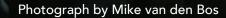
# weston-on-the-green TheVillageNews

**DECEMBER 2023/JANUARY 2024** 



# **REIMAGINED** – ALL NEW FOR 2023

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# **17 NOVEMBER – 1 JANUARY** blenheimpalace.com/christmas

BLENHEIM PALACE

III MAR



SONY MUSIC

## Village Directory

#### THE VILLAGE NEWS FDITOR

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PAROCHIAL CHURCH COUNCIL (PCC) Peter Driver: 01869 350569 Eric Bohm: 01869 352006

#### VILLAGE PANTRY & POST OFFICE Yasemin Olcay: 01869 350230

VILLAGE HALL Village Hall Secretary Jordie 350992

Village Hall Bookings Jordie and Andrew Wilson 01869 350992

### SOCIETIES

WESTON SOCIETY WESTON WALKERS FOOTPATH WARDEN Graham Barnett: 01869 350707

GARDEN CLUB Emma Bernard: 01869 350312

**GOLDEN LEAVES** Alison Townsend: 01869 350569

WOMEN'S INSTITUTE (WI) Lyn Barnett: 01869 350707

NFIGHBOURHOOD WATCH Bob Hessian: 01869 350662

NEIGHBOURS NATTER COFFEE MORNING Patsy Parsons: 01869 350331

THAMES VALLEY POLICE Non-Emergency Line: 101

### OCC

COUNTY COUNCILLOR Nigel Simpson nigel.simpson@oxfordshire.gov.uk

### CHERWELL DISTRICT

COUNCILLORS Simon Holland simon.holland@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Gemma Coton gemma.coton@cherwell-dc.gov.uk Julian Nedelcu

julian.nedelcu@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

### WESTON ON THE GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Diane Bohm, Chair, Neighbourhood Plan, Finance: 352006

Susan Davis, Vice Chair, Planning, Neighbourhood Plan, Finance: 07518 926880

Parish Council Clerk, Jane Mullane: 350282

John Miller, Works: 350511 Ben Lanham, Playing Field: 07887 886138

Tracy Rowan, Finance: 07833 473357

# From the editor

It's extraordinary how quickly Christmas comes round each year (and how guickly I seem to have turned into my mother for noting this ...). No sooner have we put away the pumpkins, picked up the casings from all the spent fireworks and celebrated another Guy Fawkes night (as ever, a huge thank you to Mark, Mick and the Village Hall Committee for such an amazing display) than creative minds are turning towards the making of the Advent Windows and all the other wonderful Christmas activities to come.

As ever, Weston has many fantastic festive events throughout December, starting with the switching on the Christmas tree lights on 3rd December and the Big Breakfast and Christmas Fair on Saturday 9th December (what better way to start your Christmas shopping than a slap-up Full English followed by a browse among the stalls?), via the unveiling of each day's new Advent Window, through to the Candlelit Carol Service with mulled wine and minces pies on 17th December and on to Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve.

Last year's Christmas issue reminisced about carol singing around the village which sadly no longer takes place; this year there's a trip down memory lane for quite a few villagers of another Christmas tradition that's no longer with us. Maybe 2024 will see the revival of one - or even both of these activities ...





Photo: Tizzle B Dizzle



Photo: Jordie Riches

Deadline for the February/March 2024 edition: 4th JANUARY 2024



# A letter from the Rector

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

Dear friends

A friend of mine, a cleric, is about to release himself from duties on this sceptred isle in order to undertake a continental chaplaincy, on the Mediterranean. I teased him with words from the Bidding Prayer at the service of nine lessons and carols: "Ah, you're going to 'rejoice with us, but upon another shore and in a greater light!'

Yet I am hardly one to speak enviously, as I am about to embark upon a sabbatical, with perhaps a little sunshine thrown in for good measure. I do not suffer from seasonal affective disorder, but the winter months are not my favourite, and I plan to spend at least a portion of my time away abroad. The rest of it will be given to study, prayer, writing, and time with the family.

## BENEFICE NEWS

### **Cantores Consort in Concert**

A splendid evening of a cappella music, old and new, polyphony and jazz. Kirtlington Church, Saturday 2 December at 1930. Suggested donation £10. Proceeds to church repair funds. All welcome.

### Sing with Joy

A fun musical service for children of primary school age 9 (and adults!) Kirtlington Church, Sunday 3 December at 1600. Practice the day before (2 December 1600-1700). Children must be accompanied by an adult.

#### **Big Breakfasts**

Two of our churches will be holding Big Breakfasts during December:

*Middleton Stoney:* Sunday 3 December in the Village Hall from 0930 preceded by a short informal Advent Service at 0900

*Weston:* Saturday 9 December in the Village Hall 0900-1200

### Keeping your village church open

We hope that everyone has by now received a copy of the leaflet 'Keeping your village church open'. Do please respond as you are able. We are very grateful to those who have already done so. If you have not yet received the leaflet, please let your churchwardens know or email enquiries.akeman@gmail.com For many, of course, there is no sabbatical, no break from the daily grind. For those in Israel/Palestine/Gaza, not to mention Ukraine, no rest from the attrition of relentless bombardment, offensive followed by counter-offensive, death, destruction, homelessness and humiliation.

