

WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN

TheVillageNews

DECEMBER 2022 / JANUARY 2023



Church window by K Mitch Hodge

CHRISTMAS AT BLENHEIM PALACE



The *Magic* is back

18 NOV – 2 JAN



NEW INDOOR ADVENTURE

The Kingdom of The Snow Queen



THE GREAT OUTDOORS MADE MAGICAL

Illuminated Trail New for 2022



PLUS... in the Great Court

The Christmas Market

Open until 18 Dec



Village Directory

THE VILLAGE NEWS

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WESTON SOCIETY

WESTON WALKERS

FOOTPATH WARDEN

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GARDEN CLUB

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GOLDEN LEAVES

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WOMEN'S INSTITUTE (WI)

Lyn Barnett: 01869 350707

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

Bob Hessian: 01869 350662

NEIGHBOURS NATTER

COFFEE MORNING

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THAMES VALLEY POLICE

Non-Emergency Line: 101

OCC

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From the editor

WINTER IS TRULY UPON US – as I write, the clocks have gone back, Guy Fawkes has been 'celebrated' by a fantastic display of whizzbangs and sparkle (many thanks to Mark, Mick, and the Village Hall Committee for such an amazing display) and by the time this is delivered the first Advent Window of the season will be getting set to light up.

Weston has many wonderful festive events throughout December, from the Big Breakfast and Christmas Bazaar on Saturday 3rd December (a fantastic way to start your Christmas shopping), via the unveiling of a new Advent Window each day, through drinks at the Weston Manor Hotel as the prelude to the Crib and Carol Service on 18th December and on to Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. Please do support these as they're all things that help make the village so special during the Christmas season. And don't forget that Weston Pantry is bursting at the seams with festive goodies and has pencils sharpened ready to take your Christmas orders.

One of the traditions that sadly is no longer with us is the annual carol singing round the village. Maybe the reminiscences inside this issue on the experiences - some good, some not *quite* so good – of the intrepid singers of yore will whet your appetite to restart this in 2023 ...

Have a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

Albo



Deadline for the February/March edition:
5TH JANUARY 2023



A letter from the Rector

Gareth Miller

Rector of the Akeman Benefice and Area Dean of Bicester & Islip

Dear friends,

In one of our schools this past term we've been thinking about 'respect' and in another about 'love'. These two come together as we approach Christmas and the new year.

When I was preparing a school assembly on the theme of respect, a proverb I was taught as a child came to mind: "Sticks and stones may break my bones, but names will never hurt me." While understanding the encouragement to resilience, I am not sure that the underlying sentiment is true. Names do hurt, and the coarsening of our public discourse and the ease with which people resort to name-calling on social media should be a cause of concern for us all. The example set by politicians, at home and

abroad, is not encouraging. If you are ever tempted (as I have been) to bad-mouth someone via Facebook or Twitter, please try to resist. It devalues the target of your venom, but it debases you too.

At Christmas, we remember another kind of name-calling: "His name shall be called Emmanuel – God with us." Love embodied, so that we might imbibe and embody that same love. St John writes: "God is Love, and those who live in love live in God and God lives in them." (1 John 4.16). Christina Rossetti put it like this:

*Love came down at Christmas,
Love all lovely, love divine;
Love was born at Christmas,
Star and angels gave the sign.*

2022 has been yet another year of turmoil on the national and

international stage. We need a lot more love and a lot more respect. But it begins when we start practising it ourselves:

*Love shall be our token,
Love be yours and love be mine;
Love to God and all men,
Love for plea and gift and sign.*



Our December and January services:

St Mary's Church, Weston on the Green warmly invites you to join in our Advent and Christmas services

4th December: Advent 2
16:00 Evening Prayer

11th December: Advent 3
11:00 Holy Communion

18th December: Advent 4
18:00 Carol Service

24th December: Christmas Eve
22:00 Holy Communion

25th December: Christmas Day
10:30 Family Service

31st December 10:00
Benefice Service: Holy Communion at Kirtlington

8th January: Epiphany 11:00
Morning Worship

22 January: Epiphany 3 11:00
Holy Communion

For other services across the Akeman Benefice please visit <https://www.akemanbenefice.org.uk/church-services>

BENEFICE NEWS

Rise and Shine! Every Wednesday in term-time in Kirtlington Church, catering for young and old. Lots of play and crafts for little ones; excellent cake and chat for everyone!

<https://www.akemanbenefice.org.uk/latest-events/rise-shine-cafe>

Akeman Benefice

Rise & Shine café

drop-in café for young and old. Play and crafts for little ones, tea and cake for everyone!



EVERY WEDNESDAY | 0915-1045
KIRTLINGTON CHURCH



Our church is facing a financial challenge.

As we move forward to regular services at our church, the clergy and wardens are attending Diocesan webinars on the topic "How Village Churches Thrive". Our church is re-engaging with Weston with events such as Harvest Festival lunch and the forthcoming Big Breakfast on December 3rd. The Akeman Benefice has undertaken a survey to determine the type of services, including the times and their frequency. We want to align the manpower resources with those needs. The PCC will meet with the Bishop of Dorchester on November 14th to discuss the issues of the C of E strategy, resources and manpower allocations.

The church is a valuable asset to our community. We need your support, including non-church goers who often enjoy the peace of the church and churchyard.

We are determined to keep our doors open for everyone and your help will ensure we can meet that commitment. Donation/Stewardship forms are available in the lobby of the church. Upon completion please give the form(s) to either one of the wardens for further processing.

Eric Bohm, Church Warden

| Income: 9 Months to September | | | |
|-------------------------------|---------------|----------------|----------------|
| | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| Regular Monthly Giving | £5,282 | £5,708 | £ 4,389 |
| Collections at Services | £186 | £329 | £ 1,484 |
| Tax Recovered | £2,101 | £1,649 | £ 1,751 |
| Other Income | £1,704 | £6,853 | £ 2,301 |
| Total Income | £9,273 | £14,540 | £ 9,925 |

Our operating income has declined by about 30% from the pre pandemic levels. Detailed financial statements are available on request.

| Expenses: 9 Months to September | | | |
|---------------------------------|--------|--------|--------|
| | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| Parish Share | £2,000 | £6,339 | £3,975 |
| Benefice Fees | £1,051 | £1,109 | £365 |

¹ Parish Share covers the clergy salary, housing, pension costs.

