

The Sandford Link

Winter 2020 Issue 160

THIS 160TH ISSUE OF THE LINK
IS A STRANGE ONE. IT WILL BE PRINTED
AT THE END OF NOVEMBER
IN THE MIDDLE OF UNCERTAINTY.

THAT MEANS SOME ADVERTISED EVENTS
MAY NOT HAPPEN **SEE PAGES 2, 3 AND 5 . . .**
ANY CHANGES WILL BE ON THE PARISH WEBSITES
(PAGE 4)

HOWEVER . . .
ONE DAY WON'T CHANGE:
DECEMBER 25TH

AND WHATEVER, HOWEVER,

**WE WISH YOU ALL A
VERY HAPPY CHRISTMAS
AND A MUCH IMPROVED
NEW YEAR**

ST ANDREW'S CHURCH NEW

Ministry team:

Robert Morgan (priest-in-charge: Lower Farm, 748848)

Teresa Morgan

(associate priest: teresa.morgan@classics.ox.ac.uk)

Liz Shatford (772598) Paddy Watson

Church Wardens: Leslie Rhodes Sue Sabini

Director of Music Christian Bradley

www.sandfordchurch.org.uk

www.facebook.com/sandfordchurch



Sunday services

At the time of writing there are no services, though the church is open each day. We hope the normal pattern will be possible in December . . .

Every Sunday: 10.0 a.m. Parish Communion
 6.30 p.m. Evening prayer

Last Sunday of the month:

10.0 a.m. a more informal Westward Communion service

Bible study

Fridays fortnightly at 5.0 p.m. and by arrangement.

Also a small group meets in church every three weeks or so to look at the Bible readings for the month and think about how they speak to us today.

Anyone is welcome to join us: contact the vicar on 01865 748848 or robert.morgan@theology.ox.ac.uk.

Childrens' Carol and Crib Service 4.0 p.m. Christmas Eve

Kings, shepherds, angels etc. required – dress code as usual – crowns, dressing-gowns, hijabs, white dresses. Wings optional. Carols and readings and miming the Christmas story, the nativity. Gold is in short supply so kings, princesses and others (queen mothers, proud fathers, grandparents, friends) are invited to bring as gifts food for homeless in East Oxford, or chip into the cheque the church send to the Porch each year.

CHRISTMAS AT ST ANDREW'S

Please check with the website (www.sandfordchurch.org.uk)
for any changes



The traditional carol service December 13th and 20th at 6.30 p.m. in St Andrew's church

Two socially distanced services of carols, readings,
and choir anthems to celebrate Christmas are planned.

Since we regrettably have to limit numbers,
you are invited to ask for a ticket for either service (say which one).
We can only accommodate a maximum of 30 socially-distanced people,
so please don't get a ticket unless you are confident of coming,
and if you do have to withdraw, please do let us know.
Tickets first come, first serve, from robert.morgan@theology.ox.ac.uk
or phone 01865 748848

All collections at Christmas services are donated each year to the
Porch for homeless and vulnerably housed in East Oxford.
Since we can't have church collections, donations can be made on
the volunteering page of www.sandfordchurch.org.uk
or by cheque to Sandford Church PC (Social Fund).

CHRISTMAS EVE

4.0 p.m. CHILDRENS' CAROLS AND NATIVITY
for parents, grandparents, children, friends.
Actors and actresses invited – contact vicar.

11.30 p.m. MIDNIGHT MASS with carols

CHRISTMAS DAY

10.0 a.m. PARISH EUCHARIST



Welcome

to **Robert and Louise Grayson** to River View
to **Fanny** to the Crescent
to **Stephen and Helen Gallagher** to Rock Farm Lane

Welcome to the world

to **Noah Edward David**, born 27 March 2020 (4 days into "lockdown"), a little
brother for Isaac and Joshua and third son to Catherine and Tom Wilde
to **Olivia**, a daughter for Joanna Trevor of Pheasant Walk
to **Ingrid Eleanor**, born 6th September, a daughter to Paul and Rebecca and
granddaughter to Marilyn Rugg of Church Road
to **Leo**, born 19th April, a second for Caroline and Barrie of Church Road and a
brother for Georgie.

Sandford websites

www.sandfordonthames.org.uk

is our village website, managed by the Parish Council. Lots of
information about council-type things, and local news.

www.sandfordchurch.org.uk

St Andrew's website, with village and church history, information for
newcomers to the village, links to music and other sites, as well as
church news and services.

Also www.facebook.com/sandfordchurch

www.sandfordtalkingshop.org

for up to date information on all things Talking Shop, with more
news on www.facebook.com/TalkingShopSandford/

<https://sandfordwi.wixsite.com/sandfordonthameswi>

excellent website of Sandford WI, together with news on
www.facebook.com/sandfordonthamesWI

The Link facebook page,

<https://www.facebook.com/Sandford.on.Thames/>

has information and news in between issues, and

<http://www.sandfordonthames.co.uk/thelink/?LMCL=lbLsmP>
has archived copies of the Link, from 1981 – 2012.

CHRISTMAS 2020

Even though the village has been stalled in a pandemic world for a long time there is still a view in Sandford on Thames that a Christmas celebration is what we all need. So with this in mind we are planning to take action to spread a little cheer – once we are allowed to of course!

What will we do?

Early in December - Trees and Lights

- The Village Hall will be decorated with a spectacular Christmas tree and colourful lights
- The large tree on the Rec by the gate and sitting area for Talking Shop will be lit up
- There will also be a lit up Christmas tree in the Church grounds

On **Saturday, 19th December at 3pm** we are also planning (subject to government guidelines):

- Christmas carols on the Rec with the St. Andrew's Church choir and The Oxford Jubilee Brass Band
- There will be Mince pies and lots of festive cheer. Santa and his Assistant will be invited to make an appearance so don't forget your Santa hat

Please do make a note in the diary and watch for further information available on the village social media platforms nearer the time.

