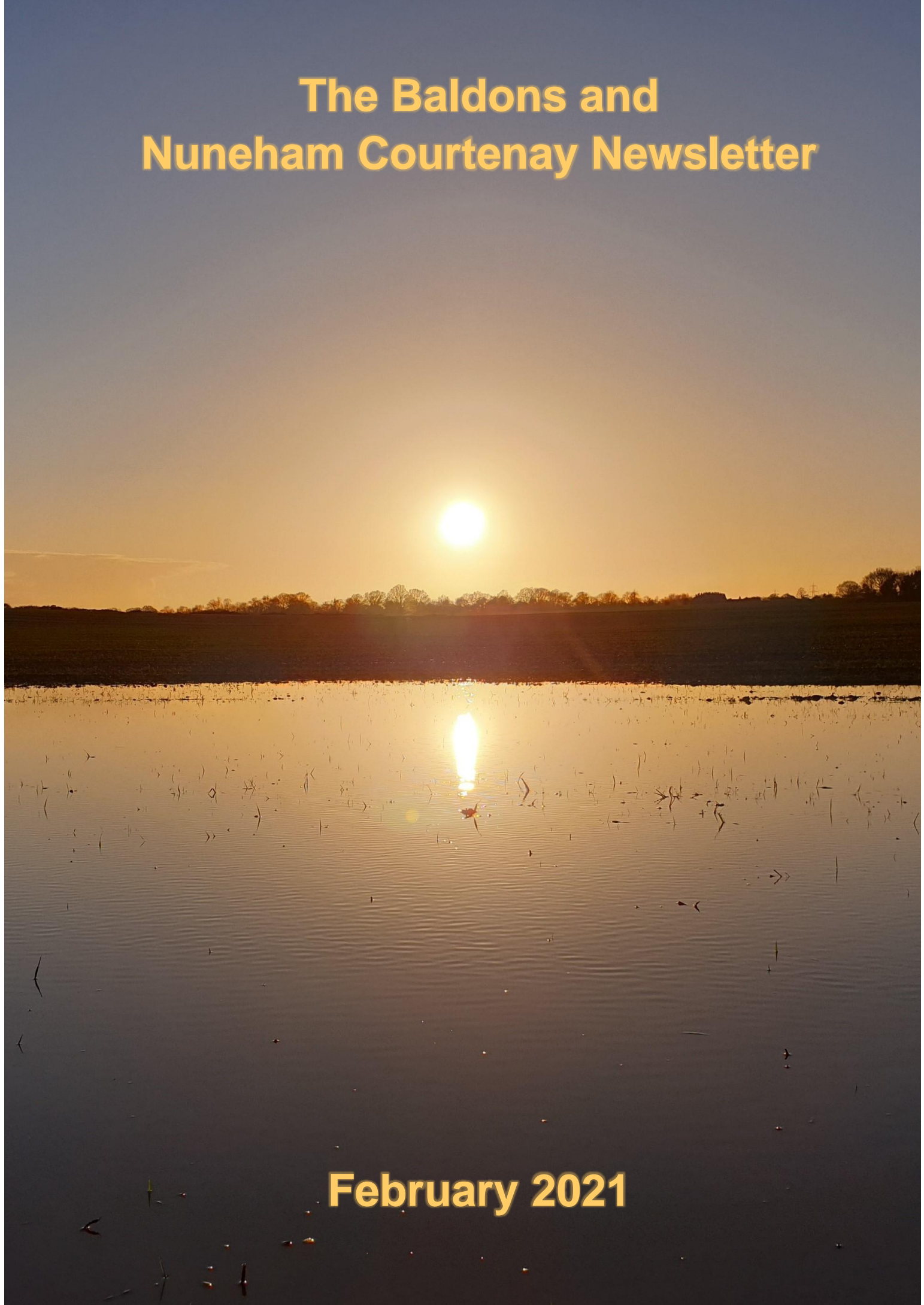


The Baldons and Nuneham Courtenay Newsletter



February 2021

FROM REVEREND TERESA STEWART-SYKES

Benjamin Franklin famously wrote that 'in this world nothing can be said to be certain, except death and taxes', and there has certainly been a lot of grim statistics in the news recently reflecting this sentiment. As I write, the world has just passed the milestone of 2 million deaths from the Corona Virus and British fishermen are having to land their catches in Denmark to avoid crippling customs paperwork.

