

SC

SONNING COMMON MAGAZINE



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ROTHERFIELD UNITED FC

Mindless damage at
RUFC has a silver lining
P6



OYB ... 550 RIDE AGAIN!

The annual On Your
Bike Event
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ECO SOCO

Launching our response
to climate change
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THE VILLAGE GARDENERS 10TH ANNIVERSARY

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JUNE / JULY 2019

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FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

What lovely Easter weather we enjoyed which fooled us into thinking that summer had arrived. But of course, we know better! It did not last and as I write this it is cold and grey. In my last editorial I mentioned Brexit and am sad to say we are no further forward with the decision that needs to be made. So let's concentrate on the events of our village and those things that we are able to affect. This issue has a real community feel.

There have been a few changes to this edition of the magazine, starting with the editorial page. Lyndsay Henderson has become a new contributor and will write regular articles about how we can make a positive impact on the environment. Sue Litchfield is providing updates on what is happening at the Health Centre and there are some new photos of regular contributors.

This issue is celebrating 10 years of village gardeners and the considerable impact they have made on our environment. On Your Bike had 550 take part and raised £4,000. The election result on 2 May emphasised the importance of the Local Plan and this was reflected in the result.

I would be delighted to receive more articles from our readers, as there are so many good things happening in the village, on which to date I have not yet reported. Please write and tell me about them. ●

Diana Pearman Editor

Email: editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org

MEET THE EDITORIAL TEAM ...



Diana Pearman



Christine Atkinson



Joan Grummant

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MAIDEN ERLEGH CHILTERN EDGE

When Maiden Erlegh Trust agreed to support Chiltern Edge School, we were acutely aware of its recent history but were buoyed by the fact that there was tremendous support from the local community to see the school improve and flourish. We were mindful that the school was more than just an Ofsted grade, and we were realistic around the improvements that were required both in the classroom but also in the environment in which the students and teachers were expected to work.

We are delighted that the school is on an upward trajectory: numbers on roll are increasing, we have determined and passionate teaching and support staff focussed on improving outcomes, and a student body who deserve the best possible experience from their time at Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge.

With this in mind, I wanted to take this brief opportunity to outline our plans to make Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge a learning and working environment fit for the 21st Century.

In order to make a long-lasting difference to the school environment significant funding is required. The only realistic prospect of obtaining the funds required is by moving



forward with plans to sell part of the school playing field, known locally as SON15a, for development, and using the sale proceeds to re-invest into the school site. To this end, the Trust has appointed Savills as its land agent and planning partner and we will be looking to submit a planning application in the latter part of 2019.

There is very little of the school that does not require an upgrade of some degree. Our programme of works will prioritise those areas that result in demonstrable improvements in the learning environment, but will also deliver facilities in which the community will have an interest. The Trust's motto is "schools for the community, schools as a community" and in this respect we aim to work in partnership with the local community to ensure that any development is sympathetic to the voice of local

residents but also achieves maximum value for reinvestment into the school.

In order to kick-start the improvement programme, the Trust has secured £1m in grant funding to replace all the roof coverings across the school which will hopefully mean an end to leaks - a constant menace. The work will start this month, and will likely complete by the end of the summer - weather permitting. This investment is in addition to the £280,000 the Trust has already made in upgrading core ICT infrastructure (servers, cabling, computers and phones), in recommissioning science laboratories and on improving the visual aspect of the school.

We understand and appreciate that there will be a degree of disruption whilst all these works go on for both the local and school community, but we remain committed to ensuring that Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge becomes the school of choice in the local area, with facilities fit for the 21st Century. ●

JONATHAN PECK
Chief Financial Officer



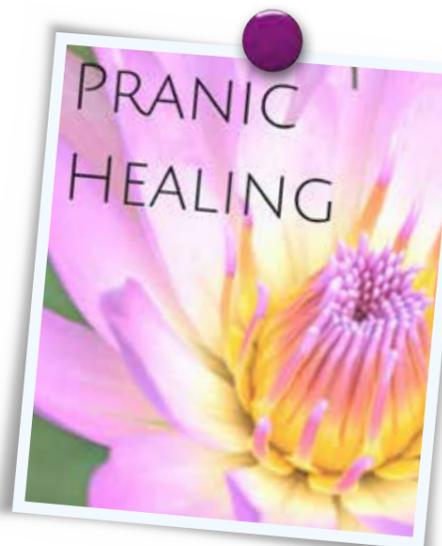
CLUB SC

Everyone is welcome to come and join us at Club SC on a Tuesday evening from 7-9pm for years 9-11 and Wednesday evenings from 6.30-8.30pm for years 6-8. We have lots of fun trying new things weekly like crafts, baking and sports. For the next 5 weeks we have pranic healing sessions running alongside our normal activities. We make full use of the sports hall and field up at MECE with rounders, football, basketball, dodgeball and much more.

We are also planning a trip to London for the older group and a trip to Red Kangaroo for the younger ones. We will also be doing a stall at the Sonning Common Primary School fair so come and see us there in June.

We welcome any new volunteers and we think it's a really fun place to be. I like to think we learn from the young people as much as they learn from us and if you have a skill you want to teach to our young people please do get in touch on sunny.clubsc@gmail.com. ●

SUNNY SMITHERS



POSTCARD FROM THE ALLOTMENT

by CHRISTINE ATKINSON

Grow, Grow, Grow plants ... summer is on the way

This is a fabulous time for the school allotment. Since the last magazine we have had perfect growing weather with a spell of warm weather over Easter as well as some still chilly nights which helps to keep the moisture in the ground. A few rainy days in late April and May have given the plants a good drink and they are now growing rapidly.

The vegetables are looking good and the onions, potatoes, rhubarb and beans are doing well. The strawberries are flowering and preparing their magical transformation into sweet fruit. One bed has been given over to bee friendly flowering plants and is beginning to flourish.

The reception children have potted planted and grown some bedding plants

which they potted up and sold after school one afternoon, raising £45.50 which will be reinvested into more seeds for them to plant and sell.

Their aims are for the allotment garden are:

- * to be self-sufficient financially by selling produce and having cake sales to enable reinvestment
- * to reuse raw materials already on the school site in our projects
- * to get the children out more in the garden and maybe have a regular lunchtime gardening club in future
- * and to involve the local community in sharing their produce and planting ideas and selling together in future.



'EGGSCITED' TODDLERS

Sonning Common Pre-School children are always very busy discovering the world around them. A great way to learn! They have been very busy with their forest school planting lots of trees and bushes to help make it feel more like a forest. Trees were kindly donated by the Woodland Trust, and planted by a parent, Sean Barrett.

The children have also been planting sunflower seeds and exploring new plants growing and looking after the bees we have found. Last term they looked at fairy tales exploring traditional stories such as Goldilocks and the Three Bears, Little Red Riding Hood, 3 Billy Goats Gruff etc and had some very exciting visitors, Chrissie Godfrey and Philip Collings from the Parish council, who read to the children, which they all loved.

This term preschool are very eggscited (sorry!) to have some eggs arriving and we will hopefully be hatching some chicks. Also learning all about the environment and what steps can be taken to help tackle climate change. ●

CLARE SAUNDERS



VILLAGE QUIZ 2019

Many thanks to everyone who took part in this year's Village Quiz. There were 18 teams of up to six players which gave us a very full primary school hall. The results were close - only about 20 points between all the teams. The final scores and placings were as follows:

1. Two Hoots - 111 points
2. Between the Covers - 108 points
3. Kelly's Heroes - 105 points
4. Comets - 105 points
5. The Book Group - 104 points
6. Baskerfold - 104 points
7. B.G.s - 103 points
8. Knights who say ni - 103 points
9. P and O - 100 points
10. Antipenultimates - 100 points

Two Hoots (Leigh Rawlins, Sue Rawlins, Alison Smith, Jeremy Smith, Katherine Lamprell and Ash Smith) took home the trophy and a unique 'winning quizzer' gnome each.

