

# Keep Chippy Beautiful

## Annual Meeting calls for action

Everyone likes coming to Chipping Norton – a wonderful Cotswold Town – but how can we make our Market Town better? WODC asked us what we thought. Now was our chance in a busy 6 March Town Hall Meeting.

The biggest cry – by a long way – was a heartfelt ‘Keep Chippy Beautiful’ with a litany of issues about litter, overflowing bins, dog poo, unkempt, overgrown pavements, and more. A close second were continuing safety issues of obstructed pavements, shortage of parking, busy crossings, dangerous walks into town and more.

A posse of Town Councillors took the brunt of the cries, but County and District – who provide most services – would have had an earful if they’d been on the speakers’ table to respond. It sounds like it needs some community action – and there’s a big local election coming up on 4 May. Full report on page 2.

SEE INSIDE FOR OVER 50 LOCAL NEWS STORIES

## Time for Town Sports Awards!



### WOWZER that was fun!!

Local Cubs and Scouts have been giving Roller Hockey a go... and it's time for nominations for this year's Chippy Sports Awards. See page 23.

## Having a Ball



Mayor Sandra and Consort Geoff Coleman at their successful, sold-out SustainaBALL colour pics on page 19

## Chippy's Roman Town



Archaeology surveys have revealed a potentially important Roman settlement the size of 20 football pitches – more on page 3

## Also in this issue:

- ChipLitFest is here
- Go try a Parkrun
- Diddly Squat Planning Appeal
- Summer at Fairytale Farm
- Action on sewage pollution

Plus the latest Arts, Sports, Clubs, Schools and Letters

..... and watch out for that April Fool story .....

# Let's Talk Town

## Chipping Norton Annual Meeting

**Around 60 expectant town citizens, including many new ones, were in the Town Hall on 6 March for the Annual Town Meeting to discuss Town issues. Here are some highlights.**

**Town Council report** – Town Mayor Cllr Sandra Coleman, as chair, mentioned the successful Charity Ball, Town Jubilee Festival and Christmas in Chippy events – and looked forward to Coronation celebrations. She noted the Town's respectful marking of the Queen's death and accession of King Charles, the Chippy Larder's work and wide cost-of-living support. As Community Committee Chair, she reported successful Sport Awards, the Town's new flagpole, and Town Hall, Pool Meadow, Cemetery and Recreation improvements. The Council's staffing, communications and processes had been improved. Committee chairs Cllr Ruth Fisher (Finance) explained the Council's grip on resources, and Cllr Mark Walker (Strategic Planning and Traffic) focused on work on the LCWIP (Local Cycling Walking Infrastructure Plan), uncertainties over East Chippy's development, and continuing HGV/Air pollution work.

### County, District and Police updates –

After last year's major discussions on traffic and safety, County Council Cabinet Member Duncan Enright was on the agenda to update us and answer questions. As a WODC Executive Member, he had also

asked for our ideas to improve Chippy as a Market Town. But he wasn't there – Chippy's County Councillor Geoff Saul read a short statement from Cllr Enright, saying that OCC's long term freight strategy study (the HGV issues) was continuing, and repeated the idea of a Market Town study. There were no other presentations from our County or District Councillors, and Police Inspector Chris Ball did not formally present but later said Chippy was a 'low crime' area with police 'responding as resources allowed'.

**Questions from the audience** – The Mayor chaired a discussion hour with comments from the public. Chippy remains a much-liked place to live but **Rubbish and Town Appearance** (17 contributions) were the overwhelming



*Litter! WODC's Executive Member Cllr Lidia Arciszewska is offering us 'litter pickers' and sacks to clear up our town for the Great British Spring Clean – so it's over to us!*

'winners' in Q&A including: overflowing bins and flytipping behind Market Row; rampant dog poo with too few (and overflowing) bins; litter breeding litter; overgrown and leaf-ridden footpaths; and graffiti (with no publication or penalty). Second up was **Traffic, Transport and Safety** (11 mentions) with action needed on: parking on pavements (horror stories of disabled pedestrians dodging HGVs down by New St playground); unsafe narrow pavements and junctions; poor town centre parking provision ('how on earth can I walk up and down half a mile with heavy shopping!'); more shuttle buses; and more chaos coming with new housing. On **Paramedic and first responder availability** (3 mentions), no one was there from the NHS who could answer.

**Missing issues?** – Perhaps the discussion was shaped by who turned up! There were no comments about: **youth interests; cost of living and energy crisis; major health and social care issues; homelessness and housing waiting lists and lack of affordability; town centre investment and local skilled jobs; more visitor facilities; nor 'hidden' or**

**unreported crime** (reported crimes over the last 12 months in Chippy's area: 455 violence and domestic abuse; 126 shoplifting, theft and burglary; 198 anti-social and public order).

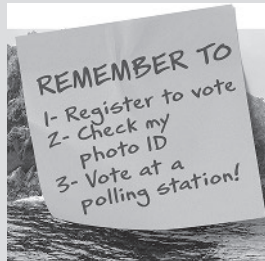
**Action and response** – At this meeting the seven Town Councillors (out of 15) who attended, steadfastly did their best to address issues – and one positive suggestion was for collective town action on a campaign to 'Keep Chippy Beautiful' (See Mayor's letter page 34). But Town Councillors will need to keep the pressure up on our larger more accountable authorities (County and West Oxfordshire District) to improve the lot of our Market Town. They were notable by their near-silence here.

### Future Town Council meetings

Public are welcome at Chipping Norton Town Council Full and Committee meetings. A new Council is elected on 4 May, and starts a new civic year. Main meetings are on a two-monthly cycle. From May they are at 6.30 on Monday evenings. Next meetings are as follows

- Weds 29 March: Finance & Resources Ctte 6.30pm
- Thurs 27 April: Traffic Advisory Ctte 2pm
- Mon 15 May: Annual Council Mtg & Mayor-Making 6.30pm
- Mon 22 May: Community Ctte 6.30pm
- Mon 5 June: Strategic Planning Ctte 6.30pm

After the election, new councillors will be appointed to Committees at the 15 May meeting. Informal Councillors' Surgeries will continue from 10am–12noon on the last Saturday each month in the Lower Town Hall. Coffee, cake and chat on offer! See [www.chippingnorton-tc.gov.uk](http://www.chippingnorton-tc.gov.uk) for full calendar and meeting details.



### Local Elections – 4 May

There's still time to be nominated as one of 16 Chipping Norton Town Councillors – or for one of Chippy's West Oxfordshire District Council seats. Nomination packs for

Town Council are available from the Guildhall offices. Completed forms must be hand delivered to the Returning Officer at WODC Council Offices from Monday 27 March to 4pm Tuesday 4 April. For details see [www.chippingnorton-tc.gov.uk/localelections/](http://www.chippingnorton-tc.gov.uk/localelections/). To vote in the local election, make sure you are registered (deadline 17 April). You can apply for a new postal vote (deadline 18 April). Importantly from this

election, voting in person requires showing photographic ID. Further information at [westoxon.gov.uk/voterid](http://westoxon.gov.uk/voterid) and at [electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id](http://electoralcommission.org.uk/i-am-a/voter/voter-id)

**The Chippy News will publicise all election candidates in the May edition. Please send a picture and brief profile (100 words Town, 150 words District) to [Chippymail@aol.com](mailto:Chippymail@aol.com) by 7 April deadline.**

## Surveys reveal Roman town

Were the Romans in Chippy? It seems they were and big time, according to two recent professional archaeology reports. Combined, the surveys suggest a small town approaching the size of 20 sports pitches! One report was commissioned by local interest group, Chipping Norton Archaeological Research Group (CHARG), who reported the findings to the Town Council's Build Chippy Better group in February. Another, by Wessex Archaeology, commissioned by Cala Homes, has recently been made publicly available by OCC on their Heritage Environment Record. CHARG told the News that their magnetometry survey of fields east of Chippy (not on planned development land) showed footings of at least 20 stone-built Roman structures and boundaries, including possible temples and bath houses, and a Roman cemetery. The morphology suggests a planned layout and, with high status finds nearby, indicates a degree of wealth or status. Earlier ring ditches also suggest a small Iron Age or earlier prehistoric settlement. The CHARG and Wessex reports together indicate a domestic Romano-British nucleated settlement, extending to 16-20 hectares with evidence of continuous occupation from C1<sup>st</sup>-C4<sup>th</sup> AD.



### What kind of Roman Town?

*An artist's impression of a planned Roman town at the site discovered at Caister in Norfolk (Venta Icenorum) – of similar scale (roughly 400x400 metres) to that possibly in Chipping Norton. Archaeologically invaluable as one of only three remaining buried sites in Britain (the other two are Silchester and Wroxeter) that were never built on by successive settlements. Did Chippy look similar?*

Historic England (HE) are assessing whether the findings are of national significance, whether worthy of scheduling as an ancient monument and if this is the best means of protection. They then make a recommendation to the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, where the Secretary of State makes the final decision. Asked by the News, HE would only say, 'We can confirm that Historic England is assessing the site for designation as a scheduled monument.' WODC were due to meet HE in late March to understand more fully the potential planning implications of the surveys. But OCC's Lead Archaeologist, Richard Oram, told the News, 'The remains of the Roman nucleated settlement are certainly of high significance and the professional opinion is that they are of national importance and of demonstrably equivalent significance to a scheduled monument.' But for the moment, everyone, is waiting for HE's verdict!

*(Editorial note: this is NOT the April Fool story!)*

## A tree for our late Queen

On 16 March, Chipping Norton's Mayor Cllr Sandra Coleman planted an English Oak tree on the Common down New Street, in memory of the late Queen, Elizabeth II, and as part



*Pictured: Martin Jarratt, Pat Lake, Chris Butterworth, Charlie Withers, Mayor Sandra Coleman, Jo Graves and Rev James Kennedy*

of the Queen's Green Canopy launched for the 2022 Platinum Jubilee. The date fell in the same week as Commonwealth Day, appropriate given Her late Majesty's years of service as Head of the Commonwealth. The Mayor particularly thanked Charlie Withers who had contributed tree compost made from the flowers laid in town to mark the Queen's passing.

## Cemetery artificial flowers

Chipping Norton Town Council's current regulations do not allow artificial wreaths and flowers to be placed on graves or memorials – and the Council has recently had this queried by concerned members of the public. In March, the Community Committee agreed to adjust the rules to say: 'Please try to avoid the use of plastic in wreaths and flowers as this will help the environment. If you do lay artificial wreaths or plastic and silk flowers, please take them home to recycle where possible'. They also added they 'reserve the right to remove worn, damaged or faded plastic wreaths, silk flowers and any other inappropriate ornaments from graves and to dispose of

## Chippy News price rise

Please note that the Chipping Norton News is now 70p! After over 25 years at 50p (since 1996!), the News Team has regretfully had to increase the price. The volunteering time of the whole Team is free but energy,

paper, and cost inflation – notably for printing – mean each copy now costs well over £1. The News Club aims to break even, with the help of welcome income from our advertisers. We hope everyone will continue to pay for their News in our honesty boxes! The subscription price, for any new subscribers, will also be adjusted accordingly and to account for April's increased Royal Mail postage charge.

The News team volunteers will do their best to continue to keep the community informed of 'all things Chippy' – and of course are very grateful to everyone who sends in regular reports and pictures. The News has always been 'for the community by the community'. If you'd like to volunteer or help in any way – from writing, editing, and proofreading, to desktop publishing and distribution – please contact Jill ([chippymail@aol.com](mailto:chippymail@aol.com)/01608 643219).



# LOCAL NEWS

wreaths, sprays and similar fresh flowers once these have perished’.

## A new Town Hall piano



*Choral Society Accompanist Rowena Gibbons & Conductor Ben Goodall admire the piano with the Council's Tania Kirby*

After a proposal from the Chipping Norton Choral Society, the Town Council agreed to a trial rental in the Town Hall of a high quality upright acoustic piano. The Society use the larger hall for their regular meetings and rehearsals, and Chair Eric Clubley with Conductor Ben Goodall made the case to the Council's Community Committee for the piano to accompany the choir and be for wider community use. So the Council, after

hearing a BBC Radio 5 item on recycled pianos, contacted Glasgow Piano City, whose Director helped them get the best match for both choir and the Hall's acoustics. Tania Kirby, the Council's Events and Facilities Officer, said they were delighted to provide the instrument, which can be enjoyed by other groups and organisations using the Hall. Ben Goodall said they were very grateful to the Council. The piano can be moved around the Hall, is kept under lock and key, and can be booked for use via the Council's offices in the Guildhall.

Meanwhile, don't forget anyone can have a play, free, on the piano in Withers Court arcade opposite the Town Hall steps, also installed by the Town Council.

## Diddly Squat Planning Appeal

Diddly Squat's planning saga, social media abuse, even death threats to Councillors and local objectors, led to high security at the two-day Planning Appeal against WODC's refusal of permission for a car park and enforcement against an unauthorised restaurant. But all went smoothly at WODC's offices on 14–15 March. Two WODC Officers, their Barrister, a local resident and his Barrister sat with a Planning Inspector and the five-strong Diddly Squat team: a KC, a 'planning bod' and two 'landscape bods' (Jeremy Clarkson's terms), plus land agent (Cheerful) Charlie Ireland, with only 30 or so (well behaved) local residents and reporters in attendance. There was not a red corduroy in sight, nor Jeremy Clarkson, nor, with all recording banned this time, Amazon TV.

Discussion included whether some non-food products were 'souvenirs', constituting a change of use; whether the venture had become a leisure use and even the planning consequences of using the lavatory! Paying £20 for a potato entitling you to a free Diddly Squat T-shirt was also mentioned. Local citizens made impassioned pleas in support and opposition. Suppliers and staff said the venture supported local farmers and Jeremy Clarkson was an inspiration. Another local feared it had become a tourist destination attracting celebrity-chasing coach tours. WODC said people don't drive three hours just to buy a turnip! Diddly Squat's KC stated it was not the role of the planning system to stifle

success. After site visits, the Inspector will consider the planning merits of the case and report in due course. He can dismiss or uphold the Appeal or find a compromise. In January OCC approved 'No Waiting' restrictions on the A361 and Chippy to Chad road. In February, Diddly Squat submitted an application for a temporary 70-space car park next to the Farm Shop. A potential compromise? The Inspector has never watched *Clarkson's Farm* and doesn't intend to. Will this help or hinder his deliberations?

## A uniform approach!

The BBC and national press had a bit of a field day in February after Bloxham's comprehensive Warriner School found themselves in hot water about a school uniform change. Some pupils joined in a mass protest, and police were apparently called, after a plan for changing the uniform next September was announced in a letter to parents – the main issue was that girls would have to wear trousers, not skirts. It seems the School had in fact made this move after 'a lot' of female students were rolling their skirts up to an 'inappropriate length' and 'sending the wrong social message'. The main problem was apparently a lack of sufficient early consultation with students and parents before announcing the plan. The Headteacher has apologised and is to do a proper consultation. The story provoked many tabloid anecdotes from around the country about a range of sometimes draconian methods of policing the length of girls' skirts and other detailed uniform rules.



*CN School LAMDA students at the 2022 CN Music Festival*

Chipping Norton School is not involved in any of this furore. The School has revised its school uniform policy over time – at the last change bringing in smart black and gold tartan patterned 2 box pleat or kilt-style skirts. No rolling up is allowed – and skirts can be no more than 10cm above the knee. All students also have the option of wearing trousers. One *Chippy News* team member recalls moving here from London many years back with two daughters who were delighted with the trouser option as it was so cold and windy in our 'two coat town' on the top of a hill. Uniforms are a traditional feature in nine out of ten UK schools. Chipping Norton School's website emphasises that their purposes are first to enable children meet their academic potential AND develop as happy, confident and hopeful about their future, whatever their personal circumstances. They stress that 'wearing a smart school uniform which fosters a sense of pride and belonging, is essential to fulfilling both purposes as an expression that everyone belongs'.

## Coronation celebrations



Chipping Norton folk are looking forward to celebrating the coronation of King Charles III. A reminder that the actual Coronation ceremony is on Saturday 6 May at Westminster Abbey. In Chippy the British Legion will mark the event at 10am at the flagpole along West Street.

Sunday 7 May is the day earmarked for local events – so why not plan your own street party and put up some flags! Neighbours and communities are encouraged to organise their own ‘Coronation Big Lunch’ to share food and fun. The Town Council is planning a ‘picnic in the Park’ with games and entertainment at the New Street Recreation Ground. Bring your own picnic and a blanket. Details nearer the time. The Sunday evening also has the Windsor Castle Celebration Concert to watch!

On Monday 8 May, the public are invited to take part in The Big Help Out, to encourage people to try volunteering themselves or join volunteer work in their local areas. Please send details of any events you want publicised to [chippymail@aol.com](mailto:chippymail@aol.com) by 7 April and we will put them in our May edition and on facebook.

## Those Royal Connections



No doubt, with the Coronation coming up, towns across the country will be scratching heads to remember all their royal connections. Chipping Norton can point to recent visits: amongst others they'll include Queen Elizabeth II in 1959 at the Town Hall,

her father George VI inspecting a military parade in the Market Square during WWII (when Tommy Aldridge's dog famously joined in), and more recently the then Prince Charles pictured being welcomed by Mayor Gina Burrows when attending a St Mary's Church concert back in 2005.

Not to be outdone, Woodstock is on the map, with Blenheim Palace showing a *Royal Connections Crowns and Coronets* exhibition until 30 July. ‘Behind the scenes’ stories span 300 years of the Marlborough's relationship with the Royal Family. There are previously unseen artefacts, crowns, coronets, robes and photo albums – among them their personal effects from royal weddings, coronations, and holidays. The exhibition features an ornate crown worn by Queen Anne, which has undergone conservation, on public display for the first time.

## New High Street Cinema

The new boutique Living Room Cinema being built in Chipping Norton's High Street (the old Harpers building) now has a Facebook page saying ‘opening summer’ rather than ‘spring’ as previously publicised. The Cinema is looking for corporate members and is one of the ChipLitFest

sponsors, but as at mid-March sign-ups for general membership had not yet started. Watch their Facebook page.

