



## Progress Report



December 2021

## Background

The rebuilding of Chearsley Village Hall, completed in April 2018, presented an ideal opportunity for the community to reconnect with its heritage.

A permanent display of old photographic prints of village life (1900 – 1935) was mounted on the walls of the new hall and a 'Historic Chearsley' programme was formally launched at an exhibition and reception at the hall in June 2019, sponsored by the Parish Council.



Come and learn about an initiative which aims to explore the fascinating heritage of our village and reconnect our community with its past.

### Sunday 2nd June Chearsley Village Hall

11.00 – 16.00 Historic Chearsley Exhibition

13.00 – 14.00 Refreshments  
during which a presentation of the plans for  
The Historic Chearsley Project will take place.

The exhibition will display a number of fascinating resources, many of which have not been seen for many years. Please bring your own photos, family memorabilia and reminiscences to share with our community.

Our guest of honour will be  
Ann Hooton, wife of Ted Hooton, author of  
Chearsley – Living Through History  
a wonderful account of the history of our village.

The event was well received by the hundred or so attending and a significant number expressed an interest in supporting and participating in future 'Historic Chearsley' initiatives and events.

In the following months, a number of informal meetings took place to discuss some potential projects, including a 'Chearsley School Reunion' and a 'Chearsley Pub Revival Day'.

This early progress was impacted adversely with the arrival of COVID 'lockdown' measures from March 2020. In particular, the date of Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2020, which had been reserved for staging a 'Chearsley Pub Revival Day' was put on hold.

## Developments in 2021

In March 2021, as the prospect of a relaxation of 'social distancing' restrictions emerged, new advice regarding the possible formation of a more formal 'Cheersley Village Historical Society' was circulated to the community, inviting feedback via the usual channels:

<https://chearsley.blogspot.com/2021/03/launch-of-chearsley-village-historical.html>

Contact was also made with the new Buckinghamshire Heritage Portal:

<https://heritageportal.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/theme/tbc744>

During the year, a Project Team, working under the aegis of the Parish Council, started putting together plans for the restoration of The Stockwell and the surrounding area.

The initial rebuilding of the pond surround, the laying of new turf on the bank and adjacent area and some initial drainage works were completed in November.

The use of gabion baskets, as recommended by the surveyor, will secure the soil in the steep bank above the pond and the stones will gradually blend into the background, as the new vegetation and wildflowers take their hold.



If all goes to plan, the remaining works, including further landscaping, restoration of the original pump and kerbing work will be completed by the Spring of 2022.

The works undertaken so far have fallen within the agreed budget and a grant of £8,000 towards the costs has also been received from the Haddenham & Waddesdon Community Board.

The project plan also includes 'Education – Signage & Other Information' and extensive research is currently being undertaken to establish the historical context of Holy Wells in the early medieval period, as well as specific information on The Stockwell site itself.

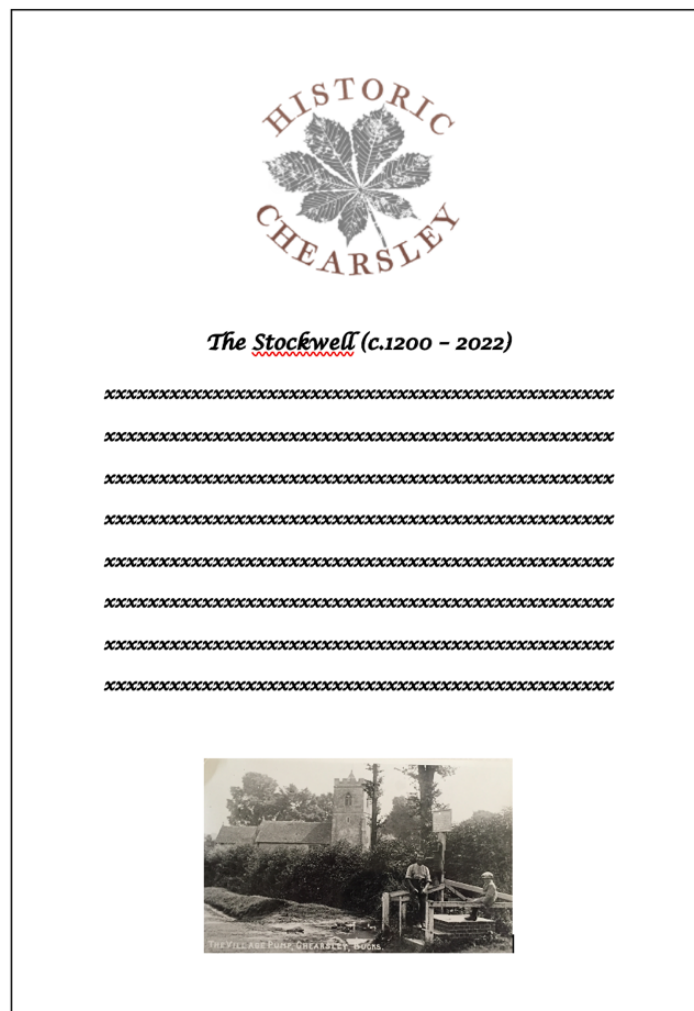
## Future Plans – 2022 and beyond

Assuming all the works are completed as expected, the restored Stockwell site could be formally launched to the community in April/May 2022.

This will also represent an ideal platform to launch further ‘Historic Chearsley’ initiatives.

The ‘launch’ will be accompanied by publication of information based on the current research, possibly using interpretation boards or other signage containing key information on the historical background to the site.

A rough ‘concept’ design is shown here but a properly designed template will be developed which could then be located on signage at other sites across the village:



Options for various types of signage will be explored and the possibility of developing a more comprehensive ