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Items for the next edition should be sent to the Editor by 10 September 2024. *The Villager* is published every other month and delivered free to all households in the village.

Editorial

A seismic event has taken place since I sat down to write my last editorial. I'm not talking about England reaching the final of the Euros. Since the election the map of England has changed beyond recognition. What was once a blue carpet with occasional splashes of tomato sauce is now a patchwork quilt. Brightwell has turned orange along with the whole of Oxfordshire, and according to the Observer newspaper, it is now possible to walk from North Devon to Eastbourne on an entirely orange camino.

But who in Brightwell has time for that when there are so many community events to organise or participate in? The sun came out for Brightfest, see p 9, and also for the Village Fete, though that was touch and go. The organisers almost drowned in their efforts to put up and clear away the stalls, but the punters had a ball, even if it was a little soggy underfoot (see p 8). Congratulations to Keith Brooks for his winning photograph (see cover).

We certainly have some adept fundraisers in our village. The Save the Children team led by Celia Collett has been recognised for their sterling efforts over the last 12 months, see p 18. The summer concert raised £1000 which was split between St Agatha's and Brightwell Supporting Refugees, and the one-man band Shena Luck has exceeded her target of £7000 in aid of the Village Hall, see p 15. Congratulations are also due to Team Trailer Swift who took their electric go kart to Goodwood on 30 June and returned with 5 trophies and a sustainability award. See p 4 – Bravo! And also to our energetic team of bell ringers at St Agatha's – you try ringing a church bell for a few minutes, never mind 3 hours non-stop, see p 11.

Research has shown that children who lack parental love and affection are often insecure and rebellious and constantly seeking approval. Find out how Maddy Lowe used kindness to find her way through "absent parent syndrome" on p 5.

By the time you read this you are likely to be on holidays – and looking for a good book to read. Are you aware that there are some stonking good reads available in our local village shop, most of them written by talented Brightwell residents. We kick off a series of reviews of books by local authors on p 20.

There are loads of wonderful events to look forward to in the autumn, so check out the Village diary. Meanwhile happy holidays one and all.

Alison Leigh

Parish Council News

Speeding

There still seems to be a problem with cars travelling too fast in the village. After reporting this in the last *Villager* and also putting messages on the community Facebook page we now have a group of villagers who have offered to work with a local initiative called Speedwatch. This will involve checking speeds of cars in the village and if they are going too fast the driver will be sent a letter reminding them to obey the speed limit. The Parish Council has done all it can, reducing speed limits, adding signage, organising the zebra crossing (hopefully installed soon on the A4130) so hopefully involving the community will be more successful. If you would like to be part of this group, and they do need more volunteers, please let Gabrielle know and she will put you in touch with the organiser.

Jubilee Pavilion upgrade

A core group of interested parties have had several meetings to plan and refine the design for the Pavilion upgrade. These things are never quick but hopefully we are nearly there with a plan that we can send to SODC to apply for planning permission. We think we've managed to include everything that the users of the pavilion requested a while ago. Fortunately we have a decent amount of money, some from the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) as a starting point but will still need to do some fundraising over the next year.

Helping Hands

We would like to thank Barbara Isaacs, Chris Baines, Bob Devey and Graham Gilgrass for all the work they did refurbishing the phone box gallery opposite the pub. It looks great. Barbara also responded to the request for someone to replenish the chippings on the mound above the tunnel at the Kings Meadow playground. Thank you, Barbara. We also thank Angela Lewis, Hugh Roderick and Kat Southwell who responded to a plea on the Helping Hands WhatsApp group and offered to wash the various signs in the village which are looking decidedly grubby. Much appreciated. If you would like to join the village Helping Hands group please send Gabrielle your number and she will add you. For those who don't know, this group was set up to provide a database of people who may be able to help on an ad hoc basis when small jobs are needed to be done to keep our village looking lovely and working well. We put the request out and it's up to you if you want to offer to help – we don't hassle you!

Please remember we have a rolling chair of the Parish Council now so the contact is always our Parish Council Clerk Gabrielle on bcsparishcouncil@googlemail.com and she will direct any queries to the appropriate councillor.

Brightwell cum Sotwell Parish Council

Trailer Swift Victorious!

You may have spotted our completed electric go kart, 'Trailer Swift' (and our trophies!) at the Village Fete. Our local team built the go kart and recently raced it at Goodwood, as part of Greenpower's national kit car project for 10-11 year olds.



Race day was unforgettable. We set off in convoy from Brightwell very excited. The sky was blue, the battery fully charged and everything looked promising until we had an axle failure in our first race. Disaster! We carried out urgent trackside repairs and went on to win five sprint races. That was

followed by strong performances from all the team in the slalom, chicane, pit stop challenge and a full lap of the Goodwood circuit.

The judges awarded us the Sustainability Award, in recognition of Trailer Swift's bodywork, which was made from recycled flooring, and our generous sponsorship by Carma, who partner with veterans to fight climate change. Carma planted trees to offset our carbon impact.

