



Issue No 501 April 2020



Diane Bates, Jenny & Simon Haviland (retiring publishers), Richard & Dale Morris (former publishers), Paul Bates

Stonesfield celebrates 500th *Slate*

Stonesfield residents and friends assembled at the St James' Centre on 29 February to celebrate the 500th issue of *The Stonesfield Slate*.

Richard Morris had arranged a display of the *Slate's* archive which included every issue since the *Slate* was started by Gordon Rudlin in December 1976. Additional memorabilia on display included newspaper cuttings, letters, awards and the famous bird box originally used for *Slate's* wildlife surveys and later for receiving entries to the *Slate* (it was located in the Post Office at The Cross).

This was an opportunity to thank all the people who had been involved with the *Slate* over the years. This includes the bundlers who sort the 900 copies into delivery routes and hand them to the 30+ distributors who ensure a copy is popped through your letterbox each month. A number of copies are also mailed out to a variety of organisations including the Bodleian Library, who believe the *Slate* to be one of the longest running local magazines. Some ex-residents of Stonesfield also receive a copy by post.

The occasion was also used to mark the change of publisher. Richard presented Jenny and Simon Haviland with a framed Stonesfield slate (a real one) in recognition of their service as publishers since 2004. Richard also presented Diane and Paul Bates with 'Provisional Plates' as they became the new publishers from January 2020.

A final thanks goes to all the people who provided cakes etc for people to enjoy.

Dates for your diary – April

1,8,15	English Folk Dancing	Village Hall	8-10pm
2,9,30	Book Break	Stonesfield Library	12.30-2pm
6	Monday Coffee	St James' Centre	10-11.30am
6	Climate Emergency Group	St James' Centre	7.30pm
8	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm
9	Over 60's Club	Village Hall	2pm
10	Treasure Box Easter Trail	St James' Centre	11am-3pm
10	SSSC	Open 12noon	
13	SSSC	Open 12noon	
20,27	Monday Coffee	St James' Centre	8.45-11.30am
22,29	English Folk Dancing	Village Hall	8-10pm
25	Plant Sale	Four Acres, Pond Hill	8.30-11am

Important note

In view of the current Coronavirus COVID-19 advice, any or all of the events listed are liable to cancellation.

We strongly suggest you check with the organisers of all events, and follow government advice, available on www.gov.uk/government/topical-events/coronavirus-covid-19-uk-government-response

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Coronavirus updates

Coronavirus – information and telephone support

Age UK Oxfordshire is providing advice & information for anyone worried about Coronavirus, on their website:

www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire/about-us/news/Coronavirus/.

In addition, and importantly for those who do not use a computer, there is a new, free telephone support service including a friendly, regular weekly call to see how people are and offer advice if needed. The number is 01865 411288 – leave a message and an advisor will call you back as soon as possible.

Please note this is not an emergency medical service, so please ring 111 for medical advice and 999 in a medical emergency.

Helen Fountain

Age Friendly Creative Coordinator

Age UK Oxfordshire

Hello! If you are self-isolating, we can help...

Our names are Kate Harris and Anne Bowles.

If you are self-isolating, we can help with:

- Picking up shopping
- A friendly phone call
- Urgent supplies
- Posting mail

Just call or email and we'll do our best to help you (no charge).

Kate 01993 898781

Anne 01993 891048

stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org

Blenheim backs Coronavirus online Help Hub

Blenheim is supporting a West Oxfordshire online service that is being created to offer support along with practical advice and guidance for individuals who find themselves isolated as a result of the Covid-19 Coronavirus. The Help Hub has been set up by Ruth Chaloner and is a free, online service offering emotional and practical help for both medically at risk and older people who have either chosen, or been instructed, to self-isolate.

The Help Hub aims to provide a free service for as many people as possible by listening, supporting and helping where it can. Ruth, along with a team of fellow volunteer therapists and individuals, will offer their time for free 15-20 minute support and help sessions for residents across West Oxford via Skype, FaceTime or phone.

The Help Hub website, designed by Blenheim's Innovation Team, has been created with the potential to be 'templated' to allow it to be easily replicated throughout the country, should groups of volunteers wish to provide this service in other cities and regions. Without

Blenheim, this service in West Oxfordshire would not be possible.

In addition to building and hosting the Help Hub website, Blenheim is also calling on more qualified/trainee therapists and individuals to offer their support and expertise to Ruth and her team of volunteers.

To find out more about the Help Hub and to support its work, please visit www.thehelphub.co.uk, or find us on FaceBook: The Help Hub West Oxford.

Niamh O'Sullivan (01993 227111)
Blenheim Palace

More information

For more links to useful phone number / websites about Covid-19 and how to look after yourself and the community go to www.stonesfield.online

Stonesfield Voluntary Transport Scheme

It is with great regret that we have suspended the Voluntary Transport Scheme until further notice. As you know, this scheme offers lifts for Stonesfield residents to medical appointments in other local villages, or Water Eaton Park & Ride for onward travel to the Oxford hospitals. Because of the Coronavirus precautions brought in by the Government in mid-March, we will not be able to provide this service, to ensure the safety of both our clients and our drivers, but we will reinstate it as soon as possible.

Viv Kendall (01993 891803)

STONESFIELD VOLUNTARY TRANSPORT SCHEME

Because of Government advice and in the interests of both our clients and drivers, it is with great regret that this scheme, which offers lifts to medical appointments in local villages, **has been suspended until further notice.**

The service will be reinstated as soon as we are advised it is safe to do so.

