



Upton News

September 2024

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Note to contributors

Contributions to Upton News are always very welcome. Please include your name, address and contact details (email and/or phone number) in case clarification is needed: we will not be able to publish your contribution without these details. The editor reserves the right to place, edit, shorten or omit contributions as required.

Please send your contributions by email to:

uptonox11news@gmail.com

The deadline for the October 2024 issue is 26th September 2024

The month ahead

Village calendar

Mon	Tues	Weds	Thurs	Fri	Sat	Sun
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
						△ ●
2 ● ●	3 ●	4	5 ●	6 ●	7 ●	8 ▲ ●
9 ● ●	10 ● ●	11 ●	12 ● ●	13 ●	14 ●	15 ▲ ●
16 ● ●	17 ● ●	18 ● ●	19 ● ●	20 ●	21 ●	22 ▲ ●
23 ● ●	24 ● ● ●	25 ● ●	26 ● ●	27 ● ●	28 ●	29 ●
30 ● ●	1	2	3	4	5	6

Village Hall

- Parish Council
- Village Fete
- Uptonogood
- Wine club
- Brownies
- Village drop-in
- Style Acre Turnstile
- Yoga
- Karate
- Dog training
- Kinetic gymnastics
- Tea Birds WI

St Mary's Church

- ▲ Parish Eucharist
- △ Lay-led service
- ▲ Other service

Waste collection

- Black bin
- Green bin + Brown bin
- Green bin + Brown bin + extra garden waste

For details of events at the Village Hall please see [here](#):

For details of services at St Mary's Church, please see [here](#):

Sunrise, sunset & twilight



Village News

St Mary's Church

Service times

Date	Time	Type	Prayer focus
1 st September	9:15 am	Lay-led service	Children Our schools Sunday clubs
8 th September	9:15 am	Parish Eucharist	Treasurers Church finances
15 th September	3:00 pm	Celebration of Harvest, followed by tea	Sidesmen Those who help with hospitality & catering. Flower arrangers
22 nd September	9:15 am	Parish Eucharist	Pastoral care & visiting

The online services continue every Sunday at 10.30am. Login after 10.00 to chat beforehand or to check your technology. Please click [here](#) to access the Churn Churches website which gives the log-in details.

Father Jason writes

During the months of September and October, many, if not most, churches up and down the land will be celebrating a Harvest Festival. Harvest Festivals are a wonderful opportunity to remember all who are involved in growing, transporting and processing the food we eat. So often we take our farmers for granted. A Harvest festival reminds us that we are all dependent on the skill and hard work of farmers, in this country and around the world.

It is not always easy to be a farmer, and I would like to draw attention to three particular charities who work to support our farming communities. The first charity I would like to mention is the

Royal Agricultural Benevolent Institution (RABI), founded back in 1860. This charity provides a wide range of support to farming people – the support provided might be financial, practical or emotional, depending on the particular need. It is an excellent organisation.

Another excellent organisation is The Farming Community Network. This was founded in 1995, and was originally called The Farm Crisis Network. In common with RABI, the Farm Community Network provides a wide variety of help, covering matters relating to farming, business, health and family.

Finally, let me mention the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (“CPRE”). CPRE covers a wide range of issues relating to the countryside, including farming. It sometimes advocates a particular approach to a particular issue, and you may agree or disagree with the particular approach which is being promoted. But the key thing is that CPRE is looking at the bigger

picture, and the way that issues are often inter-related. For example, CPRE seeks to address the connection between the future of farming in the UK and our desire to care for the environment. It also looks at the provision of affordable housing in rural areas.

If you have a moment, I would encourage you to find out more about the work of these charities. They do so much to support our farmers and our farming communities. We all depend on our farmers for the food we eat. Where would we be without them?

Father Jason

Summer of Hope

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who supported the Summer of Hope Mothers' Union fundraising event on Friday 9th August.

We were blessed with very pleasant weather and a gathering of 35 (helpers included) feasted on tasty scones, jam and cream, enjoyed good conversation and endless cups of tea! Donations are approaching £400, with more to come. How AMAZING. You have generously helped women and girls in the DRC to develop skills in literacy and agriculture, enabling them to become more self sufficient.

Upton Parish Council

As August is, traditionally, a quiet time for all councils, Upton Parish Council did not meet last month. However, there are a few points of interest, outlined below. The next full meeting of the Parish Council will be in the Village Hall on Wednesday 25th September in the small meeting room. All are welcome to attend but, if possible, please advise the Parish Clerk in advance.

