

WESTON-ON-THE-GREEN

TheVillageNews

JUNE/JULY 2024



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Village Directory

THE VILLAGE NEWS

EDITOR

Alex Reid: editor@wotgnews.uk

ADMINISTRATION:

Diane Bohm: admin@wotgnews.uk

CHURCH

RECTOR: The Rev'd Gareth Miller
01869 350224

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

COMMUNITY VAN BOOKING

Graham Barnett: 01869 350707

SOCIETIES

WESTON SOCIETY
WESTON WALKERS
FOOTPATH WARDEN
Graham Barnett: 01869 350707

GARDEN CLUB
Fiona Spensley: 07773 696798

GOLDEN LEAVES
Peter Driver: 01869 350569
Eric Bohm: 01869 352006

NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH
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
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WESTON ON THE GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Diane Bohm, Chair; Neighbourhood
Plan; Finance: 352006

Ben Lanham, Vice Chair; Playing Field:
07887 886138

Susan Davis, Planning; Neighbourhood
Plan; Finance: 07518 926880

John Miller, Works: 350511

Tracy Rowan, Finance: 07833 473357

Parish Council Clerk: Jane Mullane,
350282

e: clerk@westononthegreen-pc.gov.uk

From the editor

'April is the cruellest month', that oft-quoted line from T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, seemed wholly appropriate for one of the windiest, wettest and coldest Aprils I can remember. Luckily warmth was provided towards the end of the month by the Village Hall Committee and their Weston Welcomes drinks – so many faces, both new and old, were in the hall enjoying meeting other villagers and the as the bubbly was liberally poured and the canapés circulated by the hard-working committee, decibels rose and a lovely evening was had by all who attended.

Much less welcome was the sad news that Weston has lost two stalwarts of the village. Colin Rosser, our former Marketing Manager on the Village News Committee, died at home, surrounded by his family, in early April. As I wrote in the last issue, without Colin we wouldn't be able to have the News as it is today, a free magazine to all villagers. His wealth of knowledge about the local businesses of Oxfordshire, matched with a talent for marketing, did so much to get the News back up and running on a sound financial footing and he will be very much missed by Diane and me.

The sad news of Tony Henman's death came as I was putting this issue to bed. Jane and he moved to the village in the late '60s and were an integral part of village life with their three boys all going to the village school. Weston has lost a good friend – I first came across Tony's fighting spirit when he was part of the group of people who formed a committee, Weston Front, to fight off the proposed Eco Town development, Weston Otmoor. He was also very much involved in the committee to save the School Field from development by Lagan Homes and was a real force behind Yasemin to help make Weston Pantry become what it is today. His eloquence when speaking at the original meeting to discuss the future of the shop was inspirational in galvanising the community to take ownership.

My deepest sympathy to both families at this time.



Deadline for August/September edition:
5th JULY 2024



A letter from the Rector

Gareth Miller

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

Dear friends

In the past few weeks I have been privileged to enjoy a cup of tea with several nonagenarians, and with one centenarian. Today I visited my old secretary, now 95, who is as bright as ever and sharp as a new pin. She has just got a new iPad! We worked together forty years ago, in Dorset. It was such a joy to see her.

When I stayed at the convent in Wantage recently I found myself reading their community magazine. One page contained the obituaries of the nuns who had died recently – 105, 102, 98, 101 – there wasn't one who died before the age of 95! Conversely, when I read the obituaries of clergy in *The Church Times*, I found they were mostly in their 50s, 60s or 70s! So – if it's not too late – I'm thinking of becoming a nun, or at least a monk!

I wonder what their secret is? Cynics might say that they have an easy life, with no children or mortgage to worry about and drive them to an early grave. But

I'm not so sure that the monastic life is quite as cushy as we might suppose. It undoubtedly has its own stresses and strains.

Some of you may have been listening to Michael Mosley's radio programme, 'Just One Thing'. He encourages us to consider just one thing, one habit or practice, that we might adopt to improve our health and well-being. I like listening to it, though if you did all the things he suggests you'd be exhausted and never have time for anything else!

Our churches have recently been considering whether there is 'just one thing' that they might do to make them more outward-looking. Some very good ideas have been advanced, and I hope you will see the fruits of some of them in the coming months. Meanwhile, we can all perhaps focus on cultivating the practice of serenity, that sense of peace that monks and nuns seem to find through the habit of prayer and contemplation. It is not as elusive as you might think. Even a few moments every day in quiet reflection, perhaps with the Bible, perhaps with a verse or mantra, can help to steady us and make us more peaceable, more loving, more generous creatures.

'For thus says the Lord God: "In returning and rest you shall be saved; in quietness and in trust shall be your strength."' (Is 30.15)

'Be still before the Lord and wait patiently for him.'
(Ps 37.7)

St Mary's Church, Weston on the Green warmly invites you to join in our services in June and July:

2nd June	18:00	Evensong (BCP)
9th June	11:00	Morning Worship
16th June	11:00	Holy Communion
30th June	10.30	Holy Communion, Hampton Gay
7th July	18:00	Evensong (BCP)
14th July	11:00	Morning Worship
21st July	11:00	Holy Communion
28th July	10.30	Holy Communion
28th July	18:00	Choral Evensong with the Akeman Choir, Bletchington

Please note: the times are subject to change. The monthly schedule is posted on the front door of the church as well as the bulletin box at the East gate. For other services in the Akeman Benefice please visit: <https://www.akemanbenefice.org.uk/church-services>

From the Register

Funeral: 26th April 2024 Colin Rosser

BENEFICE NEWS

Pilgrim Paths

The Pilgrim Paths Deanery Walk starting at Oddington is on 16th June at 2.30 pm.

Sirinu Concert

The Oxford music group Sirinu is giving a concert in St. Giles, Bletchington on 22nd June at 7.00 pm.

