

## August

9	WI summer outing to Sulgrave Manor & Gardens		9.30am
17	Sausage and Cider festival	Red Lion	
17	Earth Trust Lab Tour		
18	Earth Trust History of the landscape		
21	Earth Trust – The Clumps Geowalk		

## September

10	Last Night of the Proms live screening	VH	
10	Safari Supper (starting at St Agatha's)		7pm
13	Village Lunch	VH	12.15
13	Community Association Village Quiz	Red Lion	7pm
13	WI Talk	VH	7.30pm
23	BSR Mary Acton talk	VH	7pm
30	70's Disco & Quiz	VH	6.30pm

## Advance Notice

9 October	St Agatha's Summer Concert 6.30pm
15 October	Apple Day at the Rec 11-4pm
29 October	VH Live screening Strictly Coming Dancing Halloween special
4 November	BSR Maff Potts music evening VH

## Refuse Collection (Food waste each week)

Grey bins	Thursdays 4, 18 August <b>Friday 2</b> , Thursdays 15 & 29 September
Green (& brown) bins	Thursdays 11, 25 August Thursdays 8, 22 September

## Village website

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

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**Items for the next edition should be sent to the Editor by 10 Sep 2022.** *The Villager* is published every other month and delivered free to all households in the village.

## Editorial

Like many of you, I have that end-of-term feeling. Despite being long gone from schooldays, as a mum, I don't think it ever leaves you - it's that time of year when everything seems to quieten down after a very hectic period and you can enjoy the long summer days. This year, we have had a particularly busy few months in the village, with some event or another on almost every weekend. I hope you managed to get to some of the festivities around the Jubilee Weekend. The lighting of the Beacon and fireworks up the hill was a magical evening I thought, and the street picnic party was a lovely traditional way to celebrate the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Thank you to all those who took photographs over the weekend and posted them up to share on the village Facebook page. Our cover image was taken by Beth Woods, on Brightwell Barrow on the evening the beacon was lit, thank you.

The village fete was again a success, returning to its traditional time in July. Congratulations to the winners in the Flower and Produce Show. Our centre pages have 'the results'. The sun shone, it was hot, the band played, and lots of Pimms and ice cream were sold. It made another great village afternoon.

We have welcomed over 30 Ukrainians, the majority children and teenagers, to our village in the last few months, and a few more are on their way. As Angela writes on page 15, they have shared in some of our village celebrations and been given a fabulous welcome here. Many of you are supporting them in various ways which is very much appreciated. More details on how you can still help can be found by emailing [brightwellrefugees@gmail.com](mailto:brightwellrefugees@gmail.com).

I'm still looking for someone to take over my editor role or to help me with *The Villager*. If anyone is interested, perhaps sharing the work by taking on an issue or being a guest editor on an occasional issue, please let me know. As you can read on page 5 in the report on *The Villager's* recent AGM, it's a good team to be part of and perhaps a way of getting to know people if you are new to the village or recently retired from work and want to do something different. If you are interested, please give me a ring on 07790 025908 and we can talk about it.

The temperature is rising now so time to sign off. By the time you read this I hope we are back to more normal temperatures, and that you were not too badly affected by the record heat last week.

Happy holidays!

*Helen Connor*

Thursday 4 August

Friday 5 – Tuesday 9 August

Wednesday 10 August

Thursday 11 August

Friday 12 – Monday 15 August

Wednesday 16 - Thursday 17 August

Thursday 18 August

Friday 19 August

Brian and Charles

The Railway Children Return

Top Gun (12A)

Top Gun Maverick (12A)

Where the Crawdads Sing (15)

Notre Dame on Fire (12A)

Eric Ravilious: Drawn to War (PG)

Eiffel (15)

Please look out for new updates for the programme on the website [www.cornexchange.org.uk](http://www.cornexchange.org.uk).

The theatre will be closed for annual maintenance from Saturday 20 August to Sunday 28 August (inclusive).

## An Agatha Christie Celebration

The Cholsey Community Development Trust is looking forward to celebrating the life of Agatha Christie this September at Cholsey Great Hall. It is screening *Death on the Nile* on 2 September at 7.30pm and hosting a Murder Mystery Dinner on 10 September. You are invited to the wedding of Lady Campbell to Jamie Lambert. Murder Incorporated are providing the drama and The Little Artichoke are catering. Everyone's a suspect - can you solve the case? [www.cholseycdt.org.uk](http://www.cholseycdt.org.uk).

