

Upton News



Vol 4 No.38 November 2015

This is the first issue of Upton News to be published in many months. The absence has been because of pressure of work – finding even more time on my computer has just not been possible. However it's partly been the result of a lack of material from Upton contributors - so please send in your news to make take task of publishing worthwhile!

To assist with both of these, Mike Brown has kindly stood in, not only

in the roles of sub editor and web editor but also to encourage contributions from the village. Please help us both by keeping the flow of information going and make Upton News a bigger and better publication!

Send your material to news@uptonvillage.co.uk

Brian Rippon

Burglaries in Upton and West Hagbourne

Thames Valley Police is appealing for witnesses following burglaries (non-dwelling) in Upton and West Hagbourne.

Between 4pm and 5pm on Sunday (22/11), offender(s) gained entry to an outbuilding at a property in Church Street, Upton. It is not known how entry was gained. An Apple I Mac Computer was stolen. Offender(s) broke into a shed at the same property sometime between Thursday (19/11) and Sunday (22/11), and stole a Makita table saw.

Offender(s) also broke into an outbuilding in Stream Road, Upton, and stole power tools and a mountain bike.

Between 8.30am and 6pm on Thursday (19/11), offender(s) gained entry to an insecure shed in Foxglove Lane, West Hagbourne. A chain saw and a mountain bike were stolen.

If you see or have seen any suspicious looking people or vehicles in the area or have any information relating to this message, please call the police on the 24 hour non-emergency telephone number 101.

Alternatively if you have information but wish to remain anonymous, please call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or online@crimestoppers-uk.org. No personal details are taken, information is not traced or recorded and you will not go to court.

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The Council met on 15th September and welcomed Ms Karen Marshall, who had been co-opted onto the team. Karen agreed to help Stuart Fraser with planning matters and also take over inspection of the Play areas from Chairman Bob Lott.

Also recently appointed to the Council, Mrs Kathryn Fletcher agreed to take on communications, including assembling articles for the Upton News and responding to District and County Council consultations.

County Cllr Lilley reported that work on both the Chilton Road and Hagbourne Hill improvements had started. He confirmed that the original suggestions of one chicane and realignment of the junction at the bottom of Chilton Road would be installed, together with a new roundabout at the bottom of Hagbourne Hill. Chilton slip roads were also underway but were 10 months late due to unavoidable legal delays. Milton interchange work was also six weeks behind. A further complication at Milton was the finding of an old nuclear pipe under a footpath between Milton and Didcot. The footpath cannot be reopened until the pipe has been removed. Cllr Lilley also warned of further budget cuts looming which would have an effect on local parishes, including probably cuts to waste recycling and bus services, but that childcare and asylum applications would have to be protected. Cllr Lilley suggested economies could be made by combining authorities, or even Parish Councils!

Councillor Rob Traynor reported on the progress with the Parish Plan, which had been delivered to all households in the village and that so far he had had a 50% response. Results would be communicated to the village once the results had been analysed.

During Public Forum, a parishioner complained that refuse collection lorries were damaging the grass verges in the narrower Upton streets and requested the Parish Council raise the subject with the Biffa, suggesting that the smaller vehicles be used. It was also thought that the refuse lorries had damaged the concrete bags in Stream Road installed to protect against flooding. Initially the contractor had responded that this was already the case, but it has since come to light that the larger lorries are being used. The investigation continues! In the meantime, residents might like to consider putting up a NO THROUGH ROAD sign where Stream Road becomes a private road to lessen the traffic.

Both play areas have recently been inspected by ROSPA for safety, and various small improvements are being undertaken by members of the Council. If anyone has concerns about any of the equipment, please contact a member of the Council or the Clerk.

Oxfordshire County Council hosted a town and parish council event to discuss the future delivery of local services in Oxfordshire at the Kassam Stadium on Monday 21st September; Cllrs Norman and Fletcher attended.

The Council responded to the Vale's consultation on the reduction of waste recycling sites, expressing its strong wish that Drayton be one of the three (out of five) facilities to be retained, as it served all our local villages as well as Abingdon and Didcot.

