

Upton News



Vol 5 No.58

May 2021

Church Services

Online Services

Online church services will continue on Sundays at 10.30am, login or connect from 10.00am to chat before the service. Please see the website www.churnchurches.co.uk for the service access codes and full details of how to join each week.

During weekdays Fr Jason is writing a short reflection and prayer. If you would like to receive this, please contact the office, Tel: 01235 850267 or office@churnchurches.co.uk

May Pram Service

This month's pram service hosted by The Churn Mothers Union will take place at 12.30pm on Wednesday 5th May. Revd Louise is looking forward to meeting up with families with young children once more. If it is sunny and warm we may be able to sit outside, otherwise we will be in the Lady Chapel. We shall celebrate the six weeks of the Easter Season: Easter 6 Ways!

Don't forget to bring a rug to sit on so you can be spaced out well. Inside the church adults will need a face covering. Free Happy Meals are being prepared for you or bring your own lunch. Let us know in advance if you would like a Happy Meal.

Revd Louise Butler 07837 009730

Upton Village Fete, Saturday 4th September

With any luck, and assuming the pandemic continues its retreat, we will once more be able to hold the village fete. As usual, the date will be the first Saturday in September, the venue is the village hall and recreation ground and the time will be 1:00pm to 4:00pm.

In a more normal year, we'd be well advanced with the planning by now but as it is, we're just starting. The success of the event relies totally on volunteers both in advance and on the day. We'd love more help with the planning, which will involve monthly early evening meetings of no more than one hour between now and the end of August. If you feel inspired to volunteer, you'd be very welcome! Please let me know by calling 851251 or dropping a line to pjsbatho@btinternet.com.

Paul Batho

Parish Council

Recreation Ground Play Areas

It's good to see the play areas being used and enjoyed. Feedback on the new toddler play area has been very positive. The mound with the stepping blocks still needs a bit of work and will remain fenced off until this work is completed.

Mowing of green spaces

The mowing season is now well under way, with a number of volunteers all helping out. The biggest task is of course the recreation ground. However there are other parts of the village that need to be mown occasionally. If you'd like to help out, please let the Clerk know.

Upton News - Electronic Version

The Parish Council would like to pass on its gratitude and thanks to Ian Ross for his work sending out the electronic version of the Upton News and the occasional 'specials' for the last 5 years. The Parish Council has now taken over this aspect of the Upton News distribution.

Chilton Road Closure

The council has been told by the District Council that the closure of Chilton Road will be permanent. Official written confirmation is awaited.

Tree Trimming

In the next few weeks Southern Electric will be trimming back some of the trees in the Recreation Ground that are situated immediately under the power cables. This action is necessary for safety reasons.

Parish Council Meeting

The next full parish council meeting will be the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council at 7.30pm on Thursday 20th May. This meeting will be held via an e-conference system. Please contact the Clerk on parish.clerk@untovillage.co.cuk at least 24 hours before the start of the meeting in order to receive joining instructions.

If you have any questions to ask of your parish councillors, or would like to know more about contributing to the work of the parish council and therefore your community, please contact the Clerk on 07968772935 or email parish.clerk@uptonvilage.co.uk. Thank you

Liz Cooper Parish Clerk.

District Council

Hello! We hope that everyone has been able to enjoy the warmer weather recently, as the lockdown restrictions continue to ease and we can now meet with friends and family outdoors again in groups of six, including at local hospitality venues. The council-owned leisure centres have also

reopened under the government's roadmap, with covid-safe measures including social distancing in place for both staff and public safety, and more outdoor activities have resumed. See the [Active Communities](#) web page for more details.

Covid 19 Council Assistance

For the most up-to-date coronavirus information relating to district council support and any changes to services, please take a look at the dedicated Vale webpage for updates: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/covid19

If people have nobody else to turn to, then The Community Support Team continues to be available to help people access support and essentials during the lockdown and can be contacted on 01235 422600 Monday to Thursday 8.30am-5.00pm and Fridays 8.30am-4.30pm or by email:

communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk

White Horse Community Lottery

Local charities and good causes in the Vale of White Horse will soon be able to get a funding boost from a brand-new community lottery being launched by the district council this summer. The forthcoming new White Horse Community Lottery will allow players to choose which local charity their money benefits. Similar community lotteries elsewhere raise tens of thousands of pounds for charities every year. Any charities or voluntary and community organisations wanting to register their interest and find out more please contact Alison at communityenablement@southandvale.gov.uk.

