



The consequences of regional development are very much in the news this month. The impact of the imminent Chilton interchange, the ever-increasing traffic load on the A417, and the surprise of the new 'local plan 2031' have kept our Parish Council busy. A number of properties in the village have suffered from flooding, and sadly we've had a couple of crimes in the parish.

The Wine Appreciation Club goes from strength to strength. Perhaps its members put all this news to the back of their minds while they enjoy their not too serious monthly tastings.

Meanwhile the Village Hall is generating news as it continues to seek a new treasurer, at the same time as raising funds for the new kitchen project.

As you will see, there's still space for more articles, so please email any news, photos, recipes, reviews, etc. to me at the address below, or drop in any material at Autumn Leaves, High Street.

Brian Rippon

Submissions for *Upton News* should be sent to news@uptonvillage.co.uk.

Deadline for the April edition is **28th March**.

Skittles & Supper Evening

Upton Village Hall Amenities Trust cordially invites you join with friends and family for a SKITTLES & SUPPER EVENING in aid of the Village Hall Kitchen Project.

Saturday 29th March 2014 at 7pm.

Admission £10 to include a Hot Supper and Puds (Vegetarian Option available).

- Raffle and Prizes
- Family Friendly Event - Children Welcome
- Please bring your own drinks

Tickets and further information available from:

Jessie West Tel: 851206

Lesley Shaw Tel: 850308

Maggie Maytham Tel: 850126

HowdenJones Evening

Fifty residents from the village and further afield attended the Village Hall on 7 February for an evening of supper and music by the duo HowdenJones.

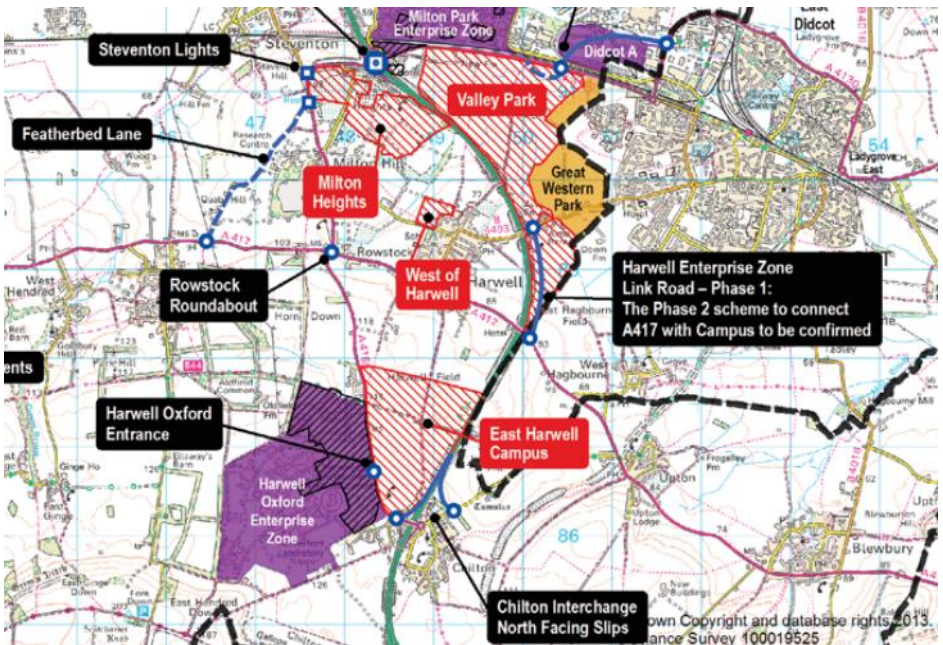
The event was greatly enjoyed, and a total of over £372 was raised for the kitchen project.

Upton Parish Council News

Vale of White Horse Housing Delivery Update - Local Plan 2031 Strategic Sites and Policies

The VoWH has just unveiled plans to meet the demand for housing and jobs. Fortunately for Upton, our "small village" status means we will not be directly affected. However over half of all the new houses being proposed in the VoWH will be centred in a triangle drawn between Harwell Science Park, Milton Park, and Didcot A Power Station, some 5550 houses in all. The plans can be viewed at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/localplanpartone where an online consultation is underway until the 4th April 2014. Please make your views known.

