

VOL XXXIX NO 4

AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2022

ASTON ROWANT, KINGSTON BLOUNT & CROWELL

PARISH NOTES



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USEFUL PHONE NUMBERS

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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: Francesca Musaeus francesca.musaeus@hotmail.com	
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

KINGSTON BLOUNT VILLAGE HALL

The Village Hall is open for bookings. 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

PARISH COUNCIL & LOCAL CONTACTS

Parish Website

www.astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

Parish Clerk

Tracy Lambourne

clerk@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

01844 353989

07971 039612

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

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01844 351392

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01844 353051

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07976 373512

Councillor John Wyatt, Aston Rowant

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07710 232349

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Ian White

01844 352085

ian.white@southoxon.gov.uk

County Councillor

Kate Gregory

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Nigel Champken-Woods

nigel.champken-woods@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

Josh Smith

07894 201 929

chairman@astonrowantcc.com

DEFIBRILLATOR TRAINING

Following the note on how to give CPR and use a defibrillator in the last issue of the Parish Notes, I am pleased to say that, finally, the new defibrillator and box are now on a wall by the church. (A large ‘thank you’ to Richard Boarder for permitting the placement of the box on his wall).

The box is green and should be reasonably obvious to all, but if heading out of the village from the Green – with the church on the right – look to the left. It’s where the old telephone box used to be.

The parish is now organising training for residents on CPR and how to use a defibrillator. There are two events being held in Kingston Blount Village Hall – Tuesday 6 September and Thursday 8 September – both starting at 19:30hrs and are free to attend.

Please try to come along to one or other of them; an hour spent understanding CPR and getting familiarised with a defibrillator unit may well save the life of someone close to you.

Just to gauge numbers it would be helpful to know who is coming. Please send an email to adam.bernstein@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk.

The parish is planning to put another defibrillator on the B4009 in Kingston Blount. That will have to wait to next year and a new budget.

Lastly, to find a defibrillator – anywhere in the UK – visit www.defibfinder.uk. It will show the 10 closest units to the postcode or town entered. Please bookmark the page.



Cllr. Adam Bernstein

07785 905120



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LETTER FROM JOHN HOWELL MP

I write my newsletter in the middle of the month. Although I usually try to avoid comment on Party political issues this time around I can hardly avoid this as I am caught up in the midst of the elections for a new leader for the Conservative Party and hence the new Prime Minister to succeed Boris Johnson. Some people have wanted me to comment on every twist and turn of events that eventually led to Boris Johnson announcing his intention to stand down as Prime Minister. To the frustration of many I refused to do so. Whilst in the end I joined those who felt that it was time for him to step down for the sake of the country and for a successful Government I do deplore the way in which it came about. Similarly, as far as I am able, I am keeping out of the fray in the election of our new leader. Of course I will have to make my choice, but I will not join in seeking to discredit candidates. Each must be considered on their merit for the role rather than against negative aspects of others. I do not underestimate the importance of who is our next Prime Minister and the integrity with which a campaign is carried out says much about the person. I am also looking to see that the Conservative Manifesto on which I was elected at the last General Election is honoured and as such can reassure those who have written to me on individual manifesto issues that they would like to see remain as live issues.

Now on to other things. In the constituency there are many families who choose to home school their children. The Schools Bill raises some concerns for them which I appreciate. Following a mass meeting in Westminster of MPs and constituents from across the country I was asked to take the lead in presenting a parliamentary petition to the House on their behalf. I will publish the Minister's response on my website when it is received. Also with children in mind, I know that many share the concerns over the harm that young people can face online. This is, of course, an issue which affects adults too. The Online Safety Bill is welcome in its work to make the UK the safest place to be online whilst also defending free expression. This will be regulated by Ofcom who will have the power to levy fines of £18m or 10% of a company's annual global turnover.

There is also local interest in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill especially aspects relating to planning. The Bill is currently at Committee Stage where each line of the Bill is scrutinised. We will soon come to the parliamentary recess during which time committees do not sit and so no further progress will be made on Bills currently before Parliament until the House returns in September.

