

VOL XXXXVIII NO 3

JUNE/JULY 2021

ASTON ROWANT, KINGSTON BLOUNT & CROWELL

PARISH NOTES



Carol Cross

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Editor

Sally Brodermann
350364
sallyparishnotes@gmail.com

Advertising

Julian Knight
351315
jknight652@aol.com

Treasurer & Distribution

Peter Lambert
352617
peter.lambert123@btinternet.com

Proofreading

Edward Meade-King

Illustrations

Sally Brodermann
sallyparishnotes@gmail.com
www.sallybrodermann.co.uk

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KINGSTON BLOUNT VILLAGE HALL UPDATE

The Village Hall is now open for bookings from June 21, the date when it is anticipated that the lockdown restrictions will be fully lifted. The Hall operates under a set of regulations issued under guidance from the Government. These have been continually revised throughout the pandemic and it is expected that some of the procedures, particularly those relating to cleaning of the Hall and equipment by hirers, will continue for some time after restrictions have been lifted. Hirers will be advised of the cleaning requirements closer to their scheduled booking.

Andrea Tinson

USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

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
Oil Syndicate adam.bernstein@mac.com .	01844 350440
Oxon County Council www.oxfordshire.gov.uk	01865 792422
Police-Thame (Thames Valley)	101 or 999
Poor's Hillock Allotments: Rupert Wolstenholme Rupert.wolstenholme@btinternet.com	07866 302697
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
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 610610
SODC Planning	01235 422600
Reporting Fly-tipping	03000 610610
SODC Environmental Department	01235 422403
Village Hall Hire/Bookings: Andrea Tinson	07391 139707

PARISH COUNCIL & LOCAL CONTACTS

Parish Website

www.astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

Parish Clerk

Tracy Lambourne

clerk@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

01844 353989

07971039612

Parish Councillors:

Chairman Peter Tinson, Kingston Blount

peter.tinson@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

01844 352817

Councillor Matthew Day, Kingston Blount

matthew.day@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

07940752446

Councillor Steven Sowerby, Kingston Blount

steven.sowerby@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

01844 351392

Councillor Trelawney Hill, Aston Rowant

trelawney.hill@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

01844 353051

Councillor Adam Bernstein, Aston Rowant

adam.bernstein@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

07785 905120

Councillor Matthew Priestley, Kingston Blount

matthew.priestley@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

07976 373512

Councillor John Wyatt, Aston Rowant

john.wyatt@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

07710 232349

District Councillors:

Lynn Lloyd

01844 354313

lynn.lloyd@southoxon.gov.uk

Ian White

01844 352085

ian.white@southoxon.gov.uk

County Councillor

Jeannette Matelot

jeannette.matelot@oxfordshire.gov.uk

MP

John Howell

01491 612852

howelljm@parliament.uk

Police Community Support Office

tel: 101

ThameHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

Village Hall Hire/Bookings

Andrea Tinson

07391 139707

bookings@kbvh.org

Play Area

Tracy Lambourne

01844 353989

clerk@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

Aston Rowant Cricket Club Chairman

Simon Tremlin

07780 672552

LETTER FROM JOHN HOWELL MP

This month will bring with it a major step forward in the COVID19 recovery programme, which is welcomed. I know that many people have been enjoying the opportunity to meet up with friends again outdoors, but the weather has, quite literally, put a damper on that! The new opportunity to meet indoors, and to be able to stay overnight with people, is good news. The progress that has been made to enable this is also good news. With the virus deemed to be suppressed in most of the constituency I know that many people are looking forward to a more normal way of life. The vaccination programme has, of course, played a huge part in this and my thanks to those who have come forward to take up the vaccination. However there are still many people who have yet to be offered the vaccine and so I encourage everyone, including those who have already been offered the vaccine, to remain vigilant and follow the guidance for the sake of these people.

One thing that I have very much missed during lockdown and under COVID restrictions is being able to meet people within the constituency. Prior to the pandemic, along with all other MPs, my Fridays and sometimes weekends were filled with visits to schools, businesses, charities and meetings with individuals and groups to discuss a wide range of issues and concerns. Some of this has continued through virtual meetings but I am looking forward to getting out and about more and seeing what is going on for myself. Once all restrictions are lifted, hopefully in June, I will be looking to schedule visits and meetings. Please do get in touch if there is something you would like me to come to.

One thing that I plan to continue is virtual surgeries. This has been one very positive thing that has emerged from lockdown. The constituency is geographically spread and, although I move surgeries around, people wanting to meet with me would sometimes have to travel some distance. With online opportunities we have been able to save people much time and at the same time reduce car journeys. In future we can determine the best way to meet according to the time needed and the travel involved.

