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## Editorial

It's still the start of a new year, a new term or for some of you perhaps a new job. I hope 2017 is working out well for you. January can be a low-spirited, restrained month after the happiness and excesses of Christmas, but it's nearly over and lighter evenings are on their way, something that cheers me up.

It's been a sad month for the village as we lost three good men – Colin Hamilton-Peach, Dick Mason and Ron Wood; and a fourth, a previous resident known to many, Sam Holland, just before Christmas. We send our condolences to their families.

2017 is expected to herald years of change in various ways, both on the world stage from what we have heard at the inauguration of the new President Trump and with negotiations on Brexit getting underway. Here in our village work on some of the housing development discussed at various meetings is likely to begin. As we publish, three separate planning applications have been submitted to SODC for a total of 76 new houses (see page 4) and there are probably others in the pipeline. Our Neighbourhood Plan is nearing completion and there will be an update meeting on Tuesday 7 February to let you know about the next stages. With such a lot happening locally, it can seem overwhelming, but it is important to be informed of possible changes and make your views known, whether you are directly affected by new houses near you or not, or whether you want changes or not. If you need more information, visit the Parish Council's website at [brightwellcumshotwellpc.org](http://brightwellcumshotwellpc.org) and come to the meeting if you can.

January is also the traditional time to resolve to do something new – become more active, start a new project, or live more healthily perhaps? There is plenty of advice out there but maybe something in this *Villager* will catch your eye - for example the Go-active taster session on page 20 or helping out at the new Toddler Group or at our school? Or what about getting involved with producing *The Villager*? It really is a team effort from putting it all together to printing and distributing it. Good fun (most of the time!).

If you have an idea for a new feature for *The Villager* or a story or anecdote you would like to tell or some photos or drawings we could use on the cover, please do get in touch with me (see bottom of page 1). I would really like to hear from you.

*Helen Connor*

# Sam Holland

**15 January 1947 – 5 December 2016**

Many villagers will be saddened to hear that Sam Holland died in Oxford in December. Sam lived at Barncroft in Sotwell with Peggy and their three children (Hannah, Venetia, and Hereward) for 15 years from the early 1980s, and he was a big character in the village.

A graduate of Trinity College, Dublin, Sam boldly followed his love of horticulture to become a professional gardener and garden designer. He loved the freedom of the outdoors, and his beaming sun-tanned face (usually with a pipe to puff on) is a fond memory for all who knew him around the village at that time.

Sam helped with Junior Church, local school events, and pretty well any community activity that needed him. But his great passion was cricket. He played in the village team for a number of years, and put together a rag tag of friends to play his brother's team in an annual match on the Rec. When he wasn't playing, Sam took on responsibility for pitch mowing and maintenance, keeping the cricket square to a stunning standard even after he moved to Oxford.

Sam was a wonderful family man, and a delightful friend and neighbour. He will be missed.

*Hugh Roderick*

## Thank you

I would like to thank all the people in the village who were so kind to Colin while we have been at Anchorage. In particular, I would like to thank those who stopped to speak with him or shared reminiscences. Many thanks to all in the shop where he made regular visits and to those kind generous people who took care to guide him home when he was inclined to stray. Your cards and kind words have been very much appreciated.

*Gloria Hamilton-Peach*

# Parish Council

Three large planning applications for Brightwell-cum-Sotwell have been lodged with SODC. Links to the applications can be found on the Parish Council website and comments can be made through the SODC website.

- P16/S3958/O The Orchard proposed residential development of 13 homes (20 houses in proposed Brightwell Neighbourhood Plan)
- P17/S0164/O Little Martins field 31 houses proposed residential development (in proposed Brightwell Neighbourhood Plan)
- P17/S0213/SCR Rectory Meadow proposed residential development (25 houses not included in proposed Brightwell Neighbourhood Plan).

People should respond with their views to these planning applications either to the Parish council or to SODC.

*Lucy Dalby  
Parish Clerk*

## Neighbourhood Plan

The consultation period for the Draft Neighbourhood Plan has now ended. Thank you for all your comments which are now being discussed. We would love as many people as possible to come to a meeting at the village hall on Tuesday 7 February at 7.30 for an update on the next stages of the Neighbourhood Plan.

