

BLETCHINGTON VILLAGE NEWS

YOUR COMMUNITY MAGAZINE – SERVING THE VILLAGE SINCE 1979

ISSUE 268

February – March 2024



Frozen Pond on Bletchington Park Estate

Reports from village organisations

Bletchington celebrates Christmas & New Year

Inter-Generation Christmas Football Tournament

Park Hill Recreation Ground Junior Parkrun

Art at Hillcrest

BLECHINGTON CELEBRATES CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR



The Village Hall Christmas lights



Christmas Lights event: the Band play carols



Fred's gift from Santa after the Christmas Football



Club goers get in the Christmas spirit



New Year's Eve: Tommy plays his Tunes again



Bleth folk see in the New Year at the Club

EDITORIAL

I hope you all had an enjoyable Christmas and I wish everyone a very happy New Year. Bletchington did not run a formal village advent calendar this year, as we have done for the past few Christmases – perhaps that idea has run its course now – but there were still plenty of beautiful lights and other decorations to be seen all around the village. A big thank you to everyone who made the effort to brighten up the village over the festive season. Thanks also to the trustees of the Bletchington Community Foundation for organising a lovely evening to mark the turning on of the Village Hall lights, accompanied by mulled wine and carols played by Bletchington Silver Band.

Thanks also to the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group for their hard work and dedication in putting our village plan together. It seems very likely that we will be required to accommodate some further housing development in the village in the coming years and whilst it is apparent that we will have little say over whether this happens or how many homes it will involve, we can, through the plan, set out our guidance on the type of homes needed, where they go within the village and any other infrastructure needed to support the development. At the meeting held in the run-up to Christmas in the very serene setting of St. Giles' Church, complete with its Christmas tree and nativity scene we were updated with the latest details of the plan and advised that further views are sought from the community. This is very important for the long-term future of our village. A form was provided to attendees to submit their views but if you were unable to attend, please visit the Bletchington Parish website, then go to the Neighbourhood Planning page for details about the plan to date and to download a copy of the feedback form for you to submit your views to the Steering Group. This feedback will enable them to consider as many views as possible from the community when formulating the final plan. For further information see the article on Page 19.

This is **your** Village News. Two things need to come together to produce a great magazine for the village. Firstly, we are reliant upon material from you, the readers. We love to hear from new contributors so if you haven't sent us an article or a photograph before, why not make it a New Year's resolution to do so this year. If you have something to say of interest to the community and don't fancy writing, we can capture your thoughts via an interview and write the article on your behalf. Secondly, in order to produce a free magazine for readers, we need the financial support of our advertisers. I would like to say a massive thank you to all our advertisers for your continuing support. If you run a local business and don't currently advertise with us, please consider doing so – we're very much volunteer run, but our printing costs don't come cheap. Please get in touch with us via e-mail at bletnnews@gmail.com. The deadline for articles is always the **18th of the month** prior to publication – so articles for inclusion in the April/May magazine must reach us by **18th March**.

bletnnews@gmail.com

Pete Baker

Defibrillators

We now have three defibrillators in the village, located at the Village Hall on the side nearest to the Co-op, at the Sports & Social Club and now a third, new defibrillator, sited at the Black's Head public house.

To access these devices, you will need to call 999 to obtain a code whilst also requesting an ambulance. Instructions on how to use the defibrillators and how to keep the patient safe are posted close by. Your prompt action before the ambulance arrives may save a life.

If you would like training in the use of the defibrillators, a course is being held at the Village Hall on 9th March at 7:30pm. Places are limited so need to be booked in advance with the Parish Council – if you are interested, please see Page 27 for further details.



Could you be our new school governor?

Looking for a New Year challenge? Perhaps you would like to make a difference in the community. If so, Bletchington School is looking for another governor to join its board – and that could be you. This is a wonderful way to contribute to our community. The role requires time, skill and commitment but you would be joining a strong team with training available. Interested? If this is the challenge you are seeking, please drop an e-mail to boster@bletchington.oxon.sch.uk to register your interest or request further information.

Parliamentary constituency changes

A general election is expected some time this year (it could go to January 2025). As a result of population growth in the county, this will see Oxfordshire returning an additional MP to parliament by the creation of a new constituency – Bicester and Woodstock. This will incorporate Bletchington, placing us in a much more appropriate constituency, based on our geographic location. It always seemed rather strange that we were positioned in a constituency named Henley which is just about as far away as you can get from Bletchington within Oxfordshire – no doubt this was done to balance out the electorate numbers.

Our new constituency brings in elements from a total of four of the old constituencies. It will also include Kidlington, Yarnton and Eynsham as well as numerous other villages within this area. Meanwhile our old Henley constituency is renamed Henley & Thame whilst Wantage becomes Didcot & Wantage, reflecting the importance of the towns added to these constituency names.

Garden waste collections

Residents are reminded that it is now time to renew your garden waste collection subscriptions. In order to continue receiving this service you must renew by 29th February. The cost for the year commencing 1st March 2024 is £49 per subscription. If you used this service last year you should have received an e-mail reminder containing a link for renewal, otherwise, to sign up for this service, visit the Cherwell District Council website, select the 'Rubbish & Recycling' tab, then select 'Garden waste - subscription' and follow instructions. Have debit or credit card ready to make the payment. If you are unable to renew on-line, please call 01295 227003.

Household DIY waste disposal

Oxfordshire residents can now dispose of limited amounts of DIY waste for free at the county's household waste recycling centres (HWRCs) by using an online booking system. The booking system launched by Oxfordshire County Council means householders wanting to use their free DIY waste allocation will need to book in advance through the OCC website (select 'Waste & Recycling'). The move follows a change in government legislation which now permits small amounts of household DIY waste to be disposed of for free.

Online bookings for free DIY waste only are for a single visit. You will need to register your address, vehicle registration number, email address, and the date you wish to visit, along with the site you want to use. You will then receive an immediate email confirmation of the booking, which must be shown to site team on arrival. It is important residents stick to the booked date otherwise you may be charged, and only authorised bookings will be accepted.

Free allocations are limited to five standard DIY items for free, or one plasterboard sheet, once every seven days. Where more than the allocated free allowance is presented, the cheapest items will be treated as free. Any DIY waste above this level or deposited more frequently than every seven days will remain fully chargeable at the advertised rates. Full details and examples of charging scenarios are available on the OCC website and will be displayed on-site.

Full enforcement of the booking system goes live on 1st February. Booking is only required for the free allocation of DIY waste. Any other chargeable DIY waste or other household waste does not require a booking, apart from the existing booking system for asbestos.

ST. GILES' CHURCH NEWS

We are part of the AKEMAN BENEFICE (Bletchington, Kirtlington, Weston-on-the-Green, Chesterton, Middleton Stoney, Wendlebury and Hampton Gay). The benefice is named after Akeman Street, the Roman road which runs through it.



Ministry Team

Rector: The Rev'd Gareth Miller	01869 350224	akemanbenefice@gmail.com
Associate Priest: The Rev'd Nick Ktorides	01869 324191	nickktorides.akeman@gmail.com
Assistant Priest: The Very Rev'd Robert Wilkes	01869 350159	bobwilkes.akeman@gmail.com
Licensed Lay Minister: Paul Clifford	01869 351652	paulclifford.akeman@gmail.com
Safeguarding Officer: Nicky Donne	01869 351748	safeguarding.akeman@gmail.com
Benefice Website:	www.akemanbenefice.org.uk	
Churchwarden:	Judith Ledger	Treasurer: Kate Ehrman
Assistant Churchwarden:	Fiona Teddy	Members of the PCC: Natasha Pitts
Secretary:	Pam Hayes	Sally Cross

If you or anyone you know would like to talk to a member of the ministry team please do not hesitate to phone or email.

