

TIDDINGTON WITH ALBURY & MILTON COMMON NEWSLETTER

www.tiddingtonoxon.co.uk

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2012

From the Editor

2012 promises to be quite a year for celebrations. See page for preliminary ideas on how to mark the occasions in the Parish. As I write this we have just had the Village Voice event and, hot off the press see page 17 for the preliminary thoughts on how it went. Many thanks to Nigel for meeting my deadline!

Zena Knight

Samantha Boswell

We would like to say a huge THANK YOU for your kindness and generosity towards us and our beloved Sam. We thought that requesting donations for charity instead of flowers was exactly what Sam would have wanted but we were completely shocked and humbled by just how much we received, from family, friends, Shabbington Steam Rally Committee (with which Tot is associated) and The Burnham Club, who's members assist at the rally each year.

Some of the money given was specifically for a memorial bench for Sam which will be installed in the churchyard very soon and donations have gone to The Sunrise Cancer Unit, High Wycombe Hospital £1,901 - Scannappeal, High Wycombe Hospital £1,000 and Breast Cancer Care - £856. Thank you so much everyone.

And so, moving on to Sam's next request! It had been her intention to organise a charity event in aid of breast cancer awareness once she had recovered. We are now picking up the baton to carry out her wishes and will be organising a summer ball on 25 August 2012, so

please save the date. Further details will be announced nearer the time.

We also have a team of 8 crazy ladies, calling themselves Sam's Cupcakes, entering the London Moonwalk on 12 May, raising funds for the Walk The Walk Breast Cancer Charity in memory of Sam. Team members, so far, are Jane Boswell, Emma Boswell, Michelle Armer, Tracey Smith, Claire Simpson, Louise Simpson, Pippa Wheatley and Mandy Pearce. We would like to raise as much as we can for this wonderful cause. If you would like to support us we have a fund-raising page online, where you can donate directly to the team http://www.walkthewalkfundraising.org/sams_cupcakes or you can see any of us as we will be carrying sponsorship forms with us! Oh, and if you see us out training please give us a cheer ☺ Many thanks once again.

Tot, Jane & Emma x

Lost Property Is it yours?

A grey Monsoon long line cable cardigan has been left in the Village Hall.

If you are the owner please contact Alan Stratton on 339430 to arrange collection

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From the Parish Clerk

Highway drainage improvements in Albury View

- advanced warning has been given that the County Council propose to improve drainage from the A418 junction to as far as Fernhill Close. It will involve major disruption particularly at the narrow part by the railway bridge and closure during working hours may be during the week beginning 19 March. Contingency plans for residents of Albury View will be put in place and widely advertised. **Watch out for notices round the village nearer the time.**

Highways matters - there are still some potholes around, but equally some have been attended to. There are holes to be attended to in Milton Common, in Albury Road and a particularly bad one in Ickford Road.

There are still vibration problems caused by heavy traffic on the A418 but Oxfordshire Highways does not seem to think that it is a problem. I shall continue to pursue this matter with them. May I ask you please to assist by reporting any matters which are of concern to you via the website? The more they hear, the better the chance of some action being taken.

Litter blitz - we are having a *Litter Blitz* on Saturday, 10 March, 10.30am at the Village

Hall. Pickers, gloves and high visibility jackets will be provided. We are also cleaning up the bus shelter on London Road in Milton Common on that day. Please come along and help (see opposite).

Tiddington 4 Village Plan - the Committee is hard at work, has a budget, has allotted responsibilities and continues to move forward. Please let the committee know if you have any issues for them.

Queen's Diamond Jubilee - this was discussed again at the January Parish Council meeting. A village event to mark the occasion is under consideration, in all probability a Sunday Lunch on 3 June. There will also be a commemorative item for sale, with various possibilities under discussion. The Village Hall Committee is considering these matters.

Ken Poyser

Clerk to the Parish Council

From the Parish Council Chair

Council Tax Reduction - one bit of good news from our District Councillor - SODC will be reducing Council Tax by 2.5% in 2012.

By the time you read this I hope you have had your say at the Village Voice meeting which was on 21 January. (See page 17. *Ed*)

I hope in Tiddington you are all joining up to the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. An application form has again been printed in the Newsletter (page 4)

Don't think your Parish Council is neglecting the Play Area; we are still waiting for quotes to come in.

With the help of one or two residents complaining, I think we might be getting somewhere with the vibration problem - watch this space.

