

The Harwell News

www.harwellparish.co.uk

The Show Must Go Online!



Youth theatres are a large part of many young people's lives – a weekly opportunity to play in a way that might

be forgotten since young childhood, yet focused by the passionate people who run them. They build **confidence**, encourage good **team-work**, **communication** and **problem-solving** in a way that any workplace management would be envious of. And they manage that in a way that is fun-filled and friendship-fuelled. But how does all that continue in lockdown? One might think it was tricky with such an interactive, physical and tactile hobby.

But fortunately, here at Gobo Theatre, we managed it: running weekly Zoom sessions in just the same way as live ones – 4 tutors working simultaneously with different age groups, rotating the students around **acting, singing and dancing**. Rehearsals for the current show "**Dorothy in Wonderland**" continued apace, despite the production date itself having to be delayed. In the meantime we filled that gap with even more possibilities. We did a **Q&A** with the American author of Dorothy, we sent everyone branded **t-shirts** to make them feel more connected and one thing we worked on during the thick of lockdown was a song called "**The Show Must Go Online**" – the title number from a show of the same name produced by New York company Beat by Beat Press. If you would like to watch it, please search **Gobo Theatre in YouTube**, it should come up. It took 6 hours of recording the 7-17 year olds and 3 weeks of editing that into a 2 minute video, so it was a lot of work, but we're really proud of the result, and the students for how **brave** they had to be each singing solo to us in their computer. It was very strange for them, but after a bit of coaching they did **amazingly**. As the song says "The show must go on. Online".

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The Show Must Go Online! *(continued from page 1)*

We also did an extra online Summer production, because so few people were off on Summer holidays. This was called “**Virtually Ever After**” – essentially videocalls between various fairytale characters. It’s a very funny show. This is still in the editing room but we’ll let the village know when we’re going to air that one – we’d love for you to watch and **support the kids**.

I also feel the whole process of going online has helped us get to know many of the students better, and that they also understand their own performing abilities better - there’s no hiding behind a group when you’re on your own in your bedroom! Could this be the start of something new, a new way to help coax some young people into an area they’ve never tried before, even now lockdown is over? Although we’re back in the flesh now, we’re continuing to teach acting grades for LAMDA Examinations online as it just works for everybody – these are smaller more **intense** sessions and means no one has to travel for it and costs can be kept lower with no venue to hire.

It is wonderful to all be back together the past couple of weeks however. It’s been full of challenges (definitely lots of the problem-solving that is key to a theatre brain!), even fuller of **cleaning**, and everyone is having to adapt to the changes, as with everywhere else in life, but it feels so good to be being creative together in a more connected way again.



We’ve always got the windows open, and are often working outside, so if you hear faint sounds (they shouldn’t be too loud, apart from the music maybe - raising voices is meant to be a no-no as far as Covid restrictions go!) drifting out of the village hall then I hope you feel a **warm-glow** knowing that there are happy bubbles of students and tutors **learning, creating and having fun**.

Amy Scott, Gobo Theatre, Putting Young Talent Centre Stage

www.gobothatre.co.uk



The Hive Market comes to Harwell on Sunday 25th October



The Hive Market is a collective of independent traders and has been running in the Hendreds for nearly two years.

The Hive Hut has been working with Sustainable Harwell, bringing plastic free refills to the village until lockdown changed plans slightly. They are behind the market organisation, focusing on reducing travel and our carbon footprint by encouraging us all to shop locally.



We are pleased to announce that **The Hive Market is coming to Harwell**, and the first event will be on **Sunday 25th October from 10 - 2pm at the Rec**.

There will be food and drink, arts and crafts, The Hive Mobile Refill and Eco Shop and some fantastic street food.

The Harwellian will also be open for refreshments. All compliance for Covid events adhered too.

If you are interested in a stand or being a trader then **contact the market** through Facebook on [@hivemarketOX12](https://www.facebook.com/hivemarketOX12)

Bring your own bags, and sanitiser and the venue will be announced on Facebook through Sustainable Harwell and the Hive Market in due course (arrangements are being made now). Please ensure you follow the latest government guidance for the event, which will be updated on the event page nearer the time. Thank you

For any more info please email penny.kinloch@outlook.com or contact

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Your Ultimate You



MP David Johnston's message for Harwell News

I spent the parliamentary recess visiting as many individuals and organisations as I could. I met with the founders of **innovative companies** like Rosemor and Aquobex, whose cleaning and flooding solutions respectively attract custom from around the world. I visited **hotels** like the Bear and Milton Hill House, hotels being one of the sectors of the economy that has been particularly badly hit by lockdown, with some people being more reluctant to return to their previous way of life. At **gyms** like tfd Health and Fitness and Fitness Space people are keen to get back their previous way of life – and as a gym-goer myself I understand them! – they just have to book in advance and adhere to a higher standard of hygiene than perhaps they did previously. No bad thing, in my book.



At Farmer Gow's I saw not just what a great **family day out** the farm is for young and old, but also met the proprietors of successful businesses that Anne Gow has as tenants on the site, from LissieLou, the cake decoration business, to Bark and Berry Dog Grooming and the Oxford Yurt, a pretty impressive glamping site – I've never been glamping myself, but if you like doing so I'd check them out. I was pleased to make my first visit to the Westmill Wind and Solar Farm and delighted they were successful in their bid for Government funding for a **new visitors' centre** that will increase the number of visitors 6-fold.

Along the way there were lots of other independent businesses, like Didcot Glass and Glazing, Emma's Vintage Style, 30 Something and Bob's Butchers. Charities too, like Children Heard and Seen, which supports the children of prisoners – more on that in a future column. On my Facebook page ([davidjohnston4wantage](https://www.facebook.com/davidjohnston4wantage)) you'll see I've started '**three questions**' with the owners of different organisations to spread the word about organisations people might not have heard of.

On my week off, we went to the Lake District, but unfortunately I crocked my knee on a crag and am currently on crutches! It's my first real experience of having restricted mobility and it does bring home quite how many places are **inaccessible** for those who need to use crutches or a wheelchair to get around, something I've understood only theoretically before. Parliament is probably one of the worst examples, although I'm grateful I've temporarily been given an office nearer to the House of Commons to reduce the walking I have to do. As ever, if I can help with anything then do get in touch via david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk

How what3words can help us #KnowExactlyWhere



what3words is now used by **80% of the emergency services** in the UK and has helped to locate nearly 4,000 incidents since it first started being used. It can also be used to help us locate incidents more easily.

Their system has given every 3m square in the world a **unique identifier** made of 3 words - making the location of any emergency or incident very easy to describe and share. For example `///tortoises.swarm.announce` will take you to a precise location on Ben Nevis where, in February 2020, a group of hikers were rescued.

To report an incident using what3words:

1. Download the free what3words app [here](#)
2. When you are at the location of the incident open the app and

tap the arrow icon for current location

3. Share with us, the 3 words displayed at the top of the screen

4. You can also use the photo icon to take a picture of the incident and it will automatically add its what3words address. Make sure you have it downloaded on your phone and know how to use it, to help you have it to hand if you should come across an incident.

