

The Harwell News

www.harwellparish.co.uk

Harwell and the fight against Covid-19

Just before lockdown, a group of people from the Parish Council, St Matthew's Harwell and All Saints Chilton met to discuss what we could do to help the village as neighbours, whilst keeping things as local as possible. The parts of the Parish in GWP would work with GWP and the Chilton group would take North Drive and Rowstock, whilst Harwell would form the **Harwell Helpers**, working alongside East Hendred. The two coordinators (in one family) each bought a very low-cost phone to handle incoming calls, a web page was developed and a leaflet drop took place so that people knew what was going on and how we could help. A number of "how to" guides were put together.

Since the outbreak of Covid-19, **over 100 local people have volunteered** to join Harwell Helpers, run online via Facebook and WhatsApp, and between them so far they have completed **in excess of 450 trips**, usually whilst doing

their own shopping to avoid unnecessary journeys, to assist neighbours in Harwell and East of the roundabout in Rowstock. We have received calls from further afield and have helped there too. These trips focus on shopping and prescription collections, but also include dog-walking and other sundry tasks, such as helping



families to maintain graves.

A team of dedicated seamstresses & tailors have been making scrub bags and facemasks, which have been distributed far and wide to local hospices, GP surgeries, schools, outreach workers, and care homes.

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Harwell and the fight against Covid-19 *(continued from page 1)*

One local competition was run to **design a monster** which then became a cuddly toy – amazing work! Others included decorating your home for VE day.

Our local shops have been brilliant: **Bob's Butchers, Harwell Newsagents, Q Gardens, the Old Farm Shop, the Hive**, all going above and beyond in making their premises safe to visit, and many providing a delivery service for those who cannot visit.

In fact, the whole village have pulled through and offered help in such a variety of ways:

Teenagers have been completing their **Duke of Edinburgh** awards by offering to help with Harwell Helpers; our local **Scouts group** has gone online so Scouts are still able to work for their badges; the **Crazy Cleary's** in Spain have been entertaining us each day; Cath has posted **#themes of the day** on the [Harwell Community Facebook page](#) every day and Di, Sue, Janice and Vicky have been **reading stories** to the children of Harwell. Visit [Stories for Harwell Children](#)



A huge **thank you** to you all, but particularly to those amongst us who are **key workers**!

You may also have seen in the news that the **Harwell site** is playing an important role in combating the outbreak of Covid-19 through its vaccine facility. Our local companies have also been making a significant contribution to the production of PPE equipment: **Covid Print Oxford** has been coordinating the efforts of a large number of 3D printer-



Local photographers using drones have been posting fabulous aerial shots of Harwell, and we hope to put some of these into a **calendar** which can be used to raise funds. Even the peacocks have come out to celebrate and play tag with **Iain Bussell**, our postie, who has been telling us what is going on with our mail, whilst delivering it nearly every day! We may have missed some people out in this list but hope that it shows what a brilliant village we live in.



owners to produce visors, with 6,565 delivered as of 25th May. This includes a large number made by **Diamond**, where for several weeks the facilities were largely given over to 3D printing, sterilising and logistics.

Diamond has passed the milestone of **10,000 headbands** printed too and they supported us in the village by the production of clips which we distributed to hospitals and hospices through our key workers. Incredibly, what has been manufactured and created here in Oxfordshire, has been sent to the surrounding counties, countries and even **across the globe**. All of these efforts genuinely mean that there are people working in a variety of dangerous situations wearing protection that began with local people here, in Harwell.

A **Meals on Wheels** scheme has recently been set up too, backed by local businesses **Fingers and Forks** and **Ann Laing Flowers**. Families are able to order meals or bouquets for themselves, and have it all delivered to their doors on Fridays. It also gives people the opportunity to donate if they so wish, with funds donated on the website put towards further meals for those in need.



One of the co-ordinators of Harwell Helpers, Cath Convery, is planning to set up a “**community fridge**” to help share the generous supplies of fruit and vegetables which are produced and available in the village. The idea of a fridge is not like a food bank, to which people have to be officially referred, but is simply a way for people to donate if they have a surplus and/or to collect if they have a need. The fridge helps to connect the community, helps families save money and reduces waste. It will be open to anyone and we are hoping to be open in **June**. If you are interested in this, please contact Harwell Helpers on the details below.

If you need help, are interested in volunteering or can help then please do contact the **#HarwellHelpers** on **harwellcovid19@gmail.com**. We will be here until lockdown is lifted and perhaps beyond. **#keepwashingyourhands**

Covid-19 Welfare Fund

Harwell Helpers is establishing this fund for those experiencing financial emergencies during this pandemic.

If you would like to donate please use the details below and include 'HH' in your reference.

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73421197**

Harwell St Matthews PCC

Financial support is being delivered through St Matthew's Church. After the pandemic subsides any residual funds will be used for the relief of poverty in the local area.

07375 829602 / harwellcovid19@gmail.com



Hello from Hayleigh and Sarah - Coronavirus Update from your Local District Councillors, Saturday 23rd May 2020



Hello! On what is now the third bank holiday weekend in recent months, we hope that you are keeping well and able to enjoy the weekend whilst staying safe. Although the lockdown restrictions have eased slightly since our last update, this means that it is more important than ever to take care when you are out and about, being mindful of keeping a safe distance from others and still staying home as much as possible. There is more specific guidance on what you can and cannot do on the government's [Coronavirus FAQ webpage](#). As everyone adjusts to the "new normal", note that there is still support available for those who need it. We are currently helping our fantastic local community volunteer groups to investigate more, longer-term funding for their activities, so that they can continue to provide help as required. The council's own Community Support

Team continues to run their support line for anyone in need, including over the bank holiday: call **01235 422 600** or email communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk.