Elaine Horne

01844-279520

elaine@ace-training.me.uk

Tiddington with Albury Parish Council Members

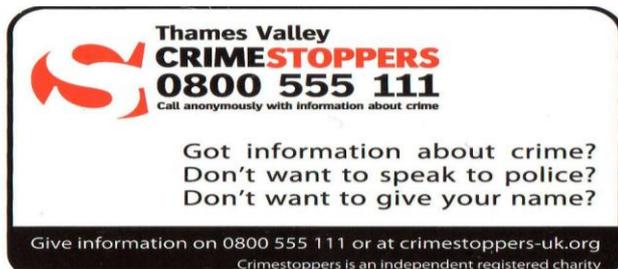
Chair	Elaine Horne	279520
	Planning, highways and Milton Common	
Vice-Chair	Cherry Draper	339347
	Environment, conservation, recycling waste	
Councillor	Ken Field	339671
	Housing, planning, building & controls	
Councillor	Zena Knight	339340
	Planning, recreation, arts, grants	
Councillor	John Nowell-Smith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

**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.



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



Just a reminder - the new national single non-emergency telephone number for the police is now 101.

Further incidents have been reported of theft from vehicles in the Thame area. Offender(s) have mainly been targeting vans to steal tools, most offences have occurred overnight. Recent thefts have taken place in Lewknor, Little Milton and Montrose Way, Thame.

The police will be putting on extra patrols and are asking anyone living or working in the area to be extra vigilant and please report any suspicious looking people or vehicles as soon as possible. Try to obtain vehicle details including make, model and registration number and description of any occupants if possible without putting yourself at any risk.

Donations are now due for NHW 2012. Thank you to those who have already responded.

Which Dog will get Dogwatcher of 2011 award? I think I know who it should be - please e-mail your suggestions.

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

Tiddington NHW

Arrests made for vehicle crime - on Thursday, 19 January during the early hours of the morning, patrolling officers spotted a suspicious vehicle parked between two lorries on the A418 near to the M40, J8a services.

Upon investigation they found a 4 x 4 vehicle containing fuel siphoning equipment and noticed that both fuel tanks on the lorries had been tampered with. The 4 x 4 was unattended and persons had made off into undergrowth. This was followed by another vehicle making off from an adjacent layby. The vehicle was traced to a nearby location where two males were arrested for offences, including theft of a motor vehicle, theft of number plates and two incidents of vehicle interference. The males have been interviewed and bailed pending further enquiries.

If you have any questions please contact me by email: meteorltd@btinternet.com or phone: 07710620820.

Chris Williams
Tiddington Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator



Horse Trailers are the flavour of the month yet again; a couple have been stolen in our area. All Horsewatch signs will be up by the end of February.

If you want to become part of Horsewatch and receive the e-mails,

please e-mail me on elaine@ace-training.me.uk.

If any horse owner is interested in a Rug Wash service I have some details. If you become a member of Horsewatch I have negotiated some discounts from a local Tack Shop.

Elaine Horne
01844 279520

From your District Councillor

GLL Sports Foundation Funding for talented athletes - there is good news for all the talented athletes situated within South Oxfordshire, as our leisure management contractor, GLL, has launched its 2012 GLL Sports Foundation Funding scheme. Talented athletes can apply for up to £1,500 towards training, equipment and travel, as well as free access to the 78 GLL sports facilities across the country. The scheme is open for applications until 20 February 2012, so please ensure that all talented athletes in your ward, parish, village or town are aware of the scheme! For athletes to secure a chance to gain some of the £40,000 funding available, applications can be submitted using the following link:

<http://www.gllsportfoundation.org/mainpage.asp?id=65>

For more information on the GLL sports awards, please contact Cath Dale on 01491 823128 or email cath.dale@southandvale.gov.uk

Introducing the Legal Ombudsman - the Legal Ombudsman is an independent organisation with official powers to resolve complaints about legal services. We can help where an issue has not been resolved between an individual and their lawyer. Our office in central Birmingham opened in October 2010 and now provides a service across England and Wales.

We are completely impartial. We don't take sides. When we receive a complaint, we look at all the facts so we can reach an outcome that is fair for everyone involved. If we decide the service a consumer received was unsatisfactory, we can make sure their lawyer or law firm puts it right. Our service is free to consumers - give them a copy of our leaflet or get in touch with us on their behalf. Our main telephone number for all new enquiries is 0300 555 0333. We're here to help.

If you would like more information about us, please call 0121 245 3481 and ask to speak to Alex Kapila.

Residents satisfied in South Oxfordshire - ninety five per cent of residents in South Oxfordshire are satisfied with living in the area according to a new survey carried out by the District Council. The survey indicated that the majority of people actively enjoyed living in their local area.

Over three quarters of residents surveyed also agreed that the quality of services provided by the Council is good overall and has improved in recent years. The responses to the survey indicated that residents consider waste and recycling to be the most important service provided by the District Council. This is also the area which has achieved the highest level of resident satisfaction in South Oxfordshire. Satisfaction with the way the Council runs things in South Oxfordshire is at seventy-three per cent which is one per cent higher than the national average. Despite not

increasing Council Tax and the significant savings achieved through joint working with Vale of White Horse District Council, the number of people who feel the Council provides good value for money has dropped slightly, something the council hopes to improve in the next couple of years, especially with the imminent reduction in Council Tax.

Thames Valley Police, front counter provision

- Thames Valley Police are currently reviewing Front Counter Services. The good news is that there are no plans to remove a front counter from any location in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse that currently has one. Thames Valley Police is seeking to reduce the number of hours of provision across the area and align their services to the needs of the public, within the new budget constraints.