You can find a full list of those services that accept what3words [here](#). You can also use what3words to report incidents with organisations like National Grid, Network Rail and the Environmental Agency—click [here](#) for more information.



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Hello from Hayleigh and Sarah - Coronavirus Update from your Local District Councillors, Tuesday 15th September 2020



Hello! We hope that you and your families are keeping safe and well, now that children are back at school and more people are returning to their workplaces. Although it feels as though things are returning to normal, many residents are still feeling the impact of coronavirus in one way or another. **If you or someone you know is struggling**, please reach out for help: the council's Community Support Hub is still available, see contact details below. There is also new **emergency assistance funding** available from the council for voluntary and community groups who are helping those in need. On that note, a huge thank you to the [Harwell Helpers](#) and the [Great Western Park COVID-19 Community Support Group](#) for your essential support for local residents throughout the past few months. It is great to hear that both groups are now planning for the longer term and working on setting up Community Larder / Fridge schemes.

Now more than ever is the time to **support local independent small businesses** as much as possible, as they have been some of the hardest hit in recent months and there are still difficult financial times ahead. It was great to see residents back enjoying meals and drinks at the Hart of Harwell during the August "Eat Out To Help Out" scheme, so please do continue to support this lovely local pub, the village shops, farm shops and other local suppliers as much as you can. Shopping locally is also better for the **environment**, particularly when it comes to locally grown, produced or sourced products, as they have travelled far fewer miles to get to your doorstep. Speaking of the environment, we would like to thank **Sustainable Harwell** for their excellent work – considering they formed just over a year ago, they are already making a huge difference: surveys on housing and cycling, lobbying local government on cycle routes, bringing a sustainability motion to the Annual Parish Meeting...to name just a few of their recent activities! We are looking forward to their events in the coming months – including the **Hive eco-friendly market** at the rec on **25th October**, and **tree planting** at Harwell School in **November**.

As always, we will keep you updated on council matters and the council's response to COVID-19 through these newsletter articles, as well as on 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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COVID-19 Community Support Hub

Whilst we don't know how long the UK's response to and recovery from COVID-19 will take, we do know it's likely to be some time. One of the roles of the Community Hub when it was first set up was to help provide vital support to shielded residents (along with others who also need support), and even though the [guidelines for those shielding has changed](#), we want all of our residents to know we're still here to provide support and advice. The hours have changed due to demand, so it's no longer open over the weekends and now reflects standard office hours of **Monday to Thursday 8.30-5pm** and **Friday 8.30-4.30pm**. A summary of the number of COVID-19 cases across Oxfordshire, broken down to district level, is available on the following website and will be updated on a weekly basis each Wednesday: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stophespread.

To contact the Community Support Team:

call: 01235 422 600 Monday to Thursday 8.30-5pm and Fridays 8.30-4.30pm

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

Harwell Cycling Update – B4493 Proposed Roundabout Design

A brief update following on from our last newsletter article regarding the proposed design of the B4493 roundabout between Harwell and Didcot, as part of the plans for the Valley Park development. Since then we have called meetings with the planning officers at the Vale and the highways officers at the County Council, and we are pleased to learn that the **design of the roundabout is now being reviewed**. We will provide a further update when more information is available, so please watch this space.

In wider cycling news, staff and councillors at the Vale have been taking part in "Cycle September" – a global event with a friendly competitive element, to help more people realise the benefits of riding a bike. More information can be found on <https://www.lovetoride.net/uk>. If you took part in this yourself, or if you would like to spread the word about your favourite cycling routes around the local area, we would love to hear from you.

One of our favourite local routes for cycling is along the Harwell link road, with its dedicated cycle path separated from the road, and beautiful views of the Didcot/Harwell landscape and Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. We are however, continuing to push for **better cycle provision in and around Harwell**, particularly given that the Active Travel plans that the County Council are working on across Oxfordshire still don't specifically include plans for this area: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/active-travel>

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Car Park charges – Vale Cabinet puts local business recovery first

To support local businesses recovering from COVID-19, and spite of having their own longer-term financial pressures, Vale of White Horse District Council's Cabinet members unanimously agreed to **retain two hours free parking across the district**. This is to ensure that town centre shops and cafes can continue to benefit from the scheme while they recover from the pandemic.

Vale Cabinet Re-organisation

Leader of the Council, Cllr Emily Smith has made some changes to the Vale's Cabinet that came into effect on 1 September. You can read her public statement on the changes on our website [here](#). The new cabinet

member responsibilities are below:

- Councillor Emily Smith: Council Leader
- Councillor Debby Hallett: Deputy Council Leader and Corporate Services and Transformation
- Councillor Andy Crawford: Finance and Corporate Assets
- Councillor Neil Fawcett: Strategic Partnerships and Place
- Councillor Helen Pighills: Healthy Communities
- Councillor Judy Roberts: Development and Infrastructure
- Councillor Bethia Thomas: Community Engagement
- Councillor Catherine Webber: Climate Emergency and Environment

Planning for the Future consultation

The government has started its **consultation** to overhaul the planning system and reform the way development is allowed. Its stated aims are to streamline processes, achieve community engagement early in the process and increase the use of **technology** in consultation and provide **interactive maps**, so it is more open and transparent. It suggests the reforms will drive our economic recovery, help build green, high quality homes and develop a framework of national green **infrastructure standards**.

Proposals include:

- a 30% discount to homes sold through the First Homes system with an emphasis on key workers
- scrapping Section 106 agreements and introducing a new National Infrastructure Levy, with local decision making on infrastructure spending.
- every area across England will have a Local Plan and can develop design guidance and/or codes, which will be binding on development decisions
- strengthening planning enforcement and sanctions through a rule-based system.

There is a lot of discussion in the press about the proposed reforms, but we encourage you to read the consultation paper, link below, and get your comments to the Government by the **deadline, 29 October 2020**.

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/907647/MHCLG-Planning-Consultation.pdf

Note from the editor: also see p11 regarding the planning consultation

COMMUNITY COFFEE MORNINGS

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CHARITY NUMBER 1157858

Harwell Parish Council



There was an extra Parish Council meeting in **August**, using Zoom as all currently do, mainly to review the **tenders for the staff building**. This is due to be built between the pavilion and the play area of the rec. Three firms were selected to be asked to confirm or update their original quotes and provide additional details such as similar work done elsewhere. The Clerk was requested to apply to the Vale for the section 106 funds from Parish developments that will cover a proportion of the cost.

Due to a submission to the Vale WHDC of a full planning application for the **Meadow View** site with an increase of dwellings from 63 to 76 the PC reviewed the s106 agreement. It agreed to ask for a proportionate increase in the requests for various village recreational facilities improvements, and for the Clerk to discuss with the Vale details given of some projects, where there had been changes to the plans since the original submission.

The Council agreed to ask the Vale to give the name "**Armstrong Close**" to the small housing development in Orchard Way, to remember the former headmaster of Harwell Primary School, Michael Armstrong.

At the meeting on **8th September** the first item taken was to consider co-option to the Council to fill the remaining place vacant since the May 2019 election. **Mr Ian Fearon** who lives on Burr Street said he had been resident in the village for 4 years and was interested in participating in local affairs; he was duly co-opted to fill the **Campus Ward vacancy**.

