

# TIDDINGTON WITH ALBURY & MILTON COMMON NEWSLETTER

[www.tiddingtonoxon.co.uk](http://www.tiddingtonoxon.co.uk)

APRIL/MAY 2010

## From the Editor

Best wishes to everybody for a very happy Easter.

Best wishes, too, to Alan Stratton in his lifetime ambition to run the London Marathon (see page 10 for further details).

Good luck to all those who are going to abseil down the John Radcliffe Hospital building in aid of St Helen's Church (see page 8).

And volunteers are asked to help with the Litter Blitz detailed on page 4.

Zena Knight

**Milton Common NHW  
(West Side) and  
Sandy Lane**



On 6 March the first AGM of Thames Valley NHW was held. Unfortunately we were unable to attend due to lack of space at the venue.

**THAME REGIONAL NHW MEETING -  
TUESDAY, 30 MARCH.**

A Neighbourhood Watch Regional Meeting is being held on Tuesday, 30 March, at Thame Barns Centre, Church Road, Thame, starting at 7:45pm, and we will be attending.

There have been 5 Land Rover Defenders stolen in the South Oxfordshire area and 3 from the Vale area since the beginning of this year. These vehicles do not normally have any standard immobilisers or alarms fitted, or if they do, they tend to be poorly equipped to prevent the theft of the vehicle. The vehicles are being stolen overnight and often from rural locations.

A metallic grey BMW 520d virtually new reg no. YD59 ??? has been seen round Old London Road, Sandy Lane and London Road, acting suspiciously. The three occupants were male, late 20's-early 30's wearing black zipper jackets - two with black hair, one with blond "streaky" hair and "trendy" sunglasses. This car has been seen round the area for three days between 12 noon and 3pm. If you see anything suspicious, please call the police on 08458 505 505 or 999 for a crime in progress.

Elaine Horne

NHW Co-ordinator M/C and Sandy Lane  
01844 279520

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## From the Parish Clerk

**Drainage works in Tiddington** - I now have information concerning the camera survey on the drainage system on the A418 by the Village Hall, which has shown up minor deficiencies in the pipeline. These do not seem to merit further attention at this time. There has been some attention to the surface water problems on the area in front of The Fox and Tiddington Garage and this does seem to have had considerable beneficial effects!

**Traffic vibrations on A418** - no sign yet of the 30mph roundels we have been promised for the approaches to the village. Vibrations caused by passing vehicles continue to be a great worry to residents. A survey is under way to determine who is experiencing this very disturbing and worrying phenomenon and results will be known and passed on to Oxfordshire Highways in early April.

**Sandy Lane** - the promised gully, to be constructed by Oxfordshire County Council, to carry away the surface water gushing down the lane, has not yet materialised. We await completion of this work to see whether this will solve the problem.

### Tiddington with Albury Parish Council Members

Chair	John Nowell-Smith	339650
	Econ.development, businesses	
Vice Chair	Elaine Horne	279520
	Planning, highways and Milton Common	
Councillor	Cheryl Draper	339347
	Environment, conservation, recycling waste	
Councillor	Ken Field	339671
	Housing, planning, building & controls	
Councillor	Zena Knight	339340
	Planning; recreation, arts, grants	
Councillor	Brian Price	339977
	Health & safety	
Clerk	Ken Poyser	339216
	Rosewood, Ickford Road, Tiddington	
	Email: twaparishcouncil@googlemail.com	

**Footpath/pelican crossing** - the footpath to the bus shelter from the Station Yard development is to be re-instated under the S106 agreement with the developers, though there is no sign of this work being started. As previously stated, we are exploring a number of avenues to have a pelican crossing installed for the safe crossing of the A418 and David Turner, our County Councillor is very active in this matter, pursuing various approaches, including possible areas of funding.

Our local athlete, Alan Stratton, is in training for the London Marathon, to be run on 25 April, and intends that any monies he raises will go towards the cost of the crossing. Alan's website is [www.marathoncrossing.org.uk](http://www.marathoncrossing.org.uk) Good luck Alan.

**Potholes** - the village is riddled with potholes following the big freeze. I have contacted Highways about this, but little seems to have been done. If only they had done something about this earlier, the frosts would have had a lesser effect. The more we report problems, the more chance there is of something being done. If there is a particular area of concern to you, lift the 'phone!