Although during recess the House does not sit Ministers continue the work of their Departments and MPs continue with their work with more of a constituency focus. My office will remain open to assist with personal issues where possible although some of my team will be taking a well-earned break.

If there is an issue that concerns you please do share your thoughts. Email is the easiest way. My email address is john.howell.mp@parliament.uk.

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 Ministers:

The Rev'd Des Foote 01844 355945
The Rev'd Dr. Brian Griffiths 01844 355953
The Rev'd Joan De Val 01844 353404
Margaret Poole 01844 281042

Churchwardens

Aston Rowant: Richard Boarder 07795 681263
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).

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CROWELL CHURCH

There will not be a Soul Space in August. It will resume on 04 September.

If anyone is interested in helping out in the graveyard in general, then please contact the Wardens. We had arranged for a work party on Saturday 16 July but this was cancelled due to the heat warnings - a wise move as we decided to try and do some small tasks but it proved impossible. Some ivy was removed by a very keen early bird but of course he will have missed the main heat of the day.

Future work parties will be announced. The priority task is to get all the ivy off the graveyard wall without damaging the wall.

We have started to create a new compost heap in the top far right corner of the graveyard when looking towards the Lychgate. Please don't use the two old ones as we are going to move them. They are too close to graves that are being tended and some people throw plastic flower wrappings etc. on them rather than using the black bin.

If anyone would like an e-copy of the monthly Chinnor Parish Magazine and/

or the weekly on-line service booklet then please e-mail the parish office at csarc@btinternet.com

The Rectors Ramble took place on 2nd July. A walk around the Parish, visiting all four churches for a bit of fun and fund raising. There was a very good turnout and the weather was kind to us.

The church will always be open when the Wardens are working in it or working in the churchyard. Please call if you would like access for private prayer at other times.

Please stay safe and continue to consider others who may still feel vulnerable.

Andy & Maggs Warman

(Church Wardens) 01844 351909

themwarmans@btinternet.com

CROWELL WINDOW SPRING CLEAN

I had no idea, until Thursday 26th May, that watching a window being cleaned could be so exhilarating or thought provoking. I was treated to a very emotional and moving experience in the Blessed Virgin Mary Church at Crowell. The stained-glass window above the altar was cleaned.

To begin with Mathew removed the cobwebs from the window, ceiling and roof with his 'magic brush'. Mrs spider who was living in her cobweb above the altar was 'not amused'. She had probably been in residence for some 15 years and was proud of her cobweb weaving skills.

He then dusted the whole window with gentle sweeps revealing some parts that had not been seen for a long time. Next, each section was gently washed with a damp cloth using clean warm water revealing the outline of the pub next door to the churchyard.

Gradually I watched the window coming to life – years of grime being gently wiped away with the damp cloth. I will never forget watching the face of Mary, the halo and face of baby Jesus, suddenly shining with the sunlight as it flooded the window. In that moment I went cold, the hairs on my arms stood up and afterwards I felt very calm and peaceful. What an absolute privilege to see the pride and care Mathew took in cleaning our precious window.

Our thanks go to the generous donor who paid for the work to be done.

We also would like to thank Matthew Powell (MP Cleaning), Widmer End for a job well done.



ASTON ROWANT PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The current hot spell has brought an increased focus on climate change. Both South Oxfordshire and the Vale of the White Horse District Councils declared a climate emergency and have set targets to be carbon neutral within in the next twenty years. The two councils are working towards a joint Local Plan for the period to 2041. It is little surprise that carbon reduction and nature recovery are strong themes in the emerging plan and their inclusion highlights a challenge to both councils - whilst the aspiration is to move to a net zero carbon, this should not be at the expense of the local environment and countryside.

We received notification of a submission to South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) for an opinion on an environment impact assessment for a solar array in Lewknor parish. Although this is not a formal planning application it has given the Council the opportunity to highlight concerns at an early stage. The proposed array covers a large area on either side of the M40 – it will run alongside the Lower Icknield Way after it crosses the A40 and will be clearly visible from the Chilterns Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. We have submitted a response to SODC noting the environmental impact of the proposal whilst highlighting alternatives to large scale developments on agricultural land.