Rise and Shine Café is every Wednesday 9.15 – 10.45 am in term-time in Kirtlington Church. 13 July

Jazz in the Park at Kirtlington 18:30 – 22:00

25 July Deanery Synod at Finmere 19:00

Church news



On April 24th we held our Annual Parochial Church Council Meeting (APCM). Peter Driver and Eric Bohm were re-elected as Churchwardens; Theffania Everett was re-elected as our representative to our Deanery Synod; the following people were re-elected as members of the Parochial Church Council (PCC): Rebecca Barton, Roz Bullen, Barbara Chisholm, Nicola Donne, and Nerys Wilkinson. As mentioned at the APCM, the incoming PCC will face several challenges in the next 12 months.

One of those challenges is increasing the attendance at our services. We will experiment with offering different service times. Despite the shortage of manpower, we have maintained a consistent number of services per month (except in May) in every parish in the Benefice. We vary the type of service from Evensong, Morning Worship, Café Church, and one Holy Communion service per month. At a recent Café Church, we asked several people to nominate their favourite hymns, which the congregation sang, and then the nominators were invited to explain why they were their favourites. The reasons varied, but the common thread was the tranquility and solace of music in people's lives. We hope to do it again.

Members of the various PCCs from across the Akeman Benefice met on April 27th to discuss and map out an action plan based on the book *How Village Churches Thrive*. There was a free exchange of ideas and options to be considered to make our village churches more involved in the needs of the local community.

We need to learn how to respond to what people wish to have in their church. Extending the experience of the recent Café Church, we will enhance the quiet space in the church to create an area for contemplation and meditation. We are investigating sourcing materials to help people connect prayer/contemplation with life's events.

The incoming PCC will address how to improve the churchyard to be more user-friendly. We need to balance the environmental issues with people areas. Thought will be given to having picnic tables available for families in a pleasing wildlife garden. This will require work and volunteers to help us establish and maintain the garden area.

One suggestion at the discussions on April 27th was to ask younger people to help the church maintain specific grave sites, while encouraging the local schools to use the opportunity for students to help do research to enhance the existing records of the graves. As Wardens, we are receiving an increasing number of requests for information to assist overseas families with elements of their genealogies.

One recent visitor to St. Mary's left a note stating we should 'de-Victorianise' the church, undoubtedly by removing the pews which restrict our ability to diversify the use of the premises. The challenge is how to increase the use of the building itself from basically one hour per week, while keeping maintenance costs under some form of control.

Our church plays a supportive role in numerous village activities. For example, we support the monthly Golden Leaves lunches. This is an initiative by Peter Driver in his personal capacity, but we assist in the publicity and several logistical areas to ensure its success. We also actively support the village's monthly Bicester Food Bank drive.

Our church is a welcoming place. It is open during the week and you can help yourself to some coffee or tea.

Eric Bohm, Church Warden

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Chair's comments

The Parish Council has begun a new year. Our financial and operational year is from 1st April to 31st March. We have a new budget and an elected set of officers as well as our highly respected team of volunteers.

Officers for 2024-25:

Chair: Councillor Diane Bohm
Vice Chair: Councillor Ben Lanham
Responsible Financial Officer: Jane Mullane (Parish Clerk)
Parish Clerk: Jane Mullane

The Parish Council relies on its Advisory Groups to lead work in the village. Each group has a Lead who reports to the Parish Council and leads a team who agree to follow the same Code of Conduct as Councillors. Each group has Terms of Reference which set out the remit of the team. Advisory Groups vary in size and requirements for membership i.e. should they be only councillors or a mix of councillors and villagers?

The Advisory Groups and Leads for the year 2024-25 are:

Finance:

Lead: Councillor Tracy Rowan

Planning:

Lead: Councillor Susan Davies

Staffing:

Lead: Councillor Susan Davies

Technology:

Lead: James Henderson

Governance:

Lead: Councillor Diane Bohm

Traffic Calming & Transportation:

Lead: Graham Barnett

Playing Field, Playground, Spinney:

Lead: Councillor Ben Lanham

Works:

Leads: Councillors John Miller and Ben Lanham

Neighbourhood Plan Review:

Leads: Councillors Susan Davies and Diane Bohm

The Parish Council has both an Internal and an External Auditor plus a 'set of eyes' from the council or the public who scrutinises the accounts on a regular basis. The current villager is Henry Donne who is a valued previous parish councillor and responsible financial officer.

Volunteers

If you are a regular reader of this report, you will know that I am always trying to muster volunteers. We currently have some very committed volunteers who make a huge difference to the appearance of the village. Among the works undertaken are mowing the playing field – which is not easy with the amount of rainfall we've had this year, planting and maintaining village gate flower boxes, maintaining the D-Day Garden, helping with special events such as the Coronation, running the monthly Food Bank,

litter picking and driving the Community Van. We have some super star volunteers, and I will name only three: Graham Barnett, whose experience and willingness to serve the village is outstanding; Mark East, who quietly leads the work on keeping the playing field well mowed; and Roger Evans, whose advice and support on both planning issues and complex problems (Oak Tree Path) is truly valued.

Engagement and encouragement

The recent event at the Village Hall where established groups in the village were able to meet newcomers was a vibrant, energetic evening. People new (ish) to the village seemed genuinely happy to have chosen to live here. Being new to a community is greatly helped by getting involved in the community. You meet people, feel good about your contribution, encourage the groups you join and often inspire us to keep working hard for you.

The work of the Parish Council cannot be carried out by six people on their own. The council is a leadership group and if the village wants specific projects done such as the further development of the playground, we must have volunteers to work with us.

For example, if you would like a

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zip wire, an area for young people, an adventure trail in the spinney – please contact Councillor Ben Lanham and offer your help.

If you enjoy living in an attractive village, please offer to help with some trimming, planting (I'm imagining lots of bulbs next spring), painting (refresh benches, fences), mowing and strimming – could you contact the Parish Clerk today!