## Earth Trust

**17 August Earth Lab Tour:** A guided tour of Earth Lab, an award-winning new skills and learning building, which showcases its innovative sustainability features.

**18 August History of the landscape:** A walk back in time - from Ice Age beginnings to Roman remains, there's a whole lot of history to be unravelled in the area around Wittenham Clumps.

**21 August The Clumps Geowalk:** A guided walk to explore how geology has shaped the landscape and learn about the fascinating history of the iconic Wittenham Clumps

For more information and booking, go to [earthtrust.org.uk](http://earthtrust.org.uk).

# An ant on a mountain

To an ant blades of grass  
might be trees, a lawn  
of forest hiding the distance.  
On a mountain in Yugoslavia  
an ant busied to and fro  
as I watched, climbing each  
grass blade to the top  
and then returning to earth.

Several hundred feet below shone  
Lake Bled in it's serene beauty  
and beyond, high snow- capped peaks  
stood against clear blue sky.  
I wondered; on the highest grass blade  
surely the ant is only aware  
of that blade, for him the mountain  
summit and the lake do not exist?

In our moments of glory,  
on our highest peaks, what is it  
that is there but invisible,  
what is it, for us, that does not exist?

*Tony Vincent Isaacs, June 2002*

## What's on at the Corn Exchange in August

### Live Screenings

Saturday 6 August, 8:30pm                      Westlife from Wembley

### Cinema (all at 7.30pm)

Monday 1 August                      McEnroe (15)  
Tuesday 2 August                      Brian and Charles (PG)  
Wednesday 3 August                      The Railway Children original  
version (U)

## Community Association

### Village fete

We were delighted that so many people could come and join us for our annual fete on Saturday 9 July. A big thank you to everybody who came, enjoyed, and supported us on such a lovely afternoon. It was wonderful to be able to welcome so many new residents who have joined our community. As always, we are extremely grateful to Jenny and David Dobbin for allowing us to hold the event in their lovely garden and for being such welcoming hosts.

An event like this can only take place with an army of hard working, dedicated volunteers to set up the stalls, run them and clear up afterwards. We are so very grateful and thankful for all that they did - and on such a hot afternoon! I am pleased to report that after expenses the fete raised over £4600 and attendance was approximately 600 – a fantastic result.

### Grants

The Community Association makes grants available to village organisations based on need and availability of funds. Grant application forms are available from our Treasurer Tom at [tarogerson@aol.co.uk](mailto:tarogerson@aol.co.uk) and must be submitted by 28 August 2022. Due to the hard work and support of so many people in the village we are in a much stronger position to help local charities this year.

### Pub Quiz – Red Lion 13 September

Sadly, this year due to the winter covid outbreak, we were unable to hold the Annual Village Quiz, but, rest assured, we will run it again next year. The good news is that our committee member Mike spent some of lockdown thinking up quiz questions! We are grateful to Corinne and the management of the Red Lion for allowing us to host this forthcoming event on 13 September. The start time is 7pm finishing at 10pm. A chilli supper is available (to be ordered beforehand) offering meat or veg plus garlic bread at £10per person. Entry to the quiz is £4 per person. We hope that you can join us and look forward to seeing you there.

### Safari Supper 10 September

We are pleased that at last we are able to run this event again this year- it is a great way to meet new people and form new friendships. We meet at the St Agatha's Church for drinks and canapes at 7pm before going on to a host's house for a main course. We then continue on to a second host for dessert. The cost is £20 per person.

If you would like to join us and perhaps act as a host for a course, please contact Lynn Burridge at [lynnburridge@gmail.com](mailto:lynnburridge@gmail.com) for more details and a joining form. NB The deadline for completed joining forms is 31 August.

*James Davys*

## St Agatha's summer concert

The summer concert is back at 6.30pm on Sunday 9 October after an enforced absence of three years. No doubt it will become known as the 'late summer' concert.

Your favourite village performers will be treading the boards, as well as new talent eager to entertain you. If anyone would like to take part please get in touch with me [alec.mcgivan@gmail.com](mailto:alec.mcgivan@gmail.com). I'd love to hear from you. Tickets will be on sale in the village shop from mid September. Put the date in your diary.

