

## Contents

Editorial	2
Parish Council	3
Community Association	4
The Red Lion / Red Box Gallery	5
Brightwell Art Club / Save the Children	6
Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Primary School	7-8
Macmillan' world's biggest coffee morning	8
Love thy neighbour ... especially online	8-9
Village lunch club / Coffee link up	9
Brightwell Toddlers	10
Flower and produce show report & trophy winners	10-11
Flower and produce show results	12-13
Stewart village hall	14
BrightFest19	15-17
Colourful field margins	17-18
The Earth Trust / In brief – round & about	18
<i>The Villager</i> AGM 2019	19
BcS Environment Group report	20-21
Brightwell Supporting Refugees	21-22
The WI BcS / Maths tuition	23
Village diary	24

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## Editorial

Summer is now in full swing and by the time you read this everyone will be on school holidays - yippee! After our cool spring, thankfully now we have some hotter days and balmy warm evenings to enjoy our beautiful gardens and countryside. The colour in the field margins is starting to fade now but hasn't it been fantastic? You can read more about Dart and Hedges Farming initiative on page 17-18.

Lots of colour could be seen also in the flower and produce show tent at the village fete (though on the hottest day of the year some of the roses were wilting in the heat, as well as people!). The full results are in the middle pages as usual. Lots of lovely entries from everyone, especially the children, which makes it a very special event.

Great to hear that the funding targets for the play and gym equipment have now been met (see Parish Council report, page 3). This has been helped by the many donations received and events held over the last month or so, especially the Open Gardens and BrightFest, both well supported by villagers. BrightFest was less lucky with the weather this year with high winds nearly causing a catastrophe before the start but all was well in the end with lots of people getting involved (read more on pages 15-17). Maintaining and upgrading our village facilities is a constant process, the next job being to tackle the tennis courts as well as of course the continuing work on the village hall.

'Get involved in your village' is a new event scheduled for 12 October being organised by the Community Association (see page 4). It's an opportunity to find out more about what's going on here (lots – it's what makes our village great!) but many clubs and societies could do with more help and 'new blood'. So why not go along and find out more, or see how to get involved in something new for you?

Welcome back Sue and Bob to the Red Lion. We couldn't resist this photo of the opening night for our front cover. The first few weeks have been busy and they have just got their 4 stars back from a recent environmental health visit which is great news. We wish them well. We couldn't be without our pub, it's such an asset to the village.

After a very busy month, with every weekend in June having a village event, from BrightFest through to the fete and summer concert, and then Midsummer Night's Dream in July, I am looking forward to a more restful August. Hope you have one too.

*Helen Connor*

# Parish Council

## Play and gym equipment

We have now reached the funding target required for the Mackney Lane play and gym equipment, with all donations either received or promised. The play equipment includes an inclusive roundabout with wheelchair access, an outdoor concrete table tennis table and refurbishment of the existing swings, including a new safety surface. Nine items of adult gym equipment have been planned grouped in four stations at the south western end of recreation ground away from the cricket pitch boundary. We hope to have layouts and plans showing the equipment on the Parish Council website in the near future, with installation commencing in late September.

## Tennis courts

The tennis courts at Kings Meadow are now in urgent need of resurfacing to ensure that this valuable parish asset remains in a safe and useable condition. The courts were out of use until refurbished in 2013, when they were cleaned, repaired and painted to LTA standards with the posts and nets replaced. The village now has a thriving tennis club, including coaching and training sessions for young people, and the courts are used also by other villagers and by the village school. Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Kings Meadow Tennis Club and the Parish Council have made donations towards the cost of resurfacing and some funding applications are in the process of being applied for. There is, however, a need to raise more funds in order to have this work carried out.

## Planning matters

The new SODC councillor for Cholsey ward, Anne-Marie Simpson, attended our June meeting and confirmed that SODC's five year land supply comfortably exceeds government requirements and that the BcS Neighbourhood Plan (NP) remains valid. If you are considering making a planning application, it is recommended that you review the applicable NP policies in advance of submission to the SODC Planning Department.

## Posters

We are fortunate to have a number of planned activities and events within the parish during the summer months. As part of the publicity process for events, could organisers please ensure that advertising posters are removed in a timely manner once the event is over.

*Graham Gilgrass*

# Community Association

## Village fete

Once again we were extremely lucky with the weather and the support of the village. A big thank you to everybody who helped make this event such a success and one of the highlights of the Brightwell year, as without all your hard work and generosity it could not happen. I am especially grateful to our Community Association team who co-ordinated the whole event so well and our kind hosts Jim and Madeline Sanger who welcome us to their lovely garden. I am pleased to say that we made £3600, a great effort by everybody involved.

