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## Editorial

Was it my imagination or was it the rainiest August in years? My imagination according to the Met Office weather report for August, which says, I quote, "The rainfall pattern was variable but generally near average". Hmm.

However maybe I'm not away with the fairies; the local weather check indicates that it was more than usually rainy around here, see page 8 where you will also find a crash course on certain little amphibians which have been much in the news lately.

Rain is great for our gardens, ours is like a jungle, but so disappointing for all the school children and their families that are restricted to taking their summer holidays in August. True to form the sun came out at the start of September, just in time for Bunkfest. Hats off to everyone that contributed to such a fine weekend of free entertainment, with really great bands. See page 21. I have never seen so many ancient teenagers bopping till they/we dropped. Yes, I was one of them.

The sun was still shining the following weekend when 25 to 30 volunteers turned up to renovate the Jubilee Pavilion (see cover photo from Sue Robson). What a fantastic display of community spirit. I'm reminded that I continue to be in awe of the team of volunteers that keep the village shop and post office open 7 days a week. They constantly save my bacon. Run out of milk? They are open at 9, so tea and porridge is still on for breakfast. Or bacon for that matter. Those shoes you ordered from Amazon don't fit? No problem. Return to sender the same day. No charge. Thank you, you splendid people - see p.10.

Altruism is a running theme in this edition; we are continuing our strand where we meet local residents with an interesting story to tell. Peter Adamson, now a full time author, dedicated his working life to making the world a better place. See p.5-7. When we talked we were lamenting the loss of prosperity at national level that has seen a cut back on foreign aid. However the Brightwell community continues to be unstintingly generous. Learn how Brightwell Supporting Refugees is supporting schoolgirls in Uganda, see page 11, and how Brightwell schoolgirls devised a fun holiday activity to raise money for Save the Children to help more schoolgirls. See page 9.

It's all go in the village for the next couple of months. The variety of events and activities is really astonishing and impressive. Check out the Village Diary (p. 24) and also the regular classes & activities on the centre pages. See you all on the dance floor in the Village Hall in November – ladies only mind.

*Alison Leigh*

# Parish Council News

## Pavilion Refurbishment

The Parish Council plans to refurbish the pavilion using part of the Community Infrastructure Levy. As part of the first phase of this project, redecoration of the pavilion took place on the 9 September by a hardworking team of volunteers. We would like to extend our thanks to them for all their hard work on a very hot day! The kitchen will be refurbished shortly.

The Parish Council is consulting with architects to discuss the second phase of the project. This will consider further developments that can be made to develop this facility for the village.

## Hedge-cutting

Residents are reminded that they are responsible for maintenance of roadside hedges adjoining their properties. Many of the streets in our village are very narrow and regular hedge trimming is required for road safety reasons – thanks for your help.

*James Davys*

## Autumn at St Agatha's & St James'

Autumn is the season when we come together as a community to celebrate an important time in the farming calendar, namely the harvest. This year, the Harvest Festival service will take place on 1 October at St Agatha's and we will again be passing our offerings on to the Wallingford Food Bank.

In the age of the supermarket, which enables all foods to be available at all times of the year, it is easy to forget our reliance on nature and sadly a sense of entitlement may replace that of gratitude. So, consider for a moment that British farming contributes to nearly two thirds of the food we eat every year. This is despite the growing difficulties that our farmers face, for example, from extreme weather conditions resulting from climate change. So there is in fact a lot to be grateful for when the harvest comes in. Perhaps we should also think more about how we can support our farmers by buying as locally and as seasonally as we can, and therefore not contributing to the environmental damage caused by importing food. A lot to think about, a lot to talk to our children about and, importantly a lot to celebrate, so I hope to see as many of you as possible on Sunday with your families.

Following on from Harvest Festival, we have a couple of special services coming up. Firstly, on 5 November at 4pm at St Agatha's, we have a memorial service for All Souls'. This is a small, very personal, reflective service for those who have lost loved ones, whether more recently or long ago. Please do come along for fellowship on that day. The following week, 12 November, we will be gathering at the War Memorial at 10.45 for our Remembrance Day service. Just prior to this there will be a procession led by our community youth groups up to the memorial beginning at the Red Lion if you would like to join that.

Planning ahead for the festivities to come, we are holding *Our first Mini Christmas Market* at St Agatha's on Saturday 4 November from 10am until 1pm. Come and enjoy a cup of tea and a slice of cake (and, if you're lucky, perhaps even some mulled wine!) and get started early with your Christmas shopping. We will have a selection of cards, bags, coasters and other items which would make lovely gifts and stocking fillers. All monies raised will go towards much needed funds for the upkeep of the church. If you are an "art and crafter" and have any Christmassy items you would like to donate for the market, please get in touch with Mina (tel 832293).

*Blessings, Rev Kev*

**See the Village Diary for a summary of key dates.** For all other Church services and events, contact me ([teamvicar@wallingfordcafe.org.uk](mailto:teamvicar@wallingfordcafe.org.uk)) to subscribe to our notice sheet, or find it near the bottom of the homepage [www.wallingfordcafe.org.uk](http://www.wallingfordcafe.org.uk).

## A Day of Prayer for World Peace

The Week of Prayer for World Peace happens every year on the third week in October. This uses prayers from all the world's religions; we all want peace. To mark this event there will be a day of prayer in St Agatha's on Saturday 21 October. The church opens at 8am and the day will begin with Celtic Morning Prayer and end in the evening at 6pm with Evening Prayer. Between 9am and 6pm the church remains open for people to drop in, experience prayer or join in led prayer. Do come and join us. Refreshments will be available from 10am-3pm. Full details on the insert.