This is a time for the village get together and we are working out how this can all work safely so that festivity enjoyment will know no bounds.

Do try to see how you might be able to join the party.

We have missed the gentle pace of our village community and it is time for a little joy.

Hopefully the snow will not be too deep!

Seasons wishes

from the Festival Committee



Pilgrim Walks

During lockdown etc. these continue on a 1+1 basis – individuals interested contact vicar for details

Coronavirus community support

South Oxfordshire District Council have a specially dedicated section of their website full of useful information if you have been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and need any help. Here are some of the main pages of information:

- Help for individuals and families
- Information if you want to help others or are already doing so
- Support for businesses
- How our services are affected
- Information and advice for landlords and tenants

www.southoxon.gov.uk/uncategorised/coronavirus-community-support/.

Oxford Winter Night Shelter

Oxford Winter Night Shelter sadly it will not be able to run its usual shelter system this coming winter, as it will be unable to comply with the Government guidelines on Covid safety.



It is the intention of the City Council to provide sufficient accommodation for all rough sleepers in Oxford during this winter while the pandemic prevails.

Emergency Food Bank

If for any reason you are short of food, maybe from illness, loss of work, delay in benefits, etc., you can get a basic range of food from the Food Bank by getting a form from your doctor, social worker, minister or other professionals in your local community. The nearest Bank is at Edith Kempson House, Chapel Lane, Littlemore (Thursday mornings between 10 and 11.30). Information from Jane Benyon at info@cefoxford.co.uk.

HOME COMPUTER HELP: For PC and laptop fixes and assistance call Jim on 07854 107337 or home.computerbtinternet.com.
Excellent local references Free assessment No fix, no fee

**SANDFORD ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL
will be looking for a new Parish Clerk in 2021
when the current clerk is due to step down.**

This is an administrative role to support the Parish Council to carry out its role in local government.

It is a part time position paid for 7.5 hours per week.
The hours of work are flexible and can be worked from home apart from the Parish Council meetings held at 6.30pm on the first Monday each month.

If you have good computer and organisational skills and are interested in supporting your local community in this way, please email sandfordparish@gmail.com for a job description.

The vicar of Littlemore writes:
Presents for Christmas

We're hoping that this Christmas everyone will have a present to open. If you'd like to buy some presents for local families, all ages, then please drop them off in the large round bin by Littlemore vicarage, St Nicholas Road. We are working with various groups to spread some joy at Christmas. Stationery, pencil cases, pens, colouring things, festive food (in date) would be very welcome.

Littlemore Community Christmas Day Lunch.

Sadly we cannot sit together in the John Henry Newman Academy for the meal on Christmas Day this year. However, we will prepare the same delicious Christmas Day Lunch, including a small present, for people to collect or, if you don't have transport, to be delivered. Please book your meal by phoning Philippa Foster on 07967 076294. Suggested donation of £2.50 per adult and £1.50 per child to be put in an envelope when collecting or on delivery.

Do let us know if you are happy to help with the delivery of the food.



Sandford Talking Shop

Monday to Friday 10am-2pm, Saturday 9-12
07305 307421 / Sandfordtalkingshop.org

Order for Christmas - orders.talkingshop@gmail.com

The countdown to Christmas has started in Talking Shop!

* **Trees:** As usual we will be hand picking trees from The Old Farm Shop in Harwell £35 / £45. Orders in as soon as possible please.

* **Turkey & Goose:** We have a great new supplier, Starveall, Aylesbury, who farm high welfare, award-winning birds. Last orders 11 Dec but please let us know asap. Delivery to us 22 December.

* **Coopers Oxford Pork** – great local sausages, bacon, ham, pigs in blankets, gammon.. Last orders 12 Dec. Delivery to us 19 Dec.

* **Waterperry Farm Shop meat:** beef topside, rolled sirloin, lamb, capon, smoked salmon and more. Order by 9th Dec.

* **Bonnors Fruit & Veg:** everything you need – anything from their website. Last orders 18 Dec, deliveries to us 21 and 23 December.

* **Country Bunches - Christmas Wreaths** Lizie is hand making natural foraged garlands again this year. Call or email the shop. Last orders 8 Dec for delivery on 15th December.

* **Gift Hampers:** you choose & we'll pack for a special present.

**Any questions or for more prices & details -
Pop in, Call us, See our website**

And More About Us

Talking Shop is your local shop and community hub. We normally run a café too but for now, that's on hold. This year we've expanded our shop lines so we have a really wide range: newspapers, store cupboard stock, chilled & frozen foods, baking ingredients, snacks, toiletries, nappies, beer, wine, lovely cards, wrapping paper and gift items. We get regular deliveries of fresh fruit and veg, locally baked bread, eggs, meat and dairy. We buy as much as possible from local suppliers and have a great line of detergent refills from Oxford's SESI.

Who runs the shop?

Did you know Talking Shop is community owned and volunteer led? We are a Community Benefit Society, supported by over 120 local shareholding members. The shop is run by a small team of paid managers with a larger team of local volunteers.

Why shop with us? We're so much more than a shop! A local shop is a vital hub, a connection point for many local residents, a place where people get to know their neighbours and keep in touch with what's going on. It's a way for us to look out for each other, and reduce social isolation and loneliness, especially in this difficult year. Some people pop in every day for their paper and to say hello, others do more of their shopping with us, our volunteers do home deliveries to others who can't get out. Whenever you buy anything with us you're helping us to make sure we can always provide so much more than just a shop for our local community.