*Alec McGivan*

## Village shop and Post Office

The AGM held on 18 June was a great success. Members, staff, volunteers and customers joined in the celebrations for the 12<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our Community Shop and the 6<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our '5 star' Post Office.

In the Management Committee's report we informed members that, over the last year, we had continued to revise the policies and procedures to improve the business and secure a firm base and good practice. This has considerably helped the shop adapt to the ever-changing economic climate. To sustain this however, we need a committed army of volunteers, good staff and a dedicated Management Committee.

This coming year we are focusing on sustainability, which will include succession planning, recruiting new volunteers, training and engaging with our members and customers to become Ambassadors for the shop and the Post Office.

It is so important to remember and reflect on what we have achieved to date, whilst also looking ahead to what can be done to sustain and improve. We hope you will help us in our endeavours as it will only happen if people in the community want it to.

*Shop Management Committee*

## What's coming up

We are busy planning events for September and have a couple of dates for your diary.

Tuesday 13 September - Community Association Quiz Night  
Saturday 17 September – Sausage & Cider Festival

We are in the early planning stages of our mini festival but our plan is to have live music throughout the day & night with some tasty food & drink for you to enjoy. Please pop this date in your diary as we would love for you all to be there and more details to follow once bands are confirmed but be sure to save the date for Brightwell's first 'Sausage & Cider Fest'!!

Thank you all for your continued support, have a fabulous summer and we look forward to seeing you all in the pub.

*Corinne, Mouse & Ruby x*

## A message from our MP

As some of you will know, I resigned from my role as PPS to the Department for Education earlier this month. Education is a great passion of mine and I did not take the decision lightly, but I could not defend what was taking place at No 10 this month or indeed these past few months.

When I decided to move from being a charity chief executive to becoming an MP in 2019, most of my family and friends thought I was mad to do so. They are interested in politics and know how much it matters, but they wouldn't touch it with a barge pole due to the hours, the abuse and the low regard in which many in the public – wrongly in my view – hold politicians.

Politicians should uphold the highest standards and act in a way that is best for the country. We should also consider the politicians who will come after us. It is very important to me that we do all we can to encourage good people into politics so that the country is well served, but events in recent months have made the view of politics and politicians worse and will only put more people off entering it, which I deeply regret. I know some disagree with my decision, but I didn't believe the Prime Minister could provide the leadership the country currently needs and I think it was the right decision for him to resign.

As ever, if I can help with anything then do please email me via [david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk).

*David Johnston MP*

## South Oxfordshire Choir – come and join us!

You might know us as Cranford Choral Society. Now we have a new name, a new Music Director, and a new concert planned for the autumn – the wonderful Fauré's Requiem!

Scores of villagers have sung with us over our 25-year history, performing more than 50 concerts from major choral works to Show favourites. We're a friendly, mixed-bag of abilities, but we all love singing. And we're thrilled that Benjamin Sheen, Sub-Organist at Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford, is our new Music Director.

Rehearsals for Fauré's Requiem begin on 5 September at 8pm in The Theatre, Moulsoford Prep School, OX10 9HR. The concert will be on 26 November at St Mary's Church, Cholsey. Find out more about us by emailing John Linton, [chair@southoxonchoir.org](mailto:chair@southoxonchoir.org) or from our website at [www.southoxonchoir.org](http://www.southoxonchoir.org).

Whether you've sung with us before, or remember how you loved singing at school, now is a great time to join us!

*Hugh Roderick*

## The Red Lion

We would like to thank everyone who joined in with the Jubilee celebrations here at The Red Lion and to you all who supported us during those 4 days. We had a busy week which we finished off with the fabulous Faith Healers who sang out the long weekend in style. They were so great, everyone asked for them to come back and we are working on finding another date to have them back to entertain you again!

Over the summer holidays, which is strangely our quietest time, we will be running a reduced kitchen for 2 weeks. From Wednesday 10 August there will be a reduced service whilst some of our staff have much needed time off. The pub will remain open for drinkers and any significant changes will be advised to you through our mailing list or our social media pages so please keep an eye on any updates. If you would like to join our mailing list, please email [info@theredlionbrightwell.co.uk](mailto:info@theredlionbrightwell.co.uk) and request to be added.