In the Open Forum, first up was our County Councillor Mr Mike Fox-Davies; he had circulated a report and was asked by Mr Paterson if he had any news on the proposed village **traffic-calming scheme**. Mr Fox-Davies replied that OCC and Taylor Wimpey were still discussing it, and he had that day written to express dissatisfaction with the delay. Mr Paterson also asked that Highways discuss developers' proposals with the PC as early as possible, rather than the PC's only input being when the formal application has gone in. Mr Fox-Davies promised to suggest this.

Philippa Spits Counselling

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I work locally in Wantage, Abingdon and Oxford.

Vale Councillor Ms Sarah Medley had also supplied a report; Mr Fearon asked about **improving the path** near Meadow View (just west of GWP) since it was a condition of the previous planning permission for the site. The new section of path is currently only due by the time of 1st occupation at Meadow View. Mr Fox-Davies said he would continue to press for clearance of the drains there, where blockage continues to cause flooding of the footpath.

The Clerk reported that only one of the 3 builders on the shortlist had fulfilled the Clerk's request to retender, submitting the same quote, so the PC had to either restart the tender process or accept the one quote. Their references were to domestic extensions. It was

proposed by Mr Roberts and Seconded by Mrs Boughton-Waite that the Council **accept the quote** from Vitex; this was carried by 7 For with 2 abstentions. The Clerk was to apply for the S106 funding and arrange a site meeting between Councillors and Vitex. More quotes for the other Recreation Ground projects were awaited.

The Council discussed the **Harwellian Club's** request to lease a small area of the Recreation Ground west of the Club building; it was agreed that the Club was an asset to the village but that complaints from local residents and visitors must not be ignored. Council approved that the lease should be updated, if necessary as a Deed of Variation, **to include the proposed area** as well as amend anomalies elsewhere due to alterations since the original lease in 1987. Council also agreed that there should be appropriate **fencing** around the outside space, and that any hedge planted between the Club and the tennis courts should be of suitable species.

They further requested that the Club Committee police the Club rules, if necessary by ensuring at least one Committee member is in the Club **at all open times**. Council sympathised with the recent complainants and hoped the Committee will be able to stop the nuisance issues quickly.

The Clerk had received and circulated data from **traffic monitoring** in Rowstock. However, it did not include the downhill section of the A4185 approaching Rowstock roundabout; it was agreed that the Clerk should ask for a survey of traffic approaching from the south.

It was agreed to **postpone** the **Annual Footpaths Walk**, but parishioners are encouraged to continue to walk the paths and **let the Clerk know of any problems**.

There was discussion of the **Parish Website** and its future management. For further details on this and other items see the meeting minutes on the web pages. The Council is looking for **technical support** and eventually a **new design** for the website. If you are involved in web management and are interested in this **please contact the Clerk**.



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Annual Parish Meeting

This eventually took place in September, with 9 Parish Councillors, our 2 District Councillors, and a number of Parishioners able to join in the meeting using the Zoom platform.

In her Parish Council Chair's report, Mrs Turner **thanked** the many **volunteers** who have worked for the Parish in various spheres and outlined several **projects** which have been under consideration by the Parish Council since the last APM in May 2019. She said that although Covid-19 had disrupted meetings for a while they were re-established in May using Zoom, including having the Open Forum where Parishioners can directly address Councillors. Among her remarks she noted that *"Many topics recur at meetings – rec projects, S106 funding issues, the staff building, the Scouts lease for the pavilion, and traffic and highways issues. We have recently had discussions with The Harwellian regarding their use of an outside area, which enabled them to reopen in the summer."*

"Our thanks go to the community action groups who continue to assist residents with Covid-19 issues, and all the other volunteers who undertake duties on behalf of the Parish – the previous newsletter editors and particularly our current editor, the delivery co-ordinators, and deliverers, whom we hope to see occupied again, and those who contribute."

"Then there are our County & District Councillors, Parish Councillors, grounds staff & Clerk, the previous webmaster who continues to provide technical assistance and advice, and all others within the Parish who give their time and efforts on behalf of parishioners. Special thanks this year are due to grounds staff who have done wonders carrying out their duties on reduced staff, to volunteers working for the Harwell Covid-19 community groups and to residents who have worked so hard on traffic surveys, questionnaires and follow-ups."

There were updates on the proposals for the recreation ground, traffic in the village, and the Valley Park planning application. On the latter there had been a meeting between Parish representatives, Ms Medley & Miss Gascoigne (VWHDC) & Mr Fox-Davies (OCC), and OCC officers to discuss the plans for the expansion of the roundabout with the Link Road on Didcot Road just east of the A34. Layouts have been reconsidered and referred to design consultants for redrafting; a crossing point will be included closer to the roundabout. Light controls had been requested but OCC officers said this was not feasible.

The plans for **traffic-calming** in the village should soon be available for consultation, so look out for them and **please send any comments you have to the Clerk**.

The **Sustainable Harwell** group proposed a motion asking the Parish Council to declare a **climate emergency** as the Vale WHDC has done and to take the lead working with local groups to reduce carbon emissions. It was pointed out that the PC has a **Sustainability Policy** which it is working towards. Miss Gascoigne, as a member of the Emergency Advisory Committee at VWHDC, said it is hoped that VWHDC will be assisting and advising parishes and other groups in future. Sustainable Harwell felt that if the Parish Council were to declare the Emergency it would raise interest locally, and suggested that the Council could push for **zero-carbon** build standards for Valley Park, if necessary by writing to the Head of Planning. Parish Councillors agreed with the need for action but did not feel qualified to take a lead.

After discussion a small amendment to the motion was proposed by Mr Ricketts, removing the request to the Parish Council to take the lead, so it read:

Recognising the impact of climate change, and the need to move urgently to a zero carbon economy, this meeting asks the Parish Council to declare a climate emergency and to ensure that all their future activities are governed by the need to meet national and local targets for carbon reduction, and this meeting also asks that the Parish Council works with other bodies such as Sustainable Harwell, to help promote a zero-carbon economy within the Parish.

This was **carried** by 14 votes in favour with no votes against, 2 declared as abstaining and 3 not voting. The Parish Council will discuss this at the **October** meeting.

Edited by M Ricketts, approved by HPC.

Remembrance Sunday



Remembrance Sunday is **8th November**. The Parish Council are currently liaising with the RBL, with respect to the **parade** arrangements in light of COVID-19, both for the Sunday and also for the short **service of remembrance** on **11th November**. Further information will be published on the [parish website](#) and also on the [Harwell RBL website](#).





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Big Ginger Tom Music - Live Music back in Harwell!



After six months of lockdown, on Saturday 12th September the Big Ginger Tom Music team ran a music event in the village hall under socially distanced conditions. The idea had been discussed with the Hall Trustees who agreed to allow the event to go ahead and any learnings will be shared with other groups such as the Film Club.

It was a great night of music from **Patrick Griffin** and **Anna Renae** who were so pleased to be out playing to a live audience again, having spent the summer doing gigs from their homes to a camera phone. Both were very well received, though not as noisily as usual as shouting is not allowed and sing-along songs could also not be done.