**Litter blitz** - I am sure Zena will publicize this elsewhere in the Newsletter, but a litter collection is proposed for Saturday, 10 April. Meet at the Village Hall at 10.00am. Pickers, high visibility clothing and sacks will be supplied. Please come along and help.

Ken Poyser  
Parish Clerk

### Monthly Farmers' Markets

**Great Haseley Village Hall – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday**

**Tetsworth Village Hall – 3<sup>rd</sup> Saturday**

**Thame – 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday**

## Easter and May Bank Holidays Refuse Collections

Please note the changes will be as follows:

Normal day	Revised day
Monday 5 April	Tuesday 6 April
Monday 3 May	Tuesday 4 May
Monday 31 May	Tuesday 1 June

## Freedom of Information Act Publication Scheme

Residents of the Parish can see the records of the Council held by the Parish Clerk or learn where they may be accessed. Records include minutes, financial information and responses to planning consultations.

Application can be made to the Clerk (Tel: 339216) and documents viewed by appointment.

Any copies required will be charged at 10p per page.

## FREE! SWAP SHOP Saturday, 24 April, 9.30am – 11.00am Merry Bells, Wheatley

Bring useful old stuff you no longer need; take away FREE stuff that is useful to you.

If you are bringing stuff it needs to be in the hall by 10.00am

### You can now bring (small) electrical items!

We have a notice board to advertise items too big to carry easily.

Bringing is not compulsory – call in and see if there is something you want to take.

**Recycling:** You can also bring used printer cartridges (not Epson, please), old mobile phones, Tetrapaks, plastic milk bottle tops, batteries and foil milk bottle tops for us to recycle.

Refreshments available (small charge)

Run by Wheatley Community Action Group  
[www.wheatleycag.org](http://www.wheatleycag.org)

Reuse, recycle and keep stuff out of landfill!

## From your Chairman

I'm sorry about the potholes but there doesn't seem to be much we can do about it in the short term - it is countywide.

Negotiations on the pelican crossing are continuing - all hope is not lost.

Flooding and drainage problems are being addressed and the work outside the Fox seems to be working.

John Nowell-Smith  
339650

## From your County Councillor

**Review of highway speed limits** - the decisions about new speed limits which will be implemented later this year have now been made by the County Council's Transport Decisions Committee. In the Tiddington area these are (a) the speed limit over the M40 on the A329 will be increased from 30 to 40 MPH. I opposed this as I feel it is a very dangerous step to take, given the visibility problems when turning off London Road and the M40 on to the A329, (b) the speed limit on the A418 Thame to Wheatley road will be reduced to 50 MPH (whilst keeping the limit at 30 MPH through



# THAMES VALLEY POLICE

0845 8 505 505

The single number for non-emergency calls

Tiddington). I supported this decision as it seemed sensible to me and (c) the limit on London Road in Milton Common will be increased from 30 to 40 MPH. I received mixed comments from residents with the majority against and spoke against this at the meeting. Thank you for the responses which I received following the articles I wrote in the Tiddington Newsletter.

**Building work on Thame's new library progresses** - builders are now concentrating on constructing the interior of Thame's new customer friendly two-floor library after broadly completing work on its shell. The 40-week programme by Oxfordshire County Council is on schedule and the modern style library in North Street is expected to be open to the public in the summer. Hundreds of new books have been ordered giving residents a wider range of items to borrow than was previously available. Locals can see plans and information about the new building at a special display at the existing library in Southern Road, which will remain open until about a week before the new one opens.

**Social care apprenticeship scheme wins national award** - a County Council apprenticeship programme which offers people from a range of backgrounds the chance to mould skills needed to work in adult social care has won a prestigious national award. The Social & Health Care Apprenticeship Scheme won the Most Effective Employer Investment in Apprenticeships category at the 2009 Skills for Care Accolades, a programme that celebrates the achievements of social care employers. The scheme, one of three to be selected for the category final, works with care providers, schools and colleges throughout Oxfordshire to promote careers in social care and support those who want to enter the workforce.

