

All dates for events shown in this issue are entirely dependent on the Government restrictions on SD and Lockdown in place at those times.

Spring 2021 Issue 109

### **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 1st May 2021.

Articles submitted after this date may not be included.

Call 01993 831023 or email: 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.

## \*Advertising Rates

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Only if possible, any adverts submitted for publication should be in any of the following formats: .jpg .tif .png .bmp .emf .gif .svg .wmf but other formats can be used.

To advertise in our Local Business Directory (see <u>Page 56</u>), please contact Wendy Pearse 01993 831023 or wendypearse@btinternet.com. The cost is £5 per year but inclusion is free for our existing advertisers.

## **Local Churches**

Holy Trinity, Ascott-u-Wychwood Burford Methodist

Rev'd Mark Abrey Tel: 01608 676572 Minister Rev'd Peter Goodhall 01993

845322

St Mary's Shipton

Churchwarden James Walmsley Westcote Methodist

01993 830842 Tony Gibson 01993 830699 Mairi Radcliffe 01993831472

SS Simon & Jude, Milton

Churchwarden Mike Hartley 01993 830160 Roman Catholic

SS John Fisher & Thomas More, Burford

St John the Baptist Fifield, St Nicholas, Idbury

Churchwarden Pat Yaxley 01993 831385

Our Lady and St Kenelm, Stow-in-the-

Wold

Society of Friends (Quakers), Burford

Nigel Braithwaite 01993 831282

Holy Trinity, Chipping Norton and St Teresa, Charlbury

Priest: Fr Antony Joyce 01608 642703.

**Wychwood Baptist, Milton** Pastor John Witts 01993 832865 Mass at Charlbury 09:15

## Services at the Chase Benefice 2020/21

All the Church buildings of the Benefice are open for personal prayer and reflection on Sundays between 10 am - 4 pm. We hope to be able to start public worship again as follows:

1st Sunday of the month
2nd Sunday of the month
10 am BCP Communion Service at Enstone
10 am CW Communion Service at Chadlington
10 am CW Communion Service at Enstone
10 am BCP Communion Service at Chadlington

Ascott residents are welcome at any of these services. We hope to resume services in Ascott Church when restrictions are further lifted. Details will be posted on our website and notice-boards around the village.

For those unable to come to services, there will be a recorded weekly service of reflection and prayer on our website: www.thechasebenefice.org.uk or you can listen by phone on 01608 998955.

## Rector's Letter - Spring 2021

Dear Friends,

January is a difficult month at the best of times. The festive season is long over, the weather is poor, the days don't seem to be getting noticeably longer and now we are in another national lockdown.

In January we need to have something to look forward to. In good times, this is the month we plan what we might do in the coming year, who we might visit, which grandchildren might come to stay, where we might go on holiday. But this year is starting in such an uncertain way that we can make none of those plans. Rather we look on as so many in our country and our world face the terrible consequences of the pandemic. There seems nothing practical we can do except as praying bystanders.

But as is the way with the spiritual life, there is always light in the darkness. This dark month reveals to us some chinks of light, for the month of January in the Church is celebrated as the season of Epiphany. During this season we reflect on the extraordinary way the light of the Incarnation - when God became human in the form of Jesus Christ - is spread from its minute beginnings in the Bethlehem manger to the wider world, and even to us in our darkness. As Isaiah prophesied: "Arise, shine, for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord is risen upon you. For darkness shall cover the earth, and thick darkness the peoples, but the Lord shall arise upon you, and his glory shall appear over you."

The season began with the journey of the Magi, following the star. In the weeks that follow, we reflect on the Baptism of Christ — Christ's going public to the waiting world; we hear how the first followers of Jesus were called; and, we hear of some of the miracles that Jesus preformed. The season ends on the 2nd February with the Feast of the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, or Candlemas, as it is more commonly known. Our attention then turns towards Lent and the events of Holy Week and that first Easter morning, when Jesus rose from the grave, shattering the darkness of death and promising new life for all.

None of us knows what this year has in store for us, but there is hope. One of the names of Jesus, which we use particularly at Christmas, is "Emmanuel'. Translated it means quite simply, "God with us". And God is with us now and will be with us as we go into tomorrow and all the tomorrows. Emmanuel. God with us.

With my very best wishes for better times ahead.

Every blessing,

## Public worship in 'Lockdown.'

During 'Lockdown' public services in all churches in the country have been suspended. But the churches of the Benefice will still be open on Sundays from 10 am to 4 pm for individual prayer and quiet reflection.

#### Virtual Services

Even though we can't come to Church worship, we can still worship in our own homes! Each week we are recording a video service for people to view in their own homes. To view it, please visit our website: www.thechasebenefice.org.uk.

#### Dial-a-Sermon

For those without internet access, we have set up a way for people to listen to our Sunday services by landline. Simply call 01608 698955 and, after a few seconds while the call connects, you will be able to listen to the previous Sunday's service. The service, including prayers, reading and reflection lasts about 15 minutes, and the calls cost the same as a local landline call. We will change the recordings each Sunday morning so keep this number handy as the number will remain the same.

### Clergy

As always, Mark Abrey and Ilona Cheyne are available to offer pastoral support to anyone who needs it. Call them on 01608 676572 or 07305 355809 - they will be delighted to hear from you.

Mark Abrey

# The Kissing Gates in the churchyard

The paths in the Church have been reconstructed to make it easier for wheelchairs and pushchairs. Part of the plan is to remove the kissing gate from the church to the pub to make it safer for these users to cross the road instead of having to walk all around the outside of the perimeter of the church.

There are no plans to change the kissing gate at the end which comes out on to Church View.

These gates have been part of the fabric of the village for many years and we welcome villagers' opinions about the proposed change. Please go to this link and have your say https://tinyurl.com/AUW-Gate. If you do not have a computer and would like to take part, then please put your opinion in writing to:

Revd Mark Abrey

The Vicarage

Chadlington Oxfordshire

OX73LY



Sarah Tribe

## No PUNishment intended!

### **Chinese Criminals**

Two brothers from the Wuhan research centre, where Trump suspects it was engineered, were due to get on a flight to escape from China. It seems that the brothers were behind the development of the new strain, and were intending to use it as a weapon, someone caught wind of their plans and purposefully grounded the plane. Therefore, neither of them got on the flight so Two Wongs Don't Make a Flight!

### **Twins**

A young woman had twin boys but had to give them up for adoption as was the way of things back then. Years later she had to try and see them as she felt she needed to see them again as curiosity got the better of her.

She goes to the adoption services and asks about their adoption. The manager gets the records and tells the lady that the twin boys were separated at birth, one to a Spanish couple who named him Juan who now lives in Madrid. The other twin was adopted by a Moroccan family and named him Amal.

The lady starts to cry and the manager of the adoption service offers to help her track down her sons. They fly off to Madrid and a few phone calls and some investigation later they track down Juan. They eventually meet and they have an emotional reunion, everyone crying. Before long it's time to go and the lady leaves Juan.

At the airport the manager offers to fly to Morocco with the lady to see Amal, she looks at the manager and says don't bother, once you've seen Juan you've seen Amal!

### Ghandi

A new biography of Mahatma Ghandi has been launched in the UK today. It's an account from his closest followers who knew intimate details of his life. The book charts his life from the peaceful marches to the end of his life. Little known facts have come to light such as the health problems he suffered and the almost deity status he had with his followers. It details his struggles with hard skin on his feet from walking on India's dry roads. The terrible breath he suffered due to a poor diet as he refused any rich trappings of power. In essence the biography is a story about super calloused, fragile mystic hexed by halitosis.



## **Wychwood Project**

## Local artists launch community project to encourage fresh perspectives on nature

Do you have a favourite place, plant, or walk in the Wychwood area? Artists in residence at the Wychwood Project Nimmi Naidoo and Flora Gregory would love to hear from you. The artists would like to invite anyone living in the Wychwood area to share photos, videos, poems or artworks reflecting the places they love in the Wychwood Forest, to form the basis of an innovative virtual artwork that explores how we see the environment around us. Using these contributions, the artists will create an accessible webpage that celebrates our local environment, encourages us to discover new spaces, and helps us experience familiar places with fresh eyes. The Wychwood Project will also share contributions on their Instagram channel, to inspire audiences to engage afresh with the natural world around them.

Flora and Nimmi, known as the Mappists, create participatory art events that offer people different ways of connecting with nature. Recent events include 'Come into the Woods: Topples Wood' an opportunity for forest bathing and to connect to the woods through audio works, and 'The Map Room: Make your Mark!' where people mark the route of their Wychwood Forest walks on a map and talk about what they love about being in the forest. Flora and Nimmi both gained an MA in Social Sculpture at Oxford Brookes University. Social Sculpture is an art form that employs social processes, and puts forward the idea that we are all artists in that every aspect of life can be seen as creative.

So whether it's a space with wonderful birdsong, that one tree you always admire, a view filled with memory, or just a path you walk along every evening, the Mappists would love to see, hear, or read your impressions of it. Please send in anything you would like to contribute to <a href="miranda@wychwoodproject.org.uk">miranda@wychwoodproject.org.uk</a> (who will share it with the Mappists), and keep an eye on the Wychwood Project's Instagram (@wychwoodproject) to learn what others love about the Wychwood area. We hope you enjoy the project, and that it helps us all find fresh perspectives on the natural world around us, for lockdown and beyond.