If you feel you can contribute to the Parish Council with skills acquired in your own life and work, don't hesitate to contact us. We would like a range of ages on the Parish Council and an interest in helping us to grow and honour our history but also understand the needs of the future. Could you please contact Councillor Diane Bohm if you are interested.

Lastly, if you enjoy research and/or have some fund-raising experience, we could use your help finding funding for our projects. Contact the Parish Clerk please.

On reflection

As a team the Parish Council is proud of the work we have done to put Bicester Food Bank high on our priority list. Our donation continues to be substantial monthly – the first Saturday of every month. The task is shared between St. Mary's Church, the Village Hall Committee, and the Parish Council. Thank you for your support.

I do think the Bus 24 provision has

made trips in and out of the village much easier for us. It's not perfect as it doesn't help students get into school in Bicester in the morning which is very hard for some.

The Community Van has lifted the spirits of many of our more vulnerable villagers and even those made vulnerable through illness. We have three excellent and welcoming volunteer drivers and I have just met the newest recruit.

The new equipment in the playground seems to have pleased the children. Finally, we have received great support from both our district and the county councillors.

Challenges

We have challenges going forward, namely:

1. The removal of the Oak Tree Path which has gone on far too long.
2. We need movement on reducing the speed on the B340.
3. We need a safe pathway for children and adults with prams and mobile scooters between the church and the playground.
4. The problems associated with more villagers having success with Gigaclear needs to be sorted. Those working from home and in the evening need a stable broadband. We also need better mobile coverage and if we can't get that, what can we do in our own homes to be able to use our mobile phones?
5. We will need to face issues around demands for housing development.

There are other issues, but these are the top five.

To conclude, the Parish Council would like to remember former Councillor Colin Rosser who sadly passed away in early April. He was new to the village but offered help quickly. He joined the Parish Council, took on the job of finding increased advertising for the Village News which led to free copies for all homes in the village and beyond. Thank you, Colin – we will remember you.

Diane Bohm



D-Day Garden

The Parish Council has a small D-Day Garden, situated between Hazel Cottage and Church Road, opposite the stocks, which is dedicated to the men and women who served and fell.

We do not forget their sacrifice on that 6th June, 80 years ago.



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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

24/00306/F – Manor Hotel
 24/00291/LB – Manor Hotel
 24/00567/LB – Manor Hotel
 24/00522/LB – Manor Hotel
 24/00645/LB – Manor Hotel
 24/00441/F – Fir Tree Farm
 24/00028/F – 20 Westlands Avenue
 24/00495/TEL – Mast 4962 Manor Farm

Applications – Awaiting Decision

23/03383/F – 2 Church Close
 Two storey side and rear extensions (re-submission of 23/01872/F)
 24/00122/F – 22 Milestone Lane
 – change of use from agricultural land to residential garden.
 Retrospective incorporation of 5m of land on the northern boundary of the development site.
 24/00497/F – Cruck Cottage –
 Resubmission of 23/02717/F
 24/00498/LB – Cruck Cottage –
 Resubmission of 23/02718/LB
 24/00804/OUT – Reynards Lodge,
 North Lane - Outline Planning
 Approval for the demolition of



workshops, stables and tennis court and erection of three dwellings and conversion of existing building to form a dwelling (renewal of 21/02146/OUT).

24/00745/CLUE – North View, North Lane - Certificate of Lawfulness of Existing Use for Change of Use of existing double width hardstanding on verge directly to front of property to domestic use - hardstanding straddling highways land.

24/01102/F - North View, North Lane – Retrospective application: upgrade of existing verge hardstanding.

24/00935/CLUE – Summer Court – Certificate of Lawfulness – excavated hard standing for parking on the grass verge.

24/00816/F – Quick Fit Garage, A34 North - Construction of 4 no EV charging bays with vehicular access and associated crossover from services exit road.

24/00893/F – Kelberg, Northampton Road - Proposed erection of 8-bay workshop and associated works.

Tree Applications

24/00722/TCA – Westfield Farm Barn – Removal of trees T1 Conifer, T2 Conifer & T3 Silver Birch.



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Police UK – New App Launched

A new app called #PoliceUK has been launched to make it as easy as possible for you to contact the police. This will allow you to report a range of services online in the same way you would as if you called 101. These include reporting anti-social behaviour, domestic abuse, or road traffic incidents and means you can do it whenever suits you without having to make a phone call.

Please note that if it is an emergency always call 999.



Planned Future Roadworks in the Area

Listed below are some of the known roadworks which are planned over the next couple of months. Please see the Parish Council website for further information and diversion routes.

- Section of Akeman Street over M40, Chesterton - essential replacement of the bridge joints across the carriageway from parapet to parapet, surfacing repairs and line painting where required (10 June 2024 for estimated duration of 8 days).
- Length of Akeman Street, Kirtlington end - essential utility repair and maintenance works (25 June 2024 - 29 June 2024 inclusive)
- M40 at Junction 10 Padbury where it meets the A43, southbound section - essential improvement works (July - December 2024, Monday to Friday between 8pm-6am)



BICESTER FOOD BANK

EMERGENCY FOOD FOR PEOPLE IN CRISIS



A collection is held on the first Saturday of every month, 9.00 am–12.00 pm outside the Weston Pantry.

All donations of non-perishable food received with thanks.

Supported by St Mary's Church, the Village Hall, and the Parish Council.

← Seeded by The Trussell Trust

Weston SOS – Nearly there!



We are now close to saving the Shop and Post Office! Weston SOS raised £161,250 from the share issue, which was great but left us needing a mortgage of £232,000 to support the purchase. Unfortunately, the only mortgage offer we were able to secure was not workable with an interest rate of over 9% (and recently increased by 0.25%). The business plan just did not work on this basis.