A small prayer group meets remotely each Wednesday morning. If you would like to join or if you have a request for prayer, please phone 351542. The church remains open each day for private prayer.

Details of services and an introduction to the ministry team together with information about the benefice churches can be found on our website at: www.akemanbenefice.org.uk.

From the registers:

9 th January	Derek Thomas Smith	Funeral
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The funeral of Derek Thomas Smith took place at St. Giles on Tuesday 9th January. We extend our deepest condolences to Heather, Grace, Sara and all Derek's family.

Rector's sabbatical

As reported in the previous edition of Village News, Gareth is now on his well-deserved sabbatical which continues until early April. During this time, he will not be responding to emails or telephone messages. All enquiries should be directed to other members of the ministry team or the churchwardens, if appropriate. If you are unsure whom to ask, please contact our administrator, Julie Andrews, at:

enquiries.akeman@gmail.com.

FROM NOW ON

Hugh Jackman dances and sings his way through “The Greatest Showman” with a great deal of panache as the film tells a version of the story of PT Barnum, the founder of the spectacular ‘circuses’, of his rise, his downfall and his recovery. Barnum’s gifts and his flaws are central to the story, and they provide an intriguing jumping-off point for the series of gatherings in people’s homes that is being organised by the church for the 5 weeks of Lent this year.

In each village a group will be meeting weekly, some of them in evenings, some groups in the daytime, with a chance to chat and get to know one another better over drinks and nibbles or tea and cake, and to reflect on a series of themes, by looking at excerpts from the film, reading passages from the Bible, and pondering over questions together. “From Now On” is the title of the material that is being used, which explores themes of hope, doubt, prejudice, faith and restoration. There are no ‘correct answers’ or churchy terminology in this process, but it is hoped that we will be able to listen to one another and support one another in an informal and welcoming environment.

If you have seen the film already you are as prepared as you need to be; if not, the material doesn’t depend on it and you can always be lent a DVD. In either case, do contact:

Joanna Clifford on: joannaclifford.akeman@gmail.com (07779 578088)

or Maggie Darby on: maggiedarby.akeman@gmail.com (07391 774640)

to express interest or find out more, or pick up an invitation leaflet from the back of your church.

In 2020 we started Lent groups in homes on a similar basis, but they were cut short by Covid restrictions. Many people had really appreciated the experience and are looking forward to an uninterrupted 5 weeks of gathering together. Do join in this time. The groups start in the week beginning 19th February and the final week is the week beginning 18th March. In Bletchington, the Lent group will be held on Mondays at 2.30pm. To find out more contact Judith at bletchington.akeman@gmail.com.

IN THE RECTOR’S ABSENCE – BOB WILKES WRITES...

The sight of a snowdrop is lovely. Part of the beauty is that a delicate flower makes its way into growth when the soil is cold if not frozen. I learn from experts that the tips of the snowdrop’s leaves are hardened to help them push through the hard surface. So we are glad to see delicate flower’s beauty and we respect its determination to make its presence felt. Good to see you, snowdrop!

I write this in the cold air of January for reading in February – which usually feels like a grey month. How is our heart doing at this time of year? It is some time since we said “Happy new year” to each other, and perhaps well-meant resolutions are fading.

We struggle with the daily feed from the news media. There are horrors. The destruction in Gaza, in an area where I used to work, is in the forefront but we know there are many other places of grief. In January the Post Office scandal gripped our attention. This got under my skin perhaps because this was about a solid institution in our country which should work well. Have business leaders, lawyers and Parliament all abandoned integrity? It is no help to boil up with angry accusations, but we do need the Public Enquiry to work with a will.

How does a Christian believer see leadership? Do we look to One who is reliable, honest, and deeply moral? Well yes – but not as we might expect. Following Christmas, the Church had the Epiphany season when we think about the leadership of Christ – yes, leadership in a vulnerable infant who became a refugee. The risen Jesus leads a kingdom of justice and love which will bring lasting healing.

The local Churches will have “From Now On” groups during Lent, with discussions based on the film “The greatest Showman” (see above). My hope is that we will be able to be open with each other, and encourage each other, about how we keep the faith and live in hope.

So, thank you, snowdrop! Let’s keep hoping and growing even when the ground feels hard and cold.

God bless!

Bob Wilkes (Retired Priest)

Church services for February & March

FEBRUARY 2024	Sunday 4th <i>2 before Lent</i>	Sunday 11th <i>1 before Lent</i>	Wedn'day 14th <i>Ash Wedn'day</i>	Sunday 18th <i>Lent 1</i>	Sunday 25th <i>Lent 2</i>
Bletchington	09:30 Morning Worship			09:30 Holy Communion	
Chesterton	08:00 Holy Comm. (said) 11:00 Family Service	11:00 Holy Communion	10:00 Holy Communion	11:00 Morning Worship	
Hampton Gay					
Kirtlington	11:00 Holy Communion	09:30 Holy Comm. (said) 16:00 Evensong	19:00 Holy Communion	11:00 Morning Worship	
Middleton Stoney	09:30 Morning Worship			09:30 Holy Communion	10:30 Holy Communion
Wendlebury	09:30 Holy Communion			09:30 Morning Worship	
Weston-on- the-Green	16:00 Evensong	11:00 Café Church		11:00 Holy Communion	

MARCH 2024	Sunday 3rd <i>Lent 3</i>	Sunday 10th <i>Lent 4</i>	Sunday 17th <i>Lent 5</i>	Sunday 24th <i>Palm Sunday</i>	Sunday 31st <i>Easter Sunday</i>
Bletchington	09:30 Morning Worship		09:30 Holy Communion		09:30 Holy Communion
Chesterton	08:00 Holy Comm. (said) 11:00 Family Service	11:00 Holy Communion	11:00 Café Church		11:00 Holy Communion
Hampton Gay					
Kirtlington	11:00 Holy Communion	09:30 Holy Communion (said) 16:00 Evensong	11:00 Morning Worship & Baptism	10:30 Procession & Holy Communion	11:00 Holy Communion
Middleton Stoney	09:30 Breakfast Church		09:30 Holy Communion		09:30 Holy Communion
Wendlebury	09:30 Holy Communion		09:30 Morning Worship		09:30 Holy Communion
Weston-on- the-Green	16:00 Evensong	11:00 Morning Worship	11:00 Holy Communion		11:00 Holy Communion

OBITUARIES

GWENDOLINE EMILY CATO (Gwennie) 1924 - 2023

Gwen was born in Bluetown on the Isle of Sheppey, Kent on Tuesday, 13th May, 1924. She was a twin with Doris; their maiden name was George. She was part of a happy family with seven brothers and sisters.

The family later moved to Minster-on-Sea, still on the Isle of Sheppey, and the family home was just a short walk to the seaside. They had a lovely house surrounded by countryside. It was a big happy family, although times were hard, money often short and her father had to walk about four miles to work every day. Gwen and her siblings always looked back and said they had a really lovely childhood.

Gwen spent her childhood days happily playing with her siblings in the lovely countryside around the home or on the beach. It was an idyllic life until war came. Gwen and her twin Doris joined WAAF and spent four and a half years being stationed in different parts of England, finally ending up at Heyford where she met her husband, Jack. They married shortly after the war and she moved into Jack's house in Northbrook where she had her first child, Pam.

Four years later they moved to Bletchingdon because of Pam needing to go to school. She was very proud of her brand new council house with its lovely big garden and spent much of her time tending to the garden, making it look lovely and helping Jack with the vegetables.