² Benefice Fees cover the costs of a part time administrator, stationery, travel etc. of the Rector and the clergy team.

| | | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|----------------|---------------|
| Insurance | £1,453 | £1,454 | £ 1,450 |
| Major Projects | £9,014 | £- | £966 |
| Other Expenses | £2,170 | £999 | £1,086 |
| Total Expenses | £15,688 | £ 9,901 | £7,842 |

We delayed one Parish Share¹ payment, and suspended Benefice Fees² payments to conserve our cash reserves. If we include those costs our operating surplus in 2022 reduces from £2,083 to a deficit of £635.



The Old Flight House

The Old Flight House is a refreshingly different antiques centre. It has a fantastic range, from quality traditional antiques to vintage and retro items and stunning painted furniture, all set out in beautiful light and spacious surroundings. A licensed cafe serves good coffee and freshly prepared lunches with a lovely outside terrace for sunny days. Open Monday to Saturday 10am-5pm, Sunday 11am-5pm. Northampton Road, Weston on the Green, Oxfordshire, OX25 3TJ

01869 343441

 @oldflighthouse

theoldflighthouse.co.uk

Chair's comments

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES have been the ongoing thread of the work of the Parish Council over the past two months.

We have continued to be challenged by the issue of the pathway in front of the veteran oak tree at the top of North Lane. We are encouraged that Oxfordshire County Council are intending to undertake the construction of the new path and the demolition of the built path. This is contingent on the total cost of the works not exceeding £25k and confirmation that the Direct Works team have the capacity. We have suggested that the replacement path could be built fairly quickly and the railings which obscure visibility be removed. Demolition of the built structure would follow and remedial work to the tree carried out. We are moving forward ever so slowly to a conclusion of this lengthy issue.

We have ahead of us the excitement about our community transport van. Hopefully, the van will provide an opportunity for people who feel housebound to get out occasionally. We are also pleased that the Welcome Kits are ready for delivery. We hope to be able to speak with those who have moved into the village since the start of the pandemic. If you get a knock on your door from a Parish Councillor welcoming you to the village even though you've been here for three years – please welcome us! We hope that you will share your contact details and areas of interest with us. We are, of course, hoping to find additional talents and skills from amongst the 'newcomers'!

**CHERWELL DISTRICT COUNCIL
LOCAL PLAN**

The CDC Local Plan draft will have a formal 8 week consultation from 14th December 2022 to 8th February 2023. The Chair and Vice-Chair of the Parish Council attended a briefing on the document.

Objectives of the CDC Local Plan update

The new Local Plan will present a plan for the overall future of Cherwell in the period 2020 – 2040, not just housing numbers. Main objectives are climate change/sustainable development, building healthy sustainable communities and maintaining and developing a sustainable local economy. The new Local Plan will also replace the saved policies carried forward from the 1996 plan.

CDC has a spatial vision for Cherwell. This is a portrait of what Cherwell will look like in 2040. The main points are:

- Banbury and Bicester are the main focus for development, including the Garden Town at Bicester. Other associated areas of development will be Kidlington and Heyford Park, where development will include new highway and other infrastructure. Development of more than 100 homes will be limited to these sites.
- Rural areas will be protected and development will be smaller in scale and directed to more sustainable villages.

Policies in the new CDC Local Plan

There will be new policies on environmental protection, biodiversity net gain, sustainable and climate resilient construction, historic assets, local character and design.

Housing need:

A technical assessment of

housing need is being done by the Oxfordshire Growth Need Assessment (OGNA) group – they will report shortly. The current estimates are that 22,508 homes are already planned in Cherwell. A further 4,400 homes are needed to meet Oxford's unmet housing need and a contingency of 15% additional homes is budgeted into the LP. This makes a total of 6,800 more homes needed to be built by 2040.

With these numbers, it is unlikely that extensive land release will be needed. A shortlist of potential strategic sites will be established (the long list is 61 sites – most will not meet the sustainability criteria).

Rural Areas:

There will be no global housing target for rural areas as a whole. These areas will have development on non-strategic sites, limited to the 'larger' villages. The settlement hierarchy of villages is being reviewed and any village without public transport will not be classified as sustainable. Further criteria in this review include the availability of services such as schools, shops, pubs, GPs, pharmacies, places of worship, play areas, outdoor community spaces, village halls. Non-allocated development outside existing villages will not be supported (but for rural exceptions where justified). Development in smaller villages will be limited to 'infill'.

All parishes will be asked to identify potential development sites. Some smaller parishes may or may not identify any sites. It is important that we are involved in the consultation as the future of our village is at stake.

Next steps:

Next briefing meeting: November 10th

Publication of the draft Local Plan: summer 2023

Submission of the LP for examination: before the end of 2023

Examination: 2024

Adoption of the new LP: early 2025

Report by Susan Daenke, Vice-Chair of the Parish Council

FULL-FIBRE UPDATE

Openreach: We have not heard from Openreach for a while. The DCMS (Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport) funding remains unapproved for our project and Openreach have been unsuccessful in appealing this. At the same time, the Oxfordshire rural voucher top up scheme has no money left in the budget. We are waiting on news for the next budget-year.

Gigaclear: In separate news, Gigaclear have informed the Parish Council that they intend to completely self-fund installing full-fibre infrastructure into our village. They are currently in Kirtlington and Bletchington and will expand their network from there to us. In a nutshell, this means that we could have a full-fibre service as soon as April next year (2023).

The current package is as follows:

- Up/down speeds are the same (the service is symmetrical).
- Residential Packages offer 200, 300, 600, 900 Mbps (up and down)
 - Most people will only want the 200 Mbps service which

is £ 17/month for 18 months then £40/month thereafter.