Our chair, Sam Sharp approached our larger shareholders with a request for them to provide loans (minimum £10,000) for which we would pay 6% for 5 years. We are delighted that this call was successful, with offers exceeding our minimum requirement! Our solicitor is currently working on the legal agreements. We are very grateful for their further support and belief in the community buyout. After five years, we should have a track record of success for a more competitive commercial mortgage, or we can revisit the shareholder loans.

We are very grateful to Alice Hillier, our treasurer, who has put in a huge amount of work on the financial

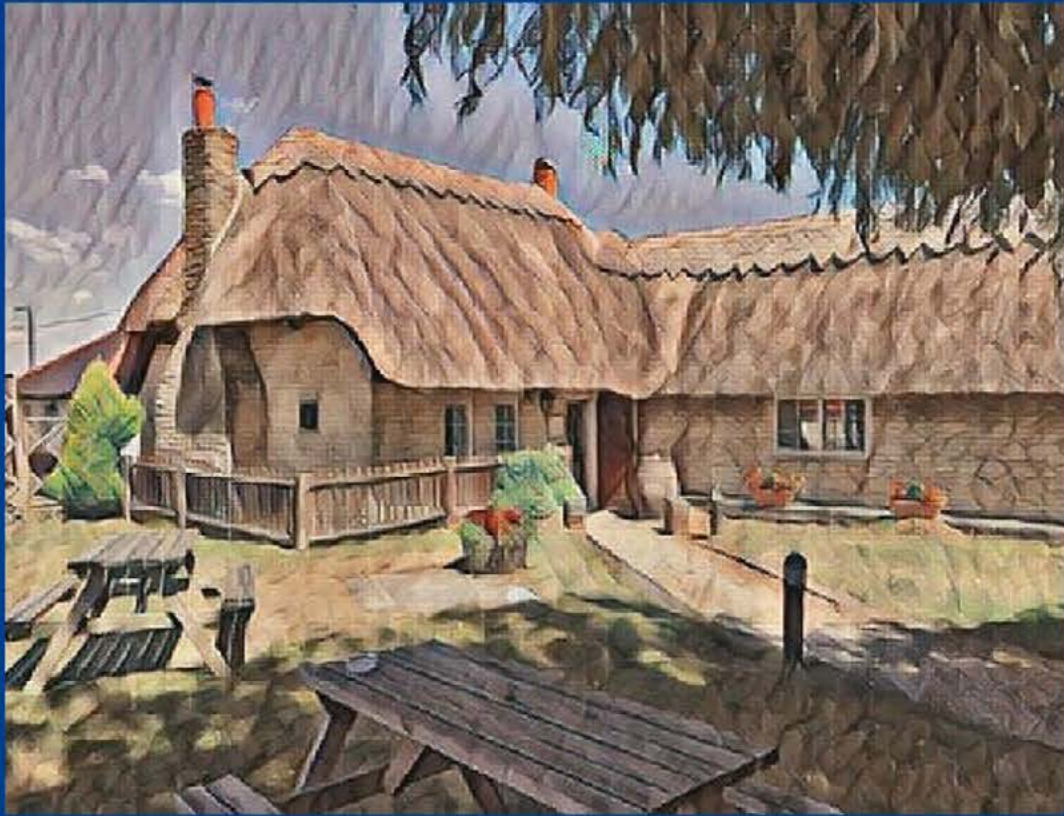


side. She is now leaving the committee for the most wonderful reason: her baby will have arrived by the time you are reading this. However, this leaves us in need of a treasurer for the SOS committee, so please volunteer if you have any expertise or interest in the financial side of things (email chair@weston-sos.org). We are delighted to welcome Shamser Pangu who is replacing Amanda Goodger as secretary. We are grateful for Amanda's contribution, it was good to have a view from outside the village.

We are now in a position to proceed with the purchase of the shop. Our amazing chair, Sam

Sharp, has continued to work tirelessly on this project; in addition to all his work raising loans, he has also secured our access to the Government funding. The only foreseeable fly in the ointment is the Post Office contract – we are not viable without it – but with fingers tightly crossed, and the Post Office expertise of Linda Allison on the committee, we are hopeful that we are nearly there!

Fiona Spensley, Weston SOS



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Much to look forward to

IN THE LAST EDITION of the Village News, we mentioned how we were going to be working on the exterior of the Hall this summer as part of our on-going maintenance and programme of works. By the time this edition goes to print we will hopefully have had the Hall roof cleaned (weather permitting!) by Kieran, and KJ Cleaning Solutions, based here in the village. A jet wash, and a thorough gutter cleaning will help keep the roof in good condition and we want to say a huge thank you to Kieran for his advice, help and expertise in completing this job. We have also completed some work on the footpath leading to the foyer and continued with our bee-friendly planting in the flower beds. New grass seed has also been sown to repair an area of damage caused by an over-zealous van driver who earlier this year damaged the lawns.

At the AGM in April, we were delighted to welcome Laura East onto the committee. Laura has lived in the village since the autumn of 2007 and will be a fantastic addition to the committee. The committee works hard behind the scenes to maintain the Hall and to provide events that might appeal to villagers.

Some future events which we think may be of interest is a Craft Fair on Saturday 19th October (10am to 3pm) when the Hall will play host to a number of stalls, including

North Aston Organics, Neal's Yard Remedies, amongst others, and our very own village businesses of BeccaLou Designs, Peck & Feather, Dough & Dine, and Rekha's Indian Street Food. We will also be raising money for MacMillan Cancer Support via the sale of teas, coffee, and cakes. Please see the poster in this Village News for more information. We would love to see you on the day!

The other event is the annual fireworks display to be held on the playing field on Saturday 26th October. Thank you to the Parish Council for allowing us use of the field for this popular village occasion. We have been fortunate, in recent years, to have had some delicious food, cheerfully served by Peter and Alison in sometimes awful weather conditions. Peter has announced his retirement from Firework Night so this year we will be welcoming Matt and Dan with their delicious burgers and Hot Dogs and a village favourite, Howes fish and chip van, to the evening. More details about the event will be in the next edition of the Village News.

