

WHITCHURCH BULLETIN

AUTUMN
2022



CHAIRMAN'S UPDATE – OCTOBER 2022

The village is a wonderful place to be with the weather we've been having the past few months. Like many of you, I've been making the most of the warm dry weather – perfect conditions for walking, mountain biking, and even swimming in the river. The recent cooler autumn weather is also a welcome change and has brought with it the atmospheric misty mornings on the river such as the photo on the cover of this Bulletin.

Manor Road Playground Survey: The Parish Council is interested in your views on the Manor Road playground and we have included a survey at the end of this Bulletin for you to provide your thoughts. Alternatively, you can access the same survey online via the village website. Substantial repair works are needed to the 'wet pour' surfacing underneath the various pieces of equipment and recent inspections show that some of the well-loved equipment is beginning to show signs of wear and corrosion. Whilst necessary repair works will be carried out, this also presents an opportunity to make changes to the playground and provides scope for any improvements our village would like to see.

We would be very grateful if you could spend a couple of minutes filling out the questionnaire. Should there be a majority of opinion from the village to see more than just repair of the existing facilities, we would welcome interest from volunteers to join a working group to take forward any improvements. Please inform Jane Yamamoto if you would like to take part, on parishclerk.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com. Please respond by 15th November.

Hand-written surveys can be delivered to:

- Cllr Paul O'Grady, Church Cottages, Mill Drive
- Cllr Carrie Leadbeater-Hart, Hawthorn Cottage, High Street, or
- Jane Yamamoto, Parish Clerk, 11 Hillside, Hardwick Road.

The Polish Memorial Gardens Opening Ceremony – held in August, this was a well-attended and well-organised event on a beautiful summer's day to celebrate the village's newest Open Space. The Parish Council would like to thank Anna Szczeponek, Sally Woolhouse, and Charles Cotgreave for their efforts to make this event such a success.

- The Gardens were formally opened with the ribbon being cut by Cllr Higley's grandmother, Mrs Maria Kowal, who was a WWII refugee based in the camp and now lives in Reading. Relatives of a number of other former

residents of Coombe Park Camp and other refugee camps in the area were also present, highlighting that these Gardens represent a unique memorial to an important part of the country's history.

- The cross was blessed by both a Catholic Polish Priest from Reading, Fr. Richard Maniak, and our own Rev. James Leach.
- The event was largely organised by Anna Szczeponek, the only remaining Polish descendant from the Camp who has continuously lived in Manor Road, and who is also acting as the Green Team Guardian for the Open Space.
- Sally Woolhouse and Charles Cotgreave also helped to organise it and Sally spoke of the objectives of the gardens for biodiversity and a peaceful place for relaxation.
- We recently became aware that Alexa Duckworth-Briggs, the former Green Team Leader, was successful in securing a Lottery Fund grant, with support of the Whitchurch Society, so further improvements will be forthcoming, including high quality historical display plaques.



*Mrs Maria Kowal cutting the Polish Memorial Gardens ribbon.
(Photo courtesy of the Henley Standard)*

Village Green Changes – In the past few months, parish councillor Frances Parkes and I have had on-going discussions with the owners of the paddock next to the Village Green, as well as representatives from the Football Club and Cricket Club, to address concerns over trespassing in the paddock, the welfare of the horses and the safety of youth from potentially dangerous young horses. We have agreed a number of changes with all parties to address these concerns:

- The East and West facing football goals that have been the main cause of the stray balls and youths trespassing in the paddock, have now been removed.
- The backstop net behind the West goal is no longer needed and has also been removed.
- The North goal remains and there is now a temporary, plastic goal that can be positioned when needed at the South end of the football field. This will be kept securely behind the pavilion and made available to Football Club members and residents requiring it for matches.
- The re-orientation of the football pitch has significantly reduced the number of balls going into the paddock and helped to de-escalate tensions. The owners of the paddock seem to be genuinely pleased with the changes and have agreed to work with us to have the fencing improved and returned to a more normal state. They have now removed several large 'Keep Out' signs that were on the fence and are working with us on options to replace and improve both the temporary and permanent fencing between the two fields.
- Alistair Aitchison has announced his retirement as the representative of the Football Club on the Village Green Working Group. It is difficult to express the gratitude that the Parish Council has for all that Alistair has done for football in our community over the years. We are certainly committed to ensuring that his legacy is preserved, and an effective Village Green Working Group will be an essential part of that.
- Cllr Frances Parkes has become the new chair of the Village Green Working Group. Alex Hilton will be the new representative of the Football Club on the Working Group.

Cricket Pavilion Improvements – The Parish Council held an extraordinary meeting on 3rd October to review the proposed agreement between the Parish Council and the Cricket Club to govern refurbishment of the pavilion.

We have separately taken some informal legal advice that suggests the buildings on the Village Green are legally owned by the Parish Council and not the Cricket Club. This understanding has a number of implications including who is responsible for public liability, insurance, and health and safety checks for these buildings. We are now undertaking a formal legal review to confirm this. Once ownership is confirmed, upgrades to the pavilion and its on-going maintenance should be more straightforward going forward.

Book of Condolences for the Queen – It is important to note that this was also the period where we had the sad passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. I know that many residents wanted to pay tributes to her in their own way and many have signed the Book of Condolences at St Mary's Church. According to government protocol, as Chairman of the Parish Council, I formally notified the new King's private secretary of the village's Book of Condolences and that it will be archived at St Mary's Church.

Finally, I would like to thank Tim Hardwick for standing in as editor of the Bulletin for this issue whilst Richard Williams is on holiday.

