



Issue No 513 May 2021



## Stonesfield reopens

Lockdown is gradually easing and, as a consequence, Stonesfield is gradually reopening.

Throughout the crisis Suriya Express shop and Post Office have remained open. Our thanks go to Mat, Rekha, Clive, Ethan and others who have looked after us so well. Thanks also to David and his team at Stonesfield Garage who have been ensuring our vehicles remained well maintained throughout lockdowns.

On 12 April Stonesfield Sports and Social Club opened with slightly restricted opening hours and have reinstated their marquee as, to start with, it's outdoor hospitality only. The Village Hall opened for supervised indoor children's activities including dance classes, musical activities, Cubs, Scouts, Brownies etc. Also, Salon Copenhagen and other hairdressers in Stonesfield have been busy working their magic on our neglected locks.

Stonesfield Library reopened on 19 April, with restricted hours, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Sport has restarted with the village's football and cricket teams back playing competitively. The Scouts started up again after Easter.

On 6 May the Village Hall opens its doors for voting in local elections and, on 17 May, for indoor sports activities, including exercise classes, table tennis and badminton.

The St. James' Centre looks forward to opening up on 17 May and welcomes enquiries about bookings. A number of clubs have already planned to restart their activities there.

More information on these and other local businesses can be found on following pages.

Disappointingly there is no news on the opening of The White Horse. The owner, Jon Bowers, is silent on his plans although some information is on @BTWH website.



Stonesfield is supporting local wildlife: Pages 12 & 14

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# Notices & news

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## David Peppiatt

May I thank all in Stonesfield who sent cards and flowers on the passing of my husband, David Peppiatt.

He loved Stonesfield and was well-known, both in our church and on his everyday walks. He is going to be so much missed by myself and our daughter, Katie.

Joanne Peppiatt

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## Stonesfield Pre-School and Day Care

We are pleased to announce our 100 Club winners for the April draw:

1<sup>st</sup> prize: Andrew Tacon      £25

2<sup>nd</sup> prize: Elizabeth Lindop      £10

Congratulations to you both.

Zena Rozee, Pre-School Administrator



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## St James' Centre

We look forward to opening on 17 May and welcome enquiries regarding bookings (please email [sjcsbookings@gmail.com](mailto:sjcsbookings@gmail.com)) Initially numbers at an event will be limited to allow for social distancing in line with Government guidance with a maximum of 30 persons in total, but exact capacity will depend on the nature of the activity.

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## Stonesfield Library

The Friends of Stonesfield Library are delighted to have been able to welcome back our customers in strictly limited numbers from 19 April. The Library's opening hours are also restricted: Monday 2-4pm; Wednesday and Thursday 10am-12 noon.

All library loans have been extended to 10 May, at which point all loans will be due for return or renewal. No library customers will be penalised as a result of having to self-isolate or being unable to travel to return library loans.

We look forward to seeing all of our customers back in the Library!

Mike Pollitt (891856)

## 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.

For further details, or to join us, please contact Mike Pollitt  
01993 891856, [mikepollitt@btopenworld.com](mailto:mikepollitt@btopenworld.com)

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## **Combe Mill - a versatile venue for all**

We had a very exciting start to the new season when this week the directors met at the Mill to talk to a lovely couple arranging their wedding reception for August. What could possibly be better?

The Mill offers:

- An idyllic setting next to the River Evenlode
- A grassy area to sit and enjoy the great outside
- Tea room for drinks and food with riverside balcony
- Marquee for just-in-case cover
- Plenty of parking
- Plenty of seating spaces to talk to guests
- Firepit possibilities
- Unique photo opportunities

School organisers are welcome to work with us to create a one day/half day learning package to explore STEM or social history topics. We have already developed a range of learning modules that can form the basis of any visit. We also have outdoor learning options on offer. Non-school community groups can also be catered for.



Our Foreman's Office will seat up to 30 people for a meeting or presentation. It has a large screen display and its own kitchenette, or alternatively the tea room can be made available. Our location is ideal

for rebuilding your team after home-working.

Everyone is welcome at the Mill! Our first non-steaming open day will be Wednesday 19 May, Government restrictions permitting.

