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

Editorial

Back in July I came home from my summer holidays to find a Roman centurion in the local phone box. Obviously something was up, but I'd missed all the excitement, I'd missed the big scoop: "Roman road dating back to AD 43 unearthed under Brightwell" - Wow! - including under the playing field at Brightwell Primary! Imagine how exciting it must have been for the pupils to get involved in a live archaeological dig. Read all about it on p 4-5.

I wonder if the Romans had issues with speeding on their roads? We now have 20 mph signs at the first and last entrances to the village. Thing is – will it actually stop the idiots that drive through the village like Ben Hur in a chariot race? Maybe you can join a Community Speed watch to help enforce the speed limit? See page 3.

Having spent half my life in Australia I am very wary of snakes, so I was initially alarmed to learn that snakes are lurking around Brightwell in abundance right now, and may turn up in the garden pond. OMG. Should I be nervous? See page 10.

On the other hand I'm delighted to learn that we have an abundance of apples in the village this year, and that we are going to have a chance to sample a dozen or more varieties on Apple day in October, see page 16-17 for details.

The apple tree in our garden is groaning with fruit thanks to some judicious pruning by Paul Chilton who generously came by to show us how. All I knew about Paul was that he had an encyclopaedic knowledge of apples, a magnificent garden and a dog, but I wanted to get to know him better and to meet his wife Janice. See page 6-8.

Brightwell seems to be teeming with dogs. Attention owners: If you haven't already, I suggest that you invest in local author Lottie Gross's books about dog friendly places to visit around the country and places to stay on holiday that welcome your pooch (Janice take note). See book review page 12.

The amount of rain we've had this summer is truly staggering. While I appreciate the extra green of our pleasant lands around Brightwell, I am well aware that the soggy fields and the recent erosion of one of our most attractive local walking paths along the Thames are every bit as stark a reminder of the perils of climate change as are the soaring winter temperatures down under and the melting glaciers. Read the gloomy statistics of our local weather pattern on page 11, and be sad.

Alison Leigh, Editor

Parish Council News

Jubilee Pavilion

We are very sad to report that Roger Gill has moved on from his position as Booking Clerk/Caretaker and would like to take this opportunity to thank him for being thoroughly committed to the role and acting above and beyond to improve the system, making it easier to use. He leaves the Pavilion in good order and the Parish Council and the users of the Pavilion really appreciate his efforts - he will be missed.

We are very pleased to announce that Lynn Burridge has agreed to take up the job. As Lynn has previously done this role she knows the ropes, so we are delighted to welcome her to the team.

The refurbishment of the Pavilion is progressing well and we believe that we are in the final stages of the design process. We hope to show the plans to the village community in the autumn. The refurbishment team are currently investigating heating and energy options with an emphasis to using renewables as much as possible. Bob Neilson has been putting considerable time and energy into heading up this project so Sue Robson has kindly offered to step into the role as Chair of the Pavilion.

We are pleased to announce that we have two new girls' football teams using the pitch this season. If you wish to book the Pavilion it is looking great and the outside space is definitely a bonus. www.Bcsjubileepavilion.org.uk

Speeding in the Village

Hopefully you have seen the two new 20 mph signs at the first and last entrances to the village. We must thank the pupils of Brightwell School for the designs, Christopher Baines for getting them made into signs and Christopher Baines and Bob Devey for erecting them. We hope that every little helps. Jamie Cresswell is still working on getting a Community Speedwatch started. We have had several villagers volunteer to be on the team but need quite a few more apparently so do let Gabrielle know if you are interested in working with him. Many hands make light work.

On that note we are thrilled that the Helping Hands WhatsApp group is working so well. We have had several jobs done by volunteers from this group over the summer which we really appreciate. Thank you all, it does all help to keep our village looking good.

Parish Clerk Vacancy

We are really sad to announce that Gabrielle, our amazing Parish Council clerk will be leaving us at the end of the year. We will really miss her as she is incredibly efficient (she writes the very best letters!) and so organised. However the plus side of this means she is leaving with everything in place so the next person will have all they need to seamlessly carry on the role (Gabrielle's mantra is that if she was to get hit by a bus someone could come in and take over easily!). The role is varied and very flexible on days and times so could suit a parent with school age children or a retired person who wants to keep their hand in. Gabrielle (or any of the Parish Council members) would be pleased to have a chat with anyone on an informal basis if desired. You will find the advertisement at the back of the magazine on page 23.

To contact the Parish Council email Gabrielle:

bcsparishcouncil@googlemail.com or ring her at the office on 01491 826968 (Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday mornings). If it is an urgent matter out of these hours you can post on the Brightwell Community Facebook page as several of the councillors check that regularly.

Sue Robson, BcS Parish Councillor

BcS CofE Primary School

All of a sudden, the summer holidays are behind us and we are back at school for the start of another year! And what a fabulous year we are looking forward to as we celebrate our largest ever number of children on role. Over the past few years, we are proud to say that the Brightwell family has grown in size to the point that we are now a single-form entry school across all of our classes. At the end of last year, we were quite literally bursting at the seams and so have had to have a lovely new classroom constructed over the holidays in order to squeeze everybody in this year!

However, that wasn't the only excitement in the school as we headed towards the summer. For the final couple of weeks of term, we were thrilled to welcome our friends from *The Wallingford Historical & Archaeological Society* (TWHAS for short!) onto the school field who opened a dig in order to find part of a Roman road that they had identified running through the school grounds.