Needless to say we can only expect traffic levels to increase over time, adding weight to the arguments being made around A417 improvements, Hagbourne Hill improvements, Chilton and Prospect Roads.



A417 Improvements

Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) has been consulting with parishes councils from Wantage to Blewbury regarding improvements to the A417. Their primary aims are to:

- Facilitate traffic flow (given projected increased usage);
- Eliminate bottle necks;
- Improve safety for all road users.

Note. This work was largely carried out before the A34 Chilton interchange was announced (see over) and the publication of the Housing Delivery update from the Vale of White Horse (left).

OCC presented their ideas on 21st February with nearly every junction along its length being assessed.

With regards to Upton, OCC had proposed to close Prospect Road (Yes another closed road!). This was made on the basis that exiting Prospect Road is more dangerous than Station Road, and a simple reduction in the number of junctions improves traffic flow. It was pointed out that coaches and buses use this road as part of their "access loop" to and from the village. Full closure would not allow for this and as turning around is not an option, closure would result in buses having to stop on the main road. A proposal has been made to make Prospect Road one-way instead. As a result the PC would like to hear your views as soon as possible. Prospect Road will be discussed at the next UPC meeting on the 18th March, 8.00pm in the village hall.

One very good piece of news was a plan (albeit longer term) to make

the entire length of the A417 (from Wantage to Blewbury) safe for both pedestrians and cyclists by means of a wide, shared use pavement. This is in recognition of the important part cycling has to play in developing a sustainable transport policy and brings the realisation of a cycle way between Upton and Blewbury a step closer.

Floods

Thankfully we have not had to bear anything like the suffering of those in other parts of the country, but you may not be aware that there were three properties in Stream Road with over a foot of water collecting in the gardens and threatening the houses themselves. The issue was a combination of the culvert at the top of Stream Road being too small to cope with the flow of water, and the open section of stream being clogged up with debris and encroachment from vegetation.

A temporary dam and wall was constructed and the stream partially cleared to prevent several pensioners from being flooded; these defences were reinforced with sandbags the next day. Thank you to those that helped with this considerable effort.

Action will have to be taken regarding the culvert to prevent a repeat incident but in the meantime UPC would ask all venerable households to consider their own defences, and ask those responsible for sections of the stream to keep it wide, deep, and clear of debris and excessive vegetation.

A34 Interchange: Hagbourne Hill

Work will commence on the northern slips at the A34 Chilton Interchange in October 2014. The new junction, together with the Harwell Enterprise Zone Link Road (to join the A417 east of the Kingswell), will result in a large increase in traffic using Hagbourne Hill. Survey work has already commenced in connection with the improvements necessary to take this additional traffic. The planned improvements are: a roundabout at the junction of Hagbourne Hill and the A417; the straightening of the bends at the bottom of Hagbourne Hill; the removal of the blind summits on top of Hagbourne Hill; and a widening of the road where necessary.

Chilton Road

In connection with the works outlined above, the residents of Chilton Road have expressed the wish for Chilton Road to be closed to through traffic. After consultation the Parish Council has voted to support this position for the following reasons:

- Volume and speed of traffic has increased over the years and will only continue to do so with the development happening around us. Closure will result in improved safety for residents both young and old accessing scheduled/ school buses, the village hall, and the recreation field;
- Improved safety to cyclists on Sustrans Route 544. This is also a concern of the Harwell Bike Users Group (HarBUG);
- Creation of a leisure amenity for walkers, cyclists and horse riders alike to access Sustrans Route 544 without fear of traffic;
- Elimination of safety concerns at the Chilton Road/Hagbourne Hill

Junction. Again Hagbourne Hill will see a large increase of traffic, making the current junction more dangerous to navigate.

- We believe that closure will allow for a narrowing of the Chilton Road entrance and the placement of a pedestrian crossing from Station Road to Chilton Road.

However the Parish Council does object to this closure until such time that the Hagbourne Hill improvements have been made. This is to ensure the safety of existing Chilton Road users as the alternative right turn on to the A417 from the bottom of Hagbourne Hill is not considered as safe as that from Chilton Road. Access for farm traffic must also be preserved by use of gates.

