

PARISH MATTERS



DECEMBER 2018
JANUARY 2019

Monthly newsletter for
Ambrosden, Arcott, Blackthorn,
Merton & Piddington

VILLAGE VIEWS & LOCAL NEWS



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Welcome to the November edition of Parish Matters.

If you have any questions about advertising, or if you wish to place an advert, please contact Russell Thompson on 01869 246093, or via e-mail, rthom91543@aol.com

Parish Matters Committee

LETTER FROM THE CLERGY TEAM

When is it all right to use the dreaded ‘C’ word? How often does it crop up in conversation even as early as the summer holidays? You know, when the family get together and discussions happen about where it is happening this year, who is going to whom, which side of the family will meet before or after or on the big day.

And then there’s the decision of when to stop the presents or how to ensure people get what they want without all the risk of duplication or the extra cost of postage etc, etc. And we haven’t even begun to try and avoid all those hassles of different family traditions; even more complicated when overseas branches of the family are involved.

But, leaving aside all the diary and domestic arranging which have to take place in advance, when is it all right to use the ‘C’ word? When can the adverts start? When is it all right for the shops to have their special displays? When can crackers be placed by the tills or gold coins put in their first appearance or carols be played on the radio or in supermarkets? When can charities begin their Christmas campaigns?

Many would like to see a moratorium until December although that isn’t always possible and would have a significant effect on the commercial aspect of the season. The Church, of course, always begins Advent 4 weeks before Christmas – Advent being the season when we remember the preparations for the first coming of Christ 2000 years ago and His second coming, whenever that will be.

And we might be surprised at just how much preparation was put into that first Christmas with angels announcing it and prophets promising

the coming of the Messiah for centuries beforehand. If we think 2 months is too long a period to advertise Christmas, the prophets were proclaiming Christ’s birth for hundreds of years and preparations were being put in place for generations as we see the line of Jesus being preserved through King David and beyond.

Perhaps if we restricted the amount of time we spend on the physical aspects of Christmas but allowed ourselves a bit longer to dwell on the wonder of the spiritual aspects – perhaps then we would be more appreciative of what it is really all about. And perhaps our anticipation and excitement would increase too.

If we spent more time asking ‘why?’ – why gold, frankincense and myrrh, why Bethlehem, why the virgin Mary, why the shepherds, why the angels and why Jesus? – then we might look forward to Christmas more each year.

We look forward to sharing a part of your Christmas this year – please choose which ever service works for you across the benefice. We are repeating a Quiet Christmas service which is designed especially to be slightly more reflective for those who have lost a loved one over the last 12 months. This year we are exploring the theme of ‘follow the star’ which has recommended, short daily readings for the 12 days of Christmas with an opportunity for us join together again on January 6th (Epiphany).

Whatever your family traditions, whatever your family arrangements, whatever the length of time the ‘C’ word has been on your lips, may you have a truly blessed time with a joyous celebration of the birth of our Saviour,
Steve

CHURCH SERVICES NOV.

Church	Time	Leader	Service
Sunday December 2nd			
Advent 1			
Ambrosden	16.00	Steve	Christingle
Merton	09.00	Lisa	Holy Communion
Piddington	10.30	Steve	St. Nicholas' Patronal Festival Family Service
Islip	10.30	Lucy	Parish Communion
Noke	17.00	Lucy	Evening Service
Charlton	10.30	Lisa	Family Service
Thursday December 6th			
Islip	14.00	Lucy	School Christingle
Sunday December 9th			
Advent 2			
Ambrosden	10.30	Steve	Holy Communion
Piddington	09.00	Steve	Holy Communion
Islip	10.30	Lisa	Parish Communion
Woodeaton	09.15	Glenys	Family Service
Charlton	09.00	Lucy	Holy Communion
	17.00	Lisa	Christingle
Oddington	10.30	Lucy	Holy Communion
Saturday December 15th			
Oddington	15.00	Glenys/Lisa	Crib Service
Sunday December 16th			
Advent 3			
Ambrosden	18.00	Steve	Carol Service
Merton	16.00	Steve	Christingle
Piddington	18.00	Rosie	Carol Service
Islip	10.30	Lisa	Parish Communion
	18.00	Lucy	Carol Service
Woodeaton	09.15	Lucy	Holy Communion
Charlton	18.00	Lisa	Carol Service
Monday December 17th			
Charlton	14.00	Steve/Lisa	School Carol Service
Tuesday December 18th			
Ambrosden	10.00	Steve	School Carol Service
Wednesday December 19th			
Charlton	18.30	Steve/Lisa	School Carol Service
Islip	14.00	Lucy	School Christmas Service
Thursday December 20th			
Oddington	16.00	Lisa	A Quiet Christmas Service
Sunday December 23rd			
Advent 4			
Ambrosden	10.30	Steve	Holy Communion
Islip	10.30	Lisa	Family Service
Monday December 24th			
Christmas Eve			
Ambrosden	16.00	Steve	Crib Service
	23.30	Steve	Midnight Communion
Merton	18.00	Steve	Carol Service
Piddington	22.00	Steve	Christmas Eve Communion
Islip	16.00	Lucy	Nativity Service
	23.30	Lucy	Midnight communion
Noke	18.00	Lucy	Carol service
Charlton	16.00	Lisa	Nativity
Oddington	23.30	Lisa	Candlelit Midnight Communion
Tuesday 25th December			
Christmas Day			
Ambrosden	10.30	Steve	Family service
Merton	09.00	Steve	Holy Communion
Islip	10.30	Lucy	Family Communion
Woodeaton	09.15	Brian	Holy Communion – Brian Mountford
Charlton	10.00	Lisa	Family Communion
Sunday 30th December			
Christmas 1			
Oddington	10.30	All	United Benefice Service

CLERGY CONTACTS

CLERGY

Church of England contacts:

Rev Steve Hayes (Rector Ray Valley Benefice)	01869 247813
Rev Lisa Holmes (Ambrosden, Merton and Piddington)	01865 331279
Rev Lucy Thirtle (Islip, Noke and Woodeaton)	01865 379470
Mrs Glenys Edwards (based in Oddington)	01865 331233
Lynne Lewis Benefice Administrator	01865 331225

Methodist: Rev Steve Mann (Bicester Methodist Church) 01869 323030

Methodist services: Please consult the website: www.bicestermethodist.org.uk

Roman Catholic: Fr John Batthula jbatthula@googlemail.com 01869 253277

Catholic services: Please consult the website: www.immaculate-conception.org.uk

CHURCHWARDENS

Ambrosden: Matt Holmes, Holly Tree Cottage, Merton Road	01869 240435
Angela Jones, 16, West Hawthorn Road, Ambrosden	01869 323960
Piddington: Margaret Hutchings, Kings Cottage, Lower End, Piddington	01844 238724
Merton: Lawrence Comiskey, 2 Church Close, Merton	01865 331429
Robert Kerr, Merton Croft, West End Lane, Merton	01865 331870

ORGANISTS & BELLS

Ambrosden: Mrs Pam Newell (bells only)	01869 241667
Organist (vacant)	
Piddington: Mrs Betty Newell	01844 237236
Mr Tony Pearce	01844 237688
Merton: Mr Russell Thompson	01869 246093
<i>(no ringable bells)</i>	



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AMBROSDEN NEWS

Ambrosden Parish Council meetings held in the Village Hall on the 3rd Thursday of each month. At 7.30

Parish website

www.ambrosden.info/parishcouncil

Ambrosden Parish Councillors:

Mark Longworth (Chair) – ambrosden@mlongworth.co.uk

mlongworth.co.uk

Maureen Cossens (Vice Chair) –

01869 252722

Chris West

Philip Blazdell

Serinne Mills Curtis

Sue Posselwhite

Wendy Cheeseman

Parish Clerk

Lynne Bustin

11 Otmoor View, Merton, Oxon

Ambrosden.parishclerk@gmail.com

District Councillors

Three District Councillors represent the ward of Ambrosden and Bicester South.