However, when I am out walking the dog early in the morning, I often find myself feeling surprisingly hopeful of the future. I see the beginnings of Spring in the hedgerows and the verges, as primroses and snowdrops show their pretty heads. I am also hearing from those who have already received their Covid vaccination expressions of hope and optimism that an end to our current nightmare is in sight. Hope is significant in our lives at the moment.

In his book, 'The Audacity of Hope' Barack Obama wrote this,

“Hope is not blind optimism. It's not ignoring the enormity of the task ahead or the roadblocks that stand in our path. It's not sitting on the side-lines or shirking from a fight. Hope is that thing inside us that insists, despite all evidence to the contrary, that something better awaits us if we have the courage to reach for it, and to work for it, and to fight for it.”

So, whilst we find ourselves in the midst of a new lockdown, we are not back to square one, we do have the vaccine, we also know that despite many tragic deaths many people have also recovered from this terrible virus. We continue to express our neighbourly love and concern by keeping apart and protecting those who are most at risk. In so doing we are being loving and we are being hopeful, and we are sharing something of God's love for us.

I wish you all a happy and hope filled 2021.

The Revd Teresa Stewart-Sykes is Team vicar for The Baldons with Nuneham Courtenay, Berinsfield and Drayton St Leonard.

e-mail: RevTeresa@outlook.com and tel: 07823 809112

A clergy person can always be reached in a pastoral emergency by ringing the Dorchester Team Office 01865 340007

FROM CANON SUE BOOYS, TEAM RECTOR

My dear friends

In this the first week of another Lockdown - greetings, prayers and love from me!

I am sure you will be wondering what happens as regards our worship together in this Lockdown. We are fortunate that we have not had a complete closure of churches thrust upon us - and as your team clergy we have talked and prayed about the best way forward for God's family here in the Dorchester Team.

We were all delighted that we were able to have a wide range of different but encouraging Christmas services in most of our parish churches. This was a real blessing and I want to thank my colleagues and the many church members in different parishes who worked hard to make that a reality, I believe we will all have been left with some good memories of our Christmas celebrations amidst the inevitable disappointments.

BALDONS COMMUNITY ORCHARDS

You may have noticed that the first community orchard area has now been planted opposite Parsonage Farm, where there are 9 apple trees. We would have liked to have involved the community in the planting but unfortunately the trees arrived during the November lockdown so this was not possible.

The apple trees planted are the following species: Cox's Orange Pippin, Blenheim Orange, Ashmead Kernel, Lord Lambourne, James Grieve, Ribston Pippin, Darcy Spice, Lewis Incomparable and Spartan.

We are commissioning an information board for the apple orchard. We also have permission from the Parish Council and Queen's to plant 3 bird cherry trees (*Prunus padus*) across the ditch from the orchard and to put in a bench and some insect boxes as well as a plank bridge across the ditch.

We are now turning our thoughts to the second community orchard area which will be a pear orchard. We hope to plant 6 pear trees and about 5 hazel trees (to provide screening) in the autumn.

This area was covered with brambles so requires extensive work. Many thanks to John Mason for the huge amount of work he has already done cutting the brambles down. We hope to organise some working parties to dig up as many of the roots as we can, when this is allowed under Covid rules and providing we can do so in a Covid-secure way – so if you enjoy this kind of thing we would appreciate your help! Then we will need to spray the area. If you have other suggestions as to how to effectively get rid of brambles please let us know.

Ali Barne, Diana Belli, Lizie Giraudeau and Sarah Marchant

BALDONS PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

A Happy New Year to everyone from the Parish Council. Let us hope that by following government advice and taking precautions and, for those eligible, having the vaccine, we will remain as fit and well as possible during this COVID-19 crisis. Also, a big thank you also to all the community volunteers who via the Village Info are willing to help those who are self-isolating or needing support.