Oxfordshire County Council is supportive of the closure principally because they consider the junction with Hagbourne Hill to be an increasing safety concern.

93/94 Bus

As Oxfordshire County Council is forced to search ever deeper for savings, we've had the clearest warning to-date that our bus service will be lost if usage cannot be increased. This would come as a real blow to the young and elderly in the village who either cannot or cannot afford to drive. We're told the service is close to becoming economically unviable, so please consider your routine travel arrangements and incorporate a bus journey or two if possible.

Plus ça change

From 50 years ago...

The County Council turned down an application to provide a footpath along Fieldside due to shortage of money. The Bus service was still of concern and 19 members of the public turned up to a Special Parish Council Meeting. They were apparently able to persuade Mr. Tappin to run extra services. The bus shelter was repaired at last!

Wallingford U13 Rugby Club

Wallingford U13 Rugby Club has been using our recreation field as a training venue on Sunday mornings while their pitch is flooded. UPC would like to know how residents would feel about our recreation field being used by such clubs on a more regular basis. The income generated from such use would help greatly with the upkeep of the field and play equipment therein.

Village Clubs & Organisations

Drop In Sessions

Yvonne Collins 850989

Short Mat Bowls Club

Tony Durbin 850035

Table Tennis Club

Bob Lott 851222

Tea Birds WI

Jo Christie tea-birdswi@hotmail.co.uk

Theatre Club

Malcolm Wright 850705

Upton Oil Syndicate

Colin Batchelor 01491 672444

Village Produce Association

Eileen Bracken 510095

Wine Appreciation Society

Kevin Jacklin 851404

Do you run a village club or organisation? Please let us have your details and we will add them to the list.

Volunteer Group

It's "Litter Pick" time of year again and we're looking for volunteers to help rid the parish of the rubbish that accumulates in our hedgerows every year. A provisional date has been set for the Saturday 29th March at the village hall at 9:30am. If you can spare an hour or two your help will be most welcome.

PCSO Report

My Police 'Have your say meetings' started up again on 15th February, held between 3pm and 4pm in the small meeting room in the village hall. If anyone has any issues to discuss with me then please come along and it will be discussed in strict confidence. Don't forget to look out for the neighbourhood news letter that can be found on the village notice board. This gives you an idea of what my fellow PCSO's have been doing in their areas.

I have recently received reports of illegal use of motorcycles on nearby restricted byways which have also caused some destruction to verges and banks of residents' property in the village of Chilton. So please keep an eye and ear open for anyone who may come down the track by the 'George and Dragon' pub, or even into the village. I have a pretty good idea who is doing it but I need your help on this. So please call the Thames Valley emergency number 101 if you should witness anyone riding around the tracks or in Upton itself in an anti social manner.

Well that's all for now, let's hope the weather cheers up soon. Stay safe.

PCSO Mike Clayden
Thames Valley Police

Michael.clayden@thamesvalley.pnn.
police.uk

Local Crime

A property in High Street was broken into on 6th February, while the owner was out between 1.00pm-3.20pm.

An Ifor Williams flat bed trailer was taken, a workshop broken into and various items have gone. The offenders attempted (unsuccessfully) to get into a locked garage.

On Sunday 9th February between 12am and 9.30am offender(s) have used an unknown implement to hook car keys through a rear door letter box in Reading Road, Harwell. The offender(s) then stole a grey Peugeot 206 sport, partial reg YT06 *** from the driveway.

Between 6.30pm on Thursday 6th and 9.30am on Friday 7th February offender(s) forced entry to a barn in Upton and stole a pallet and a half of straw bedding.

Please be extra vigilant. If you have seen any suspicious looking people or vehicles in the area or have any information please call the police on 101.



Rectors Reflections

Lent in Two Words

Before we know it, it will be Ash Wednesday, the traditional start of Lent. This year, Ash Wednesday falls on 5th March. It marks, of course, the beginning of a forty day period of preparation before the celebration of Easter Day.

But what is Lent really about? Lent is, of course, about many things. But at its heart are two simple concepts.