There are so many planning applications for new development at the moment. It is not just Brightwell cum Sotwell - across South Oxfordshire communities are coming to terms with the prospect of large amounts of new housing. The Parish Council is doing all that it can to get the best outcome for the village with the Neighbourhood Plan our best way forward. We look forward to seeing you on 7 February.

*Jason Debney*

## Community Association

### Christmas Hampers

Some of the money raised by the Community Association goes to help pay for Christmas hampers for our senior residents in the village. The Fairthorne Memorial Trust has made a very generous contribution again this year and we would like to take this opportunity to thank them for this.

We are very grateful to Celia Collet and the Village Stores team for selecting and sourcing the hamper items and to the scouts and cubs (especially Hilary Rogerson, Tim Scane and families) for packing and distributing the hampers. I am pleased to report that we are distributing more hampers than ever - if you know anybody who is eligible please let me know so that we can update the list for next year.

### Village Quiz Evening – Saturday 11 March 2017 at 7.30pm

Entry forms have been sent to all teams that took part last year. Anyone else who wants to enter a team should contact me on 01491 834195.

Numbers are limited because of the event's popularity and fire regulations in the village hall, so entries will be accepted in strict order of the receipt of completed forms. All entry forms were emailed at the same time to ensure everyone has an equal chance of acceptance.

*James Davys  
Chairman*

### Safari Supper – save the date

The fourth Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Safari Supper will take place on Saturday 13 May 2017. It will be run jointly by the Community Association and St Agatha's Church. As always, all are welcome to participate.

Please save the date in your diary. More details and application forms will be available in the next *Villager* (April). Any queries, contact me on 01491 833009.

*Lynn Burridge*

## St Agatha's Concerts

We've always known that Brightwell-cum-Sotwell is a special place and a few years ago it got a bit more special with the arrival of Claire Booth and family.

Many villagers will remember the truly wonderful musical evening Claire provided back in February 2014 at St Agatha's church. As Derek Nightingale so aptly put it 'never before can the church have hosted such exciting music-making'. Well the great news for all music lovers is that later this year there will be another chance to hear Claire's beautiful voice which continues to win international acclaim both for her commitment to an extraordinary breadth of repertoire and for the vitality and musicianship she brings to both the concert platform and the operatic stage.

Claire will be singing on Saturday 16 September so get your diary open and keep the evening free for another musical treat that is certain to be a sell out. The concert will be at St. Agatha's starting at 6pm. Watch out in the next edition of *The Villager* for ticket details and information about the programme Claire will be performing

On another musical note.... please also put in your diaries 7pm on Sunday 25 June at St. Agatha's for the annual Summer Concert. It will be our ninth and a good time will be had by all. New participants are welcome as always, just contact me on [alec.mcgivan@gmail.com](mailto:alec.mcgivan@gmail.com).

*Alec McGivan*

### St James' Churchyard

We would like to thank Bill Horsfield for allowing us to print his sketch of St James' churchyard on our front cover. It shows the grave of Dr Bach who died here 60 years ago. As mentioned in our October issue, the Bach Centre has produced a booklet which tells visitors more about the church and Dr Bach's history, available from the Centre.

### Next village lunch

The next village lunch will take place on Tuesday 28 March at 12.15pm in the village hall. Please contact Jaqui 836018 or Belinda 836223 to book.

# Brightwell Parish Church – St Agatha’s with St James’

Good news – the days are getting longer! I’m not usually an early riser, but one of the benefits of winter is that I get to see the sunrise and it has an amazing effect – it cheers me up!

At the tail end of 2016, the media proclaimed one celebrity death after another, and the mood was sombre, reflecting the darkness of the mid-winter solstice. It was an end to a turbulent year - whatever your political persuasion, a rollercoaster! A constant flow of news about how life is getting worse: an increasingly divided society between have and have-nots; lower expectations; increasing depression; fewer opportunities; and all leading to a general feeling of anxiety for many, where hope is fading.