Profits now get split between different village organisations, which bid to meet a specific funding need. All groups that want to apply for funds and have not yet received an application form should contact our treasurer, Tom Rogerson, 01491839960 or [tacrogerson@aol.co.uk](mailto:tacrogerson@aol.co.uk). Whilst the rules are not hard and fast, we do try to favour organisations that have made big efforts to support the fete and other fundraising events during the year.

## 'Get involved in your village' - Saturday 12 October

We are busy arranging an opportunity for volunteer-led groups, clubs and societies who contribute to the general wellbeing of village life to reach out to the wider community. These include sports clubs and fitness groups, church groups and charities, special interest groups and those providing a variety of services. Details can be found on the village website.

In joining a group you can learn new skills, make new friends or perhaps help others in the community. Would you like to know more (and perhaps get involved)? Then please come along to our 'Get involved in your village' event at the village hall on 12 October, 2-4 pm where you can meet and chat to representatives of these groups and pick up more information. If your group would like to be represented there (and has not already been contacted) please email Bill Horsfield at [wthorsfield@yahoo.com](mailto:wthorsfield@yahoo.com).

## Annual General Meeting – Tuesday 24 September 2019

Please come to the AGM of the Community Association at the village hall, 7.30pm and enjoy a glass of wine and a chat with the committee. New committee members are always welcome

*James Davys, Chairman*

## The Red Lion

Many of you will now know that we have had to take back the reins of the Red Lion for a while. This wasn't in our life plan but we have grasped the bull by the horns and are enjoying being back at the heart of the community. We are so grateful for the support, both emotional and physical, that we have had from the village, which has been truly heart-warming and helped hugely. I can't thank enough the army of friends and villagers, who turned up to help on the first couple of days. Village community spirit at its absolute best.

There is a lot to do but among other jobs, we have already installed a new boiler, a new glass washer and have booked new flooring for the bar and a storeroom. Charlie has been doing great work in the kitchen and everyone has high praise for the meals they have eaten here - the rump steak seems to be particularly special. We have been lucky enough to have inherited some fantastic staff and have recruited a few more to cope with increased custom. (At the time of writing we are still looking for a cleaner to come in each morning for an hour or so, let me know if this would interest you.) And we are delighted that at the environmental health visit this week we have been awarded 4 stars.

It has been lovely to see so many old friends in the pub and if you haven't made it yet we look forward to seeing you back in the pub soon!

*Sue and Bob*

## Jack & the Beanstalk at the Red Box Gallery

Jack is alive and well and climbing the beanstalk in Brightwell's own Red Box Gallery this July.

Brightwell's Allsorts preschool children get to grips with story sequencing - you can see the story build leaf by leaf up the panes! And explore their colourful creativity via hand painting, cloud creation, bean multiplication and some very tactile snails and earthworms...

Oh and they are quite clear about who is good and who is bad too.

So take a look and climb inside the Red Box Gallery this month!

With many thanks to the pupils and teachers at Allsorts.

*Robert Seatter*



## Brightwell Art Club

The club has had an interesting summer term with a variety of themes demonstrated by our tutors as well as our portrait and still life sessions. We even managed an enjoyable outdoor session in the lovely garden of a house in the village and we are hoping to have another chance to paint outside before the end of term. We were also able to display our paintings in the Red Lion in June and we are grateful for this opportunity to show what we can do!

As this year is the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the club we are having a small celebration at the end of term to mark the event.

As usual if you are interested in the club you can pop in and see us on a Saturday morning during term time, we have coffee at about 11am, or email me at [brightwellartclub@gmail.com](mailto:brightwellartclub@gmail.com) for further information. You can also find us on the village website, [www.brightwellcumsotwell.co.uk](http://www.brightwellcumsotwell.co.uk) under 'Local Services'.

*Veronica Wood*

## Save the Children

The "Midsummer Mayhem" weekend started with the barn dance, in the lovely Potato Barn at Highlands Farm, by kind permission of David & Rosemary Greasby. The band was excellent; everyone enjoyed the dancing, with the barn and the setting underneath Brightwell Barrow making it an extra special evening.

Our Country Fair followed on Saturday afternoon. The sun shone. We planned to create a lovely relaxed afternoon, where all ages could relax and enjoy music, good food and drink, a dog show, farm vehicles and animals, pony rides, competitions, muppet show and lots more. Thanks to everyone who helped us make it a really fitting event to celebrate 100 years of Save the Children. We couldn't have done it without the help of villagers, local organisations and businesses, plus all those who joined us for the afternoon; we are extremely grateful to all.

The total money raised from the bar at the Barn Dance and the Country Fair was £2118.92p. The cubs added to this by presenting us with a cheque for £520 at the Country Fair, which they had raised by building dens in the wood and sleeping in them overnight. What brilliant young people we have in this village!!

*Celia Collett*

## Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Primary School

Wow, what a year! It's too easy to get caught up in the speed of the last term and not have enough time to take stock of what we have achieved as a school community this year. It seems like a message (and a *Villager* article) you've heard before, but the school continues to go from strength to strength and such milestones are important to share with our community.