David Anderson (Conservative)

david.anderson@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Lucinda Wing (Conservative)

lucinda.wing@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Dan Sames (Conservative)

da.sames@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

County Councillor

Dan Sames (Conservative)

dan.sames@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Facebook Community message boards

Ambrosden Community

Ambrosden and Caversfield Forces Wives

St. Mary's Church

www.ambrosdenchurch.org.uk/

Five Acres School

www.fiveacres.org.uk/

Children's Centre

www.oxonchildrenscentre.org

Ambrosden Village Pre School

8.20-11.20 Monday - Friday term time only

Jackie Floyd - 07759755179

ambrosdenvillagepreschool@hotmail.co.uk

Tiddlywinks Playgroup

8.30-11.30, 11:50-14:50.

Debra Cherry 01869256555

tiddlywinks_playgroup@msn.com

Ambrosden Doctors Surgery

01869 256336

Parish and Village Hall Notice Boards

Costcutter and Merton Road (outside village hall). Community Notice Board

Public board – Ploughley Road bus shelter

Garrison Gym and Swimming Pool

Contact Garrison centre for latest updates on opening times and availability

Development Worker
Lynn Waite - 01869 256135

Recycling
Bottle banks, behind Spar

CHILDRENS POSTER COMPETITION, BAG IT AND BIN IT

In conjunction with Five Acres School, the Parish Council the Parish Council have launched an A4 poster competition for all school children under the age of 12 who live in the village or go to Five Acres School, to create the best poster combatting dog waste around the village. The posters will be placed around the village, and the winners will also be able to name the dog waste bins.

Winner and runners up will be rewarded with book tokens.

Rules:

1. There is no limit on the number of entries, pick your best design(s)
2. You must be aged 12 or under
3. You must either live in the parish of Ambrosden OR attend Five Acres School. If you attend a different school but live in the Parish then you qualify!
4. You can use paint, crayons, colouring pencils, felt tips and glitter!
5. You must return your design to either Five Acres School office by Friday 7th December or the Parish Council via: Parish Clerk, 11 Otmoor View, Merton, OX25 2NL
6. The posters will be judged by the Parish Council

Prizes

Two categories:

Category 1 – Ages 8-12, Winner £30 book token for first prize and £30 book for their school. Second prize £20 book token and a £20 book token for their school.

Category 2 – Ages 7 and under. Winner £30

book token for first prize and £30 book for their

school. Second prize £20 book token and a £20 book token for their school. The winners will get to name a dog poo bin in the village.

We will also like to contact the local paper with an article about the winning poster – have your best smile ready. If we have your parents'/carers permission for you to potentially appear in a newspaper please tick this box.

Entry Details

Name or Initials:

Age:

School Attended:

School Year:

Ambrosden.pariahclerk@gmail.com

Remember, there is up to a fine of £1000 if you are caught dog fouling.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

We would like to thank everyone who attended the tree planting of a semi mature oak tree outside Five Acres School on remembrance Sunday.

Pupils from Five Acres School planted the tree, after a Blessing, with the assistance of the DEMS Training Regiment, and members of the Parish.



AMBROSDEN CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL 2018

The Parish Council are sponsoring a tree at the Christmas Tree Festival, in St Mary's Church, which will run from Friday November 30th – Sunday December 2nd.

The festival is not a competition, there are no prizes, it's simply a great opportunity to show case your organisation/business in an imaginative and festive way and to be part of a unique mixture of heritage, community expression, and fun.

During the festival, the community will be invited to come and feast their eyes on the wonderful displays; at times they will be able to enjoy live music and other activities. There will also be the opportunity to purchase Christmas goodies or maybe even sit and treat themselves to a lovely home baked and freshly brewed coffee (or tea or hot chocolate....)

Please e-mail any queries to:
ambrosdenchristmastreefestival@rayvalley.com

ALLOTMENTS

Due to the failure of Bloor to fulfil their obligations, Cherwell District Council's planning enforcement and legal teams have become involved again, and we now have some movement.

We are advised that, a joint site visit has been carried out. Bloor Homes have advised that they have appointed a landscaping contractor to attend the site to clear the allotments and to treat the bindweed that has been discovered. Once this process has been agreed by Cherwell District

Council's Landscape Planning Officer the District Council we will agree with Bloor Homes a schedule of works, including the start

date and will advise. We understand that site clearance will once we have it.

Once the site has been cleared, it will need a further treatment to ensure that it is ready for growing. It will then need to be checked by the Parish Council before handover is agreed.

The Parish Council will be attending a number of inspection meetings over forthcoming weeks.

FLYTIPPING AND POTHOLES

Broken Street Lights, Pot Holes and Fly tipping and overgrowing hedges obstructing footways, along with many other highways issues can be reported direct to the County and District Councils, via
<http://fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk/>

GLADMAN – PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT OF 85 HOUSES IN MERTON ROAD

Residents have requested that villagers do not respond developers questionnaire, as this will give the developer the opportunity to rebut any claims that this development has no impact on the setting of the village.

FIVE ACRES SCHOOL

The proposal to replace the portacabins with two new permanent class rooms, has now received planning permission. This will cause a small amount of disruption while being built, but will significantly improve

the quality of the school buildings, but will not increase the capacity of the school.

HIGHWAYS

The Parish Council undertook a 2 hour highways inspection with the County Council Highways Team, in relation to the proposals to replace the railings on the north side of Ploughley Road, the state of Merton Road,

your village, your news ... your village, your news ...

grit bins for Ambrosden Court and Springfields, speed surveys and to install a piece of missing footpath on Merton Road by the bus stop.

We will be moving forwards with these over the next few months, the first thing that will happen is edging out of the cycleway between Ploughley Road and Rodney House Roundabout, which is likely to be undertaken in December. Road patching is expected to be undertaken by April, Microasphalting of Merton Road has been suggested, this will involve one day road closures.

The Parish Council has now received verbal permission to install vehicle activated speed signs, and we are now reviewing potential locations and appropriate products.

Ambrosden Diary

All events in Village Hall unless stated. It is likely that the village hall will need to be closed for a short period of time, so that the floor can be repaired. Please contact the organisers of each event to confirm the location.

