

The Harwell News

www.harwellparish.co.uk

Harwell Plastic Pollution

by Year 5, Harwell Primary School



Since the great debate around climate change, there has been raging controversy on how bad plastic is for the environment. Plastic is a material that can be moulded when soft and has become extremely useful. However, some people are concerned about how plastic is affecting our environment.

Firstly, **plastic is bad for the environment** as it releases greenhouse gases when it is burned. Plastic is a petroleum-based material which releases climate pollution. This has resulted in **rising sea levels**, increased ocean and air toxicity and **destruction of coral reefs**. Therefore, some people insist on the banning of plastics as it is quickly damaging our planet.

Furthermore, plastic is often causing harm to animals and their habitats. Every minute one garbage truck full of plastic is **dumped into the sea**. Often, animals can consume this plastic, get trapped on plastic or even worse small animals can get **trapped inside plastic**. Moreover, this highlights how detrimental plastic can be to not only sea life animals, but all wildlife.

We are Year 5 pupils from Harwell Primary School, this term we have been trying our best to recycle and reuse plastic. In the last few weeks we have created a **plastic painting picture** (above), created sea life creatures from recycled plastic and made our own biodegradable plastic. We have also done a **litter pick** around Harwell (top right), what was good is that we found **less plastic than expected!** However, we found smaller decomposed pieces which means they are **more dangerous**. This term has taught us to be a lot more cautious about our use of plastic and how we can help reduce it.

To conclude, is it clear we need to be more careful about our use of plastic. It is harmful to not only animals, but our whole planet. We hope to be recycling a lot more at Harwell Primary School and hope this article inspires Harwell.



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Hello from Hayleigh and Sarah - Coronavirus Update from your Local District Councillors, Friday 27th March 2020



Hello! We hope that all residents are managing to stay safe and well during these unprecedented times of the coronavirus outbreak. Over the coming weeks, there will likely be further challenges, but we are confident that as a community we can pull together and look out for one another to get through the difficult times ahead.

It has already been very heartening to see that all the communities we represent have had dozens of volunteers offering to help vulnerable neighbours, and that each area is starting to officially organise and co-ordinate these volunteer efforts. Thank you so much to everyone involved in these groups: Blewbury Good Neighbours, Harwell Helpers, Chilton Mutual Aid, Great Western Park Community Support and the Upton village WhatsApp

group.

The situation around the coronavirus outbreak is changing daily, and there is a lot of information coming through from various sources about how this affects aspects of our lives. With that in mind, we have put together this round-up of all the recent news from the Vale of White Horse District Council relating to how council services are affected, and how the council is supporting community volunteer groups and vulnerable residents.

Further updates will be posted on our councillor Facebook Page: Cllrs Hayleigh Gascoigne & Sarah Medley, and on the Vale of White Horse Facebook and Twitter accounts. However, **for the most up-to-date information** on how the district council's services are affected, please take a look at the dedicated Vale webpage for updates:

<http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/news-events/coronavirus-covid-19-information>

Shielding our most vulnerable – new support lines for those who need help

Local authorities across Oxfordshire have worked with the local Voluntary and Community Sector to develop a simple point of contact for those who have been told by government that they have been identified as extremely vulnerable, and who have no support network and would otherwise be completely isolated. This new, dedicated support line will provide our extremely vulnerable residents access to a central team who will be able to offer advice on a range of issues.

If you or someone you know has been identified as extremely vulnerable by the NHS and have nobody around to help with day to day tasks like shopping, please call 01865 897820 or email shield@oxfordshire.gov.uk.

Anyone in this situation that is **not** considered high risk can call **01235 422600** or email communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk. These support lines are open 8.30am to 8pm Monday to Friday and 9am to 5pm on Saturday and Sundays.

Volunteering for the coronavirus community support efforts

We recognise that many of you who can, would like to support your local communities during these challenging times, whether that's delivering essentials, putting the bins out for someone, or being on the other end of a phone. To ensure that residents know where to turn, all community groups, community organisations and local businesses are being asked to include details of their initiatives on the **Oxfordshire All In Response Map**: <https://www.oxfordshireallin.org/local-support-groups>.

Council Services - General update

Due to the ongoing public health risk from the virus, the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire district councils have closed their offices to the public. Residents can continue to access information about council services, and make payments, or make an application or a report via the council website:

www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/. The councils' phone lines will remain open, but anybody that needs to contact council staff is encouraged to **go online first or use email** as this is likely to be quicker and will help the councils respond to those most in need first, during a difficult time. Anybody with an appointment at the council building from Monday 30 March onwards should contact the relevant team if they haven't been in touch already.

Council Meetings and events - as a precaution, the following have been postponed:

- All formal council meetings and committees have been cancelled until the end of April.
- South and Vale Business Awards will now take place in the autumn.
- The Police and Crime Commissioner Election has been postponed and will now take place in 2021.
- Community sports activities for the over 60s that are part of our "Go Active Gold" programme and activities run for those with diabetes have been cancelled.

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Online payment are also welcome.

Other services include: Conservatory roof cleaning • Fascias cleaning, Gutters Unblocked & Cleaned out

Waste collections

Most waste collections are running normally. Our waste contractor, Biffa, has suffered some staff shortages due to illness and self-isolation and so some bins might not be emptied on their usual collection day. Critical waste services are being prioritised, so we will not be taking on new customers for the Garden Waste Service until further notice

The advice for residents is as follows: if the bins in your street are not emptied, please leave them out for **up to three days** (including weekends) and we'll try to catch up. If still not emptied, bring them back in and we will empty them on the next planned collection day. We're also recommending **residents wash their hands before and after taking the bins out** to practice good hygiene for themselves and our bin crews.