Make life easier: Order with us

During lockdown our volunteers set up a new ordering system. If you know there is something you use every week, why not set up a weekly order? There's no need to come into the shop, just collect from the back door and pay online. You can also put together a larger order with fresh veg and local meat and have it all hand-picked and packed for you. If there's something we don't have that you'd like, just let us know, we'll get it if we can.

Call 07305 307421 or email deliveries.talkingshop@gmail.com

Our Orders Team work on Mon, Wed & Fri. We need a two-day lead to make sure we have everything you need, so order on Monday for Wednesday, Wednesday for Friday, Friday for Monday.

Facebook @TalkingShopSandford / Twitter @ TalkingShopSand

Billy Fox 07786 130660
NICEIC Approved Electrician

Our New Talking Shop team

In the summer we bade farewell to Richard and Miranda, who both moved on to new adventures. Sad though it was to lose them we have gained fantastic new weekday and market managers.

First, please meet our weekday shop managers...

Kylie Mackown



Hello, I am Kylie and I am Shop Manager at Talking Shop every Thursday and Friday. I am a mother of two young children so that keeps me busy, but when I do get the chance I enjoy reading and spending time with friends and family but, like many, this is something that I have missed so much this year.

I think Sandford On Thames is a great place, with a fantastic community. My parents have lived here since 2005 and I spend lots of time here with my two young children, playing in the park, exploring the nature reserve and visiting the ducks down at Sandford lock. My son used to attend the playgroup with my mother, and he especially enjoyed visiting Talking Shop for an ice cream afterwards!

I have recently completed a Level 2 CACHE certificate in Understanding Retail Operations and I hope to complete further training in the near future. I am excited to be part of the Talking Shop team and I strive to provide the best possible customer service for all our customers.

I hope to see you all soon 😊

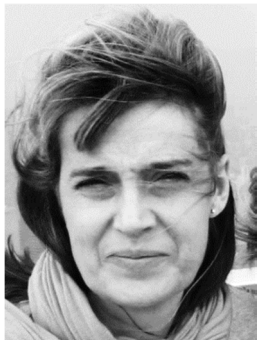
Do you like living in Sandford and would you like to play a part in local decision making?

There are a lot of issues around at the moment which may affect local life considerably, and a strong parish council, representing all the people of Sandford, will be increasingly important.

We would welcome any interest, but particularly from the Heyford Hill Lane and Oxford Park Homes parts of the village. And we are a bit short of women!

If you would like to know more, please contact the Parish Clerk on sandfordparish@gmail.com

Ingrid Gaitet



Hi, I have lived in Oxford since 1995 and raised a young family here (a girl then a boy – both have now left home). Before that I was brought up in Paris and worked for some years in New York. I have long been involved here with the East Oxford Farmers' Market and worked for some time turning recycled supermarket 'waste' into healthy meals for hungry young kids at the Rosehill Community Centre – where I also enjoyed catering for busy local bingo and bridge clubs.

I have always worked in kitchens and now really enjoy being closer to the customers in the Talking Shop. Outside work, I like to swim and sew – sewing is a life-long passion and something I learned from my dear mother. My sewing machine has kept me sane in the long 2020 lockdowns!

I am delighted to be part of the dynamic Talking Shop team at Sandford – you will find me there on Mondays, Tuesdays, and Wednesdays.

Would you like to get involved?

Talking Shop is really about bringing people together, as customers, volunteers, neighbours. So many friendships have developed since we started nearly 10 years ago. Volunteers are at the heart of everything we do and people get involved in lots of different ways – helping in the shop, counting stock, washing aprons, delivering leaflets

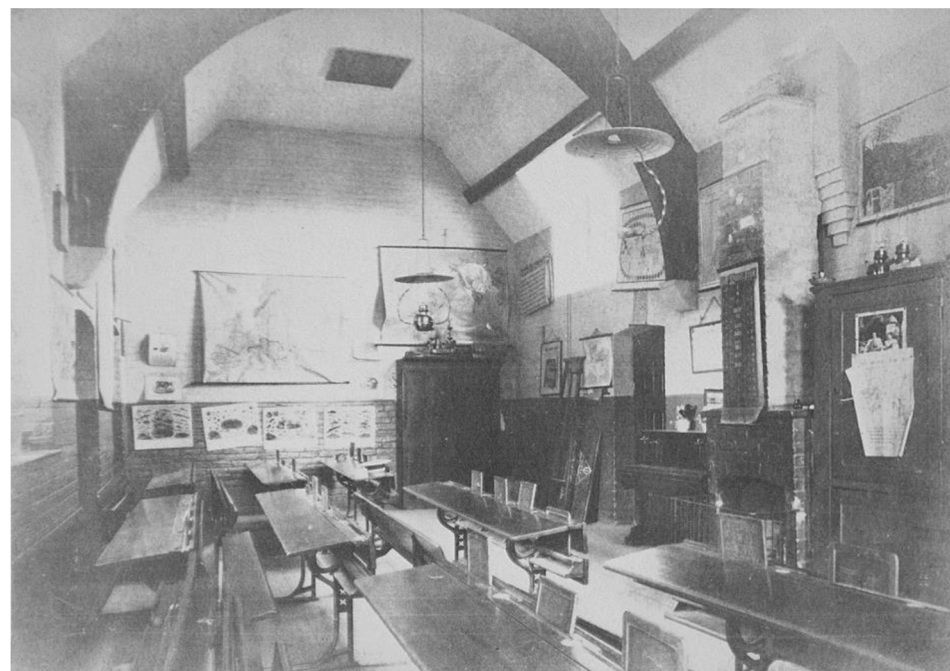
Shifts in the shop are just 3 hours.

It's fun, you'll meet loads of great people

& you'll be making a huge contribution.

