



## Parish Council News

### Recent Meetings

Approved minutes of the parish council meetings are available on the Upton website in the council decision-making section. Minutes from the previous meeting are approved at the next ordinary meeting and then uploaded. The dates of all meetings are published at the same location and the agendas are uploaded the week before. Villagers are always welcome to come to the public parts of the meetings and raise issues at the public forum. It helps a lot if an issue you want discussed can be notified to the clerk ahead of the meeting.

So far in 2016, there have been ordinary Parish Council meetings on 19th January and 15th March, and an extraordinary one held on 17th February to discuss the resubmitted planning application for the development at Owlscote. The January meeting was reported in the February Upton News: the main topics discussed were the problem of safely crossing the A417 and a request for a A417 pedestrian crossing, the completion of the draft Parish Plans and the Parish emergency response plan, setting the Precept, and a request from the Lord Lieutenant of Oxford that PCs consider celebrating the Queen's 90th birthday.

### March Parish Council Meeting

The minutes from this meeting will be added the Upton website after they have been approved at the next PC meeting.

### Upton Bus Service

The budget agreed in mid-February by OCC protects services for the most vulnerable, but means that there is very little hope of continuing bus service subsidies. Options for maintaining as much of the rural bus service as possible were discussed at the meetings between local PC Transport Representatives, Thames Travel and the Downland Transport Campaign Group. Volunteers agreed to carry out research on the use of the bus routes with a view to finding alternative solutions - this resulted in the questionnaire circulated in the February Upton News. We have received about 20 responses so far, thank you very much to those people: if you have not returned yours, please help the village by completing and returning the questionnaire, even if you or your family never use the current bus, so that we can get a complete picture

of current and future local needs. When I was temporarily without a car last week I was suddenly very aware of the value of the frequency and existence of the 94 bus.

### **Upton Village Emergency Response Plan**

The parish council would like thank the four volunteers who responded to the article in last month's Upton News. Mr Traynor highlighted that it is especially welcome to see new faces among the volunteers. We still need a few more volunteers with skills such as first aid, organising, and particularly need to identify villagers who could provide resources such as tools like chainsaws or off road vehicles that may be useful in different emergency scenarios where the village needs to help itself before the emergency services arrive.

### **Valley Park**

Our county councillor Mr Lilley and district councillor Mr Waite told us more about the newly revised much bigger Valley Park proposal from the land promoter. Aside from the number of houses - 4200 - now being proposed for the area between Harwell, the A34 , the Kingswell and Great Western Park, Mr Lilley stated strong personal concerns over the inadequate infrastructure plans for sewerage, medical facilities, school and leisure. The developers' website is [www.taylorwimpey.co.uk/proposed-developments/england/oxfordshire/didcot/valley-park](http://www.taylorwimpey.co.uk/proposed-developments/england/oxfordshire/didcot/valley-park)

Mr Waite told us that the whole of the District Council planning committee meeting of 20th April is devoted to this application, and also reported that the DC planning departments have written to Taylor Wimpey asking for an update on the provision of infrastructure at Great Western Park.

### **A417 Pedestrian Crossing**

Mr Lilley has pursued the recent request for a pedestrian crossing on the A417 at Chilton Road to help school children crossing to catch the buses. Two highways officers have done an initial survey of the location and past traffic data. The actual traffic speeds are too high to safely install a zebra crossing or to have a lollipop patrol crossing for the school morning and afternoon periods. A signalled crossing - as has recently been installed at East Hendred - will be even more expensive as it will need street lighting and some adjustments to the roadway. Mr Lilley said that traffic calming measures like chicanes or speed humps on the A417 (like in Long Wittenham) might be worth the village considering. The PC asked about the school buses stopping on both sides of the A417 so that Chilton Road residents don't have to cross the main road. My Lilley will follow that idea up for us.

The PC has been invited to a meeting on 6th April 2016 at Didcot Civic Hall, following recent successful bid by the Vale and SODC for Garden Town Status for Didcot, "to contribute to a discussion as to how local issues can and should be incorporated into the Garden Town Project".

## **Dog Mess**

The volunteers who help maintain the rec are finding increasing amounts of dog mess left in the bins on the rec, so much that the bins are filling up and overflowing. They then have the disgusting task of fishing out when emptying the bins. This adds to the bad reputation of dog walkers, already tainted by the delightful habit of certain walkers of hanging bags of poo on trees and fences. The parish council is looking at options such as removing bins or raising revenue to pay for contractors to empty the bins.

