

TIDDINGTON WITH ALBURY & MILTON COMMON NEWSLETTER

www.tiddingtonoxon.co.uk

FEBRUARY/MARCH 2013

From the Editor

First of all I must apologise for getting the dates for the waste and recycling collections wrong over Christmas and New Year. I've no excuses!

I hope I get it right next time which will be Easter. It doesn't seem possible that it will be Easter Sunday on the very last day of March, only two months away.

To date we have certainly had some problems to contend with - first power cuts and then the snow. What fun it would have been trying to do a litter blitz in the snow. Sympathies with those who had made the arrangements and likewise with those who had to cancel other events. Hopefully there will be better luck with the activities coming up in February and March (see calendar on the back page)

Zena Knight

Congratulations...

To Lt Emma Boswell RN who won the Royal Navy Sportswoman of the Year 2012 title at a ceremony in Portsmouth in November. She was awarded the title for her outstanding performance last summer as Captain of the RN Women's Cricket team, leading them to victory in the Combined Services tournament and picking up Player of the Match against both the Army and RAF and Player of the tournament overall. She also represents the Navy in hockey and squash. Emma now goes forward to the Combined Services Sports Awards Ceremony in London in March, where she will be up against

Capt Heather Stanning of Olympic Rowing Gold Medal fame and Cpl N Davies, a footballer from the RAF.

After being in the Navy for almost 13 years Emma is now in training to become a Submariner, one of the first women to do so after the service was opened up to the "fairer sex"!

Operation Christmas Child

Thank you to all who supported this project. 50 shoeboxes were filled in Wheatley and over 9,000 were checked at the warehouse in Thame, before being sent to Bosnia for street children and those in hospitals or other institutions.

In 2013, if you would like to prepare a box in November, maybe it is helpful to pick up a shoebox and toys and other items as found during the year. Special requirements include cuddly toys and items for teenage boys. Also wool for local knitters to make woolly items. For further information contact Lucy Betts on 01865 875436

INSIDE

Advertising	20-27
Church Services	9
Council News	2
Cricket Club	12
Diary Dates	back page
Information	18-19
Neighbourhood Watch	6-7
Newsletter deadline	19
Tiddington 4 Village Plan	3-5
Village Hall	11
Wheatley Park School	12
Women's Institute	9

From the Parish Clerk

Highway matters - Our County Councillor, David Turner, has provided £850 from his Locality Budget to enable us to deal with the potholes in Albury Lane. We are obtaining contractors' quotations for the work.

The bad weather will, no doubt, cause more potholes to appear. We already have a bad one to deal with at the top of Sandy Lane. The thaw will reveal all! Sandy Lane is due to be closed for three days from 8 February or thereafter, at which time we are asking County Highways to have another look at the surface water problems.

Tiddington 4 Village Plan - The questionnaire results have been analysed by SODC and the committee is co-ordinating with volunteer parishioners.

The Village Plan itself is now to be prepared, driven by the questionnaire results. This will take approximately two months and will be published on the website.

The improvements to the children's play area have been carried out and we have the contractors' final account to pay, but are first checking the suitability of the safety surface. The contractors advise me that this conforms with BS1176, relating to the fall height.

Litter blitz - The snow put paid to the blitz which was scheduled for 19 January, so we shall choose another date in a month or so, and hope for the best! Thanks to those who volunteered.

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	Brian Price	339977
	Health & safety	
Councillor	John Savell	
Clerk	Ken Poyser	339216
	Rosewood, Ickford Road, Tiddington	
	Email: twaparishcouncil@googlemail.com	

Dog fouling - Ken Field and Brian Price are putting up signs on the playing field/children's play area regarding dog fouling, which we hope will help with this problem.

Ken Poyser
Clerk to the Parish Council

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.

SWAP SHOP

SATURDAY, 13 APRIL

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)

Action Group (www.wheatleycaq.org)

Reuse, recycle and keep stuff out of landfill

*See website for other places to recycle these items.

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.

From the Parish Council Chair

Thank goodness for the T4VP Committee as they have been keeping an eye on the Pelican crossing costings. The saga is one of delays and contradictory information. Secretary Nigel Draper has written to Councillor Rose (County Council) on behalf of the Tiddington 4 Village Plan Steering Group, at the request of the local Parish Council.

Hopefully the potholes in Albury Lane will soon be attended to as we as a Parish Council are going out to quote for the work to be done. Mrs Draper, Mr Ken Field and Mr Brian Price have been working together on this.

Sandy Lane will be closed for much needed road repairs, early February for three days.

