

# **The Bulletin of Whitchurch on Thames**

**Whitchurchonthames.com**

**November 2014**

Since the last issue of the Bulletin there have been two events which denote the end of an era. The Bridge is back in service again with a brand new smooth surface and brilliant white paint. At last that long trip round by Streatley is no longer needed. And Nigel Grove has decided to stand down from the Parish Council.

Nigel has lived here for as many years as anyone in the Village during which he has been deeply involved in Village life. On behalf of the Parish Council I can say that we hope he will continue to give us the benefit of his detailed understanding and knowledge of the Village for many years to come.

Now we have a spanking new bridge there are going to be heavy lorries taking the chance of getting across. There is a 7.5 tonne weight limit through the Village and the Bridge Company says that it will apply a similar limit. Nevertheless it is hardly reasonable to ask a toll booth attendant to take on forty tonnes of truck. So everyone should know how to recognise an over weight vehicle and what to do about it.

All the information is available on the Village web site. Go to the LINKS page and click on the link in the line that refers to heavy vehicles.

There is a lot more information there, such as what to do about fly tipping.

Before leaving the subject of the bridge completely I do need to comment that our Traffic and Pavements Advisory Group (TaPAG) still feels that aspects of pedestrian safety might have received a bit more attention while the opportunity for improvement with minimum additional disturbance offered itself. The state of the railings on the southern approach suggest that improvements really are desirable. You may be interested to read Geoff Weir's note later in this issue of the Bulletin.

Turning to more every day matters, there have been a couple of tedious cases of vandalism on the Village Green. On at least two occasions seats have been badly damaged. They have been repaired by volunteers and are back in service. There have also been several thefts from garden sheds. Recent events include the loss of a petrol mower from Manor Road and the truck which got through two padlocked gates to get into the allotment area. The shed which was broken into was expected to contain a brand new mower but as it happened the mower had been taken away for its initial check-up. This suggests that whoever the people in that truck were, they were not casual spur-of-the-moment lightfingers.

The police crack down on thieves in Henley is causing the miscreants to turn their attention to outlying areas. To combat this and similar upsetting events the Whitchurch SmartWater project was set up by the Thames Valley Police and is heavily sponsored by them. The normal cost per household for a kit that will mark about 50 items is over £60. Thames Valley Police are offering it for £10.

Just to remind anyone who has not yet joined in, the objective is to get as many of our valued items as possible marked with SmartWater. The police tell us that makes them traceable right back to their rightful owner. Once 80% of our homes are using SmartWater the Thames Valley Police will supply and install a roadside sign for each of the three access points to the Village. Then any miscreants who may consider causing distress in our Village will realise that theft in Whitchurch is just too much of a risk.

We are told by the police that once the signs are up their experience is that the crime rate drops *by* 80%. Our local policeman Mark Bell will be at the Village Hall from 3 until 5 on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup>. See later in this issue for further details.

### A Defibrillator in the Village?

Our Village has an unusual proportion of retired people and it appears that there is strong support for fast access to a defibrillator.

The recent Parish Council meeting was addressed by Rev S. Cartwright, Community Liaison & Training Officer, South Central

Ambulance Service NHS Foundation Trust who is responsible for looking after public access to these portable units.

He gave a comprehensive and detailed overview of the equipment demonstrating the ease of use. The device literally talks you through step by step and will refuse to shock the patient unless its analysis confirms that a shock is the only correct way to proceed. He pointed out that of the 140 thousand cardiac arrests per year only 5% survive, but with access to a portable defibrillator this rate could increase to 85%.

Grants are available from the British Heart Foundation but they do not allow the unit to be kept in a locked cabinet.

He advised that the Central Ambulance Service has agreement with Well Medical to source units at a reduced price of £841.75. The cost of the cabinet with a combination lock is extra at £540. Total cost would be £1382. Battery cost is £120 when renewal is required.

The cabinet will be locked, but the 999 operator will give the caller the number which will open the door.

