

UPTON NEWS

DECEMBER 2004

Vol.2 No.37

A hearty welcome for a Parish Plan

On Saturday 29 November, despite the rain, as many as 30 villagers attended a meeting in the Village Hall. The purpose was to find out more about how residents can influence and shape the future of Upton using a Parish Plan. **David Fisher** from the Oxfordshire Rural Community Council (ORCC) presented the case for producing one.

Firstly, to get an idea of our views, everyone was asked to write down one thing they liked about the village, one they disliked and a suggestion for improvement. The 'likes' included Upton's tranquillity, friendliness and lack of street lighting. The 'dislikes' included obstruction by parked cars, the danger of the A417 and the lack of a village shop. Other suggestions were the need for more social activities, traffic calming and better provision for young people.

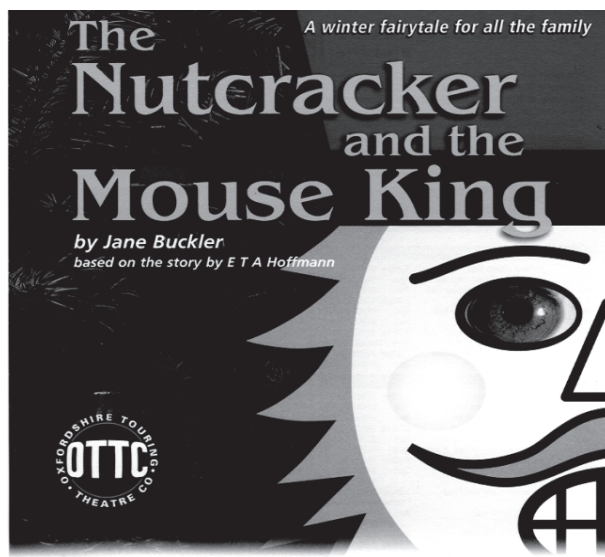
David explained what a Parish Plan was, and answered questions. Essentially it is put together and owned by the community, rather than stemming from the Parish Council. It is a statement of the residents' vision of their village and an outline of the steps needed to achieve this. The plan should represent the views of as wide a selection of people as possible and once produced it would be used to influence and steer the village's future.

STEERING GROUP

A unanimous show of hands supported the idea of having such a Plan. The next move was to form a Steering Group to manage the project. There was an enthusiastic (mostly male) response to a call for volunteers, so the Steering Group consists of **Austin Maytham, Derek Whitmell, Mike Collins, Julian Sayers, Kit and Caroline Maunsell, David Curran and Allan Macarthur.** **Mike Brown** is the Parish Council representative. A first meeting is planned before Christmas.

Do not be concerned if you missed the initial meeting as there will be many opportunities to put your views and/or volunteer to help produce the final plan.

Rosalind Caffyn, P C



Tuesday 6th January 2004
Upton Village Hall 7.00pm

A CHARMING PRODUCTION FOR ALL AGES
Tickets £6 full, £4 concessions, from Jessie West 851206. Reserve early to avoid disappointment.

UPTON JOINS CYCLE NETWORK

The cycle-path on the former railway embankment linking Upton with Didcot was formally opened in November. Representatives of Didcot and the villages, along with county and district councillors and pupils from St. Birinus and East Hagbourne schools, assembled at Lake Bridge Road, where a tape was cut. Many of them braved a fierce headwind and bicycled to Upton. The survivors were made welcome with refreshments.

Considerable dismay was registered by some villagers about the allegedly irretrievable environmental impact of the earthworks. **Simon Pratt**, the local Sustrans officer, explained that bare patches would be re-seeded and a watchdog group from the villages was being formed to report on vandalism and minimise litter. Notices at access points bar the use of motorised vehicles.

Whatever reservations may be felt, the new track provides a valuable route for cyclists both for work and leisure, linking up with the National Cycle Network. It is already being used by increasing numbers of cyclists and pedestrians.

Peter Gardiner

VPA news

This is a lovely time for gardeners, all the hard work of pruning and winter digging done for the year, now to plan next year's displays. If you would like a copy of Kings seed catalogue, with extra discounts for members, contact **Brenda Hopkins** or any of the committee.

Our AGM was well attended. The President's cup was awarded jointly (with 113 points each amalgamated from summer and autumn shows) to **Maggie Maytham** and **Karen Brooks**.

We said farewell to two stalwarts of the committee **Caroline Ball** and **Alf Timblich**. Their hard work and dedication over the years will be sorely missed, happy retirement to them both. We have a new chair, **Graeme Gettings**, and new committee members, **Elizabeth Osborne**, **Marie Hughes**, **Mary Gutfreund** and **Rosemary de Wilde**. Welcome! Also thanks to Joyce Gilbert for loan of her garden for the Bring & Buy plant stall which made over £80.