With the beginning of the new parliamentary session we have some important new legislation coming forward. Much of the detail is yet to be published but as information is available I would welcome, as always, views on proposals. Email remains the quickest form of communication. If you have an issue that you would like to raise with me, if possible, please email me at john.howell.mp@parliament.uk. If you cannot email you can write to me at the House of Commons, London, SW1 0AA or PO Box 84, Watlington, OX49 5XD. Please be aware that remote working means that it is taking longer for mail to get through to me.

John Howell MP

LOCAL CHURCH CONTACTS

Rector to the United Parish

The Rev'd Dr. Jacky Barr
The Rectory, Chinnor OX39 4DH
01844 352027 07769 825 305
revd.jackybarr@gmail.com

Parish Administrator

Tricia Prescott 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

Crowell

To be appointed

Churchwardens

Aston Rowant: Richard Boarder 07795 681263, Jeremy Wilcock 01844 761119
Crowell: Maggie & Andy Warman 01844 351909

PCC Treasurer

Michael DeVal 12 Oakley Road, Chinnor OX39 4HB 07807 967452

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

Methodist Services – Station
Road, Chinnor



CROWELL CHURCH

We have started services again but only on a monthly basis at Crowell on the 2nd Sunday of each month. 1800hrs an Evening Prayer followed by a Eucharist. These are proving successful as we are having a better than pre-lockdown turnout. How wonderful and long may it continue. This format will continue until at least September.

A 'local meeting' is to be held on 30 June at 1900hrs at the church to tease out what Crowell actually needs or wants. All are welcome as it is 'your church'. We need to make sure that it is relevant to the community and indeed if it needs to remain part of the community.

We can still offer access for private prayer. This is by appointment with the Wardens who are very flexible.

A Sunday service will still be broadcast on the church website as will the Diocese service on their website. This will support those who will not feel comfortable in joining an attended service. Should you wish to attend a virtual service, then go to chinnorunitedchurches.co.uk or oxford.anglican.org

If anyone would like an e-copy of the monthly Chinnor Parish Magazine and/or the weekly Chinnor on-line service booklet then please e-mail the parish admin office at csarc@btinternet.com

A kind donation of some solar lighting has been received for the footpath and this is most welcome.

The rain has stopped all activity in the churchyard. However, we are most grateful to the families who are now making efforts to look after their family graves. It is showing such a vast improvement and we will, when we can weather-wise, look after the main areas.

The wildlife areas will be marked off shortly for this year's survey.

Please stay safe and please, please obey the rules.

Andy & Maggs Warman

(Church Wardens) 07557 476443

PARISHIONER OF THE YEAR WINNERS

The Covid-19 pandemic has made the past year particularly challenging for many. During such difficult times there are always individuals who start new initiatives or whose work becomes more visible as a result of the changing circumstances. The Parish Council instigated the Parishioner of the Year award to recognise those who have gone above and beyond in contributing to the community and invited nominations for the Award for both over 18s and those 18 and under.

I am pleased to announce that the winners of the inaugural Parishioner of the Year Awards are Karen Clark and Scarlett Lee – our congratulations to both. A year ago, during the first lockdown, Karen set up the Lockdown Larder to provide milk, cream, flour and eggs - ingredients which were proving difficult to find in the local supermarkets. Since then, the shop has grown to provide a wide range of goods to the community and has evolved into a social hub for the Parish.

“I’m overwhelmed to receive this recognition. I’m so grateful for the support parishioners have given the Lockdown Larder over the past year” Karen said.

The lockdown saw more people making use of the many footpaths we have across the Parish. Fiveways was a regular destination for many and a small team have been working to ensure that it looks its best for us. Scarlett played her part in this work, clearing the stream of weeds and other debris. Her work, carried out as her volunteering activity for the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award, is recognised as the recipient of the under-18s Award.

It is important to acknowledge the other nominees for the Award; each has made their own contribution to the community which has been recognised by their fellow parishioners through their nomination. Mike Eaton was nominated for his work at Fiveways, clearing much of the scrub and growing and planting many of the flowers we now all enjoy. Lynda Sowerby received her nomination for the support she provided to neighbours during lockdown and finally, Cate Andreopoulous and Tony Hughes were nominated for their ongoing work litter picking in the Parish.

Our thanks and congratulations go to them all.

Peter Tinson

Chairman – Aston Rowant Parish Council

NEW RESIDENTS

A warm welcome to Nick and Louise and their Old English Sheepdog Barney who have recently moved from Watlington to Old Croft Close, Kingston Blount. Wishing you many happy years here!

ARPC FOOTPATH AND AMENITIES GROUP

It has been a quiet few months for the group as we, like everyone else, await the resumption of normality and the easing of the restrictions. It is hoped we can meet as a group when we are able so that we can review existing projects and look for new ones. If anyone has ideas for the parish to improve/maintain the footpaths please let me know.

Both Peter Heatherington and Mike Eaton have written their articles on the parish walk and 5 Ways which are elsewhere in the news.

My thanks to all who participated in the Spring Litter pick, we will repeat the exercise in the autumn for anyone who missed the May pick.