Please feel free to contact me about County Council issues that concern you. My contact details are as follows:

Address: David Turner, 50 Hardings, Chalgrove, Oxford, OX44 7TJ.

Home Telephone: 01865 891169

Email: david.turner@oxfordshire.gov.uk

David Turner  
19<sup>th</sup> March 2010

**MEETING TO DISCUSS NEIGHBOURHOOD POLICING AND YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD ACTION GROUP (NAG) Friday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2010, 1900 hours @ Thame Police Station**

Neighbourhood Policing Sergeant for Thame Sector invited the Parish Council to send representatives to a meeting to help develop the understanding and relationship between the Police and NAG with their Parish Councils. The two representatives were Elaine Horne and Zena Knight.

The NAG have been commencing fresh consultation for 2010 during February and March. The aim is to identify community problems and concerns. The main ones will be addressed by the NAG, statutory government agencies and resident members working in partnership. Other concerns raised will be passed to the relevant agency for appropriate action.

The NAG does have Parish Councillor representatives. Although the number is limited, the NAG recognises the importance of the Parish Councils and the need to develop links. As such the NAG is keen to develop understanding of its role and purpose, to support one another with common goals.

The turn out at this meeting was very poor - we are still having a problem which area Milton Common comes under policing wise. At the moment we are not covered by Wheatley NAG or Chalgrove - although Milton Common is in the Parish of Tiddington with Albury. PC Paul Gregory hopefully is going to solve the problem. Problem areas discussed were speeding, Fly tipping and distraction burglaries

Elaine Horne  
Vice- Chairman, Parish Council

## **Wheatley & Chalgrove Neighbourhood Action Group**

We have had almost 26% fewer crimes in November, December and January than we did at the same time in 2008/2009.

Incidents of burglary, criminal damage, violence, vehicle crime and anti social behaviour have all significantly reduced compared with the same period in 2008/2009.

There have been very few incidents of anti social behaviour and officers have not had to seize any alcohol from any young people.

No Sec 59's, Sec 27's or Acceptable Behaviour contracts have been issued during the period.

3 ASB warning letters have been issued

No offenders have been brought to justice by the courts in the area.

The current local Neighbourhood Action Group priorities continue to be:

Speeding

Rubbish/litter

Parking

Speed enforcement and monitoring will continue throughout the area with Speed Indicator Devices being used as appropriate.

Upcoming local meetings/Surgeries for 2010 are:

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April 2010

Wheatley Police Office, Church Road,  
Wheatley between 10am-12pm (lunch)

Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2010

Wheatley ASDA, London Road, Wheatley  
between 6pm-7pm

These meetings are an ideal opportunity for local residents to speak to their local police officers and PCSO's about any local issues. No appointment is necessary, just turn up and speak to your local officers. Further surgeries will be publicised locally and on the force website at [www.thamesvalley.police.uk](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk).

If you want any advice or would like to contact the neighbourhood team you can call us on the police non emergency number 0845 8 505505

or email

[WheatleyNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:WheatleyNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk).

Please note this email address cannot be used to contact Thames Valley Police to report crimes or for any urgent matters.

Alternatively you can visit the force website at [www.thamesvalley.police.uk](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk) to view information on your neighbourhood.

Ken Cooney

Police Community Support Officer

### **From the Vicar**

This month's letter has been written by Emma Pennington, Emma is Team Vicar of Cuddesdon, Garsington and Horspath.

'Summer is icumen in...'

so will sing the boys and men of Magdalen College Choir this coming May morning. But summer, or should I say spring, has taken a long time to "come in" this year. As I write, the daffodils have yet to emerge and we are many weeks since St David's Day. I am one of those people who yearns for warmer days and lighter evenings. Even in early April I will look to the skies in the hope of seeing my first swallow and am overjoyed when our migrant guests return. Yet this year, with the lingering winter cold, I have been forced to dwell in this seemingly dead, depressing time and to gradually perceive the beauty which it holds. We are very lucky to live in the countryside, to watch the seasons come and go, to daily have before our eyes the majesty and beauty of a tree without leaves. It was not the same when I lived in the city, where the only sign of spring was when a dirty black tree suddenly shot forth emerald leaves of the newest and startling kind.