Happy New Year

Elaine Horne
01844-279520

elaine@ace-training.me.uk

Tiddington 4 Village Plan

Questionnaire Results

We have now completed our initial analysis of the responses to the questionnaire. The results are summarised below

Overall

370 completed questionnaires were returned and analysed. 54% of respondents were



females, and 83% of respondents lived in Tiddington itself. Respondents ranged in age from under 15 years (16 no.) to over 90 years (5 no.), with the biggest single group, just, being 41-50 years, with 67 respondents. Almost half of respondents had lived in the parish for more than 15 years, whilst a little over a fifth had lived here less than 2 years.

Roads

Two thirds of respondents wanted a controlled crossing of the A418 in Tiddington, with the very large majority preferring a pelican crossing. A majority of respondents were willing to help raise funds for a crossing, especially a pelican crossing, but respondents were also clearly unsupportive of an increase in local taxes to pay for the crossing.

Environment

Dog Fouling - 40% of respondents thought it a problem, in particular on the playing field and footpaths/ pavements/ verges. The preferred solutions were more bins and exacting penalties against offenders.

Littering - similarly, 44% of respondents thought it a problem, especially along the A418/ lay-bys, the playing field/ hall and bus stops and shelters. Again, the preferred were more bins and exacting penalties against offenders.

Street Lighting - there was an almost equal split between those who thought there was too little and those thinking it was currently about the right level. Almost no one thought we had too much.

Noise - only 14% of responses said they were affected "Lots". The main culprits were air and road traffic.

The most beneficial measures, of those suggested, were seen as tidying roadside verges, provision of a local skip and removing litter

Flooding

86% of respondents have *not* suffered flooding here. 88% of respondents have *not* taken their own steps to prevent flooding, whilst a slightly

smaller percentage think it important or very important the council takes action to prevent flooding.

Support Services

All 4 suggested activities (weekend activities for children; a youth club; school holiday care; and after school care) to support children and adolescents received more than 40 expressions of interest in at least occasional use, with weekend activities for children attracting most interest.

Most elderly people or those with a disability or mobility problem wanted no support, but there were more than 15 expressions of interest for each of gardening, collecting prescriptions and transport to hospital or GP.

Leisure and Recreation

Play equipment for children and the quality of the general play space was perceived to be "good" but facilities for secondary school age and adults were perceived to be "poor".

Tennis would be the most popular activity overall of those suggested. An Activity Trail was, however, more popular when counting only responses of "very often" and "often". The most popular activities, counting only those who would use them monthly, were Dance Classes, Walking/Nordic Walking and Film Club with over 50 potential users each.

Provision of cycleways was given higher priority by respondents, when counting both first priorities only and all priorities, than various possible improvements to footpaths (not pavements). The most popular first priority was to extend the cycle path from Thame as far as Tiddington.

Housing

More than half of respondents were prepared to support limited housing development and around one quarter favoured no development at all. Around three quarters of all respondents expressed concern about the size of development and possible resulting increases in traffic, and more than half were concerned about changes to the character of the villages.

If housing development was allowed the most popular option was housing for people with local connections only. A very large majority preferred that low-cost homes (shared equity, public social rented) should be given to people who have an existing family or other close connection with the parish

Broadband

A large majority of respondents had broadband but wanted faster connectivity. However, only roughly one third were prepared to pay more than £10 monthly for increased speed.

The broadband speeds are significantly higher in Tiddington (Ickford exchange) compared to the rest of the parish although less than only one quarter of all broadband users have speeds greater than 4Mbps - the national average is 9Mbps

Economic Development

Most respondents viewed the provision of additional business premises positively whilst expressing concerns about the impact of additional traffic and possible growth of the built-up area.

More than 140 respondents worked at home at least occasionally, of whom more than 60 owned or part owned their business and thirty-one were interested in a local networking event

General Comments

81 general comments were received at the end of the questionnaire, and 40% of them concerned roads; speeding, vibration and noise (especially on the A 418) being the predominant subject (18 comments), followed by provision of the crossing in Tiddington with 5 comments. The need for a shop (6 comments) and for affordable housing (4 comments) were the next subjects of most concern generally.

More complete results are shown on the website www.tiddington4villageplan.co.uk If you are unable to access this and would like to see the full results report please contact me on 01844 339347 or at drapernigelf@yahoo.co.uk We are now entering the final stages of the planning process, which will involve using the survey results to determine what is to be

recommended to the Parish Council for action in the short and long term, discussion of the proposals with the Parish Council, write-up of the plan document, and presentation of the plan to all villagers at a launch event, which we expect to be held in the spring.

Nigel Draper
Secretary

Tiddington 4 Village Plan Steering Group

From your County Councillor

Safety concerns over chimney fires - Oxfordshire County Council's Fire and Rescue Service is urging people to ensure their chimneys are swept, after attending around 150 chimney fires in 2012. As winter draws in many people are expected to make use of their open fires, maybe for the first time this winter and if they are not properly cleaned beforehand it could lead to serious consequences.

Other top fire safety tips

- 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.