The Phone Box Library continues to be well-used by villagers (and beyond) so please do think of us if you are having a clear out of novels, biographies or children's books. If you would like to donate any books please contact us via our email address which is listed below.

In March we held our first ever Bingo and Curry Night. Over seventy villagers joined us for a number of games of bingo and a three course Indian meal. A huge thank you goes to Rekha and Bharat who catered the event, from the samosas and salad to start, to the curries, rice and naan breads for the main course, and finishing with the cookies and kulfi ice cream. The empty plates coming back into the kitchen were testament to the fantastic food. We are very grateful to Rekha and Bharat for offering to provide such a lovely meal for a village event. Our thanks as ever to the members of the committee who also helped on the evening, and to Andrew for carrying out his duties as bingo-caller with such aplomb!

Our Weston Welcomes Drinks & Canapes evening at the end of April saw ninety villagers join us for glasses of fizz and a range of light bites. The evening was a chance to meet villagers, old and new to Weston, plus villagers who run a range of clubs and societies within the village, and those who are involved with neighbourhood watch, the community bus, the Parish Council and the Church. It really was a lovely evening and a big thank you to everyone who came along.

Please do keep an eye out for our future events or join our mailing list by contacting us on westonvillagehall@live.co.uk



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Opening Times for 2024

The phone box is open Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday, from early morning until dusk when it is then locked up for the night. 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



The Village Hall Committee's tribute to Tony Henman

The Village Hall Committee was deeply saddened by the passing of Tony Henman. Tony was a great supporter of village life, including the Village Hall, and represented all what was good about the village. For many years Tony was the auditor for the Hall's accounts, and in recent years a quiet supporter of our work. His encouragement and kindness towards the Village Hall Committee was very much valued and appreciated. His wise counsel and guidance will be greatly missed.

250 Club Results

APRIL

1st prize: £18 No 98 Mandy Jones
2nd prize: £12 No 2 Carole Sweetnam
3rd prize: £6 No 147 Eric Payne

MAY

1st prize: £18 No 135 Mick East
2nd prize: £12 No 131 Neil & Corinne
Cunningham
3rd prize: £6 No 235 Carole Sweetnam

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AFTER OVER 100 YEARS of the Weston WI, it was with great sadness that we had to announce the closure of our group in March.

The Institute began in 1920 and up until the start of Second World War, the majority of both committee and members' meetings were held in various venues associated with the Manor – a barn, the hall, Rupert's Cottage – and whoever lived at the Manor provided the President. These ladies took the position seriously, supporting events, meetings and campaigns and giving generously of their time, facilities and money.

The WI took an active part in village fetes, summer picnics, school children's activities, entertainments and the Christmas party. The meetings had a set layout – business, a speaker and then entertainment and from quite early on the individuals tasked with the entertainment at a particular meeting would often put on plays, recitations, book readings, and, once they had a gramophone, dancing. There were outings to quite far flung places – Southsea was one, returning in the early hours of the next morning with a reduced attendance at school the next day as children and husbands also went on these trips.

During the war, having lost the Manor as a venue and with the Village Hall being used for War Work, they met in homes and gardens all around the village. The war time spirit came to Weston and there were many projects including making and sending essentials to the troops, make do and mend for their own families and providing nourishing meals for a family with limited resources.

There were several campaigns relating to the supply of medical assistance in the village (pre-NHS days) and they raised money to pay for the District Nurse and Midwife who served the community. They fought for a village dump (pre-dustbin collection), a play area for children, an adequate water supply, mains drainage, a village bier, footpaths, alterations to bus

Weston on the Green Wo



Paula Hessian and Margaret Fissendon preparing salad lunch for Senior Citizens from the Aylesbury area (March 2000)



W.I. Annual Dinner (2001)



Rag Rug making (2007)

Raising money for charity – Sight Savers Walk in Blenheim Park (2000)



time tables and a reduction in bus prices. There were schemes to bulk buy fruit bushes and trees and seed potatoes – often accompanied, a few months later

by competitions like 'the best tasting boiled potato'!

Following the war years, raising money to send gifts to the

men's Institute 1920-2024



Modelling Victorian Underwear (1985)

'Doing the Lambeth Walk' for the Reviewers - Jean Holloway & Norma Harkness



Local outing to the theatre (c. 1930s?)



was built and an influx of young women started the Institute again which has met ever since, 11 times a year, apart from Covid restrictions.

New campaigns were fought – the playground, litter bins, co-ordination of buses, and, after being refused a welfare clinic because of the state of the Village Hall, the fundraising for the present hall kicked off with the formation of the Reviewers and two years of fundraising. This new Institute followed the pattern set previously, but occasionally with slightly different topics: Victorian underwear, Belly Dancing, hair dressing, make up ...

Outings also changed – we travelled less distance and often visited exhibitions related to interests of the members. Three groups formed that still exist today, although not exclusively for WI members: the Weston Walkers and the Silk Painting and Sewing groups which merged into the Art and Craft group.

Over 40 years of carol singing raised over £11,000 for many different charities – a tradition we can all be proud of, but, as with the WI itself, we all got too old to walk around the village on cold winter nights, three times in the week before Christmas. We also raised money for our funds and those of other organisations by offering catering, initially to coach parties, then to private parties for villagers. Whilst keeping us well supplied with funds, it was very hard work and without a changing membership including younger women we were unable to maintain the level of activity we did 40– 50 years ago.

Times have changed and our village has changed with them. There is always the chance that a new group of ladies will decide to reform the Weston WI and even if they don't, we, as the 'end of the line' will continue to meet as friends and, as always, newcomers are welcome.

Paula Hessian

servicemen and then to welcome them home with a further gift along with the constant demand for help with preserving fruit and vegetables and clothing without

any new clothes meant that by the 1960s the WI membership was tiring and the Institute 'ceased trading' for almost 3 years. During this time Westlands Avenue

Walking in Oxfordshire

All the information you need to get walking in our beautiful county.

