



Let's talk Town!

Town Meeting & ideas wanted for Chippy's future

How can we keep Chipping Norton as a successful & thriving market town?

More houses are coming – but we need investment in our town centre, traffic and road safety, health and education, parking, visitor attractions and even our sewage works! What do you think?

- The Annual Town Meeting on Monday 6 March, 7pm is a chance to find out what's happening and have you say with our Councillors
- WODC are starting a Market Town's study – they want your views, we'd like their money!
- Why not become a Chipping Norton Town Councillor? All 16 seats are up for election in May – you could make difference

More on this in our colour centre pages and in this News about HGVs, lack of sports pitches, sewage, housing developments, and more.

Highlights in this issue

Chippy's Roman town – Historic England review 'remarkable' findings

Housing objections – Can Chippy cope with more homes?

Sewage row goes on – MP defends his record while campaign continues

Coronation Plans – let's celebrate on 6-8 May

Ascott Martyrs – 150th anniversary of women's fight for workers

Moving to Charlbury – who's moving into a changing town?

All in the walls – the ancient craft of drystone walling – in Chippy

A trip to Enstone – what's on offer at the village pubs?

Plus all the Local News, Arts, Sports, Clubs, Schools and your Letters

Music Festival

Come along and enjoy Chippy's 111th Music Festival 10–25 March



Jazz Challenge – 10 March. 2022 winners Weekend Warriors

Acapella Concert – 12 March. The Acafellas sing barber shop



Choir classes – CN Singers will be entering again



Concerts – 14 & 19 March The Adderbury Ensemble and more



And much more: something for everyone. See Arts Page 20 for all details.

Chippy News price increase

Chipping Norton News, still run all by volunteers, goes up to 70p from April – it's been 50p since 1996. The rise is regrettably needed to cover the latest large increase in printing cost. Please see page 3.

The Mayor's SustainaBALL

Last chance for tickets for The Mayor's Charity fundraiser on Saturday 4 March, 7.30pm onwards, in Chipping Norton Town Hall. Wine and Canapé Reception with the Mayor of Chipping Norton; Cocktail-style dining with sharing platters using sustainable sources; Dress Your Best for Less competition; raffle, live music and entertainment. Funds to Bridewell Gardens Charity. Tickets £25 (wearing already worn or charity shop clothes) or £40 new! Details chippingnorton-tc.gov.uk/the-mayors-sustainaball.

HGV plans turn full circle!

Once upon a time – back 18 years, on 1 March 2005, West Oxfordshire District Council (whose job it is to look at these things) declared Chippy's High Street an 'Air Quality Management Area' (AQMA), requiring action to deal with illegal polluting of traffic through town. Oxfordshire County Council (in charge of Highways) legally had to 'act'. So, on 17 October 2008, OCC's proposed solution, agreed by WODC, was an Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP). The action, to quote, was 'to de-trunk parts of the A44 so that heavy goods vehicles are re-routed away from the Town ... changing road signs and imposing vehicle weight limit restrictions on traffic coming into Chipping Norton. ... dependent on consultation with neighbouring authorities, as the A44 signage crosses county boundaries'. WODC's then Tory Cabinet Member David Harvey said, 'People living in Chipping Norton have had to put up with the effects of heavy traffic for many years and so we are pleased to be supporting this proposal', adding that 'we are asking Oxfordshire County Council to seek regional funding for a more significant scheme'.



And in 2023 – déjà vu anyone? Guess what, nothing happened! However, it's still WODC's statutory duty to report the pollution and try to get OCC to act. So when WODC's new 'Alliance' Cabinet came to Chippy in November, Andrew Prosser, the WODC Cabinet member now responsible, optimistically quoted the latest OCC 'Freight Strategy', saying, 'The County Council will consider environmental weight restrictions across the County, particularly areas which are subject to significant levels of HGV traffic, prioritising the towns of Burford, Chipping Norton and Henley-on-Thames'. But of course, for any A44 'corridor' action, adjoining authorities will still have to agree.

Any hope of action? So: same issue, same solution, 18 years on. Will OCC ever achieve anything, and where's the money? WODC's Andrew Prosser wants to 'keep up the pressure'. So WODC have announced a new 'review' of the 15-year-old

AQAP for Chippy. He's set up a new 'Steering Group'. Again they'll review the pollution and look at ideas and actions to deal with the issue. Chippy Town Councillors Sandra Coleman and Mark Walker will join the Group. Mr Prosser says, hopefully, that this will 'provide an opportunity to put pressure on OCC to deliver this proposal for Chipping Norton'. Of course, OCC are in the hot seat to actually do something, as is their Travel and Development Strategy Cabinet Member Duncan Enright (also WODC's Cabinet Member for Economic Development). A year ago he came to a Chippy Town Hall meeting, promising to listen and take action.

Anyone interested can come to the Annual Town Meeting on Monday 6 March at 7pm – and ask Cllr Enright (he's been invited) and our own County, District and Town Councillors how to get a real result this time.

Garden Waste price hike

West Oxfordshire District Council have been trumpeting 'just a rise of a fiver' to their share of Council Tax next year – so up £5 to £119.40 for a Band D taxpayer. But then in the next breath they have announced that Garden Waste bin collection annual subscription licences, due for renewal by 1 April, are likely to rise by 12½% from £40 to £45. A few years back Garden Waste collections were free – included in the main Council Tax. A WODC statement said, 'There are a limited number of things we can raise money on, and green collections are one of them. We are very conscious of the fact that if you put up the price, fewer people will potentially use the service. There is always a balance, and it is clearly not just a financial issue. We genuinely want people to recycle their green stuff.' With suitable places to take green waste being at least half an hour's drive away, subscribing to the collection does make sense with regard to time and fuel costs, but it seems that the Council is just taking the opportunity to raise fees and blame the increase on inflation. For people with large gardens, it is certainly worth making a compost area and composting your green waste, saves on the licence fee and you have a product to enhance your garden. Perhaps small garden neighbours could share a bin? And one more rise – the Council's charges for bulky waste collections such as beds, mattresses, sofas and carpets are likely to go up to £33 for up to four items and £11 per item for up to two extra items from April. The current prices are £30 and £10, respectively, making these 10% rises.



Living Room Cinema plans

Work continues to make progress on the new boutique cinemas being built at the former Harpers Department Store in Chipping Norton's High Street. The new Marketing Manager Genevieve Willis told the News that opening was still scheduled for 'late spring', and a dedicated website with local membership plans should soon be available for booking. A manager for Chipping Norton is also now being recruited. More news in April, and watch social media.

Chippy News price rise



Please would all our readers note that from next month (April) the price of the *Chipping Norton News* will be 70p. After over 25 years at 50p (since 1996!), the News Team have regretfully had to increase the price. The

Team are all volunteers, and so almost all the cost is for printing. Energy and paper cost increases in the current inflation crisis have taken their toll – and each copy costs well over £1 to produce. The News Club aims to break even, with welcome income from our advertisers helping make up the deficit.

We hope everyone will continue to buy the News and find the right coins for our honesty boxes! The subscription price, for any new subscribers, will also be adjusted accordingly. The News team volunteers will do their best to maintain the service of keeping the community informed of ‘all things Chippy’ – and of course are very grateful to all the people who send in regular reports and pictures. The News always has been ‘for the community by the community’.

The News Team always welcomes new volunteers – and in particular would like to hear from any enthusiasts who could assist with the computer work of desktop publishing, perhaps to learn some new skills, and also help spread the load! Others interesting in updating our website and Facebook pages will also be particularly welcome. Contact Jill on chippymail@aol.com or call 01608 643219.

A welcome Christmas dinner!

Chipping Norton Community Church – after the disappointment of a Covid-postponed December Christmas dinner – were delighted eventually to hold a wonderful event for the community on a Saturday in January. They regularly run community suppers in the Town Hall, but this was special! The Town Council’s Facebook pages took up the story of what happened – as



Community Church team rise to the Christmas lunch challenge!!

it turned out to be a bigger team effort than planned. When the Church team arrived at the Town Hall in the morning to begin cooking the Christmas dinner, they found that the Town Hall catering cooker had broken down. An engineer had been called to repair the cooker, but not in time to cater for such a huge group. The Community Church are a resilient and brilliant bunch, and between them managed to get everything cooked in their own homes, and brought back in to feed everyone! The Community Supper, and the work involved in providing a great meal, showed Chippy at its best. All the guests were delighted and had a wonderful Christmas dinner, with all the trimmings, served with huge smiles by students from Kingham Hill School.

Chippy – the Scottish link!

Although we’re right in the middle of the Cotswolds, Burns Night (25 January) was celebrated in style by Chippy folk – young and old(er!). One Team member came across this traditional piper at The Blue Boar. He welcomed the haggis with the traditional Ode by the poet Robert Burns (recited by heart – quite an achievement). Diners also enjoyed a four-course traditional Scottish dinner and a dram as part of the pub’s annual event. Children at the Town



Nursery also took part in celebrations – playing bagpipes, wearing kilts, eating shortbread and home-made tablet, and dancing to Scottish music – all illustrated with these

lively drawings. Residents of Beech Haven Care Home in Chipping Norton also enjoyed Burns Night with Scottish music, tasting haggis and cranachan, a traditional Scottish dessert, reciting poems – all washed down with a shot of whisky in true Scottish style. There were, no doubt, lots more Chippy Burns Night events – Beadles butchers had run out of haggis by early afternoon on the day! What a great way to liven up a dreary January.



Rainier housing concerns

Rainier Developments Ltd, who are promoting land east of Chipping Norton Cricket Club for, initially, 90 homes, held a public consultation exercise in January. The online-only consultation spread via local social media and Rainier told the News that they had received exactly 100 responses. ‘The most common issues noted by respondents were 1) capacity of local services, eg schools and healthcare; 2) traffic congestion; 3) capacity of utilities services; and 4) lack of local employment opportunities,’ Grant Stephenson, Planning Director, said. None of that would be a surprise to local people of course! Rainier also met the Town Council and the adjacent Cricket Club. Mayor Sandra Coleman told the News, ‘One big issue that Rainier have not yet addressed is the provision of a new footpath along Banbury Road into town. This is desperately needed to avoid pedestrians having to cross this busy road. And to encourage people to walk into town. Rainier were also under the impression that there was a bus stop right outside their site with a useful service and so we had to put them right about that as well!’ Martin Elliott, Treasurer of the Cricket Club, said the developer seemed genuinely open to listening to locals’ issues and to potentially altering their proposals.

May Coronation celebrations



This year, with the King's Coronation set for the weekend of 6/7/8 May, Chipping Norton as a community will no doubt be getting into the spirit, waving flags, and joining in the celebrations. Saturday 6 May is set aside for the main Coronation ceremony in London. A big TV audience is expected to watch the build-up and all the grandeur of the occasion.

The idea nationally is that Sunday 7 May will be for all kinds of local community events and joining in The Coronation Big Lunch, organised under the banner of the Eden Project. From a cup of tea with a neighbour to a street party, a Coronation Big Lunch aims to bring people together and is a great way to get to know your community a little better. Ideas and resources can be found at CoronationBigLunch.com. Chipping Norton Town Council is hoping to organise a 'Picnic in the Park' – possibly at the New Street Recreation Ground – and alongside this, neighbourhood street parties – perhaps inspired by the last Coronation's festivities (see photo opposite) are being encouraged. The major Windsor Castle Coronation Concert will be broadcast later in the day.

On Monday 8 May, the Royal Family hope that everyone – including local communities – will get involved in The Big Help Out, where a range of organisations nationally, such as the Scouts, Church and Faith groups, and the Royal Volunteer Service encourage local people to actually do some volunteering – and demonstrate what can be achieved in the community. Local Chippy organisations – and everyone as individuals – can find out more and join in! More details on all of this in the April edition of the News.

With the Coronation weekend as the main May community celebrations, the Chipping Norton Festival Committee, who put in amazing efforts for Chippy's own

Town Festival last year, have decided to pause for this year. They look forward to hearing from anyone interested in



Coronation party on Over Norton Road 1953

Photo courtesy of Chipping Norton Museum

helping out in future years and refreshing the hard-working Committee. Please email cntownfestival@gmail.com.

Diddly Squat Planning Appeal

Into March and Jeremy Clarkson continues his arguments with West Oxfordshire District Council about what he can do at Diddly Squat Farm and its shop. His Appeals against the Enforcement Notice WODC served on his restaurant and against WODC's refusal of planning permission for an extended car park now have their arrangements confirmed. The Appeals will be heard by a Planning Inspector on 14 March at 10am at Committee Room 2, Woodgreen, Witney, OX28 1NB and are currently scheduled to last one day. Interested parties may attend and, at the Inspector's discretion, give their views. Capacity at the venue will be limited, and will be on a first-come basis on the day. Accordingly, WODC ask that anyone wishing to attend should contact them at Planning.Appeals@westoxon.gov.uk, quoting reference number 22/00035/APPEAL and 22/00039/APPEAL so that WODC can advise of any change to arrangements.

A Prime case of publicity?

The forthcoming planning appeal by Diddly Squat's shop (see above) coincides with February's publicity blast for *Clarkson's Farm*. When the second series of Amazon Prime's programme, continuing Jeremy Clarkson's farming travails, launched mid-February, somehow the whole venture seemed to justify two full pages of news and pictures in both *The Witney Gazette* and *Oxford Times*. After Amazon's edited version of the disputes with WODC's planners and councillors



thousands of *Clarkson's Farm* fans endorsed a pro-Diddly on-line petition in support. Then WODC responded with a 500-word press release stressing that they followed planning policy, had given various planning permissions for the shop and had made practical suggestions to Mr Clarkson which had not been taken up. They said that there were clearly pros and cons, but it was also their duty to protect the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and take into account major issues such as highways disruption, safety for visitors, and impact on local neighbourhoods. A 1000+ negative online comments followed!

The launch of *Clarkson's Farm 2* coincided to the day with the Farm Shop reopening. Locals experienced yet more traffic and parking congestion. The long road to Chadlington, in places double parked, became a muddy single track carriageway despite the County Council asking people not to park dangerously on the verges or the main road. Even this received over 1,000 on-line responses. Clearly, the whole saga continues to polarize views, with many often ill-informed comments. The many *Clarkson's Farm* fans and free enterprise supporters might see this as a

new farmers' champion learning about a challenging industry, trying to make an honest crust, striving for some extra non-farming income, and bringing visitors to town. On the other hand, there are many local objectors and citizens who empathise with hard working professional public servants trying to be fair in implementing the rules. Such citizens might see this as a TV personality and global commercial streaming company (Amazon), setting up the whole situation (including the shop and planning showdowns) in order to film and edit a good TV show, attracting millions of subscribers – and making lots of money. Your call!

Anyone wishing to speak should also let WODC know in advance, so they can manage the session so that it runs smoothly for everyone.

Sad end for wychelm



The sad case of the wychelm, a tree whose health seemed to decline after the refurbishment of The Chestnuts near the junction of Spring Street and Over Norton Road, has been followed by the News over the last few years. The dead tree was finally felled this winter – the stump is pictured left. Nick Dalby, WODC's Forestry and Landscape Officer, told the News that he 'hadn't seen any evidence to suggest that the Elm was affected by the

construction work, but the developer is aware he has a duty to replace it.' This location lies within the conservation area, where planning law requires any tree lost to be replaced. Nick added, 'His tree contractor has already supplied a quote to plant a 14–16cm Tilia "Greenspire". I have written to the developer to seek confirmation as to when the replanting will be completed.' The replacement tree is an upright lime, which is usually a good street tree, and the 14–16cm girth suggests that a reasonably sized tree will be planted.

....and ash dieback problems



It's sad to see mature trees felled but sometimes they just come to the end of their life and need to be taken down before falling down and causing damage. So it was with a line of boundary trees along Banbury Road past the Cricket Club, cut down to stumps at the start of the year. The site is close to the Rainier land currently being promoted for housing but Rainier told us they were not responsible for the work. Oxfordshire County Council confirmed that 'The work was undertaken under our instruction due to the trees being in a poor condition generally and, in addition, exhibiting signs of ash dieback. The stumps are due to remain to allow for some regeneration and the hope is that the self-seeded line of ash that had established will be succeeded by other tree species.' There was no mention of planting replacement specimens, which would normally be required if the site was within a conservation area, which it is not. Banbury Road is one of the

few approaches to town that does not have a continuous line of horse-chestnut trees planted by William Bliss.