Baby hedgehogs rescued at recycling centre.- staff at an Oxfordshire County Council recycling centre got a prickly surprise when they found three baby hedgehogs in a discarded rubbish bag. The tiny creatures

were discovered at the Redbridge facility in Oxford, when site worker Mark Henstridge checked a garden waste bag which had been thrown in the wrong skip. Mr Henstridge, from Berinsfield, said: "I looked in the bag and just saw these things moving among some waste items you might find in a garden shed. You do sometimes come across some strange things when you're doing this job, but this is the first time I've found live animals in the three years I've been working here." It's not known who left the bag or whether the hedgehogs were deliberately dumped at the site. Mr Henstridge, who works for site operator W&S Recycling, said: "We really don't know how they got in there, but I'd like to believe it was an accident because I'd hate to think anyone could be so heartless towards defenceless animals." The staff at Redbridge wrapped the hedgehogs in a blanket and kept them safe and warm in the office until they could be transferred to the Little Foxes Wildlife Rescue Centre in Great Haseley. They are currently feeding well and will be kept over the winter months to be released in spring.

Park and Ride expansion to begin in New Year - work to provide 500 new parking spaces at the Thornhill Park and Ride is set to begin in January. The much-needed project to meet growing demand for use of the facility will last around 8 months, with the new parking capacity becoming available from the late Spring onwards. Work will focus mainly on land to the east of the existing site, meaning disruption to Park and Ride users can be kept to a minimum. The project is expected to cost around £3.6million, which includes funding from the County Council's successful bid to the Government's Local Sustainable Transport Fund.

The main elements of the project include:

- A net increase of more than 500 parking spaces
- Changes to the internal layout and improved vehicle exit to London Road

- Relocation of cycle parking to give cyclists a traffic-free access to the site
- Improvement of the short-stay parking area to minimise traffic stopping and U-turning in the entry/exit road
- Realignment of the agricultural access road serving the Shotover Estate

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
10 January 2013

Milton Common NHW (West Side) and Sandy Lane



Are you aware Neighbourhood and Home Watch last year was awarded the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Volunteering Award.

Thames Valley Police are advising dog owners to be extra vigilant following a spate of dog thefts. Nearly 20 dogs have been stolen from several counties in the past month with thieves targeting pedigree breeds.

Theft of a digger - Garsington

Between 4.30pm on Monday (14/1) and 7.30am on Tuesday (15/1) offender(s) stole a Kubota digger valued between £30,000 and £40,000 from a building site in Southend.

Burglary non-dwelling and theft from a vehicle - Marsh Baldon

Between (26/12) and (10/1) St Peters Church in Baldon Lane, was burgled. Offender(s) gained entry to the vestry, forced open a safe and stole property. On Monday (14/1) around 8.08pm, property was stolen from an insecure vehicle parked outside a property in Marsh Baldon. The offender was disturbed and made

off. Stolen property from the vehicle was located in a bush and recovered by police.

Elaine Horne
NHW Co-ordinator
Milton Common and Sandy Lane Estate
elaine@ace-training.me.uk
01844 279520

Tiddington NHW

Dog Theft - see details above of a recent spate of dog thefts. DOGWATCH was founded 5 years ago to help combat rural crime and the theft of dogs in particular. For further information and to join DOGWATCH, please visit www.dogwatchalert.com. This is a FREE service, only available in the Thames Valley police area.

Theft from Motor Vehicles and Building Sites - the number of thefts from motor vehicles continued to increase during the December period. Wheatley experienced seven incidents, Elsfield one, and Stadhampton two. In Garsington premises undergoing building works had a dumper truck stolen and Wheatley had an attempted theft of a mini digger. Criminals are primarily targeting vehicles displaying items of value, commercial vehicles carrying power tools and properties that may be undergoing redevelopment and have diggers left on site.

Burglary to Dwellings and Outbuildings and Sheds - in the run up to Christmas the following locations were targeted:-

- Oxford Road, Garsington had five incidents of burglary along with one attempted burglary. Wheatley had two and Stanton St John had one.
- Many householders store items of value in outbuildings and sheds and by taking some simple security steps this type of crime can be dramatically reduced.
- Use tamper proof screws or coach bolts together with a good quality pad bar or hasp and staple and close shackled padlock, this

will make it much harder for the would-be thief.

- It is also a good idea to bond any window glass in with mastic to prevent easy removal.
- High-quality locks should be used on doors. Windows can be fitted with a grille or, as a cheaper alternative, chicken wire, to slow a thief down.
- A shed alarm can also be installed.
- Post-coding or indelibly marking all property such as lawnmowers, bikes, and tools using ultra-violet pens, forensic marking such as Selecta DNA or Smartwater or engravers.