#### **Notes**

- To find out more about the Mappists, visit their website: https://themappists.wordpress.com/
- The Wychwood Project restores habitats in the area formerly covered by the Wychwood Forest, managing nature reserves in Witney, Charlbury, Woodstock, and Hailey. It also runs events and initiatives to help local communities engage with nature, from courses to a popular annual Forest Fair. Learn more at <a href="http://www.wychwoodproject.org/cms/">http://www.wychwoodproject.org/cms/</a>.

- The Wychwood Project will share contributions on its Instagram channel (@wychwoodproject) and the Mappists will create a dedicated webpage presenting local people's impressions on nature.
- Any contributions at all are welcome.
- The idea is to develop a fresh perspective on the spaces around us, and to deepen understanding of how we all experience them.

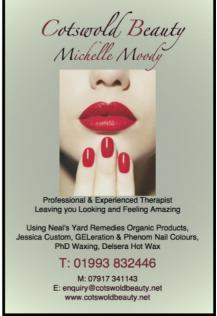
If you would like further information, or to talk to Nimmi, Flora or the Wychwood Project, please contact <u>miranda@wychwoodproject.org.uk</u>.











## Bale tombs in Ascott-under-Wychwood churchyard

Sally Badham is the leading expert on tombs and memorials, former President of the Church Monuments Society and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries. She lives in Leafield.

Bale tombs are a type of chest tomb characterised by a hemi-cylindrical cap stone, termed a 'bale', lying on top. This type is unique in England outside a limited area mostly restricted to the eastern Cotswolds. They have acquired this name in recent times. All have deep grooves scored in them lengthways, a feature interpreted by later generations as cords tied round bales of wool or fleeces, chiefly because it was erroneously thought that many of the tombs were those of wealthy wool merchants or mercers.

There are 106 extant examples in total: 56 in Oxfordshire and 44 in Gloucestershire with 4 and 2 outliers in Berkshire and Wiltshire respectively. Some church-yards have large concentrations, such as Burford with 13, Broadwell (Gloucestershire) and Swinbrook each with 8 and Chipping Norton with 6, but most locations have only 1-3 examples. The earliest are at Fulbrook dated 1660; Westwell dated 1661 and Fairford to Valentine Strong, a freemason from Burford (d. 1662). Bale tombs continued to be produced until late in the eighteenth century, although there is a handful of 'revived' examples, including at Burford one to brothers William Richardson Falkner (d. 1902) and John Meade Falkner (d. 1936), best known for his novel, *Moonfleet*.

Many bale tombs are extremely richly carved, being packed with ornamentation, including winged cherubs' heads (signifying souls winging their way to heaven), fruit and foliage, as well as some *memento mori* symbols such as skulls and hourglasses. Shipton-under-Wychwood has an outstanding example with an unusual 'double decker' formation of two chests, one on top of the other, richly decorated and with inscriptions to three generations members of the Morgan family, chiefly Henry Morgan (d. 1739) of Bruern Grange.

The north-south geographical extent of churchyards with bale tombs is from Blockley to Letcombe Bassett, a distance of 34 miles, probably reflecting the area easily accessed by river transport. The eastwards range is from North Leigh to Yanworth, giving a span of 19 miles. Forty-six of examples are within a 5-mile radius of Burford where most of the masons responsible for carving them were based and 87 within 10 miles. The Burford area had important quarries of excellent oolitic limestone, including at Sherborne, Windrush, the Barringtons and Taynton. There were three principal great mason families based in the town or nearby: the Strongs, Kempsters and Beauchamps. They worked closely together on building projects, both locally and in London. Their workshops also almost cer-

tainly produced headstones and chest tombs, including bale tombs, for local churches. Three tombs are signed by John Kempster (1644-1739), but they do not include any of those examples at Ascott-under-Wychwood.

The churchyard at Ascott-under-Wychwood has three bale tombs. The inscriptions are hard to read but the names and dates can be established, especially considered in conjunction with the parish registers and wills.

Ascott-under-Wychwood I. Listing NGR: SP3006418643 GV II. Located about 3 yards south of South Transept. Reversed-diagonal bale in two sections with shell-niche ends with rounded segments east with ram's head within, west eroded. Moulded ledger. Chest: north side rectangular panels with illegible inscription framed by leaf and tongue moulding flanked by square panels with winged cherubs' heads over angled section with scroll decoration, south side simple rectangular panel with inscription flanked by square panels with winged cherubs' heads over angled section with scroll decoration, west end rectangular panel enclosing winged bat in flight; east end panel framed by leaf and tongue moulding with in-

scription (Fig. 1).

It memorialises John Peisley, Gentleman, who lived at Crown Farm opposite the church and was buried in Ascott on 15 September 1768. There was from at least the sixteenth century no resident lord in the village and only curates residing. In consequence a group of leading farming families, including the Peisleys, exercised considerable power locally through parochial

and manorial offices and through charity trusteeships. In 1581 the head of the Peisley family was the 3<sup>rd</sup> highest taxpayer in the parish. John Peisley continued to hold the position of his forebears. His will, made on 17 December 1766, was proved in the Oxfordshire Consistory Court on 14 December 1768 (ref. 97.181; 54/1/14; 304/1/31). This does not make any mention of his burial arrangements or his monument. However, it records that he was an evidently wealthy landowner, with property, as well as in Ascott, in Churchill and 'elsewhere'.

Ascott-under-Wychwood II. Listing NGR: SP3006318629 GV II. Located about 20 yards south of south-west corner of church. Laterally corded bale with recessed ends, worn cartouche for shield of arms to west and shell niche with squared segments to east. Moulded ledger. Chest: sides each with two rectangular panels with arches with capitals within, one with mostly legible inscription; west end panel with arches within; east end has cartouche for shields of arms. (Fig. 2).



The person commemorated was William Thomas, who was buried on 23 March 1729. Nothing more can be traced regarding him or the Thomas family, except that in his will (ref. Oxford Consistory Court 94.227; 154/3/18) he said that he was a blacksmith. He probably occupied the smithy in the High Street previously run by Robert Fletcher. This indicates that

he was probably less prominent in the community than the men memorialised by the other two bale tombs at Ascott.

Ascott-under-Wychwood III. Listing NGR: SP3007118631 GV II. Located about 15 yards south of South Transept. Plain flat-ended bale. Moulded ledger. Chest: south side rectangular panel with inscription flanked by narrow rectangular panels; ends plain rectangular panels. (Fig. 3).



The tomb memorialises William Whiting d. 1741 and other members of family including his three sons William, Thomas and Limborough (Limbroo was a local Christian name). This family can be traced in Ascott back to the fourteenth century. As one of the leading farming families from the sixteenth century onwards the Whitings exercised considerable power locally through parochial and manorial offices and through charity trusteeships.

Sally Badham

Robert Marks

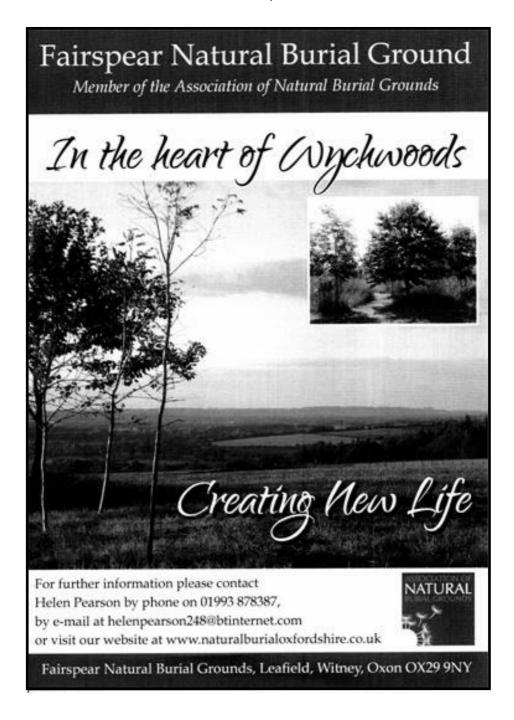
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## Why 20mph limits are being set by local and national governments and why you should do the same

20's Plenty for Us Briefing Dec 2020

http://www.20splenty.org/why20mph

It is a near universal aspiration in communities to reduce traffic speed to be more compatible with community life and human survivability. 30mph limit 20's Plenty for Us defaults are no longer seen as fit for purpose for urban and village streets. Lower default limits are being set. Choose 20mph.

...making your place a better place to be

Ask any Local Councillor or Police and Crime Commissioner for their most common public complaint and they will often say "traffic speed". Many local and national governments are ending default 30mph and setting 20mph limits for most roads instead. Council administrations for 21M people from left, right and centre parties as well as coalitions already agree that 20's plenty where people live, work, play, learn and shop.

At community and constituent level the support is overwhelming. In successive government social attitude surveys 70% agree that 20mph is the correct limit for residential streets. This is matched by local surveys before 20mph implementation which always show increased support after implementation.



The efficacy of a 20mph limit as normal road speed policy is supported by organisations such as WHO and UN General Assembly who endorsed the call made by 130 global road safety ministers to set 30kmh (18.6mph) as the maximum speed wherever pedestrians and cyclists mix with motors unless evidence exists that a higher speed can be made safe by separate facilities. Speed limiters in all new car models from 2022 will enhance compliance. In 2021 30kmh and 20mph default limits are the focus of the UN Global Road Safety Week.

Whilst Wales decided with cross-party Senedd support to set a national 20mph urban/village limit, English and Scottish central governments encourage local authorities to move away from the 30mph national limit and set 20mph on local roads. This is more expensive than a national approach. But already 17.5m people living in local authorities in England and Scotland benefit from a 20mph limit on most roads with signed speed limits with minimal new physical calming.