## The Villager AGM

At this year's Villager AGM, held on 22 June, Anne Brooker, chairman, reported that this last year had been almost back to normal. Every issue of the magazine was produced if not without hiccups, it was at least on time!

She thanked all the teams from Editorial (Helen and Angela) to printing (Angela & Susanne and Trevor & Steve), also Assembly (Shena, who does a great job of organising it) and Distribution (Keith & Adrian). Behind the scenes, our advertising manager Martin collects the revenue from the advertisers and Treasurer George pays the bills! Last but not least she thanked our proof reader Jane Hawker.

Helen has expressed a desire to step down as Editor and so if anyone knows anyone who would like to do this (or even share) please let Helen know. George Birt too has sadly had to step down as Treasurer but the good news is we have Kat Southwell, newly moved to the village, to take over. Gill Dexter has been secretary for over 20 years and has also decided to step down, to be replaced by Angela Lewis. Luckily Ken Templeton continues as our auditor and helped to fine tune the balance sheet.

George reported a healthy bank balance of £8,374, with income coming from the advertising and expenses mainly relating to printing and assembly costs. Martin Dix reported that 43 of the 47 advertisers had chosen to renew at the beginning of 2002 and the four who dropped out were replaced. All payments were received by mid-April. There are still some problems with the variable quality of print, but this is mainly due to the advertisers' artwork (too dark in places, but is being rectified). Keith reported a few changes in voluntary distributors, and we all thanked them for their regular commitment. We now print 710 copies, for all households in the village and leaving a small surplus to put in a few places, like the shop, church and pub.

*Anne Brooker*

## Village Lunch

The next Village Lunch will be on Tuesday 13 September at 12.15 in the village hall. Jaqui will be contacting people nearer the time but if you would like to go, or know of someone who might like to, then ring Jaqui on 01491 836018 or Eastlyn on 01491 832041 to book a place.

*Jaqui Brown*

# The Parish Council

## Village Hall Car Park

We are pleased to report that the work on the car park is continuing - the site is now cleared and will be levelled in readiness for work to begin next month. We hope that it will be open early next year.

## Boundary Hedges

A nasty accident was narrowly avoided last month in the Street when a motorist just missed a cyclist who had swerved to avoid an overgrown hedge. Residents are reminded that hedges and low hanging branches should be regularly trimmed. Thank you for your support.

## Traffic Lights on the Main Road

A sub-committee of the PC together with our County Councillor met with the representatives of the Highways Department to discuss the installation of a pedestrian crossing. The good news is that we have the funding for this project and the discussions were around the location. The engineers were receptive to our ideas but their department has a large backlog of work so this might take some time to complete.

## Speed Limits

Following the annual parish meeting when there was a lot of concern about the speeding around the village, a group of villagers are putting their heads together to try to think of way to stop or at least curb this. If anyone has any ideas or would like to join the group please email Jamie Cresswell at [zenke@yahoo.com](mailto:zenke@yahoo.com).

## Parish Council Meetings

Residents are always welcome to attend our monthly meeting, normally held in the Stewart Room (of village hall) on the third Tuesday of the month. We request that anybody who wishes to speak at the meeting contact Katie our Parish Clerk at [bcsparishcouncil@googlemail.com](mailto:bcsparishcouncil@googlemail.com) beforehand so that time can be allocated

*Cllr James Davys*

# Stewart Village Hall

Thank you to everyone who visited our stall at Brightfest and the Village Fete. It was great to be present at the events and to have the opportunity to share information on the hall refurbishment project with you.

We are pleased to announce we have appointed Acanthus Clews as the architect for the project and look forward to sharing more updates. We will continue to seek your input and ideas as the project develops. If you would like to be involved in the project in any way, for example, researching grants available, preparing grant applications, or fundraising then please do get in touch as we would love to hear from you.

## Some dates for your diaries:

On Saturday 10 September we will be showing the Last Night of the Proms live on the big screen. Last year this was a great foot-stomping, flag-waving fun party event.

On Saturday 30 September there will be a 70's disco + quiz to get your toes tapping.

On Saturday 29 October we will show the Strictly Come Dancing Halloween Special live on the big screen. Come and have some spooky fun and vote for your favourites.

