

# The Bulletin of Whitchurch on Thames

## whitchurchonthames.com

### March 2015

**Success!** We now have over 80 per cent of the dwellings in our Village who are using SmartWater. The three new signs will put up at the entrances to the Village as soon as we have Planning and Highways approval.

I would like to record a big “thank you “ for all the effort put in by our local policeman Mark Bell, and of course to all the volunteers who distributed leaflets and generally pushed the project forward.

The **defibrillator** that will be installed in the phone box has now arrived, thanks to a very generous donation by Stephen Trinder. The next step is to get the power sorted out. BT say the box is still connected but of course we need a qualified electrician to re-organise it so it can supply the defib safely.

The whole point of the device is speed of response. There will be training available but the basic is this: if you are the only person present who can help dial 999 and just keep resuscitation going. If there is another person available and they can get the defib before the paramedics arrive, dial 999, get the defib door release code and RUN!

On return, *just do exactly what the machine tells you to do.* Don't ask questions, there is no time. The machine will analyse the problem automatically and will only respond to the precise conditions it is designed to treat.

**Village plans.** We have our Village Plan from 2009 of course. which is available on our web site. A lot of research went into that but it was based on an assumption which is no longer valid. That was our belief that the Oxfordshire plan strictly banned any new build outside the Village boundary. The pressures on the Government for new building have resulted in so many loopholes for developers that it is no longer something we can rely on.

There are places round the Village which look as if they could attract developers. All have problems that as locals we are aware of. For example, a significant development on the fields beyond the Allotments would have an impact on the Hardwick Road junction. So we need to heed John Howell's comments and the Parish Council is getting a small group together. We have an excellent starting point: our Clerk Jenny Welham is also Clerk to Woodcote Parish and they have just completed their new Plan.

*Harry Butterworth*

As I travel around and meet with members of Town and Parish Councils one of the topics that arises again and again is that of Neighbourhood Planning. A Neighbourhood Plan represents the first time communities have had a formal share in the planning system. Once adopted a Neighbourhood Plan carries weight in planning decisions and so it is of enormous support to a community in ensuring that its vision for the future is met. Woodcote Parish Council has recent experience of how their Plan has been taken into consideration in reaching a planning decision in line with the community's wishes.

Some have criticised Neighbourhood Plans as being both beyond the technical competence and the budget of smaller communities. Neither of these is true. Plans do not have to be expensive and there is funding available to support plan making. I am delighted that the Minister for Housing and Planning has just announced that the current support funding will continue in the next financial year and also that a new £22.5 million support programme for 3 years from April 2015 has been set up. This will enable more communities to take up Neighbourhood Planning in their area.

I am very keen for infrastructure to be provided on a timely basis. A Neighbourhood Plan represents the first stage in allocating housing not the building of all the houses listed. Neighbourhood Plans can also set out exactly what is required in terms of infrastructure needed and the phasing of both. This will then steer the Infrastructure Delivery Plan which in turn will be used to seek financial contributions. Thus setting out the housing in a Neighbourhood Plan is an important starting point for this. In recent meetings with doctors and managers in GP Practices I have been surprised to learn that they are rarely involved in the Neighbourhood Planning process. I have encouraged them to change this. It is important that the implications on key services such as GP Practices are clearly understood and the need in relation to growth logged at this early stage.

I know too that Broadband provision is a hot topic and am thus delighted that thanks to government investment 20,311 properties across the Henley constituency now have access to superfast broadband and by 2017 a total of 23,098 homes and businesses here will have access. This puts the Henley constituency in the top 6% of constituencies in England receiving superfast broadband investment from the government. This is in addition to those who receive the provision through commercial providers.

Finally, as I write this month I have received news of the new Marriage Allowance that will enable married couples and civil partners to apply for an annual tax reduction of up to £212.