Costs are approx. £3 per head and provide value for money seven times higher than targeted physically calmed speed reduction zones. Gains are an impressive 20% reduction in crashes. Doing nothing simply adds to societal crash costs and the load on the NHS. And whilst 20mph gives quick value for money returns to society by crash and casualty reduction, the lower speed limits also become the foundation of local active travel, community connection, noise reduction, air quality and duty of care strategies so further widening the benefit. Wide area 20mph limits are a popular policy that wins economically, socially and environmentally. Rod King MBE, Founder and Campaign Director for 20's Plenty for Us commented:-

"Once councillors understand the efficacy and popularity of 20mph default limits it is evidently a successful change for the better in communities. Key to understanding the benefits is to detach from the 'behind the windscreen' view and understand it as a network-wide lowering of speed, risk, casualties and fear of walking and cycling. We ask all prospective and elected local councillors and PCCs to embrace this important and vote-winning initiative. Put it in your manifesto and contact us for more information."

20's Plenty for Us campaigns for a 20mph default speed limit in built up areas without physical calming. Web www.20splenty.org Twitter @20splentyforus

Rod King MBE Founder & Campaign Director Campaign Manager rod.k@20splenty.org

Anna Semlyen anna.s@20splenty.org 07973 639781 @20splentyforus 07572 120439 @AnnaSemlyen1 07415 243015

Jeremy Leach London Campaign Co-ordinator jeremy.l@20splenty.org

Adrian Berendt South East Campaign Co-ordinator adrian.b@20splenty.org 07767 664999





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## Heritage Lane

All residents in Heritage Lane are reminded that they are all responsible for the upkeep of the surface, especially outside their property. Some of the newer residents may be unaware of their duty as Heritage Lane is an unadopted lane. We have been living in the lane for over 11 years and have made good outside our

house a number of times yet others have done nothing. Graham Mills

#### For Reference:

**Unadopted** roads refer to roads which do not have to be adequately maintained by the highway authority under the Highways Act 1980. A legal duty to maintain these roads still exists, but it falls onto the owners of the road, which usually consists of the owners of any properties fronting that highway.



**Amanda Ponsonby**, High Sheriff of Oxfordshire paid a surprise visit to Ascott Shop on Saturday 12<sup>th</sup> December delivering her Christmas card. She had been calling on Oxforshire's food and drink producers, food larders, and community shops, thanking them for continuing their work during the pandemic.







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## The Wychwoods Local History Society



## Programme 2020 – 2021

Milton Village Hall at 7.30pm

17 Sep Wychwood	Tim Marshall connection	Quaker clocks and Milton-under-
David Beaumont The Battle of Edge Hill		
Liz Woolley Leisure and Entertainment in Victorian and Edwardian Oxford		
21 Jan	Simon Batten	The Prebendal
18 Feb	Martin Buckland and Future	The Wilt's and Bucks Canal Past, Present
18 March	Tom Shannon	The Journey from Afghanistan
15 April	David Innes Infantry	Capt. Ralph Kite MC Oxon & Bucks Light
20 May AGM Julie Ann Godson Oxfordshire in the Past		
16 Sept	Stephen Barker	Oxfordshire during the Second World War
21 Oct	David Young	Primitive Methodism
!8 Nov	Juliet Heslewood	William Morris and the Cotswolds
	Wychwood David Beau Liz Woolley 21 Jan 18 Feb 18 March 15 April 20 May AG	David Beaumont The Battle of Liz Woolley Leisure and Enter 21 Jan Simon Batten  18 Feb Martin Buckland and Future  18 March Tom Shannon  15 April David Innes Infantry  20 May AGM Julie Ann Godson  16 Sept Stephen Barker  21 Oct David Young





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## FOOTPRINTS FROM ASCOTT PAST

### Part 11



Railway versus Road

In our express world of today do we ever stop and think about the experiences of our great grandparents or great grandparents living in a village like Ascott, five miles in either direction from a small market town and ten from a larger source of the necessities of life. Until the advent of motorised vehicles at the turn of the 20th century, how would they have acquired the various items that are so necessary to everyday living and how would they have communicated with other family members who had moved away?

True the railway would have entered their lives which made communication so much easier especially for the rich and affluent members of society, but what about those on the lower rungs of the ladder, the majority of mankind, the carters, woodmen, sawyers and every other manual worker like the proliferous agricultural labourer. Shanks pony would have been their form of connection and they surely walked and thought nothing of walking many miles in one day. Many must have walked to Chippy or Burford especially on Market Days, to purchase necessities or to sell any surplus food such as eggs or vegetables in an effort to add to their very low income. There were shoemakers in the village or cordwainers as they could be known, and a baker, blacksmith and other tradesmen but no shop where they could purchase clothes or cloth, perhaps fresh vegetables or other goods not easily available.

One major source of assistance was the carrier with his horse drawn wagon. He could carry goods and people to and fro to market towns where they could sell goods or he could sell them for them. He would have connections with the tradesmen in the towns and convey their goods back to the villages, either ordered or on speculation. He could have conveyed letters and parcels on their outward or in-

ward journey and also passengers who could afford to pay him for the ride. All manner of goods must have travelled along the carrier routes to Burford, Chipping Norton or Witney probably starting very early in the day and in darkness during the winter months. He could have picked up newspapers for those who could afford them and he must have gossiped with his fellows enabling him to bring back the latest news to the villages.

Ascott was well supplied with carriers during the second half of the 19th century. In 1841 William Venville aged around 40, who lived in Chris and Janet Badger's house in Church Street with his wife and three young children, was listed on the Census as a carrier. On Wednesdays he travelled to Chipping Norton and on Thursdays he travelled to Witney returning on the same day. By 1851 he had become both carrier and shopkeeper with a shop building apparently situated in front of the house alongside the road. However by 1861 he was listed as a grocer and farmer of 52 acres, so it seems possible that he was then plying his trade on the site of Corner House Farm. Aged 75 in 1871 he was still listed similarly but after his death there is no further mention of the Venvilles in the village.

Another carrier mentioned in the 1841 Census was Thomas Moss aged 40 who lived in the Row (Church View) with his wife and five children, at the top end of the lower row of houses. By 1851 he was still listed as a carrier but by 1861 he called himself a haulier. Perhaps a more modern reference to his occupation or perhaps he had procured a larger cart or wagon and was able to transport larger goods. Unfortunately by 1871 he was listed as a pauper so perhaps age or infirmity had caught up with him. However he had a son Thomas, who appears to have taken over the haulier business and also a grandson another Thomas, who like his father and grandfather lived in the Row, continuing the haulier business at least up to the last available Census in 1911.

In 1871 when the Moss family had become hauliers another carrier operated in Ascott. Richard Weaver lived with his wife Eleanor in London Lane and operated his trade from there for a number of years. Likewise in 1891 William Hunt aged 60 was listed as a carrier in Ascott and also lived in London Lane.

In the same Census Sarah Claridge was also listed as a carrier. Her husband James was a carter and they lived near to Thomas Moss in the Row. Perhaps Sarah acted as a carrier for her neighbours, delivering and collecting goods and riding with the male carrier to the market towns. This would have enabled her to add to their low income. At the time she had five daughters aged between nine months and nine years. I wonder how they managed when their mother was away for the day. Sarah's parents and her married sister also lived in the Row so perhaps a family arrangement existed for her children, enabling her to provide a service for her fellow villagers. Later Sarah would give birth to two sons, John and William, both of whom were sadly killed in the First World War. However Sarah and James had died within six weeks of each other shortly before the death of the first son, so they did not have to face this tragic loss but what a sad year for the boys' sisters.

It is unknown when the trade of carrier began operating in Ascott. There would always have been a need by the villagers for some method of buying and selling goods at local markets, so it probably evolved over centuries. But as the nineteenth century drew to a close, new methods of transport evolved and with mechanisation hastened by the advent of the First World War, the horse drawn wagons of the carriers gradually disappeared from the scene.

Wendy Pearse

## Snow Clearing Team

The quite heavy fall of snow on Sunday 24 January enabled the Ascott snow team to leap into action for the first time this winter. The team clearing footpaths in the picture are -

Jack Morgan, Charles Marshall, Mike Tucker (team leader), Simon Whittaker and Simon Gidman (aided by son Tom). Other members of the team are Alan Chubb, Richard Squires, Mark Tribe and Nick Carter. The team ensures appropriate social distancing when working.

The picture shows our footpath equipment with our new salt store (kindly built by Chris Badger) in the background.

The Footpath team is complemented when necessary by the road clearing team - Chris Badger, Rob Walker and Jacob Davies.



## Folk Club

Wychwood Folk Club has artists booked and will endeavour to put on events as soon as covid regulations permit.

## Bee Friendly Gardening Tips

There are lots of ways that you can make your garden friendly for wildlife.

Roselle Chapman from Wild Oxfordshire shares some of her top tips here listen from 5 minutes 30 seconds) or read the attached.

 $https://pennypost.org.uk/2020/12/wildlife-friendly-gardening-tips/?fbclid=IwAR2Mr\_n35twGCux42gX9A7TQ7DY5X2Os9ibaRbJqaOgaZ1IhguwURmp1TM0$ 

## Gardening for bees and other pollinators

#### Bee facts

250 species of bees in the UK, 224 wild solitary bees 25 wild bumble bees and One domesticated honey bee

### Trees you can plant this winter to help pollinators

Male grey willow (sallow) Salix cinerea, Goat willow Salix caprea, Small-leaved lime Tilia cordata, Service trees: Sorbus torminalis, Sorbus domestica, Apple Malus sp - any, fruit bearing, or ornamental, Cherry Plum - Prunus cerasifera and Wild Hawthorn - Crataegus monogyna/laevigata

### Gardening tips

Leave the dead plant stems over winter. Hollow stems may be used by bees for over wintering. Provide flowers throughout the year – some bees emerge as early as February. Buy organic to ensure bulbs and plants haven't been treated with neonicotinoids. Have a flowering lawn. Provide a source of water for bees. Leave a patch of bare earth – mason bees gather mud to build egg cells. Include a variety of flower shapes – different species have different tongue lengths.