Turners Arms Public House- Ambrosden

Bicester Lions – 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month at 8pm - Turners Arms- Merton Road

Contact Facebook – Bicester Lions

Open from 7pm onwards on weekdays additionally a on Saturday it is also open

lunchtime 12-3 and then from 7pm. On Sunday it is open from 12-4.30 and then from 7pm.

Monday

Ambrosden4Children STAY AND PLAY (Term time)

0930-1100 £2.50 entry (additional £1 for siblings) Refreshments included

Email: Ambrosden4Children@gmail.com

Aqua Splash Swimming lessons for Primary/secondary School Age at Ambrosden's Garrison Pool. Contact Georgina Newell 07544 360500

Boxing for fitness class

6.45pm (45mins)

Contact Simon Charles via Facebook

Girl Guides 6pm till 8 pm

The Silibaravi Centre, Ambrosden

<https://www.girlguiding.org.uk/get-involved/>

Ambrosden Gaming club first three Mondays of the month every month Selection of table top wargames such as bolt action and warhammer. Minimum age 18

Contact 07887 761154

<https://www.facebook.com/Ambrosden-Gaming-Club-539843919418164/>

Kebab Van – Costcutter car park -evening

Tuesday

Taekwondo

Juniors age 7 years and over 6:30pm - 7:30pm.
Contact Adrian - (07979) 524923 - <http://www.buckstkdacademy.co.uk/>

Aqua Splash Swimming lessons at
Ambrosden's Garrison Pool.

Yoga 6.30-7.30pm
Contact jadewells@live.co.uk to book.

Kebab Van – Costcutter car park -evening

Wednesday
Bingo
Doors open 7.15 – Eyes down 8pm. - Contact:
- 01869 244785

Bicester Bereavement Support Group - 1st and
3rd Tuesday 10am – 11.30am
Residents Lounge, Hanover Gardens,
Manorsfield Road, OX26 6DG

Youth club – 12-17yrs - 7-9pm
Contact read Lynn Waite on 01869 256135

1st Ambrosden and Arncott Scouts
Cubs - 5:30-6:45.
Arncott Village Hall

Bicester Military Wives Choir - 7.30pm –
9.00pm
Silibaravi Families Centre, Ambrosden
Karen Rea
Bicester@militarywiveschoirs.org

Kebab Van – Costcutter car park -evening

Thursday
Thrift Shop – behind doctors
10.30-3.30

Ambrosden4Children STAY AND PLAY (Term
time)

St Mary's Church, Church Walk, OX25 2UJ
0930-1100 £2.50 entry (additional £1 for
siblings) Refreshments included

Parish Council
Every Third Thursday – 7.30pm

Kebab Van – Costcutter car park -evening

Friday
Rainbows – (age 5-7) – 5-6 pm
[http://www.oxfordshiregirlguiding.org.uk/
index.php/rainbows](http://www.oxfordshiregirlguiding.org.uk/index.php/rainbows)
Brownies Ages 7-10yrs from , 6.30-8pm
www.girlguiding.org.uk/interested

Kebab Van – Costcutter car park -evening
1st Ambrosden and Arncott Scouts
Scouts - 7-9pm
Arncott Village Hall

Saturday

Kebab Van – Costcutter car park -evening

For any errors or omissions please contact
Mark Longworth - [ambrosden@mlongworth.
co.uk](mailto:ambrosden@mlongworth.co.uk)

VILLAGE HALL BOOKINGS
ANDY & LISA CAMPBELL - [ANDYAMP-
AIR@TESCO.NET](mailto:ANDYAMP-AIR@TESCO.NET) - 01869 321318

ARNCOTT NEWS

REPORT FROM ARNCOTT VHMC & ACA
MEETING 30th OCTOBER & PARISH
COUNCIL MEETING 6th NOVEMBER
2018

Arcott Parish Council meetings usually take place in the village hall at 7:30pm on the 1st Tuesday of every month. All parishioners are welcome to attend. If you have any issues that you would like to raise, then please come to the meeting, contact a Parish Councillor or send an email to the parish clerk or the Parish Council email address.

Your current Arcott Parish Councillors are ;
Paul Wilson (Chairman) 01869 245514
Lee Savidge (Vice Chairman) 01869 246565
Martin Byrne 01869 246532
Ade Doore 07850 979455
Di Selby 01869 243527
Andy Poppitt 07921 436489
Peter Barnard 01869 570569

Parish Clerk: Anne Davies 01865 379645 -
clerkatarncott@gmail.com
Parish Council Website: <http://www.parish-council.com/arncott>
Parish Council Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/arncottpc/>
Fix My Street: <http://www.fixmystreet.com>
Parish email: arncottpc@gmail.com
Parish Matters Magazine: marionmoore20@btinternet.com

Your contacts for the Village Hall
Management Committee are:

John Cooper (Chairman) – 01869 323349 –
johncooper47@btinternet.com
Christine Dunkin (Village Hall hire) - 01869
249560 – avhlettings@gmail.com

OCC decision to cancel school bus service
County Councillor Dan Sames reported that all of the walking route from Upper Arcott to Ambrosden school would be re-assessed during the week commencing 12th November 2018. If OCC conclude that the walking route is safe, Cllr Sames will suggest that consideration is given to the primary school children being dropped off at school when the school bus stops in Ambrosden to collect children attending senior schools in Bicester. The Parish Council has submitted a report to OCC giving reasons for its strong objection to the planned cancellation and stressed that it had particular concerns about the speed and amount of traffic travelling through the village at the times when parents and children would need to walk to and from school. The Parish Council also expressed its concern about the quality of the pavements and also the safety of the route in inclement weather. The Parish Council believe that, if OCC proceed with its plan, a traffic-light controlled crossing should be installed at the entrance / exit point to the village at Lower Arcott and road centre islands should be constructed at the road crossing points along the walking route.

Dog Poo

As always requested, if you see anyone not picking up after his / her dog then PLEASE

take photos / videos of him / her and email it to the Parish Council and / or the CDC dog warden - Christopher Cundy – telephone number 01295 221633 – email Christopher.Cundy@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk. Pictures and / or video will support a prosecution attempt.

Woodpiece Road parking

On November 6th, CDC advised the Parish Council that work is still ongoing with regard to obtaining quotations for the phase one construction and for meeting the necessary requirements to satisfy the planning conditions. Construction is planned for sometime during 2019 / 20120 but, at this time, CDC cannot advise when.

Defibrillator Units

Two public defibrillator units are within the village. One unit is fitted to the village hall outer wall facing Murcott Road – ID number AR84. The other unit is fitted at The Tally Ho Hotel and is located on the building end wall in line with the hotel car park entrance – ID number AR82. To gain access to either unit dial 999 and speak with the ambulance service. The call desk operator will decide if the use of a defibrillator is necessary. If asked for then tell the call desk operator the ID number on the cabinet door. You will then be given the code number to open that door.