They each did a set of about an hour and then we were treated to two **fabulous duets** at the end, which was amazing considering they had never met before let alone performed together!

Ticket sales were limited to **30** and were sold out 4 days before the event, and although the atmosphere was a little more subdued than normal everyone who came has said that they really enjoyed the evening and appreciated the efforts to keep them all safe.

There was a lot of preparation before the event which included:

- A morning in the hall a few weeks before the event to determine a one-way system and the optimum seating arrangement
- The morning before the event spent marking out the floor and putting up signage for seating.
- Sending a letter to all attendees a week before the event, explaining what was to be expected in terms of restrictions and offering the option of a refund if they weren't happy to comply
- Once the tickets were sold, working out seating allocation by household/social bubble
- Placing a perspex screen at the kitchen hatch for the bar
- Cleaning down all touch points before starting load in and set-up.

Once at the venue, people were required to queue 2m apart to get in, were brought in one group at a time and taken through what was expected (again) in case they hadn't read the note! **Face coverings** were required within the venue (except when at your seat and having a drink) and a **one-way** system was in place and 2m queueing for the bar, merchandise table and toilets. After the event everything that had been used and all touch points had to be cleaned down and all event-specific signs and floor markings removed. It was a very busy night, but it was so good to hear live music again.

I have to give thanks to the **volunteers** who helped to make the event run as safely as it did. To Martin Ricketts for the hall preparation, especially for putting up the screen. To Janice Markey and Alison Fautley who helped on the night guiding people to their seats, prompting people regarding social distancing (which wasn't needed very often) and clearing up at the end. Alison also came in the day before to help with the floor markings and set-up. Last, but not least, huge thanks to my wife **Vanessa** who ran the bar so efficiently.

Our next event, subject to no further restrictions being put in place, is on **Friday 23rd October** with **Kitty Macfarlane** and **Craig Joiner**. Tickets must be bought **in advance** and are available from [WeGotTickets](https://www.wegotickets.com) or by contacting **Duncan** at biggingertommusic@gmail.com.



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HARWELL VILLAGE HALL



CHARITY NUMBER 1157858

Welcome to Amy Scott, our new Bookings Administrator!

The Trustees are very happy to announce the successful candidate for the role of Bookings Administrator as **Amy Scott**, and welcome her to the role. Amy lives in the village and is already a hall user, running the Gobo Theatre. Now that her youngest has started nursery she has time to take on this role. Amy took over as Booking Administrator on **1st October**, after spending time in September becoming familiar with the booking system and the various user requirements. David Marsh is remaining as Treasurer and also oversees many of the caretaking responsibilities of the hall.

We wish to thank David for all his hard work to date - David has managed all bookings since mid-2016, navigating the complex transition period of our redevelopment project and then two halls running simultaneously since then, learning the new heating, lighting and security systems and all the complexity that having two halls brings.

Volunteers: If you have a few hours a month to spare and are interested in getting involved with helping to keep our vibrant and popular village hall running, we are always keen to hear from people with energy and enthusiasm to join our friendly group of Trustees. Please contact us a chair@villagehall.co.uk and let us know what you have to offer!

Bookings: the hall has been open since **7 Sep** for most of our **regular classes**, and Regular users who haven't been able to restart, will have their slots kept open for them until we get back to normal. As mentioned in the last edition of the Harwell News, we have established new **Covid-secure Terms and Conditions** that must be adhered to with requirements for social distancing, hygiene, cleaning requirements and ventilation to keep all of our users and visitors the hall safe and minimise the chance of infection. These are constantly being revised as the government announces new measures so please review these every time you book!

To book, please contact Booking Admin, Amy Scott, on bookings@harwellvillagehall.co.uk.

We look forward to welcoming you to Harwell Village Hall and hope to see you soon.

The Trustees, September 2020.



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The Orchard Film Club September Update

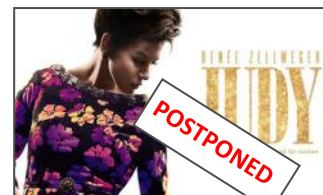
Dear Film-lovers,

As you may know, we had been planning to show our first film for sometime in early October and, following on from the successful Big Ginger Tom folk evening, we had a good idea of how we would manage social distancing and the Covid regulations. However, with increasing infection rates being reported nationwide, we have revised our earlier decision and decided to **postpone our October film** for the moment.

We will review the situation later in the year and promise to keep you all informed. Please keep an eye out for our **Newsletter** - we haven't sent anything out since our last film in March but we will be sending out an update in the next few weeks.

If you haven't already, 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/>.

We hope to be able to welcome you to a film before too long. Stay safe and keep well, best wishes from Alison, Martin and Janice.



Harwell WI

Harwell WI has hosted two successful Zoom meetings since the last 'News'.

Our speaker in **August** was **David Marsh**, who gave us a photographic tour of some wonderful local walks he and Penny have been doing during the lockdown. There is such a wealth of beauty on our doorstep and he captured it perfectly on camera.

Our Zoom meeting for **September** had **Al Sylvester MBE** as our speaker. Al spend many years leading the RAF Mountain Rescue team, and then launched an attempt to reach the South Pole. The expedition was not without its harrowing moments, and, for him, was a life-changing experience.

Did you know that there is a **WI bench** in the Rec., and one in the Cemetery? A couple of our committee spent some hours during August ensuring that they are well kept and clean.

We have restarted our monthly **Walk and Talks**, socially-distanced, of course, with our first outing up to the Pierrepont Café on Harwell Campus. By popular demand, we chose this as our destination for our September outing. The next two will take place on **Friday 23rd October** and **Friday 20th November**- assuming no further restrictions. Destinations to be decided.

A good number of us gathered on the Rec. on 26 August for a chat and afternoon tea. It gave us the chance to catch up with each other's news from the last few months, face to face. We had hoped to repeat it in September.

Our next monthly Zoom meeting will take place on **Wednesday 14 October at 7.30 p.m.** We will be fortunate to have Jane Card giving a pictorial insight into 'Victorian Ladies'. Women of Harwell are welcome to join us to hear what promises to be an entertaining evening. You can get the Zoom link from our Secretary on **01235 835430**.

In fact, if you would like to find out more about us please call the same number, or look at our website – harwellwi.org, or email: harwellwi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk.

If you are new to the village, it's a good way to become part of village life!



Harwell Gardeners' Club



Vicky's sedums

The committee has decided that meetings of the club will be cancelled for the rest of the year.

Members will get a monthly newsletter with seasonal gardening tips and photos of members' gardens along with a quiz at Christmas. You can also ask us your questions on the Harwell Gardeners' Club FaceBook page [here](#).

Meetings will resume as soon as it is safe to do so and we expect the speaker at the first meeting, in due course, to be Timothy Walker.

Luckily for our club we are still able to partake in our favourite hobby - gardening. Indeed our gardens have been our solace as I'm sure they have been for many of you during lockdown.

When we can finally gather together again we welcome any new gardeners amongst you to come and join us in learning more about plants, and all things connected with growing your own

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

Harwell and Chilton CAP

It's an anxious time financially for many. If you get into **unmanageable debt**, whatever the reason, there is local help immediately available from a free professional debt counselling service.

