

# The Ascott Grapevine



## Grapevine Appeal

The Ascott Grapevine is provided **FREE** to every household in Ascott and we wish this to continue for a long time to come.

**Although 'The Grapevine' does receive support from the Parish Council and the PCC, it only raises a limited amount of revenue from advertising. The Ascott Grapevine survives mainly on donations. If you would like to help The Ascott Grapevine continue, any donation large or small would be appreciated. You can give a donation to any member of the editorial team.**

If there is an aspect of village life not already covered in The Ascott Grapevine please contact a member of the team to discuss your ideas.

Articles for the next issue of The Ascott Grapevine should be submitted by 1<sup>st</sup> August 2018.

Articles submitted after this date may not be included.

Call 01993 831023 or email: [wendypearse@btinternet.com](mailto:wendypearse@btinternet.com)

The Editorial Team:

Stuart Fox, Elaine Byles,  
Wendy Pearse, Keith Ravenhill

## Content & Editorial Policy

If you have an article, story or poem you would like to submit for publication The Ascott Grapevine editorial team would love to hear from you. Material for publication is gratefully accepted. Due to space considerations material may not be used immediately but may be held over to be included in a later issue.

The Grapevine editorial team reserve the right to shorten, amend or reject any material submitted for publication.

**Opinions expressed in contributions are not necessarily those of the editorial team.**

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## SERVICES AT ASCOTT CHURCH 2018

|                             |       |                    |
|-----------------------------|-------|--------------------|
| Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup> Jun | 10.00 | Holy Communion C   |
| Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup> Jun | 08.00 | Holy Communion BCP |
| Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> Jul  | 10.00 | Holy Communion C   |
| Sunday 22 <sup>nd</sup> Jul | 08.00 | Holy Communion BCP |
| Sunday 29 <sup>th</sup> Jul | 10.00 | Holy Communion C   |
| Sunday 12 <sup>th</sup> Aug | 10.00 | Holy Communion C   |
| Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> Aug | 08.00 | Holy Communion BCP |
| Sunday 9 <sup>th</sup> Sept | 10.00 | Holy Communion C   |

*Ascott Church is part of the Chase Benefice, comprising the parishes of Chadlington, Ascott-u-Wychwood, Spelsbury and Enstone. For enquiries please contact the Rector: Rev'd Mark Abrey, The Vicarage, Church Road, Chadlington. OX7 3LY. 01608 676572 or [rector@thechasebenefice.org.uk](mailto:rector@thechasebenefice.org.uk)*

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## Local Churches

### **Holy Trinity, Ascott-u-Wychwood**

Rev'd Mark Abrey Tel: 01608 676572

### **St Mary's Shipton**

Churchwarden James Walmsley  
01993 830842

### **SS Simon & Jude, Milton**

Churchwarden Mike Hartley 01993 830160

### **St John the Baptist Fifield, St Nicholas, Idbury**

Churchwarden Pat Yaxley 01993 831385

### **Society of Friends (Quakers), Burford**

Nigel Braithwaite 01993 831282

### **Wychwood Baptist, Milton**

Pastor John Witts 01993 832865

### **Burford Methodist**

Minister Rev'd Peter Goodhall 01993 845322

### **Westcote Methodist**

Tony Gibson 01993 830699  
Mairi Radcliffe 01993831472

### **Roman Catholic**

SS John Fisher & Thomas More, Burford

Our Lady and St Kenelm, Stow-on-the-Wold

Holy Trinity, Chipping Norton and St Teresa, Charlbury

Priest Fr Antony Joyce 01608 642703.

Mass at Charlbury 09:15

## ***From the Rector***

Dear friends

There was an interesting story in the press in April about Wang Mingqing, a taxi driver in China. For 24 years he searched for his daughter since she went missing at the age of three from the roadside stall he operated. Unable to find her, he and his family remained in their hometown of Chengdu, where he started driving taxis for a living - hoping that one day she might be a customer. He lived his life, made it his career, made it his mission to find his child. To not give up, but to go to the furthest extents to be reunited with his child.

He gave his customers leaflets about her but did not have a photograph he could share. Some came forward over the years, believing to be the lost child, but DNA tests proved otherwise.

However, Wang Mingqing did not give up. Every day he would drive his taxi, hoping he would one day see his little girl again.

One day, a police sketch artist heard the story and got in touch to offer help. They created a picture of what she may look like now and released on social media. On the other side of the country, thousands of miles away, 27-year-old Qifeng saw remarkable similarities, including behavioural traits she had had as a toddler. DNA tests proved the match and the two families were reunited in an overwhelming show of support from the public and media. The videos of the reuniting are freely available on the internet.

Aside from being a nice and fluffy 'human interest' story for the news, that experience of Wang Mingqing and his family has a profound message. It is ironic - or perhaps divine - that such a story came at Easter this year: the time when humanity's relationship with God was repaired in the most fundamental of ways. The story of a parent searching for their children, not giving up, and bringing them home.

We know of too many stories where children have gone missing, never to be found, or where searches continue. It is 11 years since little Madeleine McCann disappeared whilst on holiday with her family. We cannot conceive of how that feels as a parent if we have not been in that position. Wang Mingqing's experience of despair is something we pray we will never have to go through.

But in the story of Easter, we may have had the smallest of opportunities to experience something of Wang Mingqing's hope. The knowledge of being reunited with a loved one beyond our sight, or the acknowledgement our relationship with God as a loving, searching parent who has not given up and who helps us rebuild our relationships.

The experience of the disciples on that first Easter morning was that their feelings of complete despair that all was lost were replaced with the realisation God had never left them and never will. God made it his mission not to give up, but to go to the furthest extents to be reunited with his children.

And that can be true for us too, two-thousand years later. We may walk through dark days, holding on for dear life to the smallest glimmer of light called hope,

when everything else tells us to give up. But in the midst of it all, there is the quiet, almost silent, but firm and unyielding message of hope which tells us there is something beyond our sight which is beautiful and will bring us home.

With every good wish

**Mark Abrey**

## ***Death***

Bertha Carpenter on the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2018 - RIP

## **UP FOR GRABS! - A LAMENT**

Sweets were rationed in the 1940's due to wartime shortages, but a packet was usually available as a treat for children at village fetes when often a well-meaning gentleman would suggest, "Let's have a scramble." The sweets were then tossed up into the air and most of them were snatched up by the bigger children. They were truly up for grabs.

It is normal practise now for sports commentators to announce that medals are up for grabs, but at the presentation we do not expect Mo Farah to be elbowed aside and his medal snatched by a burly hammer thrower.

Medals up for Grabs? Certainly not!

It appears now that along with 'wanna' and 'gunna', 'Up for Grabs' is here to stay. Oh that the use of our once proud English language has descended to this slovenly level.

The shame of it!

**Jim Pearse**

# ***Recipe***

The famous Sticky Pear and Ginger Cake from the Picnic Fayre deli in Cley Next the Sea, North Norfolk

This makes a very large cake needing a 12" dia tin with deep sides which will serve 12 easily! So, for a smaller cake, halve the quantities, adjust the timings and try an 8" dia deep tin as the nearest available tin size.

## ***Cake Mixture***

500 grams butter (Lurpak spreadable)

Handful of crystallized ginger

2-3 heaped tablespoons of ground ginger

350 grams dark muscavado sugar

350 grams white sugar

2 tins of pear halves in juice

500 grams of self raising flour

7 eggs.

## ***Toffee Topping***

130 grams of butter

300-400 grams of dark muscavado sugar

## ***Method***

**Cake Mixture:** Place butter, brown and white sugar, powdered ginger and crystallized ginger in a bowl and mix until smooth.

**Toffee Topping:** Line your baking tin, base and sides generously. Place butter and sugar in saucepan and heat on HIGH, stirring constantly. It will turn a lighter shade of brown, start to bubble and get fluffier, which can take 5 minutes. Keep stirring and pour mixture into centre of the cake tin. It is best kept away from the edges. Leave to cool.

**Cake Mixture:** Chop the pears into a large bowl. Add a splash of juice. Sieve the flour on top. Crack in the eggs and stir until smooth. Pour the mixture into the baking tin and place in a pre-heated oven at 175 degrees C.

A large cake should take about one hour, but check from 30 minutes onwards as you would for a sponge.

When baked, remove from the oven and leave to cool for 10 minutes. Upturn onto a plate, but DO NOT remove the lining paper for another 5 minutes, and then do so very gently so as not to remove the sticky topping.

This is a well deserved treat to be enjoyed after a long walk!

**Avril Rance**

# ***Murder in the Forest***



## **The Murder**

The evening of Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June 1824 was calm and clear. Near midsummer, the weather had been fine and men were at work in the hay meadows of the Swinbrook Valley mowing the long grass, hoping for a good crop of hay. Other men were working on their allotments hoeing and earthing soil around their potatoes to prevent the light from turning the potatoes green.

Henry Jesty, the landlord of the Hit or Miss Inn which stood on the double bend near Paynes Farm, was busy in his taproom.

Around eight o'clock James Millin entered the Inn to purchase some tobacco. After a few words with the landlord he continued on his way, heading for Hens-

grove Coppice, which runs eastward along the road from the Inn. Only the day before he had been appointed Assistant Keeper in Wychwood Forest, by his brother Joseph who was one of the Keepers and lived in South Lawn Lodge on the road running north from the Inn towards Shipton.

Along the Swinbrook Valley and the villages nearby, life was tough for the labourers in their very basic cottages; money was scarce which ensured poaching was rife in the area of the forest. It was not uncommon for a local man to spend time in Oxford Gaol after evidence of poaching was found against him. The keepers were certainly kept on their toes. One such incident had occurred recently when Joseph Millin's Assistant Keeper Henry Bayliss, had ac-

cused William James, who lived in one of the cottages near the Hit or Miss Inn, of having venison in his house. This James had denied and in fact no evidence had been found in his house, so the case was dismissed. However, feelings were hard between the two men and Bayliss had been advised to stay out of the area whilst the case was looked into. Hence the need for Joseph Millin to appoint his brother James as Assistant Keeper.

Suddenly the silence of the evening was split by the sharp report of a shot. Not unusual and the men on their potato plots, after a shared glance, returned to their hoeing. But fifteen minutes later, at a quarter to nine, a much louder report caused them to look up and begin to murmur amongst themselves.

Meantime William James had met up with a much younger compatriot Henry Pittaway, and after a few words with the potato hoers, they had strolled away towards Hensgrove Coppice. They were dressed only in shirt, waistcoat and breeches and carrying nothing but a bill-hook. A farmer, Thomas Young, walking on the track from Hensgrove Coppice to Asthall was closest to the sound of the shot and venturing into the coppice was the first to see James Millin stretched out on the ground a few yards in from the barrier of trees. He was bleeding profusely from a large wound in his thigh but still conscious and crying, "Murder".

Thomas Young's first thoughts were to fetch help and he left James' side to seek reinforcements from Asthall.

Meantime William James and Henry Pittaway approaching the scene saw Thomas Young in the distance hurrying away along the track, before they bumped into Joseph Millen coming from the opposite direction and also seeking the source of the shot.

Consulting together, the two told Joseph that someone had been crying murder and they thought it could have been his brother's voice. Going into and under the cover of the trees Joseph watched the two turn and walk back and was surprised when they passed three openings into the forest and only when they reached the fourth, which it later transpired was nearest to the victim, did they enter the woodland through a gap in the hedge.

The three met once more besides James who was still conscious and told them that he had seen movement behind the trees but not an actual figure. It was decided to construct a hammock to move James to South Lawn Lodge and by the time Thomas Young returned they were in the process of moving him. The doctor was sent for but by the time he reached the Lodge he could only pronounce James dead having suffered severe haemorrhaging from his wound.

Early the following day Joseph, together with James and Job Pratley, went back to the scene of the shooting. They were able to find the spot behind the hedge from which the shot was fired due to the presence of powder on the branches and leaves and wadding in the hedge. They followed the track of the ball and found it buried in the topsoil just beyond the spot where James had collapsed. Two shots were actually fired but they could not find the second ball and the first had been forced out of shape by the impact with James' leg. They also traced two sets of footprints to the firing position and then away for nearly a quarter of a mile before losing them on one of the main forest tracks.

An inquisition was held on 19<sup>th</sup> June at South Lawn Lodge before the Coroner W. Macey Esq. and the verdict was "Wil-



ful murder against person or persons unknown”.

Lord Churchill, the Warden and Ranger of the Forest together with Rev. Mr Hyde, a local Magistrate, instantly pursued an active inquiry resulting in William James and Henry Pittaway being taken into custody and questioned but for lack of real evidence they were discharged. It was suggested that the intended victim had been Joseph Millin who had been waging a war on the poachers. James Millin had been a very sober and steady man and left a wife and child.

