

ASTON ROWANT, KINGSTON BLOUNT & CROWELL

PARISH NOTES



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KINGSTON BLOUNT VILLAGE HALL
PUB NIGHT
6pm to 10pm

FRIDAY
13
DECEMBER



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

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our team of distributors,
for their continuing
hard work.

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



(Hillwerke Recreational Trust Reg Charity No. 279656)

Charges for Hire – Effective 1st April 2024

For Residents of the Parish of Aston Rowant

Monday–Sunday & Bank Holidays

Main Hall (8am–midnight)	£15.00 per hour
Committee Room only	£8.50 per hour
Whole Day Hire (8am–11pm)	£210.00

For Non-Residents of the Parish of Aston Rowant

Monday–Sunday & Bank Holidays

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KINGSTON BLOUNT VILLAGE HALL DIARY

Harmony Pilates with Sara

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Wednesday 7.30-8.30pm
Contact Sara to secure
your place.
Saracroker@hotmail.com
07398 585687

Shine Dance and Pilates

Wednesdays 10am-11am
Booking is essential.
Contact Holly:
shine-holly@hotmail.com
07834 994699

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: 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
Chinnor u3a [Chair]	07711 337243
Village Hall Hire/Bookings: Hayley Hopwood	07470 441857

PARISH COUNCIL & LOCAL CONTACTS

Parish Website

www.astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

Parish Clerk

Tracy Lambourne
clerk@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk 01844 353989

Parish Councillors:

Chairman Adam Bernstein
adam.bernstein@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk 07785 905120
Councillor Helen Birks
helen.birks@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk 07921 840360
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deborah.chaplin@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk 01844 354648
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matthew.day@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk 01844 351300
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trelawney.hill@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk 01844 353051
Councillor Joanne Hunt
joanne.hunt@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk 07825 789251

District Councillors:

Ali Gordon-Creed ali.gordon-creed@southoxon.gov.uk
Ed Sadler ed.sadler@southoxon.gov.uk 07842 602398

County Councillor

Kate Gregory kate.gregory@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Nigel Champken-Woods nigel.champken-woods@oxfordshire.gov.uk

MP

Freddie van Mierlo freddie.vanmierlo.mp@parliament.uk

Police Community Support Office

tel: 101 ThameHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

Village Hall Hire/Bookings

Hayley Hopwood 07470 441857 bookings@kbvh.org

Play Area

Tracy Lambourne 01844 353989 clerk@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

Aston Rowant Cricket Club Chairman

Josh Smith 07894 201929 chairman@astonrowantcc.com

CHAIRMAN'S NOTE

It's surprising just how fast 2024 has gone. It's equally surprising just how much litter is deposited along the roads and in hedgerows – either casually thrown out of car windows or proactively dumped by fly-tippers.

During the last parish litter pick, at the start of November, pickers filled numerous bags of litter comprising crisp and chocolate wrappers, bottles – some empty and some full of who knows what, hub caps, finished 'meal deals' with wooden cutlery, bags of nappies and so on. And this is on top of the 20 bags collected 'privately' up Kingston Hill by a community spirited resident.

While it's possible that light items have been caught by the wind, a good number were deliberately discarded. Indeed, some will have seen the fly-tipped building refuse dumped in a large pile on the Ridgeway as it meets Kingston Hill. This isn't the first example of such fly tipping in our parish and while SODC's waste collectors, BIFFA, will go through the rubbish looking for clues as to where it came from (in order to levy penalties), it would help us keep the parish tidy if anyone with suspicions of fly-tipping calls in their suspicions. This can be done via <https://tinyurl.com/bdfkaw7j> or by calling 03000 610610 or by emailing admin.southoxford@biffa.co.uk. Your details will be kept confidential and will help hold fly-tippers to account.

The next litter pick will be in Spring and announced in good time via the parish website (astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk) and KBAR. The more helpers the better.

As a side note, there's an option on the parish council home page to subscribe for to receive a weekly newsletter that details whatever has been posted on the website the prior week.