Notices & news

From the Chancellor family

It was truly wonderful for us to experience the love and support of so many of our oldest and dearest Stonesfield friends at the interment of Nicky's ashes at the church on 8 March. We give you our heartfelt thanks for being with us, and we especially thank Rev Roy for the uplifting and reassuring service of committal. Our most loving thoughts remain with you all,

Nicky's sisters Aylwin, Judith and Ann, and her parents Richard and Patricia

Celebration of the 500th edition of *The Stonesfield Slate*

I should just like to say thank you to Dale and Richard Morris and all those who helped to organise the splendid party we had to mark the 500th edition of *The Stonesfield Slate*. It was nice to be able to thank the many who help to produce the *Slate*; some of whom have been part of the production and distribution teams since it started. It was lovely to see so many at the party and fun to browse through old copies.

The party was the ideal moment to say thank you to Simon and Jenny Haviland, who have published the *Slate* since 2004 and who were presented with a framed Stonesfield slate, and to thank Diane and Paul Bates for taking over the publishing. We wish them well and look forward to celebrating the 1000th edition.

Mary Hughes

Margaret Prewitt (nee McShane)

We would like to thank all of our family and friends for the overwhelming messages of sympathy, love and support they have shown us following the very sad loss of Margaret on 25 November. Special thanks to Rev Roy for the beautiful service. It was comforting to see the church packed with so many people.

Thank you also for the donations received in aid of Bloodwise, which currently stand at £1,123.15p

We appreciate the kindness shown by so many and take great comfort in the kind words they have given us at this very difficult time. Margaret will always be remembered as a large part of Stonesfield life, and will be greatly missed.

Steve, Fiona, Richard and Family

Thanks for the Yellow Slate!

I was back from Geneva this weekend and was immediately delighted to see the bright yellow jacket of *The Stonesfield Slate*, sitting proudly on our kitchen dresser. This morning, I have sat in a sunny warm nook with a cup of tea and read it cover to cover. I've called two of the advertisers about some things, I've read sections out to James and I'm about to pack it up and post it to my mother in Melbourne who is an avid reader too! Well done for 500 issues! It's a valued and special thing.

Janet Kettels

Important message to *Slate* contributors

Given the common use of email these days, people rarely leave written articles at the village shop. However, the *Slate* recognises the importance of keeping this option open for residents who don't use email. Could we ask contributors using this facility to kindly telephone the Editor for the next edition (who is named on the Diary Dates page and email is below) to advise that an article has been left for collection?

Slate Editors

slate@stonesfield.online

Village Hall News

It's all very unsettled in the world at the moment, but the SVH Committee want to assure everyone that we are working as safely and hygienically as possible.

We have switched all cleaning products to antibacterial types and have encouraged all people making regular bookings to wash their hands on arrival and as they leave, for their protection. We are hoping that there will not be too great an impact on clubs and societies, but we will try to support them as much as possible.

We were hoping to get a lot of things done over the next year and had decided to introduce a quarterly Stonesfield Village Hall Table Top and Craft Sale to raise much needed funds for the upkeep of the village hall. The first was to be held on Sunday 5 April. In the light of current government advice this had been postponed.

If you are interested in taking part, tables are £5 plus a donation for the tombola, please get in touch with clairejeeves@yahoo.co.uk who can keep you informed of dates

Jacqueline Carthew (01993 898919)

Secretary & Booking Clerk for Stonesfield Village Hall

facebook.com/stonesfieldvillagehall

Monday morning coffee

Our Morning Coffees in the St. James' Centre take place every Monday throughout the year, starting at 8.45 am in term time and 10.00 am in holiday time, ending at 11.30 am each week. Anyone can come at any time and we have fairly steady numbers, several mothers with small babies also come having dropped children off *en route*, and they all seem to really enjoy having that brief time of relaxation at the beginning of the week.

More people come later on and it is so good that there is somewhere where people can meet and make friends, especially for any new to the village, or for those who live on their own. The variety of lovely homemade biscuits which are provided each week are very much appreciated and both coffee/tea and biscuits are free.

We started these coffee mornings nearly ten years ago, arising out of the idea that the church would like to find a way to bless the village community and we trust that this is doing just that.

For these coffee times we are always grateful for more helpers, so if you can help (even just occasionally) please contact

Muriel (891479) or Bina (891293)

Spring clean (litter pick) – thank you!

Thank you to everyone who supported the Stonesfield Spring Clean (litter pick) on Sunday 8 March. It was another fantastic turnout, with 45 volunteers tackling the village streets/roads, with a further 14 Stonesfield Scout Group Beavers (and their leaders/parents) tidying the playing fields and playground. We even had litter picking visitors (registered via the Spring Clean website) from as far afield as Milton Keynes and Leicestershire!



Overall, there was slightly less litter than in 2019 but the zone/roads leading out of the village towards Fawler and the Common were particularly bad. An interesting find of 2020 was a toilet (dumped in the hedge along The Ridings)! Along with lots of car parts - some fallen off, some fly-tipped. (The key find of 2019 was a fridge.)



Thanks to the SSSC for opening up early and supplying us with tea, coffee, and bacon baps, and to Richard and Julie Grime for collecting everything in for us.

Recommendations from the litter pick have been presented to the Parish Council for consideration.

Thanks again.

Jess Huband (jesshuband@hotmail.co.uk)

Treasure Box Easter Trail

The Treasure Box Easter Trail will be on Good Friday, 10 April and everyone is invited to come along any time between 11am and 3pm. Starting at St James' Centre, you can follow directions to explore 8 different areas. Each area will focus on part of the Easter Story and there will be things to find, games to play and lots of Easter surprises – and more Easter goodies for those who complete the trail! You will be able to come and go throughout the opening times, so allow plenty of time if you want to take part in everything. We will provide tea, coffee and squash in St James' Centre and, if you wish, you are welcome to bring a picnic lunch and take a break in the SJC garden.

Some parts of the trail have changed from previous years – but don't worry we have kept all the favourite bits! Everyone is welcome to come but please note that children must be accompanied by an adult.