And yet God promises this is not the case. In Isaiah 9:1-2, He promises His people then as He promises His people now that this 'time of gloom' will pass, because the people who walk in darkness will see a great light. Even when we feel we are walking in perpetual darkness there is a great light. Even when we feel hope might be fading, there is a great light. Even when we feel hard pressed on every side and in danger of being crushed, there is a great light. Because of Jesus. *Because 'a child is born to us, a son is given to us. The government will be upon his shoulders, and he will be called wonderful counsellor, mighty God, everlasting father, prince of peace'.*

In these dark times there is light. The wonderful counsellor, who knows us, understands us and supports us. The mighty God, who knew all of this before it happened, is greater and more powerful than anything the darkness might throw at us. The everlasting Father tender, available, all-knowing, is compassionate and full of love. The Prince of Peace, who holds all in His hands, will bring all together.

Through the gloom and fog, whether literal or circumstantial, there is light - a light that shines into every corner of the gloom, illuminating every corner of fading human hope. It is a light that tells a greater story - the light that IS the story. The light of hope. Hope that illuminates the next step for the weary, burdened and broken. Hope that whispers in the darkness *'you are loved beyond human imagination, known beyond human relationship, understood beyond human understanding, and made for eternity with your heavenly father'*. Jesus, the light of the world, has come...

As an extra opportunity to celebrate his coming, there was a special Christingle Service held in St James’ on Sunday 29 January, which marked the traditional celebration of Candlemas at the end of the Christmas and Epiphany celebrations. I hope you were able to join us.

*Rev Kevin Beer*

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Twitter: @RevKevBeer My Blog: [revkevbeer.blogspot.co.uk](http://revkevbeer.blogspot.co.uk)

## Happy New Year from Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Primary School

Christmas at school was as delightful as always with a Christmas fair, the younger children rehearsing and performing the Nativity and all the school taking part in an end of term Christmas service.



It’s now back down to work for us all after the Christmas holidays. Teachers have planned a range of work for the children for this term: The topic for Bramley Class (reception and year 1) and Russet Class (year 1 and 2) is ‘Kings and Queens’; as part of this topic the children will be visiting Warwick Castle. In Worcester Class (year 3/4) the topic this term will be The Romans.

Children will visit the Ashmolean museum and also study local settlement from prehistory through the Saxons via the Romans. Discovery Class (year 5/6) will base their English work around *Private Peaceful*, a book by Michael Morpurgo.

In addition, we are teaching the whole school on Wednesday afternoons to release teachers for their planning and assessment duties – this term we are doing “Putting the Great into Great Britain” to include work on Saint George, Robin Hood, Queen Elizabeth I ... and Theresa May.



All the children in key stage 2 are looking forward to the visit to Young Voices in Birmingham at the end of the month – an annual event where schools across the country practise songs in class with their teachers to prepare themselves to take part in a massive concert at the Genting Arena in Birmingham.



The school is moving towards the closer link with Wallingford Secondary School. I am now doing a job share with Fin Lewis from Wallingford; Fin will be the full time headteacher here from Easter. The Department for Education will make a decision later this month about the school's application to become an academy. We continue to get support from

Wallingford School – regular visiting sixth formers, visits from teachers and more practical support with issues such as cleaning the hall floor and fixing the leaking roof! All of the links add to the capacity of Brightwell School to do a good job for the children.

If you want to find out more about the school, do look at our website and our Facebook page!

*David Burrows, Fin Lewis; headteachers*  
<http://www.brightwell.oxon.sch.uk>

**Work opportunity!** Brightwell school occasionally needs to employ someone to cover absent teaching assistants for breakfast club, after-school club or class support during the day.

If you are interested in being on our “supply” list, please do contact the school office: tel 01491 837024; email [office.3221@brightwell.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:office.3221@brightwell.oxon.sch.uk)

## Village Stores/Post Office

Live local, love local, shop local.....

We had such a lovely Christmas in the shop; both the post office and shop have been incredibly busy. Thank you all for your continued support.

We were very happy to start selling local cheeses again before Christmas! For all you cheese lovers out there we once again stock Barkham Blue, Wigmore, Waterloo and Spenwood! Other firm favourites are Chiltern Charcuterie cured meats and Just Biscuits - all locally produced.

