

# TIDDINGTON WITH ALBURY & MILTON COMMON NEWSLETTER

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

DECEMBER 2013/JANUARY 2014

## From the Editor

May I wish all our readers a merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

There will be the annual seasonal favourites of the Village Hall Dinner and Dance and the Christmas Bingo (see dates in the diary on the back page).

We have an interesting report on activities at Sandy Lane Farm (page 9). Welcome back, Charles!

For those who use Wheatley Library, see details given by Anne Purse of the changes proposed in the light of County Council budget cuts on page 13.

Zena Knight

## Thank you

I would like to express sincere thanks to everybody after my mother broke her hip after a fall at home in September. Everybody has been so kind, visiting her in hospital, sending best wishes, cards, flowers, presents, etc. But a special mention to Moo Nowell-Smith, Cherie Lawton and her daughter Carla, Jennie Sherlock Williams, Kim Morrish, Alan Ilbery. I wish I could mention all but it would fill the newsletter! Thanks again

Jeremy Holborow

## Poppy Appeal 2013

Once again with the help of volunteers a house to house poppy collection took place in the village and Albury – sorry if you were out. As we come under the Wheatley area the boxes were sent there to be opened and counted and this year our contribution amounted to £522.00. Slightly down on last year nevertheless a great result.

Thanks to all

Pam Byrne

## The Fox – the end of the road for our Village Pub

You will have read in the last newsletter of our efforts to raise money and form an “Industrial and Provident Society for the benefit of the community” to purchase The Fox and manage it as a tenanted free house.

We have been successful in registering The Fox with the SODC as an “Asset of Community Value”. However, due to the lack of interest in general from the community and further the lack of pledges to invest in this enterprise, it has meant that we are unable to pursue this matter further.

We would like to thank those of you who offered your support for this venture, whether practical or financial, but unfortunately as this was such a small percentage of the community we now have no alternative but to wait and see what happens to our village pub.

As many of you may have noticed, The Fox closed suddenly in November. This was due to water damage to the building following the heavy rain. The landlords, Punch, were not prepared to undertake any repairs to the building and therefore agreed with the present tenant, Lati, to terminate the tenancy.

We will now just have to wait to see what happens and whether Tiddington becomes yet another village without a pub.

The interim committee.

### INSIDE

Advertising	20-26
Church Services	9
Council News	2
Cricket Club	12
Diary Dates	back page
Information	18-19
Maple Tree Children’s Centre	10
Neighbourhood Watch	4
Newsletter deadline	19
Village Hall	11
Women’s Institute	11

## From the Parish Clerk

**Highways matters** - the lay-by near Waterstock Golf Course has been blocked off for some while. The County Area Steward is looking into the matter, but offending cones now seem to have been removed. The Area Steward is also looking again at the running water on Sandy Lane and is of the opinion that some action is needed.

May I ask you please to assist by reporting any highway matters which are of concern to you via the website? The more they hear, the better the chance of some action being taken.

**Pelican crossing on A418** - the County Area Steward is supportive of a need for a crossing, but says there are no funds. We are still hopeful that there may be funding from the housing development in Thame. Our County Councillor, Mrs Anne Purse is pursuing all avenues for funding and support.

**Tiddington 4 Village Plan** - a reminder that Drop in Coffee Mornings are on the second Wednesdays of each month at the Cricket Club 10.30-12.30pm.

The meeting of the co-ordinators and volunteers at the Village Hall on 13 November was cancelled because the response did not indicate viability. If we are to implement recommendations of the plan, we do need to find a way forward. It would be a shame if all the hard work that went into the formulation of the plan were to no avail.

**The Fox** - as you are no doubt aware, the Fox is for sale and has now been registered as an asset of

community value. This gives a breathing space to see if this important feature of village life can be preserved for the community.

**Art and Craft Group** – Zena Knight has set up an Art and Craft Group, following interest shown in the Parish Plan responses. A number of meetings have been held and membership is increasing. Please contact Zena if you are interested.

**Parking in Albury View** - this continues to be a problem. Please park with the appropriate consideration for others.

**Red Kites** - we have reports that some parishioners are still feeding these birds. Please do not do so as this is not recommended practice.

**Dog fouling** - if you are a dog walker, please tidy up after your pet, using the dog bins provided, or take home with you to dispose of there. Please do not spoil other people's enjoyment of our lovely village.

KEN POYSER

Clerk to the Parish Council

## From the Parish Council Chair

Anne Purse our County Councillor has walked round the Parish with the Area Steward, Dave Clack. He is supportive of what the Parish Council says needs to be done, but has no funds to do anything. We will discuss this at our next Parish Council meeting, so come along and have your say and ideas of getting some funds out of the County Council.

Again we tried to organise a meeting for the T4VP volunteers on 13 November 2013. We ended up cancelling the event due to lack of response. Moving forward we are going to use the list of Volunteers from the plan, to help us in our various projects for the Parish, but we are going to e-mail you individually when required.

When walking our own dog over the last two months, I have noticed people are again not picking up their pouch's mess. Please pick up – it's an offence.