Bridewell Gardens

We are a small mental health charity based outside Witney, supporting people in our area who have experienced serious mental health problems. Each of these events helps to raise awareness of our work in the area, and to raise essential funds for us to continue our work. They are:

Plant Sale 25 April, 10-1pm
Open Days 17 May, 21 June, and
 2 August; all 1-5pm.

Proceeds from the plant sale go directly to supporting our work as a mental health charity, using gardening to help people who have experienced serious mental health difficulties. For further information please call 01993 848238 or go to www.bridewellgardens.org.

Stuntesfeld

Many a local gardener, after backbreaking work digging in our stony soil, has remarked bitterly that this village is very aptly named. In fact, it isn't widely known that the name Stonesfield has nothing to do with stones.

The Domesday Book of 1086 records Stonesfield as 'Stuntesfeld'. The derivation is from an Anglo-Saxon word, and the correct interpretation is 'the field of the idiots' or 'the field of fools'.

But don't tell anyone!

Anne Hamerto

More about Stonesfield

If you are new to the village, welcome! We hope you will be happy here and perhaps become involved in some of the many and varied things on offer.

The *Slate* contains lots of local information and you can also find about events, services, clubs, Parish Council & more via **www.stonesfield.online**

The *Slate* is funded via its advertisers who are all local business. Please support them with your custom, especially in difficult times like these.

Publishers

Politics & local affairs

Stonesfield Parish Council (SPC)

At the last meeting, Jess Huband gave an update on the Spring clean: with about 50 volunteers, it went really well. There was a lot of fly tipping particularly along the Ridings and near Green Lane, including oil which has been reported.

The Parish Council will consider the purchase of litter pickers' equipment. The Council sends huge thanks to Jess Huband for taking the lead on organising the Spring Clean.

A SAFER report had been circulated by Cllr M Heduan ahead of the meeting, and can be found on the website. The Parish Council now has a Climate Emergency Working Group.

The next Council meeting will be on Wednesday 8 April 2020 at 7.30pm, in Stonesfield Village Hall. The date planned for the Annual Parish Meeting is 13 May 2020 at 7.30pm, following a Council meeting at 7pm.

Due to COVID-19, it is possible that meetings will be postponed or cancelled at short notice.

Councillors are summoned to the Parish Council meeting at 7.30pm on Wednesday 8 April 2020 in Stonesfield Village Hall. Members of the public are invited to attend and can make statements or queries by prior request in writing to the Clerk. This needs to be done by midday on Monday 6 April 2020.

The Agenda for the April meeting is as follows:

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. To receive declarations of pecuniary interest (from Councillors relating to agenda items)
3. Minutes: To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 11th March 2020
4. Matters Arising from the minutes dated 11th March 2020
5. Public Participation
6. Art Project (Proposal)
7. Questions arising from the Clerk's report
8. Planning Applications
9. To receive reports from Parish Councillors, District & County Councillors
10. Finance
 - To approve cheque payments
 - Grant requests (must be submitted to council at least 7 days prior to the meeting for consideration)
11. SAFER (Mick Heduan)
12. Climate Emergency Working Group (David Baldwin & Simon Powell)
13. Pre-School (David Baldwin)
14. SUSTO
15. Playing Field Association
16. Climate Emergency Group
17. Any Other Business
18. Date of Next Meeting Wed 13 May 7pm Council Meeting
7.30pm Annual Parish Meeting

Parish Clerk

Community Speed Watch restarts

At the end of 2019 SAFER took delivery of a Morelock 'Speed Indicating Device' (SID) for use by the SAFER Community Speed Watch team. Now all the team have been trained in the monitoring and recording of traffic speeds, in line with Thames Valley Police guidelines.

Between 1 February and 2 March, traffic was monitored on four occasions at a range of locations in Stonesfield; one having been cancelled due to poor weather. Each Community Speed Watch session lasts around 90 minutes and the speeds of over 300 vehicles were checked. Of these vehicles, six were recorded as exceeding 35mph in the village and their details passed on to Thames Valley Police. Reports of activities are also provided to the Parish Council at their monthly meetings.

Over the coming months it was planned that these checks would take place weekly, subject to weather conditions and availability of volunteers. In view of Covid-19 these have been postponed.

SAFER is looking for more volunteers who are able to give their time to support Community Speed Watch surveys. This amounts to roughly 2 hours a month, but SAFER is very flexible and would appreciate any realistic offers of help.

Additionally, SAFER has been reporting faulty / damaged signs, roads marking and ongoing hazards to Oxfordshire County Council, with some limited success in getting rectification. SAFER will continue to pursue OCC; however the Transport Team have restricted budgets so progress is positive but slow.

SAFER volunteers would like to thank Stonesfield residents who stop and express their appreciation of Community Speed Watch and the impact it has on slowing down traffic in the village.

SAFER is a Stonesfield Parish Council working group made up of some Parish Councillors and other volunteers who live in Stonesfield. A link for volunteering, can be found at www.stonesfield.online/safer.

Mick Heduan (m.heduan@stonesfieldpc.uk)

Stonesfield Community Trust

Speaking on behalf of 'the people who founded the Community Trust', I'd like to tell you we did indeed foresee what it could do. We were following the lead of the Quaker Ebenezer Howard, who founded Letchworth Garden City in the late 19th century and started the garden city movement. We believed that owning some of its own land, housing and rents would empower it to achieve real good for its citizens, and so it proved.

We supported the Toddler Group, housed the Pre-school, helped disabled residents adapt their homes to be more liveable, helped primary school pupils whose parents couldn't afford for their children to go on school trips, and so on. Stonesfield was the first successful community trust since Letchworth - indeed we invented the term 'community trust' to describe it - and it has since been imitated by scores of communities, from Cornwall to Scotland. Stonesfield is now famous as the pioneer of a movement that has made a real contribution to remedying the British national housing crisis. We have every reason to be proud of what has been achieved.