The council held its first meeting of 2021 on Monday 11th January again via Zoom.

Orchard Planting

The council considered a proposed planting plan for Pear Trees and hedging at the second Orchard site on the south eastern corner of the green. This was supported in principle to allow applications for grants to be made. The site will need a lot of clearance of the ground to prepare it for planting and volunteers and volunteers will be welcomed.

Fuel Charity Trustees

The Council was asked to confirm its support for the appointment of trustees in accordance with recently agreed procedure. Trustees are now appointed for 3 years on a rolling basis. New trustees will be announced by the Fuel Charity.

Solar Farm Planning application

The council gave its formal support to the letter of objection to this damaging plan and for its submission to SODC. The council submission has been circulated to villagers via Village Info email and can be seen on the village web site. Many objections have been raised by villagers and a big thank you to those of you with expertise who helped us to identify issues to assist in constructing our response; and also to those of you who have written with your own comments to SODC. Whilst we await SODC decision, we may not have heard the last of this application.

Precept for 2021/2

Following discussion at previous meetings on our priorities for maintenance of our services and on the budget required for 2021 the council approved the final budget and voted on the proposed precept for next year of £9918.00 which will be submitted to SODC and represents a 3% increase on Band D properties.

SODC report

Sam Casey-Rerhaye reported on current issues at SODC, including the adoption of the Local Plan 2035. Following a question, Sam explained her decision to abstain in the vote to adopt the Local Plan. The reason for doing this was that whilst not supporting the plan, voting against it was useless, as the government minister had already indicated that he would have taken further action if the Plan was not adopted, and therefore any vote by the Council was window dressing.

Garden waste collections have been suspended for the time being due to the COVID-19 crisis and staffing issues.

National Census

SODC have indicated that the National Census will take place in March. More information will be available in due course, but it will be conducted online with other arrangements for those without access to a computer.

Planning applications

No new planning application have been received by the council from SODC

Village Spring Clean

We were unable to do our usual village clear up last year due to lock down. We hope circumstances allow it this year and the council will be looking at agreeing a date at the next meeting in March providing there is a relaxation in COVID-19 19 rules to allow it to go ahead.

Dates for future meetings

March 8th, 2021. 7.30 pm Most likely to be by Zoom and to be confirmed on the agenda.



**Oxfordshire
South & Vale**

New free phone number

We are pleased to announce that we have a new free phone number.

Adviceline: 0808 278 7907

Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm



NUNEHAM COURTENAY PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The Parish Council held its first meeting of 2021 on Tuesday 5th January. The Council is still meeting via Zoom as face-to-face meetings cannot be justified in the current situation. It was a busy meeting.

Council Tax increase

Sorry, that was just to grab your attention. The Parish Council bit of your Council Tax isn't going up by so much as a penny in 2021-22: the Council decided to freeze it. You can view the draft 2021-22 budget presented to the meeting on the Council's website if you want to see where your money is going.

Playing Field

The Council discussed a sort of road map for reaching agreement with the Nuneham Courtenay Sports and Playing Field Association on the future of the Playing Field. Steve Appleby has pursued a kind of "shuttle diplomacy" between the Council and the Association, and had submitted to the Council a fairly detailed plan for addressing each of the areas for decision in turn:

- Security of the Playing Field – making sure the Playing Field will always belong to the people of the village
- Role of the Council – if the Association is right that the Council has to have a legal interest in the Playing Field for insurance and fundraising purposes, how should this be done
- Role of the Association – how will the Playing Field be managed and who will pay the bills.

The Council expressed its gratitude to Steve and to the Association for their willingness to devise a way out of the problems that have been preventing progress. Perhaps it was unrealistic to try to discuss everything at once and we can all move forward better if we take things one at a time.

Gravel extraction

Representatives of the Parish Council attended a meeting on 24th November with Cllr Yvonne Constance, set up by our County Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale. Cllr Yvonne Constance is responsible for the County's minerals and waste strategy and she brought three members of the Minerals and Waste team to the meeting.