On a lighter note, I wish you all a happy Christmas and a peaceful New Year – hope to see some of you at the Coffee Morning for St Helen's Church and the Christmas Eve Service.

Elaine Horne  
01844-279520

[elaine@ace-training.me.uk](mailto:elaine@ace-training.me.uk)

### Tiddington with Albury Parish Council Members

Chair	Elaine Horne	279520
	Planning, highways & Milton Common	
Vice-Chair	Cherry 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	
Councillor	John Savell	338078
	Economic development, businesses	
Clerk	Ken Poyser	339216
	Rosewood, Ickford Road, Tiddington	
	Email: <a href="mailto:twaparishcouncil@googlemail.com">twaparishcouncil@googlemail.com</a>	

## Christmas and New Year Waste Collections

Normal day Mon 30 Dec      revised day Tue 31 Dec  
Normal day Mon 6 Jan      revised day Tue 7 Jan  
**There will be no garden waste collection on 7 Jan**

## Reviving your recycling

With so much more waste likely to be generated over the Christmas period, please take a moment to look at the article in the District Council "Outlook" which popped through your letterbox recently. On page 6 you will find many useful tips on what to recycle.

**Help to keep waste out of landfill!**

## The Big Clean Up

The district-wide tidy up crew is making its way around South Oxfordshire. Armed with their "rippers" and specially modified super-vacs, they're pulling weeds out of pavements, tidying verges, clearing litter and doing lots of other tidying up jobs along the way.

They are due to arrive in Tiddington some time during January so watch out for them.

## Post Office

### Tiddington Village Hall

Please support your local post office facilities in the Village Hall on Wednesdays from 1.30pm-3.00pm. Your postmaster from Great Milton is able to provide all the usual needs including top-up of mobile phones, etc.

## 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.

## Art and Craft Group

The last meeting of this year will be held on Wednesday morning, 4 December. We plan to hold a small exhibition of the work we



have been doing during the ten sessions we have held. If you have not already been, come and see what we do and enjoy a coffee or tea and a mince pie.

We plan to continue next year and our first session will be held on Wednesday, 15 January from 9.00am – 12.00noon. Thereafter every Wednesday except the 2<sup>nd</sup> one in the month. See the diary on the back page for dates and times.

For a cost of £2.00 per session you will be able to make use of the excellent facilities of the hall and enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and biscuits.

Artists and crafters are welcome to bring their projects and share tips and ideas with other like-minded people. Also bring along any books, magazines or materials that you might share and swap with others.

For more information please do not hesitate to contact me: Zena Knight, 24 Albury View. Tel: 01844 339340

## SWAP SHOP

**SATURDAY, 18 JANUARY**

**9.30AM – 11.00AM**

**MERRY BELLS, WHEATLEY**

Bring useful old stuff that you no longer need; take away FREE stuff that is useful to you. (NOT clothes or shoes)

If you are bringing stuff it needs to be in the hall by 10.15am\*

**You can now bring (small) electrical items**

We have a notice board to advertise any 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, plastic milk bottle tops, batteries\* and foil milk bottle tops**  
**Also Traidcraft Exchange now taking jewellery (incl broken pieces)**

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

\*See website for other places to recycle these items.

## From your District Councillor

### Planning Service restructure

Our planning system is undergoing fundamental changes, and our planning service needs greater flexibility and a focus on working with local communities. We are in an ever-increasing competitive environment and we need to deliver a more efficient, effective and responsive service to our customers.

We have a clear vision underpinned by five key principles which set the context for a cultural change in the way we work and behave towards development and our customers.

To help drive this change, we are undergoing a significant change in our staff structure. Central to our new service is our customer and performance hub; a new team including customer service officers who will be the first point of contact and ensure the customer experience for the whole journey is impressive. Supporting this hub will be Planning Policy, Development Management and Building Control. Recognising that we have Fit for the Future savings; our new structure is cost neutral.

In implementing our new staff structure, we have had a number of staff changes and where vacancies exist we currently have interim staff to ensure we maintain service delivery. Despite an increase in workload in planning applications, building control work, policy and neighbourhood planning, our performance to date is maintained at South and continues to improve at Vale.

Our building control team now provide what is arguably the best service in the country with responses to most case work within one working day. The team have sustained this since the summer and are very proud of this achievement.

We hope that this update is of use to you. If you require any further information, please contact Adrian Duffield, Tel: 01491 823729, email: [Adrian.duffield@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:Adrian.duffield@southandvale.gov.uk).

### Housing Allocations Policy

You will recall that the Council recently adopted an amended housing allocations policy. Copies of the policy are available by contacting the housing team on Tel: 01235 520202 or

email: [housing@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:housing@southandvale.gov.uk)

The policy is due to come into force once the councils have reconfigured their housing allocations database to support the new policy. Officers anticipate that this

will be by the end of January 2014, subject to the testing of the new database going to plan.

As part of the introduction of the new policy, all existing applicants will be re-canvassed during January. This is necessary, as the new policy requires us to consider information we do not currently hold. It also allows us to check that all applicants registered with us still wish to be.

Once the new policy comes into force, we will contact all applicants and explain the changes and how they affect their application.

If you have any questions or enquiries from applicants they should direct them to the housing needs team.