Dog mess is “an ongoing nightmare” for the district council, and the Vale is ready to take action against any irresponsible dog owner who can be identified - a photo, a car plate number - as having let their dog foul our rec or dumping their dog poo bags.

## **Planning Applications**

The Vale’s planning website where you can search for applications, look at the details of specific applications and put your own comments in on an application is [www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/find-application/planning-application-register](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/find-application/planning-application-register)

The Vale has or is carrying out enforcement on existing buildings on the land behind the George and Dragon and at Warren Piece.

**Owlscoote: P15/V2406/FUL and P15/V2407/LB:** The Planning Officer is recommending this application is granted subject to 16 conditions.

**Alden Farm: P16/V0563/PAR and P16/V0189/FUL:** change of use for disused milking parlour to stables, repair and maintain existing flat, change of use for old barn to two one bed: Alden Farm straddles the Upton-Blewbury Parish boundary so this application has gone to Blewbury for formal consultation. The PC voted to add “No Objection” comments.

**Land behind the George and Dragon P16/V0550/FUL:** change of use from agricultural to equestrian: this application was for a change of use from Agricultural to Equestrian use only and should not be confused with any subsequent applications for building. The majority decision was No Objection with comments to the effect that the land should be properly restored to agricultural use first, in accordance with the existing demolition order.

Applications recently submitted to the Value, but which the PC has yet had the opportunity for formal comment:

**Land behind the George & Dragon P16/V0549/FUL:** Erection of equestrian structures including stable block.

## **Transport Questionnaire**

**Please complete the questionnaire which accompanied the March issue of *Upton News* and return it as soon as possible.**

# Upton Wine Appreciation Society

March saw the return of a perennial favourite, Lee Isaacs of Wine Matters, who presented wines from Italy.

As an experienced and highly qualified wine educator, Lee explained Italy's importance as a wine producer; Italy regularly ranks first or second (to France) in lists of the world's largest producers of wine. In context, this means that Italy's million vineyards are responsible for about one third of global wine production. Always engaging and amusing, Lee then led us through an overview of the history of wine production in Italy and a tour of the modern appellation system, shedding welcome light on terms including IGP, DOC, DOCG and Classico with the aid of some wonderful slides displayed (with thanks to Brian R.) by means of UVHAT's projector.

In terms of value, given a £7.50 ticket price, the club was very pleased that Lee could act as guide to some of the idiosyncrasies of Italian wines explaining, for example, the link between the fine minerality of Lugana Ghiraldi and the Trebbiano di Lugana grape, which is really Verdicchio! We tasted a genuine Lambrusco - not to everybody's taste, but a rare beast redolent of cola and a perfect foil for the meats of Modena. Very generously, and to unanimous approval, Lee then went on to treat us to fine Chianti, a Taurasi DOCG (a world-class red from Campania) and

a Cannubi Barolo retailing at over £50 a bottle.

We now look forward to April's meeting, at which we will welcome Katie Jones, an experienced winemaker from the Languedoc in



France. If you've wondered about joining us, please do contact an existing member or anyone from the committee - you're very welcome to try your first meeting as a guest, and the more the merrier.

As we near the end of our season, the club's regular meetings continue on the third Wednesday of each month. Subject to final confirmation, we intend to enjoy:

- 20 April: A flying visit from winemaker, Katie Jones, from the Languedoc in France.
- 18 May: Your committee presenting some of their favourite food and wine matches.
- 25 June: The annual club BBQ

*Cheers!*

*William Betts, Chair*

## Uptonogood – Marshals Needed!

This year's Uptonogood? is rapidly approaching and having put much of the necessary arrangements in place already, it is now time to turn our attention to the most crucial element of the event; Marshals!

The event needs some 50 marshals to ensure the safety of riders on the course. Without marshals we have no event.

Thanks to those who volunteered last year we were able to make the following donations:

- Upton Village Hall Amenity Trust           £4,144
- Upton Play / Recreation Ground       £3,514
- Blewbury School                           £2,277
- Didcot Air Cadets                       £350
- Hagbourne Scouts                       £200
- Air Ambulance                           £100
- Plus smaller donations of between £20 and £80 to 23 other charitable causes!

