



Community fund raising



A stall at Stonesfield Garage Sale

Thank you to everyone who supported the Stonesfield Garage Sale on Sunday 20 September.

Over 45 stalls were dotted around the village offering a huge range of products. From bikes to bric-a-brac, clothes to collectables, plants to paints and tents to toys, there was something for everybody to browse and buy. There were also refreshments available and the whole event was conducted with suitable social distancing. It was fantastic to see so many residents, families and village groups get involved. This was Stonesfield doing what it does best!

All this hard work helped with raising awareness and funds for so many local causes including Chrissie's Owls, Friends of

Stonesfield School (FoSS), Stonesfield Scout Group, Stonesfield Pre School & Day Care, #backthewhitehorse, Stonesfield Sports & Social Club (SSSC), Stonesfield Village Hall, Sunshine Cat Rescue and Treasure Box.

The intention, when organising this event, was not only to raise monies but to also enable a fun, socially distanced community event, something we could all safely be involved in after months of lockdown and prior to the winter months ahead. Hopefully we achieved that.

As the *Slate* goes to print we are still calculating the monies raised. A full report will follow in the November *Slate*.

Jess Huband

Some phone numbers to call for help

West Oxfordshire District Council:	01993 861000
Oxfordshire County Council:	01865 792422
Citizens Advice West Oxfordshire:	03444 111 444
Age UK Oxon Free Telephone Support:	01865 411288
Witney and West Oxfordshire Foodbank:	01993 890000
Volunteer Link-Up:	01993 776277
Samaritans:	116 123
Talking Space:	01865 901222
Mind UK:	01865 247788
Shelter:	0808 800 4444
Debt Advice (Stepchange):	0800 138 1111
Crime Stoppers:	0800 555 111
Action Fraud:	0300 123 2040
Mental health line (24hr)	01865 904 997 (adults) 01865 904 998 (children and young people)

Find more information at www.stonesfield.online/covid-19-information/

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Notices & news

Michael Dennis

This is to thank the Long Hanborough Medical Centre for all the care of myself and my family over the 22 years we lived in Stonesfield. All from the lovely helpful reception staff to the doctors and nurses, and dispensary staff. All offered care and compassion during some difficult dark times for myself and my family. But the moment I needed them most was in September last year when my wonderful husband, Michael Dennis, who many of you may remember, as he worked in the shop and collected each year for the British Legion, sadly was diagnosed with terminal cancer and later died on 20 January this year.

The medical centre was amazing. Thank you all so very much for your care and

compassion. I have now moved out of the village and taken my broken heart elsewhere to mend. But I will always remember the kindness we were shown by these people in those dark times.

Olga Dennis and Family

Brian Wren

Brian Wren of Stonesfield peacefully passed away at home on the 13 September 2020. Brian had lived in Stonesfield since the 1950s and loved his village life. He will be greatly missed by all who knew him. Brian's final journey to the crematorium began in Stonesfield on Wednesday 23 September at 10am.

Keelee Wren

St James' Church, Stonesfield

Harvest Festival



Do come to our special All Age Harvest service!

Sunday 4 October 11am

Gifts of money for the charity Send-a-Cow, or goods for the Foodbank, will be gratefully received at the service

If you are unable to come, please pause for a moment and give thanks for the bounteous Harvest that we enjoy in so many ways in Stonesfield

We are sorry that it is not possible to hold our usual Harvest Tea this year due to current restrictions, but we shall be thinking of all who would have been there!

Daisy May Days

On Thursday 3 September 2020, our beloved mother passed peacefully away at Middleton Grange nursing home in Hailey, having spent only a few weeks in the wonderful care of the staff there.

She was born in May 1921 in Ivy Cottage, Stonesfield, one of 10 children, (5 boys and 5 girls) and lived to the grand age of 99. For 60 years of her life, she lived in Combe, where she raised her family with her late husband, John.

Having returned back to the place where she was born, she spent the last 23 years of her long life, with her family nearby. She was a member of the Stonesfield Lunch Club in her latter years, and had many friends in both villages.

Her funeral was held in Combe, and the church she loved, on Friday 11 September. Thank you from all the family for your kind wishes and condolences after she passed.

Les and Bob Days

Flu Clinic at Stonesfield Village Hall

Tuesday 6 October and Thursday 15 October

Because of the current situation we are unable to offer a wide variety of clinics on different days and times, as is usually the case. Please contact the surgery to make an appointment as ALL flu appointments will be pre-booked, timed appointments, only.

Please note: if you are aged between 50 and 64 and not in a clinical 'at risk' group, the earliest you will be offered a flu vaccination is November, providing there is sufficient vaccine. No appointments will be offered for people in this age group until

then. This is to ensure that those who are most at risk are vaccinated first. If you are aged 50 to 64 and are in a clinical 'at risk' group which is eligible for the flu vaccination, for example, you have a health condition which puts you at risk from the flu, you will be invited earlier.

Patients eligible to receive vaccination from the practice

- Children aged 2 and 3 as at 31 August 2020 (Due to the delivery of the Child Flu vaccine, please wait until you receive a letter.)
- Aged 65 years or over (including those becoming age 65 years by 31 March 2021).
- People aged from six months to less than 65 years of age, in a clinical risk group (Chronic kidney disease, Ischaemic heart disease, Chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, Diabetes, Asthma (*on regular inhaled steroids), Chronic liver disease, Immunosuppressed, Body mass index 40+, Stroke/Transient ischaemic attack).
- Pregnant women (including those women who become pregnant during the flu season).
- Household contacts of those on the NHS Shielded Patient List, or of immunocompromised individuals, specifically individuals who expect to share living accommodation with a shielded patient on most days over the winter and therefore for whom continuing close contact is unavoidable.
- People living in long-stay residential care homes or other long-stay care facilities where rapid spread is likely to follow introduction of infection and cause high morbidity and mortality. This does not include, for instance, prisons,

young offender institutions, university halls of residence, or boarding schools (except where children are of primary school age or secondary school Year 7).