The PC will receive a Big Society Grant of £500 towards this unit. We will need to raise the additional £782 so the PC can secure the unit. I will appreciate hearing from anyone who can help.

One location suggested is the old phone box in the High Street. This already belongs to the community but will need to be checked for electrical power source as the cabinet needs power, not least for the winter months to keep the unit at a temperature that is easily handled.

*Harry Butterworth*

## **The Arts and Crafts Exhibition**

With a bit of luck and a following wind this Bulletin will reach you before the Exhibition opens. It is a display of the things our community enjoys doing and as such is a very important part of whatever it is that makes Whitchurch so special.

So check out the advertisement later in this issue  
get along to the Village Hall  
and enjoy being part of our Village Life.

## Reporting foul drainage problems to Thames Water

During the river floods of January and February this year a number of Whitchurch houses, mainly in Eastfield Lane, had problems with their foul drainage. Many people noticed an unusually slow discharge of water from the toilet bowl after flushing. There were also a few instances of sewage overflowing into a garden.

Recently the Parish Council held a meeting with staff of Thames Water who are responsible for our water supply and drainage, to discuss the problem and to ask them to investigate. They agreed to do so and said they would start by looking for places where surface water may be able to enter the sewage collection system during a flood. They said they would probably install instruments at several locations within the system so that they can monitor flows and levels during a future flood.

Thames Water emphasised that they want to encourage householders to report any difficulties as soon as they occur. They have a special telephone number for this which is available 24 hours a day:

**0800 316 9800**

They said individual reports are important to them as they help them to pinpoint the nature and extent of the problem so that they can work out how to avoid it in future. So the message is: If you have a drainage problem, don't hesitate to tell Thames Water about it !

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### **Whitchurch and Goring Heath History Society**

Our last meeting this year is on November 20th when the subject is "Famous People of the Chilterns".

The meeting starts at 8pm, with coffee available from 7.30pm, and is at the Goring Heath Parish Hall at Whitchurch Hill. Non-members very welcome, £2 which includes coffee.

In January we move down to Whitchurch Village Hall for a members evening on January 15th 2015.

**It was there yesterday!**

**It is not there now!**

**Help to stamp out theft and vandalism  
in our Village**

**If you are not already using SmartWater  
get along to the Village Hall  
on Saturday 22nd of November  
between 2p.m and 4 pm.  
Our local policeman Mark Bell  
will be there to explain the SmartWater project.**

**Mark will have with him SmartWater kits  
which the Thames Valley Police are offering  
at the heavily discounted price of £10**

**This project has the enthusiastic approval  
of the  
Parish Council**

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**“A Bridge Reborn”**

Nick Brazil's documentary "A Bridge is Reborn" telling the story of the rebuilding of the Whitchurch Bridge is now available for £12:50 per dvd (PAL Format) and can be obtained by contacting Nick by phone on 01189841602 (24 hrs callanswer) or via e-mail on [nicholasbrazil@btinternet.com](mailto:nicholasbrazil@btinternet.com).

I am also trying to arrange a showing at the village hall sometime before Christmas.

# Whitchurch Bridge

The Bridge reopened on 19<sup>th</sup> September – much later than we would have liked, but the inevitable consequence of the high river levels last winter and to a lesser extent the structural problems encountered during demolition. The Company again apologises to all those whose journeys were disrupted during the Bridge closure.

We were very pleased and not a little surprised by the crowds who turned up for the opening ceremony, David Card's 1902 De Dion Bouton was a great way to open the Bridge and was much photographed.

Our next project will be to widen the road and pavement on the Pangbourne approach. This will need careful planning if we are to avoid damaging the character of this area: the existing railings are not compliant with current highway standards and there are trees close to the highway on both sides which may need to be felled. We will consult widely on the details of this scheme, which in any case will not get under way until we have built up the necessary funds.