It all started back in December when TWHAS came to carry out some initial investigations – those investigations showed them the road that they had been looking for. When we heard the news, and they asked if we would mind our field being dug up, we immediately said YES! And we were so glad we did as

the children got to see history literally coming to life in front of their very eyes. They were able to watch the archaeologists at work every day and we were astonished at what they found as, in amongst the cobbles of the road, there were also 2000 year old coins, bits of brooches and pottery. The children even got the chance to go into the dig site and get up close and personal with all of the finds – what a wonderful experience for everyone and a fantastic way to end our year.

It might be a tall order to see if we can top that for achievements in the coming year but, here at Brightwell, we are never ones to shy away from a challenge. Now that we have all had chance to settle back in to our routines, we will be doing everything we can to make sure that this year is the best one yet!

Sue Potts, Headmistress

Village Stores and Post Office

We have had a challenging time over the summer to keep the shop and Post Office open for all our normal opening hours, due to volunteers' holidays and sickness. Luckily we have managed it due to the commitment of our volunteers.

We are very proud of our youngest volunteer, Joe (14 years old), who gives up his Saturday mornings to help us. The last week in August found us very short of volunteers. Claudia 17, a visitor to the village saved us. Claudia was staying with her grandparents for 10 days and she stepped in to cover seven shifts. What stars both of them are!

Many Duke of Edinburgh Award young people have achieved their community service with us, two right up to their Gold Award. Eloise did her Bronze Award with us and is currently doing her Silver Award by helping on Sunday mornings. We are very proud of each and every one of them, we hope you are too. We all need to celebrate our young people more.

We are now offering lots of local speciality breads from different local bakers. On a Friday we have Blewbury Bread, on a Saturday we have Lawlor's of Henley breads and pastries. During the week Cornfield deliver daily and on Tuesdays Halls deliver savoury and sweet pastries. These bakers pride themselves on quality and good ingredients, delivered fresh on the day it's baked. Please come and see what we have to offer and help keep these traditional small bakers in business.

Celia Collett

MeetPaul and Janice Chilton

Paul and Janice Chilton will celebrate their diamond wedding (60 years) next July. They have four children, four grandchildren and a great grand-daughter – quite a dynasty. For all their married life they have lived in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell, initially at Sotwell Hill Fruit Farm on the High Road at Sotwell, and for the last 30 years in the Fairthorne House next door to the Village Hall, the house with the glorious garden with its very own babbling brook and an enormous cuddly Labradoodle dog called Jasper, that jumps up to greet you when you lean over the gate to admire.



Paul is a retired fruit farmer; Janice a retired special needs teacher but also known in the village as an Anglican Associate Priest working in the Wallingford Team assisting St Agnes, St James, St Mary Magdalene's in Crowmarsh and the Wallingford churches, a job she trained for after she 'retired'; and "I've never been busier" she says.

The first time they met was when Janice, aged 19, joined the choir of the Methodist church that Paul, 18, regularly attended with his parents. And then, says Paul, with a twinkle in his eye "we sort of drifted together".

Paul was brought up on the family fruit farm in Holmer Green. In his heyday he was farming 170 acres – of orchards. "The joke was that I was born on a ladder". 120 of those acres were in Sotwell. They built a house on their land and moved into it the day they were married. For the first decade or so the farm prospered, but once Britain joined the Common Market things started to go downhill. "It just wasn't profitable because of the influx of cheaper imports", says Paul. In the early nineties they had to sell up. "We just had to walk away. Not the best of times".

Fortunately, just a few months later one of the Fairthorne Charity (see page 14) houses became free. Having lived in the village for more than 20 years they were eligible for the house, and have lived there ever since.

Paul trained in Horticulture at Aylesbury College in his youth, but on moving into the village he went on a gardening design course for 2 years at Reading University, which he didn't pursue, preferring to be a hands-on gardener. He still does a few casual hours here and there, and his own garden is an inspiration to anybody with green fingered aspirations.

As Janice described her work as a peripatetic special needs pre-school teacher/councillor back in the day we reflected on how diminished, and in some cases non-existent, such services have become in recent years. She regrets that nowadays respite care for children with special needs is “very, very rare” compared to back then.

Another thing that makes her sad is that a whole generation has grown up without Church.” I think a lot of people ARE looking for spiritual guidance but they don’t know where to look”. She thinks the Church would serve society better by taking into account that people these days work 24/7 and reaching out to them: why only hold services between 8 and 12 on a Sunday morning? And why not hold services in buildings that don’t frighten people away?

The Church has always been part of her life, and becoming ordained 15 years ago felt like a natural progression of her faith. Paul still has faith but rarely goes to church these days. “It doesn’t quite fit my lifestyle, but I spend longer on my knees than the vicar”. In the garden of course.

Over the decades Paul and Janice have served the village handsomely. Paul was a founder member of the BcS Environment group, and helped set up the Orchard group 10 years ago. Along with Sally Dugan, he ran the annual flower and produce show for many years. Paul was involved with the badminton club, and a member of the Community Association in the early days. Over the years they have both been involved in organising or helping with many community events, big barbecues when they were on the farm, and many get-togethers in the Village Hall, especially for New Year’s Eve parties.