Robbery at Post Offices - Wheatley, Great Milton and Little Milton Post Offices were targeted in early December by offenders who stole a sum of cash from the Wheatley Post Office. CID is currently investigating all three crimes, which may be linked, and are following several lines of inquiry.

Extensive patrols by the neighbourhood team are in operation, primarily targeting vulnerable properties, locations and all main routes used throughout the villages. These patrols help to disrupt and discourage this type of organised crime.

Please Remember - if you have any information relating to any of these crimes, please call Thames Valley Police via the non-emergency telephone number 101.

Alternatively if you have information but wish to remain anonymous, please contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or online @ crimestoppers-uk.org. No personal details are taken, information is not traced or recorded and you will not go to court.

If you see any unusual or suspicious activity then please call on the police non-emergency number 101 or if a crime is in progress call 999.

Chris Williams

NHW Co-ordinator

07710 620820

meteorltd@btinternet.com

Horse owners are advised to mark their rugs following recent nationwide thefts.

One method thieves use is to steal the old rug off your horse's back, then return to steal the new one you bought to replace it! There has been an instance of unmarked rugs being stolen, whereas marked ones were left behind.

You can spray-paint your post code or use one of the iron-on kits, just make sure you identify it as yours. Don't worry about spoiling the look of a new rug - after all your horse can do that in two minutes flat, given a nice muddy patch to roll in!

Remember, Stamp it, Chip it, Mark it, Code it or lose it!

Police Recover Saddlery - two men and a woman have been arrested in the Grimsby area of Banbury for saddlery and rug thefts. Large quantities of equipment have been recovered after links were made with stolen tack being sold on eBay. The recovered saddlery will be on display at the Banbury Police Station, for people who have registered an equine related theft to reclaim their equipment.

If you want to become part of Horsewatch and receive the e-mails, please e-mail me on elaine@ace-training.me.uk.

Elaine Horne,
Horsewatch co-ordinator
01844 279520



From your MP, John Howell



A look back at recent key issues in Westminster and the Constituency

My New Year greetings to you all!. I look forward to the year with optimism and hope that you may be able to share some of that with me. There is no doubt that we are in tough times and I fully appreciate that many people are finding things difficult. However as last

year progressed there were signs of hope. Figures showed that employment was up, that net migration had been reduced by 25% and the deficit also down by 25%. It is against that backdrop that I am positive about continued progress in 2013.

Help with Heating and Insulation

As I write this month the first snow blankets parts of the constituency and I am mindful of the cost of heating our homes. The Government cannot control volatile world energy prices but we can continue to support vulnerable households. Advice on how to reduce bills and save energy is available all year round from the Government Energy Saving Advice Service (ESAS). For advice simply call 0300 123 1234. Winter Fuel Payments will have been received by eligible households before Christmas and additional Cold Weather Payments will be paid to eligible households should the local temperature be an average of 0°C or below for 7 consecutive days. The helpline can also advise on the new Green Deal Cashback scheme which opens at the end of this month. This will enable people to better insulate their homes whilst spreading the cost. It is a limited pot and will operate on a first-come first-served basis. I am aware that there has been concern over the price of heating oil and can assure you that the Government will remain vigilant to ensure that heating fuels markets function effectively for consumers.

Traineeship Programme for young people

It is good news that unemployment continues to go down especially in this constituency but none the less for those seeking work it can be difficult. I was delighted to learn that 560 people in the constituency started apprenticeships last year. However for some young people even getting an apprenticeship is difficult. It is therefore good news that plans have been announced to set up a Traineeship Programme to offer young people tailor-made support to help them get a foot on the work ladder. The scheme should be up and running later this year.

Welfare Benefits

The Government has made it clear that where people are able to work they should be better off doing so than claiming benefits. There was much debate over the Benefits Up-rating Bill in the House on 8 January. Social Security legislation requires the Secretary of State to review benefit levels each year to determine whether they have retained their value relative to price. Any up-rating is discretionary and the Government proposal was that as Public Sector pay increases are frozen at 1%, benefits increases should mirror that.

Prisoner Rehabilitation

The Justice Secretary has announced major reforms in the way prisoners are rehabilitated on release from prison. Re-offending rates are too high and particularly so for people released from short-term sentences. A new mentoring system is to be introduced which will ensure that when someone leaves prison they are supported from day one with a tailor made package to meet their specific needs. To ensure that public protection is maintained at all times the Probation Service will retain ultimate responsibility for the management of offenders. This is part of a package of reforms designed to ensure that all those sentenced to prison or community sentences are properly punished whilst being supported to turn their backs on crime. This will lead to lower crime, fewer victims and safer communities.