We are submitting a Toll Application to the Secretary of State for Transport to increase the Toll from 40p to 60p, under the process laid down in the 1954 Transport and Miscellaneous Charges Act (there's a copy on our website). We will publish the Toll Application on our website, and anyone is entitled to comment on any fact or assertion in it through a public consultation process administered by the Department for Transport. The Secretary of State will only approve the increase if he/she believes it to be justified on the facts.

Finally, may I thank you for the courtesy shown to our Toll Collectors, who do their best to collect the Tolls efficiently and good-humouredly.

Geoff Weir  
Company Secretary, the Whitchurch Bridge Company  
[www.whitchurchbridge.com](http://www.whitchurchbridge.com)

# NEW YEAR'S DAY WALK 2015

Meet at the Maze at 11:00 hrs for a walk of just over 5 miles. Our route will once again follow Hardwick Road to the first footpath on the left which we will take to enter the nearby field and then cross over and up to the Baulk.

At Path Hill Farm we will turn right to enter Bottom Wood and then drop down to the permissive path which will take us to Bottom Farm and Mapledurham.

Our return will follow the Tuddingway to and through Hardwick, then to home and, hopefully, a New Year's drink at the Greyhound.

Eric Hartley



## The Goring Chamber Choir Christmas Concert

entitled *In Dulci Jubilo* will take place on Sunday 14th December at 3pm in St Thomas' church, Goring. The concert will be a popular and festive programme of favourite carols for choir and audience, including *In dulci jubilo*, Rutter's *Nativity Carol*, Darke's setting of *In the bleak midwinter*, *Three kings from Persian lands afar*, and well-known traditional carols such as *The angel Gabriel*, *Jingle bells*, *We wish you a merry Christmas*, *Silent night* and many more. The accompanist is Jonathan Holl, a well-recognised organ recitalist in the area.

Ticket prices are £12 (full), £10 (concessions) and £5 (students) and are on sale at Inspirations in Goring, from Choir members, and on the door (subject to availability). Refreshments will be sold at the interval. Proceeds will be in support of the Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation.

## *Whitchurch Pre School*

*We've been enjoying our 'under the sea' theme, which the play team worked really hard to put together. The children will be using their creative skills to ensure a great display at the Whitchurch Art Exhibition on 15 November. Our parents have been busying themselves with all the odd jobs that need doing on a regular basis - building, planting & cleaning - in order to keep pre school a great place to play. And, we've been enjoying the wonderful weather we're still experiencing having a lovely time outside enjoying walks to the maze and the cricket field. And last, but not least, this term we'll be busying ourselves practising for our Nativity play.*

*The staff & children at pre school would like to say a big thank you to everyone in the village who supports us so generously.*

*Many thanks  
Scarlet*

### **COMMUNITY**

#### **COFFEE MORNINGS**

**EVERY TUESDAY IN TERM TIME**

**10.30 am - 12 noon**

**IN THE OLD STABLES ROOM**

**FREE REFRESHMENTS AND FRIENDLY CHATTER**

**Toys for the children**

**Volunteers needed to help make coffee etc.**

Contact Yvonne on 984 1424

# **Thames Valley Fungus Group & WoTHabs Joint Event**

**Held at Chalkhills on 12<sup>th</sup> October for National Fungus Day 2014**

**TVFG Foray (morning) and Foray for Families (afternoon)**

Despite the fine weather, attendance was low compared with 2013.

Members of Thames Valley Fungus Group visited Sandra at Chalkhills on the Friday before, to deliver specimens collected from Berkshire and to find what they could on site. Our long spell of fine weather hadn't favoured the growth of fungi, but a foray on Chalkhills managed to produce a couple of dozen species for a display in one of the barns. An additional set of specimens from sites in Hampshire and Berkshire was brought along by TVFG members in the afternoon.

Thanks to Sally and to John Bradon for their help on the day.

## **Squash and Pumpkin Festival at Hardwick 19<sup>th</sup> October**

Sandra and Sally again had a tent at this event which, like last year's, was well attended.

Sally had a WoTHabs corner and ran the 'Buzz The Toadstool' game and competition for children (and adults!). The prize for the shortest time to identify 12 toadstools was won by a young girl from Woodcote - her recorded time was a brilliant 34 seconds!