Grant money for sports facilities

Unfortunately the Parish Council has still not received a reply from CDC. Yet again, the parish clerk will contact CDC and push for a response to the questions that were asked.

Village Hall public address system

This is a joint project between the Parish Council and the VHMC. A quotation for a suitable system has now been accepted from DAT (Deaf Awareness Technology). The full system will include a loop amplifier

arrangement for the benefit of people with hearing difficulties. Arrangements will be made to get the system installed into the village hall.

Speeding

It's been reported yet again that some vehicles leaving / entering the village at Upper and Lower Arcott are speeding as they approach / go through the road build outs. The Parish Council has asked the parish clerk to contact OCC highways dept. and arrange for another traffic survey to be carried out. For this survey the recording devices will be located next to the road build outs at each end of the village. The Parish Council is also investigating the available options for getting vehicle activated signs installed. As previously requested, we need volunteers to get involved with a speedwatch program and help to compile data regarding traffic movements and speeds within the village. The info collected can be passed onto the police. If you can help then contact the parish clerk or any Parish Councillor. Due to GDPR regulations, the Parish Council will need your permission in writing for your contact details to be kept on record.

Moto Parc

The Moto Parc events calendar can be found in the library section on the Parish Council website and on the Moto Parc's Facebook page. Occasionally, scheduled events get cancelled and re-arranged for another day. If you have any questions / concerns regarding the Moto Parc then please contact CDC and / or the operators of the Motor Parc – telephone 07377 988580.

Community Play Bus scheme

The play bus visits our village on Tuesdays between 1:00pm and 2:30pm and parks next to the village hall. Free play and support

sessions / stay & play are available for children aged up to 5 years old along with parents and carers.

Community emergency response

If you can help with this initiative then please let us know by emailing the parish clerk or the parish email address. Again, due to GDPR regulations, the Parish Council will need your permission in writing for your contact details to be kept on record.

Village Hall parking

The Parish Council is investigating the possibilities of installing heavy duty grass reinforcement mesh to provide additional parking facilities.

Illegal drug use

If you are aware of or see this happening anywhere in the village then please report it. You can phone the police, make the report anonymously by telephoning Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 or fill out an anonymous form online.

Litter louts

If you witness people leaving bottles / cans / litter in public spaces then please report it to CDC. Again, video / photographic evidence is useful. If the problem persists, CDC can assign an enforcement officer to get involved.

Anti-social behaviour

The Parish Council has no legal power(s) to deal with this. We can only reiterate previous advice – whenever possible, get witness statements, take photographs and / or record video of the behaviour and report it to the police.

Trees and hedges

A survey of all the trees and hedges in the village that the Parish Council is responsible

for was carried out on October 10th. A quote for this work has been received and accepted. The Parish Council is now waiting to be advised by the contractor as to what the dates will be for all of the work to be done but it is expected that this will be in the early part of 2019.

Roads and streetlights

Please report any road / pavement / street light issues on www.fixmystreet.com. This is how we report them and it is very easy to do.

Remembrance Sunday

It's pleasing to report that this service was very well attended. Many thanks to those parishioners who turned up and also to the Revs Steve Hayes and Steve Mann for conducting the service, our buglers Steve and Karen Raffell, Brian Leach and his colleagues from the Royal British Legion and WO1 Russ Chapman and his colleagues who represented our armed forces.

Village Hall / VHMC/ACA

VHMC meetings take place on the last Tuesday in each month except for December when no meeting will be held.

Hall Administration

Email addresses for the officers and committee are being moved over to an umbrella gmail address, arncottvhmc@gmail.com, to help improve the security of those currently using their personal email addresses for village hall business.

Future Events

The children's Christmas party will be held on Sunday 9th December.

The Family Christmas Carol service will take place on Tuesday 11th December at 7.00pm

your village, your news ... your village, your news ...

in the village hall. The Army Cadets band will play for us.

The senior citizen's Christmas lunch will be on 5th January 2019 in the village hall.

Valentines event on 16th February 2019 – details to follow

Projects and Improvements

Installation of a sound system – as mentioned above it has been agreed to proceed with a system provided by DAT.

Funding options are to be explored, and we hope to have the system installed fairly early in the New Year.

Internet Access

Possible ways of getting internet access into the hall are being looked into.

Ska Martial Arts Tang Soo Doo.

New martial arts and fitness class at Arccott Village Hall every Monday from 6.45 till 7.45. All welcome from 5 years - 65 years. First lesson is free. Please contact Sean on 07740684164 or turn up on the night.

Dance Fitness

Every Wednesday at 7.15 at Arccott Village Hall. £2.00 per person. Come along and enjoy a good evening.

Craft Club Every Thursday

Everyone welcome from 6.30 p.m. onwards in the Greenfields Common Room

Scout group

The Scouts meet on Fridays, 7.00 to 9.00 pm, and the Cubs meet on Wednesdays, 5.15 to 6.45 pm, both in term times only.

Arccott Friendship Club

The friendship club has been going now for

about 25 years and at one time there was about 40 members, but due to the sad loss of members and some moving away our numbers have dwindled. We meet in the Greenfields common room on the second Wednesday of each month at 1.45pm till 3.45pm. Our activities include plenty of tea/ coffee drinking, along with cakes, sandwiches and a good old chat. We do a quiz, bingo and of course a raffle. Why not come along and meet up with old friends and make new ones. For more information ring Christine on 01869 249560.

300 Club Winners

250..... Mr P Mundy

36..... Mrs M Stillgo

141..... Mrs S Cameron

180..... Mr T Webber

183..... Mr R Taylor

If anyone is interested and would like to start or rejoin the 300 Club, please contact Wendy Wilkins by email at Arccott300club@gmail.com.

Material required for the parish magazine please.

Please email it to marionmoore20@btinternet.com by 13th of the month



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BLACKTHORN NEWS

BLACKTHORN VILLAGE HALL

November / December Events:

- Sat 24th – Movie Night – Mamma Mia 2
- Fri 30th Nov – Pub Night
- Sun 2nd Dec – Christmas Carols
- Thu 6th Dec – Coffee Morning with mince pies
- Fri 21st – Pub Night

Spring 2019 Events:

- Spring Quiz – Sat 23rd Feb
- St Patrick's and Karaoke Night – Sat 16th Mar
- Easter Sun 21st Apr

Coffee mornings 1st Thu in every month:

- o Thu 3rd Jan
- o Thu 7th Feb
- o Thu 7th Mar
- o Thu 4th Apr

Pub Nights last Friday in the month

- o Fri 25th Jan
- o Fri 22nd Feb
- o Fri 29th Mar
- o Fri 26th Apr

If you would like to receive email updates and reminders of events being held in the village, please send an email to blackthornvillagehall@gmail.com

Look out for the flyers and reminders on Blackthorn village Facebook page.

If you have any news or other items you would like included please email John Henderson at j_henderson@btinternet.com by the 10th of each month.



Bicester Athletic Club

Bicester Athletic Club was founded in 1982 and we are always looking for new members. We take children aged 8 and above. We offer track and field, sportshall athletics, circuit training and cross country. If you are interested please take a look at our website www.bicesterac.co.uk and/ or visit our facebook page, Bicester Athletic Club.