An incidence of Japanese Knotweed was reported in Frog Alley; we are advised that the tenant farmer has treated the weed and will repeat if not successful. Please keep an eye on this when you are walking your dogs and let the Council know if you spot any further outbreaks.

Recent Planning Decisions:

14/V2550/FUL The Gate House, Reading Road - planning permission granted 17/7 with conditions; subsequent application P15/V1772/FUL for larger building, no objections. Vale granted.

P15/V1649/O 14 Houses next to Horse & Harrow; UPC objected (as also did WHPC) on grounds of unsustainability and lack of infrastructure, as well as a potential increase in dangerous traffic. Application withdrawn.

New Applications

P15/V2406/FUL Owlscoote Manor Farm, High Street Upton - removal of existing non-historic buildings, removal of modern additions to existing dwelling, erection of 3 new dwellings with gardens and garaging.

It was unanimously agreed to object to the application on the grounds including the flood alleviation measures shown on the plans not being consistent with the measures in the risk assessment and the proposed two-storey houses being considered excessively tall (9+m) and overbearing. However, much of the application was considered praiseworthy.

Ash Dieback

Ash dieback has recently been confirmed at the Earth Trust's Paradise Woods, near Long Wittenham, just 6 miles from Upton!

Ash dieback, also known as Chalara, was first recorded in the UK in 2012. Since then it has spread to most areas of the UK. The latest information from the Forestry Commission shows that the disease has spread close to Upton, with records to the North, South and East of the village.

Chalara is a serious disease of Ash trees and is caused by the fungus *Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*. Symptoms include leaf loss, crown dieback and bark lesions. Once a tree is infected it is usually fatal and unfortunately we have many long established trees in this parish. The spaces left are likely to be similar to those left in this parish when the Dutch Elm disease struck in the late 1970s.

Please see the Forestry Commission's website for the latest advice on management and identification forestry.gov.uk/ashdieback. The Winter Symptoms video towards the bottom of the page is excellent, and also see chalaramap.fera.defra.gov.uk for the latest records of the disease.

Waste and Recycling

If bad weather like snow or flooding disrupts waste collections in the run up to Christmas this winter, Biffa will try to catch up the following day. Leave your bins out for three days - if they're not emptied after three days, bring them back in and put them out next time they're due with any side waste.

Keep food waste out of your recycling wheelie bin. This includes recyclable food trays with food stuck to them. Biffa are checking recycling bins - if they contain things that can't be recycled, Biffa won't empty them and will leave a note to explain why.

Please rinse out your food trays before you put them in the green bin - if our recycling is contaminated with food waste, the people who take the recycling off our hands might reject it and send it to landfill.

You can check what bins things go in at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/recycleit or by calling 03000 610610.

You can now recycle small electrical items by leaving them in a small carrier bag tied up next to your grey bin when you normally put it out for collection. You can recycle old clothes and textiles that are too tatty for charity shops by leaving them in a small tied carrier bag next to your green bin. There's more on the Vale website at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/weeeandtextiles.

Huge thanks to Upton residents

We are expecting DEFRA to confirm shortly that the Vale has once again achieved the second best percentage of recycled waste in the country and just behind South Oxfordshire District Council who for the second year have taken top place.

This is tremendous news but it is all down to the ongoing strong support from all local residents.

Winter Freebies

It is always useful to know of freebies in the run up to Christmas so be aware that free loft and cavity wall insulation is available, give the Affordable Warmth Helpline a call on 0800 107 00 44. Three of the big energy companies are giving it away to help reduce energy use. It's available to all homeowners and private renting tenants.

Got some Christmas shopping to do? Good news - you can take advantage of the traditional free Christmas parking in Vale district council off-street car parks in Wantage on 5th December.

Post Office News

We are gearing up for our busiest time of the year, please make sure all parcels have customs labels (to all non EU destinations) and airmail stickers on BEFORE coming to the counter! (And please check the country restrictions before posting!) We also have to stick “special labels” on perfume, nail varnish, phones and items with batteries in. We do not have time to stick all your stamps on for you either!

Royal Mail are delivering letters to Santa (aka Father Christmas), at Santa’s Grotto, Reindeerland, XM45HQ, please include a full name & return address, he will endeavour to answer as many as possible, last posting date for these is Friday 6th December.