Onto other matters, it appears that just like London buses, we've had a dearth of parishioners willing to fill the seventh and last seat on the council, but then three applicants turn up. Once they've all been to a couple of meetings to see how the council works and how meetings are run, by January, it is hoped, the existing councillors will vote on whom to co-opt. Regardless, I am grateful to the three who were willing to be stood up and counted.

Potholes and other road defects will soon become more of a problem as winter sets in. While the parish has an 'OCC Superuser' – your chairman – who walks the parish, reports and actions defects found (which are often fixed in days), I cannot be everywhere. And so, to repeat the message of previous columns, if potholes (150 x 150mm wide and 40mm deep) or pavement issues (150 x 150 x 20 mm deep) are found, please let me know and I'll visit to measure up, report and action if they meet OCC's criteria.

Please note that I am officially only allowed to mark and action those defects within 20 and 30mph areas because of OCC's health and safety policy. However, commonsense will be applied and if the issue isn't overly hazardous to report I'll deal with it regardless.

On this subject, those who use Brook Street in Kingston Blount will have noticed the ongoing water feature on the right-hand side of the road leading away from the Stert Road. The parish council has been active in having it dealt with, but after

investigation by OCC, it appears that the problem lies with a broken conduit owned by Openreach. OCC are actively chasing the company to fix it as soon as possible. In the meantime, the parish requested, and has been given, barriers and cones to separate off the road defect to road users.

Lastly, the parish is looking at the 2025/6 precept which makes up part of Council Tax bills. While costs have risen somewhat in recent years – a problem that we all know too well in our private lives – the council has reserves that are considered more than necessary. As a result, the proposed rise in precept will be held in check for the year, possibly for longer, with extra costs being met out of reserves.

Adam Bernstein

Chairman, Aston Rowant Parish Council

adam.bernstein@astonrowantparishcouncil.gov.uk

THE VILLAGE HALL NEEDS YOU

The Village Hall are looking for new committee members. We are a friendly bunch even if we say so ourselves! Duties are not onerous and meetings are held quarterly. If you would like to join please contact Andrea on kbyhall@gmail.com or come along to the next meeting on 16th January at 7.30 pm in the Village Hall.

THE VILLAGE HALL NEEDS A TREASURER

Are you good with numbers? Can you spare an hour a week? If so please contact Rachel Lockwood on rachellockwood.hillwerketrust@gmail.com who will be able to instruct you in the dark arts of the accounts.



ASTON ROWANT PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

Parish Council meetings were held on Wednesday 8th October and Wednesday 6th November where the planning applications detailed below were discussed. The next meeting of the Council will be held on Wednesday 11th December.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

P24/S2961/DIS Discharge of condition 3 (Submission of Joinery Details) on application P24/S1133/LB (Proposed alteration at first floor & insertion of one new window to match existing in rear elevation of the house) at Old Croft, Pleck La, Kingston Blount (Grade II Listed). **NO RESPONSE REQUIRED (For Information Only).**

P24/S3223/HH A single-story bay extension and garden room to the existing house and demolition of the existing garden store building to be replaced with the erection of a single-story outbuilding at Lower Farmhouse, Stert Road, Kingston Blount. **NO OBJECTIONS, FULLY SUPPORT.**

WITHDRAWN APPLICATIONS:

None.

PLANNING DECISIONS OF SODC:

P24/S1756/HH Erection of 3-bay carport in front of house at The Garden House, Brook Street, Kingston Blount. **GRANTED.**

PLANNING DECISIONS MADE SINCE THE LAST MEETING:

None.