- In receipt of a carer's allowance, or who are the main carer of an older or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill.
- Health and social care staff, employed by a registered residential care/nursing home or registered domiciliary care provider, who are directly involved in the care of vulnerable patients/clients who are at increased risk from exposure to influenza.

Please read the following information

Please **do not attend** your appointment if you have any of the following symptoms:

- High temperature
- Loss of taste and smell
- A new, continuous cough

If you have any of these symptoms, please call the surgery and a new appointment will be arranged for you.

Please arrive at your appointment time wearing a facemask and wait in the designated area as directed by the receptionist. Make sure the top of your arm is accessible and wait to be called for your vaccination. Following your vaccination, please follow the directions to exit. For those of you over 65 with pre-booked appointments, please arrive at your appointment time to prevent build-up in the queue. We would like to thank you all in anticipation of your co-operation and patience, while we navigate the new and quite unique situation we all find ourselves in.

Woodstock Surgery (811452)

Evenlode River

The Environment Agency, Land and Water team has confirmed to the Parish Council that the river Evenlode is NOT designated as a bathing water.

The Environment Agency closely monitors the quality of bathing waters to ensure the level of water quality is being met and regulations are complied with. For this reason we only recommend swimming in designated bathing water.

Bathing waters are classified as 'excellent', 'good', 'sufficient', or 'poor'. Please follow the link for information on: A map with current bathing waters:

www.environment.data.gov.uk/bwq/profiles/

Based on this information Stonesfield Parish Council does not recommend people swimming or paddling in the river at our village.

Karen East, Clerk to the Parish
clark@stonesfieldpc.uk

Poppy Appeal 2020

The British Legion have informed me that, due to the continued COVID-19 pandemic, there will be no door to door collections or static collection boxes this year. We have been able to order wreaths for laying at the war memorial.

On Sunday 8 November 2020, the National Service of Remembrance is planned to be held at the Cenotaph on Whitehall in London, but as yet I do not know if we will be able to have our usual parade. The situation is changing almost daily and I hope to have more information before the November edition of the *Slate*.

Anyone wishing to make a donation to the British Legion can do so via www.britishlegion.org.uk and clicking Make a donation. The continued support and generosity of all in the village is greatly appreciated.

David Brown (898193)

Poppy Appeal Organiser for Stonesfield

White Horse Pub Quiz

Although the White Horse has been shut since March, the weekly pub quiz has continued on Zoom and is still well attended and enjoyed by the regular teams. We would love to see more teams involved, it's fun and informal and there is a broad range of questions to suit everyone. If you are interested in forming a team of between two and eight players, please contact stonesfieldpubquiz@gmail.com. We are asking for a weekly donation of £1 per person to take part and this will go towards the fund to purchase the White Horse for the community. The quiz starts at 8pm every Wednesday evening.

Steve Callaghan

Cakes for Ale

It became apparent at our last stall that we are definitely a village of cake lovers! Fear not if you missed out, there will be another 'Cakes for Ale' sale on Saturday 10 October from 9am until they're all gone, outside the village shop. We will have 'crowd control' in line with the latest COVID-19 regulations to keep you all safe, and if you are currently shielding, we would be happy to deliver a plate containing five slices of cake to your door in exchange for £5. Please order in advance by emailing susan@backthewhitehorse.com



You can help boost our funds by donating items for sale on the stall: cakes, biscuits, jam, chutney, and any excess fruit/veg you might still have on the allotment. It would be really helpful if you could let us know in advance that you're donating to help with logistics (same email as above), but please deliver donations on Friday 9 October to Susan Rudlin at 21 Longore, Stonesfield, or give me a call on 01993 891679 and I will arrange a collection from you. See you there!

Susan Rudlin (891679)

Stonesfield 2021 Calendar – Landscape Photography Competition

You can't disagree that our village is incredibly photogenic throughout the seasons. To raise funds for #backthewhitehorse, we are launching a Stonesfield Landscape Photography Competition!

Up to five entries are permitted at a flat entry fee of £10 per entrant. The competition will be open to all photographers (both amateur and professional) and the Witney Photo Group will independently judge it. The prize will be inclusion in our Stonesfield 2021 calendar, which will be on sale from 1 December at a price of £15 each. All prize

winning and commended images will be included on the website. The deadline for entries will be posted on our website at a later date.

If you are a local business and would like to sponsor a month of the calendar for a suggested amount of £100, please contact info@backthewhitehorse.com

For more information about the competition and to submit your entries, please visit www.backthewhitehorse.com/calendarcompetition Good luck!

Claire Brooks
www.backthewhitehorse.com

Takeaway Cream Teas

Thanks to everyone who indulged in one of our takeaway cream teas. We are delighted to say that we raised a total of £572 for the Cystic Fibrosis Trust. Thanks to our lovely scone makers and deliverers, and to you all for your support. We are looking forward to serving you in person in the Combe Reading Room garden next year!

Libby Hanks

Village Hall News

It's been a long while since the hall echoed with happy voices, laughter, music, and the flurry of activity from groups enjoying exercise, meet ups and social events, however, we have been blowing away the cobwebs, and cleaning away the dust in anticipation of excitement for the doors of the Village Hall to reopen and welcome everyone back!