A £200 reward was posted, £100 to be paid by Lord Churchill and another £100 would be paid by His Majesty to any accomplice who gave sufficient evidence to convict the person who committed the murder. Outraged by the crime Lord Churchill wrote to Sir R Birnie the Chief Magistrate of Bow Street in London, requesting an experienced officer to come and investigate the matter. William Salmon was instantly dispatched to Oxfordshire.

Having visited the scene of the crime and conducted enquiries in the neighbourhood Salmon recommended that William James aged 48 and Henry Pittaway aged 25, be once more taken into custody. Salmon also acquired a warrant to search their homes and found there all manner of equipment connected with poaching. One item in Henry Pittaway's house was a bullet mould which it was agreed would have fitted the ball which entered Millin's thigh had the ball not been knocked out of shape by the impact. Salmon continued to acquire a mass of evidence against the prisoners and so they were committed to trial for murder at the next Assizes with sixteen witnesses bound over to give evidence.

## The Trial

On 30<sup>th</sup> July the prisoners James and Pittaway were brought by cart from Oxford Gaol to Oxford Town Hall where their trial was to commence, presided over by Mr Justice Park. The trial had been much discussed in the county and the court was full to excess. The prisoners wore drab coats, buff waistcoats and corduroy breeches. Pittaway seemed quite unembarrassed but James was a little agitated. Landowners and gentlemen were there to form the Jury. These included Sir Henry Willoughby Bart, who served as foreman, and other prominent local figures such as Cottrell Dormer of Rousham, Francis Penyston Senior and Junior of Cornwell, Thomas Stoner and George Dashwood, all large estate owners. The prisoners pleaded 'Not Guilty'.

Mr Taunton the King's Counsel opened the proceedings. He warned the Jury against any preconceived notions and said that they were to consider only the facts emerging during the trial when declaring their verdict. He then proceeded to acquaint the Jury with the sequence of events that had occurred that fateful

evening of the 15<sup>th</sup> June, before questioning a number of witnesses on various aspects of the case against the prisoners.

It emerged that both James and Pittaway had in weeks prior to the murder expressed their enmity against local keepers, up to the extent of death as a solution. They had both spent time in prison previously and were locally well known for their deeds. Although the potato hoers stated that the men had not been seen to be carrying any guns when they walked away into the forest, it would be proved later that Pittaway had a gun that took to pieces. Two sets of foot-

prints were found at the site of the shooting and then walking away into the distance. The evidence of the ball found near the spot where James Millin collapsed and the bullet mould in Pittaway's home should be considered. James had later made an admission to John Sims that the two had found James Millin but instead of rendering assistance had moved away before encountering Joseph Millin and returning to the victim's side. Could it have been guilt that induced them to walk away?

A number of witnesses then added further details for consideration.

John Sims stated that on the 16<sup>th</sup> June at James' house, James' wife asked him to take a gun away as she expected the house to be searched. He agreed to put it in his hayloft. On 25<sup>th</sup> June he saw James' wife and told her he would not keep the gun any longer. She refused to take it back and so he put it in Mr House's barn under the straw. James was by then in custody. Sims also added that poor men's guns were often taken by the keepers.

William Salmon said that on 9<sup>th</sup> July he went to House's barn and found the barrel part and lock of a gun.

Eliza Perfect who was Pittaway's niece, said that on the day of the murder she saw Pittaway's gun at 6 p.m. in his pantry. It was in the same place the next morning. A fortnight after the murder Pittaway asked her to fetch his gun from Mrs Ilotts and bring it home under a long cloak of her aunt's. Pittaway then cleaned the gun and placed it upstairs.

Ann Ilott said on the 18<sup>th</sup> June Pittaway's wife brought the gun to her under a long cloak. The Thursday following Eliza collected it under a long cloak.

Joseph Millin said that neither of the prisoners had a gun on the 15<sup>th</sup> June but they could easily have concealed one in the forest and returned later to collect it.

Richard Cross confirmed that, "Many a one kills a deer as well as me. I am not ashamed of it."

James Shaylor said that on 24<sup>th</sup> June he saw James in his garden. James said he had been bad for three weeks; he was worried about the murder. James had said "If that fool (presumably Bayliss) had said nothing about the meat, nothing would have been the matter and the other (presumably James Millin) would have been at home in his place."

This concluded the case for the prosecution. The prisoners were then called upon for their defence but they both declined to say anything.

Mr Justice Park summed up the case. He stated that the Jury must have no doubt in their minds if they decided that the two men had committed the murder, but he considered that the circumstantial evidence was more satisfactory than the positive testimony of a single individual.

The Jury took no more than 15 minutes to return the verdict of Guilty.

His Lordship proceeded to attempt to pass sentence on the prisoners. He exhorted them to prepare for death with no hope of mercy, but he was interrupted with every sentence by James who constantly protested his innocence and called upon God to witness that he was a murdered man and that the Jury was not impartial. Pittaway said, "We are innocent. Say no more James." Judge Park then stated that he hoped they would repent of their crime. James replied, "I cannot repent of what I am not guilty." However Judge Park concluded the proceedings by stating, "The sentence of the Court upon

you for this dreadful murder is that you be executed on Monday morning and your bodies be afterwards given to the surgeons to be anatomised.”

## The Execution

From the time of the sentence the Chaplain of Oxford Gaol, Mr Brown, remained with the prisoners for much of the next two days. He reported most of the following to Jackson's Oxford Journal and the Oxford University and City Herald.

Once back at Oxford Gaol the two were in a dreadful state of mind and extremely violent against all those who had brought them to this unimaginable situation, since they were totally innocent. Eventually he managed to calm them and it was decided to place them in separate cells, only coming together at times in the Gaol Chapel. Mr Brown spent many hours exhorting them to confess their guilt, reminding them constantly that, “Ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding to him.” But even after receiving the Sacrament at the Altar they were still adamant that they were innocent. And this remained their plea to the end. William James expressed the desire to address the crowd from the scaffold confirming their innocence, but finally at the end feeling unfit to do so, he earnestly requested Mr Brown to do so for them.

Members of their families visited them on both Saturday and Sunday. In the chapel early on Monday morning Mr Brown again implored them to confess, pointing out what a horrible situation they would be in if they went from this world and into the presence of their Maker with a lie on their lips. But not de-

tered they expressed vehemently their innocence of the murder.

Huge crowds had flocked into Oxford to witness the execution, blocking the roads and the coal wharf so it seems very likely that the event would have taken place by the Castle Mound. The crowd remained remarkably orderly and quiet throughout as they witnessed the execution of the sentence. At nine o'clock James and Pittaway ascended the scaffold. The rope was placed first around James' neck and when affixed to the gallows the cap drawn over his face. Pittaway was then prepared. Again they both repeated their innocence. The drop fell and both were quickly dispatched. After hanging for the allotted time the bodies were handed over to Mr Wentworth the surgeon of the Gaol to be dissected and anatomised.

William James had been 48. Born in Burford he had attended the free school for seven years before serving an apprenticeship as a slater and plasterer. He had moved to the Paynes Farm area of Swinbrook then known as Taynton, married Mary James and had six children. Much of his time there he had spent as a poacher, perhaps killing as many as 300 deer in that time. He had found no problem in selling the carcasses.

Henry Pittaway aged 25 had been born in Swinbrook, was married with two children and also had been much involved with poaching.

The Register from Oxford Gaol confirms their sentence of Death as decided by the Court. Besides each name is written, “Executed.”

## Postscript

John Kibble from Charlbury, an early local historian and collector of facts,

## Ascott Grapevine

folklore and memories from around this area, includes the following information in his book 'Charlbury and her Nine Hamlets' published in 1927. He had known a dear old woman who as a young girl had been a witness at the trial. Apparently on his deathbed another man had

confessed to the murder. He had shot believing a movement in the bushes was a deer only to discover to his horror that he had shot a man. This confession haunted the woman for the rest of her life.

**Wendy Pearse**



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# Leaffield C.E. Primary School

The Green, Leaffield, Witney, Oxfordshire, OX29 9NP

Tel: 01993 878273

Email: office.3124@leaffield.oxon.sch.uk

Web: www.leaffield.oxon.sch.uk

Follow us @Head3124

Headteacher: Mr Christian McGuinness



29<sup>th</sup> March 2018

Dear Parents and Carers,

## OX5 Run

Thank you all for supporting our OX5 Run. I am delighted to say we raised an amazing **£1530** for Oxford Children's Hospital with over £126,000 in total raised so far. If you are itching to see how we all did, our times can be found here: <https://www.sportsystems.co.uk/ss/results/Ox5Run/3555>



## Park and Stride

Thanks to the many parents that were able to join us for our walk to school last week. Our visitors were very complimentary of our children's behaviour and the mature responses they received to their questions. Thanks to Strider for making an appearance! Our story featured on Oxfordshire County Council's website too!



Honesty  
Courage  
Hope  
Love  
Respect



Inspiring-Learning-Together

## Prayer Space 2018

This week our library was once again transformed into a tranquil Prayer Space. Supported by members of the community and Miss Bowerman, children were able to take time to be still and experience prayer and reflection in creative ways.



Our thanks go to Sarah Betteridge, Nicky Bentley, Ella Summers and Jane Digby for giving their time. They were very impressed by the children's responses. <https://bespace.be/what-we-do/schools/>

## Eastertide Service 2018

It was lovely to see a full church for our Joint Eastertide Service with Finstock School. Thanks to those parents that were able to join us. Children and staff from Finstock came back to our school and enjoyed time together in classes.



Honesty  
Courage  
Hope  
Love  
Respect

ODST  
Oxford Diocesan  
Schools Trust

Excellence in Governance  
eg  
2016-18

OTSA  
OXFORDSHIRE TEACHING  
SCHOOLS ALLIANCE

Inspiring-Learning-Together



## Snapshot Reports Term 4

Snapshot reports for Years 1-6 have been sent home today. The report gives an indication of 'on trackness' in addition to recent achievements.

Over the year, teachers use the following summative judgements to record children's progress.

| Secure +   | Beginning | Beginning +                              | Working within   | Working within + | Secure   |
|--|-----------|--|--|------------------|--|
| Broadly expected level by end term 2                   |           |  | Expected level by end term 4                           |                  | Expected level by end of term 6                          |
| Beginning to work on year group objectives             |           | Working on current year group objectives |  |                  | Meets the required objectives for the end of year        |
| Majority of children should be here at the end of term |           |  | Majority of children should be here at the end of term |                  | Majority of children should be here at the end of term 6 |

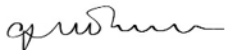
Attendance information is also included in the report.

|                        |           |
|------------------------|-----------|
| Outstanding            | 99-100%   |
| Good                   | 95-98.9%  |
| Requires improvement   | 90-94.9%  |
| Unsatisfactory/Concern | Below 90% |

I hope you find this information useful. Please see your child's teacher with any questions.

Finally, I wish you all a wonderful Easter and hope you have a well-earned rest, ready for term 5!

Yours sincerely,



Christian McGuinness  
Headteacher



Inspiring-Learning-Together

# ***Leaffield Primary School***

## **Youngsters ‘Park and Stride’ as council scheme boosts active school travel**



Pupils took to the streets to show how an innovative council scheme is helping more Oxfordshire children get active on the school run.

Children, parents and teachers at Leaffield Primary School staged a ‘Park and Stride’ event, aimed at encouraging parents to park away from the school gates and walk the last part of the journey – boosting road safety, congestion and promoting exercise.

Most of the 98 children at the school took part, alongside Oxfordshire County Council’s Cabinet Member for Education and Public Health Hilary Hibbert-Biles.

The school is one of 21 across the county already signed up to the council-commissioned ‘WOW’ scheme. The project, run by Living Streets, is a year-round walk-to-school challenge where children collect badges each month as a reward for making journeys on foot. The scheme also provides schools with a ‘Travel Tracker’ which records all modes of travel and gives valuable insights into travel habits.

Since September Active travel rates – including walking, cycling, scooting or ‘park and stride’ – have already risen by 20 percentage points from 65% to 85% per cent at these schools.

## **Impressive results**

When Leaffield first adopted the scheme, 76 per cent of pupils' journeys were 'active' but that has now risen to 84 per cent, with 29 per cent families using the Park and Stride.

Cllr Hibbert-Biles joined families walking from Leaffield Village Hall, where they were met by Strider, the Living Streets mascot who present pupils with their WOW badges.

She said: "Leaffield is a great example of how 'Park and Stride' can be used effectively to increase walking rates. The year-round walk to school challenge has been easy for schools to adapt to, and Park and Stride is ideal for a more rural school such as Leaffield, where families may be more likely to drive, but still want to enjoy the benefits of walking to school. Families can either park ten minutes' walk away or get off the bus early and complete their journey on foot."

Julia Crear, Regional Director for Living Streets said: "We know that not all families are able to walk the whole way to school but Park and Stride is an excellent alternative. It ensures there are still fewer cars around the school gates which improves congestion and air pollution, whilst allowing children to fit more active minutes into their day."