## Buying pollinator-friendly flowers and bulbs for your garden

#### Winter Wildlife Tips

Winter flowering shrubs such as viburnums, lonicera and mahonia provide vital nourishment for bumble bees and other pollinators. Hollow stalks like sage, dead nettle, allium, fennel (above), golden rod will be home to insect eggs and larvae during the winter so don't tidy them out of your garden. Wood piles are important

Village website: www.ascott-under-wychwood.org.uk

How to avoid bringing pesticides into your garden.

Be careful who you buy from. There are plenty of organic bulb and plant suppliers to choose from. The initial investment might be a little bit more expensive, but you could save money by swapping plants with friends, propagating cuttings from plants like cranesbill geraniums and lungwort, lavender and rosemary or growing from seed. In 2018, UK bulb retailer Peter Nyssen decided to source all their spring-flowering bulbs from growers who don't use from neonics so that their customer's spring flowers will be genuinely bee friendly.

Also make sure that everything has been grown in peat-free compost because peat acts as a carbon store, it's a great habitat for wildlife, it has a role in water management, and preserves things well for archaeology.

## Pet flea treatment endangers water insects

It is also now being recognised that the nerve agent in pet flea treatment called fiprinol exists at very harmful levels in our rivers, threatening water insects and the birds and fish higher up the food chain that depend on them. The washing of pets was already known to flush fipronil into sewers and then rivers, while dogs swimming in rivers causes direct contamination. "It has to be the flea treatments causing the pollution," Goulson said. "Really, there's no other conceivable source." There are many veterinary products containing fipronil and imidacloprid in the UK, many of which are sold without prescriptions. Many pets are treated monthly, whether they have fleas or not.

One of the worst cases is from Dec 2018 – Jan 2019 when half a million bees in Brazil were killed by fipronil that was used to control ants and termites on soy crops.

So please talk to your vet about limiting flea treatment of your pets. More Information on Wildlife Gardening.

Lots of links here for more information from Wild Oxfordshire's <a href="https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/communities/resources/">https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/communities/resources/</a>

### Bee-Friendly Garden Plants

#### Helleborus orientalis

Cut down to ground in Jan or Feb as this will show off the new emerging flowers and reduce foliar diseases. Dies back to below ground level each year in autumn, then fresh new growth appears again in spring.

#### Pulmonaria 'Diana Clare'

Remove old leaves after flowering.

#### Aquilegia vulgaris

Will self seed. Cut back flower stalk after flowering cut back leaves when they start to decompose.

Allium hollandicum 'Purple Sensation'

Dies back to below ground level each year in autumn, fresh new growth appears in spring. Clear the leaves from the bed once they start to decompose. Split and divide large clumps in autumn or spring.

These bee friendly herbaceous perennial plants have been carefully selected to supply nectar and pollen to bumblebees and other pollinating insects throughout their flying season. The plants are perennial so should come back year after year with very little maintenance. They are fairly resilient but will need watering and weeding to keep them productive and looking their best.

#### Geranium maculatum 'Ing. Var.'

Prune after flowering; remove flowered stems and old leaves to encourage the production of fresh leaves and flowers.

#### Rosmarinus 'Arp'

Can become straggly if left un-pruned. Prune after the first main flush of flowers. Regular picking of the tips of the branches for cooking helps keep the plant bushy and compact. Avoid hard pruning into old wood.

#### Rosmarinus 'Miss Jessop's Variety'

To ensure a plentiful supply of young, succulent leaves, snip the leaves regularly.

#### Geranium phaeum

In midsummer rejuvenate plants that are beginning to look jaded, by removing old flowered stems and leaves. Lift and divide large colonies in spring.

#### Digitalis purpurea

This perennial dies back to below ground level each year in autumn, then fresh new growth appears again in spring. Will self seed so if you don't want more foxgloves cut down flower stalk after flowering.

#### Hebe rakaiensis

Needs minimal pruning. Remove misplaced or frost damaged branches in late spring.

#### Nepeta x faassenii 'Walker's Low'

When clipped back after the first flush in June, it flowers through to early autumn. Dies back to below ground level each year in autumn, then fresh new growth appears again in spring.

#### Hyssopus officinalis

This herb is semi-evergreen, so it can lose some of its leaves in winter. In more exposed gardens, it may lose them all, but then fresh new foliage appears again in spring. Lift and divide congested colonies in spring.

#### Origanum vulgare

This herb dies back to below ground level each year in autumn, then fresh new growth appears again in spring. Cut back old faded flower-heads and stems in spring.

#### Stachys byzantina

This perennial dies back to below ground level each year in autumn, then fresh new growth appears again in spring. Avoid excessive winter wet and lift and divide large clumps in early spring.

#### Nepeta x faassenii 'Persian Blue'

Cut back after flowering to keep the plant compact. Dies back to below ground level each year in autumn, then fresh new growth appears again in spring. Lift and divide large clumps in spring, replanting divided specimens with lots of well-rotted organic matter. If powdery mildew becomes a problem prune out the affected areas.

#### Salvia nemorosa 'Pink Friesland'

To prolong flowering remove the flower spikes as soon they start to fade. This perennial dies back to below ground level each year in autumn, then fresh new growth appears again in spring. Apply a generous 5-7cm (2-3in) mulch of well-rotted garden compost or manure around the base of the plant in spring.

#### Salvia nemorosa 'Caradonna'

See Salvia nemorosa 'Pink Friesland'.

#### Echinops sphaerocephalus 'Arctic Glow'

Cut down to the ground after flowering to encourage a second flush of flowers. Lift and divide congested colonies in autumn or spring.

#### Sedum spectibile 'Autumn Joy'

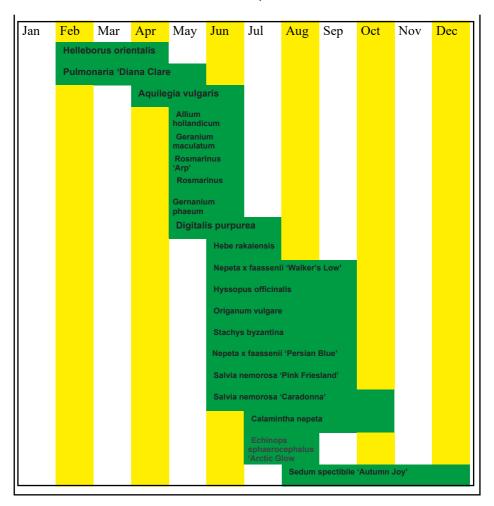
The dried flower heads look great left during the winter. In February and March cut back the old flower heads and apply a generous 5-7cm (2-3in) mulch of well-rotted garden compost or manure around the base of the plant.







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## PC News - Spring 2021

This autumn/winter has been a very difficult period for a number of residents. Our kindest thoughts go out to all that have suffered and we hope that by the time you read this there will be real signs that we are finally emerging into happier times.

In the meantime Parish Council business continues...

#### **PLANNING**

Blue Cedar Homes launched an online consultation about their proposal to build 7 retirement bungalows between London Lane and the playing field. The actual planning application had not been formally announced at the time of writing at the end of January. The Parish Council would like to hear any comments from residents – for or against – to be able to give a fully considered answer if/when the application is submitted.

## NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN (http://ascottpc.org.uk)

In mid January our emerging Neighbourhood Plan (NP) was officially recognised by West Oxfordshire District Council. The 'Designated Body' (the body which takes ultimate responsibility) is the Parish Council and the 'Designated Area' is the whole of the Parish plus the few properties which border Coldwell Brook and the bridleway but which are, officially, in Shipton Parish.

Although the Designated Body is the Parish Council most of the work will be directed by a Steering Group of 4 – Brian Leach, Philippa Carter, Richard Smith and Naomi Tiley. All their work is reported to the Parish Council and any formal decisions and budgeting must be decided by the PC.

A lot of time has been spent behind the scenes drafting the evidence documents on Flooding in all its forms and Traffic and Transport. As soon as the Designated Area was formally agreed, the NP Steering Group launched a Housing Needs Survey to identify if, over the next 10 years, there is/will be a demand for new housing amongst current residents.

#### HOUSING NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY RESULTS

The results of the Housing Needs Assessment Survey can be found on Page 43.

#### **HOUSING MORATORIUM (temporary)**

Sewage Treatment Works for the Wychwoods has a capacity for 2,130 Residents.

The current population in the Wychwood catchment is 3,822 Residents. There are no plans for upgrades before 2025.

Some of you will have read about the shocking number of times that our Sewage Treatment Works (STW) discharges raw sewage into the river Evenlode and not simply during wet periods. This has been happening for some time but has only recently been possible to prove because of data finally being made available to the

public. We are enormously grateful to Mark Purvis for his clear analysis of the situation printed in the last Grapevine.

Ascott has already had localised problems with sewage overflow over many years and surface water and sewage do flood out of their manholes during torrential rain (much of which goes directly into the river). It seemed very clear to the Parish Council that a pause is needed in this desperate attempt by developers to build new homes in the village and we have written to Robert Courts seeking his support. In researching for our meeting with him the team (Mark Purvis, Richard Smith and Philippa Carter) have gathered evidence which shows that the Evenlode is by no means the only river or watercourse being polluted by Thames Water. It is a serious environmental and public health issue for the whole of the Thames catchment and which TW needs to address with large investment.

