DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

VOL XXXXIV No 1 FEBRUARY/MARCH 2017

FEBRUARY

5 Snowdrop Walk, Duck Races & Cream Teas (p.9)

7 Neighbourhood Plan Committee Meeting (p.14)

22 Breeze Cycle Ride (p.27)

28 Pancake Day

MARCH

1 Ash Wednesday (for services see p.8) Watlington Gardening Club (p.23)

2 Taster Session, Chinnor, Mindfulness Chilterns (p.31)

6 Hunger Lunch (p.21)

Neighbourhood Plan Committee Meeting (p.14)

ARPC Meeting (p.11)

REGULAR DATES

MONDAYS

Kindergym morning Thame **Zumba** 6.30pm KB Village Hall

TUESDAYS

Kindergym morning Chinnor **Bell Ringing** 7.30pm Aston Rowant

WEDNESDAYS

Kettlebell Abs 6.00pm KB Village Hall **Yoga** 7.00pm KB Village Hall

THURSDAYS

Smurf-fit 9.30am, Watlington

Toddler Church 11.00am St. Andrew's Church

FRIDAYS

Tiddlypeeps 9.30am Chinnor **Senior Circuits** 10.00am Watlington

SATURDAYS (1st & 3rd of month) Soul Space 5.30pm Crowell Church

SUNDAYS (1st of month) Aston Rowant Church Family Friendly service 10.00am **ASTON ROWANT, KINGSTON BLOUNT & CROWELL**

PARISH NOTES



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Information in this newsletter is, as far as we know, accurate. The Parish Notes however, cannot accept responsibility for the quality of the information, services or items provided by other people or organisations.

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KINGSTON BLOUNT VILLAGE HALL

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Charges for Hire - Effective 1st January 2017

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Monday-Sunday & Bank Holidays

Main Hall (8am-midnight) £14.00 per hour Committee Room only £8.50 per hour Children's Parties (daytime) £40.00 (3-4 hours)

For Non-Residents of the Parish of Aston Rowant

Monday-Sunday & Bank Holidays

Main Hall (8am-midnight) £15.00 per hour Committee Room only £9.50 per hour Children's Parties (daytime) £50.00 (3-4 hours)

Wedding Receptions £300 per day
A supplementary charge, to be agreed, if access is required the evening before.)

Bar Licence (if required) will incur an additional charge of £20.

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KINGSTON BLOUNT VILLAGE HALL DIARY DATES

Zumba every Monday 6.30pm

07834 994699

Kettlebell Abs every Wednesday 6.00pm

07801 553019

Yoga with every Wednesday 7.00pm

Rachel Hawkins 07552 185499



USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

07391 139707

CAB Local office www.adviceguide.org.uk	01844 214827
Chinnor Village Centre	01844 353733
Church Tower, Aston Rowant: R Newton	01844 352926
Dial-a-ride (for people with mobility problems)	01869 327048
Highways Pothole Hotline	0845 3101111
Highways Street Light Hotline	0800 317802
Library-Chinnor	01844 351721
Oxon County Council www.oxfordshire.gov.uk	01865 792422
Pleck Wood: Les Martins	01844 353968
Police-Thame (Thames Valley)	101 or 999
Poor's Hillock Allotments: Lavinia Martins	01844 353968
Porch: S Thompson	01844 351334
Porch: J Rooksby	01844 352320
Post office-Chinnor	01844 351214
Schools:	
Aston Rowant C of E School	01844 351671
Icknield Community College Watlington	01491 612691

Aston Rowant C of E School 01844 351671
Icknield Community College Watlington 01491 612691
Lord Williams School Thame 01844 210510
Mill Lane School Chinnor 01844 352106
St Andrew's C of E, Chinnor 01844 351353
SODC Main Customer Services 01235 422422
SODC Refuse/Recycling 03000 610 610

SODC Planning01235 422600Reporting Fly-tipping03000 610 610SODC Environmental Department01235 422403

Village Hall Hire/Bookings: Andrea Tinson

LOCAL CHURCH CONTACTS

Rector

Revd Maggie Thorne The Rectory, Chinnor OX39 4DH 01844 354626

Parish Administrator

Louise Heathcote csarc@btinternet.com Chinnor Church Office, OX39 4PG 01844 352472

Associate Clergy: Aston Rowant

The Rev'd Des Foote 01844 355945
The Rev'd Dr. Brian Griffiths 01844 355953
Tessa Wyatt 01844 351165

Crowell

The Rev'd Maggie Thorne 01844 354626 Jo Whitfield 01844 355263

Churchwardens

Aston Rowant: Jenny Flynn 01844 352345, Jeremy Wilcock 01844 761119
Crowell: Jeremy Peters 07711716614, Andy Warman 01844 351909
Retired Clergy Supporting Us in our Parish Serena Hutton 01844 354173
PCC Treasurer Michael DeVal12 Oakley Road, Chinnor OX39 4HB 07807 967452

For arrangements for Baptism, Confirmation & Marriage please contact the Parish Administrator (see above).