Yet in the pages of scripture a rest is promised, a sabbath for the people of God, a rest from labour but also an opportunity for refreshment and reconciliation. Rest is not intended as a way of squandering time, but rather a chance to re-group, to reflect, to repent, to grow in faith and grace. Is it just possible that the peoples of what we call the Holy Land might at last begin to feel after and find the things that make for peace?

I hope that in the approach to Christmas, as well as in the time afterwards, you will find time for your self, for your family, your neighbours, both local and worldwide. And spare a thought and a prayer for those whose lives are so much less secure than our own, for whom talk of holidays and sabbaticals sounds like a very considerable indulgence.

I am grateful to the Bishop and the ministry team for permitting me to have some time apart after seven years here. My prayer is that I may use the time creatively and well, and come back reinvigorated – mentally, physically, and spiritually – to serve for a few more years, should I be spared (and if you will have me!).

I wish you all the most blessed Christmas and a creative and Spirit-filled new year.

## **Rector's sabbatical**

Gareth will be on sabbatical from early January to early April. During this time he will not be responding to emails or telephone messages. All enquiries should be directed to other members of the ministry team or the churchwardens, if appropriate. If you are unsure whom to ask, please contact our administrator, Julie Andrews, at enquiries.akeman@gmail.com

# Church roundup

Did you notice the decorations of the church for the Remembrance Sunday service? Thanks to Mandy Jones for her great creative talent in providing two montages of cascading poppies, both inside and outside the church. It was a fitting display to commemorate those who have fallen in numerous conflicts.



We are approaching the festive season and St Mary's has a full list of services and activities to both launch and celebrate Christmas. We look forward to welcoming you to our Big Breakfast event on December 9th at 9:00 am in the Village Hall. The cost is only £7.50 per person, which is very inexpensive for a meal prepared by our resident and outstanding Chef Pierre!

Our on-going fundraising campaign is generating results. We sincerely thank those people who have made 'one-off' or increased their regular financial donations to our church. The community support is essential as we move forward with works, such as a sound system, internet connection, and, necessary repairs to the fabric of the church. The church will be subject to its Quintennial Inspection in December. This report will list work that needs to be done to ensure the preservation of the building and its contents. As mentioned in previous articles, the church is a major part of the



fascinating history of the Weston community.

So, if you have misplaced the remittance form, there are blank ones at the back of the church. Please complete and hand to one of the wardens for processing.

On behalf the Rector, the Akeman Benefice Ministry Team and the St Mary's PCC, we wish each and every one a joyous Christmas and good health and happiness in 2024.

> Eric Bohm Church Warden

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

3rd December, Advent 1	16:00	Advent Children's Service, Kirtlington Church
10th December Advent 2	11:00	Morning Worship
17th December Advent 3	18:00	Carol Service
24th December Christmas Eve	22:00	Midnight Mass
25th December Christmas Day	10:30	Morning Worship
7th January	16:00	Evensong (BCP)
14th January	11:00	Morning Worship
21st January	11:00	Holy Communion
28th January	10:30	Holy Communion, Wendlebury

For other services in the Akeman Benefice please visit: https://www.akemanbenefice.org.uk/church-services We look forward to welcoming you to our services.

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# Chair's comments

CTOBER and November typically bring consultations, surveys and planning for the next financial year. This year has been exceptionally demanding as the consultation on Cherwell's draft local plan ran for six weeks and ended at midnight on 3rd November. During that period Susan Davis and I read, and discussed the draft at length. We attended a Cherwell District Council meeting and feedback session and finally presented key issues to our own Parish Council. The draft plan presents three overarching themes: (1) meeting the challenge of climate change and ensuring sustainable development, (2) maintaining and developing a sustainable local economy, (3) building healthy and sustainable communities. Our key question is how will these themes play out in the next plan period which is to 2040? What will the effect be on our local area and specifically on our village?

It is suggested via a Housing and Economic Needs Assessment that Cherwell needs 1,009 new homes per year to 2040. Added to this is some support to meet Oxford's unmet housing need. This could be an additional 284 homes per year. In total we are looking at 21-24,000 new homes. There is animated discussion about the number of houses we should build to meet Oxford's need. This parish council is concerned that some land meant for housing is now allocated to employment sites and the relief meant for housing to relieve the immense pressure felt by workers ranging from nurses and all medical categories, teachers, lecturers, leisure providers and a whole list of others is simply not felt. Furthermore, the cost of housing has priced most of these people out of the market.

Where will the housing go? The two key areas for housing development are around Banbury and Bicester. 5,950 homes will be delivered at Banbury between 2020 and 2040 at four sites. 9,100 homes will be delivered at south-east of Woodstock (450) and 300 proposed north of the Moors. Also, Begbroke Science Park is to be expanded. Heyford Park will deliver 1,235 homes by 2040. Key to the villages is that we are to share 500 new homes

# Cherwell Local Plan Review Planning for Cherwell



Bicester between 2020 and 2040 at three sites. The closest site to us is south of Chesterton/North-West of the A41 with an allocation of 500 homes with an increase in employment sites adjacent to Symmetry Park (6.3 hectares), by the newly approved Siemens site. Around Kidlington, further housing on top of the 4,400 homes already approved in the area, with a further 900 proposed in the area to include a new site among us. These 500 dwellings will only be met by site specific allocations in this Local Plan or in a Neighbourhood Plan.