By supporting the quiz, the bar and the raffle over £800 was raised for school funds. Here's hoping everyone will want to take part again next year! ●

MEL WHITE

EVEN A VERY DARK CLOUD CAN HAVE A SILVER LINING

by CHRISTINE ATKINSON

On the morning of my birthday and looking forward to a nice day out with my family, I got a phone message from the treasurer of our local football club, Rotherfield United FC. I am on the committee and he was calling to tell me that some mindless vandals had caused a lot of damage to our ground at Bishopswood. They had somehow got in via the woods, driven 'doughnuts' all over the top pitches, crashed through goals wrecking them, and then set fire to the car in the trees.

To say that I was disappointed is somewhat underestimating my feelings. I was angry and upset. Thoroughly despicable behaviour, spoiling sporting facilities for the local young people, and costing a volunteer run club thousands of pounds. Obviously, it was reported to the police but it seems that there is no compensation available for us. Our treasurer set up a fundraising page on the GoFundMe website for the club to raise money to cover new goals and pitch repairs,

and we shared this with our parents.

The silver lining in our local community is that these mindless individuals are in the minority and we have had so much support from everyone that we can start to recover and smile again.....

Other local grassroot football clubs have donated. One of our parents had organised the Santa Run at Christmas and an Easter Egg hunt, raising £930. Lots of parents have contributed small and large sums and Reading FC organised a Club Day for us at their last match of the season on the 5 May. This resulted in a donation of £500, from specially discounted ticket sales, presented at half time on the pitch.

The next big event in the village – THE BIG BASH 3 – at the Butchers Arms is also raising funds for us along with the British Heart Foundation. So do get along to that and enjoy food, real ales, prosecco, fantastic local music, and raise some funds for us! ●



HIDEAWAY TENNIS?

Discover one of Oxfordshire's hidden secrets. Peppard Tennis Club can be found directly behind the Red Lion Pub on Peppard Common. There you will find 6 all-weather courts, 4 floodlit, surrounded by laurel hedges to provide a tranquil haven in all types of weather. The clubhouse is modern and includes changing facilities and full disabled access.

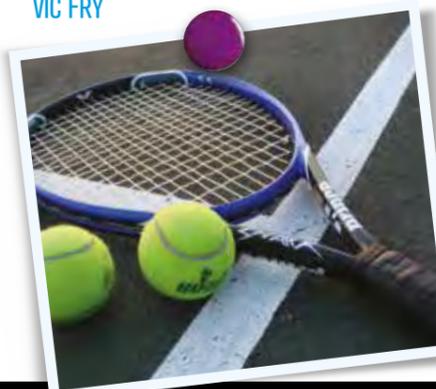
Whatever your standard of tennis, or age, you will be welcome. From start up to senior, our members range from 3 to 80+ years old. We provide a varied coaching programme through our dedicated LTA qualified coaching team run by Teach Me Tennis, who run after school, weekend and holiday programmes for junior members and offer coaching to adults on an individual and group basis.

In addition to club sessions on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, there is a singles ladder for those who wish to play competitively and we have mixed, ladies and men's teams in the Berkshire league

with matches most weekends. Match practice on Monday evenings We also run fun tournaments throughout the summer with a BBQ and drinks provided. But if you just want to play informally with friends and family that is fine also. There is a members' court booking link on our website.

We look forward to seeing you this summer and would be happy to answer any queries you may have. Please look at the website peppardtennisclub.co.uk. Or email, us at peppardtfc@hotmail.co.uk ●

VIC FRY



NOTTAKWIRE - AN UPDATE

Nottakwire (and the smaller Notts Group) are still going strong in the village. Currently there are 76 members and we are pleased that our Gents Section has grown to 14.

Last Christmas - 2018- we raised and donated £1,062 for both village, UK and International Causes and on 22 March this year, we held an internal fund-raising day from which we sent £350 each to "Comic Relief" and the "Idai Cyclone Relief Fund".

Both Elaine and I - and our members - are obviously increasing in years - and we have made a decision not to hold any more Summer Fund-Raising Events.

Sonning Common has many great qualities which all of us who live here value highly and recognise as very special. We hope that Nottakwire can continue to add its own unique contribution to the life of the Village and to all those who attend or benefit in some way from what we do.

We meet on alternate Friday mornings in the Village Hall and welcome all those who would like to join us! ●

MARGARET MOOLA & ELAINE WILLIAMS
Nottakwire Founders and Directors.
Contact: margaret.moola@btinternet.com

ABBEYCREST CONCERT FEATURING VIOLINIST SKYE EL-SHIRBINY, ACCOMPANIED BY SARAH PORTER

On Saturday morning, 13 April residents and guests were treated to a delightful violin concert in the elegant lounge of Abbeycrest Residential Home, Kennylands Road.

The musician, Skye, aged 14, is a member of three orchestras. She has performed as a soloist in Dorchester Abbey and recently at the Albert Hall. Her instrument is a German violin from Beecher Acoustics, Oxford, and she is pleased to be regularly accompanied by Jonathan Beecher's wife, Sarah Porter (erstwhile resident of Peppard).

From the start of the programme we were struck by Skye's unaffected grace and charm, her competence and subtlety of expression, her measured skill. We observed

the empathy between Skye and Sarah in their harmonious rapport.

Residents, teacher, family, friends and guests from the community were moved by the event. Skye and Sarah reinforced for us the realisation that music provides a communication channel which has the power to tap into our emotional selves in a shared creative experience, wherever and wherever we may be.

Whilst we socialised at the end we were very kindly served beverages and home-made cakes, by the solicitous and hospitable staff of Abbeycrest.

A retiring collection was held in aid of iReach Africa, for their relief work in Mozambique, and in particular, Tariro

Christian Vocational Training Centre, founded in 1998 by Aaron Beecher.

<https://www.ireachafrika.com/>
<https://www.tariro.net/>

Warmest thanks, appreciation and admiration go to Skye, Sarah, Jonathan and Abbeycrest. ●

IRENKA MOTYKA



RESIDENT'S CONCERN

Those of you who regularly walk to Bishopswood across the fields may have noticed the new signs in our Woodlands Road side lane leading to the footpath.

As residents of the lane we are delighted to see so many people exercising with their dogs and enjoying the beautiful countryside we are lucky to live in / near. But it is a frustrating disappointment that a small percentage of dog owners do not recognise their social (and legal) responsibility to clean up after their pets.

We have seen people allow their dogs to foul, glance up and down the lane before walking off and leaving the excrement. We have seen a grandmother try to kick her pooch's pooch under the hedge while her grandson watched on; not a good example to the younger generation. We have people who think bagging the dirty deed and hanging in the bushes is acceptable.

Some of us residents in this small lane have dogs so we do understand that they

do not always perform as we would desire. The owner is responsible to have a bag and to use it if and when necessary. So please take note of our signs. This is not a dog problem, it's a dog owner attitude problem. Your help in making this a clean village is appreciated and thank you to the many who play their part with bag at the ready. ●

PHILIP PARMENTER
Woodlands Road resident



NEWS FROM THE LIBRARY

- Father's Day Storytime on 15 June (with crafts and cake sale);
- The theme of the Summer Reading Challenge 2019 is Space Chase (special Saturday storytimes every Saturday in August)
- We're starting craft sessions on Friday mornings where everyone brings a project to work on (eg knitting, crocheting, card-making) in the company of like-minded people

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Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge Open Evening
Wednesday 3 July 2019
 5pm to 8pm

For parents and primary school pupils (current Year 5) moving to secondary school in September 2020

The evening will be an opportunity to visit the school and meet and talk to staff and students. There will be lots to do and see including:

- Subject displays
- Hands-on activities
- Drama and music performances
- Enrichment information
- Presentation by the Headteacher and students
- Tours of the school led by students

Presentations in the Main School Hall at 5.15pm and 7.15pm

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 For regular updates please follow us on Twitter @MEChilternEdge or visit our website www.maidenerleghchilternedge.co.uk

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JUNE 29

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Then come and learn how to take back control and feel calmer again.