Methodist Services – Station Road, Chinnor Roman Catholic Services – St Joseph's Thame Fr Mark Logorio 01844 212860 Holy Mass every Saturday at 6.00pm and Sunday at 9.00am and 11.00am

LOCAL CHURCH SERVICES

ASTON ROWANT CHURCH SERVICES

First Sunday of every month 10am Family Service 2nd, 3rd,4th Sundays 10am Holy Communion

Fifth Sundays see notice board in Church porch or village notice board

1st Tuesday of every month 8am Morning Prayers

CROWELL CHURCH SERVICES

1st Sunday of the month6pmEvensong2nd Sunday of the month10amEucharist1st and 3rd Saturdays of the monthSoul Space at 5.30pm

Listening Ear -St Andrew's Church, Chinnor

every Wednesday 7.30- 9.30pm



Aston Rowant Church by Louise Heathcote

LOCAL PLAYGROUPS

And things to do with young children

KINDERGYM

www.kindergym.co.uk Thame and Chinnor on Monday and Tuesdays mornings

TIDDLYPEEPS

www.tiddlypeeps-chinnor.co.uk Playgroup on Friday mornings 9.30am – 11.30am Just turn up, £1.50 per family

SYDENHAM COFFEE MORNINGS at The Old School Hall. Thursday 9th February 10.00am – 12noon, all welcome

'TODDLER CHURCH' at St. Andrew's Church, Chinnor Thursdays at 11.00am (during school term time) Story-time, songs, bubbles and toys!

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY CLUB

Sunday 19th February (and the 3rd Sunday each month) 10.00am (always the 1st & 3rd Sundays of each month) at St. Andrew's Church Hall, Chinnor (Behind the Village Centre)

Please email sarahparishnotes@gmail.com if you have information regarding events, groups or ideas for fun things to do with small children.

ASTON ROWANT SCHOOL HOUSE TRUST

The Aston Rowant School House Educational Trust was set up 1992 when the former teacher's house, belonging to the Aston Rowant Church of England Primary School, was sold. The money from the sale was invested to raise income which is available to assist with education.

The precise rules are that the Scheme allows the Trustees to apply the income:

- a) In or towards promoting the education of pupils attending the Aston Rowant Church of England Primary School.
- b) In or towards promoting the education (including social and physical training) of persons under the age of 25 years who have at any time attended the school or who are resident in the Parish of Aston Rowant.

Some residents in the parish may either have children or are themselves eligible to obtain a grant. To be considered you need to apply in writing to the Trustees who will consider applications at their bi-annual meetings in May and November. Each application will be considered on merit – there is no guarantee. If you would like more information please contact:

Peter Lambert 01844 352617, or Mary Williams 01844 353927.

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A LETTER FROM OUR RECTOR

Dear friends

After having a good break after Christmas and having my usual system thrown out of kilter, I've finally settled back down to my daily pattern of reading in the morning for 30 minutes. Several lines have leapt from the pages of the latest book I'm reading which I'd like to share with you.

The first quote comes from the comedian and committed Roman Catholic, Frank Skinner, who notes in his autobiography, that through his experience "only Christian belief can definitely guarantee you the label 'weird'." The second comes from the comedian and atheist, Stephen Fry, who, when asked what he would say to God at the pearly gates if it turned out it was all true, said, "Why should I respect a capricious, mean-minded, stupid God who creates a world that is so full of injustice and pain?"

I wonder whether these views reflect attendance in our churches? Unfortunately, both views are rather shallow. Is it really weird to stand up for the poor, the disadvantaged, the marginalised? Is it really weird to believe that the world is a beautiful place, but that it's beautiful because things die and are reborn? Is it really weird to believe that there is purpose to life which transcends life? Is it really weird to believe that love is stronger than death? I've been a Christian for so long now that it would be weird for me **not** to believe, but I do find that my beliefs shift slightly as I get older, read more and listen more to the experiences of others.

The third quote comes from the comedian Russell Brand. I'm not certain what his religious beliefs are, but he clearly has deep convictions about God. He suggests that "All desires are the inappropriate substitute for the desire to be at one with God". He speaks from extensive experience as someone who has used inappropriate substitutes in the past, so for me, his is the quote that I'll remember as being closest to the Truth.

I'm not bothered if people think me weird. Hopefully, no Christian will be. We follow in Christ's steps because we have had a glimpse of heaven (maybe more than one) and experience of His presence in our lives. Let us hope and pray that shallow views may be gently challenged and that those of us who do believe will be able to somehow reveal the love and presence of God in this part of His wonderful world.

