

# Upton News



Vol 5 No.43

February 2020

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## St. Mary's Church Services

Sun. 2nd February 9.00am	Sung Eucharist*.
Sun. 9th February 9.00am	Sung Eucharist.
Sun. 16th February 9.00am	Sung Eucharist.
Sun. 23rd February 10.30am	All Age Scones of Praise - A chance to choose your favourite hymns*
Sun. 1st March 9.00am	Sung Eucharist*

\*Refreshments served after these services.

Please see porch notice for weekday services.

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## Skittles Evening

Friends of St. Marys will be holding a skittles evening in the Village Hall on Saturday 22nd February, be there at 6.30pm for a 7.00pm start. This Fun Evening is open to all and includes a Fish and Chip Supper (Chicken alternative on request) and of course some scrumptious puds to finish .Tea and coffee will be provided, and you are welcome to bring your own drinks too. Brighten up a winter evening with friends and neighbours.

There will be prizes for the highest score in female and gents and under 16 categories.

Tickets priced £10 are available from Paul 851251, Jessie 851206, Gloria 850683 and Celia 850684. Please let us know you're coming in advance as the food order has to go in a week before.

Oh and there is sure to be a Raffle, donations for which would be much appreciated.

*Jessie West*

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## Theatre Group

I know it's a long way ahead, but tickets may not be available nearer the date. I have only 5 stalls tickets left for "A Bunch of Amateurs", a well-received comedy, on Thursday 18th June at 7.30pm in the Playhouse, Oxford. The group price is £23.50 per person, but doesn't include travel arrangements. Cash or cheques to me, please, just as soon as feasible.

*Malcolm Wright* (850705)

## Parish Council

The Council held a meeting on 16th January where many village related topics were discussed. It is clear that a longer term plan is required to manage changes and your councillors are working on this. This plan will include:-

- Village hall car park extension
- Toddler play area relocation
- Appointment of a grounds contractor
- Pump track restoration

The costs involved in the larger projects mean that work, once agreed, will take place over more than one financial year. The Parish Council is constrained by costs, but wants to make sure each project is right for the village and will last for many years, with proper maintenance. The Parish Council have therefore opted for an increase in the precept to help fund projects, but will also be looking for support with fund raising too.

Your Parish Council continues to look for people who can assist in making these things happen. Please think about what you can do for the village in bringing your expertise to create a coordinated approach to improving village facilities. Whether you are new to the village, a long term resident and whether you are already serving on a committee, if you can spare a few hours a month, your Parish Council would like to hear from you. Please email [parish.clerk@uptonvillage.co.uk](mailto:parish.clerk@uptonvillage.co.uk) or speak to one of your councillors. Being involved with village affairs at this level is worthwhile and non-political.

You are also welcome to attend any meeting of the Parish Council and the next one on the calendar is Thursday 19th March at 7.30pm in the meeting room in the village hall. The Annual Parish Meeting is currently arranged for Thursday 23rd April at 7.00 for 7.30pm, but this will be confirmed nearer the time.

*Parish Clerk*

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## Astons Online

Free IT advice for Upton computer users is available on Tuesday 18th February from 10:00am to 12:00 noon in Aston Tirrold and Aston Upthorpe Village Hall (OX11 9EQ). At about 10:30 there will be a discussion about 'Apps' - their benefits and hazards.

Astons Online helps people be confident, effective and safe users of email and the Internet.

Our free-of-charge events cater for all types of computer and user issues in a friendly and informal atmosphere, see [www.astonsonline.uk](http://www.astonsonline.uk) for more information.

Tell us that you're coming if you can, especially if you want one-to-one help. ([theastonsonline@gmail.com](mailto:theastonsonline@gmail.com) or phone 07780 958249)"

## District Council

Due to purdah rules during the General Election at the end of 2019, we were unable to publish news relating to policy developments at the council, so that is the focus of this month's newsletter.