In the six years of Uptonogood? your help has allowed us to donate a total of **£46,209**, a full list of which can be found here. We hope to be in a position to do the same again this year, but can only do so with your support.

Uptonogood? 2016 will be on **Saturday 18th June**. If you would like to volunteer as a Marshal, please get in touch.

You can email [info@uptonogood.org.uk](mailto:info@uptonogood.org.uk) or telephone Bob Lott on 851222.

*Bob Lott & Mike Tibbetts  
Organising Team  
Uptonogood?*

# Rector's Reflections

## *A Good Read*

A question for you: do you enjoy reading, and in particular, do you enjoy reading history books?

There's something absolutely fascinating about the study of History. It's about much more than simply trying to establish what happened in the past, although this can be hard enough. There's the intriguing question of why something happened, and whether things could have turned out differently. There are also questions of significance - what is the significance of something which happened in the past?

At this time of the year, many Christians around the world are reading a history book, written back in the 1st Century AD. The book is included in the Bible, and it's called the Acts of the Apostles. The author has chosen to remain anonymous, but it is generally thought that it was written by St. Luke, who also wrote the Gospel of that name.

The Acts of the Apostles tells the story of how the Christian faith spread around the Mediterranean world during the first 30 years or so following the death and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is an exciting story, excitingly told. Of course, historians always tell their stories in their own particular ways, and the author of the Acts of the Apostles is no exception. It was his conviction that Jesus Christ has remained alive and active in the world, through the power of the Holy Spirit and in the lives of his followers. He believed that God is sovereign over history, and so the reason why Christianity spread so rapidly is simple: it was God's plan, and so it was bound to happen.

The author of the Acts of the Apostles had his particular view. He was convinced that God is at work in human history, and that it is possible to detect what God is up to. Many Christians have shared this view; others have not been so sure. Some people feel that God shapes human events, to a greater or lesser degree, to bring about a good result. This process of shaping is sometimes called Providence. For some, history is full of examples of God's providence; but others struggle to find convincing evidence for this.

But whatever your views on God and History, I would recommend reading the Acts of the Apostles. It's a surprising and exciting book, which raises far more questions than it answers. A good read indeed!

Fr Jason

## ***What's going on at St Mary's***

### Sunday Services

3 April 0900 - Sung Eucharist\*

10 April 0900 - Sung Eucharist

17 April 0900 - Sung Eucharist

24 April 1030 - ALL AGE SERVICE\*

1 May 0900 - Sung Eucharist\*

\*Refreshment follow these services

Please see porch notices for weekday service times.

Monday 11 April - 7.00 p.m. Annual Church Meeting (in Church): we welcome parishioners to attend to hear about life at St Mary's and to elect officers to the Parochial Church Council. We would like to hear from anyone who could offer their services to the PCC.

Thursday 21 April - 4.00 p.m. Communion and Wave of Prayer followed by refreshments. This is being held under the auspices of the Worldwide Mothers' Union. Everyone will be most welcome.

COUNTDOWN TO ST MARY'S FETE - the fete is being held on Saturday 17th September commencing at 1pm. We are in the very early stages of planning the fete and would welcome an input from anyone who has any new ideas to get in touch.

Please ring Jessie (851206) or Clare (850486) for more information.

*Clare*

Submissions for *Upton News* should be sent to [news@uptonvillage.co.uk](mailto:news@uptonvillage.co.uk).

Deadline for the May edition is **Saturday 30th April.**

## Village Clubs & Organisations

### **Blewbury WI**

Karen Brooks 850219

[karencbrooks@gmail.com](mailto:karencbrooks@gmail.com)

### **Calor Gas Syndicate**

Lesley Shaw 07739 047688

### **Drop In Sessions**

Yvonne Collins 850989

### **Guides, Brownies & Rainbows**

Fiona Coomer

[fiona.coomer@gmail.com](mailto:fiona.coomer@gmail.com) 511809

### **Karate**

John Hogan

[johnhogan67@icloud.com](mailto:johnhogan67@icloud.com)

### **Short Mat Bowls Club**

Tony Durbin 850035

### **Table Tennis Club**

Bob Lott 851222

### **Tea Birds WI**

Jo Christie [tea-birdswi@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:tea-birdswi@hotmail.co.uk)

