

Upton News



Vol 4 No.43 July 2016

This is my last issue as editor of *Upton News*. After five years, first with Sarah Sayers at the helm and latterly with the assistance of Mike Brown, my multiple work and village commitments (not to mention an attempt at a social life) mean that I'm unable to devote the time that I should to the job. Thank you to all the regular contributors who have made the production possible over the past years.

I'm delighted that the new editor, Lucy Ross, is a fraction of my age and I'm sure she will be able to devote not only more time but energy to the role, and bring with her new ideas for the newsletter. I wish Lucy well and will do everything possible to hand over the reins to her capable hands.

Brian Rippon

Thank you for the cakes!

The Upton Village Hall Trustees would like to say a massive thank you to all those people in the village who baked cakes for the Uptonogood Café!

Through the generosity of all of their efforts a total of £798 was made that will go towards the refurbishment of the main hall. Every year the village amazes and humbles us with the wide range of baked goods to sell and this year was no exception from beautifully decorated cupcakes to massive gateaux's! Also a special thanks to Chris Traynor, Debbie Paul, Diane Rabbetts, Gill Potter, Giulia Rippon and "Queen of the Hot Drinks" Lucy Mason for volunteering their time to run the Café.

Thanks

Jacqui Reid

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

Deadline for the August edition is **Sunday 31st July.**

Parish Council News

The Parish Council's AGM took place on May 16, at which Bob Lott stood down from the Chair but remained as Vice Chair, and Stuart Fraser took on the role of Chair. Kathryn Fletcher had previously announced her decision to resign from the PC due to work and home demands so the PC now needs to co-opt a new councillor. If you're interested in helping to decide what happens in Upton and can spare the time, please get in touch with the Clerk (clerk@uptonparishcouncil.co.uk) with your contact details.

In addition we have recently learned that our present Clerk has decided to give up her role with UPC; for information about this post, please see the notice elsewhere in Upton News.

Our District Councillors were unable to be present but had sent a report in which they asked for the views of the population on the proposed new unitary authority. Mr David Hill had been appointed as the new Chief Executive of the Vale and South Oxfordshire District Councils. The Vale's Local Plan 2031 was currently being inspected and it was hoped that as soon as it was passed, the number of speculative development planning applications would reduce.

During Public Forum the state of the roads in the village was discussed, particularly Prospect Road, and efforts would continue to be made to get this road resurfaced. However, those present were reminded that the more complaints that were made to the FixMyStreet website, the more chance there was of something happening!

The latest news on the local bus routes is that the 94 route will be retained with some changes to timetabling but that the 95 would be dropped, unfortunately for the Moretons. Full details appear later in this edition.

Rob Traynor and his team have worked very hard on producing a new Upton Parish Plan which has now been printed and by the time you read this, should have been distributed throughout the village. Bob Lott emphasised that if the village wanted something to happen it was up to them to ask for it, the Parish Council could only do so much itself.

At this meeting of the PC, various documents have to be reviewed and amended if necessary. One of these is the Aims and Objectives, which this year includes a fervent wish to see the average speed of vehicles driving through the village being reduced to the legal limit of 30mph - current averages recorded are 43mph! This precludes any chance of having a pedestrian crossing installed for children to cross to Station Road to catch the school bus service, so we have asked our District and County Councillors to try and come up with some means of reducing the speed so we can try to achieve this goal. We await the response with interest!

Planning: An application was received for the land adjoining the George & Dragon for three pitches for Travellers. The PC objected to this application and described at length its reasons for the objection.

A new dwelling to replace the existing one at Maslina was fully supported by the PC.

Recent Planning Matters: (full details available on the Vale's website)

P16/V0885/FUL Maslina, Reading Road: development work, replacement dwelling, garaging and landscaping. PC had no objection, Vale granted permission.

P16/V0553/FUL Amended: Land adjacent and to rear of George & Dragon; the number of Traveller pitches was reduced from three to two. PC reiterated its former comments, objecting strongly to the application.

P16/V1407/HH White Cottage, Fieldside: side and rear extension and internal reconfiguration. PC had no objections but sent comments on the oil tank and HETAS regulations regarding its installation.

P16/V1469/LB: Old Stream Cottage, Stream Road. Replacement of 8 non-historic wood-frame single glazed windows with location-appropriate double-glazed wooden units. PC had no objections.

VACANCY FOR CLERK/RESPONSIBLE FINANCIAL OFFICER

Upton Parish Council is looking for someone able to take responsibility for all administrative aspects of the Council and to act as Responsible Financial Officer.