7

Every blessing

Maggie

CHURCH DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

February

5th Snowdrop Walk, Duck Races & Cream Teas, 2pm, Aston Rowant (opposite) 5th Green Communion 5th 12th & 26th Pilgrim Course at the Rectory 8th Mother's Union AGM in Church Hall, Bring and Buy for overseas fund.

28th Pancake Party, Chinnor Pavilion, 2.30pm-4.20pm.

March

1st Ash Wednesday, Lent Begins. Services:

11.00am Holy Communion with distribution of ashes, St Andrew's Chinnor 7.30pm Holy Communion with distribution of ashes, St. Peter and St. Paul Aston Rowant.

6th 13th 20th & 27th Lent Course, (Mondays) 7.30pm in the Rectory

CANON RALPH CARTMILL

Just before Christmas I decided to improve my filing system by creating new files and thus drawing together a variety of documents which had lacked proper homes. In this previously stray material I discovered old sermons, ecclesiastical law jottings, some local history notes and a number of unpublished poems.

Among these draft poems was one which recalled the gathering at St Andrew's to mark Ralph Cartmill's 25 years as a priest. Many parishioners will remember this occasion because he was presented with a bike and, being Ralph, rode it down the aisle to round things off.

The saltire church is lit with sound And unaccustomed glint of gold. The service forms proceed and yet There is a sense of something else. Conclusion and beginning come With simple speech and painful truth. An Irish joke performed with love And joyous bike ride to the end.

Dr Brian Hutton



TESSA WYATT'S COUNTRY DIARY

A selection from last month's Facebook posts

11 January

As the wind increased this afternoon it was great to see the red kites practising their aerial swoops and tumbles. I also found a gang of seven jackdaws scavenging in Bobby's stable. They erupted out of the door and twirled up into the air as they were caught up in the, by then, very stiff breeze. Little Owl unable to get home until late this afternoon due to stuff being put in his stable for storage. Very cross protests coming from his yew tree roost.

12 January

If you're still up, look out of the window at the full moon shining on the snow. It's fairyland.

13 January

With the garden frozen pretty solid, the birds are ravenous. I put even more seed down a few minutes ago and already there are seven blackbirds, a host of chaffinches, loads of goldfinches, two greenfinches, the robin and Spooky Pigeon. Poor Spooky is being driven off by a female blackbird who has a real attitude, driving everybody off while giving herself no time to eat. I think its the same one as last winter. No visible prints in the snow so I reckon Brock and Mr Fox had a night in. At the yard the track was so icy I had to let Bobby find his own way down to the field while I found mine. Every time I slowed down, he slowed down although I didn't have the rope in my hand. Either he didn't realise, or was being a very caring boy. I suspect the former, but wouldn't the latter be lovely?

Driving home through the village tonight, we met a young dog fox making his way across the road. Panicked by the headlights, he made a dash back across the road, changed his mind, dashed back again, stopped, then did a five foot leap into the Old Vicarage garden, over the hedge, from a standing start. Impressive hock action! Enter him for the Puissance at HOYS and I reckon he'd pop the wall easily!

16 January

It's hard to find beauty in the wet and the dark, but the delicate lacework of a spider's web, hung with diamonds, strung between the door and the wing mirror of the car was a morning treat. No sign of the spider, who will be hiding somewhere dry, probably under the lip of the car's roof where she can feel the vibe should anything fly into the web. Note to self, open door very carefully and drive very slowly...



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CREAM TEAS & DUCK RACES



Cream Teas at Aston Rowant Church on Snowdrop Sunday with Duck Races at Fiveways, Church Lane Sunday 5 February, 2 to 4pm.

Please come along to Aston Rowant Church for a Cream Tea. All monies raised are for Church Funds. Also walk down Church Lane to see the Snowdrops at Five ways and watch or join in the duck races along the stream.

The races are free and anyone can just turn up and take part in the fun. The day is jointly organised by Aston Rowant Parish Church and Aston Rowant Parish Council.

Mike Eaton, Jackie and Brian Griffiths and Peter Hetherington and their many helpers.

ASTON ROWANT BELL RINGERS

We hope you enjoyed the sound of the bells ringing for the services over the Christmas period as much as our band of ringers enjoyed ringing them.

Unfortunately we were not able to ring all six bells for one or two services owing to other commitments from some of our regular ringers and this also applies to the regular Sunday services.

May we appeal to any of the readers/parishioners who feel they would like to join our friendly band and be of service to our village to come and try the art of bell ringing.

Have you perhaps been intrigued by the questions asked in the Parish Notes? Why not come and find out for yourself!

Why do people want to learn? Some start as youngsters because their family members ring or to learn a new skill as part of an award scheme. Some because a friend rings, not necessarily at this tower, some find it an excellent way of keeping fit, it is wonderful for the spine and brain cells. Some wish to learn something new and some would like to serve their local Church community.