*Kind regards, Jim Donahue
Chairman, Whitchurch-on-Thames Parish Council*

QUARTERLY PLANNING UPDATE FOR WOT PC – OCTOBER 13, 2022

Planning Reference	Address	Comments by WOT PC	SODC status
P22/S2593/HH	Uplands, Hardwick Road, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7HH	The Council voted to support this application.	<i>APPROVED</i>
P22/S2767/LB	Coombeside Cottage, Hardwick Road, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7EYA	The Council voted to support this application.	<i>APPROVED</i>
P22/S1324/FUL	Coombe Park, Coombe Park Road, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7QT	The Council voted to submit no comments and will defer to SODC Landscape Officer.	<i>APPLICATION UNDER CONSIDERATION</i>
P22/S2830/HH	The Coach House, Duchess Close, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7EN	The Council voted to object on the grounds of overlooking and the outside appearance is not in keeping with the Conservation Authority. The Council will defer to the SODC to the size and appearance.	<i>APPROVED</i>
P22/S3223/FUL	Technology Centre, Bozodown Drive, Whitchurch Hill RG8 7QR	The Council voted to submit comments to request the review of the lighting report, the comments from the Forestry officer and to ensure that during decommissioning of the site, the land is remediated to remove any contaminants.	<i>APPLICATION UNDER CONSIDERATION</i>
P22/S3331/LDE	Lower Hitch Whitchurch Hill RG8 7NU	As this is not a formal planning application, the Council was not allowed to submit comments.	<i>CONSULTATION PERIOD</i>

DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S COMMENTS

Oxford Congestion Plans

Those of you with long memories, and who take an interest in these matters, will recall that about 50 years ago there was a proposal to “solve” Oxford’s traffic “problem” by building a road across Christchurch meadow, linking the Abingdon Road to the Plain. This proposal created such a furore that it was abandoned, and Oxford then became the first place in the UK to set up a Park and Ride system as an alternative solution to traffic congestion. Down here, although it could be said that we live in “North Readingshire” as much as in South Oxfordshire, Oxford is still a place we go to for many things, and there are now proposals to make further changes to the traffic management system there. Although Oxford has an excellent bus service, the buses are often held up by other traffic, and this can make the bus service erratic and unreliable, and so there are three schemes under consideration to reduce congestion and improve air quality.

First is a system of traffic filters that will limit the number of vehicles at certain key points, with essential users having exemption and local residents given a number of free passes. There will be ANPR (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) system to identify who can or cannot enter, with financial penalties for transgressors. Along with this scheme, which is now out for consultation, there is a proposal for a Zero Emission Zone. Vehicle emissions are the main source of air pollution in Oxford. This zone goes from about Oxford station to Magdalen Bridge and from Norham Gardens down to St Ebbes. Finally, a workplace parking levy is proposed, covering a much wider area than the other two schemes, essentially encompassing all of Oxford within the ring roads. Again this is to address traffic congestion and air quality by making it less financially attractive to drive to work in Oxford when there are other alternatives for many people.

The details of all these schemes are on the Oxfordshire County Council website under **Central Oxfordshire Travel Plan**, with links to the consultation process.

Waste and Bins

One service that the District Council does every week for us all is collecting the rubbish. The waste collection service is a mark of a civil society, and seeing pictures of overseas places where there is no such service makes one

appreciate it all the more. In the bad old days, all waste was dumped into landfill, but now very little from our District goes to landfill. The black bin contents are taken to the Ardley incinerator, which you can see to the west of the M40 just north of the A34 junction. This is a sophisticated operation and the most complicated part of it is the process of cleaning the smoke and gases from the incineration. Our food and garden compost goes to the Anaerobic Digester plant near Benson by the A4074, and this plant composts everything down to create gas for energy and fertiliser for agriculture. The third part of our waste is glass, cans, paper and some plastics and this should go in the green bin. The loads are taken to a local transfer station where they are tipped out and scanned by a small team for non-recyclable items that shouldn't be there, such as black bags, food waste, nappies and textiles. From the transfer station, recycling goes to a Material Recovery Facility in Edmonton, North London. When it arrives, the recycling is scanned for levels of contamination (non-recyclable items). If the recycling is too contaminated the facility will reject it, and the whole lorry load of recycling will be wasted.

If the recycling is clean and made up of the correct items, it is loaded onto a system which separates the different materials. These are then processed and sold on to companies both in the UK and overseas to be made into new items.

It is really important that only the correct items are put in the recycling bin, and if in doubt put it in the black bin. However, food waste should not go in the black bin. I was surprised to learn that when the SODC waste team rummaged through a sample of black bins, it was found that up to 10% of the waste in the black bins should have been in the food waste bin.

South Oxfordshire has one of the highest recycling rates in the country at 63.6% (2020/21), a rate only exceeded by St Albans at 64.2%. However, these figures include organic waste, i.e. garden and food, which make up 55.7% of our total recycled waste. Unlike some other authorities, such as Reading, we also accept glass bottles in the recycling bin; these must add quite a bit of weight to our recycling levels.

Making recycling work is something that is up to each of us, and while the Council can facilitate it, our high rate is a tribute to residents as much as the Council.

*Peter Dragonetti (peter.dragonetti@southoxon.gov.uk),
SODC Councillor for Whitchurch-on-Thames*

WHITCHURCH PRE-SCHOOL



About Whitchurch Pre-School

Whitchurch Pre-School is a thriving pre-school based in the beautiful, natural surroundings of Whitchurch-on-Thames. The team of experienced staff is committed to providing a secure and caring environment where children can learn and develop at their own pace within a happy atmosphere. Children and parents alike love the setting and everything the staff do to keep them informed. In the May 2022 parent survey, one parent commented that:

"Our child has had a fantastic time at the preschool . . . they have blossomed in confidence and are very well looked after by a wonderful team".