We will continue to keep you updated on council matters and the council's response to COVID-19 through these newsletter articles, as well as on our dedicated councillor Facebook Page: [Cllrs Hayleigh Gascoigne & Sarah Medley](#). Please do not hesitate to get in touch with any issues or concerns - our email addresses are hayleigh.gascoigne@whitehorsedc.gov.uk and sarah.medley@whitehorsedc.gov.uk.

Sarah Medley and Hayleigh Gascoigne □□

More District Council News appears on Pages 9-12 of the on-line edition.

Drop In

The village Drop In is restarting on Thursday May 20th at 3.00pm at Margaret Maytham's house (Toad Hall at the junction between Church Street and Stream Road). The aim is to meet every Thursday, or possibly alternate Thursdays thereafter at people's houses.

Although we are not in the village hall as in the past we very much want this to be open to all villagers. Please come along if you want to have a nice friendly chat over a cup of tea or coffee. Please email me at richmondbinov@gmail.com if you're interested.

Richard Burrow

HUGS

Wildlife garden competition

Win a luxury, ethically-sourced hamper or a wildlife garden bundle - and help nature at the same time!

The judges will be looking for garden features that provide shelter, food and water for creatures such as long grass, log piles, ponds and climbing plants. Sensitive management, including capturing rainwater and not using pesticides and slug pellets, will also boost your chances.

You can enter on our website, www.hugsustainability.org, or collect an entry form from East Hagbourne Community Shop. The competition closes on June 6th.

Making visitors feel at home in your garden

Our latest blogpost is about 7 species you might spot in your garden - and how to encourage them to visit. Find out about little owls, house sparrows, bumblebees, bats, hedgehogs, ladybirds and swifts at <https://tinyurl.com/vtevuahr>.

Solar panel scheme

‘Solar Streets’ is a promotion from installation company IDDEA that offers solar panels at competitive rates. Any Upton household can participate to get a survey - hopefully leading to cleaner energy and reduced bills. Full details on the offer are available at <https://solarstreets.co.uk/didcotplus>

Spring 3 Village Wild Walk

If you’ve enjoyed the great outdoors during lockdown, why not try our 3 Village Wild Walk? The route, and a guide to what to look for in spring, are available at www.hugsustainability.org/walk.

The HUGS team

Astons Online

Free and friendly help for computer users every Tuesday morning from 10:00am to 12:00noon. We provide help remotely using telephone, Facetime, Skype, Zoom, Teams, WhatsApp or whatever is best for you. Book a 30 minute appointment by emailing theastonsonline@gmail.com or, if this is not possible, by phoning 07780 958249.

We’re not holding an online meeting in May because of Oxfordshire Artweeks exhibition in Astons Tirrold, see www.artweeks.org for details. Our next online meeting will be 10:30am - 11:15am on Tuesday 15th June on the theme of “Try something new”. What would you like to do online but haven’t yet? Join in to hear what others would like to try. Book a place using the email address above.

For more information go to www.astonsonline.uk.

Rector's Note



Beating the Bounds

Have you ever taken part in the tradition of “beating the bounds”? In case you’re not sure what this tradition involves, it refers to going on a walk around the parish boundaries. These walks were often held on or around the Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday immediately preceding Ascension Day. Ascension Day is celebrated 40 days after Easter, and as Easter Day is always celebrated on a Sunday, Ascension is always celebrated on a Thursday. The Monday, Tuesday

and Wednesday before Ascension Day are called the Rogation Days.

This year, Ascension Day falls on 13th May.