I can confirm that following discussions with the church, Snowdrop Sunday will return in the Spring of 2022, more details will follow later.

The permissive path to Crowell continues to be very popular, so successful that the grass has suffered badly but it is good to see the grass growing back, we will monitor over the summer and may re-seed in the autumn.

Steven Sowerby

Chair of Footpaths and Ammenities Group
steven.sowerby@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk
01844 351392

PARISH WALK - SUNDAY 27 JUNE 10am

Please meet on the pavements near the Leathern Bottle in Lewknor, taking care to step aside when pedestrians want to pass. Park roadside on the left side of the road. Please do not park on the pub forecourt. This is a 6 mile circular walk at leisurely pace. You will be treated to 3 excellent views and there are 2 hills which we will take slowly, before returning to the pub by about 1.00 pm. Please bring a drink and a snack and wear boots or walking shoes. No dogs this time because of sheep.

Booking is essential please. Book by phoning or texting 07767 647714. The walk is organised by Aston Rowant Parish Council's Footpath and Amenities Group. We will observe Covid rules as they apply at the time of the walk and look forward to a lot of Parishioners join us once more. This is one of the very best walks in the Chilterns.

Peter Hetherington

Walk Leader



ASTON ROWANT PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Just over a year ago, the UK Government introduced emergency legislation to allow Parish Councils and other public bodies to carry out their business using video or telephone conference technology. That legislation expired in early May. Although the vaccination programme continues to reduce the risk of a further spike in Coronavirus cases, many Councils expressed concern about having to hold in person meetings before lockdown measures had been fully relaxed. However an appeal to extend the emergency legislation by the National Association of Local Councils was unsuccessful and so the Council will be holding its first in person meeting in June for over a year. Unfortunately, the lockdown rules will not have been fully relaxed by the time of our June meeting and so the meeting will be held under Covid-19 rules. The following restrictions will be in force:

- Continued social distancing. The number of members of the public that will be able to attend will be limited. The number of places available will be advertised on the agenda and we will ask prospective attendees to pre-book;
- Ventilation/one way system. A number of the field side doors will be opened to ensure good ventilation and to offer a one way system;
- Masks should be worn until people are seated;
- All attendees should check in to the Village Hall with the NHS track and trace app;
- Anyone who has exhibited Covid like symptoms should not attend.

The pandemic has made the past year particularly challenging for many. The Parish Council recognised that there are always individuals who come to the fore in such times and so established the Parishioner of the Year award to recognise those who have made a significant contribution to the local community. News of the winners is given [on page x] of the Notes.

The Parish Council held a minute's silence at the start of our meeting in April to make the passing of Prince Philip, the Duke of Edinburgh. It was fitting that Adam Lockwood tolled the bell in Aston Rowant Church for the Duke's funeral. Adam started his bronze Duke of Edinburgh award in year 9 at Lord Williams's School and started bell ringing as part of his Award. As Adam notes

"We were all encouraged to undertake the award with the opportunities and benefits to our future being highlighted to us.

I had already been approached by the Aston Rowant Church Tower captain to think about taking part in bell ringing so we decided I could use this as the skill strand for my DofE award and I decided to give it a go!

Fast forward 8 years and I'm still ringing.

I was given the privilege of tolling the bell for the Duke of Edinburgh's funeral; rather symbolic as it's thanks to him I have learnt and kept this skill, which was then used in his honour."

Two more of our young parishioners have carried out work within the Parish as part of their participation in the Duke of Edinburgh Award. Poppy Cunningham

worked in the Lockdown Larder helping on Saturday mornings for her volunteering strand and supplemented this by assisting with lambing at Kingston Blount Farm for her skills strand. In addition, many parishioners will have seen the results of Scarlett Lee's work for her volunteering strand, where she cleared the stream at Fiveways of weeds and debris.

The Duke of Edinburgh Award introduces young people to volunteering and both the Parish and the individuals concerned benefit. Parishes such as ours rely on the contribution of volunteers but all too often responsibility falls to a small number of individuals. Schemes like the Duke of Edinburgh Award highlight that voluntary work is often rewarding and will hopefully encourage more to join the volunteer network.