## **Schools sign-up**

Schools seeking more information on how to sign up please contact Sarah Ellis [sarah.ellis@livingstreets.org.uk](mailto:sarah.ellis@livingstreets.org.uk)

## **More info on WOW**

WOW is a behavioural change programme that incentivises primary school children, their parents and teachers to travel actively all, or part, of the way to school – essentially, it uses 'badges' to 'gamify' walking to school.

Since the first 21 schools started the programme in September:

Active travel rates (walking, cycling, scooting, park & stride and getting off the bus early) have increased from 65% to 85%).

Walking rates have increased from 45% to 57%

Park and stride has almost doubled from 9% to 16%

WOW costs less than £450 per school per annum and can be funded using PE Pupil Premium

Photos:

Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet Member for Education and Public Health Hilary Hibbert-Biles joins pupils, staff and parents at Leaffield Primary School on a Park and Stride journey.

Continued overpage

Pupils from Oxfordshire took to the streets today (Thursday 22 March) to show how an innovative new scheme is helping more of them to get active on the school run. Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles joined pupils, parents and teachers from Leaffield C of E Primary School to 'Park and Stride' to school on Thursday morning. An incredible turn out saw the vast majority of Leaffield's 98 pupils turn out to walk to school.

Park and Stride encourages parents to park away from the school gates and walk the last part of the journey, helping to reduce the number of cars around the school gates.

Families park up and get ready to stride

Living Streets has helped the school introduce Park and Stride alongside WOW – their year-round walk to school challenge.

WOW sees children who walk to school at least once a week rewarded with collectable badges each month. 21 schools in Oxfordshire County Council have signed up to take part in WOW since the beginning of this academic year and are already starting to see results.

When Leaffield Primary School started WOW, 76 per cent of their journeys were active but are now up to 84 per cent, with 29 per cent of those being families using the Park and Stride.

Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles joined families to walk from Leaffield Village Hall, where they were met by Strider, the Living Streets mascot who present pupils with their WOW badges.

Councillor Hilary Hibbert-Biles, Cabinet Member for Public Health & Education said:

"WOW, the year-round walk to school challenge, has been easy for schools to adapt to. The WOW Travel Tracker records all modes of travel and gives valuable insights into each school's travel habits. Leaffield is a great example of how 'Park and Stride' can be used effectively to increase walking rates.


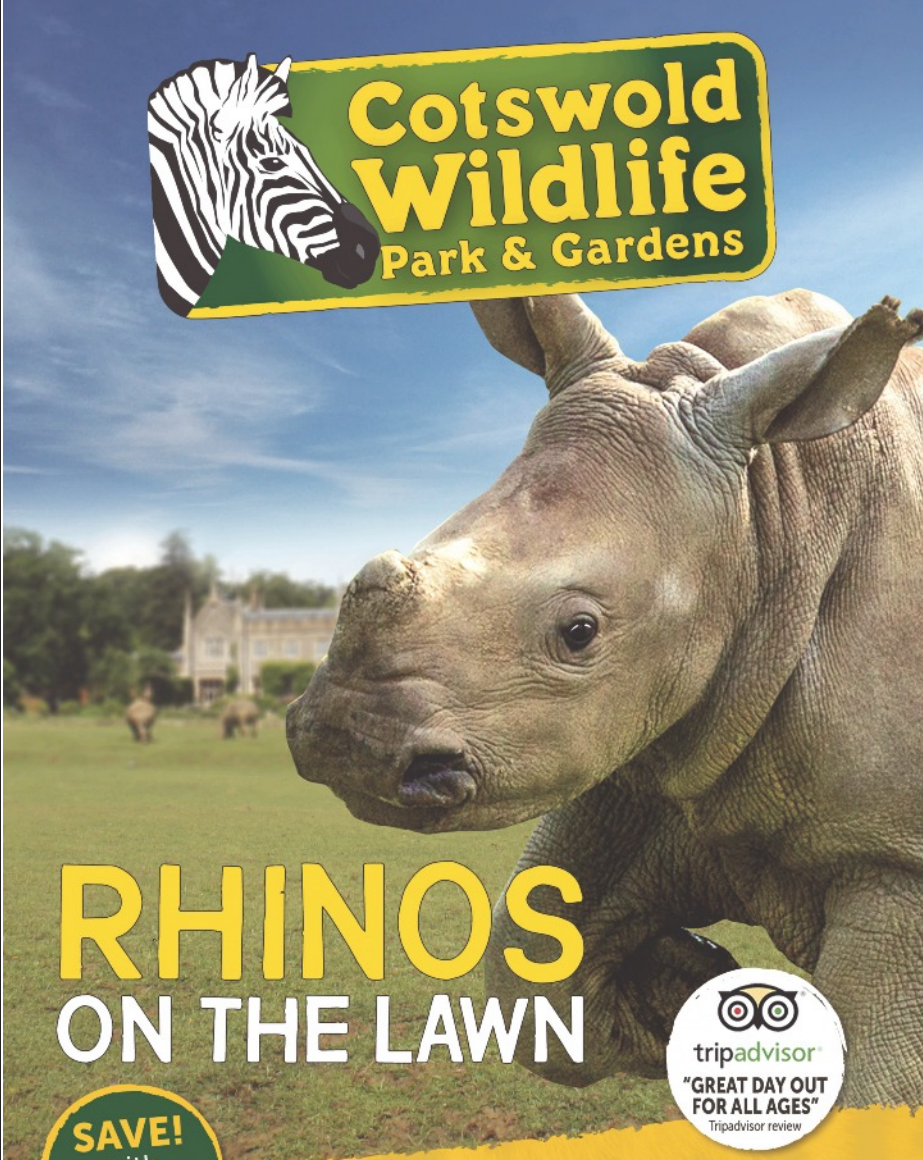
"Park and Stride is ideal for a more rural school such as Leaffield where families may be more likely to drive to get to school, but still want to enjoy the benefits of walking to school. Families can either park ten minutes' walk away or get off the bus early and complete their journey on foot, your school can even set up a Park and Stride scheme."

Julia Crear, Regional Director (South), Living Streets said:

"We know that not all families are able to walk the whole way to school but Park and Stride is an excellent alternative. It ensures there are still fewer cars around the school gates which improves congestion and air pollution, whilst allowing children to fit more active minutes into their day.

It's fantastic to see the impact WOW and Park and Stride is having at Leaffield Primary School – it's only right that we're celebrating the steps the children here have made.


Julia Crear, Director (South), Living Streets



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## ***Oxford-Cambridge growth corridor & expressway - How to get our voices heard?***

The Chancellor has backed the National Infrastructure Commission's concept of an Oxford to Cambridge 'Growth Corridor' of a million new houses, of which 300,000 would be in Oxfordshire. That would be equivalent to six new cities the size of Oxford; or to put it another way would more than double our present housing stock and population by 2050.

Part of the growth scheme is a new Expressway – a Motorway in all but name – from Oxford to Cambridge to “facilitate” the development.

**At the moment this transformative change is being proposed without any public consultation.**

CPRE Oxfordshire is demanding a full statutory public consultation followed by a Public Inquiry, at which the clear environmental and social costs of the Growth Corridor can be weighed against the potential economic benefits envisaged. This would also mean the need for and routing of any Oxfordshire Expressway would at least be decided in an open and transparent manner.

*CPRE Oxfordshire is asking local residents to join its call for a Public Inquiry by contacting local councillors, MPs and the Secretary of State for Transport.*

Find out more at [www.cpreoxon.org.uk](http://www.cpreoxon.org.uk) Facebook.com/CPREOxfordshire

email: [administrator@cpreoxon.org.uk](mailto:administrator@cpreoxon.org.uk)

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## ***From GWR to MMM***

Ascott is lucky to have a beautiful, even serene, ancient building and churchyard right in its midst. While religion and ritual are not for everyone, fortunately the church at the centre of our village welcomes everyone and anyone at any time (the door is locked at dusk).

The monthly mid-week 'meditation' was timed from its outset to coincide with the arrival of the train from Oxford and London. What better way to ease stressed commuters into their more relaxing evening than to offer half an hour of silence and reflection?

There is a surprising number of books on silence, and probably even more on meditation, contemplation, living in the present, and so on. One example has this on silence: 'it is essential to our spiritual and general well-being sometimes to take time out, to be quiet for a bit, and give ourselves a chance to see things as they are'.

Why do this with others? Meditation may be about a lot of things, reflection, mindfulness, self-knowledge, but it can also be about connection. 'To be silent is to put things into perspective and cultivate the detachment we need in order to be more truly connected'.

Those of us who know our railway provider of old, formerly FGW and now GWR, may have spent many happy minutes waiting for its reliably late departure from Oxford by thinking up alternative labels - 'Getting Worse Really' being a personal favourite. Join us at MMM (Mid-Month Meditation) and maybe those initials can be transformed into:

**Getting over the stress of the day**

**Winding down**

**Resting, Reflecting, or Reconnecting**

Join us for 10 minutes or 20 or 30, beginning at around 6.05pm on the third Tuesday of each month; sit quietly with others to ponder or wonder or just find some stillness; you'll be very welcome.

**DAVID SOWARD**

# ***Protection of Your Assets***

## **Care Cost Fees**

A lot of people are still unaware that if they need care in later life, their assets will be means-tested by the local authority to help pay for these services. This goes back to the Community Care Act 1990, which came into force in 1993.

If someone requires social care in later life, the local authority will look to use the assets of a person until they get down to a level of £14,250, when the local authority will take over the fees. There are many myths about the steps people can take to protect their assets from being used like this. The main one is that a parent should simply sign their house over to the children now, so it won't be taken into consideration for means testing. That's just not true.

Local authorities will actually look to see if you've 'deliberately deprived' yourself of an asset by giving property away, going back over any period of time. Sometimes people think if the gift is made seven years prior then the house is safe. This is not so as the seven-year rule only applies to **Inheritance Tax** and not local authority care.

The solution is for couples to simply not leave everything to each other in the first place. What should happen is that you leave half of the house to your partner so that whoever lives the longest is only assessed on half the value of the house. Also remarriage cancels any wills made in the past and the survivor inherits everything so protecting half the value is important.

## **Bloodline Trust Wills**

This ensures that a person's children and grandchildren don't lose out due to remarriages of family members.

## **Lasting Power of Attorney**

This is divided into two parts, one for finance and the other for health and welfare. In many ways it is like a passport; a document that's registered now and one which can be physically handed to the attorneys should the need arise. It allows attorneys, perhaps the children, to deal with banks and pension companies etc. should their parents become incapacitated, but also deals with matters such as where the parent should be living and how they receive care. Your attorneys, again perhaps your children, must legally act in your best interest at all times. Joint bank accounts can be frozen until a bank sees sight of a lasting power of attorney document. Lasting power of attorney should be completed whilst the parent is in good mental health. If this is not completed early enough legal costs to sort out the finances etc. can be very expensive.

## Note

The above is an extract from a legal company but reflects what is explained in a government document, which can be found on the internet [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk) in a section Trusts and taxes. Well worth looking at no matter how little you think your assets are. Act now to save a lot of anxiety for your family at a very difficult time for them.

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## ***Late Spring Group***

The Late Spring (bereavement) Group is facilitated by Age UK Oxfordshire and meets in the Wychwood Library in Milton under Wychwood the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month, 10.30am till 12pm. We are a small group and welcome you to come along and meet us and see what you think. It's open to everyone in Oxfordshire.

It is a relaxed meeting and over coffee and cake we meet with others who have lost a loved one and therefore understand and can offer valuable comfort and support to each other. Often it is easier to talk to others in the same situation whilst sometimes, it can be painful or avoided with family and friends after a time. People come along at different times, some may come at two months post bereavement whilst others may come along two years post bereavement. There is no right or wrong, it's about how life is for you as an individual. Some people might find coping with jobs a spouse did in the home or living alone hard, whilst others who have lost a different loved one may struggle and ache with other painful things. It's also about remembering good times and memories and laughter, being able to talk and feel listened to.

Being listened to, can be really important and helpful. The fact that these groups grow demonstrates this. We now have 17 Late Spring groups running across Oxfordshire. In the West we have Witney, Burford, Faringdon, Milton under Wychwood and Chipping Norton

For more information tel Joan Douglass on Mobile 07827 235453

Or Age UK Oxfordshire office Helen on 01235 849 434 or

[Helensollis@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk](mailto:Helensollis@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk) for more details and information



**Community  
Information  
Network**

Age UK Oxfordshire  
9 Napier Court, Barton Lane, Abingdon, OX14 3YT  
Office Tel: 0345 450 1276

# *The Joys of Edible Flowers*

Edible flowers have gained popularity in recent months making regular appearances on TV Cookery Shows such as Masterchef, The Great British Bake-off and Come Dine with Me. Not only do they bring colour, flavour and texture to a dish, they also bring a stunning finish to the food and drink that we love, not to mention a touch of finesse. Edible flowers also have purported health benefits. They are naturally vegan, rich in antioxidants, gluten free, GM free and contain no preservatives or additives, just pure natural beauty and flavour.