So what reason will you have for learning the ancient art of bell ringing? It would be great if we could recruit some more ringers to our friendly band so that all 6 bells could be rung every Sunday. Hope to welcome you soon.

Please contact Robert Newton 01844 352926

PARISH COUNCIL & LOCAL CONTACTS

Parish Website

www.astonrowant.org.uk Parish Clerk Tracy Lambourne clerk@astonrowant.org.uk 01844 353989 07971039612

Parish Councillors:

Chairman Peter Tinson	Kingston Blount	01844 352817
Vice Chair Peter Hetherington	Kingston Blount	01844 353296
Councillor Gordon Crossley	Kingston Blount	01844 351296
Councillor Matthew Day	Kingston Blount	01844 351300
Councillor Lynn French	Aston Rowant	01844 350154
Councillor Andy Green	Kingston Blount	01844 353819
Councillor Trelawney Hill	Aston Rowant	01844 353051

District Councillors:

lynn.lloyd@southoxon.gov.uk Lynn Lloyd 01844 354313 ian.white@southoxon.gov.uk Ian White 01844 352085

County Councillor

David Wilmshurst 01844 354106 david.wilmshurst@oxfordshire.gov.uk

MP

John Howell 01491 612852 howelljm@parliament.uk

Police Community Support Office ThameHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

tel: 101

Village Hall & Playing Fields/Hillwerke Trust Chairman

Gordon Crossley

5 Bakers Piece, OX39 4SW 01844 351296

07391 139707 bookings@kbvh.org Hall Hire/Bookings: Andrea Tinson

Play Area -Please contact

Stephanie Johns 01844 350311 07939 030102

Aston Rowant Cricket Club Chairman

Paul Humphreys 07880 791022

NEWCOMER TO THE VILLAGE

The village of Kingston Blount had some wonderful news just before Christmas when Harriet Kathleen Stockley was born to Christine and Christopher Stockley. Weighing 6.3 oz, she was born at 3:30pm on the winter solstice, 21st December. They are all doing very well (Oscar and Millie have been enjoying the new addition to the family and are being very good with her) and Chrissie would like to thank everyone for the many cards and good wishes.







'Nou can't stop the waves but you can learn to surf.'

Jane Barker, Mindfulness courses in the Chilterns

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Jane is a BACP Registered qualified Integrative Psychodynamic Counsellor, trained at The Metanoia Institute, with a private practice in Thame, Oxfordshire.

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ASTON ROWANT PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The focus of the December meeting of the Council was the budget for the coming fiscal year. When considering the budget (and hence the amount each property is charged for Parish activities through the Council Tax) the Council reviews the projected spend against the current budget, planned projects and external factors such as the reduction in funding for some services (such as grass cutting) from the County Council.

The Council is largely operating to the budget for the current financial year. Consequently it was agreed that, for many areas, no increase in spend would be required for 2017/8. However, a modest increase in spend would be required in areas where the Parish is likely to take on expenses previously covered by the County Council, following central cutbacks.

In the previous edition of the Parish Notes, I noted that it was likely that any traffic calming measures introduced would have to be funded by the community. The Council agreed to create a significant reserve specifically for traffic calming work and agreed to allocate a sum from existing, unassigned, reserves but supplementing it with a contribution from the Council Tax precept. It was agreed that it would not be prudent to run the reserves down completely; the contribution from the precept allows a modest amount to be retained as unallocated reserves for unforeseen circumstances.

Work to enhance the area around Fiveways continues. The results of the planting that has taken place over the years will soon be evident as the spring bulbs start to flower and, thanks to a donation from a parishioner, a bench will be installed to give people time to enjoy the surroundings. The snowdrops should be in full bloom for the annual Snowdrop and Teas event on 5th February and hopefully there will be enough water in the stream to allow the duck races to take place on the same day.

Finally, the March meeting of the Council will be held a week later than scheduled on March 15th. Meetings of the Neighbourhood Plan committee will take place on February 7th and March 14th, the days before the Council meetings. Both meetings are open to the public and I would encourage you to attend.

Peter Tinson, Chairman ARPC

ASTON ROWANT PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

Meetings of the Parish Council were held on Wednesday, 14th December 2016 and Wednesday 11th January 2017 at 7.30pm in Kingston Blount Village Hall. At the time of writing, the next meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday 8th February.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

P16/S3572/AG Erection of general agricultural store for hay and machinery at Parkwood Stud, London Road, Lewknor, OX49 5RZ. Should be agreed.

P16/S3717/HH Erection of detached garage in front of existing dwelling house and window in side wall of dwelling house to match existing windows at Icknield Cottage, Butts Way, Aston Rowant, OX49 5SZ.