### The Nightsafe Scheme

The Nightsafe scheme is funded by the South and Vale Community Safety Partnership (CSP), and supports initiatives to reduce under-age drinking and sales. The South and Vale CSP has been working closely with Thames Valley Police over the past few months, organising test purchase operations at off-licences across South Oxfordshire and the Vale. In July, 68 premises were tested of which 14 premises failed. Follow-up visits are being held to remind staff of their responsibilities to prevent further sales. Off-licences are also being given the opportunity to sign up to the Nightsafe scheme. To date, 16 have signed up to the charter checklist.

Stephen Harrod  
Great Milton Ward  
01844 278068

[Stephen.Harrod@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:Stephen.Harrod@southoxon.gov.uk)

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

The NCA's National Cyber Crime Unit are aware of a mass email spamming event that is ongoing, where people are receiving emails that appear to be from banks and other financial institutions. The emails may be sent out to tens of millions of UK customers, but appear to be targeting small and medium businesses in particular. This spamming event is assessed as a significant risk. The emails carry an attachment that appears to be correspondence linked to the email message (for example, a voicemail, fax, details of a suspicious transaction or invoices for payment). This file is in fact a malware that can install Cryptolocker – which is a piece of ransomware.



Cryptolocker works by encrypting the user's files on the infected machine and the local network it is attached to. Once encrypted, the computer will display a splash screen with a count down timer and a demand for the payment of 2 Bitcoins in ransom (Approx £536 as at 15/11/2013) for the decryption key. The NCA would never endorse the payment of a ransom to criminals and there is no guarantee that they would honour the payments in any event.

Lee Miles, Deputy Head of the NCCU says "The NCA are actively pursuing organised crime groups committing this type of crime. We are working in cooperation with industry and international partners to identify and bring to justice those responsible and reduce the risk to the public."

An NCCU investigation is ongoing to identify the source of the email addresses used. Anyone who is infected with this malware should report it via [Action Fraud](#)

Sound advice can be found at [GetSafeOnline](#)

Advice: This is a case where prevention is better than cure.

- The public should be aware not to click on any such attachment.
- Antivirus software should be updated, as should operating systems.
- User created files should be backed up routinely and preserved off the network.
- Where a computer becomes infected it should be disconnected from the network, and professional assistance should be sought to clean the computer.
- Various antivirus companies offer remedial software solutions (though they will not restore encrypted files).

If you are going to be away over Christmas for long periods please let me know. Once again during the Festive Season Dog Watch is going to be in Operation. Last but not least enjoy the festive season. Keep Safe and a Happy New Year to you all.

Please see pages 16 and 17 to sign up for NHW and the Oil Group.

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

## From your MP, John Howell



There have been many issues coming through in the last month both for debate in the House and from constituents. In this month's

newsletter I have written on some of the most frequently raised concerns.

### **Royal Mail privatisation.**

I wrote about this a couple of months ago but continue to receive questions from constituents on the issue especially over concerns at the future of our Post Offices. A change in Royal Mail ownership does not trigger any change in the provision of the universal postal service. Royal Mail will continue to be obliged to deliver six days a week to urban and rural areas alike at the same, affordable prices. The regulator, Ofcom has a duty to ensure prices remain affordable and there is a safeguard cap for second class stamps. I want to make it absolutely clear that the Post Office is not for sale. In fact the Government is providing £1.34 billion in funding over four years to maintain a network of at least 11,500 branches across the UK. The Post Office has won every government contract it has bid for in the last two years.

### **Energy Efficiency**

I am very pleased that the Prime Minister has made a personal commitment to help get energy bills down and the regulator, Ofgem, has announced that it is taking forward a package of measures to help reduce bills and make the energy market fairer, clearer and simpler. In the meantime Cold Weather Payments have been increased from £8.50 to £25 to help vulnerable people during periods of severe weather and in 2011/12 an estimated 5.2 million payments were made. In addition, Winter Fuel Payments have been maintained, supporting over 12 million older people. The Government's Warm Home Discount scheme helps around two million low income and vulnerable households with their energy costs each year. In 2012/13 this includes more than one million of the poorest pensioners who have already received an automatic £130 discount on their electricity bill. I am confident that the new Green Deal will revolutionise energy efficiency in the UK by offering households upfront finance to make energy efficiency improvements, paid for by energy bill savings. This scheme will provide extra financial help for the most vulnerable through an Energy Company Obligation, worth £1.3 billion, which will assist around 230,000 low income households a year.

### **County Council Budget**

Oxfordshire County Council is putting a new budget together. It does so in the knowledge that under a Government of any colour there would be no more

money for local councils than already planned. Inevitably people have differing views on what should be cut and what retained according to their own needs and priorities and how this should be done. I have met with the Leader of the County Council to discuss the issues involved including Children's Centres.

Further details of the proposed legislation and the work of Parliament is available on the parliament website at [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk). As always I am interested to hear views on the proposals before the House.

### **Christmas Wishes**

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all constituents a peaceful Christmas. It is my wish for us all that 2014 will be a good year. May I also say thank you to all those who work hard in our communities to make them special for the rest of us. It is always a pleasure when I get the opportunity to visit community activities and I look forward to learning yet more about what is being done during the forthcoming year.