Tony Simmons

[tourism@combemill.com](mailto:tourism@combemill.com)

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## **Farmers' Markets**

Please note the following correction to last month's notice regarding local farmers' markets. Charlbury Farmers' Market takes place quarterly on the second Saturday of the months of March, June, September and December, 9am-1pm. Apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Trisha Williams

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## **Village Hall**

Don't forget that on 6 May the Village Hall will be opening its doors so that the community can vote in the elections. You have the options for polling in person at a polling station, by postal vote or by proxy vote. Please do not be deterred by the current situation. Working to government and local authority guidelines with regard to coronavirus, everyone involved has organised things in such a way as to minimise risks including the requirement for social distancing both inside and outside the venue; limiting the number of people inside polling stations; masks worn by staff and voters; voters bringing their own pen or pencil; maximising ventilation; the installation of screens where appropriate; the provision of hand sanitiser and regular cleaning.

In the hope that we will be resuming our normal functions in the next few months,

we are going to start our 'shout out' for a Chairperson again. As much as we love all the people we have involved on the Committee and as Trustees, we would really welcome a Chairperson to come on board and help us guide the Village Hall into being the community hub that we want it to be. Please get in touch with me for more information or an informal chat about the role on [stonesfieldvh@gmail.com](mailto:stonesfieldvh@gmail.com) or leave a message on 01993 898919.

Jacqueline Carthew, Secretary & Booking Clerk  
for Stonesfield Village Hall

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## **A cautionary tale**

I wandered up to the White Horse on Monday 12 April hoping that the easing of the lockdown allowing drinking outside of pubs would have spurred the new owner to open up the garden. It was a fruitless visit. The garden where many of us have spent enjoyable evenings is derelict. Nothing seems to have happened since the pub was sold by John Lloyd to Mr Jonathan Bowers in January. Even the letter from the new owner has been removed. I've emailed Mr Bowers at [whitehorsepub1@gmail.com](mailto:whitehorsepub1@gmail.com) to ask when he will open the pub but I have had no reply. It is very disappointing to have so much expectation of the pub re-opening only to see it there, sad and forlorn.

The sale was a strange affair. The community offered the asking price of £395,000 to buy it but it was sold for £385,000 to Mr Bowers. A further offer of £445,000 was made by Stonesfield Community Pub Ltd to both John Lloyd and to Jonathan Bowers but neither would accept it. To turn down a much larger cash offer seems to imply there is more money

to be made out of the White Horse by developing it as residential property. Jonathan Bowers was listed as the Chief Executive Officer of JCB Real Estate, although this has now been removed.

To obtain change of usage from a pub to residential property is not easy and can take years, as we saw with the Black Head. It's a long game, during which time we may not have a fully functioning pub. Let us hope that John Lloyd has made his money and has no further interest in the pub; also, that Mr Bowers has given up property development for pub management. That way we can look forward to the future of the White Horse as our 'local'.

Graham Rutson  
[gm.rutson@gmail.com](mailto:gm.rutson@gmail.com)

# Politics & local affairs

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## **Stonesfield Parish Council (SPC)**

### **From the meeting held 7 April 2021**

**Highways:** We are aware that there will be some bus re-routing and road closures in the coming months to allow for Gigaclear's works. We need to bear with this - it will be short term. We will be advised of the arrangements by OCC and the bus companies in advance and as soon as we have the information it will be published.

**Planning:** Application no. 21/00860/HHD. Proposal: Alterations to include the erection of a single-storey side and rear infill extension and the replacement of the existing rear pitched roof with a new flat roof. Location: 9 Combe Road, Stonesfield. The Parish Council had no objection or comment regarding this application.

**Finance:** Council approved a payment of £49.20 for replacement pads for the Pre-School defibrillator and £150 for its annual service. This is available for emergency community use and the Pre-School is responsible for checking its charge etc. on a monthly basis.

**Empire Homes:** Empire Homes has made a £15,000 donation to the Council. As a successful local company with long-established connections to Stonesfield, it has made the donation to the Parish to be used for the local needs of the village. The Clerk is arranging the transfer of funds to the Parish Council in conjunction with Empire Homes. The Parish Council may

spend the money as they choose and it may be spent across more than one financial year. The Parish Council would like to thank Empire Homes for this kind donation.

**Annual Parish Meeting:** The Annual Parish Meeting will be held on 5 May via Zoom (virtually) and will commence at 7.30pm. (The standard Council meeting will be held just beforehand.) Any parties or groups who would like to provide an update at the annual meeting should contact the Clerk at [clerk@stonesfieldpc.uk](mailto:clerk@stonesfieldpc.uk) no later than 3 May in order to be included on the list. The agenda for the meeting will be available online.

**Farmers' Land:** Members of the public should not be trespassing on farmland and the land on Combe Road as they are creating unauthorised footpaths up to three metres wide in arable fields. Chemicals and fertilisers are also being used at this time of year which may be harmful to dogs. There are no public footpaths or rights of way across this land and the Parish Council encourages people to adhere to public footpaths.