Edible flowers have been used for hundreds of years in cooking or as decoration for various dishes. Flowers were first recorded as being used in culinary methods in 140 BC, many different cultures since then have incorporated flowers into traditional, everyday foods. The Romans used violets, orange blossom and roses, and historically flower petals were eaten mostly in salads or as garnishes. It was also common to dry the petals and include them in tea blends. Flowers were believed to be cleansing for the body and have all sorts of medicinal properties.

Today many fine restaurants around the UK and indeed the world are using more and more edible flowers to enhance salads with their colour, texture and intriguing flavours, as well as for decoration on appetisers, starters, main dishes, cakes and desserts. Even drinks and frozen cocktails have flower petal ice cubes and garnishes.

It is always best to grow your own edible flowers, and then you can be sure that they are clean, fresh and free from insecticides, pests and disease. The majority of edible flowers are always picked fresh

from the garden the day you want to use them. Growing your own also allows you to experiment and show off to your dinner guests what you have grown and what you've created with a colourful and tasty dish. Even if you are not keen on experimenting with salads or sauces, edible flowers make excellent garnishes, furthermore the flower garden becomes a treasure chest of delicately flavoured treats to add a touch of class to your culinary endeavours.

**When collecting flowers for eating accurate identification is essential as some flowers can be extremely poisonous and cause severe illness and in some cases death. If you are in doubt, don't eat!**

Make sure the flowers you pick are safe and suitable for food use before serving and consuming them. Pick young flowers and buds on dry mornings so the colour and flavours will be intense. For best results use flowers immediately after picking or refrigerate in a plastic bag for a couple of hours. Avoid cropping flowers in areas frequented by livestock or pets. Always wash them before you use them. Generally only the petals are used, so discard the stamens, pistil and calyx of larger flowers and the bitter heel at the base of the petal should also be removed. It is also important to remember that some people may react to certain flowers. It often depends on underlying medical conditions. If you have asthma or severe allergies take caution when eating edible flowers and try a small amount before adding to recipes.

It is surprising just how many flowers growing in our gardens are indeed edible. The list is extensive but here are a

few of my favourite edible blooms which are really easy to grow.

## Edible flowers from your border

Sweet violet (*Viola odorata*) & Pansies have a delicate flavour suitable for sweet /savoury dishes most commonly used to decorate cakes, souffles and desserts. Try floating them in a fruit salad or setting them in a jelly.

Cottage Pink (*Dianthus caryophyllus*) has a spicy clove like flower.

Nasturtium (*Tropaeolum majus*) peppery in flavour, the brilliantly coloured flowers will liven up the duller green salad.

Marigold (*Calendula officinalis*) sometimes known as poor man's saffron, petals can be used to add colour to salads, mayonnaise and to cooked rice. Please note

**DO NOT EAT AFRICAN MARI-GOLDS.**

Rose (*Rosa*) all roses are edible, the more fragrant roses being the best. Petals can be used for decoration, crystallised or frozen in ice cubes to use in summer drinks.

Daylily (*Hemerocallis fulva*) add buds and flowers to stir fry, salads and soups.

Lavender (*Lavandula angustifolia*) can be used to flavour sugar, cakes and biscuits also ideal for decoration.

Primrose (*Primula vulgaris*) decoration for cakes, salads and garnish. Flowers can be frozen in ice cubes.

Scented Geraniums (*Pelargonium*) flowers are milder than leaves and can be crystallized or frozen in ice cubes.

Elderflower (*Sambucus nigra*) used to make wine or cordials, or place in a muslin bag to flavour tarts and jellies but remove before serving. Elderflowers can be dipped in batter and deep fried.

## Edible flowers from your vegetable patch and herb garden

All culinary herb flowers are edible and generally taste like a milder version of the leaves.

Borage flowers are vivid blue in colour with a delicate cucumber flavour; adds interest to cakes, salads and pate. Flowers can also be frozen in ice cubes or crystallized.

Courgette or marrow flowers can be eaten hot in a tomato sauce or cold stuffed with cooked rice, cheese or meat.

Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*) all parts are edible and enhance salmon, pates and salads. Flowers preserved in vinegar or oil can be used in winter.

Chives (*Allium schoenoprasum*) mild onion flavour, good in salads, egg dishes and sauces for fish.

Clover (*Trifolium pratense*) both red and white clover flowers can be used to garnish fruit and green salads.

Dill (*Anethum graveolens*) aniseed flavour, ideal addition to salads, vegetables and fish dishes.

Broad beans & Pea flowers (*Pisum sativum*) add flowers and young shoots to salads or as a garnish for a fresh pea taste. Please note only vegetable peas can be eaten, **DO NOT EAT SWEET PEAS WHICH ARE TOXIC.**

Mint (*Mentha* sp) apple, pineapple, peppermint, spearmint and gingermint flowers can all be used for both sweet and savoury dishes.

Rosemary (*Rosmarinus officinalis*) a sweet flavour similar to the leaves can be used fresh to garnish salads and tomato dishes or to flavour water and butter.

Salad rocket (*Eruca vescaria*) adds sharp flavour to salads or preserve in oil or butter to accompany meat.

Edible flowers are set to move from garden to plate in a big way this year. A few carefully chosen blooms can transform a plain side salad into a work of art you would expect to find at a first-class res-

taurant. Likewise, a sprinkling of petals can make your confectionery and cakes look blooming delicious.

So finish your dish with edible flowers and start growing some today!

**Juliet Ingram**

## ***TOO MANY SHIPS***

I have seen too many ships sail out from my shore.  
It's too late now to wait their home return.  
Alone I wander the wave lashed headland bare  
Where once the beacons of youth once blazed.  
I find dead ashes there.

It's all too late. Perhaps it always was.  
Some have this feeling deep within ourselves.  
We make the noise of all us human kind,  
But listening only hear  
The echoing sound of empty shells  
On the ebbing tide.

**Fred Russell**

## PC News

We have finally emerged from a seriously wet and cold winter and we do hope that none of you have suffered too much. The Winter Emergency Team was busier than ever and the Parish Council is so grateful to them for their dedication. I believe that Robin Walker put in about 14 hours of work to at least open up 1 lane on each of the Chipping Norton Rd and London Lane. With Chris Badger injured, Jacob Davies took charge of salting the roads on a freezing open cab tractor and the team salting and ploughing the pavements tramped the streets in cold wet conditions. Please remember that all of this work is voluntary. Oxfordshire County Council was in no position to help Ascott as they lost some machinery in ditches, so without our hardy volunteers we would have all been stuck for days.

Snow was then followed by the thaw and torrential rain but, despite the river breaking its banks, the river flooding was not serious. Work to the floodplain on Pudlicote land may well have contributed to this improvement and we are grateful to Mr & Mrs Wickens for allowing the work to be done. We understand that some gardens suffered run-off flooding as the ground was so saturated and the PC would like to hear from those residents as it is hoping to record weak points in the village, especially with photographs (as requested by the drainage engineers in both County and District Councils).

Thank you again to the Volunteers who were out in strength for our Annual Litter Pick - we were able to do a thorough job along most of the verges in the Parish.

Peter Rance has been spending a lot of time on transport issues recently. The good news is that West Oxfordshire Community Transport launched a new bus service in February – Service 210. The bus runs on weekdays from Witney to Chipping Norton via the Wychwoods, Leafield and Crawley. Each Parish Council has contributed to the cost of purchasing the bus. However, the uptake so far has been concerning and we therefore include the recently revised timetable with this Grapevine, and ask even those not dependent on buses, to consider using it rather than driving. Use it or lose it, is our concern. The Villager service is continuing, also joint funded by Parish Councils. Both service timetables are also on the Village website.

However, the bad news is that the train service has been appalling this winter, partly because not enough staff are yet fully trained on the new trains but also because the full length of the Cotswold Line is still not re-doubled. There has been concern that GWR are making life so difficult for passengers that the public will eventually give up and then GWR could eliminate the stops at smaller stations altogether. Our regular, dependent users, including Peter, lobbied Robert Courts MP who had already called a meeting at Charlbury on the HMG public consultation on the GWR Franchise, which gave the opportunity to ask questions of senior representatives of both GWR and Network Rail. It was a full house event with dissatisfaction abundant. Mr Courts subsequently succeeded in gaining a special debate in Parliament on the pressing need for Cotswold Line improvements especially re-doubling.



Following the Appeal Inspector's decision to allow the development of 5 houses between Nos 12-18 London Lane, there were many rumours of more developments and a lot of very concerned residents. The Parish Council decided to call a consultation meeting so that residents could ask questions of the Head of Planning at WODC, Mr Phil Shaw. The meeting was very well attended and residents generally felt that they were better informed. Various action points were suggested for residents, including to consider what improvements could be made to the village, where small developments would be acceptable and also to keep a record, including photographs, of the weak points in the village so that there is data to draw on when the PC is consulted on planning issues.

Shortly before the meeting we had received news that the Inspector for the Local Plan 2031 had written a letter stating that he was satisfied that there were enough developments already planned to meet the needs for our area (sub-area Burford- Charlbury) until 2031. He also strengthened the protection to the AONB. This does not mean that there will not be more applications for development in the future but it does mean that there is less pressure on the WODC Planning Dept and an Appeals Inspector to allow the application. Up to the deadline of this copy (30 April) there have been no new applications for housing development of any size.

Graham Ranson has been having a frustrating time reporting potholes again and again to Highways at Oxfordshire County Council. He is having limited success as OCC has openly admitted that they are now operating 'managed deterioration' of the roads. We do, however, have to

discourage residents from trying to fill the holes themselves. If their work also deteriorates and causes an accident they could be held liable. The best thing that residents could do is support Graham by reporting the holes on the OCC website section called 'Fix my Street' – the more voices there are the more they will have to take it seriously. We did, however, succeed (after 3 years of lobbying) in having posts erected on the verge opposite Tiddy Hall so that the grass did not continually turn into a slippery mud verge, lethal for those who walk that way.

The village defibrillator is now back in working order thanks to the time that Sandy Timms has taken to resolve the problem of electricity supply to the defibrillator box. We are considering the possibility of funding a second defibrillator so that there would always be one in working order. While our defibrillator was off the Ambulance Service register anyone who needed a defibrillator would have been directed to Shipton-under Wychwood. Thankfully this was not necessary.

We come to the end of this Council's term at our May meeting. I am extremely thankful to my colleagues who have decided to remain in post – Sandy Timms, Peter Rance and Graham Ranson. Mark Tribe has decided to step down due to extreme pressure of work – thank you to Mark for the time that he has given and the good-humoured advice that he has offered at meetings. We are very pleased to announce that Brian Leach has agreed to join and we look forward to working with him. The Parish Council will therefore remain at full strength. However, personal circumstances mean that sometimes Councillors have to resign before the 4-year term is

## Ascott Grapevine

over so, if anyone is interested in joining the Parish Council at some time in the future, please do get in touch for a chat. Alternatively, come along to some of our meetings at 7.30pm on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of every month, except August, upstairs in Tiddy Hall. Meetings are open to any member of the public.

'We hope soon to be enjoying better weather and that will be a time to spend in our gardens. Sometimes it is necessary to light a bonfire but there are strict rules about when you can burn and what materials can and cannot be burnt. The

WODC Environmental Dept enforce these rules and we will be delivering their leaflet to every household. If you have a complaint about someone else's bonfire which is actually burning then you must contact WODC as soon as possible and \*NOT\* this Parish Council as WODC have instructed us that this would just slow down their inspection process.

Enjoy the summer – we deserve a lovely one.

Ascott –under-Wychwood Parish Council'

**Philippa Carter**

### Parish Council Members:

|                              |                        |
|------------------------------|------------------------|
| Philippa Carter (Chairman)   | 830344                 |
| Peter Rance                  | 831113                 |
| Sandy Timms                  | 831870                 |
| Brian Leach                  | brian@brianleach.co.uk |
| Graham Ranson                |                        |
| Angela Barnes (Parish Clerk) | 01608 641045           |



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## Vet's Advice

### **Alabama rot - CRGV (Cutaneous and Renal Glomerular Vasculopathy)**

The first case of so-called Alabama Rot has been found in our area. So what is it and how do we protect our pets?

Alabama Rot was first diagnosed in 1980 in Greyhounds in Alabama. There was thought to be a link with E Coli bacterial infection, but even this is not certain. The disease is recognized by a collection of symptoms.