This fun and informative two hour workshop will give you a greater understanding of the causes of your anxiety and stress and what is happening in your body. By learning how to take control of your thoughts you will in turn take back control of your feelings and lessen any stress or anxiety you are experiencing. You will learn some breathing techniques and some self help techniques and leave feeling calm and more empowered.

- Understand the 'Fight or Flight' response
- What happens in the body when we are stressed and anxious
- Learn breathing techniques to take control of the body and mind
- Learn how to move your thoughts out of your head and to be more aware of what's happening in the 'now'
- Learn self hypnosis to reduce stress
- Question your thoughts and change your thinking.
- Experience a relaxation session so that you leave the class calmer and more relaxed than when you arrived!

Tea and coffee and homemade cake are included and you will receive class handouts to take away with you. This is a thoroughly enjoyable and informative event not to be missed

Contact: - Louise@positive-thinking-hypnotherapy.com or 0118 9471749 to book your place. Spaces are limited.

Sonning Common Village XI Fixtures 2019

DATE	OPPONENTS	VENUE	START
May 5	Nettlebed	A	14.00
May 12	Ipsden	A	14.00
June 1	Broadwindsor (Tour)	A	14.00
June 16	Whitchurch	A	14.00
June 23	Fawley	A	14.00
June 30	Swyncombe	H	TBC
July 7	Aldermaston	A	14.00
July 14	Waterloo C.C, Belgium	A	14.00
July 21	BBC Caversham	A	TBA
August 4	Kidmore End	At Woodcote	13.30
August 11	Hambleden	A	14.00
August 18	Pangbourne	A	14.00
August 25	Peppard Maharajas	A	14.00
September 1	Highmoor (Roger Choules Memorial Cup)	A	13.30
September 8	Moulsford	A	13.30

Recycling centre cleaning dates

During May, your Household Waste Recycling Centre will be closing for two days to carry out a deep clean and essential maintenance.

Closing dates:
 Oakley Wood (Wallingford) Thurs 23 & Fri 24 May

Full details can be found at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/waste including details of your nearest site during closures. Thank you in advance for your patience.

SUMMER FETE at PEPPARD MEMORIAL HALL

SATURDAY 8 JUNE
 11am to 4pm

Various stalls including Cakes, Plants, Books, Bric-a-Brac

Tombolas, Raffle, BBQ and Teas.

Inflatables & Face Painting

Activities from Local Junior Schools

FoSCL news

Photographic Competition
 Monday 2 September

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Kathryn Fell will judge the winners

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www.friendsofsonningcommonlibrary.org.uk

Second hand projector for use by organisations who need one - please ask in the library.

Tombola prizes needed for FoSCL standy at the primary school summer fete

Saturday 22 June - please leave in the library

New members needed to organise events for a few hours per month - can you help?

Join Chiltern Players play readers

for some informal entertainment over the next few months

No charge. No obligation to perform.

Meet us in the conservatory in the Butchers Arms

Sonning Common at 8 o'clock with a drink in hand

settle down for a giggle and live entertainment.

Here are the dates:
 Wednesday 8 May
 Tuesday 11 June
 Wednesday 10 July
 Tuesday 13 August

Contact Rosemary House on 0118 9722632 for further details

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SUMMER FAIR

SONNING COMMON PRIMARY SCHOOL

SATURDAY 22ND JUNE

12-3PM

PTA

Adults 50P
 Kids 50P

The School Fields, Grove Rd

Health Walks

The bluebells are now over, but the Chiltern countryside looks wonderful in any weather! At time of writing the ground is dry and hard - just right for a brisk walk, so why not join one of our Health Walks?

The current timetable is available from the library, the Health Centre and the Herb Farm, or on the website at www.sonningcommonhealthwalks.co.uk/timetable.

To talk to someone about any aspect of the Health Walks phone Chris Brook on 0118 9242515

Rosemary Dunstan

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T: 0118 9724 401 / 07846 185 905
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BOOKREVIEW

SONNING COMMON PRIMARY SCHOOL READING GROUPS

MURDER IN MIDWINTER

by Fleur Hitchcock

Synopsis: Maya gets sent to relatives in Wales after accidentally taking a photo of a man pointing a gun at a woman in the crowded streets of London before Christmas. As the snow settles, it becomes impossible for anyone to get in... or out.

Review by Nina Govett: I liked it because there was so much action and so many unexpected things happened. Most of the story was believable – but I don't know if police would really send you to safety just because you said you saw someone with a gun....but have lost the proof that you did.



never knew what was going to happen next. I think it won the Blue Peter book award because it was all about facing your fears – and the three rabbits did!

NIGHT SPEAKERS

by Ali Sparkes

Synopsis: Three children from completely different backgrounds wake up at 1.34am every morning. They venture into the dark and find each other – and then find that they all have powers to communicate with animals. But something else is out there in the shadows waiting for the right moment to strike.

Review by Valentina Robinson: I really liked it because you never knew what was coming next. The story made me feel excited and I wanted to read more and more. I liked the ending because it was a cliff-hanger, and it made me want to read the next book (Night Raiders)



needed to save the earth....

Review by Freddie Hodges: It was a good story because it was action-packed and funny. However the ending was lazy and disappointing. The funniest bit was the cover where it says: 'My brother is a superhero – I could have been one too, except I needed a wee'

MURDER MOST UNLADYLIKE

by Robin Stevens

Synopsis: When Daisy Wells and Hazel Wong set up a secret detective agency at Deepdean School for Girls, they can't find a truly exciting mystery to investigate. Then Hazel discovers the body of the Science Mistress, Miss Bell – but when she and Daisy return 5 minutes later, the body has disappeared.

Review by Alice McNeill: I loved the story because it was full of the unexpected – and very scary at some points. I loved Hazel because she reminds me of myself, being clever and not afraid to show it. On the other hand, Daisy is just using Hazel to help her solve the mystery – and then she takes all the attention.



THE LEGEND OF PODKIN ONE-EAR

by Kieran Larwood

(winner of a Blue Peter book award)

Synopsis: Podkin (a rabbit) is the lazy son of chieftain Lopkin, until one day his warren is attacked by the Gorm: rabbit monsters covered in iron armour. With his older sister Paz and baby brother Pook, he journeys to escape the Gorm and discover what happened to his parents on that fateful night.

Review by Emma Geleta: I thought the story was good – you



MY BROTHER IS A SUPERHERO

by David Solomons

Synopsis: Zach and Luke are in their treehouse when Luke has to go for a wee. While he's away Zach is visited by an alien and is given superpowers – powers which will be



All of these books are available to borrow from Sonning Common Library

ROSEMARY DUNSTAN



ON YOUR BIKE 2019

British Summer Time got off to a bang in Sonning Common as the annual On Your Bike event got underway on Sunday morning, 31 March.

Now in its 13th year, the family event saw 500 entrants between the ages of 5 and 75; as children, mums, dads and grandparents picked from a 6, 12, or 20, mile lap starting and finishing in the playground at Sonning Common Primary School.

An army of more than 50 volunteers helped marshal the course, manage registration and provide hot food and drink to every finisher. The youngest participant this year, 5-year-old Leo Nash left the event having learned to ride a bike in the playground. 'Seeing a young child come along and learn to ride a bike with Dad whilst his older brother was out riding the course with Mum is brilliant. Having whole families take part and go home smiling with a big sense of achievement is exactly what this event is all about' said Geoff Davis, one of the marshals for this year's event.