For more information, my website is regularly updated and offers information on my work both in Westminster and in the constituency. Its address is www.johnhowellmp.com. In addition, if you would like to subscribe to my free e-newsletter please email me at: john.howell@oxfordshireconservatives.com. You can now also follow me on twitter @johnhowellmp

St. Helen's Church News

Until this Sunday when the snow and ice forced us to cancel our planned service, we have been enjoying weekly services in the church taken by kind, visiting clergy and lay ministers. We have been lucky to be so well served in this way as the interregnum does not seem to be progressing to any sort of conclusion. We are now being asked to provide a collective parish profile for the cluster of four churches and Joan Perry is kindly doing this. We then hope the post of "house for duty" priest will be advertised.

We had a packed church of at least 130 people for the Christmas Eve service which Bishop Anthony Russell took for us and the weekly

services since then have been well attended but not on that scale!

We hope to finish the electrical work on the church soon and to embark on the redecoration in the spring and summer.

We are planning some fund raising events for the spring which will be advertised on the parish notice board and in the next newsletter.

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
3 February	9.30am Morning Prayer with David Bendor-Samuel
10 February	9.30am Holy Communion with Rev Canon A Meynell
17 February	9.30am Morning Prayer with Robert Hutton
24 February	9.30am Holy Communion with Rev Serena Hutton
3 March	9.30am Morning Prayer with Rev J H Fieldwick
10 March Mothering Sunday	9.30am Holy Communion with Rev P Jefford
17 March	9.30am Morning Prayer with Albert Eastham
24 March Palm Sunday	10.00am short Cluster Service at Waterstock with Rev E Pettengell Procession of Palms from Waterstock to Waterperry
31 March Easter Day	9.30am Holy Communion with Ven Canon Morrison

Waterstock & Tiddington W.I.

In early December we began our Christmas celebrations with a very enjoyable evening meal at the Three Horseshoes in Towersey. It was a most relaxing time with a warm welcome and good food.

It was a great shame that we had to cancel our January meeting because of the major power



cut. We had been looking forward to David Barber's talk on Swan Upping and sharing the experience with visitors from three other institutes. Fortunately we knew just in time to stop most people leaving home, including the speaker.

On 14 February we shall welcome local resident Pippa Purnell, who will talk about Garden Design. Perhaps by then the weather will be encouraging us to think about our gardens and Pippa will inspire us come the spring.

We will be inviting nominations for committee at the February meeting in readiness for our Annual Meeting on 14 March.

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.

Zena Knight

Tel: 01844 339340

Email: zenaknight42@btinternet.com

Tiddington Village Hall

Time to say goodbye

Every time I write my newsletter piece I take a look at what I wrote a year ago. This time it was particularly special - January 2012 and our plans for the year ahead. Of course this included the Diamond Jubilee celebrations and the "Olympic" themed Fête, both of which unfortunately were blighted by the weather. However, I have fond memories of both as well as all the other things I've been involved in at the Hall over the past 18 years.

This is my last newsletter piece as I'm going to be saying farewell to the village this month. I hope to one day return but this will depend on a number of contributing factors, mainly children's schooling, something which I have not had to "worry" about in the past.

When I came to the village in 1995 I was instantly made to feel welcome by so many people and going to see Tiddington Cricket Club play at Lords that year was certainly the icing on the cake for year one!

Following the Millennium celebrations in 2000, I joined the Village Hall Committee. I'm really very proud of what we have achieved at the Hall over these past 10 years whilst I've been Chairman. A new larger kitchen, new toilets, new curtains, new lighting, new sound system and more storage areas. I have no doubt that the Hall will continue to be looked after by a great team of dedicated people whose numbers

have recently swelled thanks to new members of the committee, plus support from the many people who have "signed up" to help following the recent village survey.

And on the subject of the Hall...

On **Friday, 15 February** I am going to be having a social gathering there so that I can say goodbye properly and it would be lovely to see as many of you there as possible from 7.30pm. The bar will be open so please come along and join me for a drink (or two).

While you're checking your diary, here's what else is going on:

Barn Dance

Following the success of the dance last year, the band are back for another time on **Saturday, 27 April** so please put a note on your calendars and look out for more info in the next newsletter.

Christmas Dinner

2012's dinner was yet another great success and the band and caterer are already booked for 2013. The date for your diary this year is **Saturday 7 December 2013**.



New Bar

As I write this a small team of dedicated volunteers are working hard to get the new bar finished hopefully in time for a "reveal" on 15 February! There

will be a larger area for the staff behind the bar to work in and some much needed storage. A huge thank you to everyone who has helped so far, yet another example of villagers coming together to achieve so much on so little budget!

Thank you again

Alan Stratton,
Chairman, VH Committee
Tel: 07889 851588
Email: stratton@gmx.com



With Spring approaching and the nights drawing out, we can only look forward to our new Cricket season. This will start in April, with some friendly matches, junior coaching and loads of enthusiasm. The fixtures are nearly ready, we are just waiting for the Village Knockout Draw, and the first round is 21 April, which does not seem that far away.