P16/S4104/HH Proposed removal of roof canopy and construction of new porch at 1 Icknield Close, Kingston Blount.

P16/S3567/HH CERTIFICATE OF LAWFUL DEVELOPMENT FOR: loft conversion and garage conversion of existing extension at 2 Icknield Close, Kingston Blount. No decision required, notification only.

P/S4065/FUL Retention of existing roof tiles for flats 1–6 and houses 3-4, Bakers Piece, Kingston Blount.

PLANNING DECISIONS OF SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL:

P16/S3391/HH Erection of a 3-bay car port and change existing double garage into games room at Willowmead, Kingston Stert, OX39 4NL. GRANTED

P16/S3393/HH Infill existing carport wall openings with ne wall/door construction to create an enclosed garage. Construct a new detached Summerhouse. Erect a new boundary wall fronting the High Street, with a pedestrian gate and bin stores at Apsley Cottage, High Street Kingston Blount. GRANTED.

P16/S3572/AG Erection of general agricultural store for hay and machinery at Parkwood Stud, London Road, Lewknor, OX49 5RZ – GRANTED/No Formal Application for Planning permission required.

P16/S3717/HH Erection of detached garage in front of existing dwelling house and window in side wall of dwelling house to match existing windows at Icknield Cottage, Butts Way, Aston Rowant, OX49 5SZ. GRANTED.

PLANNING DECISIONS MADE SINCE THE LAST MEETING:

None



LIFE AS A GIRL IN KINGSTON BLOUNT

Hi everyone or anyone who is reading this. My name is Eliza and I write a passage every month or so here about stuff that goes on.

First of all, I hope everyone had an amazing Christmas. It seems so long ago now but it was only a month ago. I went to my Grandma's in Kingston Blount (shout-out for her amazing lunch) and it was really nice.

I went to the women's march in London the other day and it was just amazing to see so many strong women (and men) all wanting the same things. When we got off the bus the streets were literally full and it hadn't even started yet.

I'm actually writing this on the train coming back and people are staring at me because I have green face paint smudged around my cheek. A little girl sitting in front of me is looking at me like I'm kind of crazy whilst I'm typing on my phone.

We've been back at school for about three weeks now (but it feels like it's been years.) The field has been frosted over so we can't play football for PE (which is great as we get to do it indoors instead.) I am still thinking what to give up for Lent, probably broccoli. (Not really, probably chocolate again.)

Anyways, bye everyone, see you in the next issue – **Eliza**:)

Is there anything you'd like to see in the Parish Notes?

Do you have information on local events taking place,
or would you write a review or recommendation for a local business,
or perhaps you have a nice photograph for the cover.

Please do get in touch!

The deadline for the next issue (April/May) is 15th March Please send by email to sarahparishnotes@gmail.com

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All past minutes of Aston Rowant Parish Council (Including the Annual Parish Meeting) can be found under: http://www.astonrowant.org.uk/meetings.html

Occasional updates concerning the Parish are added to the Kingston Blount / Aston Rowant (KBAR) Facebook page. To join, login to Facebook www.facebook.com, search for 'KBAR' and ask to join the group.

Tracy Lambourne Clerk to the Parish

TOPPING THE TABLE IN RECYCLING

South Oxfordshire District Council is named the best recycler in DEFRA's annual recycling league tables for 2015/16, with neighbouring Vale of White Horse District Council in fourth place.

It's the third year in a row that South Oxfordshire has topped the table, although the Vale has dropped from second last year to fourth. This is in part due to big improvements from other councils – the recycling rates from East Riding of Yorkshire, which is in second place, improved by over eight per cent.

The good news comes despite a small drop in the recycling figures in both districts due to recycling in green wheelie bins being contaminated with food waste, dirty nappies and other things that can't be recycled. These are often hidden in sacks that the waste crews can't see into, and full lorry loads of recycling were being rejected. New policies not to empty recycling bins containing non-clear sacks came into force for both councils in November this year to tackle the problem. This has already begun to have a positive effect, and since the new policy was introduced, no lorry loads of recycling have so far been rejected due to contamination.

The problems due to contamination were offset by the councils' popular new kerbside recycling service of textiles and small electrical items. Residents can leave old, unusable clothes and textiles in a tied carrier bag next to their green bin, and small electrical items, like hairdryers and toasters in a tied carrier bag next to their grey bin.

Cllr Tony Harbour, cabinet member for waste at South Oxfordshire District Council, said: "We're extremely pleased to be top of the tables again and we're very grateful for the hard work of our residents – we took a difficult decision this year to stop people using non-clear sacks in their bins to prevent contamination. Most of our residents have already adapted brilliantly though, which should help us stay near the top for another year."

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You may not be aware that Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue Service offer completely free Safe & Well visits.

If you'd like them to they will visit you in your home to see what they can do to help you reduce the risk of fire, such as checking and fitting smoke alarms.