The days before Ascension are called “Rogation” Days from the Latin *rogare*, which means “to ask”. During the Rogation Days, it was traditional to offer up prayers to God, asking for a blessing on the crops growing in the fields. It was a good opportunity to walk around the parish boundaries, and in the days before the widespread use of maps, these walks helped to keep the boundaries in people’s memories.

The tradition of “beating the bounds” has largely, but not completely, died out. Nowadays, the idea of asking God to bless the crops might seem quaint, perhaps even a little pagan. Are these traditions simply hangovers from the past?

Interestingly, in recent years there has been a revival of interest in Rogationtide. People have become increasingly interested in matters relating to farming and sustainable agriculture. Our farmers play a key role in looking after our natural environment.

And our farmers certainly deserve our prayers. The fact that we have food on our plates doesn’t just happen by chance. Our farmers still play a central role in helping to feed our nation.

So, I think there’s a lot to be said for the old traditions of Rogationtide, including the walk around the parish boundaries. As we walk around the parish boundaries, let us offer up our prayers of thankfulness to God. There is so much to be thankful for - not least for the beauty all around us, and for the fact that we have food to eat. And in our thankfulness, let us think how we can share God’s bounty so that no one goes hungry, in this country or around the world.

Fr Jason

Village Produce Association

Whilst writing this article, it's great that partial lockdown has taken place and we can meet up outdoors in restricted numbers and go shopping again. Let's hope everyone observes social distancing and we don't have any spikes of this horrible pandemic again.



Our Spring Bonnet Competition took place in April and it was rather disappointing that, although we had been advised there would be a few entrants - only ONE turned up on the day!! Thank you to Myra, from Chilton, who entered the beautiful bonnet with all the flowers coming from her garden.

We are hoping that the VPA will be able to hold the Summer Show this year. The date is booked in the Village Hall diary for Saturday 10th July. To remind long

standing residents and inform newcomers, here are a few details about the event. The VPA Summer Show takes place annually and allows all residents from Blewbury, Upton and surrounding villages to take part in a competition and exhibit their home grown fruit, vegetables and flowers and/or show their cookery, handicraft and photography skills. The details of the various sections are listed in the Show Schedule which will be available next month from the post office or from Margaret Maytham in Upton or on-line via the VPA email address yva.in.bl.up@gmail.com. Entry into the Show is open to all residents and there is also a Children's Section. There are lots of trophies to be won in all the different sections of the Show. However, to make a success of the Show we do need your support. Your fruit, vegetables or flowers could prove to be perfect winners! Have a chat with Karen in the Post Office and I can assure you she will tell you that it's great fun to take part in the Show that has been running for years and years. I'll include a few more details about the Show next month. As you will appreciate it will have to be organised in accordance with whatever Covid-19 restrictions are still in place in July.

As we couldn't hold the Show in 2020 because of the pandemic, for this year we will be using the Show Schedule from 2020 which had already been printed.

DID YOU KNOW - In 1813 Thomas Jefferson said: "The soil is the gift of God to the living." and, Vita Sackville-West (1892 - 1962) said: "The more one gardens, the more one learns; and the more one learns, the more one realises how little one knows. I suppose the whole of life is like that."