Ash dieback is a disease spread by spores that settle on ash tree leaves, giving them a burnt appearance. The disease works its way into the tree and down to the roots, making the wood brittle and dangerous. Affected trees are often youngish specimens and can die quickly. The Green Gym is felling similarly affected trees in the Millennium Wood. Some older ash trees may survive, some might regenerate from the stump, and the hope is that some trees will develop resistance, but this seems to be happening slowly, if at all. Ash trees contribute a great deal to our local landscape character, thriving in the Cotswolds due to being tolerant of our limey soil. So locally we might see a change to our landscape, similar to that brought about elsewhere by Dutch Elm Disease 50 years ago.

Cecily's Fund on Radio 4 appeal

Chippy's Radio 4 listeners may have heard the latest Radio 4 Appeal on 4 and 9 February – in aid of Witney-based charity Cecily's Fund – which supports children's education in Africa. The Fund was founded 25 years ago in commemoration of Cecily Eastwood, who, very sadly, was killed in a car crash while volunteering in Zambia. Cecily's parents set up the charity to support families to enable them to have the means and



Noria, who has been supported by Cecily's Fund

opportunity to send their children to school. The Charity says that two-thirds of families with children in Zambia live below the poverty line, with no reliable means of income and, because of that, consistent education for the children cannot be a priority. Cecily's Fund has raised £6 million and helped 20,000 children over the last 25 years, using the money to provide health and social care education and to get children into school. The Radio 4 Appeal told the story of Noria, whose family struggled with poor health and bereavement. Cecily's Fund provided medical help and general support for the family and enrolled Noria into a community school. She is now a teacher, committed to inspiring the next generation. The first of the children who received help from the Charity are now educated adults and many of them maintain links with the charity in gratitude for the support they were given. See www.cecilyfund.org to donate.

The Branch: building progress

Last month saw major developments at No 16 Market Place, Chipping Norton, to turn it into a community hub. This included demolition of the old bank vault and bullion lift in the basement, installation of ramps and conveyor belts within the building to aid access and debris clearance, specialist grout injection in the basement to strengthen the floor, and demolition of the old red-brick extension at the back of the building to make way for the planned Community Hall. The Branch's Emma Kennedy said, 'The hoardings enclosing the builder's compound at the front of the building will also get a

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'makeover' in March, with a covering that will include information and artwork about the purpose and vision for The Branch, as well as updates about the building work. Once again, the team apologise for the disruption and inconvenience caused to businesses, homeowners, shoppers and passers-by due to this work. We are working hard to minimise this with our builders, Savvy Construction, and look forward to being able to open in early 2024'.

Poor show at The Pillars

Residents at The Pillars up Banbury Road, the new Bloor housing development, had been frustrated at two important facilities, still not open after two years. First, a new safe traffic-light pedestrian crossing had, for several months,



The long-awaited crossing lights were finally switched on in mid-February

been 'ready to go' for residents to cross the busy A44 main road safely to walk into Town along the only pavement. It's at the Town end of the 100-home estate, with one resident telling the News that the 'unopened' crossing had been doubly dangerous as some residents assumed it is a safe place to cross. Traffic sometimes speeds at more than the 40mph limit. Bloor built the crossing, and a switch-on had been planned for November but nothing happened. The News contacted Bloor Homes and County Councillor Geoff Saul, who was told by County Highways that a switch-on was planned for 16 February. It's now done! Bloor Homes told the News that they accepted 'it had taken longer than hoped' and confirmed the February switch-on.



The second issue was the nearby recently closed and fenced-off new playground, just off the main road, with equipment ready for action for several months. This was also built by Bloor, but handed to a

property management company, Trinity Estates, to run with residents paying charges. Residents had apparently been told that Trinity had been 'waiting for the grass to grow' but then 'were waiting for the grass to be mowed'. Again, when contacted, Bloor apologised and said, 'the play area has now passed safety checks and the fencing has been removed'. It's now open! Users might note: don't try ringing Trinity on the number on this nearby notice (0345 0345 01584) – it's nonsense. The correct number is 0345 345 1584. Try that!

... but grit bins coming

One piece of good news for residents at The Pillars is that, after requests from residents worried about ice and snow, Chipping Norton Town Council offered to pay for two grit bins, which the County Council have agreed to supply and fill with grit each season ready for the icy weather.

Inside the Albion Centre

The Albion Centre – nestled behind The Fox in Chipping Norton – is run by Guideposts Trust Charity as a social space for adults with learning difficulties and related conditions. Last month, one user's parent, Carole Fagg, wrote about the welcome offered



Steph and some of the Albion team

there. This month she tells us more about how the centre runs and why it is an important part of its users' lives. The Albion provides a safe place to build on life skills and keep learning more personal skills such as self-confidence. But, above all else, Albion is a fun and jolly place to be too, it provides activities to fill a great day suited to each individual. Carole continued, 'Overseeing the organised jollities, we have a team of nine (both male and female) including one volunteer, looking after 18 clients plus two more receiving outreach support in their own homes over the five days we are open. At the forefront is team leader Steph, with Albion for almost 19 years starting as a support worker and working up through the ranks. Steph's second-in-command Laura, eight years at Albion, is keen that users of the centre gain independence, have their lives opened up as they access community living and follow their own interests not always available at home. Our newest staff member, joining last September, is Lily; with her youth she brings fresh eyes and new ideas. She tells me her imagination is often tested whilst trying to keep up with plans and ideas though it is great fun making things happen'.

One 'happening' is a pamper session on Wednesday afternoons. Carole popped in early while waiting for her daughter and her group to come back from Drama at the Theatre. She said, 'The room was rather peaceful and relaxing allowing Julie and Emma to enjoy hand and foot creams and a rather professional manicure was being applied – I was not invited to partake – the Drama group arrived soon afterwards full of amazing energy, rather putting an end to the peace and quiet, it was lovely whilst it lasted ...' Look out for more in coming months from Carole and others about The Albion in our Clubs section.

Great Rollright Bingo

All are invited to the next Bingo night on Friday 24 March at Rollright Village Hall. It's a fun evening for young and old and a chance to win cash prizes! Doors open 7pm, games start at 7.30pm and it's normally finished at 9.15pm. There will be a bar and refreshments too. This is a non-profit making event and all proceeds go towards local causes. Watch out for local

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posters. Following dates: 21 April and 26 May. Eyes Down Look In! For further info, email grrbingo@aol.com.

New life for Quiet Woman?



*The original Quiet Woman Pub demolished in 1959
(permission sought from Edgars)*

The Quiet Woman Antiques Centre on the A44 at Southcombe looks set to return to its historic hospitality use. Bamford Property Ltd, a private limited company and part of the Bamford empire, has submitted a planning application to convert the building to a restaurant. This shows seats for 44 diners plus two outdoor terraces, a small shop and a small first floor event or meeting room. Car parking would increase from 20 to 32 spaces and the building would be refurbished with the addition of larch shingles. The floor plan suggests a 'diner-style' experience – referred to in the planning application as 'Southcombe Restaurant'.

The Quiet Woman began trading as a public house around 1870 when William Harris, seeing an opportunity to provide refreshments to workers rebuilding the nearby Heythrop Mansion, started selling beer from his rented cottage. The cottage owner, George Tompkins, took over the business himself in 1879 but his wife apparently didn't like running a pub so she refused to speak to the customers – hence the pub becoming known as The Quiet Woman. And this is how it reportedly appears on the 1881 licence register. The original stone building was demolished in 1959. A timber

replacement burnt down in 1967, was rebuilt, and in the 1970s/80s was bought by the restaurant chain Happy Eater (see box). They ran it for some years before it became an antiques centre in the mid-1990s, keeping The Quiet Woman name. The new planning application states that some of the Happy Eater internal finishes remain today but it is not clear whether these are to be retained. Given the story behind the name, it might be nice if The Quiet Woman name also lived on!

Train daytrip to the seaside

Chippy may be miles from the seaside – but on Saturday 22 April you can make a special train trip all the way to Paignton and the Devon riviera! The Cotswold Line Promotion Group (CLPG) is delighted to announce its first charter train excursion since 2019. A nine-car GWR Intercity train will make the trip to Taunton, Exeter and Paignton on 22 April,



starting from Oxford at 6am, via Worcester to Somerset and Devon. It will arrive at Worcester at 7.36am and the final destination, Paignton, at 10.41am. The return journey leaves at 15.54, so plenty of time for a paddle and an ice cream. The train will arrive at Oxford at 18.53 and its final destination, Worcester, at 20.22, stopping at all stations en route. Tickets are available at £55 for adults and £30 for children 5–16. Younger children go for free. For booking forms and further details go to the website clpg.online or contact Chris Bates at 07803 902030 before 7.30pm. The CLPG is a voluntary group founded in 1978 to safeguard and promote improvements to rail and bus feeder services along the Oxford to Hereford railway, known as the Cotswold Line. It is supported by members' subscriptions, donations and legacies.

Who remembers the Happy Eater?

The 'Happy Fast Fry', the 'Bangercake'? The ubiquitous logo, the yellow formica tables with bright red trim? The collectable Happy Eater caps and badges? Did you drag your parents there or were you a parent, dragged there by your child in search of a free Lego toy and a turn in the plastic animal-themed playground? Never haute cuisine, but it offered reliable family fare and was popular with families at weekends and business people during the week.

The Happy Eater chain was founded in 1973 by a former Managing Director of Trust House Forte to compete with Little Chef, and offered a similar menu of fast food, modelled on the American diner. These roadside restaurants were a sort of coaching inn of the motor era and Chippy boasted one of each along the A44. At their peak, there were 75 Happy



Eater restaurants, mainly in the Midlands and South East. But, just as railways contributed to the demise of the coaching inn, construction of the motorways reduced long-distance travel along trunk roads. In 1986 Trust House Forte, owners of the Little Chef chain, bought the Happy Eater brand, bringing their restaurants to a total of 439. Many of these were in fact competing against each other, as here in Chippy where the Little Chef at Chapel Cross roundabout was only a mile or so away from the Happy Eater. By 1997 all Happy Eaters had either been converted to Little Chefs or closed, as in Chippy. The Little Chef restaurants eventually ceased trading in 2018 after a slow demise, although that at Chapel Cross had already closed in the mid-1990s. The Happy Eater brand is now registered in Kuwait.

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Improvements to car parking and station waiting rooms have been a part of their success story.

'Fall fighters' at 'Come for Tea'



The team from Southerndown Care Home in Chipping Norton had an amazing reception for their 'fall fighters' talk at the 'Come for Tea' session at St Mary's Parish rooms. Stacey from Southerndown said, 'It was an absolute pleasure to present our Barchester Healthcare/RoSPA campaign to increase awareness of how to prevent the pain and distress caused by falls in our local community. The talk was informative and useful and it was great to meet so many new people in our local community'.

Shoplifting in Chippy

Regular police crime reports continue to show a level of shoplifting in Chipping Norton – with much also unreported (see box below). Chippy District Councillor Mike Cahill and Town Councillor Sharon Wheaton were out visiting local shops and stores in early February talking to retailers about what they say is a growing problem. Mike said they identified some key issues and potential steps to take to make Chippy a less attractive place for shop thieves. He told the News, 'We heard that there is no point calling the police because they won't do anything. We stressed that the police should always be informed. The problem is such that there is at least one case of a retailer being unable to put some products on display because it is too easy to pinch them and run. The potential knock-on effect is that people stop shopping in the

Town and more shops close.' Some suggestions were made, including a get-together of retailers and for a diary to be kept of incidents. Mike promises to report on next steps and stresses that this is a community problem for all residents not just for retailers.

Big changes for S3 & 7 buses

Stagecoach have announced changes to the S3 and 7 buses from 5 March, which affect routes between Chipping Norton, Woodstock and Oxford. The detailed S3 changes will mainly affect timings in the peak morning and afternoon, and evenings and Sundays. All services will now serve Oxford Railway



Station. There are more significant changes to the 7 which many Chippy residents change onto at Woodstock to reach Oxford Parkway, Summertown and 700 P&R services to the hospitals. The route is to be changed. The number will now be called S7 and will no longer go into Oxford Parkway. Instead, passengers will need to get on and off at the stops on the main road near the railway bridge before the Parkway turn-in. Like the S3, all S7 buses will serve Oxford Railway station. Instead of terminating at Woodstock, the S7 from Oxford will continue to Witney via Bladon, Hanborough and North Leigh, replacing the current 233. (Burford will be served by shorter routes 233 and 234 from Witney with some detailed changes to route). The new timetables can be downloaded from the Stagecoach website. Enter your location as Chipping Norton and click on Service Updates which will bring up the links to the new timetables.

Shoplifting up as inflation hits

The worst inflationary price rises in 40 years are thought to be fuelling a big increase in shoplifting – especially in supermarkets. Chipping Norton is not immune from the problem. Police recorded 40 cases in Chippy over 12 months – but many are missed or unreported. Consumer champion Martyn James said numbers could be 'much higher' as local supermarkets are 'reluctant to report' some instances of shoplifting. *The Retail Gazette* reports a 16% rise in shoplifting, noting a big increase in 'essentials' going missing – with Tesco and Sainsbury's accounting for a whopping 40% of all shoplifting offences. Retail specialist Scanwatch say first-time shoplifters are targeting self-checkouts – which account for 90% of supermarket cases. Tesco talk of 'desperate' people turning to shoplifting



Security tagged cheese

amid the cost-of-living crisis – with basics such as milk, cheese, butter and lamb chops being targeted.

All the main supermarkets report using more security measures. Tesco Chairman John Allan said shoppers will see extra security tags on food as well as an increased security presence in-store. Some basic foods are being 'tagged' such as blocks of cheese (see Aldi picture with tags on £3.99 blocks of cheddar), meat and baby milk. Last year Sainsbury's were rolling out technology that detects and videos shoppers placing items in their pocket or coat. In Chipping Norton, the News team heard of more examples of people being stopped at supermarket exits to check they'd paid with advice to always take a receipt from the self-checkouts.

Help at hand at Chippy Library



Thank you to everyone who joined us in the library for February's Cost of Living Support Event pictured here. Great to see so many support agencies giving face-to-face advice in one place.

Do you need help with your phone, laptop, or tablet? AgeUK come to the Library for Gadget and IT Support every other Tuesday afternoon. AgeUK Oxfordshire volunteers can help you be safe online, stay informed, and digitally connected. You could learn about staying in touch with family and friends over Skype or

Zoom, online shopping, setting up an email account, or joining virtual groups – all on your own gadget. For more information and to book your place contact AgeUK Oxfordshire on 01235 849434 or email network@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

Did you know that if all food currently put in Oxfordshire's rubbish bins was recycled, it would save more than £2 million each year? You can recycle food waste that's not suitable for garden composting in your kerbside collection including meat, fish, dairy, and cooking oil. Oxfordshire Libraries are helping promote food waste recycling by providing residents with a free roll of food waste caddy liners. Pick one up from the library on Goddards Lane to start food waste recycling.

Sally Moore – Library Manager

Chippy's Roman discoveries

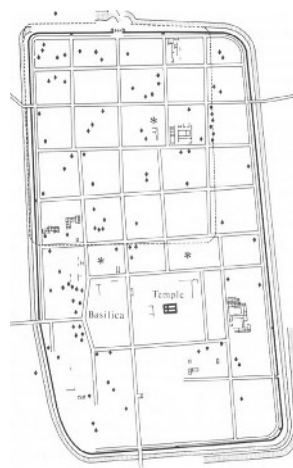
Evidence of a sizeable Roman settlement has been found very near Chippy. A group of local people with an interest in archaeology commissioned a professional non-invasive magnetometer survey of land they believed held some archaeological interest. And they were proved right! Although the land they surveyed is not that allocated for development in WODC's Local Plan, the implications of their findings might affect the officially allocated Local Plan land. So, out of respect for adjacent land-owners, the Chipping Norton Archaeological Research Group (CHARG), kept the detailed report under wraps for over two years while awaiting progress at the nearby East Chipping Norton development site. However, with progress there seemingly stalled, the group arranged to reveal the results of the investigations they'd commissioned, to the Town Council's 'Build Chippy Better' group on Monday 27 February. CHARG member Jane Beaufoy told the News, 'Our discovery shows that an historically important site lies on our doorstep. It could yield valuable information about the Roman origins of Chipping Norton and needs due consideration and protection'.

CHARG sent their report to all the relevant authorities – Historic England (HE), WODC and the County Archaeologist last year. The County also asked for further



investigations on other land controlled by Cala Homes who commissioned trial trenches north of Glyme Lane last summer. CALA said these findings have also been sent to HE but not yet been revealed publicly.