We were disappointed to learn that an application for a development of 54 age restricted residences (i.e. homes for over 55s) in Chinnor was approved by the planning

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inspectorate. The development, which will be located on the field opposite the Belway Homes development on the Crowell side of Chinnor, will place further strain on infrastructure and services in the area.

Chinnor has grown enormously over the past ten years. A further application to build 32 homes on one of the few fields left undeveloped on the outskirts of the village has now been submitted to SODC. We have submitted an objection to the proposal, which is also on the Crowell side of Chinnor and would be accessed from Oakley Lane, citing the pressure on infrastructure and services. A number of major applications in Chinnor refused by SODC have been approved on appeal. It is concerning that the inspector ruling on the aged restricted development mentioned above allowed the appeal despite Thames Water highlighting that their systems are over capacity already. It is hoped that this is not repeated for this application.

We are fortunate that we have a number of people who have records detailing the history and development of the parish. Recently we were given a planning drawing from 1925 for the construction of the houses at The Rise, Kingston Blount (pictured below). We are grateful to Vic Golder for his donation. The Council will be looking at ways of making these resources more accessible for all to use in the Autumn.

Finally, although the work of the Council continues, we do take a short summer break and do not meet again until September. I wish you all a restful and safe summer.

Peter Tinson

Chairman

Aston Rowant Parish Council

ASTON ROWANT PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

Parish Council meetings were held on Wednesday 13th of April 2022 and Wednesday 11th May 2022 where the planning applications detailed below were discussed. The next meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday 8th of June 2022.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

P22/S1728/HH Proposed detached garden room (replacing existing detached outbuilding) at 6 Icknield Close, Kingston Blount, OX39 4RS. Objection raised by immediate neighbour re: being overlooked, but as windows are not directly facing them, Cllrs did not see this would be an issue. **SUPPORT.**

P22/S1834/DIS Discharge of Condition 4 (Tree Protection (General)) on planning application P22/S0292/HH Removal of inground swimming pool and pre-fabricated leisure building. Construction of an annex ancillary to the main house. Works to boundary wall / gates at Lion House, High Street, Kingston Blount. **INFO ONLY.**

P22/S1875/HH Single storey timber orangery at 6 The Green, Aston Rowant. Only 1 comment on portal, which is supportive. **SUPPORT.**

P22/S1452/FUL Conversion of home office into self-contained 1-bed dwelling with car-port and parking at Manor Farm Barns, Crowell. **# NOT IN THIS PARISH #** but Crowell Parish Meeting have requested we review and respond if appropriate in view of apparent breaches in planning regulations, thereby setting a precedent. **OBJECTION.**

P22/S2102/DIS Discharge of condition 5 (Surface Water Drainage) on application P22/S0292/HH (Removal of an in-ground swimming pool and pre-fabricated leisure building. Construction of an annex ancillary to the main house. Works to boundary wall/gates) at Lion House, High Street, Kingston Blount. For information only. **INFO ONLY.**

P22/S2103/DIS Discharge of condition 6 (Boundary walls & fences) on application P22/S0292/HH (Removal of inground swimming pool and pre-fabricated leisure building. Construction of an annex ancillary to the main house. Works to boundary wall/gates) at Lion House, High Street, Kingston Blount. For information only. **INFO ONLY.**

P22/S2431/SCR Request for an Environmental Impact Assessment Screening Opinion in relation to proposed solar array on Land to S & W of Postcombe. This is in Lewknor Parish, who had an emergency meeting on Mon 18th July to discuss a response (not occurred at time of writing) – our response is that we would prefer full EAI survey to address these concerns & put mitigating measures in place. **OBJECT.**

P22/S2291/FUL Demolition of No 53 Oakley Lane, Chinnor and the construction of a residential development of 32 houses and apartments with access from Oakley Lane, associated infrastructure and landscaping. **# NOT IN THIS PARISH #** **OBJECT** on the basis of over-development, traffic issues, infrastructure overload, sewage and water issues, over-allocation of new housing to Chinnor and danger of outlying villages being subsumed by Chinnor's ever expanding village boundary.

WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS:

None

PLANNING DECISIONS OF SODC:

P22/S1596/HH Various single storey extensions to front, sides and rear, including new enlarged roof with roof windows and new first floor area. Elevational changes including new windows, doors and rendered walls at 11 Aston Park, Aston Rowant. GRANTED.

P22/S1280/LB To replace the remaining existing upstairs windows (the downstairs and one upstairs window were replaced in planning application P13/S1625/LB) at Chiltern Cottage, Pleck Lane, Kingston Blount. GRANTED.

P22/S1413/HH Proposed two-storey side extension, proposed single storey rear extension, larger dormer window and rooflights to the existing loft conversion, replacement balcony balustrading and fenestration, alterations to the existing house at 13 Plowden Park Aston Rowant. GRANTED.

P22/S1564/HH Porch and 2-storey rear extension at 2 Old Croft Close, KB. GRANTED.

P22/S1728/HH Detached Garden Room at 6 Icknield Close, KB. GRANTED.

P22/S1564/HH Single storey timber orangery at 6 The Green Aston Rowant. GRANTED.

P22/S1452/FUL Conversion of home office into self-contained 1-bed dwelling with associated car port and parking at Manor Farm Barns at Crowell – REFUSED.

PLANNING DECISIONS MADE SINCE THE LAST MEETING:

None.

PLANNING INSPECTORATE APPEAL:

P21-S5321-O - 54 Dwellings at Crowell Rd, Chinnor – SODC refusal overturned at appeal despite objections to the previous Cala Homes decision still being relevant.

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

NEWS FROM ASTON ROWANT TOWER

We are very pleased to be able to resume regular ringing again after the last two years of disruptions. It has been good to meet up with fellow ringers and to get back to a normal routine!

Practice nights are held on Tuesdays from 7.30pm–9pm under the guidance of Robert Newton, the tower captain. We have ringers from other local towers which enables us to ring more methods.

A General Meeting was held in the church during May, the first since 2019, which was well attended, and many points were discussed – our thanks to Jenny Flynn who chaired the meeting.

We rang for a wedding in April, always a special occasion, and more recently have rung two quarter peals for the Queen's Jubilee and for the centenary of the Oxford Botanical gardens.

Ringing for the Sunday services on all six of the bells has not always been possible as the times of the services have varied and some of our ringers are committed to ringing at different churches.

We would love to be able to call on more ringers who would be interested in learning the art of bell ringing to join our group. Please contact our tower captain, his details are at the foot of this column – you will be made most welcome

Robert Newton

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ARPC FOOTPATH AND AMENITIES GROUP

Writing these notes on the hottest weekend of the year prompts me to remind everyone to be careful whilst out in the countryside. Remember to look after your pets and please be careful about the risks of fire whilst everything is so dry.

Can we congratulate the Jubilee committee on the success of the weekend. As Mike has stated in his Fiveways notes a mulberry tree has been planted in the nature reserve. We have registered the tree with the Queen's Green Canopy scheme and a plaque will be installed later in the year.

Copies of the booklet 'Walks at the Foot of the Chilterns' including the Aston Rowant Discovery Trail are still available free to newcomers to the parish and for £3 to others. Please contact either Tracy Lambourne the parish clerk or myself – our contact details are on page 6.

Our next FAAG meeting will be on Oct 18th in the Kingston Blount Village Hall which is an open meeting, where we will be looking at suggestions for renaming the group, as outlined in the last copy of the Parish Notes, which to remind people I have recopied here.

The maintenance of the parish footpaths will always be an important part of our activities but not the only part of the groups work. We would like to expand the activities and also encourage more people to join us, the visits to 5 Ways by both the Forest School and the primary school are part of this increasing the awareness.

Another way to continue this would be to rename the group into something more relevant. In order to do this, we would like to run a competition to come up with a new name. First prize will be £25 of vouchers with another £25 for the best name from anyone under 16. Should the winner be a junior the first prize will be £50.