Tony Crofts

West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC)

From our District Councillor

The West Oxfordshire District Council Budget has been accepted and passed by the recent full Council meeting. As I wrote last month, the decisions taken result in West Oxfordshire remaining the second lowest taxing authority in England. This, whilst retaining all services and facilities, including free parking (the envy of many in adjoining areas), full retention of the system of grants and allowances. Council tax itself will undergo a rise of £5.00 at Band D.

The various discussions on the Budget, always interesting and sometimes fraught, were this year conducted in an atmosphere of cordiality. The Labour Group voted in favour of the package. The Liberal Democrats, however, voted unanimously to abstain. The eventual decision was for what most councillors viewed as an excellent and well-balanced proposal.

This Budget for 2020/2021 has taken as its theme the welfare of residents in the District and the preservation of all that is commendable in a local government financial statement. Further and more detailed information can be accessed on the West Oxfordshire website.

By the time you read this, Easter will be almost upon us. May I wish you all the very best for the holiday period in the hope that our dreadful wet weather will be past and we can look towards a good summer.

Richard Bishop (01993 891414)
richard.bishop@westoxon.gov.uk

Other WODC news

Office closures

The WODC Town Centre Shop and main reception (Elmfield) in Witney; also the Burford Visitor Information Centre will all remain closed until further notice. Many of the tasks people usually do in person can be done online at www.westoxon.gov.uk and all council services are still accessible by telephone - on 01993 861000. Payments can be made using the 24-hr payments line on 01993 861045.

May Bank Holiday

The early May Bank Holiday is being moved to Friday, 8 May to commemorate the 75th anniversary of VE Day. In our present circumstances (note from Editor) it seems unlikely that street celebrations will be possible but anyone contemplating organising events should consult the District Council to check for any necessary licences.

Budget

In late February, West Oxfordshire District Council confirmed that the council tax for 2020-21 will rise by £5, which is within Government guidelines. This means the charge for the average Band D property in the District will be £104.38 or £2 a week, making it the second lowest rate of council tax among shire councils in England.

The meeting noted that almost 500 affordable homes had been delivered in the District in the last year. Grants to the community and voluntary sector will be maintained at current levels, along with free car parking, while new priorities such as tackling climate change will also receive investment.

Businesses rates and changes in the Budget

West Oxfordshire businesses are being advised that the business rates bills they received in mid-March do not take into account changes announced in Wednesday's Budget.

Chancellor Rishi Sunak revealed a range of discounts for retailers and hospitality and leisure businesses, including pubs, for one year as a result of the potential impact of the Coronavirus.

The changes are set to be introduced on 1 April but have to be ratified by Parliament, and as a result, eligible businesses should continue with the current payment schedule until they receive further instructions. They will then be reimbursed by the Council in due course.

For retail businesses with a rateable value of under £51,000 the discount will be increased to 100 per cent and expanded to include hospitality and leisure businesses for 2021. Pubs with a rateable value below £100,000 will enjoy a discount of £5,000 rather than £1,000.

Citizens' Advice

In mid-March, West Oxfordshire District Council was expected to approve the award of a contract to Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire to continue providing the district with expert support services. Citizens Advice will continue to provide residents with advice and support on behalf of WODC on a range of issues, from budgeting and financial support to help with application forms or employment guidance.

Single-use plastics

WODC has adopted a set of principles and a new '12 Ways' campaign to minimise the use of single-use plastics, much of which ends in the countryside, waterways and the sea. The Council is to eliminate single use plastics from its own offices and services, and is encouraging residents, businesses and contractors in the wider community to minimise their use. The Council is also keen to develop staff and community volunteering groups to collect litter and minimise plastic pollution in parks and open spaces. Recycled plastic materials should be promoted as an alternative.

Below are 12 ideas on how to reduce single use plastics

1. Say no to plastic straws and cutlery
2. Bring your own reusable mugs for drinks
3. Bring your own reusable water bottle
4. Get the free Refill app to find places to refill your water bottles
5. Use a reusable bag for shopping
6. Take your own containers to supermarkets for deli items, fish etc
7. Buy items such as fruit and vegetable loose rather than wrapped in plastics
8. Consider purchasing items (such as washing power) in bulk, using reusable containers from refill stations
9. Swap plastic bathroom products for alternatives e.g. bamboo toothbrushes, shampoo bars
10. Ditch cling film and bring lunch in a reusable container
11. Give up chewing gum and cigarettes
12. Switch to doorstep milk delivery in reusable glass bottles

SCRAP campaign to stop fly-tipping

WODC operatives are regularly called to investigate and clear unsightly rubbish that has been dumped illegally, often on farmland or roadsides. The SCRAP Campaign, created by the Hertfordshire Fly Tipping Group, will be run by WODC online to raise awareness of the issue and inform residents and businesses about the law and their obligations around fly-tipping.

This will include guidance for residents on how to dispose of their waste correctly and how to report a fly tip, while highlighting the penalties if caught fly tipping.

Follow the Council's campaign on Twitter @WodcNews and Facebook at @westoxfordshire.

Communications@westoxon.gov.uk

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From our County Councillor

Budget

I am pleased that the budget I outlined in *The Stonesfield Slate* for March, was passed unanimously. It was an 'investment budget' to reduce neglect, ill-health and social isolation, following resident and business consultation.

Funding for children and adult social services will increase by £30 million next year, including an extra £8.1 million from the government. The budget also includes investment in infrastructure across the county, such as an extra £50 million for new and existing schools over ten years.