## Neither up nor down

Visitors and shoppers at the Midcounties Co-op supermarket in Chipping Norton can't have failed to notice the out-of-order escalators, which have now been dormant for close to a month. The alternative is a steep hill outside or a busy lift. One resident told the News about tripping and injuring themselves while



braving the 32 stationary steep stairs of the escalator – so the need for restoration has, well, escalated. At the time of writing, the *Chippy News* was awaiting an update from the Co-op press team. Regular customers have seen many short stoppages for repairs over the years. However, given the length of time the escalators have now been out of action, it might be time for a major replacement.

## Council's postal strike letter

Should Parish Councils send ‘political’ letters? As reported in December's *Chippy News*, back at their 7 November Community Committee meeting, Town Councillors, according to the meeting minutes, expressed their ‘support for the postal workers strike’. The four Councillors present then approved a proposal from Cllr Steve Akers to write to the Royal Mail Chief Executive, urging the Royal Mail to ‘reach a negotiated settlement’ with the Communication Workers Union, rather than ‘impose changes detrimental to the public and Royal Mail workers’. Subsequently, at February's full Town Council meeting, town resident Alan White addressed Councillors about this. In the draft minutes of that latest meeting Mr White was reported as being ‘concerned that the Council did not have the remit’ to send such a letter. However, the Town Clerk said that constitutionally the Council, elected to represent the Town's citizens, were able to do this – and, before writing the letter, they had checked with the Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils, who confirmed that no conflict arose from doing this. Mr White was not happy with this – but Councillors assured him that a proper debate and vote had taken place. They thanked him for his views. Mr White, however, has subsequently written to the Town Clerk saying he remains unhappy with the accuracy and completeness of the minuted report of his question and the subsequent discussion. (See letters page)

## New cycle repair stands

As part of their campaign to encourage more cycling, Chipping Norton Town Council agreed in February to install two new cycle repair stands and pumps – one outside the Town Hall and one at Chipping Norton Leisure Centre. The Turvec Public Bike Repair Stand and Pumps, in green with custom branding, will be funded with £4000 from the Council's earmarked reserves.

## Sewage – rivers still polluted

Windrush Against Sewage Pollution (WASP) continue campaigning on the state of our rivers, to make them safe for people and wildlife.

On Saturday 11 March a group walked along the Windrush to learn more about the decline of our rivers. The river

Windrush used to be a community asset, somewhere people could play, paddle and swim. It is becoming increasingly hostile. WASP's Ashley Smith said, 'In common with the whole country, our rivers are being used as toilets by a water industry struggling under the impact of self-inflicted underinvestment. Once clear and vibrant waters are now sad grey shadows of their former selves and the baseline for "normal" is being progressively lowered while the Environment Agency stands on the sidelines mainly blocking the view of the pitch'. WASP and campaigners say the Government is reluctant to impose necessary fines, Environment Agency funding has been cut, with too much reliance on industry 'self-monitoring', large water company dividends are being paid out instead of funding more investment, and OFWAT (the regulator) fails to hold companies properly to account.

The BBC documentary 'Our Troubled Rivers', presented by Paul Whitehouse of 'Gone Fishing' fame, is worth a catchup view! WASP helped to connect with campaigners across the country. Prof Peter Hammond and Ashley Smith spent a day with Paul Whitehouse, explaining their data analysis and their views on wider ills of failed privatisation. Some WASP underwater and surface video was 'hard to swallow'! Ashley said 'There are good people working in the water industry and regulators but, despite their efforts, those organisations, alongside our own Government, have formed a toxic cabal which has tried to legitimise pollution for profit. This is being disrupted by campaigners revealing the inconvenient truth'.

## MP's response on sewage



On our area's sewage issues, local MP Robert Courts has been explaining his own involvement in efforts to reduce the sewage pollution problem. In a *Chippy News* article last month we reported that he had 'tirelessly campaigned' on the issues, including writing letters asking for urgent action to the Thames Water CEO who had then told him that work to upgrade Witney's treatment plant by 50% was now starting – and that more investment at the Chipping Norton works was coming, but with no dates or specific plans. Mr Courts has now sent the *Chippy News* a long response to that article. He says he is a 'passionate conservationist' and repeated his response reported by the *News* last month. He has written again to Thames Water about Chippy and 'shares local frustrations that a more detailed plan and timetable for



Ashley Smith, Paul Whitehouse and Prof Peter Hammond examined 'Our Troubled Waters' on TV

these works to take place in areas such as Chipping Norton has not yet been made public by Thames Water, whose responsibility it is to do this.'

Mr Courts adds that the Government is consulting on mandatory sustainable drainage systems (SUDS), and pointed to improvements in water quality and reduced discharges which he expects from the 2021 Environment Act and other measures. He claims monitoring has increased from 5% to 90% since 2016 and points to record fines for polluters and a comprehensive 'Storm Overflows Reduction Plan' which sets new targets to deliver the necessary infrastructure. But he cautions that we cannot transform the system 'overnight' with 'lofty ambitions' and 'blanket bans on sewage discharges' and that 'long, technical practical work' is needed to deliver shared ambitions. He refers to opposition parties 'making wildly inaccurate claims', and urges readers to visit his website [www.robertcourts.co.uk/rivers](http://www.robertcourts.co.uk/rivers) to see what's actually happening.

## International Women's Day



To mark International Women's Day on 8 March, Chipping Norton's Mayor Sandra Coleman led the way by raising the purple, white and green Suffragette Flag at the Town flagpole in the Millennium Gardens. Cllr Coleman said she is passionate about supporting the cause and promoting gender equality and was flying the suffragette flag 'to celebrate the achievement of women across the world, as women are often invisible and their achievements undervalued ... by flying this flag we recognise the need to continue to fight for the rights of women, particularly access to education, health care, and employment wherever they live'.

Lisa Tanner at Beech Haven Care Home sent the *News* this photo of staff and residents enjoying the day – sharing their stories and spending quality time together, appreciating just how wonderful they all are!



## £2 bus fares to continue

*News* readers should note that you can still travel to Oxford, Banbury or Stratford for a maximum fare of £2. The Department for Transport has extended the £2 single bus fare scheme until the end of June. Stagecoach continues to support the scheme, as do Oxford Bus Company and Thames Travel on their routes in and around Oxford. Locally to Chippy, it helps on the S3 to Oxford, 488/489 to Banbury, 50 to Stratford and S7 from Woodstock to Oxford Parkway, Summertown and Witney. S3 and S7 bus users returning from Oxford now need to note that they all start at the Rail Station and go on to Magdalen Street and no longer call into

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Gloucester Green bus station. They stop nearby in George Street outside the Old Fire Station.

## A skate park ... and more!



*Charlbury Skateboard park – why not Chippy?*

Town Councillors were delighted when a large group of Year 8 students from Chippy School, came with some parents to March's Community Committee meeting. Three of the boys presented confidently the economic and social case for a long-wanted skateboard park in Chippy – then answered Councillors' questions with facts and arguments. Councillors agreeing to help them with a petition and a solid business and funding case, whilst asking for more girls in the lineup!

Coincidentally, Councillors had also had a letter (see *Schools p29*) from another Year 8 tutor group about the Skateboard case, but which covered more on ideas for Chippy, including better local buses, town litter, safer cycling and walking routes, cheaper cinema screenings, and societies for young people. Councillors were impressed and will follow up by talking to a wider student group at the School. They are also to revisit the skateboard idea – having parked it three years ago when a survey by the Council found over 300 local young people overwhelmingly in favour of the same idea. The problem then, and now, is less about funding and support, but more about finding a suitable site. Students had suggested the empty space at New Street recreation ground, but, in discussion with Councillors, they were also interested in Greystones. Councillors – from both Town and District – will be on their mettle to try and find a site solution before raising expectations again.

## A tree to remember Rachel

Chipping Norton Town Council has agreed to fund and plant a cherry blossom tree in memory of former serving Deputy Mayor Cllr Rachel Foakes, who tragically passed away last autumn. At her family's request, the tree will be placed in the wildflower section of the Worcester Road Cemetery – where Rachel used to take regular walks with her dog.

## Progress at Pool Meadow

The project work has been progressing to restore the biodiversity and improve access to Pool Meadow and the stream below New Street Recreation Ground. The whole project was to cost around £100,000, funded by grants and a £25,000 contribution from Chipping Norton Town Council, who own, and are responsible for, the Meadow. The work so far has included clearing around the pool and the path along the back. The major next stage will see work on the paths and returning the pool to a proper wetland by providing a water inlet from the stream. In February, the Council agreed a further £2500 for project consultants Beaumont Rivers to do a more detailed topographical survey to provide accurate data. Cross

sections and volume calculations at 1:200 scale are needed for engineers and an ecologist to finalise the restoration work which is expected to be completed by the autumn.

## From Chippy to China!

Are you looking for a high quality local professional printer of artwork? Many local Chippy artists are gearing up for Oxfordshire Art Weeks in May (see Arts section). Included is well regarded local artist Judith Yarrow who will be exhibiting



at FarmED as one of five artists-in-residence. But Judith, pictured, also told the News about another exhibition – on at the same time. She is showing at Dali University in China's Yunnan province where her brother has taught for some years. Their Professor of Fine Art came to visit Judith in Chippy on a British Council exchange and got very interested in Judith's work. This area of China has beautiful mountain scenery and notable plants, specimens of which were brought to the UK a hundred years ago. Judith has some in her garden and she has produced images to be shown both at FarmED and in China. She's using KMS Litho from Hook Norton (who also print the *Chipping Norton News!*) to produce exceptionally high quality large Giclée prints especially for the



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

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## LOCAL NEWS

exhibition. A picture here can't do them justice but see Judith's website ([juditharrow.com](http://juditharrow.com)) and go along to FarmED in May! For more on our printing company in Hook Norton see [kmslitho.co.uk](http://kmslitho.co.uk).

### Students explore The Branch

Those following the project for The Branch, a new community hub at Chippy's old NatWest Bank building, will see that



building site hoardings are now telling something of the story of The Branch. Please do take a look! Emma Kennedy from St Mary's told the News, 'This month we are excited to launch a project that we are working on with Top School where 10 students, who have expressed an interest working in the construction industry, will start monthly visits to follow the development of The Branch. They will meet and hear from everyone, from the bricklayer and architect to structural engineer and decorators, learning about all that is involved in delivering a project such as this. We hope that it will open eyes to some of the employment opportunities that are out there, as well as allowing them to be part of the transformation of this building at the heart of our community'. It may not look as if much is happening from the front, but demolition work at the back of the building is now complete, enabling groundworks in the basement and garden area to move on apace.

### Mill House Hotel plan approved

Kingham's Mill House Hotel looks set for a new life. In March, WODC's Uplands Planning Committee gave the go-ahead for the Daylesford Estate to redevelop the site to provide a 38-bedroom hotel with ancillary facilities including restaurant, alehouse, reception/bakehouse and demonstration barn. The proposals include landscaping and reinstatement of the former mill leat. Guest accommodation includes nine thatched 'cottages' along Station Road – where there is already permission for five new homes. The former mill building will be returned to its original linear form and renovated. A more ambitious plan three years ago did not meet with approval, as WODC said it amounted to Major Development in the AONB. The new development is smaller, with less floorspace than the original hotel, and planners say it is now of an appropriate scale. On sustainable transport, a Travel Plan Co-ordinator will oversee provision of electric bikes and a pre-bookable free electric mini shuttle bus between Kingham station, hotel, The Wild Rabbit and Daylesford Farm Shop for guests, staff and locals.

Kingham Parish Council supported the application, with the proviso, also mentioned by OCC and Windrush Against Sewage Pollution, that sufficient capacity at Bledington Sewage Treatment Works was proven. Councillors agreed that,

subject to drainage and transport conditions being satisfactorily addressed, the application be approved. A quick tally now suggests around 277 visitor bed-spaces locally under the Daylesford label. If the current planning application to refurbish The Quiet Woman, just outside Chippy, is also approved, the number of Daylesford brand hosteliaries in the area increases to seven, including recent purchases The Bell, Charlbury, and The Mayflower, Astall, not forgetting Lady Bamford's new Club and Wellness Spa, based at Daylesford Farm, where guests can join yoga, pilates and meditation classes, try sound healing and gong therapy, or relax in the steam room, crystal sauna and wellness pool. For a price!

### Upcoming events at FarmED

Have you visited FarmED – the not-for-profit organisation based at Honeydale Farm just outside Chipping Norton on the Burford Road? It's a purpose-built education and events centre for learning about sustainable farming and food systems. The **Friday Farm Walks** and lunch are



proving popular (the next are on 21 and 28 April) – for a chance for an inspiring and informative guided walk. You'll visit the meadows, heritage orchard, kitchen garden, natural flood management, woodland, and hear about the farm, with an optional lunch in the café to finish with! Saturday 13 May sees the second **Farm and Food Literature Festival**, co-curated with Chelsea Green Publishing, to celebrate words and experiences from the wonderful world of agroecology, regenerative farming and sustainable food. Expert inspirational talks and debates include renowned naturalist Nick Acheson, Adam Alexander – storyteller with a passion for endangered vegetables – and Lynn Cassells from BBC2's 'This Farming Life'. Tickets from £40. There's an **Artist's Book Workshop** on 19 May, 9.30am to 20 May 1pm. Join Ruth Shaw-Williams to learn how to make a book from one sheet of paper. You will be folding, cutting, sewing, printing and exploring journeying through a book. Cost: £55, including all materials. Further details: [www.farm-ed.co.uk](http://www.farm-ed.co.uk) or email [hello@farm-ed.co.uk](mailto:hello@farm-ed.co.uk) or 01993 402403.

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## Firefighters Charity walk

On 26 February, Chipping Norton Fire Station's crew took on a 13 mile walk in their fire kit to support The Firefighters Charity. The sun was out, making the kit warm, but they, and 26 members of the public, completed the trek, smiling all the



way. The route started in Stow, continuing through Bourton and the countryside. So far, donations have reach £300, which the crew are really pleased with. To donate, see the pinned post on the Chipping Norton Fire Station Facebook page, or by going direct to The Firefighters Charity website and following the donation link called Changing the lives of our fire-fighting heroes. The Charity offers specialist, lifelong health and wellbeing support to the UK fire services community. Watch Manager David Cuthbert stressed the importance of the Charity in supporting the Chipping Norton Firefighters in their hard work to protect their local community. If you are interested in joining the crew at Chipping Norton, pop in to the Station on a Wednesday night between 6.45 and 9pm.

**SAVE THE DATE!** It's the return of Chippy's famous **Charity Car Wash!** Sunday 2 April 10am–3pm at Chipping Norton Fire Station. Book it in your diary now!!

## Rollright Bingo

All are invited to the next Bingo night in Great Rollright Village Hall on Friday 21 April – a fun evening for young and old and a chance to win cash prizes! Doors open at 7pm, games start 7.30pm and it's normally finished at 9.15pm. Bar and refreshments. This is a non-profit-making event and all proceeds go towards local causes. Next date 26 May. Eyes Down Look In! For further info, email: grrbingo@aol.com.

## Launch of The House of Hare

The House of Hare salon, along at 35a West Street in Chipping Norton, celebrated its launch, under its new name, on Friday 3 March with a spectacular array of balloons and a party for clients and friends. Pictured, left to



right, are Angelika, Connie, Carla and Lucy from the salon. The team offer, 'A hairdressing experience that brings a slice of luxury, intimacy and unrivalled knowledge to the Cotswolds'.

## ... & Simon Smith's new salon

Celebrated hairdresser Simon Smith, who used to be at the 35a West Street salon, has left there and has been taking an 18-month 'sabbatical'. He told the News he will shortly (this Spring) be opening his own new salon at the newly renovated 2 West Street building (the old Wine Bear then Antiques shop at the entrance of Hitchman's Mews). More news soon.

## Memories of a Mayfair lunch

Last month saw the death of larger-than-life Betty Boothroyd, the MP and much admired first female House of Commons Speaker. *The Times Diary* then carried an amusing anecdote of an encounter with Gemma Levine, now living in Chipping Norton's Bliss Mill. Gemma's long and remarkable career, as a professional photographer, has seen over 26 books published and 60 worldwide exhibitions – many featuring memorable portraits of celebrities. Betty Boothroyd first appeared in Gemma's 1995 book *People in the 90s* which had a foreword by Diana, Princess of Wales. Betty did book launches for Gemma, at no charge, and they became firm friends enjoying occasional Mayfair lunches. At their last one, Betty admired Gemma's pretty watch but firmly refused Gemma's offer take it as a thank you gift. However, she looked downcast when Gemma hinted it was from Tiffany's. Gemma then admitted it was a £7 Primark lookalike, pressed it into Betty's hand and received a priceless hug. Gemma's energy in recent years has gone into raising awareness for those suffering from Lymphoedema. Her next book *AWARENESS*, with text by 12 famous personalities and photographs, is published in April – with a fundraising event at The Royal Academy of Music on 20 April featuring Sir Karl Jenkins. Details from gemmalevine@aol.com and see gemmalevine.co.uk.



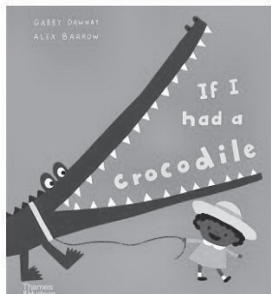
## Oxfordshire's Nature Survey

Despite a cold, snowy snap in March, the days are becoming longer, and Spring is coming! Most Chipping Norton residents will have received a survey by the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust, BBOWT, who point out that, alarmingly, the UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world, and we must make sure we do not lose more space for nature. BBOWT have a vision and want your help and views, firstly to complete the survey and secondly to join BBOWT. Do you want more wildlife features such as more street trees, wildflower margins or wildlife corridors along the roadside verges, swift boxes or hedgehog highways? BBOWT want your ideas.

