

Upton News



Vol 5 No.63 October 2021

It is with some sadness but also with some relief that I am able to report that after 115 editions this will be my last edition as editor of your monthly Newssheet. You will be aware that since April of this year I have been keen for a successor to come forward and I am pleased to report that as from next month Neil Thorp will be taking over the editing role.

For those submitting news items will you please send all future items to neilthorp@btinternet.com I am sure Neil will continue to send a reminder of the deadline day to all regular contributors.

I wish Neil every success and trust that the job will give him the same pleasure and satisfaction that it has given to me.

Mike Brown

Church Services

Online Services

Sundays at 10.30am - login or connect at 10.00am to chat before the service.

Weekday evenings - Compline at 8.00pm

Please see the Churn for the service access codes and full details of how to join each week. If you would like to be added to our weekly mailing list, please contact Elaine – Tel: 01235 850267 or office@churnchurches.co.uk

Services at St. Mary the Virgin

10th October—Benefice Climate Sunday, Harvest Festival at 9.30am.

24th October—Bible Sunday, Parish Eucharist at 9.30am.

The Harvest Festival will be a service of thanksgiving not only for our farmers, producers and suppliers but also to those who share so generously. With many in our community continuing to support the local food bank throughout the year, since this custom was started at Harvest Festival last year, all gifts for this year's service will once again be given to the food bank. They are now able to accept fresh produce as well as tinned and preserved food, so surplus garden produce would be very welcome. Please leave all contributions for the service in the church porch.

Following advice from the Diocese, we will continue to encourage people to wear face coverings and to observe social distancing while in church. Communion will be in bread only. Congregational singing will be allowed when it is safe to do so: as the virus spreads via droplets, to be able to sing will depend on the numbers attending and the ability to be socially distant from others.

Parish Council

The Parish Council held a meeting on Tuesday 21st September in the village hall. The next Parish Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday 16th November at 7.30pm also in the village hall. All parishioners are welcome to attend the meetings. The Clerk asks that anyone who wishes to attend makes this known at least 24 hours before the meeting, so that sufficient space can be made for all attendees.

The upkeep of the recreation ground continues to take considerable thought and action. The mowing rota is working well, but all other work has temporarily been taken over by members of the council, led by Ben Shaw. Ben has given a tremendous amount of time of late to ensure that the ground was ready for the summer fete and now other remedial work is taking place. However, the council still needs volunteers to come forward and form a rota for keeping the recreation ground in good order. Please contact the Clerk on Parish.clerk@uptonvillage.co.uk if you can help.

The council is looking at placing a fence round the play areas. Initial quotes run in to thousands of pounds, so considerable thought and planning is required. In the meantime, and one of the reasons why a fence is required, is because people allow their dogs to relieve themselves within the play areas. Dogs are not permitted in the play areas, so please keep them out and clear up after them.

The Parish Council would like to give notice that the gates of the recreation ground will be closed at 9.00pm every night and reopened at 7.00am every morning with effect from Friday 1st October.

If you have any questions for members of the council, would like to become a councillor yourself, or would like to help out within the village, please contact the Clerk on parish.clerk@uptonvillage.co.uk.

Thank you.

Liz Cooper

District Council

Hello! We had a lovely start to September at the fantastic Upton Village Fete, complete with Morris dancing, fun dog show and plenty of tombola prizes. The fete was opened this year by our county councillor Sally Povolotsky, and it was great for the three of us to be out and about in the community together. With the upcoming Blewbury Village Hall opening event and the annual Harwell Footpaths Walk later this month, we're looking forward to plenty more opportunities to catch up with residents in person again after such a long time.

COVID-19 Community Support

A reminder to all residents that the councils' Community Support Hub continues to operate for anyone who needs any assistance, either as a result

of COVID-19 or just for anyone who needs signposting towards the appropriate support channel. There are multiple ways to get in touch with the Community Support Hub:

Call: 01235 422 600 Monday to Thursday 8.30am-5.00pm and Fridays 8.30am-4.30pm

Email: communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk

Online Form: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/communityhub

Website www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/covid19

Residents can also contact:

Citizens Advice - 0808 278 7907

Vale Community Impact - 01235 765348

Remember that the latest Covid figures are updated on the county council's [interactive dashboard](#) on a daily basis. The national change in rules on self-isolation for fully vaccinated people took effect on 16th August. We encourage residents to get tested regularly and, if they feel unwell, book a PCR test, as Covid-19 is still very much around.