Sandra had set up a static Fungus Display outside the tent, with many and various free information leaflets from the British Mycological Society inside it, for visitors to take away. The fungus display was not as varied as last year, as there had still not been a good 'flush' of fungi, but many people stopped to look at it and ask questions.

# Concert of Christmas Music

In aid of Church funds and READING STREET PASTORS

## Featuring

The Ferryboat Brass

with GUEST SOLOISTS

With opportunity to sing many carols

Saturday **6**<sup>th</sup> December

ST Mary's Church

whitchurch-on-thames

at 7:30pm Doors open at 7pm

Tickets £10 or £5 for under 10's

Available from The Ferryboat

SPONSORED



## **News from Woodcote Library**

As the Autumn season has now firmly taken hold – it's the perfect time to curl up indoors with a good book. Be sure to pop in and pick one up soon.

As promised to all our lovely Mythical Maze Summer Reading Challenge finishers, your picture is in the Correspondent this month in the picture section. Hope we got all your best smiles!

Please remember the AGE UK pop in session between 2-4pm on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November.

Our popular Rhymetime sessions for the Under 5's continues every Thursday during term time at 10am.

The next date for our Adult Book Club is Monday 17<sup>th</sup> November 2014 at 6pm. New members are always welcome.

## **OWL - Our Woodcote Library**

We are now in a position to ask for volunteer help in the library, starting in the new year. A meeting will be held in the library on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> November in the evening to explain what this involves.

There will be training, at Central Library, Oxford, and of course at Woodcote.

More details will be available soon.

## **Whitchurch Mobile Library**

A consultation is taking place over the future of the service. It is therefore vital that now and in the future we support the library. The van comes every other Tuesday from 9.30 am to 10 am parking in Manor Road next to the play area.

## **Would you be interested in joining a thriving retired business professionals club?**

The **South Oxfordshire Probus Club** was formed in May 2012 and now has 43 active members who are retired or semi retired having held senior positions in commerce, industry, public sector and academia. Meetings are held monthly on the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday of each month at the White Hart Hotel in Dorchester on Thames. Each meeting consists of an interesting talk and the subjects have included Crime on the Oxford Road, Canals of Oxfordshire, Bermuda Triangle, Met Man in the Antarctic, Oxford University, Charles Dickens as a Social Reformer, Wildlife Gardening, Pendon Museum, Mount Everest, the Railways of Oxfordshire and many others. Following the talk a quality 2 course lunch is served.

There are also social activities for members that have included trips to the BMW Cowley Mini Plant, Jaguar Cars, Culham Laboratory - Jet Taurus Project, Silverstone Vintage Racing Day, Golf Day, Morgan Cars, etc. There are also social events with partners that have included trips to the BBC, the Palace of Westminster, theatre trips, cruise on the Thames, country walks, etc. Next year trips to Bletchley Park, Warner Bros Studios, Honda Cars and the Diamond Light Project at Harwell are planned.

Probus is a great way to make new friends and acquaintances. If you are interested in joining then send an email to our Chairman[soxprobusclub@gmail.com] telling him about your professional background and interests.

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### **BUS TIMETABLE**

**For your purse, handbag or wallet:**

**143 Bus times:**

To Reading - 08:02; 10:02; 11:42; 14:02; 16:32

To Whitchurch - 09:00; 10:40; 13:00; 15:30; 17:20

Eric

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# **Silver Surfers Inspire 4 Life**

## **Computer Tuition for the over 50's**

### **IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO LEARN COMPUTER SKILLS**

In January 2015 Silver Surfers will be running their popular complete beginners course which will run for 12 weeks. At the end of the course you will be able to surf the internet confidently, send, receive and delete emails and type letters which you will be able to file for quick and easy retrieval. The course is led by a lead instructor and each student has their own individual instructor.