*Rev. Janice Chilton*

## Meet ..... Peter Adamson

If you shop in Waitrose in Wallingford, and if you happen to stop for a coffee in the café there, you may be surprised to see a silver haired gentleman tapping away on his laptop so absorbed in his work that he is oblivious to the surrounding shoppers and trolleys and may well ignore you if you ask him to pass the sugar. This is one of three coffee shops in Wallingford where Peter Adamson researches and writes his novels, essays and stories - despite having a lovely quiet study at home in Slade End.

Peter is officially retired but has re-invented himself as a prolific author. In addition to three novels he has published a collection of short stories: *I need you be Harold*, (reviewed in the previous edition of *The Villager*) and a nonfiction book *Landmark in Time* which explores the stories behind the landscape that can be seen from Wittenham Clumps.\*



Until he retired his writing skills were dedicated to making the world a better place. He was offered a job with the Sunday Express when he graduated from Oxford University in 1969 but instead of taking that route he and his wife Lesley set up the Third World First Movement. The aim was to raise money for overseas aid by inviting university students to sign 1% of their income to Oxfam or Christian Aid. Almost 20,000 students signed up in the first 18 months. I confess this astonishes me, but Peter reminds me that the world of the sixties and early 70s was very different from the one we live in now. “Amongst people of our age, there was tremendous spirit of optimism. Most of us knew that our lives were certainly going to be better than our parents and we wanted to do something about people in countries who were still in desperate trouble. Many people felt we could afford to give more because we were prosperous. That feeling seems to have entirely gone.”

One thing led to another: they founded the New Internationalist, an independent monthly magazine on world development that is still being published 50 years on. That in turn launched his career as a writer and Senior Advisor to the then Executive Director of Unicef, Jim Grant, a job which spanned decades. During that time Peter was responsible for many significant reports and publications including Unicef’s annual flagship publication *The State of the World’s Children*, *The Progress of Nations*, and *Facts for Life*, a summary of “the basic health knowledge which all families have a right to

know”, which was described by the Economist as one of the best read books in the world.

Naively I say, “You must despair at the state the world is in currently?” To my surprise Peter disagrees. “The opposite is true. Huge progress has been made in the last 50 years. Back then billions of people were living in utterly abject poverty. This is no longer true”. And then a list: Most of the world was without water and sanitation. Children were stunted by famines and malnutrition. Families were having six, seven children because they couldn't be sure that their children would survive or that anyone would look after them in old age. “5 million children were dying every year because they weren't immunized. And 15 million children under the age of five at that time were dying every single year from non-fatal conditions like diarrheal disease or from simple things like measles and respiratory infections that we already knew how to cure for just a few cents. This has all changed”. \*\*

Under Jim Grant’s direction Unicef concentrated almost all of its resources on a few inexpensive things like immunisation and oral rehydration. In 1980 the immunisation rate across the world was less than 20%, and reached almost 80% by 1995, which saved 4 million children’s lives every year. As for diarrhoeal disease, millions more children’s lives have been saved by rehydrating children with a five cent packet of salts in clean water.

Of all the things he has done, Peter is most proud of the “small” role he played working alongside Jim Grant recording, publicising and campaigning for this huge international global health initiative. (And we haven’t even mentioned the years he spent making documentaries on global issues for the BBC).

These days he’s turned his attention from the global to the local. He is currently engrossed in writing his latest book *A Town called Wallingford*. It is in a similar vein to *Landmark in Time*, the themes and stories inspired by the people who have lived here over the centuries and by the buildings, the houses and the industries.

All in all, he’s come a long way from a two up two down back to back terraced house in Leeds where he grew up. His father worked in a blanket mill for nearly 40 years. He was the first member of his family to go to university.

He’s been married to his childhood sweetheart Lesley for 56 years. She has also been his partner in all the projects they have undertaken, as well as bringing up their two children. Now they also have three grandchildren.

I ask if Peter is concerned that climate change, world politics and countless conspiracy theories may undo all the progress that he and his colleagues worked so hard for: “The idea that it could all go into reverse is horrifying

because I do honestly believe that on any criterion you can see tremendous progress, be it against poverty and malnutrition, disease and illiteracy, or towards equality for women, human rights and gay rights, and it's very sad to think it could really all be undone by what's on the horizon now”.

*Alison Leigh*

\*Both books are on sale at the Village shop.

\*\*Over the last fifty years, the proportion of the world's people living in extreme poverty has been halved and then halved again so that extreme poverty now affects fewer than 10% of the world's people. At the same time, the proportion of malnourished people in the world has fallen to approximately 10%. Also in the last fifty years, the number of children paralysed by polio has been cut from over 400,000 a year in 1980 to just over 200 in 2022. Progress in education has also seen almost all the world's children in primary schools with the great majority progressing to secondary education. Overall, the world adult literacy rate has risen from below 50% in 1970 to almost 90% today. Meanwhile, average family size in the world's poorer countries has fallen from over 6 children to fewer than 3 – a transition that has astounded even the optimists of the 1970s by its speed and scale.

## Village Lunch Club - help wanted

Do you like cooking? Can you spare a few hours on a Tuesday morning/lunchtime once every 3 months? If yes, the Village Lunch Club 'cooking team' would love to hear from you.