We have had a lot of fun this term with our enrichment experiences; a visiting dance group, cycling proficiency, year 5/6 Residential to the Brecon Beacons, class assemblies, music assemblies, concert at Wallingford School, our first film festival (complete with Aston Martin, red carpet and our very own Oscars), an art workshop at Wallingford School, our walking float at The Wallingford Carnival, singing performance at BrightFest and the first potato and spoon race in Brightwell at Sports Day. No wonder the children at the school have improved their attendance levels too and have achieved "outstanding" attendance!

Our recent 'Moving Up Day' meant that we welcomed those who will be our largest Reception community in September – we are oversubscribed in Pippin class next year and with children joining us in other classes at both the KS1 and KS2 ends of the school, the school roll continues to rise. A huge thank you must go to the wider community for your support in spreading the word!

At the other end of the school, our Year 6 children are ready to take the next step in to secondary education. As I have shared before, tests are not the "be all and end all" to children at this age but they serve as a good indicator of progress made for schools such as ours. The recent End of Key Stage Tests or SATs saw 93% of children achieve the Expected Standard in Reading against a national percentage of 73%. With our children achieving 80% Expected Standard in Maths and 87% in English grammar, punctuation and spelling, this is yet another indicator that standards are strong at the school. Indeed, achievement at every Government headline is very positive and the progress in every year group is very pleasing and I am looking forward to seeing our children continue to grow in confidence – the sky is the limit!

I would personally like to thank everyone within the wider community for their support of the school this year. Everyone from The Fairthorne Trust through to those who organise events in the community and always seek to involve us. We are very lucky to have this support and it is never taken for granted. Next academic year brings further exciting times to Brightwell. I will be joined by Mr Lamb, who will share the headship of the school with me and we will share the Deputy Head role at Wallingford School. I'm delighted that

this arrangement enables stability and consistency at the school into next year and beyond as the school continues to flourish!

Looking forward to September!

*Fin Lewis*

## The World's Biggest Coffee Morning

Please join me (and/or bake a cake) on Friday 27 September 10-12 at the Red Lion in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support.

*Helen Connor*

## Love thy neighbour... especially online!

Don't worry, the vicar isn't encouraging the use of some of the more dubious dating sites on the internet, but as a former IT consultant, I follow internet and social media trends with interest. It is worth reminding ourselves that just fifteen years ago, there was no such thing as Facebook, Twitter or YouTube. Yet today, two out of every three Brits are active users of at least one of them, and we now spend almost 2 hours each day on social media (not least our excellent village community group on Facebook or perhaps Wallingford Piper, where it seems more 'gripes' are expressed!)

I think of the internet as just another neutral communication platform like the telephone, that can be used for good or ill, just as each of us is capable of good deeds and bad. Every time we post, we can choose to be constructive or destructive, whether to share gossip or rumour as fact and sometimes to correct someone's error (very difficult to do without sounding judgemental, but *www.snopes.com* is a good place to start). However, social media acts as an echo chamber, so that our particular political views (dare I mention Brexit?) and even our religious views seem to be the norm, encouraging us to ever narrower-minds and to be more outspoken and divisive. Where will this lead? Few of us have stopped to properly consider what it means to live well in this digital age, but as Christians, we have an essential part to play in the shape of online society.

You may have read recently that the Church of England launched a 'Digital Charter', guided by values such as truth, kindness and safeguarding. Our own Bishop Steven of Oxford has distilled these into the following guidelines, based upon the Beatitudes, that we may each play our part in making social media 'kinder'. I hope you will ponder them, whether you consider yourself to be Christian or not...

*Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
I will remember that my identity comes from being made and loved by God, not from my online profile.*

*Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted This world is full of grief and suffering.  
I will tread softly and post with gentleness and compassion.*

*Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth.  
I will not boast or brag online, nor will I pull others down.*

*Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.  
There are many wrongs to be righted. I will not be afraid to name them and look for justice in the world.*

*Blessed are the merciful, for they will receive mercy.  
I will not judge others but be generous online. I will be conscious of my own failings.*

*Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.  
I will be truthful and honest, and I will not pretend to be what I am not.*

*Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God  
I will seek to reconcile those of different views with imagination and good humour.*

*Blessed are those who are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.  
I will not add to the store of hate in the world, but I will try to be courageous in standing up for what is right and true.*

Blessings, Rev Kev

*The Revd Kevin Beer*

## Village lunch club

The next village lunch will be on Tuesday 10 September at 12.15pm in the village hall. If you would like to go, please contact Jaqui on 836018 or Belinda on 836223 to book a place. Also a date for your diary – the Christmas lunch this year will be on Tuesday 3 December.