You can get updates and news from the shop by signing up to our Facebook page - [www.facebook.com/BrightwellVillageStores](http://www.facebook.com/BrightwellVillageStores)

If you fancy having a go at volunteering in the shop just pop in and say hello. We've welcomed some great new volunteers in the shop recently and want to say a big thank you to all our seasoned volunteers for all your continued support.

We hope to purchase a new Epos system in the near future. Fundraising and a generous donation from one of our loyal customers has given us a fantastic start. We are now looking to apply for grants when funder's applications open shortly.

*Nic Williams*  
*Shop Manager*

## Day's Lock Meadow

If any of you have been over to Day's Lock recently you will have seen the ugly new fencing that has been erected by the farmer in land between the river and Dorchester. It is difficult to walk along the river there now and the meadow can no longer be accessed for dog walking or picnics. This is a local beauty spot and an iconic much loved Thames landscape which has been spoilt. Jane Duff of Little Wittenham has been collecting evidence from people who have used this land, asking them to fill in a questionnaire or send photos. Though her deadline for submission has passed, if you want to give your views please contact Jane on 01865 407056 or at [jane@janeduff.co.uk](mailto:jane@janeduff.co.uk).

## Brightwell Art Club

Our annual exhibition was held on 10 December; a big thank you to everyone who came along. It was very well attended and we do hope that you enjoyed looking at our work, and also at the local crafts and the charity stalls on display.

We are now looking forward to our spring term when we will start off with a 'still life' to get us in the painting mood.

We are a friendly group of people who welcome beginners as well as more experienced painters. More information can be found about us on the village website, [www.brightwellcumsotwell.co.uk](http://www.brightwellcumsotwell.co.uk) under 'Local Services' (just follow the instructions), or you can email me at [brightwellartclub@gmail.com](mailto:brightwellartclub@gmail.com). You could also pop in and see us on a Saturday morning, we have coffee at about 11am.

*Veronica Wood, Secretary*

## Awakening

Sunlight filters through  
a crack, seeking  
the dark corners of  
the shed, warming a  
brown, wrinkled containment.  
A stirring, a splitting  
an opportunity!  
Unfolding wings glisten  
in the shaft of  
Spring sunshine.  
A momentary display  
and a butterfly  
takes flight.

*Margaret Smith*



## Winter Wassailing

This is the fourth year that the village went a-wassailing, this year attracting around 250 people and led again by the

Armagellon Morris dancers and our own village minstrels. Processing through four village orchards, they woke up the slumbering trees and drove evil spirits away with much noise and music, plus whacking of the trees with sticks and toasting their good health with lambswool (hot spiced cider). Great fun. Once it got dark, Armagellon's traditional fire dance outside the Red Lion finished off the revelries and then it was inside to warm up.

The odd custom of wassailing is thought to date back to Roman times and was part of a festival for praising and encouraging Pomona, the goddess of fruit trees. It is carried out around Twelfth Night to encourage a good crop of apples in the coming year. Given the size of the crowd and the noise being made it should be a bumper apple harvest in Brightwell this year!

Here are some highlights of the afternoon; more can be seen on the gallery at [www.brightwellcumsotwell.co.uk](http://www.brightwellcumsotwell.co.uk). *Photos courtesy of Keith Brooks*



Marcus Harris led the wassailers through the orchards. Here he is outside Brightwell Manor addressing the tree spirits and encouraging everyone to sing the Wassail song or 'toast' to the New Year and the apple tress.



One of the minstrels, Martin Dix in his wacky colourful hat.



Armagellon Morris men performing one of their traditional dances, dressed up in their colourful costumes of tatters and feathers with blackened faces. They are a Border Morris side, based at Cumnor.

This horse had a part to play – but not sure quite what?



Armagellon and wassailers 'talk' to the trees

## Save the Children

The final total of money raised from the Save the Children Christmas trees was over £1015. Many thanks to our sponsors: - Clive Collett Electrical, Root One, Anne Elliott and Slade End Garden Company. Also, many thanks to John Burdass for providing the sound and Alexa Morgan for reading the poem, and all the people who attended 'Carols around the Christmas Tree'. What a wonderful village we live in, we are so fortunate.

The money has gone to the Yemen crisis appeal. The suffering in Yemen and Syria is at unbelievable proportions and sadly all due to war.