APPLICATIONS IN NEIGHBOURING PARISHES (which may affect Aston Rowant Parish)

P23/S4262/FUL Amended plans received 24 October 2024 for 154 residential dwellings at Land north of Oxford Road Thame – we objected to the original plans on 23-JAN-24. **AGREED TO MAINTAIN OUR EXISTING OBJECTION.**

P23/S2384/O Planning Inspectorate Appeal: Appeal ref: APP/Q3115/W/24/3343775. Notification of appeal public inquiry date for refused application for development at Land east of Junction 8a, M40 Waterstock. **NOTED.**

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



Come and explore

CHRISTMAS SHOPPING

AT

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ARPC FOOTPATH AND AMENITIES GROUP

As per all the other contributors we wish Season's Greetings to all who use the footpaths be they walkers, dog walkers or just occasional users. Can I please make my annual request that dog walkers keep their pets under control whilst walking in the parish. I do appreciate that 99% of dog walkers fully understand this and control their pets, but I am aware that there have been a couple of incidents which left the people involved very frightened. I hope this does not stop them walking in our lovely countryside.

I would like to thank the parishioners who took part in the autumn Litter Pick which took place on the 2nd and 3rd of November. We collected over 20 bags of rubbish which was actually an improvement on previous years – perhaps the anti-litter message is getting through. We will repeat the exercise in the Spring but may swop from picking Saturday and Sunday to just picking on Sunday. There will be an update in future parish notes we will also publicise on Kbar.

As referred to in Mike's Fiveways notes the parish council have approved the replacement of the bridge at Fiveways, hopefully this will be completed very soon. Our thanks to the Parish Council for funding this project.

At the same meeting the Council approved the Calendar of Parish Maintenance Works, this is the list of all the grass cutting and hedge trimming tasks undertaken by the Parish Council. This list is published on the Parish Council web site – if you think something is missing, please let Tracy Lambourne the parish clerk know of the requirements and we will review it at the next meeting.

This meeting will be on Tuesday 11th Feb. 2025 in Kingston Blount Village Hall – as before all are welcome – this will be the week before the Duck Race which will take place on the 16th.

In his Fiveways report Mike refers to the work done at Fiveways by him and Mike Smith. Before the Duck Race we will be organising a work session to prepare the nature reserve for the race. If you and/or your children appreciate the race we would be delighted to have some assistance. If you are interested, please contact me or Tracy Lambourne the parish clerk.

Finally, please see Peter Hetherington's notes on the Parish Walk on the 5th Jan. It is very well worth it, particularly if you are new to the Parish.

Steven Sowerby

Chair of Footpaths and Amenities Group

stevensowerby@hotmail.com

01844 351392

December 2024 - January 2025
at Waterperry Gardens



Waterperry
Gardens

Get into the festive spirit at Waterperry Gardens with great gift ideas for all the family, from handmade ceramics and jewellery to Christmas decorations and linens, there is something for everyone. If you're looking for something different our Waterperry Vouchers and Season Tickets make an ideal present.

FIND SANTA'S REINDEER TRAIL! Daily till Tues 24 Dec - 10am till 4pm

Help Rudolph find his friends lost all around the gardens and win a prize!

£3.95 per child. Children must be accompanied by an adult paying garden entrance fee.

CHRISTMAS MARKET

Sat 7 & Sun 8 Dec - 10am till 4pm. Join us for our Christmas Market - Arts and Craft Stalls with gorgeous handmade gift ideas and festive food and drink (*free entry to markets*).

CHRISTMAS TREES

The spectacular British grown Christmas trees will be on sale from the beginning of December along with fantastic Waterperry hand-finished Christmas wreaths.

PRE-ORDER CHRISTMAS GOODIES

Let the Teashop at Waterperry take the strain out of cooking and pre-order your festive treats, like Christmas Cake, Christmas Pudding, Mince Pies and more. Contact teashop@waterperrygardens.co.uk



Christmas Closure: We will be closed between Christmas and the New Year.
For more details on all our events please visit www.waterperrygardens.co.uk



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Sam Hunt

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Well it is almost that time of year again... so Merry Christmas to you all.

As you know the bridge at Fiveways has been out of action for a while. It has been there since the parish council took over the area ten years ago. The ground is very wet and the wood has finally rotted away. It covers a ditch whose function is unknown but it may correspond to an old boundary marker. There was a lot of support for keeping it so we eagerly await the new structure funded by the parish council, which should last much longer.