Peter Tinson

Chairman – Aston Rowant Parish Council



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ASTON ROWANT PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

Parish Council meetings were held on Wednesday 14th of April 2021 and Wednesday 5th May 2021 where the applications detailed below were discussed. The next meeting of the Council will be held on Thursday 10th of June - see agenda for details.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

P21/S0733/HH Enlargement of Existing Window at: 6 Dashwood Court, Aston Rowant - further to refusal of P21/S4366/HH. **SUPPORT.**

P21/S0907/HH Replacement pool house & leisure complex at: Orchard House, High Street Kingston Blount. Following site meetings several amendments have been suggested, chiefly due to privacy, noise and tree preservation. **OBJECT.**

P21/S1053/HH Construction of a single storey side extension, extension of an existing dormer and insertion of a skylight at: Three Gables Cottage, Aston Hill. **SUPPORT.**

P21/S1458/FUL Demolition of existing 3-bedroom detached dwelling house and out-buildings. Construction of new self-contained 7-bedroom dwelling with landscaping at: Wayside, Stert Road, Kingston Stert. Concerns expressed re: size, over development, position within plot, sight lines and roof height affecting neighbouring properties. **OBJECT.**

P21/S0907/HH Amendment No.1 to previous plans for development work at: Orchard House High Street Kingston Blount. Happy to support now amendments submitted, further to site visit and discussions with neighbours. **SUPPORT.**

P21/S1656/HH Single storey front and rear extensions and internal alterations at: 1 Aston Park Aston Rowant. Cllrs split 3/3 - concerns over size and proximity to boundary of No 2 Aston Park. but no response from No 2 so assume no strong views held. **SUPPORT.**

P21/S1694/HH Part 2-storey, part single storey side extension to existing house at: 9 The Rise Kingston Blount. **SUPPORT.**

WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS:

P20/S3679/FUL Erection of a new detached dwelling and garage at: Land adjacent to Queens Gate Bungalow, Butts Way Aston Rowant - **WITHDRAWN** by applicants.

PLANNING DECISIONS OF SODC:

P21/S0523/HH Side extension to form new garage, relocation of fuel tank, extension of driveway paving at Maple House, Aston Rowant. **GRANTED.**

P21/S0652/HH Demolition and reconstruction of existing front porch at 2 Stert Road Kingston Blount. **GRANTED.**

P21/S0733/HH Enlargement of existing window at 6 Dashwood Court Aston Rowant. **GRANTED.**

P21/S1053/HH Construction of a single storey side extension, extension of an existing dormer and insertion of a skylight at Three Gables Cottage, Aston Hill. **GRANTED.**

PLANNING DECISIONS MADE SINCE THE LAST MEETING:

None

PLANNING INSPECTORATE APPEAL:

P20/S4366/HH 6 Dashwood Court, Aston Rowant. Ref: APP Q3115/D/21/3268925.

Please note that all Planning Applications for the Parish can be found on the Parish Council Website: <http://www.astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk> under 'Parish Council' and then 'Planning'.

All past minutes of Aston Rowant Parish Council (Including the Annual Parish Meeting) can be found under: <http://www.astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk> under 'Parish Council' and then 'Meetings'.

Occasional updates concerning the Parish are added to the Parish Council's website and Facebook pages as well as the Kingston Blount/Aston Rowant (KBAR) Facebook page.

Tracy Lambourne

Clerk to Aston Rowant Parish Council

ADVERTISING IN THE PARISH NOTES

The Parish Notes are an excellent and affordable way to advertise locally. They are published every two months and delivered to every household in the area. Please email Julian Knight if you are interested in advertising: jknight652@aol.com

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OBITUARY MIKE GORTON

It is with sadness that we report Mike's unexpected death on 21st May. He was 79 and first came to the village of Aston Rowant over 40 years ago and he has kept his house here all that time. Much of his career was spent in South Africa and then Cyprus, but when he returned, he participated generously in local affairs and charities, including being a school governor here.

With his wife Correen, they made a lovely garden at Mead House and without her he was building an amazing model railway at the back of it.

He will be sadly missed by many friends locally and much more widely.

Toodlepip Mike.

PASTORAL LETTER

So, here we are at the beginning of summer. We can put the dark days of winter behind us and enjoy the brightness of this new season. There's a parallel re the virus in that rigid lockdown has finished and we can look forward to bright, covid minimalist days ahead if Boris' plans come together. Although May Day is probably the most well-known May celebration, did you know that each day of May is dedicated to something or other? I read this from what I assume is a tongue in cheek website www.thespruce.com/reasons-to-celebrate-in-may-4160362.

Since many of us have been taking the opportunity to dwell in nature during lockdown, we're probably more aware than ever about nature itself. Amongst other things, to ease the pressure, we've walked in nature, observed it, listened to it, relaxed in it. We've inherently known that to commune with nature is good for our health and mental well being. Scientists are researching the link between the two and results show it aids our immune system, counters stress, lifts our mood and gives us a feeling of contentment. Did you know that under a new trial which started in the autumn of 2020, UK doctors can prescribe patients a walk in the park instead of pills? This is part of a national experiment to test whether so-called 'green prescriptions' could offer another way of improving health. Apparently doctors in New Zealand have been doing this for decades!

However, as with so many other things, Jesus is ahead of the curve. He champions nature watching as a way of countering anxiety. He suggested His disciples think about sparrows if they are feeling afraid (Matt 10:29), to watch birds fly if they are worried (Matt 6:26) and to study flowers if they are worried about clothing, (Matt 6:28). Furthermore, when He battled temptation He did so in the wilderness (Matt 4:1). When He was seeking solace ahead of His passion, He retreated to a garden (Matt 26:36).