With the days getting longer, it's time to dust off those walking boots and head into the fields.

'Walking in Oxfordshire' has loads of interesting walks, both local and slightly further afield, all to download and print for free: <https://www.walkinginengland.co.uk/oxfordshire>.

It also has books of walks, details of all the walking groups in the county and much more. Whether you want to walk on your own or with a group, all the information is there in one place.



Photo by Joseph Coyle



Weston Society

Weston Society met on Monday 11th March to hear an interesting and informative talk on Combe Mill, it's history, restoration and current use.

We will have met again on Monday 13th May to hear about the part that Cowley Works played in the Second World War.

Our next meeting after that will be on Monday 8th July

on the subject of Oxford Bus Museum, incorporating Morris Motors Museum, based in Long Hanborough.

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.



Weston Walkers

Our walk in March took us partly along the Oxfordshire Way towards Oddington Grange before heading towards Wendlebury, on fairly muddy field paths, before coming back along the old Wendlebury road.

Just four of us enjoyed a pleasant four and a half mile stroll along the Dorn Valley on one of the few dry afternoons in April.

We will hopefully have walked again in May then our next walks will be on Monday 10th June and Monday 8th July, meeting at Weston Village Hall at 1.30pm.

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



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Weston-on-the-Green Garden Club



The Garden Club is going strong with a well-attended EGM/AGM in March. We updated the Constitution and the AGMs will now continue to be in March when the evenings are lighter and Westoners are thinking positively about their gardens again. We got through a good amount of wine, and had a lively discussion with fresh ideas for updating the Spring Show Schedule. The new committee was duly elected and we are full of enthusiasm.

The Spring Show was lovely, with some great exhibits but it could have been better attended. We did not realise we had picked the day of the Grand National – thanks to those who made fleeting visits before returning to watch the race! We had a fun afternoon, with delicious cakes with our teas, and an excellent raffle. Many thanks to all who contributed to the event.

As I write, we are looking forward to four open gardens this summer, with the first on Tuesday 28th May at the Vicarage, and the second on Tuesday 18th June at Dairy Cottage North Lane, both weather permitting. Anyone is welcome to turn up and join or renew their membership on the evening. Timings are 6.30 to 8pm, with a glass of wine and nibbles available. July and August dates to be confirmed at the time of writing. We will email our mailing list on the day of each open garden to confirm weather conditions, please email f.spensley@btinternet.com to be added to the mailing list. The date for the Autumn show will be Saturday 31st August, we will circulate the schedule to our mailing list in June and hope to encourage more entries, particularly from children.

Fiona Spensley, Chair



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Your Neighbourhood Watch Needs You!!

Join us in the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme to promote a safer village, share crime prevention tips, and to get to know your neighbours.

Members of the Neighbourhood Watch may display door stickers to dissuade Cold Callers. Weston-on-the-Green is a "No Cold Calling" Village, and we hope that villagers will not interact with uninvited tradesmen, "Nottingham Knockers" or nuisance callers. We would like them to know that our village is not a place to "try your luck".

Each area of the village will have its own Street Coordinator who will get to know members on their street or lane and understand how they would like to interact with the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. Street Coordinators will share crime prevention and other safety related information, for instance online scam awareness. They may keep in touch during a village emergency if the member wishes it.

We need Street Coordinators for Northampton Road north of the Manor, Church Road, Church Lane, North Lane and Milestone Lane. Please do consider volunteering if you live in or near these areas and/or the Lanes/Closes adjacent to them. Without Street Coordinators the Neighbourhood Watch cannot work!

Join the Neighbourhood Watch to feel safer in the community, share any safety or crime related issues, learn more about preventing crime, get tips on avoiding becoming a victim of scams, and to get information about some ways to find trustworthy tradespeople.

You can find further information on the Neighbourhood Watch tab of the Village site: westononthegreen-pc.gov.uk.

You can contact the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme at wotg.nhw@gmail.com.

The national Neighbourhood Watch website: ourwatch.org has much more information as well as safety tips. You can also register for our Neighbourhood Watch by entering your postcode on the site and choosing Weston on the Green as your scheme.

It's not a Watch Scheme without its members!



Weston-on-the-Green
Neighbourhood Watch

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An Alliance Between the Wood Fairy and the Poo Bag Fairy

Many dog owners in the village take advantage of the free poo bags which can be collected from a box situated on the fence on the footpath leading from the Village Hall to Westlands Avenue. These poo bags are very kindly provided by the Parish Council. The Poo Bag Fairy receives the delivery, bundles them up into rolls of 5 or 6 and places them in the box.

Recently the Wood Fairy has provided us with an extremely smart new box. This holds at least 15 rolls and I fill it twice a week. This equates to 180 poo bags per week, plus there are sometimes supplies in the Village Shop. Personally, unless there are a lot of dogs in the village with severe bowel problems, I feel this should be enough!! However, sometimes I fill the box and within an hour it's empty, so I am led to believe that there is an anonymous poo bag hoarder. My plea is to please take only what you need. Sometimes I cannot keep up with the amounts required.

Now we go on to what you do with them. Please collect your dog poo and place the full bags in the bins especially provided for this purpose. My daily walks are taken up with unhooking them from tree branches, picking them up when discarded at the side of paths,

picking them out of the waste bin by the church gate and transferring them to the correct bin!!!

I'm sure the majority of dog owners in this village do use these bags sensibly and dispose of them correctly, but a chosen few have decided to make my life a little more trying.

It has also come to my notice that not just dog owners are taking the poo bags for different uses i.e picking up their cat's mess in their own garden, picking up rubbish when they don't want to get their hands dirty and maybe for other things I don't think the readers of the Village Newsletter need to be subjected to ...