Duties include production of meeting agendas and minutes, attending (usually evening) bi-monthly meetings, carrying out Council decisions, advising the Council on procedural matters and producing brief monthly updates for the Upton News and posting items on the PC page of the Upton website. To comply with the government's transparency regulations, it is also necessary to keep the PC's Cloud storage facility regularly updated. A fair amount of time is spent forwarding on relevant emails to councillors and responding to queries.

Parish Council financial work includes dealing with payment of bills, managing the accounts and annual audit, budget preparations and dealing with VAT.

Training is available on all aspects of the role. Good communication with the Chairman is essential.

The post is part time, averaging 20 hours per month, working from home apart from attending meetings. The salary is from £9.299/hr, £185.98 per month gross, with reimbursable expenses as incurred.

The ideal candidate will have good organisational and computer skills, including Excel spreadsheet, and a Broadband Internet connection is essential.

For an informal discussion or to make an application, please contact the present Clerk, Angela Hoy, at angela.hoy@sky.com or telephone 01235 851726.

Upton Wine Club

Summer BBQ

June saw the last event in this season's UWC, the Summer BBQ. It marked the end of another 10 great monthly meetings which produced a fine blend of both member and guest talks on some fine wines from around the world.

Not dampened by the wet weather, 40 or so members and guests enjoyed some fine burgers and bangers cooked to perfection by Matt, accompanied by the plentiful supply of salads, rice dishes and cheeses bought by the members. Plenty of wine was consumed on the evening but those worthy of a mention were the Porta 6 2013 Lisboa (£7.49 on multi buy from Majestic) and the White Burgundy (£8.99 from Waitrose - often on offer!) Both good Summer BBQ drinks. All went well with some great tunes supplied by Pete!

Most people will know that Ellie and Matt who have supported the UWC as committee member and chief cook for a number of years will shortly be moving to Herefordshire. Whilst I am sure this will not be the last wine club meeting we will see them at, on behalf of all our members I would like to say a huge thank you for all your help and support and we all wish you well.

Enjoy your Summer break and we hope you have a happy holiday. We will be back again in September, so please look out for your renewal forms for next season. If anyone has yet to try a visit to one of our wine (social) evenings then please drop Ian Langley a note with your details at Barn Acre, Stream Road and come try an evening as our Guest!

Ian Langley

May Meeting

May's Wine Club meeting was the final tasting event of this calendar year, before June's barbeque celebrates another year of events well-received by members and their guests.

In a departure from the norm of a single speaker presenting wines chosen according to a particular theme, members of the committee were asked to chose and present some of their favourite pairings of wine and food. Thus we were treated to combinations including Manzanilla to accompany tapas; Premier Cru Champagne with crab amuse-bouches; Roussanne with pork rillettes; Porta 6 with barbequed sausages; Primitivo with meatballs and two sweet wines (2001 Chateau de Madere and H&H Malvasia Madeira) with salty blue stilton. Yes, several members were heard to lament their decision to eat beforehand!

If you'd like to learn more about the wines and food from this event, or previous wine club events, then you might like to follow us on Twitter @UptonWine. Alternatively, 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!

William Betts, Chair

Upton 50 Club Prize Winners

May 2016

£25 No. 19 Kevin Jones
£20 No. 71 Jo Joel
£15 No. 165 Gill & Adam Jones
£10 No. 35 Jane Smith

June 2016

£25 No 51 Mr Stimpson
£20 No 27 Wyn Scotney
£15 No 172 Judy Robertson
£10 No 30 Colin Field

Lesley Shaw

1st Upton & Blewbury Rainbows

The girls have been busy this term doing activities to earn their Roundabout Festivals badge, these included nature pictures, planting sunflowers and cress and make fun clown pictures.

We have also been doing activities for the Queens 90th birthday and 4 new brownies made their promise.

This term the girls enjoyed a visit from Lenny's Lizards which is a reptile sanctuary in Wantage. We invited the Harwell Rainbows to join us and the girls enjoyed handling the snakes.

2nd Upton & Blewbury Brownies

The brownies have also been busy this term. We have completed activities to celebrate the Queens 90th birthday including a large collage of Her Majesty. We also enjoyed a craft evening hosted by No Two Things from Didcot and a quiz evening.

The Brownies also enjoyed a visit from Lenny's Lizards, the girls and the leaders enjoyed handling the snakes including a very large albino python called Bubbles!

Village Clubs & Organisations

Blewbury WI

Karen Brooks 850219
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 511809

Karate

John Hogan
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

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.