For more information my website is regularly updated and offers information on my work both in Westminster and in the constituency. The address is [www.johnhowellmp.com](http://www.johnhowellmp.com) In addition, if you would like to subscribe to my free e-newsletter please e mail me at: [john.howell@oxfordshireconservatives.com](mailto:john.howell@oxfordshireconservatives.com) You can also follow me on twitter @johnhowellmp or on Facebook [www.facebook.com/john.howellmp](http://www.facebook.com/john.howellmp)

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## **St. Helen's Church News**

### **From the Vicar**

There seem to have been lots of colds and sore throats going round in the last few weeks—of course as soon as someone starts coughing and sneezing, it can spread like wildfire.

Love and kindness can be like that. If you start spreading a bit of kindness about, who knows, you might start an epidemic, with everyone catching the bug.

On Christmas Day 1914, many French, German and British soldiers arranged unofficial truces and came

out of their WW1 trenches to meet up in No Man's Land. They exchanged gifts, shared wine and chocolate, sang carols, played football

No doubt the authorities punished many of those involved. Why? Because the powers that be knew that when you start singing and sharing photos of your wives and girlfriends, it gets much harder to hate and kill the other guy.

And whether it's the Kaiser or Kitchener, Bush or Bin Laden, Obama or Bashar al-Assad of Syria neither the sword nor the machine gun is ultimately a match for the power of love.

And 2000 years ago, God looked down on battlefield earth, and saw the hurt and the hate and the sorrow – and thought: "Shall I send cavalry or infantry, bullet or bomb?"

Then he said "No, I'll send something much more powerful –I'll send pure undiluted love in all its vulnerability and power "

So Christ was born at Bethlehem.

A few years ago a family was sending out food parcels to Eastern Europe. Because it was a Christmas hamper, they decided to include a festive touch. They cooked a traditional Christmas pudding, and sent it off in its bowl in the parcel. They even stuck a piece of holly on the top. A month later they got a warm letter of thanks for all the things in the parcel. Until they remembered the pudding, they were confused by the PS: "Thank you also for the potted plant. We watered it every day, but I am afraid that it died."

God's gift of himself cannot die –for it is the gift of life itself. If we ignore or misunderstand him, still he will be there waiting for us to turn back to him. If we accept his gift, then he will live in us.

What a gift to share!!

Wishing you all a very happy Christmas.

Michael Grantham

### **St. Helen's Church**

There was a wonderful turnout for the Welsh choir at the end of October and the PCC were delighted to raise over a thousand pounds towards church funds. We paid £7,900 for our Parish Share this year and it is a tough assignment to raise the money.

We are hoping to further swell our bank balance with the Christmas Church Coffee Morning at the end of November.

On 15 December we will welcome families to a Christingle service when the Christingle oranges, which we shall decorate the day before at the

children's workshop in the church, will be distributed. We shall look forward to having some helping hands to make these oranges and also decorations for the Christmas tree in the church.

We shall as usual be holding our Carols and Holy Communion service at 6 o'clock on Christmas Eve.

A family service is then planned in church on the third Sunday of every month to which all children are welcome.

Moo Nowell-Smith,  
Churchwarden  
The Old Rectory, Albury, Thame,  
Oxfordshire OX9 2LP  
01844 339650  
moo @ nowell-smith.com

Church Services	St Helen's Church, Albury
<b>1 December</b>	9.30am Matins BCP with Robert Hutton
<b>8 December</b>	9.30am Holy Communion with Reverend Michael Grantham
<b>15 December</b>	9.30am Christingle Service with Reverend Michael Grantham
<b>22 December</b>	9.30am Holy Communion with Reverend Michael Grantham
<b>Christmas Eve</b>	6.00pm Carols and Holy Communion with Reverend Michael Grantham
<b>29 December</b>	10.00am St Mary's, Wheatley Group Holy Communion with Reverend Nigel Hawkes
<b>5 January</b>	9.30am Matins BCP with David Bendor Samuel
<b>12 January</b>	9.30am Holy Communion BCP with Reverend Michael Grantham
<b>19 January</b>	9.30am Family Service with Reverend Michael Grantham
<b>26 January</b>	9.30am Holy Communion Common Worship with Reverend Michael Grantham



### Sandy Lane Farm

It's just possible that your gastric juices did not alert you to British Food Fortnight, but for us at Sandy Lane Farm it was a real chance to try something new. After all, we already had some of the ingredients. George and Cate had the ideas and willingness to push them through, Sue and I have always had the desire to make farming more relevant, especially in a local context, and we recently took on Lauren, a trained chef, as a helper on the farm. So what happened?

We began with a Saturday market to advertise our regular Thursday markets. Lauren produced a home grown lunch and George took tours of the vegetable field for people to pick the very foods they had just eaten or bought, mostly from a large variety of squashes that have done particularly well this year.

The following Saturday was Thame Food Fair which everyone should try and visit next year. We were very busy and got a lot of new customers. There was such a buzz and you would be astonished to see so many local food outlets doing so well.