We are a team of 5 but sadly, one member is leaving the village so we are looking for a replacement to start in the new year. We would also like a rota of possible helpers for the washing up - with enough help it might be just once or twice a year from about 12 noon to 2pm.

The lunch club meets in the village hall 4 times a year and provides a simple, affordable 2 course meal and a chance to catch up with friends and neighbours. It is open to all villagers.

The next lunch is on 5 December. For more information, you can contact Eastlyn Horsfield, 01491 832041 or Sue Collett, 01491 837617. Thanks.

*Eastlyn Horsfield*

## Henge Festival celebrating Wittenham Clumps

Following the success of the community HENGE festival during the 2022 Autumn Equinox, a continuing exhibition will be held at the Cornerstone Arts Centre, Didcot from 1-26 November. It features a range of artwork, music, and poetry by leading local artists including villager Chris Baines & work by pupils from local primary and secondary schools. Website: [hengefestival.com](http://hengefestival.com).

## BcS Environment Group

### Newts

In recent times newts have received some publicity and it seemed timely to summarise which ones may turn up in ponds and wetland areas. The smooth, or common, newt is most likely to occur, breeding in ponds during the spring and then spending most of the rest of the year feeding on invertebrates such as insects, slugs and worms in marshes, hedgerows and woodlands. In water they will eat tadpoles. They are most active during the night. Generally 7-11cm long, they hibernate among tree roots, old walls and underground. They are grey-brown with an orange underbelly and covered in black spots. Males develop a smooth crest running the length of their body during the breeding season.

The great crested newt is much longer at up to 17cm and is almost black with spotted flanks and a noticeable orange belly. It has a warty skin and the males develop a wavy crest along the body and tail during the breeding season. It can be found in similar habitats to the smooth newt but it is less common with the UK population of international importance. There are several recordings within the area.

The palmate newt is the UK's smallest at 7-9cm long and is similar in appearance to the smooth newt. It prefers shallow pools on acidic soils on heaths and moorlands so is less likely to be found locally. It has a peachy-yellow belly with a few spots but none on the throat. The males, in the breeding season, develop black webs on the hind feet and have a thin filament at the end of their tails. All newts are protected in the UK under the Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981. The great crested newt has additional protection as a nominated Priority Species under the UK Post 2010 Biodiversity Framework as well as a European Protected Species under the European Habitats Directive.

### Weather

The rainfall recorded at Highlands Farm was 79.2mm and 61.1mm respectively for July and August. For comparison, in 2022 the figures were 3.7 and 9.6mm respectively indicating the very different weather we have had this year. The met office indicates that July was, unsurprisingly, cooler, duller, windier and wetter than average with August following the trend although to a lesser degree.

*Steve Capel-Davies*

## Save the Children

We are very grateful to two little girls Ffion and Seren Jenkins who spent some of their summer holidays creating a 'pop-up shop' in Greenmere selling fruit and vegetables. It gave them many hours of pleasure planning, making their marketing material and collecting allotment veg and fruit to sell. This enabled them to donate £30 to Save the Children. Children helping children! What a wonderful and creative way to spend some of their holiday time, well done to both.

The Morocco Earthquake is the latest of disasters to hit the world. Our vice-chair Sue Butt has kindly set up a Justgiving page if you would like to help. Please let Sue or I know if you would like to donate and we will send you the link and QR code.

**6 October – Air Fryer event** – village hall 7.30pm - a social evening with a difference, tickets on sale in the shop.

**18 November – Christmas Fair** in the marquee in the garden of South Cottage, Sotwell Street 11am to 3pm.

**24 December – Carols round the Christmas Tree.**

*Celia & the Save the Children Team*

## WI News

Firstly, a belated 'Thank You' to all who helped with our stall at the very successful summer fete and by the time of publication, we will have enjoyed our annual garden party in Gill Dexter's lovely garden. A big thank you to Gill for hosting this again.

### Garden Visits

Throughout the summer our members continued to the many inspiring gardens on offer via the Open Garden Scheme (OGS). These included a visit to South Stoke on a sunny Bank Holiday Monday where visitors had a wide variety of different gardens available to view. We will close the season with a visit to Waterperry on 17 September.

### Clean Rivers Campaign.

Back in January the WI nationally voted to campaign for 'Clean rivers for people and wildlife'. As part of that campaign, we have linked with the local group 'Thames 21' to nominate the Thames at Wallingford to be awarded

'bathing status'. To underpin the application 'Thames21' have developed a consultation survey. Anyone wishing to take part can find the link here: <https://forms.office.com/e/ZhACT7eDx8>.

### Forth coming events.

After the long summer we are now looking forward to our regular meetings on the second Tuesday each month, 7.30pm in the village hall.

**10 October** - we will hear how to 'extend your fitness, your balance and your brain', a talk by Jennifer Cowling

**14 November** - 'Crafty Christmas' pickup ideas to make your home merry and bright shared by our own crafters.

**12 December** - we are planning a 'members only' Christmas meal at the Red Lion.

*Karin Matthews - Committee member*

## Village Stores and Post Office

The shop and Post Office team had a very busy summer to make sure both services kept open, due to many of the volunteer team being on summer holidays. We were helped by five teenagers in the village who came to our rescue. Two of them were able to put their volunteering effort to their Bronze and Silver Duke of Edinburgh award. We are so grateful to them, well done to all five!