Slowly, we have been making the tentative steps for our clubs and classes to return, and although this has been a steep learning curve for all of us, especially adapting to constant changes, we are now able to take

bookings again, unless of course, there is another change in legislation which dictates we have to close again.

We do ask that if you run a group or class, you must ensure that you are COVID-19 safe, and have a COVID-19 safe policy in place for the protection of all that attend.

We look forward to assisting you the best we can, and hosting more events for the community to enjoy and take part in.

Jacqueline Carthew (898919)
Secretary & Booking Clerk for Stonesfield Village Hall stonesfieldvh@gmail.com
facebook.com/stonesfieldvillagehall

Combe Mill

Pumpkin Trail: The volunteers at Combe Mill are delighted to invite you to follow our pumpkin trail every Wednesday in October. The cost of entry for adults, accompanied by children, is just £4. Spot the pumpkins around the Mill, whilst enjoying all the exhibits and talking to our volunteers.

Pumpkin Carving: Half term activity – Wednesday 28 October. Why not come for a picnic and enjoy carving a pumpkin to take home in time for Halloween. No charge, but donations welcome.

Please check the Combe Mill website for up-to-date times and activity news before setting off, and please bring your own refreshments/picnic as the tea room remains closed at the moment.

Tony Simmons, Director
www.combemill.org

North Leigh Roman Villa

Over 1,000 visitors to Villa Mosaics in 2020

The North Leigh Roman Villa Volunteers were established last summer, to work with English Heritage to improve access to the 3rd century AD mosaics housed at the Villa. So it is very heartening to report that the third and final open weekend of a COVID-truncated summer season saw the 1,000th visitor to the mosaics this year.

The weather over the weekend of 12 and 13 September was beautiful, as it had been for the two previous open weekends in August. Families with children were much in evidence, exploring the Roman remains and picnicking in the sunshine.

Everything was organised in a safe socially distanced fashion, with valuable professional input from English Heritage, indeed one visitor remarked:

‘This is one of the most safe and well thought out set of procedures I have met since this virus situation began so have every confidence all will go well. Thank you for your hard work on this.’

There was a first at September’s open days, as Mary Luckhurst of English Heritage led volunteers, some fortunate Friends of North Leigh Roman Villa, and even a few

visiting children, in a thorough cleaning of the mosaics with badger-hair brushes, dabbing with de-ionised water on cotton wool and an awful lot of kneeling. This was probably the first ‘deep clean’ of the mosaics in over a decade. Perhaps the timing is appropriate!

These are the finest Roman mosaics in Oxfordshire still in their original location and were last regularly open to visitors about 30 years ago. Clearly this initiative has been appreciated, as visitor donations at these free events have topped £700 in 2020. Thank you.

The site is entirely free and large enough for safe social distancing during any visit. It is a pleasant walk from the village to the villa, so please consider leaving your car at home.

It is free to become a Friend of North Leigh Roman Villa, and allows you to keep up with future developments and events (including cleaning) on the site, to join simply email: NLRVvols@gmail.com

For more details about the site (including access if you have mobility issues), please visit: www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/north-leigh-roman-villa/ or Facebook: @northleighromanvilla or Twitter: @villa_north



Politics & local affairs

From our District Councillor

As one would expect, the Council's preoccupation remains the fallout from the COVID-19 crisis. Great efforts have been made, happily with considerable success, to alleviate the disastrous effects of the lockdown. Even with the relaxing of some of the heaviest restrictions, hardship and difficulties remain. The District Council has maintained its support financially, and in other ways, to businesses in distress. Millions have been spent on this and it is only as a result of successful fiscal prudence in the past that WODC has been able to achieve this without resorting to incurring large debts. Even though the District has had the benefit of being the second lowest taxing authority in England, it has followed a firm policy of investment and good housekeeping. All this results in the ability to ride the storm, maintain financial viability, and still offer to all residents services and benefits which might otherwise have been curtailed as a result of the increasing costs of the pandemic.

On a subject closer to the lives in our villages, the planning processes have been maintained, albeit with some difficulty because of the need to hold all meetings virtually through the auspices of Zoom and Webex. These facilities do not encourage entirely spontaneous and free discussion, but have quite successfully enabled the committees to arrive at conclusions.

In Stonesfield, the last and only office building has been the subject of

development plans. The office structure at the corner of Farley Lane and Wootton End has been given permission for conversion into six one-bed flats. This will be to the delight of those who wish to live in the village, but have suffered under financial restraint.

In the District at large, there have been in the last month, several appeals to Government Inspectors to reverse planning committee refusals for development. All these appeals have failed with the decisions of the Inspectors reinforcing the original decision to refuse. The two Planning sub-committees, Uplands and Lowlands, always try to follow the best interests of our residents whilst maintaining adherence to our Local Plan.

James Mills, the leader of the Council, has resigned and is moving to the Bristol area with his wife who is training for ordination into the ministry. All of us on Council wish them both every happiness in their new life and thank James for his hard work for the people of West Oxfordshire over the years. The consequent election has provided the Council with its first lady leader for some years. Michele Mead has been elected and councillors wish her well in her new role.

The latest round of restrictions to our lives do not augur well for the resumption of live committee structures, so, unfortunately, Zoom and Webex rule supreme for some time to come.