Cash bar and nibbles will be available at all these events and more details will be shared nearer the dates.

In the meantime, if you have any comments, questions, or feedback you can use the 'contact us' page on the Hall website, pop a comment in the mailbox at the rear of the hall or speak to any trustee.

If you have any queries or would like to book the hall please visit our website: [stewartvillagehall.org.uk](http://stewartvillagehall.org.uk) or contact Shena at [shenaluck@btinternet.com](mailto:shenaluck@btinternet.com) or on 01491 834543.

*Annette Kilworth*

## Yoga in the village

There are a number of opportunities to do yoga in the village.

### Yoga Yard

Yoga Yard is owned by Stephanie DiMassa who has taught for 15 years since completing her teacher training with Yoga Alliance in Los Angeles. She is always learning, bringing in new ideas and experiences to her yoga students. Yoga helps us to be more aware of our physical movements, connecting to our breath and finding more openness in the body. People often think you need to be flexible to practice yoga, but it is more about flexing the mind. Try something new and find a new you. As one of her students recently said: *'I just wanted to say thank you, your classes have been life changing for me! I love your calm delivery and you always manage to know what the class needs. You are patient and encouraging when needed and even though sometimes it is hard after a long day at work to get myself on the mat, I always know that I will come away feeling refreshed, reenergised and relaxed. You are an amazing teacher'.*

### Classes

Wednesday	5:45pm-6:45pm 7pm-8pm.	Beginners Gentle Practice Intermediate Hatha Flow Practice
Friday	9:30am-10:30am	Advanced Hatha Flow Practice

£10 per group class. Private classes are also available: please message for details.

*Stephanie Dimassa 07866 761232*

### Silverwood Yoga Studio

Silver Wood Yoga Studio has recently opened on Wellsprings. A friendly home-based studio that offers small class sizes for all levels and abilities. Emma teaches vinyasa style classes on a Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, and has a 'first class for £6' offer.

Emma is also teaching a free Sunday evening class for Ukrainian refugees and their hosts. She is happy to open this up to surrounding villages, so please get in touch if you know someone who may be interested.

*Emma Diserens*

## Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Primary school

It's a cliché, but where does the time go?

It's been such a busy, but highly enjoyable term for us all that has seen the full return of trips, such as to Sherwood Farm, The Story Museum and the Superbloom exhibition at the Tower of London as well as welcoming authors such as Mini Grey and James Catchpole to school to enrich our learning. Our Year 5 have become fully qualified Active Leaders in preparation for their leadership across the school at break and lunchtimes next academic year and our Year 6 children have enjoyed a full programme of transition at their respective secondary schools. All of this has been happening in addition to the hard work going on in class on a daily basis around all subjects.

Particular highlights this term have included our Years 3-6 Production of 'Shakespeare on Trial' and Sports Day where we enjoyed individual and collective performances. Further reminders of what a great school community we have here!

We have also been delighted to welcome a number of Ukrainian children who members of the local community are hosting. It's been a pleasure to welcome the children and their families and, as always, we are enjoying learning from each other.

I would like to make special mention of Mrs Natalie Collier, Assistant Headteacher who has led the school on Teaching and Learning over the last 6 years. Mrs Collier and her family are looking to relocate to the coast and so she will be leaving at the end of this term. She has played just as much of a role as I have in getting the school to where it is today, and I will always be grateful for her hard work and support.

We are coming to the end of my time at Brightwell School and as I bid farewell to the school, it is in very safe hands for the next stage in its journey under the Headship of Miss Sue Potts. Back to clichés...it has always been a privilege to lead this school and dedicated and committed staff team, with the support of parents and the wider community, but never has a truer word been said. Thank you! I know you will afford Miss Potts the same support and I very much look forward to hearing about the school going from strength to strength in the coming years.

*Fin Lewis, Headteacher*

## 70's Disco in the village hall

The Charity Ball was a wonderful occasion, and the dance floor was packed the whole evening. You obviously all love to dance and many of the tracks were golden oldies. So...there will be another opportunity to strut your stuff at a 70's Disco, in the village hall on **Friday 30 September**. Fancy dress is encouraged but not essential. We are hoping also to have an ongoing quiz throughout the evening; so even if you don't want to dance you can be entertained while listening to great music. All proceeds will be shared between the village hall funds and the Bone Cancer Research Trust.

