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**Items for the next edition should be sent to the Editor by 1 November 2016.** The Villager is published every other month and delivered free to all households in the village.

## Editorial

This first issue after the summer break has a theme of new beginnings – at our school, preschool, church, shop and village hall, all village ‘institutions’ which we cherish.

Welcome to David Burrows, the new headteacher at Brightwell School. He writes on page 6 about exciting new plans in place for managing the school and providing teaching and learning support. We wish him and the Governors well as they develop the new partnership with Wallingford School.

As you will have seen (and heard) the St Agatha's bells are back after their renovation, more on pages 14-15. There are also two new wallhangings up in the Church Room, comprising squares created by all the clubs and groups in the village forming a lovely pictorial collage of village life. Huge thanks are due to Cynthia Hurley for getting this made and all those who contributed in various ways. The Allsorts garden project has also been successfully completed this summer, thanks to the generous support of villagers and others, and the children have been out enjoying their new play area (see page 17). But, as these projects come to an end, another one begins – the future of the village hall is under discussion (see page 5) . I imagine a new project will be launched there – so watch this space.

This issue carries a listing in the centre pages of all the regular daytime and evening classes taking place in the village. If you fancy taking up something new, give the contact a ring. Many of the children's organisations would welcome more helpers, so if you would like to volunteer I am sure they would be glad to hear from you

Something new for the Villager, which I hope will become a regular feature, is Tweet of the Season. Paul Chilton has kindly written about what birds we might see at this time of year around the village. If anyone else would like to write a ‘tweet’ on birds (or other nature topics) please let me know.

And finally, there has been a lot of talk about proposed housing development around the village over the summer. Your opportunity to get an update on Brightwell's Neighbourhood Plan and proposed sites for new housing is on Tuesday 4 October at a public meeting in the village hall at 8pm.

*Helen Connor*

On the cover this month is a photo of the return of St Agatha's bells taken by Eric Dore. .

# Tony Hayzelden

I have been privileged to have known Tony and Shirley for many years. As friends we have shared many happy times together; including supporting many village events. And Tony was very much a villager, involved with many groups in the community and a familiar sight as he cycled around the village on his way to one of his commitments.

He belonged to the tennis and cricket clubs, was a member of the history group, a trustee of the Fairthorne Trust, a village shop volunteer and I am sure members of all these groups would have fond memories of Tony and of his involvement with them. He and Shirley both belonged to the village walking group, an activity they both enjoyed.

Tony was for some time Clerk to the Parish Council before becoming a Parish Councillor and then Chairman of the Council. It was at this point that I got to know Tony very well as I replaced him as Clerk to the Parish Council and he patiently helped me to get my computer skills up to scratch and introduced me to the wonders of the Excel spreadsheet. Tony's chairmanship also coincided with the building of the Jubilee Pavilion on the recreation ground which replaced the wooden pavilion burnt down at the end of 1997. This provided much needed facilities for all the sporting activities taking place on the Rec as well as improved facilities for the scouts, cubs and beavers whose scout hall was incorporated in the new building.

Tony was a governor at Brightwell Primary School and also Chair of Governors for a while. He was President of the Royal British Legion branch in this village. In this capacity he would organise and lead the parade on Remembrance Day, which would start at the Red Lion and march along The Street to the War Memorial for the act of Remembrance, followed by the service in church. The plans for this event, drawn up by Tony and Mike Maughan are in use today, as they work so well.

Tony's regular place of worship was the church of St James' in Sotwell and he and Shirley would attend there nearly every week. He was devoted to this church and was the chief sidesman and sacristan for many, many years. Regular church attendance was very important to Tony but he had other interests. The 8 o'clock service at St James fitted in well with Tony's commitment to teaching sailing to young people. After church he would whizz off to Dorchester sailing club, where he would teach young people the joys of sailing.

In all that he did Tony was enthusiastic, meticulous and conscientious. He was always courteous and kind to those he met; I never remember him being cross or saying a bad word about anybody. He was ever the gentleman, a true villager and he leaves behind a legacy for which we can celebrate and be thankful.

*Janice Chilton*

Tony loved his life here in the village with its great community spirit, enabling him to involve himself in so many of its activities. On behalf of our family, I thank you all for your friendship, care and support, especially over the last few difficult years. May he rest in peace.

*Shirley Hayzelden*

## Parish Council

There's never quite so much to report in this issue as we don't have a Parish Council meeting in August; however that doesn't mean nothing is happening. Jason and the Neighbourhood Plan committee have been working very hard on the Plan as this a very worrying time in terms of developers keen to build houses in several areas of the Parish. Remember the Public Neighbourhood Plan meeting on Tuesday 4 October at 8pm to discuss these sites and where we are with the plan.