HE is responsible for determining the importance of archaeological findings and makes recommendations to the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, who may decide, if a site is of national importance, to Schedule it as an Ancient Monument – the highest level of protection. Archaeology of lesser importance is added to the Historic Environment Register, held locally, and is subject to planning policies. It may take some time before any decision about Chipping Norton is made. Mayor and Town Councillor Sandra Coleman commented that 'These findings are very exciting historically – and need to be carefully considered alongside planning applications for housing so we can be sure proper space is left for our proposed new school and community facilities. A local Roman might have said "abundans cautela non nocet" or "you can never be too careful!"'



Layout of Colchester, a Roman town – might a settlement in Chippy have looked similar??

Dealing with double fuel bills!

In February, a national survey showed that average West Oxfordshire and Chipping Norton households are paying almost twice as much as last winter to fuel their homes. Water companies' bills will be increasing by 7½%, grocery prices are up by at least 16% and bank lending rates of 4% are hitting mortgages. Everywhere we look, prices are on the increase. Where to start? Contact your utilities provider if you are struggling. It's not easy, but persevere and discuss a financial plan with your supplier. By example, Thames Water has a financial help section on their website. If your household is on a low income, you may be able to get a 50% discount on your bills.

On energy, it's still tough – with current charging rates capped by the Government, average households on a variable tariff would be paying around £2,483 per year to run their home. Energy consultancy firm Cornwall Insights predicts the price cap regulated by Ofgem will sit at approximately £3,500 between April and June – though the typical household will be charged £3,000 at most during this period under the Government's Energy Price Guarantee. The energy price cap is then expected to drop below Government support levels in July. Cornwall forecasts that energy bills will be around £2,800 for the average household in the final two quarters of 2023.

But with all the cost of living issues, there is a lot of local help. Go to westoxon.gov.uk/costoflivingsupport to find out what support your District Council is providing to individuals and to community groups. Many of our Councils and Voluntary Organisations work together to provide support. In Chipping Norton, St Mary's Church, the Food Bank and others are contactable – as is the Chippy Larder, which has

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been going well beyond their initial remit of weekly food supplies to advise and help. They have been running sessions where organisations like Citizens Advice, Cottsway Housing, Age UK, and others have come together to be available to residents needing help. See their Facebook page for the latest.

Free exercise at Cottsway

The founder of 'Living in Fitness', Carl Davis, has received a grant from Cottsway Community Fund for the purposes of promoting exercise for their residents. Mr Davis, a fitness instructor, is keen to get the over-55s exercising and is



Free Cottsway exercise classes

using the grant to offer free online exercise classes, which will be led by him. Residents at Cottsway will be encouraged to book their place and join in with one live 30-minute class each weekday morning and there will also be 32 on-demand sessions, which can be accessed at any time. The classes will run from 1 March to 31 August. Residents of all ages can now apply. Places will be allocated on a first come, first served basis. So, residents of Cottsway, on with the leggings and make the best of this wonderful opportunity. For further details visit cottsway.co.uk/news/fitness-offer.

Methodist Church update

Cuppa and Chat are back meeting every Wednesday from 9.30–11.30am, with a warm welcome whether it's your first time or you're a regular. Knit and Natter continues throughout the morning – with knitted items recently sent to

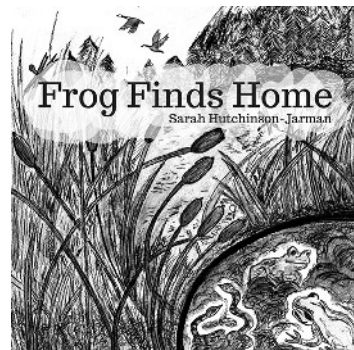


the JR's SSNAP baby unit, plus knitted scarves, hats, and gloves to Nepal. On 1 March the group will be supporting the Methodist Home Missions charity, then on 5 April, it's Dogs for Good with a speaker (plus dog!) giving more information on what funds raised will be used for. Then there's Crafty Cuppa and Chat on Monday 13 March from 10am to 12 noon. There's a new Fellowship Group starting on 6 April at 2.30pm and the first Thursday of month from then on. The first speaker will be Lela Burbridge, co-author of *Lela: Ashes of Childhood*, admission free and everyone welcome.

Elaine Parsons

Launch of Frog Finds Home

The News previously covered the launch of *Lela: Ashes of Childhood*, a book about local resident Lela Burbridge's childhood upbringing in Africa. Now Lela and co-author Sarah Hutchinson-Jarman have collaborated on a new children's picture book named *Frog Finds Home*.

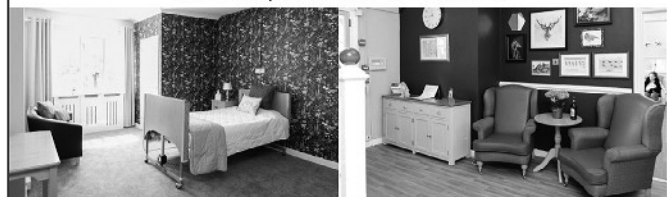


Lela has also gone on to start her own publishing company, The Lela Initiative – a not-for-profit organisation that uses proceeds from book sales to fund libraries across Uganda, giving children access to books that they would otherwise not have the opportunity to read. Helping to promote literacy in rural communities, the Initiative will be celebrating their official launch party in early April but until then are being kept very busy with the launch of the new picture book. Written and illustrated by Sarah Hutchinson-Jarman, *Frog Finds Home* is a delightful hardback book based on the adventures of a small frog on the hunt for a new home. The book launches on 2 March, World Book Day, and Sarah, listed as one of the 2023 ChipLitFest authors, is already booked up with interactive talks in local schools to promote the release. The Lela Initiative also offers local schools the chance to 'twin' with their libraries across Uganda. Schools are taking part in 'dress up days' to help raise money and awareness for the cause. Look out for more on the Initiative's work over the coming months. In the meantime, you can order Sarah's book from thelelainitiative.org/shop/p/frog-finds-home or find it in Jaffé & Neale in Chipping Norton.



At the last CQC Inspection in 2018 obtained all 'GOOD' category, updated again in 2023

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Town Council's new benches

As part of their continued programme, Chipping Norton



Town Council recently completed the installation of three new benches. One, in memory of Labour Councillor and campaigner Eve Coles, stands overlooking the New Street Recreation Ground. A second, in memory of former Mayor and Honorary

Citizen John Grantham, is installed halfway up the New Street hill near Diston's Lane. The bench faces inwards towards nearby houses rather than having the view of the road and up and down hill. Oxfordshire Highways had advised against that. A third, now in the Millennium Gardens along West Street,



was donated by the Freemasons in memory of those lost through Covid. Onwork in progress, also for the Millennium Gardens, a large crescent-shaped bench suitable for families and groups, is awaiting the Town Council's decision on an appropriate base and surface on which to mount it. The bench at the top of New Street in memory of former



Mayor Gina Burrows has been refurbished but is still missing after several months (see bottom picture), awaiting better weather. Finally, the refurbished bench in the High Street (near the Kebab van spot) remembering former Mayor Rob Evans, is still awaiting its plaque.

Coffee time at Watson Place

Would you like a chance to explore the possibilities of Watson Place Retirement Living Development on Trinity Road? Called 'Welcome Wednesday', you will be assured of a warm welcome with coffee and light refreshments on Wednesdays whilst you get a sense of what Watson Place has to offer. These open-house events have been created to provide an opportunity for you to get a taste of the lifestyle available. Come along, with your family and friends if you wish, meet homeowners who have already moved in, and hear from them their experience of life in the development. You will be

able to judge for yourself how you may continue to live your own independent and active lifestyle, whilst being part of a vibrant and sociable community. You will also be able to have a tour of the show apartments and to be introduced to the on-site Estate Manager. 'Welcome Wednesdays' are on Wednesday mornings between 10.30am and noon in the communal lounge at Watson Place.

Wigwam's 'drive-up' storage

Wigwam Storage – up at the old Countrywide Stores site on the Hook Norton Road, is now providing new 'drive-up' storage units – which allow customers to conveniently unload their belongings directly from their vehicles. With a range of sizes available, customers should find the perfect unit to meet their storage needs. The new drive-up units have the latest security features, including 24/7 CCTV surveillance and individual intruder alarms – to keep customers' goods safe and secure. You can store your items for as little as two weeks or for an indefinite period, the choice is yours. Wigwam also offer 'a man and van' service and self-van hire, making it easy for you to transport your belongings to your new storage unit. There's a packaging shop in reception, where you can purchase double-skinned cardboard boxes, tape, and packaging paper, ensuring that your items are properly protected during storage. The Wigwam team invites everyone to call in and see the units for yourself, have a site tour and see all the storage options. Whether you're moving house, decluttering your home, or simply need extra space, Wigwam Storage hopes to have you covered. More at www.wigwamstorage.co.uk.

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Langston Home wins award



The Langston team pictured outside the Nursing Home proudly display their Award

The Langston Nursing Home, located near Kingham, has been awarded a national Gold Standards Framework (GSF) Quality Hallmark Award for its delivery of end-of-life care during the pandemic. The last two years have, of course, been an incredibly difficult time for all health and social care providers. Awards, recognising health and social care providers delivering quality care in the final year of life, were presented at the GSF Conference and Awards ceremony last October in London. The Langston is one of 75 care homes, hospitals, hospices, primary care practices, retirement villages, and domiciliary care agencies, that received the prestigious GSF quality hallmark during the ceremony. To find out more visit www.goldstandardsframework.org.uk/

Coming up at Katharine House

Our calendar for the coming months is already packed! Join this year's **Moonlight Walk** on Saturday 20 May and get ready to MOVIE! Choose from a six-mile or ten-mile walk and help us put the FUN into fundraising, by dressing as a favourite movie character – from Darth Vader to Disney princesses. See www.khh.org.uk/moonlight. Remember a loved one at the **Rose to Remember** event this June. Buy your hand-crafted metal rose, designed especially for Katharine House, and dedicate it to the life and memory of someone special – it will join a stunning installation at

Surinderpal Singh, LL.M TEP Solicitor

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Sulgrave Manor for two weeks in June. See www.khh.org.uk/rose-remember. Why not take part in this year's **Open Garden** scheme this year? Find out what it involves at www.khh.org.uk/gardens. Could you **volunteer** for the Hospice, either regularly or occasionally? There are shop volunteers, gardeners, hospice companions, receptionists, and patient drivers. More at www.khh.org.uk/volunteering. Call in the Chipping Norton shop – or if you can't get there, try shopping online at www.khh.org.uk/ebay. Sign up for regular news at www.khh.org.uk/newsletter.

Train to be a Lido lifeguard

At the heart of The Lido in Chipping Norton are a wonderful team of lifeguards, who span many different ages and backgrounds, and are the ambassadors for fun and safety in the water. Would you like to train and work as a lifeguard for The Lido? You need to attain the National Pool



Lifeguarding Qualification (NPLQ), and there is a course for brand new lifeguards running at The Lido from 3–8 April. On successful completion of the course, the NPLQ allows you to start work immediately and build on your new skills as part of our friendly, supportive team. Being a lifeguard is a sociable and fulfilling role, opening doors to many opportunities and teaching valuable lifesaving skills. The NPLQ can be used to find work anywhere in the UK and is also an internationally respected qualification. The course costs £295 per candidate, and you need to be fully available from 3–8 April, aged at least 16 (no upper age limit). You should be a strong swimmer and have a reasonable level of fitness. Places are limited so please register your interest or ask for information by emailing info@chippylido.co.uk

Claire Jarvis

Moving down to Charlbury

Charlbury looked set to creep its way up the tabloid ratings with the news of a possible move there by former Prime Minister Boris Johnson. Last month, the national press was speculating about his house-hunting in Oxfordshire but couldn't quite agree on where. But, perhaps fuelled by a New Year's Eve pub appearance, *The Times Diary* said he is 'believed to have found an ideal private property near Charlbury ... and may move in the summer'. Charlbury.info, the Town's online forum, seemed to confirm this with report of purchase of an old nearby listed property. But then *The Guardian* reported purchase of a mansion near Wallingford and repeated stories of the MP 'looking for a safe Oxfordshire seat' in the next general election. Meanwhile speculation started about candidates for our three new parliamentary

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constituencies. Charlbury (now in a re-organised Banbury seat) is only a stone's throw from all three different constituencies after boundary changes: Robert Courts' Witney, Victoria Prentis' Banbury, and a vacant new seat of Bicester and Woodstock.



In other Charlbury news, the closed Bell Hotel has recently been bought by one of the Daylesford companies. The Town, with a population approaching 3000, is described by Charlbury.info as 'sequestered down winding B roads ... a vibrant yet picturesque Oxfordshire town, a centre for festivals, welcoming pubs, ideal for walking and cycling ...



always something going on'. For a nostalgic view of Charlbury life you might try R F Leslie's *Six Years in a Country Town* (if you can find a rare copy), full of old reports from the *Charlbury News*. The population now is a real mix of old and new local families, retirees, the odd celebrity (at one point even a former Archbishop of Canterbury), Oxfordshire commuters, escapees from Oxford and London, second homers, and increasingly holiday lets and Airbnbs. Charlbury punches above its weight with its own mainline station to London, rumoured to have been saved from closure in the 1970s as British Rail Chair Sir Peter Parker lived there and needed to get to work! He even had a railway locomotive named after him!

Trustees for CPRE Oxon

Due to recent retirements, the Campaign to Protect Rural England is looking for an Honorary Secretary and Board Member for the Oxfordshire branch. Do you care about your local countryside? This is an excellent opportunity to play an influential role in a respected and long-standing environmental charity. Application deadline is ideally by 30 March 2023. For further info, please contact Branch Director, Helen Marshall at director@cpreoxon.org.uk or telephone 01491 612079. See www.cpreoxon.org.uk.

Caravan site planning appeal

The caravan site now established on the Over Norton Road was the subject of a Planning Appeal heard at West Oxfordshire District Council's offices on 7 February. The family who bought the site had moved there from the heavily overcrowded Beeches site near Chipping Norton. Their application for planning permission had been refused by WODC some time ago – and this finally was the family's opportunity to appeal. The meeting was attended by residents at the site (the appellants), their lawyer and a representative from the Local Planning Authority. Three residents of Over Norton Road observed the proceedings. The Chair of the Appeal heard a wide range of issues including: potential impact on the Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty; the conservation of flora and fauna; whether there could be suitable provision for utilities; the personal circumstances of the occupiers and a general overview of the need for the site.

Number 66 Over Norton Road faces the caravan site directly across the valley and the owner put forward objections to the site. WODC's planning officer's case against the Appeal included nearby views being spoiled, and unregulated utilities. The Appellants' lawyer provided counter arguments to all the points made and the residents' spokesman argued for the social need for the young families to have an established place to live, not least so that the children could have consistent access to education. His arguments were supported by a letter from the head teacher of Chadlington Primary School, the school attended by the children from the site. Both County and District have some responsibility to provide adequate sites in the area for local

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LOCAL NEWS

traveller families, and this appears still to be an issue. The meeting lasted nearly all day, and the Appeal Chair was due to visit the site. At the time of writing, the outcome was still to be decided.

Lawrence Team news



On behalf of everyone at LHNT, we would like to extend our grateful thanks to Gail Ambrose who recently retired as Nurse Co-ordinator after 24 years of service. Gail joined LHNT in 1999 as a Registered Nurse before becoming Nurse Co-ordinator 10 years ago. Gail has written a piece for the Lawrence Home Nursing Team website and said, 'I have always had an interest in palliative care. I feel honoured and privileged to

be involved with the families at such a difficult time. To me the patient and the family are equally important and if we can give them a 'good death' then we have done a good job'. We are recruiting for the vital roles of Registered Nurse Manager and Bank Nurse Co-ordinator. The Registered Nurse Manager plays a pivotal role in overseeing that the charity maintains the high clinical and professional standards it is renowned for. Acting as the central point of contact for end-of-life patients and their families, carers and the Primary Care Team, the Bank Nurse Co-ordinator is involved throughout a patient's palliative care journey. Guided by the patients' needs and wishes, the Nursing Team are able to offer truly holistic and tailored care that's right for the individual. Excellent remuneration package and benefits for both roles.

Please visit www.lawrencehomenursing.org, email office@lawrencehomenursing.org, or call 01608 641549 for more information.