### Council motions

In December, the council voted to approve motions on agreeing the council's commitment to exploring planning policies which encourage sustainability, updating the council's equality policy and support for the voting age to be lowered to 16. In October, the council voted to adopt the Vale's Local Plan Part 2 (LPP2), and motions were passed covering EU citizens' rights, investments in low carbon funds, the A34 and changes to working with regional development organisations. Hayleigh spoke on LPP2 to highlight that despite our reservations about the plan, adopting it was the best option to prevent more speculative development, which we know that the villages we represent have hugely suffered from in the past. Sarah used her maiden speech at Council to propose a motion to mitigate adverse impacts of the UK leaving the EU on the rights of non-UK EU nationals, including sending an open letter from the Leader of the Council to all the non-UK EU nationals in the Vale. The letter can be seen on Page 12 and on the Vale website <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/brexit> - please share it with any friends, family, neighbours or colleagues who might be affected.

### Climate Emergency

Hayleigh is a member of the Vale's new Climate Emergency Advisory Committee, which had its first meeting in October. The committee listened to several speakers from across the Vale and agreed recommendations to commission work to be done by officers and to establish a communications plan to engage the community. The major outcome was the committee setting target dates for a carbon neutral council by 2030 (75% by 2025) and a carbon neutral district by 2045 (75% by 2030).

### Didcot Garden Town Project

Throughout 2019, council officers have been working hard to move ideas for the Didcot Garden Town from the visionary stage to real-life project plans. As all the parishes we represent lie within the Area of Influence of the Didcot Garden Town, we are actively interested in the project and we intend to keep parish councils and residents up to date about the next steps and upcoming meetings that will support the garden town. At the time of writing, a new simplified governance structure for the project is about to be reviewed, which includes three Sounding Boards: a parish council board, a business board and a resident board. This should provide an opportunity for Upton residents and the parish council to provide their views on the plans for Didcot Garden Town, which we very much welcome, and we will provide further updates as this progresses.

Remember, if you have any queries or issues you'd like to raise with us, please do not hesitate to get in touch - our email addresses are [hayleigh.gascoigne@whitehorsedc.gov.uk](mailto:hayleigh.gascoigne@whitehorsedc.gov.uk) and [sarah.medley@whitehorsedc.gov.uk](mailto:sarah.medley@whitehorsedc.gov.uk). We also have a dedicated councillor Facebook Page: [Cllrs Hayleigh Gascoigne & Sarah Medley](#).

## **Wine Club**

Upton wine club celebrated “Wineuary” this month with a selection of wines where we had tried to find a bargain buy! Whilst you should look out for offers from places such as the Sunday Times Wine Club (where most of our wines were sourced this month), the best priced wine of the evening came from Strictly Wine, which had no sale, “just permanently good priced wine all year round!” as Brian put it.

The aim was to keep it under a tenner per bottle and see what bargains could be found. To start, we tried Tenuta Ca’Bolani, a perfectly good Prosecco from the North West of Italy. Light and easy drinking, it had a fruity flavour with good intensity. A good wine that would work well as a welcome drink to any party.

The next white was a 2.4K Sauvignon Blanc from the tip of the New Zealand South Island. Just round the corner from the more famous Marlborough region. Do not let this give you any indication on it’s taste! With a ripe peach and apricot aroma on the nose and lots of tropical fruits coming through when tasting, you could be forgiven for not picking this up as a Sauv Blanc. If you are not a typical lover of this grape then please try this as something a little different!

The third wine, from stictlywine.com, was a new grape to the wine club. From the less well known region of the Republic of North Macedonia. Tikves Smederevka (we all had fun pronouncing that one!) produces a white wine with tropical and stone fruit aromas, underpinned by a zesty lemon note. This is an award winning wine made from the Smederevka grape that produces a great alternative to some of the more well know varieties.

Our last white was a Chardonnay from the Limestone Coast, Australia. A “Cleanskin” wine, meaning the distributors do not detail the exact source of wine, just letting you know the region (which helps keep the prices low). A good, reasonably balanced wine, with some length that reflects the quality of it’s origin.

Our first red was a Shiraz, Malbec blend from Australia called Mr Anderson. A rich wine full of black fruit and herbal notes. A smooth finish with some length that went down well with the members. The suggested pairing is with any rich sauced pasta dish.