Whitchurch Pre-School is fortunate to have wonderful and varied facilities for the children to enjoy. There is a large, safe and enclosed garden with fantastic play equipment and covered areas, a generous sandpit, mud kitchens and water trays. The indoor classroom was completely refurbished in Summer 2022 with new set-ups to engage and inspire the children. The children also benefit from a pre-school allotment for additional outdoor and nature learning. This year the pre-school is hoping to upgrade the outdoor climbing frame and investigate building renovations.

The pre-school follows the early years curriculum and the children experience an exciting range of fun activities rotated across the week, no matter what sessions and days they attend. Some of the activities the children have enjoyed so far this term have included leaf painting, bread 'baking', exploring where our food comes from, dancing to different music rhythms and outings to our local community. Alongside this there has been lots of independent play and making new friendships.

The pre-school is a really special place for children to grow and learn. This was recognised by OFSTED in their inspection in July 2022 when the pre-school was granted a "Good" rating. Their comments included:

"Settling in arrangements are exemplary: personal to each child"

"Children benefit from a well-planned, broad and interesting curriculum. They have lots of opportunities to develop across all areas of learning."

"Staff show real empathy towards children and meet their emotional needs with warmth and understanding"

"Children flourish in the positive and happy environment"

How to Join Whitchurch Pre-School

The pre-school runs Monday-Friday during term time, from 8.45am – 3.15pm, with an early drop-off option at 8.30am. Free places are available for 3 and 4 year olds (funded by the government) for 15 or up to 30 hours per week during term time. Limited places are still available but sessions are filling up fast. To register your interest, please use the following contact details:

CONTACT hello@whitchurchpreschool.org 0118 984 4516
www.whitchurchpreschool.org

How to Support Whitchurch Pre-School

As a small local setting, run as a registered charity, fundraising is essential to providing the activities and facilities that are so important for pre-schoolers. This year the pre-school is raising money for a new outdoor climbing frame and building renovations.

Some FREE and EASY ways to support Whitchurch Pre-School:

- Become a Co-op Member and select Whitchurch-on-Thames Pre-School as your local community cause. For every £1 spent 2p will be donated to our cause.
- If you shop with Amazon, go to <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/> and enter Whitchurch On Thames Pre-School as your chosen charity, 0.5% of your order value will be given to Pre-School
- Sign up to easyfundraising.org.uk to support “Whitchurch Pre-School – Whitchurch-on-Thames”. When you use the easyfundraising website or app to shop with retailers like John Lewis, M&S, H&M, the retailer sends us a donation of up to 5%. You can register here (completely free): <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/whitchurchonthamespresch/>
- To donate anytime you can scan the QR code here or go to: <https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/charity/whitchurchpreschool>



The pre-school committee are also looking forward to a series of events to raise money and bring our community together. The first event will be a bingo night on 16th November at The Greyhound pub. You can find more details on the “Whitchurch Preschool” Facebook page.

WHITCHURCH PRIMARY SCHOOL PARENTS' ASSOCIATION



The start of a new academic year is always an exciting time as children move up through the school and new children and their families are welcomed into the school community to start their education.

We rounded off last year with the return of the School Sports Day on the village green. It was such a fun day and amazing to be able to hold an in-person event after such a long break due to Covid. The event was incredibly successful and brought our overall fundraising total for the year to a fantastic £16k. Thank you to everyone for your continued support.

On an annual basis the PA provides funding to the school of over £5.5k. This covers the costs of Astroturf maintenance, educational subscriptions and subscriptions to communication tools. This year more than ever the school needs help from the fundraising the Parents' Association does. The school is in dire need to replace some of its IT equipment and is looking to rejuvenate the outside space for our foundation level children.

Even though the school year has only just begun our festive fundraising planning is in full swing and we hope to raise even more money through some events and sales – as well as having a bit of fun in the process!

For any members of the community out there who would like to help raise some funds, you can choose Whitchurch Primary School Association on Amazon Smile and Easyfundraising so we receive a donation from the retailer each time you shop online. We are also one of the chosen charities in the Co-op Pangbourne, which means each time you scan your membership card we will get a donation. If you pick us as your chosen charity we receive an even bigger donation!

Thank you.

Vicky Willcock, Chair

TRAFFIC AND PARKING WORKING GROUP

The Group has been meeting monthly and are now working hard to finalise options to present to the Parish Council (PC) at its meeting on 10th November. Any change to the present traffic and parking arrangements will need to be approved by the Highways Department of Oxfordshire so we have been grateful that the County Resident's Parking Manager and Highways managers have made time to discuss our draft plans and answered many queries about what would be legal and possible. This input has saved money, which otherwise might have had to have been spent on consultants, and time, by avoiding the situation of the PC asking for a plan which would have been unlikely to be approved.

The PC will make a decision about which option they wish to carry forward, or decide to opt for no change. If a change is voted for it will go to the County Council who will hold a public consultation. They are likely to consult the High Street residents before opening out to the general community. The County will then make a decision.

TAPWG has also been investigating the charging of electric vehicles and the possibility of street chargers in the village. A report will be submitted to the Parish Council.

As reported in the last Bulletin by the PC Chairman, we have, as part of the 2019 Village Plan, had white posts installed on the High Street verge to prevent traffic erosion. One of the fixed posts will be replaced by a removable post in a socket to allow a hay trailer to exit the farm drive opposite.