Happy Gardening

Eileen

<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div style="text-align: center;"> Foot Care A Mobile Foot Clinic for Upton </div>  </div> <p>Treatment provided in your own home for Routine Foot and Nail Care Toenail Trimming Corn and Callous Removal Diabetic Foot Care Contact Jill Allen DipFh MCFHP MAFHP Foot Health Practitioner 07767763441 or 01235 815917</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div style="text-align: center;"> Gary Cuddon 9 Harwood Road East Hagbourne Painter and Decorator Providing a High Quality Service Free Quotations Fully Insured Tel. 01235 510680 or 07827752904 </div>  </div>
<p style="text-align: center;">Scotlands Ash Garage</p> <p>Main Street West Hagbourne Oxford's award winning local Independent Garage MOTs from 6.00am by appointment Vehicle Servicing and Repairs Tyres, Clutches and Exhausts Paint and Bodywork Terraclean Service Free Courtesy Car Tel. 01235 850707 enquiries@scotlandsashgarage.co.uk</p>	<div style="text-align: center;">  </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Family Nursery, Florist, Gift and Farm Shop</p> <p>Visit Savages to discover fresh quality fruit and veg, home grown plants, flowers, giftware and foods The Nurseries, London Road, Blewbury 01235 850352 shop@savagesblewbury.co.uk</p>
<p>LJD Bell Plumbing & Heating Services All Domestic Plumbing and Heating Work Undertaken</p> <p>A1 High Efficiency Boilers Fitted Gas Appliances Fitted and Serviced (Inc LPG) Landlord Gas Safety Check and Certificates Aga/Rayburn Servicing Fully Insured Water Safe Approved Operative CIPHE Registered Plumber</p> <p>Mobile 07555100848 ljd-bell-plumbing-heating@outlook.com</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between; align-items: center;">  <div style="text-align: center;"> N Drum Landscaping, Fencing and Maintenance Garden and Grounds Maintenance Hedge Planting and Cutting Grass Cutting and Turfing Power Washing and Winter Gritting Licensed Waste Carrier Fully Insured Tel. 01235 859229 or 07922701634 ndrumlandscaping@gmail.com </div>  </div>

Oxfordshire Artweeks 2021

Susanna Brunskill of Twitten, Aston Street, Aston Tirrold would like to invite you to a free and very covid safe exhibition of original paintings, prints and cards, in an attractive cottage garden studio on May 15th-16th and 22nd-23rd

No indoor mixing so booking is essential on www.susannabrunskill.uk where you will also find more information. If you can't find a convenient time please email twittenstudio2014@gmail.com.

See information on many more exhibitions in May at www.artweeks.org

Freddie

Many villagers, particularly the dog walkers, the gardeners and those from Upper Upton, will be sad to learn that Freddie, otherwise Professor Herbert Gutfreund, a world-famous biochemist, died on 21st March at the age of 99. His wife Mary, who always used to say that she was physically still strong, but her mind was going, sadly now needs full-time attention and has moved to Cleeve Lodge, a care home in Goring.

Any contact can be made through their daughter, Philippa Chalmers, who lives in Cholsey. Philippachalmers@btinternet.com

Blewbury Post Office

We are still open for our normal hours, but we are still getting customers moaning about us not opening for longer hours, we are only paid for 30 hours a week, volunteers are welcome to apply! We will be closed for the bank holiday weekends, Saturday 1st and Monday 3rd May, also Saturday 29th May and Monday 2nd June.

We have lots of books and puzzles, Kitty's hens are laying like crazy, we have a collection box to recycle empty pill packets that would otherwise go into landfill. War of the Roses stamps out on 4th May. Duck race tickets are on sale, for Sunday 4th July, all ducks purchased for 2020 have been carried over to 2021!

With the closure of many of the banks in Didcot, and the end of the post office card account, most high street banks can be accessed at the post office, with cash withdrawals and cash or cheque deposits. No need to make a long journey.

We have become aware there are still lots of scams doing the rounds, Royal Mail will never send you a text or email asking for an unpaid fee, they will leave you a card through your door. I've had telephone calls about suspicious activity on my national insurance number and spam emails from banks I have no connection with, all absolute rubbish. If in any doubt, please check with your family or friends, or contact me and we'll look at it for you, and never give your bank details out to these people, they are just after your money.

Happy Bank Holidays.

Karen, Maggie, Katrina and Micheal.

Submissions for Upton News should be sent
to

kameki39@btinternet.com

Deadline for the June edition is
Thursday 27th May

Additional District Council News

Vaccinations milestone reached

The NHS in Oxfordshire has now vaccinated more than 320,000 people against COVID-19; over 40,000 people in the county have also now had their second dose. Locally, the vaccine totals are 73,418 in South Oxfordshire and 65,855 in the Vale. Vaccine outreach work across Oxfordshire continues to help encourage take up, working with health partners and looking to focus on individuals in vulnerable cohorts 1 - 4 (residents in care homes; frontline health and social care workers; those 70 years of age and over and clinically extremely vulnerable individuals) who haven't turned up for second doses.