We then compared two further Shiraz wines. A cleanskin from the Langhorne Creek region and Deep River Shiraz from the same region in McCaren Vale.

The second wine was billed as a half price offer wine (normally over £18). Shiraz is one of Australia’s most popular grapes and both were labelled as bold, medium acidity with medium tannic. Both were very nice wines and if you love Shiraz you would not be disappointed. On reflection you could tell the Deep River had a few more years to mature.

Our last wine was a classic Rioja from the Alavesa region. Baron de Barbon is a classic Rioja full of red fruit and full body, with a typical vanilla taste.

Good value Rioja, “safe” and paired with grilled lamb chops , char-grilled vegetable kebabs for example. Cont.

Wine fact for the month: Rioja has over 140,000 acres of cultivated land that produces 250 million litres of wine annually, helping make Spain the 3rd largest producer of wine in the world!

Next month, we will be asking our members to select a wine to talk about. Looking forward to a wide selection of wines to try! If you would like to come along and see what it is all about please visit our website ([www.uptonwineclub.co.uk](http://www.uptonwineclub.co.uk)) or email [ian.langley@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:ian.langley@yahoo.co.uk). Hope to see you on the 19th February!

Ian Langley

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## Village Produce Association

Another year, another decade and another gardening season to look forward to. Now is the time to look at seed catalogues in earnest to decide what to grow for the coming year. I belong to the National Allotment Society and receive a quarterly magazine which is very interesting and a Kings Seeds catalogue, plus free insurance for the allotment. The seed catalogue provided to NAS members by Kings is almost half the price of their normal catalogue which is very useful as I've noticed the cost of seeds in other catalogues and garden centres seem to have increased so much over the last few years.

The VPA is now looking forward to 2020 and the Schedule for the Summer Show being held on Saturday 4th July is about to go to the printers. The refurbishment of the Blewbury village hall has commenced and is expected to be completed by the 19th June which means we should have a newly refreshed building for the Show. If completion is delayed, it will take place in Blewbury School, so whatever happens it will still go ahead.

Don't forget, If you would like an electronic copy of the Schedule, it is available now, contact the VPA via the following email address:

[vpa.in.bl.up@gmail.com](mailto:vpa.in.bl.up@gmail.com)

Update on my allotment - I've been flooded three times so far this winter! Overwintering broad beans are managing to survive and overwintering onions are about six inches tall. My hens have survived the floods with pallets in their run and plenty of perches to sit on. I've spent the last few weeks digging trenches around the chickens' run to move the water into the trench at the boundary fence. I took the plunge nearly four years ago to have hens. I began with two hybrids (Polly and Dolly) and a rescue hen (Holly). Sadly, Dolly died last summer, so in September I bought three cross breeds and as they live on the allotment I named them after some of the vegetables I grow - Shallot, Pumpkin and Borlotti. They've settled in really well and have been laying ever since. More news about the hens next month.

**DID YOU KNOW?** *Healthy, mature Apple Trees will bear between 100 and 200 kilos of fruit every year and dried Figs contain about 60 per cent sugar, making them an excellent energy snack.*

Happy Gardening

Eileen

## Rector's Note



### Gallery 46

Do you like art? The other week I happened to be in Oxford, and I took the opportunity to visit the Ashmolean. I fancied looking at some of their European art, and so I ended up in Gallery 46. This gallery focuses on works from the 17th century.

One particular work caught my eye. It was painted in the 1630s by an artist called Pier Francesco Mola, whom I'm afraid I'd never heard of. The painting is called Narcissus and Echo. According to the ancient Greek myth, Narcissus fell in love with his own reflection, and in due course wasted away

from love of what he could not have. This myth has given us the word "Narcissist" and "Narcissistic", which we use to describe people who have an excessive interest in or admiration of themselves. The key word here is "excessive" - it's perfectly normal to have an interest in ourselves and in our appearance. But in some cases our interest in ourselves becomes so extreme as to be harmful - harmful to ourselves and harmful to others.

In short, it is easy to become so self-focussed that we lose touch with the world around us. We cease to care about other people and the environment about us. Sadly, some forms of spirituality can encourage an unhealthy focus on ourselves, and some spiritual activities are little more than fashionable ways of gazing at our own navels.