Anyone wishing to enter should again contact either myself or Tracy Lambourne the parish clerk.

At the October meeting we will also, at the request of the parish council, discuss the future management of Pleck Wood. This is the wood at the bottom of the Kingston Blount Playing Field – it was created in 2000 as part of the Millennium celebrations, but in recent years it has been overlooked and other than cutting the paths thorough the wood very little is done to maintain the area. Anyone who has ideas on what we could do to 'improve' this area should again contact Tracy or myself. We all understand that this project could take a long time, but we need to start somewhere. Alternatively, we could leave the wood as a wild area, but if this is the final decision it will be done knowingly rather than by default.

Steven Sowerby

Chair of Footpaths and Amenities Group

steven.sowerby@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

01844 351392

THE QUEEN'S PLATINUM JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

“Bringing our communities together”

We really hope everyone will agree that the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations were a huge success and enjoyed by all. Our village communities truly came together for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee weekend.

“Thank you all for making this such a successful event”

There was something for everyone to enjoy from lighting the Beacon at the Cricket Club; 'Aston Arms' at the church, the Quiz night at KB Village hall, the school children making hats, the procession linking villages together, competitive inter village football match and culminating in the Big Picnic Lunch and Jubilee cake, toasting the Queen's health and ending with dancing to McFadden & Sons.

A huge thank you goes to the outstanding efforts of the bunting crew who made over a kilometre of bunting at the sewing Bees and all the team who helped to decorate the villages connecting us all together. The Parish looked amazing!!





And thank you to all the volunteers and community groups that made this event such a special celebration. It was great getting to meet neighbours and enthusiastic volunteers who helped at all events putting on a good show and to make new lasting friendships.

We truly brought our village communities together and we hope that this will be a start of further village events and inspire future generations to keep our communities together.

If you are interested in forming a social group to continue the good work started during the Jubilee and would like to be a partner in organising future activities, please send us a note on KBARJubilee@Gmail

All the Jubilee events were free and open to all. This could not have happened without the financial support of the ARPC and the Hillwerke Trust. The successful and truly enjoyable quiz evening raised over £1300 which will be put forward to good community use.

KBAR Jubilee team





Thank you to everyone for sending your Jubilee photos. There were so many they deserved the extra pages!



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NEWS FROM ARCC

Firstly we would like to thank everyone who supported the recent Rowachella music and beer festival. It was a huge success and will now hopefully return as an annual event.

It is now the middle of the cricket season and is a good time to review the on-field results. The first team are in contention to win the Premier League of The Home Counties League. At the time of writing, they are in second place and only one win away from the league Leaders. Simultaneously they have progressed to the last 8 of the National Knock Out Cup – this was achieved with a thrilling last ball victory against Sunbury in one of the closest games seen at Butts Way for a long time. The result of the next round will be known by the time these notes are published. We are away to Potterne Cricket Club a Wiltshire based team on the 31st July. The final is played at Lords. Please see our website astonrowantcc.com for details.

The second and third teams are mid table in their respective Cherwell League tables and both will hope to have a stronger second half of the season. The fourth team are struggling in their league but the majority of there games are against the first teams of their opponents. The fourth team are playing as a development team for our junior players, especially the U15's.

Aston Rowant Cricket Club's Under 15 squad has had a successful year. The cohort is a strong one, one which had already won the Oxfordshire League. The idea to enter a team into the Aylesbury Mid-Week League cast the net wider amongst the squad members to offer the opportunity for match play to our u14s, allow some of our more capable u13s to play up and for some key u15s to focus on different disciplines in their playing roles. We have also, on occasion, dipped into the u11 squad to fulfil our fixtures.

We won our group by one point and faced Wendover Reds in the final, a home fixture on Wednesday 13 July.

Rowant won the toss and elected to field. The bowling was tight, only one wicket fell to a pace bowler (Max Fendom); the rest went to the spinners with two for both Thomas Healy and Arlo Hyman and one for Charlie Basden. Owen Chown from our u13s kept well behind the stumps in the absence of our regular keeper.

The target a modest, yet defendable, 117.