£17/month is the lowest rate we have seen. £40/month is 'in the mix' for a 200 Mbps service

- There is no connection fee for most premises (95%). This will be assessed at the point of application, but costs are normally for premises with an extremely long driveway, for example.
- A Linksys Velop modem/router will be provided.
 - Note: You will need 2 power sockets (one for the modem/router, and one for the fibre-ethernet converter (which sits between the modem/router and the fibre cable coming through the wall).
 - Note: If you want to maintain WIFI connectivity during a power cut, both of these devices will need a battery backup.
- The vulnerable will receive a battery backup for free.
- Entry point to the premises can be set (subject to reason) for free. This means you can choose an entry-point near a power supply needed to power the router, fibre-ethernet converter and back-up battery (if you want to use one).
- A free community hub will be provided with a 900Mbps business package for free.
- The Church may also receive a free package - we are waiting confirmation on this.


Gigaclear made it clear that they want to engage with the Parish

Council and the entire community. To this end, we will be organising open days in the Village Hall for both the afternoon and evenings (to accommodate all villagers). We expect to do this early in the new year. We can also arrange some online events for those who want to isolate.

Important take-aways:

- You do not have to take up a Gigaclear contract
- Gigaclear will have a monopoly on full fibre
 - As long as Openreach does not implement anything.
 - The offer is currently very competitive, but Gigaclear's prices long-term are unknown
- Fibre-to-the-premises needs a power supply
 - Think about where you want the service to enter your premises
 - Check that a battery-backup is included in the package if/when you apply
- Fibre does not guarantee coverage *within* the home
 - Consider your WIFI coverage within your home
 - Gigaclear will provide a new Linksys router. This may be more powerful than your current router, but we cannot confirm this right now.
- This is not an endorsement for Gigaclear
 - We will be seeking feedback from users in other villages

Report by James Henderson, Technology Advisor to the Parish Council



Traditional Home Cooked Food

Juliette and Steve welcome all to
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www.chequerswestonthegreen.co.uk
01869 351743

Planning Update

If you are interested in learning more on parish planning applications they are discussed at each Parish Council meeting and a report is placed on the Parish Council website.

BUILDING APPLICATIONS:

Decision Received – Permitted

22/01778/F – Robin's Folly, Mill Lane
Demolition of existing conservatory and replacement with sun-room. Not yet posted as permitted on CDC website.

22/01754/CLUP – Dormers, North Lane
Addition of solar panel array on the rear roof pitch and flat roof. Certificate of Lawfulness granted.

22/02571/F – Manor Farm Bungalow, B430
Erection of extension and porch - large sitting/dining room extension to the kitchen on the back of the bungalow with raked ceiling and 2 rooflights on the southern pitch.

Application Withdrawn

22/02075/F – Kelberg, Northampton Road
Existing paddock to the rear of the current parking lot for large vehicles – proposed change of use from agricultural to vehicle trailer parking area. OCC no objection.

Awaiting Decision

22/02733/F – Milestone Cottage, 3 North Lane
Single storey ground floor extension and extensive revision of internal space and roof line. Replacement of rear garage with 3 bay structure.

New Applications

22/03092/TEL – Shell Layby, A34
Application by Openreach to install a fixed broadband communications line.

22/03133/LB – Westfield Farm Cottage, North Lane
Resubmission of 22/01292/LB. Internal remodelling of kitchen and bathroom (ground floor) and retrospective application for installation of EV charge point on the garage wall.

22/03175/F and 22/03176/LB – Westfield Farm Cottage, North Lane
Resubmission of 22/01291/F. Erection of a pergola with canopy to the side of the garage, including solar panels on part of the canopy.

22/03148/F – Old Police House, Northampton Road
Resubmission of permitted development from 2015

(15/01102/F). Erection of a two-storey side extension and a single-storey rear extension following removal of existing conservatory and rear extension.

22/03149/F – Old Byre, Northampton Road
Erection of a three-bay oak frame open-sided garage with games room above. This is a building of significant scale sited on the property's eastern boundary (backing on to the B430).

Tree Works:

22/02918/TPO – Weston Manor

22/02964/TCA – Weston Manor

22/02993/TCA – Barnacre, Northampton Road

22/03131/TCA – North View, North Lane

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Ash Die-Back in the Jubilee Playing Fields Spinney

Unfortunately the Parish Council has to report that in the last two or three years ash die-back has attacked almost all the ash trees in the spinney. The trees lose leaves, then the dead branches come down in the wind and finally the trees themselves become unsafe after several years.

The suspect trees in the spinney have been dot-marked (31 in total) - yellow for obviously infected and red for urgent action necessary. The recommendation from a tree specialist is to fell all 31 trees at the same time, which would be the most economic way of dealing with the problem.

The Parish Council has appointed a tree specialist to carry out the work and this will be undertaken as soon as the company is available, likely to be in the new year. Notification will be provided to the village when we know when the work is expected to take place.

Help and Support with Cost of Living Crisis

Information and guidance to help with rising living costs can be found on these websites:
Oxfordshire County Council:
<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/council/help-rising-living-costs>

Cherwell District Council:
<https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/118/communities/977/help-with-the-cost-of-living>

Government: <https://helpforhouseholds.campaign.gov.uk/>

Better Housing Better Health:
<https://www.bhbh.org.uk/> or their free helpline which offers bespoke advice on reducing your energy bills, improving the energy performance of your home and financial help: 0800 107 0044 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5pm) excluding bank holidays.

Weston on the Green Community Transport

The Transport/Bus group has spent some time learning about models of community transport. To get this this service up and running, we



needs volunteer support from the community.

We need:

Drivers: You might work full time but be available on the occasional weekend. You might be retired and have some days each month that you could help. We need five or six volunteers for this role so that holidays and illness do

not interrupt the service. For this vehicle you will need a regular driver's license.

Coordinator: We need a coordinator to manage the fare system and take phone bookings.

We *cannot* begin the service until the above positions have been filled. Please contact:

Graham Barnett 01869 350707



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WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN
VILLAGE PANTRY & POST OFFICE

*Wishing you all
a fantastic Christmas and
a very Happy New Year*

We hope you can join us in supporting St Mary's Big Breakfast in the Village Hall on December 3rd where you will get a chance to sample a selection of wines from the Oxford Wine Company and catch some early bird deals on offer.