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

Waste Collections

A reminder that all of the Vale's waste collection services are once again up and running, and that Oxfordshire's recycling centres have also now re-opened to the public.

Business Support

New discretionary grants scheme

The new discretionary grants scheme recently announced by the government will only provide an extra **five per cent** of funding on top of the money received in the first round of COVID-19 business grants in April. This means that unfortunately it will **not** provide anywhere near enough cash to support the vast majority of businesses in southern Oxfordshire affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We have received the details of the government's new discretionary business grants scheme and are currently putting together a list of businesses that fit the detailed criteria. In line with government guidelines, we are aiming to release funds at the beginning of June and are working at pace to develop an online application based on the prescribed eligibility criteria. This may take a short while to set up, but will ensure the process is quicker and easier and speeds up decision making so we can make payments to successful applicants without delay. Our business support team will provide ongoing support and guidance to any businesses that aren't successful in applying for this scheme – this will include signposting them to the government's COVID-19 loan scheme, which can be processed and paid out very quickly.

If you have any questions, please email the Business Support team: business.support@southandvale.gov.uk

The South & Vale Business Support team stays up-to-date on the latest government advice and support, and can advise on rates relief and business support grants. Visit their website for the latest info and to sign up for their e-newsletter: svbs.co.uk, and follow them on Twitter [@TeamSVBS](https://twitter.com/TeamSVBS).

Council Tax

There is no specific update on council tax this time. Where possible, you should continue to pay your bills as normal. Residents who are currently not being paid, and are struggling to pay their council tax bill, are encouraged to apply for Council Tax Reduction – their account will then be put on hold for 30 days while their application is processed: whitehorsedc.gov.uk/ctrs

Council Matters

Remote committee meetings to take place online

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils are to begin holding council committee meetings online via video conferencing from the end of May. The first virtual meeting of the Vale of White Horse District Council was the Vale Planning Committee on Tuesday 26 May at 10.30am.

Councillors will use Microsoft Teams to take part in the meetings and members of the public will be able to watch online via a link which will be published alongside the meeting agenda on the councils' websites five working days prior to the meeting. The councils will also publish the link to each meeting via their Facebook and Twitter pages. For details on how members of the public can submit statements or questions to be considered by a committee or council meeting please visit whitehorsedc.gov.uk/meetings.

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Once councillors and officers have got used to the new process and are confident that meetings can be carried out effectively and within the guidelines, the councils will look to introduce online public participation by live video. Following the COVID-19 outbreak and the introduction of social distancing rules in March, the two councils cancelled all their official meetings and acted quickly to focus their efforts on supporting local communities and vulnerable individuals. While the focus remains predominantly on supporting vulnerable residents affected by COVID-19, it is still important to ensure the transparency of local democracy and so the councils have now put in place measures to ensure that meetings can take place again.

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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In Remembrance - Bob Hilton



Robert Hilton passed away on Thursday 21st May at his home in Dorset. Bob grew up in Harwell, and until his marriage, when he moved to Didcot, lived in The Park. He was a keen footballer and became both a player and manager of Harwell Football Club in his later footballing career. The photo shows Bob, front row, second from left and the members of Harwell Football Club in its finest year - 1971 - when Harwell finally managed to break the gypsy's curse and bring home the North Berks Cup, a much-coveted trophy. Bob will also be remembered because of his Groundworks business, where he employed many of the local lads who then, after a good learning process, went on to start their own companies. Our thoughts are with his wife and family.

Recycling centres open from 18 May for essential use



Oxfordshire County Council re-opened Household Waste Recycling Centres on 18 May, for **essential use**. Essential use means **waste that cannot be stored at home, or would cause harm to health if stored**.

There will be new site rules to ensure social distancing and the safety of residents and site staff. This includes **reducing opening hours to 8am – 4pm** to allow for cleaning, limiting the number and size of vehicles coming in and **contactless payments** only.

Queues are likely, so if it can wait, please wait. If it's waste that can be disposed of legally and responsibly in another way, such as weekly kerbside

collections or district council collection services, please do that.

Full information about the changes to recycling centre rules can be found on their website:

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wastereopenquestions

Harwell Parish Council

The Parish Council suspended meetings at the start of the Covid-19 Lockdown; for the first 6 weeks there was a weekly process of circulating proposed decisions to Councillors, followed by the Chair, Vice-Chair and Clerk meeting online to take decisions. Following a trial of Zoom, **meetings resumed** online with the May Council meeting on 12th and thereafter committee meetings on the normal rota.

The Annual Parish Meeting is still postponed, but consideration is being given to holding it as an online meeting with Parishioners able to participate – check the [PC's web pages](#). While Council meetings are online, the Public Forum at the start will be available to Parishioners – please [contact the Clerk](#) sufficiently in advance for her to email the Zoom link to you.

One of the first decisions needed was with regard to the newsletter, to make it online only for April, with decisions regarding future issues taken as necessary, and to **donate £1000**, the approximate cost of printing, to **Harwell Helpers and GWPRA groups** supporting those needing to isolate themselves. It was decided that charges for existing advertisers would be waived while the newsletter is only available online. Any new advertiser would be asked to make a donation to the support groups. It was also decided to apply to the Scottish & Southern Electricity Resilient Communities Fund on behalf of Harwell Helpers.