The football training that has been taking place on the recreation ground on Tuesday and Friday evenings will now only be held on Fridays. The concerns over parking in the Village Hall car park spreading out onto the street have been acknowledged and positive communications have taken place to improve the situation.

On a related note, the team that have been using the Recreation Ground for football training during the summer months are hoping to continue during the winter. To do this they would like to use mobile floodlights once or twice a week which would be assembled for each session. They would be used for one hour on each session and stored away again at the end. The club are applying for a grant to buy the lights which may take some time. If anyone has any comments about this proposal, could they please forward them for the attention of the Parish Council (contact details below)

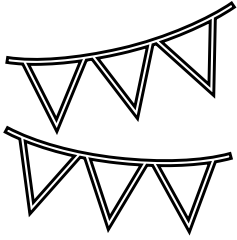
The flash flooding that was experienced earlier in the month is recognised as becoming an increasing issue. Managing this is officially a County Council concern but it will also be raised at the next Parish Council Meeting.

The Council would like to invite comments from all villagers on any matter with which they have concern. These should be sent to parish.clerk@uptonvillage.co.uk

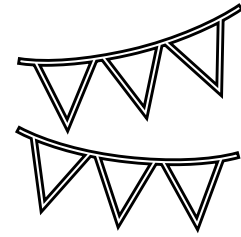
Upton Wine Club

This season will be the Wine Club's 20th anniversary, and it continues to represent a core part of our village. The season starts at 8pm on 18th September with the usual formalities of an AGM but will quickly move on to our first theme, busting some myths about wine. We are going to take a light-hearted look at some popular myths about wine and check them out ourselves. Such as... does wine always taste better with age?... Are screw caps inferior to cork?... and is red wine healthier than white?

Membership runs from September to June will be £15 per person; these fees go towards the hire of the hall and subsidising the wine and food we have each month. If you would like to "try before you buy" and/or know someone who would like to come along to the Wine Club and try an evening out before joining, non-members can join us for up to 2 meetings per year by paying a £5 supplement in addition to that month's meeting fees. If you know anyone who might be interested, please do let them know! Further details can be found [here](#).



Upton Village Fete
Saturday, 7th September 12:00 - 3:00
Village Recreation Ground



- Gymnastics Display
- Fun dog show - ALL dogs are welcome!
 - Blewbury Brass Band
 - Classic car display
 - BBQ 12:00 - 2:00
 - Pizzas
 - Wonderful teas 1:00 - 3:00
 - Ice creams
- Bar run by the George at Upton
- Second-hand books and jigsaws
 - Plant stall
 - Special Kids' Zone
 - Tombola
 - Raffle
 - Traditional spinning display
- Craft stalls selling ceramics, soaps & balms, local original artwork

AND NEW THIS YEAR - flower display on the theme 'Flowers from my garden'. Please bring your displays to the hall by 12:00. Judging at 2:00. PRIZES for the best exhibits!

Can you help? We really need...



- Donations of second-hand books, jigsaws, tombola and raffle prizes - please leave in the church porch or at Pottengers, Chilton 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 from 9:00am on Saturday 7th 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 to volunteer

Come and have fun on 7th September!

Local News

Blewbury Players

We hope that everyone has had a great summer. We enjoyed kicking ours off with our 48th summer production at Orchard Dene - The Caucasian Chalk Circle. Thank you everyone involved, from our enthusiastic and engaged audiences to our team, comprised of up to 100 local people, who took part both on and off stage. This was a less familiar play to many, and we were delighted with the positive and congratulatory messages we received. Please visit our [website](#) to see some of the beautiful production photos that Peter Willison took.

We are now planning on something to cheer the winter days in January. Once again there's lots of ways of taking part, both on and off stage. The next production will be Puss in Boots, written and directed by Andy Jarvis. This will be playing 29th January – February 1st, 2025 in Blewbury Village Hall.

Auditions will be held on Saturday 31st August and Sunday 1st September. If you would like to book an audition (including children from Year 6 upwards) please email us at blewburyplayers@gmail.com. If you would like to audition, but can't make these dates, let us know and we'll fit you in at another time. Before you request an audition please read the information on our website (link above) and let us know which Character(s) you would like to read for. If you would like to be considered for any Character please indicate 'Any', but name one preference for the purposes of your audition reading/song. We will provide a song for your Character. You should come prepared to sing one verse and chorus unaccompanied. If you are interested in joining us, please note the following dates:

Read Through - Sunday 29th September

Weekend Rehearsals from November 2nd/3rd with a break over the Christmas period.