To find out more or request a check please complete the online form www.365alive.co.uk/safewell.

Or if you know someone who may benefit

from a visit please help spread the word and let them know about this service.



THAME IN THE FINAL THREE

BRITISH HIGH STREET

Thame has been named as one of the country's best high streets by being shortlisted in the Great British High Street competition.

It was one of the top three in the Finalists Category: Small Market Town along with

Hebden Bridge and Chipping Norton, and while Hebden Bridge was the winner, it is a fantastic achievement to have reached the last three.

HSBC WUK BRITISH CYCLING

BRITISH CYCLING BREEZE RIDE

Calling all women cyclists: join Marion Buckle on a British cycling Breeze Ride along the Phoenix trail on

Wednesday 22 February starting at 10am. This will be an enjoyable ride suitable for all women especially those who haven't ridden a bike in a while. We will stop for coffee and cake in Thame and return. Please check the website for details. Letsride.co.uk

The start point is the track near the bridge at Horsenden near Longwick. You can park there or in the lay by just along the road. HP27 9QE

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ASTON ROWANT PARISH NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

The members of the Steering Group have been meeting for about 6 months now and these Parish Notes will be one of the ways of keeping you informed of where we are in the process. The group meets monthly in the village hall on the Tuesday preceding the Parish Council meeting. Our next meeting is 7th February followed by 14th March at 7:30pm. There is an open invite to all residents to attend meetings and membership of the steering group remains open and fluid.

After spending some time familiarising ourselves with the landscape and features of the Parish, we prepared some Terms of Reference and the Goals and Objectives printed below. These were presented and approved by the Aston Rowant Parish Council on 14th December. We had notified SODC of our intention to prepare a Neighbourhood Plan in October and they signed this off for designation on 23rd December. Since then we have been allocated a link officer, Ricardo Rios, who attended our January meeting and he will be available for advice throughout the process. We are now in a position to apply for funding to support any further research we may require in preparing the plan.

The next stage is to begin preparing policies about the future development of the Parish. For the plan to be successful and worthwhile it needs to have a strong evidence base that recognises the research and data that already exists about the Parish. In the coming months we will be exploring the SODC Core Strategy and the Community Profile for Aston Rowant produced by Oxfordshire Rural Council.

The Steering Group's purpose is to design a process that is inclusive, comprehensive and positive and we will be considering methods of gathering views and opinions from you. We will publish the minutes of our meetings on the Aston Rowant Parish Council website together with any updates to the process and will endeavor to keep you all fully informed as we proceed.

Jeanette Ewen on behalf of AR32 Steering Group

Goals

- To provide existing and future residents with the opportunity to live in a decent home.
- 2. To protect the surrounding countryside, landscape, designated open spaces, farming and ecosystems.
- 3. To reduce road traffic congestion and improve road safety.
- 4. To promote new development for housing, leisure, community facilities and employment opportunities in accordance with locally defined needs.
- 5. To maintain the character and vitality of the parish's villages and hamlets and to enhance access to the countryside.
- 6. To promote high quality in the design of new buildings conducive with the need to reduce pollution and decrease energy-consumption.

Aston Rowant Parish Neighbourhood Plan

Objectives

1. To provide existing and future residents with the opportunity to live in a decent home by:-

- a) providing a limited number (5%?) of new dwellings to meet local needs within settlement boundaries defined in the ARNP or to infilling within established frontages in Kingston Stert;
- b) allowing for the provision of a mix of new housing types and sizes commensurate with recognised local trends and requirements;
- c) meeting identified local need for affordable housing for families/individuals with local connections and/or employment;
- **d**) limiting new development to schemes of no more than five new dwellings, excluding changes of use or redevelopment;

2. To protect the area's local character, the surrounding countryside, landscape, designated open spaces, farming and ecosystems by:-

- a) defining open spaces on which new development will be precluded;
- b) protecting, enhancing and conserving the AONB, the agricultural /woodland character of the area and significant views into and across the parish;
- **c)** protecting the area's heritage assets, notably the conservation areas, listed buildings, historic settlement pattern, byways and distinctive local buildings;
- **d)** promoting exclusive agricultural and woodland use of all land outside of defined settlements.

3. To reduce traffic congestion and improve road safety by:-

- a) promoting new development only within walking distance of local facilities and amenities;
- b) securing, through development and alternative funding, traffic-calming measures on the B4009 through the plan area;
- c) improving the standard and maintenance levels of footpaths and byways in the plan area, including pedestrian and cycling links to the Oxford Tube bus stops;
- d) promoting home-working and local employment opportunities.



A LETTER FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Happy New Year from Aston Rowant C of E Primary School.