The next Friday we had our first Seasonal Supper in the old barn. A three course feast cooked on the farm, by the farm, from food grown on the farm (except salt and pepper). We can manage 60 people most of whom brought their own wine. What with the real music and candle light and of course Lauren's creative culinary touch, there was enough encouragement from everyone for us to attempt this on a more regular basis.

The following Saturday we held another market on the farm as before and on the Sunday one of our suppliers held an Italian cookery school in the barn.

All of the events were intended to reinforce the connection between producing great local food and enjoyment of buying and eating of it when you know exactly where it comes from.

We were invited to enter our efforts in a national competition judged by the likes of Raymond Blanc, environment secretary Owen Paterson and Alan Titchmarsh and came third, with a nice feature in the Telegraph!

So was it all worthwhile? It seems to have made a few more people aware that we exist. It helped to re-establish the importance of local food and, yes, we have already had another Seasonal Supper, so please have a look at the website ([www. Sandylanefarm.net](http://www.Sandylanefarm.net) ) or follow us on facebook and see if there's something for you.

Charles Bennett



## The Maple Tree Children's Centre

Even though the weather is starting to turn now, here at the Maple Tree we can't believe that Christmas is just around the corner! May we take this opportunity to wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy and Prosperous New Year.

Our regular sessions continue until Christmas Eve: Bumps to Babies sessions for parents-to-be and carers with babies runs every Monday afternoon, 2-3.30pm; Talk and Toddle, a quieter group for under 2s on Tuesdays from 10-11.30am; and our Stay and Play sessions run in Wheatley on Wednesday mornings from 9.15-12noon and Great Milton Neighbours Hall on Fridays from 9.30-11.30am. Maple Saturdays meets on Saturday, 14 December.

All December sessions will have festive themes, including making decorations and baking.

Over the Christmas and New Year period, we will be running a reduced service, as follows:

- Monday, 23 Dec - Bumps to Babies 2.00-3.30pm (inc Baby Café and Health Visitor Clinic)
- Tuesday, 24 December—CLOSED
- Wednesday, 25 December—CLOSED
- Thursday, 26 December—CLOSED
- Friday, 27 December—Cuppa and Catch Up Drop In 10.00am-12.00noon
  
- Monday, 30 December—Bumps to Babes 2-.00-3.30pm (including Health Visitor Clinic)
- Tuesday, 31 December—CLOSED
- Wednesday, 1 January—CLOSED
- Thursday, 2 January—Office open 9.00am-3.00pm for support and information
- Friday, 3 January—Stay and Play, 9.30-11.30am

All sessions over this period will run at the Centre in Wheatley.

Our new programme will start on Monday, 6 January, so watch this space for more details.

All sessions are free, although we do welcome donations to cover the cost of snacks and materials, and are suitable for children under 5 years old (and don't forget that accompanied older siblings are also

welcome during school holidays). You can also find further details on our webpage [www.oxonchildrenscentres.org.uk/themapletree](http://www.oxonchildrenscentres.org.uk/themapletree).

On a final note, you may have seen in the press proposals to cut Children's Centre services across the County due to Council budget cuts. At the time of writing, these are just proposals, no final decisions have been made on the future of the service. We await more news in the New Year. If you would like to voice your support for the service we provide, then please contact your County Councillor, or visit the website at

[www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/talkingoxfordshire](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/talkingoxfordshire)

If you have any questions, please contact the centre on 01865 873916 or

[mapletreec@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:mapletreec@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

You can also follow us on Twitter (@themapletreec) or like us on Facebook (mapletreec).

## Wheatley Park School

*Developing our links with the local community*

Here at Wheatley Park School, we are busy with rehearsals for two wonderful creative events ahead of us and hope that you will be able to join us at them.

On Thursday, 12 December at 7pm, we will be celebrating the festive season with our Winter Concert which promises to be a wonderful evening of singing and music. The concert will take place in the main hall at the school and refreshments will be available. Tickets can be purchased on the door at £4 (£2 concessions).

In 2014, on Wednesday 5th, Thursday 6th and Friday 7th February at 7.30pm, we will be presenting the popular musical *Grease* as our annual school production. Tickets will be available at £7 (£5 concessions) from the main reception or by phone on 01865 872441 from January 2014. With so many favourite numbers such as *Summer Nights* and *Greased Lightnin'*, this show promises to be a real treat for all the family so don't miss out!

During term time, there are life drawing classes taking place on Wednesdays from 3.30pm to 5.30pm in the Old House. These classes enable you to draw with an experienced life drawing tutor who is there to give you support and guidance. Classes cost £5 per week and are payable termly in advance at the first class of

the term. Please email Kristen Lovelock at [klovelock@wheatleypark.org](mailto:klovelock@wheatleypark.org) for further details and to confirm your attendance.

You do not need to have a connection with the school to attend any of the above and will be very welcome to come and meet some of our students and staff. We look forward to seeing you!

For further information, please contact Mellie Budge, Community Arts Manager on 01865 872441 ext. 118

## Waterstock & Tiddington W.I.

We learnt the fascinating history of face painting and body art when Gita Korschak spoke to us in October. She also showed us examples of her art, fitting her designs to her particular clients. A noble volunteer from our members had a beautiful flower design painted on her arm.