We would like to thank Sue Booth, who has resigned from the council, for all her work during her tenure. Nobody has applied to join but we hope to co-opt a new member in time for the October meeting.

We are working on a village map, with house names and streets marked, to be placed in two central areas of the village in the near future.

Hopefully everyone has now noticed the mirror at the top of Church Lane. This was erected following requests from some villagers. While putting it up we witnessed several near accidents so hopefully it will be a safer junction now.

*Sue Robson*

**Public Neighbourhood Plan meeting  
Tuesday 4 October at 8pm in the village hall**

## The village hall is falling down...

Well, not quite – but it does need some serious love and attention. What's wrong?

The village hall, built in 1870 to be the village school, was not designed for the use it has had for the last 41 years. Some of the problems include:

- inadequate parking and no potential for dealing with this on-site
- the roof needs attention and will need to be replaced in the near future
- chronic rising damp and the timber floor in the main hall is rotting away
- bricks in the chimney have deteriorated and will soon become a major structural problem
- toilet facilities are both inadequate and poorly located in the building
- use of the building has declined and over the past five years the annual income has been less than the cost of maintaining the facility and carrying out necessary improvements

In short, it is not fit for purpose. Simply patching it up will cost a great deal of money and the village needs to decide what it wants for the future.

The village hall is owned by a charitable trust and the trustees have a legal duty to provide and maintain it in order to offer social and recreational activities for the whole village, young and old. With this in mind, the trustees have assembled a small committee tasked with considering how best to meet this challenge and, more importantly, how to develop a 21st century venue that can offer all the benefits of a true village hub. The possibilities are exciting, and with the help of the whole village we believe that we can develop a new, fresh vision for the future.

Your views about the future of the hall are of paramount importance, so the trustees will be consulting you this autumn about the various possibilities they have in mind. Please ensure your voice is heard by responding to the consultation exercise.

*Robert Field  
Chair, Village Hall Trustees*

## New beginnings at Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Primary School

September is always a new beginning for schools – but especially so for Brightwell School. As well as new four- and five-year old children joining us, we have new teachers in Bramley and Worcester classes, new headteachers, and the school has set sail on a fresh course after a period of interim leadership.

The school governors took a bold decision last July for Brightwell School to move towards a long-term partnership with Wallingford Secondary School to bring strength and stability to the primary school. The partnership will bring support for teaching and learning, support for administration and, most importantly, support for leadership. I am an experienced Oxfordshire headteacher who has taken over at Brightwell School this term; I will hand over the leadership during the spring term to Mrs Fin Lewis, currently a deputy headteacher at Wallingford School. Although she is still based at Wallingford for the autumn term, she is being released to spend some of her time at Brightwell. She will take sole control of the school from Easter.

The school year has got underway with teachers planning exciting learning opportunities for the children for this term. Bramley class (reception year and year 1) are doing a Barnaby Bear topic following the journeys of Barnaby in Brightwell and then to mystery destinations beyond. Children will make their own big books. Russet class (years 1 and 2) are also studying the local area; they plan to visit the village apple orchard, and write accounts of their visits. Worcester class (years 3 and 4) are using a story as the focus for their work – *Kensuke's Kingdom* by Michael Morpurgo. History will be the Stone Age and Iron Age, and the children will be starting violin lessons. Lots of the writing in Discovery class (years 5 and 6) will also focus on a story – *Holes* by Louis Sachar. Year 6 children will go swimming this term, while the year 5 children do baking.

In addition to classroom work, there will be special events through the term, for example the harvest festival at the end of September and a Remembrance service on 11 November. We are also looking forward to increasing our ties within the community in many other ways. If you want to find out more about the school, do look at our website and our new Facebook account!

It's a busy time for the school – new beginnings and the promise of a brighter future.

*David Burrows*

# Community Association

## Annual General Meeting - Tuesday 27 September, 7.30pm village hall

As I am writing this slightly in advance a big thank you to too everybody who came to the AGM of the Community Association, I will provide more details in the next edition.

## Fun Run and Walk Sunday 25 September

Thanks also to those who took part in the 5k Fun Run and Walk through the village on Sunday 25 September, with the emphasis on fun. Medals were given to all those finishing the course and awards for the speedy participants. Again, more details in the next edition.

## BAFTA Film Evening - Saturday 8 October, 7.30pm, village hall

We do hope that you will be able to join us for the Brightwell Film Evening where we will be showing lots of short films made by people in the village. Once again it will demonstrate the impressive amount of talent that we have in our community. A big thank you to Helen and Andy who have again taken on organizing this event. Tickets will be available on the door or at the village shop, £5 for adults and £2.50 for children. Mark at the Red Lion has kindly agreed to lay on a special pre-film menu from 5.30pm. If you would like to book, please call 01491 837373 for a reservation.