The new plant this year is wild English strawberries which spread well and do produce very small fruit. There is also an Indian strawberry in the wild which has yellow flowers rather than white - check your garden. They have been planted along the paths, in the probably vain hope, they will suppress weeds.

In the near future we are hoping to clear the site as normal for duck racing on February 16th, 2-4pm. In addition we will try to take out a smallish dead tree on the site of the long abandoned cottage - so some trace may be found. We will metal detect the area but there is metal everywhere on the site, particularly fine particles in the stream. This may be evidence of a smithy or smelting in centuries past. We would welcome some help with the maintenance on the site and if you have a spare hour or two please just drop me an email.

We were successful this year with our fish sanctuaries made from old clay pipes - we need a few more pipes if you have some. The floods pushed the sticklebacks downstream, but the bullheads seemed to stay put. They are better equipped for fast water, but the unseen shelters may also have helped. The bullheads were seen regularly in daylight (up to 3 at once) during the spring breeding period but then disappeared. They normally only come out in twilight.

We have discovered another bigger oak seedling on the site which has been overgrown but after clearing will hopefully grow into a mature tree in the decades to come. See picture of myself and my helper Mike Smith with the tree... after the clearing today. We also planted the strawberries!

The Hollies along the side of the lane are very slowly establishing themselves - a remarkably slow and difficult process, albeit they are shaded. Yes there are berries but not enough to pick yet sadly.

Have a Happy New Year.

Mike Eaton

mike.eaton@btopenworld.com



THE UNITED PARISH TEAM

Rector

Rev'd Dr. Jacky Barr 07769 825305
rector@unitedparish.church
01844 352027

Associate Priest

Rev'd Joan DeVal 01844 353404

Licensed Lay Minister (L.L.M)

Margaret Poole 01844 281042

Retired Priests

Rev'd Des Foote 01844 355945

Rev'd Dr. Brian Griffiths

01844 355953

Rev'd Tony Whittaker

01844 352472

United Parish Office

Tricia Prescott 01844 352472
office@unitedparish.church

Parish Safeguarding Officer

Jane Tucker 07890 346781
safeguarding@unitedparish.church

Churchwarden at Aston Rowant

Richard Boarder 07795681263
Vacancy

Churchwardens at Crowell

Andy Warman 01844351909

Maggs Warman 01844351909

CROWELL CHURCH

A combined Parish Service was held for the departed at St Andrew's on 27 October. This is an annual service which allows us to quietly remember those dear to us that are no longer with us. The annual Crowell Remembrance Service took place on 10 November at 1600. The church was suitably decorated with floods of poppies.

Due to this service, no Holy Communion Service was held but there was an Evening Prayer with Holy Communion Service on 24 November at 1600. We do ensure that we have a least one Holy Communion Service at Crowell per month.

Please see the Christmas Parish Service sheet for all services available across the parish. A notice can be found on the church door, the parish website and in the Parish Magazine.

Of special note, the Crowell Carol Service will be held on Friday 20 December at 1900 and Crowell will be hosting the combined Parish Service on 29 December at 1030. Please come early to both to ensure your favourite seat – or even a seat.

We managed to get some ground work done during October but the weather wasn't kind. However, the October Work Party did take place both inside and outside. Work parties make a real difference as there is only the two of us. We are grateful to the volunteer families and Surmans for their perseverance.

The drive out is still a problem from the Kingston Blount direction and care should be taken when exiting the carpark. The field hedge needs some serious pruning back by the farmer. All other hedges in the area have been done.

The whole churchyard and carpark was to be strimmed, mown and the grass removed to the compost heap. However, the weather once again decided otherwise.

We are planning next year's wilding areas and notices. We don't want to have to cordon off areas.



Unfortunately, with some people, old habits die hard and they still insist on throwing plastic etc on the ground where one of the old compost heaps was next to the Larter grave, which is most upsetting for them. Please stop and use the correct bins by the Lych-gate, no more plastic wrappings etc on the compost heap.

The prayer group meet each Tuesday 1730 at Crowell and Soul Space is every second Sunday at 1600 at Crowell. Please see the monthly service sheet posted on the church door for differences.