There wasn't an agreed record of what was discussed but your representatives believe Cllr Constance has undertaken that she will ask the County Council's Cabinet to remove the designation of Nuneham Courtenay as the preferred site for meeting most of Oxfordshire's future gravel needs and instead say it is just one of many possible sites from which gravel could be taken.

Cllr Constance is presenting a lengthy report and various papers adding up to 52 pages to the County Council's Cabinet meeting on Tuesday 19th January. There

does not seem to be a specific mention of Nuneham Courtenay anywhere by name.

The main purpose of the Cabinet report seems to be to agree a new timetable which should lead to another consultation on preferred sites in August and September this year with a set of Site Allocations finally being in place in December 2023.

The important thing for the village will be to see if its existing status as a preferred site is dropped. Our County Councillor Lorraine Lindsay-Gale, who is a member of the Cabinet, has said she will support that.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Council has agreed in principle to initiate the creation of a Neighbourhood Plan to sit under South Oxfordshire's newly-adopted Local Plan and to set up a steering group to oversee the project.

Solar farm

The Council discussed Enso Energy's planning application for an enormous solar farm and decided to oppose it.

Christmas tree collection-point

The parish council asked the district council for a Christmas tree collection-point, like last year, at the piece of land that is meant to serve as a car park for users of the Village Hall. The trees left there should have been removed already but, unfortunately, Biffa has not been able to collect garden waste or Christmas trees since Christmas due to Covid-related staff shortages and we don't yet know when the collections will restart.

Next meeting

The next meeting of the Council is on Tuesday 2nd March. It will be yet another remote one using Zoom. If you have anything you want to say to the Council you can join the meeting by telephone if you don't have a computer. Contact the Clerk for more information.

ITEMS FOR THE NEWSLETTER

Items for the March 2021 newsletter

by 16th February please

Any villager is welcome to send items for publication in the newsletter. Please send copy to Natasha Eliot: tashaandjames@btopenworld.com. Alternatively, I can be contacted on 343478 or at Baldon House East, Marsh Baldon.

For advertising queries, please contact Leanna Maggs on:
leanna.maggs@gmail.com or on 01865 340 521

NUNEHAM COURTENAY VILLAGE HALL NEWS

Thank you to everyone who joined in with the Village Advent Calendar and decorated their house for Christmas. It gave a lot of pleasure to people and was a great distraction during these worrying times. The village looked so magical! I have included some pictures but of course there is not space here for them all. There was so much creativity!





Regular activities are suspended in the Village Hall at this time.

Fallow and Fields are taking deliveries from the Oxford Bread company who were so supportive during the first lockdown. If you cannot collect from Fallow and Fields yourself and need support do let me know and we can work something out for you. Tom, Kerry, Gloria, and Trudi have resumed their

weekly shopping/delivering grocery trips. They do this mainly on the WhatsApp group. If you do not have access to WhatsApp let me know either on 01865 343459 or jenny@datadaysolutions.com and I'll help you get in touch with them.

Yoga is back on Skype at this time, so it is free. It's Mondays at 7pm. Let me know if you want to be added to the Skype group.

There are two allotments free if anyone is interested in planning to grow your own this spring and summer. Get in touch with Lucy or Tom at the Nuneham Estate. Church cleaning was off for the month of January. We hope to restart this as soon as possible.



COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S UPDATE BY CLLR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE

COVID-19 vaccination programme

By 15th January 22 sites across Oxfordshire will be offering vaccinations to the top two priority groups. The first vaccinations were delivered to patients (aged 80 and over), care workers and frontline NHS staff on 8 December at the Churchill Hospital. Since then vaccination services have opened in a phased approach, led by GPs, across the following primary care network sites:

- Chipping Norton Health Centre
- Hart Surgery, Henley
- Banbury Cross Health Centre
- Malthouse Surgery, Abingdon
- Bartlemas Surgery, Oxford
- Jericho Health Centre, Oxford
- Barton Neighbourhood Centre
- Windrush Health Centre, Witney
- Leys Health Centre, Oxford
- Wallingford Community Hospital
- Morland House Surgery, Thame
- Clifton Hampden Centre
- The Heritage Centre, Bicester
- Kennington Health Centre
- Didcot Civic Hall
- Islip Medical Practice
- Cherwell School, Oxford
- Wantage Health Centre
- Carterton
- Faringdon
- Grimsbury, Banbury

Plans are also underway for the Oxfordshire Vaccination Centre to be operational by the end of January, which will be the Oxfordshire site for mass vaccinations and provided by Oxford Health.

New year present for bus passengers in Oxfordshire

Bus services across the county are set to be improved thanks to our work with local bus operators and major employers to revise bus services and frequencies to help support the region's recovery from the pandemic.

Among the changes are more frequent services between Milton Park and Didcot, with improved links to the site from Wantage, Grove, Abingdon and Oxford thanks to a new partnership between Milton Park and Thames Travel. Abingdon will once again be linked to Oxford station by service X2; and service X3 will operate through to the John Radcliffe Hospital, while also serving the new Barton Park development and Barton. A higher frequency will be introduced between Abingdon and Oxford city centre on Mondays to Saturdays. To find out more, read the news story on our website.

Schools Now Closed

Our schools are now closed until at least the February half term – perhaps returning on February 22nd. There has been an overwhelming flood of parents claiming that they are key workers, and therefore their children should be allowed to continue attending school. The objective is to minimise the number of children

attending school in order to help prevent the spread of the virus. So numbers will continue to be restricted according to the guidelines.

Changes to services

Now Oxfordshire is once again subject to a national lockdown, some of our services are affected, although many will continue to deliver an online service:

- Household waste recycling centres remain open. However, they are very busy and so we are advising residents that the sites may close temporarily to relieve traffic congestion and to maintain social distancing.
- The Oxfordshire Museum and Oxfordshire History Centre are closed.
- The county's libraries are closed for browsing, but 14 library branches are providing a limited number of services, including IT access, which must be pre-booked, online services, home library visits and click and collect.
- In line with national guidance, the county council's registration service will only be conducting wedding or civil partnership ceremonies in exceptional circumstances, such as the illness of a couple or member of the family due to attend the ceremony.

Helping businesses

In Oxfordshire, the four Districts and the City council are responsible for distributing Government grant funding to help businesses through to the spring. As throughout, they have been doing a fantastic job and update their support for business webpages on a regular basis.

Christmas effort to protect and support residents

Areas of the county were once again affected by flooding over the holiday period. I am sure you would like to join me in recognising and thanking our colleagues in highways, social care, emergency planning and response plus our wonderful fire and rescue service who worked incredibly hard to ensure all those affected had accommodation, properties were protected where possible and roads were closed where necessary.

Two care facilities were flooded and social care ensured all clients were moved to alternative care facilities, with our fire service moving essential equipment. The emergency planning team supported this response, liaising closely with the communications team, who shared information and messages as widely as possible to residents and businesses. This highlights how our services really pull together at times of crisis.

PEAFOWL – by Akshay Morye, Nuneham Courtenay Parish Council

Nuneham Courtenay can boast of a conspicuous naturalised citizen species; The Peafowl. The village was introduced to Indian peacocks and peahens in the 19th century (about a 150 years ago!). Although, the Harcourt Arboretum hosts around 15 birds, the population has gradually spread around the village with a new batch of peachicks every Summer. The increasing population has led to a growing number of birds attempting to cross the extremely busy A4174. Unfortunately, and not unexpectedly, this has sadly led to some peafowl casualties.

If you come across injured peafowl, or any other injured wildlife, and would like to assist while it is safe to do so, below is a list of facilities that may be able to provide assistance.

Note: Tiggywinkles may refuse to take peafowl casualties as they consider them to be exotic pets instead of wild animals on account of being a non-native species. However, according to the Harcourt Arboretum website, the peacocks are wild animals and have been in Nuneham Courtenay for about 150 years.