## Fete funds distribution

I am pleased to report that this year's surplus profits have been distributed to the following organisations in response to their requests for help with capital projects and other funding:

FOBS	£350	Scouts	£1200
Football Club	£250	Toddlers	£ 160
Lunch Club	£ 70	Village Hall	£ 500
PCC	£500	WI	£ 250
Pre School Group	£510	Brownies	£ 100
Rowing Club	£400		

## Christmas Concert

Unfortunately we are not going to be able to run the concert this year. As we have two events (the Fun Run and the Film Evening) so close together and the committee is much smaller than it used to be (we are always looking for new recruits) the group felt that we would be unable to run this event successfully. We hope that you will not be too disappointed.

*James Davys, Chairman*

## The Village Stores

There are lots of exciting things happening in your local village shop.

### New products

The team have introduced lots of new products over the summer. These include high-end cured meats from Chiltern Charcuterie, which have been a massive hit. Based in the Chiltern Hills, Chiltern Charcuterie produce delicious products ranging from port and garlic salami, truffle salami, chorizo and air-dried venison to name a few. We have also introduced our 'free from' range, which includes lentil, quinoa and hummus chips, gluten-free organic pasta, gluten free brownies and coconut macarons. The range will be steadily increasing so look out for exciting new products soon.

### New staff

We now have a full complement of staff. Nic is manager, Amanda is assistant manager and Donna, Christie and Amy are store assistants. If you haven't met them already please come in and say hello. Very soon all staff will have completed their training for the Post Office. Apart from a few half day closures, we have managed to give a full six and a half day service through this staff training period. Many thanks go to Anna, Caroline, Carol and Annette as we could not have managed this without them.

### More volunteers needed

As ever, we rely heavily on all our volunteers. They work hard and are always there to help - we would like to say a massive thank you to all of them too. However, we are still looking for more volunteers. This is to ensure that no-one is ever alone in the shop as part of our new 'no lone worker' policy. Volunteering in the shop is a very rewarding and sociable experience. But we know people worry about committing to a regular shift or don't know what

working at the shop involves. So we are now offering the opportunity to give volunteering a go with absolutely no commitment. If you would like to try out a shift come in and see Nic or any of the team, email [brightwellshop@btconnect.com](mailto:brightwellshop@btconnect.com) or call on 01491 835551.

### **Brightwell Bake Off**

We hope you have joined the Brightwell Bake Off. Nic and her team have been inviting customers to make the recipes from the *Bake Off* each week and comment on our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/BrightwellVillageStores](http://www.facebook.com/BrightwellVillageStores) with a picture.

On 4 and 5 November we are holding our final - who will be the Brightwell Stores Bake Off Winner ? Our customers will decide.

*Celia Collett*

### **Brightwell Brownies**

Brightwell Brownies are looking for new Brownies to start in September for fun and adventures. For girls aged 7-10 years, we meet on a Monday night. Last term we visited RAF Benson, had campfires in the woods and did cooking inspired by butterflies and insects! Next term we hope to have more trips out, games, crafts and a torch-lit night in the dark! If you would like your daughter to come along, please get in touch with me on 07827239094.

*Brown Owl - Tora Hallatt*

### **Broadband People Power!!!**

It's good to say things don't work. As a result of residents protesting about poor broadband speeds, Oxfordshire County Council has responded that they are looking at installing a new cabinet to give better speeds along The Street from The Pub in the Didcot direction. We are also led to understand that Gigaclear might be considering offering an alternative commercial service.

However it's important to keep up the pressure. Residents should continue to raise issues through the better-broadband web site [broadband@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:broadband@oxfordshire.gov.uk).

*Eric Dore*

## **The Parish Church of St Agatha's and St James'**

### **What institutions are essential for a thriving village community?**

I think most of us would answer with some combination of pub, church, school, shop and post office. We are blessed with all these and more here in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell. Even though we may not need or use them every week, most of us would campaign to keep them should they be threatened, but they should not be taken for granted: market economics play a role in all of these and the old maxim, 'use them or lose them' will ultimately apply.

Elsewhere in this edition you will be able to read about exciting changes taking place in our primary school as it adapts to become part of the Wallingford Schools Academy Trust. It will retain its Christian ethos as a Church of England school, continuing to benefit from the input of the Diocesan Board of Education but also now from the wider support and commitment of the Wallingford School and the Merchant Taylor livery company's provision for education. We hope that this will restore the numbers of pupils so that the school is not only viable but also thriving, drawing in pupils from outside the village. You will also see that there is a renewed emphasis on engaging with the village community, so I hope that we can all encourage this two-way relationship.