Also to bird lovers – a reminder that Bird Nesting Season runs from March to August, although blackbirds may have already produced their first brood. Birds may be nesting in your trees, shrubs, ivy, hedges, nest boxes or under the eaves. Nests are often well hidden, and you may not know they are there. Don't cut back hedges or other vegetation at this time of year. Also be careful using the strimmer as hedgehogs make their appearance and shelter in leaf litter or undergrowth. All wild birds, their nests and eggs are protected by law. Join online at [bbowt.org.uk/oxon](http://bbowt.org.uk/oxon) or phone 01865 788300.

## Events at Chippy Library

**Origami Time** – Here’s your chance to try your hand at origami at a new library drop-in session on the second Saturday every month, 11am to 12pm. It’s free and you don’t need library membership. All ages welcome – so if you need some downtime, or just fancy trying something new and creative, come along on Saturday 8 April.



**ChipLitFest for Children** – With the Literary Festival in its tenth year, the library is hosting three events starting with the Poetry Society Stanza Group on Thursday 27 April at 8pm. Members read their own poems, then the floor is opened to others. This is free, no ticket is required. Next up is the Short Story

Competition Awards on Saturday 29 April at 6pm. This competition attracts thousands of entries from home and abroad. It’s free, but a ticket is required. On Sunday 30 April at 11am there is *If I had a Crocodile* with Gabby Dawney and Alex Barrow – for ages 3+ and children must be accompanied by an adult. Tickets £3.50. ChipLitFest tickets from Chipping Norton Theatre Box Office on Goddards Lane, by phone on 01608 642350 or at [chiplitfest.com](http://chiplitfest.com).

**Sally Moore** – Library Manager

## 2023/4 Town Council grants

Chipping Norton Town Council award around £30,000 annually to local not-for-profit organisations. Their revised policy now says applications for these ‘Community Grants’ will be limited to £2000 for projects, activities or running costs – but you must demonstrate ‘improved physical, mental, emotional health, and environmental or economic outcomes’, and direct positive impact for Chipping Norton residents. You must have a bank account and constitution. From now on, there will be two annual chances to apply – at least 14 days before either the 17 July 2023 or 5 February 2024 Council meetings. Full details and application forms will be at [www.chippingnorton-cc.gov.uk](http://www.chippingnorton-cc.gov.uk) or from The Guildhall.

## Build Chippy Better meeting

The Town Council’s ‘Build Chippy Better’ working group has resumed meeting to pursue issues linked with the major housing growth of the Town at East Chipping Norton and elsewhere. At their latest meeting, chaired by Mayor Sandra Coleman on 27 February, the Group received a brief update from CHARG (the Chipping Norton Archaeology Research Group) about what they say are significant findings of Roman remains on sites to the east of town. Last year, the whole issue of archaeology caused a halt on any further planning at East Chippy – and it remains unclear what impact this has on new housing plans. The meeting also discussed implications for West Oxfordshire’s ‘5-year land supply’ requirements laid down, but recently amended, by the Government. It was hoped to have detailed meetings with WODC about this issue as soon as possible. This is particularly important in view of the pending planning application by Rainier for land at the top of Banbury Road, adjacent to the Cricket Club. Discussion of a possible Community Land Trust for Chippy, about which the Town Council has commissioned a short study (see article in box below), was held over until the next BCB meeting on 27 March.

## Methodist Church News

It was pancakes for all at the beginning of Lent at Chipping Norton Methodist Church. The Junior Church celebrated with pancakes for everyone – and instead of giving up something, they would try very hard to do a good deed every day during Lent with ideas from keeping bedrooms tidy to saying hello to folks with a smile. Photo shows Stan, Ronnie, Charlie and Mark enjoying pancakes made by Isla and Samson.



Diary dates include: Wednesday 5 April, Cuppa and Chat for Dogs for Good, 9.30–11.30; Monday 17 April, Crafty

## Community Trust for Chippy?

Chipping Norton Town Councillors have for some months been looking at the idea of a Community Land or Development Trust – which can act as a ‘long-term steward’ owning land, housing, buildings or other assets that meet important needs of the community. These are non-profit, community-based organisations. A key principle is that such land or buildings cannot be sold off for private or individual gain. With new growth coming in Chippy, examples of using a Trust could include:

- being given land (perhaps in a large new development) that could be leased for self-build, affordable housing, or a shared community facility
- using S106 developer contribution funding to provide affordable housing
- using an endowment from developers to own and manage green or recreational spaces instead of

contracting to a private company

- taking over existing community gardens, playgrounds, or similar assets.



These Trusts can have various legal forms but charitable status can help, for example, in seeking grants. It is important to note that they would be neither owned nor controlled by the Town Council.

Town Councillors suggest this might benefit the community and at February’s full meeting they agreed around £3000 for Community First Oxfordshire (CFO) to carry out a short project ‘Stewardship – Exploring The Options’ to look at ideas, benefits and next steps. CFO is a community development charity going back 100 years, providing support for local communities on these and related issues. The *Chippy News* will feature more detail as this work, including engaging the community, goes forward.

# LOCAL NEWS

Cuppa and Chat, 10–12 and on Saturday 22 April Spring Sale and light lunches from 12 to 2pm for Church funds.

**Elaine Parsons**

## Our new Methodist Minister

The News Team were delighted to receive this personal introduction to Chipping Norton's new Methodist Minister, Andrew Biggs



Hello! My wife Julia and I moved to Chippy just over six months ago as I took up the appointment of Methodist Minister here. I am also Minister for Methodist churches in Churchill, Charlbury, Stonesfield and Davenport Road in Witney. On top of that, I am Superintendent Minister for the West Oxfordshire Circuit of the Methodist Church, covering 12 churches in the area between Chippy and Faringdon – all enough to keep me fairly busy! Julie has recently taken up the post of Chaplain to the Methodist Home in Carterton – The Homestead.

We have come here from Gloucester, but I grew up in Hanham, just outside Bristol and lived there until I entered teacher training at Westminster College in Oxford in 1990. After college, Julie and I were married and living in Bristol, both primary school teachers and also heavily involved with church-based youth work. In 2006 I took a pause from full-time teaching to complete a Masters in Education, Society and Technology at Bristol University and it was around this time that I felt the call to ministry and ended up training at Wesley College in Bristol. I was appointed to the Burnham on Sea and Weston Super Mare Circuit in 2009 and moved to Gloucester five years later. During this time, Julie has worked for the church as a Family Worker and a Community Outreach Worker.

We enjoy walking, bird watching, following tennis and FI. We have enjoyed our time in Chippy so far, finding our way around and getting to know places and people, and are looking forward to being able to get out more with warmer weather! Meanwhile, if you spot us around, please come and say 'Hello'.

*Andrew has written this year's Easter Reflection – see p17*

## Children's writing contest

Could you write a short story of 500 words and perhaps win a £25 Waterstones voucher? Now's your chance in a local competition run by Got2B, who run youth activities in Chippy and West Oxfordshire. Their 2023 writing contest has a deadline of 16 April midnight. In two age categories (11–14 and 15–19), your 500 words of fiction could be a short story, poem, song – based around themes such as 'a moment in time' or 'big ideas'. It can be typed or handwritten – but sent electronically. Winners and runners-up will be announced by August with entries published on social media. More than one entry allowed – on different entry forms. See [got2b.org](http://got2b.org) ... and to note: Got2B run Chipping Norton's Hexagon Club for LGBTQ+ Young People aged 13–17, each Wednesday 3.30–5pm. Contact Got2B via Facebook messenger or Instagram for details.

## Blossom Day at the Orchard

Join us in Heralding the Spring for Blossom Day. *Where?* Chipping Norton's Community Orchard (off the Worcester Road). *When?* On Sunday, 23 April. *What time?* 12 noon to 3pm. *What's on?* Music by St Andrew's Assembly, Children's activities, rural crafts (Bodger with his pole lathe, handmade walking sticks, the Chippy 'Yarn Bomber'), Spring rituals, plant stall, home-baked refreshments. All for donations to keep the Orchard going. A great day out for all the family. For further details please contact [rheatherleonard@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rheatherleonard@yahoo.co.uk).



**Heather Leonard**

## ChippyThrough Time

The Victoria County History (VCH) team are giving an illustrated talk in Chipping Norton Town Hall on 17 April at 7pm about their research into Chipping Norton and the local area's history – see details below.

VCH is a national local-history research and publication project aiming to build on work already done and provide a solid foundation for others to build on. The project was first dreamed up in 1899 and was dedicated to Queen Victoria – but in fact it covers much more than Victorian history. In Oxfordshire a small team of four is working to complete coverage of the historic (pre-1974) county, hopefully by the end of the decade! 20 out of 23 planned volumes have been published and the next is focused on Chipping Norton itself and on half a dozen surrounding places: Over Norton, Hook Norton, Great and Little Rollright, Salford, and Swerford with Showell. The book itself will be published late in 2024.

The VCH team tries to work with others and share information. Chipping Norton has proved an exceptionally rich seam, with its invaluable Chipping Norton Museum collections, its wealth of existing publications on all sorts of topics, and new discoveries amassed through the recent very intensive investigation of the Town's older buildings, many of which have now been tree-ring dated for the first time. There's plenty to share – but in an hour's talk only the surface can be scratched. The team looks forward to meeting everyone – to give a brief overview of findings, and to share and swap information in the Q & A session.

**Simon Townley** – County Editor, VCH Oxfordshire

### Victoria County History

*The Oxfordshire team will give an illustrated talk on their work*



**Chipping Norton, Over Norton  
and the environs  
for Volume XXI**

Monday 17 April

Upper Town Hall at 7pm

Tickets £3 from

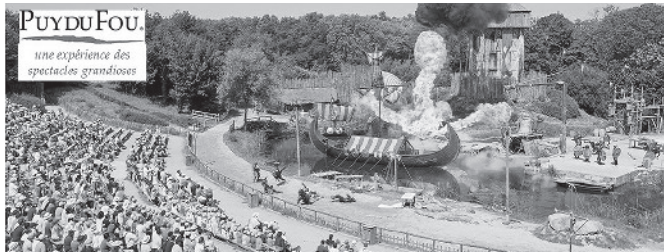
Jan Cliffe – [jan@thecliffefamily.co.uk](mailto:jan@thecliffefamily.co.uk)

Pauline Watkins – [paulinewatkins58@icloud.com](mailto:paulinewatkins58@icloud.com)

and Chipping Norton Museum 2-4pm Mon-Sat. from 1 April

## New theme park for Chippy

The News has learnt that a major new theme park is being planned just outside Chipping Norton, by a brand-new company Chippy Go Wild. This follows a February report in the *Oxford Times* that French theme park company Puy du Fou

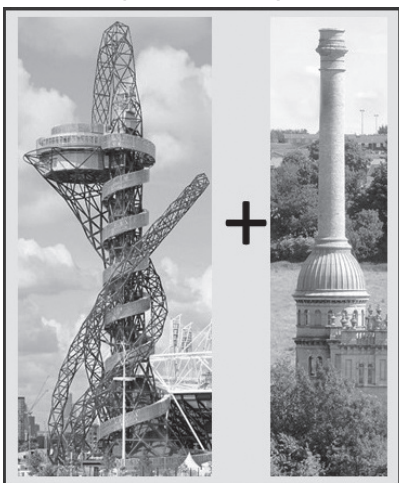


were looking for a 300–400 acre site within 40 miles of Oxford for their first UK park. Founded in 1977, that company's flagship park in the Vendée, is the fourth largest in France, welcoming over two million visitors this year. Overseas expansion already includes Spain and the USA. Their parks specialize in spectacular displays with historical themes.

But it's not in fact that French company which is coming here. It's a totally new Chippy Go Wild Community Interest Company registered by two entrepreneurial 25-year-old ex-Chippy

School students. Joseph King, one of the ambitious pair, gave the News a sneak preview of some of the likely main attractions in the new park, to be built on 200 acres of nearby flat land such as a local disused wartime airfield. Top trumps looks like being a 30-metre high space age helter-skelter, called 'Bliss

Hell' in the style of Anish Kapoor's astonishing Olympic Park Orbit slide, but wrapped around a replica of our famous Mill chimney (see pictures). Older readers may recall Kapoor's



shimmering steel globe on show at the Rollright Stones 20 years ago. Then, for those seeking more of the authentic Chippy experience, Joseph's partner, Arthur Fischel, described another plan to create a mock-up of Repton's magnificent Town Hall. Inside, in a theatre set, designed as a homely Cotswold cottage, visitors can join a live 'Chippy country kitchen supper'. There they can mingle with the famous local characters who will be there, not as waxworks, but as 'digital avatars' similar to those seen in ABBA's recent show. You can chat to and maybe ask difficult questions of personalities such as ex-Prime Ministers, retired rock stars, former Mayors, and even William Bliss himself. And perfect for the kids is a 'Formula Fun' racetrack where budding petrol-heads can race Lamborghini versus John Deere miniature tractors.



Planning permission for Chippy Go Wild has yet to be applied for, but the progress made by Enstone's Mullin Automotive Museum has encouraged our two young entrepreneurs. Local town reaction so far has been muted, but watch out for a grand crowdfunding event for the venture planned in Chipping Norton on 1 April. Joe King and Artie Fischel will be there eagerly cheering us all along.

## Chippy Lido ... the good news

... and the even better news. The Lido re-opens for 2023's season on Saturday 15 April, and, in a move that bucks the current trend in leisure, swim prices will remain unchanged for the second year. Better still, Early Bird swims will come down in price and there will be an additional money-saving offer for regular swimmers. The Trustees said, 'We're very conscious of the pressures caused by the cost-of-living crisis and we are determined to ensure that as many people as possible can continue to access swimming. Despite the pressures we too are feeling as an organisation, especially in relation to the cost of energy and chemicals, we felt that as a charity our mission is to serve local residents and we have therefore decided to allocate both our Town Council grant and some reserves to keeping prices at rates originally set three years ago'. Please visit [chippylido.co.uk](http://chippylido.co.uk) for full schedule details, information about activities such as aquafit, artistic swimming, Tai Chi and yoga, and how to book.

Claire Jarvis

## Town Hall Record Fair

After the huge success of last year's Record Fair, the Oxfam Bookshop is pleased to announce another Fair in the Town Hall on Saturday 17 June, 10am–4pm.

There will be an enormous number of records and CDs for sale on stalls in both the Upper and Lower Town Hall. Not only will Oxfam, of course, have its own stall but there will also be a huge variety of local dealers with every type of music from classical to rock and pop. There will doubtless be gems to be hunted for and bargains to be sought, so put the date in your diary and come along. Donations of records before the day will be very welcome. Call the Oxfam Bookshop on 01608 644850 to arrange delivery.

Liz Atkins

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## Learn about the Evenlode



Photo: Karina Moreton

*Legendary cakemaker Sue Myatt serving tea in the garden*

The Evenlode Geographical Lectures 2023 start with the Spring Lecture from 6–7.30pm on Thursday 11 May at the Memorial Hall, Chadlington. There’s a wonderful evening of ‘local speakers, sharing local and global ideas for tomorrow’. For those interested in the geography of the Evenlode and wider stories about our beautiful planet – come along and bring the family! This year the line-up is:

- What state is the Evenlode River in? – John Pratt, citizen scientist with the Evenlode Catchment Partnership and Peter Moss of Coldstone Angling Club
- Are we being invaded? – Daryl Buck from the Environment Agency on animal and plant threats to the Evenlode
- UK Wine, an evolving story – Monty and Louise Phillips, wine experts on UK and Evenlode winemaking

Tea and cake will be served beforehand and Chadlington Brewery pay-bar until 9pm afterwards. Tickets £10 at Café de la Post (01608 676461) from Monday 3 April. Contact [nigel@winserdialogue.com](mailto:nigel@winserdialogue.com) or 07495 469941 with queries, mailing list requests and ideas for future talks – young local geographers and naturalists particularly encouraged. The Evenlode Geographical Lectures take place twice a year. Previous topics have included eco-tourism in Mongolia, climate change, Covid-19 and food security, William Smith the father of English Geology, Bruern Farm wild hedges, FarmED, and the inspirational Heritage Art Project. Chadlington Memorial Hall is usually packed – with proceeds to the Hall and the Evenlode Catchment Partnership.

## New homes off Churchill Rd?

Chipping Norton Town Council has been approached by Blue Cedar Homes, who hope to build homes on land at West End Farm, west of Churchill Road – a site not currently allocated in WODC’s Local Plan. A decade ago, Sharba Homes were refused permission to develop a larger area, and their appeal was robustly dismissed, because of harm to the setting of Grade II\* listed Bliss Mill, conservation area and AONB. Blue Cedar say, ‘Our plans are for around six new homes, covering a small part of the site originally planned by Sharba Homes, with the remainder of the site remaining in agricultural use. Landscaping features introduced by the landowner since the original Sharba Homes plans will help to mitigate any impact on the setting of Bliss Tweed Mill’. Members of the Town Council met Blue Cedar and said they were unhappy at building beyond the boundary of the Town and in the AONB. Mayor Sandra Coleman added, ‘We were also concerned that this development again provides for the over 55s when we

know younger people are in greater need of housing and that housing for older people will put more pressure on our already over stretched Health Centre.’

## High quality joiner needed!

David Barbour’s bespoke joinery company at Heath Farm near Swerford is seeking an experienced full time bench joiner and cabinet maker to join their specialist craft team. Anyone familiar with David and Nena’s Heath Farm cottages – a



favourite local holiday rental complex – will know that all the cottages have been crafted by local blacksmiths, stone masons and, uniquely, by bespoke cabinet makers and woodworkers at David’s joinery business. Much was inspired by the work of William Morris. The joinery business was set up 30 years ago specifically to work on the cottages but there is now a thriving wider customer base. Anyone interested in becoming part of the team must be familiar with high-end joinery work and woodworking machinery, with a passion for timber manufacturing, detail and high standards. It’s a great environment to work in, with Monday to Friday hours and pay based on experience. Anyone interested contact Mon Barbour on [cottages@heathfarm.com](mailto:cottages@heathfarm.com) or 01608 683270 and see [www.davidbarbourjoinery.co.uk](http://www.davidbarbourjoinery.co.uk)

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## Spring at Rollright Stones



*The King's Men under a winter sun*

The Rollright Stones are gearing up for their Spring visitors. Copse-clearing, native tree and bulb planting, and work to improve access continue. New lodgers are expected in the bird and bat boxes, hopefully posing for

photographs very soon! Progress is expected shortly on the condition of the long-buried Royal Observer Corps bunker. Before long the grass will be growing and the equipment is being prepared! For the first time, the Rollright Trust is taking part in Arts Week, 13–21 May, with an exhibition of budding artists' work at Wyatts Farm Shop. Participants can apply for a one-day sketching/drawing event at The King's Men stone circle – directed by local artist, Stella Carr – to produce a piece of work for display depicting any or all of The King's Men. The actual event is Saturday 22 April, 1–4pm, entry fee £10, numbers limited to 20. See [www.rollrightstones.co.uk](http://www.rollrightstones.co.uk) and Facebook to registe. Several events are planned for the Summer months, so keep an eye on the website. The Rollright Stones is an internationally recognised Neolithic monument site – maintained for the benefit of visitors while preserving its peace and tranquillity.