However, it does highlight how vulnerable our services are if we can't get the volunteers. It's worth bearing in mind that we have had increased customers from Cholsey and Wallingford; their Post Offices have closed for short periods due to staff shortages.

We continue to support and source local suppliers and businesses; do take time to have a look around the shop at what we have to offer. Being a community shop it allows us to keep our prices very competitive whilst delivering quality products.

*Village Stores Management Committee*

## Halloween 'Haunted Carnival'

BcS's first fun and spooky Haunted Carnival takes place on Greenmere, 28 October from 5-7pm. There'll be pumpkins, scary clowns, and mystery acts with food and drinks available.

## Brightwell Supporting Refugees

### Supporting the education of girl refugees in Uganda.

Widespread conflict in East Africa has caused millions to flee their homes. Uganda continues to host over one million refugees, the majority of whom are women and children. Through a contact in our village, BSR is working with Windle International to support a high school at the Rhino Refugee Camp in northern Uganda. BSR has already helped fund a dormitory block for girls, some of whom had been walking hours every day to and from school. But for those not boarding at school, many girls drop out of classes when their periods start as they have no adequate or dignified way to manage, relying on improvised methods – predominantly old or new cloth, sponges, banana fibres or cow dung. Very few girls have access to pain relief, and do not go out during their period to walk to school or help with household chores, thus reinforcing gender inequality which remains a major obstacle to the eradication of poverty.

Reusable sanitary pads manufactured locally by AFRIpads offer a solution. The pads are washable in cold water with soap and can be airdried, helping to meet the UN sustainable development goal. The kits, including panties, last for about a year and cost approximately £3.25 per pack. AFRIpads also provide a free range of resources including Mental Health and Hygiene Education Toolkits and a Monitoring and Evaluation framework for schools.

Last year BSR donated money to provide 465 packs of AFRIpads to Rhino Camp High School. In November 2022 girls at Rhino Camp had missed up to 20% of school days due to menstrual related issues. By providing reusable pads this number has reduced significantly and by March 2023 the enrolment of girls at Rhino Camp School had increased by 26%. The school reported that one girl in S3 had said her parents could not afford to buy her sanitary towels, but since the free reusable pads have been provided, she is now in S4 and likely to excel in national examinations. A senior teacher wrote, *'I believe if it was not for the reusable pads distributed, the girl would have dropped out of school.'*

Given this demonstrated success, BSR will continue to fund AFRIpads and related hygiene needs for the girls at Rhino Camp High School. There are many barriers to the refugee girls accessing education, but cultural taboos and shame can be overcome through education and support.

Please keep up your support for BSR!

Jane Hawker

## What's On in Brightwell cum Sotwell

These are regular daytime and evening classes and activities that take place in the village, at the Village Hall [Stewartvillagehall.org.uk/schedule](http://Stewartvillagehall.org.uk/schedule) (VH), Jubilee Pavilion [bcsjubileepavilion.org.uk](http://bcsjubileepavilion.org.uk) (JP), the churches & St Agatha's Church Room (CR), the Rec and King's Meadow. For further information please phone or email the relevant contact. For further activities and services see [www.brightwellcumshotwell.co.uk/directories/local-services](http://www.brightwellcumshotwell.co.uk/directories/local-services).

Activity	Time	Venue	Contact
<b>MONDAYS</b>			
Keep Fit	9am	VH	Shena Luck 01491 834543 <a href="mailto:shenaluck@btinternet.com">shenaluck@btinternet.com</a>
Baby & Me Yoga	10-11am	VH	Emma Diserens 07717 784326 <a href="mailto:emmadyoga@gmail.com">emmadyoga@gmail.com</a>
Silver Swan Ballet for over 55s	5.50-6.50pm	VH	Virgina 07776 150903 <a href="mailto:v.chell1501@gmail.com">v.chell1501@gmail.com</a>
Cubs	5.30-9pm	JP	Anne Addison 01235 511018

<b>TUESDAYS</b>			
Quilting (alt Tuesdays)	9.30am	VH	Cynthia Hurley 01491 836509
WI (2 <sup>nd</sup> in month)	7.30pm	VH	<a href="mailto:brightwellcumshotwellwi@gmail.com">brightwellcumshotwellwi@gmail.com</a>
Dance classes Mable Gubbins	7.30-10pm	JP	Jenny Cox 07816 335972

<b>WEDNESDAYS</b>			
Coffee mornings	10-12	CR	Janice Chilton 01491 863331
Keep Fit	6.45pm	VH	Shena Luck 01491 834543 <a href="mailto:shenaluck@btinternet.com">shenaluck@btinternet.com</a>
Badminton	8-11pm	VH	<a href="mailto:theterryhurley@gmail.com">theterryhurley@gmail.com</a>

<b>THURSDAYS</b>			
Toddlers	9.15am	VH	<a href="mailto:brightwelltoddlers@gmail.com">brightwelltoddlers@gmail.com</a>
Short Mat Bowls	1.30-4pm	VH	Roger Symes 01491 837175 Adrian Collett 01491 837617
Pilates - 2 classes between:	5.30-7.45pm	VH	Nathan Clayton 07815 735165 <a href="mailto:remedy@live.co.uk">remedy@live.co.uk</a>
Belly Dancing	6.30-10pm	JP	Julie Robins 07850 176610

FRIDAYS			
Beavers	6-7pm	JP	Hilary Rogerson 01491 839960
Scouts	7.15-9pm	JP	Tim Scane 01235 511448

SATURDAYS			
Art Club	10-12	VH	<i>brightwellart@gmail.com</i>

SUNDAYS			
St James's services	8am	Most Sun-days	<i>teamvicar@wallingfordcofe.org.uk</i>
St Agatha's services	9.30am		<i>teamvicar@wallingfordcofe.org.uk</i>
Community Circuits (PHT)	10-11am	JP	H Harrison 07769 645069

H Harrison (PHT) also provides individual personal health training sessions at the Jubilee Pavilion – contact H on 07769 645069.