Garden Waste Suspension

[use this link for the most recent updates on garden waste](#)

Dear Garden Waste customers,

We regret to inform you that garden waste collections in our districts will remain paused at this time to ensure we can continue to provide core waste collections - rubbish, recycling and food - without major disruptions. The garden waste service was suspended last month due to our contractor, Biffa, struggling with the national shortage of HGV drivers, and during that time we have been working hard to encourage Biffa to find solutions to reinstate the service.

We continue to work closely with our contractor, Biffa, to provide us with further information as to how they propose to reinstate their contracted services as soon as possible. As soon as we are able to, we will update you on when the service will be resumed. Until that time we are asking you to continue to remain patient and thank you for your understanding.

Please could we ask you pass the news onto neighbours, especially those without access to the internet or social media. We are extremely sorry for the inconvenience we know this is causing, and we apologise that this service has fallen beneath the levels you have come to expect. We have asked Biffa to provide options so they can make it up to anybody who doesn't receive the service they should this year.

*In the meantime, if you would like to dispose of your garden waste you can take it to one of Oxfordshire County Council's Household Waste Recycling Centres if you're able - you can check the county council's [website](#) for opening times. **Home Composting** - for more information about home composting and purchasing a reduced rate compost bin please visit [the Oxfordshire County Council website](#).*

Council News

[Party continues to be a success for Didcot Garden Town](#)

[Unique amphitheatre in Chilton finally opens](#)

Full Council: next meeting will be on [Wednesday 6th October at 7.00pm](#)

White Horse Community Lottery: [get your tickets online here](#).

[Business Climate Leaders toolkit](#)

Consultations

[Oxfordshire Plan 2050 Consultation](#) - deadline 8th October

Oxford to Cambridge Arc [consultation](#) and [road study](#)- deadline 12th October.

We will use these monthly updates to keep you updated on our activities, general council news and any COVID-19 developments. We also post regularly on our councillor Facebook Page: [Cllrs Hayleigh Gascoigne & Sarah Medley](#) - please do not hesitate to get in touch with any issues or concerns, either via Facebook message or email:

hayleigh.gascoigne@whitehorsedc.gov.uk and

sarah.medley@whitehorsedc.gov.uk. □□□

Hayleigh and Sarah

Sent in 06/09/21

Upton Village Fete

Over 300 people came from far and wide to Upton recreation ground on the first Saturday in September to enjoy all the fun of the fete.

There were Morris men, gymnasts and a fun dog show in which it seemed that just about every dog in Upton got a prize. An impressive array of classic cars glinted in the occasional flashes of sun and for those with an appetite (and this included almost everyone!) there were burgers, pizzas and fabulous home-made cakes plus, of course, gallons of tea.

Then there was the usual group of stalls including books, preserves, a kids' corner and a tombola of 1001 prizes!

In short, it was a lovely afternoon and many thanks are due to all who helped in so many ways, including putting it all up and taking it down again, looking after the stalls, selling programmes, arranging parking...the list goes on! It was not only a great social occasion but the event raised over £3,300 for the Village Hall and St Mary's Church.

Keep your diaries free for Saturday, 3rd September 2022 when it all happens again!

Paul Batho

Village Produce Association

Well, it looks as though the Indian Summer is over and autumn is well on its way. The date and venue for the VPA Annual General Meeting will be announced in the November issue of the Upton News and Blewbury Bulletin. A notice will also be in the Blewbury Post Office. It doesn't look as though Covid is going away any time soon - so please keep yourselves well and safe. We won't be holding our Christmas Social, given that so many people are still observing social distancing.

Meanwhile, this is the time to start putting the allotments to sleep. It's been a bit harder this year because I've given up trying to compost. The problem is there's not enough variety and mixture of vegetation to help with the composting and it therefore takes a long long time to decompose. The problem is it also becomes a nesting site for rats (not my favourite rodent). We all know that rats are commonplace on allotment sites but I do try to keep them away from my plots.

Despite the strange weather pattern we had this season, the allotment has provided some pretty good produce. Unfortunately, the tomatoes were hit with blight but I had managed to pick some green ones beforehand and made a few jars of tomato chutney. Surprisingly the potatoes were not affected. I have dug up four rows of potatoes this weekend (last weekend of September) and was delighted at the size and quality - if I store them properly I should have enough to see me through the winter. I have three more rows to dig - the ground is so hard because of lack of rain it's taking longer than usual.