The Bulletin Board

Ray Valley Benefice

For December 2018

- | | |
|-----------------------|---|
| Sat 1st | - 2-4pm 3 Parishes Fair, Islip
-12-6pm Christmas Tree Festival, Ambrosden |
| Sun 2nd | - 1-3 Christmas Tree Festival, Ambrosden
-4pm Christingle, Ambrosden |
| Mon 3 rd | -7-9pm Wreath Making, Merton |
| Wed 5th | - 10.0am Holy Communion, Ambrosden |
| Fri 7th | - 10.30 Tiny Tots, Fencott |
| Sat 8 th | - 2pm Christmas Bazaar, Charlton
-7pm Winter Gathering, Oddington |
| Sun 9th | - 5pm Christingle Service, Charlton |
| Sat 15th | -3pm Crib Service, Oddington |
| Sun 16 th | - 6pm Carol Service, Ambrosden
-6pm Carol service, Charlton
- 6pm Carol Service, Islip
- 4pm Christingle Service, Merton
- 6pm Carol Service, Piddington |
| Wed 19 th | - 10am Holy Communion, Charlton |
| Thu 20 th | - 4pm A Quiet Christmas Service, Oddington |
| Fri 21 st | - 9.30 ABC for pre-schoolers, Islip |
| Sun 23 rd | - 6pm Carol Service, Woodeaton |
| Mon 24 th | - 4pm Crib Service, Ambrosden
- 4pm Nativity, Charlton
- 4pm Nativity Service, Islip
- 6pm carol Service, Merton
- 6pm Carol service, Noke
- 10pm Christmas Eve Communion, Piddington
- 11.30pm Midnight Communion, Oddington
- 11.30pm Midnight Communion, Islip
- 11.30pm Midnight Communion, Ambrosden |
| Tues 25 th | - 10.30am Family Service, Ambrosden
- 10am Family Communion, Charlton
- 10.30 Family Communion, Islip
- 9am Holy Communion, Merton
- 9.15am Holy Communion, Woodeaton |

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MERTON NEWS

Merton Parish Council

If you wish to contact a councillor, please use the following information:

Tony Bradley (Chair): ajrbradley@hotmail.com.

Jo Copping: jcoppingmerton@gmail.com

David Richardson: cllr david@penguinmail.co.uk

Lucy Katz: cllr lucy katz merton pc@gmail.com

Steve Kelly: stevenkelly.mertonpc@gmail.com

Parish Council Clerk - Mrs Charlesworth:
clerkmertonpc@gmail.com

The Parish Council meetings schedule has now been changed to once every two months – next one is on Monday 19th November 2018 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Merton meets the Oxford Cavaliers
Meeting at the Village Hall 29th October

The Parish Council held a meeting for the whole village at Village Hall to discuss sharing our Hall and Field with the Oxford Cavaliers' Rugby League club.

The meeting was very well attended by around 35 villagers. By the end of the meeting, the majority of the attendees felt that the proposal would be positive for the village, and it should be explored further by the Parish Council. Titch Leaver, our longest-serving villager, reminded everyone that Merton has traditionally been a sporting village, with its own team, and that it would be a great thing to see that custom return.

Just fact-gathering at this stage.

Chairing the meeting, Councillor Steve Kelly made it clear that no decisions had yet been made, and that none would be made without Merton Village being in favour of the proposal.

The purpose of the meeting was for all of us to meet the management team from the Oxford Cavaliers, and ask them questions about how they would use our facilities. It was a fact-finding opportunity, and a chance for everyone to air worries about the impact on the village.

The Proposal

The Cavaliers gave an informative and interesting presentation. They want to use our pitches and our Hall as their new home – as the base for all their activities.

They have great plans for their club which they can't take further unless they can find a good home. Rugby League tends to be a sport based in Northern England, but it's growing down here, too, and the Cavaliers are at the forefront of setting up a Southern League championship.

They have an existing Youth Team whose members tend to hail from Western Oxfordshire. By bringing the club over in the direction of Bicester, the longer-term goal would be to attract Youth players (both boys and girls, primary and secondary) into the Cavaliers. This could be a fantastic opportunity for our sports-minded younger citizens..

While their senior team will use the pitch(es), it's their Youth Team who will principally benefit – not just by holding matches, but for running their training sessions. The Cavaliers made it

clear that they would only need the facilities during the season which runs from May to September and that match dates would be fixed well in advance.

They also made clear that our children would not lose access to the Play Park, even on match days.

Income

The Cavaliers will obviously pay us for the use of the Hall and pitches. We haven't even begun to negotiate fees yet – we didn't want to go down that route until we had outline approval from the Village.

Obviously there will be costs (heat, light, water, power etc) including the pesky grass cutting. We'll have to sort out administration time, costs and responsibilities. We'll also need some professional help including legal and accounting services. Finally, we'll need to make a profit on the deal or there's no point doing it!

Potential problems

Parking

The main objection that people aired were the issues with parking that holding matches might bring in their wake. Long-term Merton residents, while being in favour of re-invigorating the Hall and Field, nonetheless have had significant problems with congestion and even access to their houses in the past. A couple of solutions to this issue were aired

- 1) Creating a new parking area at the far end of the Village Hall by installing permeable reinforcement grids
- 2) The Club taking responsibility for enforcing the parking restrictions with their members, and potentially providing parking stewards for match days
- 3) Looking into painting yellow box junction at the pinch points within the lane to the Hall.

Alcohol and Licensing

Obviously this is not for the Youth Teams! However, a bevy after a match for the Senior Teams and for spectators is usually a part of the

social life of a sports club. This will need to be carefully explored for feasibility, and also for the potential impact on the Village. The Cavaliers made it clear that the absence of a pub licence would not be a deal breaker, but we have to give this due consideration because of the potential effect on the Village.

Why are the Council keen to pursue this opportunity?

Unhealthy Parish Finances

Steve Kelly made clear the poor state of the Parish finances. The money the Parish Council receives from Cherwell simply isn't enough to cover our costs. We've cut all the costs we can, but the main outlay is the year-round grass cutting.

We've negotiated a good price from a sympathetic local service, but the bottom line is we're spending money we don't have to cut grass on a field that relatively few people use.

We're not broke – or not quite yet. We still have a reserve fund, but we're eating further into it every year and will be in deficit within the next 2 years. Charging £10 per annum for allotments, and a low price for Hall hire is never going to cover our costs. We have to find some alternative sources of finance.

Fixing up the Hall

What's more, the Hall itself isn't in great physical condition, and doesn't have the capacity to act as a hub for village life. We can't hope to make any substantial improvements unless we can attract more finances. There are grants available, but these all tend to require match-funding – that is, they will only contribute an amount equivalent to what we've raised. With such a tiny village, it's hard to see how we can raise meaningful amounts of money.

Other Otmoor villages nonetheless have great Village Halls, which act as a social centre for the Village. It would be great for Merton to have a lovely asset at our heart.

your village, your news ... your village, your news ...