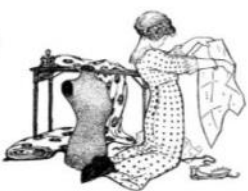
In mid-April, it was decided that some grounds staff work should resume work, such as bin-emptying and safety checks in the recreation ground, subject to suitable safeguards. At the May Council meeting it was agreed that grass-cutting should resume, after a risk-assessment had been completed and approved, which took a further week.

The Didcot Garden Town Advisory Board is looking to co-opt one parish Councillor from the 5 closest Parishes to represent all the nearby Parishes. The PC decided it would support a Councillor for the post and Mr Ricketts volunteered, so his application has gone forward.

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Mr Gibson presented findings from the group's recent survey on **cycling** in Harwell. Mrs Turner summarised the Council's input to date on traffic calming locally. Following discussions, Mr Fox-Davies offered to help in putting the recommendations and requests to OCC.

Both District and County Councillors had provided written notes for the meeting. Mr Fox-Davies said that the PC's bid for Priority Funding has been approved – **£1875 will be split between Harwell Helpers & the GWPRA Covid-19 group**.

In the meeting proper, the usual May formalities of the Annual Parish Council Meeting were postponed. The June Harwell News, it was decided, should be online only, and the money saved would be made available to Harwell Helpers and the GWPRA if their current funding is exhausted.

The tenders for the staff building were opened, and after a brief discussion it was agreed to defer the matter to the next meeting.

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It was noted that the Vale is reviewing waste collection from bins on public land, with a view to taking this over from the Parish Council. Currently the grounds staff collect and bag it for the contractor to take away.

At the online May meeting, in the Open Forum, members of Sustainable Harwell said they were trying to find ways of **increasing hedgerows**, etc., around the Parish, in particular the Holloway, and wondered whether the Council's plans to develop the rec and elsewhere were progressing. The Council had intended to discuss plans for the rec and invite public comments at the APM, but this had been postponed. The plans included tree planting on the rec but the Council has not agreed details yet, apart from letting some grass areas grow longer than usual.



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Science Vale Cycle Network Project (SVCN)

The SVCN project aims to create better connectivity for cyclists travelling from Didcot, Abingdon, Wantage to Milton Park, Culham Science Centre and Harwell Campus. The primary focus of the project is to improve routes for cyclists and pedestrians and to make cycling a more attractive choice. It will add to the Science Vale transport network and encourage sustainable travel across the area for cyclists and pedestrians who are going to benefit from improved facilities for many journeys, not just those to or from work.

As we are about to start construction of our flagship route between Wantage and Harwell Campus (Route 1) on 26th May 2020, we are launching a newsletter for those who are interested in receiving updates about the progress of this project.

The newsletter will also give you an overview and progress update of the other routes. These are in different stages of development. If you would like to sign up to the monthly newsletter please follow the link below to "Oxfordshire Travel Choices Bulletin" page and chose Science Vale Cycle Network from the list. We will be sending our first issue shortly.

[Sign up to our monthly SVCN bulletin here.](#)

For more information and maps of the routes visit the SVCN page of the OCC website [here](#).

Harwell Parish Council website also has information [here](#).

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Harwell Parish Council (contd.)

The next full Council meetings are on **9th June** and **14th July** – see the [PC's web pages](#) for agendas near the date.

Parish Council grass cutting: Now that grass cutting has resumed around the parish, the Council would like to request that grounds staff are given consideration from residents and visitors – **please follow social distancing rules** and allow the staff space. Please respect the fact that the staff will need time to catch up, and that some areas of the parish may receive attention before others. Most of all, if grass cutting is taking place, **please read any signs put up** and if you're requested to stay out of an area during grass cutting please do so. This is for your safety especially if staff are working alone.

Rowstock roundabout closure in June: The whole roundabout is due to be closed overnight from Tuesday 16th June until Saturday 20th, from 7.30pm until 6am. Details are on the PC's web pages with diversion routes, under old news – it was planned in February.



PLEASE PICK UP AFTER YOUR DOG!

The council has **yet again** received several complaints about dog mess not being picked up. VWHDC Environmental Wardens will be asked to patrol in the parish and can issue **penalty fines** for offending owners. Please help to keep this parish tidy and mess-free by picking up after your dog and placing the mess in the bins provided.

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

Following the past period of lock-down, is this the start of the New Normal?

I hope has everyone kept safe during the lockdown and now enjoying the slight loosening of the controls, with the opportunity to spend more time outdoors.



Health services in Oxfordshire

A&E: The Emergency Departments at the John Radcliffe and Horton General Hospitals are **still open 24/7 to anyone who becomes ill with serious health conditions** including stroke, heart conditions, difficulty breathing, unconsciousness, or heavy bleeding. People should be reassured that systems are in place to triage patients with suspected COVID-19, so everyone who comes to hospital will be treated in a safe manner. For **other worrying health concerns that are not an emergency please contact your GP practice**; they are open and will be able to give advice and support over the phone in the first instance. The national advice **for people who think they may have COVID-19 is to visit NHS 111 online and self-isolate for seven days**. We urge people to please **seek help if you need it**. Avoiding medical care can lead to reduced recovery rates, and can even prove to be fatal.