The Christians Against Poverty (CAP) Debt Centre will work with your creditors to agree a **repayment plan** and with you to develop a budget to pay that back over an agreed period. You get to hand over all the demanding letters you've been receiving, and possibly ignoring, to the CAP worker and then **no one can get at you** to harass you for repayments: you simply refer them to CAP which is dealing with everything on your behalf. Harwell church helps fund this local service but **you don't** have to be a churchgoer or a Christian to benefit. CAP is available to **absolutely everyone**.

You can make an appointment to be seen (at the moment on-screen or by phone) in your home by calling the freephone number **0800 328 0006** from **9.30am weekdays**. Find out more about CAP - which works across the UK offering a variety of services, including job clubs - at www.capuk.org.



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Congratulations to Mr Russell



Many of you will know Mick Russell, the council's indefatigable cemetery worker, and if it seems as if he's been working there forever, you're almost right! Mick has worked in the cemetery for **50 years** and has kept the grass cut, the paths clear and the records straight. His knowledge is second to none and he always has a listening ear for anyone with queries, not to mention looking after the relatives of those in the cemetery when they need assistance. He has been an asset to the council throughout his long years of service and we are proud to think he's carrying on into the future.

Well done Mick, and thank you.

Harwell Cemetery

As I walk through the peace and quiet of the cemetery,
Of many generations that have been buried here.

The heart of the community.

Big family graves that dominate, that was once pride.

Tilting headstones sinking into the ground.

Names disappeared of unknown eternity,

But kept in the hearts of memories.

The trees that surround are in full leaf, giving shelter and shade
looking over this precious place,

As though it's their duty to bring comfort and support.

The war graves so white and straight standing with dignity

Of the gallantry they served for our country.

The old and the new graves fill this consecrated ground.

There is sadness and overwhelming grief as one is laid to rest,
But time does heal very very slowly as graves are tenderly kept and looked
after by family and friends.

I have walked this path many times with comfort at the thought that my
whole family are resting here,
And marvel at the labour in which it has been immaculately kept by one man

Over 55 years;

Mick Russell a true force of the community.

Thank you

For one very special man, Mick Russell

By Suzanne Lay



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Government Planning Reforms - have your say

The Government is currently consulting on a **major shake up** to the planning system that would see:

- The introduction of nationally-imposed housing **targets**
- An **increase** in housing numbers in the south-east, but a fall in other parts of the country
- A significant **reduction** in local involvement - Community engagement would be

largely restricted to the Local Plan making stage (as it stands, just one six-week consultation), with the public thereafter **losing** their ability to scrutinise most individual planning applications.

Countryside campaigners **CPRE Oxfordshire** are concerned about the impact these changes will have on our rural county. You can read more about the issues on their website at www.cpreoxon.org.uk

The Government's White Paper – Planning for the Future – is out for consultation until **29th October 2020**, but the debate will continue thereafter so **there is still time to share your views with your local MP.**

Harwell Primary School



I hope this letter finds you and your families well.

As I write this in September, I cannot express enough my absolute pleasure at having all the classes in school. We have welcomed our new starters into our Foundation class. I am currently busy trying to learn their names and it is a delight to see them finally in school and thriving.

We have been trying to settle all of the children back and return to as much normality as we can, whilst not forgetting that we are in the midst of a pandemic. When I have gone on my checks around the school, I am treated to many beaming smiles of simple joy at being back in school.

I would like to thank our **parents** for their patience with all of our routines and systems. With their help, we are doing everything that we can to keep the school running smoothly and staying open. The **children** have been amazing. I would also like to thank all **my staff** for the wonderful work they put into making the full return to school such a success.

There have been challenges (and there will be many more in the coming months) but the whole school community has risen to them with remarkable resilience and flexibility. I am very grateful for the remarkable team that we have in Harwell.

We are always grateful to the **wider community** for their continued support. As we move towards being able to welcome **volunteers** back to school safely, if you would like to be involved with our school garden or listening to children read, please do [contact us](#) to let us know if that is something you would like to get involved with (when it is possible).

Last year we said farewell to our **Year 6** children and **Athene Miller** after many years of outstanding service to education. We had tentatively organised a retirement celebration. This has not yet been possible but I know that you will all join us in wishing her well as she starts her retirement after 40 years of teaching in Oxfordshire.

At this time of year, many parents are looking around at different schools. Whether it is our Year 6 parents, who have to make the decision of which secondary school to apply for by **31st October**, or parents whose children will start their school journey in September 2021, there are important decisions to make.

For children born **between 1 September 2016 and 31 August 2017**, the window for applications to Oxfordshire County Council is from **1st November to 15th January**.

Admissions for Harwell School are controlled by OCC. Please see our website harwellprimaryschool.co.uk for information about school tours - be they face-to-face or virtual. I hope to see you soon

Warm regards,

Bryn Gibson, Headteacher, Harwell Primary School



Bees and a possible False Widow spider in the Play Area

[Mining bees](#) have colonised the play area mounds again this year. These are mostly **harmless** and if left alone they are not aggressive. They can sting but very rarely do, although if you are allergic to bee stings please avoid the area. The adult bees will begin to die off shortly and activity will be over for another year. They are beneficial insects and quite fascinating to watch!



There has been an unconfirmed report that a [False Widow spider](#) has been seen in the play area near a slide. The grounds staff have been advised but have not seen anything themselves. These spiders have a very **painful bite** which can be nasty if it becomes infected. Please be aware of this and take care when using the equipment. If you see anything that you wish to report, please contact the [clerk](#).



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Harwell Parish History Group

Draft Programme for 2021

We have re-scheduled the talks postponed from 2020; the 2021 programme will start in **March**. Members who paid for 2020 have membership for 2021 without further payment.

The programme is: 17th March *Oxfordshire Blue Plaques*. Marie-Louise Kerr, of "Curator without Museum"; 21st April *Anglo-Saxon Garnet Jewellery*. Sally Spencer, jeweller and gemmologist; 19th May *"The Great Stink!" Engineers, sewerage systems and the Victorian battle against dirt*. Dr. Tom Crook, Senior Lecturer in History, Oxford Brookes University. **SUMMER BREAK**.

16th September *Harwell through the Camera Lens*. Eric Jenkins, Professional Photographer; 20th October *The Kennet and Avon Canal, Past and Present*. Charles East, Volunteer Boatmaster; 17th November *The Great Fire of Harwell, 1852* Jane M. Card; 15th December *The History of MG Cars at Abingdon*. Adam Sloan, of the MG Car Club. Dr. Katherine Watson's talk on the history of forensic science will be in January 2022. This should make for a really interesting year!

HPHG "mini-magazine" for members in lieu of talks

We hope to send this monthly up to December. All contributions from members and non-members, whether about local, family or national history, including reminiscences and anecdotes, gratefully received. Please send to harwellhistorygroup@gmail.com

Here is an extract, originally in the September issue, from Barbara Stow's memories of "The Atomic"/ (UKAEA), which she joined in 1967.