In addition, at the **BcS Recreation Ground:**

<u>BcS Cricket Club (Apr-Sept)</u>		Tony Windsor
Senior section games (May-Sept)	Sunday 1-8pm	07909 848098
Senior net practice (Apr-June)	Wednesday 5.30-9pm	
Junior 8-15 Development Group coaching (May-July)	Friday 5.30-8pm	
All-Stars 5-8 years (May-July)	Saturday 10-11am	Alex Pearmain 07989 437414
Juniors U11s games (May-July)	Sunday 10-12 noon	Chris Benarr
Junior U13s game (May-July)	Thursday 6-8pm	07813 154006
<u>AFC Brightwell Youth FC (Sept-May)</u>		Paul Whitty
U18 training in summer (winter at Wallingford School)	Tuesday 6.30-8pm	07900 253486 & Brandon Dimassa
Squad home matches	Sunday 10.30-12	07455 002056

AND at **King's Meadow: BcS King's Meadow Tennis Club**

This friendly club has access to 2 all weather courts near BcS Primary School on King's Meadow. Club sessions - Tuesday and Thursday 7pm to dusk and Sunday 9-12 noon April to September. New members welcomed – contact Tony Windsor 07909 848098 *tony@bcskingsmeadowtennisclub.org.uk*.

LTA Level 4 qualified coach Robin Sladden is providing adult coaching on Monday and Friday afternoons – 07982 711572 *thesladdens@hotmail.co.uk*.

## The Red Lion

In the last edition of *The Villager*, you would have read that we had made headway with our lease negotiations and that we were waiting to sign on the dotted line! I am very pleased to announce that we managed that, and at the beginning of September we signed a brand new 10 year lease that now secures the pub for the near future and we are over the moon. We would like to thank everyone for the support and well wishes and say thank you to everyone who helped in the many ways they did. We are very excited about what the future holds and we hope you can enjoy this next chapter of the Red Lion with us.

I find myself typing this update (late as usual to the ever patient editor) after just having yet another water leak fixed. On 10 September we discovered a leak in the garden and very quickly we realised that it was huge. It meant we were forced to close the pub, but we moved quickly and as I type the contractor is re-filling the hole and we are getting ready to clean up and re-open. Apologies for those lost few days of the pub being closed.

Going forward, we hope you can continue to support the pub whether it be taking part in our monthly quizzes, joining in with Boogie bingo, booking a table for lunch or dinner or just popping in for a drink one day and saying hello. We have our weekly meat draw every Sunday at 6pm and if you are new to the village, it's a great way of getting to know some locals as it's a busy evening and you might even leave with a joint of gammon big enough to feed the street!

That's all from me this month, here's hoping the good weather is here for a little longer and we look forward to seeing you soon

*Corinne, Mouse & Ruby*

## Stewart Village Hall

Welcome back to the groups and clubs that have been having a summer break, it is good to have you back in the Hall 😊.

Our *What's On* posters have been updated and are displayed inside and outside of the hall and on our noticeboard at the top of Swan Walk (near the allotments). There are some great events planned as well as all the regular weekly activities so please do take a moment to have a look. More information on events and activities are on our website *stewartvillagehall.org.uk*.

We have 2 events planned that are fundraising in support of the hall. First **‘Wines for Christmas’ Tasting on 27 October** with resident wine aficionado **Nick Zalinski on 27 October**, when the audience can try a carefully selected range of bottles alongside morsels of festive dishes and nibbles, and be given ideas on other drinks pairings. Tickets £20 includes a free glass of wine. And the **Ladies Dancing Night on 18 November**, a Ladies only disco with cash bar, nibbles and more. Join us for a fun evening. Tickets for both events will be on sale in the Village Stores.

The trustees are continuing to work on the plans for the redevelopment project and we hope to be able to apply for planning permission in the next few weeks. We appreciate all the offers of help we’ve had to date and we would really like help with Communication, including social media updates, keeping the community informed, reaching out to wider audiences to engage with them and encourage them to use and support the hall. If you are interested and would like to know more about this, then please do get in touch with me ([Annette.k@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:Annette.k@hotmail.co.uk)).

We have had several lucky winners of free tickets in the SO Charitable lottery draw in August and one lucky cash prize winner. This month’s star prize is £1500 Ikea vouchers. To take part in the draw please go to [www.socharitable.co.uk/support/stewart-village-hall](http://www.socharitable.co.uk/support/stewart-village-hall) or scan the QR code on any of Lottery posters on our noticeboards.

If you have any comments, questions, or feedback, you can use the contact page on the hall website, pop a comment in the mailbox at the rear of the hall or speak to any trustee. To book the hall please visit [stewartvillagehall.org.uk](http://stewartvillagehall.org.uk) or contact Shena at [shenaluck@btinternet.com](mailto:shenaluck@btinternet.com) or on 01491 834543.