Normal services on 2nd and 4th Sundays are now at 1600hrs. The flood light timer has been changed to accommodate this. It should now come on at 1530. The light over the main porch should remain on for security and guidance through the unlit part of the churchyard from the Lych-gate.

All the pieces of the jigsaw are now in place to have the vandalised west window repaired. The contractor has given us a March 2025 start date so we look forward to that. At the same time, a protective grill will be fitted to the window, which will help to keep it safe from any future attempts at damage.

A piece of concerning news is that the car number plate dumping in the car park has started again. There had been a pause after number plates were stolen from the carpark. Some arrests were made after that. A pair of plates were found recently and a report has been made to the police. The carpark and church are vulnerable to all sorts of activity that has happened in the past, so please be vigilant and report matters of concern to the Wardens or, if urgent, to the police.

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.

Copies of the United Parish Magazine, which is now every other month rather than monthly, are available in the church porch and inside the church. If anyone would like an e-copy of the United Parish Magazine and/or the weekly on-line service booklet then please e-mail the parish office at office@unitedparish.church

Outstanding jobs for which help or sponsorship/donations would be gratefully accepted.

1. Stained glass window repair (insurance job) but needs to have a protection screen fitted when back in position. Need to consider a screen for the other stained glass window.
2. 2 x churchyard walls rebuilt and or removed (some ongoing talks re one).
3. Bell Cote and Bell restored (some sponsorship already received).
4. South West Buttress wall base rebuilt.
5. Altar furniture and linen (some sponsorship already received).

Andy & Maggs Warman

(Church Wardens) 01844 351909 themwarmans@btinternet.com



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NEWS FROM ARCC

Firstly, Season's greetings to all connected to the cricket club. Autumn is a quiet time for the club leading up to our AGM on November 29th. But this is the time of year that we can look back over the season which finished in September.

At our annual dinner and presentation night the following awards were made.

Mike Eaton Team of Year Shield: Ladies Team.

Roy Blake Award – for player who has done most off the field: James Lees

Committee Cup – For non-playing member who has helped the club: Phil Brookes

Paul Humphreys Cup – For junior who has had most impact on the club: Jack Turner

John Pearce Cup for Sportsmanship: Ben La Bas.

Dudley Lambourne Cup for Best Junior: Kaian Eaton

Eric Lambourne Cup: Bowling Award: Ben Knowler.

Outstanding Performance of year: Oliver Veal.

Presidents Cup: Steve Harris.

A full list of the awards can be found on our website astonrowantcricket.co.uk.

Steven Sowerby

Aston Rowant CC

www.astonrowantcc.com



No. 36

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& Flavours

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NOTICEBOARD

WHAT'S GOING ON IN KINGSTON BLOUNT, ASTON ROWANT & NEARBY



Christmas Party

We are having our annual doggy Christmas Party in aid of Stokenchurch Dog Rescue in the Kingston Blount Village Hall on Sunday 8th December – all are welcome.

Bring a bottle and some nibbles. There will be a pup cup station and treats for the dogs, a DIY doggy bandana station and word is even Santa might be popping in for your doggy to have a photo!

Hope to see you there.

New Year Walk

Sunday 5th January. Meet at the Lambert Arms at 10am.

7 mile leisurely walk route selected for a minimum of mud.

Exercise is just what we need after Christmas and New Year excesses.

Two hills, no stiles and can easily be shortened if needed.

Lewknor, Bald Hill, Cowleaze Wood and Wormsley Estate.

Drop into the Leathern Bottle, almost at the very end of the walk, for a drink but if needed a bit of a snack or lunch. No booking needed.

Led by Peter Hetherington as a joint venture for Aston Rowant Parish Council and Thame and Wheatley Ramblers. All welcome. Boots recommended.

Please support us – the New Year walk has become a tradition.