If you are concerned about this issue please do get in touch. We understand that Robert Courts, our MP, needs to be more engaged than he has been up until now.

### **TRANSPORT**

#### **Buses**

The Covid impact upon our services had already sadly meant that our Villager Service was suspended altogether, and Lock Down N° 3 has extended that withdrawal until further notice.

Until N° 3 came our way however, WOCT, had most proactively, maintained their daily services albeit with some reduction to fine tune to meet emerging lower usage. Very sadly, they found service demand so dreadfully reduced, they have now severely cut it down to running on just two weekdays each week. Hard to question this logic when some buses had only one passenger!

Naturally we all hope for a recovery to some form of what was our pre Covid lifestyle and freedoms of movement, but it is a foolish person who will try to predict when it will be achieved, and even then, the level of bus use in the Wychwoods that will emerge. Prior to the latest service reduction, it must be said that WOCT had already commented that Ascott resident usage was very minimal.

#### **Trains**

Under Covid, it must be recorded that GWR continue to run a service subject to HMG DfT requirements and of course with very substantial subsidy for trains having far fewer passengers. Our minimal Halts Service train has so far survived, running to its long established timetable. Under Lock Down N° 3 however, a reckoning had to come, and DfT sought from GWR economic reductions through a review of timetabling. Without proper warning, our return evening train was brought forward, actually using another existing train for our stops, such that one resident had to protest for a taxi from GWR staff at Oxford, when told his train had already left!

A combination of a very forceful email by Naomi Tiley, a regular Ascott commut-

er, to the GWR MD, and Cllr Rance advising the CLPG Chairman who was meeting GWR train managers the next day, resulted in GWR accepting their dreadfully inept conduct, and normal timetabling should have resumed by the time you read this Grapevine.

The worry that cannot be dismissed, is that at the first moment of service stress, GWR planners leapt at revising the Halts service, and did so, without consulting its wholly dependent users. Had this change been shrugged off as acceptable in the circumstances, the precedent would have been set for more to follow. Well done Naomi and thank you.

We must remain alert however, as our Halts Service is clearly vulnerable.

Peter Rance

#### CHURCHYARD PATH

The Parish Council worked with Holy Trinity Church to fund renovation of the Public Footpath only as it is historically not allowed to fund anything that directly benefits the Church. But we are a public body set up to represent our residents and we have been very concerned that there has not been a footpath to link one end of the village to the other which is flat and safe enough for everyone, whatever their mobility needs. We now have to look at access to the footpath for those with wheelchairs and pushchairs.

We understand the mixed opinions about renovating the churchyard paths as, I think, everyone loves the crocus and we fervently hope that they will grow back strongly within a few years, as did the lime trees after pollarding!!

#### THE POUND

The Pound has been undergoing a facelift over a period of years and by the end of spring this should be complete. The latest, and very important, change has been an upgrade to the sign explaining the Ascott Barrow. Many thanks to Stuart Fox, in particular, for organising this project. Several Ascott Parish Councils have worked on the renovation of the Pound. With the help of the Cotswold Wardens, our groundsman, Shane Barnes, and volunteers, walls have been re-built, furniture and grass have been well maintained and now the signage has been upgraded and made available to passers-by. This is a safe space in which to pass the time of day with a paper, book, friend or just to enjoy the view of the church and surroundings and to take in the history of the village.

Please feel free to enjoy it!

#### **CHRISTMAS**

What a strange one this year and for some, perhaps best forgotten! Hopefully, most of you will have managed to celebrate. In the absence of Carols on the Green the PC was truly warmed by the new suggestions to raise Christmas spirits in a Covid-safe way. So thank you to Santa for turning up on his tractor, to Juliet Heslewood for arranging door-to-door Carol Singing, to Richard and Ann Smith

for organising the Festival of Lights, to Gareth and Richard for spending 5 hours erecting the churchyard lights and to everyone who made the effort to 'light up' the village and our spirits.

#### **EMERGENCIES**

It's been a busy time for the emergency teams who have turned out in the driving rain and the snow to clear drains, move furniture, put up and take down signs and clear pavements and roads. The post emergency support has been wonderfully warm and, of course, it continues to care for those who are in need during this long-term emergency we call COVID.

So MANY THANKS to everyone who has helped – too many to name but you know who you are. What a kind and warm-hearted village this is.

Please remember that you can contact members of the Parish Council, the Ascott Village Charity or the Parochial Church Council if you are in need of help.

Chairman - 01993 830344

PC emails:

<u>clerk@ascottpc.org.uk</u> contact@ascottpc.org.uk

## Elizabeth Cull



Sadly my mum, Elizabeth Cull, passed away peacefully at her care home in Oxford on January 13th, exactly 3 months after reaching that marvellous milestone of 100 on October 13th. She was a lady who 'asked for little and gave a lot'. She had many friends in Ascott during the 23 years we have lived in the village. Rev Mark Abrey conducted a beautiful and personal service to celebrate such a grand life at the North Oxfordshire Crematorium. John, Debra and family would like to express their thanks for the cards, flowers and kind words at this sad time.

John Cull

## THE EVENLODE, MY MEMORIES.

The excellent article by Mark Purvis brought memories of the 1940's and early 1950's. Our river ran clean and clear, with no floating bubbles. On warm, sunny, summer days many people bathed in it. Indeed at times the river and its grass bank just north of Gypsy Lane were reminiscent of a south coast resort. I recall some mothers swimming with their young children

We have known for many years since the main sewerage system was set up that clean sewage water ran into the river after treatment but to learn of raw sewage with its living micro-organisms being dumped in on a regular basis is truly shocking. The scary part of the equation is the Swinford Water Works waiting downstream where water from the river is pumped into the vast expanses of the Farmoor Reservoir from where it is processed, mixed with a chlorine chemical and pumped back round the district in our water mains; the whole process carries on.

Before the mains came in the 1950's Ascott and the surrounding villages had clear water piped to them from local springs. Chadlington in particular had a really strong spring of excellent water and understandably wished to keep it, and were supported by some influential people. So they marshalled their forces and fought the scheme tooth and nail. The local M.P. at the time, Mr Neil Martin, was quoted as saying how much he enjoyed drinking their water that was passing through the human body for the first time.

The 'powers that be' won the day and the 'dirty deed' was done surreptitiously under cover of darkness. Their spring was disconnected and the new mains joined up to their village pipes. The aquifers now flow directly into the river again as they did before the time when they supplied clean water for the population. Don't think about it or the mind will boggle!

Jim Pearse

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In Ascott u Wychwood
Spacious comfortable rooms with
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Evenlode Valley
Please ring Mrs Sally Walker on
01993 831900

Email: sally@college-farm.com

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# Ascott-Under-Wychwood Cricket Club

Covid-19 torpedoed our indoor net practice, and continues to prevent our fundraising & social activities BUT we've still been busy planning for the 2021 season. Our first friendly is on for Sunday April 11th, when we hope lockdown will have relaxed enough to allow 'socially distanced' rules cricket to resume! On Saturdays we're competing in the historic NEW Cherwell League, encompassing 176 teams all across Oxfordshire and beyond. We've local derby matches against Shipton 4th XI, Charlbury 3rd & Chipping Norton 2nd to look forward to and we're optimistic we'll be competitive! All spectator support is much appreciated - look for our eye catching new lime-green trimmed shirts, kindly sponsored by The Swan. We'll publish the fixture dates nearer the time, including a full programme of Sunday friendlies, visiting some spectacular cricket grounds like Blenheim Palace, and Middleton Stoney Park. If anyone from the village is interested in joining us to play, score, help, or to have a go at nets (Tues & Thurs evenings at the field), do let me know. To spectate, just turn up and cheer us on!

Exciting news; from Sun 29<sup>th</sup> to Tues 31<sup>st</sup> Aug we've organised a Summer tour to South Devon, with lovely fixtures at scenic Sidmouth, Branscombe, and Tipton St Mary cricket clubs. If anyone is interested in coming along to watch, support & socialise we'd be only too pleased to see some friendly faces! We're staying 2 nights inexpensively at a Travel Lodge, which has plenty of room if booked in advance.

## **Match Ball Sponsorship**

Did you know a new cricket ball is required for each game, costing £12 to £15? It's a considerable expense; we've near 50 matches scheduled this season. Would you consider being a match ball sponsor? In return, you'll be guest of honour at a match, get a delicious cricket tea served you (Covid permitting), and present the Ascott "Man of The Match" award at the end with souvenir photo taken. For a league game the cost is £15, friendlies are £12. Contact me for details and to select the fixture & date of your choice.

#### **Junior Cricket**

Is your young son or daughter interesting in playing / trying cricket? Starting in May, we hope to run a weekly junior cricket session, probably initially on a Weds evening at 6pm. We're aiming at children 10 to 14 - overseen by myself (I am a level 2 qualified coach, with an up-to-date ECB DBS check & first aid

course). The aim is to introduce children to the fun & basic skills of the game, to a point where they can start playing in matches (if they would like to). It's very inexpensive and essential kit is provided; do please contact me to register interest, so we can keep you informed.

**Stewart Moss** 07866 278685

Auwericketclub@hotmail.com
Twitter: @AUWCricketClub

## BEING KIND TO CHILDREN

When I was young I always thought when Aunts and Uncles met, maybe at a wedding or a funeral, they all would promote the achievements of their own children, almost like a league table. I always felt most of the time I was in the relegation zone. My advice, always be kind and friendly to children, you never know who they might grow up to be. If you are nasty or unfriendly they could grow up to be a dentist and pull your wrong teeth out, or a surgeon and saw your wrong leg off. There are of course some children who are arrogant, spoilt little creatures who are best avoided at all costs.