Nearly 70% of Yemen's population are in need of humanitarian help. Yemen imports 90% of its food, one third of children under 5 are malnourished. The healthcare system has completely collapsed and in many of parts of the country the water supply is turned on for just one hour every day.

Despite the incredibly difficult situation, Save the Children are working with other charities delivering aid, treating malnutrition, delivering food and vitamin supplements. They are also rehabilitating health facilities, sending mobile healthcare teams to remote communities, supplying safe drinking water, hygiene kits and protecting children by giving them safe spaces where they can learn, play and begin to come to terms with everything they have been through.

Since the fighting escalated, Save the Children has reached more than 1.1 million people, including more than 666,000 children. This can only be done with the help of people like you and your generosity.....thank you.

*Celia Collett  
Chairman, Wallingford & District Branch*

## Open Gardens under the NGS (Yellow Book) Scheme

Two gardens are open in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell ..... Dobsons, Sotwell Street, and The Priory, Sotwell Street, on Sunday 21 May from 2pm until 5pm.

Save the Children Fund are very kindly providing teas nearby at South Cottage, Sotwell Street.

*Anne Salisbury*

## Brightwell toddlers - a new group for 2017

Brightwell toddlers, which sadly closed its doors in 2016, is re-launching. We believe that having a group for young families is invaluable for creating lasting friendships and keeping our village community strong - so we hope the new-look group will be fun for families as well as making it viable.

The friendly group will run on Thursday mornings, 9.15-11.15am at the Stewart Village Hall from 23 February. It will feature exciting seasonal craft activities, new toys, fresh cake and exciting visits from the church and other local groups. Volunteers from the community will also attend the group to help it run smoothly.

So why do we need to re-launch? Simply numbers were down and we couldn't afford the hall fees. But why was this happening? To find out, we ran a survey on the village Facebook page. The answer was very clear. The first thing to say is that there was an overwhelming desire for a group in the village.

However the world has moved on from the times when parents of young families were at home full-time. Now most work part-time, if not full-time, limiting the quality time they are able to spend with their children and the time they have to get things done at home. For this reason many can't commit to attending or helping regularly. Also toddlers used to run on a Monday, a day when many people work. We hope that changing the day to a Thursday will make it easier for more working parents to come along.

Those that are at home full-time tend to be on maternity leave with small babies or have lots of children, which also makes it harder to help out. And there are plenty of other groups in Wallingford where there is no need to volunteer regularly.

To keep the group running in 2017 and beyond, we are looking for a group of volunteers to serve teas and coffees, make cakes, supervise craft activities and help set up the hall. If you could give up two hours of your time about once a month, we would love to hear from you. Please contact Helen Connor on 834754.

If you are a parent or carer and would like to find out more please call Sally Jackson on 07921 719875 - or just come along and join us for some fun!

*Team Toddlers*

## Allsorts preschool

We would like to start the New Year by saying some thank yous – a normal January tradition!

- thank you to Root One for our amazing Christmas tree
- thank you to Ali Turner and husband Chris for the amazing job on re-landscaping the buggy park at preschool
- thank you to the WI for their kind donation of £100.

Christmas at preschool has been really busy with crafts, baking, stories and the Christmas Nativity play. The children enjoyed decorating the tree for the festival in Wallingford. During the last week before Christmas there was a Christmas party at preschool with Christmas lunch from school, crackers and a surprise visit from Father Christmas! All the children and staff are very grateful to Root One for the amazing Christmas tree which was enjoyed by all.

The children are working through winter and book themes this term along with small group work and looking at the emotional scale.

*Team Allsorts*

## Environment Group

### Weather

We seem to be in a relatively dry spell of winter weather with December's rainfall reaching just 21mm, as recorded by Rosemary Greasby at Highlands Farm. Her total for the year was 619mm which is a little over the long-term average of 600mm. In recent winters Angus Dart's land alongside the Mill Brook has been flooded, but not this year.

### Millennium Wood

Members of the Oxford Woodland Group are coming to advise on the long term management of the wood. This will probably result in the removal of trees which have not grown very well and the few which have died, so that there is more space for the better trees to develop.