*Jaqui Brown*

## Link up

Come for a coffee or tea, chat and even a cake, every third Monday of the month at the Root One coffee shop, from 10-12 noon. There will always be someone there. Next ones are 19 August and 16 September. If you need a lift or would like someone to go with contact me on 835109.

*Anne Brooker*

## Brightwell Toddlers

We have been very busy at Brightwell Toddlers over the past few months! We have been doing lots of crafts including flower collages, Father's Day cards, a handprint table cover for the village fete stall and a fingerprint butterfly for the flower and produce show which the judges saw as a “fantastic original design!”. We also had a visit from Claire of the Shake&Make Club which the children (and adults) absolutely loved. We have had lots of delicious home-baking too, thanks to everyone for bringing that along. And thanks as always to our lovely WI volunteers who make the sessions so much easier for us!

It has been lovely to welcome some new faces to Toddlers and we would always welcome more! We are now on holiday for the summer but will start back on Thursday 5 September, 9.15-11.15am in the village hall. If you would like any more information or would like to volunteer, please contact us at [Brightwelltoddlers@gmail.com](mailto:Brightwelltoddlers@gmail.com) or visit our Facebook page. Happy holidays everyone!

*Laura Woodford*

## Flower and produce show report & winners

A baking hot day for our show this year, in the beautiful gardens of Jim and Madeline Sanger's house - huge thanks as ever to them for letting us invade their space, mobilise their kitchen, over-excite their dog and dig up their perfect lawn.

So up went the tents and inside was an array of colourful artworks from our youngest villagers - decorated wands that Harry Potter would have died for (I wonder if there are any sticks left in the woods?!), butterfly prints flapping their hand-made wings and vegetable people of all shapes and sizes. Oh and stupendous cakes too - did you catch Tabitha Smith's spectacular unicorn cake, mutli-tiered and multi-coloured, and a worthy winner in its category? She was narrowly pipped at the post for 'Best in show - as voted by the public' by Otto Tapping's diminutive potato penguin.

In the main vegetable section we were down on entries from last year - maybe caused by the earlier date for this year's show, but nevertheless some high standard produce. There was artistic compensation in the flower section, especially the inventive and imaginative moon-themed displays, celebrating the 50th anniversary of man's arrival on the moon, plus some very tasty cakes, jams, speciality breads and an increased number of home-produced drinks.

Photography proved ever-popular, and village life was captured in both natural and human dimensions, from the shy grace of a spring bluebell to the face-pulling efforts of a tug-of-war!

In the newly-expanded creative writing section, young and old riddled their way with dexterity - especially Rosie Lanyon's winning entry (and a worthy winner of the new Sally Dugan award) who chose the village itself as her subject. Plus there were alarmingly surreal 500-word-long stories about an ordinary day interrupted by the ring of a telephone. We have all had one of those...

As ever, a huge vote of thanks to our judges, ever-generous with their time: Fay Crabbe (flower arranging), Sandra Halstead (allotments and produce), Sarah Moody (cookery), Bruce Gordon (drinks), David Brown (photography), Kate Malenczuk (arts and crafts), Andrew and Jenny Reid (juniors), and Robert Seatter (creative writing). And to the many helpers without whom the show would never ever happen. I think David Greasby has been quietly collecting and dropping off the essential tables for more decades than he would care to remember!

*Robert Seatter*

## Results

<b>The Chilton Cup</b> (best exhibit in the fruit & vegetable classes)	John Arbuckle
<b>The Win Glendenning Memorial Salver</b> (best flower arranging entry)	Gina Coupar
<b>The Talbot Rose Bowl</b> (best rose exhibit)	Anne Hedley
<b>The Talbot Cup</b> (most points in show)	Gina Coupar Runner-up: Josephine Butterfield
<b>The Joan Sheard Cup</b> (for the best junior entry in an adult class)	Oli Smith
<b>Junior trophies</b>	(9-12) Clara Bevis (5-8) Beatrice Gordon
<b>The Swan Allotments Cup</b> Runner-up:	Paul Copley The Molls, Bob Sherwood, Susie Beresford and Giles Whitehead.
Most Improved Allotment:	Rose Sutton
<b>The Sally Dugan Cup</b> (for creative writing)	Rosie Lanyon

## Stewart village hall

It has been another good two months in the hall with regular activities, parties and other events. If you would like to know more about the events and activities held at the hall then please look on our website at <http://stewartvillagehall.btck.co.uk/>.

### **Film show**

In June we held our first film show since our new, very impressive Ultra HD 4K projector and surround sound system was installed. The bistro style seating and fully stocked bar helped us enjoy the musical extravaganza that is *LaLa Land*. We are planning to build on this and create a warm and inviting ambience for future film shows. If you would like to be involved in the set up and running a film club then please do let us know.