*Annette Kilworth*

## 70, 700, £7000?

As seventy looms over the horizon, arriving in June 2024, I would like to spend some of my time, in this, my seventieth year, fund raising for 2 charities that mean a lot to me. The first is the National Kidney Foundation, as a close family member has chronic kidney disease. The other, of course, is our Stewart Village Hall.

I have been the Booking Clerk since 1996 and am thrilled with the exciting project that will future proof the venue and make it a wonderful asset for all aspects of village life. 70 is the number so I want to add a zero to that, in the hope that I can get 700 names of people who support or attend an event and by adding another zero £7,000 is my target! EASY...

I plan to do a variety of activities, in the hope of attracting as many villagers of all ages who, I hope, will find something they would like to support, starting with a Macmillan Coffee Morning, Friday 29 September 10am–12 in the hall where I shall have a table and will be selling my late mother in law’s vintage and costume jewellery, with the proceeds going to my 70.700.£7000? challenge.

If you have any ideas about what fundraising activities you would like to attend and contribute to or even help organise, then please get in touch [shenaluck@btinternet.com](mailto:shenaluck@btinternet.com) 01491834543 and keep a lookout for posters on our village hall notice boards and Facebook page.

*Shena Luck*

## Village Website

Do you use the Community Web Group on Facebook? It’s a great source of updates on everything from dinner choices at The Red Lion, to keys found at the Rec, to debates about the village’s heating strategy!

But did you know we also have a Village Website? Our site provides much deeper information about topical events, news, local clubs and services, and fascinating personal histories and images from villagers of our past. You can find it all at <https://www.brightwellcumsotwell.co.uk/>.

The design and content creation for the website has been in the hands of a small but dedicated group of villagers from its start over 20 years ago. Sally Dugan (who sadly died in 2018) was the first editor. Myron Edwards and Veronica Wood have continued managing the site under the chairmanship of Eric Dore. But now they all feel they have done their stint.

I have been helping Myron for the last two years and have agreed to take over the management of the site. Myron has kindly agreed to act as chairman in order to share his experience and knowhow (and provide good governance for the small amount of money required to run the site!). So, thank you most sincerely to Eric, Myron and Veronica for your amazing dedication to a vital communication channel.

Of course, the Village Website depends entirely on the input from the village, so please send your photos and news. And if you have any ideas about how to make the Village Website even better and more relevant, please contact me at [www.brightwellwebsite@gmail.com](mailto:www.brightwellwebsite@gmail.com).

*Wendy Roderick*



# Community Association

## Grants

We were pleased to award the following grants in September to our village groups:

Scouts - £1000, Brightwell Church - £1000, BcS Parish Council - £280  
Pre-School - £1000, Tennis Club - £250, Football Club - £500  
Cricket Club - £250, FOBS - £1000, Stewart Village Hall - £200  
Lunch Club - £200, Toddler Group - £100, WI - £200  
Brightwell Players - £250

### **Total- £6230**

All applications were met in full. This is the largest sum that has ever been paid to support local charities by the Community Association. We are able to do this as a result of the successful events run by our hard-working team of volunteers and the support we receive from the whole community.

We would like to invite members of our Village Community to our AGM to hear about our work and events over the past year and to learn about our future plans. We hope that you will be able to come along and join us.

AGM 1 November 2023, 7pm Stewart Room – Village Hall

*James Davys*

## Brightwell School Eco Alliance... Support our Sustainable Growth

As Brightwell School continues its successful growth as a member of Merchant Academy Trust, it is important the school is sustainable both environmentally and organisationally. **Environmental Sustainability** is good for the planet and good for the school - reducing our carbon footprint and reducing running costs. There are great opportunities to involve the student body, school staff and Brightwell community in becoming a certified Eco-School.

**Organisational sustainability:** Since joining the Trust, student numbers have stabilized and have increased to the point that single year classes have now been achieved, excepting year 5 and 6. Single year classes are the most

financially sustainable, and to accommodate these through the entire school, an additional classroom is needed.

**Brightwell School Eco Alliance** is being set up to address this, with board members consisting of parents, governors and teachers from Brightwell and the Merchant Trust.

**Our aim** is to support Brightwell School becoming a leading eco-school in Oxfordshire, with a school estate which provides ample learning space for all students by September 2024 - We are acting decisively and boldly in the face of a tight deadline. Initially our plan is to fund building additional, sustainable, capacity to the school, delivering a double 'eco classroom' facility.

**We need the communities' help.** Share your skills - have a real impact! We are a new organisation, the board need support with social media, grant application writing, project management, fundraising support, accountancy, sustainability and environmental expertise. Contact [Brightwellschoolecoalition@gmail.com](mailto:Brightwellschoolecoalition@gmail.com) for more info.

*Brightwell School Eco Alliance*

## Brightwell Preschool

Brightwell Preschool has had a busy summer this year replacing the kitchen, clearing out the toy cupboard and shed, plus some much needed work in the garden. A huge thank you must go to the amazing committee members and fantastic staff members who gave up their time to help with the work, the children have benefited from all of their dedication.