Let's take Jesus' advice and as we get back to the 'new normal', let's not forget to continue our nature watching and indeed praising God as we immerse ourselves in it.

Rev'd Brian Griffiths

NEWS FROM ST PETER AND ST PAUL CHURCH

Aston Rowant Church Repair Appeal

Once again, we need to thank everyone who contributed, the sums raised have exceeded our expectations, brilliant job. Now the hard work can start, we are setting up contracts for the work, finalising the arrangements and getting the work done. As we have said before we hope to complete the work this summer during the good weather and after the Covid restrictions are lifted. We will keep everyone informed as the jobs progress.

The Churchyard

A further thank you to the Aston Rowant Parrish Council for their generous donation of money to help keep the churchyard in good order. The primroses were lovely this year and soon we shall start mowing and strimming to keep the area trim. Wildlife is being catered for with the beehives and hedgehog box.

Future events

As we come out of lockdown we are hoping to get back to normal. The Parish Council we be holding their July meeting in the church and we are already talking with the Parish Council about resumption of “Duck Races” and “Cream Teas” for next year and we are hoping to hold a musical event in the church in the Autum.

Services

The PCC remain cautious about the resumption of normal services but services in person or online are available every Sunday, please see the church web site for details.

Pictures

We have been passed this picture postcard of the church taken in the 1940s, it's interesting, nothing has changed much but the hedges and trees have changed. Has anyone else got old pictures of the church, we would be interested to see them. In particular we are looking for a nice picture of the church and churchyard covered in snow that we could use for Christmas cards this year, please send any you have to me.

Richard Boarder

Church Warden

07795681263

xairpilot@msn.com





NEWS FROM FIVEWAYS

Fiveways has been very busy again – so much so that the deck covering is wearing out after 5 years. The Parish Council have kindly agreed to pay for replacing it but take care until then.

The daffodils and the wood anemones have been the best ever. I am hoping the daffodils will start to drop seed. Ideally wild daffodils should be planted in public spaces to give nature a chance to take over. If there is any interest I would be happy to get some wild bulbs for people to plant near their homes. The wild garlic is in flower and it is clear that they have dropped seed. The white Greater Stitchwort is out and spreading at the lower end, its foliage looks like grass. The yellow Marsh Marigold by the stream is also looking magnificent. I have seen small fish near the end culvert.

The dead tree is being embellished by bat boxes, there are already some residents in the hole near the top.

I have deepened the Dog Pool keen observers will note.

The dangerous deep hole at the top end caused by the water bypassing the two pipes under the track we have filled with broken pipe bits. This has made it safer for now but sadly the local youth seem to enjoy throwing the infill into the stream!

We are still keen for volunteers (younger the better) and especially if they have a special interest such as birds, butterflies, bugs, environment etc. My email is below.

Upper Thame Catchment area protection

We live at the foot of the Chilterns and would hope the local spring water would be pristine, after being filtered through the chalk bedrock. Indeed Lewknor Brook, just south of the M40, is designated as a chalk stream; these are very rare ecosystems, globally important, 85% of which are found in southern and eastern England. I fish this stream and the wild brown trout come up to Nethercote Lane to spawn every Spring. Sadly this year they found it contaminated by raw sewage for weeks.

The Holbrook at Fiveways, like most of the Chiltern streams, has a higher nitrate content than ideal but fortunately doesn't have the sewage issues seen in the Lewknor Brook. The River Thame Conservation Trust is working with local organisations to monitor, protect and enhance freshwater systems in the Thame catchment www.riverthame.org. Local volunteers have tested all our local streams for nitrate and phosphate this May.

The streams are being walked regularly at present, the ditches are important to maintain, and they are generally the responsibility of the land owner and NOT the authorities. Blocked ditches can result in flooding, which removes the gravel in Church Lane and flows into the sewage system in several places – see below.

Much of the local area has a problem as the leaky nature of some of the sewage systems allows spring water in, especially when water levels are high. When large quantities of water enter the sewage works the storage tanks cannot cope, and utility

companies such as Thames Water are permitted to discharge sewage into the streams running into the river Thame. (For more information on this visit <https://riverthame.org/river-thame/pressures/water-quality/raw-sewage/>)

Wildlife depends on the streams as do livestock; once damaged, streams take a very long time to recover.

What can we do?

1. Plastic bottles etc can block underground culverts which are expensive to unblock. Please try not to throw large objects in the streams which can also block culverts.
2. Maintain culverts – perhaps using a grill to save costs, but these need regular checks to keep them clear.
3. No storm water should be entering the sewage system so make sure your drains are connected correctly (see <https://riverthame.org/advice/households/>) Domestic waste water should not go into the drainage system as it often contains high phosphate levels. This is a favourite fix for builders as it is easier.
4. Do not dispose of any chemicals in ditches or streams.