What a busy December we had! The children were very busy with our Christmas performances and the Thame Music Festival. The children enjoyed taking part in the Christmas Tree festival at St Andrew's church in Chinnor too, and made decorations shaped as Christmas food to decorate the tree. We had a great day out at the Pantomime with lots of children and adult participation! Our Nativity service at St Peter and St Paul church in Aston Rowant was a very special service as the Year 6 rang the hand bells again this year. We even welcomed a visit from Father Christmas to school!

It is always lovely to look forward to a New Year in school and we have many exciting plans for the new year ahead at Aston Rowant School. We welcome a drama workshop to work with the children to develop their performing skills and to bring stories to life through role play and improvisation. We also welcome an Indian dance group to teach the children about the significance of Indian dances and to link with our 'Around the world' topics.

We will be opening our school to parents and visitors for our third 'Learning Exhibition' this year. The children will be showcasing their wonderful art work in a gallery. The theme is 'Cultural Art'. All visitors are welcome to attend this open afternoon from 2.30pm on Thursday January 26th. Look out for more 'Learning Exhibitions' planned for after Easter.

We are excited about our work on Maths too and are working to sustain excellence in the teaching of this subject. We are keen to develop ways in which our children take greater responsibility for their own learning, and gain a greater understanding of 'real life problem solving' maths. We are moving from a position of 'We do problem solving on Friday' to embedding challenging mathematical thinking in every lesson and establishing high quality cross curricular planning which incorporates mathematics all around us.

We are open for visits to the school. Please make an appointment at our school office or on 01844 351671 if you would like to meet Mrs Roberts, the Head Teacher, or have a guided visit to the school.

Mrs Eve Roberts

Head Teacher – Aston Rowant Primary School visit www. aston-rowant.oxon.sch.uk for more information



The Shepherd's Crook is a traditional British Free House. Not being tied to any single pub chain we offer a fine selection of the finest beers, ales, wines and spirits including locally brewed and independent products that you are less likely to find elsewhere.

We have several live music events coming up, please check our website for details.



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Opening Hours
Pub Hours: 12:00am to 11:00pm
Kitchen Hours:
Lunch: 12:00-2:30pm (Tuesday- Saturday)
Dinner: 6:00-9:30pm (Tuesday - Saturday)
Sunday Lunch: 12:00-4.00pm

4. To promote new development for housing, leisure, community facilities and employment in accordance with locally-defined needs by:-

- a) promoting new dwellings through the re-use of existing buildings, the sub-division of larger properties and the redevelopment of large dwellings/sites;
- b) creating the opportunity for the retention and provision of community assets and local facilities.
- c) maintaining the open nature of identified recreational and leisure spaces;
- d) securing homes for local agricultural workers.

5. To maintain the character and vitality of the parish's villages and hamlets and to enhance access to the countryside by:-

- a) protecting identified and unidentified heritage assets;
- b) maintaining appropriate conservation area boundaries in Aston Rowant and Kingston Blount;
- taking opportunities for the planting of new trees in association with new development, along established byways and through the replacement of trees lost through commercial woodland management;
- d) improving maintenance of established footpaths byways and bridleways.

6. To promote high quality in the design of new buildings, conducive with the need to reduce pollution and decrease energy-consumption by:-

- a) integrating new housing into the villages so as to maintain their essentially rural and informal character;
- b) seeking the use of materials in character with the area and reflecting its proximity to the Chilterns;
- c) insisting upon compliance with the most appropriate standards aimed at the creation of zero-carbon housing;
- d) conserving and enhancing biodiversity.



NOTICEBOARD

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Parish Notes Delivery Volunteers Needed

Do you have an hour or so to spare once every two months to help deliver the Parish Notes? We are looking for more volunteers to join the team and to provide back-up help for current volunteers. Please contact Jenny Jackson on 01844 351444 or jjtherapy@aol.com.

Watlington Gardening Club

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 1st March. The talk will be by Caroline Jackson-Houlston from Brookes University on the 'Wild Flowers of Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire'. April's meeting is on the 5th April by Christie Leary on 'My Organic Garden – Gardening without Chemicals'. Both talks promise to be very interesting and relevant to all of us who garden in Oxfordshire. The meetings are held in Watlington Town Hall at 7.45pm, with coffee, tea and biscuits afterwards. Everyone is welcome and guests pay £2.50.

Advertising in the Parish Notes

The Parish Notes are published every two months and delivered to every household in the area. Please contact Julian Knight if you are interested in advertising. jknight652@aol.com

1/4 page—£10 or six for £40 1/2 page—£15 or six for £60, Full page—£30 or six for £120

Local Help

Jack Hudson, a Year 11 student at Lord Williams' School living in Kingston Blount, is still raising funds for his expedition to Borneo. He is looking for any babysitting jobs, (he has experience, and references) or any other odd jobs to help him raise funds for the trip. Please contact him on 01844 352247 or text 07714 136911.