Our openers came out confident, Teddy Purushothaman was the first to fall on 19 in the 4th over closely followed by another wicket in the same over. We consolidated our position in the next few overs during which the runs flowed until Finley Little was run out on 20. A solid collection of runs came from Luke Doherty, Fendom and Hyman. We needed 6 runs off the last two overs which came, rather as an anti-climax, off a wide.

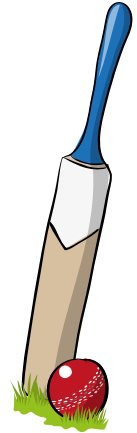
It was a close match worthy of being the final and contested in good spirit by two committed teams with some fine all-round cricket, but the win made us 2022 Champions of both Oxfordshire & Aylesbury Leagues – see picture opposite of the winning team.

As a club we have been trying to foster stronger links with our local communities and we were delighted that Icknield College accepted our offer to host its cricket club's summer outdoor sessions in our newly refurbished nets. Despite the uncertainty of the May weather, ten or so budding young cricketers made the short minibus journey from Watlington for an afternoon of coaching from PE Teacher and Rowant regular, Joe Dodd, and our overseas player, Ben le Bas. We also hosted a thrilling match for the club against Langtree School which went down to the last ball (Langtree just beating Icknield).

The collaboration has been a huge success and at the last session before the school holidays, the number attending had almost doubled including a few people inspired to join who had never played cricket before. The boys and girls clearly had fun in their new training surroundings and we look forward to continuing our partnership with Icknield College in the 2023 season.

Finally, we are unfortunately not able to hold either the Barmy Army 6 a side event that was mentioned in the last parish notes or the Open Air Play which was so successful last year. Neither group are able to fulfil their dates and so have reluctantly cancelled – we will try and rebook in 2023.

Steven Sowerby



NEWS FROM FIVEWAYS

Since my last contribution we have been visited by the Forest School, based at the cricket club. I have to say I was impressed by the concept. The pre-school children are outside all day, except in dire conditions. Even the small ones looked after themselves even if they got stung by nettles or fell over, they just got on with it. They removed a lot of artefacts from the stream and also magnet fished. It is amazing how things continue to appear. They spent all day there and the youngest slept in a hammock slung between the trees. It is meant to make kids stronger and more independent and seems to work. I think they all really enjoyed it.

The plants have been good this year. Knapweed is going well and there is a good show of Fox and Cubs, which looks like a vivid orange dandelion - very striking. The yellow Monkey Musk, introduced by my grandson on his DoE, is in flower and a picture is shown. I hope it spreads as it is a water based flower which bees love. There are butterflies around at present dominated by the Gatekeepers.

There are a few dead trees in there which need to be removed when we have time and it is cooler. The Mulberry tree planted for the Jubilee is growing well and needs to be watered regularly so if anyone is passing please give it a drink.

The most interesting thing is the sticklebacks have returned after several years' absence. I have put in a fish sanctuary in the top pool. These are made of a half moon short pieces of pottery pipe and similar are used by the Environment Agency. My grandson has just put four more sanctuaries in the lower part of Fiveways. The water level is very low at present so the sanctuaries will help – they help protect the fish from predators so please do not reposition them. I have tried to catch a Bullhead in the evening with a rod and line but was unsuccessful. They were in there and are common locally but are not active in daylight. I will try again.

The lower part of Fiveways has a bottom of white sand which is ideal for top dressing cacti and succulents – help yourself or ask me for advice.

A short while ago we met with the River Thame Conservation Trust to discuss our environmental concerns, which are less significant than Lewknor's, where there are raw sewage issues in its stream again. Basically most of our streams nationally are polluted but nothing can be done about it.



Mike Eaton

mike.eaton@btopenworld.com

LETTER FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Ofsted Inspection

'Every child is known and believed in at Aston Rowant.'

Aston Rowant School has recently had its Ofsted inspection. This celebrated the very nature of our wonderful school including the children who attend and the hard working and positivity of the staff team.