If you think you have a problem, get in touch with Tracy Lambourne clerk to the council, contact details are in the parish notes or she can be contacted via the parish council website as there are people who can help find a solution. If you see what you think is a pollution incident notify Thames Water (0800 316 9800) and the Environment Agency 0800 80 70 60. It helps if you can take a photograph, note any smell, dead fish, colour, extent, and duration of the event.

Mike Eaton

mike.eaton@btopenworld.com



PARKING REQUEST

A request to those parking at the junction of the Stert Road and Brook Street in Kingston Blount, especially when dropping off or collecting children from the school.

Please park away from the junction.

We're seeing an increase in this and it's only a matter of time before it causes an accident with the risk of injury or death. Drivers turning into Brook Street from the Stert Road will not see or have time to react to cars parked so close to the junction. Similarly, drivers emerging from Brook Street on to the Stert Road won't see traffic that has right of way.

As a reminder, parking so close to a junction is an offence: "Rule 243 of the Highway Code states you must not park opposite or within 10 metres (32 feet) of a junction, except in an authorised parking space."

Apart from the risk of injury or death, drivers risk a police penalty and losing an insurance claim since the manner of their parking puts them at fault.

Please help us to keep the community, and children, safe; it's not an unreasonable request.

Adam Bernstein

adam.bernstein@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk



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LETTER FROM A HEADTEACHER

I wonder how you would sum up being British? I must admit that I am a Yorkshire lass and I am rather partial to a brew! It has to be strong mind you with the tea bag left in for a good few minutes and even better if the tea is served with a Yorkshire Fat Rascal! I also love Whitby cod and large Yorkshire puddings, all of which make me think of home and are part of who I am.

It is a question that we often explore in school – what does it mean to be British? A key part of education is to ensure children become valuable and fully rounded members of society who treat others with respect and tolerance, regardless of background or beliefs. Therefore, to support this every school promotes the basic British Values, defined by the Government, of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs. The aim is to ensure young people understand the importance of respect and leave school fully prepared for life in modern Britain.

At Aston Rowant Primary School we ensure that the fundamental British Values are introduced, discussed, celebrated and lived out through the ethos and work of the school. We have a cross curricular approach to learning, which provides opportunities to deepen and develop understanding, developing the spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of our children. We value the voice of the child and promote the democratic processes by having school council members and house captains who are elected by the children. Children are given other responsibilities such as Worship Leader, Eco Warrior and Games Leader. In RE we study a range of faiths and in all of our lessons there is a chance for children to debate and put forward their points of view. We also maintain links with the local community through projects such as ‘Hearts for Homes’ and supporting our local food bank ‘Sharing Life Trust’.

Recently, on St. George’s Day, we had a British Values Day. The children explored each of the five values in more depth and joined in activities such as: ‘If I were Prime Minister...’, ‘Who is the Queen and what does she do?’ and even decided which old laws to eliminate as well as introducing some new ones.

I wonder how you would define what it is to be British and what special traditions and customs you embrace and enjoy?

Mrs Helen France

Headteacher,
Aston Rowant School



NEWS FROM ARCC

In theory May sees the start of the league cricket season and is looked forward to by players and spectators alike. But after the wonderful weather in April so far this May 7 out of the 8 league games have been washed out or badly affected by the rain. Only the third team have completed a full game, a comprehensive win at Garsington.

The village cup competition however played on Sundays has seen the club win 3 games to reach the Oxfordshire semi-final. The result of which will be known by the time the notes are published.

Also, by the time you read this the covid regulations will be clearer, and we know that spectators will now be allowed but the rest of the regulations are not clear at the time of writing. You can check the current regulations by looking at the club website, www.astonrowantcc.com.

The club hospitality area is open with the bar open Friday nights and both Sat and Sunday afternoons from 1pm. Everyone is welcome, please come down and enjoy the cricket and the views.

As a club we cannot overstate how proud we are of James Coles, who this week signed a professional contract with Sussex. Having been the youngest player for them last season this is a well-deserved reward and we all look forward to following his progress over the next few years. Everyone who has played with James say he plays his cricket in the right way and we know your grandad will be looking down on your progress with immense pride.

We are continuing to improve the cricket facilities at the ground, 2 new sight screens have been erected on the bottom ground and now we have the new scoreboard we are looking better than many 1st teams grounds.



The rest of this article is about what is a very important part of the club, the senior teams get most of the publicity but the junior section is very important to us and I thank Matt and James for their report.

Friday nights are Juniors Nights at Aston Rowant Cricket Club. This season kicked off in mid-April quickly becoming a really bustling affair with plenty of junior members made up of both regulars and an influx of new players to the club. Under 9 & 11 squads train from 6-7 pm and Under 13 & 15 squads from 7-8 pm. The bar is open to enjoy drinks and snacks from our wonderful new outdoor hospitality area and there is currently no shortage of dedicated parents doing that each week!