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Email: sue.gaskell@hotmail.com
Harwell, Oxfordshire.



If you have the virus or suspect you or someone in your household have it, please follow these guidelines from Public Health England about how to dispose of your waste:

Personal waste (such as used tissues) and disposable cleaning cloths can be stored securely within disposable rubbish bags. These bags should be placed into another bag, tied securely and kept separate from other waste. This should be put aside for at least 72 hours before being put in your usual external household waste bin. Other household waste can be disposed of as normal.

Advice for businesses and job seekers

For the latest coronavirus advice for business owners, self-employed

and job seekers, please see our South and Vale Business Support website: <https://www.svbs.co.uk/coronavirus-guidance-and-support/>

Council tax

If you are having any difficulty paying your council tax for any reason, including if you have lost work or now have a reduced income, contact us as soon as possible on 0345 302 2313 or email vowh.counciltax@secure.capita.co.uk

Parking charges suspended

All parking charges in our council-owned car parks are now suspended until 1 June 2020, to support key workers and those needing to shop for essential food and medical supplies. You do not need to display a ticket. For all enquiries please email carparks.southandvale.uk@sabagroup.com or call 01235 470118.

Leisure and community centres, parks and play areas, and The Beacon

All our leisure centres, community centres, children's play areas, sports and exercise areas, and The Beacon are now **closed** until further notice.

Taxi licensing

We cannot offer licensing appointments until further notice. For more information head to the webpage: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/business/licensing/taxi-licences

Planning and building control

There is some disruption to our planning and building control services.

Please see our planning and building control pages for the latest information: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/make-planning-application and www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/planning-and-building/building-control-1

Charity Support

AGE Concern Oxfordshire has set up a new helpline to advise anyone worried about the Coronavirus. You can find out more by visiting their website <https://www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire/about-us/news/coronavirus/> (also see their advert on page 6)

SOFEA, the Didcot-based food charity, has also announced that it is offering free food deliveries to vulnerable residents. They're looking for volunteers to help and have set up a Just Giving page for donations towards the service: <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/sofeacommunitylarder>

Take care, stay safe, stay home!

We will endeavour to keep you updated on the council's response to the Coronavirus COVID-19 through future newsletters and 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



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Harwell Parish Council

At the **February meeting**, the Open Forum at the start of the meeting heard a report from two residents of Reading Road on the recent traffic survey carried out near Wantage Road – see report on page 5. Then, County Councillor Mr. Fox-Davies reported, and the footpath flooding on Didcot Road was raised with him; he said he had recently asked Highways engineers to clear the drains. He also said that the A417 project team including representatives of several villages along the A417, that looked at the stretch of road through them, may be reformed – the Parish Council was in favour of this.

District Councillor Ms. Medley made a report, and in answer to questions promised to find out if the Vale's planning department was able to do anything to require new buildings to be more sustainable in construction materials and efficiency in use. She was also asked if the Vale had done any cost-benefit analysis of remaining at Milton Park compared to rebuilding the Crowmarsh site.

On reports of external liaison, Mrs. Turner reported she had had a meeting with Winnaway residents and HarBUG, the Campus bicycle users group, about the residents' concerns. Signs may be erected to encourage more consideration by cyclists; HarBUG will issue a code of conduct to members, and carry out a survey of usage.

Mr. Ali then summarised matters raised at the January Councillor surgery, some of which had been discussed at the January Lands meeting.

After planning matters (see below), the Council dealt with various financial items and then Lands matters. It was agreed that the High Street notice board doors should be removed so space not required by the Parish Council could be used by other Parish Groups. **Please look at the PC's Noticeboard Policy on the web pages if you are intending to make use of it.**

There was approval that part of the west field of the recreation ground be left unmown for the spring and early summer.

The Clerk reported that the Vale WHDC had confirmed that the PC could still co-opt a Councillor to fill the remaining vacancy. **If you are interested** please contact the Clerk. Items were approved for discussion at the Annual Parish Meeting, but obviously the date of this is now uncertain. Also in her report on correspondence, the Clerk said that a parishioner had asked for a footpath along the Reading Road to The Kingswell, to provide a safe walking route to Didcot.

At the **March meeting**, there was a further report on Reading Road traffic, this time comparing recent numbers with 2014. In the discussion it was noted that East Hendred has 2 pedestrian crossings on the A417 for the new houses north of the road, which are fewer in number than those south of the road in Harwell but similarly separated from the main village.

Later in the meeting, the Clerk was asked to add to those already

requested, a further traffic survey just east of the Wantage Road.

District Councillor Ms. Medley in her report said that on GWP, both the District and Southern Centres had been completed, and the Vale was working with Taylor Wimpey so they can be handed over as soon as possible.

After financial and planning matters various Lands matters were discussed. It was agreed that the tendering process for the new staff building should begin. The draft Pavilion lease was approved, and signed by the Chair.

There was agreement in late March that for the duration of the Covid19 emergency a Committee consisting of the Chair and Vice-Chair be delegated to make any necessary decisions.

For Planning notices, please see continuation on page 5.

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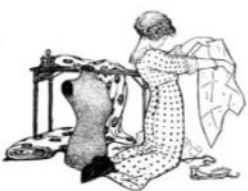
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Traffic Issues along the A417 Reading Road, Harwell

Residents along the Reading Road have growing concerns about the impact of levels and speed of traffic along the A417 as it goes through the village. Increasing problems prompted the circulation of a questionnaire among the residents of the Reading Rd in order to clarify and establish their issues and main concerns. The residents deserve thanks for the considerable time and support they gave for this door-to-door exercise.