We have had a letter from Santa to say he is sending us an “Elf”, who will be reporting back to the workshop on any naughty children!

Last posting dates

Friday 27th November for operational HM Forces abroad

Friday 4th December; Africa & Middle East

Monday 7th; Asia, Far East, Cyprus, Japan, Eastern Europe

Tuesday 8th; Caribbean, Central & South America

Thursday 10th; Australia, New Zealand, Greece

Friday 11th; international mail to static HM Forces

Monday 14th; Czech Republic, Germany, Italy, Poland

Tuesday 15th; Canada, Finland, Sweden, USA

Wednesday 16th, Austria, Iceland, Ireland, Portugal, Spain

Thursday 17th; France, Belgium, Denmark, Luxembourg, Netherlands

Friday 18th; Norway, Slovakia, Switzerland

Saturday 19th; 2nd class

Monday 21st; 1st class

Tuesday 22nd; Special Delivery & Parcelforce Worldwide Express 48

Wednesday 23rd; Parcelforce Worldwide Express 24

Please also remember that our LAST ACCEPTANCE TIME for posting is 4.30pm every day, except Wednesday and Saturday when it’s 10am officially, but if Colin is working, it’s nearer 11.30am! We are allowed to refuse all mail after this time, or it has to wait till the following day! Parcelforce come at 3pm, (or 11am on Wednesday).

The Blewbury WI calendars are also on sale, and tickets for the New Year’s Eve dance.

We have had a lovely silver bracelet watch handed in, please come and collect it!

For those who have a pre-paid “key meter”, and run out unexpectedly, please don’t sit in the cold and dark, ring me at home (850219) and I will come and do a cash top up for you!

Love from Karen & Angela

UPTON VILLAGE THEATRE GROUP

The Ladykillers

Watermill, Bagnor, Tuesday 27 October 2015

The production of “The Ladykillers” at the Watermill Theatre just outside Newbury was as enjoyable for the environment as the performance; the Watermill is a lovely 220-seat theatre and restaurant located in a disused corn mill dating back from the 1830s. The restaurant offers an excellent pre- or post-theatre hot and cold buffet; in the summer, dinner in the conservatory or outside on the lawn would be extremely agreeable. As it was, on the cold and drizzly Tuesday that the Upton Theatre Group visited, the Watermill Restaurant provided a warm and sociable environment for dinner.

The play was staged on a tiny, precariously sloping set which managed to ingeniously host an ailing parrot, four murders, two car chases, a string quintet and its audience, a rooftop chase and a railway line. The small stage area required almost balletic choreography as the cast dodged and ducked around each other, cramming themselves into tiny spaces and juggling an improbable amount of luggage. There were many elements of classic farce in the production blended with the character-based comedy.

The script, adapted by Graham Linehan from the original film screenplay by William Rose, was similar in style to Linehan’s most well-known works, *Father Ted* and *The IT Crowd*. The quirks and tics of the oddball villains were hilariously realised by the cast, particularly the winking, twitching Major (Dermot Canavan) and obsessively polishing Harry (Harry Katsari). The moral of the original screenplay, that “in the worst of men, there is a little bit of good that can destroy them”, applied to all of the gang apart from the smooth, psychopathic ringleader Professor Marcus (played by the gangly and almost rubberised Paul Mundell) who was only undone by his choice of accomplices and scarves.

Having seen the 2004 Coen Brothers film which is quite good but is unfortunately rather less than the sum of its parts, I wasn’t expecting the manic, laugh-out-loud, sometimes breathtakingly ingenious production that was the Watermill Ladykillers. Combined with the very enjoyable (albeit a little expensive) dinner, it was an excellent evening and I will be keeping an eager eye on the Watermill What’s On web page for future opportunities to repeat the experience.

Jane Pettman

Upton Karate Club

Upton Karate Club meets in the Village Hall every Sunday at 11.30.

Classes are run by Mr John Hogan 4th Dan Black Belt who is helped on a regular basis by his wife and daughters who are also black belts.

New classes will be starting on January 24th and 31st to which beginners are welcome from the age of 4 up to adult and all fitness levels.