Later, as her daughter got older, she went to work in Oxford. She loved her job and there she met her lifelong friend, Rose. They remained very close friends right up until the end. She finished work when she had her second child, Ian.

After Ian was born, she didn't work any more and became a full-time housewife. She dearly loved all her large family and always kept in touch with them all, keeping the families together. She loved having family and friends to visit and many used to come and stay for holidays.

After her husband Jack died, she worked for a short time in the 'big house' in Bletchingdon Park. She enjoyed working with some of the other people in the village as she said it helped to take away the loneliness and she became friends with more of the village.

Gwen lost her husband in 1978 and never wanted to re-marry. Her twin always spent time with her and when she retired, moved back in permanently. They both enjoyed the same; keeping house, gardening and entertaining. They trusted everybody and always invited people in for tea whether they knew them or not, all they needed to do was knock on the door. It was a weekly stopping place for the dustmen who always had tea and biscuits.

Some of the grandchildren used to call Nan's house The Corner Café.

She was a very caring person, looking after her Mum and Dad and having her dad to stay when he became poorly and also looked after the elderly in her home for friends when they needed a break. Many people in the village have commented on her kindness when they were children, saying they often spent time with Gwen, having tea in the house or garden and being allowed to help with whatever she was doing.

She had two children, four grandchildren, eleven great grandchildren and six great great grandchildren.

Gwen had a long happy life and I know she would look back and not want to change it.

We all love you, will miss you so much and thank you so much for always being there.

EULOGY – MEMORIES OF DEREK SMITH

Derek was born in Steeple Aston in July 1938. He lived with his parents Elsie and Jack who was in the RAF. After being evacuated from Portsmouth the family settled in Kidlington. He left school at 15 and started work delivering in and around the colleges of Oxford on his trade bike. He moved on to the Morris factory but didn't enjoy being indoors so then took a job as a van/salesman for Harris Bacon as being out and about suited him far better.

He loved riding his favourite AJS motorbike and often told the stories of his adventures riding around the country with his cousin Brian who later introduced him to Heather. They got married and bought a house in St. Giles, Bletchingdon in August 1966.

Sara was born in 1969 and Grace in 1974.

Derek always loved the outdoors, walking the dog and caravan holidays. They bought their first caravan in 1972 and, whether a weekend away with the Caravan Club or getting on the road at the crack of dawn with Heather in the front and the kids in sleeping bags on the floor of the Land Rover to tour the lengths and breadths of England, Scotland and Wales, it seemed wherever we went he met someone he knew to chat to, even at Land's End and John O'Groats.

He moved into driving buses, as well as working on the engines to keep them all running and working with Sam (his brother-in-law) at Charlton-on-Otmoor Services where he finished his career. The two of them were often found having 40 winks under the apple tree in the garden at Murcott of a lunchtime. Sadly Derek had to give up driving due to poor eyesight, but not before he drove many trips up and down the country for lots of local societies, including the Bletchingdon Thursday Club, of which he became a regular attendee himself after retirement as he always loved a chatter over a cuppa and a bit of cake!

He became Grampy for the first time in 1992 when Jake was born with Tamsin, Sophie, Luke and Toby later on. They were all introduced to caravan holidays and had lots of adventures away in the New Forest, Longleat, Eastnor Park and Cotswold Farm Park, to name but a few.

He recently became a great grandad to Alfie, or Little Tommo as he called him, due to the shared middle name.



FROM HEATHER & FAMILY

We would just like to say a massive thank you for the amount of people who came to pay their respects and support the family at Derek's funeral on the 9th January. And thank you for the kindness shown with cards and flowers given to all the family of Derek. It is very much appreciated and we are speechless from the amount of love we have received in this difficult time.

Finally, a big thank you from the family for all the donations, being cash or on-line, for Derek's chosen charity, Marie Curie Nurses. When the total has been added up, we will let everyone know.



Kirtlington Morris

Not much to report from Kirtlington Morris at this time of year, except to say that, thanks to our recent influx of new members, we are now able to practise every week (yes, Tuesdays, Kirtlington Village Hall, 8pm, you should know by now). It's not, no never, too late to join us and learn our distinctive style and a few dances so that you can 'dance out' with us in the Spring...

Meanwhile we already have events on our calendar, starting with Sue Brown's Kirtlington Community Orchard Wassail on 20th January, which will of course have happened before you read this. Wassails are an ancient mid-winter tradition centering around apple trees and orchards, designed to encourage the trees to give a good harvest in the following season, ensuring lots of apples and plentiful cider to follow. Orchards are not the best dancing venues but we will be there to drink a toast to the trees, sing some wassailing songs and maybe a dance outside in the lane if we can still stand!

And then in February and March we are invited by other local sides to a couple of Morris Ales. Morris Ales? Well, they are best described as a party with dancing, singing, eating, drinking and maybe a bit more dancing... You know, like an old-fashioned party.

So thanks again to our new recruits, for making all this possible once more. And don't forget you could do it too, men, women, couples, any age will do. Give me a call on 01869 350219 to find out more. It could be a New Year's Resolution you won't regret!

Nigel Holt, Squire, Kirtlington Morris

1st BLETCHINGTON BROWNIES

Welcome to 2024 with 1st Bletchington Brownies, there's lots happening.

In February is the Oxfordshire Gang Show where members of Girlguiding and Scouting give a brilliant performance of songs, dances and skits. Hannah, our Rainbow leader is on stage in the gang.

We're setting out to challenge, learn, laugh and have a lot of fun with everyone. Come and join us. We'll be taking part in the OxTrail badge; a special challenge to help us in our mental health - Twinkle for Heather; planning a holiday; celebrating Australia day and supporting each other throughout.

Rainbows for girls age 4-7 on a Wednesday in Woodstock
Brownies for girls age 7-10 on a Monday in Bletchington
Guides for girls age 10-14 on a Thursday in Woodstock
Spaces for Young leaders age 14-18 with all our units
Trefoil for adults age 18+ meeting monthly

Email us to find out more: girlguidingwoodstock@hotmail.co.uk.

Answers to Christmas Quiz, in the Dec/Jan edition: 1. Moon River; 2. Australia; 3. Angela Rippon; 4. Dessert Orchid; 5. Birmingham; 6. Noele Gordon; 7. Margate; 8. Turkey; 9. Wassailing; 10. David Bowie

History Corner

Pancake Day

Shrove Tuesday is the day before the start of Lent and this year falls on 13th February. The name 'shrove' is derived from 'shrive', which dates back to Anglo-Saxon times when Christians confessed their sins, prior to Lent, and were thus 'shriven' – absolved of their sins. The day has, however, come to take on more of a carnival atmosphere and in some parts of the world is known as 'Mardi Gras' or 'Fat Tuesday' as people have come to make the most of the final day before 40 days of Lent and its associated fasting and austerity commences.

The pancake has a very long history, known to feature in a cookery book of 1439 and the British custom of eating pancakes on Shrove Tuesday is similarly ancient. Churches would ring a bell to call parishioners to confession, known as the Shriving Bell, and subsequently this came also to be known as the 'Pancake Bell' and is still rung today in some places. From a practical perspective, the making of pancakes on Shrove Tuesday proved the ideal opportunity to use up ingredients such as eggs, milk, sugar and fat, the consumption of which were forbidden during Lent.

The idea of tossing a pancake in the air as a means of turning it over to cook the other side is almost as old as the pancake itself, leading to the British custom of pancake races, run in many places on Shrove Tuesday and involving competitors running over a fixed distance whilst tossing a pancake in a frying pan. Thought to be the original, and easily the most celebrated of such races is that run at Olney in Buckinghamshire which is claimed to date back to 1445 although there have been several periods when it has lapsed. Legend has it that it began when a woman from the town heard the shriving bell whilst she was in the process of making pancakes and ran out into the street clutching the pan, complete with pancake, as she made her way to church. The present race was revived by the local vicar in 1948 and is run over a 415 yard course. Since 1950, it has taken on an international flavour, as Olney accepts an annual challenge to compete with the town of Liberal in Kansas, USA, the winning times of the two separate races being compared to determine the overall winner.