We have not given up trying to provide some sort of protection for pedestrians in the Lower Narrows. It has also proved difficult to find an answer to the poor pedestrian safety in the Upper Narrows. Better lighting may help during dark evenings and this will be investigated.

The Group is very grateful to the member who has investigated the requirements for speed watch and has now registered a Village Speed Watch Group. Four residents have signed up for online training but at least **two more volunteers** are needed for the two teams of three required. If you can help please contact Linda Gray at lindapgray100@gmail.com.

Diana Smith (Chair of TAPWG)

HARDWICK HAPPENINGS

As ever there has been much activity on Hardwick Estate since the last bulletin. The Squash and Pumpkin festival at Tolhurst Organics on 2nd October was a great success again, attracting around 1000 people who enjoyed the bar, live music, kids' workshops, wonderful organic food and crafts, as well as loads of beautiful squashes in a stunning setting.

The following weekend a whole community meeting was held, as part of the Estate's transition to a community-led charity, to begin developing an energy strategy for the Estate. This includes looking at best practice energy efficiency options for our old cottages and business units, as well as renewable micro-generation options on buildings, or larger scale community energy generation options (such as a community wind turbine or solar farm). This issue affects all of us in terms of increasing energy prices from the national grid, as well as the imperatives of the climate emergency. A working group was formed from community members, some of whom had a wealth of knowledge in the area, to take forward research and recommendations. We would be happy to share our findings with the local community where they could be applicable and relevant.

Our work developing a vision for the Estate over the last few years made it very clear that addressing the food security crisis by producing quality organic food and other products, was at the core of Hardwick's ethos. This crisis was illustrated during the pandemic when supermarket shelves were empty and the Tolhurst Organic Veg Shed had queues of customers, and even had to ration produce! As a result we are now in the slow process of transitioning our extensive areas of horse grazing over to agriculture over the coming years. The fields currently used as a livery business at Hardwick Stud are the best quality for agriculture on the Estate, and the only soil similar enough to the walled garden for more horticulture or soft fruit production. Therefore the difficult decision has been made to convert this area, after two years' notice, back into a farm growing produce for local needs. The horses and all those who work with them will be very much missed but we hope that the wider community will also appreciate the need for this change.

Some Estate tenants have formed a community group called 'Hardwick Hands' which can be called upon to help with farming, woodland or conservation challenges when they occur. This has included watering drought-ridden orchards and pulling ragwort, rewarded with tea, flapjacks, playing music together and forming friendships. If you'd like to join the email list for future call outs please email hardwickhands@gmail.com and speak to Romilly Swann.

Upcoming events:

The Hardwick Lecture Series continues on the last Thursday of every month at 7.30pm at the Tolhurst Organic Packing Shed, opposite Courthill Cottage (RG8 7RB). Tea and biscuits provided. Suggested donation £3.

27/10/2022 – MIRIAM ROSE. *Britain's Mineral Imperialism and Community Resistance*: Miriam Rose from grassroots solidarity group Foil Vedanta exposes a macro-picture of global commodity flows, resource racism and neo-colonialism, and celebrates the incredible victories of community resistance and international solidarity in the fight against a criminal mining company.

24/11/2022 – IAIN TOLHURST. *The Birth of Naida*: Iain presents the remarkable story of this unique Pinky Ketch yacht, built over 12 years using windblown trees from Hardwick Estate, and launched into the River Thames for her Maiden voyage.

Miriam Rose (Hardwick Estate Manager)

WHITCHURCH & GORING HEATH HISTORY SOCIETY

Oxford is known for many things, its architecture, its history, its alumni, and of course for the detective books and TV series of Inspector Morse. The first book, *Last Bus to Woodstock*, was published in 1975, but it is probably the TV series of 1987 to 2000 starring John Thaw that most people have in their minds when they hear the haunting title music. With the later *Lewis* and *Endeavour* series, the images have persisted, and our next speaker will be pinpointing the highlights. Alastair Lack, a former BBC journalist and President of the Oxford Alumni organisation, will give his talk on Thursday 17th November at 7.30pm at Goring Heath Parish Hall. He is sure to entertain and inform us.

We'd really like to involve more people in our activities. We have speakers of quality, and a good range of interests is covered both local and national. As an early Christmas present, we will waive our usual non-members fee for this meeting, so come and join us for coffee and biscuits at 7pm, and sample our friendly meetings.

There is no meeting in December, but we re-convene on Thursday 19th January 2023 at Whitchurch Village Hall. Coffee and biscuits at 7pm, then a members' meeting where we talk of our local researches and investigate our archives.

Vicky Jordan

THE ART CAFÉ, WHITCHURCH ON THAMES

The Art Café is open in the Old Stables, High Street (opposite The Ferryboat) from 10.30am to 12.30pm every Saturday. It is a well-established local social event organised each week by a different local group to raise funds for themselves by offering tea, coffee, homemade cakes and a raffle in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere. Sometimes a local artist will be there to exhibit and sell their work.

It's a great way to meet old friends and make new friends, and to keep warm for a couple of hours! We now have a "Welcome Table" where people on their own or new to the area can be sure of a warm welcome and someone to talk to.

If you're a local group interested in running an Art Café please get in touch. We would also be delighted to hear from new artists and crafters who maybe have not exhibited before – we can help and support you to put on a show.

Finally, if you've never visited our Art Café or haven't been for a while, we would love to see you.