Reflecting on ourselves and our own lives is important, but it is only a starting point. Within the Christian tradition, the next stage is to reflect on how God is active in our lives, and how God wishes to transform our lives for the better, so that we may be more effective in being channels of God's love, not only in our own lives but in the lives of our communities. Yes, as Christians we reflect upon our own lives, in all their depth and complexity, but we do so in order to be better able to serve others. We seek to understand ourselves so that we may serve others better.

It will shortly be Lent, traditionally a time for us to reflect on our lives and think about how we might better serve our communities. May our reflections this Lent bare rich fruit - in our own lives, yes, but especially in the lives of our communities.

*Fr Jason*

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## Drop In

The Drop-In is an informal gathering to enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and a pleasant chat, meetings take place every other Thursday from 10.30am to 12.00 noon. Meetings this month are in the Village Hall on the 13th and the 27th, please come along and join us.



### Foot Care



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### Hatha Yoga

For Strength and Flexibility, Mixed ability.  
Monday 9.30am-11.00, Upton Village Hall  
and 7.15pm-8.30pm, Blewbury School.

### Therapeutic Yoga

Gentle self healing practice.  
Wednesday 9.30am-11.00, Upton Village Hall  
Private sessions also available.  
Contact Cath Watsham  
Yoga teacher/therapist, Dip.  
Tel. 07786210177



### Upton Dog Days



We walk, rest and play  
Doggy Daycare  
Dog Walking  
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Tel. 01235 850549 or 07753635038  
Email: [uptondogdays@hotmail.com](mailto:uptondogdays@hotmail.com)  
Facebook: Upton Dog Days



## **Upton 50 Club**

Unfortunately the Upton News is unable to publish the results of the January draw. In order to get the Email version of Upton News to you before the 8th February it will go for publication on the 29th January and the draw for the 50s Club will not take place until Friday the 31st. *Ed.*

### **Renewal for the coming year.**

After the success of last year the UVHAT trustees would like to you invite you to again make your annual payment for the Upton Village private lottery, Upton 50 Club, which starts again at the end of April.

Upton 50 club has raised over £1,200 this year and the proceeds go towards the prize funds and the rest to the upkeep of the village hall. We successfully refurbished the main hall last year, however fundraising remains important to us for maintenance and upkeep. For example, we have just had to replace the cooker in the kitchen!

Each ticket is £10 for 12 months and every month the 4 winning numbers drawn receive either a £25, £20, £15 or £10 prize. The lottery runs from each April to the end of March the following year, with the draws taking place on the last Friday of each month.

We do have volunteers who will visit to collect your monies and issue your ticket however it makes it a much easier job if you are able to pay online direct to Upton Village Hall Amenities Trust. To do this, please follow these easy steps:

1) Make a payment for £10 for each ticket you require (you must be over aged 16 to play)

2) Payment details are:

Account name: Upton Village Hall Amenities Trust

Sort code: 40-52-40 Account No: 00025632

Reference: *Please Use Your First initial and surname eg J Reid*

3) Email [jacqui.reid@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:jacqui.reid@hotmail.co.uk) to say you have paid online.

Once payment is verified we will then post through your ticket for the year.

### **Please make online payment by Friday 13th March**

If you are new to the village please feel free to make a payment and we will allocate you a number. There is no restriction on the number of tickets per household.

If you would prefer someone to come round and collect the cash or cheque then we will keep you on the list for a volunteer to visit during March and April before the first draw.

Thanks

*Jacqui Reid*



## **Bake Up**

Our Christmas edition, warmly hosted by Giulia and Brian, was mostly about the sweet stuff. The spread featured American gingerbread, Estonian Kringle braid, bûche de Noël, champagne syllabub, Christmas pud (trad, and in truffle form) and ginger shortbread. All delicious! The savoury side had a European slant: gravadlax with beetroot rosti, salt cod bolinhas, and Italian meats.