If acting is not your strength, then there are lots of other ways to get involved. Experienced or not, we would love to hear from you if you are interested in taking part in one of the following teams: technical roles (light & sound), backstage, rehearsal support, publicity, costume, scenery, front of house etc.

Finally, we will be holding Jeff and Peter's Music Quiz on 9th November 2024 - more news nearer the date. Don't forget to add this to your diary!

Blewbury WI

Blewbury WI generally meet on the 4th Wednesday of the month in the Vale room. We have lots of interesting Speakers and meetings provide a chance to catch up with friends over a glass or two of wine. There are also lots of other things to do over the month, such as the monthly craft club and the book club. We also play Mah Jong weekly and Scrabble and Rummikub monthly. This is on top of a monthly coffee morning and a monthly walk to somewhere interesting – usually involving a pit-stop for coffee. Plus occasional theatre trips and pub lunches – what's not to like? Just join in as much or as little as suits you.

The main meeting in September will be held on Wednesday 25th September. Jane Fletcher will be inspiring us with "Making the most of your possessions in the home for you and others". Inspiration to preserve our memories and perhaps re-purpose those treasured family possessions that we all have tucked away. She will suggest how we might make the most of our 'stuff', namely personal belongings. Following the talks with other groups, she has received some lovely examples of what people have gone on to find, dust down, display and share.

If you'd like to come along to Blewbury WI with someone else or find out more, ring our Secretary, Joy, on 01235-850543 or email blewburywi@gmail.com. New members can join at any time and pay a 'pro-rata' rate for the rest of the year.

Blewbury School

The 2023/24 school year has been another busy and successful year for our School and as part of our commitment to openness and transparency we wish to share with you some of the highlights. The outstanding highlight of the year was of course our very successful OFSTED inspection which took place in May. It was with great pleasure that we received the report confirming our view that the School is overall a good school as well as being outstanding in the Early Years provision. The inspectors were very rigorous, and you can see more information if you read the full report on the OFSTED website or the School website. The School, however, remains ambitious and is continuing on the road for further improvement. Everyone involved continues to work hard to strive for the excellence that the children deserve.

Many individuals from the community have supported the school in a variety of ways. Some have become regular volunteers, listening to children read; helping in the garden; supporting clubs. We wish to thank you all. The School's PTA continues to do an amazing job raising funds for the School through organising a variety of events and our thanks go to them too. In the coming year we are actively planning new initiatives with Sustainable Blewbury, the Blewbury Players and the Blewbury Croquet Club.

We are a Church of England School and our Christian ethos is at the heart of all we do. Our vision is based on the Parable of the Sower (Matthew 13). Our guiding motto is *Nurture, Grow, Flourish*. Our school is place where all belong. Through love we nurture all to grow in their own unique way. We greatly value our links with the Church and the support we receive through being part of ODST (Oxford Diocesan Schools Trust). We are grateful for the support from Canon Jason who is a member of the Board and who leads weekly assemblies. This year a team of volunteers from the Benefice ran a BeSpace initiative which provided all children with a time for prayer and reflection. We know there was a positive response from the children, parents and staff.

At the start of the year the staff were joined by Mr Sam Coleman who took on the role of Assistant Headteacher. He has had a positive impact on the team working extremely effectively with Miss Jo Reeder the headteacher. As well as working as a class teacher he is SENDCO with responsibility for Special needs and has also been further developing the curriculum leaders.

The Governing Board has continued to work diligently throughout the year managing a challenging budgetary situation. We have been joined on the board by Katie Dickens who comes with a wealth of experience and by Sarah Smith who was elected as a parent Governor. We were sad to see Roger Murphy leave us at the end of the academic year. He has been a Governor for 10 years and has supported the School in many ways. We wish him well as he moves away from Blewbury. We are at present recruiting new Governors and hope to have a full complement in September.

At the end of the academic year we said goodbye to a large cohort of year 6 children and we wish them well in their new schools. We currently have spaces in all year groups so should you know anyone moving into the area or looking for a school do tell them about us and point them to our OFSTED report. Miss Reeder is happy to show anyone round if they make an appointment through the school office and they can see for themselves the many strengths of Blewbury School. The dates of our open morning for prospective 2025/26 Reception starters are Tuesday 1st October, Saturday 5th October and Tuesday 8th October.

Ann Parham (Chair of Governors)

United Charities

We are a local charity able to support people living in Blewbury, the Astons and Upton by providing one off payments to help you, or someone you know in need. If you are struggling to pay for food, energy, an essential item or school expenditure such as uniform, equipment and trips, please consider applying for help.