The draft plan has a sincere vision to 'protect the character, appearance, heritage and identity of our villages ... important landscapes are to be protected ...we will continue to meet local community and business needs and farming and rural businesses

### PARISH COUNCIL



will have the opportunity to thrive'. While this vision is reassuring, it is of concern that all of the newly allocated sites for strategic housing across the towns and larger villages in Cherwell are Greenfield sites, even though there may be some Brownfield sites that might be considered. This seems to be at odds with the vision and the designation of Banbury and Bicester as 'Garden Towns'.

Central to the concerns of our village will be how much housing should we offer and where. There are six site allocations put forward by owners and developers. To be perfectly clear, if we do not identify some housing in our Neighbourhood Plan, we are open to speculative development and the decision will then be with Cherwell DC. Our current housing policy will be reviewed

so it sits under this local plan. What do we envisage for our village over the next plan period? Our Neighbourhood Plan goes to great lengths to describe the key features of the village and the characteristics of each area are described fully in the Conservation Appraisal Report 2009 and our Design Code. Our Plan has passed an Examination and found full support in a Referendum so there is strength and currency to our policies. There are threats though and the Parish Council's key role is to see these coming and be an advocate for the village.

Our key concern is that new housing in the village is where we want it and built to the specifications of our Design Plan. We want our lanes to be characterful and not turned into streets that are urban in appearance. Secondly, a major concern is the impact of the proposed housing near and around Chesterton on our roads. Rat running is still occurring and despite the very best efforts of our Speed Watch team, there are drivers using the village as a cut through who pay no attention to their speed. Thirdly, our medical and dental resources are stretched beyond capacity. What is proposed to match need with supply in this area?

As you can see, there has been a lot to understand and to consider in this consultation.

Reference: Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040, Consultation Draft (Regulation 18) September 2023. www.cherwell.gov.uk

A few more notes: The Parish Council is looking ahead to the next financial year. At our next meeting on 6th December, we will be discussing a proposal for the children's playground, the reenergising of the Neighbourhood Watch programme, funding requirements for specific projects. If you have comments regarding any of these areas please contact any of the councillors or attend the meeting where we will be interested to hear your thoughts. Contact details for the Parish Council are on the inside cover of the magazine.

On a cheery note, your Parish Councillors wish you a very happy holiday season.

Diane Bohm



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# Planning Update

Planning applications relating to the parish are discussed at each Parish Council meeting and a report is placed on the Parish Council website. Full information regarding each application is available via the Planning and Building section on the Cherwell District Council website.

### **BUILDING APPLICATIONS:**

### **Decisions Received – Permitted**

23/02367/DISC – Starbucks, A34 North 23/02366/NMA – Starbucks, A34 North

23/01641/F – Kelberg, Northampton Road

### **Decisions Received – Refused**

23/02422/F – 20 Westlands Avenue 3/01872/F – 2 Church Close

### **Awaiting Decision**

23/00994/F – Family Farm, A34 South

23/01788/F – New Sarum, Northampton Road

23/02337/F - OS Parcel 9366 Adjoining and West of Vermont Northampton Road

23/02388/F - Stowe Cottage, 4 Oxford Court

23/02635/CLUP – 3 Shepherds Close



### **New Applications**

23/02764/CLUE – Summer Court, North Lane Certificate of lawfulness for existing rooflights on south face of roof

23/02717/F 23/02717/LB – Cruck Cottage, Northampton Road Replacement of existing 2 storey side extension with new 2 storey side and rear extension together with new first floor window to the existing rear. New single storey rear glazed extension. Replacement of front porch with new porch. Conversion of existing carport into ancillary residential annexe guest accommodation.

23/02731/LB - Manor Hotel, Northampton Road Proposal to remove the existing Baron's Hall floorboards and replace with new.

### Tree Works

23/02269/TCA – Willow Cottage, Church Lane

23/02260/TCA – Mill House, Mill Lane - permitted

23/02497/TCA – Cobblers, Blacksmiths Close - permitted

23/02495/TCA – The School, North Lane - permitted

23/02698/TCA – Ladygrass, Church Lane - permitted

23/02695/TCA - The School, North Lane - permitted



## **EV & Hybrid Specialist**

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# News from Oxfordshire County Council

### Thames Valley Alerts is a free

email messaging system where you can receive regular crime updates, information on ongoing incidents and crime prevention relevant to your local area.

By signing up to Thames Valley Alerts you can get involved in helping to make your local area a safer place, tell us what the police should be doing in your area, shape the initiatives that help to keep people and property safe and tell us what matters are causing your communities harm.

You can register at www. thamesvalleyalert.co.uk to receive messages of local crime alerts, witness appeals and information to the area in which you live or work or download the free Thames Valley Alert app by visiting the Apple store or Google Play store.



PLEASE NOTE: THIS SERVICE IS NOT FOR REPORTING CRIMES OR INCIDENTS -TO REPORT THESE PLEASE CONTACT THAMES VALLEY POLICE ON 101 OR VISIT THE THAMES VALLEY POLICE WEBSITE: www.thamesvalley.police.uk

IN AN EMERGENCY ALWAYS CALL 999.

## Welcome the Warmth Oxfordshire: The Home Upgrade Grant

Are you concerned about the cost of energy bills and looking for ways to make your home cheaper to heat and more comfortable to live in?

A grant is available from Oxfordshire County Council to improve residents' homes.