Hunger Lunch

On Monday 6th March a Hunger Lunch will be held at The Old Vicarage, Aston Rowant in aid of The Porch Steppin' Stone Centre in Oxford. The Porch Steppin' Stone Centre targets its services at those who are experiencing, or have experienced, rough sleeping, hostel accommodation, supported housing, or who are vulnerably housed. See page 21 for more details.

NOTICEBOARD

What's going on in Kingston Blound Aston Rowant & nearby

Kingston Blount Christmas Fayre

From the committee:

The Kingston Blount Christmas Fayre on 3rd December made £550 for the Hillwerke Trust. We express our sincere thanks to the sponsors who supported us:

John Howell M.P.
Tim Russ -Thame
Hamnett Hayward -Thame
George Stevens Garden Services
The Lambert Hotel
Mid Counties Co-Operative Society

Parkers Estate Agents -Chinnor

Waitrose -Thame

Also sincere thanks to The Chinnor Silver Band for their wonderful Christmas music, and last, but by no means least...many thanks to Mrs Robert (Headteacher) and the Aston Rowant School Choir who opened our Fayre and sang beautifully ... and unaccompanied!

Snowdrop Sunday

Join in the fun on Snowdrop Sunday at Fiveways, Church Lane on Sunday 5th February. Enjoy a cup of tea and a cake or scone, and take part in the duck races along the stream. All are welcome and all proceeds go to the church. (See page 9 for more details.)





NOTES FROM THE ALLOTMENT

Happy New Year!

The last time I wrote we were busy putting our gardens "to bed" for the winter by finishing our digging and applying manure or compost ready for Spring.

Now (Jan14) our gardens have had the first snow and the thought of spending time on the plot is remote and unpleasant!

November was the perfect time for bagging up those Autumn leaves to make leaf mould which is really useful as a soil "improver". Firstly worms love it and secondly it helps to retain moisture.

When I first got my plot I quickly filled the two compost bins with all sorts of organic mater and was lucky enough to acquire a third . Those bins are full of wonderful, rich, brown soil which I will use in March as I get ready for planting.

Just before Christmas I picked two more bins from a gardener in Christmas Common. Now they are filled with leaves and kitchen waste, but they wont be ready till next Autumn.

An early season job (which is so helpful) is to dig a trench for runner beans and the new trial crop for my plot-sweet peas. I will open up two such trenches about a foot deep, which I line with newspaper to retain moisture. I then fill them with leaf mould and kitchen waste on a regular basis and a few good handfuls of slow-release fertilizer, such as bonemeal, to provide these greedy crops with the ideal conditions for strong growth. The bonus here is that the newspaper lining and leaf mould reduce the need for watering in June/July.

The thought of spending time on a frosty allotment is not very attractive especially when there is cricket from the sub-continent to watch on TV!

An almost thankless task is cutting winter greens and getting frozen fingers which start to ache with cold. As they thaw out I am reminded of Uncle Bert complaining of "hot aches." Modern gardening gloves help protect a "wimp" like me .

The daily weather forecast tells me constantly that the days are getting longer but it doesn't seem that way to me and I am happy to let Winter take its course on the allotment and just pop out once a week to get greens and parsnips and get back into the warm and watch the cricket!

ROLL ON SPRING!

Dick Ewen

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A Small Natural Area managed by Aston Rowant Parish Council

We have organised more clearance work at Fiveways. Dead thorn and elder has been removed and the hazel along the stream has been coppiced. The result is that a lot more light enters the area and it will stimulate more wild flower growth. It will also allow more new planting.

The path by the stream has been lengthened by 18 meters which may not seem much. However we have many daily visitors to the site who enjoy walking by the stream.

We are now looking forward to seeing the snowdrops which should be out by the time you read this.

We are also looking forward to Snowdrop Sunday and the Duck Races on the steam which will take place on Sunday 5 February from 2pm until 4pm. Will we see you there? Please see the separate article in these Notes (p.9).

Peter Hetherington and Mike Eaton

HUNGER LUNCH

A hunger lunch will be held on Monday 6th March from 12.30-2pm at The Old Vicarage, Aston Rowant in aid of The Porch Steppin' Stone Centre in Oxford.

All are welcome for a simple lunch of soup and bread; cash donations and gifts of dry and tinned foodstuffs will be gratefully received.

Please contact Rona Knight 351 315

VACANT ALLOTMENT PLOTS

We have two plots available with immediate effect. Both plots are 5 pole (which is approximately half the size of the penalty area on a football pitch). However, if you are interested but feel this might be too large to take on, we would be willing to create 'starter plots' by sub-dividing one or more. Please contact me if you would like more information.

Lavinia Martins, Hon. Sec. Poor's Hillock Allotments laviniamartins@hotmail.com