Memories of UKAEA- including frozen flowers!

I lived in Icknield Way House hostel, also known as B Mess (the old RAF sergeants' mess), adjacent to the site, for about 6 years. I initially shared a room, but was later able to get a single. I think my fees were about £4 a week which covered your room, bed linen and cleaning, full English breakfast, a three course evening meal, and lunch at weekends which, I think you'd agree, seems very good value for money! We had a large communal dining room and lounge, several TV rooms, and a snooker room with 2 full sized tables! (After marrying, Barbara and her husband moved) to a prefab at 5 Hillside, Aldfield Estate, on the Harwell campus. The rent was, I think, about £5 a week. The prefab was very cold in winter as the Rayburn coal fire in the lounge was the only source of heat. It had air vents to other rooms, but they didn't really work efficiently as the prefab insulation had collapsed. To keep warm one year we had the fire burning so hotly that the bars on the fire basket started to sag. One winter when we went away for Christmas the water in the toilet froze, and our plants looked fine until collapsing in a heap when they thawed out. The built in metal wardrobe also suffered from extreme damp and you made sure you didn't keep clothes there in winter, otherwise they came out mouldy and smelly. It made you hardy!When I started at UKAEA, if your biro ran out of ink you had to take the old one back before you could have another, and your office could only have a carpet if your grade was high enough (I had lino!).

Harwell's Dick Whittington.

The real Richard Whittington (c.1354-1423) came from a wealthy Gloucestershire family, and was an importer and exporter of silks, velvets and English woollen cloth. His "cat" may have been a type of coal barge – but he *did* marry Alice FitzWarren. Her father's monumental brass is in Wantage Church. Whittington very generously funded many charitable institutions.



"Harwell's Dick Whittington" is the nickname of Sir Christopher Smith, born here to a farmer's family in 1750. Sent to London for a smallpox vaccination, he convalesced at the home of a wine merchant who took him under his wing. He became the head of a firm of Port Wine Shippers, then went into politics as M.P. for St. Albans. In the City, he became a Councilman, an Alderman, and in 1817, Lord Mayor of London. He founded a charity to help prisoners and ex-convicts which still works with the Probation Service today. You can see a monument to him in the chancel of St. Matthew's (left), with a coat of arms (right) which he "borrowed" from another family named Smith. **He had in fact risen further in society than the original Dick Whittington.**



Because live pantomime will not be possible this December, the **Didcot Phoenix Drama Group** – which performed pantos in Harwell Village Hall in 2018 and 2019 and includes members from Harwell – are hoping to go online this year. Details in December BUT it will almost be a "Harwell Dick Whittington" – the script has been written by our chair, Malcolm Thick (Brookside), and the clever technical work will be by Karen Carey (Townsend).

Jane M. Card July 2020 harwellhistorygroup@gmail.com

STOP PRESS!! Congratulations to **Sara Lee** who came 1st in 3 classes in the **Cholsey Virtual Produce Show**. Visit <http://www.cholseyhortsoc.org.uk/cholsey-virtual-village-show.html> for the full results!



Little Pippins Pre-School



Exciting things have been going on at Little Pippins over the summer - our new outside classroom, aka '**The Nest**', is now installed in the garden and almost ready for use. This fantastic addition to Little Pippins has been entirely down to a 2 year fundraising campaign. We are very grateful to everyone involved with this achievement, from organising the events like Santa's grottos, Spring balls, raffles, tombola's, cake sales, to manning stalls, donating gifts and prizes, supporting us at the events, and submitting grant applications. The Nest will be a very calm and natural environment where nurtured small group work will support learning and development. It is a significant enhancement to the facilities at Little Pippins and we can't wait for the children to enjoy this space.

We were very relieved to have been able to fully re-open the pre-school again from September. We have welcomed **thirty-five** new 2 and 3 year old Harwell village children to Pippins over the first few weeks of term and it is also lovely to see some of those who were with us before lockdown come back to Pippins too. We have already had a lot of fun getting to know each other and look forward to discovering their many different characters as they grow in confidence.

Our pre-school for children aged from 2.5 to 5 years old, is set in an old orchard in the centre of the village. We have a large play area, **mud kitchen**, construction zone, forest school, **nature area**, small covered pond and a **pirate ship** along with a large sand pit, water play, and plenty of outdoor ride on toys. Even if the weather is inclement, we can provide outdoor wet weather clothing for wet and wild play and we have large covered verandah. Equally, we have indoor play and focused activities on offer every session in our warm and inviting building.

We are now **full** for this academic year. If your child is already on our waiting list, we will contact you should a place become available. Places for admission in September 2021 will be allocated in May 2021, with highest priority being given to funded children who live within the village and children who will be starting primary school in September 2022.

Unfortunately, we are currently unable to open our Breakfast club but hope to be able to review this as soon as coronavirus restrictions can be relaxed.

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**

Sam Abbott, Manager

Little Pippins Pre-school, Charity Registration Number 1105994



Harwell Fun Club



Harwell Fun Club is a baby and toddler group which runs weekly on term-time **Tuesdays** from **9.30-11.30am** at Orchard Hall, Harwell Village Hall. We reopened our doors on 15th September and are looking forward to welcoming back new and familiar faces over the coming term. Snacks and refreshments are provided and there are a range of

different toys, games, crafts and activities each week appropriate for **children aged 0-5**.

In order to limit numbers in line with coronavirus restrictions, we are currently operating a weekly pre-booking system. For more information about what precautions we have put in place to keep everyone safe while the pandemic continues and for news and updates, including how to pre-booking a space for your family each week, please follow our [Facebook page](#) or contact us on funclubharwell@gmail.com.

Natalie Napper and the rest of the Harwell Fun Club committee



Harwell Christmas Craft Fair

We have been in discussion with the Village Hall Trustees with regards to the feasibility of the Harwell Craft Fair this year.

In light of the ever-changing coronavirus restrictions and guidelines, we have made the sad decision to **cancel** this year's fair. We have not made this decision lightly, ultimately we feel that this is the best option to ensure the safety of our stallholders, volunteers and attendees. We have already booked the hall for **next year's fair**, which will be held on **Sunday 14th November 2021** and there will be further details in the New Year.

Kathryn Roberts-Lock, Janette Roberts, Kath Luker

Do you care for a friend or relative?

Do you look after a friend or a relative in their home or yours? If so, Healthwatch Oxfordshire **wants to hear from you!**

As an independent champion for people who use health and social care, we want to know what it is like to be an **unpaid carer** and about the **help and support** you receive or need.

Even if you only help someone for a few hours or you don't see yourself as a 'carer', your views are **important**.

If you are **aged 18 or over** and care for an adult relative, friend or neighbour who is elderly or has an illness, disability, mental health problem or addiction please share your views by completing an anonymous survey at www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/Unpaidcarers

If you'd prefer to talk this through over the phone, or to ask for a paper copy of the survey to be sent out to you, please call **01865 520520**.