Commenting on the event, which has been run in the village since 2008 and is supported by local businesses including AW Cycles and Ella's Kitchen, 8 year-old Sadie Skilton, who did the 12 mile route said: "It was a really fun day, I have never cycled that far before – but it was great doing it with my Dad and friends".

Penny Snowden, the founder of the event said 'the total money raised from this year's On Your Bike was £4000, which brings the total raised since the first event to over £55,000. All money raised goes to local charities and this year went towards funding trips out for elderly residents of the village with FISH and towards a new play area for Sonning Common Primary School.

For further information visit: www.onyourbikesonningcommon.co.uk

GEOFF DAVIS

- Over £4,000 raised (after taking off all costs and not including the value or donations from AW Cycles, Bevilles, Higgs printers, Lift creative design)
- Over 550 took part including all the cyclists, marshals, volunteers and first responders
- Over 35,000 miles cycled
- Every rider safely home
- Wonderful smiley faces from start to finish
- Many very sincere thanks and congratulations from participants on a wonderfully organised and executed event

OYB 2020 (Olympic Year) will be Sunday 29 March



JACKIE'S CRAFT COLUMN

PAINTED ROCK PHOTO HOLDER

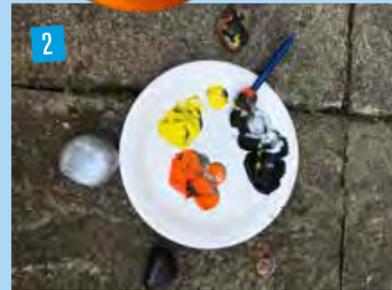
These photo holders make great gifts for friends and family.

What you'll need:

- A rock
- Paint and paintbrushes
- Jewellery wire/pipe cleaners
- Beads
- Scissors
- Photograph



1) Start by cleaning and drying your rocks



2) Decorate your rocks by painting them or why not use stickers and accessories as part of your design.



3) While you are waiting for your rocks to dry, take a pipe cleaner or piece of wire. Wrap one end around a circular object to create the photo holder - we used a medicine syringe. You will need to wrap it at least twice. Twist the end of the wire around the loops to secure them - you may need help from an adult for this step.



4) Thread beads onto the remaining length of wire leaving some wire spare at the end. You can always twist 2 pipe cleaners together if you need more length.



5) Wrap the remaining wire around your painted rock and twist to secure. The rock will form the base of your photo holder.

6) Slot your favourite photo between the wire loops and pop it on display.



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VILLAGE GARDENERS CELEBRATE TEN HAPPY YEARS OF DIGGING

TO WEED OR NOT TO WEED ... THAT WAS THE QUESTION

So from little acorns mighty oaks grew.

On Sunday 7 April thirteen Village Gardeners enjoyed a splendid lunch at the Butchers Arms in Sonning Common to mark the occasion of their tenth anniversary. It was a very happy event and many memories were evoked about the considerable changes in the village and the efforts made to maintain its special character and sense of community. The old red telephone box was one topic that provoked a lot of passionate discussion and the outcome was the hope to see it reappear as a focal point in the near future.

The work outside the Village Hall with the two large wooden planters and presence of tubs and containers full of flowering shrubs and plants is a highly visible part of the work undertaken, but we also all remembered the weeding, pruning and watering as well as the effort needed to transform dull areas into places of greater beauty. The profusion of wonderful daffodils around the village thanks to an anonymous sponsor was greatly appreciated. Many members had fond memories of being part of this friendly group.

JOAN GRUMMANT

CELEBRATING 10 YEARS OF VILLAGE GARDENING It's hard to believe that 10 years have passed since Chrissie and I were walking through the village with those scruffy, unweeded beds that were there and we decided that we could make a small difference by plucking out a few dandelions, buttercups etc and do a bit of planting to improve their appearance a little.

I can barely remember all the details but the idea grew - we mentioned it to friends, made new ones along the way and the idea caught on. Chrissie was the main organiser and I concentrated on the plants we used. We became known as the Village

Gardeners - worked twice a month and still do - the first Sunday of each month and the third Thursday and anything else in between if one wanted to.

Many VGs have concentrated on their particular patch in the village. For example Linda Webb and her friend June Fisher worked on the upper end of Wood Lane and it was extremely sad that we have lost Linda. She worked as long as she was able particularly on the Heath & Watkins bed and the tubs outside the charity shop. She also organised a substantial donation from the Caversham Waitrose where she worked. We miss her very much.

Initially we relied on donations from individuals and local businesses, but as our boundaries grew wider the Parish Council now very generously supports us annually and allows us to use a useful storage area behind the Village Hall.

The interesting thing about a group of people is the different strengths you have that contribute to the effectiveness of what you can do. For instance, we have muscle with Leigh Rawlins, James Sadler and Paul Waterman for the somewhat heavier work of digging, hedging and shifting etc. They also plant very well too! Gail Noble who moved to the south west is a garden designer and came up with good ideas about planting. Most of us do the tubs, beds, weeding, planting and tidying etc. and we have lots of fun and laughter whilst we are doing this.

We helped at the primary school several times with Jill Pound and the young would be gardeners who particularly like the watering jobs! Also, we helped out with planting bulbs and replacing trees at the front of Chiltern Edge.

Stan Rust has made such a valuable contribution with his photography of what we do and his work behind the Village Hall. He also worked on the red telephone box and the planting inside it. We hope that will

be restored fairly soon when the design for the village centre has been decided.

One of the highlights of the 10 years has been participating in the Thames and Chilterns in Bloom Competition in 2014. We earned a Small Town Silver Award and were in fact only a few points off gold! So much effort went into that it was decided just to concentrate on the village itself and not the deadlines we had to meet. But it was a memorable experience.

We are extremely grateful for the support we get either verbally as we are working, and all the donations we receive, some anonymous, both monies and plants. Without such support we would find it hard to function. We are grateful to Alan Gibbon who keeps an eye on our monies and earlier it was Judy Pitson who did the same. Also we thank Paul Waterman who has recently designed a website for us.

If you want to join us please do! If you have and enjoy your own garden, you will know that it never stops but always brings pleasure!

JILL GREENWOOD

2 hours a month- it's amazing how much we can get done. It's such a sociable occasion too, as many residents stop to chat to us.

CAROLE LEWIS

Bind weed in the border outside Flemings/One Stop was a huge job. After many Sundays trying to dig out the never say die bindweed in the border it was agreed to lift all approx. 20 tons of soil. With machinery, lorries and labour the task was duly completed. In the future the border will be replanted with a similar scheme.

JAMES SADLER

When I volunteered to help the Village Gardeners I had no idea what I was letting myself in for. I found I did not need any

particular skills, just a willingness to weed and plant out new bedding plants. I enjoy my one hour, one Sunday a month and it is good to see the village looking so colourful and cared for, a far cry from when I first moved here in 1968. It can only be done through volunteers, so if you're wondering whether you can do it or not - give it a go.

ANDREA BAPLE

I have so many good and happy memories of VGs. It is difficult to pick out one but working with both Sonning Common Primary School and the secondary school were very special. We helped kick start the gardening club both with some money and with practical help. The much missed Linda Webb was seconded by her then employers, Waitrose, to work in the school gardens with the children one afternoon a week.

Several of the village gardeners went in as well and it was always a special time. The other occasion was when the technical after school club at Chiltern Edge designed, built and painted two troughs which now stand by the bus stop in Wood Lane. The primary and secondary children were so interested and involved - working with them as a team was such fun.

Winning a silver medal for Britain in Bloom was pretty exciting as well.