On the fundraising side, Proms, Picnic & Fireworks is back in 2023 and taking place at Chivel Farm, Heythrop on Saturday 8 July. Pick your spot in the glorious gardens, unpack your picnic, and settle in for an evening of spectacular entertainment from The Salomon Brass ensemble with their guest soprano. Tickets are £25 pp if booked before Sunday 2 July. Children under 18 go free. The outdoor bar will be provided by Potted Goose Event Catering. Thanks to our sponsors, Wise Funds and Wheelers Chipping Norton.

Verity Fifer

Farewell old friends

Robin Howard 1928–2023

Robin moved to Chipping Norton from Shropshire with his wife, Mary, in August 2008 to be near family who lived in Chippy. Soon, he was involved with community life including Amnesty International, Christian Aid, Probus,



Chipping Norton Choral Society, and U3A, where he set up an Architectural Group. Robin and Mary thoroughly enjoyed the local Book Group. Robin also attended the Literature Lectures at Charlbury and other highlights included many social outings arranged by Pat Lake. Robin, a retired priest, covered many services in Chipping Norton and the surrounding villages until he was 90. In early December 2022, Robin became unwell after suffering a heart attack. Following this, he was looked after at home by the Lawrence Home Nursing Team. He died on 3 January at the age of 94½ (an age he remarked on with pride, as the longest living 'Howard' for 205 years on his family line!). The family is very grateful for all the wonderful support from the local community and his funeral was attended by 170 friends and family.

Leon Moody 1949–2022



The News was sad to learn that Leon Moody, known to many in Chipping Norton, passed away aged 73 on 13 December 2022 after a long illness. His funeral was held on 30 January 2023 followed by a burial at Chipping Norton cemetery. Leon's son, Mark Moody, sent this: 'My Dad lived in the Chipping Norton area for nearly 40 years and many of you will remember him for the two pet shops he ran in New Street and where Gill & Co is now, his many years dealing in antiques, doing his auctions and working at Kingham Station. I would like to thank friends and family for all their support over the last month and the kind donations to Cardiac Risk in the Young and Cancer Research UK that my Dad would have loved. Also, a special thanks to A L Sole & Son for their wonderful support and making sure my Dad had the wonderful, dignified send-off he deserved.'

Celebrating the Ascott Martyrs

June 2023 sees celebrations marking the 150th anniversary of action by 16 local women who fought for better pay for farm workers. It made national news – and Chippy's Police Station has a place in their story! Paula Nielsen-Tickner, a Trustee of the Ascott Martyrs Educational Trust (AMET) tells us about their plans:

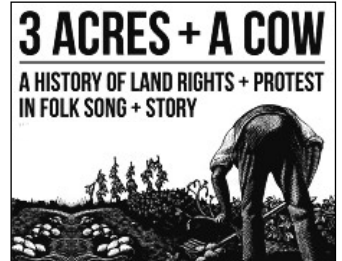


people and life in an Oxfordshire village in the later 19th century. The story of the Martyrs is an important part of our local history. In May 1873 sixteen woman tried to prevent two youths working in place of men from the village who were striking in an attempt to improve their meagre wages. The women, two of whom had babies, were subsequently tried, convicted, and imprisoned with hard labour in Oxford Gaol. Their case was soon national news, resulting in a surge of support for the women and the Agricultural Workers Union. Questions were asked in the House of Commons and a royal warrant was issued to relieve them of the hard labour to which they had been committed. Their sentences served, the women returned home where great celebrations ensued on 20 June. Thereafter some emigrated, whereas for others life continued much as before. For further information about the Martyrs, their story and others involved in this event visit the AMET website: www.AscottMartyrs.co.uk, or follow us on Facebook.



Fanny Rathband (nee Honeybone) the last surviving 'martyr', who died in 1939, was a 16-year-old glove-maker in 1873

150th Celebrations – A full programme is available on the AMET website but highlights include: **Saturday 17 June** a family/local history afternoon in the Tiddy Hall. **Saturday 24 June** Folk artists 3 Acres + a Cow will bring their nationally acclaimed show to Ascott, starting at 7pm. This special show features additional material to mark the 150th anniversary of the Martyrs and includes performances of songs about the Martyrs by local folk artists. Buy tickets via www.wegotickets.co/event/568374 or from AMET email: ascottmartyrsinfo@gmail.com. **Sunday 25 June** a cricket match will see the Martyrs pitted against the Establishment!



you to Ascott to join us in enjoying the celebrations.

Join us to enjoy traditional teas and trails that explore the Martyrs' story and the village itself, or visit the Church to view the stunning contemporary hanging, pictured left, that celebrates the Martyrs and their community. We look forward to welcoming

The important fight of the Martyrs

To link with the 150th anniversary year, a new book is being launched. One of the Trust's founders Paul Jackson previews *The Ascott Martyrs – Why did the rural establishment imprison 16 women and two babies in 1873?* edited by Keith Laybourn

For many the Martyrs' story was just a 'local difficulty', however the book (67,000 words and 53 illustrations) expands the story and fully recognises the national furore with letters to *The Times* from lawyers, Union officials and the farm labourers themselves. Leading articles in *The Observer* and *Spectator* challenged the role of clerical magistrates. There was also a Union demonstration of 5,000 in Hyde Park, a major riot in Chipping Norton and questions in Parliament. The book pulls together the work of five academics in their specialist subjects together with five local historians and covers the rise of the Agricultural Workers Union, the unsatisfactory role of women in the 19th century and the pressure on tenant farmers.

THE ASCOTT MARTYRS



Why did the rural establishment imprison sixteen women and two babies in 1873?

Edited by
KEITH LAYBOURN

The role of the various religious denominations was also important in maintaining or challenging the status quo, with rival churches being built. The leading players for change were the Primitive Methodists together with Union officials, even to the point of promoting emigration which at its peak was often 25% of a village's population. The law did get changed but was fudged by the Establishment and it wasn't really until the founding of the Labour Party in 1900 and the widening of the electoral franchise in the early 20th century that conditions improved for the labouring poor. The book is available on Amazon and from Jaffé & Neale Bookshop Chipping Norton £14.99, proceeds to maintain the memory of the Martyrs.

A lunchtime ride to Enstone

With the weather feeling more spring-like, Chippy News readers might fancy catching the hourly S3 Stagecoach bus for a 10-minute ride to Enstone – to sample the latest hospitality at the two village pubs. To follow up last month's 'pubs round up', the News team investigated.

The Crown turns up trumps

Sue Hadland writes: One of my favourite eating places is The Hare at Milton-under-Wychwood so when I heard that The Crown Inn at Church Enstone had been taken over by Matt and Kate Beamish, who run both The Hare and also the Kingham Plough, I had

to go and test it out. It was a pleasant surprise to discover that the new manager was Matt, a different Matt, whom many may remember from Whistlers. Three of us went for dinner and for starters chose roast wood pigeon breast with red cabbage, heritage beetroot and citrus dressing, and the double baked cheese

soufflé. Unfortunately, the pigeon was tough but the soufflé was a great success. For mains we had 24hr Tamworth pork belly with boulangère potatoes, greens, butternut puree and cider sauce, Cotswold chicken Kiev and grilled giant tiger prawns with garlic and parsley butter. All thoroughly enjoyed our main courses. The tiger prawns were the biggest I've ever seen and delicious. The chicken Kiev was deemed to be one of the best! With very little room left for pud we shared Black Bomber mature cheddar with quince jelly (pictured) alongside homemade sorbet. Altogether a very enjoyable evening.



sampled French onion soup, Thai fish cakes with chilli, coconut and coriander sauce, ham hock terrine and again the soufflé. All were delicious but what followed was even better. The roast of the day was Oxfordshire striploin of beef served with a plethora of vegetables: roast potatoes, honey glazed parsnips and carrots, mixed veg, red cabbage, cauliflower cheese and of



Just to double check that our dinner was not just a one-off success, five of us ventured there recently for Sunday lunch. From the again impressive array of starters we

course Yorkshire pudding. There were alternatives including pork belly and nut roast. Two of us managed the sticky toffee pudding with caramel sauce and vanilla ice cream. I don't know how they managed it! So The Crown turned up trumps again. Prices are not cheap but, bearing in mind the quality, about £30 for two courses plus £8 for dessert represents fair value for money.

The Harrow Inn: open to all!

Keith Ruddle reports: Last Autumn, The Harrow Inn, on the main road in Enstone village, had a makeover and has been 'reborn' under its original name, after the spell as the Artyard Café. New landlords Ben and Hannah Nunesvaz pictured below, want to 'give the locals a pub they can enjoy again, as well as offering great food and entertainment for any passing guests!' If the Facebook New Year's Eve party pics were anything to go by, they mean it!



Two News Team members, with their regular Friday walking group, were given a warm welcome for lunch – with orders taken inside the pub at 10am on the day, then served promptly in the bar at 12.30 (dogs allowed there) to 11 hungry hikers. Dishes chosen ranged from huntsman's chicken, to mixed grill, tasty pork ribs and chicken wings, scampi, pate with herb tomatoes, traditional fish, chips & mushy peas, and baked potato. Sunday roasts get good reviews! Chippy butcher Trev Beadle is one of their regular local suppliers.



The Harrow Inn team are planning lots of entertainment: live music at least twice a month; open mic; live sports TV; darts, poker, pool and aunt sally; kids outside play area and summer festivals; ladies days with bottomless brunch (!); and the latest is a Little Lambs Baby & Toddler group every Monday in term time (9.30–11.30 for £3.50 which includes snacks, softplay and more. Book via facebook or 01608 678852). Accommodation is planned for holiday lets later this year. Oh, and The Harrow team have opened specially on a Monday evening every month for Chippy's Folk Club to return! (See Folk Club report on page 28.)



If walls could talk

News Team member Angela Ewing writes about one of our ancient traditional crafts, and watching a craftsman at work – right in the middle of Chipping Norton.



If you have lived in Chipping Norton a long time, no doubt you will pass the ubiquitous drystone walls that surround our churches and line country fields and lanes with nary a thought as to how they were built. The art of building a wall without mortar is medieval, and it all stems back to the talented builders of yesteryear around 1600 BC in the Bronze age. Masons, freemasons and the like may be responsible for the magnificent cathedrals and churches in the British Isles and Europe, but it is the farmers who learned the art of drystone walling.

As agricultural land around Britain grew, farmers were given the opportunity to own more land and they built the walls that crisscrossed in irregular shapes to divide livestock and ownership. They used the stone that was available locally, and it is our fossil rich limestone that makes up the iconic Cotswold buildings and walls.

Drystone walls are not only boundaries of fields and churchyards, they provide shelter for small insects, larger gaps for hedgehogs and birds to shelter along the base among plants, and allow wild flowers to grow along the top. All of this adds to the charm found in the lanes and the walks around the Town.



When I watched a drywall being built close to where I live up Wards Road, my interest turned to the actual art of building of it. David Norris is in the business of creating and building such walls. After 35 years of a career in retail and

publishing, he said it was the rambling rugged natural-stone walls that run forever up and down mountains and fields that inspired him to change careers at the age of 52. But to step into this other world, he needed instruction.

So he found someone to teach him, for a fee, and he embarked upon a learning curve for three months. Learning the skills and artistry that is necessary to build a structure that will stand for many years is no mean feat. He learned the hard commercial lessons that go along with making a living as a drystone waller.

Walls have to be robust, but exude natural beauty. He mentions that all stone is quarried, either limestone or sandstone is most suitable and slate in other parts of the country. Drystone walls move and flex to allow slippage of land beneath, and water to run in between the spaces so that areas don't flood. A real advantage in the country.



David mentions that although he repairs old walls, there is a new market that means using the old art in a more contemporary presentation such as the one pictured left. He now has a drystone walling business and an academy to train anyone who wants to study the art of building drystone walls. It's my guess, after watching David at work, not only does it require an accurate touch with the tapping of stones to fit just right, but a few arm muscles don't hurt either!

Local courses for individuals and businesses are run at the Yarnton Home & Garden Centre by the Drystone Academy, where David is one of the tutors as an ODSA Dry Stone Professional. Visit drystoneacademy.co.uk, email info@oxforddrystoneacademy.co.uk or call 07970 142714.

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Serving Chipping Norton and local area



Could you become a Town Councillor?

This year, on 4 May, all 16 seats on Chipping Norton Town Council are up for election for four years. Our current Council is calling on residents passionate about their community to stand.

The Town Council's influential role – There's a long history of Chippy Councillors stewarding and representing the community. While County and District authorities have more statutory powers, the Town Council is closest to the people, runs a budget approaching £500,000, and looks after assets including the Town Hall, Pool Meadow, Recreation Grounds, Greystones, and the Cemetery. Plans to invest another £350,000 of reserves in improvements are also starting. The Council provides grants to town organisations, takes on projects to improve the town centre, road safety, and influences plans for town growth such as at Tank Farm. It can help with events and promote the Town for visitors, businesses and residents.

What do elected Councillors do? – There is a fully staffed Guildhall office under Town Clerk Luci Ashbourne but volunteer Councillors are elected as community champions to give residents a voice on Council decisions. They can make a real difference by engaging with residents, local groups and businesses, finding out needs, making decisions on which projects the Council should pursue, and getting involved to ensure it all happens. Councillors attend full and main committee meetings (held every two months) but time is also spent engaging with residents and working on projects. It's voluntary – time put in depends on you. The National Association of Local Councils suggests perhaps three hours a week. Some, particularly experienced councillors, put in more and enjoy it.



Be extraordinary

Become a Town Councillor

Would you like to:

- Make a difference to people's lives on a local level?
- Give something back to your community?
- Help shape change for the benefit of your town?
- Become a community leader?

Local elections take place on Thursday 4th May 2023 - Could you be a candidate?

To find out more:

01608 642341

www.chippingnorton-tc.gov.uk/local-elections

Could you do the job? – You need to be aged 18 or more, and be a British, eligible Commonwealth or EU citizen. You must be registered to vote in the parish of Chipping Norton, or have lived (in or within 3 miles of), worked or owned property in the parish for at least 12 months before an election. There are no compulsory qualifications – but councillors can bring skills from their working life, knowledge and experience from being part of the Chipping Norton community (including with other voluntary organisations), practical ideas, enthusiasm and passion for the Town, wisdom and common sense, and a willingness to work with others for the best for all.

See how it all works – In March there's plenty of opportunity to see the Town Council in action. Most importantly, come to the **Annual Town Meeting** on Monday 6 March 7pm in the Town Hall and join in the Q&A session (see page opposite). The public can also attend and observe Council Meetings – the next two are **Community Committee** (15 March, 6.30pm) and **Strategic Planning Committee** (22 March, 6.30pm), both in the downstairs Town Hall Council Chamber. They can book a 5-minute Public Participation slot to speak at these meetings. There's also an informal **'Councillor Surgery'** on the last Saturday of each month (next is 25 March, 10am–12noon) in the Lower Town Hall – meet for coffee and chat.

Find out more and apply

You are welcome to contact current Town Councillors or Town Clerk Luci Ashbourne (townclerk@chippingnorton-tc.gov.uk) to find out more about the role and how to apply. There is also a special online briefing and question session via Zoom about life as a councillor on Wednesday 15 March 2023, 2pm. For more information, see www.chippingnorton-tc.gov.uk. The Town Council's online February Newsletter is also on the website with links to helpful sites and more news. More information on how to obtain and return nomination papers will be available in March. Nomination deadline is likely to be 4 April 2023. See www.westoxon.gov.uk for latest information.

Important Notice: Voting – you must have photo ID



To vote in person on 4 May for Town and District Local elections **you must now show acceptable Photo ID** – such as passport, driving licence, senior bus pass, other valid items – or a new official (FREE) Voter Card which you must apply for in time. Ask for a form from WODC (call 01993 861410 or email elections@westoxon.gov.uk) or, better still, apply via gov.uk/apply-for-voter-ID-voter-authority-certificate. You can still obtain a postal vote that does not need this. Photo ID is a new Government requirement to 'secure the integrity of our elections', after a 2016 report on electoral fraud chaired by Ex-Tory minister Sir Eric Pickles which cited 'potential vulnerabilities'. The Electoral Reform Society, however, calls it 'an expensive distraction' and points to very low fraud levels, mostly in postal votes. Roughly 4 million registered voters lack acceptable photo ID. Several million more are not registered. Thousands more polling officers will be needed and there are concerns that all this might discourage the less fortunate and also young voters aged 18–24, a high proportion of whom do not have ID compared with the over-60s. Oxfordshire's Leader Liz Jeffman (a Lib Dem from Charlbury) hinted at a 'Government trying to benefit itself'.