Contact Abi to find out more – Contacts.talkingshop@gmail.com

Do you have a spare bike lying around?! You can donate bikes to the excellent Ready Set Go campaign, working to ensure that every child in Oxford can learn to ride a bike. They will pick up your bike and refurbish it. www.oxfordhub.org/ready-set-g



Sounds familiar . . .

On 3 November 1918, the News of the World suggested ways to combat the raging 'flu pandemic in words which perhaps echo more recent suggestions: "Wash inside nose with soap and water each night and morning; force yourself to sneeze night and morning, then breathe deeply. Do not wear a muffler; take sharp walks regularly and walk home from work; eat plenty of porridge."

It appears from the minute book of the school managers that the Spanish Flu pandemic somehow avoided Sandford's school. There is no mention even of the Great War, which is surprising if we study the names on the village war memorial in the church. However, in the years before the war, there were other epidemics. There had been a long-running problem regarding attendance versus health; if children were not sent to school the Attendance Officer would call, which was not good; if they were sent to school with symptoms of infectious diseases they got into trouble with the 'Sanitary Authority'.

To further complicate matters the County Council had instituted a 'Prize Attendance Scheme' to encourage families to send children to school, and in

1906 there was a stand off between parents eager for their children to receive prizes and the maintenance of community health. In Autumn 1906 the chairman of the school governors reported that there had been two certified cases of scarlet fever amongst the children and probably more, earlier ones. Two children were taken to the isolation hospital and are doing well. The Sanitary Authorities, in whose hands the matter was placed, had so far done nothing, so he has given the children three days holiday till the school was disinfected.

Following this the Chairman wrote to the County Council, saying “our experience of the bad working of their prize attendance scheme, ending in outbreaks of measles (1 death), whooping cough, and scarlet fever.”

He wrote:

“Gentlemen, I have been asked by the managers of Sandford on Thames school to write to you as to the working of your scheme for prizes for attendance. As far as its object is concerned it has been a thorough success. Children and the parents, who are often late concerning attendance, now will do anything rather than that child miss school. The governess, instead of being abused as she used to be because the attendance officer called, now is abused because she sometimes has to send a child home ill. Mothers who used to keep their children at home on every pretext now send them even when they know they have infectious illness. Since the scheme has been started we have had:

1. An outbreak of measles directly due to a child being sent so as not to lose its medal. Result school closed one child died.
2. An outbreak of whooping cough, also due to fear of losing awards. There was no actual death, but one child was given up by the doctor.
3. Now going on - scarlet fever. Not due directly to prizes, but to the mistake on the part of our governess. I fear, owing to the pressure put upon her to keep up appearances. Result is that now we have 50 children at school out of 77 so that in the long run I think that the plan has actually reduced our attendance.

I think it probable that we are peculiarly liable to disease, as many of our mothers go into Oxford weekly for their shopping, and drag their whole family with them, and so pick up anything that is going. Can some modification of the Attendance scheme be made?”.

Liz Shatford

NEW TEMPORARY BUS SERVICE: 45

COWLEY TO ABINGDON, VIA SANDFORD & LITTLEMORE

Government funding has allowed Oxfordshire CC to reinstate a bus route axed in 2016, between Abingdon, Berinsfield, Sandford, Littlemore and Cowley. However, this grant is **for one year only**, so won't be continued unless used. The bus runs roughly every two hours, no weekends – the timetable is available from Thames Travel. It isn't going to win awards for frequency, but it does offer people in Sandford access to Cowley shops and the 10 Hospital bus, as well as Abingdon, the Thames at Clifton Hampden, and a route to the Roman Road which leads back from Berinsfield via the Baldons to Grenoble Road.

Sandford Hydro news

A report from the Low Carbon Hub in the summer showed that the Hydro had generated 63% of their target annual generation figure. That is on the lower end of the predicted range, mainly because of the extreme weather of 2018/19 – a very dry summer and autumn in 2018 meant there were low water levels, with unusually large amounts of rainfall in late autumn and winter of 2019 making the river levels extremely high. This resulted in plant shutdown for safety reasons. In general the Hydro has been working well. Climate change being a reality, the Hub is continuing to look for ways to mitigate the effects of weather extremes and achieve the highest possible generation in future years.

Go Active Outdoors : suitable for all

Getting outdoors and connecting with other people can be really helpful during this time of isolation. To find out more about what activities are available, go to www.oxford.gov.uk/goactiveoutdoors or contact Emma on e.collins@oxford.gov.uk



SANDFORD PET SITTING

**If you are unhappy about leaving your pet alone at any time,
I may be able to help.**

Going on holiday or need to leave your pet alone, day or night?
I may be able to help you and your pet. Reasonable rates, local references.

Ring Anna on 07368 256770 or sandfordpetsitting@yahoo.com

Sandford-On-Thames Women's Institute Winter 2020



Although we haven't been able to resume our monthly meetings in the Village Hall we are still managing to keep in touch and support each other in various ways. On one beautiful evening in August we had a 'bring your own' picnic in the riverside garden of our President. We have just this month had our first Zoom meeting and it was great to see everybody - although of course it was a shame that some members could not participate - a few of our members have gone online for the first time. Plans are in hand for a Zoom Christmas Party. Once this situation is over, we'll see the benefits of what it's encouraged us to do and achieve.

As a memorial, we decorated the Church gate with poppies knitted by the members for the service outside the church on Remembrance Sunday, which was a particularly moving and memorable occasion (see photo on back cover).

To have a lasting record of our thoughts about the year 2020, each member of the WI is decorating a giant piece of a jigsaw 12" x 12" with their interpretations of Lockdown, which when combined will form a spectacular mural to be displayed on a wall at the Village Hall. While many people may wish to forget this last year it is apparent to a good deal of people that there have been some amazing experiences during this time.