### **Theatre Club**

Malcolm Wright 850705

### **Upton Oil Syndicate**

Colin Batchelor 01491 672444

### **Upton Village Hall**

[www.uptonvillagehall.co.uk](http://www.uptonvillagehall.co.uk) 887129

### **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.

## Upton 50 Club

Congratulations to our March Winners who are:

£25	No. 63	Mr Head
£20	No. 178	Emma Rockall
£15	No. 170	Jane True
£10	No. 7	Lisa Morgan

Our lovely team of volunteers are out and about to collect the charity lottery subscriptions for 2016/17 so if you haven't already seen them you will find them knocking on your door shortly to enlist your support. Thank you in advance for your help in keeping this very worthwhile village tradition going for the coming year

*Lesley*

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## Drop In

Are you free on Thursday mornings?  
Don't know many people in Upton?  
Working shifts, looking after young babies or old people, new to the village?

Drop in to the DROP IN in the village hall.

What is the DROP IN?

It's a coffee morning ( or tea) every other Thursday ( ..... ). 70p for as many cups as you like.

Bring the baby, the parents, the dog (if it's VERY well behaved)

Looking forward to seeing you on Thursday...

*Mary Gutfreund*

## *Blewbury Tennis Club*

Blewbury Tennis Club would like to invite new members to join the club

Members benefits:

- Excellent facilities: new clubhouse and four well maintained courts
- Access to ladies, mens and mixed doubles teams to compete in a range of summer and winter leagues
- Regular social tennis sessions:
  - Wednesday - 9.15am all year & 6.30pm summer only
  - Sunday - 10.30am all year
- Coaching available for all ages: groups and individuals

Players of all standards are welcome

For more information and joining details please go to our website:

[www.blewburytennis.co.uk](http://www.blewburytennis.co.uk)

Come along to one of our club social sessions on the first Sunday of every month - 10.30am \*

\* email us in advance on [members@blewburytennis.co.uk](mailto:members@blewburytennis.co.uk) or just turn up!

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## *Christian Aid Week*

**15-21 May**

Advance notice of the dates of Christian Aid Week. You may receive your envelope in the week before; in any case, it would be wonderful if it could be filled for collection during the actual week.

*Elisabeth and Malcolm Wright*



## **Blewbury Post Office**

Royal Mail are putting their prices up on Tuesday 29th March, 1p on both 1st & 2nd class stamps, we have plenty in stock, if you want to save a few pennies. The cost for Europe is going up 5p, to £1.05, while the price for “rest of the world” zones 1 and 2, stays the same. Parcels are going up by 5p, so not too bad really!

We will have “Shakespeare” stamps on sale soon, not very exciting, and some “Notable Britons” too, also not very memorable, and not very notable either! Think the stamp designers need to try harder!

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## ***1st Upton and Blewbury Rainbows***

The Rainbows enjoyed completing the Minute Marathon badge this month, they raised money for Dyslexia and gained a badge and certificate.

We finished for the Easter term by having an Easter Party with Harwell rainbows, this included an Easter egg hunt in the field and play area.

## ***2nd Upton and Blewbury Brownies***

The Brownies enjoyed performing a Disney parade dance this term, they all came along dressed as different Disney characters and Leah our young helper taught the girls the dance moves. Even the leaders joined in!

We also ended the term with an Easter party and egg hunt.

## ***Blewbury W.I.***

April already! Birds building nests, lambs in the fields, lawns being mown, flowers in the garden, ducklings on the stream, and hopefully some sunshine too! We are putting our plans together for the months ahead, outings, lunches, talks, workshops, all sorts of events, so there is always something for everybody in the WI.