This government-backed scheme targets inefficient

homes not heated by gas. With the Home Upgrade Grant (HUG2), eligible homes can receive tailored energy solutions, from insulation to solar panels, resulting in a warmer home, lower bills and reduced carbon emissions - all delivered by the Welcome the Warmth team.

Check your eligibility and apply through the website at www.welcomethewarmth.org.uk

Get your home winter-ready today!

"It's going to be a real relief this winter, knowing there's heat there when we need it."

Debbie, Banbury









Your newly invigorated committee, under Sam our tireless Chair, has continued working hard on the project to take the Weston Pantry Shop and Post Office into community ownership. We now have all the background arrangements and applications in place and have reached the moment of truth! Will the community support, evident from the survey, be converted into financial support? You can keep up-to-date with progress, as the running investment total is displayed on a tablet in the shop.



There is a significant disjoint between my writing of this piece (early November) and your reading of it in early December. As I write we have just launched the share offer, and it is exciting to report that on just Day 5 of the offer we have £39,250 in share applications on the Crowdfunder page and £3,600 in donations on our justgiving page. There are some lovely supportive comments.

Such an encouraging start towards our £250,000 target. As you read this, we will have had a Village meeting on 6th November at



# The final push

which we will have outlined the business plan, the share scheme and hopefully gained further donations. We hope everyone will feel confident as we have the Community Share Standard Mark for our share offer, and the assurance that everyone contributing will get their money back if we are unable to go ahead.

There will be a further Village meeting on 4th December at 7pm, at which point we will know whether or not we have the Community Ownership Grant

"We are nothing without a community and a community is nothing without a shop!"

An investor

that is necessary. This is two weeks before the final deadline for donations and investments, but it should be clear whether or not the project is viable. Hopefully, it will look promising for a final push for the share deadline of 13th December.

"This shop is priceless, not just for WOTG but for many villages all around. Once it is lost, there is no getting our rural Post Office back."

An investor

Thank you so much if you have already made a donation or invested in shares. If we have not reached our target, as your read this, please consider contributing (perhaps jointly with family or friends). Please follow the links or consult the printed copy of the business plan in the shop for more information. If you are unable to make a donation or investment you can support us by spreading the word.

Fiona Spensley, Weston SOS

### -----

I was born and brought up in Weston when there were two shops and a school which I attended. It would be a shame to lose the last one standing - the shop and PO in the heart of the village. My parents still live here, they value the shop enormously and were very grateful for all it did during lockdown.



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Chequers Weston On The Green

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



Over three hundred people turned out to watch the fifteen minute display on a very wet and soggy evening. Thankfully, the rain did stop for the fireworks but we appreciated everyone who turned out in awful weather to support the evening. Of course, such an event doesn't just happen and the whole day is given over to wood collecting, bonfire building and setting up the event. Our thanks go to Robin and Tony for collecting the wood and doing many, many trips around the village to the playing field – a total of six hours on this

task alone! Thanks also go to Paul, Keyna, Jessica, Robin, Andrew, Alan and Tracy, Andrew W, Graham B, Graham F and Kieran who built the bonfire. It was the biggest bonfire of recent years and was quite a sight to behold when lit. Thanks also to Cherrie and Mandy

(Cox) who were on the gate collecting the donations (which all go towards next year's display); to Peter for the hot food and to Alison, Tracy and Alan for helping serve the food on the evening; to Andrew, Emma, Laura and Jordie for running the bar and Keyna for making the delicious mulled wine. A special thank you to Kieran and all the children who carved their home-grown pumpkins into fantastic scary faces to help light the way to the playing field. They were 'spooktacular' and were a very welcome addition to the evening!

Our final Hall project of the year was the installation of the bespoke village OS map to the gable end of the Hall and housed in a new display board which commemorates the Coronation of King Charles III. Our thanks go to Robin and Andrew who installed the board and to Graham Barnett for the OS map. We hope this will prove a popular addition to villagers and walkers alike.



This installation was the culmination of a number of additions and improvements to the Hall this year and we hope hirers of the Hall enjoy using the new and improved environment. Our thanks, once again, go to Ed and Sally Bentley who weeded and maintained the Village Hall garden, including the planter by the main doors, to Graham Barnett for keeping the lawns looking so smart and tidy in the grass-growing months, and to Robin who, as the Hall House Manager, carried out numerous repairs for us across the year. As a Committee our aim has been to make the Hall a comfortable space for villagers to use and to keep the hire costs down for villagers. Our thanks to Jordie who has worked tirelessly on grant applications which allowed us to carry out a number of works across the year.



By the time you receive this edition of the Village News the Christmas tree will be in place ready for the Christmas lights-switch on 3rd December at 6pm.

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. The evening will also see the Christmas Raffle and we have some wonderful prizes including vouchers for The Milk Shed, The Ben Jonson and Afternoon Tea at Weston Manor. We also have prizes from Lakeland and Blue Diamond plus lots more. All are welcome to join us for mulled wine, mince pies, sausage rolls

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### VILLAGE HALL NEWS

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and Christmas cheer. Father Christmas will also be putting in an appearance!

At the Christmas tree lights switchon we will also be running a book amnesty/fiction book drop-off for the phone box library so if you're clearing some space for new books please do think of us and drop off any unwanted novels or children's books in the Hall foyer. We try to rotate the stock for grown-ups on a fairly frequent basis and we pass these books onto the book stall at the Horton Hospital or other charitable causes in Oxfordshire.