So, that was the proposal that was discussed at the meeting

The meeting was strongly in favour. However, there are probably some Villagers who couldn't get to the meeting who still have reservations – if that includes you, please do contact Lucy Katz on cllrucykatzmertonpc@gmail.com or on 07970-803753.

Macmillan Coffee Morning

Merton met up, drank coffee and ate cake – and all for Charity.

Merton's Macmillan Coffee Morning was a great success, raising the really great sum of £716.65.

Merton's bakers had been hard at work in their kitchens producing a wide range of cakes and biscuits, making sure that the supply didn't run dry until the very end. Barely a crumb was left over – testament to the fact that everything was so delicious. Many thanks to you all for the creaming, whisking, sieving, kneading, rolling, oven watching – and washing up!

It was very well attended, with plenty of Mertonites, and also visitors from our fellow Otmoor villages including Ambrosden, Charlton on Otmoor and Islip. The weather outside was really miserable, but, inside, the Village Hall had on its party face. The organisers had worked really hard to make it over into a welcoming retro tea-shop, with pretty tablecloths and flowers. All the preparations paid off – the event had a real buzz and a real charm to it.

The raffle was also successful, thanks to the

generous gifts donated by people in the village – and also by local businesses who gave both gifts and vouchers. Many thanks to all the donors for your kindness – charity events can only succeed with widespread support.

Everyone dug deep to help raise such a large sum of money (for a very small village). It's such an important cause, and your generosity will help people with cancer lead the best lives that they can.

Thank you to all who helped. In particular, thanks go to the organizers who made it all possible, in particular to Meenu, Noreen, Jo, Rachel, Kirsty and Zarina.

Inspired by the success of the Coffee Morning, visitors used the opportunity to come up with some other ideas for social events for the village. Suggestions included

- Teddy Bears' Picnic and the Woodland
- Big Breakfast (weekends only!)
- Gin Tasting
- History Group
- Walks around the village for new arrivals – showing people the footpaths
- Walking / rambling / running club

If you have any additional ideas for Merton, please contact Lucy Katz on cllrucykatzmertonpc@gmail.com or on 07970-803753

FREE FILM SHOW IN MERTON VILLAGE HALL: THURSDAY 20 DECEMBER

The next in our 'season' of FREE films – open to ALL residents of Merton and neighbouring

villages – will be shown in the Village Hall at 7.30 pm on Thursday, 20 December.

The Lunchbox is a 2013 Indian romantic film revolving around a mix-up in the complicated system (known as “dabbawalas”) that picks up and delivers lunches from restaurants or homes to people at work in Mumbai.

As usual, there’ll be (free!) tea/coffee and biscuits afterwards. And if you fancy a glass of beer or wine during the film, please feel free to bring your own!

The provisional programme of films for the rest of the ‘season’ is as follows: 17 January The Railway Man (2013), 21 February The Darkest Hour (2017), 21 March Eddie the Eagle (2016) and 18 April Churchill (2017). Please send suggestions of suitable future films to patmurphy153@btinternet.com (or 01865 331643).

FREE FILM SHOW IN MERTON VILLAGE HALL: THURSDAY 17 JANUARY

The next in our ‘season’ of FREE films – open to ALL residents of Merton and neighbouring villages – will be shown in the Village Hall at

7.30 pm on Thursday, 17 January.

The Railway Man is a 2013 biographical drama based on Eric Lomax’s autobiography about the long-term consequences of having been forced to work on the Thai-Burma Railway during World War II. The film stars Colin Firth, Nicole Kidman, Jeremy Irvine, and Stellan Skarsgård.

As usual, there’ll be (free!) tea/coffee and biscuits afterwards. And if you fancy a glass of beer or wine during the film, please feel free to bring your own!

The provisional programme of films for the rest of the ‘season’ is as follows: 21 February The Darkest Hour (2017), 21 March Eddie the Eagle (2016) and 18 April Churchill (2017). Please send suggestions of suitable future films to patmurphy153@btinternet.com (or 01865 331643).

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PIDDINGTON NEWS

PIDDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 18th December at 7.30pm. If you have any concerns or questions the Parish Council is always keen to hear from you, details below. The first 30 minutes of our meetings are an opportunity for villagers to address the council. Agendas and minutes from the meetings are available to view on the village website and the two Parish Council noticeboards: www.piddingtonvillageoxfordshire.org.uk/meetings.html

Planning applications for the parish will be listed here in future and can be viewed in full on the Cherwell District Council planning portal. Planning applications currently under review are: 18/01889/F, 18/01924/F, 18/01930/F, 18/01965/R56 and 18/01964/R56.

Parish Clerk:

Anne Davis

Tel: 01865 379645

Email: piddington.parish.clerk@googlemail.com

Councillors:

Francesca Darby (Chair)

Tel: 01844 238294

Email: francesca.darby@piddingtonpc.com

Pam Feltbower (Vice Chair)

Tel: 01844 237523

Email: pam.feltbower@piddingtonpc.com

Andrew Coleman

Tel: 01844 237582

Email: andrew.coleman@piddingtonpc.com

Lynda Galloway

Tel: 01844 237584

Email: lynda.galloway@piddingtonpc.com

Ken Howard

Tel: 01869 320950

Email: ken.howard@piddingtonpc.com

Mike Nixon

Tel: 01844 239209

Email: michael.nixon@piddingtonpc.com

Mario Terzino

Tel: 01844 238154

Email: mario.terzino@piddingtonpc.com

VILLAGE EMAILS

Piddington News & Events. To receive regular updates of what is going on in the village, and important issues affecting our locality, go to the home page of the village website and register: <http://www.piddingtonvillageoxfordshire.org.uk/>. You will receive a welcome email. If this does not appear in your inbox within 5 minutes, please check your spam folder and add us to your 'Safe Senders' list.

APPEAL REFERENCE APP/
C3105/W/18/3209349 GYPSY/TRAVELLER
SITE ON WIDNELL LANE

The deadline for submissions to the Inspectorate has passed. Following the village meeting held

in October, the Parish Council appointed legal representation to act on behalf of the parish through the Appeal. At the time of writing PPC had received £8500 in pledges from villagers towards these costs and have set aside £3000 from parish funds. Further funds are still needed and we cannot be complacent. If you are in a position to help, no matter the amount, please contact the Parish Clerk. If sending an email, please head it 'Legal Costs'. Anne Davies: piddington.parish.clerk@goolemail.com or 01865 379645.

WIDNELL PARK, PLAYING FIELD AND MEADOW

The problem of some dog owners from the village not picking up after their pets continues. The problem seems to have become worse with the dark evenings, and if there is no improvement PPC may have to consider closing the park to dogs over the winter. This is not something we want to do, so if you use the area for walking your dog, please do make sure you clear up. If you have forgotten to bring your own poo bags, you will find a small supply beside the dog poo bin. Not only is it an offence to allow dog fouling at the park and playing field but it is inconsiderate and irresponsible. Some individuals have been sent a warning letter and further infringements will result in details being passed on to the dog warden.