We have put together two shoe boxes of necessities for Women in Oxfordshire's Women's Refuge as part of our Federation's 'Action to support women in need' and we are in the process of collecting within our group to produce Hampers for families who cannot afford all the things we normally take for granted at Christmas. If you would like to join in supporting either of these causes please get in touch.

It would be lovely to have new members, especially at a time when people are supporting each other in so many ways and the WI is a perfect way to meet new people - do ring for a virtual cup of coffee.

'Only when normal things are not normal,
do we realise how special normal things are.'

Please visit our Facebook page at Sandford-on-Thames Women's Institute and follow us on Instagram @sandford_on_thames_wi to see more.

Jill Love, President SOTWI Tel: 01865 716557 - text only 07800 907477
jpappslove@hotmail.com

Heyford Meadow and Simons Land



Oxford Preservation Trust owns approximately 11½ acres of land in Sandford, consisting of Heyford Meadow and Simons Land. Heyford Meadow is a former scrap yard which has been transformed into a nature reserve open to the public since 2011. The nature reserve is managed to be a wildlife-friendly amenity space with ponds, a scrape and species-rich grassland which over the summer had a blooming display of wildflowers. Three information boards are sited around the nature reserve highlighting wildlife to spot and a map showing the permissive paths. Access is through a kissing gate at the bottom of Broadhurst Gardens. Simons Land is a small site which slopes gently down to the River Thames with beautiful views across to Kennington, this site has pedestrian access from Heyford Hill Lane. A raised board walk allows access, and an information board is located at the entrance gate.

Heyford Meadow has been particularly well used this year, with many local residents utilising the space for exercise and enjoyment. OPT manages this nature reserve with volunteers supporting routine site maintenance.

Conservation work parties take place on the Third Thursday of each month, following government guidance on social distancing and limited numbers.

During November, our work party was cancelled due to the restrictions, however we are hopeful that we may be able to recommence in December.

If you would like to find out more, please look at our website (<https://www.oxfordpreservation.org.uk/content/events>) for information about dates including any cancellations if necessary. Sessions last from 09:30 to 13:00 with no previous experience expected. It is essential you wear stout shoes or wellies (it can be a very wet site), old clothes and bring gardening gloves. Do join us for good exercise in friendly company. For more information or to register for a session, please email Lindsay.

As a charity all our crucial work, including the maintenance of our green spaces within Sandford, would not be possible without our members and donors.

During these unprecedented times, funding and support is vital to ensure that Oxford's heritage and setting is maintained for future generations. Becoming a member is easy – you can do so online <http://bit.ly/2joinopt> or by telephoning the office on 01865 242918.

Best wishes and keep safe and well,

Lindsay Priddle l.priddle@oxfordpreservation.org.uk

Village Hall Update

While the lockdown and other restrictions have obviously had a major impact on the use of the Hall, generally speaking it remains in good material condition and financially sound.

Lockdown: when the first lockdown was imposed we had no choice but to shut the Hall completely. Then, as restrictions were eased, we started to re-open the Hall for bookings. Our approach was to provide a safe space and to take reasonable precautions to ensure that people use it safely, which meant we had to do some things differently. We made the Hall as COVID-safe as we could, and restricted the number of people who could use each room. As a result, we could allow some hires for work purposes (for example, the NHS routinely use the Hall for training courses) but not for social events. These restrictions are regularly reviewed but will continue until further notice.

Finances: we went in to the lockdown with a healthy reserve and this has stood us in good stead – we were also very grateful to receive a government grant of £10,000. Some of this has been used to cover our ongoing costs, as well as maintenance and repairs.

Maintenance: we have had minor repairs done to ground-floor windows at the east end and the skylight above Talking Shop. We also had some roof tiles replaced and gutters repaired/cleaned out. The cladding on the west end is in a poor state and we plan to have that repaired or replaced, and repaint the external woodwork. The window in the Hutton Room (overlooking the Church) also needs repairs, which will be included in the work on the cladding. Future projects might include replacing the fire-door, an awning outside Talking Shop to allow more use of the outside space, and internal redecoration.

Talking Shop: we have done what we can to support Talking Shop and all the benefits they bring to the community. Originally, we allowed them to use the Hall so that they could allow more shoppers at a social distance. Now that we have started hiring out again we have had to end that.

***Treasurer:* we will be looking for a new Treasurer from early next year. If you would like to contribute to the Village and its community, and are able to spare a few hours a week, please get in touch with Steve Marsh, the current Treasurer on sandfordvillagehallaccounts@yahoo.com or me, Charlie Wilson, Chair of Village Hall Committee charlie@wilson.org**

Why not help your garden birds this winter...and you'll really enjoy doing it!

With the prospect of us all spending more time than ever at home this winter, there is no better time than now to start feeding your garden birds. By providing a constant supply of bird food in the next few months you will be helping many of your local birds survive the winter and at the same time it will bring you great pleasure watching their playful antics as they to and fro your bird feeders.

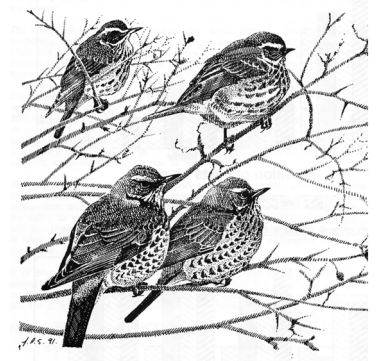
Winter is a difficult time for our garden birds. The short days combined with harsh weather, can lead to high mortality for many of our familiar and much loved birds. Bad weather can quickly drain birds' energy reserves, and shorter days bring fewer opportunities for feeding.

Giving your garden birds extra food during the winter will dramatically improve their chances of survival. The wider the variety of food you can offer them, the more species you will attract.