People encounter God in different ways, but for many I think it is this lovely planet with its plants, rocks, clouds and animals which grow

and fade yearly that touches our spirit. To drive across the ridge or twist and turn amongst the lanes is to daily be reminded of the Godly soil in which we are all rooted and grounded. One of the reasons that Easter is such an inspiring festival is that it not only speaks of new life but is at a time when that new life is springing up all around us. As we journey from winter to spring, so we journey from the desolation of the cross to the joy of the empty tomb. Yet, let us not be too hasty to Passover the winter of the cross, but linger so that it too may speak to us of its darker beauty. For the story of Easter reminds us that now, at all times and in all places, we and all this world have been hallowed and sanctified by God's entering so fully into it. There is nowhere that God cannot be sought and found, be it in the depths of wintry despair or the sunshiny days of new life. So let us with those atop Magdalen tower sing with our hearts that through Christ summer has indeed come in and

that though winter is sure to follow our song need not cease.

Emma Pennington, Team Vicar of Garsington,  
Horspath and Cuddesdon

### **ABSEIL FOR CHURCH HEATING**

It has been a long cold winter, things are heating up slowly but it has highlighted how much we need a good new heating system in church.

Please consider abseiling for us on 4 July at the John Radcliffe Hospital, or sponsoring someone who is participating. We are on the Just Giving website (search Albury). There will also be other events so look out for news. We appreciate your support and help.

For more information please speak to me or John Nowell-Smith.

Caroline King

<b>Church Services</b>	<b>St Helen's Church, Albury</b>
<b>4 April</b>	9.30am Family Communion for Easter Day
<b>11 April</b>	9.30am Holy Communion
<b>18 April</b>	9.30am Morning Prayer
<b>25 April</b>	9.30am Holy Communion
<b>2 May</b>	9.30am Morning Prayer
<b>9 May</b>	9.30am Holy Communion
<b>16 May</b>	9.30am Morning Prayer
<b>23 May</b>	9.30am Holy Communion
<b>30 May</b>	11.00am Cluster service at Waterstock



**Welcome to exciting new additions to our service!**

**New Children's Centre Mobile** - with the coming of spring, our area will be visited by the

new Children's Centre Bus. Come along and join the team on board this one stop shop which offers:

- Library services including book borrowing
- Story and Rhyme Time sessions
- Information for parents, carers and childminders

- Specialist information from health professionals, family information service and others
- **Free** use of on-board lap tops

The new bus will visit Tiddington and Garsington from April in place of the Playbus, which we will still see at special events. Please contact Sarah Lowman for timetables.

**Calling all childminders!** If you are a grandparent, childminder, au pair, nanny or other family member caring for other people's children, we would love to see you at our monthly Childminders Stay and Play which is held in Horspath on the fourth Monday of each month (Sarah has dates!). This session is run in conjunction with Trio Childcare Connections and is a great forum for carers to catch up with each other and talk about the latest development in childcare - or just to come and have a coffee and a chat while the children play. Of course you are also welcome to attend any of our regular Stay and Plays too.

**And a big thank you** to everyone who came to our Family Fun and Feedback Day on 4 March. It was a great success with over 25 carers and 30 children joining in the fun. We had some fantastic feedback and thank you to everyone who contributed. This will help us move forward with the development of our centre. Please contact us if you would like further information or if you would like to help steer our work.

The Maple Tree Children's Centre  
 Tel. 07988 149041  
[sarah.lowman@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.lowman@oxfordshire.gov.uk)



Children's Centres  
 for families in Oxfordshire

## Waterstock & Tiddington W.I.

In February, Martin Way's history of horse brasses was fascinating, with examples from his collection showing development of styles through the ages. He worked with heavy horses, showed slides of the different breeds and talked about his two particular favourites that he looks after and uses on the farm.

There was a disappointing attendance at the Annual Meeting in March to hear about the activities, fun and fellowship we have had during the past year.

On 8 April, Zena Skinner will tell of her experiences facing the camera in the days when she demonstrated her cookery on television. The subject for the competition is a poster illustrating the history of the village, either Waterstock or Tiddington. The winning entry will go forward to the Group Meeting.