Karen East, Parish Clerk  
[clerk@stonesfieldpc.uk](mailto:clerk@stonesfieldpc.uk)



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## Community Speed Watch can restart

With lockdown restrictions being lifted, Thames Valley Police (TVP) have announced that Community Speed Watch (CSW) checks can restart across the Thames Valley area. TVP have also announced more direct support for CSW teams including new reporting systems, improved volunteer training, new speed-measuring equipment and providing more data to TVP for analysis and police enforcement activity. These improvements will be rolled out using a pilot scheme run by TVP in the coming months.

During lockdown, SAFER have deployed two speed indicating devices (SIDs) to remind motorists of their speed and to encourage safer driving. However, the SIDs do more than just give drivers instant feedback that they are conforming to, or exceeding, speed limits; they clearly allow members of the public, friends and family to see at first hand who chooses to speed in their village and take risks that could lead to a collision.



The good news is that the SIDs seem to be acting successfully as speed reduction devices. Our data from the two locations (war memorial, Woodstock Rd and Witney Lane, Laughton Hill) shows 95% of drivers travelling below 30mph and 50% travelling at less than 26mph. In the last couple of

months the highest speed recorded was by three vehicles travelling at 57mph – fortunately this is a rare event in Stonesfield.

A very big thank you from Stonesfield Parish Council to the 95% of drivers who travel at or below the current limit in the village.

Stonesfield's CSW team forms part of the Parish Council's SAFER working party and, once the GigaClear works have been completed in the village, the CSW team will swing into action and set up roadside speed checks.

If you have some spare time and would like to volunteer and support the CSW team, please email me for further information.

Cllr Michael J Heduan MBE

SAFER (Parish Council Working Group)

[m.heduan@stonesfieldpc.uk](mailto:m.heduan@stonesfieldpc.uk)

[www.stonesfield.online/safer/](http://www.stonesfield.online/safer/)

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## From our District Councillor

Some matters of interest to Stonesfield residents this month include a request from Woodstock Town Council to be given ownership and management control of the Woodstock Water Meadows. This request was very favourably received by the District Council. However, it was pointed out that any such application would have to be made to Natural England as the overseeing authority. The application would, however, have the full support of WODC.

A series of Community Revenue Grants was agreed. Unusually, it was decided that those 2020 grants which had not been realised during the last financial period would be carried over to 2021. This

affected the grant awarded to Stonesfield Pre-School so the full amount requested of £1,027 remains available to the Pre-School. Other sums were made available for measures to prevent homelessness and also to help deal with problems of domestic abuse in West Oxfordshire.

This is my final report to *The Slate* and to all the residents of the village. I have worked with the Parish Council in one form or another for over 23 years and have represented the District for the last seven. As I will not be standing for election on 6 May, I should like to thank all my friends, neighbours and residents for the constant support I have enjoyed during my time in office. I have found the whole experience intensely interesting and fulfilling. Thank you all.

I hope you will give my successor, whoever he/she may be and from whichever political persuasion, as much support and friendship as you have me.

Richard Bishop (891414)

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## Other news from West Oxfordshire

Coronavirus testing centre: WODC have advised that a new symptom-free testing centre opened in Carterton at the end of March in order to allow local residents to access symptom-free testing, otherwise known as 'lateral flow' testing. The site is at Brownes Hall in the town centre and is open six days per week. Residents eligible for the tests include those who work or volunteer in any role where they have close contact with people outside their own homes, including childminders, and it is recommended to get tested on a regular basis. The test may be booked via [www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test](http://www.gov.uk/get-coronavirus-test) and more general information is available from Oxfordshire County Council's website at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/council/coronavirus-covid-19/prevention-and-testing/](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/council/coronavirus-covid-19/prevention-and-testing/)

### STONESFIELD VOLUNTARY TRANSPORT SCHEME

Volunteer drivers are available to take you for vaccination, other medical appointments and now also to the hospitals in Oxford and Banbury.

We can usually provide a lift at short notice (for an appointment the same day), but this cannot be guaranteed.

Full COVID-19 precautions are in place to ensure your safety.

There is no charge but we do welcome a donation for expenses.

Please call **Amanda Peters 01993 891947** to book a lift in May.



# Education, culture & more

## Stonesfield Pre-School

A year ago, Pre-School was under threat of closure. Thanks to the local community for supporting our 'Just Giving' page and a number of direct donations, we are now in a much healthier financial position.