Many other places still run pancake races on Shrove Tuesday. The best known in Oxfordshire has been that in Wallingford although this has not taken place since Covid. Bletchington also has a history of holding pancake races on the Village Green, then at the school, perhaps as recently as the very early years of the present century. The 'June Martin Rose Bowl', named in honour of a resident who was sadly killed in 1987, was awarded to the winner of the parents' race. Unfortunately, this village tradition is currently dormant – is there anyone out there who might be interested in reviving it?

BLETCHINGTON THURSDAY CLUB

Tribute to Derek

We were sorry to hear of the death of one of our longest standing club members, Derek Smith. In his coach driving days Derek drove Thursday club members on various trips to the seaside, garden centres and meals out. He was an active member of the club and came to the Christmas lunch which he enjoyed. We offer our condolences to Heather and the family.

We held our Christmas lunch at Kirtlington Golf Club on 1st December and this was attended by 35 people who enjoyed themselves.

For our December meeting we had a Christmas quiz which was won by Charlie and Valerie. We also had a small Christmas bingo.

We start back in the new year with a meeting on 1st February which will involve curling followed by tea and a raffle.



The Bletchingdon Community Foundation

Christmas lights and mulled wine

Our Christmas Lights evening, held this year on 3rd December, was a great success. Mulled wine, mince pies and toasted marshmallows were on offer to accompany the turning on of the Christmas lights in the Village Hall Plaza – a great way to begin the festive season.

We would like to say a big thank you to the Silver Band who came along to entertain us with carols throughout the evening. Also, thank you to Helen for organising the event, to Jamie for all his work in putting up the decorations and to everyone else who helped out on the evening. And finally, thank you everyone for coming along to make it such a special evening – we do hope you all enjoyed yourselves.



The trustees of the BCF wish you all a very happy New Year.

Car parking at the Village Hall

You are reminded that the Village Hall car park is a private car park. There are only a limited number of spaces, intended solely for use by those with business or attending an event at the Village Hall or the School. It should not be used for residential parking.

Village Hall for hire

Full details of prices and terms & conditions can be found on the Village Hall page of Bletchingdon Parish website, where you will also be able to download a booking form. Special community rates are available to residents of Bletchingdon and Hampton Poyle, using the hall for non-profit purposes. If you would like to enquire about booking the Village Hall, please drop an e-mail to: vh.bookings@thebcf.net.

Village Hall activities

The Village Hall offers a wide range of activities for all age groups. Our directory below details the regular groups currently operating. If you are interested in joining any of these groups, please contact the organiser.

Event	Days & times	Contact	Telephone / E-mail
Physio-led Pilates/Yoga classes	Monday – 10:00am Thursday – 7:15pm	Gemma Queralt (MCSP Chartered Physiotherapist)	07974 692287 gemma.c.queralt@gmail.com
Zumba Gold (low impact)	Thursday – 10:30-11:30am (Term time only)	Mariana Bujons Palmer	zumbawithmarianaoxford@gmail.com
Tumble Tots (walking up to 4 years, play sessions)	Wednesday (Term time only) 10:15am to 2 yrs. 11:15am 2-3 yrs. 12:15pm 3yrs+	Catherine Codd	07305 097209 northcotswolds@tumbletots.com <u>Website:</u> www.tumbletots.com.northcotswolds
1 st Bletchington Brownies (girls, 7-10yrs.)	Monday – 6-7:30pm (Term time only)	Lorraine Wing	girlguidingwoodstock@hotmail.co.uk
Total Body Conditioning	Monday – 7:30pm Wednesday – 6:30pm	Geraldine Jennings	07875 364130 geraldine_jennings@yahoo.co.uk
Stretch & core (non-sweat)	Wednesday – 7:30pm	Geraldine Jennings	07875 364130 geraldine_jennings@yahoo.co.uk
Thursday Club (over 50s)	First Thursday of the month – 2:00pm	Rozz Wing	wingrozzw@aol.com
Bletchington Silver Band (Senior band)	Tuesday - 7:30pm Friday – 7:30pm	Laura	secretary@bletchingtonsilverband.co.uk
Bletchington Silver Band (B band)	Friday – 6:30pm	Laura	secretary@bletchingtonsilverband.co.uk
Children's Martial Arts Class (Jiu Jitsu)	Wednesday – 5:15pm	David Plested	07515 560201 inspirebjjuk@gmail.com

Better Housing Better Health

is here to help keep
Oxfordshire residents
warm and well at
home

“ I have heating and hot water again! I can't tell you how happy and relived we are. ”

Free
help



Find out how they can help you.
Call 0800 107 0044



The purpose of the charity is to:

- **Relieve financial hardship.**
- **Reduce social isolation.**
- **Support education**

It is available for anyone living in the parish of Bletchington.

The members of the Charity committee wish you all a very happy New Year.

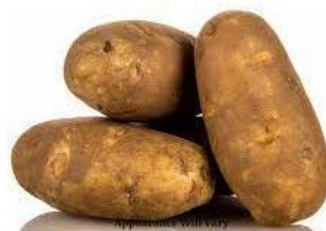
If you would like to apply for financial support, for yourself, a friend, family member or neighbour then you can do this by downloading a form from the village website, www.bletchingdon-pc.org.uk. If you do not have access to the website, then a member of the committee will happily drop a form off to you and, if helpful, support people to fill it out. Ring and leave a message on **01869 350180**. Preferred contact is through the e-mail: charity.secretary@thebcf.net. All applications are treated in complete confidence.

Examples of grants available include: utility bills, travel to school, school uniform, sixth form grants, university grants, help towards funeral costs and over-75s TV licenses.

Applications will be considered at our meetings, generally quarterly, however, if the application is urgent, the committee will be able to consider it sooner.

The next meeting is scheduled for 19th February 2024. Applications to be in by 17th February.

GROW YOUR OWN VEGETABLES



ALLOTMENTS AVAILABLE TO RENT

Each plot is approximately 28m. x 8m. = minimum 220 square metres

Rental is £12 per annum per plot

Available in double-plots, single plots and half-plots

If you are interested in renting an allotment, contact the Allotment Association

E-mail: bletchingdon.allotments@gmail.com

ART AT HILLCREST



These are just three samples of art pieces exhibited by mostly local artists from Bletchington, early December, at the 'Art at Hillcrest' exhibition. A ceramicist, painter, illustrator, photographer, printer, jeweller, two stone carvers and an artist who works wonders with a graphite pencilsee the trees.



The team had a wonderful time chatting to the many who came along and were thrilled to sell some of their work.

They have formed a dynamic team and are already planning a bigger event in the summer. Watch this space for more details of the weekend of the 13-14th July. There could also be a steam train!





WESTON ON THE GREEN WI

We celebrated Christmas with a delicious Italian-themed buffet meal for members and guests, made by Mariella Bliss. Graham prepared three quizzes and Paula told us about Christmases past in Weston.

On 17th January, Paul Baker came to tell us about RSPB Otmoor – Paul has been involved in the project since its beginning and has many slides of how the reserve began as well as changes during the years. For our February meeting on the 21st, John Coffin is going to tell us about his life in New Guinea.