We've learnt so many new skills during this project and had fun. We hope another team in the village will use the kit next year. Thank you to Carma, our Mums and Dads, Paul Rodwell, and Patrick and Elizabeth Rooney for cheering us on.

Let's drive change, one electric car at a time!

Florence Clancey, Naomi Davidson, Jasper Dixon, Laurie Quantrell, Grace Richards, Maggie Richards, Annabel Rooney, Theo Tapping and Angus Winckworth

Meet Maddy Lowe

If you saw the recent production of *The Invisible Man* at the Corn Exchange you would have seen the talent of one of Brightwell's most talented performers on full display. One minute Maddy Lowe was the formidable landlady Mrs Hall, next she was the rather posh but mild mannered Rev Bunting - then she's Dr Kemp, a completely different character.



If you missed that you may have attended the Summer Concert at St Agatha's, in which case you will have heard her glorious soprano voice soaring above the rafters. And yet until she came to live in Brightwell Maddy hadn't seen a play or a concert much less sung a note or strutted the stage for over 20 years. And therein lies a story.

Maddy was born in Twickenham to a single mum, and brought up in North Dorset. Her childhood was difficult because she never felt she fitted in. Aged 8

she won a music scholarship to St Marys, a posh private Catholic school in Shaftsbury. (Camilla Parker Bowles went there. So did the Asquiths). She didn't fit in there because she wasn't posh enough and she didn't fit in with the local kids because they thought she was too posh for them.

Nor was home a comfortable place. Her father lived in Blackpool so she was lucky if she saw him more than once or twice a year and her mother was too busy earning a living and entertaining the latest boyfriend to show Maddy the love and attention she craved. "I remember feeling scared and wondering, if anything happened, who would look after me? and feeling really vulnerable."

Consequently Maddy recalls that she spent half her time breaking rules, acting up and doing things she shouldn't, but at the same time she was an exceptional student, always working really hard and always getting high grades. "I think I was desperate for their (the parents') affection, and I worked my bottom off to try and get that affection."

Her musical talent was evident from the outset. "I remember sitting in class making up tunes in my head and trying to scribble them on to paper, and a girl saying to me, Oh you're one of *those* people are you?"

During her teens she sang and acted in various productions but the highlight was doing a world tour and singing in the proms with the National Youth Choir – "It was a mind-blowing experience. Absolutely amazing."

She desperately wanted to do music as a career and got a place at the Royal Academy of Music. But her parents vetoed it; you're bright they told her, you've

got to use your brains. Devasted but still eager to please she did a psychology degree at Sussex University. When she graduated (with a first) she was wondering what she was going to do with her life. Her Dad suggested medicine. She went along with it even though she didn't really want to be a doctor. "At that stage I didn't really know who I was. I just had to make sure I achieved, because I didn't feel I was worth anything if I wasn't achieving, and to be honest I don't think I really knew who I was until the last five years."

You could describe Maddy's last 5 years as seismic. By now she was living in Brightwell, married with two children and a qualified Doctor. She had been practising as a GP for 3 years, but hated the restrictions that decreasing resources in the NHS put on her practice. She had finally discovered what she really wanted to be, and that was a coach. That required more training, which she did at the same time as taking on a high-powered management job running the quality assurance team at an international private health company. She was by her own admission running herself into the ground. And then on 14 March 2020 she got Covid.

Covid hit her very hard; she was in bed with chest pains and a racing heart. Her son asked her if she was going to die. She really thought she might. "We didn't understand anything about it. It was very scary." For a while she couldn't work and couldn't look after the children. Covid's legacy is a concoction of pills to deal with a persistent racing heart and chronic arthritis.

In retrospect she says it was a blessing in disguise. With the help of counselling she went on an enormous journey of self-reflection and re-evaluation. "It genuinely, made me realize how lucky I am, and that meaningful relationships within the family, and within the community are everything and that's where I want to spend my time and my energy."

The upshot of which is that she is now an executive coach, meaning she coaches people in big life changes, just like her own. It allows her to spend more time with her husband and children and gives her scope to help others go on similar journeys of self-discovery: "Most people I see can't remember what they enjoy; they're so plugged into work. They haven't taken out time to listen to music or read a book, for a really long time. So the first thing is to remind them of who they are and what lights them up and what gives them energy rather than what draws from them all the time." (See www.drmaddydumontcoaching.co.uk for more details).

Maddy also has more time to contribute to the community. She is one of two parents spearheading the Brightwell School Eco Alliance (see *The Villager* June July edition) and music and drama are once again central to her life. "Bringing people together is a fundamental value of mine and that's what acting and singing does. It's creative and it's silly and it's fun."