Tickets are £5, adults only; they can be purchased from Shena Luck by contacting 01491834543, [shenaluck@btinternet.com](mailto:shenaluck@btinternet.com) or from the Village Stores.

Wine, beer, soft drinks and snacks will be on sale, cash only. Doors open at 6.30pm ready to start at 7. Why not get a few friends together and go back in time to the 70's.

*Shena Luck*

## Save the Children

The Save the Bone weekend was a brilliant success thanks to the organisational skills of the Ball committee and Band Night committee, the sponsors, volunteers, the very generous raffle donations, auction givers and amazing bidders, plus all those that attended the two events.

The amount raised was an incredible £14,000 (£7,000 for each charity). This will really help both charities to continue and grow the wonderful work they do. When people come together look what can be achieved... and a good time was had by all!

Thank for your continued support.

*Celia Collet*

## Bone Cancer Research Trust

Hear hear! This community's generosity to BCRT in memory of Alex buoys & overwhelms us. Thanks also to Steve (& Shena) Luck for his extraordinary sponsored cycle ride from Lewis to Lewes, and all those that supported him.

*Andy Lewis*

## Brightwell-cum-Sotwell WI

As part of Brightwell-cum-Sotwell WI's Centenary celebrations, our June meeting was held in Gill Dexter's beautiful garden where we were joined by some previous members. The sun shone and the fizz went down well!

Everyone had a preview of the exhibition which was to be put up in the Red Box Gallery later in the week. The exhibition is on the history of the WI in the village and in the wider world. It has a timeline of photos and a 100 years of WI campaigning for improvements to public, health and social policy. This ranges from Equal Pay to more women police officers and the 'Keep Britain Tidy' campaign. The photos from between the wars and in the fifties are fun to look at – hats and grim expressions. We had presentations of certificates to two members from before the temporary closure in 1995 and our longest-standing member.



Several members went to the Rare Plant Fair at Kingston Bagpuize in June and managed to bring home quite a few plants!

Our summer outing this year is to visit Sulgrave Manor and Garden on Tuesday 9 August. This is a mid-16<sup>th</sup> C restored Tudor Hall House, just north of Banbury, built by George Washington's ancestor, with a garden laid out in the formal English style. We hear it's well worth a visit. A coach is booked (£20), leaving the village at around 9.30-10am. It is open to partners, family and friends so if you would like to join us on the coach, please contact me on 01491 835109 or at [brightwellcumsotwellwi@gmail.com](mailto:brightwellcumsotwellwi@gmail.com), before end July.

We meet on the second Tuesday of every month at the village hall at 7.30pm. Our September talk on the 13<sup>th</sup> will be on 'Sex, Scandals, and Salacious Gossip at the Royal Courts, 1660-1830' by a Hampton Court Guide. If you would be interested in joining the WI, please come along.

We also meet up at Root One for coffee and chat on the 3rd Monday of the month from 10am. Everyone is welcome to join the noisy table!

*Anne Brooker, President*  
[brightwellcumsotwellwi@gmail.com](mailto:brightwellcumsotwellwi@gmail.com)



Perry' at the village hall on Friday 23 September, and on Friday 4 November, Wallingford supporter Maff Potts will lead us either on a fun 'Funky Friday' interactive musical evening OR (following the huge popularity of a previous Jazz Night), Maff and his band will entertain us again- look out for info on ticket sales.

If anyone who has space in their property and time in their lives wants to know more about what it is like to host a family under the 'Homes for Ukraine' scheme, do get in touch on [brightwellrefugees@gmail.com](mailto:brightwellrefugees@gmail.com), and indeed if you would like to make a donation to BSR or start regular giving, let us know and we can send our bank details.

*Angela Lewis*

## Brightwell Toddlers

What an amazing year we have had with so many wonderful families joining us for lots of fun and laughter! We have made lots of lovely new friends and our toddlers and babies have had the best time! We finished our summer term off with a little party in the village hall which was so much fun.

We now have a break for the summer holidays and Toddlers will return on Thursday 8 September with some lovely new mums running the group.

Both Charlotte and I are stepping down from running Toddlers as our little ones are getting a bit older now. We wish Raffy the best of luck starting school in September! A huge thank you must go to Charlotte whose endless energy, enthusiasm and smiles always make the group so friendly and welcoming. Thank you for all you have done over the last 5 years - Toddlers will miss you!