Geoff Weir, OldStablesBookings@btinternet.com

WHAT'S ON AT THE VILLAGE HALL



In the last few months, a couple of new activities have started in the village hall:

- **A Painting Class** run by Anya Goldenberg, an art photographer with much experience of running art classes in her native Ukraine. The classes are fun, you don't need prior experience and all materials are provided. If you might be interested, then please ring Anya (see contact details in the list below).
- **A Youth Theatre Group** run by Lori Taliesin who, as well as acting professionally and holding an Equity card, has taught in local schools. The current class at 15:30 on Fridays is for primary school age children.

There are two weekly **yoga** classes: Jean Cosham's class is on Tuesdays at 18:00 and lasts for two hours. On Thursdays at 18:00, Helma Beelen runs a less physically demanding one-hour class.

The **Whitchurch Hill Camera Club** is well organised and has lots of interesting talks, competitions and activities. If you are at all interested in photography, this is worth checking out.

Also running every other week is the **Whitchurch Bridge Club**. There are usually five tables playing a friendly game of Chicago Bridge. There is a range of abilities and all are welcome.

On Mondays, the Bloom Baby **mother and baby classes** provide babies with music and plenty of activities and, of course, give mothers the chance to meet other mothers.

WhitFit 45-minute community exercise class. If you want to improve your fitness, strength and flexibility, in a fun and welcoming setting, then please contact Hannah Dunbar to pre-book your place in the class.

Afternoon Tea A community event on the second Thursday of each month from 14:30-16:30. All welcome – no need to book! Also, If you'd like to help and/or learn how to make the cakes please contact Jean Marc Grosfort.

This list of the regular activities at the hall has the contact details for the organisers. You can also always check the up-to-date listings on the calendar at hallbookingonline.com/whitchurch/.

Activity	When	Contact
Yoga Asana	Tuesdays 6-8pm	Jean Cosham, 07484 113401
Hatha Yoga	Thursdays 6-7pm	Helma Beelen, 07810 425593. yogabyhelma@gmail.com
Whitchurch Tap Dancers	Wednesdays 10.30am	Pauline Bainbridge 0118 984 2504
Bridge Club	Wednesday 1.30pm (alternate weeks)	Philippa Turner (Chairman) 01491 875648
Whitchurch Hill Camera Club	Wednesday 8pm (alternate weeks)	Alan Copeland, 01491 681471 alan@curiosities.co.uk or WHCC on Facebook

Activity	When	Contact
Bloom Baby <i>mother and baby group</i>	Monday. Two classes: 10am or 12 noon	Sara Jackson, www.bloombabyclasses.com/ reading-north or @bloomreadingnorth
Painting Class	Wednesdays 6-7pm	Anya Goldenberg 07578 190114 or Whatsapp on +380973845668
WhitFit community exercise class	Wednesdays and Fridays 9.15-10am	Hannah Dunbar 07971 116704 hannah@coach-hannah.com
Youth Theatre Group	Fridays 3:30-6pm	Lori Taliesin info@breakthboxtheatre.com
Afternoon tea and cakes	Second Thursday of each month 2.30-4.30pm	No need to book but contact Jean Marc Grosfort on 07881 312233, if you'd like to help.

John Bradon (Treasurer, Village Hall)

WHITCHURCH UNITED CHARITIES

The Secretary of Whitchurch United Charities would like to remind all families that the Charity has funds available to help meet the costs associated with educational needs such as books, equipment or educational trips. Eligible students are young people between the ages of 5 and 25 years and whose permanent residence is within the parish of Whitchurch.

Applications are processed twice a year, with the closing dates being 31st March and 30th September. However, late applications are considered if the available funds for the previous 6-month period have not been fully allocated. All applications and decisions are treated in strict confidence by the Trustees.

If you would like to know more, please do contact Sarah Dixon (our Grant Application Secretary). Contact details: telephone: 0118 984 4262, address: Flint House, Hardwick Road, Whitchurch-on-Thames RG8 7HH or e-mail – whitchchurchunitedcharities@gmail.com

WHITCHURCH & GORING HEATH TWINNING ASSOCIATION

It has been four years since we last visited our twinned village of La Bouille in Normandy, and three years since our French friends came across to Whitchurch. So it was a special trip when a small group travelled over to France by private car for the weekend of Friday 30 September to Monday 3 October.

We received the usual warm welcome and spent Friday settling in with our hosts before doing a bit of local sightseeing, again with our hosts, on Saturday. That evening we attended a reception hosted by the mayor and the French twinning committee before enjoying a buffet meal together. On Sunday things were a little different from usual as it is the custom to go on an excursion by coach to some town or attraction and share a picnic lunch. This time a group of around 18 drove to Courmeilles for lunch at the local creperie (whilst it was raining cats and dogs outside!). Luckily the weather cleared up after lunch and the sun came out in time for us to enjoy a visit to the Chateau and Gardens of Boutemont; the chateau dates back to 1000 and the gardens have some fine topiary. On Monday it was time to say goodbye to our French friends and drive to Caen for the return ferry to Portsmouth, having spent an enjoyable time in La Bouille.

In 2023 it is Whitchurch's turn to host the folk from La Bouille and we hope that by then coach travel to and from France will be easier to arrange. If you would like more information on the Twinning Association, please get in touch via the contact details near the end of this issue of the Bulletin.

We are running the Art Café in the Old Rectory Stables in Whitchurch on Saturday, 26 November to raise money for the French visit – fresh coffee, homemade cakes and raffle prizes. You will be very welcome!

Wendy Ferguson

WHITCHURCH ART AND CRAFT EXHIBITION 2022

The Whitchurch Society is very pleased to again be holding this popular annual event, in the Whitchurch Village Hall, Manor Road, on the weekend of **12th – 13th November**. This year, it will take place in the traditional 'live' format with the prize-giving on Sunday at 4.30pm, but the exhibition will continue to be available to visit online for the following two weeks.

The most important point to note again this year is that all entries must be registered online in advance by 9th November (regardless of which of the exhibitions they are entering) and the old-style paper entry form has been dropped. Video entries should be sent to me 'manually' by 4th November please. Exhibits which haven't been booked in using the online system will not be accepted at the sending-in sessions in the Hall, unless there are exceptional circumstances.

This year's theme for the Joyce Voysey prize is 'Speed'. All residents (both past and present) of Whitchurch-on-Thames and Goring Heath parishes are eligible to enter their work. Children who attend the Whitchurch Pre-School, the Whitchurch Primary School or the Oratory Preparatory School are also eligible to enter, regardless of their place of residence.

Please do join in – your paintings, photos, craft works and videos are all very welcome and remember, they can only be enjoyed by everyone in the village (and worldwide online!) if you make the effort and enter them into the exhibition.

For all the information about entering and viewing the exhibition, please follow this link <https://wa2022.wotarts.co.uk/>

Sally Woolhouse sally@wotarts.co.uk

PANGBOURNE AND WHITCHURCH SUSTAINABILITY (PAWS)



PAWS activities are designed to highlight how we both need to and can reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and curb our negative impact on our environment. The present worldwide crisis can indeed become an opportunity to redesign our economic thinking and enable us to use the positives our new Technological Age has brought about. We are in transition between old economic theories relating to the Industrial Age and the burgeoning of new thinking on how a 'good' life might look in years to come. Turbulent, but exciting!!

In the meantime, our Apple Pressing Day, held at Whitchurch Maze at the end of September, proved to be our best yet in the ten years we have been running it. Plenty of lovely apples, 50-60 people including lots of children and three hours of hard work washing, chopping, scuttering and pressing led to some of the best tasting apple juice yet and a great deal of fun. Sally and Peter Woolhouse provided water to the site, brewed up excellent tea and supplied much enjoyed cake and biscuits. Reading Transition Town yet again provided the apple press, and this year PAWS members were able to help collect apples from people who could not pick their own.



(Photo courtesy of Gill Goodwin)

You may remember that in April we had an excellent presentation on the state of our rivers. The talk emphasised the work of volunteers and the following report is from Julie Read, a Pangbourne resident:

River Meeting

A few months ago I attended my first PAWS meeting; I went along as it was all about our local river Pang. It was a fascinating and at times shocking evening learning about the state of our chalk stream. The speakers were engaging and clearly committed to improving the plight of the Pang. What was great was they suggested small changes we can all make to improve the state of the river.

Personal Impact

My take home thought was about using bleach to clean the toilet – would I put bleach in the pond in my garden; of course not! I'd kill everything living in it, but that is what I'm doing each time I bleach my toilet. So that has changed and I'm testing a range of eco products. I also had not considered the impact my dog's flea treatment has on the river – it's not selective and kills the tiny invertebrates that are at the bottom of the food chain and directly impacts all wildlife. So now I'm trying to keep our spaniel out of the river.

Action for River Kennet (ARK)

I have also been lucky enough to attend a day's training in river fly monitoring; ARK has been running this citizen science project for many years and has now extended it to the River Pang.

There are now several groups monitoring the numbers of eight key species that are all sensitive to pollution. This monthly count will help us to gauge the health of the river and alert the Environment Agency to any potential pollution incidents. Karen and I are sampling on the Pang next to the Co-op; if you see us there with our wellies on, net in hand or crouching over a tray counting the number of species we would love it if you came down to have a look and chat.

Hopefully, together we can improve the quality of the water in the Pang.

October was a busy month for PAWs – running an ideas day at the Art Café on the 8th and the ever-popular Barn Dance on the 22nd.

Some of you may remember that a few years ago the Pangbourne Business Forum ran a Pangbourne Businesses Need You campaign. More than ever in this

critical financial time we need to support our local businesses, not least to keep the village alive, but also to reduce our carbon footprint. Despite Government intervention the energy costs to some of our local businesses will be crippling and they need the support of our local community. Every little helps!

2022/3 PAWS Calendar

When	What	Where
Thursday 17 November 8pm	Film Night	Pangbourne Village Hall
Thursday 15 December 8pm	Christmas Gathering	Pangbourne Village Hall
Thursday 12 January 8pm	PAWS 2023 Planning Meeting	Pangbourne Village Hall

Join our Facebook group: **PAWS (Pangbourne & Whitchurch Sustainability)**

Heather Thorne (pawsg21@gmail.com)

THE GREEN TEAM

Since the last Bulletin, only seven working parties have been held, because of the hot weather in July and August that drastically reduced growth. From the start of September we have begun to resume our normal activities. Thank you to everyone who has contributed. Some key points are indicated below.

- **List of Green Spaces:** We are lucky to have many green spaces in the village; our primary goal is to care for these. The list can be found on our website page: <https://whitchurchonthames.com/groups/greenteam.html>. Photos of the team at work appear in the Pictures section of the website.
- **Litter-Bug Detective Trail:** In August we liaised with the South and Vale Waste and Recycling Officer to establish a litter bug trail in the village that provided an extra source of interest to children during the school holidays.
- **Village Green and the Maze:** We have regular working parties maintaining these areas. At the maze we work together with WoTHABS to edge and

maintain the central area. At the green we have continued to clear invasive plants and unwanted saplings. We cut back and shaped the hedges on either side of the car park, as well as the beech hedge along Eastfield Lane. Two flower beds are now established in the car park, enhancing the visual appearance.