**Robin Smitten**, Trustee and Site Manager

## Sports pitch plan dispute

February's meeting of the Town Council's Build Chippy Better group resolved to question WODC's Cabinet on their recently adopted Playing Pitches Strategy and Action Plan. Last month, a *Chippy News* article covered the WODC report's findings – which highlighted pitch capacity issues for different sports. WODC's earlier 2013 Open Space Study had in fact also highlighted an under-provision of 5.55 hectares in the

Town. Yet this new 'Strategy and Action Plan' provided no mechanism for additional sports pitches to be secured. Town Councillors consider that, once the proposed East Chipping Norton development is factored in, 8.5 hectares of new sports pitches would be required. Mayor Sandra Coleman said, 'We simply cannot understand how the conclusions of this new report are so wildly different to their earlier study. We would be interested to know how the report was researched as even committee members from clubs mentioned in the report don't appear to have been consulted, and there is certainly no reference to the complete lack of public pitches. At the very least they need to explain their calculations. We ask that the provision for Chipping Norton be reconsidered.'

## Spring at Chastleton House



The team at National Trust's Jacobean Chastleton House are looking forward to Spring and Summer visitors. A rare gem of a Jacobean country house, the House was built between 1607 and 1612 by prosperous wool merchant Walter Jones, as an impressive statement of his wealth and power. Owned by the same increasingly impoverished family until 1991, the House remained essentially unchanged for nearly 400 years as interiors and contents gradually succumbed to ravages of time. This Easter, from 7 to 9 April, will include an Easter Trail with an outdoor theme. Guaranteed to be fun for all the family, you can complete a host of nature-themed activities and win a chocolate egg, while enjoying Chastleton's beautiful gardens. The House and Gardens are open 1–5pm, with last entry at 4pm.

## Volunteer at Chastleton


*Chastleton's 'House Experience Volunteers' add sparkle to any visit – with a warm welcome and stories from Chastleton's past. News Team member Charlotte Bird volunteers and loves it! Here's what she says:*

'What a joy to return to Chastleton in March. My volunteering sessions are something I really miss during the winter with House closed for conservation, cleaning, etc (except for the wonderful pre-Christmas extravaganza!). We volunteers are a mix of those who've devoted their time to this unique property for years and relative newcomers. Some travel a distance, but for Chipping Norton residents, it's on our doorstep. It has a fascinating history and one never stops learning – with a feeling of great privilege to spend time in a home that remained in the same family from its beginning in 1612 until the early 1990s when the last resident, Barbara Clutton-Brock, finally called time. The National Trust's mission was not to 'muck about' with the House. What you see is a

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Peacock Gymnastics Academy

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**GYMNASTIC BIRTHDAY PARTIES WITH THEME**  
Olympic Games, Princess, Wizards, Jungle, Disco & more



**HOLIDAY CAMPS**  
running from Easter break to end of Summer break  
please get in touch for more information and specific dates



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**Bookings & Enquiries email: [flipping@peacockgymnastics.com](mailto:flipping@peacockgymnastics.com)**

**[www.peacockgymnastics.com](http://www.peacockgymnastics.com)**  
Peacock Gymnastics Academy, Shipston on Stour CV36 4QZ

# LOCAL NEWS

property largely untouched by modern life and how refreshing that is. My fellow volunteers are a friendly bunch. Staff are welcoming and continually grateful for the time we give. Like most things, I definitely get out more than I put in. If you have a few hours to spare Wednesday to Sunday and fancy joining the team why not find out more. The House can never have too many people on its books!

See [myvolunteering.nationaltrust.org.uk/opportunity-search](http://myvolunteering.nationaltrust.org.uk/opportunity-search) or please email [Chastleton@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:Chastleton@nationaltrust.org.uk) or call 01608 674981.

## Lawrence Team's spring news

A big thank you from the Lawrence Team to all their many generous donors and supporters. With so many more different contributions, it's difficult to name everyone – and some like to remain anonymous. So, thanks to regular monthly givers, one-off donors, supporters who fundraise for us with various challenging Just Giving campaigns, charitable trusts, foundations and those leaving legacies. Thanks also to the many local businesses sponsoring our 2023 events including Zurich Community Trust, Wheelers Garage, Wise Investment, Wise Funds, Fairfax & Favor, Tattinger Champagne, The Oxford Wine Company, United Fresh Consortium, Marsh Farm Country Suppliers and Robert Johnston Associates! All our 2023 events, including Proms, Picnic and Fireworks on Saturday, 8 July, are listed at [www.lawrencehomenursing.org](http://www.lawrencehomenursing.org).

**PROMS, PICNIC & FIREWORKS**  
Saturday, 8th July 2023  
Chival Farm, Heythrop near Chipping Norton OX7 5TR  
4 miles east of Chipping Norton off the A361 or A44.  
by kind permission of Mr and Mrs J D Sword  
in aid of the Lawrence Home Nursing Team

**Programme**  
6 pm Gardens open  
7.30 pm Music  
8.15 pm Interval  
9.00 pm Music continues  
including Lee Night Of The Frogs - 1812 Overture  
9.30 pm Fireworks display

[www.lawrencehomenursing.org](http://www.lawrencehomenursing.org)

Our Spring Newsletter is out now. To receive a digital version please email [fundraiser@lawrencehomenursing.org](mailto:fundraiser@lawrencehomenursing.org) or visit Chippy Health Centre to collect a copy. There's also information for anyone seeking general support and advice, plus where and how to access social care services in our catchment area. This can be particularly helpful for the frail, disabled or elderly, with or without a diagnosis of an end-of-life disease, who want to know what resources are available to help with finance, planning and everyday life. For general support visit our website [www.lawrencehomenursing.org](http://www.lawrencehomenursing.org).

**Verity Fifer**

**Adlestrop Easter Bazaar**  
Everyone is welcome to an Easter Craft Bazaar in Adlestrop on Saturday 8 April, 10am-1pm, in the Village Hall to raise funds for the Hall. Craft stalls~ teas ~ Easter bonnet competition ~ Easter Egg Hunt plus yummy treats and a raffle.

## Hooky Shire Horses on show

A busy month again for Hook Norton Brewery's Shire Horse ambassadors saw, on 4 March, Shires Brigadier and Lady Grey with Head Coachman Nicholas Carter welcomed by Newark's Mayor on Market Day. They were promoting



*Balmoral settles in at the Brewery*

the Shire Horse Society National Show the following weekend. One of the oldest horse shows and the largest gathering of shire horses in the world, it's a chance to promote the Shire breed which has played such a key role in the UK's history but is still on the 'at risk' register. In the ring the horses are shown in hand, ridden and in harness. Although not really riding hacks, they are ideal as Household Cavalry drum horses. Of course, a certain stature is desirable in the rider; this writer's 4-year-old self perched splay-legged atop 18-hand Gypsy ambling home from work, felt like a king but had the authority of a feather.

Brigadier won everyone's hearts at Newark last year in a similar 'meet and greet'. His companion this year, Lady Grey, is a recent addition to the Brewery stables. Greys are the rarest of Shires – she is one of only about 200 breeding mares worldwide. Last month the team gained a fourth member, four-year-old Balmoral, renamed in tribute to Her Majesty the Queen. Nicholas Carter says, 'We've been waiting a long time to find another horse suitable to join our first-class team and we're thrilled to finally find one. Balmoral's temperament and character are exactly what we're looking for and we hope to have a long successful career with him here at the Brewery'. It all keeps alive the tradition of the working horse – and promotes this 'at risk' breed.

## No 'cramming' at Bell Lane

A bit of 'town cramming' has been avoided in Bell Lane off Chipping Norton's West Street. Developer Amanda Bond Design had applied for planning permission to build two semi-detached homes on rear garden land where planning permission had been won at appeal for one home in 2019. The new proposal was larger, taller and significantly closer to neighbouring Bell Lane properties. The Town Council and more than a dozen neighbours objected on grounds including loss of daylight, loss of privacy, access difficulties, surface water run-off damaging nearby properties, highway safety, and emergency vehicle access and pedestrian safety issues on Bell Lane. Eventually WODC asked the developer to submit a daylight study, using architects' software that plots the shadow cast by a building throughout the year. This revealed that concerns were justified – the overshadowing of a neighbouring home would be severe. WODC refused permission, citing '... detrimental impacts upon the living conditions of 2 Bell Yard through loss of light and overbearing impacts, and adverse impacts upon the amenity of Nos 58, 60 and 60A West Street by way of overlooking'. The developer can appeal the refusal.

## Joining the Chippy Parkrun

**Would you like encouragement to keep fit with a gentle jog or run? You could try joining the Saturday morning Chippy Parkrun – or even start from scratch with the Couch to 5K plan. Find out more here.**



Chris & Rachael take a rest after their Parkrun

Every Saturday at 9am Chipping Norton Parkrunners assemble at Chipping Norton School on Burford Road to walk, jog or run 5km (or perhaps to volunteer or spectate.) This free, fun and friendly event is part of an international movement to improve physical and mental health in a very enjoyable way. Chipping Norton Health Centre is a 'Parkrun practice', where Dr Wendy Hall (aka Wendy Carter), a well-loved partner at the Practice, is a very keen participant – both running and acting as a volunteer (see the photo opposite of Wendy completing her hundredth run!). She says, 'I don't need to tell my fellow Parkrunners how amazing Parkrun is, but I regularly introduce it into consultations with my patients and I am always pleased to see the Chipping Norton population taking part. I would much rather prescribe a walk, run or jog to a patient than a tablet. Parkrun improves the physical and mental health of me and my patients which, along with other lifestyle changes, should reduce the need for lifelong medication to control such conditions as Type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure. It can help to reduce social isolation and Chippy Parkrun is welcoming and friendly'.

The Parkrun course at Chippy School starts behind Glyme Hall, and involves two circuits of the school playing fields, a short section of Glyme Lane and also a figure of eight course in the William Fowler Memorial Wood (hopefully not threatened by a possible new link road!). Unfortunately, dogs can't take part, but children in strollers can and there are encouraging volunteers along the course. Participants can record their time as long as they have registered once via the Parkrun website and



Volunteer stewards recording run times at the finish line

brought their barcode along. There is, however, no time limit and walkers are welcome. On average' more than 100 people a week take part in Chippy but there are also more than a thousand weekly events all over the country, which means you can also take part when you are on holiday or try different courses locally. As Wendy says, 'there probably aren't many Parkruns that don't have a healthcare professional taking part'. There are over 1100 different UK locations for Parkrun on Saturdays – there are others nearby in Witney, Moreton and Banbury.

Wendy Hall herself started running by undertaking 'Couch to 5k' – a free NHS podcast app which has also managed to get several of the Chippy News Team jogging much further than they believed possible (see below). Parkrun is itself celebrating the NHS with an event on 8 July. Wendy says, 'I will never be one of the speedy ones... but I don't care. I am there ... loving it'. See [Parkrun.org.uk](http://Parkrun.org.uk).



### A Parkrun first timer's view

*One newly-converted News Team member reports: Despite being in my latish sixties I thought I should test my legs at the Chippy Parkrun. On a freezing cold morning I joined others at the first timers' briefing before assembling at the start with a hundred and seven other enthusiasts who were variously stretching, chatting and even (a couple) dressed as pirates. I walked most of the three mile course but was still not quite at the back and had lots of friendly encouragement from the noble volunteers along the way. I even managed a slight jog towards the finish line and the very friendly applause made me feel (almost) like a marathon winner. My result – I was 100<sup>th</sup> (second in my age group there might have been only two of us) – a position I was very satisfied with but perhaps if I try a bit harder next time ..... Overall it was a great experience – I felt totally supported and very welcomed – what a brilliant initiative. Do give it a try.*

## Starting with Couch to 5K



Taking up running can seem like a scary prospect, especially if you feel out of shape or unfit. NHS Couch to 5K helps you work up gradually to running in around nine weeks. It's a running plan for absolute beginners, developed by a new runner, Josh Clark, who wanted to help his 50-something mum get off the couch and start running, too. The plan involves three runs a week, with a day of rest in between. Couch to 5K works because it starts with a mix of running and walking to gradually build up your fitness, and stamina. You listen as you run to a different podcast each week – originally with 'Laura' (but now you can pick a celebrity!) who guides you through the session, explaining

when you need to run and when it's time to walk. There's great music with it! In the first 4 months of Lockdown nearly 1 million people downloaded it!



# CHURCHES AT EASTER

## An Easter Message

**An Easter message from Andrew Biggs, Minister at Chipping Norton Methodist Church**

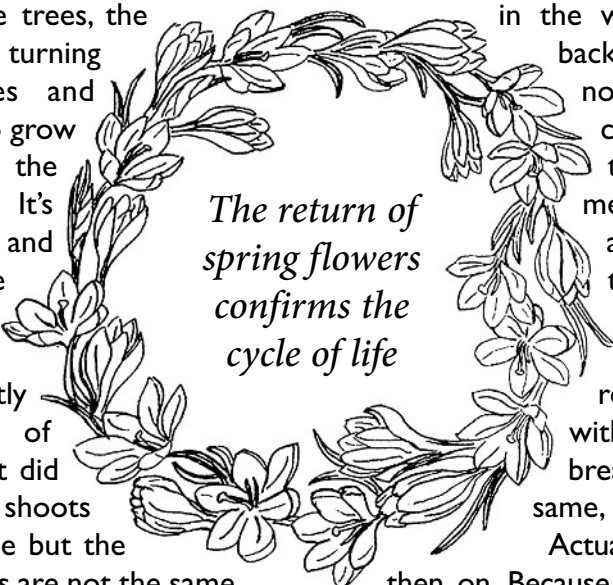
This time of year is one of my favourite times. I tend to be an early riser and I must confess to feeling a little excited when I pull back the curtains in the morning and daylight floods in. I see the green buds beginning to appear on the trees, the green spikes in the ground turning into snowdrops, crocuses and daffodils. The grass begins to grow and I reluctantly head to the shed for the lawnmower! It's like creation has wakened and sprung back to life: life renewed, rediscovered, looking very much like it did this time last year but subtly different. That patch of snowdrops looks just like it did last year. Or does it? The shoots come from the same source but the green leaves and white petals are not the same ones that were there last year. The patch has developed and spread out a bit since last year too. It's the same – but different.

It's also the time when we celebrate what we have come to know as Easter. Celebrating the most important event in Christian history – the

resurrection of Jesus. In Luke's gospel we hear of the women going to the garden and finding the tomb empty! Instead, they find two men in dazzling white clothes who tell them that they are looking in the wrong place. The women run back to the other disciples who do not believe their story. Later, a couple of the disciples, walking to a village called Emmaus, meet with a traveller on the road and they get talking all about the events of the last few days and what they might mean. It is significant that they don't recognise that it is Jesus walking with them, until later when he breaks bread with them. He is the same, but different.

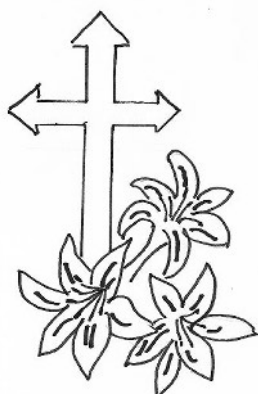
Actually, everything is different from then on. Because of love, Jesus is alive, death is cancelled: just another point in the cycle of life. And because he did not die, Jesus is there ready to be alongside us in every experience of life, the good and the bad. We can trust him to be there for us, just as we can trust that next year the snowdrops, crocuses and daffodils will be back – the same, but different!

*Easter drawings: Frances Buckel*



*The return of  
spring flowers  
confirms the  
cycle of life*

## EASTER SERVICES & EVENTS



**Community Church** at the Town Hall

**Easter Sunday** 9 April  
10.30am Family Worship

**Methodist Church**

**Good Friday** 7 April  
9.30am Service

**Easter Sunday** 9 April  
11am Easter Service with Holy Communion

**St Mary's** (Church of England)

**Tuesday 4 April** 11am–3.30pm Youth Hike Meet at the Parish Rooms

**Maundy Thursday** 6 April 6–8.30pm Passover Supper In St Mary's Church

**Good Friday** 7 April Easter Trail for children  
Collect map from Chipping Norton Theatre

**Good Friday** 7 April 12pm–3pm Drop in time of Reflection and Prayer in St Mary's Church

**Easter Day** 9 April 6am–6.45am Informal Outdoor Sunrise Service. Meet at the Parish Rooms

**Easter Day** 9 April Holy Communion (BCP) in St Mary's Church

**Easter Day** 9 April 10.30am–11.30am Family Celebration in St Mary's Church

**Friday 14 April** 2pm–3.30pm Easter Come for Tea in the Parish Rooms



© Jan Cliffe

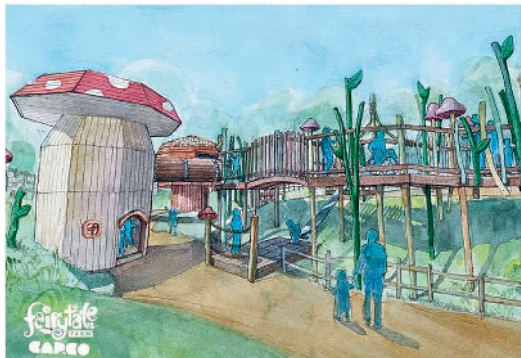
Easter Services at **Chipping Norton Baptist Church** and **Holy Trinity** (Roman Catholic) had not been confirmed as the News went to press. Please consult Church Notice Boards nearer the time.