Alison Leigh

Brightwell Supporting Refugees (BSR)

A quieter month for BSR but Brightfest was not so quiet and brought a fair few customers into our tea tent to quench thirsty throats and munch delicious cakes generously provided by our supporters and fellow trustees... Thank you!

We have been able to send out more donations to pay for two primary school teachers as well as boost the budget for the secondary school at the Hope Centre in Amman, Jordan. More money was sent too to the Afripads project at the Windle Trust in Uganda which is proving to be really successful in keeping young girls at school throughout the term. Asylum Welcome in Oxford has also received a donation from us.

We have now a very good website (*bsr-charity.org*) put together by Anthony Finn, our patient treasurer, so do please take a look, see what we are about and let us know what you think by writing comments!

Our next event will be on **Friday 13 September** in the Village Hall at 7.30pm. Peter Adamson will be talking about his recent book 'A Town Called Wallingford'. An interesting evening for sure!

Ann Linton and Helen Connor, co-chairs, Brightwell Supporting Refugees

BcS Environment Group

We have been carrying out further trimming along the Swan Stream to keep the footpath passable and to clear short lengths of stream to allow the less vigorous species to grow, although that seems to be more in hope than practice! We have aimed to keep the umbelliferous plants as they attract a wide range of insects. These plants have clusters of flowers rather like an umbrella and include hogweed, cow parsley, wild carrot and hemlock - currently not present alongside the stream but becoming widespread in verges and fields. We will need to remove more ash trees due to dieback later in the year.

It is unfortunate that several dominant aggressive species have taken hold in the Millenium Wood, despite attempts to control and remove these in previous years. These plants include hemlock, burdock, cleaver and nettles etc. Whilst these give some benefit to insects they do prevent less vigorous wildflowers from becoming established and result in an impenetrable area. The burdock is a particular problem for dogs as the burrs readily attach to their coats and are difficult to remove. The vision of the pond (as constructed about 4 years ago)

being surrounded by a wildflower meadow area (as seen in the community orchard) seems very hard to achieve! Any ideas welcomed!

We are very pleased that Jonathan Stamp will be giving his talk 'The Lost Library' in the village hall on Thursday 5 December. This will tell the fascinating story of the discovery and analysis of papyrus scrolls from the oldest library ever found which is in a villa in Herculaneum buried by the eruption of Vesuvius in 79AD. Further details to follow. Not to be missed!

Weather

The rainfall recorded at Highlands Farm was for May and June 55.9mm and 10.1mm respectively. The May figure is about average whilst that of June is only 20% of the average measured at the farm between 1999 and 2012. These are about in line with the Met Office figures for the wider region.

Maximum mean temperatures were about 1 deg C higher than average for May but about 1 deg C below average for June.

Steve Capel-Davies, Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Environment Group

Community Association

Village Fete 6 July

Despite the torrential morning rain a big crowd joined us in the afternoon sunshine for our annual Fete. It was wonderful to be able to welcome so many new residents who have joined our community. We are extremely grateful to Jenny and David Dobbin for allowing us to hold the event in their lovely garden at Sotwell House and for being such gracious and welcoming hosts.

Big thanks also to the army of hard working, dedicated volunteers who created such a happy event for the whole village, heroically setting up the stalls in the pouring rain, running them and clearing up afterwards in the rain again.

I am pleased to report that after expenses the Fete raised over £4250, The attendance was approximately 600 – a fantastic result! A big thank you to everybody who came, enjoyed and supported us.

Grants

The Community Association makes grants available to village organisations based on need and availability of funds. Grant application forms are available from our Treasurer, Tom at *tacrogerson@aol.co.uk* or *tacrogerson@gmail.com*.

Applications must be submitted by 28 August 2024 to be considered for a grant.

As our takings have been a little down for some of our events (due to the weather!) we are unable to be quite as generous as we were last year – but still send in your applications!

Jumble Sale 5 October

Due to its success when it was held for the first time last year, we will once again be running a Jumble Sale on 5 October 2024 2-4.30pm at The Pavilion, Mackney Lane. Doors will open from 10am for donations: please provide clean and serviceable clothing only. The sale will begin at 2pm. We will be delighted if you can join us to discover and buy some fashionable bargains at excellent prices! Further details can be obtained from Lynn on lynnburridge@gmail.com.

James Davys

Brightfest 2024

As I'm writing this summary of the Brightfest 2024 event, it's chucking it down outside my window, and it seems that the recent 3-day "hot spell" is the only hope of summer. How lucky we were to have a pretty much dry and sunny day on Saturday 8 June.

A massive thank you to all villagers who turned up to support this amazing community event, and particularly those who contribute through their businesses and with their own time to help put it on, see below.

We estimate total net income to be about £14,200, giving us around £6,500 to distribute to our local causes and still maintain a full year's event costs in the bank – a terrific result. This year we are supporting the pre-school decking project, both the Stewart Hall and the Jubilee Pavilion re-development funds, as well as our normal contributions to the Scouts, BSR, 1155, and also the Donkey Sanctuary.