When the children were small Janice led a group of Ranger Guides and Venture Scouts – only the second joint group in the country. They went all over the place on expeditions to Scotland, the Lake District and the like, driven by Paul in a battered old RAF coach which they called Matilda. Being a keen ornithologist himself, Paul also drove car loads of RSPB Young Ornithologists here, there and everywhere hoping for a sighting of a rare bird; it’s funny to recall that they would go all the way to mid Wales in the hope of seeing a red kite; nowadays Brightwell is full of them.

Very few people know that Paul has a secret talent. He plays the harmonica. Age 14 he appeared on the BBC’s children’s program All Your Own, and more recently in one of the Village Hall Christmas concerts he surprised and delighted the audience by playing a few tunes on a tiny harmonica attached to his key ring.

Both feel fortunate to have reached their eighties. Paul survived a heart attack 14 years ago, and Janice almost didn’t make it through childhood. She was born with a heart defect which was slowly killing her. She was saved by pioneering surgery aged 8. “I remember I said to my mother, am I going to die? She was very honest. She said ‘I don’t know darling’. So I had this operation and here I am”.

What, I asked, is the secret of a long and happy marriage? “We’ve always done our own thing and we’ve always supported each other in what we are doing” says Janice. And what are they looking forward to in the time they have left? Paul: “I hope to be able to carry on as we are; to sit here and look at my garden”. And Janice? “Having more time to ourselves and the odd holiday, as long as we can take Jasper!”.

Alison Leigh

St Agatha’s Church

The Church celebrates the season of Creationtide from the beginning of September and into early October. This is a time to thank God for his goodness to us, for the food that we eat and for the raw materials that the earth provides, without which modern life would be very difficult. It is a time for Harvest Festivals and our service in Brightwell will be held at 9.30am in St. Agatha’s on 6 October, which is our Family Service slot, so no communion. We would welcome donations of tinned and dried goods for Wallingford Food Bank, which will be collected during the service.

This is also a time to reflect on how we use the resources God gives us, not just endeavouring to not waste food but to use wisely everything we have. Most people in the world want to live in peace and harmony with their neighbours, but this seems to be more and more difficult. Peace is something we pray for regularly; without peace farms are not tended so people are hungry, cities are destroyed by fighting, children cannot go to school and ill health is the lot of many because of interruption to medical care and facilities.

13 October to 20 October is the annual Week of Prayer for World Peace, a multi-faith organisation that this year marks its 50th anniversary. As part of this special week, we are again having a Day of Prayer in St Agatha’s on Saturday 19 October. There will be set times when we can pray together, starting at 8am with Morning Prayer, and then at 9.30am, 12 noon, 4pm, and concluding at 6pm with Celtic Evening Prayer. Otherwise, the church will be open all day and you can sit quietly and pray or use one of the prayer stations in the church. There will be activities for children and refreshments will be available in the church room from 10am until 5pm.

November is a time for remembering. We will hold our All Souls' Memorial Service, when loved ones who have died can be remembered, on Sunday 3 November, in St Agatha's at 4pm. On Sunday 10 November our annual Service of Remembrance will be held beginning at the War Memorial at 10.45am. Details of our weekly services are always on the gate at St Agatha's. Come and join us, all are welcome.

Rev. Janice - Associate Priest

Stewart Village Hall

A big welcome back to the groups who have returned after a summer break, it's good to see you all in the Hall again. And many thanks to everyone who came along to our Annual General Meeting on 18 September, we will give a summary and update from the meeting in the next edition of the Villager.



As you know we have launched the CLOCK TOWER LOTTERY; this is part of our fundraising plan for the future of the Hall and, as well as being a great way to support the hall it gives you the chance to win ££££ prizes. Tickets are £5 each, payment made monthly by Standing Order. The first draw will be held in the

Red Lion at 9pm on 18 October. Many thanks to Corinne for kindly allowing us to carry out the draw in the pub. Pop down, have a drink and witness the first draw and prizes of £200 and £100 being won ... **you** could be one of the lucky winners.

To take part: go to <https://www.stewartvillagehall.org.uk/clock-tower-lottery.html> or Email info@stewartvillagehall.org.uk or collect paper forms from the Village Hall, complete the form and pop into the mailbox at the rear of the Hall. Or give Shena a call on 01491 834543.

Save the dates:

23 November: Ladies Dancing. Back due to popular demand 😊 another fun 'ladies only' disco is planned, with great music, bar and nibbles. Tickets will be available in the Village Stores.

2 December: Festive Block printing event. Make 3 lovely items to take home for Christmas, these will make lovely presents or look great on your Christmas table. Go to Artoffaipur.com to book.

18 December: Traditional Christmas Carol Concert. More info to follow, look out information on our website, on Facebook and for posters on our notice boards.

In the meantime, if you have any comments, questions, or feedback, or wish to book the hall you can use the contact us page on the Hall website, stewartvillagehall.org.uk, pop a comment in the mailbox at the rear of the Hall, speak to any trustee or contact Shena at shenaluck@btinternet.com or on 01491 834543.

Annette Kilworth

BcS Environment Group

Snakes Alive! Grass snakes seem to be quite active this summer; we've seen several in garden ponds. One even found its way to a very small pond in the heart of Cholsey where it took to eating the frogs! But don't worry, they are completely harmless to humans and although may strike with their head they don't bite.