The County Council also proposes to spend £30 million in 2020/21 from its capital budget on repairs to roads, bridges, drainage and footways across Oxfordshire's towns and villages, with major schemes scheduled in Banbury, Abingdon and

Witney. The budget also provides for climate change initiatives, including support for sustainable travel such as improving park and ride services on the A40, and the replacement of over 50,000 streetlights with energy-efficient LEDs. All budget proposals have to consider the climate change agenda and how the County Council will meet its carbon neutral target by 2030.

Dementia-friendly Council

Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) plans to develop further awareness, understanding and support for vulnerable residents and staff who are impacted by dementia.

The number of people with dementia in the UK is expected to rise to 1 million by 2021. About two in every 100 people aged between 65 to 69 have dementia, and this rises to one in five for those aged 85 to 89. Oxfordshire has an ageing population and the number of residents aged 85 and over is forecast to increase.

This means that more people in Oxfordshire are likely to be affected by dementia, either by having a diagnosis themselves or through someone they know with the condition. More people may develop dementia while still in employment; others will be combining work and a busy lifestyle with being a carer for a person with dementia.

OCC aims to help people who live with dementia to stay independent and live well in their communities for as long as possible. The Council's plans are part of a wider Alzheimer's Society initiative that aims to create a network of four million Dementia Friends across the country.

Cllr Ian Hudspeth (07956 270318)
ian.hudspeth@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Education & culture

Stonesfield Library

Telephone: 01993 898187

Revised library opening hours:

Due to advice from Oxfordshire Library Services that volunteers should not be in the library in these difficult times, from Wednesday 18 March the library opening hours will be as follows:

Monday	2.30pm-7pm
Wednesday (alternate)	10am-12 noon
Saturday (alternate)	10am-12 noon

The library will be open on 8 and 22 April, and on Saturdays 4 and 18 April, and every alternating Wednesday / Saturday until further notice.

Please remember that you can renew loans online or via the library app. Thank you for your understanding.; these arrangements will remain in place until further notice.

North Leigh Library

Bloomin' Good Reads, Oxfordshire's adult reading challenge is running at North Leigh and other OCC libraries until 11 April. Read books, recommend them, and then be entered into a prize draw for excellent prizes. More information is on the OCC Libraries website.

Phil Bloomfield

Friends of North Leigh Library

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/leisure-and-culture/libraries

FoSL: Friends of Stonesfield Library

Open to anyone who wants to help keep our village library open. We have been providing voluntary cover for half of the existing library hours (about 6 hours a week) since the library service was cut back. Please note: Until further notice volunteers can not work in the library.

For further details, or to join us, please contact Tony Scott
01993 891380, tonyandrachel.scott@virgin.net

The Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock

The Art of World War II

A new exhibition of artwork, produced during and depicting scenes from the Second World War, is on display at the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock, from until 7 May.

The Art of World War II exhibition has been curated from John Noott's personal collection of work, gathered together during his career as an art collector and dealer for more than 40 years. The pieces themselves form a history in pictures of the Second World War, but give incredibly personal perspectives reflecting a varied range of experiences before, during, and after the conflict. Through the work of artists of the time, visitors can see the war unfold 'as it happened'.

Easter Holiday Activities

Tuesday 7 April:

10.30-11am *TOM TOTS* – fun for under-fives, free.

2-4pm *ET take home* – make a model alien and flying saucer, £2 per child.

Wednesday 8 April:

10.30-11.30am *Earth from the air* – Discover how archaeologists use air photography to uncover secrets from the past. Age 8 +, £2 per child.

2-4pm *Gallery Gaming* – Play some classic 80's gallery games. Free drop-in.

Thursday 9 April:

2-4pm Jump and Jiggle, leggings & lycra – make a giggling puppet, £2 per child.

Tuesday 14 April:

10.30-11am *TOM TOTS* – fun for under-fives, free.

2-4pm *I just called to say...* Learn about telephones through time and make a mobile, £2 per child.

Wednesday 15 April:

10.30-12 noon *The Magic of Mosaics* – Find out about Roman mosaics in Oxfordshire and make your own. For age 8+, £2 per child

2-4pm *Gallery Gaming* – Play some classic 80's gallery games. Free drop-in.

Thursday 16 April:

Pop Star spoon puppets – Big hair, shoulder pads and smash hits; make a 1980s-inspired spoon puppet, £2 per child.

Friday 17 April:

Adult drop-in 10.30-12.30

Come and explore the artwork '*Jungle*' by Terry Frost, then create your own art in paint. Free.

Those were the days! Do you remember...?

A monthly group for people to meet, reminisce about the past, bring photos and objects and share memories

Friday 3 April: *What Did We Do Before* – (smartphones took over the world?) Has the world moved too fast? or can you keep up with changing technology? Remember queueing outside the phone box and waiting for your photos?

The Coach House 2-3.30/4pm, £1 per person; tea and coffee will be served.

For further details, please phone 01865 300639.

Clubs & societies

Climate Emergency Group

Our meeting in March was all about growing things and sharing the produce: an excellent way to reduce our carbon footprint. Once again, a good turn-out indicated the high level of interest in these meetings, which are open to all: there is no group membership or subscription; email me if you want to be on the mailing list.

Genny Early has invited anyone who wants to be involved in the Stonesfield community garden project to email her (gennyearly@gmail.com). Please get in touch with Genny, so she can form a working group to take the initiative forward. The idea is to work on a plot of land together, experimenting with cultivation techniques, and produce all manner of fruit and veg for sharing. John Sampson is looking into setting up a produce stall in Stonesfield this summer.

The minutes of the meeting and information sheets on plastic-free gardening, hedge-growing for wildlife and how to make ecobricks are now on the SUSTO page of the village website (www.stonesfield.online/category/sustain/).