The first is Intentionality. If you want to learn something new, or to improve an existing skill, it's no good simply expecting it to happen of its own accord. We've got to be intentional about it. It's the same about developing our relationship with God. If we wish to find God in our lives and in our world, we need to be intentional about seeking Him out. A few people are lucky enough to stumble across God without seeking Him, but they seem to be in the minority. Lent is a time when we get serious about seeking God. Seeking God has two sides to it - our seeking God, and God seeking us. One of the mysteries of the spiritual life is that our seeking God is as much about God seeking us as it is about our seeking God.

The second is Depth. A good way to start trying to find God, or trying to find out more about Him, is to try and go deeper- deeper in our relationships, deeper in our exploration of God's world, deeper in our reflection on the realities of love and truth and beauty and peace. So much of our life is lived at a superficial level - we content

ourselves with half truths about ourselves, about other people, and about our world. Sometimes we get annoyed because we're looking for God on the surface of our lives, and can't find Him. Sometimes God does come up to the surface, but more usually He is to be found in the depths of our lives - in the mysterious world of possibilities which opens up to us after we have left behind the half-truths and the easy answers.

So there we are, Lent in two words: Intentionality and Depth.

May this Lent be a time of blessing for us all - a time of real growth in our love and knowledge of God and of His world, and in our love and knowledge of one another.

Fr Jason

For Sale

Westmorland

Classic Electronic Organ

Integral Speakers, Two Manuals, 9 years old, perfect working order.

OIRO £2,500 suitable for a home location.

Contact the Administrator 01235 850267, e-mail

office@churnchurches.co.uk

Dates for your diary

Thu 6 Mar	Drop In, Village Hall
Tue 18 Mar	8pm Parish Council Meeting
Wed 19 Mar	8pm Wine Appreciation Club, Village Hall
Thu 20 Mar	Drop In, Village Hall
Tue 25 Mar	8pm Tea Birds WI, Village Hall
Sat 29 Mar	9.30am Litter Pick
Sat 29 Mar	7pm Skittles & Supper Evening, Village Hall

Jumble Sale

As mentioned in the last edition of *Upton News*, I am planning a Pre-loved (Jumble!) Sale on Saturday 10 May to be held at the Village Hall - all profits being donated to the Village Hall Kitchen Fund. If you think you are likely to have items such as clothing for children/adults, accessories, books, white elephant (anything really!) I would be very grateful if you could **let me know** by email - giulia@ripton.net.

I had a very poor response to last month's request so, come on, get Spring Cleaning and let's make this happen! Thank you!

Giulia Rippon

Village Hall Kitchen Update

The sub-committee appointed by UVHAT to progress the kitchen refurbishment project has been hard at work considering the needs of the new kitchen and completing applications for grants.



Some of the regular user groups have already been consulted on design, but the views of the village as a whole are also sought. Please contact Jacqui Reid (projects@uptonvillage.co.uk) if there are any particular features you would like to see incorporated – or indeed if you have any ideas for fundraising!

Bookkeeper Required

After 3 years, I find myself unable to continue as Upton Village Hall's Treasurer due to pressing personal and family commitments. I have really enjoyed the time I have spent working with the UVHAT Committee and am very sad to be giving up the role.

So we are urgently looking, in the first instance, for a bookkeeper to take over the day to day book-keeping and accounting.

The responsibilities include:

- banking receipts from hirers
- making payments to suppliers
- recording receipts and payments in the books of account
- raising invoices and receipts for hirers
- reconciling the books of account to the bank account balances
- checking that money is received for all hall hire bookings
- preparing monthly accounts for the Committee

- preparing an annual budget and checking actual receipts and payments against the budget.

The current accounting records are in excellent order and a full handover would be given to anyone who would be interested in taking this over.

The role would suit someone who has an hour or so a week that they would be prepared to spend volunteering for the village and who would like to get involved in the management of our thriving village hall amenity. There is definitely scope to develop the bookkeeping in line with some of the exciting changes happening to make the hall bookings and payments process more automated.

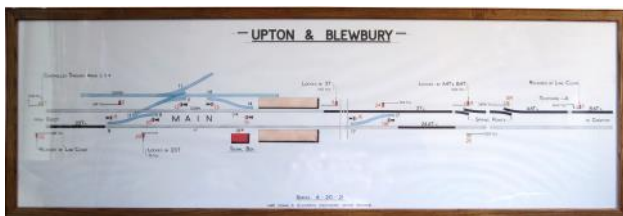
If you are interested in working with the Upton Hall Committee and have some background in finance, book-keeping or accounting, please get in touch with Brian Rippon on 01235 850158 or brian@rippon.net. We would love to hear from you!