By the time you read this, the Festive Season in the shop will be in full flow - stocking fillers, seasonal plants & gifts and our very popular wreaths will be in stock and by demand Mandy Jones' tweaked version of the 'Magical Bauble of Weston' as this year's Christmas card.



Speaking of Christmas Cards and Post – Please ensure you have

used all your 'non-bar coded' Elizabeth II stamps by 31st January 2023. If you wish to redeem the old stamps, please ask us as to how you can with Royal Mail. Please note, all new barcoded Elizabeth II stamps will be valid for quite some time. The King's stamps are in the making and are a long way off from becoming the 'only valid' stamp.

I wish I could also say we are a long way off from hearing about strikes and strife. There is no telling as to how things will pan out with Royal Mail over these coming weeks. Anything you wish to post abroad or that is time sensitive, I would recommend you do so as early as possible. I would also like to take this opportunity to say whilst things are as dire as they are, your support of the Food Bank initiative driven by the Parish Council, is much admired and for those of you willing to do a little bit more, please check out 'Crisis at Christmas' who do beyond an amazing job for those in need.

Your Village Pantry & Post Office is here to support the many communities it serves and to provide services that you all may need from banking to posting to daily essentials or that treat for yourself or a loved one.

We are now taking orders for your Christmas:

- Turkeys, Meats & Pies from Peter Goss the Butchers and Findlater's Famous Pates & Coleslaw
- Sourdough & yeasted breads from The Natural Bread Company
- Wines from The Oxford Wine Company & our extremely popular house wines from Waddesdon Manor

And don't forget those perfect gifts from Weston...

- 'Scent on the Green' 100% Organic Wax Scented Candles and 'Weston Limited Edition Hampers'
- Weston Apple & Ginger Vodka (I'm afraid there is no Damson Gin this year, which I know is going to dismay many for miles around, the crop just wasn't there, so very sorry.)
- Toddy's 'Peck & Feather Jewelry & Mick's Xmas creations

CHRISTMAS OPENING HOURS SHOP AND POST OFFICE

| | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|
| Christmas Eve | 9.00 am – 12.30 pm |
| Christmas Day | Closed |
| Boxing Day | Closed |
| 27th December (shop only) | 9.00 am – 11.30 am |
| 28th/29th/30th December | 9.00 am – 5.30 pm |
| 31st December | 9.00 am – 12.30 pm |
| 1st January | Closed |
| 2nd January (shop only) | 9.00 am – 11.30 am |

FRIENDS PRODUCE:

As ever huge thanks go to Mick, Toddy, Corrinne and to all of you with apple trees that kept on giving. The amount raised since the last edition of the Village News towards St Mary's Church and Village Hall is £181.47

Hello from your local Savills team

Savills Summertown
256 Banbury Road
Summertown
Oxford OX2 7DE

01865 339700



With a presence in Oxfordshire for more than 20 years, Savills is a respected name in real estate.

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Whether you're thinking of renting out your property for the first time, a professional landlord with a large portfolio or a potential tenant looking for a new home, our lettings team is here to help. We manage all aspects of letting a property, from sourcing tenants and negotiating on behalf of clients, through to ongoing maintenance issues. Working with our residential sales colleagues - and with access to Savills worldwide network and resources - our comprehensive service will ensure you find the property or tenant to match your requirements.

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Our new homes specialists are experts in the residential development market. The team provides consultancy, sales and marketing support for a wide range of high quality new build schemes and conversions, large and small, within the city and across Oxfordshire. From contemporary apartments through to converted historic buildings, we only work with those developers whose commitment to quality and attention to detail matches our own.

Whether you are a first time buyer, stepping up, downsizing or investing, we can guide you. We believe that best-in-class property deserves best-in-class service. Call our friendly and experienced team today to find out how we can help with your next property move.

Talk to us today



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Savills Summertown
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Fantastic Fireworks!

We would like to start this month's write-up with a huge thank you to Mark and Mick East for the fantastic village firework display which took place at the end of October. As a committee, we know we are biased, but each year the display just seems to get better and better. Over four hundred and twenty people turned out to watch the fifteen-minute display on a very mild and dry evening. Our thanks go to Robin for collecting the wood for the bonfire, to Paul, Keyna, Robin, Alan, Andrew, Tracy and James who built the bonfire early Saturday morning; to Linda and Cherrie on the gate collecting the donations (which go towards next year's display costs); to Peter for the hot food and to Alison and John for helping serve the food on the evening; to Andrew and Paul for running the bar and Keyna for making the mulled wine.

Mark and Mick provide the village with a stunningly spectacular display and the Village Hall Committee would like to say how much we appreciate their efforts and all their help in providing us with such a great event every year.

Springing to life

The Committee would like to thank all the villagers who came along to our bulb donation event



the first Saturday in October. Your generosity saw over 360 bulbs donated, including over alliums, tulips as well as grape hyacinths, irises, and crocuses.



All the bulbs were planted the same morning by Andrew and Jordie so fingers crossed the majority take and we get a glorious display in the spring. We really were overwhelmed by your donations. We know how much enjoyment and pleasure people have taken from the garden and hope to see a riot of colour in the springtime.

Film Night

We are delighted to announce that our first Film Night of 2023 will take place on Saturday 28th January and we will be showing the sequel, 'Fisherman's Friends: One and All' (certificate 12A) via our new laser projector. Doors open at 6pm and we will be serving a two-course supper prior to showing the film. Tickets are required for this event (and cost £10pp) and can be purchased by emailing us at westonvillagehall@live.co.uk

Hall Improvements

Our final project of refurbishment of the year was the updating of the foyer floor, which had been looking tired and was showing signs of wear and tear. Over the year we have completed a number of projects which have improved the interior of the Hall and hope hirers of the Hall enjoy using the new and improved environment.

continued on page 14

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Nicola Wallbank



Julian Taylor



Paula Rome



from page 13

We have to say a big thank you must go to Ed and Sally Bentley for weeding and maintaining the Village Hall garden, including the planter by the main doors and to Graham Barnett for keeping the lawns looking so smart and tidy. Thanks are also extended to Robin who, as the Hall House Manager, carries out numerous repairs for

us across the year and to the Committee for all they do behind the scenes to keep the Hall running efficiently.