Our next meeting is at 7.30 on Monday 6 April in the St James's Centre for a discussion on electric cars. We have two speakers: Karl Anders, who has worked in the EV (electric vehicle) industry for many years, and David Rollinson, who owns one! Come and ask questions: there is a lot to find out before they become mandatory. We are also going to look at solar panels. Harry Holland will talk about the school's

experience with solar panels and its biomass boiler, and the solar panels on his own roof.

Caroline Friend

Caroline.v.friend@gmail.com

Stonesfield Folk Dance Club

We continue to attract new dancers to our weekly club nights, and average around 20 dancers and sometimes 8 musicians. However our Spring Dance in March attracted 70 or so dancers from other clubs in England, who came to dance to the music of Purcell's Polyphonic Band. They are one of the best dance bands in the UK and we all had a most enjoyable day of dance; albeit with the spectre of COVID-19 hanging over us.

With dances now being cancelled around the country and dancers being pressured by relatives not to attend, we expect declining numbers. We hope the crisis is over by June as we have our big event of the year – the 48th Stonesfield Folk Dance Weekend.

Please do come and support us on Wednesday evenings – extra soap is provided, in addition to homemade baking!

Stewart Nicholls

stewart.nicholls@virgin.net

www.stonesfieldfolkdance.danceorg.uk

Stonesfield Gardening Club

Our March meeting was an interesting and entertaining talk from Timothy Walker entitled 'How to be a 21st Century Gardener'. He stressed how important the soil in our gardens is. We cannot change, only improve, it and that the best way to do this is by having our own compost heaps and using a general fertiliser (such as organic 6X) in February or March. It's important to choose the right plant for your soil: try British native plants and plant carefully with a good soaking, with the aim of not having to water very often, if at all.

On the hot topic of growing in peat-based composts he showed evidence that plants grow perfectly well without it. In fact, although gardeners always get the blame for the use of so much peat, it is sold in Ireland as fuel and it is that which accounts for much of the use. This has recently been outlawed in order to allow peat bogs to recover as they are such good carbon sinks. On pesticides, we were advised not to use them but to consider predators if we need to control pests in the greenhouse, otherwise let nature take its course!

We have no formal meeting in April but our annual plant sale will be held at Four Acres in Pond Hill on Saturday 25 April. This date is subject to government restrictions so look out for further notices. SGC will look for ways to hold this sale but help you stay 'contact free'.

In the meantime all members are encouraged to get seed sowing!

Diane Bates

diane@bateshome.co.uk

www.stonesfieldgardening.info

Over-60s Club

We met as usual for our meeting in March and having greeted each other, settled down to lunch. We had fun taxing our brains and proving we could remember the alphabet before enjoying a cuppa and cakes. Details of the April meeting were given, when the speaker Frank Collingwood will be showing slides and talking about the Bus Museum in Long Hanborough. Our refreshments that day will include hot cross buns and maybe a mini Easter Egg! We ended our afternoon with the raffle.

Thank you all for coming. We hope you all take care of yourselves and keep well; Spring is just around the corner. See you in April, and visitors are always welcome.

Best Wishes, Avis.

Sports and Social Club

We are looking forward to April and the lighter evenings (but hopefully not too many April showers)!

Enjoy Easter with the Club's extended opening hours on Good Friday and Easter Monday from 12 noon. Non-members are welcome. Happy Easter to all from the SSSC.

Brian Clarke

North Leigh History Society

On 7 April we will be tripping the light fantastic as Michael Heaney will be giving a talk on 600 years of Morris dancing. A member of Eynsham Morris Dancers, Michael has researched the history of this folk art which dates back to the 15th century, so there's lots to find out. He may even inspire you to get your dancing shoes on and join a group yourself!

We meet in the Turner Hall, Church Road, North Leigh, OX29 6TX at 7.30pm. Visitors £4, Members free. Further details from Diana Power (01993 882301). If you want to go on our mailing list, contact

Robert Kyte kyterobert@gmail.com.

A slice of Stonesfield history: The Sleeping Policemen Club

In 1987 I began a campaign to get traffic calming in the old part of Stonesfield. I gathered a few like-minded individuals together, called ourselves the Sleeping Policemen Club and we met monthly in the Black Head.

Each month the meeting was recorded in the *Slate*, the entry was always "The Sleeping Policemen met on 'date' at the Black Head". Correspondence went to and fro from Parish Council, where Fred Edgeler was the clerk, District Council where Derrick Millard was the councillor, and Parliament where Douglas Hurd was our MP.

Eventually, in 1990, after pressure from Douglas Hurd, the District Council conceded that sleeping policemen were permissible, but they did not have any money available. I offered to pay for a sleeping policeman which they accepted! I informed Douglas Hurd who promised to come for a drink to the village's first sleeping policeman.

Alas, the sleeping policeman could only be constructed to the council's design. The design would have to be lit and its dimensions were such that in Boot Street it was longer than the width of the road!! I accepted defeat and the club stopped meeting in 1991 as did the monthly *Slate* entry.

Graham Rutson

Sport

Stonesfield Football Club

I know you'll have heard this before and you'll hear it many more times in the coming months, but we really are living through extraordinary and, for some, perilous times. This winter people have had their homes flooded and now we all face what has become a pandemic. To report on the fortunes of our football club seems such a trivial pursuit in the face of these world-wide problems, but I will give it a go.

Our teams have had games cancelled due to water-logged pitches, and it remains to be seen whether we will be immune to the effects of the Coronavirus (COVID-19). Despite it all, games have been played! The Firsts, in 2nd place, are involved in a titanic tussle for the Premiership and it looks like a three-way contest with Hailey (currently 3rd) and Carterton (currently top). To complicate matters there are three Carterton teams in the league and our boys have had brilliant wins away at the other two, Carterton R (2-1) and Carterton Town A (6-0). The latter match was a masterclass in goal scoring from the Rice brothers, with Raffy scoring 2 and Carry scoring 3! In previous years we'd have been looking forward to a fabulous climax to the league campaign, but we are subject to the vagaries of virology as to whether we even finish the season, only time will tell.