Our first fundraiser in April, a quiz night, raised £450: our thanks to Corinne for hosting and to Phil Annets for the brain-ache. Next, with their own hotline into the Met Office, the Norfolks managed to organise the annual BubbleDogs in just days and raised an amazing net £1,290. Takings on the gate were a record £5,098 before any tax adjustments (£5,053 last year). Our event day costs were very similar to last year at £7,000. The overall aim is of course to optimise the expenditure needs and find the most creative and cost-effective

solution – so, if you have business contacts that can help, please do approach the Committee.

Apart from some initial intermittent sound issues the local bands were excellent, but "Don't mention the (tug of) war". It seems a few contacts/ringers from Wallingford Rugby club might be the only way the men of Brightwell can beef up their pulling power and solve continuing poor performances! Go Sotwell!

Finally, huge thanks to the Brightfest Organising Committee. After several years at the helm, Tony Windsor and Phil Thompson are retiring from front line duties. Weirdly, Phil says he'd still like to lug around the barriers at 4am whilst being dive-bombed by red kites. Tony says he'll miss all the planning details, barrier alignment, and incessant banter on the walkie-talkies, roger that. I'm very pleased to announce that John Burdass and Werner de Jong are taking on bigger roles. If you would like to be involved, please do reach out to John or me. Meanwhile - in your diaries for next year please - Saturday 7 June (hopefully during "summer"!).

Eliot Forster

Thanks to: all our local corporate sponsors: James Gesner, E&W Plumbing, Didcot Hire, Germ, The Red Lion, BBQ Sam's, and Mellers clothing (see logos on our website); also Werner de Jong for re-design of website and on-line shop/T-shirts, 1155's Mark Brett for loan of equipment including the van, – surviving a miraculous 287,000 miles, and Tony crunching through the gears; Clive Collett and John Burdass -electricals; Brightwell Supporting Refugees running the tea-tent; 20+ villagers who took a shift to shake buckets or the Sum-Up machine.

SOHA Wilding Scheme

"Feed the Birds; tuppence a bag"

At the beginning of Spring last year the South Oxfordshire Housing Association (SOHA) Environment team instigated a Wilding scheme on the footprint of land on the High Road and behind Green Lane flats as a part of their Biodiversity project programme across all the locations where they operate. Initially, some wildflower pollinator seeds were sown and last autumn a variety of flowers bloomed, mainly poppies, as well as a couple of mini-sunflowers. As autumn closed and the blooms receded the area was tidied up and 'put to bed' so to speak, for the Winter season which was far from truly wintry like those winters many of us will 'fondly recall' from our now perhaps long distant childhood!

This year, many more seeds have been sown and fresh topsoil spread. We've planted some 30 bulbs of perennial nature for future propagation and 20 bluebells bulbs in close vicinity of the existing cherry tree on this site. It is

likely that these may bloom next year whilst the bluebells, once established, will colonise and bless the neighbourhood with glorious colour in future Spring seasons. In the meantime numerous flowers have bloomed and have attracted the attention of our ‘buzzy’ friends too. I have installed a tall box which is intended as an Air BnB or Bee & Bug Hide for their purposes, another SOHA Environment team initiative.

It has come to my attention though that some residents are far from happy with this initiative and have described it as a ‘Mess’ and a ‘waste of Ratepayers money’. In response to these ‘observations’, I would reply by saying that ‘Wilding’ by definition is not exactly organised nor designed. As for cost, no expense has been incurred by tenants, council taxpayers or anyone other than me buying the seeds and bulbs and SOHA who bought some soil. When autumn closes, we will again put the site to bed for the winter and look forward to a glorious and colourful Spring in 2025. We are all but temporary custodians of the environment wherever we respectively live and we have a duty of care to hand over our countryside to future generations fully fit for purpose. This tiny footprint is just a part of what SOHA are doing in fulfilling this duty and I’m proud to be one of their volunteers.

Chris Green, SOHA volunteer

St Agatha’s Church Bells

I’m pleased to confirm that, as flagged in the last magazine, we achieved our peal in June. Rev Kev, myself, two of our friends from Wallingford and four others from the Diocese rang a Peal of "Plain Bob Major". It took us just under three hours, without a break, during which time we each pulled our rope 5,120 times, with only very minor ‘hiccups’ along the way. Celebrations ensued! We will be attempting a ‘quarter peal’ ahead of our normal practice on 27 August. Fingers crossed again.

Our young ringers are progressing nicely too. As ever, if you'd like to learn more, do please get in touch on johnedowling@hotmail.com.

John Dowling

Village Lunch Club

Our next lunch is on Tuesday 10 September at 12.15pm in the Village Hall, £5. If you have not already booked and would like to attend, please contact Eastlyn Horsfield, 01491 832041 or Sue Collett, 01491 837617.