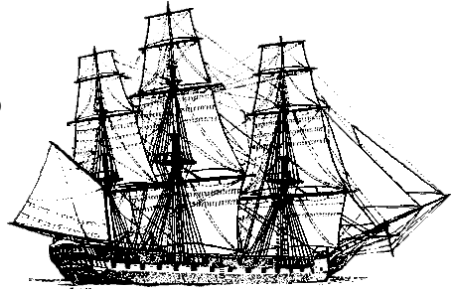
- Wednesday 4th April, Coffee at Style Acre tearooms, 10.30am
- Wednesday 3rd, Lyn’s walk, meet at Blewbury Village hall, 9am (everyone welcome) for a walk along the Kennet & Avon canal, lunch out, cars needed!
- Wednesday 13th, Triples Bowls tournament
- Wednesday 13th, The Music Man, Abingdon Operatic Society
- Saturday 16th, Batsford Arboretum, with the VPA (all welcome)
- Wednesday 27th, Main meeting, Vale Room, 7.30pm, Talk on the RNLI (visitors welcome)

For more details of any of our events, the date of the next Coffee morning, Scrabble or Mah Jong session, or if you wish to join us, please ring Karen on 850219 or visit our webpage [blewburywi.wordpress.com](http://blewburywi.wordpress.com) where you will find more information.

## From a Descendant of 19th Century Uptonians

To whom it may concern,

I refer to an article “Emigration to Australia” on the website [www.uptonvillage.co.uk](http://www.uptonvillage.co.uk) which refers to the emigration of Luke Smith and his wife Martha (nee Wheeler) arranged by Frederick King, Government Emigration Officer for Oxford in the 1850/60’s.



I am a great grandson of Luke and Martha, and a grandson of Luke

Wheeler Smith. Luke’s brother Richard and Martha’s sister Jane also came out with them on the *Glentanner* which arrived in Moreton Bay on 8 July 1859. Subsequently Frederick King arranged the emigration of Martha’s parents and her sister Lucy and Mary to emigrate on the *Persia* in 1862. Martha’s sister Hannah and Luke’s younger brother James also followed them.

It was not until a family reunion, centred mainly on the descendants of Luke Wheeler Smith, held in Harrisville, Queensland in April 2014 that descendants of Luke’s sister Elizabeth contacted me and informed that Elizabeth, who had married Joseph Belcher in East Hagbourne in late 1858 and with her husband and one year old son Joseph (who died on the voyage) also accompanied Luke and Martha on the voyage.

The reunion was well advertised and brought a responses of good wishes from a descendant of Martha’s brother Shadrack Wheeler who lived in Aston Tirrold. This descendant now lives in Alvescot.

My nephew Greg Smith will be visiting the UK for approximately 4 weeks leaving here on 23rd April, mainly to visit his wife’s relatives in Scotland, but is hoping to make arrangements to hire a car and visit Upton to look up graves of a few names we can give him and make general enquiries for information to add to the history of our pioneering ancestors from a poor agricultural labouring life in England and who contributed so much to the development of the new colony, and were duly rewarded for their courage.

If you can advise on any contacts that Greg could approach it will be greatly appreciated. If the Upton Village website would like a follow up to the article on “Emigration to Australia” I am sure we could arrange same.

Trusting I am not imposing on your good services

Most Sincerely,

Robert Wylie (Bob) Smith

## ***Pot Holes***

There are plenty of pot holes in our local area, just waiting for an unsuspecting driver or biker to fall in to one, and damage their car, their bike or themselves. Please report these to Oxfordshire County Council, either via their website or by phoning them on 01865 792422, or go to [fixmystreet.com](http://fixmystreet.com) and enter it on there. There are several already reported, but the more people who complain, the more likely they are to get fixed.

## ***A New Arrival!***

We're very pleased to announce the safe arrival of Upton's newest kid on the block, George William Haworth. Weighing in at 8lbs 3oz he arrived at 8.27pm on 29th so a leap year baby!

We're all doing well and Hugo is getting the hang of being a big brother.

*John, Jess, Hugo & George*



This photograph, dating from about 1933, has been on the village website for some time, described as 'location unknown'. A patient of Liz Hardy reports that it was on the right hand side of the road to Alden Farm and the lady could be Mrs Vokins.



# Free compost giveaway!

Come and join us to fill your box, bag, or container with top-quality compost for free – and don't forget your shovel!

**Saturday 9 April 9.00am – 11.00am**

Rye Farm car park, Culham Road, Abingdon OX14 3NN

**Sunday 10 April 9.00am – 11.00am**

Old South Oxfordshire District Council car park,  
Benson Lane, Crowmarsh Gifford OX10 8ED



Free recycling goodies



Pick up kitchen caddies and liners



50% off compost bins, now only £10 (cash)

*All while stocks last*