The Reserves are still in with a chance of avoiding automatic relegation despite a thrashing (7-0) by runaway leaders Bletchington. However, following a

dramatic win against basement boys Witney Royals (4-3), including a Jake Davis hat-trick, they are still clinging onto the coat-tails of Kingham All Blacks, who are 4 points above them. It will take a herculean effort, but they could still do it! They are favourites to progress in The Supplementary Cup after their 2nd round, first leg win (3-0) at home to Bampton, so at least they are fighting on two fronts!

So, the trivia continues, and we come to what could easily be the final Fredo Award of the current season (I hope not). Both Carry Rice and Jake Davis are in contention this month. Given that these really are momentous times, I feel that it would be churlish to split it, so the club has gone the full hog and bought two Fredos (I was accused of panic-buying!) in honour of both hat-trick heroes. Well done to both Jake and Carry; the village salutes you both!

On a serious note - keep washing those hands; "stay clean and stay safe" is the mantra and together we might just complete this football season.

Tom Flanigan (01993 891979)

Stonesfield Cricket Club

Our winter preparations for the 2020 season have been quite thorough, with participation in the Oxfordshire Indoor Cricket League and ten weeks of indoor net practice at Charlbury Community Centre.

Jamie Burns again leads the 1st XI in Division 1 for this season, while Jordan

Newman is the dashing new young captain of the 2nd XI – as I have stood down after three years at the helm. 2019's third place was our best 2nds finish for many years, so let's hope Jord can guide the team to some silverware. Our first outdoor match is scheduled for Sunday 12 April, when the lads visit Great Tew.

On the Youth Cricket front, we are again running U15s and U13s cricket. Peter Stringer is the charming and charismatic coach of the U15s, with talented batsman Fred Holloway as skipper – but they urgently need more players for this season. If you have a year 9 or 10 boy or girl interested in playing, do let Pete know, by email
on cockshootclose12@btinternet.com or phone/text 07904 430979. All kit is provided and membership is incredibly cheap at just £25 for the outdoor season, and that covers all the matches and training!

I will be running U13s training at the field again this season on Tuesday evenings from the start of May, all things being equal. Again, we could do with more players, aged 10 to 13 – so if your child is interested in giving it a go do please get in touch. Our U13s group have great fun, everything is provided and summer membership is just £15.

Stewart Moss (07866 278685)
stewmoss@hotmail.co.uk

.....

Charlbury Bowls Club Open Days

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for a summer sport? Or just want to find out what happens at a bowls club?

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All you need to bring is yourself and a pair of flat sports-type shoes or trainers - we can lend you everything else you need.

Saturdays 18 & 25 April from 2.00pm and Wednesday 13 May from 6.15pm, at The Oxbrew Bowls Green, 74 Ticknell Piece Road, Charlbury, OX7 3TW.

For more information please email enquiries@charlburybowls.co.uk

Shaun Morley
Treasurer, Charlbury Bowls Club
www.charlburybowls.co.uk

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Using Stonesfield playing field

Dogs, sport and children's play areas do not go well together.

Stonesfield's playing fields have a clear 'No Dogs' rule.

People are asked to respect this for the protection of children. This should not be a hardship as Stonesfield has miles of dog walking paths.

If you are out walking your dog, please collect your dog's poo and dispose of it in the bins provided round the village (or take it home). Whatever you do do not bag it and then throw the bag in the hedge... this is the worst of all solutions.

Church news

Roman Catholic Worship

Lent: Our journey to Easter

Lent, as we all know is a 'period of fasting and abstinence' to prepare us for Easter by partially sharing Christ's own 40 days of fasting in the desert. By briefly denying ourselves something that we like and enjoy, we are symbolically shedding some of the material weight which holds us back from fully engaging with the true purpose of Easter. However it is also possible to see Lent as another form of pilgrimage, if we consider that pilgrimage is defined as:

'a journey or search of moral or spiritual significance. Typically, it is a journey to a shrine or other location of importance to a person's beliefs and faith, although sometimes it can be a metaphorical journey into someone's own beliefs.

A pilgrim (from the Latin *peregrinus*) is a traveller (literally one who has come from afar) who is on a journey to a holy place.'
Wikipedia

Lent could be our inner journey towards the deeper meaning of how our redemption was achieved by Christ's sacrifice for us on the Cross. Further, our own 'journey or search of moral or spiritual significance' of this inner Lenten pilgrimage could be a reflection upon how we are going to change our lives in response to, and in recognition of the impact of Easter with its message of universal salvation. And never has it seemed more urgent, with the Coronavirus sweeping the world to such devastating effect, that we have some sort of greater

meaning in our lives as we face these uncertainties.

Church services have been cancelled at St Teresa's, Charlbury and St Kenelm's, Enstone due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

Please check the St. Theresa's website for updates about attending mass.

The church will remain open for private prayers between 8am and 8pm.

Confession: Confessions will be when advertised .

Parish Pilgrimage:

Saturday 18 July to St. Chad's Cathedral, Birmingham on the occasion of Deacon Dytor's ordination. For further information please contact Suze Mathews, 01993 891720 or email suzemathews899@btinternet.com

Father Tony Joyce can be contacted on: holytrinityrcchippy@gmail.com or

Telephone: 01608 642703

For parish updates, any further information and further support, please see www.stteresaschurch-charlbury.com/ or contact Clive Dytor: chair. stteresaschurchcharlbury@gmail.com.