A lesson we should learn, we are not going to be liked by everyone. There are some in life we will never get on with. When this happens, turn away, close the door and find another dream.

I do like to ask children questions that adults would call stupid, so here are a few. Which way up is the universe?

If I go out at night I look up at the Milky Way. Am I looking up or down? In Australia they also look up at the night sky, so are we looking up into the universe or are the Aussies? Is there a north or south?

Do fish ever get thirsty?

Whales and dolphins I was told are mammals, so why don't they go mad if they drink salt sea water? Perhaps some do, that's why they beach themselves.

When a Zebra was evolving was it originally a black animal that developed white stripes or a white animal that developed black stripes?

How can you tell where an elephant comes from? Answer – you look at it's ears. If they are the same shape as the continent of Africa it's from Africa. If it's got smaller ears and carrying a cricket bat in it's trunk it's from India.

Which came first, the chicken or egg? The answer is easy. The chicken came first, it's got legs, it can run faster. The only time you will see an egg run is if you boil it for under two minutes.

And finally, I don't think I shall live to see the answer.

When Prince William becomes King, will he send a decree across the land telling everyone to support Aston Villa? The question then is what will they do with Old Trafford if this happens?

Fred Russell

## **Nature Notes**

It is said that when any two British friends meet their first topic of conversation is the weather. I suppose that this shouldn't be surprising as our weather is so variable, from week to week and month to month. Not for us weeks of unbroken sunshine. Instead perched on the edge of Europe, surrounded by sea and exposed to Atlantic storms our weather is unpredictable and subject to extremes. Britain lies in an area of changeable weather that includes the North Atlantic on our western side, Southern Greenland in the north and across Scandinavia through to Siberia in the North East. Local climate is also affected by the mountains, hills and valleys across our island.

Pity the forecasters who try and predict future weather prospects, even using the satellites and the most advanced computer systems, they can still get it wrong. Is there any way that we can make simple projections based on local observations? Yes, using a domestic barometer or looking at wind direction and taking account of the season it is possible to anticipate likely future weather conditions.

#### What the wind direction may indicate:

A south-west wind is the prevailing wind of Britain, bringing moist tropical air. In winter this indicates mild wet weather, but in summer warm weather with the possibility of squally showers.

A west wind is generally cooler and drier than wind from the south-west and following a period of poor weather may point to a decrease in rainfall and clear visibility.

A north-west wind brings Polar Maritime air. This indicates cool weather in summer and cold in winter. It may bring heavy cloud, but often little rain. A north wind is cool in summer and cold in winter, but generally indicates dry weather and good visibility.

A north-east wind starts off as Polar Continental air, but as it approaches across the North Sea picks up moisture and in spring may be responsible for April showers. In winter and in spring it may bring frosty weather and if it starts to veer to the north-west this may bring snow. In summer it may herald a heat wave and if it moves to the south-east this could indicate a period of settled conditions.

The East wind tends to prevail in spring and is very dry. In summer it brings cool weather, but in winter it can be very cold, and has been nick-named 'The beast from the East.'

A south-east wind brings variable conditions. Normally it would be cold in winter, bringing icy conditions but warm in summer. However, it may herald the approach of an Atlantic depression. In this case it indicates a warm spell in

winter and hot, humid conditions in summer, with the possibility of a thundery spell.

## How to interpret barometer readings.

When the barometer is rising:

- A long, steady rise in summer indicates fair, settled weather and possibly a hot spell, but in winter it may mean fine, cold, frosty weather and perhaps fog.
- In wet weather, a high reading maintained over a period may indicate the coming of fine weather. If there is a sudden rise from low to high a coming fine spell may be short-lived.
- A rise with moist air and low temperatures may bring wind and rain from the north.
- A rapid rise can indicate unsettled weather. The barometer rises higher for north and east winds than it does for south and west winds.
- A rising barometer combined with rising temperature and a dry southerly wind will bring a fine spell.
- A very slow rise from low to high pressure usually brings dry but windy conditions.
- If there has been an average or low reading for some time a rise against falling temperatures can indicate northerly winds and if it has been raining or snowing these should reduce.
- A rise following a period of very low pressure in the region of 980 millibars may indicate heavy squalls from the north possibly with strong winds.
- If the barometer and thermometer both rise together it is a sure sign of coming fine weather.

When the barometer is falling:

 A fall with rising temperature indicates wind and rain from the south-east or south-west.

- A sudden fall and low temperatures with a west wind may mean gales from the north-west or north-east.
- A steady fall indicates unsettled weather or rain both in summer and winter.
- A slow fall from high to low pressure can mean wet weather and light winds.
- A rapid fall from high to low pressure is a warning of sudden rainfall or snow in winter coupled with high winds.
- A fall with rising temperatures and wind from the north-west heralds an approaching gale.
- A fall in hot weather indicates that thunder storms may be expected.
- Falling during stormy high winds from the south or south-west would suggest that the storm will increase.
- When the barometer falls with a low temperature watch out for snow in winter.
- In summer a storm can be expected if the barometer falls sharply. If the pressure does not rise again, once the storm has passed, be prepared for a period of unsettled weather.

Now we know how to forecast the future weather let's take a look back to 2020 in Ascott. How will we remember 2020? The answer must be as a very wet year? We experienced 40.6 inches (103cms) of rainfall during the year compared with an average in the previous 5 years of 30.5 inches (77cms). The wettest months were February, August, October and December. In comparison the period March to May was quite dry. In May we suffered a drought with only ¼ inch of rainfall, with no rain falling for 25 days. September also brought a period of dry weather with no rain for 21 days. We suffered major storms with 40-50 miles per hour winds in February, August, October and December. In October there were only 5 days when it didn't rain and at the start of the month 4 inches (10cms) of rain fell over 3 days. In August 2.4 inches (6cms) of rain fell from the 12th to the 15th and in December I recorded 2 inches (5cms) between the 23rd and 24th. During the various periods of heavy rainfall, the Evenlode burst its banks and the roads out of the village were flooded. In December some properties also suffered.

Two interesting rainfall facts: when 1 inch of rain is recorded in a rain gauge this

Two interesting rainfall facts; when 1 inch of rain is recorded in a rain gauge this means that 101 tons (102,000 kilos) of water will have fallen on each acre of land. To express it another way, each acre will have received 22,624 gallons (101,800 litres) of water!

Stuart Fox

**PS** January is turning out to be another wet month, with over 2 inches of snow and many wet days there has been total precipitation of 4.7 inches (12cms).

# FORGE GALLERY AT WYCHWOOD

Having read the winter 2020 issue of the Ascott Grapevine, I instantly knew what I should name my new gallery in Ascott-under-Wychwood, our new home after so many years of globe trotting. The new "Forge Gallery at Wychwood" will open with a party once it is safe to do so after a long winter of COVID-19.

I grew up in Tokyo, Japan and moved to the States to complete a Masters degree in Political Science. Then my family moved from Connecticut USA, to Ascott-under-Wychwood in August 2019 after having spent 10 years in Switzerland followed by 8 years in the USA. My children Leon ,Luis and I are new to the UK so we did not know what to expect. Our neighbours welcomed us with open arms from the first day and immediately made us feel at home with wonderful friendship and many invitations to parties.

It did not take us long to choose Ascott-under-Wychwood as our permanent home with its' friendly neighbourhood, great pub, village shop and beautiful Cotswold houses and gardens. When one of our neighbours mentioned the Forge Garage was for sale last year, it must have been the moment of "perfect coincidence" to realise my dream of owning an art gallery, as well as finding an opportunity to give back to the village and to help my children feel even more at home as part of the community in Ascott.



My art background is shorter than many of the artists I have met here in the Cotswolds. My previous life was as a United Nations diplomat in Africa, the Indian Ocean and Switzerland, working for the UN programme to eliminate child labour globally for 30 years. When we moved to the USA on sabbatical leave, I decided to take a few art courses as painting my children's portrait was my dream that I put



aside for a long time for my work and family. Like most parents, my inspiration and the most beautiful things in my life are my children.





My art career took off when families started commissioning portraits. Then it expanded to public commissions at schools, local gallery shows and exhibitions in Chelsea in New York to Art Basel in Florida. I was also invited by the Metropolitan Art Museum to copy one of the master pieces with the public as my audience which was a nerve-racking experience to say the least. It was an honour to participate in many events which used art to improve lives of underprivileged children in many parts of the world. There are a few restaurants and pubs in Connecticut and New York where you can see my art pieces as well.

Family portraits in oils is my primary passion but I love experimenting in other media such as pastels, watercolours, acrylics and colour pencils. I also enjoy printing, sculpture, graphics, digital art and paper craft. My pop art series were most popular in New York and Miami and I had a few commissions here in the UK as well.



Many people ask me, "What are you going to have in your new gallery?" I hope to fill it with some of my art and local artists work that I wish to promote. In addition I will hold many events for children and families when possible. I want to support art for all children in our community.

The Forge Gallery at Wychwood will

be "a special place to find something special for someone special". I hope my gallery will be full of beautiful art and crafts which will make every visitor happy and help them find something unique to give their loved ones joy, love and beauty.