Ros Caffyn

Signal Box Diagram

Railway enthusiasts and village historians may be interested to read of Mr John Coles of Ashampstead, who owns an exact copy of the signal diagram from the Upton & Blewbury signal box – of which he has provided a photograph (search for 'signal box' on the website to see a larger image). It is unknown whether the original diagram is still in existence - if you have any information please contact us.

This diagram showed the signalman which numbered lever operated each point and signal.



Upton Wine Club

“Off the Beaten Track”

With an attendance of 45 members we started with the Bronelli Ortrugo 2012 12.5% Italy (2012). Light, crisp, fruity with gentle bubbles - and a great alternative to Prosecco. From the Emilia Romagna region this is made from a local grape found exclusively in the area of Colli Piacentini. Nice and light and would make a nice aperitif or spending an afternoon drinking in the sun.

Next up was Gaia Notios White 2012 Greece 12% (£13.50) Greek wines still tend to raise a snigger. But this crisp, aromatic shows just how drinkable they can be. A blend of two local pink-sinned grape varieties from the Peloponnese has produced a wine with floral aromas with grapefruit flavours, a steely core & a dry finish. Gaia, the producer, has two wineries, one on the mainland and one on Santorini. The company is at the forefront of showcasing indigenous Greek grape varieties to wine lovers worldwide.

El Supremo Torrontes 2012 13.7% Argentina (£9.50) The grapes for this are grown 650 metres above sea level in the Maipu region of Mendoza. Aromas of wildflowers & honeysuckle, but with a dry, grassy palate and light spicy finish. It avoids the hard and oily texture that overripe Torrontes can suffer from.

Lupin Frangy Roussette de Savoie 2012 12.5% France (£13.50) Roussette de Savoie is a French appellation near the Swiss border, where the late-ripening Altesse grape grows. Which is also known as Roussette, just to confuse you. It

produces a mellow, soft and rounded wine lifted by a lively acidity.

Domaine Lupin is run along organic lines by Bruno Lupin and this wine, is made from grapes grown in one of the best cru in the region, Frangy. Great with Vacherin and baked cheeses, it also works very well with freshwater fish like trout.

The reds began with Eduardo Miroglio Soli Pinot Noir 2011 13% Bulgaria (£10.95). Produced by an Italian Eduardo Miroglio from the village of Elenovo, Thrace. A medium-bodied Bourgogne Rouge in style, with red fruit and a fresh finish.

Gran Cerdo (Big Pig) Tempranillo 2012 13% (Biodynamic) Rioja Alta, Spain (£8.75). Produced by Gonzalo Gonzalo Grijalba. The Tempranillo grapes are organic and the wine is not fined or filtered and minimal sulphur added. All enjoyed the winemaker's dedication to Bankers on the back label but the wine was not to everyone's taste. Could have done with decanting beforehand as there was lots of sediment.

Moric Blaufränkisch 2012 12.5% Austria (£21.00). Weingut Moric is considered to be the best producer of Blaufränkisch in Austria. Blaufränkisch (German for blue Frankish) is a dark-skinned variety of grape late-ripening variety, producing red wines which are typically rich in tannin and a spicy character. The majority of members liked the wine but found the price a bit off-putting although a couple of members would pay it.

And finally, Chateau Ksara Reserve du Couvent Bekaa Valley, Lebanon 2011 13.5% (£10.50) A blend of Cabernet Franc (25%) Cabernet-Sauvignon (20%) and Syrah (55%). A complex aroma of cloves, vanilla and mulberry. Chateau Ksara, founded in 1857 by Jesuit Priests, has been producing wine in the Bekaa Valley Lebanon for over 150 years. This was more to the member's price bracket and taste. A nice well balanced Bordeaux/Rhone style.

Overall the wines were well received and everyone had an enjoyable time and there was a lot of positive feedback on the night and lots of enquiries about the evening's wine supplier - Park & Bridge from Acton. Who knows, perhaps "Off the Beaten Track" could become a regular theme at the Club?