CHRISSIE GODFREY

The enjoyment I have from gardening (flowers only) meant I could give some of my free time during my retirement to Village Gardeners. It's amazing what a group of friends can achieve. I feel I can give back to the village what it has given to me, having lived here for over sixty years. We have achieved so much in the past ten years, the list is endless if you think about it. To me I give such a little time and in return I receive pleasure from friendship and the results of our efforts, also compliments from village people who enjoy our endeavours.

JUNE FISHER

When Chrissie started the Village Gardeners ten years ago it was in the face of less than positive support from leading members of the then parish council. She resolutely persevered with her ideas and today we benefit from the much improved appearance of our village, the result of years of hard work by the V.G. team. The 10th Anniversary is a cause for celebration!

DOUGLAS AND YVONNE KEDGE

I just want to send my appreciation for all the hard work that the Village Gardeners do to make this village more attractive. They have transformed the flower beds in front of the shops and how pretty the grass spaces look with all the daffodils each Spring. Well done to all of them.

DIANA GITTINGS

THANK YOU VILLAGE GARDENERS...

...for the time and effort you give to making our village centre that bit nicer. The large wooden planters and the raised flower beds bring character and colour and a softness to an otherwise ordinary street scene, and coming across the occasional flower-filled wheelbarrow brings on the smiles!

JULIA WHITELAW

COPING WITH DEMENTIA

When I was caring for my mother who had Alzheimer's dementia I didn't know very much about the illness and found the task of looking after her very difficult and emotionally draining. I was never sure whether I was doing the right thing and as it was becoming so difficult to communicate positively with my mother life was becoming very tough for both of us. This was 20 years ago and thankfully things have changed. A great deal of information and support is now available to hopefully make life easier by providing both practical and emotional support. Dementia not only happens to those who have the condition but to all those around them. It is indeed an emotional roller coaster for all concerned and everyone needs support.

There is a great deal of fear and misunderstanding around this illness and it is important to realise that dementia is not an illness in itself but rather the signs and symptoms caused by a person's brain being compromised either through a brain disease - Alzheimer's or Vascular Dementia - or damage caused by a physical injury or some other condition such as Parkinson's or Motor Neurone Disease. Sadly these signs and symptoms involve a progressive decline in someone's mental abilities namely to remember, to make rational judgements, to perform everyday tasks, and to communicate. All very difficult problems to support. Dementia is not all about memory but when a person's short term memory is affected it becomes impossible to function without support.

Dementia care was transformed in the 1990s by the introduction of the principle of 'person centred care'. Basically placing the person themselves at the centre of the care and not the symptoms of the illness. The effects of dementia are as individual as we all are and our ways of dealing with it are also individual. This approach brought hope and provides ways of connecting with a person in a positive and natural way but it does need patience, time and effort to fully understand emotions and needs but the rewards for both the person and their carers are infinite. Making this 'connection' provides a way of supporting the person to enjoy as stimulating and contented life as possible despite the numerous difficulties the person and their carer will face.

There are now many activities provided for people living with dementia and their carers. Creating an interesting mix of exercise, Day Centres, social groups, Tea Dances, Relaxed film performances, walking football to name but a few! Many communities are also taking up the banner and helping to create dementia friendly spaces and also creating and providing training for banks, shops, transport facilities. This is beginning to make a real difference.

No one would say that caring for someone with dementia is easy but with the right support at the right time, quality of life can be enhanced and the wellbeing of everyone involved improved and sustained. Never forget that the person is still there - we just need to find the right way to reach them. Understandably it is extremely hard to accept a

diagnosis of dementia and many people just cannot do this and continue to struggle alone. Seeking help early is the best advice I can give.

If I knew as much about the illness when I was supporting my mum as I do now I am positive life would have been much easier both for my mother and for me and my children. Often the more one knows about the mechanics of dementia the easier it is to understand it's effects and to enable you to care in the best way you can. ●

KATE HAMPTON

Useful numbers

Age UK Oxfordshire
0345 450 1276,

Dementia Oxfordshire
01865 410210 (Helpline)

Alzheimer's Society National
Dementia Helpline
0300 222 1122

Alzheimer's Research UK
0300 111 5555

Local carers groups - Carers
Oxfordshire 03450507666

Contented Dementia Oliver James
Dementia Reconsidered Tom
Kitwood



BUILDING WORK SCHC

Thank you for your understanding during the period of building work this winter. The work has included:

- The conversion of office space downstairs to create three new clinical rooms
- The small outside patio area has been altered to become part of a larger waiting room
- A new dispensary area accessible by patients from the main Reception entrance
- The conversion of the old dispensary into a larger treatment room and clinical testing area

The work is being part funded by Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and will enable the Health Centre team to manage its increasing patient list in the years ahead.

Thank you to Sonning Common Parish Council for their help with funding to equip one of our new clinical rooms. We are fundraising to equip the remainder of our clinical rooms, waiting room and the patient assessment area. Any donations would be gratefully received. Please contact Andrea, Practice Manager, for further information. ●

MATTERS OF MEMORY TALK/FORUM ON 30 APRIL

The last of three talks on Dementia was held in the Palmer Room at the Health Centre. Dr Ralph Drury introduced the speakers Rose Elliot and Ken Blanton.

Rose Elliot is an Admiral Nurse from The Orders of St John Care Trust. She works at Chilterns Court Care Home and in the community under Dementia UK. She spoke about her role, helping carers and also in training other nurses for the role.

Ken Blanton kindly stood in for Esther Ramsay-Jones who was unable to attend. Ken is a Specialist Counsellor at Sue Ryder Nettlebed. He suggested thinking about the use of the word 'should'. Do what is right for carer and patient now rather than in a normal situation.

A video clip about a son and his mother, a photographic journey through Dementia is available. Google Tony Luicani - TED talk

An interactive question time with general debate aired some personal situations which were discussed in a relaxed atmosphere. Refreshments were enjoyed at the end of the afternoon. ●



MATTERS OF MEMORY TALK/FORUM ON 26 MARCH

This was the second of three talks held in the Palmer Room at the Health Centre. Nicky Vernede a Dietician from Oxford Health gave a very informative talk with a slide presentation. She stressed the importance of a balanced diet and advised on the need to avoid certain foods and textures if eating or swallowing is difficult.

Louise Williams and Vicky Tomlinson from Carers Oxfordshire then spoke about their role in supporting and giving advice and where carers can find additional help. They brought a very useful booklet called 'Care Matters' which is available at the

Health Centre. Question time brought discussion and debate from the audience, which included examples of personal situations. Tea, coffee and home-made cakes rounded off another very successful afternoon. ●



SUE LITCHFIELD

SOCIAL PRESCRIBING WITH SONNING COMMON HEALTH CENTRE

The Community Information Network (part of Age UK Oxfordshire) are working with the Sonning Common GP surgery to provide Social prescribing to their patients aged 18 plus. Social prescribing is a way in which we can help you to link with a range of local, non-medical activities, opportunities and support that can improve your health and help you 'live life to the full'. These activities, opportunities and support are typically provided by locally based voluntary and community organisations. We know that being active, engaging with others, learning something new and getting involved in the world around you can improve your mental health and wellbeing. Being supported to have something to look forward to, take up a new hobby, reconnect with something you have done before as well as being active are all ways in which we can work together with you. Everyone is different and we personalise the service to reflect this. It all starts with a conversation.

If you would like further information or you think that you, or someone you are close to, would benefit from our help or support please speak to your GP or Practice Nurse about being referred to us or you can contact us yourself by phoning 01235 849445 or emailing socialprescribing@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

WHAT WE CAN DO TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE



By **LYNDSAY HENDERSON**

Whether it's remembering a shopping bag and a refillable bottle or recycling, we're all trying to do our bit for the environment. The issue has been prominent in recent months - thanks in part to BBC's Planet Earth, worldwide environment protests and MPs declaring an 'environment and climate change emergency'.