Testing: Public roll-out

Alongside following the rules and the rollout of the vaccine, regular testing forms an essential part of the government's roadmap plan. From Friday 9th April, everyone in England will be able to access free, rapid lateral flow device (LFD) tests for themselves and their families to use twice a week.

One in three people with COVID-19 do not experience any symptoms and may be spreading the virus without knowing. Rapid testing detects cases quickly, meaning positive cases can isolate immediately and help stop the spread.

The expanded regular testing offer for people without symptoms will be delivered through:

- Workplace testing programmes, on-site or at home
- Secondary school and college testing on-site or through home test kits provided
- [Community testing](#) at council-run symptom free testing sites in Banbury, Carterton, Oxford and Wantage.
- [Collection of home](#) test kits from any local testing site
- A home ordering service, which allows people to [order lateral flow tests online](#) to be delivered to their home. If testing at home, individuals need to [register their results online](#) or by calling 119.

Anyone who tests positive will need to self-isolate immediately and [book a second PCR test](#). A [self-isolation information pack](#) is available to provide advice and support.

If you test negative, you must continue to follow social distancing guidelines, wear a mask in public and regularly wash your hands. Anyone with symptoms of COVID-19 should [book a test online](#) or call 119.

Pandemic financial support

Businesses

For details of the support grants available to businesses, please visit South and Vale's Business Support website: svbs.co.uk.

The [Restart Grant](#) is a one-off grant for rate paying businesses that predominantly deliver in-person services for the general public. It will pay up to £6,000 for non-essential retail businesses, and up to £18,000 for hospitality businesses, accommodation, leisure, personal care and gym or sport business premises. As soon as we can offer more information on how businesses can apply for the scheme, we will send out details via our South and Vale Business Support newsletter. [Businesses can sign up to our newsletter here](#). Once the scheme is available, the applications will be open until 30th June 2021 and final payments will be made by 31st July.

Community Groups

Government funding is available for voluntary and community organisations to help with the costs of arranging and providing Covid-safe transportation for residents. Groups can receive funding of £1,000 - £15,000 and it can go on revenue costs like paying for petrol as well as capital costs like PPE supplies or wear and tear on vehicles. The deadline to apply is Friday 14th May. For more information, please contact grants@southandvale.gov.uk

Individuals: Test and Trace £500 Payments

The government recently expanded the scheme to pay £500 to eligible people who lose income having been told to self-isolate through the Covid test and trace system - it now includes eligible parents and guardians who lose income if their kids are sent home from school due to positive cases among students or staff. A revised application form will be available on the council website soon.

Local News

Great Western Park Community Centres now open

We (Hayleigh and Sarah) are delighted by the news that the district councils have now opened all three of our community centres on Great Western Park in Didcot and Harwell. The Northern, Southern and District Centres are now available for residents and groups to hire with priority bookings given to groups that are helping to support the Covid-19 response.

The Southern and District centres are brand new buildings that the council took over from Taylor Wimpey last year. The Southern centre has a main hall and smaller meeting rooms with an outside multi-use games area. The Great Western Park COVID-19 Support Group has moved into one of the rooms at the centre to store the group's equipment, PPE and non-perishable foods, and to distribute food parcels for local residents in need.

The District Centre is a much larger facility and is built opposite the main shopping area on the park. It has a large hall and many function rooms for people to hire for their events. The Northern centre is the smallest of the centres with a smaller meeting hall and was already being regularly used by local community groups prior to the pandemic.

More information about the hiring of the centres is on the council websites:

[Northern Community Centre](#) [Southern Community Centre](#)
[District Community Centre](#)

New cycle hub at Didcot Parkway opens

Didcot Parkway Station has just opened its new cycle hub with space for an extra 600 bikes. The hub caters for standard and non-standard bikes to be securely parked. It is fitted with CCTV, motion sensor LED lighting and bike repair stands. The new cycle hub has opened ahead of 16th May, when GWR aims to run around 90 per cent of its usual timetable of trains.