# Fairytale Magic and Fun



Looking for family fun for Easter and Summer – the News Team’s explored the latest at Chippy’s Fairytale Farm and spoke to founder Nick Laister

**Introducing Fairy Dell** Imagine shrinking down as small as a fairy, able to dance among



mushrooms, flora and fauna, surrounded by magic and sensory encounters in Cotswolds countryside. This fantasy is becoming a reality for visitors to Fairytale Farm – celebrating its 10<sup>th</sup> birthday in June and launching a brand-new area, Fairy Dell. The biggest Farm investment yet, Fairy Dell has been created especially for Nick Laister, his family and team. He explains, ‘You won’t see this play area anywhere else in the world. It has been designed by CAP.Co, a leading designer of attractions and play spaces with a series of sensory features, most wheelchair accessible’. The most magical play area ever, Fairy Dell includes giant mushrooms, raised walkways and bridges, a crawl tunnel, clamber net, climbing wall and slides. Many of the sculptures are made by Andy Blake, who works in polystyrene and resin. His domain

includes the way statues are sprayed to ensure they’ll glow when lit up from within, and the size and shape of each element.

**A spring and summer welcome** Gearing up for the holidays, over Easter is a new interactive Easter display, with Mother Goose joined by some friends for an egg hunt. Join Ribberty Rabbit Crafting for Easter-themed crafts, Easter Garden Games and the Scavenger Hunt. Over the Easter weekend, book breakfast with the Easter Bunny or visit Bunny Hollow for an Easter story with every child getting a full-size Easter egg. Ticket prices on the website, pre-booking advised. The new Fairy Dell arrives later in Spring. Nick Laister adds, ‘You can also explore our new Willow Tunnel in Wilderness Walk and the new Dinosaurs in Dino Valley. There’s a covered picnic area in our Huff & Puff Playground, and even our toilets are rebuilt for 2023!’ And don’t forget to see all the animals! The Farm is open daily, from 10–5, and Nick encourages people to visit outside the holidays too. For playdates with under 2’s, the Higgledy Piggledy Play on Tuesdays and Thursdays is ideal (£4 adults, under 2s free) – with off-peak prices for term-time school days. Bookings and information at [www.fairytalefarm.co.uk](http://www.fairytalefarm.co.uk).



## The Fairytale Farm story

**A dream – accessible for all!** – The seven Fairytale Farm zones were part of a dream over ten years ago, when Nick Laister and his wife Nicola realised that, when they travelled to different attractions with children, there wasn’t quite the right mix of activities. Daughter, Olivia, now 25, has Cerebral Palsy, leaving her wheelchair-bound. With so few accessible activities, the Laisters found themselves either waiting with Olivia at an unusable attraction, or amusing the other children while Olivia found something accessible. So back home, the Laisters decided to build their own attraction near Chipping Norton, catering for able-bodied, disabled and sensory-challenged children and their families.

**Building the vision** – Registering Fairytale Farm trademark and web domains, the plan began! They bought the farm in 2008, with shop and surrounding fields, and began to bring their vision to life. ‘When we started, it was about begging, stealing borrowing,’ Nick recalls. ‘I also run a planning consultancy and specialise in attractions and asked contacts for anything we

might be able to use.’ Many sculptures were from other attractions or sitting unused. Nick brought them to life with traditional fairytales from Snow White to Jack and the Beanstalk.



Nick at Fairytale Farm with daughters Grace & Olivia

Everything at Fairytale Farm is done with accessibility in mind – for wheelchair users, those struggling to move or with special educational needs. There’s sensory experiences and animal petting.

**Sustaining a family legacy** – After juggling planning permission, budget and building costs and deadlines, Fairytale Farm opened in June 2013, with David Cameron cutting the ribbon. With Nick’s professional work competing with his Fairytale life, the whole family now help with the Farm – from Grace, 18, who works in the animal area, to Guy, who runs his own IT company as the brains behind the tech running everything from musical water fountains to the Giant’s camera. 10 years on, it’s about family

legacy, for the Laisters and their visitors, creating memories for whole families on a level playing field, where nobody feels left out.

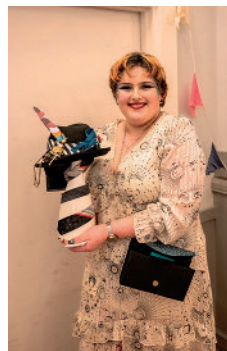
# Having a Ball for charity

A good time was had by all at Chipping Norton Mayor Sandra Coleman's Charity event on 4 March. Well done everyone!

Pictures: Shot by Jude



The Town Hall was host to the Mayor's SustainaBALL with good food and fun, plus dancing to The Gershwin Gang. As the name suggests, the emphasis was on sustainability. Guests were issued the challenge: *Dress your Best for Less* and given ticket discounts, for turning up in either charity shop clothes or old favourites. It is several years (including with the Covid break) since the tradition of an annual Mayor's event was followed. It was good to see plenty of enthusiastic support and Sandra reported all tickets sold with, on a rough totting up, over £1600 to go to charity. The Mayor is supporting mental health charity Bridewell Gardens – see box below for more about the Charity and upcoming Open Days. Well done to organisers, guests, Mayor Coleman and a big thanks to the many local businesses who supported the event with raffle prizes.



## Bridewell Gardens



## Visitor Open Days

Bridewell Gardens, a mental health recovery service based within a beautiful walled garden in Wilcote, between Chipping Norton and Witney, provides a mental health recovery service for West Oxfordshire, supporting people who have experienced severe and enduring mental illness. The Gardens are the chosen charity of Chipping Norton Mayor, Cllr Sandra Coleman.

Bridewell's **Plant Sale is on Saturday 29 April 10am to 1pm**, where you can browse a wide variety of cottage garden plants for sale. Please note – the walled garden will not be open during the plant sale.

The walled garden and vineyard will be **open to the public on Sundays 21 May, 18 June, 16 July, and 10 September 11am-4pm**. Open gardens include a pop-up café in the garden for



tea and cake, plus high quality plants for sale, home produced jams and chutneys and their acclaimed organic sparkling wine. Make a day of it, take a picnic blanket and relax in the vineyard with friends and family. Speak to Bridewell staff about the recovery service and the support provided at the gardens. Dogs on leads very welcome. Families and children are encouraged to explore the site. No booking required. Suggested donation £5 per person.

Bridewell Gardens is an exemplar of green care and social and therapeutic horticulture. They greatly value sharing their experiences with other projects as people seek to develop similar initiatives across the UK. Bridewell Gardens, The Walled Garden, Wilcote, Oxfordshire OX7 3DT. See [www.bridewellgardens.co.uk/](http://www.bridewellgardens.co.uk/)

# THE ARTS

## The Theatre

### Fundraising Auction

The online auction over the weekend of 3–5 March was a great success and raised £5,933 for The Theatre! 'Thank you so much to all of the local businesses and bidders who took part. It's always wonderful to have such generous support from our amazing community!' said Sophie Harvey, Fundraising Officer.

### Live performances

**Nothing Happens (Twice)** | April, 7.30pm. A funny and moving two-hander exploring companionship, co-dependency and what motivates us to keep going. £5–£25 through the Pick-a-Price scheme.



**The Wind in the Willows** 6 April, 2.30pm. Age 4+. A charming new adaptation of Kenneth Grahame's much-loved classic by award-winning theatre company Box Tale Soup, featuring puppetry, theatre and an

original score. £13.50, £11.50 under 16s

**Gulliver** 6 April, 7.30pm. Age 12+. Box Tale Soup return with a new version of Jonathan Swift's incredible adventure. £16.50, £12.50 concs, £8 under 26s

**Bossy** 11 April, 2.30pm. Multi-award-winning Zoo Co present this empowering hip-hop children's show celebrating Black and Deaf culture. £13.50, £11.50 under 16s

**Sold** 14 April, 7.30pm. Age 11+. One woman's extraordinary journey to overcome the brutality of slavery and become a beacon for the British anti-slavery movement. Presented by Kuumba Nia Arts, a Black-led Oxford-based touring theatre company. £16, £12 concs, £8 under 26s

**Sweeney Todd: The Victorian Melodrama** 18 and 19 April, 7.30pm. Opera della Luna's new production (not the Sondheim musical!) with an orchestra of ten musicians, and music penned by British opera composers of the Victorian age. £30

**Graeme Garden in Conversation with Miriam Margolyes** 20 April, 7.30pm – SOLD OUT

**Angela Barnes: Hot Mess** 22 April, 7.30pm – SOLD OUT

**Twirlywoos** 28 April, 1.30pm and 4pm. Age 1+. Great BigHoo, Toodloo, Chickedy, Chick and their friends set sail in their big red boat to discover the wonderful world around them. £14, £11 under 16s

### 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. 5–7 years 10am–1pm, 12 April £25  
Booking at the Box Office, Goddards Lane, via [chippingnortontheatre.com](http://chippingnortontheatre.com) or on 01608 642350.



ChipLitFest 2023  
Committee Member Laura Parker sent the News the following: Our literary festival can look back proudly on the hundreds of authors it has brought to town – and this year some of them are coming back to help celebrate its tenth anniversary, 27–30 April. 'Authors love the warm Chippy welcome so much that they want to come back for more!' says Festival Director Jenny Dee.

This year nearly 20 authors are returning. **David Baddiel**, who is talking about atheism with *The God Desire*, last appeared in 2015 with his children's book. Popular humorous novelist **Lissa Evans** is joining the children's festival with her book *Wished*. Festival patron and favourite **John Dougherty** has been every year. His beautiful new book, *The Hare-Shaped Hole*, (pictured) helps children deal with change. Other favourite children's authors include **Harry Heape**, **SF Said**, storyteller **Lucy Walters** and artist **Yuval Zommer** – kids can help him draw on Jaffé & Neale's bookshop window! Other familiar faces coming back for a second helping include former BBC Arts Editor and art expert **Will Gompertz** and historian **Greg Jenner** with his family show *You Are History*. Chippy foodies will be delighted to sniff out **Kathy Slack's** baking



### What's On

## THE THEATRE CHIPPING NORTON

2 Spring Street | Chipping Norton | Oxfordshire OX7 5NL

#### LIVE

31st Mar, 7.30pm  
1st April, 7.30pm

6th April, 7.30pm  
14th April, 7.30pm  
18th & 19th April, 7.30pm  
20th April, 7.30pm  
22nd April, 7.30pm

#### FILMS

27th Mar  
28th Mar–8th April  
30th Mar

13th & 16th April  
24th April  
27th April

#### LIVE FAMILY AND CHILDRENS

6th April 2.30pm  
6th April, 7.30pm  
11th April, 2.30pm  
28th April, 1.30pm & 4pm

#### SCREENINGS

30th Mar, 7pm  
2nd April, 2pm  
11th April, 7pm  
12th April, 7.15pm  
21st, 23rd & 25th April, 7pm

#### MARK STEEL—SOLD OUT

**NOTHING HAPPENS (TWICE)** - Pick A Price  
(see website for more details)

**GULLIVER**—£16.50, £12.50 concs, £8 under 26s  
**SOLD**—£16, £12 concs, £8 under 26s  
**SWEENEY TODD: THE VICTORIA MELODRAMA**—£30  
**MIRIAM MARGOLYES AND GRAEME GARDEN**—SOLD OUT  
**ANGELA BARNES**—SOLD OUT

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

**RELAXED SCREENING: ALLELUJAH (12A)**  
**ALLELUJAH (12A)**  
**CINEMA BAMBINO: WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT? (12A)**  
**THE SON (15)**  
**RELAXED SCREENING: THE SON (15)**  
**CINEMA BAMBINO: THE SON (15)**

**WIND IN THE WILLOWS**—£13.50, £11.50 under 16s  
**GULLIVER**—£16.50, £12.50 concs, £8 under 26s  
**BOSSY**—£13.50, £11.50 under 16s  
**TWIRLYWOOS**—£14, £11 under 16s

**NT LIVE: LIFE OF PI (PG)** - £17.50, £12.50 concs  
**NT LIVE: LIFE OF PI (PG)** - £17.50, £12.50 concs  
**NT LIVE: LIFE OF PI (PG)** - £17.50, £12.50 concs  
**ROYAL OPERA HOUSE: CINDERELLA**—£17.50  
**NT LIVE: GOOD (15)** - £17.50

27TH-30TH APRIL—CHIPLITFEST 2023

BOX OFFICE 01608 642350 [www.chippingnortontheatre.com](http://www.chippingnortontheatre.com)

# THE ARTS

from her veg patch, while **Pen Vogler's** session on *Scoff*, can be sampled with a glass of fizz and fish & chips.

Fiction returners include Costa-award winning novelist **Claire Fuller**. **Mike Gayle**, a previous interviewer, is on the other side of the table talking about his romantic novels with multi-million seller **Milly Johnson**. **Ayisha Malik**, who has been both an author and a tutor, is now an interviewer. And there's a chance to catch up with best-selling crime writer **Clare Mackintosh**, LitFest's founder and home-grown success story.

Children in local schools are in for a treat when the festival brings them familiar authors **Candy Gourlay**, **Jack Meggitt-Phillips**, **Andy Riley** and **Bali Rai** on the Festival's free Schools Day.

'Every author has a new book, so they always have something fresh to say!' adds Jenny Dee. 'Look out for them around town enjoying Chippy's pubs and cafés.'

## LitFest Talks at The Theatre



**Confessions: Ed Stourton** 27 April, 6pm. One of the best-known names in broadcasting reflects on the life he has led and the events that have shaped him. £12

**The World: A Family History** 27 April, 8pm. Historian Simon Sebag Montefiore introduces his widest-ranging and most ambitious book yet: the story of humanity, told through the families that shaped the world. £12

**Two For Joy** 28 April, 8pm. Countryfile presenter and owner of Cotswold Farm Park, Adam Henson goes on a journey through each season to help us find new and varied ways to reconnect to the countryside. £15

**You Are History** 29 April, 10am. Age 7+. Delightful, daft and deadly facts with historian and *You're Dead to Me* podcaster Greg Jenner who shares the fascinating history behind everyday objects. £7

**The Last Party** 29 April, 12pm. Clare Mackintosh returns to ChipLitFest to introduce her new character DC Ffion Morgan. Clare will be interviewed by Nell Frizzell. £12

**Wild Westminster** 29 April 2pm. Journalists Marina Hyde (*What Just Happened?!*) and Sebastian Payne (*The Fall of Boris Johnson*) reflect on recent extraordinary years in UK politics, interviewed by Suzi Feay. £15

**Ten Things I Hate About Me** 29 April, 4pm. Age 16+. Actor and social media star Joe Tracini lives with the complex mental illness borderline personality disorder. Here, he discusses his frank account of living with the condition. £12

**The God Desire** 29 April, 6pm. Following his 2021 best-seller on antisemitism, *Jews Don't Count*, David Baddiel now tackles God. David will be interviewed by Suzi Feay. £15

**See What You're Missing** 30 April, 11am. Art expert Will Gompertz guides us into the minds of great artists who really know how to pay attention. £12

**The Ship Beneath the Ice** 30 April, 1pm. Mensun Bound, Director of Exploration on the Endurance22 project, tells Sir Ernest Shackleton's story and the remarkable account of his own team's expedition to find the lost ship. £12

Tickets from Theatre Box Office, 01608 642350, [chippingnortontheatre.com](http://chippingnortontheatre.com) or [chipplitfest.com](http://chipplitfest.com)

## Museum, Lectures & Events

**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. Tickets reserved £15, unreserved £10. [burfordsingers.org.uk/buy-tickets](http://burfordsingers.org.uk/buy-tickets).

**Zuleika Gallery**, Woodstock Till 8 April, *This is the Place*, new works by Philippa Jeffrey. Philippa works in a sustainable way with water-based paints on canvas, creating patchworks of naturalistic patterns. 14–23 April *Marilyn Stafford: Street Stories*, celebrates the life and work of an extraordinary 20<sup>th</sup> century photographer who was only discovered in her tenth decade.



Opening hours: 07719 060962 or [info@zuleikagallery.com](mailto:info@zuleikagallery.com)

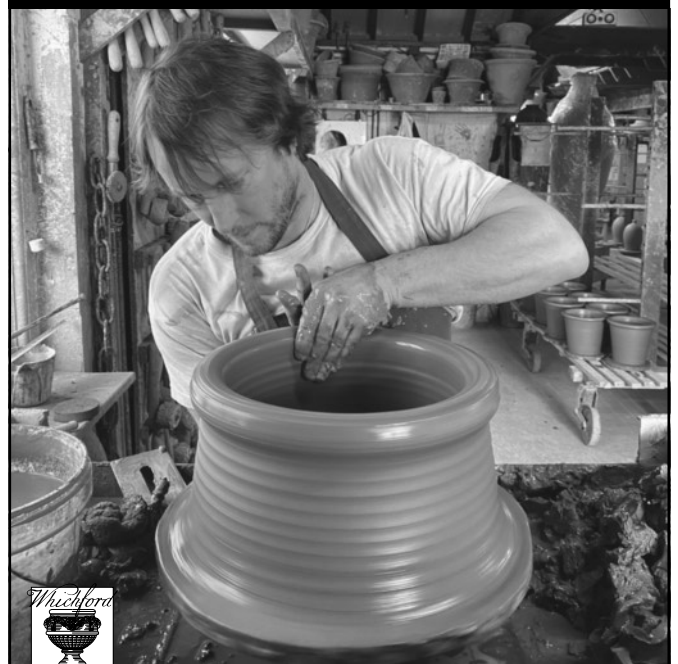
**Dar-le and the Bear**, Woodstock, 9 April to 15 May Spring Exhibition: new works by a selection of the gallery artists. Opening hours at [darleandthebear.co.uk](http://darleandthebear.co.uk)

**Oxfordshire Museum**, Woodstock, Easter holiday children's activities 4–6 April and 11–12 April. Colour, craft and make activities include making a mini bug house, a wooden spoon character and planting some vegetable seeds in your own decorated plant pot. Free. No booking required. Activities to take place in the Coach House or in the garden. More information at [oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxfordshiremuseum](http://oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxfordshiremuseum)

Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> April - 10am to 4pm

## Whichford Pottery Open Day

Open Workshop \* Practicals \* The Straw Kitchen



For full details please see our website or call us.