We are lucky that our Parish Council is prepared to support dog owners in this way. I hope you



will agree that we should use this service with respect and for what it is designed to provide.

The PBF



Weston on the Green Community Bus



Our generously donated Community Transport vehicle is an excellent service helping villagers get to their doctor and hospital appointments.

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Everyone is welcome to ...

Neighbours' Natter



Weston-on-the-Green Village Hall

Thursday 13th June and 11th July 10am - Noon

Join us for coffee or tea, a biscuit and a chat.



Colin Rosser

1940 - 2024

COLIN ROSSER grew up in Monmouth Road in Hinksey as the youngest of three children with his mum Edna and father Edwin. He attended St Matthews School until he was 8 and then went to South Oxford Junior School until the age of 11. He joined the Lifeboys, the Junior Reserve of the Boys Brigade and played football at South Oxford Junior School.

He then took a scholarship and although he had the chance to go to Magdalen College School, opted for Southfield School.

He became an apprentice for 5 years at Osberton Radiators, an Oxford institution, on the

Woodstock Road. He went on to become elected Chairman of the Apprentice Association and, three years into his apprenticeship, he made up his mind to go for the Nuffield Scholarship which paved the way to a Mechanical Engineering degree at Southampton University where he would captain the university's first XI football team for two years.

He began his business career working with his father in insurance out of a shop on the Botley Road. They then transitioned to estate agency with offices in Witney, Banbury, Abingdon and Swindon before a period of construction saw the family business building 60 houses a year at its peak. In 1972 Colin purchased a modest printing company in Kidlington owned by Roger Goodhead and Malcolm Dunmore. The printing company was struggling to keep its head above water and Colin knew his role was to fill the press 7 days a week, 24 hours a day. And fill it he did with anything he could print including the Mormon Bible.



Colin was at the forefront of the explosion in free newspapers which necessitated a move to Bicester and bigger presses. He was also a brilliant innovator. The advent of the three-day week in the Winter of Discontent of the 1970's didn't stand in his way as he purchased a generator which meant the presses never stopped and a huge amount of work was won from printers who hadn't matched his innovation. He also pioneered 're-reeling' where unfinished or damaged reel ends would be spliced together to create usable paper for print, thus reducing costs.

It was this innovation and savvy operating plus his impressive ability as a salesperson which helped him build a business with a turnover in excess of £70 million and clients including Auto Trader, Diners Club, Viz and The Mail on Sunday supplement which alone had a weekly print run of one million. Despite his own unquestionable ability, he always maintained that 'a Good CEO surrounds himself with people who are more able than him'.

The 1980's saw Colin float Goodhead, thus realising his dream of becoming Chairman of a Public Company. The company grew through acquisition including operations in Canada and Orlando, helping him to diversify the



business from print into publishing, paper and design. The old red, blue, green and yellow Goodhead logo was surprising similar to the Google logo of today!

This didn't stop him supporting others when taking two weeks out of a busy schedule to raise fortunes for the National Childrens Home as he walked from Plymouth to Sheffield – when he put his mind to it he could do anything!

As Chairman of The National Association of Free Newspapers he met Lady Thatcher and The Queen but the recession precipitated the collapse of free newspapers and the end of his time at Goodhead. Since then he has worked shoulder to shoulder with his son Richard in building the respected local business community, B4.

He never lost the sales bug and in addition to selling for B4 he was instrumental in reviving The Village News, both in terms of sales and design. He took immense pride in helping turn the magazine around and loved delivering copies to advertisers to get their feedback. He was delighted that the magazine became profit-making and hopefully the foundations he helped lay for the magazine will give it a long future.

Colin was widely respected in the local business community and was a Life Vice President of Oxford City and co-founder of one of Oxfordshire's largest boys

football clubs, Summertown Stars. He was also a solid golfer, playing and often winning many seniors competitions and was also a member over the years of North Oxford, Studley Wood and Frilford Heath. He was also a long-standing member of The Clarendon Club.

Colin is survived by his wife of 58 years, Sue, children Debbie and Richard and grandchildren Gabrielle, Edward, Eloise, Abi and Alfie, great-granddaughter Annabel and sister Marion.



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John Howell MP writes...

THE QUALITY of the water in our rivers has been an ongoing concern for some time. It is therefore welcome news that the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) has announced that Wallingford Beach is to be given designated bathing waters status. Although the site is just over the bridge in the Wantage and Didcot Constituency I know that it is something that will be welcomed by people in this constituency. The site will be subject to the requirements under the Bathing Water Regulations 2013 and will be included in the Environment Agency's bathing water monitoring programme from this month. The Regulations require public information about water quality and potential sources of pollution to be available at all bathing waters during the bathing season, with local authorities in the areas responsible for providing this information. The Environment Agency will prepare a bathing water profile for the site, which will be available on its Swimfo website. They will also assess what action is needed to improve water quality to meet the standards set by the Bathing Water Regulations. Alongside these reforms, the government remains committed to improving water quality through the Plan for Water, a comprehensive strategy which sets out the delivery plan to ensure clean and plentiful water for people, businesses and nature through more investment, tighter regulation and more effective enforcement.

The internet is something that we have come to rely on for our daily business, for education, and for information and for leisure. However, concerns to protect children have rightly been raised. In the middle of this month there was a debate in Westminster Hall on



the impact of smart phones and social media on children with a call to ban smartphones for under 16s. I know that there are strongly held views both for and against this. I very much acknowledge the dangers of social media for young people and endorse the Online Safety Act which introduced measures to protect young people. However, I do not agree with the proposal to ban young people from having smartphones. I believe that this is a decision for parents and not one for legislation. If we legislate about such things there will always be ways found to work around it. So rather than potentially criminalise people I think that, alongside the Online Harms Act, we should be looking to educate our young people on the risks and harms of social media. As the Minister said 'we live in a digital age and many parents want their children to have a smartphone, as they provide benefits to children and parents, not least allowing them to stay connected while travelling alone. Research by the charity 'Young Minds' has shown that young people want to be protected but do not want an outright ban. The charity say that the voice of the young people concerned has not been heard in the debate. As this was a Westminster Hall debate it was an

opportunity to formally raise the issue but there was no vote. I am sure that there is more work to do in this and that further discussion will be had on how best to make the online world a safer place.