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Vaccination appointments: While preventing the spread of COVID-19 is a public health priority, it is still vital that people go to scheduled vaccination appointments to stop outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases, and to protect vulnerable groups including children, babies and pregnant women. All scheduled vaccination appointments such as **baby and child immunisations** should **go ahead as normal** as long as **everyone** attending is well and isn't suffering from COVID-19 symptoms or is sharing a household with someone who is self-isolating because they are displaying symptoms. If you have any concerns about attending vaccination appointments because of the coronavirus please speak to your GP practice or Health Visitor.

Road repairs still rolling

Miles of Oxfordshire road are getting a new lease of life as work to deliver the county council's massive spring and summer list of repairs is continuing apace. Having just completed 110 miles of surface dressing across the county, our road crews are now turning their attention to structural patching projects, including A417 Challow Road, Wantage.

There is also a programme of safety schemes starting in mid-May to resurface roads including A4185 Rowstock Roundabout

Transport and Infrastructure work will be key to the country's economic recovery and this work is all part of the county council's promised £32m repair pledge. Although the use of the roads has fallen dramatically in recent weeks, safety-related problems with public highways, such as potholes, can still be directly to the county council via

fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/.

Libraries open for online business

While our library buildings may be closed, we want to remind residents **our digital library service is very much open for business**. We are offering **1000s** of eBooks, eAudio, newspapers and magazines to borrow for free and we've even got a music streaming service, with over **60,000 albums**. Residents can get involved and discover everything on offer at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/libraries. We'd also encourage them to head over to our [Oxfordshire Libraries' Facebook page](#) for our weekly Bloomin' good book club and songs and stories to entertain the younger members of the family from our fantastic library service team.

Emergency Active Travel Fund – For Cycling and Walking

You may be aware of the recent announcement by the Secretary of State for Transport for a £250 million emergency active travel fund for local authorities across England, alongside fast-tracked statutory guidance for managing road networks to encourage active travel (cycling and walking) and enable safe social distancing.

(continued on page 9)

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Although we are yet to know the exact funding allocation for Oxfordshire County Council, I am aware of the many ideas and proposals already being brought forward and the County Council will be collating proposals to consider the potential options across the County.

I am supporting all the villages in my division, including proposals from Sustainable Harwell amongst others locally, and hope to see some investment in our area.



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Local Economy and Business

District and City Council colleagues are continuing to work incredibly hard to communicate and action the significant changes that are being developed by Government to support residents, the economy and businesses through COVID-19.

A recent key focus for our district council and city council colleagues has been on actively contacting businesses that are yet to submit their details for grant support in response to COVID-19, including those who already receive 100 percent rate relief. If you are aware of any business that may benefit from funding support and has yet to apply, please point them towards the local council website. Here they can find more information, confirm their eligibility for a Business Grant and apply.

The link for the District is : [Vale of White Horse District Council](#)

Self-employed people in urgent need of financial assistance are being advised by the Government to apply for Universal Credit and Council Tax Reduction. This will provide them with support until a grant for the self-employed becomes available in June.

Scam awareness for business



At a time when Oxfordshire businesses are already facing challenges posed by COVID-19, the proliferation of related scams directly targeting business is adding further strain. We are supporting [Businesses Against Scams](#), a new element of the successful [Friends Against Scams](#) initiative, run by National Trading Standards. They provide free online training to protect and prevent businesses, employees and customers from becoming victims of scams. Please help us to promote this initiative.

Full Council

Democracy in Oxfordshire has passed a **landmark moment** with committee meetings being staged electronically for the first time ever, and our first virtual Full Council meeting took place on Monday 4 May at 10:30.

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



Oxfordshire age UK

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.

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Use new fast-track reporting for suspicious emails



Scam emails, one of life's most tiresome phenomena, are becoming so smooth and sophisticated that even computer experts can be deceived by them, and the rest of us are in constant danger of being taken for a ride. There is no need to feel isolated with the problem, though. If you are suspicious of an email or simply unsure, you can use a new, dedicated reporting service which is very quick and convenient: forward the email to report@phishing.gov.uk and the National Cyber Security Centre (NCSC) will investigate it.

How does a scam email work? The usual methods are persuading you to divulge sensitive information, like bank details, or urging you to click on certain links. If you click on those links, you could be directed to an unsafe website which might download viruses on your computer or steal your passwords or data.

It's crucial to bear in mind that a scam email is designed in such a way as to get you to act quickly and without thinking, so **NEVER** give way to that pressure.

How do you spot a phishing email? This is very tricky, since many of them look just like the real thing. Scammers are quite capable of producing professional quality graphic design with pleasant pastel colours, for example. This makes the email look authoritative and trustworthy and thoroughly up to date.

However, and fortunately for us, if you examine a scam email carefully it will reveal its true nature. Remember these key points:

First, it is very **unlikely to be a message you are expecting**.

Second, **the language of most scam emails has an uncompromising toughness** that isn't characteristic of the average business email. It might try to rush you into making a decision or threaten you with legal action or financial losses, telling you that you have to act right away to avoid them. The email might claim to be from a bank, a government department or the Inland Revenue, perhaps saying that a warrant has been issued for your arrest.

The email could also be from a **company that doesn't normally contact you** or from an organisation that you normally deal with in a different way, e.g. TV Licensing or the district council - which, it might strike you, have never emailed you before.

Beware too of **topical scams**: an email might offer you a cure for coronavirus or encourage you to donate to a related cause.