Email: [howelljm@parliament.uk](mailto:howelljm@parliament.uk) Website: [www.johnhowellmp.com](http://www.johnhowellmp.com)

To be added to my regular updates email me at [john.howell@oxfordshireconservatives.com](mailto:john.howell@oxfordshireconservatives.com)

## **WHITCHURCH SOCIETY GARDEN WALK SUNDAY 7 JUNE**

Gardens will open from 1.30 to 4.30 pm. As in the past, with the generous agreement of Matilda and Neil King, tea and cakes will be served in The White House garden from 4 pm. Cost £3 adults, £1 children.

Matilda is happy for children to use the swimming pool provided they are supervised. The tennis court is also available if you bring your own racquets.

A list of open gardens will be delivered to each household nearer the date. A Garden Open notice will be displayed at each address.

We are still keen to find new households willing to put their gardens on show. Please contact the undersigned ASAP if you are interested.

Ian Bruce

Secretary – tel 984 2653, mobile 07879 405559, email  
ian.bruce@btinternet.com

### **Whitchurch & Goring Heath Twinning Association**

We're expecting a party of just over 30 guests on the weekend May 1st to May 4th. If anyone would like to join in our activities, please get in touch - whether that be attending the drinks reception on the Saturday evening, visiting Bath with us, or indeed putting up some of our French guests in your house. We're particularly looking for people to house some early 20s young men!

Vicky Jordan 0118 984 3260

# **Whitchurch and Goring Heath History Society**

**Thursday March 19<sup>th</sup>** ‘Drove Roads’ Bruce Smith looks at our area.

**Thursday April 16<sup>th</sup>** Elizabeth Hazeldine tells of the "wilful murder of Kate Laura Dungey in Henley on Thames that occurred December 1893 which shocked Victorian Society"

Both meetings are at Whitchurch Village Hall in Manor Road.

In May we move back up to Goring Heath Parish Hall for a members evening. Meetings start at 8pm, coffee from 7.30 and visitors are very welcome, £2, including coffee.

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## **OWL (Our Woodcote Library)**

At our AGM this month the Chair reported a busy year of negotiation on many fronts, which has now resulted in a satisfactory outcome. The volunteers are nearing the end of training in the library, and the new system starts for real on March 30<sup>th</sup>.

A slimmed down OWL committee will now act in a supporting role, liaising with Oxfordshire County Council and fundraising.

Thanks are due to all those who are giving up their time to help, and to the Parish Council, Woodcote Rally, and WI who have all supported the library financially, through OWL.

# Whitchurch Litter Blitz

**Saturday March 21st, 11am to 1pm – Meet at the Greyhound**

Spend an hour or two keeping Whitchurch beautiful! Come along on Saturday the 21<sup>st</sup> March and volunteer to pick-up a street or two. Bags, litter pickers, and Hi Vis Jackets will be provided. Please bring your own gloves. There are about 8 litter pick-up streets identified and we need about 2 or 3 people for each, so the more people we get the quicker it will go.



Please contact Jim Donahue and [jimdonahue7@gmail.com](mailto:jimdonahue7@gmail.com) or 07557668601 if you can make it and let him know if you have a preferred pick-up area. Or just show up in front of the Greyhound on the day!

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## Churchyard tidy-up – volunteers welcomed

On Saturday 7th and Saturday 14th March, between 10 am and midday, volunteers are invited to come along and help tidy up St Mary's churchyard.

There is ivy to be removed from walls, brambles to be cleared and overgrowth to be trimmed around headstones and trees. If you can come, bring whatever 'cutters' you have and a pair of gloves. There will even be a reward: coffee, tea and biscuits (and possibly *cake*) will be available at the Old Stables. Let's make this a real Whitchurch community event and improve the surroundings of the remarkable church building which in one form or another has been here for over 1,000 years.

Our historic church belongs to the whole community. You don't have to be a churchgoer to join in!

# WHITCHURCH PRE-SCHOOL

With Spring in the air pre school commence their new season activities starting with some planting in our veggie patch. We're very lucky to have had one of our grandma's keeping this tidy for us.