This year has had its challenges with Covid-19 and having to close and furlough our staff for a period of time but we are now fully open and our numbers of children are increasing each term.

We would like to thank everyone who has supported our fundraising events in the last year. Our 100 Club was very well received and unfortunately not all those

who wanted to participate were able to do so. However, our 2021/22 registration forms are now available. If you wish to participate or renew your existing entry, please email [stonesfieldps@outlook.com](mailto:stonesfieldps@outlook.com).

We are offering a summer holiday club this year for two weeks: Monday 26-Friday 30 July and Monday 2-Friday 6 August. If you wish to register your child, please contact Zena Rozee.

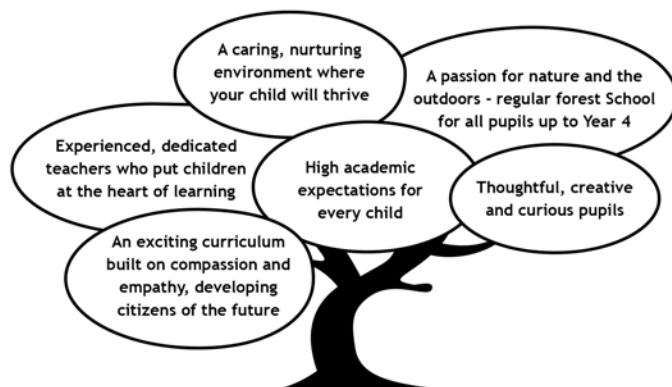
Zena Rozee (898012)  
[stonesfieldpsad@outlook.com](mailto:stonesfieldpsad@outlook.com)

## 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](mailto:office.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk)  
Headteacher email: [head.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk](mailto:head.2353@stonesfield.oxon.sch.uk)

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## Oxfordshire Art Weeks

Oxfordshire Art Weeks runs from 1-23 May and includes both open studios and online virtual events. This year the brochure is online only at [www.artweeks.org](http://www.artweeks.org). Grey Cat Studios are open. This popular Art Weeks venue is open this year on the 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> May, 11am-5pm. We are Covid-safe so please wear masks.



This year we have work by Rachael and Rebecca Sherlaw-Johnson, Jenny Lines and Kerry Burniston along with Ann Lowe and Griselda Sherlaw-Johnson including painting, printmaking, crafts, jewellery, textiles and more. Our carport gallery will be open and visitors will be allowed into the studios one at a time or in a family bubble.

We look forward to seeing you. For more information contact me.

Rebecca Sherlaw-Johnson (891328)  
[rebeccasj@btinternet.com](mailto:rebeccasj@btinternet.com)

Due to unforeseen circumstances, I will not be exhibiting during Art Weeks this year but my work can be seen on [Instagram@clairefyfejackson](https://www.instagram.com/clairefyfejackson).

Claire Fyfe-Jackson

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## Nice food

On being urged to write more food articles, I looked into some of my ancient (sepia brown and disintegrating) cookery books and there I rediscovered a very colourful and interesting character who was from Nice and an expert on its cuisine.

Jacques Médecin, (born 1928), studied law in Paris and then worked as a journalist for several years. He became Mayor of Nice in 1966, an office he held for 24 years. Jacques was deeply passionate about all things *niçois* and in 1972 *Cuisine Niçoise* was published. Following an exposé by the novelist Graham Greene, allegations of corruption were made against him and in 1990 he fled to Uruguay; however, he was extradited and brought back to France in 1993 where he was convicted and served a jail sentence. He later returned to Uruguay where he died in 1998 at the age of 70.

Whether one cooks or not, the book is good for dipping into with snippets and stories interspersed among the recipes. Linguists might be interested in the recipe titles which are given in *Niçard*, a dialect of the Occitan language, as well as in French. Given the region's proximity to the sea, there is, naturally, an emphasis on fish and seafood – there is an old *Niçois* saying that 'fish are born in water and die in oil'. The following is his exhortation on the preparation of *salade niçoise* which you may find amusing, whether or not you intend to make it.