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

From our County Councillor

West Oxfordshire residents will benefit from a funding deal with Homes England for £102m from the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) dedicated to providing a significant upgrade to the A40 west of Oxford. The key route carries up to 32,000 vehicles a day on the section between Witney and Oxford and is single carriageway in some sections. The sum of £102 million will deliver the Housing Infrastructure Fund 2 A40 Smart Corridor which comprises:

- An extension of the dual carriageway from Witney to the proposed Eynsham park and ride, including improving cycling facilities along the route
- An extension of the A40 westbound bus lane from west of Duke's Cut canal and railway bridges close to Oxford, near to the proposed Eynsham park and ride
- A40 capacity and connectivity improvements to widen access at Duke's Cut canal and railway bridges, extending the eastbound and westbound bus priority lane, prioritising bus rapid transit at this pinch point

This is in addition to the Local Growth Fund of £35 million which will deliver the west bound bus lane along with the Eynsham park and ride. The work will increase A40 capacity for all users of the route between Witney and Eynsham, while providing a high-quality, congestion-free public transport, cycling, and walking link for travel between Witney, Eynsham, and Oxford to encourage residents and travellers to adopt active travel to slash emissions and improve air quality.

The development is great news for residents in the villages along the A4095, as it should reduce vehicles using the road as an alternative to the A40, in particular HGVs. It will also deliver capacity and connectivity improvements at the Duke's Cut canal and railway bridges. This will include an eastbound bus route over the bridges on the approach to Wolvercote and improved cycling facilities, including a link joining the A40 cycle route to the National Cycle Network route 5, along the Oxford Canal.

Oxfordshire County Council is currently reporting additional costs and lost income of approximately £51 million as a result of Coronavirus. The council has received almost £31 million to date in grant funding from the Government. The Government's new Income Guarantee Scheme for sales, fees, and charges is expected to provide around a further £4m during the year. This means the overall shortfall this financial year is currently forecast to be £16 million. The cabinet will be asked to approve around £15m of savings for 2020/21 to cover the majority of this shortfall – acknowledging that the overall situation could change for better or for worse as the financial year progresses further. We have to ensure we have sound finances in case there is a second spike of COVID-19 or a flu epidemic.

The council is proposing to take the opportunity to take a fresh look at services and find new ways of delivering them rather than following the route of cutting services. COVID-19 has presented opportunities for adopting new ways of working and making greater use of digital technology. For example, 3,500 members of council staff who normally work in the office are continuing to work remotely

from home, which has resulted in a saving in utility costs across council buildings.

The County Council must deliver a balanced budget and is unable to borrow funds to support the revenue account, so difficult decisions have to be taken.

Good news for the Bus Route 233 (Burford – Witney – Woodstock) on 6 September a new hourly Sunday service commenced, funded by Oxfordshire County Council through the national Supported Bus Services Fund. To ensure that the service continues beyond the financially supported phase, it is important that we use it, otherwise we will lose it.

The new bus shelters at Hanborough station are also welcome as they should encourage people to use public transport during poor weather conditions. The longer-term aim must be more services so that there is less time between the trains and buses arriving and departing.

Please do not hesitate to contact me and keep safe.

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

NHS guidelines

The lockdown restrictions have been eased, but it is important that we do not become complacent.

Do not leave home if you or someone you live with has any of the following:

- 1. a high temperature
- 2. a new, continuous cough
- 3. a loss of, or change to, your sense of smell or taste

NHS test and trace service

The NHS test and trace service is now live. Everyone over the age of five presenting symptoms should have a test. The new NHS test and trace service works as follows:

- You request a test online or by calling 119
- If the test comes back negative, you and everyone in your household can go back to normal
- If the test comes back positive, the NHS test and trace team will get in touch with you via text, email, or phone call to discuss whom you have come into contact with
- The NHS test and trace team will then alert those contacts, where necessary, and notify them if they need to self-isolate to stop the spread of the virus
- You and members of your household need to follow the usual guidelines about self-isolating.

Police and community support

For information or advice on security concerns, please contact woodstockNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk or call 101.

Stonesfield Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

For information, see www.facebook.com/StonesfieldNHWS. If you are interested in joining our scheme, please follow this link and ensure you click ‘Join a scheme’ then select ‘Stonesfield’ to complete your request: <https://member-registration.neighbourhoodalert.co.uk/30/Join>

Deanna Blakeway Asplundh

Education, culture & more

Cycling to the Marlborough School – Thank you Blenheim Estate

By the end of the first full week of school in September, a total of 14 children from Stonesfield and Combe had cycled a collective 89 journeys and 198 miles between them. Hopefully, by the time you read this, even more miles will have been racked up, more car journeys avoided, and more space left on the school buses for those that need it.

During the month of August a group of parents, supported by Cllr Mick Heduan of Safer Stonesfield, met with representatives of Blenheim Estate and the Marlborough School to discuss safer routes for students. We carried out risk assessments, trial rides and discussed the practicalities. We contacted various companies, organisations, and individuals who could support us with cycle training, donations of cycling equipment, signage and, just in time for the new school year, all our hopes and plans fell into place.

In particular, we would like to thank the Blenheim Estate, The Marlborough School, Bikeability, The Windrush Bike Project, Oxford Products, CT Financial Services/ Oxfordshire Bookkeeping, CP Infusions, and all the parents and individuals who have helped us to put this together so quickly. What a great example of how a community can work together, taking small steps to make a big difference.

If you are a student at the Marlborough School and you'd like to know more, email us on marlboroughcycling@gmail.com and find out how to ride the most beautiful school commute in the world!

Stonesfield Primary School

It's been an absolute pleasure to welcome all our pupils back to school this month. After months of partial opening, the school is fully alive once more: the freshly painted walls echoing with the joy of pupils learning. The hard work over the summer has all been worth it: putting together a comprehensive risk assessment and action plan to iron out the logistical headaches of minimising contact between pupils, and keeping our staff safe. I have been incredibly impressed by the commitment shown by our staff during these challenging times: staying positive and offering solutions in order to bring the school community together. I would also like to thank our parents who have adjusted to the new arrangements and worked with us to minimise risks, particularly at drop-off and collection times.