Focus on high-energy foods that top up those vital fat reserves. Peanuts (the ones sold for birds) are a favourite with tits, nuthatches and greenfinches. Sunflower, millet and niger seeds are particularly rich in nutritious oil. Tiny black niger seeds poured into fine-meshed feeders or empty teasel heads are ideal for goldfinches and siskins. Reed Buntings (usually a scarce garden visitor) are regular visitors to my garden in Broadhurst Gardens to take advantage of the sunflower hearts I provide.

Bruised apples scattered on the ground are welcomed by redwings and fieldfares, especially if the farmland fields they usually frequent are flooded or frozen hard. A dish of dried or fresh mealworms is adored by robins and wrens.

Stale bread, cooked rice and pure lard or fat can be combined with flaked maize and sunflower seeds to make a tasty bird cake. These along with fat balls can be hung in trees.



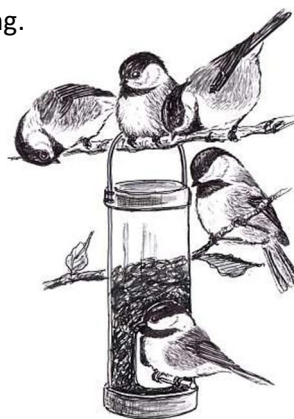
Redwing and Fieldfare by J.P. Smith

Position your bird table and feeders in places where you can see them easily from the house, but near enough to fences, trees and shrubs where birds can

perch and check for predators such as cats. Once you have started to feed your garden birds ensure you continue to do so throughout the winter as the birds will rely on your offerings.

Birds can be messy eaters! Clear spilled feed off the ground every few days so that it doesn't go mouldy and spread disease, and throw away food that the birds don't eat. Fresh water is just as essential as food, not only to drink but also to maintain their plumage, which is the bird's natural insulation. An old washing up bowl or plant pot saucer makes a good bird bath and remember to replace the water as often as possible.

Just five minutes bird watching can be very rewarding. The acrobats of the bird world are the tit family: great, coal, blue and, if you're lucky, the long-tailed tit whose tail is as long as its body. The large noisy gang of birds twittering in the shrubbery is probably a family of house sparrows, waiting to descend on the bird table and devour the scraps left by other birds.



Birds that are territorial at other times of the year will come together to feed in winter. You may be surprised to see several cock blackbirds in your garden at the same time; some of them will be natives, while others will have flown in from continental Europe, escaping the harsher weather there.

Watching your garden birds from the comfort of an armchair in your living room can provide you with many hours of enjoyment and relaxation. My birdfeeders are now strategically placed so I can enjoy the coming and goings of my garden birds whilst I attend to the washing-up, a chore I never used to enjoy....until now!

I can recommend Vine House Farm as excellent suppliers of bird food.

They run a conservation award-winning farm and every sale supports the Wildlife Trusts movement, including your local Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust.


They also have a free next day delivery service.

<https://www.vinehousefarm.co.uk/>

Colin Williams

Thanks

The vicar writes to thank everyone who wished him a happy birthday in October. The kind messages were overwhelming and the collage of so many friends living and departed will remain a treasure. He looks forward to being allowed out to roam around and thank people in person, but meanwhile joins all his friends and neighbours in looking forward to a joyful Christmas.



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Rest in peace

Geoff Cowan 6th September 1950 – 23rd September 2020

Three years and three months after suffering a devastating stroke which left him largely paralysed Geoff died at Brookfield Christian Care Home on 23 September. Ray Davies, who was present when Geoff passed away, reported that his end was totally peaceful – he just stopped breathing.



Geoff was born in Plymouth on 6 September 1950. His father was a naval officer who came from Seapattrick near Banbridge in county Down, his mother came from a Cornish family which had settled at Bridgend in Glamorganshire. His father's naval career meant that with his mother and his elder sister Sandra (who now lives in New Zealand) Geoff's early years were spent partly in Singapore and in Malta. The family returned to England in time for Geoff to take and pass the Eleven Plus, which gained him a place at the Southern Grammar School in Portsmouth.

He had early shown very considerable musical talent, and on leaving school he attended the Royal Academy of Music in London. While there he obtained a number of qualifications; his Associateship of the Royal College of Organists was the one of which he was most proud. He also counted it a great privilege to be invited to attend an in-depth course under the tutelage of the great Flor Peeters in Belgium. His family's religious background was strongly evangelical (the Open Brethren), but he became assistant organist for the Anglican church at Waltham Abbey. He was married and had four children. To support his family while living in Essex he engaged in contract computer programming work for various firms including Kodak, but he later found time to engage in peripatetic music teaching. Following his divorce he moved to Sandford. He played piano and organ (even that in the Town Hall) for the Oxford Welsh Male Voice Choir, and was active in fund-raising for the Oxford branches of the Multiple Sclerosis Society and the Stroke Association. He undertook the task of examination invigilation both at Brookes and at Oxford University. He loved exploring National Trust properties, old churches and organs over a wide district.

For some years he was organist at Sutton Courtenay, but from 2007 he took on this function at Sandford, where the skill of his organ playing was much appreciated, as was the reliability and regularity of his attendance at choir practices and services. However a first stroke, though mild, had some effect on his fingerwork, and he resigned the Sandford post after eight years. It was however very fitting that members of the Sandford choir under the direction of Christian Bradley took part in his funeral at St Andrew's church on 12 October, and fitting also that on this same occasion recordings were played of a virtuoso piano performance he had given when still in his twenties.

His death was a sad loss for the many friends he had made in Sandford or retained from his earlier life, and in spite of Covid-19 the funeral was well attended. His ashes will be deposited at Sandford because, as he himself said, living at Sandford was the happiest time of his whole life.