Our WI meets at Weston Village Hall every month, on the third Wednesday at 7.30pm (except for December). In addition, we have theatre and other visits, plus occasional coffee mornings and lunches. We also have a craft afternoon on the 4th Monday at 2pm and walks on the 2nd Monday at 1.30pm (both of which were WI initiatives although you don't need to be a member to take part in these).

We'd love to see you - please contact our secretary Lyn Barnett on 01869 350707 or email her on wotg.wi@gmail.com if you would like to know more.

Combe Mill in steam - Blenheim Palace Sawmills, Combe, OX29 8ET

Combe Mill is currently CLOSED for maintenance and general improvement work in time to open to the Public again in March with Beam Engine and Stream Raising training also being carried out. Meanwhile the TEA TOOM ONLY is open Wednesdays 11:00am-2:30pm until 13th March.

Sunday, 17th March sees our first 'IN STEAM' event of 2024, the theme being '**Science at the Mill**'. Wednesdays from 20th March the mill (non-steam) open for self-guided tours along with the tea room (see ad on Page 38).

Bletch Diary

17 th February – 9:00pm	Sports & Social Club – Live Music With Mike E (<i>see Page 25</i>)
24 th February – 8:00pm	Sports & Social Club – Cash Bingo (<i>see Page 25</i>)
6 th March – 7:30pm	Village Hall – Defibrillator Familiarisation course Book your place in advance (<i>see Page 27</i>)
9 th March – 4:00pm	Village Hall – Spring Concert With Bletchington Silver Band (<i>see Page 20</i>)
13 th March – 7:30pm	Sports & Social Club – Comedy Night TICKET ENTRY ONLY With the Laughing Ox Comedy Club (<i>see Pages 25/39</i>)
23 rd March – 8:00pm	Sports & Social Club – Easter Bingo (<i>see Page 25</i>)
31 st March – 9:30am	St. Giles' Church – Easter Holy Communion (<i>see Page 7</i>)

INTER-GENERATION CHRISTMAS FOOTBALL TOURNAMENT

On 23RD December, the Men's and u17s community came together to play in a Christmas football tournament at the Sports Ground. This was a full-on festive family day with 65 players in total and consisting of four teams. The day was really successful and fun was had by all.



BLETCH LEGENDS - Under 65s

Team managers: John Clack & Jim Knight



STRICTLY BLETCH - Under 30s

Team managers: Steve Barker & Dan Willoughby



MIGHTY BLETCH - Under 19s

Team managers: Riaz Slavik-Ali & Lorenzo Meta



YOUNG GUNS - Under 16s

Team managers: Vinny Barrett & James Warton

The Social Club was full afterwards where Father Christmas popped along to share out presents and a few Christmas drinks were had by all.

Food was laid on by Jim & Maureen Knight and Michael & Bethan Hilsdon. Thank you for your efforts.

We would also like to thank everyone who contributed to the Christmas raffle and give a special mention to Mark Taylor for his contribution towards this. The Raffle and football card managed to raise £216 in total, half of which went to the football club and the other half to the Trussell Trust, supporting our local food bank.

A few thank yous go to Michael, Bethan, Rob and Fred for helping set up on the day.

And finally, thank you to everyone else who got involved.

BLETCHINGDON PRIMARY SCHOOL PTA

Thank you so much to everyone who supported the PTA Christmas raffle this year, whether it was buying tickets or helping to provide some fantastic prizes.

We raised a fantastic amount which will go towards subsidising some school trips for the children and new outdoor items to benefit all the children in the school.

Did you win a prize? Well done to all those who won - here is the full list of winners:

1. £50 cash prize – donated by Smiths Bletchington – **Sophie Easom**
2. The Heyford, Upper Heyford – 1 game bowling & round of drinks for 6 – **Christie Bennett**
3. Oxfordshire Oven Cleaners – up to £60 oven clean voucher – **Thomas Mullane**
4. Teamworks Karting – 2 Simulators Grand Prix Vouchers – **Jo Scurr**
5. Teamworks Karting – 2 Simulators Grand Prix Vouchers – **Charnock**
6. Sky Wave Gin – 2 vouchers for Distillery Experience & curated gin tasting – **S Richardson**
7. The Back Lane Tavern, Woodstock – £50 voucher – **Geraldine Jennings**
8. Grow Jiu Jitsu – 1 month's family training for up to 4 kids and adults – **Muriel Casey**
9. David Lloyd Clubs – day pass vouchers x2 – **Rebecca McNaught**
10. Witney Pony Partners – 1 hour lesson – **Steven**
11. Partyman World of Play – family pass – **Harry Spence**
12. Laser Kombat – pass for 4 for 2 games – **Mike Deen**
13. £25 cash prize – donated by Smiths Bletchington – **S Mitchell**
14. £25 cash prize – donated by Smiths Bletchington – **Nuala Dunne**
15. Nuffield Gym, Woodstock Rd – 2 free day passes – **Pamela Rimmer**
16. Jump, Bicester – 2 passes for 1hr jump session – **Barry Howells**
17. Jump, Bicester – 2 passes for 1hr jump session – **Hilary Critcher**
18. Crocodiles of the World – 1 adult & 1 child ticket – **Gallyer**
19. Pendon Museum – family ticket – **S Mitchell**
20. Pendon Museum – family ticket – **Lola Barrett**
21. Stonelily Hairdressing – blowdry with Molly voucher – **Louie Whitehead**
22. Chipping Norton Theatre – 2 film screening tickets – **Tom Cobern**
23. Miller & Carter – £20 voucher – **C Crosby**
24. Waterperry Gardens – years season ticket for 2 – **Max**
25. Mini Professionals Dance Academy – 2 free child classes – **Lucy O'Hare**
26. Mini Professionals Dance Academy – 2 free early years classes – **Karen Taylor**
27. Mini Professionals Dance Academy – 2 free adult classes – **Nikki Lloyd**
28. Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum – family pass – **Finley Phanichattra**
29. Combe Mill, Blenheim Palace Sawmill – family pass – **Barbara Oster**
30. Whizz Kids, Thame – 1 adult & 1 child pass – **Zara Rutt**
31. Whizz Kids, Thame – 1 adult & 1 child pass – **Richard Knights**
32. First for Safety Oxfordshire – 2hr family emergency first aid training course x2 – **Sylvie McNaught**
33. Victoria's Secret – Coconut Passion fragrance mist & body lotion set – **TC**
34. BMW baseball cap & large men's t-shirt – **Harriett Dobbins**
35. Joules fluffy socks & foot cream gift box – **Sandy Rutt**
36. Prosecco – from Co-op – **Fiona Mason**
37. Prosecco Rose – **Tracy Parsons**
38. Ian's Firewood & Kindling – bag of logs & kindling – **Jenny Dodgson**
39. Ian's Firewood & Kindling – bag of logs & kindling – **Fiona Mason**
40. BMW thermo mug – **Jackie George**
41. Harry Potter – Ron Weasley Crochet Kit – **Eric Walton**
42. BMW bear keyring & Mini Cooper model car – **Sue Hayward**
43. Elizabeth Arden hand treatment – **Fiona Mason**
44. Tabletop Football game – **Samways**
45. Red wine bottle – **Nicky Lloyd**

46. Red wine bottle – **Jill Saint**
47. Red wine bottle – **Rebecca McNaught**
48. Red wine bottle – **Dave Crane**
49. Red wine bottle – **Callum Warton**
50. White wine bottle – **Linda Skinner**
51. White wine bottle – **Olivia Coles**
52. BMW Mini umbrella – **Olivia Coles**
53. Gravitee Golf, Kassam – £5 voucher – **Kate Tomlins**
54. Gravitee Golf, Kassam – £5 voucher – **Jack Howells**
55. Gravitee Golf, Kassam – £5 voucher – **Fiona Mason**
56. 8 Mile blu ray DVD & 2 mini red wine bottles – **Sue Hendron**
57. Sass & Belle Gift Collection – **Lucy O'Hare**
58. Gin O'Clock gin glass – **Benjamin Watson**
59. Celebrations tin – from Co-op – **M Teall**

Unwanted Items and Christmas Gifts

If you are having a clear out of unwanted items at home and think they could be used for the next raffle or tombola the PTA would be very appreciative of the donations no matter how small or large they may be. If you have anything you would like to donate, please place them in the PTA box in the school foyer entrance or hand them into the school office at any time throughout the year.