The grass snake is the largest snake in Britain growing up to 150cm long. It is particularly fond of wetland habitats, but can also be found in dry grasslands and in gardens. They hunt amphibians, fish, small mammals and birds. Females lay 10 to 40 eggs in rotting vegetation, such as compost heaps, incubating them until they hatch in early autumn. Like all reptiles, grass snakes hibernate, usually from October to April.

Owls: Following the very successful and well supported talk with owls earlier this year we have now arranged for a workshop to examine owl pellets. This will be with the same team that came before and will allow participants to find out more about what owls eat.

Owls swallow their prey whole - bones and all, so they have a specialist digestive system to deal with this. Different to poop or sick, a pellet is a regurgitated ball of all the bits and bobs an owl cannot digest. Pellets can contain the fur, feathers, teeth, bones and beetle wing casings from an owl's last meal. All attendees get their own pellet to dissect and discuss with the experts. It is also planned to have an owl or two present to oversee operations! Space will be limited so booking will be required.

Future Events

The Owl event is planned to be held on 1 November between 10am-12 noon but we are finalising details and they will be advertised on the Community Facebook page. And ...Jonathan Stamp will be giving his talk 'The Lost Library' in the Village Hall on Thursday 5 December.

Weather

The rainfall recorded at Highlands Farm was for July 68.3mm and August 53.1mm. The storm that occurred on 1 August recorded 22.1mm. The storm caused the flooding of Waitrose and several other premises in the town with around 33mm of rain being reported in Benson on that day. The rain was accompanied by severe gusts of wind which uprooted several mature trees on or around Castle Meadows. The July rainfall is about 145% the average measured at the farm between 1999 and 2012 whilst that of August is about 85%. These are about in line with the Met Office figures for the wider region. Maximum mean temperatures were about 1 deg C below average for July and about 1 deg C above the average for August.

Steve Capel-Davies

Community Association

Grants We were pleased to make the following grants in September, a total of **£5260**: Scouts - £1068, Brightwell Church - £1390, Pre-School - £1000, Tennis Club - £250, Cricket Club - £250, Village Hall - £300, Lunch Club - £88, Toddler Group - £200, Shillingford Park Group - £200, BcS Website - £264, Brightwell Players - £250.

Jumble Sale 5 October 2-4.30pm - Jubilee Pavilion

Please bring donations of clothing, toys, paperback books and small items of bric-a-brac to the Mackney Lane Pavilion on the morning of the sale from 10am or the evening before and join us later to pick up a bargain.

AGM 6 November 7.30pm Stewart Room - Village Hall

We would like to invite members of our village community to join us for a glass of wine at our AGM to hear about our work and events over the past year and to learn about our future plans.

James Davys

The Cosy Café

The Cosy Cafe will start up again in the Stewart Room, at the rear of the Village Hall, from 10-11.30 on Monday 28 October, and every Monday until further notice. All welcome, including well behaved dogs! A chance to meet new people or catch up with old friends, in a warm environment. All proceeds go towards the Village Hall's restoration project. We even have a card reader! Please tell your friends.

Shena Luck

Book Reviews

"Dog Days Out – 365 things to do with your dog in the UK and Ireland" by Lottie Gross

This is a delightful and resourceful travel guide for dog owners, offering a year's worth of daily activities you can enjoy with your four-legged friend. Written by a devoted dog owner, the book is brimming with authentic experiences, as the author has personally visited and tested each location, ensuring that they are truly dog-friendly. This first-hand knowledge adds a genuine touch to the recommendations, making the book a trustworthy companion for anyone eager to explore new places with their pooch.

I really appreciated the informative introductory section which not only introduces you to the author Lottie Gross and her dog Arty, but it also includes valuable tips on what to pack, travel advice, and guidelines on good dog etiquette which is particularly useful for both new and seasoned dog owners especially when you are trying new experiences.

The book's layout is a particular strong point. Each activity or destination is clearly explained, with a simple key provided at the beginning of each section, allowing readers to quickly grasp essential details before diving deeper. This user-friendly design ensures that the guide is not just informative but also convenient to use.

As a dog owner who often explores the countryside of rural Oxfordshire with my Cocker Spaniel Monty - but not much further - I was amazed by the variety of days out covered in this book. It includes everything from rural walks to urban adventures, with activities ranging from museum visits and castle tours to beach outings and boat trips. The sheer diversity of options has inspired me to broaden my travel horizons and embark on new adventures with Monty.

The guide is also visually appealing, with excellent and relevant photographs that break up the text into manageable, bite-sized chunks, which makes it along with its simple navigation an ideal book to dip into at any time. My only minor critique is the geographical organisation; while the regional split is practical, I found the south-to-north order less intuitive and would have preferred it to be organised concentrically from each location. However, this is a small issue in an otherwise excellent resource. In summary, "Dog Days Out – 365 things to do with your dog in the UK and Ireland" is a must-have for any dog owner looking to explore new destinations with their pet.

Dariel Burdass

Pyramids of England by Christopher Baines

Chris Baines was living in London when he first sought out the Wittenham Clumps. He had seen George Warner Allen's 1947 painting, *Picnic at Wittenham*, in the Tate Gallery and wanted to find the spot that looked out on such a magnificent view of the English countryside. Years later, Chris and his family moved to Brightwell cum Sotwell, attracted by a house that was just what the family had been looking for. Only later did he learn that Brightwell was the village where George Warner Allen had lived and that the Wittenham Clumps were on his doorstep.