The proposed opening hours for **Thame** as a Neighbourhood Station are:-

8 hours on 5 days 9.00-1700, Tuesday to Saturday.

Thames Valley Police are particularly interested in hearing your thoughts on whether the new opening hours will impact on the services we provide and more general thoughts on the changes.

The Council's community safety team will be providing a response to Thames Valley Police on these proposals. If you have any comments you would like us to include in our response, please send them by **3 February 2012** to Karen Brown (Shared Community Safety Projects Officer): Karen.brown@southandvale.gov.uk, 01235 540485 or 01491 823054.

Stephen Harrod Great Milton Ward
01844 278068

Stephen.Harrod@southoxon.gov.uk



**THAMES VALLEY
POLICE**

101

The single number for non-emergency calls

From your County Councillor

Rogue traders jailed for conning homeowners

- two builders who conned homeowners out of thousands of pounds for inadequate building work were jailed by Oxford Crown Court on Monday 9 January 2012. They were found guilty by the court in December last year following an investigation by Oxfordshire County Council's Trading Standards Service. They were sentenced to four years and three and a half years. The pair were found guilty for not finishing work which had been paid for and failing to complete work to a satisfactory standard at ten houses across Oxfordshire and two in West Berkshire. During the four week trial last year, the court heard how the pair took £47,000 from an 80 year old woman for work that a surveyor valued at £8,320. This work included a new bathroom, conservatory and solar panels. Neither the conservatory nor the solar heating were completed and the victim had to pay a further £5,500 to another company to get the conservatory finished.

Fire fighters visit towns in recruitment drive

- Oxfordshire County Council's fire fighters have been visiting towns and businesses across the South and Vale to encourage people to consider a role as a retained fire fighter. Crews have been in Thame, Henley, Faringdon and Watlington in January to give out leaflets, explain what being a fire fighter involves and invite people to apply for the position. Officers have also visited local businesses within 1.5 miles of the stations to discuss with managers the possibility of releasing staff to become retained fire fighters. Nick Bourke, Station Manager for Oxfordshire County Council's Fire and Rescue Service, said: "The opportunity to become a retained fire fighter is open to everyone aged 18 and over. We are looking for people from all walks of life who would like to contribute something to their local community. Interested people should call 0800 5870870 and ask for Fire Service Recruitment. Further

information is available on the website www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/firecareers

Over 100 chimney fires spark safety advice

- Oxfordshire County Council's Fire and Rescue Service is warning people about the dangers of open fires following 141 chimney fires in the County during 2011. Fire fighters attended 96 chimney fires alone between 1 January and 31 March 2011. The service is advising people to have their chimney swept, make sure embers are under control and properly put out before they go to bed and use a British Standard fire guard to prevent sparks escaping.

Winter tips: With many people turning up the heating to keep warm during the colder weather this winter, the service is also providing additional safety advice to protect people from the threat of fire in their home:

- Never air or dry clothing near open fires or portable heaters.
- Do not leave candles unattended, make sure they are in a proper holder and remember to extinguish them before you leave a room or go to bed.
- Never use hot water bottles in the same bed as an electric blanket, even if the blanket is switched off.
- Unplug electric blankets before you get into bed, unless they have a thermostat control for safe all night use and check regularly for wear and tear.
- Make sure you have a working smoke alarm and test it weekly.
- Have a fire escape plan.
- Don't get distracted when you are cooking - turn off or turn down the heat if you have to leave the cooking unattended, for example to take a phone call or answer the door.
- Don't leave lit cigarettes, cigars or pipes unattended - they can easily overbalance as they burn down, land on a carpet or newspaper and start a fire. When you put it out, make sure it really is out.

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
20 January 2012

From your MP, John Howell

John Howell MP writes..

A look back at key issues from Westminster at the end of last year and a New Year message



Firstly may I wish everyone a peaceful and prosperous 2012. I also want especially to thank all those who work hard in our communities and for the many charities and voluntary organisations which make our area a good place to live and work. It was a great pleasure to meet so many of you in 2011 and to share a little in the work you do. I hope to meet many more of you in the coming year.

Parliament in November and December 2011

- in November the Localism Bill received Royal Assent and became the Localism Act. As this year progresses measures enshrined in this Act will be introduced which will see some key changes to the powers given to local communities. Transition arrangements have yet to be announced and I will ensure that information gets to those who need it as it becomes available. During the year we will see two of the first Neighbourhood Plans to be permitted by the Localism Act completed in this constituency as one of our villages (Woodcote) and one of our towns (Thame) were awarded the opportunity to pilot the process as 'frontrunners'. These plans will for the first time be a legal part of the planning system and will allow local communities to help shape the places where they live.

As the year drew to a close there were a number of important Ministerial Statements made in the House which set out important areas of Government policy.