Council News

Full Council Meeting- 24th March

The latest Full Council meeting took place on 24th March - see [the agenda](#) and [YouTube link to watch the online meeting](#). As of 19th April, the minutes have not yet been published. At this meeting, we (Hayleigh and Sarah) asked Questions on protecting women and vulnerable people in public spaces and on the Great Western Park infrastructure. We proposed a motion on improving healthcare provision for new developments, and supported a motion on improving cycling infrastructure; both motions passed. Other key items from the agenda are covered elsewhere in this newsletter.

Local Elections 6th May

Polling day - polls will be open from 7am to 10pm on **Thursday 6 May**. For information about the measures we are putting in place to help keep our polling stations Covid-safe, please visit our [polling stations page](#).

You can view the candidates for each of the following elections in the South and Vale district council areas by clicking on the following links:

Thames Valley area Police and Crime Commissioner election - [South / Vale](#)

Oxfordshire County Council elections - [South / Vale](#)

District council and parish council by-elections - [South / Vale](#)

Councils agree to develop a joint South and Vale Local Plan

The two district councils in South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse have agreed to develop a joint Local Plan for the area to reduce costs and help the councils meet their ambitious targets for making the two districts carbon neutral.

Local Plans are used to help determine planning applications and set out how and where new housing developments should take place, along with identifying the infrastructure needed to support them. They also set out policies on what kind of housing is appropriate and acceptable; what the local requirements for affordable housing are; and can even set requirements on the energy-efficiency levels of new developments.

These are all key themes and aspirations that are addressed in both councils recently adopted new Corporate Plans, which set out their visions for their districts. Both councils have also committed to do everything they can to address the climate and ecological emergency, and officers advised that the consensus on these issues makes this a rare opportunity to create a joint Local Plan.

The reports set out the advantages and disadvantages of a joint plan. The advantages include the planning issues in the two districts are quite similar, like the need for carbon reduction, affordable housing and new and improved infrastructure, and so a joint plan would be able to address these issues in a co-ordinated way.

A joint plan would also benefit the residents of Didcot where the boundary separating the two districts runs through the town. Under the current arrangement, on some roads, development on one side of the street is covered by South planning policies, while development on the other side must abide by Vale policies.

There will also be cost-savings by producing one plan for both districts because there would be one set of evidence studies, one local plan examination and one Planning Inspector not two.

The Councils also approved the timetable for the new Joint Local Plan, which involves public consultation stages in summer 2022 and summer 2023, followed by independent examination, and then adoption in autumn 2024.

More on the White Horse Community Lottery (*See Page 3*)

The lottery will have a weekly jackpot of £25,000 and will be available for residents to play online. The draw will take place every Saturday, with a jackpot going to anybody who matches a sequence of six numbers. The other prizes are £2,000, £250, £25 or three free tickets. The district council will not receive any of the proceeds, although some will go into a central community fund, all of which the council will distribute to good causes in the district's voluntary and community sector. Residents can get involved by buying tickets which will cost £1 per week with 60p going towards the player's chosen local good cause. 20p of the remaining money goes into the central community fund, 17p towards the administration of the lottery, and 3p on VAT. It's a great way for constituted community groups and charities operating in the Vale of White Horse to raise regular core funding, with 60 per cent of ticket sales going to good causes (50 per cent directly to good cause and 10 per cent to the central fund).

Vale Leader's statement on the Expressway project cancellation

The Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council has welcomed [the announcement](#) that the government's proposed Oxford to Cambridge Expressway has been scrapped, calling it a success for local campaigners. The statement by Cllr Emily Smith, Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council is on the [council website](#).

Former Leader of the Vale, Cllr Roger Cox

It's with great sadness that we can confirm that Roger Cox, the former Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council, passed away on Saturday 27th March. He represented his local Faringdon ward for many years and served in a number of different Cabinet positions before becoming leader. It was while he was Leader of the council in 2019 that he announced his retirement and didn't stand at the subsequent election. Cllr Emily Smith, Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council, paid tribute to Roger who preceded her as council leader - read her tribute [here](#).