This illustrates that institutions do adapt and change. Today as I write this, I have just run a half-marathon around 17 local churches with sponsorship in aid of the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust, one of the charities that supported our Bell Renovation Project at St Agatha's. However, my fear is that this places undue emphasis on the church as buildings at the expense of 'church' as a worshipping community of people. Several of the churches I visited today have become redundant as places of worship, acting as museums with only historical interest. Obviously, we don't want to see St Agatha's or St James' going the same way.

As a village, we are extremely good at taking on capital projects such as the parish room and bells, but the day to day running costs of the church still need to be addressed. We will be having a Stewardship Campaign for church members, starting on Sunday 2 October with our Harvest Festival when we offer the fruits of our labour back to God in thanks. I hope that we can also find ways for others in the village to contribute to the ministry and mission of the church, not least so that you continue to have your own clergy to take weddings, christenings and funerals.

*Rev Kevin Beer*

## Brightwell Supporting Refugees: helping refugees in Jordan

On behalf of the Brightwell Supporting Refugees group, we would like to thank everyone for their support and donations over the last few months.

In July, we went to London to meet Catherine Ashcroft for an update on how the funds from the village events have been spent in Jordan. Catherine is the Founder and Director of Helping Refugees in Jordan (HRJ) and one of our local contacts out there.

As there are seldom places available for Syrian children in Jordanian schools, HRJ has been supporting education in tented classrooms and caravans in remote farm areas. Refugees have settled in these rural communities where there is chance of finding work, rather than in camps where there is little to do. Through charitable donations a building has recently been acquired in the North East Za'atari Governorate. This is currently undergoing renovation and is now registered as a school with the Jordanian Department of Education. This is an encouraging development as this is the first school of its kind to receive this recognition and as such will be able to employ a Jordanian teacher. It is now called The White Hands Villa School for Refugees.

The school follows the UNICEF curriculum, widely recognised both in Syria and abroad. The catchment area is 5 km and there is a bus to transport those who can't manage to walk the distance. School can really help traumatised refugee children by providing a structure, supervised play and education. A typical day is lessons for children in the morning and vocational classes and training for adults in the afternoon. Future plans include adding another floor to the building for music and art therapy.

All the funds raised at recent village events have provided new books for the dedicated reading area in school. The money from St Agatha's Summer Concert will contribute to more equipment and books.

Next Event: Sunday 9 October 'Lunch for Syria' in the village hall from 1-3pm. This will be a basic lunch with a film and a talk – look out for posters around the village.

*Sarah Metcalf and Jane Hawker*

## What's On in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell?

These are the regular daytime and evening classes and activities taking place in the Village Hall (VH), Jubilee Pavilion (JP), Red Lion (RL) and Church Room (CR). For information, phone relevant contact.

Activity	Day	Times	Venue	Contact
Keep Fit	Monday & Wednesday	9.00am 6.45pm	VH	Shena Luck 01491 834543
Toddlers	Monday	10.00am	VH	Saffron 07955 608231
Brownies	Monday	6.00pm	VH	Tora Hallett 07827 239094
Badminton	Monday	8.00pm	VH	John Percival 01491 837372
Quilting	Alternate Tuesdays	9.30am	VH	Cynthia Hurley 01491 836509
Upholstery	3 Tuesdays per term		VH	Community Learning 01235 216302
WI	Tuesday (2 <sup>nd</sup> in month)	7.30pm	VH	Anne Brooker 01491 835109
Betty Bloom Dance	Wednesday	3.30pm	VH	Kally 07785 232862
Bowls	Wednesday Thursday	7.50pm 2.00pm	VH	Cynthia Hurley 01491 836509
Pilates	Thursday	6.30pm	VH	Nathan Clayton 07815 735165
Art History	Friday	10.00am	VH	Sandra Grainge 01491 839166
Art Club	Saturday	10.00am	VH	Veronica Wood 01491 837367

Activity	Day	Times	Venue	Contact
Cubs	Monday	6.00pm	JP	Anne Addison 01235 511018
Yoga	Tuesday	10.0am	JP	Sanna Ratilainen 07508 178315
Rapper Dance	Tuesday	8.00pm	JP	Angie Cole 01844 3542
Cycling Club (Didcot Phoenix CC - Sep-Mar)	Thursday	7.00pm	JP	Mike Coupar 07801 240898
Beavers	Friday	6.00pm	JP	Hilary Rogerson 01491 839960
Scouts	Friday	7.15pm	JP	Tim Scane 01235 511444