You will be pleased to hear that the mums talking over are equally as fantastic - they are Emma Diserens, Ellie Sharps and Emily Paton-Smith. Thanks so much for volunteering, we know you will do a brilliant job.

We hope you all have a lovely summer break and look forward to seeing you in September:

Thursday mornings (term-time only) 9:15-11am in the village hall.

For more information see Brightwell Toddlers on Facebook or email [brightwelltoddlers@gmail.com](mailto:brightwelltoddlers@gmail.com).

*Laura Woodford*

## St Agatha's Church Bells

You may have heard some extra bellringing in recent weeks. Let me explain....

Church bells are often rung, not only for Sunday services and our practices on a Tuesday evening but also for weddings and funerals, by request, and for other special occasions. During June, for example, we rang the bells to celebrate the Platinum Jubilee. We had intended to ring 840 changes (as they are known) - one change for every month of Her Majesty's reign. This would have taken us about half-an-hour of non-stop ringing. Unfortunately, one of our ringers tested positive just beforehand, so we were unable to attempt this feat. Instead, we rang 70 changes of 'Queens' (a specific order of the bells, see below), one for each year of her reign. That was ahead of the Jubilee service on 3 June. We intend to attempt the 840 again, in July. The date is yet to be fixed (as at the time of writing).

We are also at the planning stage for two more special rings. Many villagers will have fond memories of Roy Thorpe, who died in July last year. We intend to attempt soon a 'quarter peal' and a 'full peal' to celebrate his life. A 'quarter peal' typically comprises 1,260 changes (about 45 minutes of non-stop ringing) and a 'full peal', typically, 5,040 changes (around 3 hours of non-stop ringing) - quite a feat of endurance and concentration. Fans of The Archers may recall reference to a quarter peal being rung in memory of Nigel Pargetter, many years ago!

Do listen out for, and enjoy, the sound of our bells. I will let you know how we get on with these special rings, in a future edition of *The Villager*.

*John Dowling, Tower Captain*

## Volunteers needed for Citizens Advice

Are you looking for a new challenge and want to give something back to your community?

Oxfordshire South and Vale Citizens Advice is looking for volunteers to work in their friendly offices in Abingdon, Didcot, Henley or Thame, as advisers, receptionists, IT specialists and a training and HR administrator. They would like you to be available for two sessions per week if possible, either mornings or afternoon or a whole day. If you are interested then follow the link to [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/oxfordshire-south-vale/volunteer/](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/oxfordshire-south-vale/volunteer/).

# Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Environment Group

## Swan Stream and Wood

The area is becoming quite an attraction for wildlife. In addition to the kingfisher, sticklebacks and minnows etc, over 78 species of insects have been noted by John Bloomfield who is now regularly recording insect life here. Of particular interest was the presence of two species of damselfly: a banded demoiselle which is attracted to silty streams and a pair of common blue damselflies which may indicate they are breeding in the stream. John's observations will provide a very useful record over the coming years. Insects are very important in the natural world as pollinators as well as breaking down waste, controlling pests and being a food source for other animals. To quote Sir David Attenborough, *'if we and the rest of the back-boned animals were to disappear overnight, the rest of the world would get on pretty well. But if the invertebrates were to disappear, the world's ecosystems would collapse'*.

We are fortunate that the stream is not only supporting the natural world but is a place also to play in and appreciate. This will involve some management of the vegetation and we will aim to strike a balance between the differing objectives.

## Weather

The rainfall recorded at Highlands Farm was 35.5mm and 57.4 mm in May and June respectively. Of the June rainfall, 23.3 mm (nearly an inch) fell on 30 June which you might remember if caught in the downpour! The local averages for the months are about 55.3mm and 49.2mm based on the records in 'Portrait of a Rural Parish' published by the Group in 2013.

The Met Office report for the area indicates below average rainfall for spring (March, April and May) while temperatures were up by around 1 degC and there was 5-10% more sunshine compared to the 1991-2020 averages.

## Events

We had a stand at the village fete which gave a good opportunity to meet and chat with locals. The stream and its surrounds have a lot of support and we are pleased to have some more volunteers to help with their management. We are hoping to have a talk on sustainable farming by Mark Oldroyd (of Dart's Farm) in the autumn and on local insect life by John Bloomfield next spring. Further details will be announced nearer the time.