The club is pleased to announce that it has gained its first junior black belt, congratulations to Jacob Hunt-Brough.

For more information about the club please contact John Hogan on 07548 784929 or johnhogan67@icloud.com or visit www.tiskakarate-abingdon.co.uk

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 at the Village Hall in Station Road.

What is the DROP IN?

It's a coffee morning (or tea) every other Thursday (10.30 to 12.00) - next meeting 10th December. 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.

Village Clubs & Organisations

Blewbury WI

Karen Brooks 850219
karencbrooks@gmail.com

Calor Gas Syndicate

Lesley Shaw 07739 047688

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

Upton Village Hall

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.

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

Deadline for the December edition is **Wednesday 16th December**.

Upton 50s Club

Winners for October were drawn at the George & Dragon on 30th October:

£25	No 140	Irene Timblick
£20	No 111	Carole Gardner
£15	No 169	Mr Fox
£10	No 40	Ros Caffyn

The UVHAT Trustees have approved a special Christmas Draw with "double up" prizes to take place on Friday 18 December at the George & Dragon.

Christmas Draw Prizes will be

- First Prize £50
- Second Prize £40
- Third Prize £30
- Fourth Prize £20

Good Luck and Thank You for supporting our fundraising efforts for Upton Village Hall in 2015.

Lesley Shaw

Upton Village Hall

O venerated vaults of Upton, Oxon,
Tis time to sing of fortunes past,
And herald civic deeds undone.

Happily, few let slip t'contrast
Twixt scullery - aged, mean, forlorn -
And, lo, this gleaming galley of hygiene.

Infra-red faucet! Lockers new! These adorn
You now, yet more will grace your measured mien:
Tables - as feathers light; projectors - as suns bright

And against the year's encroaching fusc,
A test of brains, a ball, fount of delight
For revellers garbed in gown and tux.

Let none, Acropolis redux, bring upon
Your timbers neither blight, nor worm nor cast,
But ever-flourishing bookings...

Anon

1st Upton and Blewbury Guides

Upton and Blewbury Guide unit meets on Fridays from 7.30 to 9.00 and is the section of Girlguiding UK for girls ages 10-14. Being a Guide means making friends, trying new experiences and being encouraged to discover and learn in new ways. This term the girls are spending some of their meetings working on patrol badges called Go For Its, with the girls planning and running their own activities. Other meetings this term have included sign language; making bags from t-shirts as part of *Waste Less Live More* week; jazz dancing and enjoying the Harwell firework display. Still to come this term are a wide game out on the field in the dark, ice skating in Oxford and Christmas crafts. A highlight was the trip to London in October to the Big Gig - a massive pop concert in Wembley Arena organised by Girlguiding just for Guides.

If anyone would like more information about Guides, or has a skill that they would be willing to share with the group, please get in touch. Lynn.nickerson.holywell@gmail.com

2nd Upton & Blewbury Brownies

We meet every Tuesday from 6-7.30pm during term time. The Brownies have been busy this term doing Autumn crafts and they also enjoyed a Halloween party. We welcomed four new Brownies this term and they made their promise on 13th October.

The rest of the term we will be preparing our annual Christmas entertainment and Christingle event.

1st Upton and Blewbury Rainbows

The new Rainbow unit started on 11th September with 10 girls and on 16th October they all made their promise as new Rainbows. Rainbows are aged between 5-7 years old and we meet every Friday between 5-6pm term time.

The girls work towards Roundabout badges and enjoy lots of art, crafts and games. So far this term we have enjoyed a food evening where we made fruit kebabs and decorated cakes and we also had a Halloween party. The rest of term we will be getting ready for Christmas. We have space in the unit so if anyone is interested please contact Emma on cortina3@hotmail.co.uk



Christmas Craft Fair
Saturday 5th December, 11am-3pm
Upton Village Hall

Teas | Coffees | Mince Pies | Cakes
Chutneys & Jams | Jewellery | Make Up
Wax Melts | Word Art | Kids Lucky Dip
Handmade Bags | Christmas Wreaths
Paintings | Handmade Christmas Cards

We hope to see you there!