### La Salada Nissarda: la vraie salade niçoise

*'Salade niçoise is one of those dishes that is constantly traduced. At its most basic – and genuine – it is made predominantly of tomatoes, consists exclusively of raw*

*ingredients (apart from hard-boiled eggs) and has no vinaigrette dressing: the tomatoes are salted three times and moistened with olive oil. However, nowadays even the Niçois often combine anchovies and tunny fish in the same salad, though traditionally this was never done - tunny used to be very expensive and was reserved for special occasions, so the cheaper anchovies filled the bill. But whatever you do, if you want to be a worthy exponent of Niçois cookery, never, never, I beg you, include boiled potato or any other boiled vegetable in your salade niçoise.'*

Well, many would disagree with that and I must confess to including baby potatoes (skins on) and French beans, always provided they are very fine. Sadly, the latter are virtually impossible to find outside France so, in the absence of the elusive skinny beans, I have found that a little steamed samphire is also an excellent addition. Jacques would be *desolé* ...

Another respected cookery writer who expresses equally fierce but completely opposing views on the subject of composed salads including niçoise is Richard Olney in his book *Simple French Food*: '*... one need not often respect any of the endless and precisely defined classical recipes for composed salads to be struck with the puerility of such a pastime...*' Ouch! Nevertheless, for purists who would like to follow Jacques' mantra, here are his very specific instructions.

For 6 persons: 10 medium tomatoes; 3 hard-boiled eggs, quartered; 12 anchovy fillets, cut into small pieces **or** 300g tinned tuna, flaked; 100g black olives; and the following, all of which should be sliced finely: a large cucumber, peeled; 2 green

peppers; 8 spring onions; lastly, 200g broad beans **or** 12 baby globe artichokes, sliced very thinly - depending on the time of year, use either one or the other, or neither, but not both.

For the dressing: 6 tabs olive oil; 6 basil leaves, finely chopped; salt and pepper.

Quarter the tomatoes and salt them lightly, leaving them to drain. Rub a serving dish or salad bowl thoroughly with cut cloves of garlic and put in all the prepared ingredients, apart from the tomatoes. Make the dressing and set aside. When the tomatoes have drained of their juices, salt them once again and then add them to the dish. Pour over the dressing and chill before serving.

In the final event, whether you decide to be purist or not, you can be confident of producing a dish as colourful as Jacques himself!

Trisha Williams

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## Counting Adders: the recount

Well, it looks like sad news I'm afraid. I say that, as someone out there may know different, but on the information received so far it appears that any adders (viparberus) in West Oxfordshire have disappeared – they are no more. They are considered extinct and have been so for the last fifty years! (At least, according to those who studiously investigate and record such things.)

After my appeal in the last edition of *The Slate*, I had one call and pictures sent of a squashed snake which was formally identified as a grass snake. Unfortunate – but thanks very much to the lady concerned who took the time and effort to contact me.

I would also like to thank Aljos Farjon, Honorary Research Associate at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, who appraised me of the current biodiversity survey at Blenheim. I won't steal his thunder as the survey has not yet been completed nor the research published, but let's say that the results are impressive. Unfortunately, his team have found no trace of any adders on Blenheim's land nor any recent record.

Now for the interesting bit – the mystery. If you do an internet search on 'adders' and 'West Oxfordshire' you will see rather a lot of positive results for their presence, especially in the 'more recent biodiversity studies'. Admittedly, most do not give any time, day, date or location sightings but working back through any references given, one generally ends up at a scientific paper published in the late 1700s!

Far be it for me to suggest any 'cut and paste' science but it does seem (without any evidence to the contrary) that adders are No More in Stonesfield. Therefore, unless anyone out there really knows otherwise, it looks as if the great cull of 1968 was their final exit from our village.

Graeme Cairns (898541)

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## **Bird Aid report 2020/21**

Thanks to the help provided by local volunteers and farmers, this year's bird feeding campaign has been a great success. There has been a hive of activity at the two feeding stations on the outskirts of the village with scores of birds coming down to grain left scattered on the ground.

At the Highfield Barn feeding station, large flocks of chaffinches and linnets have been observed regularly, along with yellowhammers, dunnocks, blackbirds and

the occasional brambling. Further afield, the feeders at Kingswood Brake have paid dividends. Yellowhammers and large flocks of linnets and chaffinches have been recorded here, interspersed at times with dozens of bramblings. The two hanging feeders at this site have seen a frenzy of feeding from blue tits, great tits, marsh tits and coal tits along with several nuthatches and treecreepers and the occasional great spotted woodpecker. Queuing does not come naturally to birds so there was a lot of squabbling going on from time to time and the resident muntjac was only too happy to help himself to the feed left on the ground!

A special thanks to all the local farmers who provided a constant supply of grain throughout the winter months; it has been lovely to see the community coming together to support such a worthwhile cause – our resident birdlife.