The collection of symptoms we see in CRGV in Britain is similar to those found in Alabama Rot in the USA and we have begun using the same name Alabama Rot rather than Cutaneous Renal Glomerular Vasculopathy (a bit of a mouthful) even though we are not certain that it is in fact the same disease. In Britain most cases have been found between November and May.

The disease causes damage to the blood vessels of the skin and kidney of the dog. As yet it has not been found in other animals. Tiny clots form in the blood vessels which damage them and lead to the destruction of the surrounding tissue. In the skin we can see redness, swelling and ulceration in the distal limbs, from the knee down and also occasionally on the face and ventral abdomen. These lesions are not linked to physical injury. Within a few days signs of kidney failure can start to develop. In the kidneys the damage can lead to organ failure. We then find fever, anorexia, vomiting and lethargy. Not all dogs that get skin lesions go on to develop kidney failure. So how do we protect our dogs from a disease we know so little about?

It is important to remember that not all skin lesions are caused by CRGV. If in doubt al-

ways contact your vet for advice. Remember that although the disease is very uncommon it can progress very fast. Wash your dog's feet after a muddy walk. This has a two-fold benefit. We might be washing away the cause of the disease but we are also checking for ulcers etc.

We cannot tell you where to walk your dog as it is not certain which locations, if any, are to be avoided.

So how do we treat CRGV?

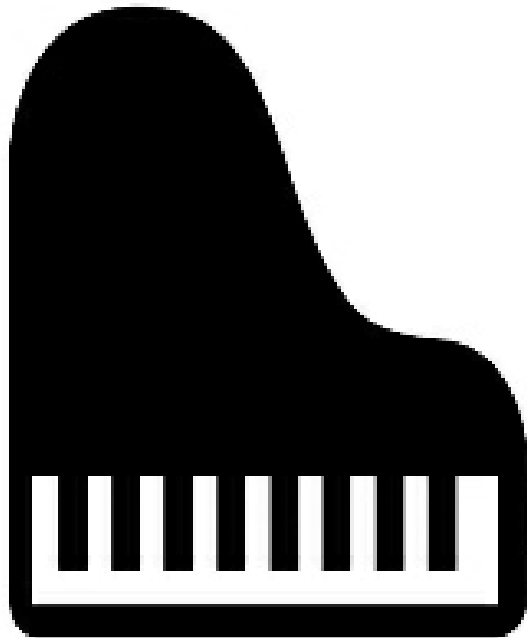
As we do not know the cause we can only treat the symptoms. We can assess the kidney function by taking blood and urine samples. We can use antibiotics to treat possible bacterial infection and give painkillers, although not all painkillers are suitable for dogs developing kidney failure. We can give intravenous fluid therapy. Should dogs develop kidney failure most will be referred to a specialist. At the moment Anderson Moores Veterinary Specialists are managing most cases and are carrying out most of the research. Some animals are referred to London where they have intensive management including a form of dialysis - not cheap, and not always effective. CRGV treatment has been successful in only about 20 - 30% of the diagnosed cases. It is important to be vigilant and to understand what to look for, but also to remember to not panic, as it remains an uncommon disease.

The Alabama Rot Research Fund (ARRF) is a national charity aiming to raise awareness and funds for research.

See [www.arrf.co.uk](http://www.arrf.co.uk).

**Karen Kappen**

# **Piano Tuition & Vocal Coaching**



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## **Robert Courts MP**

I am delighted to be contributing to this edition of The Ascott Grapevine. I am very optimistic about the coming year as I carry on working hard and doing the job that I love – being your Member of Parliament, and representing our fantastic constituency.

Indeed, 2017 was a busy year but with so much achieved, locally and nationally. We have seen a deal struck by the District Council and Government to complete the rollout of high-speed broadband and not one, but two ground-breaking new plans for affordable housing in our district. £215m was secured for Oxfordshire in the Autumn Budget, whilst I and local Councils are pursuing a number of different options for improvements to local transport infrastructure, such as the County Council's Housing Infrastructure Fund bid. Furthermore, we have secured more support for Oxfordshire's healthcare and in my particular interest area of mental health.

Of course, as ever, there's more to do. I continue to participate fully in the discussions over primary care for Witney and the surrounding area. Work continues on a final fix for the A40. I want to see improvements in broadband matched by improvements in mobile signals; to make it easier for local businesses to grow and thrive. I will continue to support our NHS and education systems as they continue their outstanding work.

Many of you have contacted me about the condition of roads in West Oxfordshire, and I am very aware of the damage that has been done to our roads during these past winter months – especially along the B4449, in particular. I have listened to your concerns and I have campaigned for more funding to fix potholes right across the constituency. I therefore welcome the Government's recent announcement that local roads badly affected by winter weather will benefit from a further £100 million to help repair any potholes and other storm damage. This means £1.8m will be available for Oxfordshire to repair potholes; when coupled with other funding announcements, this means we will have nearly £3m to fix our roads.

The Highways Team at Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) are working hard to address these issues, using this funding to patch the areas that need it most, and I welcome the good work they have done so far. Nevertheless, I know there is more to do, and I continue to push for more funding – but this is certainly a large step in the right direction.

Rest assured, these are only a few of my priorities for the year ahead. If there are any issues you wish to raise with me, please do email me at [robert@robertcourts.co.uk](mailto:robert@robertcourts.co.uk) – I would greatly appreciate hearing your views.



TIDDY HALL

# Piano Lessons

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**Pauline Carter**

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REMEMBER THOSE BRAVE WOMEN IN 1873

# ASCOTT MARTYRS DAY

**Saturday 23 June 2–5pm**  
**The Green, Ascott-under-Wychwood**

- \* unveiling of the Martyrs textile hanging at 2.30pm \*
- \* meet Beverley McCombs, author of 'The Ascott Martyrs' \*
- \* hear and experience the Martyrs story \*
- \* local folk songs from Shepherds Crook \*
- \* dress the family 1870s country style \*
- \* music & singing \*
- \* teas in the church \*
- \* food & drink at The Swan \*
- \* bring a picnic & have fun \*



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# Ascott Martyrs' Day

## Martyrs Day Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> June 2-5pm (See Advert)

In this centenary year of the introduction of votes for (some) women, 23 June is a day to remember those oppressed women from Ascott who in 1873 were punished for standing up to authority. Join together on the green to enjoy a fun afternoon of music and song, and hear more about the Martyrs, their families and life in the village at that time. Beverley McCombs, a descendant from New Zealand and author of *The Ascott Martyrs*, will be here to tell the story – we would love to see visitors dressed 1870s rural style for the occasion!

At 2.30pm the textile hanging that a group have been working on since September will be unveiled. The textile will have a permanent home in the church, hanging opposite the main entrance door. The Trust will use it for presentations to local schools and interested groups where it will provide a powerful and lasting reminder of the women and their stories.

### **Quilt features in exhibition celebrating the achievements of Oxfordshire Women**

The Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock is marking the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of (some) women getting the vote by telling the stories of some of the extraordinary women who have lived in the county. As part of this year-long celebration a small temporary exhibition featuring a colourful patchwork quilt said to have been made by one of the Ascott Martyrs, opens at the Museum on Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> June and runs until late September. The quilt is thought

to have been started by Martha Smith whilst in prison in Oxford in May 1873 and completed later by her daughter. See pictures which shows both sides.

The quilt has been borrowed especially for the exhibition from the People's History Museum in Manchester, where owing to its fragility, it is not on public display. Thanks to the support of the Ascott Martyrs' Trust and the Friends of the Oxfordshire Museum conservators in Manchester have been able to undertake work on the quilt to enable it to travel.

The Museum is open Tuesday to Saturday 10am - 5pm and from 2pm -5pm on Sundays. Free Admission. For more information see

[www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/oxfordshire-museum](http://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/oxfordshire-museum). Tel 01993 814106.

## Study Group

Members of the Ascott Martyrs' study group, led by Peter Vass of Oxford Brookes University and mentored by Wendy Pearse, whose knowledge of the history of the village is encyclopaedic, are beaver away teasing out the evidence for various aspects of the Martyrs' story. We may not yet have answers to the many questions that arise from the reports of the events of 1873, but we are making progress and have already unearthed some unexpected information about keen gardener, Joseph Lakin who was Superintendent of Police in charge of Chipping Norton police station at the time the Ascott Martyrs were imprisoned

there overnight pending their removal to Oxford gaol.

More about him and others in the next issue of the Grapevine.

New members of the group are always welcome. If you are interested in joining us please email Carol Anderson [carol195@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:carol195@hotmail.co.uk).

## Educational Group

Our next major task is to set up an educational group which will reach out to local schools and develop media programmes (probably via YouTube) to spread the significance of the Martyrs' story. We need some existing or retired teachers to come forward as well as those with modern media skills to establish goals and objectives before the Trust seeks funding.

## Martyrs Seats

Regular readers will know that the Trust has been involved for sometime in trying to solve the problem of bird muck on the seats under the Martyrs' Tree, as well as considering how more information about the Martyrs' story could be made available on the green. There is no easy solution to this problem as the birds aren't likely to show any more respect for interpretative panels between the seats than they are for the seats themselves. If the birds can't be moved on then the only answer may be to move the seats away from the tree altogether or perhaps install appropriate roofing which could contain the story? We appreciate that the seats and the tree are a distinctive part of the visual identity of the village and so this may not be a popular option. We are therefore working with the Parish Council to seek the views of everyone in the village in the hope that a solution can be found to the problem.

To discuss email Carol Anderson [carol195@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:carol195@hotmail.co.uk)



## WYCHWOOD FOLK CLUB



In association with the Wychwood Brewery

At Tiddy Hall or The Swan Inn Shipton Rd, Ascott -u- Wychwood

**Sat June 2<sup>nd</sup> Jaywalkers** + support by **Terry Page**

**Tiddy Hall**

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**Tickets £10.00 in advance £12.00 on the door.**

**Sat June 16<sup>th</sup> Winter/Wilson** + support by **Pete Joshua**

**The Swan Inn**

Winter Wilson's current tour showcases their latest album "Ashes and Dust", the follow up to "Cutting Free" which made the Daily Telegraph's ten recommended folk albums for Summer 2014.

**Tickets £10.00 in advance £12.00 on the door**

**Sat July 21<sup>st</sup> Wychwood Summer Showcase Evening** featuring

**Ian W Brown, Linda Watkins + Simon Loake, Robert Lane**

**Tiddy Hall**

Ian will be showcasing some new songs written with the on-going theme of TV shows such as *Crunch Time for The Cramptons* (*Wanted Down Under*) & *Its Ruff Ruff Ruff Being A Dog* (*Walking with Dogs*) to accompany the infamous Jeremy Kyle Song.

**Linda Watkins + Simon Loake** - 'The Tour of Britain' Tour of Britain!

Linda Watkins on vocals and guitar with multi-instrumental accompanist Simon Loake present an excerpt from their 'Tour of Britain' show with songs from the far North to the deep South of the country.

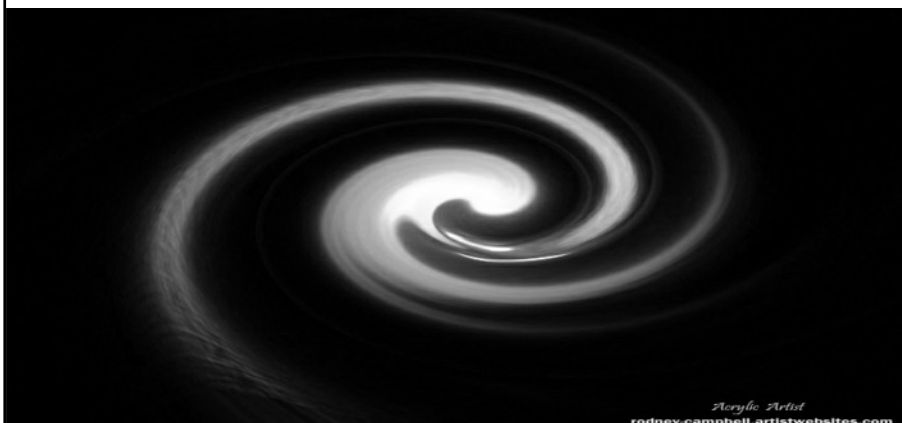
**Robert Lane** will be showcasing songs from his new album 'Only a Flight Away'. Robert was chosen by the LG Arena to perform in the Forum Live area of the arena before concerts by Eric Clapton, Mark Knopfler, Ellie Goulding and John Mayer. In July 2015 he once again performed at the newly re-branded Genting Arena before a concert by Fleetwood Mac.