We are delighted that we have been able to run an Advent windows event for a fourth year. It really is a lovely way to count down to Christmas and really brings the festive spirit to the village. Thank you to all the villagers and businesses who have volunteered to create an Advent window. We know how much



thought and planning goes 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, and for all the emails of encouragement and thanks we have received over the year. It really does mean a lot to us. The Village Hall Committee would like to wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a Peaceful New Year.

The Village Hall Committee would like to thank everyone who participated and made such beautiful windows for the Living Advent Calendar Windows Event, 1<sup>st</sup>-24<sup>th</sup> December 2023.



# **250 CLUB RESULTS**

OCTOBER

1st prize: £18 No 2 Carol Sweetman

2nd prize: £12 No 45 Georgina Lamb

3rd prize: £6 No 215 Sally Brown

### NOVEMBER

1st prize: £18 No 99 Mrs P Roberts 2nd prize: £12 No 190 Eric Payne 3rd prize: £6 No 74 Pat Betts



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VILLAGE HALL NEWS



# PHONE BOX LIBRARY **Opening Times for 2023**

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Please feel free to borrow a book to read. We only ask that you return it in a good condition for the next person to borrow.

Stock will be rotated on a regular basis.

Please could we ask that book donations are not left in the phone box. If you wish to donate books please email westonvillagehall@live.co.uk

Many thanks and happy reading!



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Weston on the Green Memorial Village Hall

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# A PANTO'S NOT JU



Cinderella **1994** 





# by Mic

And between 1994–99 Weston kept up the tradition, staging five pantos to raise money towards the repairs to St Mary's Church.

Oh yes we did!

Springboarding off the Reviews the WI used to perform, a few phone calls to likely victims (officially known as volunteers) and a group met to assess the chances of putting on a show.

Cinderella was the first production, with Act II being the wedding of Cinders and the Prince in St Mary's and having the reception at Weston Manor - but only after the church roof had been repaired.

The huge success of that production, both financially (we raised £750) and as entertainment for the audience and cast alike, led to a flurry of creativity in the following years with Jack and the Beanstalk, Little Red Riding Hood, Snow White and the Several Dwarfs ('Several'

**Little Red Rid** 1996



# Image: State of the state

because we weren't sure how many members of cast we'd have to spread around) and finally Dick Whittington.

For each show a stage had to be built – after much head-scratching the first one was finally constructed from two shed bases borrowed from a farm, some scaffold planks and lots of nails; a bespoke stage was built the second year – scenery made and costumes sewn (including one for Daisy the cow and a rather eccentric golden hen for Jack and the Beanstalk). Sheds and garages around the village were commandeered for the making of various bits of scenery, front rooms and sewing machines for costumes.

The pantos were an excellent way of raising funds for St Mary's and were so successful that one even merited a visit from Mad Maud ... All together now:

'SHE'S BEHIND YOU!'

# ling Hood



Snow White 1997



18

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1. Bob Hessian; 2. Daniel Barnett, David, Cherrie East, Neil Hessian, Mark East; 3. BR: Bob Hessian, Wally Harkness, Eileen Wickson, Mick East, Joan Davis, Jean Godwin; FR: Graham Barnett, Cherrie East; 4. Mick East, Jean Godwin, Joan Davis; 5. BR: Wally Harkness, Jenny Hicks, Bob Hessian, Margaret Fissenden, Graham Barnett, Cherrie East, 4. Mick East, Jean Godwin, Jean Holloway, Michael Gibson, Bernita Long, Jean Godwin; FR: Neil Hessian, Cherrie East, Norma Harkness, Mark East, Mick East; 6. Wally Harkness, Mark East, Mick East; 7. Cherrie East, Graham Barnett; 8. BR: Jean Godwin, Jean Holloway, Michael Gibson; MR: Bernita Long, Jora Gibson, Mick East; Joan Davis; FR: Mark East, Mick East; 7. Cherrie East, Margaret Fissenden, Kate Hessian, Dob Hessian; Jean Holloway, Michael Gibson; MR: Bernita Long, Nora Gibson, Mick East; Joan Davis; FR: Mark East, Sian Pringle; 9. Bob Hessian; 10 Mark East; Sian Pringle, Mick East; 11. Graham Barnett, Cherrie East, Kate Hessian, Cherrie East, Sian Pringle, Lesley Savage; 12. BR: Bob East, Sian Pringle, Graham Barnett, Cherrie East, Kate Hessian, Wally Harkness, Mick East; Lesley Savage; FR: Hannah Moss, Charlotte Moss, Jeanette Poole; 13. Joan Davis; FB: David Jordan, Bernita Long, Bob Hessian, Margaret Fissenden, Graham Barnett, Jan Jorden, Bill Lawrie, Joan Davis; Bob East, Mick East; Hannah Moss, Charlotte Moss; Laste Moss; Bob East, Mick East; Jean Godwin, Cherrie East, Lesle Savage, PA Cavan; FR: Mark East, Hannah Moss, Charlotte Moss; 15. Bob Hessian, Bill Lawrie; 16. Lesley Savage; 17. Cherrie East, Bernita Long; 18. Bob East, Mad Maud (aka Joan Davis; 19. Bob Hessian, Bill Lawrie; 16. Lesley Savage; 17. Cherrie East, Bernita Long; 18. Bob East, Mad Maud (aka Joan Davis)



Our Autumn meetings started with a welcome return visit by Mariella Bliss, who showed us how to make Italian biscuits and 'real' panna cotta, not the British version, which we then sampled. Mariella grew up in Italy and while she cooked the panna cotta, she told us more about her life there.