Annual Energy Statement - the coalition agreement stated that the Government would give an Annual Energy Statement to Parliament which would set out strategic energy policy and guide investment. On 23 November the Secretary of State for Energy and Climate Change made the 2011 Statement. This was the second Annual Statement and the Energy Secretary also announced a consultation on secondary legislation to provide for the Government's green deal which will begin next autumn.

Chancellor's Autumn Statement - it is a legal requirement for the Government to publish a financial report on the state of the economy twice a year. In March in the Budget Statement the Chancellor sets out the state of the national finances, Government's proposals for changes to taxation and growth forecasts. The November 'Autumn Statement' provides the Chancellor an opportunity to update MPs on the Office for Budget Responsibility's growth forecasts for the UK economy and the public finances.

Statement on the uprating of benefits and pensions - on 8 December the Minister of State for Work and Pensions, Steve Webb, made a statement to the House of Commons on the uprating of benefits and pensions for 2011-12. This offers some protecting for the vulnerable including the elderly, those who are disabled, have caring responsibilities or are unable to work through no fault of their own.

A personal reflection on the year ahead - if we look to the year ahead the Government has made it clear that restoring the economy will be its priority. Keeping international confidence will keep interest rates low to keep mortgage costs and the cost of business loans down.

With so many major world issues unresolved, there can be little doubt that 2012 will, in

many ways, see many of the same issues as we faced in 2011 continue to be in the news. At the centre of this will undoubtedly be the continuing crisis in the Eurozone.

Hopefully too we shall have some special opportunities to enjoy ourselves with the Olympics and the Queen's Jubilee. Whether you are sportingly inclined or not, the Olympics this year will be a major focus of attention and there will be many opportunities offered through tourism. The Queen's Jubilee too, as a key national celebration, will bring a chance to celebrate together the life and work of a monarch who has given so much to this country. During this year I will continue to give a regular and factual report of the key activities in Parliament including legislation. In these I do not offer party political reflections but simply seek to explain the stated purpose or aim of the Government or others who propose legislation such as individual MPs. Constituents of all political persuasions may agree or disagree on whether those stated aims will be achieved or whether they are desirable. I welcome letters and emails from constituents on these and other parliamentary matters.

Also in 2012 I plan to undertake some additional 'Village Tours'. Last September I visited 80 of the smaller villages and hamlets in the constituency in 8 days. In the coming months I hope to visit some of those I was unable to visit then and if possible to return to others. Details will be published through local magazines and websites.

My website is regularly updated and offers more information on my work both in Westminster and in the constituency. If you would like to read more about my work please visit www.johnhowellmp.com

John Howell
Member of Parliament
Henley Constituency

From the Vicar

Getting married in church

This is the time of year that people often start to plan a wedding. As a church we want to encourage and support couples preparing to get married. I am often asked about the regulations concerning marriage in church. The good news is that there has been a recent change in regulations and this is aimed at making it easier to get married in a church that may have special significance to you.

An engaged couple can now do just that if either of you can show just **one** of the connections with the parish listed below.

You can marry in a CofE church if you can show:- that one of you:

- has at any time lived in the parish for a period of at least 6 months
- was baptised in the parish concerned
- was prepared for confirmation in the parish
- has at any time regularly gone to normal church services in the parish church for a period of at least 6 months
- That one of your parents, at any time after you were born has lived in the parish for a period of at least 6 months. Or that
- One of your parents regularly attended

worship in the parish for a period of at least 6 months.

- That one of your parents or grandparents was married in the parish

In my experience the list is very comprehensive and enables the majority of people who wish to marry in one of our churches to do so. But even if you cannot demonstrate any of the above connections, I would want to encourage you to get in touch so that we can explore together whether it may still be possible for you to marry in your special church, so please don't hesitate to get in touch. I wish you all a very Happy New Year

With best wishes
Caroline

From the Registers

Friday 13 January

Funeral and burial in churchyard

Tom Newitt

"May he rest in peace"

Service for Ash Wednesday

Holton 10.00am Short said Holy Communion followed by coffee in Holton Vicarage

Church Services	St Helen's Church, Albury
5 February	9.30am Morning Prayer
12 February	9.30am Holy Communion
19 February	9.30am Morning Prayer
26 February	9.30am Holy Communion
4 March	9.30am Morning Prayer
11 March	9.30am Holy Communion
18 March	9.30am Service for Mothering Sunday
25 March	9.30am Holy Communion
1 April Palm Sunday	Processional service from Waterstock to Waterperry for Holy Communion and dramatisation of the Passion

Waterstock & Tiddington W.I.

We were entertained by "Three Pressed Men" at our festive Christmas meeting in December. They delighted us with songs and comedy dating back to the 15th century.

We were further entertained in January with Thelma Sanders. This time light-hearted poems and monologues had a more modern flavour and several were really topical.

On 9 February, Gillian Cane will speak on "My Royal Weekend". She had an interesting career as the first female entrant to Sandhurst and in another talk has related her amusing experiences while there. This talk promises to be just as entertaining.