We took inspiration from closer to home at the January meet, namely Scottish food. This produced an amazingly well-balanced banquet: Scotch broth and Cullen skink to start, with either Scottish cheese scones or tattie pancakes. Smoked salmon pâté on homemade oatcakes as an entremet, then Dermot's fine poached trout or Mike's 'wee beasties of the glen' with Giulia's rumbledethumps (cue discussion of what a Scot calls a parsnip) on the side.

Puddings were high in calibre and calorie, including a splendid St Andrew's Cross-emblazoned gingerbread, superior cranachan and bara brith, plus brown bread ice cream. At least two of these contained whisky, so no risk of missing out on the Burns' Night dram. Hearty thanks to Mike and Yvonne for providing theme and venue.

Next meet is at 11:30am on Friday 20th March hosted by Sarah Carter at Fieldfare, off Church Street. The theme is Polish food.

*Kieron*

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## **Blewbury Post Office**

Maggie and I are both unavailable for a short while, I have arranged for Frances to come in to cover, but she's from Pangbourne PO, and still has to do her usual days there.

The only times the Post Office will be open during the first week of February will be:-

Tuesday 4th, Thursday 6th, and Friday 7th - 8.30am through to 3pm

Wednesday 5th; 8.30am to 12 noon

Back to normal hours from Saturday February 8th onwards.

Royal Mail collection will be at about 12 noon, anything handed in after that will go the following day.

We have some interesting 'Video Games' stamps on sale now, 'Visions of the Universe' stamps will be available mid February.

*Karen and Maggie*

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## **Didcot U3A**

This month's U3A meeting is on Tuesday February 18th in the Didcot Civic Hall. Start time is 2.00pm, early arrival is recommended. The guest speaker will be Mervyn Edwards - 30 Years in the Thames Valley Police as a Specialist Firearms Officer.

## Healthcare in this Area

Didcot and its neighbouring village have only three medical centres which are now filling up extremely rapidly as a result of the vast volume of new homes being built. The three medical centres/surgeries via their PPG's (Patient Participation Groups) are becoming anxious about the situation. We intend to produce frequent newsletters, similar to the attached first issue (below), so that residents are aware of this important problem.

### An Invitation to join your PPG (Patients Participation Group)

Are you confused about what's happening with healthcare in this area and do you know how to get your voice heard.?

All GP Practices are required to have a Patient Participation Group. There are no requirements about how a PPG should operate, it's up to each Practice, but their role is to be a 'critical friend' on behalf of patients. PPG's work to foster communication between patients, doctors, carers and all who work in the Practice. They support the Practice's objectives and give feedback to the Practice on patients views and concerns. They also act as a forum for discussion on general health matters, including promotion of good health and prevention of disease; this may include public meetings on topics of general interest.

We're all aware of the rapid expansion in the Didcot area, with many new homes and new residents arriving. Sadly, investment into infrastructure to support this expansion has been poor; a small area of land in Great Western Park has been allocated for a GP Practice, but the submitted plans are still a cause of argument and debate. This is not the fault of the Practices, who are working hard to deal with the pressures of ever-increasing workloads. The three Didcot Surgeries are now collaborating, through the Didcot Primary Care Network, to offer integrated primary and community health care, enhanced services and additional advances in patient care, through multidisciplinary teams. The Didcot PCN is still at an early stage and the three PPG's are supporting the Practices in this important initiative.

The PPG's welcome active membership to ensure there is continuity in medical facilities for the growing population in this area. The more members there are, the higher the volume of the collective PPG voice in support of the Partners and Staff of our valued GP Practices.

As Chairs / Representatives of the three PPG's we will be writing regular articles to keep you informed on local healthcare developments.

In some Practices, patients are automatically members of the PPG, but can opt to become active members, participating in meetings, surveys, consultations, etc. In other Practices, you may need to apply specifically. Check your Practice's website or ask at Reception for further details.

Andrea Warren Oaktree Health Centre [www.oaktree.co.uk](http://www.oaktree.co.uk)

Shelagh Garvey Didcot Health Centre [www.didcothealthcentre.com](http://www.didcothealthcentre.com)

Stewart Lilly Woodlands Medical Centre [www.woodlandsmedicalcentre.com](http://www.woodlandsmedicalcentre.com)

## County Council

Unfortunately we do not have a report from Mike Fox-Davies our County Councillor due to him being unwell, we wish him a speedy recovery. However we do have an important announcement from the Council.