We need to purchase a new roller for our square as, after many years' service, it is now taking more time to keep it going. Grateful thanks to Gerry Morrish and Pete Farrell for all their work on it over the years. The ground has been renovated over the winter, ready for the season and we plan to have a big Easter tidy to attend to all the little jobs inside and out.

We are very pleased to have received planning permission for a bar store extension. This will make a big improvement, but will mean some hard work in getting it ready for the season as we will also have to make changes to our disabled access.

Our annual Race Night is on Saturday, 16 March, tickets are £3 each or two for £5. We have 8 races, which can be sponsored for £30 each, which includes 2 free tickets. Horses and Jockeys are now on sale in the Club. We look forward to your support.

The winter season continues with our Crib and Darts teams turning out in all weathers to battle for honours against local opposition. Our golfers, politely known as "The Dog's" have had a couple of days out and enjoyed a meal at the Club and are looking forward to their trip abroad, to sample the delights of Morocco.

The coffee mornings continue to be well attended, thanks to Chris Craddock for her

hard work, and also a big thank you for the donation of a new kettle for the Club.

New members are always welcome and we look forward to seeing everyone.

Lesley Pykett
07762 572558

Wheatley Park School

Here at Wheatley Park School, we have some wonderful creative events ahead of us in 2013 and hope that you will be able to join us for them.

This year, on Wednesday 6th, Thursday 7th and Friday 8th February at 7.30pm, we will be presenting the musical *Little Shop of Horrors* as our annual school production. Tickets are available at £7/£5 from the school's main reception or on 01865 872441. This show promises to be a treat for everyone so don't miss out!

During term time, there will be life drawing classes on Tuesdays for 4 weeks from 3.30pm to 5.30pm. Classes will be held on 19th and 26th February and 12th and 19th March. These classes enable you to draw with an experienced life drawing tutor who will be there to give you support and guidance. A 4 week course costs £20 payable in full at the first class. Beginners to experienced artists welcome. Please email klovelock@wheatleypark.org to confirm attendance.

For more information about any Arts event or getting involved in our community projects, please contact Mellie Budge, Community Arts Manager on 01865 872441 on ext. 118.

the charity for
your community



Debt Collectors

I have received a letter from a debt collector demanding immediate payment of money I don't owe and threatening legal action against me if I don't pay. What should I do?

Don't pay if you don't think you owe the money. If you don't think the debt is yours (or you don't think you owe the amount being asked for, or if you have already paid the debt) tell the debt collector immediately.

A debt collector has no power to do anything to you - they can't take your belongings, for example - so don't be scared of them.

Check you're definitely not liable for the debt. Think back, it may be some time ago. The debt may have been sold on and you may not recognise the name of who is collecting it.

You're likely to be liable if you signed an agreement such as a phone contract or credit agreement. This may have been jointly with someone else, or if you signed as a guarantor for someone else.

Write to the company that has contacted you and say:

- you don't owe the money they are demanding
- to stop contacting you immediately
- if they want to continue to demand the money from you, they need to prove you owe the money, by sending you a copy of the original signed agreement
- you consider their behaviour constitutes harassment under the Regulations. Under the Consumer Protection from Unfair Trading Regulations 2008, it is an offence to engage in aggressive commercial practices, including the harassment of debtors by making demands for payment in a manner that causes unreasonable distress, fear or embarrassment.

- if they continue to write to you in this way, you will take the matter further.

If this doesn't work, get further advice about who to complain to (this will depend on who is demanding the money). For more information see this OFT guidance leaflet: http://www.offt.gov.uk/shared_offt/consumer_leaflets/credit/offt1299.pdf or go to www.adviceguide.org.uk

Sales Returns

Need to return something you bought in the Christmas sales?

Sales goods may be reduced in price because the trader needs to clear stock at the end of the season, because they want to attract customers, or because there are known faults with the goods. As a consumer, the law says that any item you buy from a trader in a sale must be of satisfactory quality, fit for purpose and match any description given. If it doesn't then you are entitled to a repair, a replacement, or a refund.

Traders must also point out any faults with damaged sales goods, for example a missing button on a coat. If this does not happen you are also entitled to a repair, replacement or your money back.

Things become more problematic if you have simply changed your mind. A trader doesn't have to do anything in this situation, but some traders do have their own returns policies where you can be offered an exchange or a credit note. More information on these types of returns policies can be found on the back of your receipt or displayed next to the tills.

Proof of purchase, like a receipt, will be needed to return goods bought in the sales and be aware that some returns policies state that goods which have been opened or the package damaged will not be accepted. Some retailers will also not accept returned goods which could carry infection such as pierced earrings, so remember to check the trader's terms and conditions if you think you may want to return them later.