Christmas Cheer

By the time you receive this edition of the Village News the Christmas tree lights will be on- hopefully looking splendid. Our thanks go to Bunkers Hill Plant Nursery for delivery of the tree and to Robin,

and Andrew for putting the tree up and decorating it with an abundance of lights.

We are delighted that we have been able to run the Advent windows for a third year. It really is a lovely way to count down to Christmas and really brings the festive spirit to the village. The Advent windows list is available in this edition of the Village News and an A5 flyer will also be in the shop.

Thank you to all the villagers and businesses who have volunteered to create an Advent window. We know how much thought and planning go into them. We cannot wait to see them!

As the year draws to a close the Village Hall Committee would like to thank the village for their continued support of the Hall and its events; to Yasemin, and all the villagers who donate, and buy, the Friend's Produce, which we and the Church benefit from, and for all the emails of encouragement and thanks we have received over the year.

The Village Hall Committee would like to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

250 Club

Recent Results

OCTOBER

| | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|--------------|
| 1st | £18 | 158 | Jane Mullane |
| 2nd | £12 | 62 | C Parsley |
| 3rd | £6 | 10 | A Williams |

NOVEMBER

| | | | |
|-----|-----|-----|----------------|
| 1st | £18 | 189 | Joanne Steward |
| 2nd | £12 | 121 | Diane Parsley |
| 3rd | £6 | 177 | Ruth Whitfield |

At present there are more than 20 unallocated numbers available for purchase £6 each.

Paul Warren Cairn Cottage, Church Lane Tel: 350770.

WESTON ON THE GREEN ADVENT WINDOWS EVENT DECEMBER 2022

| DATE | LOCATION OF ADVENT WINDOW |
|------|--|
| 1st | Weston Pantry-Village Shop |
| 2nd | Jubilee Cottage, Church Lane |
| 3rd | Rose Cottage, Church Road |
| 4th | Village Farm Court |
| 5th | Pickery Cottage, Knowle Lane |
| 6th | 13 Milestone Lane |
| 7th | Cruck Cottage, Northampton Road |
| 8th | Lilywood House, North Lane |
| 9th | Pear Tree Cottage, North Lane |
| 10th | The Cedars, Mill Lane (window by path) |
| 11th | Holly House, Church lane |
| 12th | Bramble Cottage, Oxford Road |
| 13th | 10 Church Close |
| 14th | Odd Tymes, Northampton Road |
| 15th | The Laurels, Brooklyn Gardens |
| 16th | St Mary's Church |
| 17th | 9 Gallosbrook Way |
| 18th | The Cottage, Oxford Road |
| 19th | Bramley Cottage, Mill Lane |
| 20th | Guernsey Cottage, Mill Lane |
| 21st | Milestone Cottage, North Lane |
| 22nd | Chanick, Westlands Avenue |
| 23rd | Stone House, Northampton Road |
| 24th | 3 Church Close |



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A photograph of a winter landscape. In the foreground, a snow-covered path leads towards a stone wall covered in snow. Behind the wall, several trees with bare branches are also covered in snow. The background shows more trees and a slightly hazy sky, suggesting a snowy day.

Singing for our supper...

By Paula Hessian

CAROL SINGING became a feature of life at Christmas in Weston for 45 years. This began in 1968, when a group of women sang carols to raise money in a good cause – the terrible plight of children in Biafra. Singing at about 40 homes they raised £6 10s

From this small beginning the tradition grew. Sometimes there would be 15 to 20 singers – men, women and youngsters and, in order to cover all the village (about 200 homes), singing took place on three nights during the week before Christmas. Each night an appointed leader kept everyone under control - singing the same carol, the same verse and following the route for that night and most importantly giving the correct note to begin singing. It also helped if you knew potholes and trip hazards – here I speak with experience; being horizontal but still holding the collection tin or on another occasion being lifted over huge puddles by strapping teenage boys – memories that will forever be associated with carol singing. When invited to sing in the minstrel's gallery at Weston Manor this involved a fourth night, but the acoustics made us sound much better than we really were!

Following a two hour session each night came supper. The tradition of hostesses, supplying cups of soup, nibbles and mince pies each evening to the sometimes wet or frozen singers grew and this part of the evening became a social event. We would sing one last time that night 'for our supper' and the night's collection was counted. We had all trudged through puddles, against cold winds, down long driveways, evaded farm animals and dogs and rattled the tins; it was good to know just what was in those tins.

Over the years the youngsters became adults with families of their own and, of course some adults who sang in 1968 became senior citizens who preferred to offer refreshments rather than sing each night. We celebrated 40 years of singing with a concert in the village hall, showcasing many musical talents including not-quite-perfect hand-bell ringing.

Seasonal decline

The demise of this Christmas tradition came after the 2013 'season'. The problem was not just a lack of volunteers willing to commit 1, 2 or 3 nights, but also changing lifestyles. Often, singing heartily at a door, only to find that although the lights



were on, no one was at home, the singers would trudge on to the next door, their throats dry and the tin no heavier. In comparison to 1968, 21st century people are often out in the evening. Without younger singers volunteering to give of their time and voices it was decided to 'cease trading'. After 45 years, the tradition was broken; all those who had taken part – some for all those years, others for just a few sessions, can be proud of the one over-riding fact – they raised over £11,000 for many charities.

After that first year, 'for Biafra', the charities were many and varied. Other overseas projects or disasters were supported as well as local 'good causes' like our own church and village hall. Children's charities often featured and the group supported both small local projects as well as the 'big' charities like Macmillan Nurses and Cancer UK.

When they began singing, they used a small carol sheet – small print, flimsy paper – which often ended up in dubious 'puddles' in a farmyard, sometimes so stained as to be unreadable. Later we progressed to laminated sheets – drop it anywhere, wipe it clean for the next night! One elderly

resident taught us the tune to a carol (Like Silver Lamps...) not previously tried and it became a favourite of some regular singers, other carols never made it into our top ten – 'From Jesse's Stock Up-springing...' or 'A Virgin unspotted...' – do you know them?

