

Upton News



September 2023

UPTON VILLAGE FETE – 2ND SEPTEMBER 2023



Everyone is welcome!
Upton Village Fete
Saturday, 2nd September 12:00 - 3:00
Village Recreation Ground



- Gymnastics Display
- Morris dancing
- Fun dog show - ALL dogs are welcome!
- Blewbury Brass Band
- Classic car display
- BBQ 12:00 - 2:00
- Wonderful teas 1:00 - 3:00
 - Ice creams
 - Pimm's Bar
- Second-hand books and jigsaws
 - Fair Trade goods
 - Plants for the garden
 - Home-made preserves

PLUS: Blewbury PTA Kids' Zone, Tombola, Raffle with CASH prize and much, much more!

Can you help? We really need...



- Secondhand books and jigsaw donations - please leave in the church porch
- Tombola/Raffle Prizes of Bottles/Jars, Chocolates and unwanted gifts - Midway, Prospect Road
- We are always grateful to have a wonderful supply of home-made cakes from the many talented bakers in the village. Please bring your donation to the Village Hall on the morning of Saturday 2nd September



Putting up and dismantling



- Can you help set-up from 9:00am and dismantle from 3:00pm?
Please drop a line to Paul pjsbatho@btinternet.com or call 01235 851251

STOP PRESS - Cakes can also be dropped by arrangement on Friday evening to Rosemary please call 07802 796560

Services at St. Mary the Virgin, Upton

You are always welcome to enter the church even if the service has commenced!

Prayer Focus

3rd September

Trinity 13

9.15 Lay-led service

Treasurers & church finances

10th September

Trinity 14

9.15 Parish Eucharist

Sidesmen, those who help with hospitality & catering.

Flower arrangers

24th September

Trinity 16

9.15 HARVEST FESTIVAL

Outreach & Parish

magazines

For details of on-line services and contact information for clergy and staff please see the March copy of the Upton News (always available on the village web site) or contact Elaine on 01235 850267 or at office@churnchurches.co.uk

What is School for?

For many people, September is a significant month because it marks the start of the new school year. It can be an exciting time, but it can also be a time of some anxiety: will the children settle in their new class or new school? Will they get on with their new teacher? Will they find it easy to make new friends?



We are very fortunate in our country to have access to an excellent education system. Most of the schools in our country are pretty good and some are absolutely outstanding. We are fortunate to have three excellent primary schools serving the villages of the Benefice: Blewbury Church of England Primary School; Hagbourne Church of England Primary School; and South Moreton Primary School. And once children have left primary school, there are many excellent local Secondary Schools to choose from.

We take the provision of schools for granted, but seldom ask ourselves the question: what are schools for? In other words, what is the aim of our education system?

The Government view is that education is basically about providing children with the skills they need to enter the work force and to lead economically productive lives. In short, the Government's focus is on education as preparing children for the world of work. This is, of course, important.

But there are other ways of looking at the purpose of education. For example we can focus on the idea of human flourishing: helping children to grow into adults who are able to live a fulfilled and meaningful life. This means that we need to learn how to look after our physical and mental health, to form strong relationships, and to contribute to the well-being of our communities.

Another approach focusses on education as sowing the seeds of effective citizenship: helping children grow into adults who have the skills and the willingness to exercise their vote in a responsible manner, and to contribute actively to the political life of the country, at local and national level.

You may be interested to know that the Church of England takes the view that education is basically about human flourishing: giving every child the skills and experiences they need to enable them to flourish, regardless of what they happen to believe and regardless of their contribution to the economic system.

I wonder if you would agree?

Father Jason

NEW PARENT AT BLEWBURY SCHOOL?

Parents - to help you have a good experience on that first day of school, you are invited to **REST-A-WHILE** after you have dropped your children off at Blewbury School on Tuesday 5th September. The Vale Room, Blewbury Village Hall will be open from 8.30am - 10am for you to chat with others in the same situation and have some refreshment. There will be an area where younger children can play. Organised by the local Mothers' Union which supports families. Any queries, contact Louise 07837 009730

Council News

Update from Vale of White Horse District Councillors Cllr Hayleigh Gascoigne and Cllr Debra Dewhurst

It was great to see Western Valley Parish Council formed and attend their parish council meeting. We were also able to attend Upton and Chilton Parish Council meetings. Understandably, all parish councils were keen for an update on the Great Western Park GP surgery. As mentioned in our last report, on 23rd June, a report came to the Vale of White Horse council cabinet meeting regarding the surgery. The details of the paper cannot be shared at this time due to commercial confidentiality, however, we can share that legal negotiations are ongoing between all parties involved and the project is progressing. We will continue to push for further communication as we know this is a deep concern for residents.



Council News

£155k of longer-term funding for vital information and advice services: Organisations based in the Vale of White Horse who provide vital information, advice and outreach services in the areas of debt, employment, finance, housing, energy, family, law and courts, immigration and health can now apply for up to five years of funding, thanks to a new grant scheme. See the Vale website for more information.