Revd Georgie Simpson d. 30th October 2020

Georgie was born in South Wales in 1946, but moved to Oxford in the 1960s. In those days she ran the Wykham Coffee Shop in Holywell Street in Oxford, where she met Ben, who was farming in West Gloucestershire. In 1976 they married and 3 years later they moved to Oxford and Georgie started to study theology. She qualified as a Counsellor, gained a BTh (Oxford) and later an MA with distinction in Pastoral Studies at Birmingham University. She later studied part time before being ordained as a Deacon, and serving at St Nicholas Church, Littlemore. She transferred to the joint benefice of St Margaret's and St Giles, where she worked as a busy Parish Priest for the best part of 20 years, before retiring from Parish ministry in 2008.

The following year she founded Oxford Centre for Spiritual Growth, which is based at the Church of St Michael at the North Gate in Cornmarket Street. The Centre offers spiritual direction on a one-to-one basis, and runs study days, linking the arts with spirituality, along with quiet days.

Georgie was diagnosed with cancer in late August and her health deteriorated rapidly until her death on 30th October. She leaves and is sadly missed by her husband Ben (often seen about the village with their dog, a small black Cockapoo) and her two grown-up daughters, Emily and Helen.

Their many friends offer deepest sympathies.

Libby Langton

Alan and Libby lived many years at the end of River View and brought up their two children Simon and Maria there. After Alan's death in about 1990 Libby moved to Littlemore and lived next door to Dot Painter and transferred to St Mary and St Nicholas. She remained true to her South African/West Indian roots, full of joy and laughter, but became less mobile and last Autumn accepted the need of care and moved into the Isis at Cornwallis Road, where she died peacefully in June, aged 88. May she rest in peace and rise in glory.

* * *

For many this has been a year of loss and bereavement. Since the September Link we again sadly record the passing of several in the village. The sudden and unexpected death of **Patsy Knights**, aged 72, of The Crescent, was a shock to her friends and neighbours. She was not many years in the village but had a good neighbour in Maureen.

Also in Park Home **Russell Spencer** of Main Avenue was cared for 24/7 in his home by his family through a long illness. He will be missed.

www.sandfordchurch.org.uk

You might like to take a look at St Andrew's new website - in addition to church news and events, it has lots of music and videos suggestions, Liz's leaflet on the history of the church building, and a 'newcomers guide to the village' with information on things that go on in and around the village - though that comes with a warning that some of the information, e.g. Talking Shop hours, is pre-Covid, and there doesn't seem much point in updating it until life is a little less uncertain.

Welcome

to Louis as manager of the King's Arms and farewell to Dale, with a big thank you for the excellent job he has done. All the best for pastures new to you, Nadine and the boys, and congratulations on your promotion to Area Manager. Shows what a good job you did here.

Your Parish Council

The Parish Council continues to meet monthly on Zoom and nearly-to normal business continues. The agenda format has changed so that any parishioner who would like to attend to raise an item has a slot to do so early on in the meeting. If you would like to attend or have something to raise, please email in advance to: sandfordparish@gmail.com.

The meetings are on the first Monday of each month at 6.30pm. The full minutes of each meeting and the topics mentioned below may be viewed on line at www.sandfordonthames.org.uk.

The current Parish Councillors are:

Hilda Bailey (Chair), Peter Emery (Vice-chair), Peter Addyman, Andrew Glynn, Charlie Wilson. Michael Whittaker has just joined the PC following the resignation of Iain Geddes and there is one vacancy following the resignation of Tammy Holden-White.

If you are interested in joining the PC to become more involved in local and community issues, please email sandfordparish@gmail.com. The main time commitment is in attending the monthly PC meeting (see above) for 1-2 hours once a month and reading the relevant emails and papers to be able to engage in the matters discussed for the benefit of the local community.

It does not require any special knowledge or expertise.

The main points from recent Parish Council meetings:

1. The emerging Local Plan 2034 that includes plans for housing development on Oxfordshire's Green Belt, including up to 3000 new homes south of Grenoble Road is still being pushed through by central government and requiring SODC to proceed with the necessary steps. A consultation on the main modifications to the Plan (none of which alter the essential proposals in scale or location) has just closed and it will then require SODC to formally adopt the Plan. Your PC has continued to raise objections about the development through all the avenues available and these may be found at www.sandfordonthames.org.uk under Developments/Grenoble Road.
2. The PC has recently responded to the consultations on the wide-ranging and radical changes to the planning system proposed by the government.
3. The proposal by OCC under their Mineral and Core Waste Strategy for a large new gravel extraction site on the peaceful banks of the river Thames on the southern border of Sandford-on-Thames Parish but within Nuneham Courtenay Parish has been cast into doubt after it was found the site

would yield less gravel than initially calculated and therefore other sites are again being investigated. However, at present, the Nuneham Courtenay site still remains OCC's proposed site and if no overall alternative site is found, it may still be developed for gravel extraction as one of two sites. Questions are being asked as to why a site in South Oxfordshire should be chosen rather than elsewhere in the county and the basis for why the county needs so much aggregate. This proposal is being firmly resisted by the Parish Councils of Nuneham Courtenay and Sandford-on-Thames but if it is reinstated, it will be subject to formal planning.

4. The PC plans to install a new village gateway sign to help slow traffic from the A4074 northbound onto Henley Road as it enters the village. It is being coordinated with the Highways dept of OCC who will arrange installation.

Main points from the reports of the Oxfordshire County Councillor and South Oxfordshire District Councillor representatives who also attend the PC meetings (full reports available on www.sandfordonthames.org under Parish Council/OCC and SODC parish reports):

OCC rep (Lorraine Lindsay-Gale): there have been ongoing challenges emerging from the first lockdown to make community facilities, such as libraries, operational again. The second lockdown brings further challenges. OCC has set up support for vulnerable people, see www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/council/coronavirus-covid-19/support-residents.