Whichford Pottery, Whichford, Nr. Shipston-on-Stour, Warks, CV36 5PG. Tel: 01608 684416 [www.whichfordpottery.com](http://www.whichfordpottery.com)

## THE ARTS

**The Arts Society Cotswolds** 12 April *David Hockney: The Old Master of the Modern World* with Douglas Skeggs. From the early sixties, Hockney's paintings have shown a charm and humour that sets them apart from others of his generation. This lecture follows the career of an artist whose wit and imagination have never faltered. Warwick Hall, Burford, OX18 4RZ at 11am and via Zoom. Non-members £10 donation. [theartssocietycotswolds.org.uk](http://theartssocietycotswolds.org.uk)

26 April **Special Interest Day** *Portraiture: Here's Looking at You* with Cindy Polemis. Three talks: How portraiture has changed throughout history and its impact; Miniatures: Tiny Painted Treasures Close to our Hearts; The Story of Omai: A case study examining this world-famous portrait which continues to tell the complex story of race and the legacy of empire in Britain. 10am–3pm at Warwick Hall, Burford. £38 (£40 for non-members) including lunch and refreshments. Bookings: contact Lisa Etheridge on 07918 180895 for a booking form or at [theartssocietycotswolds.org.uk](http://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](http://ticketsource.co.uk/under-chippy-woods) or phone Sian on 07951 891332.

**Berrybank Amphitheatre** 4 May–9 Sept. After last year's



successful season, the Amphitheatre will be back in action at Oddington with its open-air summer of music, theatre and comedy. May sees the Orchestra of the Swan, comedy and folk nights, a Queen tribute band and a Murder Mystery. Tickets [Amphitheatreberrybankpark.co.uk](http://Amphitheatreberrybankpark.co.uk) or 01451 828105.

**Oxfordshire Artweeks** 6–29 May, a not-for-profit organisation that works to support artists and makers throughout Oxfordshire. North and West Oxfordshire 13–21 May. Further coverage of Artweeks will be in the May issue of the *News*. Meanwhile here is a small taster of some Chippy exhibitors:

Five artists from Chipping Norton have been 'Artists in residence' at FarmED, Station Rd, Shipton-under-Wychwood, OX7 6BJ, for a year. They are: **Judith Yarrow, Carol Harvey, Ruth Shaw Williams, Jill Colchester & Liz Teall** and their work will be exhibited 10–26 May (closed on 13 May).

On display by Chippy resident **Melanie Wright**, equestrian and landscape painter, will be atmospheric watercolour and mixed media paintings, a collection of vibrant racing pastels, oils and charcoals, equine studies and portraits. Her working sketchbooks will also be shown. 13–21 May (closed on 15 and 19 May), 11am–4pm, 33 Spring Street.

**Cotswold Events** 13 May, 7.30pm at Chippy Town Hall. Dance the night away with Pet Shop Boys tribute and a DJ with all your favourite 80s tunes. Fully licensed bar. Dress code: smart casual or your best 80s outfit. Tickets £9 on 07850 163109 or at [ticketsource.co.uk/cotswoldevents](http://ticketsource.co.uk/cotswoldevents)

## Summer festival previews

**KITE Festival** 9–11 June at Kirtlington Park, OX5 3JN. Seven stages of music – Hot Chip, Suede, Pretenders, Candi Staton, and ideas – David Baddiel, Chris Patten, Alastair Campbell, Polly Toynbee and many more. Kite lessons, Skylark Social and bookshop, food and drink, kids' areas, DJs. [kitefestival.co.uk](http://kitefestival.co.uk)

## WILDERNESS

Thursday 3rd Aug - 2023 - Sunday 6th Aug

**Wilderness Festival** 3–6 August at Cornbury Park OX7. Boutique festival with an eclectic line-up: music and the arts, dining experiences, talks and debates. Big names such as Fatboy Slim, Sugar Babes, Penguin Cafe, Sara Pascoe, Karim Kamar, Elizabeth Day. [wildernessfestival.com](http://wildernessfestival.com)

**Fairport's Cropredy Convention** 10–12 August OX17 1PJ. 7–8 August Cropredy Warm-up at Hook Norton Brewery, OX15 5NY. Festival of folk and rock music, headed by Fairport Convention. Bucking current trends, the Festival has always stuck to the one-stage idea: performers guaranteed a huge audience, no matter how far down the billing. Amongst many other favourites: Nile Rodgers and CHIC, 10CC, Fisherman's Friends, Strawbs, Richard Digance. [fairportconvention.com](http://fairportconvention.com)

**Big Feastival** 25–27 August OX7 6UJ. At Alex James' farm, Kingham, Big Feastival brings together music from the UK's biggest artists, Michelin star chefs, award-winning street food and an array of family activities. Headliners on the main stage: Sigrid, Tom Grennan, and Blossoms. Some 15 celebrity chefs over the weekend. All campsites family-friendly, filled on first-come first-served basis once you arrive. [thebigfeastival.com](http://thebigfeastival.com)

## Whistlers

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WE ARE OPEN  
WEDNESDAY – SATURDAY  
11AM – 10PM

### What's on at Whistlers?

LIGHT BITES Lunch Menu – Wed-Sat

Standup Comedy - Wed 5<sup>th</sup> April / 8pm-10pm

Easter Sunday Lunch - Sun 9<sup>th</sup> April / 12pm-3pm

7 Piece Funk Band- Sun 30<sup>th</sup> April / 6pm-8pm

Open Mic Session – Sun 14<sup>th</sup> May / 4pm-6pm

See our events page for more details

01608 643363  
[www.whistlersrestaurant.co.uk](http://www.whistlersrestaurant.co.uk)  
[whistlers.info@gmail.com](mailto:whistlers.info@gmail.com)

## Town Sports Awards



Tania Kirby, Town Council Facilities & Events Officer writes: The Annual Chipping Norton Sports Awards will be on 14 July 2023. Nominations open at the end of April – so keep an eye out on Chipping Norton Town Council Website and Social Media for the launch of the nomination date! We are already getting emails about the awards – we are certain this year is going to be full of great people and heart-warming stories.

With several trophies up for grabs we are looking for awesome local businesses to sponsor each award! It's a wonderful way to inspire people in your community to achieve greatness and reward for all the work they put into their sporting achievements in the past year!

Get in touch with [events@chippingnorton-tc.gov.uk](mailto:events@chippingnorton-tc.gov.uk) if you'd like your business's name on a trophy to inspire the people of Chippy to future greatness!

We would like to say Thank You to Graham Beacham for his continued support for Chipping Norton Town Council and all the community with the work he puts in year on year to make the Sports Awards a HUGE Success.

## 4 Shires Swimming Club



The County Championships produced some great swimmers with Liam Kay and Liberty Bennett, emerging the overall swimmers of the Counties.

In March, 24 young swimmers competed at the Oxford Development Meet and all swam really well. We look forward to seeing them compete at our forthcoming club championships. The swimmers of the meet were Oliver Robertson and Grace Thorp, who received the coveted Top Banana award.



Swimmers of the Month are Georgia Preston, who continues to train really well, swims for us at counties and competed at the recent Oxford Development Meet and Daisy Shaw, a quiet young swimmer who is swimming really well and is nearly ready to progress up a squad. Daisy also swam at the Oxford Development Meet.

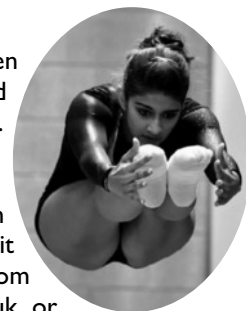
The Club trains at four pools: Sibford & Kingham Hill Schools, Bourton on the Water and Chipping Norton Leisure Centres. We offer a broad range of times to suit and structure our six squads to cater for individual needs.

If you are a keen swimmer wanting to compete or are simply aiming to develop your fitness and swimming skills, please book onto a Trial session on Saturday mornings at Kingham Hill School, either via our website [www.4ssc.co.uk/join-us](http://www.4ssc.co.uk/join-us) or by email [membership@4ssc.co.uk](mailto:membership@4ssc.co.uk).

Lucy Warner

## Higher Energy Trampoline and Gymnastics Club

Are offering Taster Sessions for children aged 4+. Sessions are fun, exciting and develop confidence and awareness. Sessions are run on Saturdays at Chipping Norton Leisure Centre and at other venues in Oxfordshire with CRB cleared, qualified instructors. Visit [www.higher-energy-trampolineclub.com](http://www.higher-energy-trampolineclub.com) or email [higher-energy@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:higher-energy@hotmail.co.uk) or call 07891 419793 if you'd like to find out more.



## Chippy Swifts

Chippy Swifts U15s have reached their knockout cup final after winning a nail-biting semi-final against Duckington, that needed extra time and penalties to separate the sides. The victory sets up a mouth-watering encounter against Chadlington in the final, which will be played at Banbury United next month.

Following the successful launch of our two girls' teams in 2021, we will be running two new recruitment 'taster sessions' in April. We hope enough interest will allow us to create at least one more girls' team for next season. **See the advert below for more details.**

We are also looking for new players to make up our U7s team for next season. If you child would like to learn to play football in a safe and fun environment please email [leeashworth@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:leeashworth@hotmail.co.uk) for more information.

Martyn Walsh



### Year 3 & 4 Girls' Footy

**NEW TEAM Taster sessions**

**Would you like to be part of our newest girls' football team?**  
**Would you like to have FUN whilst learning new skills?**

After the success of starting our girls teams in 2021 ...

We are holding 2 fun taster sessions to trial the start up of our newest girls' team, we would love you to be a part of it. The aim of these taster sessions is to have fun and just have a go! No previous experience necessary.

All you will need to join is trainers, a water bottle and comfortable clothing.

The FREE taster sessions will be hosted by local coaches and supervisors with sports qualifications and current DBS certificates.

If you want to join the fun, please email [bridgetmfgay@gmail.com](mailto:bridgetmfgay@gmail.com)  
**WE CAN'T WAIT TO SEE YOU!**

**FRIDAY 21st APRIL  
 AND  
 FRIDAY 28th APRIL**

**3.45-4.45**  
 @  
**Chipping Norton School MUGA  
 (at the back of the Leisure Centre)**

# SPORTS NEWS

## CN Rugby Club's Festival Time!

Our annual Chipping Norton Festival of Rugby is all set for Sunday 23 April, when we'll have up to sixty U10 and U11 teams joining us from 43 clubs across Oxfordshire and surrounding counties, along with Gloucester Rugby, Jack FM, food and drinks court and special guests. If you have children



who want to see what (mini) rugby is all about, this is a great chance to come and see it in action. Huge thanks to all the club volunteers and to our sponsors who are making the festival possible. Mini and Junior rugby from U6-U16 continues on Sunday mornings from 10am, with new players always welcome. To find out more please contact the Club by emailing [chippingnortonrugby@gmail.com](mailto:chippingnortonrugby@gmail.com), check our website, alternatively or follow us on social media.

Graeme Williamson

## Chippy Squash Club

Squash in Chipping Norton is growing in popularity. Court usage is up and we ran seven squash leagues in March. Our Drop-in Mix-in evening (7–9:30pm) on the first Tuesday of each month is always well attended and a good way to come and get a game with players of all abilities.

Chipping Norton Leisure Centre run by Better will be refurbishing the squash courts in April; this is really good news. It is gratifying to see that Better are investing in squash as a community activity. To join our squash leagues or for more information, contact Colin Little at [colin.r.little@btinternet.com](mailto:colin.r.little@btinternet.com) or phone on 07855 473572.

Colin Little

## Hook Norton Tennis Club

**Lawn Tennis Association Award** We have nominated Clare White and her teammates from Hook Norton A Team for the LTA President's award – a national award for an exceptional or innovative action. Clare took the lead when a teammate collapsed with a cardiac arrest last September. The team performed CPR for a full 12 minutes until the ambulance arrived. A major challenge and certainly exceptional, with a happy ending as their friend made a full recovery and is now back on court. They have received a regional award from the County LTA and we wait to hear whether the national award will follow. The Club is now arranging regular CPR training sessions and has encouraged all other Oxfordshire tennis clubs to do the same.

Winter Floodlit teams' current positions are as follows: A team 3<sup>rd</sup> in Division 1; B team 7<sup>th</sup> in Division 1; C team 3<sup>rd</sup> in Division 4 and the D team 5<sup>th</sup> in Division 4.

Within the Club, all ladder matches are under way. Members can book courts via <https://clubspark.lta.org.uk/>

HookNortonTennisClub which also lists Club sessions. The cost of floodlights on non-club nights is £8 per hour per court. Coaching is available from Marc Gilkes: 07930 406015 (coaching dates 2–30 April) Contact Faith Heron: 07771 904905 or Steve Bone: 07850 036656 for their coaching dates. New members welcome: contact membership secretary Kate via [khs.shoes@gmail.com](mailto:khs.shoes@gmail.com) or 01608 642774.

Elaine Priestley

## Chippy Trixters

WOWZER!! That was FUN!! Local Cubs and Scouts keen to give Roller Hockey a go, joined a Saturday Beginners session to start their Skating and Streets Sports Badges. They found out



about the kit, safety, skating moves and, whether complete beginners or not, all finished the session skating much more confidently, with sticks in hand and pucks on the run!

Come and join the fun – come along to any Beginners session 11.40am for a 12pm start to 1pm, each Saturday, except the last of the month. Roller Disco 1.45–3.45pm is on the last Saturday of the month. No kit needed, age 5 up.

Contact Paulette on 07533 524818 if you would like your Cubs or Beavers group to join in with another.

## Hooky Harriers Annual Awards

The Harriers social and awards dinner was held on 25 February, celebrating Harriers' achievements in 2022.

*Award winners were:*

Female Runner of the Year – Donna Allen

Male Runner of the Year – Paul Taylor

Club Handicap Trophy – Donna Allen

Club Cross Country Female Champion – Anwen Greenaway

Club Cross Country Male Champion – Tom Bradford



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# SPORTS NEWS

Alan Roche Trophy for Most Improved Runner – Richard Tew  
 Hailey Award for Services to the Club – Nell Darby  
 Triumph over Adversity Award in Memory of Bryan Walford  
 – Nell Darby

## Chipping Norton Cricket Club



**Youth Cricket:** Registration Day was on 18 March with the season starting on Tuesday 18 April 6–7pm for U13's and 7–8pm for U15's and over. The start date for ALL other age groups will be Friday 21 April 6–7pm. The season ends 21 July. We still need Team Managers for U9's and U11's and Volunteers for Friday sessions.

Please get in touch if you can find the time to help while your child has their coaching session. We will have the bar open and the bbq running if there are enough volunteers. It's a lovely ground and a friendly club, so come and join us for some relaxing sunny evenings. Any questions please ask Youth Coordinator Sue Powell bloxhamsue@aol.com

**Seniors:** It seems very strange writing about cricket as snow has been lying on the ground. However, before we played League matches, we used to start cricket in April. We all tried to wear layers of jumpers early on in the season – In the cold the cricket ball seems even harder, when it hits your hand. I remember at Brackley one time, it was so windy, the sight screen blew over, on another occasion in Chippy we had stopped for tea when it started to snow and did not stop till it had covered the wicket so we abandoned the game and opened the club bar!

Preparations for the up-coming 2023 season have included a couple of committee meetings, indoor training nets

and work on the ground to begin very soon.

League cricket starts in May with a couple of friendlies planned in April. New players are always welcome.

Graham Beacham

## Indoor Hockey

We think Chippy's hockey team is over 25 years old. Quite a bit younger than a few of its players!

We think it all started in the late nineties, when a group of friends got together, and then their husbands and their own kids joined in, and it all took off.

Over the years, people have come and gone but we've always maintained the same family-friendly fun ethos that makes everyone welcome, whatever gender or age (over 11's) and however talented, plodding or new to the game. This doesn't mean it's not competitive, so long as it involves lots of laughs and camaraderie.

It's a great way to start your Sunday: an hour from 10 to 11am at Chippy Leisure Centre; no regular commitment necessary, just turn up when you feel like it and we have kit for you to borrow if you need it. £5.40 adults/Juniors £3. Ask at reception or contact us to find out more via sjtruelove@hotmail.co.uk or 01608 730546/07722 603207.



*Indoor Hockey is played the world over – this is a game in USA*

*photo source: www.teamusa.org*

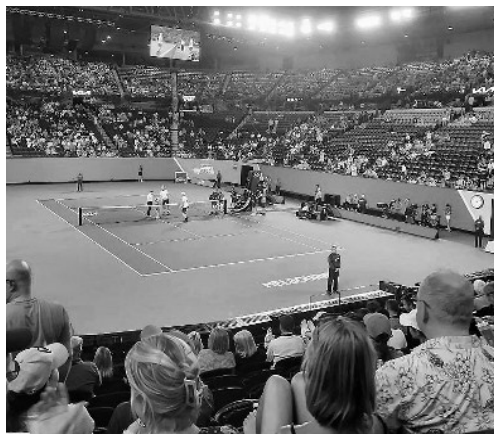
## I was there: Murray vs Berrettini

**Team Member Charlotte Bird kicks off the first of an occasional series where readers recount memorable sporting memories.**

As attending Grand Slam tennis tournaments is on my bucket list and as I was visiting my son in Sydney for Christmas, I thought why not combine the two?

Sitting in Chipping Norton booking airline tickets, an Airbnb and grounds passes for the Australian Open was to prove very far removed from what was to unfurl as one of the greatest (sporting!) experiences of my life!

Andy Murray's match vs Berrettini was scheduled for Day Two. I wondered how many more opportunities there would be to see the former No 1 so I upgraded to a Grandstand seat (ticket now a treasured souvenir pictured above – \$99 well spent!) I cheered on Dan Evans but when his match was halted due to the heat (35 degrees!), I happily retired to the airconditioned arena. To my delight I was sandwiched between a British family and a young Irish woman. We quickly bonded and proved to be a



*Murray & Berrettini at the net in the packed Rod Laver Arena*

very vocal, supportive group of cheerleaders for Andy!