Kevin Jacklin

150 Years Ago

The Revd Richard Hooper's diaries were in full flow in 1864:

Illrd Sunday in Lent, February 28th
Service 11am Upton by Revd J. Frith. As Mr Frith was returning from Upton our pony Puck fell & cut his knees very badly.

Friday, March 11th

My wife and I received a wondrous mercy from Almighty GOD this day. Psalm CXXVI

Perhaps next month somebody can reveal the relevance of Psalm 126?

Village Produce Association

What a blow!! Our first meeting was beaten by the weather. Torrential rain, high winds and closed roads, caused by flooding, forced us to cancel our speaker. Fortunately we have been able to re-schedule the February talk. The March meeting is Wednesday 12th March, 7.30pm, Blewbury School: *Mushrooms.*

Toadstools and Pixies with Mr Brian Winsley.

Our programme for 2014 is now available in Blewbury Post Office, and Maggie and Austin Maytham will also have copies.

Has anyone managed to get into the garden or on the allotments? I have a mini lake at the end of my veggie plot and the fruit plot isn't much better. I called into Savages last week and their seed potatoes will be in the shop around the middle of February. The good thing is being able to buy just the number of potatoes needed, rather than bags from the garden centres and ending up with too many.

Our Schedule for the Annual Show to be held on 12th July is almost ready. I hope to give you lots of news about the show, which will have some special events, in the next issue. I've had a good response to my request for old gardening tools to display at our Annual Show - if you have any old or unusual gardening or DIY tools you would be willing to loan, don't forget to call me on 01235 510095 or e-mail me on the VPA number: VPA.in.Bl.Up@gmail.com

Happy gardening
Eileen Bracken

Recipe of the Month

Mary Berry's Easter Lemon Pavlova



If I can make this, anyone can!! And, it's delicious. Giulia

Preheat the oven to 160C/325F. Lay a piece of baking paper on a baking tray and draw a 25cm circle on it.

Whisk the egg whites on the fastest speed until stiff. Gradually, still whisking on maximum speed, add the sugar until the mixture is stiff and shiny and stands in peaks.

Blend the vinegar and cornflour together and mix until smooth. Stir this into the meringue mixture.

Spread half of the meringue mixture onto the paper to give a 25cm circle. Fill a piping bag, fitted with a rose nozzle, with the rest of the mixture. Carefully pipe about 10 separate nests positioned equally around the edge of the circle.

Slide the meringue into the middle of the oven, turn the heat down to 150C/300F/Gas 2 and bake for 1½-2 hours (check after one hour), or until it easily comes off the paper. The pavlova will be a pale creamy colour rather than white. Turn off the oven and leave the pavlova in until cold.

Meanwhile, make the lemon curd for the filling. Place a heatproof bowl over

For the meringue

6 free-range egg whites
350g/12oz caster sugar
2 tsp white wine vinegar
2 level tsp cornflour

For the lemon curd filling

6 free-range egg yolks
350g/12oz caster sugar
4 lemons, juice only
225g/8oz butter
450ml/¾ pint double cream

To serve

30 chocolate mini-eggs

For the candied lemon zest

100g/3½oz caster sugar,
plus extra for coating the zest
4 lemons, zest only (in long thin strips)

a pan of hot water, simmering gently. Add the egg yolks, sugar and lemon juice and whisk. Gradually add the butter, whisking continually until it starts to thicken. It should coat the back of a spoon when it reaches the correct consistency. It will firm up further once cooled.

Whisk the double cream in a large bowl until thickened, then swirl it through the cooled lemon curd.

Spoon the lemon curd and cream mixture into the middle of the pavlova and spread over the base of the meringue nest. Spoon a lemon filling into each of the mini nests. Decorate by placing three chocolate mini-eggs in each of the 10 mini-nests around the edge.

Put 100ml of water and the caster sugar in a pan. Bring to the boil, stirring. Add the zest and boil for 2-3 minutes, or until syrupy. Drain on parchment paper, roll in extra caster sugar and leave to dry in a warm place for a couple of hours, or overnight. Place a delicate mound of candied zest in the middle of the pavlova, and serve.