In November Sylvia Vetta described how she came to start the articles on Oxford Castaways which she writes for the Limited Edition magazine of the Oxford Times. She has met many fascinating people, some famous, others less well-known but still with interesting lives.

Our Group Meeting at Chinnor was very enjoyable but the long awaited talk by the excellent speaker, Gillian Cane, did not materialise as she was ill at the last minute. Instead, several members "stepped up to the plate" and we learnt of amusing experiences as a teacher, another as a shepherd and then work with anorexic victims.

On 12 December we hold our Christmas meeting. Members and visitors are welcome to bring a little savoury or sweet food to share and enjoy a glass of wine or juice. We shall exchange Christmas presents worth no more than £5.00. We will be entertained with Old Time Music Hall Songs from the Shows by Keith Harris and Lesley Morris.

Michael Palmer will tell us of his time working as a Met man in the Falklands and Antarctica on 9 January. The competition for an item of fruit or vegetables begins with the letter "F" in December and "G" in January.

Visitors and new members are always very welcome to join us on the second Thursday of the month at 7.30pm in Tiddington Village Hall.



Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Zena Knight  
Tel: 01844 339340  
Email: [zenaknight42@btinternet.com](mailto:zenaknight42@btinternet.com)

## Tiddington Village Hall

Christmas is now fast approaching and we have two festive events coming up. There are still places available at the Village Hall Christmas Dinner and Dance, which this year is on Saturday, 7 December. Tickets are £33 each, for which you get a cocktail on arrival, three-course meal and coffee and live music for dancing! Contact Pauline Field on 01844 339671 for further details and to book.

Our other event is the Christmas Bingo on Thursday, 19 December, eyes down at 8pm. We will be calling on your generosity once again to provide prizes for the bingo. You'll be visited by a Committee member in the week leading up to the bingo to collect any donations you may have. This is a great fun evening for all the family, so even if you've never played bingo before come along and join in - you might even walk away with an armful of prizes!!!

As we approach the end of the year, I felt it was time to say some thank you's - although we have a core committee who keep the hall running day to day, this couldn't be achieved without a lot of help from elsewhere, so a huge thank you to everyone who pitches in to help at the fete, Christmas bingo and other events. Another huge thank you goes to the ladies who run the fortnightly bingo sessions in the hall. I know many of you attend these and enjoy your night out but it is a lot of hard work for those 'in charge' and not only have they kept the bingo going but recently donated a fantastic £1000 profit to the hall from last year, for which we are very grateful. This will be put towards the redecoration of the hall which is to happen in the New Year.

Wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and New Year

Tot Boswell  
Village Hall Chairman  
01844 331846



**November 2013**

Many of you will have seen our building work coming to a finish. Our new bar storage room is nearly ready, the brewery are due in to change the pumps, shelving is about to go up and we can then move everything in. The outside area is nearly completed. A bit of painting left to do, it looks so much better with more space outside and we will be looking to purchase suitable furniture in the Spring.

We must extend thanks to all those who have helped, especially Dick Brownsill, Tony Dowhunek, Ray Manning and Phil Manning, who managed the project. Their support has been tremendous. Also thanks to the members who have contributed financially to enable us to finish the project.

We recently held our end of season Cricket Awards evening at the Village Hall, which was very well supported and we catered for 85, which was no mean feat. Thanks to all who helped, particularly Kim Morrish and Sue Pearce for their excellent puddings.

We look forward to seeing our members over the Festive season and opening hours will be posted in the Club and on our website - [www.tiddingtoncricketclub.org](http://www.tiddingtoncricketclub.org)

Lesley Pykett  
07762 572558

the charity for  
your community



### Changes to legal aid

**Despite my son having Special Educational Needs, the local authority is refusing to accept our medical evidence and to provide the support he needs. I want to appeal against the council's decision but don't think I can afford to pay for legal advice.**

**However I understand that since April 2013 changes to legal aid mean I might not get financial support - what can I do?**

Civil legal aid helps to pay for the costs of getting legal advice if you're on a low income. However, the government has made large cuts to the civil legal aid budget and, since April, civil legal aid is no longer available for many types of problems including divorce, as well as particular debt, housing and welfare benefit issues.

It is still available if there is a risk of domestic violence or child abuse; if your home is at risk, or in some other cases.

Fortunately, if you meet the financial conditions, legal aid is still available for people appealing against Special Educational Needs assessments decisions by councils. In some cases, legal aid is free. In other cases, you may have to pay towards the cost.

Unless you are on certain benefits, your income will have to be assessed to decide if you qualify for legal aid.

Whether or not you are eligible for legal aid, there are organisations you can contact for free advice about SEN appeals. You can find a list of organisations in [Adviceguide](#).

If you need to apply for legal aid for a Special Educational Needs problem, you must apply through the telephone gateway service run by Civil Legal Advice on 0845 345 4345. It is open from 9am to 8.00pm, Monday to Friday and from 9am to 12.30pm on a Saturday. Calls cost no more than 4p a minute from a BT landline. Calls from mobiles are usually more.