Four hours 49 minutes flew past. Andy showed the pre-bionic flashes of brilliance that we had previously taken for granted. Oh how we yelled, leaping out of our seats with abandon, wildly waving our arms, screaming support for our idol – 'c'mon Andy, you've got this Andy'.

And the din when he finally won the fifth set tie break! An absolute cacophony of cheering by hysterical fans who were still reeling from one of the best matches they had ever witnessed. 'I am very proud of myself' Andy said in his post-match interview. And we were bursting with pride for you too, maestro.

The downside of watching the best live match I have ever seen on Day Two? Everything else paled into insignificance! But wow – to be one of the 14,500 people who were there for that epic match will stay with me forever.

*Have you an 'I was there' sporting story? The News would love to hear from you (contact details p35).*



# CLUB NEWS

## Green Gym prepares for Spring

In the past few weeks Green Gym has continued working on a wide variety of local projects. A recent and very productive morning of bramble and path clearing at Pool Meadow resulted in several pathways made more accessible and layered with wood chippings. Trimming hedges, clearing scrub and general tidying, including litter picking, were carried out at Church Enstone corner. Sessions at other sites have included general weeding and maintenance at Chipping Norton Health Centre, coppicing, tidying,



clearing carpet mulch and brambles at Fitzalan Wood and grass cutting, hedge laying and weeding at the Community Orchard.

Work at the Community Orchard will continue during April in preparation for our annual Blossom Day celebrations which will take place this year on Sunday 23 April. Everyone is welcome to join us there any time between 12 and 3pm. Look out for the posters around town which will appear soon. Finally, we'd like to welcome two new recruits to Green Gym this month and hope they enjoy taking on new tasks and challenges and, of course, making new friends!

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](http://www.chippygreengym.org) and then contact our Membership Secretary at [rmccubbin33@gmail.com](mailto:rmccubbin33@gmail.com)

Everyone welcome. A variety of jobs for all!

Adela Thomas

## Chipping Norton Labour Party

Chippy Labour Party has selected Mark Walker to be the Labour candidate in the May election for West Oxfordshire District Council. Mark has lived in Chippy for 20 years and has been a Town Councillor since 2014. He has taken an active role in traffic-related issues and was instrumental in bringing in the 20mph zone. He has continued to build strong relationships with OCC and as a result a local cycling and walking infrastructure plan (LCWIP) is being developed which will help address some of the challenges we face, making it easier to walk and cycle around town.

We have also selected a group of candidates for the Town Council election on 4 May. They are keen to continue the exceptional work done by the current councillors over the past four years. Don't forget, unless you have a postal vote, you will need to take proof of identity to the polling station on 4 May. For more information on what the Labour Party does locally, or if you would like to join us, please contact me at [davidheyes@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:davidheyes@yahoo.co.uk)

David Heyes

(See also article about Local Elections p2 )

## Spring is in the air for Chippy Folk

Whilst freezing rain was lashing down outside, Chippy Folk Club were singing of happier things – on the theme of 'Spring'. A friendly atmosphere created by MCs Brock and Vixen contributed to a great evening. A highlight was a poem on Spring written especially for the evening. Other links to the theme were more tenuous (eg 'I am using a capo and that has a spring...') – but all contributions were welcomed, enjoyed and loudly applauded. Our next meeting is Monday 10 April 7.45 pm with the theme Songs of the Sea (for those who like to follow a theme – it's voluntary!) Huge thanks to the team at The Harrow Inn who open their doors for us specially. Easy parking on site. Oxford Rd, Enstone OX7 4NF. All welcome. Free to attend. Sing, play, recite or just listen. Visit our website [www.chippingnortonfolk.org.uk](http://www.chippingnortonfolk.org.uk) for further information

Rachel Chai

## CN Probus welcome new President

In February the Club held its Annual General Meeting at the Wychwood Golf Club, where outgoing President, Brian Simpkins, is pictured handing over the chain of office to Peter



Miller, President for 2023/24. Brian thanked members for their support during what had proved to be a challenging but interesting year. There had been some cancelled meetings due to ongoing renovations at the Crown & Cushion Hotel and he was also disappointed that we managed only one Club outing and looked forward to more in future. In conclusion he gave his full support to new President, Peter Miller, for a successful year. Peter said that he had very much enjoyed his membership over the past three years, thanked the two previous Presidents for their support and looked forward to making a full contribution to the Club.

The Club year began in March with a talk by Tracy Jones from Guide Dogs for the Blind, with Poppy, the guide dog, in attendance. In April, members will welcome back Katy Bellamy to talk on Dreaming ....this promises to be one to remember! Meetings at the Wychwood Golf Club, whilst work at the Crown & Cushion continues, are on the third Tuesday of the month. We would be delighted to welcome guests and possible new members. Membership secretary, Simon Bucknall (01993 830760) can provide more details.

Martin Williams

## Chippy u3a

We had our AGM on 1 March and were delighted that several vitally needed new people came forward to help organise Chippy u3a from behind the scenes. u3a is run by and for members, and most members belong to one or more of our varied interest groups such as Books, Painting, Crafts, Architecture, Table Tennis or the regular Lunch club, and our

# CLUB NEWS

volunteer group leaders are the life blood of the Club. Members are also encouraged to share their skills or learn new things by introducing new subject groups – there are usually other like-minded people to get them off the ground. (For more information please visit our website: <https://u3asites.org.uk/chipping-norton/home>) For members and prospective members, there's a chance to meet friends



and make new ones at our monthly talk, followed by a cuppa. On Wednesday 5 April at the Town Hall at 2.30pm we shall be welcoming Jo Willett, an award-winning TV drama and comedy producer pictured left. Her many

credits include the recent BAFTA-nominated *Manhunt: The Nightstalker* which stars Martin Clunes, *Birds of a Feather*, and *Brief Encounters* – a fictionalised story of the first women who ran Ann Summers' parties in the 1980s. Jo's talk will be about Lady Mary Wortley Montagu. Born in 1689, she was an English aristocrat and lady of letters, but also a scientist and feminist who was responsible for the introduction of the smallpox inoculation to Britain and Western Europe.



*Lady Mary was inspired by personal experience of smallpox: her brother died of it and she caught it herself. She recovered but was left with deeply pockmarked skin. She later wrote: 'No art can give me back my beauty lost'.*

Yvonne Beaumont

## Chequers Music Session

February's session on the third Thursday of the month in The Chequers in Goddards Lane, saw some newcomers, although Kenny Woodward is well known locally for his country music, and it was great to have such a mix of youngsters and oldsters. Francis managed to stand up successfully without damaging anything after going down on his knees in 'Stealin' (hurrah!) and we had French and Canadian tunes from Brock and Vixen, with hilarious kazoo duets from Kenny and Vixen. Newcomers Ben and Jo offered some lovely ballad-style singing and playing, which contrasted beautifully with Jess's Stand By Me and Freya's gritty, cigarettey Tom Waits numbers (ably supported by Pete and Colin).

There was no session in March, due to the Music Festival – so the next one is at 8pm on Thursday 20 April. All are welcome, whether you sing, play, recite, tell stories or just want to listen – because we do love an audience. If you want to be added to the mailing list, contact Jane on [jalemail27@gmail.com](mailto:jalemail27@gmail.com)

## History Society explores lost villages

CN History Society will be meeting on Monday 17 April at 2pm in the Lower Hall at the Methodist Church, West Street. Come along to discover The Lost Villages of Oxfordshire with a talk by Deborah Hayter. Visitors are welcome £3.

Janis Paxton

## Return of Ponderings

Chippy's discussion group Ponderings is getting going again. Our first meeting is on 29 March at 8pm in The Fox pub (upstairs) and the subject is *Assisted Dying – should the UK make it lawful?* The subject is serious and we hope for a proper discussion, but we also want the atmosphere to be friendly and welcoming. It's open to everyone and there's no charge or ticketing. We hope to meet thereafter on the last Wednesday of each month. The next meeting on Wednesday 19 April, will be: *Is it time for British Monarchy to stand down?*

After that we hope people will come up with suggestions for topics they find interesting. For more details see: <https://www.meetup.com/theponderings/events/292172676/>

## Albion Centre update

The Albion Centre behind The Fox in Chipping Norton is a social space for adults with learning difficulties and related conditions. Here's the latest update from the mother of a Centre user:

It's a busy time in the Albion because Reviews for our users are taking place. These involve extra work for the staff and Steph our leader, but it is an important process that ensures a person's needs are being met as well as possible. Of course they are! This is a tightly run ship and we have the back-up of Guideposts Trust. What could possibly go wrong?

As well as ongoing reviews, there has been a steady stream of small groups of Albion users taking public transport to go bowling in Banbury. This is a firm favourite and I have a feeling that the staff rather enjoy watching the eagerness of all the users too. My daughter tells me she did not come third with her bowling skills but that 'she got a bronze'.

Please remember to call in and buy the kindling produced by Anthony. I know that house fires will soon no longer be needed but you will still need kindling for firepits & barbeques.



*Anthony pictured recently with a bag of his wonderful kindling*

Carole Fagg

## WOWI: a great bunch of ladies!

West Oxfordshire WI had a fabulous evening at our meeting in February when Art Historian Lizzie Rowe gave us a fantastic insight into how we can look at art and interpret what the artist was intending us to see. Her focus was on how artists used colour. There was a great deal of audience participation and it proved a thoroughly fascinating evening. Then March saw our Annual Meeting when we elected our President and will hopefully take WOWI on to another successful year. We're a great bunch of ladies who welcome anyone who would like to join us. We have subgroups, craft, Saturday lunch and anything you would like to start! Join us at St. Mary's Parish Rooms, Every third Monday of the month at 7.30pm. Contact us via [wowi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk](mailto:wowi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk)

Hilary Dix

# CLUB NEWS

## Join Burford & Kingham Rotary



Recent speaker Carol MacKay is pictured here with Club President Colin Stringfellow. Carol is the Emergency Planning Officer for Oxfordshire. An excellent speaker, she made a serious subject very

entertaining. The help offered to people in some of the blackest moments of their lives is incredible and we are very lucky to have this excellent department in Oxfordshire. Last month we collected for the Turkey and Syria Disaster Fund aiming to pay for a shelter box (see [www.shelterbox.org](http://www.shelterbox.org)). Thank you to all who donated and – with a top up from our Charity account – one is now on its way to help the victims.

Would you like to enjoy some good speakers? Help your local community and enhance your social life? Raise money to help local and international Charities? How do you do that? Join Burford & Kingham Rotary! Why not come along to one of our meetings at Burford Golf Club on Monday evenings. We are a small but very friendly group with members from all the local villages in the area. We are keen to increase our membership. You will get a very warm welcome. Contact our Secretary John Smith email [jpw.smith@jasss.co.uk](mailto:jpw.smith@jasss.co.uk) 07717 883182 or give me a ring on the number below

Ros Richardson  
01608 643844 / 07700 2135731

## 6<sup>th</sup> Chipping Norton Scout Group

6<sup>th</sup> Chippy Cubs have been learning about Chinese New Year, playing traditional Chinese games and making Chinese lanterns. The Cubs have also been learning about how to protect their personal safety: completing games and activities that teach them about the green cross code, internet safety and home safety. We had a visit from a local Police Officer who showed the Cubs the equipment Police use in everyday life and how they serve the community, and what we can do to help ourselves and others. Coming up, the Cubs will have a visit from the Police and their horses and are preparing for District Camp. If you would like to volunteer with Scouting, please pop up to the Scout Hut at Greystones on either a Wednesday or Thursday evening.

Ceri Osborne

## Horticultural plans for Plant Sale

On a cold and wet March evening, the Chipping Norton Horticultural Association met in the Methodist Church Hall for the penultimate meeting of the autumn/winter season. Speaker Richard Harvey from Brockworth delighted members and friends with his beautiful photographs illustrating a talk on Cotswold and Gloucestershire gardens, as we look forward to the warm, sunny days ahead (we hope!!), when we can explore the countryside. Our next meeting is at 7.30 on Wednesday 19 April. Christine Ramsey from Icomb will talk about Sustainable Flower Arranging – all welcome. Advance notice to all with spare plants, seeds to

sow or in need of plants. CNHA has a Plant Sale on Saturday 13 May outside the Methodist Church and would welcome contributions and purchasers – details next month or visit [www.cnha.uk](http://www.cnha.uk) or call secretary Eileen Forse 01608 643275.

## NOOG visit the Kingdom of Fungi

North Oxfordshire Organic Gardeners were shown the work of the Heritage Seed Library of Garden Organic at their March meeting. Not just to conserve heirloom vegetables but also to allow their members to grow such varieties as the Bradford Bomb Cabbage, the Early Warwick French Bean from before 1890, or the Gravedigger Pea (originally grown by a gravedigger in Oxfordshire). 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 always welcome. From May we move to outside visits, and on 3 May we will have a guided walk of Lineover Wood near Cheltenham. Please visit our website: [www.noog.org.uk](http://www.noog.org.uk) or call 01295 780710 for further information about NOOG.

Tracy Lean



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## Chipping Norton School

**Women in Astronomy workshop:** Mr Turvey and a group



of Year 10 scientists enjoyed a fantastic workshop held jointly by the Oxford History of Science Museum and the Physics Department at the University of Oxford. They explored various ideas about space and discovered how our understanding of the universe is influenced by women both past and present.



**International Women's Day:** A group of Year 7 students accompanied Mrs Faulkner to the Headquarters of the Alpine FI Team in Enstone to celebrate International Women's Day and hear about some of the women who work at the BWT Alpine FI Team. The students were allowed to test their reaction times on a racing simulator, and learnt about the different parts of the FI racing cars

designed and manufactured on site. They were treated to lunch before watching the qualifying for the Bahrain Grand Prix in Alpine's superb cinema. They all had a fantastic time!

**Sports News:** The phenomenal growth of Lacrosse at CNS saw five CNS girls participate in a tournament at Westonbirt School, representing Oxford City Lacrosse Club, in February. They had a great time, scored some good goals, made new friends and won seven of their eight matches (only losing to a university team). Well done to Isla, Emily, Elsbeth, Evie and Millie. In April some of them will attend county trials and we are hopeful that some may even make their way onto the England Lacrosse development pathway.



Our Year 7 five-a-side football team recently triumphed at the final of the Vale & District Indoor Football championships. Well done to the whole team – you played brilliantly!

We also look forward to taking 31 Year 10 & 11 students on our first Sports Tour since the pandemic to Edinburgh from 10–14 April. The girls' netball and boys' football teams

will play two fixtures each. There will be plenty of sightseeing, including visits to Murrayfield Stadium, Edinburgh Zoo and the Castle and even a Harry Potter Walking Tour!

**Extra Time Clubs:** During the Spring term students have taken part in 13 different clubs including two new creative clubs, Young Writers (run by Miss Bell) and Pottery (run by local potter, Alison Townley). We are pleased to be starting a new Ecology Club after Easter with Katherine Holmes, a local ecologist. This club will explore aspects of ecology and conservation, environment and wildlife, and encourage older students to consider a career in the field. We are always on the lookout for new and exciting clubs to offer the students. If you feel you could help, please get in touch with Robyn Bissett, [rbissett@chippingnortonschool.org](mailto:rbissett@chippingnortonschool.org).

### CNPS News:

Last week we welcomed the Year 4 pupils from our partnership schools to pottery workshops at CNS. They made a variety of pots under the guidance of local artists Cally Bond



and Alison Townley. The event was sponsored by 'Sculpture at Kingham', to whom we are very grateful.

This term the primary schools have also taken part in a swimming gala which was run in partnership with Four Shires Swimming Club; congratulations to Kingham and Enstone who won the Big and Small Schools' competitions respectively. Other sporting events have included Cross Country, Ball Skills, Dance Workshops and Multi-Skills.

The Science Department ran a 3-week club for Year 4/5 to come and use the labs to learn about solving a crime using forensics. We found some budding scientists who can't wait to come to Chipping Norton School to experiment more!

## Buses, a skate park ... and more!

A proactive tutor group of Year 8 Chipping Norton School students has sent a well-argued letter to the Town Council about improving life in Chippy. Their two biggest proposals were:

- First, better buses serving local routes from Chippy. A big issue is towards Middle Barton and villages (home for many Chippy students) for daily and weekend timetables. They also mentioned no direct buses to Deddington, Kidlington and Oxford Parkway.
- Second, a skate park – ideally at New Street's recreation area. This, they say would help with social connection and exercise for older kids. They point to better facilities in Moreton and Charlbury

The tutor group (8CSB under Mr Brown) also raised issues of town litter, rubbish, safer cycling routes and paths, cheaper cinema screenings, and more societies for young people. At March's Council Community Committee Meeting another Year 8 Group also presented their well-researched skate park proposal. Town Councillors were impressed (see article p7).

# SCHOOLS NEWS

## Holy Trinity Primary

Reports taken from the School's website

**Mardi Gras celebrations:** On Shrove Tuesday children



came dressed in green, purple and gold which represent Faith, Justice and Power. They enjoyed pancake racing and learning more about Mardi Gras traditions. Then on Ash Wednesday, they attended Mass to receive ashes on their foreheads as a sign of their faith.

**World Day of Prayer:** Some children attended the World Day of Prayer service at the Methodist Church while classes back at school joined in linked activities. Each year the service is written by the Christian women of a different country. This year it was the turn of Taiwan.

**World Book Day:** On the Day itself the School was invaded



by book characters: princesses, heroes, villains, animals, dinosaurs, witches, wizards and even a joke book! KS1 enjoyed a workshop based on Frog Finds Home with parent-author Sarah Hutchinson-Jarman, whilst KS2 had a book tasting session complete with nibbles. We had started the week with a visit from the Lela Initiative, whose mission is to re-build and re-stock a library in a primary school in Kasaala, Uganda. We saw photos of their tiny library, with holes in the tin roof and termite damage to the books! They only had 50 books for 800 pupils! How lucky we are!