There have already been challenges, and I have no doubt that we will need to draw on the strength of our community during the winter ahead. Lockdown has resulted in children's immunity to normal coughs and colds being reduced and we have had more waves of illness through the school earlier in the term than ever. We must insist on children displaying COVID-19 symptoms

being tested and this has been a challenge for parents: families being sent hundreds of miles for a test; phone lines not being answered; delays on test results being received. We have a 'recovery curriculum' to catch up children's lost learning, but this is only effective if children are in school. The challenge for us now is how to provide high quality education for those children in school AND remote learning for those self-isolating. Fortunately, data provided by Oxfordshire County Council shows the transmission rate in West Oxfordshire is low, and at the time of writing, every test in the school community has come back negative. We are living through a pandemic and the reality is that the measures we have in place will continue well in to the future.

Our Governing Body is recruiting for new governors to support and provide challenge on the strategic direction of the school. In particular, the Governing Body would love to recruit someone with a financial background. Please get in touch if you are interested.

We have school places in all year groups – please get in touch if you are interested in a place for your child, including for Reception in September 2021.

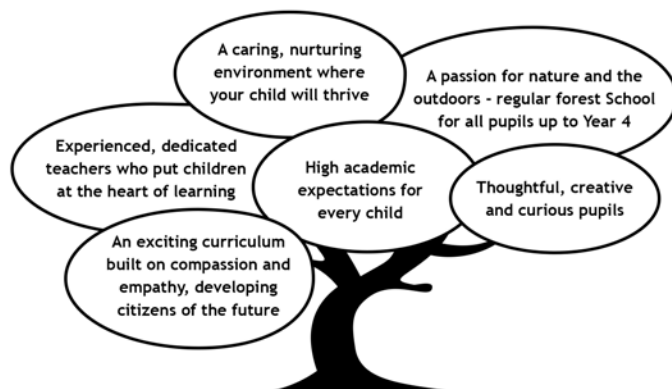
Ben Trevail, Headteacher (891687)
head.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk

Stonesfield Primary School

Learning together to achieve our best.



Looking for a friendly, inclusive, local school for your child?
Stonesfield Primary School has places in all year groups - we would love to show you around.



To arrange a tour with the headteacher, Mr Ben Trevail, please contact the school office.

Tel: 01993 891687

Office email: office.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk
Headteacher email: head.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk

Stonesfield Pre-school

Making the most of each and every moment

It has been a really positive start back for all the children, especially our new little ones who have settled remarkably well considering they missed out on their parent being able to stay for a while to help them relax and get to know everyone. We knew that, due to the Early Years COVID-19 guidance we are following to help keep us all safe, it was going to be a challenge to settle some of the children. Supporting both children and parents at such a crucial and challenging time has been our main priority. We want every child to flourish at pre-school and it gives us great delight when a child makes those first small tentative steps. Their body language becomes more confident and they are able to begin to explore and play in their new environment. We celebrate and share these successes with their parents and feel as relieved and delighted as they do!

The added bonus of the late sunny summer days at the end of September has been therapeutic for us all, giving the children lots of opportunities for outdoor play. Below is a little flavour of what our children have been up to in pre-school:

- Learning each other's names and making new friends
- Practising our listening skills and becoming familiar with pre-school routines, such as learning our 'Hands in the air and wiggly fingers' prompt
- Learning the words to our 'Tidy Up' song to help each other tidy the toys we have all been playing with

- Loving all the water play outside, painting the blackboards with lines and circles and watching chalked patterns disappear as we paint over them!
- Sharing *Peppa Pig* books together, and some of us really like *Goldilocks and the Three Bears* story. We have started to act out the story with props
- Playing shops, we chose to sell cakes and cars!
- Discovering what magnifiers are used for, looking closely at the late summer flowers and hunting for mini beasts in amongst the herbs growing in the border.

We love to build on our children's special interests, carefully observing their play and adding extra resources to extend their learning. Our pre-school is a very special place where children are individually nurtured with patience, care, and sensitivity. We take time to get to know each child and tailor our teaching to suit their character and disposition. We will continue to keep you updated on the children's progress next month.

If you would like to have a chat about your child starting at our lovely pre-school, please email Lizzie at stonesfieldps@outlook.com or phone 01993 898370. We have places available for children age 2 to 4 years. You may be entitled to government-funded childcare: www.workingfamilies.org.uk/articles/free-childcare-for-children-aged-two-three-and-four/

Lizzie Wharton, Pre-school Manager

The Oxfordshire Museum, Woodstock

**We are open and we can't wait to
welcome you back!**

Discover the stories and treasures of Oxfordshire from mysterious Iron Age mirrors to Anglo-Saxon warriors to Victorian toys and games. The dinosaur garden will be open, but sadly the dinosaur gallery must remain closed for the present. Most of our interactives can still be enjoyed, but we'll remind you to use the hand sanitizer provided before and after you play. New trails and quizzes will add to the enjoyment for our family visitors.



Our current art exhibition explores 'Distance' (something that has been on everyone's mind of late!) and will run throughout October. Specially selected from our collection, it features paintings and prints with a theme of perspective, incorporating traditional to modern and slightly abstract works.

The Museum café will be serving sandwiches, light lunches, together with our usual delicious cakes, scones, and other treats. At the moment we aren't able

to provide indoor service, but there's plenty of seating outside from which you can enjoy the garden with its colourful summer planting. The shop has new stock, including an excellent range of gifts and greetings cards. For the present, we are only able to take card payments. Although your cash is still welcome in our donation boxes!