Rectors Reflections

Christmas in Little Boddington

A long time ago, in a far-away land, the villagers of Little Boddington were getting ready for Christmas. They had been doing so for hundreds of years. But this year, things were different. A dragon was stalking the land, and the good folks of Little Boddington were frightened.

Now, this dragon was called Spending Review. It was huge and sleek and very, very hungry. In the past, the good folk had fed it with titbits - easy savings, they called them. But there were no more of these titbits left - the low-hanging mince pies, so to speak, had already been removed from the tree. But further cuts were still required.

It was hard to seek efficiency savings, as there had only ever been a task force of one - Santa himself - and his elves were all interns, who were there gaining valuable work experience.

So what was to go? Three wise men? One was sufficient. But if one wise man could do the work of three, why bother having any at all? Gold, frankincense and myrrh were definitely out. Shepherds and sheep - all very nice and fluffy, but are not strictly necessary. A donkey and an ox - again, presence unnecessary. The manger? Well, definitely a health and safety risk here. A star?

Well, a proper star needed to be lit, which involved electricity, and electricity in turn costs money, not to mention the problem of light pollution. The stable itself was now looking so bare that it only made sense to get rid of it as well.

So the good folks of Little Boddington made all these savings. All that was left was baby Jesus.

That Christmas Eve, the Spending Review flew into Little Boddington. It congratulated the villagers on their efforts, but added there was a problem - it was still hungry! It looked at baby Jesus, alone, and cold and hungry. "There is still more! Give me Baby Jesus" it roared. But the villagers said no - if you take Baby Jesus, you have taken our Christmas away. "Humph!" said the Spending Review, as it flapped its wings and flew away. For the Spending Review knew that the villagers of Little Boddington were quite right.

God's gift of His Son, the baby Jesus, God with us, to share the joys and sorrows of our lives, given to us out of God's sheer love. This is what Christmas is all about. May you all know the riches of God's blessing this Christmastide and always.

Fr Jason

St Mary's Services

Sunday Services

6th Dec - 0900 - Sung Eucharist*
13th Dec - 0900 - Sung Eucharist
20th Dec - 0900 - Sung Eucharist
27th Dec - 1030 - Morning Prayer

Saturday 12th December - 4.00 p.m.
- Friends of St Mary's Carol Service*

Thursday 24th December - 4.00 p.m.
Crib Service*

Friday 25th December - 0900 -
CHRISTMAS DAY EUCHARIST

*refreshments follow the service

Friends of St Mary's

For the second year the Friends of St Mary's held a quiz night in the village hall in October and it was once again a resounding success with over 60 people in attendance. Carl Pettman was a splendid question master, delivering the questions set by Alan Davies with aplomb and a little magic, and a mountain of pizzas, delivered for the interval, soon disappeared along with the wonderful salads prepared by Jessie and her army of helpers.

Competition amongst the eight teams was intense but in the end the combined wisdom of Chillup (as it had members from Chilton and Upton!) outshone that of runners-up Grand Union by just one point and they were declared Brains of Upton for 2015!

Not only was it a fun evening, it also raised £357 for the Friends scheme. Our sincere thanks to all who worked so hard to make the evening a success.

The final Friends event for 2015 will be Carols and Readings on a Christmas theme to be held in St Mary's at 4.00 on Saturday 12 December. This will be followed by mulled wine and mince pies - it should be a great start to the Christmas season, especially for those of us who don't really get going until a couple of weeks before! Last year the church was packed, and we look forward to seeing a big gathering of Friends of St Mary's once again this time.

NOTES FROM THE ALLOTMENT

The weather is still extraordinarily mild, which is making all those autumn planted vegetables grow rather too fast, including broad beans which are already several inches high. I hope they don't catch cold when the frost comes; I have some fleece handy to protect them from the worst, although they are very hardy vegetable.

And still no frost to sweeten the sprouts, although I'm not sure it makes any appreciable difference. Rather too much rain though, making the ground extremely claggy and difficult to work. Alongside the sprouts, I have some spinach beet which is producing masses of succulent leaves at the moment.

It is much lighter on my side of the allotment now that the hedge has been trimmed, it makes quite a difference to the plants trying to grow in the shade of it, especially during the darker winter months when the sun has to struggle to clear the top of the hedge.