Neighbourhood Plan update

Thank you to everyone who attended the meeting on 12th December to discuss the Neighbourhood Plan for Bletchingdon, Hampton Poyle and Hampton Gay. Despite being a chilly winter evening over 40 people attended the discussion in Bletchingdon Church so thank you to everyone that came along.

We discussed the findings of the survey carried out in March and April last year, which reveals plenty of useful information regarding what the residents of our villages would like to be considered for the future of our villages.

The next stage of the Neighbourhood Plan is to develop local policies. The policies currently in development include sustainable development, character and design, climate and environment, facilities and infrastructure, and local economic development. These policies will describe how we see the future of our villages so it was helpful to discuss these in the December meeting and thank you to those who have commented.

If you weren't able to attend the meeting and would like to look at the survey findings, or you have comments on the draft policies, you can view all of these documents on www.bletchingdon-pc.org.uk. Or please speak to one of the steering group members.

Further information about the Neighbourhood Plan is available on the Bletchingdon Parish Council website www.bletchingdon-pc.org.uk/neighbourhood-planning. If you would like to find out more, have a chat to share your ideas, or are interested in joining the Steering Group please speak to one of the Steering Group members or email futurebletch@gmail.com.

And please watch this space for further information!

Duncan Ledger, Andy Jordan, Wayne Dobbins, Rachel Pirie, Dan Robins, Mark Webber, Julian Bagwell, Peter Drobac



BLETCHINGTON SILVER BAND

As the tinsel has been packed away, the last of the mince pies have been eaten and the carols books have been put back into the cupboard for another 11 months, the band has returned to rehearsals after the Christmas break. We thoroughly enjoyed our Christmas period. It started off by playing at a new event in Middle Barton where Father Christmas and his elves arrived on a trailer behind a tractor. We were made to feel very welcome here. We also performed carols in the village hall for the lightening of the village lights which was a lovely event to be a part of. Saturday 9th December was our Christmas Concert. It was fantastic to see such a big audience and in such fine voice too. Our programme began with 'Festive Frenzy', a mash-up of a variety of Christmas carols and pop music and concluded with the Slade classic 'Merry Christmas Everyone'. We were provided with a standing ovation from our audience which was lovely. As always, the ever-impressive B Band entertained with their set and ended with White Christmas. The Christmas season was pleasantly rounded off by the church Christmas service and our regular engagement at Lower Heyford. Thank you to everyone who provided support to the band during this season, it was very much appreciated.



Carols at the Village Hall Christmas Lights evening

The band are looking forward to what 2024 will bring. Our Annual General Meeting will be held in the Village Hall on Friday 26th January from 7:30pm. Everyone is welcome to attend. We are also in the process of planning our concerts for next year. We have provisionally booked our movie themed spring concert for Saturday 9th March at 4pm in the hall.

Please keep an eye on our website and social media pages for more details - visit our website: www.bletchingtonsilverband.co.uk and social media pages (Facebook: **Bletchington Silver Band** / Instagram: **@bletchband** / Twitter: **@BletchBand**)

Finally, would like to take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy New Year and looking forward to seeing and performing to you again soon.

From your Cherwell District councillors - Launton & Otmoor District

I hope you have had a lovely Christmas and wishing you all a happy new year! There are a couple of updates from us this time:

New Chief Executive

Gordon Stewart has now been appointed as the new Chief Executive of Cherwell District Council after being unanimously approved at Full Council on the 18th December and started on the 8th January and will be fully inducted by Yvonne Rees. He has previous experience in senior leadership roles across the public sector, higher education and the charity sector. We look forward to welcoming Gordon to Cherwell and we will keep you updated once he has settled in.

Full Council 18th December 2023

Full Council took place on the 18th December at Bodicote House with a number of motions and questions being raised. All motions were passed unanimously and they were:

- Asking Cherwell to look into a solar strategy across the district to ensure a more cohesive plan moving forward.
- Asking Cherwell to look into accessible locations to provide sanitary items to those in need, to help tackle period poverty.
- Condemning the decision to delay the ban on Section 21 notices and calling on the Leader of the Council to communicate this to our Members of Parliament and the government in the strongest possible terms.
- Asking Cherwell to investigate the feasibility of creating service hubs within our localities and what they can usefully provide and then develop a strategy that facilitates the use of service hubs to better provide access and support to our communities.

Banbury Vision 2050

Cherwell District Council have been running a consultation about the future of Banbury Town Centre and have sought resident's views. This consultation will then help shape the future of Banbury for the next 30 years. Details about Banbury Vision 2050 can be found online at www.banbury2050.co.uk or you can get a hard copy from the Community Hub (Castle Quay Shopping Centre). The deadline for the consultation was 15th January, so has now passed.

Get in Touch

As always, please do get in touch!

Our emails are gemma.coton@cherwell-dc.gov.uk and julian.nedelcu@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or phone us on 01869 717712.

All the best,
Gemma & Julian



STORMS

It seems like nearly every other week there is a named storm with all the accompanying rain and wind that it brings. Other parts of the country (and the world) are, no doubt, affected more than us but global warming certainly is having an impact here in Oxfordshire.

This photograph, taken at the turn of the year, shows the River Cherwell at Enslow, bursting at its banks and flooding the fields beyond.

SNOWDROPS

Last February there was a short piece about snowdrops in Weston Road so I thought I would try and explain why some of them are earlier and larger.

The snowdrops we see in most churchyards are *Galanthus nivalis*, *Galanthus* being the Latin name for snowdrop coming from the Greek *Gala*, milk, and *anthos*, flower. Back to the snowdrops in churchyards that everybody thinks are native to Britain, they came around the 1500s and then later *Galanthus plicatus* and *elwesii*, these having larger leaves and flowers. There are now around 23 species of snowdrops and more being found in the wild even today, but in these species there are well over 4,000 hybrids, cultivars varieties and forms.

Their native habitat is mainly southern and central Europe and here many of them cross and new forms are found.

Across America, Europe and Britain there are many *Galanthophiles*, the name for those with great interest in snowdrops and we have conferences and snowdrop lunches, not to eat the snowdrops but to discuss them and have a good time in the dark days of January and February. Many new crosses are found in the countryside and gardens but there are many people breeding new ones. This often takes around 10 years and this is why these often cost a lot of money. Yellow forms have been found amongst ones growing in woodlands but now several growers are getting a tinge of orange into the buds and some with cream flowers and maybe plant them alongside white ones to see the difference.

Nearly all snowdrops are easy to grow and you can often find slightly different ones in garden centres, hoping that they have not been imported from the wild. Unless you want to buy a new bred variety for well over £1,000 for one bulb, they are not expensive to buy.

Have a go - they really are worth it to have something blooming at this time of the year. There are also the autumn snowdrops so you can start seeing them from about October until the late winter ones at the end of March/beginning of April, depending on the dear old weather.



Here are some of the more unusual varieties of snowdrop, all growing in my garden in Bletchington.