Martin Gascoigne-Pees



Yellow Hammer at Kingswood Brake

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## North Leigh Roman Villa

We are delighted to let you know that North Leigh Roman Villa Volunteers have been awarded a Commendation by the Heritage Alliance for outstanding heritage voluntary work in 2020.

The collective efforts of our group of 25 committed local people worked to promote North Leigh's Villa site as a resource for well-being and education throughout the pandemic. This was judged to be a perfect example of where English Heritage volunteers have made a massive difference to linking heritage sites with their community during the pandemic.

During the summer, the volunteers led a series of successful open mosaic days, hosting over 1,250 visitors which is nearly twice as many as the previous year. Visitors generously donated nearly £1,000 to benefit the site and, in spite of Covid-19

restrictions, the team of volunteers gave over one thousand hours of their time, including 290 hours on site.

For over a decade, Ecclesiastical's Heritage Heroes Awards have celebrated the wonderful contribution of volunteers in the heritage sector. More than a simple thank you, these awards are a great opportunity to demonstrate how volunteers can take ownership of the heritage around them and make a real difference.

Matthew Lee

[nlrvols@gmail.com](mailto:nlrsvols@gmail.com)



# Clubs, societies & sport

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## Stonesfield Gardening Club

The Gardening Club will hold its last (we hope) Zoom meeting this month, with Harriet Rycroft talking and demonstrating 'A Year in Pots', helping us to make the most of the pots in our garden. All members will be sent an invitation to this which will be from 7pm on Monday 10 May. New members are welcome at all times; please look on the website or contact me directly.

Diane Bates, Secretary

[diane@bateshome.co.uk](mailto:diane@bateshome.co.uk)

[www.stonesfieldgardening.info](http://www.stonesfieldgardening.info)

Committee member Gaye Olesen is suggesting that we all take it easy this month and 'lock up your lawnmower on 1 May'.

It is often said that summer is the smell of freshly-mown grass, but for those who have a garden how about saying "no to the mow" this May to help our bees, butterflies, wildlife and us?

Plantlife, a British conservation charity that works nationally and internationally to save threatened wildflowers, plants and fungi has a campaign to encourage us not to mow from 1 May until the end of the month. Plantlife's #NoMowMay campaign doesn't ask you to do much. In fact, it asks you to not do anything at all... Just lock up your lawnmower on 1 May and let the wildflowers in your lawn bloom, providing a feast of nectar for our hungry pollinators.



At the end of the month, on the bank holiday weekend, you can join in with Plantlife's nationwide 'Every Flower Counts' survey to discover how many bees the UK's lawns can feed. Not only will you receive your very own 'nectar score' (which will tell you how many bees your lawn can feed), you'll help Plantlife learn more about the health of the nation's wildflowers.

And if you're really keen and want to re-wild all summer, try #LetItBloomJune or put up a 'scarecrow'. More info can be found at [www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/discover-wild-plants-nature/nomowmay](http://www.plantlife.org.uk/uk/discover-wild-plants-nature/nomowmay) or [www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/take-part-in-the-no-mow-may-challenge](http://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/take-part-in-the-no-mow-may-challenge).

Gaye Olesen

[gaye.olesen@icloud.com](mailto:gaye.olesen@icloud.com)



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## Stonesfield Football Club

As the country takes its first tentative steps out of lockdown and the vaccination programme hurtles along at full pelt (don't forget to get yours!), our lads are back playing competitive football again. With the leagues sensibly declared null and void, our boys are in search of glory in their respective cup competitions which are being run on a group basis, similar to The Champions League group stages, with the top two in each group going through to the semi-finals.

So how have our boys been doing? No major surprise that it is a mixed bag of results. Young Raffy Rice has got off to a flier, scoring five for The Firsts in the three games played so far. He notched a stunning hat-trick in the opening encounter at home to Bletchingdon in The Ted Young Senior Cup where they trounced the visitors 6-2. Next up they travelled to the new club playing out of Enstone, surprisingly called 'Enstone', where the home team sprung a surprise by winning 3-1. These things happen in cup games but our lads were not downhearted and travelled all the way to Hailey to play the local Reserves and in a pulsating encounter a Raffy Rice double inspired our lads to a 3-2 win. I know it was Hailey Res, but Hailey is always a tough place to get a result whether it be their Firsts or Res, so our boys should be delighted. Will they make the semi-finals? I think they have a good chance but only time will tell.