*John Rodda*



After a busy November with both the monthly and Didcot group meetings, December seemed fairly low key. With the preparations for Christmas well on the way, it was a welcome relief to have an evening of line dancing led by Elaine Bywaters. This did not turn out to be low key at all, in fact it was an evening of great exercise and laughter as we tried to get our feet to follow the steps, twisting and turning to some lively country music. It was great fun and a definite for a repeat performance at some point. The mulled wine and mince pies that followed were very welcome.

January is one of our more official meetings when members have the opportunity to discuss this year's resolutions and vote on which one we want to go forward to the national WI's annual meeting in June. Successful resolutions form the basis of WI campaigns and educational activity for the coming years. In its 101 year history they have been instrumental in many initiatives and social changes in particular affecting women, such as establishing the NHS cervical screening programme, legislating on equality in the workplace, supporting the Fairtrade Foundation, alerting the world to the plight of the honey bees and much more. This year's shortlist of resolutions range from women's health and well being issues, such as prioritising maternal mental health services and supporting women's refugees, to keeping microplastic fibres out of our oceans.

The serious nature of the meeting was relieved by a chutney and cheese tasting competition and celebrating our birthday. We have now been re-established in the village for thirteen years with a steady membership and hope to attract more with the programme we are preparing for the coming year. Please come along and meet us. Guests are welcome for a trial run and the annual fees are not horrendous at £39. Our February meeting falls on Valentine's Day and Kate Lacey's talk is described as 'From Guns and Roses to Hearts and Flowers' - very intriguing.

*Margaret Smith*

## BcS Kings Meadow Tennis Club

Your village tennis club is alive and well; we have approaching 200 members and friends of BcSKTMC with 171 being registered with the Lawn Tennis Association of England. In 2016 we received 12 pairs of Wimbledon tickets, including a pair for the men's final. To be eligible to be included in the BCSKMTMC ballot for Wimbledon tickets in 2017, members must opt-in to the LTA by 17 February 2017.

The club tennis competition in 2016 was run in a new format, which provided members with a more flexible way of playing, reducing the time spent on each match by limiting the number of games played to 12 for singles and 16 for doubles. The winners were those who won the most games during the competition:

Men's Singles: Dave Webber

Ladies Singles: Shena Luck

Men's Doubles: Dave and Mathew Webber

Ladies Doubles: Shena Luck and Gillian Parkinson

Mixed Doubles: Victoria and Rory King.

Not wishing to finish on a negative note but sadly the LTA coaching, provided by the Community Tennis Association (CTA) (now providing coaching for 11 clubs in the local area) for BCSKMTMC Juniors on a Friday afternoon has had to be suspended due to a lack of support. It has been agreed with Ed Nieburg, the Managing Director of the CTA, to review the situation again in April 2017 to see if the coaching can be reintroduced.

If you wish to discuss anything about the BCSKMTMC, please contact the Chairman, Tony Windsor on 07909 848098 or [tony@bcskingsmeadowtennisclub.org.uk](mailto:tony@bcskingsmeadowtennisclub.org.uk)

*Tony Windsor*

## Welcome to two new Villager distributors

We would like to thank Cynthia Hurley for her years of distributing *The Villager* in Bell Lane. She has recently relinquished her role and passed it on to Mandy Finn - welcome Mandy. Thanks also to Karen O'Hanlon who distributed the magazine in Monks Mead. Following her house move, she has passed the baton to Rob Arnold - welcome Rob.

*Keith Brooks*

## Earth Trust

The Earth Trust has lots of activities coming up this half term. Here are some highlights, more details at their website [www.earthtrust.org.uk](http://www.earthtrust.org.uk). All events take place at the Earth Trust, Little Wittenham, OX14 4QZ unless otherwise stated. To book, go online or ring 01865 407792.

**Creepy Crawly Comic:** Monday 13 February, 10-3pm. Led by popular cartoonist Neill Cameron, whose work features in The Phoenix comic. For 7-11 year olds; parents welcome to stay. £30 - booking essential.

**Planetarium:** Tuesday 14 February, 3-6.30pm. Book into a 30 min slot in Science Oxford's pop-up planetarium followed by astronomical activities. £9 per child, 1 accompanying adult free (subsequent adults £4.50); booking essential.