As a complete contrast, Jan Warner gave us a very interesting talk at our meeting on October 18th entitled 'The Survival of the Fittest', about how babies were cared for in the past. Many babies died through disease, but many also died from ignorance. Examples she gave were of bottles not being washed between feeds, babies wrapped too warmly so overheated, or nappies, often rags, not being changed. She also told us, surprisingly, that babies were more likely to survive in poor families, especially in the countryside, than in rich families. We were very grateful for modern knowledge and medicines! She also brought along many interesting items from the small museum she has in her home.

On the 13th December, a week earlier than usual, we will celebrate Christmas with a buffet meal for members and guests; this must be pre-booked. Then on January 17th, Paul Baker is coming to tell us about RSPB Otmoor. Paul has been involved in the project since its beginning and has many slides of how it began as well as changes during the years.

We would like to invite all ladies to join us, 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 a long, time resident, give us a try – you will be very welcome.

Our WI meets at Weston Village Hall every month except August, on the third Wednesday at 7.30pm. In addition, we have theatre and other visits, plus occasional coffee mornings and lunches. We also have a craft afternoon on the 4th Monday at 2.00pm and walks on the 2nd Monday at 1.3 0pm, both of which were WI initiatives although you don't need to be a member to take part in these.

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

Lyn Barnett



# Weston Society

Weston Society met on Monday 11th September when Mark Davis gave a very interesting and informative talk on Alice's Adventures in Oxford, relating a lot of work he had done in researching Lewis Carroll and the events that led to his writing of the books.

We will then have met again in November with a talk on Stonesfield Embroidery.

when we are expecting Bob Hessian to give a talk on the Barn Owls that have been nesting in his property for several years.

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



Our next meeting will be on Monday 8th January



# Weston Walkers

For our September walk we parked in Lower Heyford and followed the canal towpath south towards Northbrook before crossing the canal and heading back across the fields to our start point.

Only four of us turned out in October, so we walked locally down to the BP garage and back behind Staplehurst Farm, taking a slight diversion to avoid a field of lively heifers, out onto the Bletchington road and back to Weston via Stonehouse Farm.

We will hopefully have walked in November, being our last walk of the year, usually a morning walk followed by lunch.

We usually avoid January so start again on Monday 12th 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



# Oliver Hilliam / CPRE

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# CPRE Planning Volunteers Needed - Bicester and Surrounding Villages

This role involves being aware of factors affecting the countryside or green spaces in your local area and helping us to suggest solutions and improvements through the planning system. You'll keep an eye on local planning applications and developments and alert us to them. You'll also help to investigate them further to gather the facts so we can respond appropriately.

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# **Pumpkins & Halloween**

'VE NEVER LIKED pumpkins (to eat) and I've never grown them. And I've never really bothered to find out why they are associated with Halloween.

So when I received a phone call asking me if I would judge the Children's Pumpkin Competition this year (held on the village Bonfire Night, 28th October) I had to ask the question – "Why me?"

"We need a local dignitary" came back the reply! Once I'd stopped



laughing, I politely replied that I'd be honoured to carry out the task. Which I did in the pouring rain, an hour before they lit the bonfire.

Local children – the "Weston Veggies" – had been busy earlier in the day carving out the pumpkins they had grown on the allotment. I've been assured that when they'd finished carving their sculptures, all children ended up with their full complement of fingers ...



To see the pumpkins, all lined up along the verge, was an impressive sight! So, with notebook in hand and with rain dripping off my hat and down my neck and nose, I commenced my task – there were at least a dozen entries. All were illuminated from the inside

## Simon Roper Winner of the Queensland College of Teaching TeachX Awards 2023 for Innovation in Teaching

John Roper proudly congratulates his son, Simon, on winning the Queensland College of Teaching TeachX Award for Innovation in Teaching 2023.



Born and bred in Weston, Simon attended Weston School before venturing further afield, ending up as a teacher of Engineering in Australia.

He won the award because as well as teaching, he has developed highly innovative STEM programs with students including Wind Farms, Binbots, and the Farmbot, which foster students' enthusiasm for the subjects, providing them with the foundations and skills to pursue a STEM-based career and encouraging them to connect with the world around them – just as he has done.

Congratulations from your very proud Dad!

by tea-lights which showed up the intricate carvings of the outer layer of the pumpkin. All very professional and a credit to the youngsters. I tried to mark each one out of a maximum total of ten, writing the scores down in my notebook. A simple task one would think, except the rain made my notes illegible!

Then the fireworks started - as always, a brilliant display by Mick East and his team.

There was going to be a prize presentation afterwards but most of the spectators were keen to get home to somewhere dry and warm. So the children never got to meet 'the dignitary' and I never got to meet them. Maybe they'll ask me next year?!?

Every child got a small prize but the overall winner was Theo Harris from Gallosbrook Way – well done Theo, a brilliant effort!



Many thanks to Kieran Evans for organising the competition and encouraging the children to enter their pumpkins.

I won't put my name down as I don't want irate parents phoning me and asking why their child didn't win a prize!