The children were excited to learn the Easter Bunny has sent word he'll be visiting soon and will be hiding some Easter eggs in the pre school garden for them to find. Weather willing we'll have a picnic in the garden during the hunt where the children can play and our parents get a chance to catch up with each other.

Another event on the pre school calendar fast approaching is our annual trip to Rushall Farm. This is always thoroughly enjoyed by the children and teachers! Feeding the baby lambs is an annual highlight!

## SPRING FAIR

In aid of church funds

SATURDAY 16TH MAY

IN THE OLD STABLES ROOMS

10 am TILL 12 noon

Plants, Home Made cakes, Raffle etc.

Refreshments

Come and celebrate Spring with a drink, a cake and a chat!

## Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre

On the last day of February, I went with Sandra Parkinson to the Thames Valley Environmental Records Centre (TVERC) Conference

The conference, held in Oxford's Natural History Museum, was attended by over 60 people from environmental groups throughout Berks, Bucks and Oxfordshire. Presentations from a variety of speakers and then workshops in the afternoon made for a busy extremely interesting day.

Some snippets:

- Judy Webb on Seed Banks - i.e. where plants have self-seeded where they grow. This is a complex subject very important to helping rare plants survive and thrive. But here's a basic point: perennials' seeds remain viable for only one or two years, but the viability of annuals' seeds is much longer.
- David Wilding on Birds at Otmoor Nature Reserve and RSPB's successful reestablishment of lapwing populations. Night photography revealed a series of egg-eating predators, including foxes, badgers and lambs. A fence has made all the difference. However Red Kites (contrary to their traditional dietary habit) have been seen to take live chicks.
- Dr Jeremy Biggs on the Use of eDNA (environmental DNA) in gathering records: Establishing the presence of the Great Crested Newts' DNA in pond water is proving a very efficient detection method. Whether the newt DNA is retained for longer in sediment is not yet known.
- Dr Paul Waring on the use of species-specific pheromone lures to ascertain the presence of moth populations - again, a modern technique proving a useful addition to recorders.

In the afternoon, Sandra - in a workshop led by Dr Darren Mann - was delighted with the chance to see into the huge (over 5 million insects) Hope Entomological Collections. Meanwhile I was busy learning about mammal tracks and other signs they leave behind: 'Poo, prints and more' with Dr Merryl Gelling. This should stand us in good stead for next time WoTHABS has an Explorers' Day for children.

**Do please pass on details of wildlife sightings to TVERC online at [sightings.tverc.org](http://sightings.tverc.org)** and whether for single or more sightings, when you do so, do not send in the same record to another online recording site, so there is no duplication of the record/s.

Gill Goodwin

# WHITCHURCH CRICKET CLUB

Spring is nearly here- so it's time for you to whiten your pads and oil your bat!

Whitchurch Cricket club invite you to play for us this season. We are a welcoming club playing friendly games most Saturdays and Sundays through the season.

We also invite you to join us for Indoor Cricket Nets on Monday evenings at Bradfield Sports Centre. The first net is [Monday 9 March between 8.15pm and 9.15pm](#) and the last [on Monday 13 April](#). Cost this year will be £5 per session; colts and students free. We've got 2 nets every evening so there'll be lots of opportunity to bat and bowl. Thereby ensuring that you pull and strain every muscle you haven't used in the last 5 months and can't move for two days after. Post-net recovery will be in the Greyhound at Tidmarsh.

Pre season work parties will take place on the weekends of **Sat 28 / Sun 29 March** and **Sat 4 / Sun 5 April**. There's no better way to nudge yourself up the batting order!

We have a thirty year agreement with the Parish Council allowing us to play cricket on the ground without charges. This allows us to make playing great value for money- especially for students and concessions. We hope you can be a big part of it.