*Steve Capel-Davies*

# Brightwell Supporting Refugees News Update

Ten Ukrainian families have been in BcS for two months or more now, another guest arrived last week and two more hosts are expecting arrivals imminently. We are pleased to report that they are all settling into village life brilliantly; they constantly amaze us by their extraordinary positivity – particularly when the news from home can be so difficult to hear; and their dedication to learning English as quickly as possible as the best way to integrate into life here is admirable.

Speaking personally, I can say that Andy and I feel our lives are enriched by the presence of these extraordinary women and their children. But not only are we in great admiration of them, we are also so impressed and grateful to the village community for its support. Many people are willingly giving their time to complement the more formal English lessons (being given freely by the Old Counting House in Wallingford), either individually, in informal groups or more recently by twice-weekly fun conversation sessions in St Agatha's, with Ukrainians paired with a native speaker discussing valuable subject matter, and now involving a bit of role play – and lots of laughter.

The organisers of community events Brightfest and the village fete have ensured a warm welcome by offering free entry and concessions to Ukrainian visitors. Expert advice is being given on navigating the UK benefit system, transport offered to appointments, and experience is being shared on anything from the most helpful banks, NHS dental care, summer holiday activities for the children, food vouchers and shopping, to loaned garden space for growing food – although those pesky BcS pigeons are not helping in that area!

Brightwell Primary School and Wallingford School have of course risen to the occasion by offering all the school aged children places. The staff and pupils alike are coping admirably with all the inevitable issues arising from the new circumstances these Ukrainian children find themselves in, in some cases not having any English at all – somewhat bewildering! A dedicated Ukrainian teacher of English is working at Brightwell School to support their rapid learning, and BSR are hoping to arrange that this progress is continued during the summer holidays to ensure the best possible start to the new school year in September.

So thanks to you all – funds raised from our BSR recent events and direct donations are being put to extremely good use. Our next events will be Mary Acton's talk 'The Spirit of Place in British Art from Paul Nash to Grayson

# Apple Day is back!

## Save the date - Saturday 15 October

There is going to be a great harvest this year as there are masses of apples around the village in gardens, old orchards and the community orchard too. So come long to a bigger and better festival this autumn at the recreation ground from 11-4pm on Saturday 15 October.



The most spectacular feature will be Paul Chilton's stunning display of up to 100 varieties of apple that are grown in the village. Laid out the length of the pavilion, you will see apple varieties dating back to the 1700s all the way through to those we know in the shops today.

There will be the fabulous apple and juice tasting as well as chutneys and cakes competitions and potentially ciders and coffee - a bit like a food court but focussed on apples! We will be picking apples in the weeks before and pressing them on the day making masses of juice to take home.

There will also be tours of the community orchard where people can learn about the orchard, the tree planting and the varieties of apple. And of course, plenty of children's activities!

Sadly, two trees in the community orchard were vandalised in the spring. They were wrenched out of the ground so it must have taken quite a lot of time and effort but for what thrill? Anyway, they are much missed and we plan to replace them. We want to raise funds for new ones and plan to celebrate and plant the trees at a jolly village event in the winter.

This summer you will see apples in the orchard and they might look really tempting but remember "red does not mean ready". They won't be ripe until the autumn so be patient!

*Alison Bloomfield*

# Flower and Produce Show Results 2022

## Trophies

<b>The Chilton Cup</b> for the best exhibit in the fruit & vegetable class	Tom Hancock
<b>The Win Glendenning Memorial Salver</b> for the best flower arranging entry	Gina Coupar
<b>The Talbot Rose Bowl</b> For the best rose exhibit	Anne Hedley
<b>The Talbot Cup</b> awarded for most points in show	Keith Brooks
<b>The Joan Sheard Cup</b> for the best junior entry in an adult class	Florence Debney
<b>The Swan Allotments Cup</b> Runner-up:	Julie Botting Barbara Isaacs
<b>The Sally Dugan Cup</b> for creative writing	Tabaiha Tapping

## Junior Trophies

Aged 9-12 year olds	Olivia Arbuckle
Aged 5-8 year olds	Otto Tapping