**Tickets £10.00 in advance £12.00 on the door**

**SEE WEBSITE FOR MORE DETAILS - [www.wychwoodfolkclub.com](http://www.wychwoodfolkclub.com)**

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Tel: 07780 572283 for more information

## Nature Notes

Sometimes choosing a subject for my article depends on a brief observation or a casual comment or query, but this time the object of my interest seems to have been making its presence known recently on a very regular basis. Otters seem to be pursuing me for attention. First several villagers remarked that they had seen an Otter on the Evenlode, the Fishing Club required financial assistance to protect the fishing lake with an Otter proof fence, then a female Otter took-up residence by the lake at the Wildlife Park. Next I found the remains of a large Trout in the grass verge on London Lane, which proved to be all that was left of one of the fifteen Trout in a local spring-fed pool. Finally when walking on the edge of the Sherborne Estate I had the pleasure of watching a dog otter ambling across a field a few yards away, totally unconcerned about me or my dog.

Otters are members of the Mustelid family of animals that also includes Weasels, Stoats, Polecats, Mink and Pine Martins.



In Britain they are the top predator of the river environment. There are several species of Otter in the world, but the Otter found in Britain is the Eurasian Otter that is the most widespread of the species and is found all across Europe and parts of Asia. Sadly throughout their range they

have become listed as near threatened as their numbers have declined. In Britain their numbers have always been limited because of their environmental requirement for clean undisturbed waters and an extensive territory. An adult dog Otter may require up to 12 miles of river or 2 to 3 square miles of lake to provide his daily requirement of 1 to 1.3kilos of fish a day. The territory required can change depending on the local availability of fish or other food such as Crayfish or the occasional Duck or Moorhen.

Pressure on Otter numbers first occurred during the Industrial Revolution, when pollution and the industrial use of rivers disturbed the Otter's environment and reduced fish populations. Hunting and exploitation for Otter fur also put them under pressure, but it was not until the 1950's that Otter numbers experienced a rapid decline. It has been estimated that Otters lost 95% of their natural range in Western Europe between 1950 and 1970 as a result of pesticide pollution (Aldrin and DDT that are now banned), water sports, loss of undisturbed riverside habitats, clearing of river banks to improve drainage, changes in farming methods and urbanisation. The Otter's only natural enemy is man and his activities!

Realising the perilous position of the Otter in the 1970's when it was found to be virtually absent from England and only holding on in Wales and Scotland, particularly round the Scottish coast, on 1st January 1978 the Otter was granted full legal protection. There was a concerted attempt to reintroduce the Otter to England in the 1980's and 1990's. Also, captive bred Otters were released in suitable environments up to 1999. Landowners

with access to rivers and streams were encouraged to create artificial Holts and to provide planted riverside areas as day-time resting places. This was carried out in Ascott by Mr Gripper on his stretch of the Evenlode. Coupled with these efforts was a general improvement in water quality that encouraged an increased fish population and so now the Otters can be seen in every English County even in urban areas such as Bristol, Birmingham and Manchester where they had been absent since the Industrial Revolution. Some conservationists are sounding a note of caution and say that an increase in sightings in new habitats may reflect Otters roaming in search of food rather than there being a big increase in overall numbers.

The Otter is supremely well adapted to life spent hunting in our rivers, lakes and coastal areas. They have a dense undercoat and a top coat of thick, long guard hairs, which help to keep it dry and trap a layer of air to insulate the body from cold water. The tail is large, broad and flattened at the base and used as an aid to swimming. When swimming slowly the Otter uses its webbed feet in a kind of 'doggy-paddle', but for speed the front legs are held tight against the body and the hind feet and tail form a broad surface which is flexed up and down like the flukes of a whale. Unlike most of its close relatives Otters hunt by sight rather than smell, their eyes can focus under water as well as on land. Although the majority of its hunting is carried out at night in rivers and lakes they will occasionally take Voles and Rabbits on land. In Western Scotland they can often be seen hunting in coastal waters during daylight hours. When diving they are helped by the large capacity of their lungs and they can reduce their oxygen

consumption by slowing their heartbeat. When diving in muddy water or on a dark night they are able to feel their way along the bottom using their sensitive whiskers.



Dog and bitch Otters live separate solitary lives only coming together for mating. Courting Otters find each other by scent and their courtship consists of chasing and play fighting, both on land and in the water. Pregnancy lasts about 62 days and the pups are born in a breeding den or Holt. This is usually created in a quiet part of the bitch's territory, often built into the bank under overhanging tree roots. The Holt is lined with dry grasses, moss or rushes. Normally there are 2 or 3 pups, but up to 5 is possible. They are born blind and toothless; their eyes open at 4 to 5 weeks and weaning starts at 7 weeks. In 2 or 3 months they will have developed an adult coat and are able to take to the water.

Both parents hunt to provide the pups with food, but once they are able to swim the male leaves. The bitch and pups will stay together for up to one year at which time the mother will probably come on heat again and the pups will disperse. They can stay within the mother's territory for another few months before leaving to find permanent territories of their own.

In the wild Otters can live up to ten years, although few survive for more than five years. A female Otter will normally only breed twice in her lifetime and this slow rate of reproduction is a limiting factor on their geographical spread and

makes them vulnerable to adverse environmental pressures.

We must be optimistic about the Otter's future in England.

**Stuart Fox**

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## ***Rotary Club of Burford & Kingham News***

The club's support for the **National Trust Chastleton House** refreshments started on a rather dismal "Spring" day in March. The poor weather possibly helped encourage the fewer than normal number of visitors to restore themselves with afternoon tea and cakes! Certainly there was considerable appreciation among those who succumbed to the temptation! This volunteering continues during the summer.



In April the **Blood Pressure check** in Burford High Street (see above), which was part of a national drive by Rotary (200 clubs are taking part throughout the UK), interested a surprising number of people to come along. Happily only a relatively small proportion were found to be at risk, though some of these had to be advised to see their doctor sooner rather than later. Clearly a very worth-

while activity if it entails saving only one person from potentially serious consequences of leaving high blood pressure unmanaged. The club is extremely grateful to Mr. Reavley of Reavley's Pharmacy for offering the use of his facilities for private confidential counselling. Thank you very much! We were also pleased to help distribute Burford Town Council's free booklet entitled "**are you ready**" which has been prepared by the emergency services to help people be prepared for emergencies. The booklet contains lots of helpful information & contact telephone numbers. More copies can be obtained from the Council Offices, if anyone would like one.

The month of May brings the **Annual Bluebell Walk for Charity** round public and private parts of the Cornbury Estate. Club members act as marshals. The route is approximately 8 miles – but there is a short cut of about 3 miles! Any organisation, individual or family can take part and raise funds for THEIR OWN charity! If you are interested, please pop this in your diary for next year & contact secretary (see below)! The same month is the **annual Christian Aid Week door-to-door collection** helping relieve the misery and poverty of folk less fortunate



## Ascott Grapevine

than ourselves who have been lucky enough to live in a prosperous part of the world! Again, please make a memo for next year -but this time contact [christianaidburford@gmail.com](mailto:christianaidburford@gmail.com) or tel. 0784 305 4223

In June the club is helping the **Armed Forces Carterton picnic** on **June 30<sup>th</sup>**! Social events in the club have included talks by Mr. Reavley about England's oldest pharmacy (in Burford!) & a presentation about the "S. Oxfordshire &

Bucks. Blood Bikes", a rapid response medical transport service by Capt. Kamran Irani. The club had a mid-May outing to Chipping Norton Theatre to see "A Tender Thing" while in June there is a trip to the still active bell foundry owned by one of our members. If you would like to visit the club, you will be welcome, but please first contact our secretary, Terry Best at [terry.a.best@btinternet](mailto:terry.a.best@btinternet)



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# ***The Ascott Village Charity***



## ***Your Village Charity- What does it do, and who does it help?***

The village charity is still in the position to offer help to any person in the village who is embarking on further education and is in need of books or equipment for the course. They can apply to the charity to assist with the cost. All applications are dealt with in strict confidence.

If any villager feels that the Charity could help anyone in the village with financial aid then please contact one of the trustees to discuss the application procedure. The trustees will review all applications in full confidence to determine if they are within the Charity's power to assist.

There will be a Charity run this year on October 28<sup>th</sup> more details in next issue of the Grapevine.

### **Chairman**

John Cull [johncull@wowmatters.com](mailto:johncull@wowmatters.com)

### **Trustees**

Elaine Byles [elaine.byles@bioch.ox.ac.uk](mailto:elaine.byles@bioch.ox.ac.uk)

Stuart Fox [stuart.john.fox@gmail.com](mailto:stuart.john.fox@gmail.com)

Sandy Timms [se.timms@btinternet.com](mailto:se.timms@btinternet.com)

Mark Abrey [rector@thechasebenefice.org.uk](mailto:rector@thechasebenefice.org.uk)

Keith Ravenhill [keith.ravenhill@talktalk.net](mailto:keith.ravenhill@talktalk.net)

Mark Dawbarn [mark@dawbarn.co.uk](mailto:mark@dawbarn.co.uk)

Pauline Marshall [pollymarshall@gmail.com](mailto:pollymarshall@gmail.com)

# ***Coffee Mornings at Ascott Church***

***10.30am - 11.30am***

Tuesday May 29<sup>th</sup>

Tuesday June 26<sup>th</sup>

Tuesday July 31<sup>st</sup>

Tuesday August 28<sup>th</sup>

Tuesday Sept 25<sup>th</sup>

Tuesday October 30<sup>th</sup>

Tuesday November 27<sup>th</sup>

***All Welcome***



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.On National Poetry Day, **Pam Ayres** returns to The **Roses Theatre Tewkesbury** on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> October 2018 at 7.30pm to perform a charity show in aid of the Sebakwe Black Rhino Trust. The Trust raises money to help conserve the Black Rhinos in Zimbabwe.

Pam has been making the nation laugh for over 40 years. Funny and warm, her charming understated manner belies a rare comic precision. Her hair-trigger timing, her eye for the absurd details of everyday life, and unforgettable turn of phrase, combine to make her a true national treasure.

Tickets are now on sale and available at £27.00 each from [the box office 01684 295074](#) or order on line at [www.rosestheatre.org/events](http://www.rosestheatre.org/events)

For those who may not know, Pam Ayres lived in the village in the old Vicarage for a number of years.

Also, John and Annie Gripper and family of Manor Farm have worked for many years to aid the conservation of the black rhino in Zimbabwe.



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**Saturday 8.00am – 12.00pm**

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OXON OX7 6JP**

**TEL: 01993 830302 FAX: 01993 831752**

**[www.grovesdiyshop.co.uk](http://www.grovesdiyshop.co.uk) email: [info@alfredgroves.co.uk](mailto:info@alfredgroves.co.uk)**

# TIDDY HALL

The first five months of this year have been a busy time at **Tiddy Hall** and bookings continue to come in for various events and private parties. The summer months are looking equally eventful, as you will see as you continue reading.

**The Wychwood Folk Club** has had five gigs at **Tiddy Hall** since the beginning of this year. All great performances from artists around the country! February saw our biggest audience to date, 160 to hear Port Isaac's Fisherman's Friends, which I'm told was an outstanding evening!

Upcoming gigs as follows:

**June 2<sup>nd</sup> – The Jaywalkers**

**September 15<sup>th</sup> – Steve Ashley**

An added event to this year's schedule - **Saturday July 21<sup>st</sup> – A Summer Showcase Evening** – featuring Ian W Brown, Linda Watkins & Simon Loake, Robert Lane. Please see the website [www.wychwoodfolkclub.com](http://www.wychwoodfolkclub.com) for further information.

The **Sunday Tea Dances** are continuing at **Tiddy Hall**. They are a friendly bunch and would like to welcome some new members, especially those living locally. Cost is only £3.50 per person which includes a cup of tea, or two, and home-made cakes! Don't be shy, please come along and have a go, no matter what your level of dancing - beginners are more than welcome! During the summer months, tea dances will be held on **June 3<sup>rd</sup>, July 1<sup>st</sup>, August 5<sup>th</sup> & September 2<sup>nd</sup>**.

You will no doubt have seen posters up around the village for a **Charity Auction** being held on **Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> May**. Our old friends and former landlords of The Swan, Richard & Michiel, are returning to Ascott to host this event, while auctioneer, **Mark Stacey**, of Bargain Hunt and Antiques Road Trip fame, will run the proceedings. Viewing of items for auction will be on Friday evening, 6pm – 8pm and again on Saturday morning, 10.30am – 12.30pm. **The auction starts at 1.30pm**. If you have any quality household items or antiques that you would like to donate, please contact Richard by email [richardhaddon@btinternet.com](mailto:richardhaddon@btinternet.com). All proceeds will go to Lawrence Home Nursing and Ascott Church Bells Repair Fund.

**The Roseneath School of Music** are holding their **Annual Summer Concert** on **Saturday June 9** starts at 7.30pm and tickets are £10 and £6 for under 18's. For more information please contact Mrs Pauline Carter on 01993 774568.