If interested, please email David Mattimoe [theloafs@btinternet.com](mailto:theloafs@btinternet.com)



## **Beating the bounds (well, some of them)**

Whitchurch and Whitchurch Hill were once one village in one Parish and in one administrative area. Now the villages are in separate administrative areas, each with their own Parish Council. The original boundary of the villages when combined was shown by the Reverend Slatter in his 1895 sketch (see below and note the inclusion of part of Sulham!). Martin Wise followed and depicted the whole land route for the Whitchurch Hill millenium exhibition.

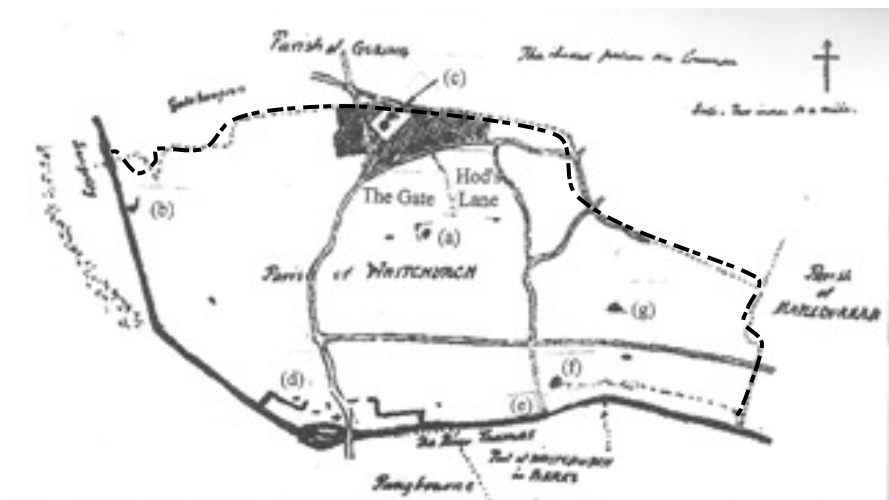
Apart from the Sulham variation the river formed and forms our southern boundary and on our western flank the boundary rises north east from the river along the edge of Upper Hartslock Wood. It passed Mount Pleasant Farm (with Goring as our neighbour) and then ran east below Mount Pleasant Farm towards Boundary House where it passed between two trees. It then continued eastwards to meet and cross our B471 to the northern side of Hill Bottom Road. Then following east, it went behind The Sun, across the fields, almost directly to Ladygrove Farm. This section enclosed Whitchurch Common, the common land of the villagers before it was forcibly enclosed in the 1800s.

At Ladygrove it is now the byway which crosses our Path Hill Road to continue as Bunces Lane to Collins End and then into the top edge of Long Ground Plantation above Holly Copse Cottage. It follows through the plantation until it meets our eastern and obvious boundary with Mapledurham. Here it turns south to drop to the valley floor and then rises to the rear of Westford Hill Copse and again down by East Lodge to rejoin the river.

An old custom, still practised in parts of the country, is to walk and beat the boundary (with flails of twigs) usually on Rogation Sunday (10 May this year).

The parish priest would bless the boundary at defined points and in some areas the village children were beaten or bumped at these points to ensure that they remembered the boundary location when it became their turn to safeguard it.

Much of our boundary is now on private land and inaccessible and therefore difficult to follow or 'beat' but we can follow some of its route and once it reaches our Hardwick estate it is possible to get reasonably close. Sir Julian has recently kindly given us permission to access these boundary following paths and I hope to plan a walk that will allow us to celebrate our good fortune in living here together and to meet and beat (including the children!).