La-la land

Requests were sung – as long as we knew the tune and had the words on the sheets. Singing in the dark, with only a failing torch to illuminate the page, does aid the memory and some can remember all the words to all the verses to nearly all the carols – just give them the first line and they are away! One leader, who rarely used a torch, was famous for calling 'first, second and last' when starting a carol, thus limiting the singing to the three verses we were certain to remember. If this failed, you could 'la-la' to the tune!

For a while, singing at events in both the village hall and the Chequers continued in the years after 2013. Now it is up to another generation to revive the tradition – if they want to.



Weston-on-the-Green WI

Our meeting in September was very enjoyable. We had a demonstration by Mariella Bliss, who showed us how to make 'proper' fresh pasta (which was easier than we thought) and a tomato sauce while she told us about her early life at home in Italy. We had a go at making different shapes which she then cooked for us all to sample. We also enjoyed Italian starters and wine, with Italian biscuits afterwards. Three new ladies joined with us and it was a pleasure to welcome them.

At our meeting in October our speaker was Colin Oakes who spoke on Ben Jonson (the man, not the Village pub). He gave us an interesting talk on his plays and poems and how his works were in the shadow of William Shakespeare's.

On the 16th of November we are hearing about the Z to A of Oxford from Richard O'Smith. We are cancelling our meeting on the 21st December as it is so close to Christmas but are getting together for a festive meal earlier in the month.

At our meeting on the 18th January we will be off on our travels once again with Pam Newall, this time to Transylvania.

We would like to invite all ladies to join us at our meetings, several are already from Bletchington and other villages. If you are new to either village it's a great way to make new friends, or if you have been here for a long time, give us a try and you will be very welcome.

Our WI meets at Weston Village Hall every month except August, on the third Wednesday at 7.30pm. 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 so please contact our secretary Lyn Barnett on 01869 350707 or email her on wotg.wi@gmail.com if you would like to know more.

Lyn Barnett

Can I say a big thank you to all those who helped at the coffee morning or baked cakes and to the Craft Group for their display.

**Together with donations and the proceeds of the afternoon tea in my garden in August we were able to send £510.00 to Macmillan.
Lyn Barnett**

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Weston Walkers

Our September walk followed the Heyfords circular, starting in Lower Heyford and following the canal towpath to Upper Heyford before returning through the village and across the fields back to our starting point.

In October nine of us followed the blue line of one of the Bicester Health Walks, starting and ending in Langford Village, encountering a surprising amount of green space!

At the time of writing our final walk of the year should be a morning walk on Monday 14th November, to be followed by a lunch. We do not usually walk as a group in December or January, so our first walk of next year will be on Monday 13th February.

All are welcome to join in as and when, there is no commitment to every month, so if you wish to enjoy sociable company, conversation and exercise please come along and join in or speak to me. There are now also several local walks to enjoy published on the Weston on the Green Parish Council website, under Health and Wellbeing.

If while out walking you encounter any problems with overgrown vegetation, damaged stiles or footbridges, or any other issues, please let me know for Weston Parish or Katie Holt (01869 350219) for Bletchington Parish, in order that they can be reported to the County Council for repair.

Graham Barnett 01869 350707



Weston Society

Weston Society began when a few like-minded people met in the Ben Jonson one night and discussed their mutual worries that the village they then knew might be under threat. This threat, from developers, was successfully overcome but the original group became interested in the preservation of the village and its environment and slowly became a group who met on a monthly basis to enjoy speakers on many topics ranging from local history, the environment both built and natural and the people and activities specific to our area.

Over the years we have broadened this to include the wider environment and, on some occasions, national and international events but our main focus has always remained our village and its people.

We now meet on the second Monday of alternate months to hear speakers on a variety of topics. We were able to hold our AGM in September, when we

reviewed the talks we had heard during the year and members were able to renew their memberships for the coming year. We were also well entertained by Bob Hessian recounting his beekeeping experiences over many years, while also educating us on the life of the Honey Bee.

Simon Wenham will have spoken on 'The Great Exhibition' on Monday 14 November.

Our next meeting will be on Monday 9th January, 7.30 pm in the Village Hall, speaker to be confirmed.

All are welcome free of charge to their first meeting; there is an annual subscription of £10 per person for anyone who wishes to join, which enables us to pay for speakers and to share wine and nibbles after meetings.

Graham Barnett

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Bonfire and fireworks 2022!

Looking back over the archives of the village news, I discovered the first report of fireworks in 2005. This was a delayed display due to the inclement weather and moved from 6th Nov to the 11th Nov. The report concludes with the thought that Guy Fawkes was the last person to go to parliament with honest intentions. Still rings true today!

This year saint Barbara (the patron saint of all things incendiary) smiled upon the gathered crowd. She had, I believe, spoken to Saint Medardus, who is patron saint of the weather, vineyards and breweries, also for a laugh, of toothache.

The playing field was dry with no possibilities of getting the van stuck again. A photo is attached of the



fireworks laid out with cakes on their ply bases and shell racks in the corner. You may be able to see the finale rack covered with foil tape to stop a stray spark setting it off early.

This year the two pyrotechnicians were joined by a third, Paul; his usual show had been cancelled as the pub that ran the show had burned down. He insisted it was nothing to do with him!

We began with a 2-inch shell to draw your attention, this was followed by fourteen plus minutes of mayhem and whooshy bangs. Culminating in the finale which was a range of 15 shells set off together.

The witches on the gate must have been especially frightening this year as they collected a record sum in Bertie the Bucket. The Village Hall report may tell you how much. Suffice to say that next year we can probably afford another sparkler.

Many thanks to all of you for supporting this venture and for the cheer at the end. Also thanks to the many organisers and workers who make it all possible. It is heartening in these strange times to see that Weston is keeping the old traditions alive. I am told that many litres of mulled wine were consumed, this goes some way to explaining why the crowd was happy.

Having warmed up with Weston on the Saturday, the pyrotechnicians then did shows at Harriers School Banbury on Thursday, Long Hanborough to music on Friday and Coventry rugby club on Saturday 5th, the last one being fired electronically.

Each night was blessed with moonlight and calm winds at time of firing. The saints have smiled on/at us. Hopefully see you all next year.

The Firework Fairy

Thank you so much for your support of Neighbours' Natter though this year. I hope you have enjoyed chatting to each other over a hot cuppa.