Ofsted have judged Aston Rowant CofE Primary as a 'Good School'. This is an incredible achievement within the new framework, following the pandemic and especially given the journey we have been on as a school. The inspection was extremely positive and useful in terms of looking at school improvement and the inspectors were very thorough in their analysis of our school.

The inspectors talked very positively about the ethos of the school and our wonderful children. The opening line of the report captures it beautifully – we know and believe in every child. Although we are a small school, there is 'ambition for every child to achieve well with no limits placed'. Quite simply, the children grow and flourish under our care.

We are very proud that Her Majesty's Inspectors have recognised the wider context of being a pupil at Aston Rowant: 'It is easy to spot an Aston Rowant pupil. The way they convey themselves is impressive.' We are very lucky that we work with children who: 'work hard, do the right thing, speak eloquently to visitors, happily look out for each other, recognise that it doesn't matter if a person looks different to another and affirm that bullying has no place here.' They are not only friendly but they 'go out of their way to make everyone feel welcome.'

Our vision of 'Growing Together' was evident and acknowledged. We have been 'courageous' in our work to improve the school and critically:

'The school continues to move from strength to strength.'

We agree. Long may it continue!

Mrs Helen France

Headteacher, Aston Rowant School

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MARK LORD, LOCAL PHOTOGRAPHER

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 Mark's home are £25, or a shoot can be arranged at your family home if you prefer.

Please contact Mark for more information.

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TESSA WYATT'S COUNTRYSIDE DIARY

You may have noticed (or perhaps not, we writers tend to be a little vain!) that Countryside Diary has been missing over the past couple of issues. This is not because I have given up, but because, sadly I have not been able to get out walking due to persistent sciatica, which has curtailed my normal activities.

Rather than give you nothing however, I thought I would just share my observations from the garden, and what I have observed from the car as I drive, or am driven, here and there.

Hands up who's noticed that the wild plants seem to be coping with the drought and hot weather far better than our garden plants? Our little wild patch at the end of the garden has been a sea of lovely delicate blue harebells and tall elegant Canterbury bells. We started with just one little harebell about three years ago, and now they are everywhere in the long grass. The Canterburybells are new this year, having been seed blown into the wild patch from the track to where we park "round the back."

As a result, we have not cut, or topped, the patch but left it to grow long and seed, to protect all the new wild flower seeds underneath from drying out. We will top it towards the middle of August, or when the drought breaks, whichever comes first, which I daresay will please our neighbours, as it looks extremely wild and untidy at the moment. Tinker the cat loves it of course, as it is full of little mouse highways hidden under the long grass. She spends hours scouting there, with some success, but not a lot as she is basically very lazy!

The poor flowerbeds are looking very sad, the contents struggling to flower at all, not only because of the lack of rain, but the fact that the bed is overshadowed by the sycamore trees behind, which seem to be more heavily leaved than ever this year. Mulch and/or feed all you like, there's nothing like rain to keep the flowers coming. Watering doesn't do much good, as I feel the additives in the tap water don't help the soil at all. However, since most of the plants are perennials, I'm hoping they will do better next year, assuming this type of weather doesn't yet become the norm.

Anyway, apart from the discovery of a long pyramid orchid in a friend's garden (hope for more next year!) and glorious displays of wild geraniums, scabious, wild lettuce and suchlike along the roadsides, I'm afraid that's it for this time. Let's hope the sciatica calms down before the next issue. Cheers everyone!

Tessa Wyatt



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CHINNOR VILLAGE CENTRE NEWS

The Friendship Club Managers Rowen and Emily have put together an exciting programme for the autumn and winter. This includes Art Therapy; Hands on Heritage; the talking libraries; music therapy; seated yoga and relaxation; and falls prevention workshops. Grant funding from South Oxford District Council has enabled the Stroke Club to run a coordinated programme, 'living well after a stroke'. Outside experts will be brought in to lead sessions including, maintaining physical and psychological health and wellbeing; and financial planning. An added bonus is that CVC has a mini bus that can pick up from Thame and Chinnor and surrounding villages to enable those without easy access to transport or with mobility difficulties to attend.

The Parkinson Support Club with outside facilitator runs every other Tuesday and continues to flourish.