We have our Annual Meeting on 8 March, when we will review the year and look forward to the coming one with a new programme of speakers. We would welcome some new members on to the committee so please give it some thought when nominations are required at the February meeting. For entertainment in March, members are asked to bring along a favourite poem or prose to share.

The competitions in February and March are for garden items with the letters "G" and "H".

Our Quiz Evening on 11 February is as popular as ever and already fully booked. The charity chosen to support for this event is Helen and Douglas House, so fifty percent of the proceeds will go to them, the remainder to boost WI funds.

Several County events are planned for the coming months, including coach trips to Dickens London and to Worcester. Let me know if you are interested.

New members will be made very welcome at our meetings on the second Thursday of the month in Tiddington Village Hall at 7.30pm, or come as a visitor to see if you like us!



Zena Knight

Tel: 01844 339340

Email: zenaknight42@btinternet.com



Our Race Night plans are well under way. Tickets are available at £5 per couple, £3 each, book your table/tickets at the bar. Should you wish to purchase a horse or jockey (£5 and £3) or sponsor a race, contact us for further details.

Keep the date free -**St Patrick's Day 17 March 7:30pm**

A further date for the diary, following on the racing theme is Thursday 23 February. This is a Cheltenham Races preview evening, 7.30pm start. Tickets are £10 to include a buffet. There will be a panel of 'experts' to discuss details of the festival, including Lawney Hill, a local trainer, Andrew Barr, racing pundit and Harry Skelton, Andrew Thornton, David Bass who are successful jockeys. Contact Nick Pykett 07823 779339 to book tickets.

We have been given a date for the start of the installation of our new net. The contractors will be here on Monday 13 February. We have some work to do beforehand in preparing the site and apologise for any inconvenience to our visitors during this period but when finished we will have a top class facility for seniors and juniors.

Our AGM will be held on Thursday 8 March 7.30pm. Details will be forwarded to members before this date. John Bull has kindly agreed to continue as our President, for which we are indebted. The AGM will be a chance to review the year and elect the Officers of the Club: Chairman, Hon Secretary and Hon Treasurer, who form the basis of the Management Team. We look forward to welcoming members to join the Management Team and please let me know if you are interested in standing for election.

We have an updated list of clothing available, both playing and social for adults and children, details can be found on the website and in the club. We do not carry stock but orders usually take around a week. If you have any specific kit requirements, please let me know as we can often source it for you.

Our two men's darts teams have mixed successes and sit mid table; a mention for Ian Pykett in the A team, who at the time of writing is unbeaten this season. Crib continues on a Monday and our two ladies' teams compete enthusiastically on Wednesdays.

Lesley Pykett
Secretary

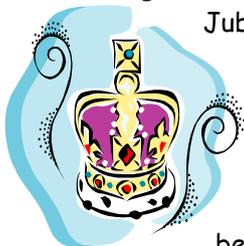
07762 527558

lesleypykett@btinternet.com

Tiddington Village Hall

Diamond Jubilee Celebrations

It's been a fairly quiet start to the year; however 2012 is going to be a very busy year. The Village Hall Committee is putting together plans for how we as a village can celebrate the Queen's Diamond



Jubilee and we've come up with the idea of Sunday Lunch (Sunday 3 June). We are not 100% there with the menu

yet but we are doing our best to make it

fun, easy and most of all affordable.

We will have a big screen in the Hall showing the Thames

Pageant and hopefully if the weather is kind there's the possibility of some games in the afternoon on the playing field (for all ages!)

There will be more in the April newsletter, so for the time being please put the date, **Sunday 3rd June** in your diaries.

There are also plans to give a Tiddington with Albury Parish commemorative gift to every child (still in full time education). I'm sure you will remember the mugs we did for the Royal Wedding



last year; we'll expect something a little different. Adult residents will also have the opportunity to purchase the item. An order form and full details about price etc will be in April's newsletter.

Summer Fete

It seems bizarre to be talking about this already but we hope that this year's Fete will be the biggest and best yet. The date for your diaries is **Saturday, 7 July** which is just two days before the Olympic Torch comes to Oxford (and no unfortunately I won't be running with it) so we thought we might have a themed Fete but with a twist. I'm looking for unique competition ideas, for example a bed making contest or Bruce's Play Your Cards Right. Yes, there will be many of the old favourites but it's time to bring in some new ideas. But don't worry, the egg throwing game will definitely stay. If you have any ideas then please do not hesitate to drop me an email.

Barn Dance

Something I don't believe we've had in the Village Hall for a few years. More news in the coming months but we are hoping to book a band and caller for a night in September or October.

Christmas Dinner

2011's dinner was another great success and the band and caterer are already booked for 2012. However, this year we have decided to shift the date back a week to **Saturday 8th December 2012**. Not wanting to break with 'tradition' we felt that the 1st was simply too early.

New Lighting

I'm pleased to say that the inside of the Hall is finally getting some new modern lighting. Over the coming weeks we will be fitting some rather nice flush fitted units that will give off plenty of light (when required) and we will then phase out the older fittings.