**Sports news:** On Tuesday 7 March, our girls took part in the



biggest ever football session across England as part of The FA's Let Girls Play campaign. Our players also participated in the West Oxfordshire schools U11s hockey tournament. Although the weather was cold, the children played very well and showed good teamwork and sportsmanship coming third overall.

**CNS Dance Festival:** Year 1 attended the CN Partnership dance festival at CNS, where they used dance moves to create a Commotion in the Ocean. They had a wonderful time and enjoyed their walk there in the snow.

## St Mary's Primary

**Author Visit:** The children had the wonderful opportunity to be read to by a published author. Naomi Joslyn, a former teacher here, who writes children's books based on the character Molly McDrew. Molly is 8 years old and



loves to go on adventures. She has a magic blanket that goes wherever she wants when she uses her magic words. Molly goes to the North Pole, Africa, South America and Paris.

The children enjoyed watching Naomi's talk and receiving signed copies of the books and have been inspired to read more of Molly's adventures.

**Commotion in the Ocean:** Year 1 attended this Partnership workshop at CNS. With roaring polar bears, diving penguins and slippery sea serpents, our children and staff had a whale of a time. The children were impeccably behaved at all times and did themselves and the School incredibly proud. Thank you to the staff and students at Chipping Norton School and we look forward to attending the next school's partnership event.



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# SCHOOLS NEWS

**World Book Day:** Children experienced a super world book day. Mrs McQueen dressed up as a crayon from *The Day The Crayons Quit!* There were crayons around the whole school which needed to be returned to the correct classes, which was lucky because they were needed for the Decorate a Potato competition! We would like to thank Aldi for providing



the potatoes. Who knew a potato could look so good?!



the potatoes. Who knew a potato could look so good?!

**Pottery Workshop:** All of Year 4 had the opportunity to go to Chipping Norton School for a Pottery Workshop. It was a fantastic morning, led by Ali and Cally. The children learnt how to make a coil pot and a pinch pot using air dry clay. They all learnt new skills and were able to take their pieces home. The children said, 'It was a fun and exciting morning and went by so quickly!' We would like to thank Sculpture at Kingham Lodge for funding this event which gave Year 4 children a great introduction to pottery.



**Open afternoon:** A chance for all parents and carers to see the School in action. Thank you to everyone who came and supported the children and to see the great things happening in school – the buzz in the school hall afterwards was lovely. Pupils and parents had the opportunity to offer their feedback, which was very useful and we hope to see you all again soon at the Open Afternoon in the summer term.

## Great Rollright Primary

We added a new twist to our Book Week celebrations this year – a 'Catch Me Reading' photo challenge. We asked children and staff to send in creative photos of themselves reading, and we got an amazing response – including photos of readers up trees, in the snow, and even one in a tumble dryer! All the photos are now on display in the school library.



*In other news:*

**Friday night party:** Our hard-working fundraising group, the Friends of Great Rollright, are turning the school hall into a disco on 21 April to support their Pounds for the Playground campaign. They've already raised over a third of their £6,000 goal, which will help add fun new equipment for our children to use during break time.

**Children Singing for Children:** For the 14<sup>th</sup> year, our school choir joined others from all over North Oxfordshire to sing to a full house at St Mary's Church, Banbury, to raise money for Rotary projects benefiting children. It was great to be back at this event, after a long hiatus due to the pandemic.

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.

## Blocked Ears?



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*The Willows*

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# SCHOOLS NEWS

## Chadlington Primary

**We Are Animators:** The topic ended with a very special workshop series from Jim Parkyn, animator from Aardman (makers of *Wallace and Gromit*). Jim worked to help class



groups create creatures from recycling to tell the story of *Bird Box: the journey of a caterpillar to escape a world full of rubbish*, which dovetails neatly to the next topic.

**We Are Activists!** This integrates learning and experience of the workings of democracy, people power, and climate change. KS2 went to London to visit Parliament and we are developing an eco-area at school. The School has signed up for Eco Schools, a programme that aims to 'empower students to be the change our sustainable world needs by engaging them in fun, action-orientated, and socially responsible learning.'

**Top 1% in the country:** We received a letter from Parliament congratulating the headteacher and staff for the School's being in the top 1% in the country for reading, writing, and maths. 81% of children reached the expected standard (or higher) for reading, writing, and maths combined, compared with a national average of 59%. The average for Oxfordshire schools is 58%. We are very proud of what this small school achieves and affirms our belief in the power of creativity to foster a love of learning.

## Hook Norton Primary

As a school we have had lots of fun over the last few weeks. Just before half term the children had Disco Fever, with Reception and KS1 having a Funky Disco including music and games and KS2 having a UV Disco with ultra violet lights and neon face paints. It was definitely one of the highlights of the school year so far.



For World Book Day this year, instead of dressing up as story characters we enjoyed World Book Week celebrating all things book related, with a Pyjama Party and Picture Book Day on Tuesday. Children (and staff) came into school wearing their pyjamas and dressing gowns and brought with them blankets and picture books. They made cosy reading dens under the tables (see photo) and spent the day

reading, sharing and recommending stories. It was an incredible sight, watching the children engaging so much in wonderful, imaginative worlds, creative and colourful

characters and loving every minute of it.

We have also had the pleasure of enjoying individual class assemblies on Wednesday mornings, where parents and carers are invited to see their children presenting what they have been learning this year so far.

## Kingham Primary School

**Book Week:** In the first week of March, we celebrated Book



Week at Kingham and we participated in a variety of awesome activities. Our class really enjoyed the online storytelling workshop from the Oxford Story Museum where we actually got to write our own stories with no restrictions!

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# SCHOOLS NEWS

Dressing up on Wednesday was the highlight of the week with lots of unique costumes including a terrifying beheaded Anne Boleyn and a Viking complete with longboat.

*By reporters Joshua and Tobi in Year 6*

## ACE Centre



The March snow days at the ACE Centre were full of creative experiences. The children cut and cooked vegetables to make leek and potato soup for warming up after playing outside in the snow. At Forest School we lit a fire to see what happened if we cooked snow in a saucepan. We sang snowman counting songs and learnt new poems about 'freezy weather', 'stepping stones' and 'building a house to stay safe and warm'. From under the snow, we dug out a big branch and sawed tree cookies to make superhero medallions with the hot glue gun and paint. And of course, we had some intensive practice getting in and out of waterproofs and wellies independently.

We know that for young children it is important that they feel immersed and involved in all areas of the curriculum both outside and in. Whatever the weather, the children at the ACE Centre have access to the wonderfully adventurous outdoor learning area and challenge themselves to explore and interact with the ever-changing natural world. As everyone in early years education knows: *The best classroom and the richest cupboard are roofed only by the sky.* (2021, Margaret Macmillan)

## Sibford School

**Don't miss the Sibford Whole School Open Morning**



Sibford School is opening its doors for a whole school open morning on Friday 28 April. This event will offer the opportunity to talk to staff, meet current parents and take a tour of the School with student guides. Head, Toby Spence, explains 'At Sibford we value holistic education where the happiness and well-being of pupils is paramount. We encourage pupils to live adventurously, and foster resilience and we look for the unique talents in every individual that comes to the School. We encourage you to come along and learn more about what Sibford School has to offer children aged from 3 to 18. Visit [www.sibfordschool.co.uk/events](http://www.sibfordschool.co.uk/events), or call Elspeth Dyer, Admissions Officer on 01295 781203 to book your place,

**Public bouldering sessions:** Join us on our climbing wall to give bouldering a go! Sessions take place on Monday evenings from 6.30–8.30pm, 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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# LETTERS

## Keeping pavements clear

At our Annual Town Meeting in March we discussed how people travel around the Town – particularly the desire to



*Obstructing the pavement at the New Street recreation ground*

encourage walking and cycling. I know that for some walking will never be a viable option, but we are a small town and many rely on walking to get around. The Town Council want to make

sure that walking really is a viable option

and are working with Oxfordshire County Council to improve crossing places, particularly on Albion Street near the London Road, and have demonstrated to Officers where the current pavements are inadequate or need repair. However, there are two ways that all of us can make it easier for those who walk. First, ensure that vegetation growing in our gardens does not encroach on the pavement. Second, keep the pavement clear of parked vehicles.

**Overgrowing gardens** – The space available for road and pavement is defined by property boundaries and can't easily be increased, but it has been eaten away in many places by hedges and trees that have grown over them. This means that in places where there should be space for a parent to walk hand in hand with a child on the way to school, or for an adult on a mobility scooter, this is no longer available. Those walking on the pavement get soaked by wet vegetation, and pedestrians can be hit in the face by twigs and branches. When you tidy your garden in the spring, please consider walking along the pavement at the front to check that plants are not encroaching beyond your garden.

**Pavement parking** – Parking enforcement is now the responsibility of the County Council but the better answer is for those living and visiting here to park considerately, remembering that the pavement is designed for walking, not a space where a vehicle can pull off the road. If tradespeople or visitors to your house park on the pavement, please consider asking them to move their vehicle to a better location.

The Annual Town Meeting also discussed the problem of litter around the Town and the Town Council agreed to explore a 'Beautiful Chippy' campaign to encourage people to take pride in our town. More details to follow.

**Cllr Sandra Coleman**, Chipping Norton Town Mayor



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## Shoplifting and town centre issues

Following on from last month's report on shoplifting, we held a meeting of traders from shops both large and small. The suggestion from Dave Hughes at the Co-op that we should set up a private WhatsApp group was unanimously agreed and has been implemented. A report on the meeting was circulated by hand and people who weren't able to be there have since been joining up. This group has the potential to become the voice of the Town's businesses and the initiative has been warmly welcomed by the District's Officer for Market Towns. We were asked to explore the issue of getting CCTV in Chippy and can report that when WODC receives an outline business case for a new system, we must make our case for extension of coverage beyond Witney. The other issue adversely affecting our Town Centre is empty premises – we are working on that as well.

**Sharon Wheaton** (Town Councillor) & **Mike Cahill** (District Councillor)

## Appeal for Bell Ringers

Are you interested in joining in Ringing for the King? There has been some publicity in the media recently about church bells being rung for the Coronation over the weekend beginning 6 May. At the national level, we have about 30,000 ringers but ideally, we need 8,000 more. This acute shortage is equally true in the Chipping Norton area and to ring the bells over the Coronation weekend is a huge task for all our local churches. So, if any lapsed ringer would like to return or anyone is willing to learn in the long term, please contact our Branch Ringing Master at [brm@chippy.odg.org.uk](mailto:brm@chippy.odg.org.uk). Training sessions will take place at St Mary's, Chipping Norton.

**Chris Harris**, ringer at St Mary's Church



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# LETTERS

## Penhurst reunion

It is now 10 years ago this May since Chipping Norton's Penhurst School closed and a colleague and I are organising a reunion on 17 June from 12–4pm at CN Rugby Club. This will be open to anyone who has ever worked or lived at Penhurst



School or to families of children who attended. Refreshment will be provided. We have posted this with pictures on social media but hopefully using the *Chippy News* may reach others. We all look forward to seeing old friends and colleagues. Anyone interested in coming, please confirm attendance by contacting me at [pratley699@btinternet.com](mailto:pratley699@btinternet.com) or 07983 414910, or Sallyann Baker at [sallyann68@aol.com](mailto:sallyann68@aol.com) or via the Penhurst School Facebook page.

**Dawn Pratley**, former Penhurst staff member

## Daytime community singing

Would you like to sing in a **daytime** Community Choir in Chipping Norton? Celebrated musician and choirmaster Arne Richards (from the Oxford Concert Party) will introduce songs from around the world and across the centuries. No need to read music and definitely no auditions. One-hour sessions – informal and fun. Chipping Norton Methodist Church Friday 11am–12noon. Start date 2 June. £7 per session. To register an interest, please contact Joy on 01608 642792 or alternatively email [joy@paulfischerguitars.com](mailto:joy@paulfischerguitars.com)

**Joy Fisher**

## ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

*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.*

## Town Council's letter about postal strike

Having read the recent report (December News) of the Town Council's views on the Postal Strike, I attended the Full Town Council meeting in February and asked the following question: 'I understand that the Town Council wrote to the CEO of Royal Mail in support of the striking workers in their dispute. When did it become part of the Town Council remit to start lobbying in industrial disputes?' In the spirited discussions that ensued between me, the Town Clerk and Councillor Akers, I clearly stated that my comments were not about the Royal Mail dispute per se, but it was about a general principle. I also stated that the Parish Council should act in a non-political manner. I also added that in my opinion any member of the Council is perfectly at liberty to send letters of support in any industrial dispute, either as an individual or a party political group. They should not send such letters in the name of the Town Council on behalf of the Town, since they cannot possibly know the individual views of all residents in Chipping Norton. I have emailed the Town Clerk asking for the minutes about this discussion to be corrected since the minutes are incomplete and fail to mention my concerns fully.

**Alan White**

## Carol Malley – interment service

Carol Malley died suddenly after a short illness on 28 December 2022. Her ashes will be interred on 20 April at St Nicholas Church, Chadlington. The timing is to be confirmed. If you would like to join her neighbours, friends and those who walked, went swimming with her, or played tennis or table tennis, shared her love of gardening, silk flowers and music, then please do. Details can be confirmed from 1 April on 01608 645067. Thank you so much.

**Sue Leeming** – on behalf of executors of Carol's will

## Chipping Norton News Club

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## May deadline: Friday 7 April

**Final copy should be sent to Chipping Norton News, c/o Hill Lawn House, 22 New Street, Chipping Norton, OX7 5LJ tel 01608 643219. Items should preferably be typed or sent via email to [chippymail@aol.com](mailto:chippymail@aol.com)**

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*The Chipping Norton News is printed on environmentally approved paper*

# Ukraine Auction raises £15,000

**On 24 February, exactly one year since the launch of the Russian invasion, Hook Norton Brewery hosted an Auction of Promises for Ukraine. Here's the story.**

Attendees at the sold-out event enjoyed a fantastic evening under the direction of celebrity auctioneer, Adam Henson, pictured below. The 25 Lots ranged from a macaron-making masterclass to a session for a problem pooch with TV dog trainer Graeme Hall, and a stay in a fabulous French holiday house. The Auction itself raised just short of £9,500. Several impromptu Lots added at the end added a further £1550. Sales of fabulous raffle prizes plus ticket sales and individual donations from people unable to attend the event meant the final total was £15,000.

Guests were entertained by two singers in the interval – talented young local, Sienna, and Natalia from Ukraine. Songs in their own language provided a poignant reminder of the incredible unity between the two nations. Likewise, was the amazing gesture by Oleksandr, a young

Ukrainian living in Hook Norton. He had made a basket full of bracelets, keychains, lanyards and trinkets in blue and yellow cord which he gave to everyone, guests and volunteer helpers, to thank them for their support. Event organiser, Charlotte Bird, thanked the volunteers who had contributed to the evening, local food purveyors Raya Horner, Sally Turner at Brown Cow Food, Mark's Cotswold Bakery, the Cop, Maggie Sorenson and wine supplier Grape Minds. As a special thank you to Adam Henson, she presented him with a framed programme featuring his grandfather, Leslie Henson, at the New Theatre Oxford in 1946. This had been kindly donated by Over Norton resident, Hilary Norris. Many thanks to everyone who donated Lots and to those who dug deep and bought them. **Slava Ukraini!**



*The fundraising team pictured before the Auction*



## DIARY

### April (News out Monday 27 March)

- 1<sup>st</sup> **Mum to Mum Market** 2–4pm Glyme Hall - baby & children's second-hand goods.
- 2<sup>nd</sup> **Charity Carwash** 10–3 @ the Fire Station - see p9
- Cuppa, Cake & Chat** 2.30-4pm Methodist Church
- CN Ramblers** meet 2pm New St car park
- 4<sup>th</sup> **Railway Club** 7.30 Lower Town Hall Frank Banfield-Heritage films from the 50s
- 5<sup>th</sup> **Methodist Coffee Morning** in aid of Dogs for Good 9.30–11.30am - see p10
- U3A** 2.30pm in the Town Hall see p27
- North Oxon Organic Gardeners** 7.30 Parish Rooms - see p28
- 7<sup>th</sup> **CHIPPY NEWS DEADLINE** - see p35
- 7-9 **Easter weekend** - see p17 for Church Services
- 8<sup>th</sup> **Adlestrop Easter Bazaar** 10-1 see p15
- 10<sup>th</sup> **Folk Club** 7.45 The Harrow Inn Enstone - see p26
- 15<sup>th</sup> **Farmers Market** 8.30am-1pm
- 17<sup>th</sup> **Crafty Cuppa & Chat** 10-12 Meth'dist Church see p11
- History Society** 2pm Methodist Hall - see p27
- Victoria County History talk** 7pm Town Hall see p11

- 18<sup>th</sup> **CN Probus** Wychwd Golf Club see p26 for details
- 19<sup>th</sup> **Horticultural Assoc** 7.30 Methodist Hall - see p28
- Ponderings** (discussion group) 8pm The Fox see p27
- 20<sup>th</sup> **Chequers Music Session** 8pm Chequers, Goddards Lane, Chipping Norton - see p27
- 22<sup>nd</sup> **Methodist Spring Sale & Lunch** 12–2 - see p11
- Sunshine Cat Rescue Jumble Sale** 11.30-1.30 Milton u Wychwood Vill Hall: entry 40p/tin of cat food
- 23<sup>rd</sup> **CN Festival of (Mini) Rugby** - details p24
- Blossom Day** noon–3 Community Orchard - see p11
- 27-30 **ChipLitFest** - See Arts p20–21
- 28-29 **Under Chippy Woods: Under Milk Wood** 7.30 Glyme Hall see p22
- 29<sup>th</sup> **Bridewell Gardens Plant Sale** 10-1 see p19

### May (News out Monday 24 April)

- 4<sup>th</sup> **LOCAL ELECTIONS** for 16 Town Councillors & one District Councillor - see p2
- 6-8 **Coronation Weekend** - see p5
- 6-29 **Oxfordshire Artweeks** - See Arts p22
- 11<sup>th</sup> **Evenlode Geographical Lectures** 6–7.30 - see p13