As well as being an ideal setting to show films there are lots of ways you could use and enjoy this equipment, for example arrange a party (just for fun or to fundraise) to coincide with the screening of big shows such as Last Night of the Proms, sporting events, Strictly Come Dancing final, New Years Eve celebrations etc etc. Just book the hall, invite your guests and enjoy the show in style.

The hall has a TV licence so you can stream these shows from your phone or iPad, full instructions on how to use the equipment is available but we can offer support with the technical set up if needed.

### **Village hall AGM**

A note for your diary, please join us in the hall on Wednesday 9 October at 8pm for our Annual General Meeting. We will also be present at the Community Association's 'Get involved in your village' event on 12 October to answer your questions and gather your views on the hall.

As always, we thank you for all your support, it is very much appreciated. If you have any questions, comments or feedback please contact the trustees using the 'contact us page' on our website or leave a note in the suggestions box in the kitchen of the hall. To book the hall go to the hall diary on our website: <http://stewartvillagehall.btck.co.uk/> or contact Shena at [shenaluck@btconnect.com](mailto:shenaluck@btconnect.com) or on 01491 834543.

*Annette Kilworth*

# BrightFest19

Like many in the village, the BrightFest19 beer tent had had a rough Friday night. Stressed at the joints, and canopy swirling, it finally took off and landed on top of the tea marquee at breakfast time on Saturday morning. Along with two mangled gazebos and the absent bouncy castles, it seemed that the gusty weather might have got the better of us this year. However, with some last minute marquee swapping, BrightFest19 kicked off on time with the customary opening performance from the Brightwell School choir who sang particularly well this year. Gradually, as the sun broke through (a rare occurrence this June), the numbers at the gate began to swell, welcomed by Eliot Forster and his team who did a magnificent job collecting donations.

The standard of all performers this year was exceptionally high, and we must once again thank our musical director and technical organisers Werner de Jog and Yives Reed, as well as the many revellers providing vocal support all afternoon and late into the night. Thank you also Werner for your tireless work with social media – the BrightFest website, with new online shop and FaceBook and Twitter pages. In the month leading up to BrightFest19 we had over 3,500 hits on Facebook alone.

## **A big team to thank...**

The main fundraising aim this year was ‘Young People’, with funds being distributed via charities, organisations and community projects. Despite the lack of the bouncy castles, the younger festival-goers were kept busy in the kid-zone. The silent disco in particular was a great hit and well attended - even occasionally by the odd ‘dad-dancer’. Our thanks to Stephanie di Massa, Charlotte Todd and Natalie Bright plus helpers.

Volunteers and supporters of Brightwell Supporting Refugees were blessed with an impressive array of donated cakes and sweet treats in the re-arranged tea tent. Such was the supply, and demand for cakes, that Angela & Andy Lewis and Sarah Metcalf were still at their posts well past teatime - in fact darkness had already descended when the last scone was gone.

Many thanks to Roger Gill, Simon Hunt and Trish Halstead for running the raffle and to all those people inside and outside the village who donated prizes. Our thanks must also go to Mark Brock, Sam, Flick and their team for ably squashing into the remaining marquee and ensuring the provision of food and drink. It was noted last year that certain reliable beer consumers were away on a biking trip honouring our fallen war heroes. Significant adjustment

was made this year to accommodate their needs, and thankfully there were no shortages.

The BrightFest Organising Committee would like to thank Mark for his time as Chairman. Having now left the Red Lion, he moves on to ventures-new away from the village. We are looking for a new Executive Chair, and indeed anyone who can dedicate some time to help organise the event next year.

A mention too for Sian Norfolk who provided invaluable advice to the organising committee based on her experience running BrightFest18. In addition, she ran the ‘BubbleDogs BBQ’ (post BrightFest19 due to the weather) with her husband Peter, Kristen Dudley, Lisa and Werner De Jong and friends which generated a sizeable contribution from bubbles, beer and burgers. The funds raised will contribute towards a practice tennis wall at the Kings Meadow tennis courts, a very useful facility particularly for young tennis players.

Every year the scouts show us how to put up their marquees with timely efficiency, and when others may be nursing a sore head the next morning, the scouts are scouring the Rec for rubbish, segregating for recycling, packing up the marquees and tents, manoeuvring fences, chairs and tables, until the Rec is spotless again. A big thank you to our scouts for their invaluable help.

Phil Thompson has advised that, as a man of Brightwell he does not think it’s really necessary to mention the Tug of War (thank you Jeremy Whetter for organising). However the competitive spirit has clearly been building in some quarters, and this year even involved the men of Sotwell arranging secret practice nights to work on their technique. Anyway, despite some bulky Brightwellians, Newton’s second law ( $F=ma$ ) favoured the Sotwell 8 winning both pulls despite a swift pint at the interlude, (winter training starts mid-January, Lycra *optional!*).