If you haven't yet cut down your legumes, their roots can be left in the ground when you are clearing the foliage, so they can return nitrogen to the soil for the next crop, ideally brassicas.

I made a tasty soup recently using two autumnal products, pumpkin and apple juice; peel and chop some onions and garlic and fry in a mixture of oil and butter, together with a couple of torn bay leaves and some mace (or grated nutmeg) plus a cinnamon stick. After five minutes add the peeled and chopped pumpkin and cook for a further 10 minutes. Then add a pint or so of vegetable or chicken stock and a similar quantity of apple juice and simmer until all the vegetables are soft. Remove the whole spices and then liquidise. Reheat and check seasoning, serve with a swirl of plain yoghurt or crème fraiche on the top. Delicious! (courtesy of Reader's Digest Cookery Year).

Compost Corner: if you haven't already done so, now is the time to tip over your composter and make use of that lovely compost residing at the bottom. Put a large plastic sheet on the ground in front of the bin, tip the bin over and remove it, leaving the recent additions on the sheet, then dig out the finished compost from the bottom, sieve or remove any large twiggy bits, then mulch your beds with it. Replace the bin and put back the unrotted material.

Angela Hoy

angela.hoy@sky.com

Village Produce Association

Where has 2015 gone?? What a strange year weatherwise and for the VPA. Sadly at our Annual General Meeting in November we had to announce the decision that the VPA will not be holding monthly meetings in 2016 due to lack of members attending. Attendances have not covered the cost of speakers and hiring of the hall. Many thanks to our supporters who have been to our talks on a regular basis.

In 2016 we will continue to have garden visits, a summer outing and the Christmas Social. We will also be holding the Annual Summer Show. Please pop the date in your diary - Saturday 9th July 2016.

Despite our difficulties we have had an enjoyable year. Thirty eight entrants took part in the Annual Summer Show in July and a number of the exhibitors came from Harwell and Didcot - congratulations to Martin Ricketts from Harwell who made a clean sweep of the trophies in the cookery section.

We are concluding 2015 with our ANNUAL XMAS SOCIAL, UPTON VILLAGE HALL. SATURDAY 5TH DECEMBER at 7.00pm. Tickets £9 per person.

This year is an Italian Evening and will include food and wine, together with an unusual quiz and some interesting games. There is a poster in Blewbury Post Office and Savages giving all the details. Please book your tickets at Blewbury Post Office or through Maggie Maytham (01235 850126) or Eileen Bracken (01235 510095). Ticket orders by 1st December please.

May the VPA Committee, be the first to wish everyone in Blewbury & Upton an early Happy Christmas and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

DID YOU KNOW? George Bernard Shaw wrote: "Be like the sun and meadow, which are not in the least concerned about the coming winter."

Happy Gardening
Eileen

Upton Wine Appreciation Club

The November meeting was presented by Brian Rippon of Upton's very own wine merchant, Strictly Wine (www.strictlywine.co.uk). Brian introduced Weird and Wonderful wines made with unusual grapes from a total of seven countries, accompanied by a slideshow, a smattering of educational insights, Giulia's chocolate truffles and concluding with ice cream served with a delicious black muscat.

December's meeting will be presented by Will Betts looking at Dinner Party Wines that are suitable for pairing with food and are great for dinner parties or just when you want something a little bit special; taking you from a sparkling opener through wines to accompany each dinner party course.

It should be a fun evening with wines to inspire you and as usual with our pre Christmas meeting we'll have some festive nibbles to accompany the wines.

If you would like to attend the December meeting please book by Monday 30th November 2015. The club welcomes new members - contact Kevin Jacklin (Secretary) Kevin.jacklin@btinternet.com

Blewbury Players

Auditions for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* will be held at Blewbury School on 31st January. An alternative audition date will also be available on 7th February and probably a workshop. If these dates are impossible please do still ring and discuss it. In our anniversary year we are as keen as ever to encourage new people to come along and take part and for those who have been involved in the past to return and help us celebrate. THERE ARE LOTS OF PARTS FOR A VARIETY OF AGES AND ALL LEVELS OF EXPERIENCE.