I have a bit of sad news. Pumpkin, my little white hen was taken ill last month. It was all very sudden - she was very quiet on the Sunday and I put it down to it being because it was one of the very hot days. On the Monday morning she didn't run up to me like she always did and I could see that she was having a problem breathing. I took her to the vet and was given the news that Pumpkin had a respiratory infection and there was nothing they could do for her. She is now in chicken heaven. Fortunately, the other three girls didn't catch it and are all fighting fit. I think they missed her initially but have now settled down as a threesome.

On a happier note, I picked 6lbs of plums off my tree yesterday and will be making some jam when I finish writing this newsletter. They're not Victoria plums and I need to find the label to see what variety they are - the tree is only three years old and this is the best crop I've had.

I'm hoping the weather holds so I can put the plots to bed before it gets really wet - the soil is clay so you can probably imagine what it's like!

DID YOU KNOW? *Blackcurrants contain more than four times as much vitamin C as oranges and Dried Figs contain about 60 percent sugar, making them an excellent energy snack.*

Happy Gardening - Keep Safe

Eileen

Rector's Note



Offering a Prayer on 13th October

Most days of the year are associated with a particular saint. The official saints of the Church are a curious mix of men and women from different countries and cultures. Few Saints have lived perfect lives, and many Saints have been controversial figures. But there has been something about their lives which the Church has felt to be worth celebrating.

An interesting case in point is St Edward the Confessor. Edward was King of England between 1042 and his death in 1066. He developed a reputation for holiness during his own lifetime, and some hundred years later the Pope gave him the official status of a Saint. His body was placed in a magnificent shrine in Westminster Abbey; the shrine was despoiled at the Reformation, but it has been subsequently restored, and is a splendid sight. Perhaps you have seen the shrine for yourself, on a visit to Westminster Abbey.

I'm writing about St Edward in part because it is his Saint's day on 13th October. But I'm also writing about St Edward because I'm thinking of our royal family today. What do we want from our Monarchy? Do we want members of the Royal Family to behave in different ways from the rest of us? Would we be happy if our Monarch developed such a reputation for holiness that people started to regard them as a Saint?

Edward was regarded as a Saint in part because he made himself available to his subjects, and he was also generous to the poor. Well, that was back in the 11th century, and the world was a very different place. It was a society which seems to have taken the existence of Kingship and aristocratic privilege for granted. We are a much more democratic society, and we tend to want our leaders to have earned their place on merit, rather than by accident of birth. Of course we are very fortunate in our country at present, in that our Monarch is a truly remarkable woman, who would be exceptionally well-qualified to be our Queen on merit alone. It is hard to imagine anyone else who would be able to carry out her roles and duties to a similar level of competence.

Whether we approve of the idea of Monarchy or not, I think we could all agree that our Queen deserves our respect and our support.

I wonder how we might best support our Queen? And how might we best pray for her, and for her family?

Father Jason

<div data-bbox="120 116 176 164"></div> <div data-bbox="266 108 381 135">Foot Care</div> <div data-bbox="474 116 530 164"></div> <p>A Mobile Foot Clinic for Upton</p> <p>Treatment provided in your own home for Routine Foot and Nail Care Toenail Trimming Corn and Callous Removal Diabetic Foot Care</p> <p>Contact Jill Allen DipFh MCFHP MAFHP Foot Health Practitioner 07767763441 or 01235 815917</p>	<div data-bbox="583 100 650 196"></div> <div data-bbox="721 108 871 135">Gary Cuddon</div> <div data-bbox="941 100 1009 196"></div> <p>9 Harwood Road East Hagbourne Painter and Decorator</p> <p>Providing a High Quality Service Free Quotations Fully Insured</p> <p>Tel. 01235 510680 or 07827752904</p>
<p>Scotlands Ash Garage</p> <p>Main Street West Hagbourne Oxford's award winning local Independent Garage</p> <p>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</p> <p>enquiries@scotlandsashgarage.co.uk</p>	<div data-bbox="642 443 941 539"></div> <div data-bbox="583 528 650 608"></div> <div data-bbox="922 528 990 608"></div> <p>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</p> <p>The Nurseries, London Road, Blewbury 01235 850352</p> <p>shop@savagesblewbury.co.uk</p>
<p>LJD Bell Plumbing & Heating Services</p> <p>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</p> <p>ljd-bell-plumbing-heating@outlook.com</p>	<div data-bbox="586 818 661 906"></div> <div data-bbox="751 818 841 845">N Drum</div> <div data-bbox="930 818 1005 906"></div> <p>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</p> <p>Tel. 01235 859229 or 07922701634</p> <p>ndrumlandscaping@gmail.com</p>

Drop In

The village Drop In is up and running again on alternate Thursdays at 3.00pm. It is open to all villagers so 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 and to find out the venue for the meetings which this month are on the 7th and the 21st.