Flower and Produce Show 2024

Trophies	
The Chilton Cup (best exhibit in the fruit & vegetable classes)	Helen Satchell
The Win Glendenning Memorial Salver (best flower arranging entry)	Josephine Butterfield
The Talbot Rose Bowl (best rose exhibit)	Gina Coupar
The Talbot Cup (awarded for most points in show)	Jason Debney Josephine Butterfield
The Joan Sheard Cup (for the best junior entry in an adult class)	Wilfred Woolhouse
Junior Trophies	(9-12) Ryan Homan (5-8) Gigi Benarr
The Swan Allotments Cup (for most improved allotment)	Andrew Smith
The Sally Dugan Cup (for creative writing)	Dulcie Chandler
The Bakers Bowl (for the most points won in cookery)	Josephine Butterfield
Best Entry in Show - (judged by popular vote) £10 Voucher for the Village Stores	Florence Gordan

Stewart Village Hall

Many thanks to everyone who visited the Village Hall stand at the Spring Fair, Brightfest and Village Fete. Hopefully you had the chance to share your thoughts and feedback about the future of the hall with a trustee.

We have had some great fundraising events in the hall. In June, Nick Zalinski led us through a delicious journey of summer wines from fizz, to sherry, to luscious reds, all accompanied by delicious nibbles. In July, Marea from Art of Jaipur led 2 block-printing workshops. Attendees were amazed how, in 2

short hours, they went away with 3 items they had created themselves: tea towels, children's aprons, tote and gift bags, purses and scarves. The overwhelming request was "Please let's do it again".

So, save the date: **Monday 2 December** for *Festive Block Printing workshops*. We'll start with booking a morning class (Marea's preference) and, if demand is there, we will add an afternoon slot. If you are interested, please let me know by emailing Annette.k@hotmail.co.uk or call me on 07867 726008. As soon as the workshop is available to book online, I will let you know. Posters will be displayed in the hall and around the village.

Again, due to popular demand, we are hoping to put on another Ladies Dancing event before the festive season gets underway. Date to be announced - keep an eye on the village Facebook page and look out for posters around the hall and village.

The trustees thank everyone who organises and attends regular events, classes and groups in the hall – including Shena's Cosy Café on Mondays - these really are the lifeblood of the hall and so important to our whole community.

Annette Kilworth

Clock Tower Lottery

On 1 October, the Village Hall trustees are launching a brand-new lottery as part of the fundraising programme for the regeneration of the building. You can be a supporter of this impressive project - there is no restriction on the amount of tickets a participant can buy. Everybody over the age of 16 will have the opportunity to buy a number or numbers to enter the draw at £5 each per month. The draw will take place on 18th of every month with a top prize of £200. The proposal is to retain a minimum of 50% of the ticket income for the Stewart Village Hall Restoration Project, and the remaining balance will be paid out in prizes during the course of each year. The enclosed leaflet, in this edition of *The Villager*, gives you further details of how you can take part. Best of luck.

The Trustees of the Stewart Village Hall

70, 700, £7,000 UPDATE

Thank you to all who have attended the Cosy Cafe or an event that has been part of my challenge to get £7,000. I now have over 600 names of people who have attended an event. Sheila Cordey's coffee morning, tombola and raffle on the hottest day of the year raised £906 which brings my total to well over

£7000. I could not have done any of this without the help of many other villagers happy to support the Village Hall. In particular Annette who ran the cafe and Harriet who stored and set up the cakes whenever I have been away. Although I hoped to keep the cafe going for the rest of the year, the numbers are low so I will take a break over the summer and reopen in the autumn. Look out for an update in the next *Villager*.

Shena Luck

Brightwell cum Sotwell WI

Taking a brief look back to our meetings this summer, they ranged from an interesting glimpse into the work of a Police Crime Scene Examiner to useful tips from a professional Organizer, how to declutter your home, clear your mind and make space and time for the important things in your life.

We followed this by another very successful day at the Village Fete, the colourful Children's Jarbola proving to be as popular as ever with queues of children lining up for their chances at winning the best surprise. With all produce and cakes sold out before the end of the afternoon we ended the day in sunshine and with a glass of Pimm's. Thank you to all who helped to make the day enjoyable and successful.

Celebrations continued with our annual Garden Party in Jennie Pozzoni's lovely garden - a big thank you to Jennie for hosting the event. This year we tried 'Flower bashing' - a novel idea of how to transfer the colours and shapes of flowers and leaves onto absorbent paper by bashing them with a hammer!! Well, a glass of prosecco beforehand clearly helped to produce some very pleasing results. Looking ahead, no meeting in August.

Tuesday 10 Sept: 'Keeping safe from online scammers' a talk by PCSO Sue Harris. NB: This will be an **'Open Meeting'** – guests more than welcome. There will also be a special visit to Waterperry Gardens in September.