On 13 May, we consider the one resolution which will go forward to the National AGM in June. The subject is the mandatory clear labelling of food with the true country of origin. Also, our member, Yvonne Cartwright will have us doing some gentle yoga. Bring an item from the kitchen beginning with the letter "J" for the competition.

It is our turn to host the Group Meeting on Thursday, 22 April and the interesting title of Susan Howe's talk is "Hysterical History". We hope that members from the other four local institutes invited will be encouraged to come and that we will have a full house. Volunteers to make biscuits and help on the night will be welcome.

Oxford Operatic are performing a Mel Brooks musical "The Producers" at the New Theatre and the coach and ticket package is available on Wednesday, 19 May. If any friends or families would like to join us please let me know as soon as possible.

The Quiz Evening was a great success again, thanks to all of you who supported it. We were able to make generous donations to the Haiti

earthquake appeal and the Thames Valley Air Ambulance, as well as a contribution towards the bursary which the Institute provides for a week-end course at Denman College.

We look forward to seeing you on the second Thursday of the month in Tiddington Village Hall at 7.30pm

Zena Knight  
Tel: 339340

## Tiddington Village Hall

It's been a fairly quiet couple of months at the Hall. Unfortunately we had to cancel the Blues Night in early February as Daniel Smith was unwell. However it is hoped that this will be re-scheduled for later this year.

While things were quiet we took the opportunity to have the Hall floor re-varnished, which involved having it stripped back to the bare wood and then 3 coats of special lacquer were applied. It really does look great and I hope it will last a good few years. If you are using the Hall please try not to drag tables and chairs as this could mark the new floor.

In April we are planning to have the interior of the Hall re-decorated so hopefully come the summer the Hall should look at its very best.

Meanwhile, a reminder for your diaries that this year's Village Fete will be on **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> July**. We've already been promised a huge inflatable from Jack FM and as well as the usual attractions there will be some more arena displays from our local schools and dance groups.

We are always looking for help organizing and running this event so if you fancy volunteering your services please give me a call (339430) or email me [stratton@gmx.com](mailto:stratton@gmx.com)

Here's to a good summer!

Alan Stratton, Chairman  
Tiddington Village Hall Committee

## Mark Quinton

Congratulations to Mark Quinton who ran 4 miles for Sport Relief on Sunday, 21 March. Running from Tiddington to the Six Bells in Thame in about 1 hour. He decided the day before to do it and raised over £500 for the cause. Congratulations!!



Alan Stratton



Our winter activities have drawn to a close with the end of season for Crib, Ladies and Men's Darts, and the winter Quiz league. Our attention is now turning to the new cricket season which commences on Saturday, 17 April with a Cherwell League Cup game away to Cropredy and a friendly match at home. In the Npower National Village Knockout we have been drawn at home to Cropredy on Sunday, 9 May.

The Aunt Sally season starts in April and the players will have the benefit of a newly designed throwing area. We also have a new general storage shed, our thanks to Dick Brownsill and Ray Manning for their hard work on these. Our youth equipment will also be stored in a new facility which is being built by Ken Field and Neil Smith, dedicated to the memory of Reg Ilbery. Our thanks to them for their time and effort.

At our recent AGM it was decided to keep our senior memberships the same, £20 per family and £15 single. Membership is due on 1 April and reminders are on the way. 100 Club renewals are also due and remain at £15 per year. Membership can be given to Tracey Smith, Rowland Maule or left at the bar for collection.

100 Club winners are February: Keith Simms, Colin Smith, Phil Clarke, March: Neil Andrews, Emily Maule, Neil Smith.

It is with regret that we will have to increase our bar prices in April. There have been rises from the brewery, together with the increase in VAT in January.

We look forward to welcoming you and hope for a summer of warm, dry weather.

Lesley Pykett  
07762 572558

## Wheatley Library

We will be closed from Good Friday, 2 April and re-open on Tuesday, 6 April for Easter. Any items due back on these dates will be given a longer loan period automatically. The two Bank Holidays in May do not affect our opening times, as we never open on a Monday.