Richard Burrow

Wine Club

15th September marked the beginning of the Wine Club year with 36 members signing up for the evening, which kicked off with the AGM. Our Chairman Ian gave thanks to Ros Caffyn who has resigned from the committee (albeit she will continue to assist), and Brian Rippon was voted on.

The theme of the evening was blended wines, and members were treated during the AGM to a glass of Pinord Seleccion Brut Cava (Xarello, Macabeo and Parellada grapes), a light sparkling with refreshing citrus notes.

The first wine was an interesting and popular Italian white from Puglia, a Paolo Leo 'Renée Bianco Organic' by Majestic. A blend of Chardonnay, Fiano and Sauvignon Blanc, the tropical fruit notes made it a good summer drinking wine. We followed with a Portuguese Selected Harvest White, available from Majestic or Strictly Wine, from the Santo Isidro de Pegões cooperative on the Setúbal peninsula near Lisbon - good with food, a full flavoured wine with aromas of orange blossom and fresh fruits which worked in harmony with the oak spice. This pushed the blends to the limits with no fewer than five varieties, Fernão Pires, Antão Vaz, Verdelho, Arinto and Chardonnay.

The final white, also from Majestic, was the St Cosme 'Micro Cosme' Sauvignon-Viognier from the Rhône valley - aromatic and refreshing, with notes of apricot, lychee, grapefruit and mango.

The reds started with a wine found in most of the supermarkets, on offer at £7. '19 Crimes Red' by Treasury Wine Estates topped the list in a recent survey as the UK's favourite supermarket wine, also the UK's number one millennial wine brand. "It's a taste you'll never forget", says the website, and some members agreed, preferring a little less sugar in their wine. Members heard about the app which brings the label to life when you point your phone at the bottle; the cash prizes for finding special corks, and the pop-up 19 Crimes tattoo parlour in London offering free tattoos...

The tone became a little more serious with a Buzet from Strictly Wine, 'Sans' without added sulphites. A Bordeaux blend of Merlot, Cabernet Franc and Cabernet Sauvignon from south-west France, it represented a good value option to similar Bordeaux wines a bit further down the Garonne river. This was followed by a Strictly Wine Rhône red - an opulent unoaked Grenache/Syrah/ Mourvèdre (GSM) from Domaine Combe Julièrre in Rasteau.

Members then heard about some of the challenges facing the wine industry, including global problems with shipping and haulage not to mention delays with customs clearance. Frost, hail, mildew, and fire damage have resulted in the worst French harvest in 50 years, while the New Zealand Sauvignon Blanc harvest is 20-30% down at the same time as global demand has dramatically increased. In consequence this most popular of wine varieties will become more expensive and harder to find in the coming months.

The evening finished with a lovely Ribera del Duero Reserva (also Majestic) from the Bardos winery. This is a high altitude blend of Tempranillo and Cabernet Sauvignon, with complex notes of dark fruit, chocolate and vanilla spice, a perfect end to a most enjoyable evening.

You can find details of future meetings and membership at www.uptonwineclub.com.

Ian Langley

Astons Online

National Get On-line Week 18th - 24th October

Astons Online is hosting three Zoom events, all at 10:30am to 11:15am; book a place by emailing theastonsonline@gmail.com. See www.astonsonline.uk for more information.

Tuesday 19th October is about Dropbox, iCloud, One Drive, Google Drive and other cloud storages.

Wednesday 20th October is about using the NHS app to support good health and well-being.

Thursday 21st October is about using smartphones safely for shopping, banking and pleasure.

Free and friendly help, as always, for computer users every Tuesday morning from 10:00am to 12:00 noon. 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.

More Church Services

Pram Service

The MU Pram Service team invite families from across the Benefice to this monthly event which this month will be held on Wednesday 6th October at 12.00 noon, outside St. Michael's Blewbury, in church if wet. Please bring a rug. Lunch will be provided. Any enquiries, please contact Revd Louise Butler 07837 009 730. Looking forward to seeing you.