**Woodland Adventure:** Wednesday 15 February, 10-12pm. An expedition for 5-8 year olds. £4 suggested donation per child, accompanying adult(s) free.

**Build a Bird Box:** Thursday 16 February, 10.30-12pm and 1.30-3pm. Take home a handmade bird box and help encourage more wildlife to your garden. All tools provided. £15 per box; booking essential.

**Song Writing Workshop: Climb That Tree** Saturday 18 February, 11-12pm. Have a go at making some music and having a sing-along with singer-songwriter David Gibb. For children aged 6-11 years. £6 per child; accompanying adult(s) free.

Other activities in February include:

**New Moon Walk** Tuesday 21 February, 7-9pm. Glory in the night sky on a guided walk to Little Wittenham Wood, lit by the monthly occurring new moon. £5 adult, £2 child; booking essential.

**Basket Weaving** Sunday 26 February, 9.30-4.30pm. Learn how to weave with willow in a session lead by Catherine Tregaskes, from Crafts for a Sustainable Future. £45; booking essential.

*Isabel Hauer*

## GO Active

Why not choose small lifestyle changes in 2017 that can make a big difference to your long term health and fitness? One way of doing this is to aim for 150 minutes of moderate intensity physical activity each week by the end of this year. Enough to get you out of breath and a bit sweaty - just 30 minutes, 5 days a week. Here is a list of activities below to help you get started:

- **Beginners running group** in Wallingford, all abilities welcome. Meet at Castle Leisure Centre, OX10 8HH Wednesdays 7pm-8pm, Sundays 9am (Bullcroft park). For more info please contact: Ian 07970 807108 [RunWallingford@gmail.com](mailto:RunWallingford@gmail.com).
- The **Green Gym** – practical nature conservation with the aim of keeping fit and healthy, <http://www.tcv.org.uk/southeast/volunteer-south-east/green-gym>
- Explore the **Chilterns Area of Natural Beauty** by downloading Handheld Tours App for a list of walks <http://www.chilternsaonb.org>
- **Ladies only pay-and-play tennis sessions.** Join a friendly drop in tennis session for beginners. Portcullis club Wallingford Mondays 9-10am, Benson Tennis Club Wednesdays 9.30-10.30am, £4 a session - contact Liz Bowles [liz\\_btc@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:liz_btc@yahoo.co.uk).

Enjoy getting more active!

*Hendriette Knouwds*  
Participation Coordinator - South Oxfordshire Mob 07717 836750



## Taster Day for the 60+

GO Active Gold have organised a free physical activity taster day at the village hall for people 60+. This is a project funded by Sport England to support people in rural villages to increase physical activity levels, with a focus on social and mental and well-being too.

**When:** Wednesday 1 March 2017

**Time:** 10.30-12.30pm

Activities that Go Active have set up in villages include:

Senior circuits, pilates, yoga, tai chi, keep fit, walking, table tennis, badminton, walking football, bowls, zumba, golf, tennis and falls prevention.

If you would like to register your interest email  
*Conor.Grogan@southandvale.gov.uk* or tel 07717 326660.

## Welcome to Nowhere: Book launch to aid Syrian refugees

Where do you go when you can't go home? That's the question at the heart of an evocative children's novel about Syrian refugees, whose author will be coming to Brightwell in March.

Elizabeth Laird, the much-travelled author of *Welcome to Nowhere*, will be speaking in the village hall on 24 March, 6.30 for 7pm. Her novel is aimed at children aged nine and over, but readers of all ages will appreciate her vivid portrayal of life in war-torn Syria and the Za'atari Refugee Camp in Jordan. Macmillan Children's Books will be donating 50p per hardback copy sold in the UK to the Mandala Trust, which supports the education of Syrian refugees.

Born in New Zealand, Elizabeth Laird taught in a Malaysian school aged 18; she travelled deep into Ethiopia to collect folk tales, and many other experiences – in India, Iraq, Beirut at the height of the civil war, Palestine, Kazakhstan, Iran and Russia – have found their way into her writing.

Brightwell Supporting Refugees, which is in the process of registering as a charity, hopes villagers will continue to show their amazing generosity by coming to hear Elizabeth Laird speak, and donating at this event. Tickets (free) will be available from the Village Stores, and there will be refreshments after the talk.