Tea Birds WI

Tea Birds meet on the last Tuesday of every month at 8.00pm at Upton Village Hall. Our 26th July meeting will be "*I think I'm turning Japanese. I Really think So*". We will be experiencing Japanese culture and cooking. For non members - contribution £7.00.

Our June meeting was great fun, as usual. We learnt what goes on under our bonnets - car bonnets that is. Thank you to Andy for coming along to demonstrate to about 20 ladies the basics of car maintenance.

If you can't attend our July meeting, our August meeting will be on the 30th. Our theme is a good old fashioned picnic. Let's hope the weather will have improved.

New members are always welcome or if you would like to pop along one evening, either leave a message on Facebook or email tea-birdswi@hotmail.co.uk

Please check out our Facebook page or website - www.tea-birdswi.co.uk

Blewbury WI

Tea for Two? It was more like tea for 200 as the WI Ladies served tea and their delicious homemade cakes at the Fun Day on June 11th celebrating the Queen's 90th birthday. Everyone will be welcome to join us at the following events during July and August.

- Friday 1st July, Crafts meeting at Liz's. 7pm. Ring Liz on 850098
- Wednesday 6th July, Local walk. Meet at Village Hall 9.30am. There will be no Walk in August.
- Thursday 7th July, Flower Demo at Cassington.
- Thursday 7th July, Coffee at Style Acre with Marilyn. 10.30am.
- The date for the Scrabble meetings will be posted on the WI website (address below)
- Wednesday 13th July, Visit to Buscot Park.
- Wednesday 27th July, WI monthly meeting at the Vale Room 7.30pm. "An Evening of Flowers" June Cassel.
- Friday 29th July, Crafts meeting at Liz's 7pm. 850098
- Wednesday 24th AUGUST, Summer Garden Meeting at the Melland Room.

For more details of any of our events, or if you wish to join us, please ring Karen on 850219 or visit our webpage, blewburywi.wordpress.com where you will find more information.

Rector's Reflections

A Special Sort of Space

Well, it's Summer time, and, with luck, the sun will be shining, and it will be nice and warm, and we'll be thinking to ourselves: holiday time! If we are lucky, we might be able to go away for a week or even longer; or perhaps we're planning a couple of day trips. But whether it's for a short time or a longer time, it can be good to get away and enjoy a change of environment.

As human beings, we are very sensitive to the environment in which we live. A bright, light and peaceful space in which to live can make a real difference to our quality of life. Of course, for many people, a bit of peace and quiet is a real luxury. We seem to spend so much of our day rushing from one thing to another, what with family obligations and the need to earn a living. There is something about the modern world which expects everyone to be busy and on the go, all the time.

We need to give ourselves some space, so that we can simply be. It might be that we can go away somewhere, by car, train or plane. If our budget, in terms of time or money, won't extend to time away in a literal sense, we can still create a special space in our daily routine, even if it's only 10 minutes. Perhaps we could go for a walk, or simply sit still for 10 minutes, and arrange with our families that we're not to be disturbed during our quiet time!

We might also go along and sit in a church building, even if it's only for 10 minutes or so. Church buildings are great places simply to sit in, to think thoughts and dream dreams. Anyone can come into a church, and make use of the space. It's a special sort of space - space hallowed by years of love and prayers, by stories and memories, by sadness's and joys.

You don't have to be a member of the Church to use the building; in fact, you don't have to be a Christian, or have any faith at all. The church building is special space - space for you, space for us all. It is a special space because it is a space where God can make Himself real to us, a space where we can be touched by His love, His mercy, and His peace.

Fr Jason

Christian Aid Week

The door to door collection this year raised £340.46 - rather less than in previous years. But we were able to add another £76.11 for plant sales. Many thanks to all who contributed and to our loyal collectors.

Elisabeth and Malcolm Wright

Notes from the Allotment

June

I'm losing track of the seasons! On the same day I removed the bubble wrap from my greenhouse, I instantly replaced it with fleece shading to stop my seedlings dying of heat exhaustion! Climate change has a lot to answer for.

And up at the allotment I didn't notice that my first early potatoes had surfaced, and were scorched by the frost for their impudence, so had to pull the black cloth back over them for a few more days. However, they appear to have recovered and are now growing well.

Both rows of beans in the Field Trial are up almost 100% now, which is good. I have added another row of broad beans because I like them, an excellent protein-rich vegetable which is a lot more versatile than people give it credit for - and you can cook and eat the leafy top shoots when you remove them to deter blackfly!

This (intermittently) very cold Spring has been wonderful for keeping the early flowers and fruit blossom going, but rubbish at helping seeds to germinate in my cold greenhouse; I've had total failure with leeks, carrots and tomatoes, but fortunately was given a couple of tomato plants which are doing well, and have ordered some interesting sounding varieties which will arrive ready to plant out. I only have tiny windowsills at home so don't have an alternative warmer germination site.