Always **check the sender's email address** because this is the only part of the message which can't be beautified. There will be something peculiar about it for sure. For instance, it might be extremely long and complicated with lots of numbers and letters, or the country code might be unfamiliar.

If you are in any doubt, **don't open the email** and **don't click on any of its links**, but forward it right away to report@phishing.gov.uk. The NCSC says it acts on **every** message received, analysing it and the dubious websites it links to. Government specialists can then block the criminal's email address and instruct hosting companies to remove the websites from the Internet. For essential reading see <https://www.ncsc.gov.uk/information/report-suspicious-emails> or ring Citizens Advice Adviceline on **0300 330 9042**.



Harwell Gardeners Club



There will be no meetings of Harwell Gardeners' Club during June, July and August this year.

In lieu of looking at other people's lovely gardens which is what we do in the summer months we suggest that you nurture all that is beautiful in your own gardens, whether it be a cultivated plant, a cheeky little wildflower that has found a space to put down roots or some fruits, vegetables and herbs that will give you the freshest of flavours and lots of goodness with no travel miles. Time spent pottering in your garden will do a lot to help our mental health in these troubling times as many gardeners will know.

Chilton Garden Centre is now open with social distancing so if you haven't managed to grow your own you can top up with some plants from there.

We have our own page on Facebook called [Harwell Gardeners' Club](#) where anyone can ask for advice on gardening matters. Just ask to be a member and one of us will do our best to advise you. Garden Club members will soon be posting photos of their gardens on this site and anyone else is welcome to join us too.

Take care of yourselves, everyone, stay alert and go no further than your garden unless you really have to.

Janice Markey, Chairman, Harwell Gardeners' Club jvmarkey@googlemail.com

News from Sustainable Harwell



Cycling and Walking

The results from the cycling survey conducted in the village have been analysed. Over 100 responses show clearly that people want to be able to cycle more around the village and into Didcot but they are concerned about the danger of doing so, including poor road surfaces, worries about traffic and the lack of joined-up cycle routes. The cycling group presented the findings and recommendations recently to members of the Parish Council as well as Harwell's



councillors from The Vale of the White Horse and Oxfordshire County Council. More detail can be seen on our website [here](#). The number of people using bikes has increased notably during the coronavirus pandemic and with the recent government announcement that £2billion is being made available to promote cycling and walking as the lockdown is eased, it seems like the time is right to make improvements.

Lobbying for New Houses to be more Sustainable



Given the interest in the cycling survey, this group has decided to run a similar on-line survey about the many new properties which are being planned to be built in and around Harwell over the coming years. We would very much like to understand everyone's view about how energy efficient and environmentally friendly people think these houses should be. The findings will help guide our activities in the future. The anonymous survey is now live and will remain open throughout June. The survey takes about 2 minutes to complete and we hope you will take part and tell us what you think. You can access the survey on our website [here](#). Please encourage your family and friends to take part as well if it is relevant to them, and forward the link to them. We are interested to hear everyone's viewpoint and gather as much data as possible.

Tree-planting

We have lots of ideas for greening up the village by planting trees and hedgerows that will capture carbon, make our air cleaner and provide cover and nesting places for all sorts of wildlife. We will shortly be ordering whips and saplings that will be planted out in November. Some will be planted at Harwell School and others will hopefully be put on the Recreation Ground and various locations around the village as we ascertain suitable sites and work with land owners.



If you feel that you know of any suitable spaces for trees or for hedgerows, be it large or small, do let us know. Similarly if you would like to help plant the whips and saplings in November **send us your contact details** and we will be in touch later in the year with you. We welcome supervised children to this project as well as adults who are up for digging lots of big holes! In addition if you have any young trees that have seeded themselves in your gardens that you would like to nurture on until November and then donate to the project that is also a great contribution.

Next Sustainable Harwell Meeting is Weds 3rd June at 7:30

Come and join us at the next Sustainable Harwell meeting which will be held on-line via Zoom. We held our April meeting remotely with Zoom, and it went very well, and by now hopefully many of you are comfortable with using Zoom and attending meetings remotely. In addition to hearing more about the activities of the group the meeting will feature a talk by **Ian Pritchard**, Managing Director of Greencore Construction, who will be talking about building low carbon homes locally in Oxfordshire. This is a focus for one of our sub-groups and we hope this talk will be relevant to residents of Harwell, with so many new houses to be built nearby in coming years. We'll send out the zoom link to all on our mailing list. If you want to be added to the list, **please email us at sustainable@harwellvillage.uk**. We look forward to seeing you.

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Little Pippins Pre-School



As you are well aware, the last couple of months have been a difficult and strange time for us all. Little Pippins closed to all but children of Keyworkers and vulnerable families in March and has since been supporting our children and their families remotely.

The staff team have used social media and virtual platforms to reach out to our families and provide support as needed, including ideas for activities and feedback on what the children have been up to at home. We were even able to hold a social distancing Easter Bonnet competition and had 27 entrants, which was amazing. Those who

took part, uploaded a picture to Tapestry of the making and the end result modelled by the child. A certificate and small chocolate treat was sent out to all the children who took part.

Regular emails have been sent to keep families up to date with the changes in government guidelines, all of which has led us to the most recent announcement on 10th May. As a result of these new guidelines, and at the time of writing, **Little Pippins will be reopening on June 1st 2020.**

We have organised changes to procedures in the setting to ensure the safest environment for our returning children, their parents and our members of staff. Going forward, the safety of our staff, children and their families is our highest priority, so we can continue to offer stimulating and engaging sessions which are still fun and inspiring, where the children can thrive alongside their friends.