Tuesday 8 October: 'Design Tips for a perfect Home'

Karin Matthews

Apple Day

Apple Day is confirmed! It's going to be a great crop this year! Paul Chilton has done his rounds of the village and can announce that there will be plenty of apples this autumn. So we will have another splendid Apple Day this year on **Saturday 12 October from 12-4 pm** at the **recreation ground**. We will be pressing hundreds of kilos of apples so bring your bottles to fill up with juice to take away. Why not have a go at pressing yourself? Alison H will

show you how easy it is. Each year Ali Q and Gina ask for apple baked donations for the cake stall and a wonderful selection of delicious cakes, biscuits, pies, muffins, tarts, and so many more just arrive on the day as if by magic.

To celebrate the 10th year of the village orchard we will have a competition for the best apple picture. If yours is chosen as the most popular one it will become the orchard logo. More details to follow in the October-November edition.

Alison Bloomfield

Brightwell Preschool

When I tell you that 21 children will be leaving us to go to school this year, you can only imagine what a busy final term we have had. If we throw-in the extra 11 children who stay behind, then double that busyness (smaller children are unpredictable and seem to get into more sticky situations).

How do we cope during the summer term you may ask? Well, we have lots of tricks up our sleeves: divide and conquer, split the group into two gaggles (one in/one out); lots of Forest School, outdoor learning and school-field action; hose them down (a lot), plenty of water-play with foot-spas, car washes, water painting, channelling water, watering the plants; cloak and dagger tactics, disguise tasks as play and give choices ending in the same result - the one that we need to happen. It's all good fun and our list is endless. I would like to thank Sue Potts and the team at the primary school for providing our little ones with the very best transition they could wish for.

Alongside our transition activities, the summer season has been rather wet this year, but the children have relished the opportunities this brings, such as finding lots of slimy creatures on our bug hunts. Wet weather never stops us being outside and the increased Forest School sessions have had a positive impact to teach the children how to take good care of nature, increasing their understanding of their own impact on the world around them and how to take care of creatures, plants and themselves. We can only hope that embedding this at such a young age will help them to make sense and adapt to an ever-changing planet as they grow older.

Talking of change, we are expecting a bumper year again this year, with currently 13 new starters for September (numbers are still rising); such great news for our special place.

Natasha Hillier, Manager

Save the Children

On the 1 June great fun was had by young and old together with our four legged friends, at the Country Fare & Fun Dog Show. We would like to publicly thank all our sponsors, supporters, helpers and everyone who helped make it a brilliant afternoon. The tractor, sheep and goats, tea tent, barbecue plus so much more went to make it extra special, raising £2,252.00.

SCUK VOLUNTEER TEAM AWARD

For a team of volunteers who achieved something remarkable over the previous twelve months.



TO Wallingford Branch

Date June 2024

Thank you for your commitment to Save the Children, and making sure kids everywhere get the chance of a future they deserve.



We have received this award. This is not just for the Save the Children team here in Brightwell, it is to all of those in our community who have supported and helped us with our fundraising for over 60 years...thank you!

Celia & the Save the Children team

Celia is being modest. The letter from SCUK reads: "You continue to find innovative and inspiring ways to raise funds.... For over 60 years you've had the fantastic ability to connect with neighbours and attract supportyou have managed to sustain your fundraising successes year on year by adapting to changing times." Ed.

Village Stores and Post Office

I was invited to attend Plunkett's UK Dinner at the Worshipful Company of Innholders in the city of London on 27 July. I was one of two representatives from Community Shops in the UK. The passion and enthusiasm for community businesses at this event was infectious. The clear message was that Community Shops, Post Offices, Pubs & Hubs, apart from providing essential services, have far reaching benefits and positive outcomes for communities, local suppliers, volunteers and customers.

The guests included corporate supporters, planners, developers and charities. An example of some of the collaborative work that is taking place was a Community Shop built as part of a new housing development. This project was in agreement with the developer and the wider village, it engaged both the old and the new residents and helped bring the community together right from the start.

Talking to many of the guests during the evening, it was clear how lucky we are to have our Community Shop & Post Office, together with a thriving Pub, School and Community Hubs creating a special place to live; research shows the one big benefit is 'well-being' for the community and the individual. Another very interesting statistic... after 5 years 47% of start-up businesses are still operating but after 5 years 99% of community businesses are still operating. As our Community Shop and Post Office approaches its 14th anniversary in August, we are proud that we are still going strong, with a dedicated team of Management Committee and volunteers that give their time freely to ensure the shop and Post Office is able to thrive. For this to continue we always need more volunteers, if you would like to join our team and be part of our success please contact me.

Celia Collett

Brightwell Toddlers

The end of the school year is a bittersweet time at toddler group. As we finished for the summer we celebrated with a bouncy castle end of term party and reflected on how much fun we've had. However we also bid farewell to some of our wonderful little ones who will be starting school in September. We also enjoyed being part of the summer fete and seeing lots of the children having a go at our bean bag game, as well as seeing how much excitement the giant bubbles brought them.