RSPCA:

0300 1234 999

<https://www.rspca.org.uk/local/oxfordshire-branch/aboutus/contactus>

HerpVet Services (exotic animal vet):

07754 125302 Email: beavs@herpvet.co.uk

HerpVet Services, (inside) Iffley Vets, 35 Iffley Road, Oxford OX4 1EA.

Tiggywinkles Wildlife Hospital:

01844 292292

<https://www.sttiggywinkles.org.uk/contact-us/>
Tiggywinkles, Aston Road, Haddenham, Buckinghamshire, HP17 8AF.

Alert – Coronavirus Vaccination Scams

As of 7 January 2021, Action Fraud had received 57 reports from members of the public who have been sent text messages claiming to be from the NHS, offering them the opportunity to sign up for coronavirus vaccinations. The texts ask the recipient to click on a link which takes them to an online form where they are prompted to input personal and financial details. In some cases the online form has looked very similar to the real NHS website.

Pauline Smith, Head of Action Fraud, said:

“Remember, the vaccine is only available on the NHS and is free of charge. The NHS will never ask you for details about your bank account or to pay for the vaccine. If you receive an email, text message or phone call purporting to be from the NHS and you are asked to provide financial details, this is a scam.”

How to protect yourself:

In the UK, coronavirus vaccinations will only be available via the National Health Services of England, Northern Ireland, Wales and Scotland. You can be contacted by the NHS, your employer, a local GP surgery or pharmacy, to receive your vaccination. **Remember, the vaccinations are free of charge and you will not be asked for a payment.**

The NHS will never:

- **ask for your bank account or card details**
- **ask for your PIN or banking passwords**
- **arrive unannounced at your home to administer the vaccine**
- **ask for documentation to prove your identity, such as a passport or utility bills**

If you receive a call you believe to be fraudulent, hang up. If you are suspicious about an email you have received, forward it to report@phishing.gov.uk. Suspicious text messages should be forwarded to the number 7726, which is free of charge.

If you believe you are the victim of a fraud, please report this to Action Fraud as soon as possible by calling 0300 123 2040 or visiting www.actionfraud.police.uk.

FROM JOHN HOWELL MP

When I wrote in December, for publication in January, I was optimistic for this new year and now in January, despite this current lockdown, I do remain so. Having said that I fully appreciate the difficulties of yet another tightening of restrictions, I know that some people are very worried and others very frustrated, but it is essential. What does sadden me is the lack of understanding by some as to why this is so necessary. I have received emails from people seeking my support for their own justification to push the boundaries of restrictions to allow particular activities. Such requests go completely against the spirit of the restrictions and each of us has to be able to justify any activity outside or our own homes for ourselves should they be required to do so. We simply have to reduce unnecessary face to face communications as far as possible.

However I do remain optimistic as we see more vaccines approved and the pace of the rollout stepped up. The priorities for vaccination remain to protect the vulnerable, reduce deaths and reduce pressure on the NHS. In conversation with the Chief Executive of the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, which is heavily involved in the rollout, I have been reassured that we are on track to meet the Government schedule. At the start of the rollout it took time to get different locations set up and more will be operational by the time this newsletter is published. There is plenty of supply of the vaccine and it is being used as it becomes available. The Government is, of course, concerned to make sure that distribution is evenly spread across the county so that vulnerable people nationwide are protected.

Some very generous people have asked me if they can bypass their vaccination to allow some other person to receive it. The spirit of this is much appreciated but in truth we need everyone who is in the categories set to take the vaccine for the reason set out above. In contrast to this generosity I have also had reports from GP surgeries of people verbally abusing staff as they have been wanted higher priority for themselves. I too have received calls along the same lines. I am sure that most of us will be relieved when we personally have the protection of the vaccine, but we have to be patient and we have to look at the collective good. Our turn will come and in the meantime we must all continue to follow measures to protect one another whether we have been vaccinated or not. It takes time to build immunity after receiving the vaccine and those who have been vaccinated must remember that others have not yet had the benefit. Hands, space, face will remain the mantra for some time yet. There is no place for selfishness in this, only by working together and showing mutual respect will we be able to get back to a way of life that we would prefer.