Courses are held at The Barn, Goosecroft Lane, off Beech Road, Purley on Thames RG8 8DR where there is ample parking. The cost of the course is £25

For further details and other courses that we run please call us on 07743 293165 and leave a message or alternatively you can email [course@inspire4life.me.uk](mailto:course@inspire4life.me.uk)

We look forward to hearing from you.

Geoff Chivers  
Chair  
Silver Surfers Inspire 4 Life

## **AN IMPORTANT MESSAGE FROM PANGBOURNE & DISRICT COMMUNITY 1<sup>st</sup> RESPONDERS**

If you call an ambulance, police or the fire brigade to your home, how easily will they be able to identify and find your house?

Many homes in this area have names rather than numbers and may also be set back from the road making house names or numbers hard to see. Especially as the evenings and dark nights draw in and many of the minor roads have little or no street lighting. In the event that you have to call the emergency services, think of how you can help them to find you as quickly as possible. For example, have someone stand outside the house or leave your front door open with the outside lights on. If you have a car on your driveway, please switch on the hazard warning lights as these can easily be seen.

*Help the emergency services find your home and save precious minutes that can make a huge difference.*

Sean Wheeler  
Ext 5503 Pager #6571  
0118 9135503  
Technical Services Team  
Facilities Management  
SPOG1

### **PAWS Meetings**

**November**     **Film: Trashed - ‘No Place For Waste’**  
**Starring Jeremy Irons** Thursday 27 Nov  
Pangbourne Village Hall – 8pm

**December**     Christmas Drinks Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> Elephant

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## News from Basildon Park

We've just finished a very busy October half-term - the fire has been roaring in the Gardener's Sitting Room as children sit cross-legged on rugs and listen to tales of magic and broomsticks. Basildon beasts have been created by participants of the Halloween trail and colonies of origami bats have been made in the Old Kitchen.

During November, we are commemorating the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the First World War with our Poems and Poppies trail. We'll be using the words of the poets to tell the stories of those who fought and those who remained at home waiting for news.

Preparations for Christmas are well under way here. The shop is brimming with cards, baubles, biscuits and a smattering of decorations have started to appear in the house.

During December, come and wander through our Enchanted Forest where toadstools speckle the woodland floor and doors to fairy houses nestle in the trunks of ancient trees. Weave your way through the forest and the gardens beyond with our Christmas trail as you follow the rhyming clues. Afterwards, step inside the golden house where there'll be Christmas trees dressed with lights and topped with a star and icicles dangling from the chandeliers. The decorations will be up from 29<sup>th</sup> November until 6<sup>th</sup> January. We are open every day except Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

We look forward to seeing you soon!

For more information visit [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/basildon-park](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/basildon-park) or call 01491 672382.

### **Come and join us!**

We're a friendly bunch here at Basildon Park and we love it when new people join our team. Whatever you like doing and whatever your skills, we have a volunteer role for you.

Our next Volunteer Open Day is on Friday 14<sup>th</sup> November. Come along and chat to our team about how you can get involved at Basildon Park.

If you can't make it, we'd still love to hear from you. Drop us an email to [volunteer.basildonpark@nationaltrust.org.uk](mailto:volunteer.basildonpark@nationaltrust.org.uk) or call us on 01491 672382

# DIARY DATES

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

## NOVEMBER

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup>           ART & CRAFT Exhibition  
Thursday 20<sup>th</sup>           History Society meeting  
Thursday 27<sup>th</sup>           PAWS film

## DECEMBER

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup>            Ferry Boat Christmas Concert  
Sunday 14<sup>th</sup>            Goring Chamber Choir concert  
Thursday 18<sup>th</sup>         PAWS Christmas drinks

## JANUARY

Thursday 1<sup>st</sup>            New Year's Day Walk

## THE NEXT ISSUE OF THE BULLETIN

will be published in January 2015

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

[Sarah.pongo@btconnect.com](mailto:Sarah.pongo@btconnect.com) by 8th January 2015

Views of individual contributors

are the views of those contributors,

and are not necessarily the views of the Parish Council, or the editor