But, what can we do in Sonning Common? Well, more than you might think. I've set up a group called Eco SoCo and will be writing a column, in this magazine to share more and I'd love to hear your thoughts too.

Eco SoCo is a community group to share stories, run events, engage with local businesses and groups and encourage practical ways to make a positive impact on the environment through:

- minimising waste and pollution;
- promoting borrowing, repairing, buying local produce and sharing resources and knowledge; and
- maximising recycling of the waste we have.

Our community is aware of protecting our rural setting and the wider environment and I will be sharing a story from the community, news and events and Sonning Common Primary School's Eco-council challenge.

Sonning Common WI

Sue Hedges and Jenny Ward from the Sonning Common WI spoke to me about the WI's work in promoting environmental issues in the village.

Tell me about the WI's environmental campaigns

The WI have a strong history of supporting environmental issues back to Keep Britain Tidy in 1951. We have over 220,000 members and 6,500 WIs, so the National Federation is in very strong position to get their voice heard. Recent campaigns have

included Climate Change (Green Hearts to Show the Love) (2015), Avoid Food Waste (2016) and End Plastic Soup (2017).

What actions has SCWI taken on the campaigns?

End Plastic Soup aims to find solutions to tackle the problem of microplastic fibres, released when synthetic clothing is washed, from entering the marine environment. The clothing industry set up the Microfibre Consortium and SCWI is writing to major clothing brands asking how they are supporting this and meeting the aims of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

For the Climate Change Campaign, SCWI made Green Hearts to start conversations and wrote to MP, John Howell. Green Hearts were displayed in the Village Hall with a 'reduce plastic' presentation at the Village Coffee Morning and WI meeting.

SCWI support SC Primary School's recycling, sells at car boot sales to reduce landfill waste and raise money for charity and provided refreshments for the SC Springclean. Recent talks have been on SODC's waste disposal and turning recycling waste into bags, jewellery and bowls.

What should the Community do to reduce its impact on the environment?

Many SCWI members remember a thriftier way of life. We dislike waste and discarding stuff which can still be used. We didn't use wet wipes; used soap bars and wore outer clothes several times before washing. Flasks were the norm and electrical goods were more expensive but could be repaired. We don't want to turn back the clock, but this might solve the waste problems.

Challenge from Sonning Common Primary's Eco-council

The Eco-council are the ecological conscience for the school, pupils who are

not afraid to share opinions and provide solutions to ecological issues at school and further afield. Encouraging all to use less of what we must, recycle wisely and growing more plants and looking after animals on site. They give all the school a nudge to do the right thing for the environment and as custodians of the planet. They are brilliant.

Your challenge: we want to help you recycle more 'difficult to recycle' waste by using the bins in the library. Let's double the quantity we recycle in the second half of the year!

News and events

We will be running events to support our aims - for further information including events, recycling and where to buy locally join our Facebook group (Eco SoCo) or email ecosoco@sonningcommonmagazine.org



EAT...SLEEP...RECYCLE... REPEAT

How many reasons do you need to recycle single use plastic waste?

1. It is the right thing to do.
2. You can help raise money for every kg that Sonning Common Primary School send to Terracycle.
3. This money will be spent directly on playground and sport equipment for the children of the school.
4. If they are the most successful recycling school in the country between 25th March 2019 and 5th July 2019 they could win £10,000.

Lent Lunch group and Churches Together have generously raised £285 for the school enabling them to purchase more recycling bins to put into other establishments. Do you fit this category - does the business you work for fit this category? If so please contact the headteacher at the school for more information.

More recycling = more money to spend on the children of Sonning Common Primary School...

For more information on which items are suitable please see the TerraCycle website <https://www.terracycle.co.uk/en-GB/>



Local Recycling Collection



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Save all your packaging for us to recycle, and help save the planet at the same time....

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TOM FORT BEING GREEDY



Thank goodness Easter is over and done with. I don't mean the church bit or the family lunch on Easter Sunday (slow-roast hoggett, which is older than lamb and younger than mutton and very delicious, in case you're interested) or the amazing weather. I mean the chocolates and the eggs. All gone, all eaten. Good riddance.

The thing is, I am a very greedy person. Always have been, always will be. It's a weakness I fight against - or try to fight against. But the influx into the house of chocolate eggs and the bars of chocolate and the individual chocolates that come with them makes the fight very hard.

People who are not greedy do not

know how hard it is being greedy. They think - and tell you - that it's just a matter of will power. Get a grip, they say. Turn away. But they know nothing about that voice in your head whispering insistently: 'Go on. One more is almost the same as nothing. You've already scoffed most of it, that last chunk won't make any difference. Get rid of it and then pretend it never existed in the first place.'

It's not just Easter eggs. It's cream (double, of course, preferably Jersey) - what's the point of raspberries and strawberries without cream? It's leftovers. It's the bits of meat and fat left on the plate after carving. It's those scrumptious crunchy deposits left after frying sausages. It's..... well,

the list is pretty much endless.

Greed is a condition, not a choice. I, my brothers and my sister are all afflicted with it, and the accompanying obsession with food. I fear my children may be infected too - in Bilboa recently 18-year-old Rosie said: 'It's amazing how much of our holidays revolves around eating'.

What we sufferers need from the non-greedy is not criticism or advice on how to fight our weakness - but sympathy. It's not easy, you know. Now pass the biscuits. ●

COOK'S CORNER

By SANDY ONOFRIO

THINK OUTSIDE THE BUN



VEGETARIAN CHICKPEA BURGERS - serves 4

- 1 (400g) tin chickpeas
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 tablespoon dried thyme, or to taste
- 4 teaspoons dark soy sauce
- salt and freshly ground black pepper to taste
- 75g dried breadcrumbs
- 2 eggs, beaten
- 4 tablespoons vegetable oil



In a blender or food processor, purée the chickpeas until the mixture is a paste. Add onions, thyme, soy sauce, salt and pepper to the mixture; mix well. Add breadcrumbs and egg; mix well. Form the chickpea mixture into burgers. Heat oil in a large frying pan over medium heat. Fry burgers until each side is golden brown. ●

HOMEMADE BURGERS - SERVES 4

- 1 diced onion, chopped finely
- 1 tablespoon oil
- 4 tablespoons dried breadcrumbs
- 250g minced turkey or beef
- 2 tablespoons light soy sauce
- 1 tablespoon Worcester sauce
- 2 eggs
- Salt & pepper to taste



Cook off the onion on a med-low heat in the oil until soft. Place all other ingredients in a bowl and add the onion. Pre-heat your pan. Divide mixture into 4 and roll each into a ball in your hands. Place on a tray, flatten and shape by pressing out to about 2cm deep. Place in the preheated pan and cook for about 5 minutes before turning over. You need to let it form a golden crust and seal one side before you turn it to the second side. Cook for about 5 minutes on the other side. Turn over again, cooking both sides again for a minute or two. ●

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ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

As this article is being written Easter was just over a week ago. Parishioners were delighted to see children from the parish and school having their feet washed on Maundy Thursday and receiving their Maundy money. We managed to end up with 13, rather than the traditional 12, for this ceremony but no one seemed to notice. The church was full for the solemn Good Friday service and the Easter Sunday Masses. Since Easter was relatively late this year it was not completely dark when we began our Easter Vigil on Easter Saturday at 8pm. However, this did not detract from the beauty of this service. It is always a great joy to see old friends and visitors returning for these services. The exceptionally good weather made it a particularly pleasurable to join with Christians from all the local churches for the Good Friday walk of witness through Sonning Common.

IN THE MERRY MONTH OF MAY was the title of this year's concert at St John's in Kidmore End on 4 May, to raise money for much needed parish maintenance funds.

Musical Director was Frances Brewitt-Taylor with Linda Scottorn on piano.