Cash boost for rural economy across districts: South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse district councils have secured more than £1m funding from the government's Rural England Prosperity Fund, which can be used to provide a boost to projects such as creating rural business hubs, setting up community energy schemes and diversifying farm businesses beyond agriculture. They are now asking for Expressions of interest to understand which organisations might apply and for what type of project. See the Vale website for more information.

Have your say on the plans for the new council HQ: A new building that will kickstart the revitalisation of Didcot Gateway is now one step closer, with updated images of the proposed council headquarters released. The planning application is now live and open for comments on the South Oxfordshire District Council website (P23/S2621/FUL). The building will be the first step to bring new life into this historically neglected site, providing more confidence for future business investment and making Didcot an even more attractive place to live, work and learn.

We use these monthly updates to keep you updated on our activities and general council news. We also post on our councillor Facebook Pages:
www.facebook.com/CllrHayleigh & www.facebook.com/Debra4BlewburyAndHarwell

Please get in touch with any issues or concerns via email:
hayleigh.gascoigne@whitehorsedc.gov.uk and
debra.dewhurst@whitehorsedc.gov.uk.

Happy Voices Family Choir

A Blewbury based choir for family members of all ages

We already have a few Upton people joining our regular Church choir in Blewbury when there aren't services in Upton. This New Family Choir starts this September for Mums and Dads to bring their children!

Starts Monday 11th September from 6 – 6.45pm

In the Benefice Centre, Blewbury,
for a short time of musical fun.

For more information, contact:

Sharon at sharon.mrsphillips@gmail.com or
Karen at karen.marsden@gmail.com

Upton's Village Hall drop-in

Dates confirmed for the rest of 2023.

Please join us between 10.00- 11.30 for tea, coffee, biscuits and a freshly baked cake! Many of these will be themed suitable for all ages and we welcome any efforts from villagers to make them fun.

- August - Thursday 31st
- September - No drop in as instead we will have a Macmillan special coffee morning on Friday 29th. Please add this to your diary and bake if you can!
- October - Thursday 26th
- November - Thursday 30th
- December (pre-Christmas special) - Thursday 21st

If you have any questions or would like to help out with any of the meets, please feel free to email Nicola Hall - events@uptonvillagehall.co.uk

Didcot & District u3a

Meeting on the **third Tuesday of every month** in the Didcot Civic Hall at 2:30 pm, this very sociable gathering encourages a whole variety of interest groups. At the monthly meetings, where tea, coffee and biscuits are served, a Guest Speaker provides a presentation on diverse topics which in the coming months include

19 September: *A Brief History of Tattoos and their Meaning* - Janine Kilroe

19 September: *A Brief history of Tattoos and their meaning* - Janine Kilroe

17 October: *George Orwell* - Richard Blair

21 November: *Freda Skene: Oxford writer, prison reformer* - Liz Woolley

19 December: Christmas Event: *Magic Show* with Ian Keable

Chair - chairman@didcotu3a.org

Secretary - Secretary@didcotu3a.org

Additional information can be found on the u3asites.org.Uk

Brian & Lynn Burscough - PR for the Didcot & District u3a

Baby Sitting Service

Are you looking for a reliable and caring babysitter for those late-night outings or for when you just need some time for yourself? Look no further!

I am a 17 year-old with a passion for children and experience in babysitting kids of all ages. With me, you can have peace of mind knowing that your children are in safe hands.



Contact me by email: amelia.thackray@gmail.com or by text: 07718 832079

Astons Online

Astons Online's September round table webinar using Zoom will be Tuesday 5 September 2023 10:30 - 11:15. We'll discuss issues you bring to the meeting as well talking about latest uses for smartphones eg digital train and bus tickets. Book your place at theastonsonline@gmail.com

Astons Online's September in-person event in Astons Village Hall (OX119EQ) will be on Tuesday 19 September from 10:00 to 12:00. Please tell us, if you can, that you're coming to join our round table discussion, what you'd like to talk about and if you'd like a one-to-one meeting. Email us at theastonsonline@gmail.com and see our website www.astonsonline.uk.

Bruno Brunskill (on behalf of Astons Online)

07780 958249

Blewbury Post Office news

Thank you everyone for being so understanding about our 'summer' hours: I had holidays booked, with no extra cover!

Our opening times are back to normal from Monday 4th September, and I'm really hopeful that Sarah will be taking over on Tuesday 12th, if that is the actual day, then we'll be closed until around 10.30/11am, while an auditor goes through everything, and I can retire!

Andrew and I will still be working one day a week each, (our usual hours, Tuesday and Friday) and the other days will be 9-3. I've been told there's a chance of us getting some of the Charlie coronation 50p!

Karen, Andrew and Sarah

Poppy Appeal

After many years, I have now retired from organising the Poppy Collection in Upton, so I am very sorry there will not be a collection in the village this year. If anyone is interested in taking over the role, please contact me on 01235 850031 and I will give you the details of who to contact.