Signed: 'The Dignitary'

Thanks Bob, your name's safe with me - Ed

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The firework display this year followed the renewal of both certificates for the Firer and Senior firer. The firers renewal (i.e. the glamorous assistant) was done over the weekend of 14th and 15th October in the village hall, as is the law of sod, the sun was out fully all day for both days, although the wind was a bit fresh. The course was followed by a one hour, 30 question on-line exam 10 days later.

The course was run by Skyline and came under the auspices of the BPA and City and Guilds. The Senior firer had completed his course and exam some weeks earlier. 18 people attended the firers course from several different firework companies. The certificates last for 5 years and contain your photo and firers number. The details of all those who pass are put on the BPA (The British Pyrotechnists Association) website for clients to see. Councils and education authorities etc, are increasingly looking for approved crew to set off fireworks on their property.

Lunch was provided on both days by Dough & Dine, with the lecturer having been given his very own Apple Cake on Day 2. Not that I am at all jealous!

On the 28th October we picked up the hire van and made our way to the new storage facility at Great Milton. The sun shone. The various shells, cakes and candles were fused; the sun shone. At 5.20 pm we made our way to the playing field, it started to spot with rain. By 6.00 pm we had been joined by Paul again this year and we sat in the van keeping dry. By 6.30 pm we had to put the fireworks out and use weather protection. This was for the fireworks, the firers just get wet.

We also lit the bonfire, which, after a good smoke, burnt up brightly. At 7.06 the first shell passed by my shoulder into the rainy sky. This was quickly followed by an assortment of bangs, flashes and crackles. Regular attendees will have noticed a subtle change in the finale, this was because it was lit three minutes too soon. Mainly due to the glamorous assistant mistaking which five-inch shell to light. One was a single and the other was connected to 10 others, oh cripes and folly ... (Did you notice how that was made acceptable to the Village News?)

A fair amount of cash was taken on the gate, thanks to the ladies, so next year seems OK. We have three more shows next week, then a rest until next year. Remember it goes 'bang-whooshbang-sparkle-wow-oooh-ahhh'. Many thanks to the Village Hall committee and all volunteers who made this damp evening possible. The dinky donuts were very nice.

A funny thing happened at the Hanborough fireworks. We had prepared everything and set out the cakes etc by 5.30 pm - all of a sudden a line of lights passed overhead. We thought of drones and aliens and Russians. Afeared we were. Oooh! Turns out it was the Starlink satellites ...

Mick East

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# Followed by Mulled Wine & Mince Pies

# Оп December 17<sup>тн</sup> 2023 at 6.00 pm

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



Weston on the Green Memorial Village Hall

# Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2023, 6pm

Join us for the turning on of the Christmas Lights, mince pies, Christmas Raffle, carols around the tree, and festive cheer!

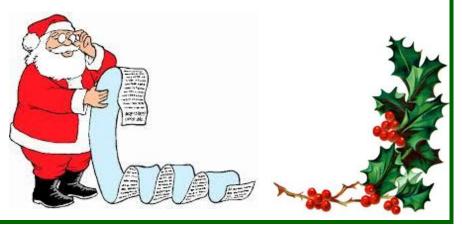


Enjoy a glass of wine, and mince pies as we turn on the Christmas lights and officially start the festive season in Weston!

Children will also receive a small gift from our special visitor, Father Christmas!

(Gifts from Father Christmas are for children of the village aged 11 and under. To register your child for a gift please email <u>westonvillagehall@live.co.uk</u> with the name, age and address of your child)









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# **Christmas Raffle**

Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2023, 6pm

Weston on the Green Memorial Village Hall

## Prizes include:

Milk Shed Gift voucher, Afternoon Tea voucher for The Manor, Meal for Two voucher for The Ben Jonson

Bottles of wine & spirits, scented candles,

Christmas crackers, gifts from Blue Diamond, Lakeland and many more!

£2 per ticket- purchase on the evening!



All proceeds to the maintenance of the Village Hall.

Christmas Library Closures The library will be closed from the evening of December 21st and will re-open on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> December for the day. The library will then be closed until the morning of January 6th.

> Thank you to all our visitors & readers Happy Christmas and happy reading!!



Everyone is Welcome to.... Neighbours' Natter

Magazines to Swap Weston-on-the-Green Village Hall Thursdays Dec. 14<sup>th</sup> and Jan. 11<sup>th</sup>10am - Noon Join us for coffee or tea and a biscuit.

Bring your

# John Howell MP writes...

HE STATE OPENING of Parliament marks the formal start of the parliamentary year and the Monarch's Speech sets out the government's agenda for the coming session, outlining proposed policies and legislation. On 7th November the new session of Parliament was opened with a historic King's Speech. It was the first King's Speech for 70 years. The detail of the speech has been well covered in the media and there will be differing views on the Bills to be brought forward. However at this stage we do not have the detail of the different Bills. This will be published in due course at which time scrutiny can take place.

In the Prime Minister's introduction to the King's Speech I was personally pleased to note mention of the Holocaust Memorial Bill which will progress the construction of a national Holocaust Memorial and Learning Centre in London. I have been a Trustee of the Holocaust Memorial Day Trust for some time. The Trust promotes the annual time to remember the millions of people murdered during the Holocaust and also in the genocides which followed in Cambodia, Rwanda, Bosnia and Darfur. The centre will provide a focal point for national remembrance and help to promote learning the lessons of the past.