- **Polish Church Garden Project:** Details and latest updates can be found here: <https://whitchurchonthames.com/groups/polishgarden.html>. We weeded and watered the flowerbeds and shrubs, and watered the saplings that form the Community Orchard. In August the garden was officially opened, an event that we estimate was attended by over 80 people, including many from the Polish community. Refreshments were provided afterwards in the Village Hall.
- **Bell Mouth Entrance to Walliscote House Drive:** In October a small working party weeded and tidied up the area around the flower beds.

We welcome all who would like to help with Green Team work. Our working parties last from an hour up to two or three, but you don't have to stay for the duration. In (say) half an hour or an hour you can still make a worthwhile contribution. If you would like to know more or have a suggestion for work we might undertake, please contact us (details on the website).

A provisional working-party schedule for the next few months follows – you can always find the up-to-date version in the village website What's On section:

- tba – further work at the Polish Garden
- 29 October – Village Green working party
- 5 November – Maze working party
- 19 November – Working party on bank at north side of Hardwick Road opposite the western entrance to Swanston Field

Charles Cotgreave

October update: After several years of hard work and valuable guidance, Charles has stepped down from his role as Green Team Coordinator. I am now taking over the coordinator role, although Charles will still be an active part of the team. Very many thanks to Charles for all the work he has done to look after the green spaces in our village.

Jill Bradon

CHANGES TO WASTE COLLECTIONS OVER THE CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR PERIOD

Normal Collection Day	Revised Collection Day
Thursday 29th December 2022	Saturday 31st December 2022
Thursday 5th January 2023	Saturday 7th January 2023
Thursday 12th January 2023	Friday 13th January 2023

Please remember that we suspend garden waste collections over the holiday period to concentrate on Christmas waste collections. Collections resume in January 2023. For more information, please see our garden waste page on our website.

Find out more about recycling tips and waste collections over Christmas and New Year on our website www.more recycling.co.uk

We will post information about any disruption to waste collection services on our websites and social media sites.

Our call centre is open for queries from 9am – 3.30pm on 23 December, 9am – 5pm on 28, 29 and 30 December on 03000 610610.

Waste Team, South Oxfordshire District Council

THE PARISH OF WHITCHURCH ON THAMES, OXFORDSHIRE

Acreage – 1,320, Population – 824 (2011 census), Electors – 622

WHITCHURCH ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL			
Chair	Jim Donahue	cllrdonahue.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com	
V/Chair	Diana Smith	cllrsmith.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com	
	Nick Brazil	cllrbrasil.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com	
	Katherine Higley	cllrhigley.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com	
	Carrie Leadbetter-Hart	cllrhart.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com	
	Paul O'Grady	cllrgrady.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com	
	Frances Parkes	cllrparkes.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com	
Clerk	Jane Yamamoto	11 Hillside, Hardwick Road, RG8 7HL parishclerk.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com	07876 714906

SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL			
135 Eastern Ave, Milton Park Estate, Milton, Abingdon, OX14 4SB, www.southoxon.gov.uk			
Councillor	Peter Dragonetti	Covert Cottage, Hill Bottom	0118 9844711

OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL			
County Hall, Oxford, OX1 1ND, www.oxfordshire.gov.uk			01865 792422
Councillor	Kevin Bulmer	35 Springhill Road, Goring on Thames, RG8 0BY	07526 743091

WHITCHURCH ON THAMES VILLAGE WEBSITE			
www.whitchurchonthames.com			
News Editor	Richard Wingfield	rmwingfield@btinternet.com	0118 9843682

PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL			
St Mary's Whitchurch and St John's Whitchurch Hill			
Hon Secretary	Rosemary Pearce		07761 056125

WHITCHURCH PRE-SCHOOL GROUP			
Eastfield Lane, Whitchurch on Thames, RG8 7EJ			
Supervisor	Kathleen Barrow		0118 9842347

WHITCHURCH PRIMARY SCHOOL			
Eastfield Lane, Whitchurch on Thames, RG8 7EJ			
Head Teacher	Dawn Chesters		0118 9842347
Head of Parent Assoc	Tania Neeson		
Chair of School Governors	Eleanor Sugrue		

LANGTREE SCHOOL			
Woodcote, RG8 0RA			
Head Teacher	Simon Banford		01491 680514
Chair of School Governors	Jan Seal		01491 680514

Front Cover photo courtesy of Jim Donahue

WHITCHURCH AND DISTRICT ALLOTMENT SOCIETY

Chair	John Copeland	jvcopeland@yahoo.co.uk	0118 9842692
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WHITCHURCH TWINNING ASSOCIATION

Chair	Wendy Ferguson	wendyfergie@gmail.com	0118 9841262
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WHITCHURCH SOCIETY

Chair	Laura Lucas	laura.c.lucas@hotmail.co.uk	
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WHITCHURCH BRIDGE CLUB

Enquiries	Phillipa Turner		01491 875648
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WHITCHURCH AND GORING HEATH HISTORY SOCIETY

Contact	Vicky Jordan	Little Langtree, Whitchurch Hill, RG8 7PU	0118 9843260
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WHITCHURCH THEATRE CLUB

Contact	Chris Martin	Sonia, Goring Heath Road, Whitchurch Hill, RG8 7PG	0118 9844252
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WHITCHURCH CRICKET CLUB

Sec	Cormac Neeson	cormac.neeson@gmail.com	0118 9843347
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PANGBOURNE AND DISTRICT BOWLS CLUB

Recreation Ground, Thames Avenue, Pangbourne

Contact	Roy Rosekilly	22 Swanston Field, Whitchurch on Thames, RG8 7HP	0118 9843080
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PANGBOURNE AND DISTRICT TENNIS CLUB