The church choir kicked off the afternoon with 3 lovely songs, among which: Peter Skellern's Waiting for the Word.

All four corners of the earth were visited. Simon Classey's rendition of Papageno's Song from The Magic Flute to Penny Edward's and Jenny Artivitch's comic presentation of There's a Hole in my Bucket delighted the 70 strong audience. Caribbean sunshine appeared in the form of a folk song, Junkanoo, presented by four members of the choir.

From jazz saxophone to recorder, ukulele and organ there was a wide representation of instrumental prowess! Tim Walker's sax piece Sultry Evening by Chris Norton morphed into Dave Brubeck's Take Five followed by a complete contrast with Debussy's Fille aux cheveux de lin. Karen Broadbent's challenging recorder piece: Sammartini's Concerto in F left us breathless.

Frances rounded off the afternoon with the choir bringing us Come with Me for the Journey is Long in which the audience took part with vigour.

Frances was thanked by Rector James Stickings for her hard work and we repaired to the back of the church where a splendid array of tea and sweet and savoury snacks were set out to refresh both audience and participants.

ROSEMARY HOUSE

As well as our regular Sunday services there is a Mass on each weekday; usually 9.30am Mon, Wed, Fri, and 12 noon Tues, Thurs but it can vary.

St Martin's our primary school in Caversham Park Village started the summer term with a new headteacher. We hope she soon feels part of the community.

BRIAN THEOBOLD

ELECTION RESULTS

There were seismic changes in our local districts.

For Sonning Common ward the result was :-

SODC WARD

SONNING COMMON	VOTE	%
D Bartholomew (Con.)	951	25.7
L Fumi (LD)	540	14.5
P Harrison (Con.)	703	19.0
L Rawlins (IND)	1238	33.4
D Winchester (Lab)	273	7.4
TOTAL	3705	

Externally this will look an amazing result – a no-hope independent running in an apparently super-secure ward against organised parties. However in reality it is a tribute to the local spirit and army of support for a better way. I was standing on big shoulders! Alongside so many of your huge contributions Sue has made a major input. It has been rather all-consuming. Thank you all!

Congratulations also to David Bartholomew.

I should note that Paul Harrison was very philosophical and gracious in defeat.

Overall the following mix for SODC applies :-

SODC is now :-

LD	12
Green	5
HRG	3
IND	3
Lab	3
Con.	10
Total	36

So scope for big changes in the Local Plan!

There's also been a seismic change at SODC - with a popular uprising against the previous draft Local Plan "LP2034" - right across the district. Political personalities and the balance of parties have changed quite dramatically. This will create space for a new direction and hopefully a council where persuasion and reasoned cooperation are much more in evidence!

Sonning Common is a special place within our "Midsomer" district. Whilst "Midsomer" is fictional, idealised and perhaps a little nostalgic, our environment is distinctive and valuable in real life. It is within that space that our friendly and grounded community exists. It is true that like other places we need to move with the times and adapt - but not to lose sight of what makes our village a special place.

In my new role, I will make it my priority to correct SODC's emerging Local Plan 2034, correct its crude high-density policy and reduce its numbers to reflect our real needs. I will press to re-focus the housing mix on the more modest first-time and down-sizer homes that we lack. Likewise I will oppose excessively high volumes in the future Oxfordshire Plan 2050.

I will not accept any sprawl from north Reading into rural South Oxfordshire and the Chilterns AONB. The integrity of our village must remain. I will resist any takeover of SODC by OCC to centralise power in distant Oxford. If efficiencies can be gained by sharing resources we can explore those options. However power must remain close to communities - grounded in local realities. I will work in partnership with our Parish Council(s) to make a real difference so that SODC is better connected to local knowledge. I will properly represent local communities and work in cooperation with David within this ward. We both care enough to call out ill-considered proposals that won't serve Sonning Common well.

Leigh Rawlins

District Councillor for SC Ward

YOUR PRIORITIES ARE MY PRIORITIES

Thank you for electing me on 2nd May as your District Councillor. I have already been representing you as your County Councillor for six years and will now combine that with the role of District Councillor.

First and foremost, I see myself as a champion of the communities I represent - I make no apologies for saying political allegiances come second at a local level. My wife and I have lived in this area we love for 30 years and our sons grew up here.

Since being elected as County Councillor in 2013, I have made a point of attending almost every monthly parish council meeting of the nine parishes in my County Division, which include the five Sonning Common Ward parishes, so I am already very involved in local concerns and issues.

As a County Councillor, I never forget the things that are important to everybody, such as the Oakley Wood Household Waste Recycling Centre, which I successfully fought to keep open, and the state of our roads, which I do what I can to improve in the face of budget pressures. As a District Councillor I will continue to speak out against those of an urban mind-set who champion growth at all costs and do not understand our village way of life.

Thank you again for your trust and support.

David Bartholomew

County Councillor for SC Division

District Councillor for SC Ward

Parish news

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TWO RETIRE AND ONE RETURNS

By **DIANA PEARMAN**

Barrie Greenwood has retired from the Parish Council after 23 years - a long-service award is deserved in my opinion. He has worked on a variety of committees and with a number of chairmen, some of whom held quite strident opinions! However, his quiet manner and carefully phrased interventions were invariably listened to and duly considered by many an assembled group.

He is best known for his work on planning where he led the sub-committee for several years. With his helpful, measured approach, his expertise was always highly regarded by residents, colleagues and by the staff at SODC.

His greatest achievement was undoubtedly Sonning Common's Neighbourhood Development Plan. He brought together a small team of volunteers and despite the challenges and hurdles encountered during the five years the plan took to complete, his caring stewardship and unwavering commitment ensured that the team stayed the course and got the job done. His insistence on robust consultation with residents at all stages was recognised by the examiner of the plan who commented that plan-makers went beyond legislative requirements

to actively engage with local people; moreover there was plentiful evidence to demonstrate that the local community had in effect shaped the plan.

Now, with all this free time Barrie will be able to more fully pursue his many interests - reading, golf, skiing, the 'Green Gym' - and, of course, enjoy his five grandchildren. We wish him all the very best and thank him for his many services to our village.

Chrissie Godfrey was a parish councillor for over 12 years and her achievements did not end with her leading the village gardeners towards the Britain in Bloom award. She has been a very responsive and industrious Parish Councillor, representing the council on the Planning committee and various other groups. She is a member of the proof reading team for the village magazine and was the link member between the parish and their committee. When the library was under threat of closure, she gathered together a group to fight a campaign to save it and is frequently seen there on Saturday mornings reading stories to the young attendees. She has organised annually, a themed lunch which is open to all and a dinner for senior residents of the village on Christmas Day. Any funds raised by her, first by a Quiz night, plus annual suppers with a themed

menu, albeit Irish, Russian and various others, the profits went towards funding the Skate Park, another venture that she supported; this time for the young people of the village. The last two dinners raised funds for Sue Ryder and Cancer Care. Any project she engages with is thoroughly implemented. Her energy, people skills and drive are frequently commended by anyone who knows her.

In more recent times she has worked at the Sue Ryder home sorting out donations, books being her favourite. She organised a supper to raise funds for the hospice and sold raffle tickets at regatta. All of which she did with her usual enthusiasm and persistence.

Reading has always been one of her passions, having established a book group 20 years ago, as has gardening, her six grandchildren and a new husband, all of whom will keep her busy in her 'retirement'.