Last but not least there are already so many people in Ascott who helped me to set up this project. My family of course with their unconditional support and my dear friend Deborah who is my ardent supporter and source of energy and inspiration, her husband Steve for his tireless availability for any help I need, Pauline my project manager and anchor, Malcolm for his ever patient listening and compassion. Mel and Andrew for their never-ending encouragement, and other Church View neighbours, Lisa, John, Ann, Shirley and David for their kind support especially after the unfortunate car accident last December. I would like to thank Chris who has owned and loved The Forge Garage for many decades for giving me this wonderful opportunity and he will always have a place in the gallery with a nice cup of tea. There are so many more who encouraged me to be brave, adventurous and keep going towards my dream.

We feel very lucky and privileged to live here in Ascott and to be able to look after the Forge. I hope the new gallery will bring more excitement, joy and community spirit to the village. There will be some months of preparation, so please feel free to pop in for a chat when it is safe to do so.

I look forward to seeing you in the Forge Gallery at Wychwood very soon.



Warmest Wishes, Motoko Aritake-Wild 3, Church View Ascott Under Wychwood



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# Festival of Light

As the nights grew longer and darker In late November, and COVID-19 restrictions increasingly looked likely to prevent the annual Christmas Eve carols on the green, there was a lightbulb moment at 22 High Street and the idea of an Ascott Christmas Festival of Light flickered into life. If we cannot sing Christmas carols together, then why don't we try to light up Ascott and cheer people up a bit by encouraging everyone to display as many outdoor Christmas lights as possible in their front gardens and encourage a socially distanced promenade on Christmas Eve to admire the spectacle.

Within a few days the idea had received an enthusiastic thumbs-up from a random selection of people, a poster had been designed, an action plan was drawn up and an implementation task force was established. The idea also received a huge, unexpected boost by way of an incredibly generous donation to fund the purchase of 150 lights to hang in the avenue of trees through the churchyard.

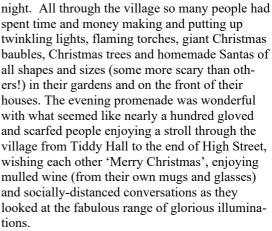
A military style operation quickly began! Lights were selected, ordered and tested. Posters were printed, delivered to households, laminated and put up on notice-boards and telegraph poles. Gareth Evans' extraordinary electrical tree lighting skills were engaged. 100 metres of electrical cable were acquired, the vicar was consulted, trenches were dug, ladders were climbed, and after five hours of hanging in trees on a cold wet Sunday, the churchyard was illuminated like never before.



The stunning array of glowing illuminations through the churchyard was a wonderful sight that brought festive cheer to many villagers every evening throughout the Christmas period.

By the time Christmas Eve arrived, Ascott-under-Wychwood looked amazing at







Through the goodwill of the Village Shop committee, the Festival of Light was linked to a food bank cash collection to augment the generosity of food donations for those most in need, and at the end of the few weeks of the festival over £130 in cash was converted into extra food from the shop stocks for North Oxfordshire Food Bank.

The Festival of Light was a great success and could not have happened without the combined efforts of many people including Anne and Richard Smith, John and Debra Cull, Gareth Evans, Mark Avery, Elaine Byles and the generosity of others. It may be repeated in some form or other next Christmas, but the fantastic lights in the churchyard will definitely be lit up again in December, if not before!

# Ascott Village Charity Notification

During this time of hardship caused by the Coronavirus, we recognise that some of our fellow villagers may be having financial difficulties. If you, or someone you know, may be in need of support (including those young people going into further education & purchasing essential items), then please contact Ascott Village Charity in confidence:

Trustee: Eleanor Bishop (eleanor-bishop@hotmail.co.uk or 01993 831258)

Trustee/Secretary: Mark Dawbarn (markdawbarn@outlook.com or 01993 831632)



#### Alternate Trustees:

John Cull (Chair), Revd. Mark Abrey, Elaine Byles, Stuart Fox, Keith Ravenhill, Sandy Timms

Ascott Village Charity, supporting our community for over 200 years.

### **WANTED: 3 PARISH COUNCILLORS!**

3 out of 5 Parish Councillors are retiring at the beginning of May after 28 years of service collectively.

## We are calling on YOU to join up!

The primary commitment is to attend as many of the 11 monthly meetings as possible (every 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday in the month except August). Each P Councillor takes responsibility for particular tasks that they are interested in. Some will obviously have more spare time than others but each person has strengths and brings a different perspective, which is valuable.

If you would like to support this community please consider volunteering for the Parish Council. Yes, it can be frustrating but also interesting, varied and rewarding. It is particularly interesting at this time of Neighbourhood Planning – a project which should bring the community together (Covid permitting) and set out plans for the years ahead.

'Parish Councilling' is a wonderful way to get to know the residents.

Please get in touch through <u>contact@ascottpc.org.uk</u> or phone 01993 830344 for more details. You can also ask to attend a Zoom PC meeting to get an idea of our work and you can find our minutes on the Parish website.

## Thank you



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# Housing Needs Assessment Survey

First of all, a huge thank-you to all of those residents who took the opportunity to fill in the Housing Needs Assessment survey on behalf of the Parish Council. I am happy to say that we received over a hundred responses.

This is essential for us to engage meaningfully with developers and with the planning system to ensure that Ascott contains the right mix of houses in the right places to meet demand without compromising the quality of life in the village. Remember – the Parish Council is here to act on your behalf, and we can only do that if everyone is willing to engage.

To ensure independence, the PC engaged an expert in planning matters, Paul Semple, to assist us in drawing up the survey. Similarly, to ensure anonymity whilst being able to validate that all the online responses really were from residents, we used a smart numbering system printed on the leaflets delivered in random order though village letter boxes.

So, what can this tell us?

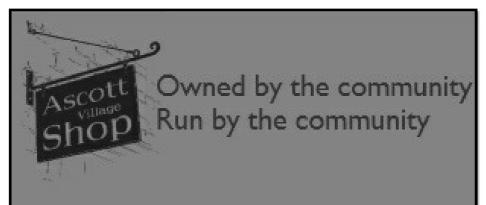
There is a lot of data for us to analyze, alongside our planning expert and in combination with other sources (e.g. census data), to understand the housing requirements of the village, but we are already working through some of the top-line figures and some of the ways in which we are able to slice and compare these to build up a picture of future needs.

What is immediately clear is that most of the respondents are perfectly happy where they are and there is no high demand for new housing; but by aligning projections of the number of households who tell they wish to leave Ascott over the next few years against the number of households looking to downsize or with children looking to fly the nest during the same period, we can build up a picture of what that releases and occupies in our housing stock, to see whether there really is any shortfall in our housing situation or whether the current provision is sufficient to meet the demands of the village. This will take some time to analyze and cross-check.

Working from home is of course a feature of Cotswold life, and personally I am happy to give up on my commute to London to spend more time in Ascott. I am not alone -52 of the respondents stated that they work from home full or part time (even when there are no Covid regulations).

We will be publishing the full results in due course and will be drawing upon these as we continue to work through your Neighbourhood Plan. As always, you can always get in touch with us with any questions. Watch this space.

**Brian Leach** 



## LATEST NEWS

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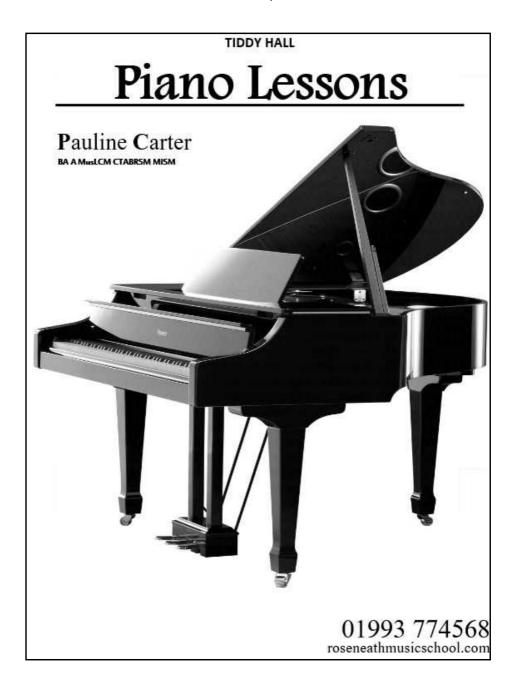
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## TIDDY HALL

After writing the last **Report from Tiddy Hall** in the winter issue of **The Grape Vine**, we were very hopeful that in this issue, we would be reporting of the gradual re-opening of our village hall. However, sadly, we will have to wait a little longer before our regular clubs and activities can start to operate safely.

Government guidelines stipulate that early year's provision can continue to remain open, so we are very pleased to see the **Ascott Pre School** working hard to keep their doors open, enabling the younger children in our community to continue with their education. **The Post Office** is still providing its service and is keeping its weekly slot - Fridays 2pm - 4pm. We thank Liz for her continuous effort in providing this service at **Tiddy Hall**.

At the time of writing, it is expected that **Tiddy Hall** will be used as a **Polling Station** on Thursday May 6<sup>th</sup>. Elections to be held are for a new Police & Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley.

The only other events booked, restrictions permitting, are:

**Art Exhibition:** over the bank holiday weekend of May  $1^{st} - 3^{rd}$ . Look out for posters on our village notice boards for more information nearer the time.

Folk Night: Saturday April 10<sup>th</sup> will hopefully see the return of the Wychwood Folk Club at Tiddy Hall, featuring Paul Downes. Two sittings are planned, each lasting an hour with a reduced audience. Another evening is planned for Saturday May 8<sup>th</sup> when we hope to welcome Sunjay to Tiddy Hall. For further up to date information, see the Wychwood Folk Club website: <a href="www.wychwoodfolkclub.com">www.wychwoodfolkclub.com</a> The bulbs are starting to bloom, heralding the coming of a new season, enjoy the beauty that spring brings! Keep well everybody and let's hope we can soon meet again in our village hall!