There is a short application form to complete which can be picked up from St Mary's Church porch 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.

Astons Online

Astons Online supports people who want to be digitally confident on the Internet, with smartphone apps or online services like health and banking. Astons Online events and support are free of charge and open to everyone.

The next Zoom webinar, featuring online health and wellbeing, is at 10:00 am on Tuesday 17th September. We'll hear from one of the local GP practices and from our area's Integrated Care Board. Hear what they have to say and ask your questions at free and friendly Astons Online Zoom meeting. See our main [website](#), or click [here](#) to join the meeting. You can also email us at theastonsonline@gmail.com for further details.

We're available for Zoom, Facetime, WhatsApp or telephone one-to-one sessions on Tuesday mornings between 10:00 and 12:00. The next in-person one-to-one session in Astons Village Hall (OX119EQ) is on Tuesday 15th October from 10:00 to 12 noon.

Vale News

VoWH District Council

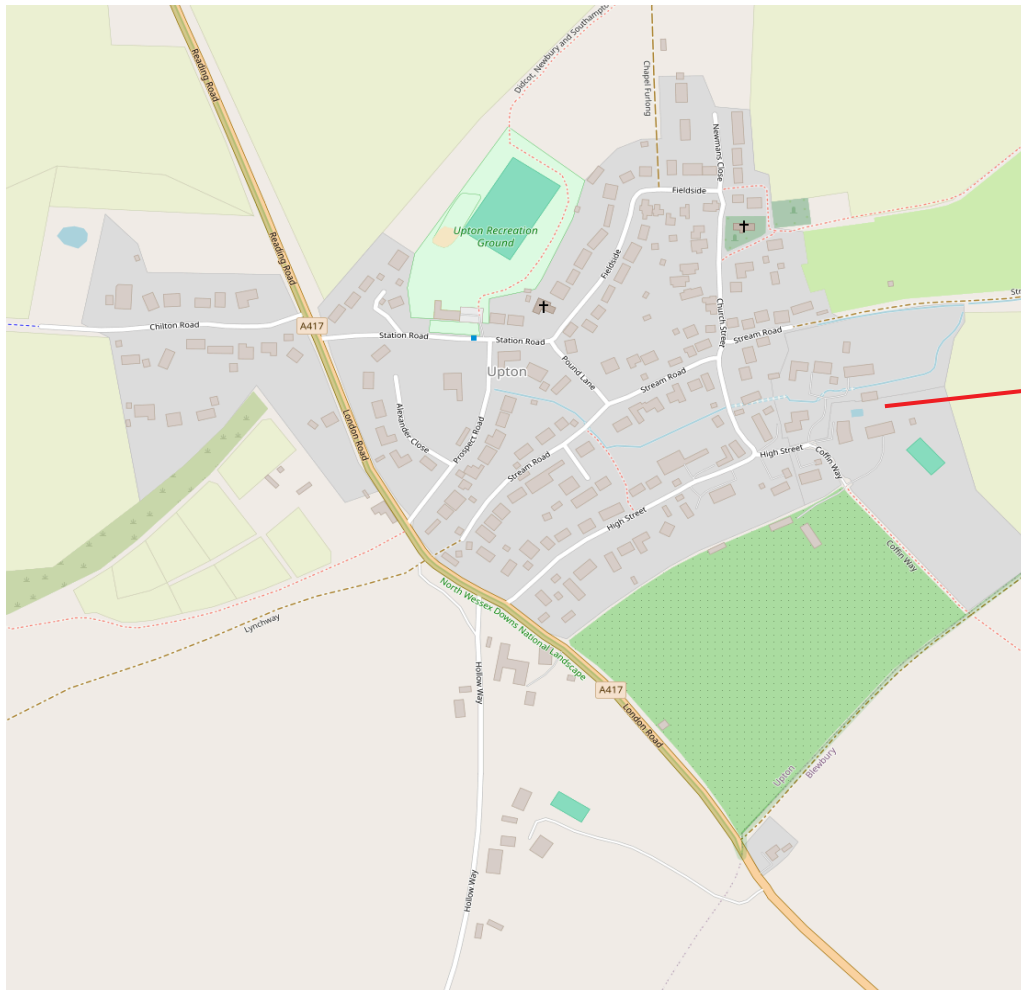
General News

Vale of White Horse District Council submitted its consultation response on Friday 23th August to Thames Water's proposed reservoir for the district. Thames Water launched a public consultation in June on the proposed reservoir and the public had until 28th August to give their views. View the council's consultation response [here](#).