In this current lockdown Parliament continues to run as best it can with remote working. The Speaker has strongly encouraged MPs not to travel into London unless absolutely necessary and has limited further the number of MPs who can be in the Chamber at any one time. However, this does not mean we are simply twiddling our thumbs; far from it. Many changes have been made to enable MPs

to carry on with important business. My staff team continue to work remotely and together we are doing our best to respond to the heavy workload we are experiencing particularly at present.

Council of Europe

I am delighted and honoured to have been asked by the Prime Minister to become Leader of the UK delegation to the Council of Europe. The Council of Europe is a non-EU organisation of which we remain as members beyond Brexit. My delegation is cross-party and represents the UK at the Council in a number of ways including dealing with climate change and other important issues. The Council of Europe was founded in 1949, in the wake of the Second world War to uphold human rights, democracy and the rule of law in Europe. It has 47 member states and remains an important link with our European neighbours. The Parliamentary Assembly is made up of parliamentary representatives from the members states and has to reflect the political balance of the country.

If you have an issue that you would like to raise with me, if possible, please email me at john.howell.mp@parliament.uk. If you cannot email you can write to me at the House of Commons, London, SW1 0AA or PO Box 84, Watlington, OX49 5XD.



Your voice on health and care services

Visiting loved ones in care homes during COVID-19

Do you have a relative living in a care home in Oxfordshire? If so, Healthwatch Oxfordshire would like to hear about you and your loved one's experiences during COVID-19.

The county's **independent health and social care watchdog** would particularly like to know what contact you've been able to have with your relative since the first lockdown in March, and what impact this has had on you and them.

You can share your experiences by completing a short anonymous survey at www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/carehomefamilies/

Healthwatch Oxfordshire will report what it hears to social care decision-makers, so this is your chance to have your voice heard.

If you would like a paper copy or a translation of the survey you can contact Healthwatch Oxfordshire on 01865 520520 or at hello@healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk

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

BOSOM FRIENDS

Oxfordshire Breast Cancer Support Group

This time last year, nobody had any idea what 2020 would have in store for us. The coronavirus pandemic has meant that the last few months have been challenging and difficult for just about everyone.

Hearing the news that you have cancer is devastating; receiving such a diagnosis during these uncertain Covid times can be even more frightening. As well as the obvious physical effects, such a diagnosis is emotionally overwhelming and ultimately lifechanging; it's common to feel alone, fearful and anxious.

Breast cancer is the most common cancer in the UK, with one in eight women being diagnosed in their lifetime. Men can also be diagnosed with breast cancer. Each year around 12,000 people will die from the disease. Although survival rates have improved dramatically - with more people now surviving breast cancer than ever before - there is still a long way to go.

Bosom Friends is a small, Oxfordshire support group run entirely by volunteers and offers a listening ear as well as practical, confidential support to those who have been affected by breast cancer. The group was formed several years ago by two women who wanted to ensure that others in Oxfordshire would not feel the same isolation that they had experienced following their diagnosis.

Members of Bosom Friends would usually meet once a month, often in the home of one of the members with a chat, cuppa and cake. Although currently unable to hold normal group meetings due to coronavirus Bosom Friends continue to hold monthly meetings online via Zoom.

Whether you have just been diagnosed, are currently undergoing treatment or completed your active treatment a while ago, the group offers emotional support and practical, up-to-date information. Above all, we can offer an understanding voice at the end of the phone should you ever need it.

If you or someone you care about has been affected by breast cancer, please do take a look at the Bosom Friends website - www.bosomfriends.org.uk; alternatively if you prefer, please call Jan in confidence on 01844 290362 for more information.