Allocation of places for September 2020

We will soon be allocating the places for September 2020. Our apologies for the delay to those of you who have already registered your child and are waiting to hear from us. We are reviewing the guidance from the government on reopening and group sizes and looking at how the changes will affect our pre-school both now and for September.

Changes to 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)

Fees for unfunded sessions from 1st September 2020

Breakfast Club: £5.80 (£4.80 for siblings)
Unfunded pre-school sessions: 3&4 year olds £15.00, 2 year olds £17.50.

The Pippins management committee would like to extend their thanks to Sam, Brenda, Vicky and the fantastic staff team for their continued hard work during this uncertain time.

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
Laura Norton, Committee Chair



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- Other errands – just ask!



GWP COVID-19
Community Support Group

If you live in Great Western Park and require any support with access to supplies, or are likely to require help, please contact us on the details below and a volunteer will provide free help and support.

Text: (+44) 07520642520
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.
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Harwell Primary School

I want to say a huge thank you to everyone who has helped our pupils continue with their learning during these challenging times: those of you within the wider village community who responded to Nick Ray's plea for laptops, which has enabled us to ensure all our children can access their learning from home; our children who have engaged enthusiastically; my dedicated staff, and especially, parents. As a parent of primary-aged children myself, I know only too well the challenges of juggling work whilst home-schooling at the same time!

Our efforts to continually improve the facilities for our children continue and a new projector, screen and speakers have recently been installed in the school hall (social distance guidelines followed) with the support of the **Harwell School Association**.

Earlier this year, we took delivery of a new and more flexible stage system funded by a mix of grants and monies from Harwell Village Hall, GOBO Theatre and the school. The stage has already been used by the school, The Harwellian Club and, in the Village Hall, for the joint Little Pippins and Harwell School Ball. We are immensely grateful to **GOBO Theatre** for helping to source the stage, raise funds and successfully apply for grants, and to the **Village Hall** for helping.

Looking forward, we have had confirmation that we will be welcoming a **full class** into our Foundation class in the next academic year.

The end of the academic year will also see us saying goodbye. Our **Year 6 pupils** will move onto their new senior schools with our warm wishes as confident, capable young people.

We will also say a very fond farewell to **Athene Miller** as she leaves us to start enjoying her retirement. Athene has been a teacher for 40 years - a real achievement. At Harwell, she taught Foundation Class and in more recent years, parents have known her as our **Special Needs Coordinator**. She has been an important part of the success of the school and I would like to recognise her dedication to the school and towards all the children she has come into contact with, both at Harwell and in her previous schools. When we are able to do so, we plan to hold a celebratory tea and cakes afternoon for pupils and parents (both past and present) to wish her well. Details to follow.

Warm regards,

Bryn Gibson, Headteacher, Harwell Primary School

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Harwell WI

We might have been in lockdown, but Harwell WI has continued to function in one way or another.

Our Committee has continued to meet and to plan and we have offered telephone support to our members. Fortunately, most seem to have strong networks of family and friends to rely on.

We are also continuing to produce our monthly 'Snapshot', to keep everyone informed.

Also continuing is the monthly magazine, '**News and Views**', from the Oxfordshire Federation. This has moved online. The Federation is offering **events on Zoom** with speakers and the opportunity to ask them questions after the talk. Some of us have taken advantage of this – most recently learning about 'Life in London'.



Our **Knit 'n' Natter** group has gone virtual, too, using Zoom on Monday evenings.

Many of us have taken to our sewing machines to produce laundry bags for NHS staff and care homes, including Abingdon Court.

If you were exercising in the village on **VE Day**, you may have seen the bunting we put up outside the Village Hall, with images from WWII.

We have also collected memories of the original VE Day Celebrations from some of our members, which we will be circulating amongst our wider membership.

Even though it looks as though it will be some time before we can all gather in the Village Hall again, we can still be grateful for the opportunities that the WI offers in this time.

For further information about us and our activities: please call our Secretary on **01235 835430**. We also have a website - harwellwi.org; and an email address – harwellwi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk.

Coronavirus: Get help if you can't pay household bills



The arrival of coronavirus in the UK and the threat of infection has emptied streets, confined us in our houses, closed shops and offices and filled hospitals with thousands of patients. So far so bad, but the financial issues have widened the scale of the problem: many of those fortunate enough to remain healthy have suffered a loss of income so drastic that even the paying of essential household bills has become questionable.

However, there are definite steps you can take to tackle these bills. Many banks and utility companies, being keenly aware of people's predicaments, have already reached out to their customers with offers of help. So don't ignore your bills but **get in touch** with the companies to whom you owe money, or expect to owe money. They might be able to help by redistributing your debts, letting you pay in smaller amounts, over a longer time period, or on a deferred basis.

If you are repaying a mortgage, **contact your provider**. The government has mooted the idea of a three-month mortgage payment holiday and you might be eligible for it.

If you pay rent, **contact your landlord** to discuss the situation. If you are at risk of being evicted, remember that since 26 March 2020 the law on evictions has temporarily changed and, for many types of tenancy, eviction notices have to last a minimum of **three months**.

You might be able to **claim benefits**, or **enhanced benefits** if you already receive them. The Citizens Advice website has details: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk>

As for Council Tax, if your income has dropped or you are on benefits, you might qualify for reductions. **Contact your local district council**, using the details on your latest bill.