## **The headline figures**

This year BrightFest19 raised in excess of £12,500 from donations, fund raising activities and grossing up eligible donations for gift aid. After auditing the expected Free Funds to be distributed will be in excess of £7,000.00 to: The Scout Group, Allsorts Pre-School, Brightwell Supporting Refugees, BCS Kings Meadow Tennis Club and the 1155 Charity for loan of equipment.

The main good cause supported by BrightFest19 is for a community project – the redevelopment of the children’s play facilities on the Rec. It is important to note that BrightFest relies heavily on the BcS and local community. Without the generosity of villagers and local trades, providing their free



technical input and direct financial support, this event would simply not get off the ground.

Thanks to Matt Allen for the BrightFest19 logo design and producing the artwork for the advertising banners. But a special thank you must go to Clive Collett for the many years he provided the electrical installation for BrightFest – and welcome to Nathan Gray who has taken over the role and also to the directors of Bunkfest for allowing BrightFest19 to use their electrical equipment to provide power throughout the recreation ground.

BrightFest also relies on a small group of committee members busily making it happen for those just enjoying the day. The committee thanks everyone involved. Roll on BrightFest20!

*Tony Windsor, Secretary and Phil Thompson Treasurer  
On behalf of the newly constituted Brightwell cum Sotwell Music Festival  
(Non-Profit Un-incorporated) Association, Organising Committee*

## Colourful field margins

A post from local farmers in our Community Facebook page is reproduced here with their permission as we felt it would be good to share it more widely because it has had a lot of responses. There are some lovely pictures there too! We hope to have more on farming news in the next issue.

### Dart and Hedges Farming

As this year's pollinator margins are coming to an end, we can look back and see how successful they have been. We had a bloom of the phacelia, crimson and other clovers, vetch, lucerne, ox-eye daisy and corn flower in the crucial period in the year between the spring flowering and the period we have now entered which is the main summer flowering. Our margins provided important food for bees and butterflies over the gap between the two making sure they were able to survive and thrive into the summer. The summer flowering period is the main flow of nectar for pollinators to feed off, coming from plants like: brambles, thistles, lime trees and other trees. The bees will be feeding off this now and no longer be in the margins so much, allowing us to mow them ready for harvest and control some of the undesirable and non beneficial weeds that have grown up in them, keeping them clean for next year.

We have noticed a large increase in bees, particularly bumble bees around the farm and we hope we have helped increase the numbers around this year. Wild

bees are very important for us on the farm as they help pollinate our oilseed rape and winter bean crops alongside the managed honey bee colonies we have on the farm, looked after by Meadow Honey Farm. We farm these to produce cooking oil from the oilseed rape and human or animal feed from the beans. This is a completely voluntary practice we have undertaken as we think the benefits are worth paying for. We want to carry on looking after our pollinators so will be growing more margins in different places on the farm next year. Also we have not sprayed any insecticides on these crops in 2019 as we believe that we can build up natural enemies such as wasps, ladybirds as well as bees that will keep the pests to our crops under control without the need for chemicals.

## The Earth Trust

The Earth Trust at Little Wittenham is now starting planning and preparation work for their River of Life II project. This is a partnership project to create vital wetland habitats that will improve our riverside ecosystems helping to boost biodiversity, slow down and filter water as well as adding interest and beauty to the landscape for people to enjoy. The new habitats will include a small area of wet woodland, sixteen ponds and seven backwater channels. These channels will connect to the main river and provide a refuge for fish and other aquatic wildlife. The project is funded by a Water Environment Grant, from the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development.

River of Life II will create these vital wetland habitats at three locations within the Parishes of Long Wittenham, Little Wittenham and Dorchester-on-Thames. Pre-construction work including ecological surveys and archaeological trial trenching will be carried out in 2019 ahead of a main earth works construction period beginning in spring 2020. The final physical elements of the project, relating to access and interpretation, will be installed towards the end of the project and include new boardwalks which will mean better access to areas of the public footpath.

For further information and updates on this exciting project please visit: [www.earthtrust.org.uk/riveroflife2](http://www.earthtrust.org.uk/riveroflife2).

*Ruby Glasspool*

\*\*\* No room for our 'In brief – round & about' section in this packed edition so in short, for summer activities at the Wallingford Museum and the Wallingford Photographic Club please see page 24 Village Diary & websites [www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk](http://www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk) and [www.wallingfordphoto.club](http://www.wallingfordphoto.club). \*\*\*

# The Villager AGM 2019

The AGM of *the Villager* this year was held on 26 June in the Stewart Room.

There have been no particular issues with the printer, although there are still concerns with the quality of the print which is being monitored. Print teams have produced the magazine without major problems during the year. A little over 700 copies are printed each time. Steve Luck and Trevor Morgan manage the adverts and Angela Lewis and Susanne Tuffrey the text and front cover.