The Tiddy Hall Team

## Regular Activities:

Monday - Friday Mornings

Pre-school

Contact: Mrs Pauline Plant

07968 006451

Post Office runs every Friday afternoon 2pm – 4pm

# A Jolly Christmas

Well...many of us anticipated a strange, unfamiliar, rather gloomy Christmas. No carols on the village green, no bubbly outside of bubbles, anti-social distancing... In the end, some cheer arrived. The staggered carol singing was greeted with smiles, warmth and generosity and I'm thrilled to report that having covered most of the houses on the main route through the village, we collected £570.00 towards the Oxford University Vaccine Research Department. Because of this, I was surprised to be invited to a webinar featuring the Oxford team who revealed much about their efforts. Their research began as early as January 2020 when they understood that the virus was going to stray beyond China. Interestingly, I learned that they have the facilities for the creation of a 'surprise' vaccine, an un-named one that runs alongside other current projects in anticipation of some new virus turning up - which, as we know too well, it did - Covid. The world needs more vaccines than are available but many countries are now developing them - and there is the added proposal of 'Covax' where all available vaccines might be pooled to provide for those countries that are particularly in need. So our singing, sometimes in the rain, has contributed to these very important measures.

Our carol-singing was not a new adventure. In the past, some forty years ago, Harry Cook organised carol singing from door to door, beginning with a gathering at Corner House with a roaring fire and plenty to eat and drink for the large following of willing participants. The collection then was always for the Children's Society.

Carols usually take place before the 25<sup>th</sup> and thanks to further careful plotting, mulled wine was available down the High Street, thanks to the Smiths, near their rain-spattered Santa on Christmas Eve.

Splendid decorations on house facades and in gardens was encouraged resulting in an appropriate display of seasonal bling - and the suggestion of a Christmas Eve wander to wonder at them also helped to cheer things up.

It comes as no surprise to hear the question 'shall we do this again next year?' Who knows ....

Juliet Heslewood



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To help protect you and our staff, we will be observing the 2m rule and will only be accepting credit card payments

Please be aware that we are very busy and at times you will not get through on the phone straight away. We have limited staff and are trying our best to serve and fulfill orders. We will call back as soon as we can if you leave a message.

Please note that we do not take orders via email or messenger as we cannot efficiently monitor these.



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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:
Serve our customers
Stock the shop
Promote and market our produce

Organising and carrying out maintenance

Administration

#### ASCOTT VILLAGE SHOP GOES DIGITAL

You are now able to keep in touch with your community shop on Facebook and Instagram.

Log in as 'ascottvillageshop' and see what a wide and exciting range that we offer.

Keep up-to-date with new products and developments that will improve your shopping experience. Remember we are open 7 days a week and our volunteer staff will always greet you with a friendly smile. Come and visit us and you will be amazed at the wide range of products that we offer, often at very competitive prices. We look forward to serving you!

# Village Shop

2020 was certainly a funny old year for Ascott Village Shop.

While we all had to get used to masking up, queuing outside, reduced opening hours and getting excited when we received new supplies of toilet roll, the crisis also very much played to the shop's strengths. Our different supply chains meant that we often had stock of staples when bigger shops had run out, and our network of amazing volunteers allowed us to provide home deliveries to the most vulnerable. Many people appeared to 'rediscover' the shop as a safe environment to do more of their weekly shopping and as a result the shop ended the year with a profit of over £3,000.

This will give us the chance to put some big plans into operation in 2021, as we look towards a post-Covid future. Watch out for a new till system as well as exciting changes to the shop's layout and new fruit and vegetable racking. We are also planning a brand refresh as we examine what we stand for in the community, and this will inform new signage and a new website. Already, as of the beginning of February, we have returned to opening at 9 am on weekdays.

We couldn't do any of this without our fabulous volunteers - those who man the tills come rain or shine and those who share their professional expertise with us free of charge – and are always on the lookout for additional help, particularly on Sundays. Working at the shop is fun and a great way to get to know others in the



village, so let us know if you would like to be involved.

2020 also saw the launch of our popular social media feeds on Instagram and Facebook. Follow us for news of all the planned improvements (search for AscottVillageShop) and please use these forums to share your own thoughts and opinions with us — we want more than anything to make the shop work as well as possible for you, its users.

In these uncertain times, remember that when you shop with us, you are also supporting the many local businesses, farms and artisans who supply us and are helping to keep Ascott Village Shop right where it belongs, at the very heart of our village community.

# The Ascott Village Charity



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

Thank you to all those who put money into the Charity Collection Box in the village shop, the sum collected 2020 was £224.95

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.

The village charity is still in the position 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.

#### Chairman

John Cull john@greenascott.co.uk

#### Trustees

Stuart Fox stuart.john.fox@gmail.com

Sandy Timms se.timms@btinternet.com

Mark Abrey rector@thechasebenefice.org.uk

Elaine Byles elaine.byles@bioch.ox.ac.uk Keith Ravenhill keith.ravenhill@talktalk.net

Mark Dawbarn mark@dawbarn.co.uk

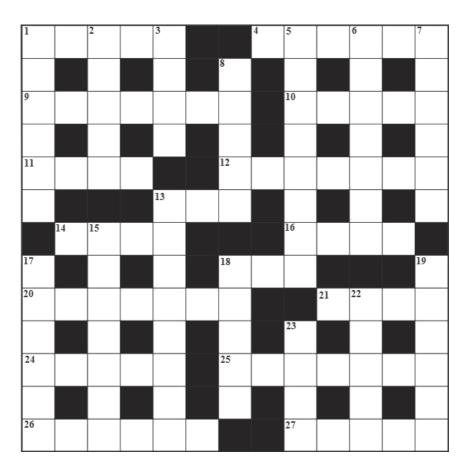
Eleanor Bishop eleanor-bishop@hotmail.co.uk

# Children's Road Safety Sign Competition

The Village Charity is going to judge the result and the winners will be listed in the Summer issue of Grapevine

Village website: www.ascott-under-wychwood.org.uk

## **Crossword Puzzle**



#### **Across**

- $1 H_2O(5)$
- 4 Best quality (5,1)
- 9 Composer of *Tosca* (7)
- **10** Luggage (5)
- 11 Sound, record (4)
- 12 Enslavement (7)
- 13 Low (3)
- **14** Gratis (4)
- 16 Pine; protracted (4)
- **18** Attempt (3)
- **20** Loss of memory (7)
- **21** Stitched (4)
- **24** Singers in harmony (5)
- 25 Facsimile (7)
- **26** Strip (6)
- 27 Name (5)

#### Down

- 1 Cleaning (6)
- 2 Unspoken (5)
- 3 Devastation (4)
- **5** Of late (8)
- **6** Scorn (7)
- 7 Response (6)
- **8** Dance (5)
- **13** Made sure (anag.) (8)
- **15** Summary (7)
- 17 Smelly and going bad (6)
- **18** Linger (5)
- **19** Occupant (6)
- **22** Oust (5)
- **23** See; place (4)

### Solutions to **Crossword in Edition 108**

#### Across

- 1 Beau
- **5** Ling 7 Steeple
- 8 Eyesight
- **10** Sort
- **12** Damp
- 14 Astonish
- 16 Ancestor
- **17** Dill
- 18 Idle
- 19 Declared
- 22 Certain
- 23 Huge
- **24** Twig

#### Down

- 1 Brie
- 2 Uses
- 3 Sergeant
- 4 Spot
- 5 Lessened
- 6 Gift
- 9 Yearned
- 11 Resolve
- 13 Pretence
- 15 Turncoat 18 Itch
- 19 Dark
- **20** Aunt
- 21 Drag

# Local Business Directory

ACADEMY/GB DOORS 01993 778836/01865 246444/01494 539339 www.garagedoors.org	Page 38	
ANNIE'S CURTAINS AND BLINDS 01993830687 07989497253 www.anniescurtainsandblinds.co.uk	Page 42	
ASCOTT VILLAGE SHOP 01993831240 shop@ascottvillageshop.co.uk www.ascottvillageshop.co.uk	Page 44	
COTSWOLD BEAUTY 01993 832446/07917 341143 enquiry@cotswoldbeauty.ewww.cotswoldbeauty.net	net Page 6	
COTSWOLD CORNER 07973884232 CotswoldCornerMaintenance@gmail.com Page 9		
COTSWOLD WILDLIFE PARK 01993823006		
www.cotswoldwildlifepark.co.uk	Page 14	
ENLIGHTENED WINDOWS 01608 684607 www.enlightenedwindows.co.uk	Page 6	
FAIRSPEAR NATURAL BURIAL GROUND 01993 878387		
helenpearson248@btinternet.com www.naturalburialoxfordshire.co.uk	Page 10	
FARMHOUSE B&B 01993831900 sally@college-farm.com	Page 30	
FOLK CLUB 01993831427 07870563299		
wychwoodfolkclub@zoho.com www.wychwoodfolkclub.com	Page 20	
GROVES SHOP 01993830302 Shop mobile 07970262425 info@alfredgroves.co.uk www.grovesdiyshop.co.uk	Page 50	
INGRID RIDLEY B&B 01993830612/07952657906 ingrid@meadowbank-ascott.co.uk www.meadowbank-ascott.co.uk	Page 15	
IVY'S FLORIST 01993830268	Page 12	

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## Events Calendar - 2020-21

Date Time Event Venue

The Events Calendar is suspended until the next issue.