We must give another big thank you to the members of the Community Association who kindly donated a large fund towards the kitchen, which is not only appreciated in monetary terms, but also the recognition of the importance of supporting our next generation as they navigate their way through their early years. Having a working kitchen helps children to learn much-needed skills to progress in all areas of learning, such as their ability to use tools, understand measure, appreciate the provenance of their food, acquire new vocabulary, learn about healthy eating and how to take care of their bodies, but most of all to try yummy food they have made for themselves. Our sparkly new kitchen has been put to good use already, with cheesy courgette muffins produced using our own courgettes grown at the preschool and apple cakes using apples from a friend of the preschool. Any fruit or vegetable donations are welcome from members of the community should you have anything spare for the children to chop, grate, bake and eat!

We have had a busy start to the new term, with many new starters and plenty of returning customers to help build-up our baking repertoire. Many sessions are now full and our new after-preschool care from Monday to Wednesday is picking-up extra members so we will have an army of chefs heading out into the village for years to come. As we head into the autumn term, we will enjoy our trips to see what you are all growing in the allotments, pick some apples in the orchard, walk down the lanes to see the changing colours and enjoy our Forest School sessions in our beautiful village. We can't wait!

*Natasha Hillier*

## Brightwell cum Sotwell Cricket Club

### **BCSCC "All Stars" - the ECB'S introduction to cricket coaching programme:**

The programme is designed for 4-8 year olds. Now in its 7th year at BCSCC, we saw twenty-nine children learn, play and eat the famous end of session ice creams! With only one of the ten weeks lost to rain, there was significant progress made by the group, as demonstrated in the customary end of season match which gave the All Stars their first taste of cricket on the square, one pair of batters managed seven sixes between them, and also some brilliant catches taken in the field: truly a record-setting cohort! As we look forward to 2024 we encourage any of the villagers interested in their children discovering and nurturing an early love of the summer's game (for boys and girls alike) to register with Tony Windsor for next season, where we confidently forecast similar sunshine (no liability accepted!). Thanks also to my fellow activator Roger Gill.

*Alex Pearmain Lead Activator*

### **BCSCC Development Group 8 to 15 Years**

This year we fielded two teams in the Oxfordshire league with the U11s playing a pairs format and the U13s playing in the T20 and Hundred competitions. On most Friday evenings from May to August we trained up to 40 children at the Rec.

All the children made significant progress this season and as a team we consistently out bowled the opposition. We fielded a team every week with at least one girl in the eight and had 4 for one game and hope this sets us on the path to run a girls' team next year to compete in the local league. Winning

fixtures over the season, some by huge margins thanks to solid all round performances with bat, ball and in the field.

The U13 team had a younger mix of players facing teams that were much older and advanced. We knew we would have a tough season so focused on smaller milestones and personal goals, which was mostly achieved. No wins from the 8 fixtures doesn't properly reflect the progress made. They can all be very proud of their achievements and we have put forward 6 children to the county pathway training programme.

It would be great to hear from parents who want to undertake ECB training over the winter and help train next year. Younger cricketers can also get an ECB training assistant badge that will enable them to support training too and develop their own skills and CV. We are looking to field more teams and set up more fixtures for the teenagers to keep them involved in the club and village.

Special thanks to Duncan Chandler and Alex Pearmain for their support this year.

*Chris Benarr Junior Section Manager & Level 2 ECB Coach.*

### **Senior village cricket team**

Despite the weather of the passing summer, the village senior cricket team had a busier season than usual. For the first time in many years, BCSCC participated in the Friendly Cup and also added new fixtures to the diary totalling 20 games in the season. Results were mixed, but the season was speckled with some outstanding individual and team performances. This year's tour to Bournemouth was 'washed out' except for the final game on the Sunday played on a damp pitch. We concluded the season with the Captain v Chairman XI and closed a good season indeed.

As always, none of this happens without a whole community of support. Thanks to Steve Metcalf for a pitch that in good weather regularly produced more than 400 runs in a match. Indeed, one match, though abandoned due to rain, saw the BCSCC innings scoring the highest number of runs in the season 257 (against Ipsden in the 2nd round of the cup). Times were tougher in the rain swept months of July and August of course! Thanks to Corrine and the Red Lion for our teas that go down so well with both the club and the opposition. And of course, thanks to the 46 players who played and others who made themselves available to play. A remarkable number for a small village in South Oxfordshire. A final thanks to the more than 100 families

from the village who have participated in our cricket family across the senior and junior sections throughout the 2023 season.

*Eliot Forster Captain BCSCC*

## Bunkfest

Back in 2002, Bob Wyatt was celebrating his 50<sup>th</sup> birthday. At the time Bob, who is sadly no longer with us, ran the Crosskeys pub in Wallingford. His old schoolfriend Colin Bolton decided to organise a music night at the pub in honour of his friend. It was such a success that they decided to do it again - and again - and again. They never dreamt how it would grow.

25,000 to 30,000 people attended Bunkfest over the weekend, 15 venues in Wallingford signed up to be part of the festival, 17 played on the main stage, the largest number ever. And still it is free. According to Colin, who is still the festival director, it's mainly thanks to the volunteers, all 488 of them, who work their socks off all weekend for nothing. Actual costs are covered by earnings from the beer tent, the participation fees from the trades people and even the bucket donations, which this year exceeded £30,000.

Bunkfest got its name from the Cholsey and Wallingford railway known as "the Wallingford Bunk line", but why that nickname is a mystery.

*Alison Leigh*

## Apple Day

On 14 October Apple Day will once again be an opportunity for everyone to celebrate all things apple whether you have your own tree, share your neighbour's or covet ones that are just out of reach.