Martin Dix, as advertising manager, is the main contact for our advertisers (who number approx. 50) and he liaises with Charlotte Morgan relating to any advert changes. There are no vacant slots in the advertisements at present and indeed a waiting list! As a result, consideration is being given to printing an extra page of adverts.

Assembly happens on the last Monday every other month in the morning from around 10am. Shena Luck still manages to fill the slots even on bank holiday Mondays, but if anyone knows of a volunteer to add to her list, it is always useful.

George Birt continues as treasurer and has produced his second end of year accounts, ably assisted by Trevor Morgan. There is currently a healthy balance in the bank, mainly from advertising revenue. Steve Luck thanked *the Villager* for the donation from our profits to the village hall's new projector and sound system. The books were audited as usual by Ken Templeton, who was thanked for this.

The editor, Helen Connor, also reported a smooth year. She continues to receive a good range of articles from regulars and newcomers. Although not usually short of material, she welcomes new contributors and ideas. She thanked Angela for her assistance in the publishing process and also Jane Hawker and Gill Dexter who share the proof reading. Helen would like to step back a little and share the editorial process more with others so if anyone would like to help by taking over say one or two of the issues a year, please contact Helen.

As can be seen, *the Villager* is very much a team effort. A big thank you to the committee for their continued support and also the various teams: production, printing, and distribution, not forgetting of course the scores of assembly and distribution volunteers who give their time.

*Anne Brooker, Chairman*

# BcS Environment Group Report

## Millennium Wood

We are planning on creating a wildlife pond in the wood later this year which the scouts have said they would like to help with – an offer gratefully received!

Ponds of any size create a rich and fascinating habitat – indeed I have made two in my garden in the last four years and am amazed by how quickly they are colonised by frogs, newts, dragonflies and all manner of creatures. Many bird species visit the pond including green woodpecker and heron but starlings, blackbirds, gold finches and sparrows do love to bathe. This year our secretary has recently created a small pond which within a few weeks has its own inhabitants.

## Making a pond

A wildlife pond, that is one which is not intended for stocking fish, needs shallow areas and provision of a gently shelving beach sloping up to the normal ground level. This is ideal for birds to bathe in even as the water level drops.

Most ponds will need a liner to hold the water with butyl being a good choice as it gives flexibility with the design and lasts well. Fine gravel/ sand can be used to cover the liner which allows easy creation of beaches. It is also helpful to include a boggy planting within the liner. A key point is to have a water supply and this may readily be provided by fixing a water butt type filler to an existing rainwater downpipe. This can either directly feed the pond or pass through a water butt which can overflow to the pond. The butt can then give an additional supply in dry periods. Some planting of aquatic plants will help aerate the pond and these can be obtained from a specialist water garden centre.

Creating a pond may not be for all and one has to consider safety but one of any size (even an old sink) can benefit wildlife as well as being enjoyable to look at. Further information is available from many sites eg. Freshwater Habitats Trust and Wildlife Gardening Forum.

## Hedgehogs

In the last *Villager* I mentioned about encouraging hedgehogs in the garden. If you have a concern about the rescuing of a hedgehog then a call to Little Foxes 01844 279469 should help.

## Weather

The rainfall at Highlands Farm for May and June was 20.2mm and 68.3mm respectively. For the general area, May was under 50 per cent of the long-term average while June was about 50 per cent above. Overall, for both winter and spring the rainfall has been around 70 per cent. Although May was cooler than average, a warm March and April meant that spring was around 1 deg C hotter than average.

It remains to be seen how our weather will be this summer but the Met Office global temperature forecast suggests that 2019 will be close to record warmth due to climate change and the added effect of El Niño-related warming in the Pacific.

## Events

Thank you to those who visited our stall at the village fete on the hottest day so far this year where we had a map-based treasure hunt and allowed us to contribute a modest sum to the Community Association.

*Steve Capel-Davies BcS Environment Group*

## Brightwell Supporting Refugees

We have had a very successful last few months, raising a fantastic total of almost £1500 in June alone from the BrightFest19 tea tent, St Agatha's summer concert, Wallingford School Fun Run and donations. The trustees would like to thank everyone for their generosity and support. We have a new logo which we will be using to develop our branding and social media presence.

We continue to support the schools in Jordan for refugee children and at Rhino refugee camp high school in North West Uganda. An extract of Jane Hawker's report of her recent visit to the Ugandan school shows how well the school is doing but that more funds are clearly needed.



## Visit to Rhino Camp High School, Arua, North West Uganda

Uganda has welcomed over a million refugees and as such is one of the largest hosting countries in the world. There are over 200,000 refugees living in

Rhino settlement, most of who are from South Sudan. Through our village contacts with the Windle Trust, Brightwell Supporting Refugees has contributed funds towards the building costs of a teacher's house, a dormitory for 60 girls and adjacent washing facilities at the Rhino Camp High School. More latrines are urgently needed.