To find out more about Healthwatch Oxfordshire see www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

healthwatch
Oxfordshire



Age UK Oxfordshire's exercise classes innovate and run classes on Zoom

Pre-COVID, Generation Games, Age UK Oxfordshire's physical activity service, were delivering 64 classes in the community across Oxfordshire, with around 1,000 older people attending sessions every week. With the event of COVID-19 everything changed and physical classes had to be suspended. The Generation Games service had to go online, and began to deliver exercise sessions by Zoom, the online video platform, instead.

Zoom was unfamiliar to many of our participants. One participant, Anthea said: "Initially it was difficult, I find technology rather beyond me, but with a little help it's very comfortable and quick. I don't know what I'd do without my exercise class." And their tutor, Caroline, said: "It's fun to teach a class by Zoom. It's lovely to see everybody each week, and to chat at the end. It's also nice to find out about each other more, we are seeing each other in our homes."

Joining a Zoom class is not just about the physical benefits. It is also an opportunity to see the other familiar class participants' faces, which is the next best thing to a physical class, under the circumstances.

If you are interested in joining a Zoom exercise class, please get in touch with Generation Games on gbookings@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or call **01235 849 403**. You can visit the website via www.generationgames.org.uk



Beware of "Nottingham Knockers"!

Watch out for a gang of people who are active in the village selling shoddy goods at inflated prices on the doorstep, pushing their way into the house and threatening residents.

They **demand cash**, look round the house and promise to return after having given a sob story of being homeless and hungry. They become very difficult to get to leave.

Home burglary often takes place a few weeks later.



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Organise fuel bills, suppliers before winter - Citizens Advice tip



Did you know that Citizens Advice has advisers **who can help you** sign up with a new fuel or electricity company, or switch to a better tariff?

There's **no charge** for our time and you won't be steered towards one particular supplier because we're impartial, having no links with any of them. We offer one-on-one sessions (by telephone at present) and we'll take a close look at your individual situation.

Now is the time to sort it out before winter closes in with cold autumn gales.

We can help you understand energy bills and various kinds of tariffs, supporting you if you want to switch and calculating the savings you might make. If you've fallen behind on bill payments, we can advise you on ways to **reduce your debt** by budgeting or trying a new payment scheme, for example.

We can also tell you about **energy efficiency measures** around the house, like draught-proofing windows and doors and installing LED light bulbs. Grants may be available to pay for thermal insulation.

We can check your benefit entitlements and help you to claim them if you're eligible. There are several helpful schemes like the **Priority Services Register** and the **Warm Home Discount**.

And if you have any complaints against your current supplier, we can help you resolve them.

You can find the relevant information on our website at www.citizensadvice.org.uk/energy or phone our Adviceline on **0300 330 9042**.

How to Claim Pension credit and your free TV licence



As the curtain fell on the free TV licence scheme for over-75s, the Government Pension Credit take-up figures show that around **3,500 older people in Oxfordshire** are still failing to get the Pension Credit they are due. Pension Credit is a welfare benefit for people who are over state pension age on a low income.

Without the award of Pension Credit Guarantee Credit, they will **not** be able to get a free TV licence either, which will leave people on already low incomes struggling to find an extra **£150** this year and every year.

Age UK Oxfordshire is therefore calling on **everyone aged over 75** to see without delay if they are eligible for Pension Credit, if they haven't already done so.

To check if you are eligible and to apply for Pension Credit, you will need to find the following:

- National Insurance number
- Bank account details
- Information about your income, savings and investments
- Information about your pensions (if you have any)
- Details of any housing costs (such as mortgage, interest payments, service charges)
- The same details for your partner (if you have a partner who lives with you)

If you can get online - the Age UK benefits calculator is easy to use: <https://benefitscheck.ageuk.org.uk/>

If you already think you are eligible – you can apply online here www.gov.uk/pension-credit/how-to-claim or call the Pension Credit claim line on **0800 99 1234**.

If you are **unsure and need someone to check** on your behalf – call our Age UK Oxfordshire helpline on **0345 450 1276** (10am – 4pm, Mon – Fri) or the national Age UK Helpline on **0800 169 65 65** (8am – 7pm daily).

Or you can **write** to us at: **Age UK Oxfordshire, 9 Napier Court, Barton Lane, Abingdon OX14 3YT**.

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Contact Craig Taylor

Tel: 01235 512881 - Mob: 07778 661548

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A bill can be left for postal payment if you are not home.

Online payment are also welcome.

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



Care | Empower | Recover



Would you like to support people affected by crime?

Victims First Emotional Support Service Volunteer

Victims First Emotional Support Service provides free emotional and practical support to all victims of crime, witnesses of crime and family members of victims. The service is available across Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire and can provide help regardless of whether or not the crime has been reported to the police

The role of a Victims First Emotional Support Volunteer involves:

- Providing practical and emotional support to victims of crime in the Thames Valley area
- Working to empower victims and map progress using an evidence-based outcomes tool
- Ensuring fairness, impartiality and equality in supporting victims
- Keeping a secure record of contact with victims and reporting to the Caseworker appropriately and in line with data protection requirements
- Working alongside a Caseworker to ensure the delivery of a high-quality service
- Committing to attending ongoing training, supervision, reflective practice and support sessions

What skills are we looking for?

- A non-judgmental attitude
- The ability to empathise with people from diverse backgrounds and cultures
- Excellent listening skills
- Reliable and punctual
- Able to set and work within clear boundaries
- Able to travel within your local area
- Can commit to a minimum period of 18 months

What's in it for me?

- Free training, support and ongoing professional development
- Travel reimbursement
- The opportunity to develop personal and support skills for future opportunities and employment
- Contribute to your community in a role which has social value
- Meet people, learn new things and gain a sense of reward and contribution

Role subject to reference and DBS clearance. For more information or to request an application form please contact the VFESS Manager on 01844 487 989 or email admin@vfess.org.uk



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News from the Didcot GP Surgeries - Patient Participant Groups

Covid-19

The pandemic has required all GP surgeries to make important changes to ensure patients' safety and wellbeing. All the staff at our three Practices have been under tremendous pressure from constant new government directives, with little breathing space. As we mentioned in our previous article (February 2020), the three Practices are now collaborating, as the Didcot Primary Care Network (PCN), to offer specialist services across the three surgeries. **E-consulting** has been used extensively during the pandemic, to enable clinicians to respond swiftly, without patients attending the surgery unless necessary, e.g. when a physical examination is essential. Greater use is being made of IT in general; however, if you don't have access to IT, or aren't confident with it, you can still **ring your surgery** as before. Please make sure you wear a face mask or **suitable face covering** when you go to the surgery.

Many of you already order repeat prescriptions online, and it's easy to set this up. Some pharmacies are also delivering (with the aid of volunteers) to anyone who finds it difficult to collect items. Another option is an online pharmacy, which you can use to receive repeat prescriptions by post; **all** requests are still forwarded to your GP for authorisation.

Flu vaccinations

The government has announced **increased eligibility** this year. This will pose significant challenges for the surgeries; social distancing requirements, cleaning and PPE changes after every patient reduce the numbers who can be seen. The Practices are working on a variety of arrangements, to provide the best possible access, while maintaining social distancing and infection control. Dates will be released **by your surgery** as soon as they have been finalised. This additional workload – which will increase further when a coronavirus vaccination eventually becomes available - highlights yet again the urgent need for further medical facilities in our area.