Next year some of the Natter sessions will move to the third Thursday of the month, and I hope this will allow others to attend. We will let you know dates in the Village News Calendar, as well as on posters and Facebook, so hopefully you will not miss any sessions.

Note that the January Natter will be on the third Thursday, the 19th - hopefully we will have recovered from Christmas revels by then.

Join us for

Neighbours' Natter

Weston-on-the-Green Village Hall

Thursdays Dec 8th and Jan 19th 10am - Noon

£1.00 for coffee or tea and a biscuit

Please join us for Mulled Wine & Mince Pies

Kindly hosted by THE WESTON MANOR HOTEL

On December 18TH 2022 at 4.30pm

Followed by a singing procession from
The Manor down Monks Walk to the Church
for the

Crib & Carol Service

at 6.00pm

Please wear sensible shoes & don't forget to bring a torch

*Retiring collection and gifts (toys) received will be donated to the
Bicester Food Bank*

Please contact Peter Driver 01869 350 569 or Eric Bohm 01869 352 006 for further information.

All are Welcome



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Saturday 13th May 2023 at Weston on the Green Memorial Village Hall

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Village Food and Toy Bank

Village Pantry,
Weston on the Green

Saturday December 3rd
9.30am - 12.30pm

Bicester Food Bank will welcome toys for children and teens as well as the usual food. Have an early browse for a few bargains! Hopefully one or two items put away in your shop will add up to a wonderful help for those in real need. This could be a tough Christmas for many.

John Dovey

— FCCA —

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Weston on the Green Memorial Village Hall

Film Night

**Fish & Chip Supper followed by a screening of
'Fisherman's Friends: One and All' (12A)**

Saturday 28th January 2023

Two course supper: £10pp



**To purchase tickets for this event email
westonvillagehall@live.co.uk or call 350992**

Advance booking required

Doors Open 6pm



Oxfordshire

Age UK offer a free and confidential information and advice service for older people, their families and carers on a vast range of subjects, including staying independent at home, social and leisure opportunities, legal issues, financial issues, housing, care homes, being a carer - and much more.

Age UK also produces many very useful information guides and factsheets on a range of topics including; fuel, rights, wills, care homes, TV licences and just about every other issue that affects older people. These can be downloaded from their website or Exeter Hall in Kidlington have a very good selection of free Age UK advice leaflets (and the clerk is happy to go and obtain any leaflets for anyone unable to visit there).

A recent JSNA (Joint Strategic



Needs Assessment) bitesize report on Pension Credit has estimated that over 4,000 older people in Oxfordshire are not claiming the Pension Credit to which they are entitled, equating to a staggering £8.2m in unclaimed entitlement locally. Pension Credit also serves as a gateway to other forms of support, which could go a long way in helping some older people meet rising costs.

More information about benefits and entitlements for pensioners and the elderly can be found on Age UK's website and are linked

from the Parish Council website. Please contact the Age UK Information and Advice team on 0345 4501276 and ask for the helpline or email at helpline@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk

The Community Information Network

The Community Information Network provide local information and connect you into your community:

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire/our-services/community-information-network/>



Supporting
Weston-on-the-Green Village Hall

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- Join your community in making where we live an even better place

Just visit CherwellLottery.co.uk and search for Weston on the Green Memorial Village Hall

Supporters must be 16 years of age or older



Warm-hearted local welcome to Ukrainian families

THERE IS A LOT of excellent activity going on in this locality, welcoming and supporting Ukrainian families who have had to leave home, family members and jobs to find safety elsewhere. Many of you will have seen the news about the recent concert in Islip to raise funds to support them, - or even been one of the 100 singers. There are very strong support groups in Islip and Bicester offering a whole range of services and gatherings, as well as the fund-raising.

Much is already being done, but the crisis continues. There are many hundreds of Ukrainians still looking for sponsors and hosts in UK, (200 on the Oxford Diocese waiting list alone). Some families whose hosts are unable to have

them for longer than 6 months will be needing new places to live near to the community they have joined and the schools in which children are settled.

So there are plenty of opportunities for those who would like to get involved. This could be in a whole variety of ways. Here are just some examples of things needed:

- Lifts to appointments
- Old laptops for re-use
- Space in your home for an individual or family for 6 months
- Support for English language lessons online (training given)
- Help with filling in forms, applications etc
- Befriending, introducing people to their area

For those wondering about

hosting, Sanctuary Foundation has a really helpful website <https://www.sanctuaryfoundation.org.uk/> and you can watch their video "Not too late to host" https://youtu.be/v5_EmhmCX50 You could talk to people who are already doing this in the area to find out how it works.

We are working to coordinate local efforts and would be really happy to hear from you with any queries or offers:

Michele Mapp
michelemapp.akeman@gmail.com
Joanna Clifford
joannaclifford.akeman@gmail.com

Coordinators for the Bicester and Islip Deanery within the Oxford Diocese

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John Howell MP writes...

HAVING been through a rather turbulent period I am pleased that we now have Rishi Sunak as our Prime Minister. He has had my support over the months, and I believe that he will be the person to get to grips with the key issues that we face.

It is interesting to reflect on the issues that have been before us in recent months and also the reactions that come forward in the media and indeed in the many emails that I receive. Understandably there are strongly held views and in this time of Remembrance it seems to me that there is plenty of room for shared understanding, moderation and mutual tolerance.

Take for example the attendance of the Prime Minister at COP27. Within a few days of taking office, at a time when there are huge national issues to address, his initial response was that he could not attend due to needing instead to focus on the immediate issues before him. He faced a backlash on that and, once he had been able to assess the workload on his desk, agreed that he could go. However rather than this being seen as a decision based on assessment of the situation it was dubbed as a U turn. If politicians 'stick to their guns' they may be accused of not listening. If they give serious thought to an issue and have a change of heart they are accused of a U turn. Either way there is an accusation to face.