Peter Hetherington

07767 647714



Thanks and update

Please may I give a big thankyou to friends and neighbours, some of whom I had not met before, who have been so kind, helpful and supportive since the event on Friday September 20th

Due to all the information that we were able to give to the police, within 24hrs.they had a match with an Organised Criminal Gang, and in less than 3 weeks the gang was arrested.

It has obviously been a very traumatic event, but you have all helped me to cope for which I am very grateful.

Thank you all so very much.

Shirley Smith

Advent Lunch at Aston Rowant Church

Wednesday 4th December 12.30 – 2.30pm

A lunch of jacket potatoes, fillings and side salad will be provided.



PARISH NOTES ADVERTISING – HELP NEEDED

Parish Notes has been a constant feature in the local community for many years, initially produced by the church pcc, it is now backstopped by the Parish Council and produced and distributed by a small team of volunteers. A few years ago, a parish survey showed that a substantial majority of local residents appreciate having Notes and would like it to continue.

Our only expense is the cost of printing, which now totals about £2,500 a year. Our present level of advertising covers about 80% of this, but has to be found and maintained. Julian Knight has been doing this for the last 20 years and plans to stop at the end of the year.

Please will somebody in the Parish take it on? The job is interesting and not onerous, I probably spend about 5 hours per issue on it and somebody even half competent on a computer would take far less time.

Contact the editor Sally at sallyparishnotes@gmail.com or Julian at jknight652@aol.com for more information.

KBAR QUIZ NIGHT

Friday 7th February 2025



**Kingston Blount
Village Hall**

Doors Open: 7pm, Quiz Starts: 8pm

£10 per person | 8 per team

Cashless Bar | Raffle

REGISTER NOW: kbarquiz@gmail.com

All proceeds to go to Aston Rowant CofE Primary School



POOR'S HILLOCK GARDENS



Dear All

Welcome to our second contribution to the Parish Notes.

We would like to extend a very warm welcome to all our new plot holders. We hope you enjoy the vagaries of the weather and its impact on the success of veg growing and also you enjoy the therapeutic elements of having an allotment. We would also like to say a fond farewell to those plot holders who have decided to leave this year. We wish you well and look forward to the possibility of your return in the future.

Spikey Allotment Friends

Hedgehogs are consistently voted amongst Britain's favourite wild animals and yet their numbers have been declining. The decline has got so severe that they were recently classified as 'vulnerable to extinction'. Hedgehogs are considered the gardener's friend as they can help keep some garden pests under control. Allotments can have several hazards, but with a lot of thought they can provide safe havens for hedgehogs, who in turn will help the gardeners – a win win situation.

The British Hedgehog Prevention Society has a number of top tips for helping the hedgehog on your allotment. It includes information about netting, compost, slug pellets and other pesticides, bonfires, sheds, pests etc. Further information can be found on the National Allotment Society website.

We do have a number of vacant plots so if you are interested, or would like more information, please contact Fran at: Francescamuseaus@hotmail.com

CHARLIE'S

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20 Church Road, Chinnor

Open: 8am – 5pm Tuesday to Friday

8am – 1pm Saturday

8.30am – 12pm Sunday



01844 353432

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LETTER FROM THE HEADTEACHER

Someone recently gave me a book called 'Christmas in Three Words'. It's a brilliant small pocket book by Vaughan Roberts which asks the question: "How would you sum up Christmas in just three words?"

As any good book does it got me thinking. Having just three words to describe anything really does focus the mind, it makes us hone in on what is important and challenges us to be both clear and concise about what we are trying to summarise.

The book chooses the following words to sum up Christmas: Historical, Joyful, Essential.

- Historical – it really happened
- Joyful – it's good news for everyone
- Essential – something we ignore at our peril

As we reach forward towards Christmas we are busy with nativity rehearsals and Christmas crafts. We have been practising our Christmas carols and we have been thinking of what that first Christmas day really meant both historically and for us today. So, I thought that I would ask the children in school how they would sum up Christmas in three words. Some were able to give an instant answer, whilst others took time to think carefully about how they could best sum it up. It was certainly a real conversation starter! As you would expect I was given a variety of answers, a few are highlighted here.