CHILDREN'S PLAY AREA

A small team of volunteers is trying to raise £20,000 to install a new play area behind the Village Hall to replace the unsafe equipment that was recently removed. Over £1500 has been raised at village events so far, which is a huge achievement. Help is needed with the application of grants. Can you spare some of your time to fill in forms? Contact Olivia: olivia_329@hotmail.com.

ALLOTMENTS

A couple of plots are available. The annual subscription £15 per year for a single plot to include affiliation to The National Allotment Society. If you would like to apply for an allotment, please contact John Galloway: jmg.galloway@gmail.com

DOG POO BINS

Cherwell DC are responsible for the emptying of bins. If you notice that bins are overly full you can contact Cherwell directly and it should be emptied within 24 hours. To report a full or damaged bin use Cherwell's website link: <https://www.cherwell.gov.uk/info/193/dogs/396/dog-bins>, call 01295 227007 or contact the Parish Clerk. A new dog bin will soon be installed in Lower End, close to Shady Lane.

OXFORD – CAMBRIDGE EXPRESSWAY

Details of the preferred corridor have been published and it is likely that Piddington and its neighbours will be affected. Highways England have produced a booklet 'Oxford to Cambridge Expressway: The Preferred Corridor' (<https://highwaysengland.co.uk/projects/oxford-to-cambridge-expressway/>). It is expected that one million new houses will be built along the agreed route, of which 300,000 are allocated to Oxfordshire. A public consultation is likely to take place in Autumn 2019, with the announcement of the preferred route in 2020 and construction starting in 2025. Parish Councillors attended consultation events at the end of November and the Parish Council will send out updates as they become available.

RURAL POLICING

Contact the police directly if you have any concerns or wish to report suspicious behaviour or vehicles in the village (email BicesterRuralNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk).

your village, your news ... your village, your news ...

The NFU and Crimestoppers have also launched a new rural crime reporting line as part of the NFU's ongoing work to tackle the serious issues surrounding criminal behaviour on farms and in the wider countryside. Phone 0800 7830137 or visit www.ruralcrimereportingline.uk.

ROAD-CALMING MEASURES FOR THE VILLAGE

The Parish Council is still researching sources of additional funding for the purchase of white gates for the village entrances. The Vehicle Activated sign on Arncott Road has been recalibrated and is proving a great success. The Parish Council will soon be installing new posts so that the sign can be moved between all four entrances to the village. The aim is to move the sign every two weeks or so. If you are interested in being part of the village road safety group, please contact Ian Darby: isdarby@btinternet.com.

SSE PRIORITY SERVICE

The SSE Priority Service is free and offered to people who may have special needs, particularly in the event of a power outage. These might be health issues, mobility problems or having young children. The Parish Council fully supports this initiative and encourages registration. Contact the SSE Careline team directly on 0800 622838 or email careline@sse.com for more information.

PIDDINGTON'S INFORMATION CENTRE

A range of useful information can be

found on the village website, including phone numbers and email addresses: www.piddingtonvillageoxfordshire.org.uk/information-centre.html

T94 BICESTER MARKET SERVICE

There is a request bus service from Piddington on Friday mornings to Bicester, returning early afternoon. Bus passes are not accepted on this route.

CHRISTMAS AT ST NICHOLAS CHURCH

The church will be decorated for Christmas on Saturday 15th December.. Any offers of festive foliage and help with the decorating will be gratefully accepted.

Christmas services are as follows:

Sunday 16th December: Carol Service at 6 pm
Christmas Eve: Holy Communion at 10 pm.

CAROL SINGING

Please help keep this village tradition going by joining in with the carol singing on Monday 17th December, We will start in Lower End at 7.00pm and make our way through the village. This is a very enjoyable evening and all are welcome to join in along the route even if it is just for a short time.

PIDDINGTON 200 CLUB WINNERS

Drawn at Village Hall on 13th November 2018.

1st	095	Angela Loft
2nd	170	Anne Cummings
3rd	084	Alex White
4th	115	Ben Biggs

VILLAGE HALL DIARY DATES

1st December – The Pantry Christmas Market 10-2pm. The first to be held in the village hall's brand new kitchen! Come and see what we've done.

14th December – Village Christmas drinks and hot nibbles, mulled drinks and mince pies

KEEPING IN TOUCH

Village emails:

Register on the Piddington website

Piddington village website:

www.piddingtonvillageoxfordshire.org.uk

Piddington village Facebook page:

www.facebook.com/piddingtonoxfordshire

Piddington Swap Shop Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/>

[groups/447881082064329/](https://www.facebook.com/groups/447881082064329/)

Twitter:

[@pidding_pantry](https://twitter.com/pidding_pantry) – for all things relating to The Pantry

[@Piddingtonoxon](https://twitter.com/Piddingtonoxon) – for general items of interest
The Pantry blog:

piddingtonpantry.wordpress.com

THE PANTRY
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piddingtonpantry.wordpress.com

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OTMOOR GARDEN SOCIETY

We have reached the end of another great year in the garden society, which this year we have shared with 103 members! Not all of them attend the meetings, not all of them go on the trips, not all of them take advantage of the garden centre discount, but.... all of them get something out of this excellent society in their individual ways. If you are still outside our exclusive 103 club then we would love you to join us now!

October's speaker, Philip Aubury, gave an excellent talk on Garden Ponds, and there was nothing he did not know about them! He covered every aspect from siting to design, construction, planting, wildlife and more. He also had plants for sale, and although pond plants really don't look their best in October, I am sure they will bob up well in the spring. We have had two good speakers for autumn, and hopefully our final one in November will have continued in the same vane and finished our year with a flourish.

From November our 2019 Programme is available – woo hoo!! This year's is possibly our most ambitious yet. It is so packed full that we have had to change the format slightly to fit it all in! Eight speakers, two local visits, two coach trips, one AGM with quiz and supper, one garden party (at mine – note to self: work gardener harder next year!), a willow workshop, and of course our Plant Sale. I can't tell you any more about it at present as it's a secret, so you will just have to join to find out.

The committee has been happily swelled by a couple of new recruits this year, but we would still like to get one more. I hope I am allowed to say that Brian would like a man, if you know what I mean! Brian has lived his life in a harem and I feel is getting a bit old for it now, so he would like another of the male persuasion to step in and help him control all these unruly females. Apply directly to Brian if you think you are up to this onerous task and he will clarify the job description!!

Looking ahead to next year, the 2019 AGM, Quiz and Supper (with wine) will be on Tuesday 22nd January, Murcott village hall, starting at the earlier time of 7:30pm. It's a fun evening, and I promise that this year's quiz will not contain leaves! Hope to see lots of our members there.