The questionnaire was carried out between Nov 2019 and January 2020 and although there were 74 responses, which is a considerable body of information, should there be further residents who were not contacted and would like to respond, would they please email dunsdon18@btinternet.com and a copy can be sent out. The initial results have now been analysed and reported to the Parish Council in February 2020. It demonstrates clearly a high level of concern about the traffic using the road at present, with 71 residents reporting that it is affecting their quality of life. Should you wish to read the analysis of the questionnaire it is currently available on the Parish Council website.

Residents also expressed opinions on the lack of traffic-calming measures along the road, the absence of safe crossings and the lack of inclusion in the traffic-calming procedures which have been planned or taken place in the centre of the village recently.

The Parish Council has listened and actively responded by organising traffic surveys which have supplied further information on speeds and types of vehicle using the A417. This data has been analysed and presented to the Parish Council in March 2020. It should be noted that speeds of up to **81mph** have been recorded and **43% of traffic was recorded as driving over the speed limit**.

We are obviously at the beginning of a journey in order to make the A417 a safer place both for drivers and residents, and to reduce the environmental impact which the present traffic has on Harwell residents. These issues will be included in the Annual Parish Meeting (date to be confirmed - please check the Parish Council website for updates) and interested residents would be welcome to attend.

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Harwell Parish Council (contd.)

Planning:

P19/V2660/FUL 80 Extra care apartments and communal facilities on Greenwood Way.

The Council didn't object to the amended plans but in its response to the Vale WHDC it commented on the still inadequate parking, including disabled spaces, and lack of sustainability incorporated in the design, and said it would withdraw its previous objection if some of the suggested planning conditions are made requirements.

P14/V2873/O Amended outline application for Valley Park.

The Council's response was to reiterate its previous objections; while cycle paths had been widened, the design was still unsafe in that there would be parallel parking inside of cycle lanes. With regard to the archaeological work, the Council welcomed the proposed arrangements to excavate certain areas that showed features on the ground survey.

P19/V3214/FUL Replace one of the new houses on the Reading Road site with 2.

The Council objected that this would exceed the number of houses approved for the site.

P20/V0428/HH Construction of 2nd storey with raised roof and extension, 3 Lyncombe, Didcot Rd.

The Council agreed to object due to the increased height and impact on neighbours due to the proximity to the boundary.

Oxfordshire County Council Report from Mike Fox-Davies, your Oxfordshire County Councillor for Blewbury, Upton, Chilton, Harwell, Steventon, East Hendred, West Hendred and Ardington.

Firstly, I must applaud the work done by the volunteer groups working in the parishes, towns and cities throughout the County and beyond, who have sprung into action during this emergency to ensure the elderly and vulnerable are receiving support and assistance when needed. I attended the start up meeting of the Harwell Helpers and was very impressed by their enthusiasm and dedication. All our volunteers deserve our praise and appreciation, and if you feel you can give even a small amount of support to your local volunteer group, please do.



These are unprecedented times, we all need to take care and follow the latest Government advice. Staff at the County Council are working flat out as we cannot simply close or ask everybody to work from home. We are here to support and protect Oxfordshire's residents, particularly the vulnerable, and are prioritising our work and where possible working from home. There are some areas that will see an increase in demand if our staff become ill with the virus. There will be changes as we prioritise work to key areas.



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The main area of work in Social Care, both adult and children's, **has to continue on a 24/7 basis protecting around 7,000 residents.** We expect the number of people requiring care to increase as informal carers become ill and are unable to continue care. This work is vital as it's important we keep as many people as possible out of hospital.

We are working closely with the NHS to provide care and facilities for those patients that do not require acute care, to be cared for away from hospitals or at home, freeing up beds for those that most need them. This includes the group that we need to shield from the virus who are thought to be most at risk across the county. The Government are shielding the extremely vulnerable,

approx. 1.5 million across the country **full details can be found on the website: [Extremely vulnerable](#).**

Currently those people identified by the NHS as extremely vulnerable will be told they need to isolate themselves at home for the next 12 weeks. If they do not have any help to collect prescriptions and food, then they will be told to contact the council, who will arrange a contact, which may come from one of the brilliant local groups which have been set up. As you will see from the document these are certain groups within the population but there may be others that need help such as those in self-isolation which is where all the volunteers will help. **If somebody thinks they should be on the list and haven't been contacted by Sunday 29th March, then they should contact their GP or hospital clinician.**

To assist in the logistics across the country there are Local Resilience Forums, we are in the Thames Valley Based around the Police authority area. These are where the blue light services link in with the NHS and local authorities to consider the high-level strategy. These then delegate down to the County to work with WODC and other Districts to coordinate the local hubs. The Government have seconded military planners to assist in the hubs which is where all the local community groups come in to the local networks. **This is about all working together to ensure that we do not duplicate provision or even worse miss a vulnerable resident.**

The organic growth of the community networks or hubs that we are seeing being set up is fantastic. These groups are providing some excellent services to local residents who are self-isolating or do not have relatives locally. It's important that they are community led but we need to avoid duplication, so the County Council and Districts are working with Oxfordshire Volunteers to list them all and provide support where needed.

If you are approached by people wishing to volunteer, they can register at: <https://oxonvolunteers.org/vk/volunteers/index.htm>

Unfortunately, there are some cases of people taking advantage of the vulnerable residents so Trading Standards are working with the Police monitoring the situation and will take action should there be a need. Please do contact me if you are aware of anything.

This is a very fast-moving situation so please use the OCC, NHS and Government websites for the latest information.