Either way, please make sure you and people you know get Photo ID and that you are registered to vote.





The future of our Market Town

With the Annual Town Meeting set for 6 March (see below) perhaps it's time take stock of how Chipping Norton citizens feel about the Town, its current way of life and future prospects. There are many topics but here's a taster with a focus on the future sustainability of our town centre.

The need for investment – Last month the News ran a feature on the need to boost Chipping Norton's declining markets. Questions also remain on how to invest in and sustain our town centre and business community – for visitors, residents and employment. More housing is coming – but with few specific plans for infrastructure investment. Issues are continually raised about affordable housing, parking, town attractiveness, traffic, visitor signage, pedestrian friendliness and safety, health and leisure facilities, and even basic utilities such as overflowing sewage plants. There's more also in this *Chippy News* edition on HGV issues and the need for more sports pitches.

A thriving, safe Chippy – Private investment does help: new shops in Chippy, an entrepreneurial Christmas in Chippy trading event, listed building refurbishment, the Branch community hub, and a new High Street cinema are but some. But our public authorities also need to lead. Our Town Council does what it can, for example boosting the use of the Town Hall and improving recreational facilities. With a focus on the town centre, readers might note that West Oxfordshire District Council have just announced they are paying over £9m to invest in Witney's shopping centre – saying it was 'in



line with our investment strategy to invigorate our market towns'. However, what does this mean for investment in Chipping Norton – not Witney? We asked our District Councillors what WODC were doing and how we could all help.

WODC's plan for Town Centres? – WODC has published a new four-year plan 'to improve West Oxfordshire', but, more specifically, Cllr Duncan Enright, WODC's Cabinet Member for Economic Development, responded directly to questions about Chippy's town centre. First, on the declining markets, he said 'putting the market firmly back in market towns is one of our priorities. A market provides footfall from which shops, restaurants, cafes and pubs can all benefit, gives a buzz to the Town, offers value for customers, encourages visitors to come, supports local suppliers and businesses, and is a low-cost way to try out a new business or earn some money in these tough times'. He also mentioned a new study into improving the town centres, including Chippy, funded partially by money to WODC from the Government's optimistically titled 'Shared Prosperity Fund' to help 'levelling up'. (This partially replaces old EU funding). Cllr Enright says there are ideas already – and the County were working on HGV and traffic issues.

Your ideas for Chippy's market town prosperity?

With WODC starting a study on town centres, Cllr Enright wants to involve local businesses, market traders and residents. He invited Chippy News readers to suggest ideas for boosting the market, business, trade and visitor experience more generally, across the Town. Tell us – but, perhaps better, tell Chippy's District Councillors (Geoff Saul, Rizvana Poole and Mike Cahill) or the Town Council.



Annual Town Meeting – 6 March

**6th March 2023, 7pm
Chipping Norton Town Hall**

Annual Town Meeting

You are invited to Chipping Norton's Annual Town Meeting! Hosted by Chipping Norton Town Council, this is not a Council meeting, but a chance for residents to raise and discuss matters affecting the town, and to ask questions and express views about the year ahead.

01608 642341 | www.chippingnorton-tc.gov.uk | townclerk@chippingnorton-tc.gov.uk

Everyone in Chipping Norton is invited to the Annual Town Meeting at 7pm on Monday 6 March in the Upper Town Hall, facilitated by the Town Council on behalf of the electorate. This is not a Council meeting but an official Annual Parish Meeting of the Town's citizens as an opportunity to raise matters affecting the Town. Registered electors are entitled to vote on any resolutions proposed.

The Mayor will open the meeting and Town Council Committee Chairs will present brief reports on the Council's work over the past year and its future plans. Other representatives, for example from Thames Valley Police, West Oxfordshire District Council and Oxfordshire County Council, may attend and answer questions relevant to Chipping Norton. Cllr Duncan Enright (both a County and District Cabinet member) has agreed to attend following his appearance last year discussing town traffic and road safety issues including HGVs and dangerous crossings.

Residents are encouraged to take part in the public question session. If you have questions to raise, it would be helpful if they could be submitted in advance. Send a letter or email Katherine Jang deputyclerk@chippingnortontowncouncil-tc.gov.uk. The final agenda will be published on the Town Council's website, noticeboards and Facebook event page.

THE ARTS

The Theatre

Live shows



Kate Mosse: Warrior Queens and Quiet Revolutionaries 2 March, 7.30pm. Bestselling author Kate Mosse celebrates trail-blazing and inspirational women throughout history, from mothers of invention and pirate queens to unsung heroines of medicine and those who dazzled on the big screen. £26

Daliso Chavonda: Apocalypse Not Now 3 March, 7.30pm. Age 14+. A new show from master of satire and star of BBC Radio 4's Citizen of Nowhere. £16.50

An Evening with Aggers 4 March – SOLD OUT, waiting list only

Budapest Café Orchestra 9 March, 7.30pm. Traditional folk and gypsy-flavoured music from the Balkans and Russia, Klezmer laments, Romanian Doinas, Hungarian Czadas. £19.50

Phil Beer Trio 10 March, 7.30pm. Multi-instrumentalist Phil Beer is joined by singer and bass player Miranda Sykes and drummer Siân Monaghan. £22.50

Youth Theatre Showcase: Tales from the Traveller's Inn 20–21 March, 7.30pm. The Youth Theatre's annual showcase presents stories and tales inspired by a children's edition of Canterbury Tales. £7, £5 cons

I Want My Hat Back Trilogy 24–26 March. Age 2+. Innovative puppeteers Little Angel Theatre present a new show based on Jon Klassen's much-loved books, *I Want My Hat Back*, *This is Not My Hat* and *We Found A Hat*. £13, £11 under 16s

Mark Steel: An Evening and a Little of Morning 31 March – SOLD OUT, waiting list only

Easter Holiday Workshops

Play in Two Days Practical workshops – drama games, improvisations, devise a play. Learn how a play is devised from scratch and experience the excitement of performing on a professional stage to an audience of family and friends.

5–7 years 10am–1pm, 3–4 April £45. **8–12 years** 10am–4pm, 12–13 April £55

Musical Mayhem A fast paced workshop – singing, dancing, drama, build skills and confidence and learn some well-known musical numbers. 10am–1pm, 12 April.

Booking in person at the Box Office, Goddards Lane, at chippingnortontheatre.com or on 01608 642350.

Music Festival

The 111th Chipping Norton Music Festival 10–25 March is back in full force this year. It is one of the oldest of its kind, promoting music-making in the north-east Cotswolds since 1904. Why not come along? At the heart of our Festival is a wide range of 10–25 March 2023 adjudicated non-competitive classes for all ages and abilities. Alongside are professional concerts and special events (in the Town Hall unless stated) including:



Jazz Festival Night 10 March. The opening event, an adjudicated Youth Jazz Band Challenge held at Chipping Norton School.

The Acafellas 12 March. CN Choral Society's Ben Goodall leads this acapella quartet of ex-Uni students with their unique Barbershop blend.

The Adderbury Ensemble 14 and 19 March with pianist Viv Mclean. 14 March Scarlatti sonatas, Chopin nocturnes, Suk pieces and Brahms violin sonata. 19 March Mozart, Beethoven and Mendelssohn piano trios. Latest and tickets at www.adderburyensemble.com



Young Musicians Recital Class 16 March. In memory of much-admired local conductor and musician Shauni McGregor, a former Chair of the Festival Committee. Musicians under 18 are invited to 'stretch themselves' in front of an audience. Non-adjudicated.

'Can sing' choir evening 23 March. A community choir; evening to encourage singers of all levels from 'Can't' or 'Won't' to 'Just try it' – with Lizzie Soden leading. Free entry.

Folk Night 24 March. An informal evening with the feel of a traditional folk night, and space for individuals or groups to perform with adjudicator's feedback – at The Chequers.

Festival Concert 25 March. Ending event to hear from and award outstanding performances from the Festival.

What's On

THE THEATRE CHIPPING NORTON

2 Spring Street | Chipping Norton | Oxfordshire OX7 5NL

LIVE

2nd Mar 7.30pm
3rd Mar 7.30pm
4th Mar 7.30pm
9th Mar, 7.30pm
10th Mar, 7.30pm
31st Mar, 7.30pm
1st April, 7.30pm

KATE MOSSE OBE—£26
DALISO CHAPONDA—£16.50
AN EVENING WITH AGGERS—SOLD OUT
BUDAPEST CAFÉ ORCHESTRA— £19.50
PHIL BEER TRIO— £22.50
MARK STEEL—SOLD OUT
NOTHING HAPPENS (TWICE) - Pick A Price
(see website for more details)

FILMS

28th Feb
1st Mar
7th, 11th and 19th Mar,
8th Mar
14th Mar
15th and 16th Mar
17th Mar
24th–26th Mar
27th Mar
28th Mar–8th April
30th Mar

TICKETS £11, £8 UNDER 16S (unless otherwise stated)

THE FABELMANS (12A)
TILL (12A) - Friends 2 for 1/half price
WOMEN TALKING (15)
EVERYTHING EVERYWHERE ALL AT ONCE (15)
THE QUIET GIRL (12A)
THE WHALE (12A)
ALL QUIET ON THE WESTERN FRONT (15)
WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT? (12A)
RELAXED SCREENING: ALLELUJAH (12A)
ALLELUJAH (12A)
CINEMA BAMBINO: WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT? (12A)

LIVE FAMILY AND CHILDRENS

24th–26th Mar

I WANT MY HAT BACK TRILOGY—£13, £11 u16s

SCREENINGS

30th Mar, 7pm
2nd April, 2pm

TICKETS: £17.50, £12.50 cons

NT LIVE: LIFE OF PI (PG)
NT LIVE: LIFE OF PI (PG)

BOX OFFICE 01608 642350 www.chippingnortontheatre.com

THE ARTS

During the two weeks, the public are invited to listen to any of the classes: singing, speech and drama, guitar, woodwind, brass, piano, strings, and vocal. Festival Pass, £6, admits one person to all classes and the Children's Workshop, but does not include any concert or special events as above. Also entry on the door. Please see cnmf.org.uk for tickets, times and last-minute changes.

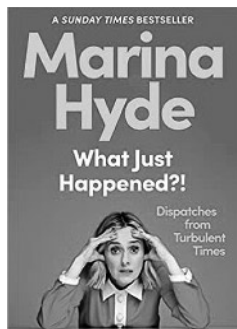
Literary Festival

ChipLitFest 27–30 April. 'It's wonderful to be celebrating our tenth-ever ChipLitFest' says Jenny Dee, festival director. 'It doesn't get any easier to organise a festival but we are so heartened that authors continue to love coming to Chippy and taking part. We're now well-established on the literary festival scene and continue to punch above our weight with the range and reach of the writers we can attract.' Here are just some of the events:



Photo: Steve Best Xavicus Media

David Baddiel is headlining at The Theatre with his new perspective on atheism, *The God Desire*. Also appearing at The Theatre over the weekend are top journalists **Marina Hyde** and **Sebastian Payne** talking about the recent extraordinary events in UK politics and **Adam Henson**, the *Countryfile* presenter and owner of Cotswold Farm Park with his new book, *Two for Joy* which is a journey through each season to find new ways to reconnect to our countryside.



For those interested in history: **Simon Sebag Montefiore**, *The World, a Family History*; BBC favourite **Greg Jenner** with his family event *You Are History*; **Mensun Bound**'s account of the search for Shackleton's boat *Endeavour*. Nature lovers: **Richard Smyth**, who has written about finding wild things with his kids; **Lev Parikian**, celebrating the miracle of flight; **Nicola Chester**'s *Wild Writing* workshop.

Fiction lovers: **Mike Gayle**, **Milly Johnson**, **Charlotte Mendelson**, **Meg Rosoff**, Costa Prize winner **Clare Fuller** and **Katherine Bradley**. The Festival's regular New Voices slot introduces the best-selling authors of the future. There's a special appearance by **Clare Mackintosh**, the Festival's founder, now a best-selling crime novelist, introducing her new series set in Wales.

As ever, there is an eclectic mix of talks to stimulate your minds in myriad directions, from alternative funeral director **Ru Callender** to engineer **Roma Agrawal**, rock star photographer **Chris Floyd**, gardening-in-pots expert **Harriet Rycroft** and food historian **Pen Vogler**.

This year's **Children's Festival** promises loads of literary fun for children from age 3 upwards: storytelling, illustration workshops, creative writing, music, history and the natural world with favourites such as **Lucy Walters**, illustrator **Yuval Zommer**, **Varjak Paw**, **SF Said** and **Lissa Evans**.

If you want to write, there's a range of writers' workshops covering getting started, finding your voice, working with a literary agent. And there is a chance to pitch your work to a non-fiction literary agent in one-to-one sessions.

Further information and tickets at chiplitfest.com and chippingnortontheatre.com or 01608 642350.

Music, Lectures & Events

CRAG Sunday Tea Concerts 5 March. Rachel Beckett, flute and recorder, Alison Bury, violin, Alastair Ross, harpsichord. Baroque music by Bach, Handel, Telemann and Leclair. 3pm Memorial Hall, Charlbury. Tickets £15 (£5 for under 16s) from Cotswold Frames Charlbury. Limited tickets available at the door. Free tea and homemade cake. Details: nick.parker@cooptel.net or 01608 811558.

Chipping Norton Choral Society 26 March 7.30pm, St Mary's Church, Banbury. Brahms: *Ein deutsches Requiem*. Conductor Benedict Goodall with the Adderbury Ensemble. Tickets £12 at cncs.org.uk.



Cherwell Choral Society Concert 1 April 7.30pm at St Mary's Church, Bloxham. *In Memoriam* – Ian Venables: *Requiem* and Michael Tippett: five spirituals from *A Child of Our Time*. Tickets £15 (children under 16 free) available from Hamptons, Deddington, at cherwellchoral.org or call 01295 367441.

Burford Singers 2 April 7.30pm, Church of St John the Baptist, Burford. Classic Choral Favourites: Fauré's *Requiem* and Haydn's *Nelson Mass* with the Cotswold Chamber Orchestra, conductor Brian Kay. Book tickets till 31 March on-line (reserved £25 [sold out], £20, £15, unreserved £10 via burfordsingers.org.uk/buy-tickets); or in person (unreserved only from The Madhatter Bookshop, Burford).

Chipping Norton Amateur Operatic Society is now well into rehearsal for *Me and My Girl*, full of such well-known songs as *The Lambeth Walk*, *I'm leaning on a lamppost...* and *The Sun has got his hat on*. The show is directed by Pat Lake, with Catrin Russ as musical director and Fiona Bates as

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THE ARTS

choreographer. 11 and 12 May at 7.30pm, 13 May at 2.30pm and 7.30pm, Tickets £15+£1.50 booking fee for 7.30pm performances and £13.00+£1.50 booking fee for 2.30pm performance at chippingnortontheatre.com or 01608 642350.

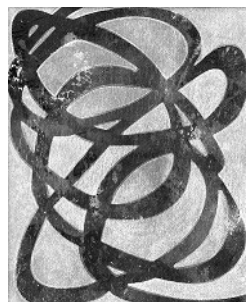
Kingham Singers have just started rehearsals for their concert in June and are looking for more singers. They meet on Monday evenings 7.30–9pm in Churchill Methodist Chapel. No audition is needed. Two weeks free trial. For more information, contact Linda Sale on 01608 658647.

The Arts Society Cotswolds

James Bolton: *Vita Sackville-West and Sissinghurst*. Sissinghurst, created and gardened by Vita Sackville-West, novelist, poet and garden writer, and her husband, Harold Nicholson, is the perfect example of an Arts and Crafts garden. 8 March 11am, Warwick Hall, Burford. Non-members are welcome, space permitting, for a suggested donation of £10. Zoom invitations are sent via newsletter and to those who book at theartssocietycotswolds.org.uk.



Under Chippy Woods 28 and 29 April 7.30pm, Glyme Hall: *Under Milk Wood*, a tale of a fishing village or small town in South-West Wales, Llareggub – read it backwards! Tickets available from ticketsource.co.uk/under-chippy-woods or phone Sian on 07951 891332.