Look out for the new one-way system that will be in operation around the site. Unfortunately, we are unable to safely open our toilets for use by visitors at the moment, but the public toilets just around the corner in Brown's Lane, are open as normal. Don't forget your 20p.

So that we can give the Museum a thorough sanitizing before we open each day, as well as at intervals during the day, we have revised our opening hours which are now:

Wednesday – Saturday 11am–5pm

Sunday 2–5pm

Last admission will be 4.30pm

Our friendly staff and volunteers will be on hand to answer any queries you may have before or during your visit, and we all look forward to seeing you soon. Please call 01993 184106. You can also keep up-to-date with what's happening at the Museum by following @OxonMuseum on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter.

Nature Notes

In praise of ivy

The prize for the weirdest flower of the year (from out of space?) goes to ivy. About twenty small lime green balls are just peeling back to make the sweet, sticky nectar and pollen available. Just over 140 varieties of insect have been waiting for this moment, an autumn feast with colour complexity, music, and drama before preparations for the winter ahead. The humming and buzzing is intense, bees, wasps, and flies congregate together.

Young ivy grows long stems with roots for holding on, then after about ten years, the adult ivy changes the shape of the leaves and flowers for the first time. Watch out for the red admiral butterflies filling up before a winter hibernation in the evergreen foliage.

A study by English Heritage has shown ivy keeps walls 15% warmer in the winter and 36% cooler in the summer. Air quality improves by trapping particulates. This summer, the ivy on Churchfields allotments, below the produce stall, has had greenfinch, sparrow, dunnoek, robin, wren, and blackbirds nesting. For the winter, the evergreen leaves are ideal for hibernating insects and mammals.

Ivy roots stick to trees with no evidence that ivy takes nutrients from them, so there is no need to remove ivy from trees. For me, this drama at the changing season follows the first snowdrop, swallow, and cuckoo.

John Sampson

Time flies when you're having fun

This year has been an interesting one for being able to get outdoors and enjoy insect life in the Stonesfield area. Lockdown (along with a new macro lens) giving me the opportunity and inclination to study one particular insect order in great depth: flies. With around 5,500 species of fly here in the UK with such a diversity of form, behaviour, and choice of habitat, there is so much out there to see. As well as the familiar and benign hoverfly, tachinids have become a personal favourite (over 270 species here in the UK). With the majority of tachinids boasting an assemblage of the most fabulous bristles, many may be considered the Goths of the dipteran world. As parasitoids of a wide range of insect species, their reproductive habits are fascinating (and gruesome), the larvae developing inside their unfortunate host of choice. This provides the fly larva with a ready supply of fresh food, but with terminal consequences for the unfortunate host; as such, tachinids can be of great value for use as biological control agents of certain pest species.



My hunts with camera and net have, to my delight, revealed several species of fly not previously recorded in our area, including the Nationally Rare Downland Villa bee fly, a male of which I found enjoying hogweed

flowers back in July, a lovely little tachinid (*Cistogaster globosa* – no common name) whose status seems to be slowly improving from that of its original ‘Endangered’ (Red List) and a marvellously bristly tachinid (*Mintho rufiventris*) that is Nationally Notable. All have been recorded for the NBN (National Biodiversity Network) Atlas.



It is all too easy to overlook our fly population and consider all flies as being, at best, a nuisance or, at worst, harmful, and there are indeed some species that fall within these descriptors. Far greater, however, is the number of species that provide essential services to us in the form of being key pollinators, pest controllers, waste disposal experts, recyclers, etc., as well as providing an essential food source to many other animals, both vertebrate and invertebrate.

It is currently flowering ivy season and the flowers are alive with insects. We often tend to think of ivy as undesirable, even destructive, but at this time of year it provides an invaluable nectar/pollen source for a wide range of fly species, as well as many other insects, such as wasps, bees, ants, sawflies, butterflies, and beetles. It is the focus of much of my insect watching at the moment and has already

yielded some fantastic fly ‘firsts’, including the ‘ivy wasp-grabber’ conopid fly and the hornet mimic hoverfly, one of our largest and most spectacular hoverflies.



These two species target wasps: the females of the former grab a wasp mid-flight and lay an egg into its abdomen (one may imagine the rest – think ‘Alien’); those of the latter casually enter wasp nests to lay their eggs, their larvae eating nest detritus and, possibly, wasp larvae and pupae themselves. Tucked in among the wasps and honeybees on the ivy flowers, you may well see a fairly recent introduction to our shores in the form of the beautiful (and harmless) Ivy Mining Bee, one of the solitary bees; they are certainly in abundance along Brook Lane. It is about the same size as our standard commercial honey bee, but has distinctive thin orange banding on the abdomen and a fluffy, ginger thorax. You may even be lucky enough to find them nesting in your lawn.

If you have a bit of time on a sunny day, why not see what you can spot on the ivy flowers or perhaps think about letting your patch of ivy mature sufficiently to allow it to flower in subsequent years; you will be certainly be rewarded with plenty of visitors.

Tanya Bainbridge

Clubs, societies & sport

Stonesfield Gardening Club

For those of you who have been in the village a long time, and spent evenings at the Boot Inn, might remember some of the late nights shimming over the wall at Evenlode, to have a late evening dip in the pool!

I use that word loosely, as it might have been described as a swimming pool in the 1960s or 1970s, but since we moved to the village seven years ago, it has been a health and safety nightmare for us.

With the arrival of a puppy in January 2020, we rushed to fill it in, as the thought of the puppy falling in with no escape, played on our minds. The decision was what to do with the area.

I, like lots of people, have read about the concerns of the massive loss of wildflower meadows, so we decided to turn the area into a wildflower meadow. We bought UK native wildflower mix from Landlife Wildflowers, cleared the perennial weeds from the area, scattered the seeds in March on the soil and kept our fingers crossed.