On 14 April we will be holding storytime with some simple craft activity at 11am. This is for children aged 4 to 8 years old. Everyone is welcome and tickets are available from the library. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

From Wednesday, 21 April we will be holding a very short storytime for the younger children (age 5 and under) every week. This will be in the morning, more details from the library. There will not be a craft activity, just a colouring to take away. Again all children must be accompanied by an adult.

We are planning to move some of our stock around but would appreciate some feedback from library users on our plans. The idea is to move the large print books and the audio books to the area next to the window. As ever there are advantages and disadvantages to this idea. More information will be available in the library in April. The change over will not happen until the end of May, depending on the feedback we get from our customers.

All the staff at Wheatley Library would like to wish you a happy Easter and a sunny spring.

Anne Spruce Library Manager

### Wheatley Library

<b>Monday</b>	Closed
<b>Tuesday</b>	2.00pm - 7.00pm
<b>Wednesday</b>	9.30am - 1.00pm 2.00pm - 5.00pm
<b>Thursday</b>	2.00pm - 5.00pm
<b>Friday</b>	9.30am - 1.00pm 2.00pm - 6.00pm
<b>Saturday</b>	9.30am - 1.00pm

The Merry Bells, High Street, Wheatley  
Tel: 01865 875267

Email: [wheatley.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:wheatley.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

**Thame & District Citizens Advice Bureau  
Opening Hours**

Monday, Tuesday, Friday  
9.30 – 4.00 Open door  
Wednesday 9.30 – 1.00 Specialist debt  
clinic (appointment)  
Thursday 9.30 – 1.00 Telephone advice

Advice line: 01844 214827  
Appointments line: 01844 217186

A Drop-in session is held at the offices of the  
United Reformed Church, Crown Square,  
Wheatley on Monday mornings  
from 10.00am-1.00pm



**ALAN'S RUNNING THE  
LONDON MARATHON  
SUNDAY, 25 APRIL 2010**

[www.marathoncrossing.org.uk](http://www.marathoncrossing.org.uk)

The time has finally come for me to fulfil a lifetime ambition and that is to run the London Marathon, something I never thought I would do. The training has been hard but sticking to a schedule has really helped. The hardest part has been the politics surround the sponsorship. Something that initially seemed so simple seemed to create more and more barriers, so often I felt I'd hit the wall (excuse the pun!) Anyway, all now appears to be sorted and if you'd like to sponsor me then please see all the info you need on page 10. In addition to this there will also be a flyer and separate traditional sponsorship form coming through your door if you would prefer not to "pay" via the web site.

I would really welcome your support on the "big day". If you've sat there watching the

marathon on television and thought "One day I'd like to go up to London and see it for myself" then this is the ideal opportunity. If you are planning to come, please let me know so that I can fill you in with details about routes, where I hope to be at what time etc.

Please keep an eye on the web site for updates [www.marathoncrossing.org.uk](http://www.marathoncrossing.org.uk) and you can also follow me on twitter via @marathoncross ([www.twitter.com/marathoncross](http://www.twitter.com/marathoncross))

Many thanks

Alan Stratton  
(07889 851588)

## **Newington Nurseries**

### **Magnolias herald the arrival of spring**

The Magnolia, a signature plant of this time of year, is one of the most primitive of flowering plants. It's named after Pierre Magnol (1638 - 1715), Professor of Botany at Montpellier University and also Director of the Royal Botanic Garden in Montpellier. Magnolias are native to North America, East and South-East Asia including the Himalayas where the plants are valued for their fragrant blooms and handsome foliage. It's rather difficult to believe that this beautiful shrub evolved before bees. The showy flowers originally developed to encourage pollination by beetles. The result is that Magnolia flowers are tough so as to avoid damage by crawling and eating insects.

Most species of Magnolia produce flowers in spring, often before the leaves appear, and are usually followed by attractive cone-shaped and colourful fruits. *Magnolia stellata* (Star Magnolia) is the perfect choice for container growing, bearing abundant white or delicate pink blooms depending on variety. *M. stellata* 'Rubra' has large dark pink flowers and *M. stellata* 'Waterlily' white flowers up to 12cm across. Magnolia 'Susan' produces glorious purple-red flowers with the added bonus of fragrance and is another great option if space is limited. Take the time to choose an attractive pot that will be big enough to accommodate the shrub as it grows. With more space in the garden, you might consider planting directly into the ground.