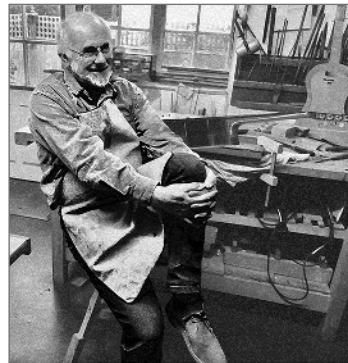
Darl-e and the Bear, Woodstock 9 March to 3 April, Saroj Patel and Mita Vaghela are artists and co-curators of *Zari Sona Moti: Glitter Gold Pearls*: fellow South Asian artists living in the UK celebrating their roots through experiences of parenthood, they pose the question: *when we have more than one cultural influence, how does our sense of self shift when we become parents or a carer for children?* Opening times: darleandthebear.co.uk.

Zuleika Gallery, Woodstock 25 February–11 March *Jean Jones: Oxford's Forgotten Artist*. Inspired by her post-impressionist heroes, Cézanne and Van Gogh, Jean Jones felt that, through close observation, she could express her passion for the people and places around her. Opening times: zuleikagallery.com

Screen by the Green 11 March 7.30pm, Churchill Village Hall. *The Lost King*. In this inspiring, life-affirming true story, the amateur historian Philippa Langley (played by Sally Hawkins) believes she has made the archaeological find of the century: the lost burial site of King Richard III. She defies all obstacles and raises the money for the successful dig. It is astonishing to realise that Richard III was discovered under a car park due to the persistence and dedication of this woman. Tickets £5. Advance booking preferred via screenbythegreen@gmail.com or on 01608 659903.



Life story of a Luthier



AGAINST THE GRAIN
AN INSTRUMENT MAKER'S JOURNEY
Paul Fischer


Anyone interested in the art and craft of making beautiful musical instruments might like to read a copy of *Against the Grain: an Instrument Maker's Journey*, the second publication by internationally respected luthier and Chipping Norton resident **Paul Fischer**. Following the debilitating effects of a severe stroke in 2013, Paul had much time on his hands to consider the future and look back on his long and


fruitful career, creating and fashioning delicate and beautiful musical instruments – harpsichords, spinets, lutes and classical guitars. Following up on friends' suggestions, Paul set out to write, in memoir form, about the life he has lived making musical instruments for over 50 years. *Against the Grain* has been written beyond what Paul calls the initial post-stroke 'grey zone' where 'all attempts to muster his memories in some sort of order proved difficult'. A fresh and thorough examination was then taken in this new publication. Paul was greatly helped in the preparation of the new book by the generous and patient support of the writer and copy editor, Thérèse Wassily Saba. *Against the Grain* is available from prestomusic.com, bookdepository.com, Amazon or the author himself.

Half Price Seconds Sale

at Whichford Pottery

Friday 24th to Sunday 26th March





Whichford Pottery, Whichford, Nr. Shipston-on-Stour,
Warks, CV36 5PG. Tel: 01608 684416
www.whichfordpottery.com

SPORTS NEWS

Town Sports Awards

I recently held another meeting about the 2023 Sports Awards with Tania Kirby, the Town Council Events & Facilities Organiser. Though plans are still at an early stage, I'm pleased to report that Lewis Brain, Manager at the Leisure Centre, is keen to support and sponsor the Legacy Awards.

The Town Council very kindly budget £500 a year for these awards, which is much appreciated especially when budgets are constrained by the cost of living rises. This covers expenditure including trophies, framed certificates and refreshments. So far, the initial quote for trophies is higher this year, so if any local organisation would be keen to sponsor some of the awards, Tania and I would be very pleased to hear from them. Tania can be contacted at the Guildhall or via taniaj Kirby@chippingnorton-tc.gov.co.uk

Graham Beacham

Chippy's sports pitches need action!



Martyn Clements of the Swifts with WODC's Cllr Joy Aitman

With growth planned for Chipping Norton, our Town Council in January discussed the need for more and better sports pitches. In front of them was a 90-page report – over a year old – from WODC called Playing Pitch Strategy and Action Plan, which seemed long on analysis but, according to some,

flawed in places and short on specific action for Chippy – particular as provision for some sports is already 'at capacity'. There are also concerns that action depends on funding (and land space) from big developments such as at East Chipping Norton, when in fact allocated space there for sports seems way below WODC's own planning guidelines.

So where are Chippy's issues? An obvious one is that there has been no adult-sized football pitch here since 2014 – a glaring omission compared with any similar town. WODC's press release and report mentions new extra pitches for Witney and Carterton. But Chippy would need some new land and funding for one here. Martyn Clements of Chippy Swifts, who run junior teams, told the News that they had received some grant support in the past from WODC, but one concern is the lack of space to grow and add more teams, especially with the push for girls' football. They already have two dedicated girls teams. Rugby has a shortfall predicted, and a major gap is artificial 3G pitch provision for all sports here. There's no main hockey pitch provision, and a single MUGA at the Leisure Centre means, tennis, hockey and other sports all compete for its space. The report says we are short of tennis provision – and Chippy has no organised tennis club. Hook Norton and Shipton are local thriving clubs.

WODC commissioned the pitch study back in 2021 – but their Cabinet dealt with its recommendations only last November. They are now appointing a dedicated 'fixed term' officer to take recommendations forward. The WODC Cabinet member responsible, Cllr Joy Aitman, was pictured in WODC's press release with Chippy Swift's Chair Martyn Clements, and has offered to come to Chippy to meet our

Town Councillors and local clubs. There is currently little overall coordination of sports activity or needs in Chippy – so a meeting between clubs and local Councillors might be worthwhile to share information about the future.

Chipping Norton Rugby Club



The 1st XV, have continued their strong start to the second half of the season and have risen to 4th in the Counties 2 Tribute Berks/Bucks & Oxon League with six games to play. The next home game, on 11 March, promises to be a cracker as we take on league-toppers Oxford Harlequins, so come and cheer the lads on! Our second Chipping Norton Mini Rugby Festival is on 23 April, when we'll have sixty U10 and U11 teams joining us from Oxfordshire and surrounding counties, along with Gloucester Rugby, Jack FM and special guests. Meanwhile the Club briefly became a filming location for Series 2 of *Clarkson's Farm*, so look out for a familiar backdrop to the 'chilli scene' in episode 2! Mini and Junior rugby continue on Sunday mornings from 10am, with new players welcome.

To find out more email chippingnortonrugby@gmail.com, check our website, or follow us on social media.

Graeme Williamson

Chippy Swifts news

All eleven teams have been busy in league and cup competitions in the Witney and District League, Oxfordshire Girls Youth League and county cups.

5v5

Our newest team, the U7 (sponsored by TSG Energy and Chipping Norton Event Hire), are thriving with a good squad of players enjoying their football with first-time coaches Liam, Adam and Shane.



U8 (sponsored by Wheelers and RM Painting) are now in the second season and showing real signs of improvement with positive results. Thanks to coaches Steve and Dan.

7v7

U9 (sponsored by Chipping Norton Physio), although they have a smaller squad than most, are a tight-knit bunch who've transitioned to the larger pitch very well. Thanks to their coaches Tim and Craig.

U10 (sponsored by Mr Simms Sweet Shop) continue to produce high-quality performances and get the results they deserve whilst playing in the 'A' league. Thanks to their coaches Luke and Mark.

U11 girls (sponsored by Topside Pharmacy) and their coaches Chris and Peter were overjoyed to record their first win on

SPORTS NEWS

home soil in January and continue to attract more players.

9v9

U12 (sponsored by Felix Flooring) are pushing for promotion from their league improving week on week with many high-scoring entertaining matches. Thanks to coaches Tom, Brad and Jason.

U12 girls (sponsored by Chipping Norton Garden Company) are now really competitive, with close score-lines every week, attracting new players to enjoy their football with coaches Bridget and Paul.

11v11

U13 (sponsored by BPD Joinery and Clewsla) finished 3rd in their autumn 'A' league and have since progressed to the semi-final of the cup. Good luck to them and their coaches, Martyn and Lee.

U14W (sponsored by Chipping Norton Opticians) enjoyed a flurry of necessary recruitment in September which has helped to produce some more positive performances and goals. Thanks to their coach Dom.

U14B (sponsored by Donaldson Timber Systems) hope to maintain their position in the 'A' spring league. Thanks to their coaches Paddy and Matt.

U15 (sponsored by Old Mill Café and MKT Computers) finished 3rd in their autumn league and with a semi-final place in the cup. Good luck to them and their coaches, Martyn and Rob.

The Swifts would like to thank all our local sponsors for their continued support for the Club and all the teams.

Martyn Walsh

Hook Harriers' cross country races



November to March is cross country season for runners. Oh yes, Hook Norton Harriers are mad enough to call it fun to run through the mud in the depths of winter! February's Oxfordshire Cross Country League race saw Harriers running close to home on a brilliant course around Cotswold Farm Park. The 2-lap, five mile, course had plenty of opportunities for spectators to cheer the runners on, and the lovely sunshine made for very pleasant running conditions (if you ignore the hills!). With eight Hook Norton women and six men, we managed to field three teams, with our very own Victoria Bödeker (pictured) winning the women's race by 45 seconds. We meet at 7pm on Tuesdays at Hook Norton Sports and Social Club. Visit www.hooknortonharriers.org.uk for details.

Anwen Greenaway



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Chippy Trixsters

Our March roller disco will be on Saturday 25 March 1.45–3.45pm at Chipping Norton Leisure Centre. Entry is £6 and we have skates for hire at £1 a pair. Why not come along and try our beginner skater hockey sessions? They run Saturdays 12–1pm at the Leisure Centre, except on our disco days. These sessions are fun while also encompassing a range of skills including ball and puck handling, skating skills, match play and tactics with games like bulldog on skates. You can borrow all the equipment needed for these sessions and all are welcome to come and have a go. Please message us on Facebook or email chippytrixsters.info@gmail.com with any questions you may have or for more information.

Emma Vickers

Hook Norton Tennis Club

Winter Floodlit teams' current positions: A team 2nd in Division 1; B team 7th in Division 1; C team 3rd in Division 4 and the D team 5th in Division 4.

Following a member collapsing on court last year, the Club is holding a series of cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) training courses in Hook Norton which started in February. Within the Club, all ladder matches and Club sessions are fully under way. Club members can book courts via <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/HookNortonTennisClub>. The cost of floodlights on non-club nights is £8 per hour per court. Coaching is available from Marc Gilkes: 07930 406015 (coaching dates 21 February–1 April) Contact Faith Heron: 07771 904905 or Steve Bone: 07850 036656 for their

SPORTS NEWS

coaching dates. New members welcome: ontact Membership Secretary Kate, khs.shoes@gmail.com or 01608 642774.

Elaine Priestley

Chipping Norton Cricket Club

Youth Cricket: In the hope of warmer weather thoughts are turning to the cricket season. Don't forget Registration Day on Saturday 18 March 10am-4pm at the club house on Banbury Road. Youth membership is £60 per player with siblings £30 each. Get a membership form from bloxhamsue@aol.com or at the Club on the day. Registration & payment on the 18th guarantees a place with those registering later dependant on numbers. We need two Team Managers for U11 competitions played on Sunday mornings during the season. We look forward to seeing you in March.

Sue Powell

Seniors: Registration Day is also for you with membership £75. Email bloxhamsue@aol.com for forms and options. Indoor training to prepare for the outdoor season has begun.

Graham Beacham

4 Shires Swimming Club

A huge thank you to Chipping Norton Town Council for a generous £500 grant. This has enabled us to buy a new pacing clock and a good supply of resistance bands. (pictured in action right!). Swimmers of the month are Liam Kay



and Grace Thorp. Following the Chipping Norton Partnership Primary Schools gala, we held one of our busiest trial sessions ever and are pleased to welcome several new swimmers to the Club. We have six squads: Academy, Pre-Comp, Competition, County, Regional and Masters. If you are a keen swimmer wanting to compete or are simply aiming to develop fitness and swimming skills, please book a Trial session on Saturday mornings at Kingham Hill School, via our website www.4ssc.co.uk/join-us or email membership@4ssc.co.uk.

Lucy Warner

The Vintage Sports-Car Club

The Club has been crowned Motorsport UK's 2022 Sustainable Club of the Year. This followed on from the Carbon Initiative announced at our 2021 AGM, when a group was set up to focus on how the Club can both reduce its emissions and recover any unavoidable emissions, during the period before 100% sustainable fuels (as opposed to biofuels) become readily available. Following a due diligence exercise, the Club has entered into an arrangement with Tree-V to recover around 400% of the total annual emissions from all of its events, equally balanced in accredited international offsets and accredited UK capture. UK capture will be through a 50-50 split between tree-planting and peatland restoration. All reports and the emissions are on our website and we are

working with others in the historic motorsport community to help them consider their own offsets.

In December, the Club provided alkylate fuel at the Winter Driving Tests (as reported in last month's News). Alkylate is one of the cleanest petroleum products. However, the Club is committed to the eventual use of fully synthetic and sustainable fuel so that we can continue to enjoy historic vehicles in an environmentally responsible way.

Tania Brown

Sunday Indoor Hockey

Come along to Chipping Norton Leisure Centre sports hall every Sunday morning for a game of indoor hockey from 10 to 11am.

There is lots of support for beginners and no pressure to attend every week. Everyone is friendly and welcomes all ages, fitness levels and hockey experience. So whether you have played before or not, it's a great way to keep fit and meet new people. One regular wrote, 'We love going as a family on Sunday mornings: it's a friendly group of people and it's really welcoming. We have fun whether we are on the same side or not, everyone is included in the teams. Come along and join in with us'.

No regular commitment necessary, just turn up when you feel like it and we have kit to loan if you need it. £5.40 adults/Juniors £3.00. Ask at reception or contact Sharon Truelove for more information sjtruelove@hotmail.co.uk 01608 730546/07722 603207



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CLUB NEWS

Green Gym braves the elements

Green Gym has continued to take up tools and carry on through the recent wintry weather. Clearing more of the invasive blackthorn at the Glyme Valley nature reserve managed by the BBOWT (the Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust) resulted in a welcome bonfire to warm everyone up! Further afield, trimming hedges, clearing scrub and general tidying took place at Church Enstone corner and the fruit trees at Chipping Norton Health Centre were pruned ready for Spring. Work continued at Pool Meadow clearing paths and tidying the area – the new pathway is now nearly complete. More tree planting at Hawkyard Copse also took place and we will soon be preparing the Community Orchard for Blossom Day on Sunday, 23 April. More details in the next edition.



Green Gym would like to thank Jenny Harrington on her retirement from the role of Membership and Publicity Secretary which she has held for 10 years since the inauguration of Chippy Green Gym. She will, happily, continue to remain a member.

If you would like to join us on Wednesday mornings, working in the fresh air on environmental projects in good company visit www.chippygreengym.org and then email our Membership Secretary at rmcubbin33@gmail.com Everyone very welcome and there is a variety of jobs for all!

Adela Thomas

History Society AGM planned

The Chipping Norton History Society will be meeting on Monday 13 March at 2pm in the Lower Hall at the Methodist Church, West Street. Stephen Dawson will be telling us about the work of the Oxford Preservation Trust. His talk will be preceded by the AGM. Visitors are welcome £3.

Janis Paxton

Railway Club – 49 and steaming!

28 Members gathered for our Annual General Meeting on 7 February. The Chairman and Committee were re-elected: Alan Brain, John Mann, Cecily Maunder, Richard Stowe, Emma Bayley and Wendy Sumner. There will be only one outing in 2023, in the summer. More details later in the year. Following the AGM, member Geoff Turner entertained us with illustrated slides of his visits to Swiss Railways. Spectacular scenery of course. Geoff travels to the meetings each month from Evesham! For our next meeting, on 7 March, we welcome once again, our old friend Chris Youett. Travelling from Coventry, his talk is entitled 'Cross Country, Part 4'. March is our Anniversary month – 49 years old and on 4 April, Frank Banfield will be the speaker, showing more 'Heritage Films from the 50s'.

We are a very friendly Club and new members and visitors are most welcome. We meet in the Lower Town Hall on the first Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm. Tea/Coffee and biscuits are served in the interval. Think about it!!

Estelle Brain

Trees, seeds & fungi for NOOG

North Oxfordshire Organic Gardeners had an interesting talk in February about Foxburrow Wood, where Wychwood Forest Trust have planted hundreds of trees, and the farm they are re-wilding near Witney. On 1 March a speaker from Garden Organic will talk about their Heritage Seed Library, which aims to conserve heirloom vegetable varieties not widely available. On 5 April an expert from the Cotswold Fungi Group will enlighten us on the importance, beauty and just plain kookiness of this fascinating and little understood kingdom. The talks are in St Mary's Parish Rooms at the bottom of Church Street and start at 7.30pm. We are a friendly group of gardeners who are also interested in wildlife and the environment. Visitors (£3) and new members are welcome. Please visit our website: www.noog.org.uk or call 01295 780710 for further details..