It is good that the Prime Minister has pledged to return to the 2019 manifesto. This is the mandate which was supported through the General Election. It promised an ambitious environmental programme with robust action on climate change and nature loss. It is important to note that protecting



our environment does not mean sacrificing economic growth. It is not 'either or' but 'both and'. Green measures can reduce the cost of living, create employment, investment and export opportunities, and safeguard our long-term prosperity and security. It is also important to ensure that measures taken are affordable and encourage people to make environmentally friendly decisions. There is indeed an urgency in tackling the global issues on climate change and in stopping action that irreparably damages our environment. However, at the same time it is important that people can live without constant worry about providing for their needs and that of their family. The climate targets that leading nations have set through successive conferences are not that far into the future in terms of our ability to do something meaningful. However, for someone struggling to make provision for today or tomorrow they are way distant. We have to do our best to make things genuinely possible.

It is precisely this need to bring people with us that protest groups overlook. People who are in a position to take time out to stop others getting on with their lives leads to focus on the disruption rather than the issues. I fully appreciate that people have strong feelings on certain issues, but it is simply not fair that in making their

voices heard they prevent others from getting to work, business from operating and indeed cause people to miss things such as long-awaited hospital appointments. It also puts pressure on policing which diverts officers from other important duties. It is not about who shouts loudest or makes the grandest gestures but about how we work together to resolve the important issues of our time.

Let us also consider the issue of storm discharges where untreated sewage is released into rivers. I completely agree that sewage pollution is not acceptable but when these discharges of untreated sewage are released into a river it is when water levels are exceptionally high and there is risk of flooding to properties. If you live in a property which, as things stand, would be flooded with raw sewage if these discharges were not made this might have a strong influence on your view and the realistic timescales for improvement.

In seeking to work together we need to get beyond the headlines. There will always be differing views on important issues and often some conflicting approaches to similar ends. There is rarely, if ever, a perfect answer. It is good to discuss issues, and sometimes discussion may be heated, but when disagreement turns to abuse and protest causes genuine difficulty to others, we have lost our democratic compass.

If there is an issue that concerns you, please do share your thoughts. If you would like to know more about my work on behalf of the Government, and in the Constituency, please do look at my website. The address is www.johnhowell.org.uk. My contact details are also on the website.

From your local councillors



Launton & Otmoor District Update November 2022

The weather has been unseasonably warm at times recently, although quite wet, and by the time you read this Halloween and Bonfire night will have come and gone. Given the turmoil at Westminster over the past month, we hope some sense and prudence will prioritise the needs of the country in these challenging times. Roses, Celebrations and Quality Street (other confectionery selections are available!) are back in the shops which must mean that Christmas is getting closer so we hope your plans will allow some respite from the shenanigans and you will enjoy being with family, friends and loved ones.

The Local Plan

CDC is currently preparing the new Local Plan for Cherwell which will set out how the district should be developed over the next 15

years, in line with national policy and legislation. Please see the report in the Parish Council section for more information or visit the dedicated page at <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/homepage/27/local-plans>

A41 Ploughley Road junction

The roadworks and closures around the A41 Ploughley Road junction were due to complete in November this year, but this has sadly slipped to March 2023. At both Parish and District level we are hearing how this is impacting journeys and the amount of traffic through our villages. We have expressed our dismay at the delay in the strongest terms to Oxfordshire County Council and they are working to ensure better management of the project is in place. Up to date information on closures and more details can be found at <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/roadworks/future-transport-projects/ploughley-road-a41-junction>

Voter Identification - May 2023 Elections

Although things can change (and seem to do so with alarming frequency at the moment!) there is a current plan to require photo-based identification for the local elections in May 2023. Although that seems far away, you will need to have this in order to vote, so your polling card or just popping to the polling station will no longer be accepted. There is more information at <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/voter->

identification-faqs but some key points to note:

- There will be a wide range of photographic identification which will be acceptable, including:
 - Various concessionary travel passes
 - PASS cards
 - Ministry of Defence identity cards
 - Photocard parking permits issued as part of the Blue Badge scheme
 - Driver's licenses
 - Passports
 - Free Voter Cards, provided by local authorities
- Expired photographic identification will also be accepted if the photograph is of a good enough likeness to allow polling station staff to confirm the identity of the holder.
- You will need to bring this ID to the polling station to vote

As mentioned, this is subject to change, but we feel making you aware of this, regardless of the political questions around it, is important so do keep an eye out for more information on this and we will advise you how to get a free ID card when we know the process if you don't have anything currently in the list.

That's it!

Thank you for reading all the way to the bottom if you have! Please do get in touch on 01869 717712 or via email at gemma.coton@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or angus.patrick@cherwell-dc.gov.uk.



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Web: www.axiconlabels.co.uk
Church Road, Weston on the Green, OX25 3QP

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Help with admin
Befriending and Socialising
Help with household chores
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cat.info@cano.org.uk
to find out more



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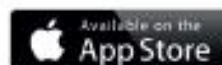
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Machine™**

Charity Number: 1159320



Dates for the Diary

| | | |
|---------------|---------------------|--|
| 3rd December | 9.00 am – 12.00 pm | Christmas Fair & Big Breakfast |
| 7th December | 7.30 pm | Parish Council meeting |
| 8th December | 10.00 am – 12.00 pm | Neighbour Natters |
| 13th December | 12.30 pm | Golden Leaves Lunch |
| 18th December | 4.30 pm | Pre-Carol Service drinks at Weston Manor Hotel |
| 18th December | 6.00 pm | Crib and Carol Service |
| 9th January | 7.30 pm | Weston Society |
| 10th January | 7.30 pm | Parish Council meeting |
| 18th January | 7.30 pm | WI Meeting |
| 19th January | 10.00 am – 12.00 pm | Neighbour Natters |
| 1st February | 7.30 pm | Parish Council meeting |

Parish Council Meeting Dates in 2022/23

Last meeting for 2022 to be held on 7th December.



Notification of the agenda for the meetings will be published on the Parish Council village noticeboard and website 3 days prior to the meeting date.

"To inspire each generation, giving them the confidence to shine! Training the stars of tomorrow...TODAY!"

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A place where all ages, shapes and sizes learn to dance, sing and perform.
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All of our lessons are set to enrich the lives of our students. We don't just teach plies, leaps and shuffles. We are training them to get up when they fall, to finish what they start, to win and lose with grace and always work as a TEAM.

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==== 50th Anniversary ====

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