Get in touch with your **gas or electricity supplier**, as well as **telephone/broadband** company. Their help line phone numbers should be on your latest bill. They can tell you whether a special payment plan can be set up.

If you owe income tax, **HMRC has a free help line** you can ring: **0800 015 9559** (Mon-Fri 8 to 4).

For further information, **Citizens Advice Adviceline** is always there to help you: **0300 330 9042**.

Harwell Parish History Group

Members have been beavering away online with research; here are some of the results!

The Battle of Britain 80th Anniversary

From mid-July to the end of October 1940, this occurred because Hitler intended a sea-borne invasion of Britain. German naval leaders told him that, in crossing the Channel, they could cope with the Royal Navy but not the Royal Navy and the Royal Air Force together. Thus the Luftwaffe tried to disable the RAF before the planned invasion. Our poster and display of cartoons in the Village Hall will remain until well after lock-down is lightened.

Meanwhile, David Drummond writes:

"During the Battle of Britain, RAF Harwell was bombed twice by German raiders on the night of 16/17 August 1940 causing the loss of two petrol bowsers, three Wellington bombers and seven casualties, two fatal. A further raid on 19 August destroyed another three Wellington bombers. The last raid during the Battle of Britain was on 26 August near the bomb dump and it caused the death of six RAF personnel and injuries to 10 civilians employed at the aerodrome.



Ted Lay was born in Harwell and he had an aunt at Little Massett (a house near The Packhorse pub, Milton Hill) when a German bomber dropped a stick of bombs. The first one landed in her back garden, the next one near the junction opposite the Packhorse, the third one at Milton Hill and the last one near the railway line. The bomber was aiming for 3 Maintenance Unit, RAF Milton (now the Milton Trading Estate)."

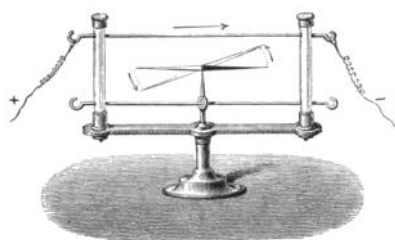
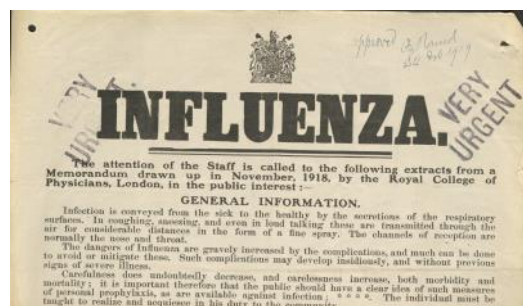
RAF Harwell and D-Day

The first product of research on the Harwell site is a lovely film short by Karen Carey combining footage related to D-Day preparations at RAF Harwell with the schoolboy reminiscences of Norman Staples. This can be found on <https://vimeo.com/412749658/> and on the [Harwell Village Community Facebook page](#).

Harwell History on Harwell Village Community Facebook page

As requested, we have started to put documents on Harwell's history on Facebook. Do look, comment and send queries. We have noted that long posts (for example, the will of Frances Geering, founder of the Almshouses) receive fewer viewings!

We were asked via Facebook **how the influenza pandemic of 1918 – 20 affected the village?** The pandemic globally came in 3 waves. The relevant village burial records run: 1917:5; 1918:5; **1919: 15**; 1920:4; 1921:6, showing a **spike in 1919**. Of those who died in 1919, the youngest was 56 but several were in their 80s – consistent with the disease hitting the older and weaker. Unfortunately, burial records do not list the **cause** of death. Interestingly, the minutes of neither the Trustees of the Geering Almshouses nor of the Parish Council make any specific mention of influenza. The latter do ask the Overseers of the Poor for a precept towards the cost of burials, and convey very deeply felt condolences to Dr. Richard Rice on the death of his wife Alexandra – but the cause of her death is not named. Issues of those local newspapers which reported on Harwell most fully in 1918 - 1920 are unfortunately not yet digitized. We have to await the re-opening of the Oxford Record Office to consult them on microfilm. So we have added this to our to-do list!



Electromagnetism

Mike Jewess had been asked to create a poster of the discovery, 200 years ago, of the relationship between electricity and magnetism by Hans Christian Oersted (1777-1851). This relationship forms the basis of telecommunications and the electric motor. Owing to the closure of the Village Hall, he has instead made a 9-minute demonstration video, exceptionally clear in its explanation:

<https://youtu.be/Dm9cBxgST30>.

Harwell's crusading lord of the manor: Reynald/Renaud/Reginald I of St. Valery/St. Walery

We now know that he accompanied, c.1156/7, one of many minor expeditions. Like much of his career, this tied in with his close links to the Counts of Anjou, one of whom fathered Henry II (1155-88) and one of whom became King of Jerusalem. Reynald took charge of a key fortress in the crusade state of Antioch c. 1160-62. His grandfather, father and grandson were crusaders but did not hold Harwell manors. The father took part in the bloody and infamous massacre by which the crusaders seized Jerusalem in 1099 - an atrocity which resonated for centuries. The grandson, on good terms with Richard I (1188-99), died at the siege of Acre in 1191 on the Third Crusade. A full display will be put up as soon as the Village Hall re-opens.

Grateful thanks to Karen, Mike, Dave – and to Kath Luker for uploading our material onto Facebook, and forwarding questions.