We were pleased to see that it became established fairly quickly and attracted bees and butterflies over the summer. The only maintenance was that we watered the area in May, when it was very dry.

I will, over the next few weeks, cut the wildflower patch, removing the grass material, as the nutrients should not go back into the soil, so as to encourage the wildflowers next year. I am also keeping a

little area not cleared for the birds over the winter period.

Gaye Olesen, Committee member

The Club was meant to be visiting Bridewell Organic Garden last month, but the day we chose was the one that the new rules came in about restricted numbers, so Bridewell had to disappoint us. We hope to go next year!

All our 2020 meetings have now been postponed, with visiting lecturers kindly putting us in next year's diary.

We would welcome any member contributing to the *Slate* if you, like Gaye, have done some remodelling in your garden or have been particularly pleased with your horticultural efforts this year. Please write to let me know!

Best wishes to all.

Diane Bates, Secretary
diane@bateshome.co.uk
www.stonesfieldgardening.info

The Players During Lockdown

The Players have been trying to keep the show on the road during lockdown with a series of readings, using Zoom.

We started with a classic Stoppard comedy, *The Real Inspector Hound*. It was cheering to see each other on the screen and to have a good laugh; those early lockdown days were such a shock, I think making a connection through a play really lifted our spirits. We then read David Lines' new play

Our Defence, all about his father's wartime memories. Then came *Hedda Gabler*, nice and gloomy, after which we needed something light, so we took one of the scripts from the TV series, *Inside Number 9* (*Sardines*), and also *The Wrong Parents*, a short play memorably directed here in the village many years ago by Sally Wainwright.

Next, we tackled *Twelve Angry Men*, which I had directed in the village hall in 2000, using raked seating for the very first time (broke the bank, but looked and felt terrific). We then collected together the winning entries for the Players' script-writing competition and gave them a performance: some excellent pieces in all age ranges.

The Diary of Anne Frank (originally directed here by Rebecca Sherlaw-Johnson in 1991) was a very moving evening. Anne's lockdown was, of course, much more severe than ours, but we felt a real resonance with it. In total contrast, we ended our season with *Shirley Valentine* – a lovely piece of escapism, which really lifted our spirits.

If anyone missed out on this round of Zoom readings and would like to take part in the next season, drop me a line.

Caroline Friend
caroline.v.friend@gmail.com

Stonesfield Sports and Social Club

So you have some time to spare
off to the club a chat to share.
Cricket to watch, pool to play
idle away part of your day.
Among your friends old and new
listen to bands, play bingo too.
Come and watch the children play
lounge outside on a sunny day.
Use the club – you're welcome all.
Beer, Prosecco – not just football!

Brian Clarke (891770)

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 the library is closed.

For further details, or to join us, please contact Mike Pollitt
01993 891856, mikepollitt@btopenworld.com

Stonesfield Tennis Club Doubles Tournament

Bathing in some glorious September sunshine, the tennis club staged a very successful doubles tournament, with eight pairs battling out for honours.

Deserved winners were the international pairing of Borut Rozman and Cosmin Jica who didn't drop a set in winning the tournament, beating Andrew Tacon and Alan Revell in the final, and playing some excellent tennis throughout.

Phil and Liz McArdell took the honours in the plate competition for pairs defeated in the first round, taking both sets on a tie break in a closely fought final against Lynn and Pete Searle.

There was some debate as to the last time the club had held a tournament, which was settled when Dale Morris turned up with the bucket that used to be the trophy. The date was 2003, and the winning team that day comprised Steve Callaghan, Val Phillips, Nick Hooper, Lynn Searle, Richard Morris, and Sheila Maclean.

Thanks to everyone who took part. We plan on staging another tournament in the spring, so look out for that and make sure you keep playing over the winter months.

Andrew Tacon



Winners: Borut Rozman and Cosmin Jica

STONESFIELD VOLUNTARY TRANSPORT SCHEME

Voluntary transport to medical appointments remains suspended at present.
We continue to monitor the situation and will re-start our service as soon that is as possible.

If you are in need of transport for medical reasons and are unable to find this from your own household, there are other possibilities - for further information please phone Viv Kendall on 01993 891803.

Church news

Church of England Worship at St James the Great, Stonesfield

(Benefice of Stonesfield with Combe Longa)

www.stonesfieldparishchurch.org

Parish letter

A few years ago, I attended a talk at which the Japanese art of Kint-sugi was explained to me. Its origins may go back to the 15th century when a Japanese shogun sent a damaged tea bowl back to China to be repaired. When it was returned, it had ugly metal staples prompting Japanese craftsmen to seek a more pleasing form of repair.

Japanese artists called this Kintsukuroi. It is sometimes referred to as 'wabi-sabi' philosophy – an embracing of the flawed or imperfect. Kintsukuroi recognises breakage and repair to be part of the unique history of an object, rather than something to reject or disguise.

In English, Kintsukuroi means 'golden joinery' or 'to patch with gold'. The technique transforms broken ceramics into amazingly beautiful pieces of art using gold with lacquer or epoxy at the point of brokenness, transforming the broken pieces to something not only whole, but better than before.

This presents to us a simple illustration of transformation, through which we can be reminded that we as individuals, as children of God, experience brokenness in our lives, brokenness through rejection,

through loss, through pain unimaginable to another person, through failure, through our own actions or the actions of another.

God does not reject us because of our imperfections or because of our brokenness. Indeed the reverse is true. He draws near to comfort us. In Psalm 147:3 we hear: *'He heals the broken hearted, and binds up their wounds.'*

And in Matthew 5:4: 'You're blessed when you feel you've lost what is most dear to you. Only then can you be embraced by the One most dear to you.'