Tracy Lean

WOWI in pretty good shape!

We mentioned in last month's issue that Thea Rogers had come to show members of West Oxfordshire WI (pictured here), how to exercise while sitting on a chair. We are now



preparing for our Annual Meeting when we elect our President. As usual we present our financial statement and we can say that our state is pretty good thanks to our lovely members doing their bit with the fundraising during the year. Do come along and join us. You will be given a warm welcome. We meet at 7.30pm every 3rd Monday of the month in St Mary's Parish Rooms, Chipping Norton or contact us via wowi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk for more details. We have put together an exciting programme for the coming year.

Hilary Dix

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Rotary's aid for Ukraine



In the month before Christmas, Rotary in the Thames Valley launched an appeal to buy large generators for Hospitals and Care Homes in Ukraine. And by mid-January, we had raised over

£45,000 (including a bequest of £25,000 from the Quakers) which paid for two generators. These were installed in Kharkiv hospitals just a week later with the help of Ukrainian Rotarians. The International Rotary Fellowship of Healthcare Professionals have provided a list of other Ukrainian hospitals needing generators which we will supply as soon as funds permit. Please call me on 01608 643844 If you would like to donate or find out more about this project.

Burford & Kingham Rotary President Colin Stringfellow is pictured presenting Rotarian Jacqui Martin with The Paul Harris Award for service to Rotary at a party at the Golf Club held in her honour. Jacqui has been a President of Rotary several times bringing great enthusiasm and encouragement to all especially to new members. Jacqui is moving to Hampshire to be nearer family. We will all miss her very much and wish her every happiness in her new home.



We are really keen to increase our membership. Do come along for a taster meeting, we would love to see you. All you have to do is email our secretary, John Smith jpw.smith@jasss.co.uk or give me a ring on the number below. We meet on Monday evenings at Burford Golf Club.

Ros Richardson 01608 643844 / 07700 2135731

Chippy Ramblers in Chadlington

Thirteen of us met up with Wendy who took us on a walk through the fields and meadows of Chadlington. We passed a spring known as St Chad's where people like to collect fresh spring water and beside large arable fields which seemed to stretch to the horizon, then smaller fields and along the River Evenlode. Then we admired a small lake, complete with swans chasing each other – no doubt competing for nesting sites in the rushes. Soon we came past a farmhouse which is having major work done, along with its many outbuildings. Although it is a while since heavy rain, the tracks there were still very muddy from the heavy builders' vehicles but that was negotiated with good humour and we soon saw Chadlington in the distance, lit up by the late afternoon sun.

If you too would like to enjoy the countryside in good company, join us on the first Sunday of every month. We will meet in New St car park at 1.30pm on 5 March (2pm on 2 April after the clocks change) and walk for about two hours at a leisurely pace – a different walk each time! Lifts are

available. Contact Heather Leonard (01608 643691 or rheatherleonard@yahoo.co.uk) and we'll put you on the list!
Jenny Harrington

Chipping Norton Labour Party

In just a couple of months there will be elections. This year we will be electing not only a District Councillor for West Oxfordshire but also the full Town Council of 16 councillors. With several of the current group no longer eligible there will be plenty of room for fresh blood. It is important that the Town Council is truly representative of the population so that all viewpoints are heard and can continue the good work done by the current Council.

So why not you? If you would like to know what is involved and how much time it takes, please contact any councillor. You can find out who we are on the Town Council's new website <https://www.chippingnorton-tc.gov.uk>

Chippy Labour Party have also organised a Meet your Councillor session where you can talk to some of us to find out what is involved. We would love to see you at 10.30am on Saturday 11 March in The Fox. Refreshments will be provided.

David Heyes

Horticultural flowers & gardens

Craig Blackwell was the guest speaker at the February meeting of the Chipping Norton Horticultural Association – his topic was Flowers of the Cotswolds. Craig gave a very lively and interesting talk, very much involving the audience in his presentation which included a large selection of pictures of wild flowers, many found in and around Chippy. Members and the many visitors thoroughly enjoyed the evening. The

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CLUB NEWS

March speaker will be Richard Harvey (from Brockworth), his topic will be Cotswold and Gloucestershire Gardens. This meeting will be held on 15 March at 7.30 in Chipping Norton Methodist Church Hall. At the March/April meetings we will be collecting the subscriptions of £15 for the coming season, which will run through until the end of September 2024 – this change will bring subscriptions into line with the start of our financial year. Your membership cards will show this change so you will still be able to use them at garden centres for discounts on some purchases during the summer of 2024.

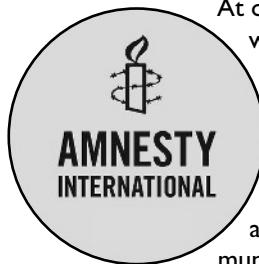
For further information visit our website www.cnha.uk or call the secretary Eileen Forse on 01608 643275.

Chippy Folk back at The Harrow

At Chippy Folk this month there was a lovely vibe and we continue to be delighted to be back at The Harrow, Enstone. Colin Pitts of Evesham, Kim Hobday of Adderbury, along with regulars Dave, Mandy, Rosie, Paul, Rosemary, Claire, Anabel, Rachel F, Rachel C and Steve were all in excellent form. It was also good to hear old friends (Pete'n'Pen) and new recruits (Sean) contribute to the melodic variety of the evening. There was much excellent traditional as well as original material, but a highlight was to hear two of Colin Pitts' original songs, recently recorded for his latest CD, with our own Rachel Chai providing harmonies! It was a treat to hear this live 'preview' performance. As usual, we were delighted to welcome listeners, so if you would like to join us, remember that we are at The Harrow Inn, Enstone, from 7.30pm on the second Monday of the month. Next meeting: 13 March 2023. For more details please visit www.chippingnortonfolk.co.uk

Ginnie Redston

Chippy Amnesty plan a busy year



At our February meeting Chippy Amnesty welcomed guest speakers from the Charlbury Refugee Action Group (CRAG). Fran Webber summarised CRAG's recent activities, majoring on fundraising and the distribution of funds through 'front line' agencies, alongside education and communications, and she also updated us on some consequences of the recent Nationality and Borders Bill. Angela Gwatkin described the different ways in which Ukrainian guests and their hosts are being supported locally. Some families are now trying to move into rented accommodation which is proving hard to find.

2023 is set to be a busy year for Chippy Amnesty as we aim to extend our reach to neighbouring towns. We also plan to take on a new case file to help secure the freedom of human rights defenders detained in India for peacefully exercising their rights to freedom of expression, assembly and association.

We meet in the Lower Town Hall on the second Thursday of the month – all are welcome! Our March meeting is on the 9th and then on 13 April we shall learn about the work of the Forest People's Programme, a human rights organisation based in Moreton-in-Marsh which works with indigenous and forest peoples around the globe to secure their rights to their lands and livelihoods. For further details of our activities and meetings please contact Val on 01608 645036.

Kate Ward

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Chipping Norton School

Sixth Form News: We are delighted to share the news that



three of our Year 13s were successful in their applications to join The University of Cambridge. Rebecca Warner and Aaron Denton both applied to study Natural Sciences, whilst Lewis Lamb will be studying

History and Politics. We are all extremely proud of every student in our School but also wish to acknowledge the particular achievement in this instance and congratulate Rebecca, Aaron and Lewis. Furthermore, we would like to thank Mr Ward and Mr Dye, in particular, for their support of all students in their pursuit of different post-18 pathways, including those with the ambition to submit Oxbridge applications through our Spires Programme.

The CNS British Heart Foundation Appeal: In the run

up to St Valentine's Day, students and staff raised funds to support The British Heart Foundation which funds medical research related to heart and circulatory diseases. Our week of fundraising started



well with plenty of students and staff buying delicious cakes and biscuits from our Bake Sale. Each day a different house was responsible for supplying and selling the cakes. Well done to all the students who have helped and many thanks to Miss Miles for organising these events. Students were also invited to buy an artificial rose for a special person and the roses were delivered to tutor groups on Friday morning by a group of Sixth Form cupids! We were delighted to be able to send over £1300 to the British Heart Foundation.

News from the Art Department: Two Art lecturers from Gloucestershire University visited the School and worked



with the Year 11 GCSE Art students for a full day. The workshop started with an introduction and visual aids of artists' work to inspire the students. Then the students worked in pairs, small groups and

eventually the whole group together to explore collage work based on the Amazon Rainforest. It was a fantastic opportunity for the students and a fun day for all.

Preloved Prom dresses, suits and accessories: Do you have any preloved formal wear such as dresses, suits and other accessories that you would be happy to donate to the School? We plan to hold a Prom Clothes Sale later this year

and all funds raised from the sale will support school projects for our students. Please bring your donations to the School Reception (during school hours). For more information please email our Family Support Worker, Mrs Budd (cbudd@chippingnortonschool.org).

Year 9 Human Library Event: This year we had 30 guests

from industry supporting our Human Library event for our Year 9 students. The 'Human Library' concept is to put



students in front of experts from many different sectors of business. The Year 9 students were able to quiz the guests about their roles, experience, employment, education / qualifications, and skills that are needed in their particular line of work. The groups of students had four minutes to engage with each of the guests and learn about a whole range of careers, many of which they previously knew nothing about. Each of the employers bring along a prop to help the students work out the job being represented. This year there was a great range of sectors that were represented and the feedback from students after the event has been very positive, with some students now reconsidering their options for GCSEs that take place in the next few months. We would like to thank all of our guests who gave their time to act as our Human Library and who, by doing so, have informed and inspired our students for their future.




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Holy Trinity Primary



Reception visit to Church: Our Reception Class had a lovely visit to the Church to learn all about Baptism. Father Tony explained about the Sacrament and the children were really interested to learn all about the symbols used. See photos above and right.

Houses of Parliament: Year 5 enjoyed a fascinating trip to the Houses of Parliament. They took part in a tour, learning all about the history of the buildings and parliament and having the chance to ask lots of questions. They watched live debates in both the House of Commons and the House of Lords and learned about the role of the Monarch in our current democracy. After

that, the children participated in a workshop where they ran their own debate learning about the process of how laws are created. The Class thoroughly enjoyed their day and learned lots about democracy, which they shared in a slick assembly to parents and the rest of the school.

Cross country: Children from Key Stage 2 put in a fantastic effort at the Partnership Cross Country tournament. Pupils from across Key Stage 2 participated in the U9 boys and girls and U11 boys' and girls' teams. They competed really well and were a credit to the School.

Swimming Gala: A team from Years 5 and 6 took part in the Partnership Swimming tournament at Chipping Norton Leisure Centre, hosted by the Four Shires Swimming Club. The children swam brilliantly and came joint 2nd.

Ball skills: Year 4 attended the Partnership Ball Skills festival hosted by Chipping Norton School. All the children demonstrated excellent sportsmanship which was recognised by the CNS Young leaders when they awarded the final certificates, and we were very proud of their team spirit and attitudes. They enjoyed participating in lots of different activities which were all aimed at developing their ball skills.



HAVE YOU THOUGHT ABOUT BECOMING A TEACHER?

There can be few things as rewarding as making a tangible difference in shaping the lives of young people and inspiring them to become the best they can be. Here are five reasons to get into teaching.

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THRIVE ON LEARNING – YOURS AND THEIRS

Nothing encourages you to continue to learn more about a topic than when you're teaching it! Children are inquisitive, often asking questions that you have never thought of and so teachers are lifelong learners, alongside the children they teach. Education is all about positive change and so a key part of being a great teacher is about being able to respond to challenges with creativity and flexibility.

JOIN A GREAT COMMUNITY

Teachers never teach in isolation and schools provide a community and strong networks to support and inspire you from the outset.

SHARE YOUR PASSION

There are few who can use their passion in their job. Teachers get to do this every day, with the opportunity to instil this enthusiasm in their pupils.

EMBRACE THE CHALLENGE AND REAP THE REWARDS

Really great teachers make their job look effortless, but of course, in reality, it requires a complex set of skills which are developed through practice, expert input and personalised support. Training programmes combine these factors to ensure that you are supported and nurtured through this challenging process and able to feel the positives as soon as possible.

If you are considering a career in teaching and would like to arrange a visit to Chipping Norton School to find out more, please contact Mrs Thomas, Professional Tutor, on gthomas@chippingnortonschool.org.

St Mary's Primary

Key Stage One Local History Project: This term, KS1 have had the exciting opportunity to learn all about our



wonderful town. The children have been on two tours of Chipping Norton, starting with a trip to Bliss Mill following the roads which related to the building. This week, they explored the Town itself, with a walk around local landmarks. Thank you to Elaine Parsons for being our brilliant tour guide providing the children with excellent local history.

Year 5/6 Anglo-Saxon Workshop: Sonja from the Oxfordshire Museum in Woodstock came and did some wonderful workshops with us. We dressed up in Anglo-Saxon



style clothes, which were made from a simple form of tablet weaving. We also created pots. This was very enjoyable and helped us with our topic. *By Isla and Jools*



Year 3/4 Topic – Iron Man: Sycamore class has been reading *The Iron Man* by Ted Hughes. They made this giant paper Iron Man model to help them experience what he looked like and how big he could have been made/constructed. This then helped the class write a detailed description about the Iron Man, using similes. We are really



enjoying reading the book and don't like it when we finish a chapter and don't read more. It is a spectacular book. We are building up to writing our own version.

Great Rollright Primary

Just in time for spring, our children have a fun new hideaway in our Forest School area – a wooden teepee. And it wouldn't have happened without some wonderful parents. The Friends of Great Rollright paid for the teepee, with the help of a generous donation by one parent, Mr Pescott. Two other parents, Mr Finniear and Mr Wood, gave their time to build the structure and its foundation. We are very grateful to them all!



Science Fun: Last month we got excited about science, with a range of special activities. Explorer Dome turned our school hall into a planetarium. We hosted adults who use science in their jobs, including Formula One engineers, microbiologists, and paramedics. We did lots of experiments (pictured). And we wrapped up with a Science Fair where children showed their own science projects created over the half-term break.

Cross Country Stars: Our Year 6 boys made Rollright history by qualifying for the West Oxfordshire Schools Cross Country Finals, after winning the small schools section of the CNS partnership tournament.

Parents and carers are strongly encouraged to visit to see all that we offer – including a free bus to Chipping Norton. Please call us on 01608 737202.

Hook Norton Primary

Congratulations to our year 5/6 swimming team who came 1st in the Chipping Norton Schools Partnership Swimming Gala (see picture). They were successful in winning in the breaststroke, backstroke and freestyle relays, three out of four races, which meant they



were overall winners of the big schools' competition. The small schools' competition took place later in the afternoon and the times for all 10 Partnership schools were put together and they were overall winners of the whole competition!

Year 6 have all been on a residential week away at Yenworthy Lodge in North Devon developing their team skills and independence. Their activities included sand sledging, rock climbing, and waterfall climbing and paddling in the North Atlantic Ocean.

Elsewhere in the School, the year 3/4s have started rehearsals for their upcoming Easter play and are continuing their project on the Greek Myths and Gods learning about the story of Perseus and Medusa.

Year 1/2s have been creating sculptures of alien spaceships out of clay and painting them in wonderfully vibrant colours.

Reception and Nursery have been creating their own top trump cards with facts they know about woodland animals and have discovered some spring flowers in our garden.

Bledington Primary



Our School is taking part in an Oracy competition for the first time. Each pupil had to think about a topic they would like to tell others about. They then had to research that topic, plan and write a presentation and prepare a two-minute speech to deliver to an audience. The topics were very wide, ranging from Life on a Farm to UFOs and from Endangered Species to Bananas – something to keep everyone interested!

Children and adults judged the presenters using strict criteria, including:

- Have they prepared and practised?
- Were they engaging with their audience?
- Was their speech clear & pleasant with varied tone & pitch?
- Did they have good expression in their voice?
- Did their talk have impact and spark interest?

Three winners were chosen from each class and they then had to take part in the next stage of the competition which was to perform their speech in front of the whole School. The judges for this were Dr and Mrs Gilmour who were impressed by the variety and delivery of the presentations. The three school winners were: Grace in KS1 (Friendship),

Bella in LKS2 (Penguins) and Flora in UKS2 (The Ocean). They will represent us in the North Cotswold heats of the Oracy competition. Good luck to you all!