Plans for the controversial reservoir near Abingdon have been criticised by local communities, with Vale of White Horse District Council urging water providers to consider alternative solutions more seriously. At around 6.5 km², the reservoir is now even bigger than originally planned (almost as big as Gatwick Airport) and unprecedented in scale.

The council also reaffirmed its objections to the reservoir in formal letter to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs on 25th July. The letter set out the council's concerns around the proposed reservoir and requested a meeting to discuss the matter further. The council has argued the plans fail to fully consider the long-term impacts to the local community and the environment, both during a decade of construction and the irreparable damage to the countryside. Any reservoir would also come at the expense of significant carbon emissions which the council argues would impact the district's ability to become carbon neutral by 2045.

Current planning applications



[P24/V1119/FUL](#)

The map above shows the location of all planning applications within the parish of Upton that are Current and were registered between 1st January 2020 and 29th August 2024. Details of each application can be obtained by following the hyperlinks on the right-hand side of the map.

Didcot U3A

'Learn, Laugh, Live!' is the aim of the National organisation, now known as u3a, a self-help organisation for retired or semi-retired individuals seeking to keep both body and mind active, make new friends and continue their educational or active pastimes. The Didcot and District u3a has no fewer than 30 Interest Groups ranging from learning a language (currently includes French, German, Spanish, Portuguese), Bridge, photography, walking (long/short walks), ukulele for beginners, wine appreciation, and many more, a full list of which can be found [here](#).

Individuals can find further information by attending the friendly and informal monthly meetings which are held on the Third Tuesday of every Month in the Didcot Civic Hall, Britwell Road, Didcot, OX11 7JN starting at 2:30 pm. All visitors will be warmly welcomed by 'meeters and greeters'. Meetings generally consist of monthly u3a activity updates by the Chair, a presentation from a Guest Speaker, followed by the opportunity to enjoy a chat with fellow members over tea and biscuits and see what Interest Groups might be suitable for you - all new members are most warmly welcomed!

The Autumn 2024 programme includes:

- 17 Sep Andrew Carnegie: The World's Richest Man - From Rags to Riches, giving it all away.
Speaker: Jeremy Holmes
- 15 Oct Morris Minors in the Media
Speakers: Ann & John Ford
- 19 Nov The Ridgeway; The Oldest Road
Speaker: Russell Cherry

If this is something you have been looking for in retirement we look forward to seeing you there, and remember the Didcot & District u3a enables you to 'Learn, Laugh, Live!'

AFC Didcot

Our team name is AFC Didcot. We are currently training youth football at Upton and it would be nice to have some local children playing in our teams in the future. We have teams at U7, U9, U10, U11 and U12 ages and are trying to create more teams.

We play on Saturdays for boys and Sundays for girls, and train on Tuesdays and Fridays. Friday training takes place at Upton until the end of September when it moves to an artificial pitch. Matches will be Saturdays and Sundays again at Upton but these haven't been scheduled yet.

For further details, please contact Ashleigh at Ash_football_development@hotmail.com.

Useful contacts

Contact	Telephone	email
<i>Upton News</i>		
Upton News Editor	n/a	uptonox11news@gmail.com
<i>Churn Benefice</i>		
Father Jason St. John Nicolle	01235 850267	office@churnchurches.co.uk
Revd Louise Butler	07837 009730	revlouiseb@aol.com
Revd John Clarke	01235 510073	jphclarke@gmail.com
Revd Dr Mark Rhodes-Smith	01235 850267	mark.rhodes-smith@churnchurches.co.uk
Elaine de Ridder	01235 850267	office@churnchurches.co.uk
<i>Parish Council</i>		
Chair	n/a	bens@uptonpc.co.uk
Clerk	n/a	parish.clerk@uptonvillage.co.uk
<i>VoWH District Councillors</i>		
Hayleigh Gascoigne	n/a	hayleigh.gascoigne@whitehorsedc.gov.uk
Debra Dewhurst	n/a	debra.dewhurst@whitehorsedc.gov.uk
<i>Afternoon Drop In</i>		
Richard Burrow	n/a	richmondbinov@gmail.com
<i>Astons Online</i>		
Bruno Brunskill	07780 958249	theastonsonline@gmail.com
<i>United Charities</i>		
Main contact	n/a	unitedcharities@outlook.com
<i>Blewbury WI</i>		
Joy	01235 850543	blewburywi@gmail.com
<i>Didcot U3A</i>		
Chair	n/a	chair@didcotu3a.org
Secretary	n/a	secretary@didcotu3a.org