There are many people in the constituency who live here on the basis of a visa. It is important to be aware that UK Visas and Immigration (UKVI) are rolling out a digital immigration system. This means physical documents are being replaced with online records of immigration status; eVisas. These eVisas will be much more secure as they cannot be lost, stolen or tampered with, unlike a physical document. Since 2018, millions of people have already received an eVisa, for example through the EU Settlement Scheme. However, anyone who does not already have an eVisa will be required to have set up an online record by the end of this year. Updating a physical record does not in any way affect the immigration status or the conditions of permission to enter or stay here. However, it is critical that people register for the online system. Anyone concerned will have been contacted by UKVI but too often people overlook official contacts to their peril. If any readers know of anyone who might need to act on this please do pass it on. This information is also important for employers and landlords who will be able to check the immigration status of applicants much more easily.

As always I am interested to know the issues that concern constituents. The best way to contact me is via email: john.howell.mp@parliament.uk.

You can find updates and replies to standard campaigns run by lobby organisations on my website: <https://www.johnhowell.org.uk>



From your local councillors

Launton & Otmoor District Update

A massive thank you for everyone who voted in the recent local elections. It has been a delight to speak to so many of you in the last couple of weeks, as well as represent you for the last two years.

We are delighted to say that Alisa Russell has been elected as your new District Councillor for Launton and Otmoor. She replaces Simon Holland, who decided not to stand again. We look forward to welcoming her

to the team and working closely with her to represent your views at the council. Alisa will be out and about in the coming months and hopes to meet as many residents as possible.

After the election results on the 2nd May, the final make up of Cherwell District Council now stands at:

- Liberal Democrats 17 councillors
- Labour 13 councillors
- Conservatives 11 councillors
- The Green Party 4 councillors
- Independents 3 councillors

For any party to get an overall

majority they would need 25 councillors and so currently no party has a majority. At time of writing, talks are ongoing between the parties about who will form the administration of Cherwell. This should be decided ahead of the full council meeting on the 22nd May and we will keep you updated as we know more.

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

All the best,
Gemma & Julian

John Dovey

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Dates for the Diary

1st June	9.00 am – 12.00 pm	Food Bank Collection, Weston Pantry
4th June	12.30 pm	Golden Leaves Lunch
5th June	7.30 pm	Parish Council meeting
10th June	1.30 pm	Weston Walkers; meet at the Village Hall
13th June	10.00 am – 12.00 pm	Neighbours' Natter
18th June	6.30 – 8.00 pm	Garden Club 'Open Garden' at Dairy Cottage, North Lane
2nd July	12.30 pm	Golden Leaves Lunch
3rd July	7.30 pm	Parish Council meeting
6th July	9.00 am – 12.00 pm	Food Bank Collection, Weston Pantry
8th July	1.30 pm	Weston Walkers; meet at the Village Hall
8th July	7.30 pm	Weston Society
11th July	10.00 am – 12.00 pm	Neighbours' Natter
3rd August	9.00 am - 12.00 pm	Food Bank Collection, Weston Pantry
7th August	7.30 pm	Parish Council meeting
31st August	2.30 – 4.00 pm	Autumn Garden Show



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



I was very saddened to hear of the death of Tony Henman. I, like everyone else who knew him, have lost a great friend, a mentor who never shied from having a listening ear and a helping hand - he managed to find an answer to everything. Always concerned about the village and its residents, I was often 'summoned' to Monk's Walk to answer his and Jane's questions and discuss concerns. At the first one of these meetings, Jane and Tony were sitting on a bench in the garden, I opposite them. I felt I was being interviewed as the barrage of questions didn't stop coming. Since then, we have always laughingly referred to these meetings as 'interviews'. It was only the week before his death I received a message from Jane saying 'I think we are due another interview'; sadly it was not to be. I shall miss him greatly and my deepest condolences to Jane and the family – I hope they have Crunchy Nut Cornflakes in Heaven.
Yasemin

FRIENDS' PRODUCE

As ever huge thanks go to Mick, Toddy and Corinne for keeping this initiative going. The amount raised in aid of St Mary's Church and the Village Hall since the last edition of the news is £59.84.

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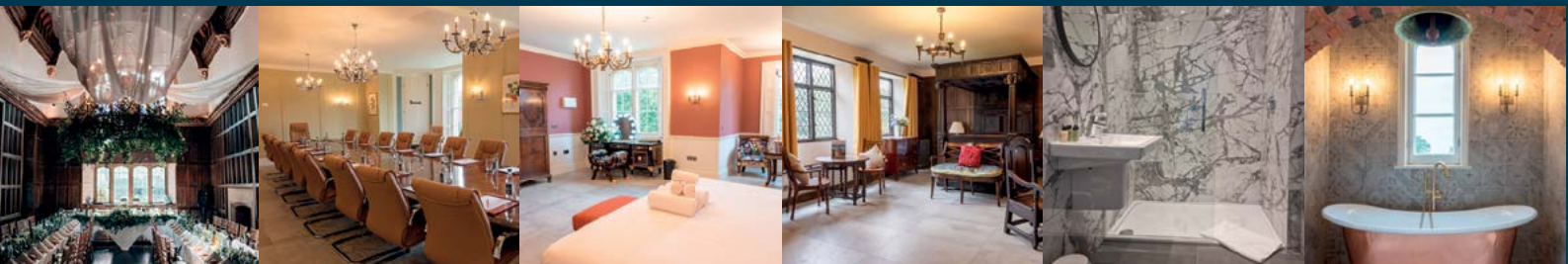


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