With my compliments to the Reverend John Slatter and Martin Wise - Eric Hartley

# **WHITCHURCH HILL FETE**

**BANK HOLIDAY SATURDAY**

**23<sup>rd</sup> MAY**

**STARTING AT 2PM**

**Whitchurch Hill Recreation Ground**

**25 Piece Concert Band**

**Bottle Stall**

**Stalls & Games**

**Fun Dog Show**

**Beer and Tea Tents**

**Barbecue**

**Punch & Judy**

**Raffle**

**Children's Races**

**Swingboats**

**Candy Floss**

*'A Fun Day out for all the family!'*

**Goring Heath and Whitchurch**

# **SPRING SHOW**

**Goring Heath Parish Hall**

**Saturday  
11th April 2015**

Open to the Public 2.30 - 4.00 pm

**Competition classes include Flowers, Fruit and  
Vegetables, Flower Arranging, Eggs, Art,  
Handicrafts,  
Photography, Baking and Preserves and a  
Class for Children up to 12 years**

**\* Raffle \* Refreshments \* Plant Sale \***

For schedules and entry forms contact

Liz Gibson 01189 842012

Sue Sexon 01189 844236

Denyse Williams 01189 841139

Helen Willis 01189 843620

**Or download an entry form from**

**[www.whitchurchonthames.com/diary.php](http://www.whitchurchonthames.com/diary.php)**

**[www.goringheath.com](http://www.goringheath.com)**

Goring Heath Parish Charity

Regd. No 1056772

***Mike Holland's Quiz Night***

***Is back in***

***Goring Heath Parish Hall***

***on***

***Saturday 21st March***

***8pm***

*There is plenty of time*

*to get a team together, so don't miss out.*

*There will be food and drinks to simulate the brain.*

*So book a table now - £10 per person.*

*Phone Mike on 0118 984 4867*

*Or*

***Theresa on 0118 984 2056***

## **Dido and Aeneas in Concert!**

The South Chiltern Choral Society is performing Purcell's Dido and Aeneas, Zadok the Priest by Handel, and Purcell's Come Ye Sons of Art. Professional soloists and orchestra will accompany the choir at the Great Hall, Reading University, London Road on Sunday 29 March at 6pm.

This is the second concert directed by South Chiltern Choral Society's new conductor, Paul Burke, after his successful Christmas debut.

Tickets can be obtained from [www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk](http://www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk), or by calling Caroline Jones on 07500 032840. Adults £12, under 21s £6.

Dido and Aeneas is Purcell's first opera, and one of the earliest English operas, composed about 1688. The basis of the story is Virgil's Aeneid and tells the love of Dido, Queen of Carthage for Aeneas, the Trojan hero. The well-known lament 'When I Am Laid in Earth' describes her despair.

Handel composed Zadok the Priest for the coronation of George II in 1727. Since then, every British coronation has included the work. Purcell composed the jubilant Come Ye Sons of Art for the birthday of Queen Mary II in 1694.

Come and hear Paul Burke and the South Chiltern Choral Society celebrate English music in the beautiful setting of the University's Great Hall on Sunday 29 March at 6pm. Tickets from [www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk](http://www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk)

David Doidge      Publicity Manager and Webmaster

South Chiltern Choral Society      Telephone: 0118 9724174

Mobile: 07866 718430

[www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk](http://www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk)

# DIARY DATES

Contributions welcome for this column if anyone knows of a date that would be of interest to the village.

## MARCH

- 14<sup>th</sup> Sat Church Yard Tidy Up  
19<sup>th</sup> Thurs History Society  
21<sup>st</sup> Sat Quiz Goring Heath Village Hall 8pm  
Litter Blitz  
29<sup>th</sup> Sun SCCS Concert  
30<sup>th</sup> Mon New system starts at Woodcote Library

## APRIL

- 11<sup>th</sup> Sat Spring garden Show  
16<sup>th</sup> Thurs History Society Meeting

## MAY

- 2-4 Twinning Visitors  
16<sup>th</sup> Sat Spring Fair  
23<sup>rd</sup> BH Sat Whitchurch Hill Fete

## JUNE

- 7<sup>th</sup> Sun Garden Walks

## THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN

will be published in May 2015

Please send your contributions **preferably by e-mail to**

[Sarah.pongo@btconnect.com](mailto:Sarah.pongo@btconnect.com) 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015

Views of individual contributors  
are the views of those contributors,  
and are not necessarily the views of the Parish Council, or the  
editor