In addition at **The BCS Recreation Ground** there is:

BCS Cricket Club Senior Section	Apr –Sept Sunday PM	Tony Windsor 07909 848098
BCS Cricket Club Junior Section	May – July Friday Practice 6.00pm Sunday Games 10.30am	Alan Jenkins 07803 940463
AFC Brightwell Youth Junior Football	Sept-May Sunday AM	Ian Bacon 07789 000499
Didcot Eagles FC Senior Football	Sept-May Saturday 2-4pm	Graham Hammond 07866 481808

### Red Lion

Bespoke	Monday	11 00am	RL	Sandrine Arnould
French	Tuesday	10.30am	RL	01491 598675
	Thursday	10.00am	RL	

## St Agatha's bells – project completed

It's amazing – and I think Roy Thorpe has a lot to answer for regarding getting us into this! Couple that with Tony Lascelles accepting the challenge to mastermind the all important fundraising effort, such an initial impetus meant my side of things had to really get organised to bring everything together successfully.

Renovation and refurbishment work of this nature is a longish haul especially the costing, reporting and planning process involved with obtaining permissions from church authorities. Often projects flounder running out of resources part way through, a problem we did not experience with such an excellent fundraising campaign! It is therefore very pleasing to report that the project objectives have been achieved within the budget and ahead of time!

Many thanks to the building committee for their input throughout the process and to the bellhangers and many others who have helped with dismantling bells, renovating and maintaining bell frames and reinstalling – and a special mention to Helen and Chris Baines for recording events and producing the videos so well. Also, tremendous appreciation to those who have helped throughout, whether organising or participating in the hugely successful fundraising events, the grant providers and everyone who donated and gave so generously towards the 'Save our Bells' project.

Quite a bit has happened since early April when the bells were first removed from the tower! Work has included waterproofing the tower roof, maintenance and strengthening of the bell frames and painting of all metal work as necessary – there's a maze of timber and steel structural framework in the tower. The tower has also been reinforced as an essential belt and braces approach to the project – the tower collapsed in 1795 and we do not want a repeat of that experience! Bell renovation itself has included new headstocks on 6 bells, new bearings, new clappers and a weld repair on the cracked 7th bell, new ropes, pulleys, stays sliders and of course tuning. When they are rung, even I can tell the difference!

There is still some work to do in order to complete the overall project but this is not time related. It includes basic cladding to the floor directly under the bells themselves, repairs to the louvres and windows, and possible provision of a safer access ladder to the tower.

A very big thank you to Tony for organising the highly successful fundraising strategy, which enabled those of us planning and managing the work to make timely decisions from confidence, and get on with the job. Tony, the 'A' team

has done it again and we go out on a high leaving the next project to someone else!!

Finally, my personal thanks and those of our church bellringers to Roy Thorpe our Tower captain - for being the inspiration behind the whole project and for working endlessly, quietly and strongly behind the scenes on behalf of us all.

The eight bells of St Agatha's Brightwell-cum-Sotwell will ring out for years to come and their sound will be a fitting legacy to all who have contributed in so many ways to this successful project.

*David Greasby*

### **And finally....**

A memorial book with photographs showing various aspects of the bell restoration is being put together. Copies at £10 each may be ordered by adding your name to a list in St Agatha's, on the table by the visitors book.

## **Save the Children**

Save the Children will be running the Charity Quiz in the Red Lion on Monday 31 October at 8pm, we promise you a quiz with a difference.

On Saturday 5 November we are holding a coffee morning in the Stewart Room of the village hall between 10am and 12 noon. Besides a chance to relax and enjoy coffee and cake, we will be selling Save the Children Christmas Cards and wrapping paper. We hope you can join us at both of these events.

*Celia Collett*

## **Village Lunch**

The next village lunch will be our Christmas lunch on Tuesday 6 December at 12.15 pm in the village hall. Contact Jaqui 836018 or Belinda 836223 to book.

## **Allsorts preschool**

We have welcomed our children this term, new and old, to explore our wonderful new garden, the bulk of which was finished over the summer break. Thanks to some very hard-working parents, committee members and of course, generous villagers, we now have a preschool garden with a mud-kitchen, a water wall, bongo drums, a sound wall, and a weaving wall, not to mention the willow tunnel, grass mound, sand pit and outdoor classroom that were installed during the Easter break. We are to have a new sail installed to provide much-needed shade also. We will be adding resources to our new outdoor classroom, and our sensory garden is being given an overhaul with brightly-coloured scaffold boards and stone monsters!