Top left: *Phil Cornish*

Top right: *Walrus*

Below left: *Seedling, probably with Corrin somewhere in its parentage*

Sue

PARK HILL RECREATION GROUND JUNIOR PARKRUN

Did you know that there is a free run for kids, held every Sunday at 9am, just 10 mins away from Bletchington?

Park Hill Recreation Ground junior parkrun is a free, fun, and friendly weekly 2km event for juniors (4 to 14 year olds) held in Kidlington.



If your little ones fancy kicking off 2024 by running, walking or skipping around the park, then do come and give it a try!

Park Hill Recreation Ground is a park in Kidlington, situated off Benmead Road, behind the main car park and Tesco's in Kidlington Centre (postcode: OX5 2DH).

Parkrun is run by volunteers so we'd also welcome any mums or dads who might want to don a high-viz and marshal the kids around the course!

For more information, check out our website or Facebook page (google "Park Hill Recreation Ground junior parkrun") or just come along at 9am on any Sunday!



Isla and Ted leading the warm-up

This junior parkrun was set up by a team of volunteers including Bletchington resident James Groves who writes: "Running is such an easy way to do exercise, it just involves putting on a pair of trainers and walking out the door. However, unlike sports like football, rugby and cricket, it can lack the team-spirit and collective sense of fun that team sports can bring. We therefore set up this junior parkrun to encourage kids to come together and enjoy the simplest form of exercise".

Ted Groves (12) is a regular runner and Isla Groves (14) has been marshalling as part of her Duke of Edinburgh Award.

SOME VITAL STATISTICS

Events to date: **34**

Total Finishers: **256**

Average finishers per week: **39.5**

Volunteers: **122**

Average finish time: **00:13:00**

James Groves, Junior parkrun run director

BLETCHINGTON SPORTS AND SOCIAL CLUB



Bletchington Sports & Social Club is situated at the end of the drive in the Sports Ground on Oxford Road. The Sports field used to be in the grounds of Bletchington Park. It moved to the current location which was owned by Lord Valentia and was rented to the village to use for football and cricket. In the 1960s Lord Rotherwick generously donated the land to the village. The original clubhouse was described as “a very basic structure.” The first bar was opened on 19th March 1978 by Mr Arthur Eeley. The go-ahead to build the current clubhouse was given by the committee in 1980 at a cost of £50,000 and was extended around ten years ago adding the veranda and scoreboard.

The club is self-funded and run entirely by volunteers from the village. We offer memberships throughout the year that are renewed on 1st September. Memberships cost just £15 for a family, £10 for an individual and £5 for senior citizens and U18's. You are more than welcome to come in for a drink.

We currently have 4 youth football teams (U17, U14, U11 & U10), 3 Cricket Teams, 2 Bar Billiard Teams, 3 Darts Teams, a Quiz Team, Aunt Sally, Pool and a Cribbage Team who all base themselves at the Club. We also have a very active social committee who regularly host Bingo, Live Music and other events that are generally free admission and open to everyone.

We have Sky Sports, Darts, Pool and a Bar Billiards Table. We generally open for any major televised sporting events.

Our opening hours vary during the week, but we are always open from 5:00pm on Friday and 7:30pm on Saturday evenings. Please join our Facebook page for details of opening hours and events.

We are able to offer use of the clubhouse outside of normal hours for private events such as Christenings and Funeral Wakes. If you would like to make use of the facilities drop into the club or contact a member of the committee to check availability. We can also accommodate parties during normal opening times, but members will still be permitted to use the bar.

Polite Notice

There is a public footpath that runs from Oxford Road through the sports field. If you use this, we would be grateful if you could keep dogs on leads and clean up behind them. This helps us keep the area safe for the children and sports teams that use the facilities.

We have also experienced some damage to the clubhouse where ball games have been played against the building. These are costly repairs, and we respectfully ask that this is avoided.

TEAM NEWS

Cricket: At the AGM it was decided to withdraw the third team from the Cherwell League and to play friendlies instead. The practice nets need refurbishing after being badly damaged in recent storms. There is support from Sport England but only if we can garner enough contributions from elsewhere. Please help, just £5 makes a huge difference. Donate at: <https://www.crowdfunder.co.uk/p/oxfordbletchingdon-cc-practice-nets>. Please visit the cricket club website at www.obncc.play-cricket.com for details and fixtures.

Bar Billiards: There is no update, with 3 teams playing from the Club, one on Tuesdays in the Eynsham League and 2 on Thursdays in the Witney League.

Pool: The team which play in section two of the Oxford Invitation Pool League on a Thursday evening are currently second after five games. The Club annual 9 ball competition was won by Paul Sawyer who defeated Pete Soanes in the final.

Football:

Men's team: The men's team has had an extremely tough set of fixtures leading up to the Christmas break, claiming only two wins from six but very close games, currently sat in the bottom half of their division. 50 players signed on and only being together for five months, the men are doing well. With this they are in high spirits and are as solid as ever, looking forward to the second half of the season and looking forward to climbing back up the table. Along with this they are still in two cups, one being the Charity Cup with the quarter final coming up, against some very stiff competition in Senior League Premier favourites, Adderbury Park.

Under 17s: Not a huge amount of football in December, unfortunately, for the boys due to away team pitch conditions but the boys are still going strong and are still placed 3rd in their division and also looking forward to the second half of the season where they can try and pursue promotion/silverware.

Under 10s: They have secured a second promotion through their impressive progress and have now started the new year in League C.

Bletchington Nomads – Quiz Team: The Nomads began the new year with a music tabletop quiz. Defending the title they won back in the summer but fielding an under-strength side, they finished a creditable third.

Meanwhile in the Oxfordshire Quiz League, the Nomads sit in third place in the Premier Division having played 9, won 7 and lost 2. Should be an interesting rest of the season.

In the Online Quiz League, the Nomads have played just two games since their promotion to Division 2. Both defeats and as difficult as was expected, but enjoyable as always.

Ladies Darts: There is no update.

Aunt Sally: Season closed.

Cribbage: The season has just started.

What's On at the Club?

SATURDAY 17th February – LIVE MUSIC: Mike E (9:00pm)

SATURDAY 24th February – CASH BINGO (eyes down 8:00pm)

WEDNESDAY 13th March – COMEDY EVENING (doors open 7:30pm)

SATURDAY 23rd March – CASH BINGO (eyes down 8:00pm)

SATURDAY 13th April – LIVE MUSIC: Ryan Crowe (9:00pm)

Comedy Evening – Wednesday 13th March

Please note entry to this event is by TICKET ONLY.

Tickets are £15 and limited to 80.

We've sold quite a few already.

Please book via QR code (see poster on Page 39) or over the bar.

Kirtlington & Bletchington Historical Society

In November we welcomed back an old friend of the Society, **Liz Woolley**, local historian, for her talk entitled **Beer, Sausages and Marmalade**. This was a fascinating and lively survey of the principal local families engaged in supplying food and drink to Oxford's residents in the late 18th and 19th centuries. A number of important producers were discussed, most of whom developed their businesses over several generations. Brewers featured prominently since Oxford's rivers and streams and agricultural hinterland were ideal for the manufacture of beer (strongly encouraged by the authorities in the early 19th century as a less pernicious alternative to cheap gin).



At one time in the Victorian period Oxford had four breweries and 320 pubs. Names such as Hall and Morrell are still known today. There were butchers producing the Oxford sausage which gained an international reputation for its spicy flavour. And, of course, Frank Cooper's Oxford marmalade, perhaps the most enduring of them all though not, as we discovered, suiting all tastes. This was made first on his premises in the High Street and then in the larger Jam Factory, a building which still stands in Frideswide Square with its carvings of oranges in stone on the façade. Several members of these families produced Mayors of Oxford and, in at least one case, an MP for the city. They were also philanthropists, building houses and supporting local causes.