As Leader of the UK Delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe I was also pleased to see the Prime Minister draw attention to the fact that he has ensured that illegal migration has been on the agenda of every international meeting that he has attended from the G7 to the Council of Europe. His attendance at the 4th Summit of the Council of Europe which was held in Reykjavik in May was



very welcome. At the Summit the Prime Minister set out the need for international cooperation in establishing a global asylum framework and discussed reform to the European Convention of Human Rights in tackling this issue. These steps will help to build cooperation with international partners in stopping the small boats, helping to put an end to the barbaric enterprise of people trafficking. He called for an end to the humanitarian disaster caused by illegal immigration.

Now to a much more local issue which is regularly raised with me, that of Royal Mail deliveries. In some specific post code areas across the constituency mail is not being delivered on a regular basis and indeed at times people have not received post for over a week. I have challenged Royal Mail on this on a number of occasions and in September met with senior staff to pursue matters further. A number of issues were explained as I set this out on my website at the time. In a recent follow up meeting I was advised that there have been some changes in senior personnel with someone specifically brought in to oversee improvements to delivery in this area. Whilst due to staff absence and shortages they are not able to guarantee daily deliveries in some areas as yet they have committed to every second day deliveries within the next

month. Where there are delivery problems in specific post codes Royal Mail has promised a local investigation if given the post code detail. Staff shortages remain and if anyone is interested do look online on the Royal Mail website where vacancies are advertised. It was also interesting to learn that some of the delays are with distribution via third party carriers before mail gets to Royal Mail itself for delivery. With sight of the envelope the team at Royal Mail can use the codes to track the precise journey of a letter to see where the delays are coming from. It was interesting to learn that organisations such as the NHS use these carriers which may explain why some important letters offering appointments are delayed. The situation will remain under review with Royal Mail.

On other matters, if there is a particular 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.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all constituents a peaceful Christmas and to send my best wishes for the year ahead. I know that for many life is not easy and personal and global struggles can weigh us down. Whatever your beliefs, I do sincerely hope that the peace of the Christmas season may bring some comfort and joy.

May I also take this opportunity to pass on my sincere thanks to the army of volunteers who give their time to help others in their communities in many different ways throughout the year. Our communities are strengthened by this generous service. Thank you all.

# From your local councillors

### Launton & Otmoor District Update

### Full Council 16th October 2023

The Full Council of Cherwell District Council took place on the 16th October. At this council three motions were passed unanimously which were:

- To look into a community forum, inviting local residents and representatives from local climate-action groups, with the aim to best map out the future agenda of Cherwell's climate response.
- To develop a retro-fitting action plan for council-owned housing, showing how it will become carbon neutral by 2030.
- Look into a briefing on Cherwell's sport and leisure facilities.

### Housing Drop-In Sessions

Cherwell's housing team has organised dedicated events to help people with housing concerns. They take place the last Thursday of each month (Thursday 21st December and Thursday 25th January) from 10am to 12pm at Unit 56 (near the old Debenhams) Castle Quay, Banbury, OX16 5UN.



- They can answer queries on: • General tenancy concerns
- Tenancy deposit protection
- Tenancy deposit prote
  Tenancy fees
- Rent increases
- Landlord harassment
- Eviction
- Leaving your accommodation
- Tenancy agreement clauses

### Get in Touch

As always, please do get in touch! Our emails are gemma.coton@ cherwell-dc.gov.uk and julian. nedelcu@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or phone us on 01869717712.

All the best, Gemma & Julian



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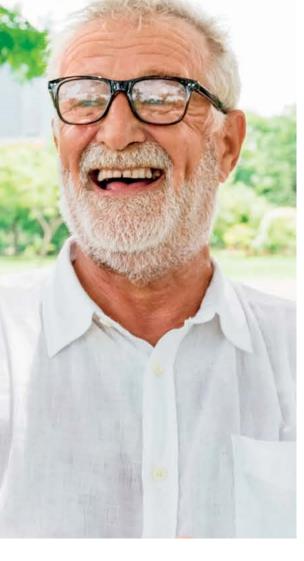
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Dates for	the Diary	E and		
3rd December	6.00 pm	Christmas Tree Lights Switch-On		
4th December	7.00 pm	SOS Village Meeting; in the Village Hall		
6th December	7.30 pm	Parish Council meeting		
9th December	9.00 am – 12.00 pm	The Big Breakfast & Christmas Fair in the Village Hall		
12th December	12.30 pm	Golden Leaves Lunch		
13th December		Community Share Offer for Weston Pantry Ends		
13th December	7.30 pm	WI Christmas Buffet (must be pre-booked)		
14th December	10.00 am – 12.00 pm	Neighbours' Natter		
17th December	6.00 pm	Carol Service followed by mulled wine and mince pies		
8th January	7.30 pm	Weston Society		
9th January	7.30 pm	Parish Council meeting		
11th January	10.00 am – 12.00 pm	Neighbours' Natter		
17th January	7.30 pm	WI Meeting; in the Village Hall		
12th February	1.30 pm	Weston Walkers; meet at the Village Hall		



## FRIENDS PRODUCE

As ever a huge thank you to Mick, Corinne, Toddy and to those of you who have been donating fresh produce from your gardens and greenhouses. The total raised towards St Mary's Church and the Village Hall since the last edition is £174.40.





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