If you're worried about the cost of the phone-call, you can ask an adviser to call you back. You can text 'legalaids' and your name to 80010 and an adviser will call you back within 24 hours.

The helpline has a translation service if you would like advice in a language other than English or Welsh.

There is also a minicom service for people who are deaf, hard-of-hearing or speech-impaired and a type-talk service for people with hearing difficulties.

You can also get advice online from their website at [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk).

It's important to be aware that although Legal Aid has been cut, it is still available in certain circumstances. If you have a legal problem it is worth finding out if you qualify for Legal Aid.

Your nearest CAB office is Market Square, Thame  
Adviceline:01844 111 444 Mobile: 03 00 33 00 650

**Thame & District Citizens Advice Bureau**  
Market House, North St, Thame OX9 3HH

**Opening Hours**

**Monday, Thursday, Friday 9.30 – 4.00**

**Tuesday, Wednesday 9.30 – 1.00**

**Advice line: 08444 111 444**

**Or 0300 3300 650 (mobile)**

**Appointments: 01844 217186**

**Website: [www.adviceguide.org.uk](http://www.adviceguide.org.uk)**

**General information: [www.thamecab.org](http://www.thamecab.org)**

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



With the aggressive marketing and astronomical interest rates of the payday loans companies, there has never been a greater need in our community for a fair and affordable option for borrowers who aren't a good fit for the high street banks.

Thame Community Bank is a local branch of Swan Credit Union, a recent merger of two neighbouring Credit Unions in Milton Keynes and Aylesbury. Credit Unions are mutual societies; not-for-profit companies owned and run by their members to promote regular saving and to offer loans at reasonable rates.

Launched on 11 November in Thame Town Hall, Thame Community Bank is the product of ongoing collaboration with the Town Council, the Citizens Advice Bureau and a local charity, Sharing Life Trust. With support from local Housing Associations, caring agencies and the high street banks, this is an enterprise from the community for the community.

With loans at 2% per month, instead of 1% per day, borrowers will be able to manage their accounts online or, if needed, get help from the staff at the Information Centre in the Town Hall. With savings covered by the Government's guarantee scheme, Thame Community Bank will provide a safe, fair and affordable banking service to the people of Thame and the surrounding villages.

Visit [www.thamecommunitybank.org.uk](http://www.thamecommunitybank.org.uk) for more information.

## Wheatley Library

**Opening Hours**

<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)

## The future for Wheatley Library

People are being sought to be part of a friends group that will help shape the future of how Wheatley Library will be run. The library is one of 21 in the county which will deliver services differently from April 2015, with volunteers supporting staff in the running of the library.

The County Council is working closely with communities across Oxfordshire to put the new operating model in place, and to maintain current opening hours. It is now seeking members of the public to form a friends group for Wheatley Library. This group will speak for the local area on matters related to the library, and will help with delivering the volunteering model there, which will see around 20 hours per week of volunteer time. Library friends groups can also undertake fundraising activities, or arrange events to help raise the profile of the library.

Around 40 people attended the recent public meeting on 22 October in the Merry Bells, where representatives from the Library Service talked about the volunteering model, and how this is already being put into place in other libraries.

A number of people have expressed an interest in being part of a Friends Group, and so the first meeting of the group will be held on 11 December in the Merry Bells coffee lounge to shape the group, and to discuss how it will operate. Anyone is welcome to attend this meeting, please email [james.hazlewood@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:james.hazlewood@oxfordshire.gov.uk) or ask at the library to find out more.

Anne Purse, County Councillor

## GREAT HASELEY AND DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

### December 2013

Today the temperature has dropped markedly and winter would appear to have arrived, but the next few days promise, at least, some brightness which I will appreciate after weather that, in Scotland, would be described as dreich. The rain and darkness (we are only a month from the shortest day) are miserable and it is hard to get myself outside to do the necessary clearing.

Today I walked around the garden in the sunshine and actually looked at what was looking good; it is too easy just to work and not actually see what is looking good. The star of the show is a big Mahonia which has masses of beautiful, sweet-smelling spikes of yellow flowers, but it does have its drawbacks which are the vicious spiky leaves which grab you when you are working nearby and tend to drop year round which is the wont of evergreens. There is no doubt the balance is in favour of keeping it, but it will need heavy pruning in the spring as it has well outgrown its allotted space. There was a bumble bee feeding on a deep pink Salvia which is still in full flower and I thought it was dead earlier in the year. A bright pink single Chrysanthemum sprawls across one bed adding a welcome blaze of colour which should last well into December. Just outside the kitchen door is a Coronilla glauca "Citrina" which is full of fresh new leaves and already showing its flower buds which will soon open to show lemon yellow intensely scented flowers which will continue well into summer before the plant takes a rest. I find that these plants are short-lived and I will need to take cuttings next season.

This month is the time to remove the old leaves from oriental Hellebores which reduces the risk of disease and allows the new flowers to be seen more clearly. These usually flower in February, but may well be later especially if we get the harsh winter which has been promised. If you haven't done so already be sure to get tender plants inside or, if that is not possible, put them alongside the house or shed to give protection.