Another new group to look out for is the Board Game Friendship Club incorporating Cribbage, Chess, Dominos, Ludo, Connect, card games, Monopoly, Scrabble. Other suggestions are welcome. We are also seeking volunteers to assist.

Please contact the centre for more info or to register your interest in attending any of these events either admin@chinnorvillagecentre.org or daycare@chinnorvillagecentre.org or telephone 01844 353733 and ask for the Friendship Club Manager

OPEN FORUM – The next open forum is on Wednesday 21 September at 7.30pm Do please come along as this is your opportunity to meet the team of trustees and staff, to find out more about future plans and to offer your ideas and suggestions

CVC is a 'not for profit' organisation with a range of facilities available for hire.

There are three rooms available:

- Chiltern Room, suitable for business meetings as there is a projector and screen.
- Games Room appropriate for any occasion.
- Therapy Room which is a small private room, with a sofa, chairs and a sink.

Many groups already make good use of these spaces. For example the newly formed Chinnor Rotary have started to meet once a month in the coffee shop on a Saturday morning; the u3a Special Interest Groups e.g., Archaeology & Geology, meet on 4th Monday of the month and u3a members meet for a coffee morning every 2nd Friday. Knit and Stitch, Age UK and other local businesses hire rooms for training and seminars. For further information on room bookings and rates please contact us

We believe that no one should feel alone in our community and the CVC clubs and facilities are for everyone so we hope to see you soon. We are always open to new ideas and so if you have any ideas, please let us know by posting you thoughts in the suggestion box

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Are you hoping to go to university or college in 2022? Will your child be moving up to secondary school in 2022? Is there a school trip you can't afford or are you looking at doing the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme? Grants are available to help with these costs.

For more details or to apply please contact the administrator:

Peter Lambert

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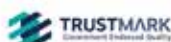


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5. Feeding discourages red kites from expanding their range and looking for new breeding territories and sources of food. This disrupts their natural population spread.
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LOCAL FARM RECOGNISED AS A WILDLIFE HAVEN



Chilterns based farmer, Andrew Stubbings, has been turning his farm into a stronghold for nature and wildlife for more than 20 years. His farm has recently been designated a ‘Local Wildlife Site’ – a recognition given to the most exceptional and valuable wildlife areas in the UK. Manor Farm is now one of the biggest Local Wildlife Sites in Buckinghamshire, with an impressive 225 hectares of land achieving designation.

It is very unusual for farmland on such a large scale to be designated – it’s more common for specific fields or smaller areas on farms to gain designation so the scale of this award in Buckinghamshire is unprecedented.

A tenant of the National Trust on the Bradenham Estate, Andrew first began working with his father on the process of reverting a good deal of their arable land back to chalk grassland. More than 20 years on, the farm has become one of the biggest and best sites for species rich grassland, a habitat that has suffered a 97% loss in the last century. It also supports a fine assemblage of arable plants, including the diminutive Venus’s-looking-glass, just one of several threatened plants found in the arable field margins at Manor Farm. What’s especially impressive is that Andrew has achieved such a high level of diversity of plants, birds, butterflies and even reptiles whilst running a commercially viable working farm.

Wildlife on the farm also includes breeding barn owls, common lizards, and breeding corn buntings – a locally scarce and endangered farmland bird. 35 species of butterfly have been recorded at Manor Farm including Duke of Burgundy, Chalk Hill Blue, Adonis Blue, Dingy Skipper, Grizzled Skipper and the Silver-washed Fritillary. The impressive Great Green Bush Cricket has also been found on the farm!

Andrew is one of 18 farmers in the Central Chilterns farmer cluster (supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund), all of which are committed to do more to support wildlife on their farms too. Helping wildlife at a landscape scale is vital and farmers are leading the way in the Chilterns. Andrew is also grateful for support he has received from Countryside Stewardship funding.

For more information see www.chilternsaonb.org/news/570/24/Chilterns-farmer-achieves-Local-Wildlife-Site-status-for-Manor-Farm

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

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

Email: sallyparishnotes@gmail.com