Training sessions are masterminded by our Director of Cricket, Wes Morrick, together with a fantastic group of coaches, many of whom play for the Rowant First XI, who impart an array of technical knowledge and can also give a current player's perspective, particularly useful as young cricketers get older and need insight into tactics and game planning.

The run of matches, which currently takes us up to the beginning of July, has already commenced for all age groups in a number of leagues and competitions and our teams have started the season really positively – it is great to see this and it bodes very well for the forthcoming season since expectations, based on previous success, are always high for Rowant teams.

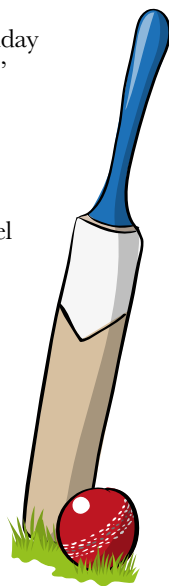
This year the Club has also instigated a Development team for the older, keener players designed to transition them from junior to senior cricket with additional training sessions and matches against clubs from further afield: government restrictions permitting, there is likely to be a short UK tour for these dedicated lads and lasses in the summer holidays.

We are really pleased to see an increased representation of girls at Friday night training: we have an Under 15 girls team designed to promote girls' access to match play and since they are able to play across a greater age range this is a great opportunity for any between the ages of 13 and 17 – they are entered into the main Aylesbury U15 League so there is no compromise on standard.

So, if you are a young player, yet to align yourself to a club, please feel free to come down on Friday night to see how we roll and if you like it (and we're confident you will) you may find your second home at Aston Rowant this season.

Steven Sowerby

Aston Rowant CC



TESSA WYATT'S COUNTRYSIDE DIARY

29th March I thought I would put this here, because I feel this is something we should all bear in mind. Sir David Attenborough has said the same thing in a different way:

“Before I was six years old, my grandparents and my mother had taught me that if all the green things that grow were taken from the earth, there could be no life. If all the four-legged creatures were taken from the earth, there could be no life. If all the winged creatures were taken from the earth, there could be no life. If all our relatives who crawl and swim and live within the earth were taken away, there could be no life. But if all the human beings were taken away, life on earth would flourish. That is how insignificant we are.”

Russell Means, Oglala Lakota Nation (1939 – 2012).

1st April I was horrified at the amount of rubbish strewn along the roadside and along the bridleway in the woods today. People leave all kinds of detritus, from used face masks to empty bottles and cans, all of which are a danger to wildlife. Birds and animals get caught up in the straps of the masks, and hedgehogs get stuck inside discarded drinks cans and either suffocate or starve because they can't escape. Dogs, horses and people cut their feet on broken bottles, and it all looks so ugly. I feel like standing at the slip road off the M40 with a placard reading, “Please, if you are a visitor to our countryside, leave it as you would wish it to be – pristine and lovely.”

4th April Wood anemones, lesser celandine, a lone fritillary and fluffy white blackthorn all in flower at Fiveways to celebrate Easter. And it's a bit warmer too!

8th April A dear little partridge walked with me to Katie's field this morning, gazing up at me with his head on one side, peeping softly, tame as you please. I got to the gate and opened it whereupon he shot off into the hedge, screeching his disgust. I suspect he was hoping I had grain in my pocket and was disappointed. There are two shoots nearby so I reckon he was hand reared for the guns. Not destined for our table obviously!

15th April Mrs Muntjac was back in the garden this evening. She was licking up dropped seed from under the bird feeders while we were having supper in the kitchen in full view of her. She's looking a bit chubby so I suspect there's another bambi on the way. Tinker glared at her through the kitchen door - she's not scared of her as she used have wild boar in her last garden, but she was cross because Mrs M didn't ask her for permission.

April 24th We have been working non-stop today. I've cleared a flower bed with a view to replanting and John has been creating new skirting boards indoors. Just about ready now to sit down in the sun with a cool glass of something wonderful, and a certain large woolly cat has plonked herself in John's chair (we only have two.) Moving her brings on such an aria of chirps and miaows of complaint, it's easier just to drag out a dining chair!

April 26th The garden this morning. Pear blossom out and apple about to pop, let's hope we don't have any severe late frost!



April 30th Mr and Mrs Duck have taken to roosting in our garden. I asked if they would like anything, they said they were quite happy thank you but please keep the cat indoors. They are very confident and didn't even move when I came staggering past them with a load of shopping.



May 10th The bluebells are more abundant this year than I have seen for ages. The blue of heaven, flung like a blanket across the woodland floor. However, Spanish bluebells are not native to the UK, as you probably know, and are very invasive, threatening our delicate British ones. You can tell the difference between the two species by the way the British variety bears its bells on the underside of its arching stem, whereas the Spanish fella wears his bells all round his upright stem.