I'd like to extend a huge thank you to everybody who has helped to run the group this year. It's been a huge team effort. We're so thankful for the community spirit which helps keep our group alive, and for all of the lovely families who come along and make each week so full of fun. We look forward to meeting some new faces and welcoming back those we already know when a new term starts in September.

If you would be interested in volunteering this year and helping us run our group we would love to hear from you. Toddlers runs every Thursday morning during term time 9.15-11am and is suitable for children aged 0-5. The cost is £3.50 cash or £4 online per session. We can be contacted at brightwelltoddlers@gmail.com or via our Facebook page @brightwelltoddlers.

Emily Paton-Smith

The Red Lion

As the summer motors on, here at The Red Lion we have been very busy and this is mostly due to our fantastic new courtyard! When the sun shines, the space is very busy with many people wanting to sit outside so just a little heads up, if you do want to book a table and want to sit out there, please do book in advance as the seats are very popular!

Talking of our garden, I'd like to thank our lovely supporters from the village for their bench sponsorship. Nearly all the furniture has now been sponsored but we do have a few chairs and benches left. Please contact Corinne at the pub if you would like to be a part of this by sponsoring our new furniture.

Moving on, we have more live music lined up and are pleased to say we have The Night Herons back on, they will be performing on Sunday 11 August from 6.30pm after our meat draw. The last time they were here we were full to capacity and this time, weather permitting, we will have them performing out in the courtyard which means we can fit many more people in. Pop the date in your diary and come and support this local band. For those who perhaps do not know them, they play mostly originals with mix genres such as jazz, folk, funk and pop with influences from Florence and the Machine, Lana Del Rey and Stevie Wonder! I am also trying to secure some music for the August Bank Holiday so keep your eyes peeled on our social media pages or join up to our mailing list to miss out on the details.

Everyone in the village: please note that during the warmer months, our live music will be outside wherever possible but all acts will be finished at a respectable time and we hope you can support this. Your continued support really means a lot and we look forward to seeing you all over the summer. Dates for diary: 6 August – Quiz Night; 11 August – Live Music The Night Herons; 18 August – Jazz Jam; 25th – Possible Live music, TBC; 3 September – Quiz Night; 15 September – Jazz Jam.

Corinne, Mouse & Ruby

A Town Called Wallingford

Peter Adamson is one of our most prolific authors. His latest, *A Town Called Wallingford*, appeared on our shelves earlier this year alongside his collection of short stories *I need you to be Harold*, reviewed in the Aug Sept 23 edition of *The Villager*, and his previous volume *Landmark in Time*. *Landmark in Time* offers stories and musings inspired by the views, the objects and the random encounters he came across as he walked on the Wittenham Clumps.

A Town Called Wallingford is essentially the same concept. For example, the painting of the mid 19th Century artist Mary Hayllar's garden in Thames St Wallingford. Never heard of her? Nor had I and that's the point. In Chapter 13 *Four sisters and a Prejudice* – Peter tells us that in spite of having exhibited at the Royal Academy in her teens, Mary was obliged to give up painting when she married aged 22 in order to “devote herself to her duties as a wife and mother”. Mary's story is a vehicle to reflect on the unfortunate fate of any Victorian female artist constrained by the times. Had she not “lived and worked within the tightly laced corset of Victorian attitudes to women in general and female artists in particular” she might have become as famous as the likes of Sisley, Pizarro or Monet.

Perhaps you think of Wallingford as a sleepy market town, significant only for its historic past. Far from it, according to Peter. Curious to know what goes on behind the closed doors of some ordinary looking buildings, he has discovered that Wallingford is home to numerous world leading scientific research and hi-tech industries doing ‘extraordinary things’ and that their impact reaches far and wide.

Peter chooses to write in Wallingford coffee shops rather than at a desk at home. That got him musing about how coffee has become the beverage of choice rather than tea, and that allows him to tell the story of Brightwell's very own Sir Francis Bernard, born 1712, who became the Governor of Massachusetts and played a central role in sparking the Boston Tea Party when more than a million dollars worth of tea was dumped in Boston harbour as a protest against colonial rule. Thereafter tea drinking was considered unpatriotic and Americans turned to coffee.

You can hear more about *A Town Called Wallingford* at the BSR event on 13 September in the Village Hall. We will be reviewing more books from local authors in future editions.

Alison Leigh

Mary Acton's History of Art lectures

Many of you will know that Mary Acton used to give regular Art History lectures in the Village Hall on Fridays - and they proved very popular. The good news is that Mary has decided to continue them:

The Rise of Modernism and the influence of England

Many people can be negative or even apprehensive about the notion of modern art because of the fact that it looks unfamiliar and even downright ugly and unpleasant. But my view has always been that, once you understand the background of ideas and history, it may become at the very least more

interesting and sometimes even seductive. One of the main problems seems to have been the move away from the study of appearances to an understanding of what may lie beneath. This was a long and gradual process throughout the nineteenth century, particularly in France, in the aftermath of the French Revolution and the upheavals it caused. These changes were aided by the influence of England and the work of such artists as Constable, Turner, Bonington and the English watercolourists, as well as the radical developments in poetry, led by William Wordsworth, otherwise known as Romanticism, and important discoveries about colour.”