Alan Stratton
Chairman

Tiddington Village Hall Committee

Tel: 01844 339430/278534

Mobile: 07889 851588

Email: Stratton@gmx.com

the charity for
your community



What financial help is available to sixth formers who are struggling to stay in education?

First of all, it is always worthwhile talking to a trusted teacher to find out how the school or college may be able to help.

Although financial help for school students through the education maintenance allowance (EMA) has now been scrapped, young people who were already getting EMA before January 2011 will continue to get it until the end of the 2011/12 academic year.

Anyone in their first year of post-16 study who was getting maximum EMA is eligible for £20 each week they are in education or training until the end of this academic year.

The EMA scheme has been replaced by a bursary scheme of £1200 a year for young people with disabilities, on income support, children in care and care leavers.

There is also a new fund for schools and colleges to use to support any student who may find themselves in financial difficulties. This is a discretionary fund and it is up to the educational establishment itself to decide who should get help.

Young people aged 16/17 **may** also be able to request a concessionary bus pass to pay half price fares through their school or college.

Some charities and trusts can help with equipment and costs to enable young people to continue their educational studies. Youth workers can help with applications.

For more information on young people and benefits, go to the Citizens Advice microsite www.advice4me.org.uk which contains information and advice just for young people about the problems that concern them the most.

Parents may also be entitled to help. They can get free, confidential information and advice on this from their local Citizens Advice Bureau. See www.adviceguide.org.uk for contact details.

Returning a faulty Christmas gift

Whatever time of year - be it Christmas or summer - the goods you buy must be of satisfactory quality (not faulty). If not, you're entitled to your money back if you're quick. If you aren't quick you could be offered a repair or replacement instead to put things right. The shop will usually want to see the receipt to prove that it was bought at that store. It is the purchaser of the gift who has the right to return the goods. However, if you've got the receipt the shop might be flexible and let you get a replacement without involving the purchaser. It might be worth calling the customer services department of the store first, to check if they will swap the present, even though you did not buy it.

Tip - when buying something as a present, always ask the store for a gift receipt!

For more information about your consumer rights, go to the Citizens Advice website www.adviceguide.org.uk

CAB advice line 08 444 111 444 or 0300 3300 650(mobile)

For general advice visit www.adviceguide.org.uk

Your local CAB is in Market Square, Thame

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)

Website: www.adviceguide.org.uk

General information: 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

Community Policing

If you want any advice or would like to contact the neighbourhood team you can call us on the police non emergency number 101 or email 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 to view information on your neighbourhood.

Wheatley Library



During these winter months Wheatley library offers you all a warm welcome! Let us provide you with books and DVDs to help wile away the dark evenings. If your thoughts are turning to holiday destinations, our up-to-date guides are very useful.

On Wednesday mornings our volunteer, Wendy, can help beginners with the internet and email. Ring the library on 01865 875267 if you would like to take advantage of this one-to-one support.

For babies, toddlers and pre-school children, we have **RHYMETIME** on alternate Thursdays at 2.30pm, i.e. 9 and 23 Feb and 8 and 22 March. This is a change in day and time from last year. The sessions include finger, action and number rhymes, and instruments and last about 30 minutes. There is no need to book and you do not even have to be a member, just come and join in. It's an outing, it's free and it's much warmer than the park!

For 4-8 year olds, we have our usual half term **STORYTIME** on Wednesday 15 Feb. at 11.00am. Children must be accompanied. Places can be booked at the library or by phone 01865 875267. You do not need to be a library member. We look forward to seeing you!

Opening Hours

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

The Merry Bells, High Street, Wheatley
Tel: 01865 875267
Email: wheatley.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Great Haseley and District Horticultural Society

What a mixture of weather we have been having over the last few weeks! Until about a week ago we were having the mildest winter I can ever remember until an abrupt change saw the onset of hard frosts and bright sunshine with an easterly wind blowing. We have returned to much milder, damper weather, but as I write the sun is shining so the garden beckons me once more.

Ten days ago a walk around my garden revealed a number of plants which were either ahead of themselves or were still flowering from last summer. Snowdrops seem to be appearing largely at the normal time and if the weather remains mild their flowers will fade more quickly. The most dramatic growth visible was my group of *Zantedeschia Aethiopica* (Calla Lily) which was about 2 feet tall and in full spring growth. This plant is only marginally hardy and usually disappears over the winter so this is something I have not seen before in January; the frost last week has reduced it to mush so normal service is resumed. A number of roses still have buds about to burst, but to achieve good flowering this summer I am soon going to have to sacrifice these very soon and prune them or the plants will look scruffy and not achieve that beautiful summer flush.