Influencing decision makers

We liaise with Healthwatch Oxfordshire (HWO). Healthwatch is a statutory organisation and independent national champion; their role is to find out **what matters** to people who use health and social care services, and help ensure that their views shape the support they need. We three PPG's are working with HWO to communicate with the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG), which plans, buys and oversees health services across Oxfordshire. Didcot, as we all know, is growing at an overpowering rate; sadly, despite much pressure from your surgeries, PPGs, District/local Councillors and Healthwatch, we still **do not** have a clear view about what is planned to address the healthcare needs of our expanding communities.

Your PPGs continue to seek to influence decision makers wherever we can; we are all volunteers, and are happy to welcome new active members. Contact your surgery PPG via the following links:

Didcot Health Centre email: dhc.ppg@gmail.com

Woodlands Medical Centre email: pgsecretarywoodlands@gmail.com

Oaktree Health Centre via the website: <https://www.oaktreehc.co.uk/contact/>

Your PPG Chairpersons:

Shelagh Garvey - Didcot Health Centre; Andrea Warren - Oaktree Health Centre; Stewart Lilly - Woodlands Medical Centre.

<https://healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk/>

CPRE Oxfordshire – Trustees Wanted



Do you care about your local countryside? Want to make a difference?

CPRE Oxfordshire is the **voice of the countryside** in Oxfordshire. We fight for the right development in the right place and work to protect, promote and enhance our amazing local landscapes and rural character.

Due to retirement of current members, we are looking for **a number of new trustees**, including **a treasurer**, to join the team.

By volunteering with us you will be helping to find positive solutions for the issues facing the countryside and the environment. By applying your skills and experience you can make a **real difference** and be a central part of our friendly and passionate charity.

To find out more...

Please contact our Branch Secretary Dorian Grier: E: dorian.cpre@gmail.com or leave a message on our office phone:

T: **01491 612079**.

Role descriptions can be downloaded from the CPRE Oxfordshire website www.cpreoxon.org.uk. Application **deadline** is **31st October 2020** in the first instance, but we are happy to receive expressions of interest on an ongoing basis.

INCONSIDERATE PARKING - notice to all residents in the parish

Please ensure that you and your visitors **park vehicles considerately**. Parking on pavements and at junctions is an **offence** and parking on grass verges causes long-term **damage**, leaving these areas looking unsightly and uneven. Parking overnight on the recreation ground car park is **not permitted** and may result in legal action. Thank you for your co-operation.



Click on logo for website

share your warmth



Click on logo for website

Donate and support older people to be active and connected during this pandemic

Sir Muir Gray, Age UK Oxfordshire and Active Oxfordshire have once again teamed up to support the Share Your Warmth campaign. Last winter, this campaign helped to get older people more physically active and reduce isolation and loneliness. Now more than ever, your help is much needed. We want to get older people active, feeling supported and connected online. We are asking people who receive a winter fuel allowance but are able to spare it, **to donate** it to this year's Share your Warmth campaign.

The last campaign ended in March 2020 at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic, so these donations couldn't have been more timely. The money raised made a **real and immediate** difference to older people in Oxfordshire. It enabled us to make 5 specialist exercise films that were designed to maintain strength and balance whilst at home, and proved popular during this time.

Becoming physically deconditioned can have a huge impact on people's daily lives, e.g. not being able to walk as far or as fast or not being able to hold a full kettle of water. Sir Muir Gray said: "The bad news is that the impact of reduced activity and increased isolation makes the need for the campaign even greater. The good news is that people can become **stronger**, more **supple** and move with more **stamina** and **skills** whatever their age and no matter how many long term conditions they may have."



We sent out **1,000** home exercise packs to people without internet access and also made **3,290** phone calls to check on people's wellbeing and to motivate people to be as active as possible.

People have said to us: "Really appreciative of these messages and the videos. Makes me get on with it!"; "I do 1 or 2 sessions every day since lock down, and have really benefited. Your varied sessions on YouTube have kept me sane (and balanced!)"

During this pandemic, older people are understandably being far more **cautious** about socialising, which in turn is taking its toll on mental health. Many regular social activities have not resumed, meaning that feelings of **loneliness** are even more pronounced. For older people, this realisation can be quite hard hitting, with many people saying they are feeling a sense of **loss of hope**.

For younger people, adapting to a new life online may be easier than for someone who is unfamiliar with technology, increasing the feeling of being cut off. We aim to change that and make a difference to as many people as we can.

By donating your £200 you would:

- Support **20** housebound people to do chair-based exercises at home with a home exercise pack
- Support **40** older people to attend an online group exercise class, keeping them active, mobile and socially connected
- Enable **100** housebound older people in Oxfordshire to receive a friendly phone call

Sir Muir Gray, Age UK Oxfordshire and Active Oxfordshire are working together to help older people be as active and as connected as possible to benefit both physical and mental health.

Age UK Oxfordshire's Deputy CEO Nigel Gowing said:

"This is a terrific initiative that will make a real difference to older people in Oxfordshire. The ever changing rules can make it difficult to maintain activity levels at any age, but physical exercise is proven to be highly beneficial to both physical and mental wellbeing. So we need to do everything we can to support older people to remain fit, healthy and connected, and we are immensely grateful to everyone who is able to support this campaign."

Visit the Just Giving page to donate via <https://justgiving.com/campaign/warmth>.

Or please send a cheque to: Fundraising, Age UK Oxfordshire, 9 Napier Court, Barton Lane, Abingdon, OX14 3YT. For any queries please contact **Anna McKay** via annamckay@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or call **0345 450 1276**.



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.

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

Items for the December issue should be sent by 15th November 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, Ian Fearon, 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



HARWELL PARISH COUNCIL

Webmaster

£20 per hour (negotiable)

Expressions of interest are invited for a Webmaster for the Parish Council Website, who will be required to work with the council to provide technical assistance and advice. The successful candidate will already be in the business of creating and supporting websites professionally.

Hours: Around 1 per week

Duties:

- Maintain the integrity, security and infrastructure of the website
- Integrate new functionality as required
- Manage website administration regarding hosting, email and troubleshooting

Experience & skills required:

- Demonstrable experience of creating and maintaining commercial websites essential
- Fluency with Wordpress essential
- Excellent communication skills essential

For full details email: **clerk@harwellparish.co.uk.**

Deadline for applications: **31st October 2020**

www.harwellparish.co.uk

HOW SAFE IS YOUR ELECTRIC BLANKET?

FREE ELECTRIC BLANKET CHECKS IN OXFORDSHIRE

Make sure your blanket is safe to use this winter.

Things change

– but your safety is most important to us.

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, we will test your blanket, but you will not be able to visit the test venue.

We will collect your blanket from your house, take it to be tested and then return it to your house (we will post you a plastic bag and label prior to our collection).

Testing in Oxfordshire in **OCTOBER 2020**

**Monday 5 – Friday 9 and
Monday 19 – Friday 23**

BOOKING INFORMATION:

To book your collection call **01865 895999 Option 1**

Or email: communityengagement@oxfordshire.gov.uk