FUN. MAGICAL. JOYFUL. HAPPY. EXCITING. SPECIAL. JESUS. CELEBRATION. THANKFUL.
PRESENTS. HOLIDAYS. COLD. LOVING. EXCITING. GIVING. PRESENTS. DECORATIONS. TURKEY.
FUN. FAMILY. FOOD. FAMILY. FRIENDS. GAMES. JOYFUL. PEACEFUL. HOPEFUL.
SANTA. STOCKING. CHOCOLATE. TREE. LIGHTS. PRESENTS. STAR. MANGER. JESUS.

I wonder if they were the answers you were expecting? I wonder what three words you would choose to describe Christmas? I was fascinated that one word that came up time and time again was joyful. Even if faced with challenging times the children remain full of joy, hope and expectation for Christmas and both the traditions and the true meaning that lie behind it.

As we finish for the Christmas break I hope that you find Christmas: Joyful. Meaningful. Memorable.

Helen France

Headteacher

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OBITUARY

MARGARET RUTHERFORD 1940 – 2024

We are sad to announce the passing away of Mrs Margaret Rutherford, who died on Monday 21st October after being ill for just over a year. Margaret, and her husband Brian, moved to the village in 1966, into their new house in Belsom Close (later renamed Old Croft Close) after they were married on 30th July (the day England won the World Cup). Margaret was born in Sunderland, but moved to Harrow in London when she was a girl. She trained as an infant school teacher, graduating in 1960, and held teaching posts in Harrow, Hemel Hempstead and Wendover before taking a break to have her two children Martin and Stephen.



Margaret was highly active within the village after they moved here. While taking her family career break, Margaret set up a pre-school Playgroup in the village, and ran a support and information group about childcare and child development for new mothers in the village. Margaret was one of the key players in the committee to build the new Village Hall, with Brian playing a leading role in creating the playing fields. Subsequently, she was the booking secretary for the Village Hall for many years.

In her early career, Margaret developed expertise in early child learning and development, working with many of the leading lights of the '60s and '70s in child education and development in her first job after returning to work, at Southwark College. During that early period she volunteered one evening a week to work with children with special educational needs. In the 1970s, Margaret became a lecturer of Nursery Nursing at Uxbridge Technical College, eventually rising to being one of three Heads of Faculty before she retired in 1993.

Margaret was a prolific and skilful knitter and sewer in her spare time, also a keen gardener and artist, though she was always extremely modest about her skill with all of these things. A kind and generous person, who loved to cook and provide for others (her signature chocolate cake was famed across the country). She was a devoted wife, a wonderful mother, and was an especially devoted 'Nana' to her three grandchildren, whom she adored. She passed away, with Brian and Martin by her side, in The Triangle Nursing Home, Wheatley.



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	9am MORNING PRAYER Margaret	1030 am HOLY COMMUNION Jacky		
		6pm Taizé Tony and Monica		
SECOND SUNDAY 8th Dec Advent 2	9 am HOLY COMMUNION Brian and Des			
		1030 am Christingle Service Margaret	1030 am BCP HOLY COMMUNION Jacky	
				4pm HOLY COMMUNION Jacky
THIRD SUNDAY 15 Dec Advent 3	9am MORNING PRAYER Richard +Pam			
		1030 am HOLY COMMUNION Jacky	4pm NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS Joan and Margaret	4pm Soul Space
FRIDAY 20th Dec				7pm Carols@Crowell Jacky
FOURTH SUNDAY 22nd Dec Advent 4		1030 am HOLY COMMUNION Jacky		
	4pm NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS Brian and Des	6pm NINE LESSONS AND CAROLS Jacky		
TUESDAY 24th Dec CHRISTMAS EVE	4pm CRIB SERVICE Brian and Des	5pm CRIB SERVICE Margaret and Jacky	4pm CRIB SERVICE Joan and Sydenham team	
		9pm MIDNIGHT	9pm MIDNIGHT	

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

Email: sallyparishnotes@gmail.com

Copy deadline for the February/March issue is 20th January 2025

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