We cannot thank the kindness and enthusiasm of our local community enough for helping to raise the money needed to give the children their new space; you have made a real difference to their learning adventure.

The playroom has had a lick of paint also, and various fences, windows, doors and gates have been freshened up, thanks to a team of Vodafone volunteers. The school has installed a new separate gate into preschool to ensure their reception class area can be used to full potential.

This summer, we ran a holiday club for the first time here at Allsorts where the children had fun with our 'At the Beach' theme, splashing in water, running in sprinklers, and making shell clay pots. They enjoyed making volcanoes and dinosaur footprints for our 'Prehistoric Adventure' day. The children sailed boats, made pirate hats, under-the sea pictures and went on a treasure hunt for our 'Pirates and Princesses' day.

I would like to thank the wonderful staff team we have here for working hard and getting the preschool ready for the new term. Thank you to our committee, who as volunteers have given up their precious time to help the preschool stay open for the local children. Their hard work and dedication to our garden project has been tremendous and we are forever grateful.

If you are interested in potentially sending your child to Allsorts, please do get in touch to arrange to come and look round.

*Natasha Hillier, Allsorts Manager*



## A huge thank you from Allsorts

Allsorts preschool has reached its fundraising target of £20,000 for the new playgarden and the committee would like to extend a huge thank you to all those in the village who have contributed in various ways. We couldn't have done it without you. Work is nearly completed too. The recent addition of water play, weaving and music activity walls as well as a huge mud kitchen area have added to the wonderful landscaping, willow tunnel and outdoor classroom that were installed over Easter.

We are also extremely grateful to Wear's Nursery for committing to donate the plants to make the entrance area and sensory garden look beautiful. This is the last bit of work to be completed by our resident gardeners Ali Turner and Ali Quantrell who will be working on this over the coming year.

As a result of work in the garden we will be holding a series of events and open days to show off the garden, alongside Allsorts' other excellent facilities, in order to attract new families. This means the garden will not only benefit the current children, but also help our preschool to go from strength to strength over the coming years.

With thanks,

*Kristen Dudley and Sally Jackson (fundraising)*

P.S. During the open gardens event, visitors to the pottery café made animals that have been on display at the red box gallery in Brightwell. Please contact Jennie if you (or you child) made one of them to arrange to collect them from her: [jenniepotsonly@gmail.com](mailto:jenniepotsonly@gmail.com).

## Brightwell Art Club

I know it is early to talk about Christmas but don't forget the Art Club's Exhibition on Saturday 10 December in the Village Hall, 10am – 1pm.

If you are interested in joining, or just learning more about us, you can always pop in and see us on a Saturday, we have coffee at about 11 am, or email me at [brightwellartclub@gmail.com](mailto:brightwellartclub@gmail.com). We also have a link to a web page on the Brightwell-cum-Sotwell web site under Local Services.

*Veronica Wood*

## Tweet of the Season

I am writing this on the first day of autumn, a time when there is a big changeover in our local bird population. This week I saw 100 or more swallows sitting on the wires along the Croft Path, ready to make their way to Africa in the next week or so. They will be joined shortly by house martins and various warblers, such as whitethroat and chiffchaff. Swifts left in early August, they are only here for 3 or 4 months.



This is the first year I haven't noted any breeding spotted flycatchers, a summer visitor that is in decline. The iconic cuckoo is also in decline and I haven't heard one in the village for a year or two, but maybe you have. They have certainly not bred around here for quite a few years now.

In October, redwing and fieldfare will arrive and can readily be seen feeding on berries and fallen apples around the village. Blackcaps will also arrive from Germany for the winter. We have had at least three breeding pairs of these birds in the village over the summer but this population will head for southern Spain and Africa for the winter and will return here to breed in the spring and the German visitors will head back to Europe to breed.

Visiting blackcaps will be joined by many thousands of blackbirds, thrushes, robins and finches come from the continent to spend the winter here in the UK, boosting our local bird population. Believe it or not it's actually warmer here! Many of the birds in your garden this winter, which you may faithfully be feeding, will not be long term residents and will go back to Europe next spring to breed.

Keep your eyes open for what I believe is a new resident, the nuthatch, a handsome little bird that, like a woodpecker, is able to walk up or down tree trunks. In the spring, I saw a pair in the Wellsprings and recently have seen a pair near Brightwell garage. I have received several reports from others of sightings of this bird. Let's hope they stay; please let me know if you spot one.

*Paul Chilton*

Our annual party was rather blighted by the weather which, after a glorious week of sunshine, turned grey and cold. The plans to play croquet and petanque were not met with too much enthusiasm but there were a few stalwarts prepared to brave the elements. In all other respects we had an enjoyable evening, the excellent food washed down with glasses of Pimm's being very welcome as we shivered on the veranda.