*Magnolia x loebneri* is a wonderful shrub or small tree for the garden, producing masses of star-shaped blossoms, 8-13cm across. Look out especially for 'Leonard Messel', which produces pale, lilac pink flower heads or 'Merrill' which bears white flowers. For large goblet-shaped blooms that come in mid to late spring, look to *Magnolia x soulangeana* (Saucer Magnolia). 'Rustica Rubra' is a beauty, its purplish red flowers being reminiscent of red wine. Alternatively, go for 'Lennei Alba' with its pure white flowers. *Magnolia campbellii*, a fairly large tree, would be great if space allows because it bears those intriguing 'cup-and-saucer' shaped flowers. 'Darjeeling' or 'Charles Raffill' are also really lovely, producing dark pink and purple-pink blossoms respectively.

*Magnolia grandiflora* (Bull Bay) is worth mentioning despite the fact that it flowers in autumn. This species is a stunning evergreen tree whose leaves are a beautiful glossy green. Large, creamy coloured and very fragrant flowers appear late summer to early autumn and these are followed by fascinating, rose-coloured and candle-shaped fruits.

Magnolias really can be the showpieces of the garden. Put the big ones in prominent positions or with other trees in woodland garden situations. Most prefer soil tending towards acidic although some, including *Magnolia stellata* and *Magnolia x loebneri*, are happy in alkaline soils. They are very light on maintenance, needing nothing more than a trim in late winter to remove any untidy shoots that spoil the framework. Mulch in spring with manure or leaf mould particularly if the soil is dry.

### SEASONAL HIGHLIGHTS

Animals and birds are waking up now. Birds getting ready to lay and mammals that are soon to give birth will be on the look out for any extra food they can get – help them out if you can.

March/early April is the ideal time for pruning. Prune shrub and climbing roses, heathers and mahonias. This time of year is also perfect for planting and replanting. Pick out which perennials flowered less last season – these can be divided and separated to give them a new lease of life. Nutrients are also very important for a healthy garden so definitely don't forget to fertilise now.

Newington Nurseries, Newington, nr Stadhampton, Oxon, OX10 7AW  
Tel 01865 400533 [www.newington-nurseries.co.uk](http://www.newington-nurseries.co.uk)



PARENTS AND CHILDREN TOGETHER

[www.pactcharity.org](http://www.pactcharity.org)

## Have YOU ever thought about FOSTERING?

There is a recognised shortage of 10,000 Foster Carers in the UK. PACT, founded in 1911, is also known as the Oxford Diocesan Council for Social Work Inc. We are a registered charity working to improve life chances for children. The focus of our work is within Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire and aims to build and strengthen families.

We are an approved Adoption and Fostering Agency. We have a history of finding safe, loving families for children in care. Here are a few facts about Fostering:

1. Did you know you don't have to be married to become a Foster Carer?

2. You don't have to have children already although you do need to have experience of caring for children.
3. Did you know you get paid a Fostering Allowance of £335.70 a week to be a Foster Carer which is tax free and won't affect any other benefits?
4. Most of the children who need fostering are known as 'hard to place' children, they will usually be 8+ years of age.

Fostering is a hard but very rewarding job. If you think you might have what it takes to become a Permanent Foster Carer or you want to find out more then contact PACT now on **0800 731 1845**  
e-mail [fostering@pactcharity.org](mailto:fostering@pactcharity.org)



### BEREAVEMENT SUPPORT VOLUNTEERS

#### Are you:

- Warm, empathic and a good listener?
- Able to cope with other people's sadness?

#### Do you:

- Have around 16 hours a month to spare?
- Have your own transport?
- Want to make a difference?

#### What we provide:

- Full training commencing September 2010
- Ongoing support, training and supervision
- Travel and phone expenses

#### COME ALONG TO FIND OUT MORE ON:

Monday 26 April from 6.00 to 8.00 pm  
or

Monday 10 May from 4.00 to 6.00 pm

**Sobell House**  
**Churchill Hospital, Old Road**  
**Headington, Oxford OX3 7LJ**

**Please phone us on:**  
**01865 225878 for more information**

*We do not recommend this work for those who have been bereaved in the last 2 years*