I will send any updates as they become available. Above all please take care, stay safe and follow the advice.

Mike Fox-Davies, Hendreds and Harwell Division, mike.fox-davies@oxfordshire.gov.uk

03 6 80



NEW TELEPHONE SUPPORT SERVICE FOR OLDER PEOPLE



A new telephone support service has been launched by Age UK Oxfordshire, offering advice and assistance to older people concerned during this time.

Call 01865 411 288, leave your name and phone number and you will get a call back as soon as possible.

Assistance includes a friendly, weekly call to see how you are and to problem-solve if you are facing practical problems.

County council launches consultation on infrastructure plans around Didcot - UPDATE, March 2020

Oxfordshire County Council is about to launch a public consultation on the proposed range of transport improvements in Didcot and surrounding areas that will support the creation of new jobs and homes.

The consultation opened on **Thursday 19 March**. Work on these infrastructure improvements follows the successful funding announcement for £218 million from Government in March 2019 known as the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF). Although the funding for the transport improvements has been announced, Oxfordshire County Council is currently in the final stages of negotiating the details of the funding agreement with Government.

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As part of this consultation, public exhibitions were planned across various locations in the local area over the last two weeks in March. Unfortunately, due to the advice from Government with respect to Coronavirus (COVID-19) these have been cancelled. However, residents and businesses can view the plans and submit feedback online until 30 April 2020.

If you know anyone who does not have access to the internet and you think would be interested in this consultation, we would appreciate your help in telling them about it. They can call us on: **07392 318945** or **07833 401067** to discuss the proposals and request printed copies of the consultation materials.

The funding will substantially improve the county's transport infrastructure, including a new river crossing between Didcot and

Culham. The improved infrastructure would enable the development of new housing and employment areas using good sustainable design, supporting improved conditions for cycling.

The four schemes are:

1. A4130 road widening from A34 Milton Interchange towards Didcot
2. A new "Science Bridge" over the A4130, Great Western Railway Line and Milton Road into the former Didcot A Power Station site, back to the A4130 near Purchas Road
3. A new Didcot to Culham River Crossing between the A4130 Northern Perimeter Road at Didcot and A415 near Culham Science Centre
4. A new Clifton Hampden Bypass between A415 near Culham Science Centre and B4015 Oxford Road north of the village.

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peterdmartin.perspekt@gmail.com
 07905 697279

 www.perspekt.co.uk

Since the previous public exhibition events in November 2018, Oxfordshire County Council has been working to address previous comments and updating the design work. The online consultation will show the latest scheme designs and provide an opportunity for local people to comment on these.

All schemes include new and/or improved high quality walking and cycling routes which will give people real travel choice. The lack of suitable crossings over the railway line and river, coupled with the success of the Science Vale area has resulted in heavy congestion. The lack of crossings have resulted in limited alternatives to the private car.

Councillor Ian Hudspeth, Leader of Oxfordshire County Council, which submitted the HIF bid, said: "This funding will support the creation of new houses including affordable homes and will improve transport links including walking and cycling routes. It is a big

boost for Oxfordshire and underlines our commitment to ensuring that the infrastructure is in place to support new homes. The work will mean that the new homes will be supported by infrastructure that will connect residents with main routes whilst allowing them to avoid surrounding villages."

How to respond:

The **online public consultation** started on **Thursday 19 March 2020** and will close on **Thursday 30 April 2020** (closing at 11:59pm). Please follow this link for more details: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/didcotupdate

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MP David Johnston's message for Harwell News

About a month ago, most MPs still had a wide variety of different things on their desks. There were a range of interesting debates taking place in parliament and meetings on areas from climate change to homelessness. Our Fridays – and at least parts of our weekends – were the usual mixture of 6-7 engagements a day, seeing local businesses, charities and community groups and finding out how you can help. I spoke in the budget debate about a brand new government investment to create a new research and storage facility for the Natural History Museum at Harwell and spoke in a private members' bill debate on a bill designed to cut the cost of school uniforms.



But as the month wore on, one issue began to take over. All of the meetings and events with external people at parliament ceased and we were advised to avoid public engagements. I am still conducting my surgery appointments, but by phone, rather than in person. And the high volume of email that we usually get on a whole multitude of subjects is now just on one subject. It is completely understandable that COVID-19 has taken over in this way as it is a global public health crisis the likes of which we have not seen. Rather than talk more about the nature of the virus and the actions we have to take – which you are hearing 24/7 on the news – I wanted to highlight 2 things which I hope are of interest at this time.

Shaun Guard

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The first is the **huge community response** that has taken place. Spend a couple of minutes on Facebook and you will find lots of groups across the constituency that have sprung up to support their neighbours. Sometimes these have been set up by people like Gareth Clarke, Chair of the Residents Association at Great Western Park. At other times they work in partnership with charities, as is happening in Wantage with the Ray Collins Charitable Trust. One is being run by Sofea, using its established Community Larder programme. The Community Larder already provided a weekly grocery supply to 700 individuals and families, feeding up to 2000 people in Oxfordshire, as part of a membership which also provides additional support and discounts on things like utility bills. They've now repurposed their efforts to support those self-isolating as a result of COVID-19. These initiatives all need people who can make calls, make visits, drive, help package up supplies and, of course, donate. Please help if you can.

The second thing I wanted to highlight is **Open University's free to use learning platform**, OpenLearn. It has over 15,000 hours of online courses to help people improve their knowledge and skills. Given so many of us are going to be spending a lot more time at home, I thought a break from the news would be welcome.

As ever, you can contact me via email on david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk

PS - thank you St Matthew's Church and Harwell Parish Council for setting up Harwell Helpers which I understand currently has 99 volunteers. I will have much to report in the June edition.