For September we put aside frivolity to give our attention to the work of The Samaritan's Purse, a Christian charity that collects together shoe boxes filled with Christmas gifts and goodies for deprived children across the world. This year after two years absence they are once again able to enter Liberia with gifts for the deprived children across the country.

As WI members we try to give our support to worthwhile causes both at home and overseas. We meet every second Tuesday at 7.30pm in the village hall. Do come along and join us or check out our website to see what else we get up to.

Next meeting: Tuesday 11 October 7.30pm 'Autumn Glory' with Ann Linton who will be showing how to make use of seedheads and flowers from our autumn gardens. Visitors welcome

*Margaret Smith*

## Earth Trust's Autumn Water Festival

Join us at our annual autumnal celebration of water and wetlands on Sunday 2 October 11am – 4pm at the Earth Trust Centre, Little Wittenham.

Lots of wonderful watery activities to be enjoyed including: water rockets, making a willow lantern or origami boat, apple pressing, natural dyeing and lots of sustainable water play.

£6 adult, £3 child, £15 family. Book online (incurs a booking fee) or pay on the gate. Get more information at [www.earthtrust.org.uk/whatson](http://www.earthtrust.org.uk/whatson) on this and other Autumn events.

*Lucy Benyon*

## Environment Group

### Autumn talk

To celebrate the 21st anniversary of the launch of the Environment Group in 1996, we are very lucky to have David Dugan, our noted BAFTA award-winning local film maker, giving a talk on Saturday 22 October at 8pm in the village hall. 'Telling Nature's Stories on Television' is expected to be the title of David's talk when he will share with us some of his experiences of filming in exotic locations and dealing with unusual subjects from the animal kingdom.

### Climate change

Recent news from the meeting of the G20 that China and the USA have ratified the Paris Agreement on Climate Change is a welcome step towards limiting CO2 emissions and slowing the rise in the global temperature. However nations accounting for 55% of the emissions must ratify the agreement before it comes into force. Then all nations should follow their programmes to reduce reliance on burning fossil fuels. For our government this should mean more investment in wind, solar, geothermal, hydropower and other renewable sources. SODC should be more energetic in the promotion of improved levels of insulation in new dwellings and encouraging more cycling and bus and rail usage.

### Summer weather

An unusually dry July was followed by an August with a small amount of rain. Gardeners had a lot of watering to do but the harvest was gathered in mostly in the dry.

### St James' churchyard

A working party spent a lot of time and effort clearing the churchyard and removing a number of errant branches. The bushes and small trees cut down in one area revealed a tomb where several members of the Fairthorne family are buried. Thanks are due to those who worked so hard.

*John Rodda*

## News from the Bach Centre

Those of you who regularly walk through the Sotwell end of Brightwell-cum-Sotwell may well have taken the short-cut across the churchyard of St. James's. It's only a few minutes' walk from the Centre. We are often sending people in that direction because our founder Dr Edward Bach lies buried there, in a modest plot on the north side of the church.

St James's is no different from other churches in that it needs to raise money towards its upkeep. To help the effort we have agreed to stock a booklet, printed under the auspices of the parochial church council, that will tell visitors to the Centre more about the church and a little about Dr Bach's history. Proceeds from its sale will go to church funds. The booklet will, we hope, encourage more of our visitors to walk down to see the church - and give them a unique souvenir of their time in the village, since the only way to get a copy will be to come on a visit.

Press deadlines being what they are, at the time of writing we aren't sure if the booklet will be available by the time this edition of *The Villager* is published, or what it will cost. If you're passing the house though you are welcome to come in and inquire.

*Stefan Ball*

## Wallingford Photographic Club

### **Autumn/Winter Programme 15 September - 15 December**

We are a friendly group of local photographic enthusiasts who meet on Thursday evenings in Crowmarsh at 7.45. We welcome people of all ages and levels.

You may be just thinking of taking up photography-or would like to meet fellow photographers and share expertise. Our programme has something for everyone. Highlights are talks from experts on travel, wildlife and photo technique; club evenings to learn how to improve your skills; and friendly competitions.

Full programme and how to find us can be found on our website [www.wallingfordphoto.club](http://www.wallingfordphoto.club).

*Eric Dore*

## Artist of the month at the Red Lion

An exciting line up of for the rest of 2016 brings the return of local artist **Lizzie Hingley** in October and a new young artist **Jess Linton** in November.