Among a host of intriguing illustrations was a photograph of the workforce of Hall's Brewery in 1916 which featured the father of one of our members, Jenni Duckworth. At that point he was a fresh-faced clerk who could not have known of his legacy to Kirtlington.

Paul Clifford

Kirtlington and Bletchington Historical Society *Coming soon.....*

Morris' Motopolis: the car industry in Oxford

SIMON WENHAM

7.30pm Thursday 22nd February

The Alhambra

PHILIPPA JOSEPH

7.30pm Thursday 28th March

Kirtlington Village Hall. Members free. Visitors £4. All welcome.

Bletchingdon | Enslow | Heathfield

YOUR COUNCIL MATTERS

"DEVELOPING A THRIVING, INCLUSIVE, SUSTAINABLE, RURAL COMMUNITY"



Latest News

Defibrillator familiarisation Course 2024

Bletchingdon Parish Council have organised a defibrillator familiarisation course for the village. It is being held in the main section of the Village Hall on **Wednesday 6th March 2024 at 7:30pm** and will last approximately 1 hour.

Spaces are limited so if you would like to come, please let the clerk know by emailing her at bletchpc@gmail.com

Thank you to those who have already expressed an interest. We look forward to seeing you there.

Neighbourhood Plan Public Consultation

Thank you to everyone who attended the consultation in December, it was a great turnout!

Thank you too, to our Neighbourhood Plan Committee who put together a very thorough presentation and did a great job answering all the questions raised.

Temporary Road Closure Notice

Oxfordshire County Council have advised that due to an essential new water connection needed, it is necessary to temporarily close a section of road at Springwell Hill, Bletchingdon from **Sunday 3rd March to Tuesday 5th March 2024**.

IN OTHER NEWS

Dates for your Diary

Spring Clean 2024

Bletchingdon Parish Council will be joining the National Spring Clean again this year. More details will follow nearer the time but it will take place on the weekend of the 13th/14th April 2024



Next Meetings

**27th March 2024 &
24th April 2024- The
Village Hall.**

Visit our website for information on public attendance and participation at Council Meetings.

Primary Contact

Fiona Mason - Parish Clerk. | Tel: 351967 | eMail: bletchpc@gmail.com

The clerk is based in the Village Hall on a flexible part-time basis, but will respond to all messages at her earliest convenience.

www.bletchingdonparishcouncil.co.uk



D-Day 80 - 6th June 2024

Bletchingdon Parish Council would like to share with you that Parishes are being invited to join in the with the D-Day 80

Commemoration/Celebration of the 80th Anniversary of the D-Day landings on the five Beaches in Normandy, France, which took place on 6th June 1944.

This is an opportunity for our local community to pay 'tribute' to the many, many thousands that sacrificed so much in helping to secure the freedom we all enjoy today.

If this is something you would like to see Bletchingdon take part in, have any ideas of how to celebrate and/or would be willing to organise an event, please let us know by emailing the clerk on bletchpc@gmail.com or letting one of your Councillors know.



Planning Matters. November & December 2023



New Applications Put Forward

23/02981/TCA – Cadwallader -The Old Rectory, Weston Road, Bletchingdon OX5 3DH – T1 x Ash – Framework pollard at up to 5 meters due to storm damage and continued limb failure.

23/03047/LB & 23/03046/F – Bletchingdon Park House, Springwell Hill, Bletchingdon OX5 3DW - This application is submitted following an approved planning application, Ref No. 18/01969/F and 18/01970/LB, granted on 16th June 2021. The previous application included: various works and general refurbishment of the interior of the main house along with changes to the form of the northwest steps. It also concerned a proposed underground car parking facility and pool (underground facility) adjacent to the main house. This application proposes an amended access route from the underground facility and new lift position.

23/03173/CLUE – Robin Investments Ltd – Caravan & Camping Park, Diamond Farm, Islip Road, Bletchingdon OX5 3DR – Certificate of Lawfulness of Existing Use – Use of land as caravan and camping site in accordance with planning permission ref CHS.56/76, lawfully in breach of Condition 4.

23/03158/F – Mr Xungan Nie – Green Barn, Ingleby Farm, Ingleby Paddocks, Enslow OX5 3ET – Approval to amend the current building (currently undergoing demolition) to a single storey storage space.



Applications Approved

23/02347/F – Bletchingdon Park House, Springwell Hill, Bletchingdon OX5 3DW.

23/02382/F – Bletchingdon Park House, Springwell Hill, Bletchingdon OX5 3DW –

Realignment of the existing access driveway to New Lodge.

23/02964/TCA – Little Lime Tree 1, Weston Road, Bletchingdon OX5 3DH. – Tx1 Leylandii, reduce the height by approximately 3 feet and trim the sides to allow fresh growth.



Applications Refused

23/02627/PIP – Mina Louka – Land off Islip Road, Bletchingdon OX5 3DP – Permission in Principle application for the erection of between 1 no. and 5 no. dwellings.

Councillors, Responsibilities & Contacts



Name	Role	Address	Contact Number:
Dan Robins	Chair	Four Views, Oxford Road	350007
Chris Lane	Vice Chair	Village Farm	350257
Matt Whitehead	Councillor	Rogers Cottage, Station Rd.	350991
Mark Taylor	Councillor	Stoneacre, Oxford Rd.	350609
Duncan Ledger	Councillor	3 Islip Road	351542
Rachel Pirie	Councillor	12 Valentia Close	07790 025110
Nicola Morris	Councillor	The Stables, Islip Road	351025

District Councillors:

Gemma Coton - Gemma.Coton@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Julian Nedelcu - Julian.Nedelcu@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Simon Holland - Simon.Holland@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

County Councillor: Nigel Simpson - nigel.simpson@oxfordshire.gov.uk



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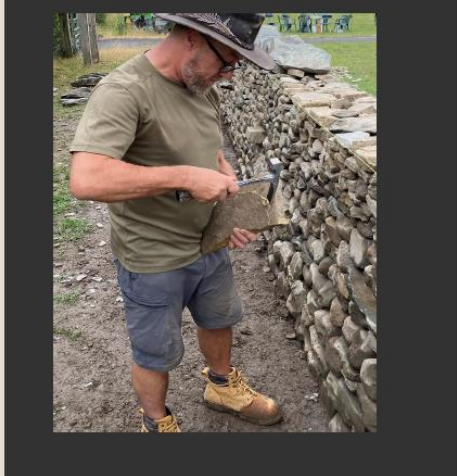
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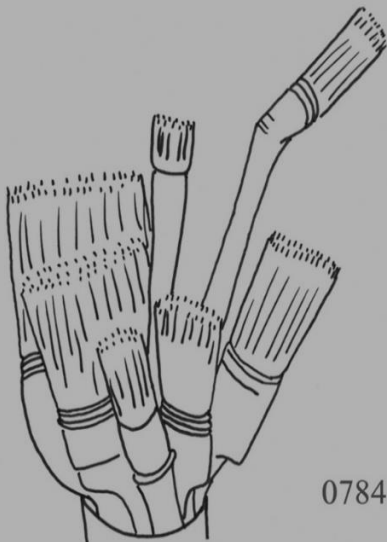
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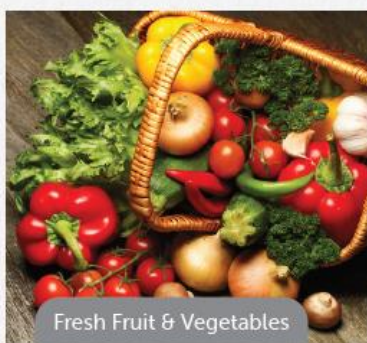
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