Oxfordshire residents warned against coronavirus scams

Residents have been warned to be on their guard against criminals and scammers exploiting the coronavirus situation.

In Oxfordshire, County Council's Trading Standards has received reports of scams targeting people via **emails, text messages, and on the doorstep**. Full details and advice from our Trading Standards team here:

<https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxfordshire-residents-warned-against-coronavirus-scams/>

Press Office, Oxfordshire County Council

Conservatives in the Community...



... or if you prefer, Litter Pickers in the Community!

The sun always shines on the righteous they say, well that definitely felt like the case on Saturday morning, 14th March as we started our Litter Pick bathed in glorious sunshine. Volunteers from 9 years to retirement age all donned their beautiful blue high viz vests and set off down the Harwell Link Road.

Two hours later with a trailer load of bags to be collected by the Vale Waste Team we left feeling a little weary, but energised too by the positive response we had received from passers-by and in

the knowledge that "Conservatives are definitely making a difference in this Community."

One passer-by gave us a shout out on Facebook the next day and is one of several potential new recruits to clear the rubbish. Great team work all round and no-one can deny we got the job done. Look out for us for further litter pickups in Harwell and elsewhere!

Reg Waite, President of Wantage & Didcot Conservative Association

28 8 20



Residential Vacancy in the Frances Geering Almshouse, Harwell



There is a vacancy in the Frances Geering Almshouse, situated in the High Street, Harwell. The Almshouse is an historic feature in the village, and comprises two houses, which are owned and managed by the charity, which was originally set up in 1730 to provide accommodation for women "in need". The Trustees are looking for a local lady requiring single accommodation and who is able to live independently.

This is an opportunity to live in a modernised Grade 2* listed building in the centre of a thriving village community. Many facilities are within easy walking distance. There are

two shops, a pub and an excellent bus service to Didcot and the surrounding areas. The refurbished village hall provides many social activities.

The cosy single floored accommodation consists of a sitting room, bedroom, bathroom, kitchen and utility area and has its own private entrance. There is a small landscaped garden at the back.

Preference will be given to those who have lived in the Parish for 5 years but in the absence of village applicants, ladies from the surrounding area would be considered.

For further details please contact Harwell Parochial Charities, via the Clerk to the Trustees: Mrs Clare Wagner, Jabrin, Reading Road, Harwell, OX11 0LU or telephone **01235 835425** or email: clare.wagner@jabrin.co.uk

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WHEN

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This is now an online meeting

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ALL WELCOME. HELP WITH PROJECTS IN HARWELL AND LEARN MORE ABOUT WHAT WE DO... TREE PLANTING AND RE-WILDING : RECYCLING : LOBBYING FOR NEW HOUSES TO BE MORE SUSTAINABLE : CYCLE ROUTES AND FOOTPATHS : AND MUCH MORE

INCLUDING A TALK BY CHRIS CHURCH...TOWARDS A ZERO CARBON OXFORDSHIRE:

"What can we really do to tackle climate change?"

Chris leads Oxford Friends of the Earth's work on climate change and produced the 'Fast Forward Oxfordshire' report that looks forward to a Zero Carbon Oxfordshire. He is Director of the Community Environment Associates consultancy and has worked on environmental issues for over 25 years.

He will look at how we can move to becoming a 'Zero Carbon' county before 2040, at the benefits that we will get from doing that, and at what we all need to do now to help tackle the climate crisis effectively.

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2020 D-Day Commemoration - called off

It is regrettable, if predictable that Harwell RBL Branch have **called off** the annual D-Day Commemoration Service for 2020 in light of the Covid-19 outbreak. The mass gathering of 100+ member of the public, invited guests and dignitaries, and representatives from a variety of veterans groups and onsite businesses, all travel from numerous and variety of locations, and have the potential to spread the virus. As such, in line with Government advice, the event will not be held to avoid this risk.

We hope the Parade will return in 2021, the date for which will be Saturday 5th June.

Peter Davies, Ceremonial Officer, Harwell Branch RBL (email: harwell.committee1@rbl.community)



Little Pippins Pre-School



September 2020 Pre-school Admission – registration deadline - 1st May 2020

Please contact us to make an appointment to have a look round and pick up a registration form, or you can download a form from our website – see contact details below

Change to times opening times from September 2020

Breakfast Club – 8:00am to 9:05am

Morning Session – 9:05am to 12:05pm

Afternoon session – 12:05pm – 3:05pm (please provide packed lunch)

Our pre-school for 2.5 to 5 year-olds is set in an old orchard in the centre of the village. We have a large play area with a willow dome, muddy kitchen, construction zone, forest school, nature area, small covered pond and a pirate ship along with a large sand pit, covered veranda and plenty of outdoor ride-on toys. If the weather is inclement, we can provide outdoor wet weather clothing for wet and wild play. Equally we have indoor play and focused activities on offer every session in our warm and inviting building.

Breakfast club is available for 3 – 11 year-olds from 8am Monday to Friday with a walking bus provided to Harwell Primary School. Early Education Funding is available for up to 15 hours per week and we also offer some funded places for 2 and a half year-olds. Wrap-around care is offered for those children whose parents wish them to attend 'The Barn' - afterschool club at Harwell School.

Allocation of places for September 2020 will start in May. Our main priority is Harwell village children who will start primary school the following September, then other funded Harwell village children, unfunded Harwell village children, other children by age and distance of home from the Pre-school.