The artist's hands work on the broken pieces of ceramic, as the grace of God works in our lives. From brokenness we have the opportunity for the creation of transforming beauty, a beauty that empowers us to claim strength where once there had been weakness or deep suffering.

When we are open to God, without awareness, transformation is occurring. We may see, at a later time, that our brokenness had purpose, and God has made something new in us: *'Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away, behold, the new has come.'* (2 Corinthians 5:17).

God created everything to be good, but through sin, we became broken and damaged and destroyed the perfection of his creation. Yet through God's redeeming love (John 3:16) he repaired and restored us, and we become even more valuable to him.

Thinking about the original repair with staples, which may have restored the broken pieces to take on once again the form of the cup, we can imagine that it ceased to be truly fit for purpose. Perhaps it leaked. Perhaps it wouldn't stand level any more. But the cup more carefully restored, because of its uniqueness and the gold used to repair it, became more beautiful, stronger, and valuable than it was before.

When we hold our brokenness in our own strength and do not allow God to receive it from us, when we try to heal ourselves, there remains a part which can run deep, an imperfection which prevents wholeness. Only the healing that God can give is the gold which actually heals and restores us.

Rachel Severn

Services for October

Sunday 4 October [Trinity 17]

9.30am	Combe	All Age Worship
11am	Stonesfield	All Age Worship – Harvest Festival

Sunday 11 October [Trinity 18]

9.30am	Combe	Morning Prayer – Harvest Festival
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion

Sunday 18 October [Trinity 19]

9.30am	Combe	Parish Communion
10am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion – followed by APCM at 11am

Sunday 25 October [Last Sunday after Trinity]

9.30am	Combe	Parish Communion
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion

Stonesfield Methodist Church

Services for October

4	11am	The Reverend Rose Westwood
11	11am	The Reverend Malcolm Cook
18	11am	The Reverend Jason Cooke
25	11am	Ms. Jenny Bywater

All are warmly invited to join these services.

Kathleen Alb  rt (891733)

Roman Catholic Worship

Vocation

Jesus made a tour through all the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the Good News of the kingdom and curing all kinds of diseases and sickness. And when he saw the crowds he felt sorry for them because they were harassed and dejected, like sheep without a shepherd. Then he said to his disciples, 'The harvest is rich but the labourers are few, so ask the Lord of the harvest to send labourers to his harvest.' Matthew 9:35

That passage from St Matthew's Gospel establishes the fundamental mission of those who are called to a priestly vocation: to care for us both spiritually, and sometimes in practical ways, too. Jesus indicates that the 'labourers' to his harvest – us, priests will have a life-long commitment for our care. In the Catholic rite of ordination that is manifest in four ages old symbolic actions, each with specific and profound meaning:

- Investiture with priestly garments: a visible sign that as priests these new priests will have a particular role that sets them aside from others

- Anointing with oil: this ritual uses the indelible symbol of oil to show that this commitment is irrevocable
- Presentation of gifts: a gesture that indicates that we, the congregation, have consented to the new priests, given the new 'tools of their trade' – a chalice for the wine, and a paten (a plate) for the bread
- Kiss of Peace: a universal Christian symbol of love and charity

Vocation comes from the Latin 'vocare' *to call*: just as priests are called to their vocation, we are all, in turn, called to our path in life. For some, that path is clear and obvious, for others, it may take a while to find it, and for some they struggle all their lives to seek a fruitful direction.

Whatever path or calling we have, even for those who struggle, Christ knows and understands as St. Matthew tells us above.

Congratulations to Fr Clive Dytor who was ordained as a priest on 12 September 2020

St. Teresa's is now open for Holy Mass on:

Monday: 9.30am

Tuesday: 9.30am

Wednesday: 7pm (followed by Adoration)

Thursday: 9.30am

Friday: 9.30am (followed by Adoration)

Confession by arrangement with Fr Clive.

Prayers of spiritual communion:

O my divine Jesus, how great is my desire to receive your sacred body! Oh, come now into my soul, at least, by a spiritual communion! O Jesus, my divine Saviour, save me. O my God, hiding myself with a humble confidence in your dear wounds, I give up my soul into your divine hands. Oh, receive it into the bosom of your mercy. Amen.

Fr Tony Joyce can be contacted on: holytrinityrcchippy@gmail.com or 01608 642703

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

Roman Catholic Community in Stonesfield
– keep praying

Suze Mathews (891720)

Advertisements

For boxed ads please email **slate-ads@stonesfield.online** for full details of availability, sizes, requirements and cost. Line ads: £2.00 per 30 words.

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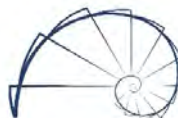
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Anna Burnside PARTNER

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BLenheim



An update from us...

Blenheim Art Foundation have unveiled a major solo exhibition inside the Palace by acclaimed British Artist Cecily Brown. Running until 3rd January and free for all Annual Pass holders, the exhibition is comprised entirely of new work created in response to the Palace's history as an English country estate.

During lockdown Richard from our Estate Team had the idea to turn a disused piece of Estate land into a chaos vegetable garden with the help of local farmers and gardeners, including CoVeg.

His first harvest was donated to local cause Waste2Taste, and was made into delicious, healthy meals for those in need.

The new collection at Park View, Woodstock is launching this October, including our first Shared Ownership and Affordable Rental homes in this new community. To be the first to see the new collection, visit blenheimestate.com/parkview and sign up to our mailing list.

Make sure to keep an eye out on our website for some spook-tacular activities this October Half Term!

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