Oxfordshire school attendance was 93.3% on 29th September, compared to 88.7% across England. OCC is promoting The Careers in Care programme. OCC have applied due to take over parking enforcement from Thames Valley Police for the Vale and South Oxfordshire (as has already happened in the city and West Oxfordshire). There are ongoing discussions about whether to merge all the local councils with the county council to create one unitary authority.

SODC rep (Sam Casey-Rerhaye): SODC is also occupied responding to the ongoing Covid situation. The Community Support Hub at SODC is open 9-5pm weekdays for signposting to local volunteer support services. Like OCC, there are still some measures to support local businesses. There is a consultation on the issue of off-road parking – responses via SODC website until 19.11.20. The 2-hour free parking in SODC carparks is ending. The council has a new website <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/> which has made the information the public most likely to want far more accessible.

Julie Anderson, Parish Clerk.

Roads and houses and things like that . . .

There is more information on all these developments on our Parish council website, including links to various relevant documents.

What's going on with the Grenoble Road development?

(for this and gravel, see also our Parish Council minutes on pp.24/25)

A CONTROVERSIAL housing plan which South Oxfordshire politicians hoped they could alter has been approved by the Inspector, with just minor changes. South Oxfordshire's new Local Plan makes space for as many as 28,000 homes in the district, 24,000 of which could be built by 2034. The seven 'strategic sites' identified by the plan for housing (six in the Green Belt) include land south of Grenoble Road where 3,000 homes are planned, effectively extending the southern boundary of Oxford city. The plan also includes a Park and Ride site on the A4074 on the southern border of our village.

The council's ruling Lib Dem-Green coalition had wanted to revise the Local Plan, but the Government's Housing Minister, Robert Jenrick, ordered SODC to approve it before the end of 2020. *The Oxford Mail reports:* It is unsure what will happen in the run up to the December deadline to approve the Local Plan: before the plan becomes a lawful blueprint of where homes and offices should be built in South Oxfordshire, it needs the district council to sign off on the changes the inspector has made. Mr Jenrick could order the council to adopt it, or councillors might be given a vote on it as they usually would, with many unlikely to feel comfortable with voting on something they still disagree with.'

Baldons Solar Farm proposal

The Solar farm proposal adjacent to the Baldons moves on. The SODC planning officer has requested a full environmental impact assessment for the proposal, which would take in six large fields, from roughly the opposite side of the road from Lower Farm up to and encircling Nineveh. There are maps and more information on our Parish Council website.

Gravel extraction at Nuneham

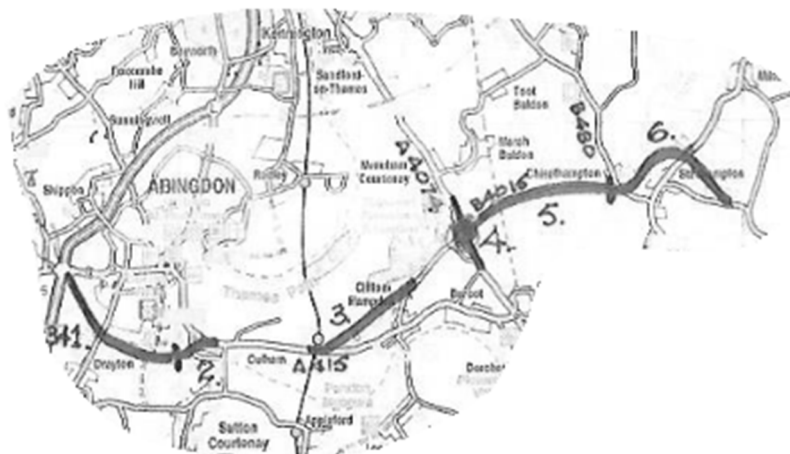
This proposed development, between Lower Farm and Nuneham Courtenay, has been put on hold by Oxfordshire County Council after the plans were found to be unsound. The objections to the site are numerous – harm to wildlife, to the river and to an archaeological site, proximity to the Global Retreat Centre, transport issues etc. – as well as the probability that the site would produce far

less gravel than previous estimates. The Council have gone back to look at other sites, but we are left somewhat in limbo, as the site remains the Council's 'preferred option' until such time as they declare otherwise.

The video produced by the Global Retreat Centre gives a good idea of the size of the Gravel and Solar proposals: youtu.be/UYU8S4f0Nh8

Oxford-Cambridge Expressway

Well, it's officially 'paused', though it has recently been showing some signs of life. We know that the route (which involves the projected building of a million houses) is not yet decided. We also know that there are planned roads from the A34, including bypasses of Abingdon, Clifton Hampden, Stadhampton, conversion of the Notcutts roundabout, 'improvement' of the B4015 lane to Chislehampton. (See plan below). It suggests the possibility of a major road between the A34 and the M40 near Thame – in effect an outer Oxford Southern Bypass by stealth. The Spring 2020 budget may give clues as to whether the Expressway will go ahead, and if so various routes will be made public. After that Highways England will choose a preferred route. If it goes ahead, it is due for completion by 2030.



The above map shows the major roads currently planned. It is taken from a document produced by the POETS (Planning Oxfordshire's Environment and Transport Sustainably), a group of people who have held influential positions in planning and transport in Oxfordshire, and who continue to put pressure on our Councils. If you are interested in that sort of thing, it's worth looking at their website: www.poetsplanningoxon.uk.



This Link magazine is published by the Link Committee and this issue is edited by Prue Sykes, Lower Farm, Sandford-on-Thames (748848).

Anything for inclusion should be sent to Lower Farm or e-mailed to robert.morgan@theology.ox.ac.uk.

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