February is also the time to tackle clematis pruning which is a subject beyond the scope of this article, but briefly the early, spring flowering ones such as Montanas (Group 1), should be left alone until after flowering, after which any unwanted growth can be tidied up to keep the spread in check. Clematis with large flowers in early summer (Group 2) which develop on last year's growth should only be gently tidied up or there will be few flowers. The later midsummer ones flowering with smaller flowers (Group 3) are cut back to strong shoots about a foot from the ground and will flower on the new growth. The best way to know when and how to prune Clematis is to keep the label which will tell you to which group the variety belongs and then you can check the pruning required either in a book or on the web. Clematis shoots are very brittle and I often break some when I am training them on to the support; it always upsets me, but seems unavoidable.

A couple of years ago we planted rhubarb crowns and gooseberry bushes next to each other. We are now about to dig up the rhubarb and move it as we have discovered that actually both crops want ALL the ground allotted to the two. Planting too closely is a fault which I never seem to grow out of and I do not think I am alone in this. I read spacing instructions, never take any notice and do it by eye; this will not do. It is less of a problem with herbaceous perennials as they can be dug up, split and surplus given away (or sold at the fete), but shrubs planted too closely never give the best effect as one always seems to win. If I have a resolution for the new season it is this - read the instructions and don't plant too much for the space!

Liz Moyses

Newington Nurseries

Mellow Yellow

Winter Jasmine (*Jasminum nudiflorum*) is a thoroughly generous plant, producing an abundance of bright yellow flowers from juicy pink buds. These emerge mid-winter along the vibrant green, twiggy branches. This slender, deciduous shrub is robust enough to survive cold British winters (including 2011) and rewards dormant gardens with a welcome burst of golden yellow on the gloomiest of days.

This hardy and prolific plant was brought to the UK from northern China in 1844 by the renowned plant hunter Robert Fortune. It was named for its flowers which appear before its leaves, *nudiflorum* meaning naked flower.

The name 'jasmine' is derived from the Persian 'yasmin' meaning 'a gift from God'. Recent research has found that the sweet smell of jasmine is as effective as Valium for calming the nerves. Interestingly, essential oils of jasmine are a key ingredient in an iconic brand of French perfume which may go some way to explain its enduring popularity.

Winter Jasmine however is much less fragrant and has been described as smelling slightly mossy.

Unlike other less hardy jasmines, Winter Jasmine does not twine and therefore needs training if vertical growth is required. Although not actually a climber, the arching, rambling stems of this beautiful plant can grow up to 5 metres in length. It looks amazing when trailing down from a high retaining wall or rock ledge. Alternatively, it can be trained up a trellis or pergola or be grown as a shrub albeit a bit lax in habit. Because it readily roots, Winter Jasmine is often used as a soil stabilizer on steep banks.

Winter Jasmine succeeds in any well-drained soil but also tolerates a variety of poor conditions, whether they be acid or alkaline, including clay. It's fast growing and tolerant of sunny sites, shady situations, woodland settings, even north-facing walls. It's also an ideal plant for the urban environment, putting up with pollution of all sorts yet giving a cheerful display of green and yellow amidst a concrete jungle.

A vigorous plant, it's easy to maintain and responds well to severe pruning every three to four years. Left unpruned, plants tend to become woody and matted with dead stems so some maintenance is required. Otherwise, lightly prune every year immediately after blooming to ensure flowers emerge the following spring.

Flowers can be damaged in very severe winters but new flowers are usually produced once the weather warms up.

Help it along with a regular feed of fertilizer such as Fish Blood & Bone. It will repay in winter when little else is in flower in the garden. Winter Jasmine is hardy to -15°C, probably more, and is really a tough yet very forgiving plant.

An all round winner really.

Anne Hendry

Newington Nurseries, Newington, Nr Stadhampton (on the A329), OX10 7AW

Tel 01865 400533

www.newington-nurseries.co.uk

SuperHome Open Days set to inspire your eco makeover

Interested in making your home one of the most environmentally friendly in your area? This is your chance to talk to someone who has already done it!

Pioneering owners of some of the UK's most energy efficient SuperHomes will be hosting free open days between Saturday, 17 March and Sunday, 25 March 2012.

SuperHomes are older homes that have been refurbished to the highest standards of energy efficiency - resulting in greater comfort, significantly lower running costs and a reduction in carbon emissions of at least 60%.

The SuperHomes website makes it easy to find properties with features you may have on your wish list. SuperHomes open to the public in March, September and at other times by appointment. For more information, or to book to attend an open day, visit www.superhomes.org.uk



"Hold a Fish and Chip Supper to help spinal cord injured people live full and independent lives."

Want to do something different? Want to raise money where you live or work? Want to eat Fish and Chips, while raising money for charity? Hold a fish and chip supper on Friday, 18 May 2012 whilst raising awareness of spinal cord injury and supporting SIA's information and support services.

You can hold a fish and chip supper in your own home, at work or hold a larger supper at your local community centre.

SIA will provide a fundraising pack containing hints and tips, recipes, invitations and donation envelopes.