The Reserves have made a difficult start in The Supplementary Cup (that cup needs a proper name). They lost their first match at home to Spartan R 'A' 3-1, then travelled to Leafield where they were beaten 2-0. Not a great start and it would be the ultimate

optimist or a reckless gambler who would bet on them making the semi-finals. Of course, if they win the rest of their matches, they'll stand a decent chance but that is a huge 'IF'. The challenge to our Reserves is obvious .... three wins and see where fate leads!

It is beholden on me to refute the scurrilous rumours circulating on social media that the Fredo Awards had gone mouldy in lockdown. Social media is a rancid environment where lies and falsehoods go unchecked and unchallenged, but I'm delighted to see that *The Slate* (a bastion of truth and integrity) gives me the chance to put the record straight. The Fredo Awards are alive and kicking and it will come as no real surprise that this month's award goes to Stonesfield's answer to Usain Bolt, the man with pace to burn, who is on sizzling form, Raffy Rice! Five goals in the first three games (including a hat-trick) are worthy of any Fredo Award, so step up Raffy, top man this month: a pristine, mould- and virus-free Fredo is your reward. (Sharing with your wee brothers is optional).

Tom Flanigan (891979)

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## Stonesfield Cricket Club



Match at Stonesfield Playing Fields on 18 April

[www.pitchero.com/clubs/stonesfieldcricketclub](http://www.pitchero.com/clubs/stonesfieldcricketclub)



# Church news

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## **Church of England Worship at St James the Great, Stonesfield**

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Churchwardens: Lindsey Sellar and Rachel Severn

[stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org](mailto:stonesfield@stonesfieldparishchurch.org)

For any enquiries or help, including pastoral support, please do contact us.

### **Parish letter: Blinking into the Light**

The sense of emerging, blinking into the light, has been one that many of us have felt over recent weeks. The longer days and spring sunshine have coincided with the gradual ending of some of the lockdown regulations to create a pervasive sense of release. But do we feel comfortable with this freedom? Just like the children returning to school, there are those who are eager to catch up with old friends and missed experiences. But there are also others who feel hesitant about stepping out again into the light.

Metaphors of light are of course a universal element of human ways of thinking. From the summer solstice at Stonehenge to the books of the Old and New Testament, or the South Asian festival of light, Diwali, many religious traditions use the analogy of light to communicate the power of truth

to enrich our lives. But our approach to light can also be ambivalent. Christian teachings often emphasise the quiet of the night, or the shade of a building, as a time for contemplation, when we are more conscious of ourselves, and can better comprehend the world that surrounds us.

After a year of constraints, of the pain of bereavement, or the ache of simple loneliness, we are impatient to embrace people and experiences that have been denied us for so long. However, the last year has also taught us the value that can be found indoors. We all resemble in this way newly-released prisoners who look back at the door of the prison closing behind them, even as they walk forward towards the pleasures of freedom.

The promise of a phased return to normality is therefore one to which we shall need to accustom our eyes, and our expectations, over the coming months. Light illuminates and warms, but it also has the capacity to dazzle. The challenge for us individually and as a community will be to measure our pace, carrying with us something of how we have learned to live differently during lockdown. As a community, we emerge from this period more aware of our reliance on each other, and of the benefits that derive from small acts of kindness. But, as individuals, we are also conscious of the inner conversations that we have had with ourselves during the period of confinement. Some have made big decisions; others much smaller or even trivial ones. It is not of course the scale of

the decisions that matters, but the way in which they are personal to each of us.

And that is where the light comes in. Decisions and resolutions - even those subsequently abandoned or neglected - are the fruits of internal reflection, enriched by the light that reaches us from elsewhere. Where we find that light varies. It can be the sunshine that comes through the window, the music we hear or overhear, the natural world that surrounds us, or the different forms of belief that we inherit or acquire. For some, those beliefs have a label or a consciously Christian identity; but for others they have less formal origins. The different sources of the light, however, matter less than the way they provide us with a sense of ourselves, and the confidence to walk out into the world.

Martin Conway

**May Services**

**Sunday 2: Fifth Sunday of Easter**

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe	All Age Worship
11am	Stonesfield	All Age Worship

**Sunday 9: Sixth Sunday of Easter**

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe	Parish Communion
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion

**Sunday 16: Seventh Sunday of Easter**

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe	Parish Communion
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion

**Sunday 23: Pentecost**

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
9.30am	Combe	Parish Communion
11am	Stonesfield	Parish Communion

**Sunday 30: Trinity Sunday**

8am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion [BCP/said]
10am	Combe	United Benefice Communion

**Wednesdays**

9.30am	Stonesfield	Holy Communion (every week)
11am	Combe	Morning Prayer (12th and 26th May)

.....