To contact us about a place for your child, donations to our charity, helping on the volunteer committee or any other aspects of the running of the pre-school, check our website www.littlepippins.org.uk, email office@littlepippins.org.uk or telephone the office on **01235 821741**

Little Pippins Pre-school, Charity Registration Number 1105994
Brenda Pyke, Office Manager

Swan, your local Community Bank

Did you know we have a community bank, providing savings and loans locally? Swan Community Bank is the operating name for Swan Credit Union and anyone who lives or works in the Didcot and surrounding area can become a member and apply for a loan from the credit union. If you are tempted to approach a payday lender, or if you have been turned down by a high-street lender, why not try us instead? A local group including councillors, Rotary Club, the churches and other local organisations came together in 2015 to set up the community bank to help local people. Our loan rates are reasonable and we are a co-operative, so any profits are shared between the members as a dividend. We have now grown to almost 100 members in our area.

Swan Community Bank is internet-based, so visit <http://swancommunitybank.org.uk/> for further information or call our administration office on **03030 300147** or **03301 359813**. Another option is to speak to Citizens Advice Didcot, where someone can help you find the information you need. Join the community bank now to help manage your money, and don't ask for an expensive payday loan!

Harwell Feast - cancelled

It is with regret that due to the ongoing situation with Coronavirus that the organising Committee have taken the decision to cancel the 2020 Harwell Feast. We hope to hold the event in May 2021.

Sharon Palmer - on behalf of the Harwell Feast Committee



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Prices start from just £2.50 for a drink and a generous slice of cake.

We look forward to welcoming you



Contact : Janette Roberts - 01235 861409
Andrea Thompson – 01235 834978



Harwell Primary School

As I write this article the playground markings made possible by a grant from Harwell Feast are being installed. These include a roadway around the mound in the playground, parking bays for tricycles and ride on toys, a dragon with numbers 1 to 20 and a train diagram with phonics sounds. A huge thank you to the Feast committee.



In addition, we decided to improve safety at the front of the school including a zebra crossing from the cycle and scooter area to the playground and a footpath from the gate to reception.

We have also been fortunate enough to successfully apply for two further grants - The Ernest Cook Foundation have given us £500 for 'waterproofs and wellies' for our Foundation Class, which will be used for their

weekly trips to our wooded area. Magnox have given us £1000 towards our next exciting outdoor project - a climbing traverse wall. This is something that our School Association will be fundraising for over the coming months.

World Book Day saw the children and staff dressed as book characters. I am always delighted to see the children and staff join in enthusiastically. The whole school also enjoyed watching a performance of the Reluctant Dragon on the same afternoon.

I was delighted with the success of the joint Harwell School & Little Pippins 'Ball' on Saturday 29th February - please see a report from the organising team below.

Warm regards,

Bryn Gibson, Headteacher, Harwell Primary School

Harwell School and Little Pippins Leap Year Ball 2020



Well what a wonderful event to brighten the stormy Winter of 2020!

Harwell School and Little Pippins Nursery would like to thank all those who attended this year to help raised much needed funds for both school and nursery projects.

The Harwell Village Hall transformed into a perfect venue for this year's Leap Ball; amid swathes of elegant black and fuchsia décor and centrepieces from Ann Laing, the backdrops of soft fairy lights twinkled to set the scene as guests arrived.

The event was catered by our local specialists Fingers and Forks, who created and prepared a stunning menu of cocktails n' canapes on arrival, followed by sticky feather beef steak, spring mash and seasonal vegetables, then treated us to a delicious chefs speciality of chocolate brownie with amazingly delicious accompaniments to please any pallet!

We enlisted the help of a wonderful barman (and Pippins dad) Stuart Weal, who is an expert in all things cocktails and comes highly recommended (sipcocktailsevents@gmail.com). His 'Orchard Bliss' cocktail, created especially for



the ball was a real hit, and a great reflection of the Little Pippins association with the former orchards of Harwell.

Our fundraising efforts came in the form of three fun and engaging games this year... the traditional 'Heads or Tails', the 'Rum Slider' and a new take on 'Higher or Lower'. With great audience interaction and participation it certainly added to the camaraderie and fun of the evening. Congratulations to Elina (from the Summerfield table) for winning the £30 drinks voucher; Kathryn Caudle (from the Moreton table) for winning the Heads or Tails cash stash – and very kindly donating it back to the cause; and the very dapper gentleman (from the Pearson table) who slid his £1 closest to the bottle of fine Dumpy Rum!

With drinks flowing, and food savoured, we moved on to the fantastic live band "Back4", who once again supported our event free of charge. With great classics on the hits list, it didn't take long for the usual suspects to leave their seats and display their skills on the dancefloor!

It was a great event, and as mentioned, we are very thankful to those who came, but events like this are only made possible by the kind support of local suppliers, and the amazing dedication and efforts of the HSA and Pippins fundraising teams – what a community we have, thank you.

Claire Summerfield

Harwell WI

At Harwell WI's meeting in February 'Al's Owls' were more than the anticipated delight. We all fell in love with Zeus (a Eurasian Eagle Owl, with a wingspan of about six feet), Cotti (a Barn owl), and Willow (a tiny Tawny owl). Al Charlett rescues owls, and his talk on his work, the owls and their habitats, was very informative. Several of our members were lucky to handle them, too.

We had a good turnout for our Annual Meeting in March. Kate Beswick is our new President for the 2020/21 year. The business was followed by wine and nibbles, and a cryptic quiz.

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Sunday 8 March was International Women's Day, and there was an exhibition at The Cornerstone to celebrate this. One of our sister WIs was asked to coordinate a WI entry depicting the WI over the years and its relevance today. Most WIs from the District Group contributed, and Harwell WI played a major part in this.