Recreation Ground, Thames Avenue, Pangbourne

Chair	Louise Shearer		0118 9842934
Sec	Amanda Holland		07814 369566

WHITCHURCH ON THAMES HABITAT STUDY GROUP (WotHabs)

Contact	Gill Goodwin	1 Swanston Field, Whitchurch on Thames, RG8 7HP	0118 9842934
Sec	John Bradon	Rylands, Hardwick Rd, Whitchurch on Thames, RG8 7HW	0118 9841574

VILLAGE HALL

Hall Manager	Richard Searce	38 Manor Road, Whitchurch on Thames, RG8 7EU	0118 9842004
Events Mgr	Jean-Marc Grosfort		07881 312233

OLD STABLES ROOM

High Street

Contact	Geoff Weir	oldstablesbookings@btinternet.com	
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WHITCHURCH HILL CAMERA CLUB

Meetings: Whitchurch on Thames Village Hall, every Weds at 8pm Sept - June

Chair	Alan Copeland	14 Wayside Green, Woodcote, RG8 0QJ	01491 681471
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GORING HEATH GUIDE AND SCOUT GROUP

Contact	Doreen Pechey	doreen@pechey.org (<i>Beavers, Cubs, Scouts, Brownies, Guides</i>)	01491 681236
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PANG VALLEY SCOUT GROUP

The Barn, Purley on Thames

Contact	Ian Shenton	ishenton@ntlworld.com (<i>Beavers, Cubs, Scouts</i>)	0118 9678769
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PANGBOURNE AND DISTRICT VOLUNTEER CENTRE

Committee Room, Pangbourne Village Hall

	Open 09:30 – 11:30am Mon-Friday	0118 9844586
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AFC WHITCHURCH FC (ages 5-16)

Chair	Alex Hilton	hilts123@hotmail.com or afcwhitchurch@yahoo.co.uk	
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THAMES VALLEY POLICE

Wallingford Police Station, Wallingford, OX10 9DW

	Non Emergency Police Number (manned 24/7)		101
Neighbourhd Supervisor	Barbara Taylor	barbara.taylor@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk	07814 485286

PANGBOURNE LIBRARY

Reading Road, Pangbourne, RG8 7LY

Monday 14:00-17:00	Tuesday 10:30-18:00	Wednesday CLOSED	
Thursday 9:30-12:00	Friday 10:30-17:00	Saturday 10:00-12:30	

ST MARY'S CHURCH

Contact	For Baptisms, Weddings or Funerals	0118 9765905
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THE FRIENDS OF ST MARY'S AND ST JOHN'S

Chair	Paul Witcher	pwitcher@aol.co.uk	
Secretary	Sally Woolhouse	whitchurchfriends@gmail.com	

PANGBOURNE BOATHOUSE SURGERY

Whitchurch Road, Pangbourne, RG8 7DP

Routine health conditions	Mon to Fri, 08:00-18:30	0118 9842234
Urgent unplanned conditions		NHS 111
Life-threatening emergencies		999

WHITCHURCH ON THAMES BULLETIN

Editor	Richard Williams	rlwilliamsafcw@btinternet.com	07810 374280
	<i>Deadline for Articles</i>	<i>Planned distribution</i>	
Winter 2023	15th January	29th January	
Spring 2023	15th April	29th April	
Summer 2023	15th July	29th July	

PLEASE TEAR OUT THIS PAGE AND COMPLETE THE SURVEY

WHITCHURCH-ON-THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

VILLAGE SURVEY ON POTENTIAL IMPROVEMENTS TO MANOR ROAD PLAYGROUND

Whitchurch-on-Thames Parish Council is interested in your views on the Manor Road playground.

Substantial repair works are needed to the 'wet pour' surfacing underneath the various pieces of equipment and recent surveys show that some of the well-loved equipment is beginning to show signs of wear and corrosion. Whilst necessary repair works will be carried out, this also presents an opportunity to make changes to the playground and provides scope for any improvements our village would like to see.

We would be very grateful if you could spend a couple of minutes filling out the following questionnaire. Should there be a majority of opinion from the village to see more than repair of the existing, we would also like to welcome interest from volunteers to join a working group to take forward any improvements. Please inform Jane Yamamoto if you would like to take part, on parishclerk.whitchurchonthames@gmail.com

Please respond by 15th November. Hand-written answers can be delivered to:

- Church Cottages, Mill Drive • Hawthorn Cottage, High Street
- 11 Hillside, Hardwick Road

QUESTIONNAIRE:

1. Are you a: child / parent / grandparent / other ? *(please circle)*
2. How often do you use the playground in Manor Road:
every week / every month / occasionally / never ? *(please circle)*
3. How would you rate the playground in general (1 low to 10 high)? *(please circle)*
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10
4. Why have you given this rating?

-
5. Would you like to see the playground changed/improved?
-
-

If 'No', thank you for your response. If 'Yes', please rate each of the existing apparatus shown on the next page on the scale of 1 (low) to 10 (high):

MULTIPLAY

RATING:



SWINGS BABY/NORMAL

RATING:



CLIMBING FRAME

RATING:



SPRING RIDERS

RATING:



TALL SLIDE

RATING:



TODDLER MULTIPLAY

RATING:



Are there any other pieces of equipment you would like to see?

Any other comments?

Thank you for your time. We look forward to hearing the views of everyone in the village in order to understand how best to look after our playground.

Whitchurch-on-Thames Parish Council

This survey is anonymous and therefore there will be no use of personal data.



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