Dirk Jones, another valuable member of the Parish Council did retire briefly. It was with relief that he was welcomed back to manage the CCTV at the village hall and his safeguarding brief for the village which includes organising the snow clearing team. ●

ON THE 14 APRIL, the South Central Ambulance NHS Foundation Trust (Sonning Common First Responders) organised two sessions on Defibrillator Awareness, following the installation by the parish council of a defibrillator on the front of the village hall. Twenty seven local residents attended the two excellently run sessions, which included information on basic life support, the recovery position as well as defibrillator awareness. We are very fortunate to have such a first-class First Responders team (all volunteers) in our village. They deserve all the support we can give them. ●

Douglas Kedge



Sonning Common Parish Council
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T: 0118 972 3616

E: clerk@sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk (Philip Collings)
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Reminder to all readers to use the Parish website for information

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We can advise on your eligibility, set up an email address or Universal Credit account, fill in the initial application form, get access to a computer, or arrange advance payments. We can also help you by ensuring that the right evidence is submitted with your form. And if you only need minimal help with your application, Citizens Advice can provide tips if you get stuck.

As part of its normal service, Citizens



Advice also supports people who are already receiving Universal Credit.

The national Freephone number for Help to Claim is 0800 144 8444. Telephone and webchat services are available from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. (Monday-Friday)

For any other issues you might need help with, please telephone the Citizens Advice Adviceline on 03 444 111 444. Come and see us in person if you prefer. For locations of offices and opening hours see www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/oxfordshire-south-vale

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- make sure everyone is wearing their seatbelt before you set off
- get a taxi, the bus or be the designated driver on a night out
- make sure you're safe to drive the morning after, you could still be over the drink drive limit, even if you feel fine

Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service have put together top tips to help you avoid the fatal four, and have created an handy 'don't get caught out the morning after' guide 365alive.co.uk/fatalfour.

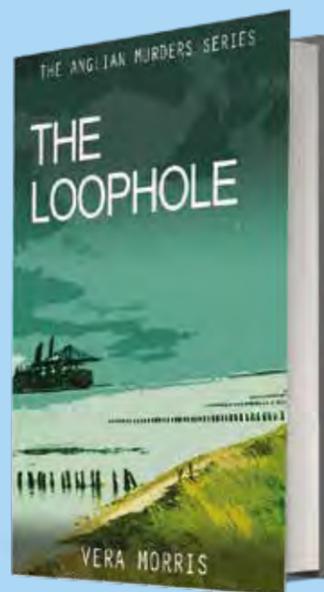


THE LOOPHOLE

Vera Morris's new crime novel, *The Loophole*, published by Accent Press, on May 9th. This is the third book, set in the 1970s, in *The Anglian Detective Agency Series*.

Laurel Bowman and Frank Diamond, partners in the agency, go undercover at a holiday camp near Orford, Suffolk. Their mission: to discover what happened to two missing members of staff. They uncover a web of murder, deceit, and cruelty, as they try to stop a sadistic killer from murdering again. Vera, a former headteacher of Chiltern Edge School, is as excited to reunite with former

staff and pupils at a launch for *The Loophole*, as she is to see her third crime novel published. ●



FLOWERS, HANDICRAFTS, PHOTOGRAPHS AND CAKES

The Chiltern Edge Horticultural Society held their Spring Show in the Village Hall at the beginning of April. There was an excellent display of spring flowers and, in the cookery section, a good selection of Victoria Sponges and Banana Cakes. The photography classes were also very competitive. There were excellent displays of flower arrangements and handicrafts. John Windass, the Vice-Chairman, won four cups in the flower section, with the Frank Pritchard cup for house plants being shared with Lynda Crocker.

There was also an excellent display of submissions by SC Primary School children for the colouring competition.

Sandra Reed-Jennings, the show secretary, said that overall the standard of entries was "very good despite the challenging weather just before the show".

The Society has an interesting and stimulating selection of events this summer. There are coach outings to Abbey House Gardens, Malmesbury in May, RHS Wisley in June and Sir Harold Hillier Gardens Romsey in September. We also have plant stalls at the Peppard War Memorial Hall Fete and the SC Primary School fete in June. ●

Dates for your diary

Our main show will be in the Sonning Common Village Hall on 7 September 2-4pm.

Our series of autumn talks at Peppard Memorial Hall starts on 8 October.

We always welcome new members; membership is £6/year.

Full details of all our events and membership can be found on our website cehs.co.uk

NIGEL CRUSH



CHILTERN PLAYERS PRESENT 'BUILDING BRIDGES' BY COLIN CALVERT

Chiltern Players' latest production, 'Building Bridges' by Colin Calvert, is an environmental comedy with murky undertones.

Although engaged in ostensibly gentle English country pursuits the characters are readily recognizable from all walks of life and much of the comedy derives from the personality frictions and topical references.

As in all their productions the Chiltern Players offer a warm welcome and, in a time of political uncertainty, an inclusive but also essentially English atmosphere: understated, unpretentious, relaxed, creative, fun. These precious occasions build bridges just as ironically the murder in the play ultimately built bridges between some of the characters. ●

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DIARY DATES

JUNE 2019

Wednesday 5
10.30am - 12noon
Village Coffee Morning hosted by Sonning Common WI. Open to all. Village Hall

Saturday 8
11am - 4pm
Summer Fete. Peppard Memorial Hall

Monday 10
2.30pm
FISH - Tea party. Village Hall

Tuesday 11
8pm
Chiltern Players play reading. Butcher's Arms

Sunday 16
2pm
SC Village cricket vs Whitchurch

Monday 17
8pm
Sonning Common Parish Council. Village Hall

Tuesday 18
2 - 4pm
Overcome anxiety and stress workshop. Sonning Common Health Centre

Thursday 20
11.30am
FISH - Pub lunch

7.30pm
Sonning Common Women's Institute: "The Kennet & Avon Canal", a talk by David Copley. Village Hall

Saturday 22
Summer Fair. Sonning Common Primary School

Sunday 23
SC Village cricket vs Fawley

Thursday 27
FISH - Henley Farmers' Market

Saturday 29
Big Bash 3. Butcher's Arms

Sunday 30
2pm
SC Village cricket vs Swyncombe

JULY 2019

Wednesday 3
5 - 8pm
Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge open evening. MECE school, Reades Lane

Sunday 7
2pm
SC Village cricket vs Aldermaston

Monday 8
2.30pm
FISH - Tea party. Village Hall

Wednesday 10
8pm
Chiltern Players play reading Butcher's Arms

Monday 15
8pm
Sonning Common Parish Council. Village Hall

Wednesday 17
10.30am - 12noon
Village Coffee Morning hosted by Sonning Common WI. Open to all. Village Hall

Thursday 18
11.30am
FISH - Pub lunch

Thursday 18
7.30pm
Sonning Common Women's Institute: "An Artist's War", a talk by Phyllida Shaw. Village Hall

Sunday 21
1.30pm
SC Village cricket vs BBC Caversham

Thursday 25
FISH - Henley Farmers' Market

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LC Chauffeurs	33		

The FISH Volunteer Centre runs regular door-to-door shopping trips to Tesco in Henley every Monday morning and to Henley Waitrose, Henley Farmers Market, Morrisons in Reading and Reading Town Centre every month.

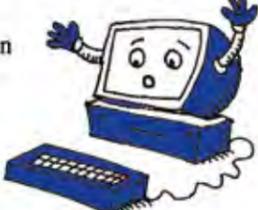
The programme of shopping and leisure trips for each month is published and distributed on 20th of the preceding month and bookings are taken from that date. Copies of the programme are available from the FISH Volunteer Centre, Sonning Common Library, the Christian Community Action shop, Pet Country Supplies and on request from Day Lewis Chemist. The monthly programme of trips is posted on noticeboards in both Peppard and Sonning Common and is also sent to individual email addresses. If you would like to receive a regular monthly copy, please email busmanager@fishvolunteercentre.co.uk with the message 'bus programme please' and your name.

Details of all minibus trips can also be found on the FISH website www.fishvolunteercentre.org.uk
For more information and to book any trip call 0118 972 3986 any weekday between 09.30 and 11.30 a.m. ●

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