On 21st March, we would have been participating in the Great British Spring Clean. Of course, this has had to be postponed until we are all allowed to go out together en masse.

What would have happened if events hadn't intervened:

- The Didcot Group of WIs meeting on 6 April at Upton Village Hall.

We were looking forward to hearing and seeing Judy Dewey, Curator

of the Wallingford Museum, give an illustrated talk on 'Wallingford Castle – Royal medieval stronghold of the Thames Valley'.

- Our April meeting in the Village Hall - taxi-driver-poet, James Hadow, coming to entertain us with his rhymes and poetry on life and love. Hopefully, we can enjoy his talk at another time.
- Visit to The Base at Greenham to see the touring exhibition of the 'Wildlife Photographer of the Year'.
- Monday evening Knit and Natter at The Hart.
- Community coffee mornings on Wednesdays, also at The Hart.

You can see from the above, the wide variety of activities we encompass.

Other benefits of being a WI member are the support we can give each other in times of need, and the friendships we can make.

We usually meet each month (apart from August) in the Cherry Hall in the Village Hall on the second Wednesday of the month at 7.30 p.m. For more information about us and our activities visit our website: harwellwi.org; email: harwellwi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk; or call our Secretary on 01235 835430.

We look forward to seeing you when our regular programme starts again!

Support for the unpaid carers of Harwell



If you are looking after a loved one or friend who could not cope without your help then the team at Action for Carers Oxfordshire are here to support you. We are an independent charity whose sole purpose is to support and advise

unpaid carers of Oxfordshire. We work within communities like Harwell to help unpaid carers to stay independent and live life to the full. We currently have a number of carers support groups operating in the county including groups in Didcot and Abingdon. As well as a team of dedicated staff who can offer one-to-one support including help with carers assessments.

If you would like more information on the FREE advice and support we can offer or would like to know more about our local carers support groups please feel free to call us on 01235 424715 between 9.00am - 5.00pm, Monday to Friday.

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Harwell Parish History Group

2020 sees many interesting anniversaries and initially we have displayed posters on three with local resonance.

- 1) The publication of Agatha Christie's first novel, *The Mysterious Affair at Styles*, in 1920. Christie, a long-time resident in Winterbrook near Wallingford, is buried in Cholsey Churchyard.
- 2) 'Planes from RAF Harwell took part in the Battle of France; the airfield was raided during the Battle of Britain seventy years ago (1940).
- 3) In 1120 King Henry I's son William drowned when the White Ship sank off the French coast. This area strongly supported his remaining heir Matilda in her struggle for the crown against her cousin Stephen (1135-54). Prince's Manor, Harwell, belonged to her loyal supporter Reginald II of St. Valery. His lands were confiscated by Stephen, but returned to him by Matilda's son Henry II (1155-88). In the glass display cabinets is a small exhibition of contemporary cartoons relating the Battle of Britain and the RAF in the 1940s.

Reginald/Reynald/Renaud II of St. Valery – a Harwell crusader

We've discovered that Reginald went to the Middle East as a crusader in the 1150s, becoming Lord of Harenc (in Syria) in the crusade state of Antioch. He returned to the west c.1160-1164. Reginald held 23½ different English manors, and we cannot know whether he ever set foot here, but Prince's Manor, a rich fief, contributed to his wealth and power. Therefore we intend to find out more about him; display to follow!

Postponement of Talks

With much regret, we have postponed the talks for March and April by Charlie East and Dr. Katherine Watson, owing to concerns about the possible spread of the Coronavirus. Those who have paid £10 for 6 talks will not lose out. We hope to reschedule the lectures later; should this have to be in 2021, membership fees will be adjusted. The next talk is booked for **SEPTEMBER**.

Work in progress includes research on the Geering Almshouses, the Harwell Site, Harwell's schools, and the church's monuments. The group is dreadfully short of researchers - if there is anyone out there who can help, PLEASE get in touch!

Jane M. Card harwellhistorygroup@gmail.com



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Email: covid19support@gwpra.org.uk

Website: <https://www.gwpra.org.uk/covid19support>

Check the NHS website regularly for official guidance and updates on Coronavirus: <https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/coronavirus-covid-19/>

By contacting the Great Western Park COVID-19 Community Support Group, you consent to the use and storage of your personal data in order to facilitate community help.
All personal information regarding requests is kept strictly confidential.

Harwell Gardeners Club



Harwell Gardeners' Club meetings are now closed until further notice.

As we seek to socially distance ourselves and self isolate, our gardens will become a safe place in which to exercise, get some fresh air and sunshine and restore our spirits as we watch our gardens bloom and grow. If anyone would like any advice on gardening then Harwell Gardeners' Club is here to answer your questions. You can find us on Facebook where we have just opened a dedicated group page called "Harwell Gardeners' Club". This is for anyone to join. If you are not on Facebook you can email me on jvmarkey@googlemail.com and I will find an expert within our group on your subject. There may be more green fingers in the village by the end of this crisis! We wish you all well.

Janice Markey

Friends of the Ridgeway - Swire Ridgeway Arts Prize 2020

The Ridgeway – the oldest road in Britain – with its wonderful views and its powerful atmosphere has always appealed to the creative spark in artists and in all of us.

The Friends of The Ridgeway have established an annual arts competition and prize – the Swire Ridgeway Arts Prize. Sadly, as a result of the Covid-19 crisis, the Friends Ridgeway Day including the Swire Ridgeway Arts Prize and associated exhibition on 18 and 19 April 2020 in Uffington, plus the additional exhibition in Monks Risborough on 25 and 26 April 2020 **cannot go ahead** as planned. Additionally the Friends of the Ridgeway AGM cannot go ahead. However, if at all possible we would like to be some form of exhibition either postponed to the autumn or a virtual exhibition on our website or both. We will re-arrange the AGM as soon as possible, perhaps as a virtual online AGM. As soon as possible we will finalise plans. It is most disappointing to have to cancel the Ridgeway Friends Day and associated events.