Until then.....Happy Christmas, Happy New Year and plenty of Happy Gardening,
Judith Rawlinson

For more details, or to join, contact Brian Eadle on 01865 331472
www.otmoorgardensociety.org.uk or find us on Facebook

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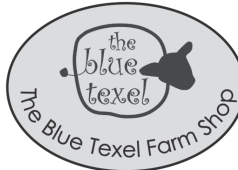
Oxford St Giles (Stop C5)	16:10	17:10	18:10
Gosford, o/s Kings Arms PH	16:30	17:30	18:30
Islip, opp The Red Lion PH	16:35	17:35	18:35
Oddington, opp Glebe Barn Bus Shelter	16:40	17:40	18:40
Charlton-on-Otmoor, opp Bus Garage	16:45	17:45	18:45
Merton, o/s The Plough Inn PH	16:50	17:50	18:50
Ambrosden, adj Birch Road	16:55	17:55	18:55

Ambrosden - Islip - Oxford

Ambrosden, opp Birch Road	07:00	07:45
Merton, opp The Plough Inn PH	07:05	07:50
Charlton-on-Otmoor, o/s Bus Garage	07:10	07:55
Oddington, o/s Glebe Barn Bus Shelter	07:15	08:00
Islip, o/s The Red Lion PH	07:20	08:05
Gosford, opp Kings Arms PH	07:25	08:10
Oxford St Giles (Stop C5)	07:40	08:25



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VET'S REPORT

High Tech Eye Surgery

When Taz the cat was rushed in with a sore eye recently, it was a great surprise to the owner & Palli the vet to find what appeared to be a thorn embedded in the surface of the eye. The eye was understandably very painful & watery, with a dark object sticking through the cornea into the fluid filled space behind (the anterior chamber).

Taz was admitted to hospital for further assessment and Vet Helen Collett took over the case. Using a specialised eye examination tool called a slit lamp she was able to see the thorn clearly and be pretty sure that it hadn't gone right through into the lens as well. Helen explained to the owner that we needed to remove the thorn but that this was a very delicate procedure. There was a risk of inadvertently pushing the thorn further forward, where it might end up floating in the fluid chamber; this would mean a more invasive procedure would be required to fish it out.

Helen has done an advanced 2 year certificate course in ophthalmology, so she really knows her way around animals' eyes. By good fortune Taz's injury happened on a Friday when our referral specialist ophthalmologist Mike Rhodes was also in the practice. He kindly offered the use of his operating microscope so Helen was able to perform the delicate operation using state of the art specialist equipment, thus improving the chance of success.

With Taz anaesthetised, Helen was able to

use the strong magnification of the operating microscope to ensure she was manipulating the thorn in exactly the right direction. Using a very fine insulin needle she was able to catch the end of the thorn and ease it back out of the eyeball. Helen was expecting to have to suture the wound in the cornea but amazingly, the elastic corneal surface of the eye sealed itself instantly so that barely a drop of the fluid came out.

Taz recovered uneventfully & is now having intensive courses of drops & medication to deal with any infection and inflammation associated with the damage. I'm pleased to report that the early signs are very good and Helen expects Taz to make a complete recovery, with perhaps a tiny white scar as the only evidence of the thorn that could easily have been so much worse!

Well done Helen & Taz.

Enjoy your pets

Jason Williams
Bicester Vets

Mike Rhodes is a Veterinary Ophthalmology Specialist – this title is only gained after a long internship at a University or referral hospital. This involves research, specialist training and finally successful completion of a Diploma – his speciality is recognised by the Royal College of Veterinary Surgeons as well as the European College of Veterinary Ophthalmologists. He visits Bicester Vets most Fridays where he sees referrals and can also perform BVA eye testing for breeding dogs.

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OTMOOR WOMANS INSTITUTE

Sadly, our speaker for the evening was unable to attend so members enjoyed a general social evening instead. The business of the evening included finalising arrangements for the Community Lunch on Sunday 18th November and for the WI stalls at local fairs. Reports were given on the trip to the London Postal Museum at the beginning of the month and on the craft, pastimes and recording life groups along with dates for their next meetings. Items were collected for the Bicester Food Bank and names were taken for a trip to Aston Pottery at the beginning of December. The menu choices for the members Christmas meal were available for people to sign up to during the break and future outings were discussed.

Several members had taken on the challenge to write a fishy poem and these were read out before being placed for members to vote on their favourite. The break for refreshments prepared by Michelle, Sophie and Linda followed. The result of the poetry competition was revealed at the end of the meeting with Mary Hatwell in first place, Glenys second with Virginia and Ann Williams joint third.

Members were reminded that the next meeting, the Christmas party, is at Murcott Village Hall at the earlier time of 7.30.

Dates for the Diary

Tuesday 11th Dec – Members Christmas Party (MVH) 7.30
There is no craft meeting in December
Tuesday 8th January – The Wartime Housewife with Biffy Raven Hill (CCH) 7.45
Thursday 17th January - Coffee, Craft and Cake (MVH) 7.30
Tuesday 12th February – A Puppet Tale with Angela Collins (CCH) 7.45
Thursday 21st February – Coffee, Craft and Cake (MVH) 7.30

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All items for the next magazine and all adverts should be given to the village collectors by the 13th of the month preceding publication, and to the editor by the 15th.

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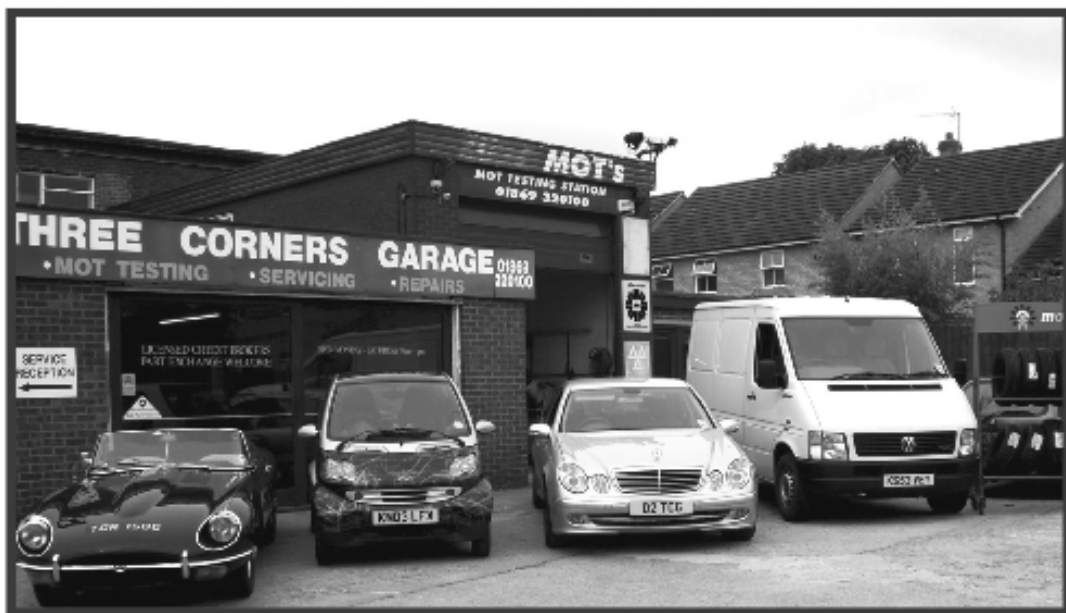


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