Thank you so much to all the collectors who have gone out in all weathers with their collecting tins over the past 35 years, also to all the villagers who have given so generously.

Many thanks to you all,

Helen Weston.

New Photographic Competition

Summer - from now until 30th September.

Three categories -

1. Upton and Surrounding Area.
2. Birds - any kind: sitting, flying, eating and from anywhere.
3. People/Person - at work, play, holiday, family, friends or stranger



Good luck and get snapping!

Entries should be in JPEG format (highest resolution you can manage) and emailed to upton.photo@outlook.com

Rob Traynor



We would like to thank everyone who has generously donated to help local people who have been struggling financially in the current economic climate.

We are pleased to have been able to help an increased number of individuals and families in Blewbury, Upton and the Astons with funds as they found themselves unable to pay for life's essentials. This has led to a considerable decline in our funds and we are therefore reaching out to the local community for help again - any amount would be greatly appreciated and can be donated through our Just Giving page www.justgiving.com/ucab

We thank you very much in advance for your help and if you have any questions, please do get in touch with us by email unitedcharities@outlook.com.

Blewbury WI

Blewbury Women's Institute meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 7.30 pm, normally in the Vale room of Blewbury Village Hall. It is open to women of all ages from Blewbury and surrounding areas.

As well as the monthly meetings with interesting speakers, we organise trips to the theatre, guided walks, lunches, garden visits, coffee mornings and craft workshops. We also have weekly Mah Jong sessions, monthly Scrabble (evenings or afternoons), monthly craft nights and run a book club.

Our next main monthly meeting is on Wednesday 27 September Main at 7.30pm in the Vale Room. We will learn about "Oxford's penicillin". The drug we use today was developed by a group of scientists based in Oxford. We will hear the story of the life-saving work carried out plus the trials and tribulations that the scientists faced and the experiences of the first patients to be treated with penicillin.

We love to have visitors, if you'd like to come along with someone else or find out more, ring our Secretary, Joy, on 850543 or email blewburywi@gmail.com. You will be made so welcome - we all love to meet new friends. So, if you are new to the area or have been here for a while, do come along.

Short Mat Bowls

Quite simply, Short Mat Bowls is a version of outdoor bowls but played indoors, predominantly over the winter months but can be played all year round.



**OXFORDSHIRE SHORT MAT
BOWLS ASSOCIATION**

FREE OPEN DAYS

**HARWELL VILLAGE HALL
OX11 0EX**

**SATURDAY 30TH
SEPTEMBER
2 TO 5.30PM**

**MONDAY 2ND
OCTOBER
7.30 TO 9.30PM**

JUST TURN UP!

**Great for wellbeing
Easy to learn**

**Please contact
harwellsmbc@gmail.com
for further information**

**OXFORDSHIRE SHORT MAT
BOWLING ASSOCIATION**

In Upton village hall we have all the equipment required and a group play socially on three Wednesday evenings each month.

If you are looking for an evening fun activity then please come and join us from September, I am a qualified bowls coach and Umpire and will help you get started and to improve your game.

For more information, please contact Mike Weston -07706 795950 or Joan Durbin - 850035

Short Mat Bowls is a competitive game played Nationally and Internationally and although we just play for fun on our Wednesday evenings, several of us play for Harwell in the Oxfordshire Leagues, with some progressing on to County and National Competitions. Harwell is also looking for new members and the club is holding some Open Sessions later this year, the attached poster has the dates and details. Again, contact Mike on 07706 795950 for more information.



HELP WITH ESSENTIAL LIVING COSTS

We are a local charity which supports people living in Blewbury, the Astons and Upton who are unable to meet essential living costs. If you are struggling to pay for essential items such as food, energy or school clothing and equipment for the new term we can provide modest one off payments to help you, or someone you know in need.

To apply there is a short application form to complete which can be picked up from St Mary's Church porch, Blewbury Post Office, or requested by email to unitedcharities@outlook.com. We can help you fill in the form if needed. All applications are assessed on an individual basis but, as our funds are limited, we give priority to those in receipt of benefits such as Universal Credit, Tax Credits and Pension Credit or those who have extenuating circumstances such as ill health or vulnerability. Please don't be reluctant to ask for help, all applications are dealt with confidentially.

United Charities of the Ancient Parish of Blewbury Registered Charity No: 203538

Afternoon Drop In

A village drop-in runs on alternate Thursdays at various villagers' and ex-villagers' houses from 3-5.00. 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.

Richard Burrow

Contributions for Upton News

For those submitting news items, will you please send them to me at neilthorp@btinternet.com.

A few days beforehand I will send a reminder of the deadline day to all regular contributors but early submission will always be welcome. Anything received past the deadline (usually 28th of the month) may NOT be included - if this causes a problem please contact me.

Neil Thorp, Editor