The lectures will take place on the last Friday of the month ie: 27 September, 25 October, 29 November 2024, NONE in December, but will resume on 31 January 2025, 28 February and 28 March. As before they will start at 10am and finish at 12 noon with a short break for coffee which will be provided.

If you are interested in attending these lectures, please contact Jim or Madeline Sanger on either 01491 833655 or email Jim@JimSanger.com.

Jim Sanger

Volunteer with the Earth Trust

The Earth Trust is looking for volunteers with experience of working with primary children to help run it's environmental education programme designed to teach young people to understand their classroom based learning in a real world setting. Every workshop is designed to make full use of our woodland, meadows, farmland, rivers and wetlands, and heritage sites. They are also seeking volunteer Ambassadors to represent Earth Trust at local events and in their green spaces. For more information on the roles email the team at volunteering@earthtrust.org.uk or take a look at the website www.earthtrust.org.uk/volunteer.

Sharon Squire

Wallingford Theatre Club (WTC)

If you enjoy theatre and would like to go to the theatre without the hassle of driving and parking in the company of other theatregoers then the Theatre Club may be just what you are looking for. Recent visits have been to theatres in Richmond, Winchester, Bath and Guildford to see such shows as “Sleuth”, “Around the World in 80 Days”, “Steel Magnolias”, and “Life of Pi”, with upcoming visits to “The 39 Steps” and “A Chorus Line”. We avoid West End theatres and choose local theatres which are up to a couple of hours drive away, with excellent choice restaurants and cafes for lunch close by.

We leave Wallingford and Didcot mid-morning by coach and get back early evening. Ticket prices are reasonable because we get discounts for group bookings; the current cost to members of the theatre ticket and the coach trip combined is around £60 per person. If you are interested in learning more about the Theatre Club – or want to join, please contact the Membership Secretary Marion Rae on 01491 824422 or by email on marion@274industries.com.

Keith Tibbs

Wallingford Food Bank

Wallingford food bank needs your support. We provide emergency food packages to those who need them. The number of households requesting food is 22% higher than in the first six months of last year. A household might be a single person, or a family with several children. In 2023 we fed double the number of children that we fed in 2022. Overall last year the numbers of households requesting food increased by 55.1%. We have calculated that with a continuing increase in demand we are likely to run out of funds by the end of the year. If you already support us financially, please consider a small increase in your regular giving. If you do not already support us financially, please would you consider doing so. A small regular amount would be an enormous help. Please visit wallingfordfoodbank.org.uk and look at the donate page for ideas as to how to help, both financially and with donations of food.

Alice Penney, Manager

Wallingford Photographic Club

The new season begins on 19 September with our welcome evening including an introduction to the club, programme, committee and membership, and we have a local guest photographer Benji Walker presenting some 'live music' photography. On 26th Robert Harvey joins us to show and discuss effective use of lenses ranging from long telephotos to fish-eyes and stitched panoramas to capture the most impact. We meet on Thursdays from 7.30pm at Crowmarsh Pavilion, and we'll have a few sessions online (later in the season) where we make the most of speakers from far away.

Phil Swarbrick

Cholsey Repair Café

... opens regularly at **The Cholsey Pavilion** on the third Saturday of odd-numbered months. The **September** session will be on 21st from 10-12.45.

Ian Wheeler

VILLAGE DIARY

August

6	Red Lion Quiz Night	RL	7pm
11	Live music - The Night Herons	RL	6pm
18	Jazz Jam	RL	6pm
25	Live music TBC	RL	6pm

September

3	Red Lion Quiz Night	RL	7pm
10	WI Open Meeting – Talk by PCSO Sue Harris 'Keeping safe from online scammers'	VH	7.30pm
10	Village Lunch Club	VH	12.15
13	BSR talk 'A Town Called Wallingford' by author Peter Adamson	VH	7.30pm
15	Jazz Jam	RL	6pm
27	Mary Acton lecture History of Art	VH	10am

Advance Notice

2 October	Community Association, The Pavilion 2pm
12 October	Apple Day, The Pavilion 12-4pm
2 December	Festive Block Printing, Village Hall

Refuse Collection (Food waste each week)

Grey bins	Thursdays 1, 15 & Friday 30 August Thursdays 12 & 26 September
Green (& brown) bins	Thursdays 8 & 22 August Thursdays 5 & 19 September

Village website

For more information about Brightwell-cum-Sotwell visit the village website: www.brightwellcumshotwell.co.uk.