For more information on your consumer rights or for general advice go to the Citizens Advice website www.adviceguide.org.uk.
CAB advice line 08 444 111 444 or
0300 3300 650(mobile)
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)

Appointments: 01844 217186

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

Wheatley Library

Lots of changes here at the Library.

In March we will get Self Service machines.

This means you will be able to scan your books yourself when you bring them back and take them out. It also means we will not be stamping books any more. You will get a print out with the names of the books you have and the dates they are due back. If you have not used Self Service before, don't worry, there will be a member of staff on hand to help you.

Storytime will be on 13 February at 11.00am for children aged 4 to 8. Everyone is welcome but please book a place in advance. All children must be accompanied by an adult.

Rhymetimes are on 7 February and 21 February and 7 and 21 of March at 2.30. These are for the preschool children. Again everyone is welcome. You do not have to be a library member. Again all children must be accompanied by an adult.

Silver Surfers Day is on Wednesday 20 February. Millie from Age UK will be on hand to

help people. Again everyone is welcome, but please book a session. We are running half hour sessions. If this is successful we hope to run more regular sessions. Using the internet seems to be a more and more fundamental part of our daily lives so we hope these sessions will be helpful.

I hope to see you in the library soon. I welcome any ideas and suggestions you may have about how we can make the library more useful to the people of Wheatley.

Anne Spruce
Library Manager

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

February 2013

I hope that the child in you is enjoying the snow. I don't mind snow at all if I don't have to go anywhere and if the heating is working for when I return indoors.

In the week or so after the New Year the weather became very mild and there was a sense of spring in the air. My back courtyard was full of scent from the Daphne flowers; I know I have too many there for the balance of planting, but they are such good value on mild winter days when I am setting about clearing away the dead remains of last year's top growth of other plants. Underneath lay wakening snowdrops and winter aconites with their cheery yellow flowers which opened in

the sun; my spirits were lifted and I worked all the harder.

There is no doubt that the almost imperceptible lengthening of the days is at work both in the garden and in the greenhouse where my over-wintering Fuchsias and Salvias are starting to bud. I fear I have lost several plants as the heating failed one day; the greenhouse doors were frozen shut so I could not get inside to reset the trip switch. In the past this would have upset me, but I am much more philosophical these days and will simply compost any dead plants as soon as I am sure they are indeed dead. Losing any plant is always an opportunity for a new plant!

In the vegetable garden I am again faced by an out of control raspberry patch which seems intent on world domination; the books simply don't warn you. I suspect the best way of controlling them is in a long weed free bed which is either surrounded by grass or hard paving. Mine started in the fruit cage, but have suckered their way into the adjoining vegetable bed; I have been unable to decide what to do and will perhaps move them to a long raised bed as I haven't noticed much bird damage outside the fruit cage. The rhubarb is well advanced with beautiful pink stems and I think I will cover one crown with a large pot to "force" the stems to grow tall and pink. Now these crowns are well established I can do this on a three yearly cycle as I have three crowns. Forcing a crown in consecutive years would rapidly weaken it and is not recommended; in commercial rhubarb growing in huge dark sheds, the crowns are disposed of after cropping ends. If you want a more attractive solution than a pot it is possible to buy special terracotta rhubarb forcers, but they are expensive; my father always used a metal bucket with good effect.

February is a busy month with pruning of roses and clematis; this is best learned from another gardener or a well illustrated book such as those published by the RHS. I must also tidy the greenhouse as I confess there are a lot of

dead leaves lying around which is poor management and encourages disease. You can sow some fruiting vegetable seed in a heated propagator such as tomatoes, cucumbers, peppers and chillies which need a long growth period if they are to ripen in the autumn. Outside broad beans sown early will produce an early crop well ahead of most other vegetables. If you are unsure read the back of the seed packet or consult books or one of the many gardening internet sites. I tend to wait a few weeks longer as I find that the low light level at this time of year in combination with artificial heat results in leggy growth. It is possible to purchase greenhouse lighting to get round this problem, but it all costs and I am not convinced it is worth it for me; maybe one day.

Liz Moyses

Membership secretary

liz@moyses.org

01844 279875

Please contact me for further details of membership which costs only £5 per family per year.

Thank you to those members who have already paid their subscription for 2013 and may I remind other members that your subscription is now due and will be gratefully received.



PATIENTS AND GPs CALL FOR BETTER TREATMENT FOR CHILDREN WITH ME/CFS

There are estimated to be 310 children under 14 with CFS/ME in Oxfordshire - many of whom have had to put their futures on hold because there are no local specialist medical services to help them recover.