Each year we have an apple tasting stall where you can taste 8-10 different varieties of apple from the village. You'd be amazed at just how different they can be. Paul Chilton's giant display of over 100 varieties of apple will show you just how different they look too. This year we also have a cider tasting stall that will present a taste of traditional English cider, produced by a local home brewer and orchard group member. Craft ciders certainly do not taste like the sweet fizzy options in the supermarket. Come along and taste the difference.

Last year we posted on village social media that we would like cakes of any kind as long as they were made with apples and we received so many! There has never been anything like it before. And they were all free, although visitors were also very generous with kind donations. So once again we

would like to invite all those bakers to rise to the challenge. Ali Q is coordinating cakes and will be happy to receive them before or on the day [alison@bloomingbotany.co.uk](mailto:alison@bloomingbotany.co.uk). You can also take them to her at Button and Loop Cottage on the High Road. And to go with the cake, Emily from Dark Horse Roastery will be selling her delicious coffee from her horse box cafe. Plus the ever popular chocolate dipping apples and the longest peel challenge will be back.

Do you know how and why we have such a wonderful community orchard in the village? Join one of the tours of the orchard and hear the background story. Saturday 14 October 1-4pm at the recreation ground.

*Alison Bloomfield*

## Brightwell Art Club

New term starts 9 September. New members welcome. Come along and meet us your first session is free. We meet on Saturday mornings at Brightwell Village Hall between about 10am and 12 noon during school terms.

At present we have four tutors. This gives us a variety of different styles and interests. Tutors run a workshop on a subject or technique requested by members. Whether members choose to follow the workshop or to get on with their own work, the tutors go around and assist members as required. We also have a break during which coffee/tea and biscuits are provided, and it is a chance to chat to other members. The fee is £60 a term.

If you know of any local crafts person or charity that would like a stall at our annual Art Exhibition on 2 December, please contact [anne@honeyball.com](mailto:anne@honeyball.com).

*Anne Honeyball*

## The Last Twitch

Actor/producer Ben Manning, who is also our local District Councillor, is screening his third feature film in Stewart Village Hall on Friday 3 November.

An ancient witch's mark is found in the cellar of The Dirty Hog pub just as a series of murders takes place in the village. As the hapless police try to solve the murders, the pub owner and his two regulars investigate to find out if the pub is cursed or haunted...or both. As the deaths continue an unusual pattern is uncovered pointing to a literary clue.

Doors open 7pm for 7.30 start. Tickets £5 from the Village Stores or on the door. Refreshment cash bar on the night.

## Wanted: Photos of Post War Brightwell

The Brightwell Village History Group has around one thousand photos in its archive mostly dating from the 1890s to the second World War. We are now looking for photographs (such as the pic featured below) depicting village life, people, events or places from the 1950s to the present day to bring our record up to date. If you have any images and need someone to copy them, please contact Jason on 07761169343 or email them to [jjrdebney@gmail.com](mailto:jjrdebney@gmail.com).



*Stanley Kew in the Brightwell Bakery at The Woodman sometime before it closed in 1988. It had one of the last remaining coal-fired bread ovens left in England.*

*Jason Debney*

## Cholsey Repair Café

Continuing the pattern of 'third Saturday of odd-numbered months', Cholsey Repair Café's next session will be on Saturday 18 November. As ever, it will be at the Cholsey Pavilion on Station Road, from 11am opening to 13.45 close. All sorts of repairs to domestic items can be considered, on the basis that, although repair assistance is free of charge, spare parts have to be paid for and a donation towards running costs is much appreciated. Tool and knife sharpening is very popular, with some do-it-yourself equipment available.

More information is available at [www.cholseyrepaircafe.com](http://www.cholseyrepaircafe.com) and you might like to know that excellent tea, coffee and cakes are available at the Cholsey Community Café (on your way in) until midday.

## VILLAGE DIARY

### October

1	Harvest Festival Family Service	St Agatha's	9.30am
6	Save the Children Air Fryer event	VH	7.30pm
10	WI Talk 'extend your fitness, your balance and your brain' by Jennifer Cowling	VH	7.30pm
14	Apple Day	Rec	1-4pm
16	WI Friendship Coffee morning	Root One	10am
27	Wine Tasting with Nick Zalinski	VH	7.30pm
28	Halloween Haunted Carnival	Greenmere	5-7pm

### November

1	Community Association AGM	SR VH	7pm
1-26	Henge Festival – Cornerstone Art Centre	Didcot	
3	Film 'The Last Twitch'	VH	7pm
4	Church Mini Christmas Market	St Agatha's	10-1pm
5	All Soul's Memorial Service	St Agatha's	4pm
12	Remembrance Day Service	War Mem	10.45am
14	WI 'Crafty Christmas'	VH	7.30pm
18	Ladies Dancing Night	VH	7.30pm
18	Save the Children Christmas Fair	South Cottage	11-3pm
20	WI Friendship Coffee morning	Root One	10am

### Advance Notice

2 December	Brightwell Art Club Exhibition VH
5 December	Village Lunch Club VH
24 December	Save the Children Carols around the Christmas Tree

### Refuse Collection (Food waste each week)

Grey bins	Thursdays 12 & 26 October
	Thursdays 9 & 23 November
Green (& brown) bins	Thursdays 5 & 19 October
	Thursdays <b>2 (extra brown)</b> , 16 & 30 November

### Village website

For more information about Brightwell-cum-Sotwell visit the village website: [www.brightwellcumsotwell.co.uk](http://www.brightwellcumsotwell.co.uk).