Jane M. Card harwellhistorygroup@gmail.com



BBOWT - Sutton Courtenay Environmental Education Centre

Sutton Courtenay Environmental Education Centre:

Online resources, activities and competitions

Sadly we are unable to run events onsite at the education centre at present, but there are still lots of ways you and your family can enjoy and learn about nature at home. The Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust have a huge range of materials you can access online. Read on for competitions, ideas, free resources and to sign up for our annual 30 Days Wild Challenge!

- If you're looking for fun projects to do at home why not enter our **'Wild About Nature' competition**? With 3 age categories spanning **0-18 years** and some fantastic prizes there is a chance for children of all ages to get involved. Tell us why you are Wild About Nature in your own way – write a poem, paint a picture, take a photo, tell a story – it's up to you! Deadline for submissions is 7th June. <https://www.bbowt.org.uk/competition>
- BBOWT sends out our **Family Fun Newsletter** every week with ideas to keep you busy, particularly suitable for children of primary school age. [Sign up here](#)
- If you have **children aged 0-12** at home, find some lovely ideas for **nature activities, crafts and sensory play** on our **Pinterest page**. Follow us to keep up to date with ideas and do leave us comments and photos so we know what you've enjoyed! <https://www.pinterest.co.uk/bbowtlearnoxon>
- Keep up to date with everything that's going on at BBOWT including activities and local wildlife updates on **Facebook @bbowwildlifetrust** ; **Twitter @BBOWT** or **Instagram BBOWT**
- BBOWT is part of The Wildlife Trusts. Access more materials on their dedicated **children's website: WildlifeWatch** <https://www.wildlifewatch.org.uk>
- June is the month to Go Wild! Sign up for The Wildlife Trust's annual **30 Day's Wild Challenge** – can you complete one random act of wildness every day for a month? When you sign up you'll receive a special pack of materials to help you. Find out more [here!](#)

For more information please head to our website: www.bbowt.org.uk

Sutton Courtenay Environmental Education Centre,
Sutton Courtenay Road, Didcot, Oxon, OX14 4TE



The Orchard Film Club

Covid-19 Update

Dear Film-lovers,

Government guidance looks like allowing cinemas to reopen in July, but as we don't yet have clear guidance on what measures we might need to put in place, we don't have a date for our next film for you yet, and we will also need to wait and see what Harwell Village Hall say about when they will reopen. We hope to be able to see you again by September.

For updates, please sign up for our 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, hopefully not before too long.
Stay safe and keep well, with best wishes from Alison, Martin and Janice.



Click on logo for website

share your warmth



Click on logo for website

What your generous donations have made possible

In February and March of this year, Sir Muir Gray, Age UK Oxfordshire and Active Oxfordshire launched the "Share your Warmth" campaign. The campaign was the brainchild of Sir Muir Gray, who asked older people who receive a winter fuel payment that they do not need to keep them warm in winter to donate it to help promote physical activity and prevent loneliness for older people in Oxfordshire.

Together, everyone who donated managed to raise the astonishing amount of **£7,600**, which has been of enormous value in helping Age UK Oxfordshire to respond to the Coronavirus pandemic.

The virus has particularly affected older people, who are no longer able to attend their usual **exercise class** or participate in **physical activity**. Age UK Oxfordshire has been able to use the money raised to adapt to the current situation and provide exercise opportunities in a **new way** for older people. The donations have been vital and have enabled us to:

- Make (film, edit and publish online) **5 new specialist home exercise films** designed for local older people to improve their strength and balance whilst in isolation. It is incredibly important to remain physically active, to prevent deconditioning of muscles, help mental wellbeing and also to give a focus to the day. These films are available on our [website](#) and Youtube channel and have had **14,283** views to date (21/05/20)
- Print and distribute **1,000 tailored home exercise dvd packs** to older Oxfordshire residents who don't have access to the internet
- Make **3,290 friendly calls** to older people focused on alleviating loneliness and promoting exercise and wellbeing.



Sir Muir Gray said: 'Since the campaign started, a new pandemic has emerged which makes the need for activity, particularly in groups even more important – it is the pandemic of inactivity and isolation resulting from lockdown. Now we do need to keep distant to reduce the risk of that very nasty virus which is the cause of the first pandemic but only now has the problem caused by social distancing been recognised, by the prime Minister no less.'



Penny Thewlis, CEO of Age UK Oxfordshire said: 'We are hugely grateful to Sir Muir Gray for initiating this campaign and to everyone who donated so generously. When the campaign was launched, of course we had no idea that we would be facing a pandemic. In the event, the

donations allowed us to move very swiftly to create a series of tailored home exercise opportunities and we have been delighted by the uptake.'

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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 August issue should be sent by 15th July 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

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Harwell News edited by

Alison Fautley



Citizens Advice Oxfordshire South and Vale We are still here to help

We are no longer able to offer face to face appointments from our Advice Centres.

But you will be able to talk to our advisers on the telephone.

Advice Line: 0300 330 9042

Monday to Friday 9.00 am - 5.00 pm

For general advice please visit our website Citizensadvice.org.uk



Self-Isolating?
You are not alone.

HARWELL HELPERS

If Covid-19 has left you in need or feeling unsafe and housebound, let us try to lighten the load. We are not a business, nor looking to take work from businesses. We are just a neighbourly helping-hand.

Happy to help with:

- Shopping collection
- Running errands
- Prescription pick-ups
- Referring services
- Spiritual help
- Or even just a chat

PLEASE GET IN TOUCH

harwellcovid19@gmail.com
07375829602

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)