Anthony Burdall, Chairman, Friends of the Ridgeway (email: anthony.burdall@burdall.net)



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Concerts@Cholsey

It is with great regret that Concerts@Cholsey have called off their event planned for Saturday 23rd May at The Cholsey Pavillion, due, of course, to the current health situation. Keep an eye out for more exciting concerts in the future. For any queries, please contact us on concerts@cholsey.com.

Ian Wheeler, Concerts@Cholsey

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Didcot and District U3A

It is with much regret that, during the ongoing and unfolding concerns of COVID-19 throughout the UK, the Didcot &

District U3A, in conjunction with Current Government directives, has had to postpone the Monthly Meetings, Interest Groups and planned trips until further notice. Once the situation recovers and the Ministerial instructions advise 'normal service can be resumed' details will be distributed at the earliest opportunity?! Meanwhile, the Chair of Didcot & District U3A wishes all ages, genders and creeds to take care, be safe, and follow the national guidelines in bringing to an end this current awful situation . . . and wash your hands!'

Brian & Lynn Burscough - PR Didcot & District U3A

Chair - chairman@didcotu3a.org Tel: 01235 510048;

Membership - membership@didcotu3a.org

For further information you can contact:

Secretary - secretary@didcotu3a.org Tel: 07845 922237;

The Orchard Film Club

Covid-19 Update

Dear Film-lovers,

In light of current events, we will not be showing films until the government restrictions on social distancing are lifted, and Harwell Village Hall opens its doors once more. As soon as we know more we will let you know.

For updates, please sign up for our monthly newsletter by emailing us at orchardfilmclub@gmail.com. You can also visit our page on the Harwell Village Hall website on <https://www.harwellvillagehall.co.uk/the-orchard-film-club/>

Do also email us with your film suggestions!

When we start up again we will be showing the following films:



We look forward to seeing you again in the not-too-distant future.
Stay safe and keep well, with best wishes from Alison, Martin and Janice.

Citizens Advice campaigns hit the target in 2019



People often see Citizens Advice as a “quick fix” centre, rather like the garage that changes your car tyres – you pop into our office or ring Adviceline or you check the facts on our comprehensive website. But there’s more to Citizens Advice than quick fixes.

“Research and Campaigns” (R and C) is a part of Citizens Advice with a different task, a long-term one that demands much effort and patience. It has the job of collecting evidence on emerging social problems and then directly petitioning the people or organizations - including ministers, local MPs and government departments -

that have the power to solve or alleviate them.

These campaigns have been remarkably successful, often making use of the media to put their point across. In 2019 R and C contributed to the surge of action that led to the scrapping of tenant fees. It also submitted a “super-complaint” on the Loyalty Penalty, whereby long-standing customers in some services (e.g. insurance) often end up paying more than new customers for the same service. Noting the rise in demand for food vouchers, R and C highlighted the issue of pressure on household budgets because of slow payment schedules for Universal Credit. R and C also issues occasional publications such as “Putting the house in order”, which described failings in the housing market.

Would you like to become one of these dedicated and hard-working volunteers, or work for us in a different role? Visit www.ca.org for further details.

For more general help see our website www.citizensadvice.org.uk, or call Citizens Advice Adviceline on 0300 3309 042.

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Other than where stated and in reports of Parish Council matters any opinions expressed are not those of the Parish Council.

Items for the June issue should be sent by 15th May to news@harwellparish.co.uk.

Distribution is on hold during the current health crisis, in line with social distancing measures. Harwell News is available online at <https://www.harwellparish.co.uk/harwell-news/>

Advertising queries to the clerk.

Parish Contact Information

All contact information can also be found on the parish website: www.harwellparish.co.uk

Phone: 07749 361957

Post to: Clerk, Harwell PC, Harwell

Village Hall, High Street, Harwell, OX11 0EX

Core office hours, in the office at the Village Hall, are 9am to 4pm Monday

Parish Councillors

Syed Aly, Dee Boughton-Waite, Jeremy Hawthorne (Vice-chair), Wah Cheng Lee, David Munyemweri, Neil Paterson, Martin Ricketts, David Roberts, Sarah Soames and Debbie Turner (Chair).

District Councillors

Sarah.Medley@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Hayleigh.Gascoigne@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Campus Ward:

janet.shelley@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

County Councillor:

Mike.Fox-Davies@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

073939 79510

MP: David Johnston

House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA

david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk

0207 219 6350

www.david-johnston.org.uk

Harwell News edited by

Alison Fautley

Need our advice? Coronavirus update



From Wednesday 18th March, we will no longer be offering face-to-face appointments to try to reduce the spread of Coronavirus. Previously booked appointments will be changed to a telephone appointment. You will still be able to talk to our advisers by telephone.

Advice line: **0300 330 9042**

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Backed by Parochial Church Council and Harwell Parish Council.

Covid-19 Support Groups

Blewbury Good Neighbours group on [FaceBook](#)

Blewbury Post Office 01235 851777;

Karen 07825 154842; Lydia 07801 932383

Chilton Mutual Aid Group on [FaceBook](#); chiltonaid@gmail.com

GWP Community Support Group - www.gwpra.org.uk/covid19

(see main advertisement on p13)

Harwell Helpers - 07375 829602; harwellcovid19@gmail.com

(see main advertisement above)