May 13th A very confused bee flew into the kitchen just now and crawled under the gap under the linen cupboard door. Poor soul has now crawled out looking terribly worried. I think she thinks it's her hive poor dear. Anyway she has been caught and released in the hope that she doesn't come back #bee#wrong address#try again darling

Tessa Wyatt



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Many of you may have met Mark during his doorstep project in 2020 when he photographed the residents of Kingston Blount & Aston Rowant to mark 75 years since VE Day. In all Mark photographed 75 households on their doorsteps during lockdown 1 & last Summer. The images will be on display in the village hall soon. Mark has lived in Aston Rowant for almost ten years & is often seen out with his camera photographing his clients using our lovely local countryside as a backdrop. Book Mark to photograph your family & you will meet at his home in Aston Rowant before walking down towards Fiveways. A relaxed family shoot, the walk helps everyone unwind, interact & Mark will capture some beautiful images which your family will treasure for years to come. After the shoot you will receive a secure online gallery from which you can choose digital files, prints or he also has some stunning wall products to choose from. Portrait shoots from Marks home are £25 or a shoot can be arranged at your family home if you prefer.

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LOVE WON THE DAY

After a long year of no weddings we finally had a wedding in the Parish! On 10th April, Miss Amelia Hall married Mr Adam Hall (yes, you read that correctly) to become the newest Mr and Mrs Hall of their families! The wedding took place with all Covid restrictions in place and yet, it was still an amazing day of great joy! Congratulations to Amelia and Adam from everyone at the United Parish!



If you have any news you would like including in the next Parish Notes (weddings are good!) or if you have new neighbours we can welcome to the Parish please email me at sallyparishnotes@gmail.com.

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FTTP BROADBAND FOR THE PARISH

It's been a couple of months since I started the FTTP project, but I am pleased to report that progress is being made.

In numbers, at the time of writing, I have had 65 residents from Aston Rowant express interest, 68 from Kingston Blount, four from Kingston Stert, 10 from Crowell and three from Copcourt – 150 in total. Of that number, 54 have registered as running a business from their home.

Compared to Airband with just 26 expressions of interest after a year we've done well. In fact, those numbers have helped move the project on somewhat and according to an OCC contact overseeing broadband rollout in the county, we're the second or third largest FTTP project in Oxfordshire.

Now where this gets interesting is that as I've previously noted, each property is worth £1500 in government voucher funding, £3500 if a business is run from the premises (even if a residential line is taken). The Oxfordshire coverage map at <https://bit.ly/2SMjmOf> shows that we're eligible for voucher funding.

The Openreach estimate for the project is in – it's £260,099 and that sum is entirely covered by voucher funding (which generates a total of £333,000). But because of the potential for residents to withdraw Openreach require expressions of interest to 130 percent of the estimate which equates to £338,128.

I have now requested a formal offer from Openreach which may change the figure quoted in the estimate. But that aside, the advice I have been given by my OCC contact, who has spoken to Openreach on my behalf, is that we are only a few thousand pounds short of the 130 percent requirement and that because of our proximity to the target it's highly likely the project will get the green light. Importantly, we shouldn't need to sign an overarching contract, form a community interest company, or seek monies from residents which greatly simplifies the process. It's also possible that we could have FTTP delivered within a 12-month period from now.

Of course, until Openreach engineers have visited the parish and each home to install there is scope for failure. But I've been assured that this is unlikely.

I need to keep the momentum going and it would help the project, if you can mention, if you haven't already, the plan to bring FTTP to the parish to all you know and ask them to express interest to me. If we can exceed that 130 percent requirement then, subject to governmental changes or some other supervening event, I think we would be mostly – and I use that word guardedly - home and dry.

To go on the list, I need the householder's name, full postal address, email address and knowledge of whether a business is being run from home (I don't need details of the business). At this point, this is only an expression of interest; there is no obligation to take FTTP. It's also worth pointing out that using Openreach means that householders can choose their internet service provider. The alternative, if it ever comes to fruition, means an initial two-year tie-in with Airband.

I have an Openreach FAQ for those interested.

Adam Bernstein

adam.bernstein@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

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If you are one of those affected, you should know that PIP (personal independence payments) may be available. PIP is financial support for those who have an illness, disability or mental health condition, making it hard for them to do everyday tasks or get around. Income, savings and employment status don't affect your PIP eligibility, and PIP can supplement any other benefits you might be receiving. To apply, you need to be aged between 16 and your state pension age, and you need to have had these health problems for at least three months and expect them to continue. For help with applying for PIP, contact Citizens Advice Adviceline on 0808 278 7907 (for Oxfordshire South and Vale). There is more information about PIP at <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/sick-or-disabled-people-and-carers/pip/>



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If you have anything you'd like to see in the next issue please get in touch anytime.

Copy deadline for the August/September issue is 15th July.

Email: sallyparishnotes@gmail.com.