A few days ago I visited an elderly friend who is no longer able to do much gardening and found her enjoying three beautiful big clumps of pale pink Hesperantha (formerly Schyzostylis) which perform magnificently every autumn over a long period; this is a strappy-leaved rhizomatous perennial which appears to require little care (what am I doing wrong

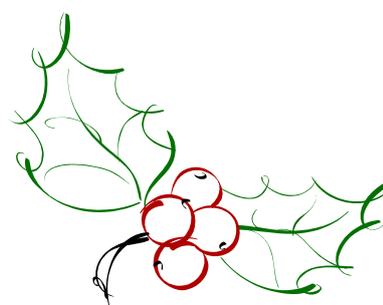
with mine - perhaps it is too shady where they are? That is another job for the list!).

I try to get out for at least a short time each day when I can, as the cutting back and weeding I do now will get me ahead for next year. I have been digging out several clumps of Crocosmia which only seem to flower if I water a lot or if it rains a lot during the summer; as neither can be depended upon I decided they should go. It may be, of course, that I should simply split them and replant as herbaceous perennials benefit hugely from that and you get the bonus of extra plants to give away. However the decision is made and I already know what I will plant in their place. I have also removed or reduced several clumps of Phlomis and Geranium as they were expanding much too rapidly; this has resulted in lots of space for more Tulips which there is still time to plant. Indeed you should get on and plant any bulbs you have lying around if they are still firm - they may flower later than usual, but probably will still perform. When you can't face going outside get out the catalogues and browse. Members will be able to get a seed catalogue at the Christmas party.

Happy Christmas.

Liz Moyses  
Membership Secretary  
liz@moyses.org  
01844 279875

PS The Christmas Party is in Great Haseley Village Hall on 4 December at 7.30pm. All welcome with no charge for anyone. There will be festive refreshments and the Christmas Hamper raffle. Hazel Ball from Velvet Brown will give a talk entitled 'Making a Christmas Wreath'. I will also be collecting subscriptions for 2014 on that evening and you will be able to collect a seed catalogue.





## Thame & District Lions Club

The Lions want to come to Watlington. Thame and District is your local branch of the world's largest community service organisation, with more than 1.3 million members in approximately 45,000 clubs in more than 200 countries and geographical areas around the world. Since 1917, Lions clubs have aided the blind and visually impaired and made a strong commitment to community service and serving youth throughout the world.

The Thame club was established in 1976 and consist of men and women from all walks of life willing to help their community.

We hold regular fundraising events to help fund the community service which we do, whether this is a donation to a worthwhile charity or providing much needed equipment to the local community hospital or surgery.

The club also participates in district events with support to the Children's party or for Senior Citizens. Locally a dance is held for those with disabilities, support for Young Carers. We are limited in the scope of our activities due to manpower so membership is a key component. We welcome interested people with the same outlook and willingness to be involved.

Our fundraising can be the Santa Sleigh at Christmas. This circulates around selected areas and Santa will be at Asda in Wheatley on the three days immediately before Christmas. We provide the mulled wine for the Christmas Light turn-on in Thame, as well as providing car park control for the main Town events, Annual Fun Fair and the Food Festival. Quiz evenings, (we intend to run one in Wheatley later in the year) and concerts are other ways that money is raised, all to support the community service activities of the club. No money raised is used to fund the club.

We are looking to recruit people with a similar outlook as ourselves, willing to be involved with their community, helping to provide the much needed service required. Membership is by invitation but willingness is the first requirement. Younger people are the life blood of any organisation so anyone over the age of 18 is welcome. If you are below that age then there are the Leos, the junior Lions.

Anyone interested please contact Lion John Savell using the details below:

Phone Number: 01844 338078

Club

E-mail:

[membership.enquiries@thameanddistrictlions.org.uk](mailto:membership.enquiries@thameanddistrictlions.org.uk)

Web site: [www.Thameanddistrictlions.org.uk](http://www.Thameanddistrictlions.org.uk) (new site so much to do)

Join us at a meeting:

Club Meeting Place: The Cross Keys PH East Street Thame

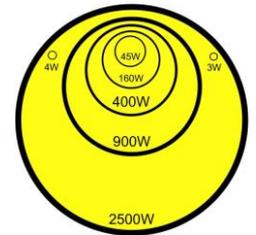
Club Meeting Date: 1st Wednesday of the month

Club Meeting Time: 2000 hours



### Watt's up Doc?

Energy price hikes are back with a vengeance. But are we any more in tune with our electricity use? Here's a quick quiz to find out. Simply take each power in Watts from the graphic and match it with the right appliance here:



- Microwave
- Nintendo DS
- PC with monitor
- Kettle
- iPod
- Big old Plasma TV
- Laptop

The answers might surprise you, especially if you take a poor view of headphones and gaming. The electrical energy we consume at home is arrived at by multiplying the power rating of the appliances we use in kilowatts by the length of time we use them in hours.

These figures are fairly typical for the listed appliances. Are yours the same? Adapted from an open day activity created by Zoë Williams of [www.superhomes.org.uk/138](http://www.superhomes.org.uk/138)

Answers: a) 900W b) 4W c) 160W d) 2500W e) 3W f) 400W g) 45W