Getting to know the twin hills with their distinctive crowns of beech, Chris was soon looking into the work of another artist who had painted the Clumps not once but twenty-six times. "Ever since I remember them the Clumps had meant something to me," wrote Paul Nash, "... they were the Pyramids of my small world."

Nash is regarded today as one of the finest British landscape artists of the twentieth century. But until recently, his lifelong obsession with the Wittenham Clumps was a little-known feature of his life and work. That gap was filled in 2021 when Chris produced 'Pyramids of England', including many fine reproductions of Nash's paintings of the Clumps and several of his better-known war paintings (Nash was an official war artist in both world wars).

Pyramids of England is beautifully produced, art paper and layout doing justice to the many photographs and reproductions of Nash's work. It is also a fascinating portrait of a man with many strange views and eccentric ways. As Chris writes in his introduction, "I have tried to show Nash's Wittenham Clumps work in context with his wider output, giving a sense of his life and personality along the way." Devoid of inconsequential detail, the book can be read in under an hour and is an enjoyable and classy introduction both to the life and work of Paul Nash and to the fascinations of the Clumps themselves.

Peter Adamson

Editor's Note:

These books are on sale at the Village Shop, as is Lottie Gross's previous book *Dog Friendly Weekends – 50 Breaks in Britain for You and Your Dog*.

We will review more books by local authors in future editions of *The Villager*.

Fairthorne Memorial Charity

As many will know, this small village charity is the last surviving historic BcS charity from many that existed as recently as the 1990s but were then consolidated. It exists to help those who are in distress or need in Brightwell cum Sotwell and the local area.

The charity is very conscious that it is not always obvious when somebody is in need or distress. That is particularly so in an area considered wealthy by comparison to other parts of the UK. But that would be to ignore real-life difficulties that individuals do encounter. The charity is in a position to help by providing awards or grants where the terms of the charity are met. By way of example only, we have a history of supporting children and young people who might otherwise lose opportunities that might be readily available to others.

We are not big, nor do we have lots of funds. But if you think we might help then please do contact us. The charity is proud of its record of treating all requests confidentially and with sensitivity.

Michael Drury, Secretary and Trustee

Save the Children

2024 marks the Centenary of the Geneva Convention on the Rights of the Child. The text of this important document was published by the International Save the Children Union in Geneva on 23 February 1923. One hundred years on Save the Children is still having to fight to get those rights upheld, very often in the most terrible situations and conditions. Your support ensures Save the Children can continue this fight.

So...please come and join us on Saturday 5 October in the Village Hall from 7-11pm to enjoy a Mediterranean evening, the ideal way to hang onto that summer feeling a little longer, to enjoy good food and drink with friends. To book your ticket (£25) or table, please contact Sue s.e.butt@btinternet.com.

Save the Children Christmas cards will be available from myself, Sue Butt or Corinne Jones from 1 October; we are doing pop-up events for you to see our selection. A further date for your diary is 7 December, we hope you can join us for coffee, cake or lunch in the Village Hall, where we will have Christmas goodies for sale; a chance to buy those last minute Christmas cards!

Celia & the Save the Children Team

The Red Lion

It's been a busy summer here at The Red Lion and our courtyard garden really has been used to its full potential, we hope you are all enjoying it. We have had some fabulous live music outside and we plan on doing more where weather permits so please check our emails & socials for more info.

Just a few things to tell you about this month. Firstly, we normally run our quiz nights on the 1st Tuesday of each month but for October we are doing things a little differently. Phil Annetts has kindly offered to do a special music quiz and this will be on Thursday 17 October. We will run the quiz as normal with teams of up to 8 people, £4pp to enter and we will be serving chilli & rice on the night for just £10pp. Please contact the pub to enter your team and be quick as tables get booked up fast. If you don't fancy joining in the quiz, you can just come and join us for a chilli. Other dates to note: 20 October Jazz Jam, 3 November Live Music with The Tubthumpers, 5 November Quiz Night, 17 November Jazz Jam.

Lastly, I know this is early but our Christmas menu is now available (also on our website) and dates are booking fast. It will be served from 27 November to 21 December on Wednesday to Saturday. You can book for 1 person all the way up to 36 but again be quick as some dates are already fully booked.

Corinne, Mouse & Ruby

BcS WI

After an enjoyable afternoon picking apples and plums in the orchard of Brightwell Manor (thank you Boris and Carrie for inviting the WI in), our autumn schedule began with an interesting talk by Lizzy Rowe at our September meeting about Christopher Wren's Oxford. Later that week members visited the brilliant autumn colours at Waterperry Gardens.

For **October** we are hoping to pick up some clever 'Design Tips for a perfect home' from Holly Scott, an award-winning designer. **November**, a time for preparation, is once again reserved for our 'Crafty Christmas', an evening for members to show and make their own Christmas decorations. The **December** meeting is set aside for the WI ladies to sit back and enjoy a 'Festive Film' alongside some festive food and drink. For anyone interested, wishing to join or just come along for a 'taster session', our meetings are always held on the 2nd Tuesday in the month, 7.30pm at the Village Hall. For any questions or enquiries please email: brightwellcumshotwellwi@gmail.com or find us on Facebook.

Karin Matthews

Apple Day - Saturday 12 October

Come and celebrate 10 years of our community orchard at Apple Day.