For more information or request a fundraising pack call Elizabeth Wright on 0845 071 4350 or email fishandchips@spinal.co.uk or visit www.spinal.co.uk/fishandchips



Village Voice Event

The Village Plan took a further significant step forward on Saturday 21 January, with the first major public event since the launch meeting last summer. The Village Voice Event offered residents the

chance to both respond to the initial ideas of the Steering Group and to express ideas and concerns of their own.

Around 30 people took time to visit the Village Hall to meet members of the Steering Group over a cup of tea and some homemade cakes, where they responded to a questionnaire covering all the topics raised by parishioners at the initial launch. A special feature of the event was the extra effort made to appeal to the younger members of the population, and it was very pleasing to see a number of young children being interviewed by Cate Teideman in front of the movie camera (kindly supplied and set-up by Alan Stratton). We aim to show highlights of the filming to villagers later in the planning process. As this note is being written on the same day as the event itself (in order to meet an extended publication deadline) I can only offer very preliminary results from the event. Of those who attended from the adult population of the parish, the large majority live in Tiddington and were aged above 50 years, though, perhaps surprisingly, the majority were in paid employment rather than retirement.

Headline responses included:

- People like living here mostly because of the people who comprise the local community, the accessibility of the place and the peace of the local environment.
- The overwhelmingly worst feature locally is the traffic through Tiddington and the difficulty of crossing the main road there.
- Not surprisingly, there was overwhelming support for the provision of better crossing facilities. Indeed, many were willing to pay to help bring this about.
- Respondents were largely active walkers and, to a lesser degree, cyclists. Whilst most were happy with local footpath provision many would like to see the village linked by cycle path to Thame and (less so) to Wheatley.

- Opinions about the state of the local environment were quite divided, though it was clear that the principal concerns were littering (including dog mess) and noise (including helicopters, road traffic and barking dogs). However, even in these areas a significant minority were quite happy with the state of things.
- Around half the people asked would prefer not to see additional housing built in the parish, whilst others were more open to such developments provided concerns about scale and location were suitably addressed. If more housing was built the preferences were for subsidised and family housing, rather than luxury or specialist supported accommodation.
- Most people interviewed subscribed to broadband, but most were also fairly dissatisfied with the current service and prepared to pay some more to get a better service.
- Finally, people made over a dozen suggestions for how services and facilities within the parish could be improved, with the most frequently cited being a youth club or similar facilities for teenagers and a local shop.

Next Steps

By the time you read this the Steering Group will hopefully have fully digested the results of the Village Voice event and so be clearer about the specific propositions to be put forward for inclusion in the Village Plan. There may well be further, smaller events in the coming months, focused upon particular topics or ideas where we will seek the views of interested parties within the parish. These will then enable the Steering Group to formulate a

questionnaire to go to everyone, in the spring, to seek their views upon specific propositions for each of the topics to be covered by the plan.

We hope you will give active support to the plan by participating in future consultative events and, in due course, completing and returning the questionnaire.

The plan is intended to reflect your views, so do please let us have them. In the first instance, if you have any views, positive or negative, on the points above please contact a member of the Steering Group (see below for details).

Volunteers Needed

The Steering Group continues to seek further volunteers to help us prepare the plan. You can give as much or as little time as you wish. You can join the Steering Group (which meets once a month on a Monday night for around 90 minutes), contribute to a particular topic of special interest to you, or help with a single task or tasks (e.g. distributing leaflets).

We are particularly in need of volunteers from Tiddington itself, as at present the village is proportionately under-represented in comparison to other parts of the parish. Also, if you have a special skill we can no doubt put it to good use for our cause for just a few hours at least.

Please don't hold back. Contact me at drapernigelf@yahoo.co.uk or on 339347.

Steering Group Members

The current members of the Steering Group, their roles and contact details are:

Name	Position	Special Interest	E-Mail	Telephone
Christine Craddock	Chair	Older People/ Tracks & Paths	no e-mail	01844 339 525
Nigel Draper	Secretary		drapernigelf@yahoo.co.uk	01844 339 347
Tony Giddy	Volunteer Co-Ordinator	Housing/ Environment	tonygiddy@btconnect.com	01844 278 113
Cate Teideman		Young Persons	cate.teideman@gmail.com	07961 551 813
Jenny Leslau		Roads	jenny.leslau@hotmail.co.uk	
Rob Richardson		Young Persons/ Broadband	refrichardson@talktalk.net	
Michelle Richardson	Treasurer		refrichardson@talktalk.net	
Elaine Horne	Parish Council Liaison	Policing & Crime Control	elaine@ace-training.me.uk	01844 279 520
Lyn Farrell			lfarrell@brookes.ac.uk	07881 700400
Anton Nath	Specialist Adviser		anton.nath@oxonrcc.org.uk	01865 883 488

If you would like to contribute an idea or an opinion on any subject regarding the villages, whether identified in the above table or not, do please contact one of the Steering Group members using the contact details shown. We really would like to hear from you.

Nigel Draper, Secretary to the Steering Group
drapernigelf@yahoo.co.uk 01844 339347