Roman Catholic Community in Stonesfield
– KEEP PRAYING

Stonesfield Methodist Church

World Day of Prayer

The WDP Service on 6 March was a very joyous occasion. Although we discovered how difficult life can be for the families of Zimbabwe, we also learnt about their resilience and courage and the way God shines in their lives. Thank you all who came and took part in this special service. The donations raised £212 and this has been sent to the WDP, to be included in the charity grants for 2021/22.

Sadly all services are cancelled until further notice.

Thoughts and prayers are with this community and far beyond.

Please get in touch with me at any time if you feel you would like to spend time in the Church, and it can be arranged.

To contact the Church Minister, The Reverend Rose Westwood, Tel. No. 01993 883614.

Kathleen Albert (01993 891733)

New Rector at St James

Until a new Rector is appointed (in the next few months), we will welcome other clergy to take our services however currently **all services have been cancelled** because of Coronavirus. The churchwardens will endeavour to keep everyone informed.

The church will always be open during the day for private prayer.

For any enquiries, including pastoral support, arrangements for baptisms, weddings and funerals, please contact a churchwarden:

Stonesfield

Kate Harris (01993 898781)

Neil Melrose (01993 891566)

Combe Longa

Andrew Hobson (01993 891273)

Linda Soderberg (01993 891177)

Email:

stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org

Information about services and other events may be found at:
www.stonesfieldparishchurch.org

Anglican Worship in the Parishes of Stonesfield with Combe Longa



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The Rectory, Stonesfield, Witney, Oxon, OX29 8PR
email: stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org

www.stonesfieldparishchurch.org

Stonesfield Churchwardens: Neil Melrose (891566) & Kate Harris (898781)
Combe Longa Churchwardens: Andrew Hobson (891273) & Linda Soderberg (891177)

BCP=Book of Common Prayer: CW=Common Worship

For pastoral help please contact the Rector



Parish letter

This month many people will enjoy a long weekend, known by all and sundry as the Easter Weekend (10-13 April), which begins on Friday, generally known as Good Friday, and continues through Easter Saturday, Easter Day (Sunday) and Bank Holiday Monday.

But how many people nowadays know and understand the origin and the significance and the implications of Easter?

Easter is the greatest and oldest feast of the Christian Church, when the Resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, after being crucified, is celebrated.

Whatever people may think, or not think, of Jesus Christ, He was, and is, an established and acknowledged historical figure, whose life and death and resurrection are all recorded in various manuscripts as well as the Bible.

The Cross of Christ, by which is meant the crucifixion, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, is the focal point of history, when God in Christ fulfilled His plan of Redemption.

The recording of history is reckoned and referred to in terms of the years up to the time of Christ as B.C. (Before Christ) now called B.C.E. (Before the Common Era), and A.D. (Anno Domini, the Year of our Lord) now called C.E. (the Common Era).

On one occasion Jesus declared: 'God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life. For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but to save the world through Him.'

The Cross of Christ is also a crossroads for every person born into this world, at which he or she makes a choice, either to accept and believe in Christ as our only way to be made right with God, or to reject Him and thus turn our back on His free gift of forgiveness and eternal life.

At His trial, before Jesus was crucified, the judge (Pontius Pilate), finding no fault in Jesus, asked the leaders of the people and the crowd, 'What shall I do with Jesus who is called Christ?' And they shouted, 'Away with Him! Crucify Him!'

On one occasion when Jesus asked His disciples, 'Who do people say that I am?' They responded with various suggestions of what people thought, so He then asked them, 'But what about you? Who do you say that I am?' And Peter responded: 'You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.'

When St Thomas met the risen Jesus face to face his response was 'My Lord and my God.' The question for each one of us is: 'What will you do with Jesus Christ?'

Rev'd Ian Farrow

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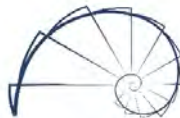
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At Great Experience Travel, the safety and good health of our clients and our staff is our top priority. For this reason, we are no longer seeing clients in our office in Witney, but are maintaining contact by phone and e-mail using the contact information below.



As with so many other businesses, we are dealing with a situation for which there is no precedent, and every day sees some new policy or regulation that impacts on the information that we are giving to our clients about their travel plans. We are striving to keep abreast of every change and pass on what we know as best we can.

We thank everyone for their understanding and kindness, especially when we are having to pass on the bad news that a much needed and anticipated holiday has had to be cancelled or other travel plans are disrupted.

However, we are always looking for light at the end of the tunnel and are rebooking our clients to holidays later in the year, and finding great deals for people making new enquiries.



Until further notice, if you have booked with David, you can call him on 01993-627713; bookings made with Mandy, call 01993-627814, or with Sally, 01993-627712; or e-mail: info@greatexperiencetravel.co.uk.





The White Horse, Stonesfield

SPRING IS STILL HIDING ROUND THE CORNER!

With the evenings drawing out a bit and the clocks going forward we can start looking forward to drinks in the garden of an evening and it'll soon be time for our Marquee to go up again!

We have planned our VE Day Celebrations on Friday 8th May and have booked a Swing Band coming to play in the garden for the evening .

We would, however, like to take this opportunity to thank everyone in the village who has become involved in making the Quiz Night such a continued success. Without you all taking over the running of it late last year it wouldn't be the popular evening it is. Also, thanks to everyone who supports the Folk Night, especially Nick and Judith Hooper, as it continues to grow. It is a lovely evening which is enjoyable for both those contributing with music, poetry and song as well as those listening.

For now all is very dependent on the situation with regards to Coronavirus.

We have decided to close The White Horse until further notice.

Please look on our website for updates and we will also keep you posted via NextDoor.

Bar opening hours

Wed – Thursday	5pm – Close
Friday	12noon – 3pm
	5pm – Close
Saturday	12noon – 3pm
	6pm – Close
Sunday	12noon – 4pm

Food served

Wed – Thursday	6pm – 9pm
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