### Waste Wizard

Oxfordshire is the top performing county in the country, recycling 58% of household waste. Our residents help to make that happen but there is still more we can do to increase the county's recycling.

The Waste Wizard is the county council's response to help you dispose of your waste and unwanted items in the best possible way. The online tool allows you to type in the name of any item along with your postcode to find out whether it can be repaired, reused, donated, recycled or whether it needs to go into a specific bin or can be disposed of at a Household Waste Recycling Centre. Just go to [oxfordshire.gov.uk/wastewizard](http://oxfordshire.gov.uk/wastewizard)

There's lots of different ways to get rid of waste but you only need one Waste Wizard to help make sure you do the right thing to ensure anything that can't be reused, repaired or donated is properly recycled or disposed of.

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## Open Gardens

In June (around midsummer) we plan to have an Open Gardens evening in the village. It will be 6 or so gardens open and a glass or two of wine as we amble round viewing them.

If you are interested in opening your garden please get in touch. I already have 3 offers but would love a few more!

This event will be strictly for Uptonians and friends, it will not be advertised outside the village. It is intended as a low key social event for villagers and to possibly raise a little for the St Marys extension fund.

Please contact [Celiaadavies@aol.com](mailto:Celiaadavies@aol.com) or Tel. 850684

*Celia Davies*

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## Over 55's Fitness Classes

The Vale and South Oxfordshire District Councils have a vast range of classes to help the over 55s to keep fit. Classes which cost between £2 and £9 per session include the following:-

Aerobics, Chair Aerobics, Badminton, Indoor Bowls, Chair Dancing, Indoor Cricket, Keep Fit, New Age Kurling, Nordic Walking, Pickleball, Pilates, Short Tennis, Swimming, Tai Chi, Waking Football, Walking Netball, Yoga and Zumba Dancing. There are also classes to help sufferers of Parkinsons and M.S. and to help prevent falls.

For more information go to

<https://www.getoxfordshireactive.org/vale-of-white-horse>

## Letter to EU Citizens

Dear Resident

The deadline for the UK to leave the EU has changed, but the country continues to prepare for this event. I am writing to you all on behalf of the Vale of White Horse District Council about issues related to Brexit - in particular we want to make sure affected EU nationals from countries outside the UK who live in our district know what they need to do to protect their rights to remain in the country.

The new deadline to leave the EU is 31 January 2020 at the latest, but it's still not clear exactly when we will leave or how we will leave, especially now there will be a general election in December. We share many of our residents' frustrations about this uncertainty, particularly over the future immigration status of affected EU nationals.

If you live in the UK but are a citizen of another EU country, it's very important you know what you need to do to be able to stay here after we leave the EU. You might need to apply to the government for "settled" or "pre-settled status" in the UK - if you do not do this as soon as possible, you might not be able to stay in the UK in the long term. We have put lots of information on our website to help, including links to the right pages on the government's website. You can find this at [www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/brexit](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/brexit).

If you don't have access to a smartphone or tablet to carry out your identification verification, you can do this at the libraries in Abingdon, Botley, Wantage and Didcot.

Like all of our residents, you make an important contribution to our district and our communities - you are most welcome in the Vale of White Horse, and I want to let you know you have the Council's continued support.

I also want to reassure all our residents that Council officers are working hard on Brexit preparations to make sure our services are not affected.

The Council also remains committed to supporting our local economy and we are here to advise or guide any local businesses that could be affected by Brexit. There's lots of information, guidance and support on our dedicated South and Vale Business Support website at [www.svbs.co.uk](http://www.svbs.co.uk).

Yours Sincerely,

Cllr Emily Smith Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council

*Apologies, this letter was issued in November but was not fitted into a packed December edition but now Brexit is with us it has been included as it has become more important. Ed.*

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Submissions for *Upton News* should be sent to

[kameki39@btinternet.com](mailto:kameki39@btinternet.com)

Deadline for the March edition is

**Tuesday 25th February**