It's going to be an Apple Day with added extras. Of course, Paul Chilton's spectacular display of over 100 varieties of apple will be the main feature. Last year he had 119 different varieties of apples and pears that stretched across 5 tables. Surrounding villages now ask Paul to come and identify their fruit! This year we have an abundance of apples in the gardens and orchards in the village so we will be pressing and making juice for 4 hours. Start keeping your plastic drink bottles or milk bottles and take some juice home to drink fresh or freeze.

This year John and his team will have about 10 different varieties of apple to taste. You could have some of your favourites to eat now, store or use to make chutneys, or you could even try making quince jelly. Martin will have 4 different ciders for you to taste and decide which is your favourite. Kat's famous chocolate fountain is always a winner for people who like chocolate and like apples! Mark from Pickles Produce will be selling bottles of pasteurised juice. He sources his apples from an old orchard in Harwell and produces many different single varieties as well as interesting mixed fruit flavours. Good for taking to family and friends instead of the normal bottle of wine.

For the first time Corrine at the Red Lion will be providing prepared baguettes filled with her chef's wonderful chutneys, made with village apples (of course). Jessie's Coffee Truck from Woodcote will be offering fabulous barista coffee and all kinds of teas (to go with all the apple cakes!). Charlotte Fyfe will have a stall selling apple recipe books. Find inspiration for sweet and savoury dishes using apples. And this year we will be welcoming Wormersley Foods from Harwell. This family business has been producing naturally infused fruit vinegar, cider vinegar and jam gourmet condiments since 1979.

See you at **Apple Day** on **Saturday 12 October** at the recreation ground 12pm-4pm.

Why not make your own apple juice?

It's easy! All you need are apples, and the village press which makes 40 litres of juice in just 15 mins! You can put plastic bottles in the freezer and enjoy them through the winter or you can pasteurise the juice and bottle it up. We provide everything you will need (except the bottles and caps). Start keeping your milk bottles or plastic drink bottles instead.

The hire of everything is just £35. Contact villageorchardgroup@gmail.com for more information.

Alternatively, you can take your apples to Waterperry Gardens at Wheatley. They press and bottle the juice for you. Just contact them for more information about their services and charges. It would be wonderful if more of our village apples could be used.

Alison Bloomfield

Brightwell Preschool

Happy New School Year!! September heralds a new beginning in education and so in essence, we like to think of it as our New Year: time to celebrate achievements from the last academic year and time for new beginnings; joining families new and old for adventures ahead. It is also the time of year when we say goodbye and thank you to our committee of dedicated parents, especially those who hold the chair, treasurer and secretary posts as they take on the lion's share of responsibilities. On behalf of the staff, children and families, I would like to take the opportunity to recognise the care and time the committee has put into our preschool over the past year (and prior to this for most). We have seen a huge amount of updates, including a fabulous new surface for our under-cover play area, which I am pleased to say has held-up to thorough health and safety testing by the most destructive of individuals.

We would also like to thank the many local businesses, organisations and individuals that made the project possible for us, not only raising funds but generously giving advice and services. Huge thanks to Brightfest for the support, Grondon Sand and Gravel for the aggregate for the base of our new play area, McCardle SportTec for the astroturf expertise, and local landscape garden company Oxon Complete Landscapes for managing and completing the project for us with such care and integrity.

Natasha Hillier

Brightwell Art

Brightwell Art Club meet on Saturday mornings (10-12) at the Village Hall, OX10 0RY. We are a friendly group of people who welcome beginners as well as more experienced painters. We have a tutor each week who gives us a variety of subjects/techniques to try. You could pop in and meet us on a Saturday morning, coffee is about 11am. For further information, email anne@honeyball.com.

Anne Honeyball

Earth Trust Farm Pumpkin Patch

This October, come down to the farm for a whole host of great activities for visitors of all ages to enjoy at the Pumpkin Patch, with heaps of harvesting fun to be had!

As well as the all-important growing field, where you can pick your perfect pumpkin and select your favourite squash direct from the earth it grew in, there's a storytelling teepee with autumnal stories and harvest-time tales, in Earth Lab's Discovery Zone science experiments and testing tables to delve into the hidden world of soil, plus a mini scarecrow trail around the farm and a mega maize maze to beat in the field!

Dates: Sundays 13th, 20th, 27th and Monday 28th-Thursday 31st October

Times: 10am-1pm and 1pm-4pm

Tickets: £3 per person in advance (plus booking fee), £5 on the gate. Under 3s free earthtrust.org.uk/whats-on/.

Sharon Squire, Communications Earth Trust

Brightwell Supporting Refugees

BSR will be staging a **Horrible Histories** event at St Agatha's Church on Friday 25 October at 6.30pm. (Children & adults of a strong disposition welcome.)

In the right hands, history can be horribly funny. The man who brought Horrible Histories to the BBC, Richard Bradley, who runs Lion TV, will tell the story of how this hugely popular history series came about, using clips and reenactments from some of his favourite moments. And you might recognise some of the local talent who will be acting the sketches in a live performance.

David Dugan

Wallingford Museum

Creative Art Workshops

During the October half term (Tues 29 -Wed 30 October) from 11-4pm we are running Creative Art Workshops with artists Julie Edwards & Ron Thompson. **'Planet Art'** will be working at Wallingford Museum to develop ideas for a piece of public art at St Joseph Homes Highcroft Wallingford. Please note artists will only be available 29th & 30th. The rest of the week just drop in and create from 2-5pm. Come and work on a large collaborative drawing rolled

out on a 10m scroll. Inspired by the museum of Wallingford's collection, decorate, craft and paint wooden figures to illustrate characters throughout the town's history. Workshops are free, just the normal entrance charge applies.