Patient group OMEGA (Oxfordshire ME Group for Action) recently surveyed Oxfordshire

GPs, with the support of Oxfordshire Local Involvement Network (LINK), on services for patients with CFS/ME. They found that over two thirds (68%) of GPs would support a multidisciplinary team for children because they feel that services for young patients with ME/CFS are even less satisfactory than those for adults. At present the Oxfordshire Community CFS/ME Team (OCCMET) is only able to treat children from the age of 14, which leaves families struggling to manage on their own with an illness that is often misunderstood.

For further information on Link and OMEGA

www.oxfordshirelink.org.uk

www.oxnet.org.uk/omega

For full details of the report contact

Margaret Eaglestone, LINK Support Officer on

link@oxonrcc.org.uk

3 steps to a greener home

Holding on to more of the heat you pay for is a sensible way to reduce your energy bills. In an older home 3 key steps will help to achieve this:

1. Draught-proofing

Start by draught-proofing doors, windows, letterboxes, keyholes and cat flaps. Install extractor fans in kitchens and bathrooms so you don't need to open windows.

2. Insulation

You've put 270mm in the loft. Now to the walls. If they aren't cavity walls which are easily insulated, solid wall insulation may suit. Adding it externally should be easier following a recent change in planning advice. If not, internal wall insulation adds real comfort and is best installed just prior to redecorating. All these approaches are supported by the government's Green Deal.

Improved Glazing

Energy efficient glazing is now available to replace single glazing, even in original sash window frames. If upgrading isn't affordable, consider removable secondary glazing. Failing

that a thick pair of curtains helps!

You can see these and other improvements in exemplar homes in March and September when SuperHomers host free events around the country. For more information and to meet a homeowner who has already had the work done, see www.superhomes.org.uk



Visitors view wall insulation to the rear of a SuperHome

Photo courtesy of www.superhomes.org.uk

Oxfordshire County Council has been awarded over £152,000 from the Government's 'Warm Homes, Healthy People' fund to help residents keep warm and well this winter.



Being warm in your home during winter can have many health benefits as well as protecting you from serious illnesses such as pneumonia. The chances of problems occurring are higher if you are:

- over 60
- on a low income (so cannot afford adequate heating)
- have a long-term health condition such as heart disease
- registered disabled.

The additional project funding includes:

- Distribution of fuel or food vouchers to vulnerable people: those struggling to afford

heating bills or have to choose between food and warmth.

- Distribution of essential refurbishment grants for home efficiency improvements such as thermostatic radiator valves, lined curtains, boiler repairs, provision of emergency heaters, draught proofing measures, etc.
- Promotion of the Oxfordshire bulk oil buying scheme with a free year's membership, for those residents who have oil as their main heating fuel. This enables cheaper oil prices through consortium buying.
- Ability to carry out more benefit checks, ensuring that people are getting the financial assistance they are entitled to.

If any of the above sounds helpful to you or someone you know, or if you have any further questions on affordable warmth, please contact the helpline on **0800 107 0044**. Our friendly team are available Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm. An answer service is available outside of these hours, and over bank holidays. More information is available online at: www.usea.org.uk/AffordableWarmth

United Sustainable Energy Agency (USEA), will co-ordinate the project on behalf of the council, dealing directly with Oxfordshire CAB network, Age UK and NHS services. USEA will also run the freefone number on behalf of all the partners, as a central point for onward referrals.

USEA is a not for profit company providing services to the public sector, businesses and individuals to help them reduce carbon, adapt to climate change and tackle fuel poverty.

Dale Hoyland, Project Manager
Oxfordshire Affordable Warmth Project

Oxfordshire Woodfuel Programme

The Oxfordshire Woodfuel Programme has a website which provides lots of advice on growing, cutting, storing and burning woodfuel: www.oxonwoodfuel.org.uk.

There will be a series of one-day woodfuel-related study visits in April, May and June. More information is available on the website.

The Oxfordshire Woodland Project is running workshops on woodland management: see www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/woodland-workshops.

I am hoping to set up some "logs for labour" matches. If you are a woodland owner who could use some free help with woodland management in return for people taking some firewood (labour for your logs), or a group of people who would like to work outdoors in return for some firewood (logs for your labour), please get in touch with me.

The moisture level of woodfuel is important: a freshly cut log at 50% moisture has only about half the energy content of an equivalent well-seasoned log at 20% moisture. The woodfuel programme has a moisture metre that you are welcome to borrow.

Grants: Households that do not have central heating and install a biomass boiler before the end of March can get a £950 grant. Woodland owners who need to put in roads to extract woodfuel can get a grant that covers up to 60% of the cost. Please contact me if you need help with these, or with any other aspect of woodfuel.

Riki Therivel
manager@oxonwoodfuel.org.uk
01865 243488



Thames Valley
CRIMESTOPPERS
0800 555 111
Call anonymously with information about crime

Got information about crime?
Don't want to speak to police?
Don't want to give your name?

Give information on 0800 555 111 or at crimestoppers-uk.org
Crimestoppers is an independent registered charity