**Flix in the Stix** is returning on **Saturday June 16<sup>th</sup>** with the film, **The Greatest Showman**! Inspired by the imagination of PT Barnum and celebrating the birth of show business, this musical stars Hugh Jackman, Zac Efron, Michelle Williams and Rebecca Ferguson. Tickets are £12 to include a two course supper. Doors will open at 7pm so that you can settle in and order your drinks at the bar, before dinner is served. Please book with Simon Gidman 01993 831479 or Ingrid Ridley 01993 830612.

**An Evening of Remembrance for Judy Moss** will be held on **Saturday June 30<sup>th</sup>**. Tickets are £15 each to include a two course supper, music by Ascott's own Three



Piece Sweet and Matt & Katrina, plus a Line Dancing lesson! Pete is organising a raffle, which will be held before the night (tickets are £1 each) and all proceeds from the raffle and from the evening will go to Katherine House Hospice, who do such excellent work caring for people suffering from cancer. Doors will open at 7pm, supper at 7.30pm. Please ring Pete Moss on 01993 830758 or Ingrid on 01993 830612 for your tickets.

Members of the public are more than welcome to join us at the **Tiddy Hall Trustees AGM on Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> July at 8pm**, upstairs in the Committee Room.

**Summer Yoga** will take place for a six week run on Wednesdays, commencing Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> July – 7.30pm – 9pm. For further information please contact Nikki Jackson on 07816 786656.

**The Sheila Price Dance School** will be running a summer workshop for three days in August, Monday 20<sup>th</sup> – Wednesday 22<sup>nd</sup>. This mini workshop is for children who have completed Reception Year to Year 5 and gives them a little taste of everything to do with musical theatre. Please contact Sheila on 01451 870025 if you'd like your son or daughter to take part. [www.sheilapricedance@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:www.sheilapricedance@yahoo.co.uk)  
Have a wonderful summer!

Ingrid Ridley

## ***Regular Activities:***

### **Monday – Friday Mornings**

#### **Pre-school**

Contact: Mrs Pauline Plant 07968006451

#### **Monday Afternoons**

3.30pm – 6pm Piano Lessons

Contact: Pauline Carter 01993 774568

#### **Monday Night**

7pm - 9pm Dancing

Contact: May & Terry Cox 01608 810721

#### **Tuesday Night**

6.30pm-7.30pm Pilates

Contact: Ursula Beale 07917 090346

#### **Wednesday Night**

6pm – 6.45pm Circuits

Contact: Simon Gidman 01993 831479

7.30pm – 8.30pm Happy Fitness

Contact: Andrea Forrester 07747 853989

#### **Thursday Night**

7.30pm – 8.30pm Qigong

Contact: Pam Quirke 07780 572283

#### **Friday Afternoons**

3.30pm – 6pm Piano Lessons

Contact: Pauline Carter 01993 774568

### **1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of each Month**

2.30pm – 5pm Sunday Tea Dance

Contact: Jess 07827 235457

**Post Office runs every Friday afternoon 2pm – 4pm**

#### **Special Events:**

Sat 2<sup>nd</sup> June Folk Night – The Jaywalkers 7pm

Sun 3<sup>rd</sup> June Afternoon Tea Dance

Sat 9<sup>th</sup> June Roseneath School of Music Summer Concert

Sat 16<sup>th</sup> June Flix in the Stix 7pm

Sat 30<sup>th</sup> June Evening of Remembrance for Judy Moss

Sun 1<sup>st</sup> July Afternoon Tea Dance

Weds 4<sup>th</sup> July Tiddy Hall Trustees AGM 8pm in Committee Room

Sat 21<sup>st</sup> July Folk – Summer Showcase Evening

Sat 2<sup>nd</sup> Sept Afternoon Tea Dance

Sat 15<sup>th</sup> Sept Folk Night – Steve Ashley



Do you want to get involved in the community? Meet new people, make friends, and help us provide an essential facility.

The Ascott Village Shop has been serving the whole village since 2003. We are always looking for new volunteers of all ages over 16 to help us keep the shop open 7 days each week.

Run by the village, for the village.

If you think you can spare a little of your time, please contact Bridgette in the shop or by telephone. She will be pleased to tell you what is involved.

The shop relies on volunteers to undertake one (or more if you are inclined) of the following tasks:

Serve our customers

Stock the shop

Promote and market our produce

Organising and carrying out maintenance

Administration

# Village Shop

***Owned by the village, run by the village and there for the village.***

***We are economically viable only through the support of our volunteers. Can you help, by volunteering just two hours per week please?***

It seems the village will change over the next few years as development plans, recently put forward aim to significantly increase our population and further choke our roads and infrastructure. The shop must consider how best to respond to the changes the influx of a 30% increase in population might bring. There are no easy answers as, of course, there is no way of knowing whether the buyers of new houses will support the village and its shop, or not. Some will say an increase can only help the shop but I remain sceptical. Whatever the outcome, we must start to think about what this means to the future viability of our volunteer business.

We have the AGM of our shareholders on 13 June in The Swan and I hope to begin serious discussion about this at that time, inviting comment from those most concerned with our future.

I want to invite comment, on a personal basis, from all our volunteers as well. If you have a point to make, I am open to any suggestions regarding shop services, stock, opening hours and the way we provide this vital facility to the village.

Today, though the shadow of the development plans hangs darkly over us, several things have changed already, concerning the future survival of the Village Shop and I want to address these other issues now.

1. The number of people who have walked into the shop so far, this year is 25% fewer than in 2012.
2. The Shop's gross annual income has fallen by 20% since 2006.
3. The margin for staying in the black on sales against costs (ignoring sudden and essential costs) is now less than 2%.
4. Our reserves have fallen by 10% in the last year because of the cost of maintenance (largely for major items, and see para 3 above, bought over 10 years ago) and the replacement of essential equipment.
5. Our volunteers are wonderful, caring, people who all want to provide a service and an essential facility to the Village. But there are too few of us to keep the seven day a week service going indefinitely.
6. Only about 25% of villagers support the Shop – yet many dash to use us on the few occasions there is a snow-drift.

The main threat seems to be the enormous increase in on-line shopping but we are too small to provide a delivery service. Any ideas?

Please, if you want the Shop to continue, help us by turning up and using the shop. It needs your support, mainly as a customer - £3.00 per week from each house would keep us viable - and exceptionally as a volunteer.

I include a new flyer for the Shop, that asks for help, but specifically for help in one or other of the fields we need it.

**Nick Leadbetter**  
**Chairman, Shop Management Committee**

## WOW!

It seems to me the younger generation cannot put a couple of sentences together without using the word 'Wow'

I should like to know who decides which words should enter the language. I have to admit I have no expertise in English or English Literature, being ten years old before I could write my own name. My primary education was in the latter years of the Second World War. When many of us left, we were labelled backward children. I have spent the rest of my life trying to find the right gear to move forward. Time is running out,

Having admitted to that it makes me wonder if the use of 'wow' by our great poets would have enhanced their works. For example Wordsworth.

Bliss it was in that morn to be alive. Wow.

But to be young was very heaven. Wow.

Or Shakespeare.

To be or not to be. Wow.

That is the question. Wow.

The 'wow' sound is something I expect a whoopee cushion to make or used by a Hollywood film star floosie when getting an Oscar. One place you would not have heard it used was in the barrack room of the British Tommie. His word of exclamation would have been a good old Anglo Saxon four letter word beginning with f and finishing with me. I cannot write the word in full because I am not a modern day comedian who thinks he invented it, or an established author who can get away with anything. To use the word would lower the tone of a genteel magazine like the Grapevine.

And another thing. Why do people get hospitalised rather than go into hospital? And why is it now called a train station when I always knew it as a railway station? Why is the word twice becoming obsolete? And another thing. Why do I wake in the morning so often and wonder where all my old friends have gone and the England I knew sixty years ago? Am I beginning to rage at the dying of the light? Wow!

**Fred Russell**

# ***Ascott Pre-School***

## **Spring into Action**

We are so excited to leap into Spring after what has felt like a very long winter here at Preschool. As much as the children loved the ice and snow, it's been wonderful to start enjoying being outdoors in milder weather!

In keeping with the changing seasons, there has been lots of new life for the children to enjoy at Preschool. This month the children were delighted to arrive into Tiddy Hall to the sound of cheeping, as our chicks hatched from the eggs that we placed into the incubator in March. During the incubation process, the children were interested and excited to spot any changes or movement in the eggs, they also noticed the different colours of the shells.

We find that taking care of an egg all the way through to hatching and the early life of a chick is a brilliant practical experience for the children, and a wonderful way to learn valuable life skills - it has been lots of fun too!

## **Teaching Early Phonics**

This term, we took the decision to change the way that we teach phonics to the children in keeping with the new learning system that other local primary schools have introduced. This will help children to be better prepared for when they move up to Primary School.

To help us to move into this new system, we had support from Wychwood Primary School Foundation Stage and were also able to observe a phonics lesson in action. It is called Read Write Inc, and the way that letter sounds are learned is very similar to the previous way of learning phonics, though the method of teaching is different. As well as learning the sound, the children are shown how to write the letter and have individual whiteboards for practising on. So far the children are really enjoying learning phonics the new way, especially writing on their little whiteboards too!

We teach phonics to the older children in small groups every day and once they have mastered one letter sound, we move onto the next.

## **Time to Bake**

We have also restarted Cooking Club! This is open to all our children aged three upwards and runs on a Monday. We take the children into the kitchen in small groups where they weigh, whisk and prepare all the raw ingredients before their efforts are baked and cooled ready to be taken home and enjoyed with their families. It's a brilliant hands-on session, during which the children also learn about kitchen hygiene and cleaning up afterwards – including washing up!

## Date for your Diaries

Our annual Sports Day will be held this year on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> June at the Recreation Ground so please put it in your diaries! As well as a valuable fund-raising event for the Preschool, it's also a great day out for all the family with a BBQ, stalls, tea and cake, a fantastic raffle with amazing prizes donated by local businesses, brilliant games and activities for all ages too. Entry is free and with any luck, we'll get to enjoy some sunshine as well.

Last year's sports day helped us to raise over £1,000, which enabled us to invest in some wonderful new equipment for indoor and outdoor play, as well as go towards the new shed which we built earlier this year. So, if you are free on Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> June this year, please do come along – we would love to see you there.

## Space Available

We have spaces available from **September 2018** for children aged two and above across our sessions, which now run from 9am – 3.30pm on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and from 9 – 12.45pm on a Thursday. These sessions include child-led learning through play, craft, messy play, singing, Forest School, Cooking Club and dancing sessions with the wonderful Dancing Sally.

For more information, or to find out about availability for your child or children, please visit [www.ascottpreschool.org.uk](http://www.ascottpreschool.org.uk), telephone 01993 832671 or email Pauline at [ascott\\_pp@btinternet.com](mailto:ascott_pp@btinternet.com).

## *Wychwood Library*

Regular events at the library: Age UK meets on the first and third Tuesdays of the month at 10.30am; Afternoon reading group meets on the second Thursday of the month at 2.30pm; Poetry club meets on the third Thursday of the month at 2.30pm and Coffee mornings every Wednesday at 10.00am.

Contact 01993 830281

## Restoring landscapes. Inspiring people **Wychwood Project Press Release**

### ***The Wychwood Project will be Going Wild this Summer***

This summer the Wychwood Project is running its Go Wild summer day camp for 8 – 12 year olds at the Ascott-under-Wychwood Conservation Centre. The emphasis for the five days of the camp will be on outdoor activities and fun. The range of activities on offer will include:

- A dragonfly and butterfly safari
- Building an otter holt – the name for its den, and pond restoration
- Jam making and pick and cook popcorn
- Magic of trees
- Meeting the farm animals
- Building wildlife boxes
- Three county walks to neighbouring sights
- A hibernation game
- Bird bingo
- Plastic problems
- .....and much much more

Following the recent success of the Wychwood Project's family whittling day at Combe Mill, Toby Swift, the Wychwood Project's Learning Officer, confirmed that plans are well advanced for a week of activities in the summer.