Steve Capel-Davies 'Ways over Water - a history of Thames crossings' 9 October

This talk, presented by The Wallingford Historical and Archaeological Society will look at fords, ferries, bridges and a couple of tunnels from Roman times using examples from the whole river. Steve has had a lifetime of working on the Thames starting nearly 50 years ago with the Thames Conservancy Division of Thames Water Authority before moving into private practice with Peter Brett Associates based in Reading. This has helped him indulge in his interest in the history of the Thames. For more information see:

<https://www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk/events/>

<https://www.twhas.org.uk/meetings-programme.html>.

Sue Wright, Wallingford Museum

Wallingford and District Art Club

Tuesday 22 October 7.30-9.30pm: Join our friendly Wallingford and District Art club for a live demonstration as professional artist, Steven Hall, paints an industrial scene in watercolours. Steven originally taught architecture and construction, and has been painting full-time since 1994. He is influenced by famous watercolourists including Edward Wesson and Edward Seago. The demo will be held at Centre 70 (off Goldsmiths Lane in Wallingford) is free for club members or £5 for visitors.

Tuesday 19 November 7.30-9.30pm: Professional artist James Ort will give a live demonstration of his process of making an animal sculpture from wire. Animals are James' primary subject matter, which is the result of a lifelong fascination in wildlife and a former career. Using his knowledge of anatomy and form, he pushes ceramic and wire to its limits! Venue: Centre 70 (off Goldsmiths Lane), free for club members or £5 for visitors.

If you would like further information on these events or other club activities, please visit the club website at www.wallingfordartclub.org.uk or email admin@wallingfordartclub.org.uk.

Nicola Web

CAB seeking volunteers

Make an Impact! Volunteer with Citizens Advice Oxfordshire South and Vale. Are you looking for a new challenge, and want to contribute something to your community? Oxfordshire South and Vale Citizens Advice is looking for volunteer advisers and IT specialists to work in our friendly offices in Abingdon, Didcot, Henley or Thame.

Citizens Advice gives people the knowledge and confidence they need to find their way forward - whoever they are and whatever their problem. In a typical year our 111 volunteers support around 10,000 people. Our volunteers play a vital role, ensuring that people receive the advice and support they need.

We are currently looking for advisers and IT specialists. A new adviser training course begins in early October 2024, so apply now!

Advisers will:

- Receive extensive training and support to ensure they have the knowledge to help people move forward
- Learn about a range of issues that affect our clients including benefits, debt, housing and employment (no prior knowledge necessary)
- Give confidential advice over the phone and in person
- Make a real difference to people's lives, contributing to improving their wellbeing
- Have a sense of belonging to the community developed through working with people from all backgrounds.

IT specialists will:

- Help to maintain our IT systems and support the service
- Help staff and volunteers with day-to-day IT issues, for example with trouble logging on, connecting to Wi-Fi and locating files
- Help to maintain our local Citizens Advice website.

We would like you to be available for two sessions per week, if possible, either mornings or afternoons or for a whole day. We offer a rewarding, flexible and supportive working environment.

We also welcome volunteer receptionists, fund raisers, communication workers and HR administration.

To apply, please use this link <https://citizensadviceosav.org.uk/volunteering/>. Or, if you would like to discuss these volunteering roles, please email: recruitment@citizensadviceosav.org.uk and one of our team will contact you.

Darius Halpern

Age UK Oxfordshire

Age UK Oxfordshire is a local independent charity supporting older people in Oxfordshire. We have a variety of services available to help you to live independently and live life to the full. Our services range from support at home to helping link you into your community, from foot care clinics to exercise classes. We offer a free information and advice helpline, as well as one-to-one support if you have been a victim of a scam. To find out more about how we can support you, please visit www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire, call 0345 450 1276 or email contactus@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk.

Emily Cleary

Part Time Work Available

Laundry Assistant required at Sotwell Hill House for alternate Fridays 9am–2pm. There may also be opportunities to cover extra shifts. Please contact Mrs Josephine Butterfield, Manager on 01491 836685 or email us at sotwellhillhouseoffice@gmail.com.

Val Bindon, Admin.

Cholsey Repair Café

We're pleased to hear that new repair cafes have opened in this region but Cholsey Repair Café still opens regularly at The Cholsey Pavilion on the third Saturday of odd-numbered months. The November session will be on 16th from 10-12.45; this coincides with Cholsey Community Café, next door, where you can buy home-made cakes to go with a good cup of tea or coffee. To cover running expenses, the Repair Café accepts donations for any help or advice given, but repairs are free of charge. Soldering, glueing, rewiring, sewing, mechanical repairs, sharpening and electrical safety testing are just some of the skills normally on offer www.cholseyrepaircafe.com.

Ian Wheeler

'Come and Sing'

South Oxfordshire Choir's Handel's Messiah "Come and Sing" concert will take place at 7.30 pm on Saturday 30 November, in St Mary le More Church in Wallingford. All are welcome; do bring your family and friends – tickets will be available on the door and music will be provided. For more information contact me on chair@southoxonchoir.org, or 07714256807.