Jan Backhouse, Co-ordinator
01844 290362

Alison Ball, Support
07833 527725

Linda Poll, Admin
01235 553925

Dulcie Dunbar, Publicity
dulciedunbar@gmail.com

www.bosomfriends.org.uk

HUMANKIND HAS A MORAL DUTY TO STEP IN AND HELP

I often talk about different types of plants being hosts, and homes, to varying types of insects, as even insects can be host specific. I also talk about having the right plants, in the right place, isn't always enough. We need to have juvenile growth on those plants in any given habitat, as well as teenage growth, or senior growth.

By that I mean, some insects will only be attracted to their favourite plants if there is fresh new growth (juvenile), growth that's one to 3 years old (teenage), and more established growth (senior). There are some insects that need the whole range of different aged growth, in a given habitat, to be able to not just exist, but thrive. Building a healthy local ecosystem, starts from the plants and insects. From there, everything else will follow. Well, that's my experience, for what it's worth.

The other day, a client of mine, who lives in Summertown in Oxford, and whose garden runs right down to the banks of The River Cherwell, inadvertently discovered this theory. How many people are lucky enough to be able to say they can maintain a section of riverbank, as part of their gardening duties?

On the other side of the river from my client, there are some huge willow trees, that are totally unmanaged by the landowner. The trees are becoming brittle and snapping off. Many dangerously overhanging the footpath. Others already collapsing, some even into the river, forming a dam, that threatens to back up the water flow, and blocking the river, so navigation is awkward. Some of the fallen branches in the river, are regrowing, and Willows can now be seen emerging in the centre of the river.

On my client's side though, when looking along the neighbouring gardens, that share the stretch of riverbank, you could see the homeowners, over the last few years, had all cut back hard (pollarded) their willows. They had all done it in separate years, so there were loads of willows at different stages of regrowth. Some juvenile, some teenage and some like my clients, in the senior group, beginning to look like they need attention.

On my client asking me, should they cut back their willow, as it was becoming somewhat tall and brittle, like those on the other side of the river, unmanaged by the landowner. "Hell yeah!" I said, as I proceeded to explain the benefits of considered management of wildlife habitats. It's not about leaving nature alone and to its own devices. Humankind has a moral duty to step in, and help maintain the mosaic of habitats, that come together to make a thriving ecosystem. Even in our own gardens.

Happy Gardening
Stuart Mabbutt
Wildlife Gardening Specialist
01865 747243
www.wildmaninspires.co.uk

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6/6a Merchant House, 5 East St Helen Street, Abingdon, Oxfordshire OX14 5EG

Once again we are in lockdown and for now we are focusing on our online services on Sunday mornings. Once this current lockdown comes to an end we hope to be able to hold some Public Services again. However we expect these will still have restrictions and be subject to strict guidelines.

THE CHURCH BUILDINGS REMAIN OPEN for Private Prayer

There will be a team Service online each Sunday to join with the churches across the Dorchester Team.

See <https://www.dorchester-abbey.org.uk/online/>

Once lockdown has ended we will be hoping to gradually be making our way back to normal with services but of course in these uncertain times we do not know what the future holds. Once services of worship can happen again we expect that pre-lockdown 2 restrictions will apply in our Churches if they are Covid secure. One aspect of this is asking you to register in advance for services so that we can ensure there is space. Each week the Team sends out information about what Sunday services there are across the Team and who to contact if you would like to attend in person. If you would like to be included in that correspondence do let Rev Jennifer know at jennifer@morton8.co.uk. Or ring the office on 340007.

Details of the online services can also be found on Dorchester Abbey's website and our church's 'A Church Near You' (ACNY) website. Regular services are also broadcast on the TV and radio and there are prayers and other information on the Church of England's or The Diocese of Oxford's website.

As we know advice is changing all the time. Plans for Services often change by the time the Newsletter is published and therefore as things are updated current information will be posted to the websites.

The Diocese and the National Church also offer online services. There are also dial in facilities for those without internet.



A free Church of England phone line of hymns, reflections and prayers. Do share the number, 0800 804 8044, with those who may be feeling lonely and isolated.

Don't forget that the Diocese of Oxford Church at home services are available to dial into too - find out more at oxford.anglican.org/livestream