We are delighted that Laura Baggaley is returning to direct after the successes of *The Winter's Tale* for us in 2007 and *Twelfth Night* in 2009. She will be joined by Andrew London, who will support her as movement director (he was the front puppeteer of Joey, the hero of *Warhorse*, in the National Theatre production for more performances than anyone else).

Performances will be on 20-23 July 2016 and will celebrate Blewbury Players' 40th anniversary year and the 400th anniversary of Shakespeare's death.

Please contact us by e-mail blewburyplayers@gmail.com or call Sheila on 01235 850537 if you would like to book an audition or discuss the production further.

If you want to get a flavour of previous productions and activities please do look at our website where you will find many photographs.
www.blewburyplayers.co.uk

Blewbury Brass Band

There is no denying the festive season is now well and truly upon us, and there surely can be no better sound at this time of year than a rousing carol or two to cheer you along as you trudge around your favourite supermarket! The band hut has been emanating Christmas cheer for some weeks and the learner band especially, are excited to be able to actually start performing some of their pieces for you.

You will be able to catch Blewbury Brass Band at various local locations in the next few weeks.

The band trustees met for the first time during November - an important landmark in the continued long term growth of the band. The trustees are Julian Gallop (Chairman), Dennis Fowkes (Secretary), Martin Holliss (Treasurer), Judith Atkins (Learner Band Musical Director), and three Blewbury "Great and Good": Sheila Loy, Marion Mills and Chris Lakeland. If you would like to contact the trustees collectively, please send an email to trustees@blewburybrassband.org.uk.

Finally, a reminder it's our Christmas concert on 4th December in Blewbury village hall. There will be a wide range of music, marches, shows, solo's and much more. We really look forward to welcoming as many of you as can make it. Tickets can be purchased from Savages, Blewbury Post Office and Blewbury Service station.

For details about joining the band, please visit www.BlewburyBrassBand.org.uk or contact Lindsay Lott (treasurer@blewburybrassband.org.uk)

Lindsay Lott



Logs for Labour

Would you like free firewood, or do you have a woodland that needs managing? The Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment's "Logs for Labour" programme aims to promote sustainable use of firewood by running events where volunteers help to manage woodlands in return for logs. The events run most weekends in the winter, are about 3 hours long, and could involve coppicing hazel, thinning trees or piling up brash. All you need are sturdy gloves, shoes and a saw (only hand tools are allowed for insurance reasons)... or let us know if your woodland needs the help of volunteers. Information about forthcoming events is at www.oxonwoodfuel.org.uk/logs-for-labour or 'like' [facebook.com/oxonwood](https://www.facebook.com/oxonwood). Riki Therivel, 01865 243488.

Proposed Outreach Post Office for Upton?

Blewbury Post Office is considering the viability of running an outreach post office at Upton Village Hall for four hours once a week and is seeking your views on this.

We need to know whether you would use such a service, and if so, how often, as Post Office Limited will not sanction the expenditure unless they feel it is worth their while. The previous post office facility was closed through lack of demand so we need to prove the case for a new facility.

Services that could be offered include:

- Cash withdrawals and deposits
- Bank cheques and pay bills, including Council tax
- Draw pensions
- Accept letters and parcels, including Parcel Force and online returns
- Sell stamps/stamp books
- Sell Gift Cards
- Top-up mobile telephones
- Sell Health Lottery tickets
- Sell pre-ordered Euros and other currencies
- Change facility, withdraw and pay in

The Village Hall Management Committee is keen for the Hall to be used during the day and is supporting this idea; it could be combined with the serving of refreshments and also, taking a leaf out of the very successful “Tea with Technology” sessions at Aston Village Hall, where local residents are given help and advice on their laptops, tablets and mobile phones...

Please complete the short questionnaire at

www.uptonvillage.co.uk/outreach

We need your support to convince Post Office Limited.

Recreation Ground Rules

The Parish Council has drafted a set of rules for the recreation ground, which are currently the subject of consultation with known regular users of the village hall and rec. The aim of the exercise is to control unregulated use of the ground and avoid damage to the facilities. If you would like to see the draft rules please contact the Parish Clerk, parish.clerk@uptonvillage.co.uk