John Linton

Nettlebed Dance

Dance to Irish country music with Ireland's Declan Gaynor, the well-known Irish singer, accomplished keyboard player and accordionist who brings the sounds and songs of Irish Country Music and popular 60's/70's songs. He will be on stage at The Nettlebed Club RG9 5DD, Saturday 5 October, 8-11pm. We are a 'not for profit' group of friends but do ask for a donation of just £10 per person on the door. A friendly venue, with free parking, disability facilities, a good size dance floor, and a bar selling tea & coffee. Bring your friends and enjoy a great night out. Just arrive - tickets not necessary. Queries? Call Keith on 07752 374 610.

The 'not for profit' Nettlebed Dancing and Music Friends also hold 2 hours of social dancing to Country and Popular Music CDs on the 1st and 3rd Tuesday of each month from 7.30-9.30pm for a donation of £5pp on the door with the same facilities as above. Again, any queries, do call Keith on 07752 374 610.

Keith Fletcher

The North Moreton Book Sale

The North Moreton Book Sale will be held on Saturday 2 November in North Moreton Church, from 10am-3pm. As usual, thousands of books will be on sale, with all proceeds going to support the village hall and church. Tea, coffee and home-made cakes will be available. Free entry and car parking. Donations of spare books are always welcome. Email northmoretonbooksale@gmail.com or call 01235 818900 or 07908314771; if you have any books to give, and the organisers will happily collect them.

Katy Taylor

Corn Exchange

Breath of Spring: A comedy written by Peter Coke, and directed by Dorothy Hirsch. It is the late 1950's London and times are hard!

The Sinodun Players proudly present a new production of this witty action-packed comedy, which invites you into a world where you can leave your troubles behind for a few hours and just spend some quality time laughing. How can such a sweet hopeful title lead to such carnage? Tuesday 15 to Saturday 19 October at 7.30pm, matinee performance Saturday 19 October at 2.30pm. Tickets: Adults £15, Opening Night Special Offer £12

Book and watch the theatrical trailer at sinodunplayers.org.uk, and view information on other events at cornexchange.org.uk.

BcS Parish Clerk Vacancy

Due to the retirement of our current Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer we have a permanent, part-time vacancy (12 hours per week). The Parish of Save the Children Brightwell cum Sotwell is located in South Oxfordshire with approximately 650 households. There are 9 very experienced members of the Parish Council. The role involves a combination of home and office working along with attendance at Parish Council Meetings which are held in the evening of the third Tuesday of each month, with no more than 4 additional evening duties per annum. Salary will be commensurate with qualifications and experience. (LC2 £15.21-£17.16 per hour).

Key tasks

Ensure all legal, statutory and other governing provisions relating to the Council are observed.

Prepare agendas and supporting documents for our monthly meetings and produce the resulting minutes. Deliver the actions required.

Carry out duties of Responsible Finance Officer including maintaining finance spreadsheets, dealing with invoices and on-line bank payments, annual budget preparation and submitting internal and external audits. Training will be provided if required.

Provide support on local government matters and give advice on Council policies and procedures, ensuring policies are reviewed and updated as required.

Provide administrative support to projects being undertaken by the Council.

Be the initial point of contact for all communication with parishioners.

We are seeking:

- Someone well organised and self-motivated who is able to work independently and part of our closely knit team.
- You will need to be computer literate as well as having a command of basic financial accounting with intermediate capability of Microsoft Word and Excel.
- Flexibility is important in return for a relaxed working environment and the ability to
- Shape your working week.
- A good communicator and empathy with our parishioners will be valued.
- Closing date for applications 11 October 2024.
- Interviews to take place at a mutually convenient date and time.

VILLAGE DIARY

October

5	Community Association Jumble Sale	Jub Pav	2-4.30
5	Save the Children Mediterranean evening	VH	7pm
6	Harvest Festival	St Ag's	9.30am
8	WI talk 'Design tips for the perfect home'	VH	7.30pm
12	Apple Day	Rec	12-4pm
17	Music quiz	Red Lion	7pm
18	Clock Tower Lottery draw	Red Lion	9pm
19	Day of Prayer	St Ag's	All day
20	Jazz Jam	Red Lion	6.30pm
25	BSR Horrible Histories	VH	6.30pm
28	Cosy Cafe	VH	10-11.30

November

	Cosy Café every Monday	VH	10-11.30
1	Environment Group event dissecting owl pellets	VH	10-12
3	All Soul's Memorial Service	St Ag's	4pm
3	Live music with The Tubthumpers	Red Lion	6.30pm
5	Red Lion Quiz	Red Lion	7pm
6	Community Association AGM	VH	7.30pm
10	Service of Remembrance from War Memorial		10.45am
12	WI 'Crafty Christmas'	VH	7.30pm
17	Jazz Jam	Red Lion	6.30pm
23	Ladies dancing night	VH	7.30pm

Advance Notice

2 December	Festive Block Printing, Village Hall
5 December	Jonathan Stamp 'The Lost Library'
7 December	Save the Children Christmas Sale, Village Hall
18 December	Traditional Christmas Carol Concert

Refuse Collection (Food waste each week)

Grey bins	Thursdays 10 & 24 October Thursdays 7 & 21 November
Green (& brown) bins	Thursdays 3, 17 & 31 October (+ extra garden) Thursdays 14 & 28 November

Village Website

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