I was able to visit the school in February this year while staying with family in Kampala. The long day's drive north took us through different terrain, leaving the green of the south behind. It was very hot. The Windle team in Arua town are dedicated teachers and answered my endless questions patiently as we drove in the early morning along tracks rutted by huge UN supply vehicles, through settlements, to the high school. Much of the school is new, and more building is in progress, particularly to accommodate more girls. In the A level Chemistry lesson I visited, only 6 of the 82 students were girls. The teacher was young, sparkly and very committed and the teenage students were attentive and delightfully welcoming. At the moment, many girls risk walking miles to school each day: The boarding facilities will provide a safe environment in which they can expend their energy on learning. They have ambition and are bright friendly young people.

More funds are needed to complete the accommodation for the girls and I hope BSR will be able to continue to donate funds to this new and much needed building.

*Jane Hawker*

## Where BSR funds have gone this month

Following discussion with the head teacher at Hope school we sent £1000 to fit out a new IT /library room. This will also go towards teachers' salaries, bus transport and school food. We have also made a donation of £2000 to the Windle Trust to pay for bath shelters for girls at the high school in Uganda.

## Future events & dates for your diaries

We will be running further fundraising events in the autumn and winter starting with a jazz evening on Friday 27 September at the village hall followed by a Red Lion quiz on Monday 25 November. In addition we are planning some regular book talks /film nights, so look out for further details.

On behalf of our fellow trustees, thanks again for all your support.

*Helen Connor and Ann Linton, co-chairs*

August already and we do not have a meeting with a speaker this month. Instead, we are going to Portsmouth harbour on the 13<sup>th</sup> to visit the new Mary Rose museum and spend the day in the historical Dockyard. There may still be a few places on the coach so if you would like to come (open also to non-WI members), please contact Gill Dexter (837110). In September we have Emma, the shepherdess from Wittenham, telling of her life with sheep. Usual time Tuesday 10th at 7.45pm in the village hall. There will not be any sheep but there might be some buy (baa) products.

Our June meeting was an opportunity to have an antique valued as Simon Jones, auctioneer from Watlington, came along but without his gavel. It was all very helpful and we had some interesting comments on our valuables! Mike Payne came to our July meeting and talked on 'The History of Pinewood Studios', with lots of amusing insights on film stars and anecdotes.

Our garden visits have been very enjoyable and we were lucky with the weather on both occasions to Hidcote and to Broughton Poggs & Filkins gardens. Of course, although all very lovely and a joy to behold, our village gardens are just as nice and it was great to have the opportunity to visit ours in June and support the Open Gardens day by serving teas and cake in the garden of Coombe House, Sotwell.

A big thank you also to the supporters of our stall at this year's village fete and in particular Eastlyn Horsfield who made bees-waxed covers as an alternative to using clingfilm plastic – they sold like hotcakes! We also banned plastic bags on the stall, all part of our campaign to reduce the use of plastic.

Check out our website to find out more about us, [brightwellcumshotwellwi.com](http://brightwellcumshotwellwi.com).

*Margaret Smith*

## Maths tuition

One to one maths tuition available in Brightwell for key stages 3,4 and adults, including functional skills and GCSE (both foundation and higher tier). I have 20 years' experience and have experience with dyslexic and autistic students. References and CV are both available on request.

For further information please contact Tricia Godfrey [tricia@godfreyz.co.uk](mailto:tricia@godfreyz.co.uk) 01491 835147 or 07759 944071.

## VILLAGE DIARY

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### August

- 13 WI trip to the historic Portsmouth Dockyard
- 17 \*Experiment day at Wallingford Museum\*
- 19 Coffee link up at Root One 10-12
- 31 \*Wallingford Photographic Club Exhibition St Mary's Church Hall\*

### September

- 6-8 \*Agatha Christie weekend events ([www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk](http://www.wallingfordmuseum.org.uk))\*
- 10 Village lunch club VH 12.15pm
- 10 WI talk by shepherdess Emma from Wittenham VH 7.45pm
- 12 \*Wallingford Photographic Club Welcome Evening, Crowmarsh Pavilion\*
- 16 Coffee link up at Root One 10-12
- 24 Community Association AGM VH 7.30pm
- 27 Macmillan coffee morning at the Red Lion 10-12
- 27 Brightwell Supporting Refugees Jazz Evening VH 8pm
- 30 Save the Children quiz at the Red Lion RL 7.30-8

### Advance Notice

- 9 October Village Hall AGM
- 12 October 'Get involved in your village'
- 3 December Village Christmas lunch club

### Refuse Collection (Food waste each week)

- Grey bins Thursdays 8 & 22 August  
Thursdays 5 & 19 September
- Green (& brown) bins Thursdays 1, 15 & **Friday** 30 August  
Thursdays 12 & 26 September

### Village website

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