*Sally Dugan*

## In Brief – round and about

### **Pettits: past to present**

This special exhibition at Wallingford Museum opens from 1 March. It will give a history of Wallingford's department store, and a little about the family who ran it from its beginning in 1856 to the present day. Over time it has sold a large range of merchandise and undergone several transformations. The newly renovated department store will be re-opening during 2017.

### **Wallingford U3A**

If you would like to come to our talks, our meetings are held in Crowmarsh village hall at 2pm on the first Wednesday of each month. Visitors are always made welcome. Visit our website [Google u3awallingford](http://Google.u3awallingford) or phone Hermione on 01865 858 024, or Jill on 01491 835994.

Next meeting is Wednesday 1 Feb: A brief AGM then John and Simone Richards will speak on 'Travels in India and Nepal'. In March we are still in India: 1 March, Richard Wilson on 'The global problem of slums - what can be done'.

### **Madeira Quintas and Botanical Garden**

This is the February talk of the Wallingford Gardening Club, by Brian Fisher a recognised plantsman, who is currently writing a book on tropical plants for travellers. Ridgeway Community Church, Wallingford at 7.30pm on Thursday 9 February. Visitors very welcome - £3. For more information contact Isabelle Darby 01491 836867.

### **Barn Dance**

Roll up, roll up for a night of fun. Sustainable Wallingford is holding a barn dance on Saturday 25 February in the Great Hall at Cholsey Meadows, featuring popular local band, Traction, with their caller, Pete North. Come as a family, come with friends, make up a group - the more the merrier. Start time is 6.30pm so bring the young 'uns and take 'em home when they are tired. Tickets, which are very good value as they include supper, cost £12 for adults, £8 for under 16s, students and over 65s. Family ticket (2 adults + 2 kids under 16) cost £35. Under 5s go free. Available from 'Just Trading' in Wallingford, 'R.G. Park' butcher in Cholsey, the Village Stores in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell or by calling 01491 201229. Tickets can also be bought on the door.

# Village annual calendar 2017

## February

St Agatha's Day (Parish Church Patronal Festival)	5 February
Brightwell School term 3 ends	10 February
Brightwell School term 4 starts	20 February

## March

Community Association's village quiz in the village hall	11 March
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## April

Brightwell School term 4 ends	7 April
Palm Sunday service at St James'	9 April
Good Friday / Easter Day services at St Agatha's	14 & 16 April
Brightwell School term 5 starts	24 April
Annual Parish Church meeting (7.30pm at St Agatha's)	27 April

## May

Safari supper	13 May
Church spring fair	20 May
Rogation Sunday Team Service at Highland Farm	21 May
Open Gardens, Sotwell Street	21 May
Brightwell School term 5 ends	26 May

## June

Brightwell School term 6 starts	5 June
Summer concert at St Agatha's	25 June

## July

Village fete at Moreton House	1 July
Brightwell School term 6 ends	19 July

## September

Harvest festival	TBA
Claire Booth concert at St Agatha's	16 September
Community Association Fun Run	24 September

## November

Remembrance Sunday	12 November
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## December

Art Club exhibition	9 December
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# VILLAGE DIARY

## February

5	St Agatha's Day (Parish Church Patronal Festival)	St Agatha's	
7	Neighbourhood Plan update meeting	VH	7.30pm
10	Brightwell School term 3 ends		
14	WI Kate Lacey's talk 'From Guns & Roses to Hearts & Flowers'	VH	7.30pm
20	Brightwell School term 4 starts		
23	First new toddler group session	VH	9.15am

## March

1	GO Active Taster Day	VH	10.30am
11	Community Association village quiz	VH	7.30pm
14	WI Meeting	VH	7.30pm
24	Brightwell Supporting Refugees book launch	VH	6.30pm
28	Village lunch	VH	12.15pm

## Advance Notice

See village annual calendar on page 23

## Refuse Collection (Food waste each week)

Grey bins	Thursday 9 & 23 February
	Thursday 9 & 23 March
Green (& brown) bins	Thursday 2 & 16 February
	Thursday 2, 16 & 30 March

## Village website

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

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