You might remember Lizzie Hingley for her wonderful exhibition of large acrylic and resin abstracts in 2015. They were very colourful and dynamic and make October a great month to visit the Red Lion to see her work. In the meantime, you can also see Lizzie's work on her website [www.lizziehingley.co.uk](http://www.lizziehingley.co.uk) or on Artfinder [www.artfinder.com/lizzie-hingley](http://www.artfinder.com/lizzie-hingley).

In November we introduce Jess Linton, who was brought up in Oxfordshire, Wallingford and Brightwell cum Sotwell, but has lived and worked in London since 2006. Jess will be exhibiting her exciting 2D collage works using a wide range of reference material to explore her world and experiences as well as some of her photography documenting physical, social, political and human landscapes in the context of conflict, natural disaster and social upheaval - from her work as an HCPC (UK) registered art therapist. You can learn much more about Jess from her website [www.jesslinton.com](http://www.jesslinton.com).

*Susan Ganney*

## In brief round and about

### **Wallingford U3A**

Our October Speaker, on Wednesday 5 October, is local historian Judy Dewey, who will speak on 'The Civil War in Wallingford'. Meetings held at Crowmarsh Village Hall on the first Wednesday of each month, at 2pm. Visitors are always welcome. Next theatre trip is to Sonning Theatre to see *Blithe Spirit*, matinee on Saturday 29th October. For information about our interest groups and what else we do please visit our website, just google [u3awallingford](http://u3awallingford). Or, if you would rather speak to someone, please phone Hermione on 01865 858024

### **'Create a Cartoon' Night at Wallingford Museum**

This October's 'Night at the Museum' will be another FREE bookable 'Cartoon' event for children, from 6.30 - 8.30pm on Friday 28 October. Limited to 20 children (suggested age range 7-11), they will have a chance to try their hand at creating their own cartoon characters with help from some

local artists and inspiration from things they can see in the museum. For further details and booking, please contact Judy Dewey, 01491-651127, preferably before 20th Oct. More details at [www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk](http://www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk)

### Wallingford Gardening Club talks

The series of autumn talks begin on 13 October with a lecture by Antony Powell on 'Beautiful Kashmir'. He will present an illustrated talk about the 1983 Botanical Expedition to Kashmir. The November speaker will be Geoff Hawkins on 'Herbacious Borders', on the 10<sup>th</sup>. These will be held as usual at Ridgeway Community Church, Wallingford at 7.30pm. Visitors very welcome £2. For more information contact Isabelle Darby 01491-836867.

### The Tempest

Sinodun Players will be toasting the Bard's 400th anniversary year with an innovative and magical production of The Tempest at Wallingford Corn Exchange from 19-22 October. Tickets £10 from [www.cornexchange.org.uk](http://www.cornexchange.org.uk) or box office 01491 825000. Group discounts are also available

### Welcome Packs

If you know of a newcomer to the village, they might like a Welcome Pack. Please give their name and address to Bill Horsefield 832041 [wthorsefield@yahoo.com](mailto:wthorsefield@yahoo.com) or Andy Lewis 825680 [lewisaanda@gmail.com](mailto:lewisaanda@gmail.com) and they will pop one through their door

### Apples, apples, everywhere...

If you want to make more use of your apples this Autumn, why not hire the village apple press and make your own delicious juice?. Easy to use, just £30 to hire all the equipment . Phone Robert Field 01491 836275 or email [fieldrobert@gmail.com](mailto:fieldrobert@gmail.com) or look on Orchard group website [www.brightwellorchards.co.uk](http://www.brightwellorchards.co.uk).

# VILLAGE DIARY

## October

2	Harvest Festival	St Agatha's	9.30pm
2	Earth Trust's autumn water festival		
4	Public Neighbourhood Plan meeting	VH	8pm
8	BAFTA Film Evening	VH	7.30pm
9	Brightwell Supporting Refugees lunch	VH	1-3pm
11	WI Meeting – talk 'Autumn Glory'	VH	7.30pm
22	Environment Group – talk 'Telling Nature's Stories on Television'	VH	8pm
31	Save the Children quiz	Red Lion	8pm

## November

4-5	Brightwell Stores Bake Off final		
5	Save the Children coffee morning (Stewart Room)	SR/VH	10am
6	All Souls service	St Agatha's	
8	WI meeting	VH	
13	Remembrance service	St Agatha's	7.30pm

## Advance Notice

6 December	Christmas village lunch (12.15 at VH)
10 December	Art Club Exhibition (10-1 at VH)

## Refuse Collection (Food waste each week)

Grey bins	6 & 20 October, 3 & 17 November
Green (& brown) bins	13 & 27 October (extra waste), 10 & 24 November

NB No black bags in the green recycling bins as they hide too much contamination

## Village website

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

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