All Souls Service

A Remembrance Service will take place at St Andrew's Church Hagbourne on October 31st at 4.00pm. All are welcome at this service, which includes the lighting of commemorative candles and reading out of names of those to be remembered. Anyone who would like to have a loved one remembered at this service is invited to let Elaine de Ridder in the Benefice Office (Tel: 01235 850267 or office@churnchurches.co.uk) know if they wish to add name(s) to the list.

Upton Nature Garden

Over the weekend of 25-26th September we started the landscaping work on the nature garden site. The grass was removed to leave earth for the woodland shrubs, perennials, and native ground cover. The massive concrete foundations from the old playground equipment were dug up and removed from site. Smaller hardcore has been retained to form the base for the seating area and some paths. Some of the rubber matting from the slide area was also re-purposed as path base.

There are two sets of trenches where hedges will be planted. One hedge is between the meadow (bus stop) end and the seating area, and the other is the new boundary behind the village hall. NB there will be a gate in the hedge there too, even though the trench is continuous for now. The big pile of wood chippings next to the nature garden site will be used as toppings for the paths through the woodland area

So, what is the plan?

The Upton Nature Garden project aims to create a haven for wildlife and people that is a focal point for community activities involving biodiversity and the environment. Walk through the woodland glades; spot insects, fungi, flowers, birds and the tracks of small animals. Sit and relax whilst youngsters try out the log trail and babies enjoy the flickering sunlight through the leaves and branches. Enjoy the wildflower meadow spectacle in summer.

Inside the nature garden site, we already have

- Mature copper beech, horse chestnut and field maple

- Well shaded bank with hazel, willow and hedgerow beech

- An area that has been dog excrement free for many years

Oxfordshire Conservation Charity recommended we plant blossom and berry bearing bushes, shrubs, and wildflowers; that we renovate the hedge along the roadside; and that we include boundary hedges that have edible fruit for birds (and people) to eat.

The final garden design has three areas that wrap around the village hall.

(1) In the **Forest Sub-Canopy** there are native shrubs and woodland bulbs around the perimeter, and perennials and ground cover over a mound in the centre. The winding paths and log trail loop around the trees, and log piles and dead hedges return nutrients and encourage fungi, bugs, and insects.

(2) The **Open Glade**, where the slide used to be, is bounded by new native hedge for seclusion. Part of the existing concrete base has been re-used for the seating area, which is surrounded by flowers and berry bearing shrubs. There will be shallow rooted plants near the hall and two clusters of fruit trees between the seats and the road.

(3) In the sunniest part of the garden nearest the bus stop, in the **Meadow**, there are wide mown paths for pushchair and wheelchair access, and a wide

variety of meadow flowers to support pollinators like queen bumblebees who need that early nectar for the energy to find a nest site.

The garden will develop over the next few years and increase in interest as the plants grow and the wildlife moves in. There are information posters about the planned work schedule and design pinned to the boundary fences. More information and pictures on nature-garden.co.uk

Didcot U3A

We are back ! The Didcot & District u3a is part of a National organisation for those individuals who are retired or semi-retired and wish to 'Live, Learn and Laugh', providing numerous self-help interest groups that range from gardening, walking, wine appreciation, learn a language, etc, and we are pleased to confirm 'live' monthly meetings are currently being held at the Great Western Park District Community Centre, Gentian Mews, OX11 6GR at 2:30:pm, on the third Tuesday of every month.

In addition to meeting with like minded individuals, the monthly meetings also benefit from a visiting Guest Speaker presenting numerous fascinating topics, the next three months are:

19th October - 'Beer, sausages and marmalade: food, drink, politics and tourism in 19th Century Oxford' - speaker Liz Woolley

16th November - 'Pop on the Box: 50 years of music on the TV' - speaker Jeff Evans

21st December - 'Rocking around the Christmas Tree' - speaker Fiona Harrison

So, we look forward to welcoming back returning members and extending a Warm Welcome to newcomers who wish to find out what u3a is in their local area.

(Please arrive 15 minutes early to allow for entry and seating in accordance with current Covid regulations!)

For further details or information contact the following:

Chair - chairman@didcotu3a.org

Secretary - secretary@didcotu3a.org

Membership - membership@didcotu3a.org

Remember u3a is for those who wish to 'Live, Learn and Laugh!' . . . look forward to seeing you there!

Submissions for Upton News should be sent to
neilthorp@btinternet.com

Deadline for the November edition is
Thursday 28th October