**Stonesfield Methodist Church**

**Services for May**

5 May	11am	Mrs Penny Fowler
9 May		no service
16 May	11am	Rev'd Rose Westwood (Holy Communion service)
23 May	11am	Mr Martin Hannant
30 May		no service

The Church Minister returns on 16 May to conduct the Holy Communion service. It will be a very joyous occasion indeed after so long. Several services now take place each month and there is safe space enough for others who may wish to come, and to share warm fellowship.

*‘Taste and see that the Lord is good; blessed is the man who takes refuge in Him.’ Psalm 34:8.*

Kathleen Albért

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## Roman Catholic Worship

### The Promise of Faith

Faith has two meanings: in the context of religion, one can define faith as 'belief in a god or in the doctrines or teachings of religion', about which some who are sceptical of religion tend to think of faith as simply belief without evidence. The other meaning for Christians is believing God's promises, trusting in his faithfulness, and relying on God's character and faithfulness to act.

*'The next day Jesus decided to go to Galilee. He found Philip and said to him, "Follow me"'* John 1:43-51

That passage in St. John's Gospel summarises faith: by inviting Philip to follow Him, Jesus is saying 'Trust and believe in me and I promise I will help, guide and support you for ever, leading you to an eternal life.' And that promise gives us hope that, even in the darkest of days, we can see light. Faith teaches us that we can strive for love over hate, hope over despair and light over darkness.

*'To one who has faith, no explanation is necessary. To one without faith, no explanation is possible.'*

St. Thomas Aquinas

### Holy Mass

Sunday Mass at 9.15am. Please book in advance as places are strictly limited. Social distancing is maintained and masks must be worn.

### Weekday Mass times:

Monday, Tuesday	9.30am
Wednesday	7pm followed by exposition of the Blessed Sacrament
Thursday	9.30am
Friday	9.30am followed by exposition of the Blessed Sacrament

There is no need to book – all are welcome and social distancing is strictly enforced.

### 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.*

Confession by arrangement with Fr. Clive Dytor who may be contacted on [holytrinityrcchippy@gmail.com](mailto:holytrinityrcchippy@gmail.com) or 01608 642703

For Parish updates, any further information and further support:

[www.stteresaschurch-charlbury.com/](http://www.stteresaschurch-charlbury.com/) or contact Fr. Clive Dytor at:

[chair.stteresaschurchcharlbury@gmail.com](mailto:chair.stteresaschurchcharlbury@gmail.com)

Roman Catholic Community in Stonesfield

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### New Church thought

*'Love comes into being through useful service to others'.* E Swedenborg

A cousin of mine commented on this as follows: 'Useful service is initially done as a result of a decision to be helpful. The love of doing it is a gift from the Lord that follows. As we mature, the Lord motivates us through our love of being useful.'

My 97-year-old mother died peacefully just after Easter. She was an embodiment of 'useful service to others' and thus was loved by many - an excellent example of a life well lived.

Dale Morris (898210)



Photo: Daniel Hooper

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**Anna Burnside** PARTNER

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**Jacqui Birks** TAX DIRECTOR

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# BLENHEIM



We are delighted to have re-opened our Park, Gardens, Gift Shop and outdoor catering last month, and are excited to announce our Palace State Rooms, The Orangery Restaurant and our **NEW Exhibitions** will open as from 17th May. A pre-booked time slot is essential prior to any visit, including all Annual Pass Holders and Walking Permit Holders.

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## Apply for our Bursary Scheme

We are inviting grant applications for our 2021 bursary scheme from local projects and charities that focus their work on bringing people together in the local community. The £50,000 Blenheim Bursary is available to all charities and organisations based within a 20-mile radius of Blenheim.

Apply online at [blenheim.org/bursary](https://blenheim.org/bursary).

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## New Homes in Bladon

The Blenheim Estate Construction team are hard at work building a new collection of homes in Bladon. The two, three and four bedroom homes will be available to let from early 2022. For more information visit [blenheimestate.com/bladonpits](https://blenheimestate.com/bladonpits).

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## Please keep dogs on leads

As lambing continues and we see more Spring babies in the Park each week, we'd like to issue a reminder that dogs must be kept on leads at all time when visiting Blenheim. We aim to create a safe environment for everybody, and the safety of our livestock and resident wildlife is our main priority.

**Please abide by the Countryside Code and keep your dog/s on a lead.**

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Keep up-to-date with our news and latest events by signing up to our newsletter at [blenheimpalace.com](https://blenheimpalace.com)

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