We are told it's going to be a bumper year for slugs and snails due largely to the very mild winter, so it's as well to stock up now in advance of the onslaught. I don't like using pesticides but sometimes there is no alternative. However, I'm going to have another go with copper tape and also try some of the innovative suggestions from the Garden Organic people including a mulch made of wool felt (which they don't like crossing), snail gel and a slug and snail barricade which looks interesting... Sadly, they've already eaten all my brassica seedlings.

I have erected new netting against the birds that munched all my gooseberries last year, so hopefully there will be enough for me to make some gooseberry jam. I am also rehoming an unwanted Conference pear on my fruit patch, which will be a welcome addition. I have also managed to strike some blackcurrant cuttings so will add these to the lone blackcurrant up there; they do make the most delicious jam and ice-cream.

July/August

As usual with British weather, it can't make up its mind whether to hit us with a heatwave or a monsoon. It does make it difficult to plan in advance!

The most notable effect of all this confusion is that the weeds positively LOVE it, and have grown exponentially. If you leave them for a couple of days, they grow two feet, so it is vital to try and keep on top of them - not easy.

We are well into broad bean season now, with the autumn sown ones ready for cropping and the spring sown ones catching up fast. Don't forget to nip the tops out to confuse the aphids, although so far I have not seen many. I read recently that a bean is at its best when the pods are swelling so that you can see the shape of the bean inside and when you open it, the scar attaching the bean to the pod should be green or white, not black - if it is then it is past it.

My first sowing of leeks and carrots having completely failed, I tried again in the warmer weather and this time have had good results. In the meantime a friend helped out with some surplus leek seedlings and they are now growing well. The new ones can go into the ground in a few weeks time. And in lieu of sowing salad leaves I bought a tray of "growing salad" from a well-known supermarket and planted them all out - a wonderful crop with very little effort or cost.

I'm still not having much luck with brassicas; my first beautiful seedlings were entirely destroyed by slugs, and the replacements are struggling to get going. Still, they are in the ground for a long time so hopefully they get their act together soon. And the onions, I'm obviously not feeding them enough as they are still puny... shame!

On the fruit front, it looks like being a very good year for soft fruits; my tayberry is smothered in fruit already and summer raspberries are forming. I think there are a lot of gooseberries but they are doing their usual hiding trick of under the leaves. And I think I will be having a bumper harvest of strawberries; I have a patch at the allotment and two patches at home, all now tucked up under their bed of straw to protect them from mud, rain and slugs, and netted against the hungry birds!

Angela Hoy (angela.hoy@sky.com)

Village Produce Association

Well, the weather beat us when it came to our April garden visit to Batford Arboretum - we had to cancel because of rain, wind and almost sub-zero weather conditions. Maybe we can fix an autumn visit and be luckier with the weather.

SATURDAY 9th JULY - VPA ANNUAL SHOW. SCHEDULES ARE NOW AVAILABLE FROM BLEWBURY POST OFFICE OR MAGGIE MAYTHAM IN UPTON.

Also have a look on the website - blewburyanduptonvpa.wordpress.com

Happy Gardening
Eileen

Theatre Group

Upton Theatre Group visit to the Watermill Theatre to see *Untold Stories—Hymn and Cocktail Sticks*, by Alan Bennet.

On Tuesday 7th June, 14 of us had a very enjoyable visit to the Watermill Theatre, 12 having the buffet pre theatre buffet meal. The weather was warm & dry as we arrived so it was pleasant to wander down to the stream to see the sculptures and watch the antics of the ducks.

During the interval it poured with rain so some of us got a little wet!

Untold Stories is a double bill of memoirs based on his 2005 collection of diaries, recollections and essays. In *Hymn*, a play set to live music by George Fenton, Bennett, played with thoughtfulness by Roger Ringrose, recalls the hymns and music that underscored his childhood. It was a reflection on the gentle way things were then and a childhood and youth long past.

A live string quartet played while Bennett remembered his disappointment at his failure to play the violin despite his father's mastery of the instrument, with no encouragement from his own father. Bennett's passion for music was activated by his weekly trips to Leeds Town Hall to see the Yorkshire Symphony Orchestra, launched in 1947. A customer of his father's butcher shop, the Entertainment

Officer of Leeds City council, would pass on a couple of complimentary tickets to the Saturday night concerts. His father would accompany music played on the radio with his violin. As a member of the church congregation Alan felt that he belonged to a group, whereas he usually felt an outsider, looking in on other people's lives, not really sharing.