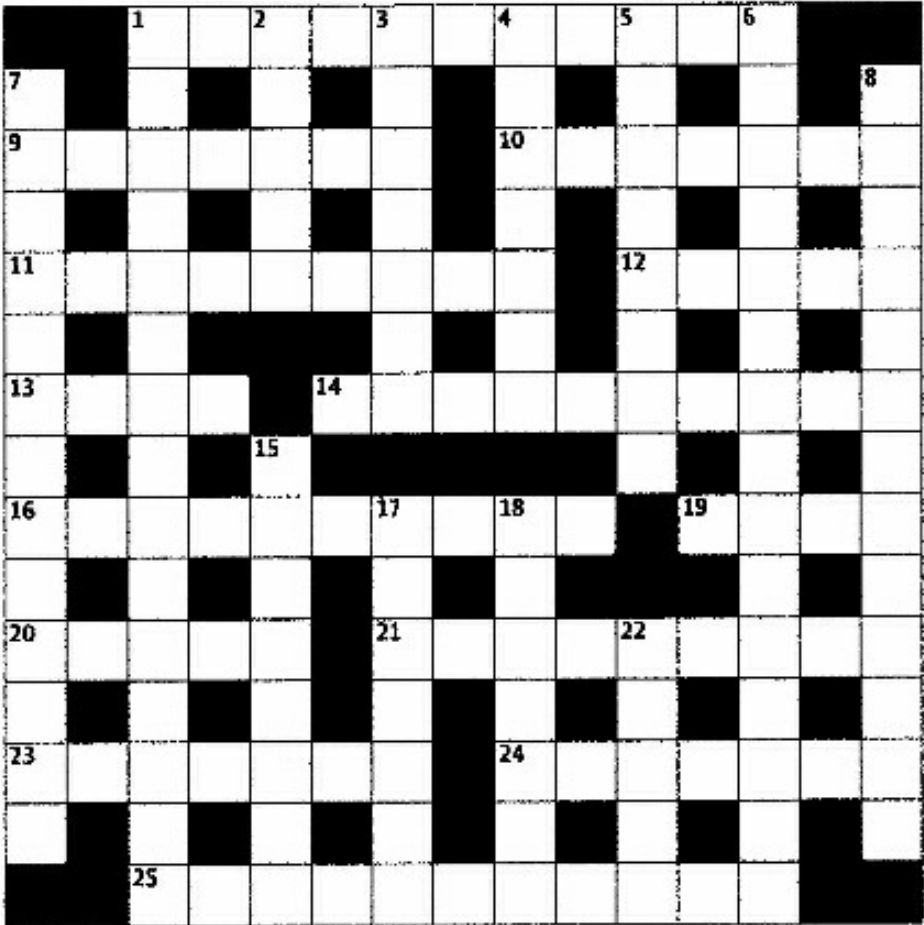
*“The summer holidays are the ideal time to get active outdoors. And we are hoping to offer youngsters an unforgettable introduction to the natural world they see around them, through a host of activities. It is great that we are able to base ourselves at the Ascott-under-Wychwood Conservation Centre which offers us ideal facilities for safe, fun learning, right in the heart of the historic Wychwood Forest area. I am really looking forward to what should be a delightful week with lots of young people taking part.”*

The Go Wild camp will run for from August 13 – 17 (drop off 8.30 - 9am, pick up 4.30 – 5pm each day).

Full cost for the week is £150. Some part-funded places available at £30. Booking essential as places are limited. Visit our website at [www.wychwoodproject.org.uk](http://www.wychwoodproject.org.uk) and click on ‘Learning and Events’ to secure your place.



# Crossword Puzzle





## Across

1. Grub to provide food and support (11)
9. Mistake by deserter trapped by signs of hesitation (7)
10. A number work out how to delegate (7)
11. Ran lightly towards the top - and stumbled (7,2)
12. Possibly rent a poet's cave (5)
13. Going off in great spirits (4)
14. No tipping? Honestly! (2,3,5)
16. Capital ideas (10)
19. Extremely nervous (4)
20. Commanded by junior (5)
21. Back stove put in new order (9)
23. Journals I'd taken back to sign (7)
24. No turning back with change in working (2,5)
25. Even in peacetime its members are prepared to fight (7,4)

## Down

1. All that is required for the honeymoon departure? (8,3,4)
2. Infant raised to do simple arithmetic (3,2)
3. Managed to hold the first man coming up fast (7)
4. Sort of investigation made by bathyscape? (2,5)
5. Greatly enjoy being skilful and winning (8)
6. Specifically, what makes blood thicker than water? (8,7)
7. Go over the limits? (4,3,6)
8. Desperate employer tends to repeated and extensive use of manpower (13)
15. Expressing contempt for cocaine taking? (8)
17. It supplies one's needs at the press of a button (7)
18. Delight from being in love with the French language (7)
22. One out of bed seen going upstairs (5)

## Solutions to Crossword in Edition 97

### Across

1. Catnapped
6. Rider
9. Tesco
10. Redivivus
11. Hop
12. Significant
14. Pottage
15. Musette
16. Sapphic
19. Stirrup
22. Floor Polish
23. Asp
24. Tailboard
26. Other
27. Pooch
28. Tweenager

### Down

1. Catch Up
2. Tossplot
3. Atom Smasher
4. Pirogue
5. Dadaism
6. Rev
7. Deviant
8. Rosette
13. Ipswich Town
16. Soft Top
17. Proviso
18. Coolant
19. Swindle
20. Road Hog
21. Paperer
23. Bah

# ***Local Business Directory***

**ACADEMY/GB DOORS** 01993 778836/01865 246444

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

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**ANNIE'S CURTAINS AND BLINDS** 01993830687 07989497253

[www.anniescurtainsandblinds.co.uk](http://www.anniescurtainsandblinds.co.uk)

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**ASCOTT MARTYRS** 01993 831967

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**ASCOTT VILLAGE SHOP** 01993831240 [shop@ascottvillageshop.co.uk](mailto:shop@ascottvillageshop.co.uk)

[www.ascottvillageshop.co.uk](http://www.ascottvillageshop.co.uk)

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**BESPOKE VINTAGE TEA PARTIES** 01608 642233

[www.chippingnortontease.co.uk](http://www.chippingnortontease.co.uk), [tweet@chipnortears](mailto:tweet@chipnortears)

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**COTSWOLD WILDLIFE PARK** 01993823006

[www.cotswoldwildlifepark.co.uk](http://www.cotswoldwildlifepark.co.uk)

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**DRY STONE WALLING** 01242263428/07980564508

[drystonewalling@tomhazzledine.co.uk](mailto:drystonewalling@tomhazzledine.co.uk) [www.tomhazzledine.co.uk](http://www.tomhazzledine.co.uk)

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**FARMHOUSE B&B** 01993831900 [sally@college-farm.com](mailto:sally@college-farm.com)

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**FOLK CLUB** 01993831427 07870563299

[wychwoodfolkclub@zoho.com](mailto:wychwoodfolkclub@zoho.com) [www.wychwoodfolkclub.com](http://www.wychwoodfolkclub.com)

**{Ref}**

**GROVES SHOP** 01993830302 Shop mobile 07970262425

[info@alfredgroves.co.uk](mailto:info@alfredgroves.co.uk) [www.grovesdiyshop.co.uk](http://www.grovesdiyshop.co.uk)

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**INGRID RIDLEY B&B** 01993830612/07952657906

[ingrid@meadowbank--ascott.co.uk](mailto:ingrid@meadowbank--ascott.co.uk) [www.meadowbank--ascott.co.uk](http://www.meadowbank--ascott.co.uk)

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**IVY'S FLORIST** 01993830268

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|   |                |
|---|----------------|
| <b>JENNA SAUNDERS</b> 01993831338 saundersjenna@hotmail.com   | <u>Page 25</u> |
| <b>LEAFIELD PICTURE FRAMING</b> 01993878357   | <u>Page 11</u> |
| <b>LED Lighting Showroom</b> 01993 704 105  | <u>Page 50</u> |
| <b>MARK DAVID ESTATE AGENTS</b> 01993824800<br>www.mark-david.co.uk   | <u>Page 12</u> |
| <b>MPN Plumbing &amp; Heating Services Ltd</b> 07787434865<br><a href="mailto:mike@mpn-plumbingandheating.c0.uk">mike@mpn-plumbingandheating.c0.uk</a>  | <u>Page 33</u> |
| <b>PIANO TUITION</b> 01993 830848/07811 199558<br><a href="http://www.davidsoward.com">www.davidsoward.com</a> <a href="mailto:david.soward@gmail.com">david.soward@gmail.com</a>                       | <u>Page 35</u> |
| <b>PILATES WITH URSULA</b> 01993 830267 07917 090396<br><a href="mailto:info@pilateswithursula.co.uk">info@pilateswithursula.co.uk</a> <a href="http://www.pilateswithursula">www.pilateswithursula</a> | <u>Page 10</u> |
| <b>ROBERT GRIPPER</b> 01993831960 robgripper@btinternet.com   | <u>Page 25</u> |
| <b>ROSENEATH</b> 01993774568 <a href="http://www.roseneathmusicschool.com">www.roseneathmusicschool.com</a>   | <u>Page 38</u> |
| <b>TV AERIAL SERVICES</b> 01993 608118  | <u>Page 22</u> |
| <b>WITNEY SHUTTLE</b> 08000434633 <a href="http://www.witneyshuttle.com">www.witneyshuttle.com</a>  | <u>Page 11</u> |
| <b>WYCHWOOD HEALING</b> 07780572283<br><a href="mailto:pam@wychwoodhealing.co.uk">pam@wychwoodhealing.co.uk</a>   | <u>Page 43</u> |
| <b>WYCHWOOD WROUGHT IRON</b> 01993832850<br><a href="http://www.wychwoodwroughtiron.com">www.wychwoodwroughtiron.com</a>  | <u>Page 22</u> |

# Events Calendar - 2018

| Date                       | Time           | Event                                   | Venue             |
|----------------------------|----------------|---|-------------------|
| May 29 <sup>th</sup>       | 10.30 -11.30am | Coffee Morning                          | Ascott Church     |
| June 2 <sup>nd</sup>       | 7.30pm         | The Jaywalkers                          | Tiddy Hall        |
| June 9 <sup>th</sup>       | 10.00am        | Coffee Morning                          | The Mill          |
|                            | 7.30pm         | Roseneath Summer Concert                | Tiddy Hall        |
| June 10 <sup>th</sup>      | 2.00 - 5.00pm  | Open Gardens                            | Wychwood Manor    |
| June 14 <sup>th</sup>      | 7.30pm         | Qigong                                  | Tiddy Hall        |
| June 16 <sup>th</sup>      |                | Pre-School Sports Day                   | Recreation Ground |
|                            | 7.30pm         | Winter Wilson                           | The Swan Inn      |
|                            | 7.30pm         | Flix in the Stix                        | Tiddy Hall        |
| June 23 <sup>rd</sup>      | 2.00 - 5.00pm  | Martyrs' Day                            | The Green         |
| June 26 <sup>th</sup>      | 10.30 -11.30am | Coffee Morning                          | Ascott Church     |
| June 28 <sup>th</sup>      | 7.30pm         | Qigong                                  | Tiddy Hall        |
| June 30 <sup>th</sup>      | 7.30pm         | Charity Fund Raising Event              | Tiddy Hall        |
| July 5 <sup>th</sup>       | 7.30pm         | Qigong                                  | Tiddy Hall        |
| July 12 <sup>th</sup>      | 7.30pm         | Qigong                                  | Tiddy Hall        |
| July 14 <sup>th</sup>      | 10.00am        | Coffee Morning                          | The Mill          |
| July 19 <sup>th</sup>      | 7.30pm         | Qigong                                  | Tiddy Hall        |
| July 21 <sup>st</sup>      | 7.30pm         | Wychwood Summer Showcase Evening        | Tiddy Hall        |
| July 31 <sup>st</sup>      | 10.30 -11.30am | Coffee Morning                          | Ascott Church     |
| August 11 <sup>th</sup>    | 10.00am        | Coffee Morning                          | The Mill          |
| August 28 <sup>th</sup>    | 10.30 -11.30am | Coffee Morning                          | Ascott Church     |
| September 1 <sup>st</sup>  | 7.30pm         | Tom McConville                          | Tiddy Hall        |
| September 8 <sup>th</sup>  | 10.00am        | Coffee Morning                          | The Mill          |
| September 15 <sup>th</sup> | 7.30pm         | Steve Ashley                            | Tiddy Hall        |
| September 25 <sup>th</sup> | 10.30 -11.30am | Coffee Morning                          | Ascott Church     |
| October 6 <sup>th</sup>    | 7.30pm         | Megson                                  | Tiddy Hall        |
| October 13 <sup>th</sup>   | 10.00am        | Coffee Morning                          | The Mill          |
| October 20 <sup>th</sup>   | 7.30pm         | Stick in the Wheel                      | Tiddy Hall        |
| October 28 <sup>th</sup>   |                | Charity Run                             |                   |
| October 30 <sup>th</sup>   | 10.30 -11.30am | Coffee Morning                          | Ascott Church     |
| November 10 <sup>th</sup>  | 10.00am        | Coffee Morning                          | The Mill          |
| November 10 <sup>th</sup>  | 7.30pm         | Jody Kruskal                            | The Swan Inn      |
| November 17 <sup>th</sup>  | 7.30pm         | Anthony John Clarke & Peggy             | Tiddy Hall        |
| November 27 <sup>th</sup>  | 10.30 -11.30am | Coffee Morning                          | Ascott Church     |
| December 8 <sup>th</sup>   | 7.30pm         | Johnny Coppin - All on a Winter's Night | Tiddy Hall        |