Chadlington Primary

'We Are Animators': We have been learning animation to hone ICT, reading, writing and narrative skills. KS1 have been using the Pixar story spine to help develop narrative, and KS1 have been using animation programmes such as scratch jujio as a way of making simple animations to bring their stories to life. Pixees created basic animations using buttons.



Clay workshop: Jon Williams, 'The Flying Potter' ran a workshop to help children prepare for the Sculpture at Kingham Lodge exhibition. A beehive, butterflies, beetles, ladybirds, worms and caterpillars have all been sent off for firing.

Wellbeing and mental health has been a big priority this term with staff and children taking daily exercise in the school grounds and beyond. At least three times a week, KS2 have been walking what is known locally as 'The Chad Mile', with villagers stepping out to wave at the children as they pass. Teachers have noticed the positive impact with the children coming back alert and ready to learn.

Sustainability Task Force: A sustainability task force has been formed made up of Governors, parents, staff and soon-to-be pupils. The next topic is 'We Are Activists' which will initiate sustainability action planning initiated by the children who will lead the way.

Kingham Primary

Young Voices: Last month, the School Choir performed at Young Voices at the Resorts World Arena, Birmingham. Young Voices is the largest children's choir in the world, starting over 5,000 children – it was an epic event! One of our favourite songs was Proud which we performed live with Heather Small! There were many other performers including dancers, beatboxers and the violin player, Anna Phoebe. The performance was amazing and to finish the night we sang Nile Rodgers Disco Party!!! By reporters Alice, Amy and Ruby in Year 5.



Children's mental health: In February, it was Children's Mental Health Week. Kingham students learnt how human connection is vital for their well-being and during the week were encouraged to connect with others in healthy, meaningful ways. Pupils participated in several activities to help them understand more about mental health and on the Friday enjoyed expressing their personalities through colour and costume as they 'dressed to express'.

Kingham sports news: Congratulations to all our four teams of athletes who, having won the Chipping Norton



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SCHOOLS NEWS

Cross Country tournament, made it to the West Oxfordshire Finals. At the West Oxon finals our U11 Girls came in second qualifying for the County Finals. Well done all and congratulations to Max Bellord and Zack Glennie who have individually qualified for the finals.

Enstone Primary



The first half of the Spring Term has been very busy and productive here at Enstone Primary School. We started the term with a talk from a local environmentalist about river pollution, which led our older pupils to write letters to MP Robert Courts, asking for his support in bringing about positive change in our area. The following week we enjoyed a fantastic pottery workshop, courtesy of

Kingham Sculpture (pictured). Our pupils collaborated to produce three beautiful bird baths, which will return to our school garden following their display at the Kingham Sculpture Trail. On the sporting front, we enjoyed great success at the Chipping Norton Partnership swimming gala, bringing home the small schools' trophy, swiftly followed by a win for our girls' team at the cross country competition. A much warmer treat was a visit for Years 4 to 6 to the Sheldonian Theatre to enjoy a concert performed by the County Youth Orchestra – amazing music in fabulous surroundings! As this half term draws to a close, we are celebrating our annual House Festival – two days

of teamwork, singing and creativity culminating in a sharing assembly, which is a lovely way to head into the half term holiday.

ACE Centre Nursery School

We've had a very chatty start to 2023, with our whole Centre Child Development training securely in place: the teachers and all the team actively listen and develop talk in everything we do. The children are



becoming experts in talking around books and adopt core books as their favourites to act out on stage and in their play. Weekly poems and songs have made their way home and parents report they have been taught the words by their child. The photo is of play inspired by the poem *I'm going to build a little house*.

Our communication and language programme WELL COMM is also securely in place, which means all children who need a little extra help are enjoying daily language experiences. So, we are delighted to observe that language ability is rising where it is most needed.

And once a small person gets a taste for expressing their ideas, mark-making naturally follows. But careful planning for writing in play goes alongside this – so shopping lists, pirate flags, vet's bills and designing your own computer game for online safety day have all been super motivating reasons for our children to begin to write.

Sibford School

CHICAGO the musical: Sibford School is excited to perform a teen edition of Kander & Ebb's legendary and award-winning musical about fame, fortune and acquittal! In roaring twenties Chicago, Roxie Hart murders a faithless lover and convinces her hapless husband, Amos, to take the rap... until he finds out he's been duped and turns on Roxie. Convicted and sent to death row, Roxie and another 'Merry Murderess', Velma Kelly, vie for the spotlight and the headlines, ultimately joining forces in search of the American Dream: fame, fortune, and acquittal.

Performance dates: Monday 6 March at 1pm: All tickets £10 – preview matinée with no interval refreshments.

Tuesday 7 to Friday 10 March at 7pm. Raked Seating: Adults £12, u16s £10. Cabaret Tables (with welcome drink, canapés and waiter service): Adults £25, u16s £20.

NB Audience age recommendation from Concord Theatricals is 11+. Run time inc interval is approx 2 hours. Book tickets via: <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/sibford-school>.

Public bouldering sessions: Join us on our climbing wall to give bouldering a go! Sessions are 6.30–8.30pm on Mondays during term time. £10 per climber, suitable for ages 12+. Please park in our swimming pool car park and use the swimming pool entrance to access the climbing wall.



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Sunday: CLOSED

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LETTERS

The Chipping Norton News Team welcomes letters but reminds writers that name & address must be supplied and that the opinions expressed are not those of the Team.

Congratulations Dr Toby!



Congratulations to Dr Dowling!

Big congratulations to Toby Dowling who has just been awarded his PhD in Quantum Physics. Toby attended St Mary's Primary School, then studied at Chipping Norton School attaining A-levels in Chemistry, Physics, Maths and Further Maths. He went on to gain a First Class Master's Degree with Honours in Theoretical Physics and now a PhD at Sheffield University. We would like to thank St Mary's and Chipping Norton School with a special mention to Phil Jacobs for the extra Maths tuition.

Congratulations from Dad (John), Mum (Julie), brother (Ben) & Nan (Jean). Well done Toby and good luck for your future.

Julie Dowling

What can I do today?

I wonder how many people in Chippy wake up in the morning not knowing how to fill their day? If, like me, you live on your own and, again like me, have a physical disability, there are only a few options on how to occupy yourself. There are a few organisations who meet during the day such as the U3A, Methodist coffee mornings and the WI, but there are few other opportunities to socialise or have exercise. Chipping Norton seems to have been forgotten in the provision of facilities for people who crave companionship and/or group exercise or dance sessions targeted at the elderly or infirm. Coffee shops and pubs in the Town with good accessibility could open their doors more for people to meet and chat. All that is needed is it to be publicised so that prospective participants know where and when to attend. Age UK seems to have many opportunities in other areas such as Witney, Oxford, Abingdon, etc but poor old Chippy seems to be out on a limb. I am appealing for organisations and individuals to come forward with ideas. You see many people sitting on their own having a drink or a cup of coffee who would probably relish the opportunity for a chat or to share opinions on the news of the day. Anyone interested, please contact me at sue.hadland@yahoo.co.uk and we will see what can be done.

Sue Hadland

(The News Team would be happy to help with Sue's publicity – and hear from others who have access or mobility issues in finding places around the Town – Ed)

Thanks from Oxfam

Oxfam would like to thank all our loyal customers for their support over the Christmas period making it a bumper year. This would not be possible without the wonderful donations of books and music. The success of the shop contributes to Oxfam's on-going work in relieving famine and poverty in the poorest parts of the world. Please keep the donations coming and continue your support in the coming year.

Liz Atkins – Oxfam Bookshop volunteer

Chippy Swifts – 75 years ago

Who was there? I have cast my mind back over seventy-five years, looking at this photo of a Chippy Swifts team taken on the recreation ground towards the end of that glorious hot summer of 1947. Hawkyards is in the background. The person in charge of the team was an Irishman by the name of Paddy Collins. He was a boot and shoe repairer who operated from premises off Market Place. We were required to provide clothing coupons to purchase new shirts! Paddy was a Glasgow Celtic supporter so the colours had to be green and white! Please pass the original photo on to the Swifts! There may be readers of the News who can fill in some of the gaps.

John Hunt



Front Row: Brian Robinson (Rock Hill), David Roberts (Worcester Road), Eddie Simms (? Address), Mike Oliver (? Horsefair)

Centre Row: First name? Duncan (Middle Row), Dudley Cox (Worcester Road), Doug Reeve (The Leys), Peter Tyler (? Address), Ron Stanbridge (The Leys)

Back Row: Frank Tollett (Rock Hill), John Hunt (Worcester Road), ? Quartermain (West St), ? Worvill (Over Norton), John Roberts (Worcester Road), John Roberts (Cemetery Lodge)

Overflowing dog waste



Readers sent in pictures and 'disgusted' comments about



waste bins overflowing with dog poo bags, near Marks & Spencer's and on the Over Norton Road. Readers might note that West Oxfordshire District Council are meant to empty the bins 'in a timely manner', and members of the public can notify them about any bins needing emptying via www.westoxon.gov.uk/environment/litter-street-cleaning-and-dog-fouling or telephone 01993 861000.

LETTERS

Memories of times at Hartwells

The mention of Frank Griffiths and Hartwells brought back happy memories (*A Chippy family that made their mark* – February News). Having failed my A-levels in 1976 and in need



Motor cyclists outside Hartwells in the 1930s –

Photo courtesy of Chipping Norton Museum

of a job, I walked into Hartwells after seeing a postcard in their shop window. 'Temporary driver required, apply within'. Frank Griffiths directed me upstairs to the office, where his wife worked, and in doing so I became part of what was almost an unofficial family. Mr Galloway, who owned the business, gave me the briefest of interviews asking, among other things, did I have a driving licence. I failed to mention that I'd only passed my test a few months earlier and had really only driven my father's Ford Escort. I was told to report at 8am the following morning. Alf Relph pulled back the garage door in Albion Street to reveal the Leyland FG350 three-ton lorry, fully loaded with 40 gas cylinders and a tank containing 150 gallons of paraffin. Frank handed me a journey sheet and a leather satchel containing a cash float of £20 and said that they would help me to reverse the lorry back in when I arrived back later in the day. What could possibly go wrong?! My first challenge was to master double-declutching BEFORE the end of Albion Street. By the time I reached Enstone, I had the job sorted.

Over the next few months, I became great friends with the Griffiths, Alf, Les Reeves, Mrs Sale and Kim Roberts (apologies to anyone that I've missed). Hartwells was a great team effort. When the gas deliveries arrived, all the men would help to unload up to 400 cylinders, which were unloaded on to High Street and wheeled up the passageway that now leads to Gills shop. I can still remember some of the customers, including Mrs Evans who would have a cup of milky coffee and a piece of homemade shortbread waiting for me each week. The landlord at The Gate Hangs High would insist on providing a free pint plus sandwiches for all the local delivery drivers, who would congregate for a pint and game of dominoes at Friday lunchtime! On one particularly snowy week, Les Reeves was sent with me as driver's mate. Having only ridden a bicycle throughout his life, poor Les spent most of the day gripping the seat – especially when we slithered down the hill from Whichford to Long Compton! I've always maintained that driving for Hartwells was one of the best jobs of my life. I was almost sad when Bill Hinchcliffe (who was also the landlord of the Oxford House where both of my grandfathers were regulars) was fit enough to return to work and I had to get a 'proper' job.

Graham White

Stand up for our Town

The news from Rainier Developments that they are applying to build more new homes in Chippy's greenbelt, bringing the total of additional houses to over 1630, along with the extra traffic, utility needs, parking and further strain on our health centre, makes me wonder 'why here?' Could it be the lack of strength in our weak Town Council? For example, the Town didn't oppose very strongly the increase of new homes from 600 to 1100 or of the air pollution. Now it may just roll over and accept 1630 without the essential finance to upgrade services and roads? I'd like to see questions raised in the County and District Councils' meetings, backed up by the attendance of all Town Council members carrying flags, raising legitimate arguments, and making their case against destroying our Town. And I thought the Labour Party acted dynamically on behalf of the working man. Wrong, all talk and no action!

Gordon Brown

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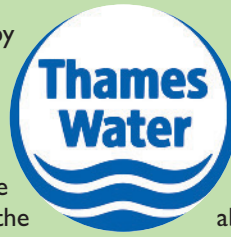
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Sewage protests – MP’s response

National press continues to report discharges by Thames Water of untreated sewage in our local rivers, including near Chipping Norton. For over three years, campaign groups including WASP (Windrush Against Sewage Pollution) have been prominently pressing both Government and the regulator to impose stricter conditions and fines on the big water companies.



to take urgent action. He says the Witney sewage capacity ‘is now being increased’, and ‘there will be more investment, including at the Chipping Norton treatment works’. There is, however, no evidence of any works in Chippy and no information, from Mr Courts on his own website, nor from Thames Water, about any specific plan or timescale.



Protesters at MP’s constituency office

In January, local protestors were out in force and in Witney they unveiled a plaque on the office door of Chipping Norton’s MP Robert Courts. It’s part of a mass action against the 255 MPs, mainly Conservative, who

voted against an amendment to the Environment Bill from the House of Lords, that could, according the campaigners, force large companies such as Thames Water to ‘take all reasonable steps’ to avoid sewage overflows.

To respond, Mr Courts was given both the main *Oxford Times* leader column, and *The Witney Gazette’s* political comment space in early February to defend himself. He says he has ‘campaigned tirelessly on the issues for my constituents’, writing twice to Thames Water’s CEO to object, calling on them



MP Robert Courts (centre) with Ashley Smith from Windrush Against Sewage Pollution (left).

Picture taken in August 2019

Mr Courts

also said he wants housing estate developers to provide funds to Thames Water to help them to increase capacity. However, industry experts and campaigners say this is legally wrong. Thames

Water are already fully funded to make up-front investments to cope with new housing, as the regulator allows them to collect adequate revenue from new householders. Thames Water shouldn’t



Chipping Norton treatment works – past Southerndown Care Home on the Worcester Road

be paid twice! Local West Oxfordshire councillors and WASP would prefer to keep pressure on Thames Water using a so-called ‘Grampian condition’ that any new housing development (such as at East Chippy) cannot start until local capacity is upgraded. WASP, and a new campaign by *The Times*, continue to say it’s Government and regulators that need to be tougher with sanctions against water companies who don’t perform their statutory function.

DIARY

March (News out Monday 27 February)

- 1st **Methodist Coffee Morning** in aid of Methodist Home Missions 9.30-11.30am - see p10
- U3A** 2.15pm in the Town Hall:AGM then Simon Batten - The Medici – Were they as bad as has been painted?
- North Oxon Organic Gardeners** 7.30 Parish Rooms - see p26
- 4th **Mayor’s Charity Ball** 7.30 Town Hall - see p2
- 5th **CN Ramblers** meet 1.30pm New St car park see p27
- Cuppa, Cake & Chat** 2.30-4pm Methodist Church
- CRAG Tea Concert** 3pm Charlbury - see p21
- 6th **Annual Town Meeting** 7pm Town Hall - see p19
- 7th **Railway Club** 7.30 Lower Town Hall - see p26
- 9th **Amnesty** 7.30 Lower Town Hall - see p28
- 10-25 **Chipping Norton Music Festival** - see p20
- 11th **Screen by the Green** *The Last King* 7.30 Churchill - see p22
- 13th **Methodist Crafty, Cuppa & Chat** 10am - see p10
- History Society** 2pm Methodist Hall - see p26
- Folk Club** 7.30 The Harrow Inn Enstone - see p28
- 15th **Horticultural Assoc** 7.30 Methodist Hall - see p27

- 15th **Town Council Community Cttee Meeting** 6.30 Town Hall

- 18th **Farmers Market** 8.30am-1pm

- 21st **CN Probus** AGM 11am Crown & Cushion - call 01993 830760 for details

- 22nd **Town Council Strategic Planning Meeting** 6.30 Town Hall

- 26th **CN Choral Society** *Ein deutsches Requiem* 7.30 Banbury - see p21

April (News out Monday 27 March)

- 2nd **Cuppa, Cake & Chat** 2.30-4pm Methodist Church
- CN Ramblers** meet 2pm New St car park - see p27

- 3-8 **Lifeguard Training Course** - see Lido article p12

- 4th **Railway Club** 7.30 Lower Town Hall - see p26

- 5th **Methodist Coffee Morning** in aid of Dogs for Good 9.30-11.30am - see p10

- U3A** 2.30pm in the Town Hall: Jo Willett - Lady Mary Wortley Montagu

- North Oxon Organic Gardeners** 7.30 Parish Rooms - see p26