Glimpses of his early life with Mam and Dad are shared in *Cocktail Sticks*, as Bennett in dialogue with his fictionalised versions of Mam and Dad bemoaned the lack of a "proper childhood" with the right kind of trauma to equip him as a writer. "Well we took you to Morecambe", replied Mam. Lucy Tregear was brilliant and sympathetic as Mam, depicting both the eager excitement at the anticipation of living the style and social fashion shown in her women's magazines and the doubt and confusion caused by her son's lack of warmth and appreciation of her efforts to please him. Dad too (Richard Gibson) retreated into shyness when he realised that his best just wasn't good enough for his clever son. Bennett looked back, after their death, with love and affection but pain too at the little everyday things that his parents had given him, including source material for this funny and witty play.

Bus Service

Following the withdrawal of bus subsidies by Oxfordshire County Council, representatives of the local villages have joined together to form the Downland Villages Transport Group to work with the bus companies to retain as much service as possible. We are pleased to announce that Thames Travel will continue a Monday to Friday service on the 94 route and that there will be a twice daily service also serving the Astons and the Moretons, made possible by the transfer of the school run to the scheduled bus. There will be some increase in fares and the bus service will operate on a trial basis for one year starting on 24th July.

Thames travel has released the new 94/94A timetable which is reproduced on the next page.

The 94 will serve the Hagbournes, Blewbury and Upton and will run roughly hourly from early morning until the evening from Monday to Friday. During term time a 94A service will run once in the morning and once in the afternoon; in addition to serving the 94 villages. It will also serve the Astons and the Moretons. The longer term future depends on the economic viability of the service, so more users are needed!

The Downland Villages Transport Group is grateful to everyone who has provided input on bus services over the past few months and for the support of our County Councillors. You've said clearly that keeping bus services is important for the life of our villages. Your input has helped us to argue for our transport needs and to begin to work out some new options where services have been cut, while the new timetable will not be perfect for everyone. Thames Travel have listened to our suggestions and responded where they can. It is a trial - we need to ensure adequate use, as it's fairly close-cut thing for them on a commercial basis.

A key factor that made Thames Travel feel it was “worth giving it a go” on the 94/94A was that “you (our villages) were really passionate about keeping the service”

The key financial replacements for the lost subsidies were, as we knew, school funding and some development funding.

A real effort has been made to try and serve our commuters. If it fits in with your schedule please give it a try.

As and when more information becomes available, we'll keep you informed.

Jessie West

route 94/94A

Didcot • East Hagbourne • Blewbury • Didcot Mondays to Fridays, except Public Holidays (from 25 July 2016)

Notes	Sch	Hol	M-T	Hol F	Sch F	Sch	Hol	F	A
Bus Number	94	94A	94	94	94	94A	94A	94	94
Didcot, St Birinus School					1430	1530			
Didcot Girls' School					1435	1535			
Didcot, Parkway Station, Stop R4	0630	0720	0740	0845	0945	1045	1225	1325	1425
Didcot, Orchard Centre, Stop S2	0633	0723	0743	0848	0948	1048	1228	1328	1428
Didcot, Sandringham Road	0638	0728	0748	0853	0953	1053	1233	1333	1433
East Hagbourne, War Memorial Green	0641	0731	0751	0856	0956	1056	1236	1336	1436
West Hagbourne, Moor Lane	0647	0737	0757	0902	1002	1102	1242	1342	1442
Upton, Prospect Road	0651	0743	0803	0908	1008	1108	1248	1348	1448
Blewbury dep	0656	0749	0812	0914	1014	1114	1254	1354	1454
East Hagbourne, War Memorial Bus Shelter	0703		0822	0923	1023	1123	1303	1403	1503
Didcot, Sandringham Road	0706		0825	0926	1026	1126	1306	1406	1506
Didcot, Orchard Centre, Stop S1	0710		0830	0930	1030	1130	1310	1410	1510
Didcot, Didcot Parkway, Station	0714		0834	0934	1034	1134	1314	1414	1514
Aston Tirrold, Chequers PH	0759								1514
South Moreton, Crown PH	0805								1520
North Moreton	0810								1526
Didcot, Orchard Centre, Stop S1	0824								1626
St Birinus School	0834								1631
Didcot Girls' School	0834								1541
Didcot, Didcot Parkway, Station	0840								1641
									1545
									1645

- Notes:
- Sch - School days only
 - Hol - School holidays only
 - M-T - Monday to Thursday
 - F - Friday only
 - A - Commences from Didcot Girls' School at 1655 on schooldays only