Karen Brooks

Neighbourhood Watch

In November four incidents were reported to me. Two cars were vandalised and one had petrol syphoned off, one house had an attempted break-in and one shed was broken into. All incidents happened in the vicinity of Stream Road. If you are going away please put your lights on a timer and ask a neighbour to twitch your curtains. Timers cost £4.99 in Focus or Argos.

Celia Davies



My name is Mark.
I am interested in badgers.
Their latin name is *meles meles*.
They are related to the bear.
Their home is called a sett.
They live in family groups called clans.
The male is called a boar.
They are the size of a small dog.
The young are called cubs.
The female is called a sow.
They eat meat, fruit
and earthworms.
When I go badger watching
I see roe deer and muntjac, foxes,
barn owl, little owl, tawny owl, buzzard
and red kite, sparrow hawk, kestrel,
red wing, fieldfare.
I also have seen yellow hammer
and willow warbler, gold finch.
The badgers I watch are in Upton
In the George and Dragon they call me
the **BADGER MAN**
Yours sincerely
Mark Crockford

POSTING DATES

The latest service the Post Office can do is to provide and top-up many mobile phonecards, eg. Orange, Oz, T-Mobile, Vodaphone and Virgin Mobile. These may be a nice gift for someone. More to the point, last Christmas posting dates are Canada, USA, Japan and Eastern Europe December 12th, Europe 15th, 2nd class 18th, 1st class 20th, Special Delivery 23rd, Standard Parcels 12th.

Margaret Maytham

Please give for Christmas

1 **GAP** is a drop-in centre in Oxford for homeless young people, aged 16-25 years. The churches in Upton, Blewbury and Hagbourne will once again be collecting goodies to take to the Centre before Christmas. The kind of things needed are tins or packets of food, biscuits, tea, coffee, breakfast cereals, soap, toothpaste, shampoo, little luxuries like scarves, hats and mittens. There is a collecting box in St. Mary's where things can be left. When the church is locked **Clare Lightfoot** (850486) will be pleased to accept your gifts.

1 At the Crib Service on Christmas Eve **St. Mary's** will have a collection in aid of **PACT**. Parents and Children Together is the working name for Oxford Diocesan Council for Social Work. It has a history, dating back to 1865, of helping children and caring for families. Professionals work with volunteers in the fields of adoption, fostering, care in the community, providing 'appropriate adults' for children in trouble and running drop-in centres. Please give generously. If you are unable to attend the service donations can be left at Prospect House.

Ann Dendy

UPTON HANDBELL RINGERS are hard at work practising carols. We hope to ring round the village on Monday 22 December — starting at 6pm. If you would like to hear the bells please telephone 851192 so that a time may be arranged for the team to appear on your doorstep. We shall be shaking a tin for Sobell House Hospice.

Daphne Simpson

A Random History of Upton No. 5 — **The Old Roads, Lanes and Paths** by **Juliet and Peter Gardiner** is now available at the Post Office, price 50p.

A Dell XPS D233 PC is available free for any charitable or educational purpose. Please apply to Professor **Freddie Gutfreund** (851468).

If you would like to help a local village school, the governors of St. Michael's School, Steventon require a clerk. Details from **Ann Dendy** (850760).

50 Club Winners

November £10 Mr Abbott, £7 Mrs Scotney, £5 Mrs Hall, £4 Mr Simpson

CHURCH SERVICES IN DECEMBER/JANUARY

ST. MARY'S

Sunday 9am

7 Parish Eucharist with Methodists

14 Parish Eucharist

21 Matins

4pm Service of Nine Lessons and Carols

Wednesday 24 4pm Crib Service

Thursday 25 Festive Eucharist

28 Parish Eucharist

NB January 4 No service (see right)

11 No service

Coach trip to Dorchester Abbey for the ordination of Russell Dewhurst at 10.30am.
Book seat on list in church.

18 Matins

25 Parish Eucharist

METHODIST

10.30am — Preacher

9am at St. Mary's

Barbara Sexton

Brenda Boyer, Carol Service

At Blewbury

Rev. T. Dibble, joined by St. Mary's Pearl Maunder

Mariene Chalkley

Derek Morton

UPTON NEWS is published monthly, the copy deadline being the 25th of the previous month. Please deliver or send items for publication, including letters on village topics, to The Old School, Church Street, either on paper, by fax (851779) or by e-mail to carol-uptonoxon@oxfree.com

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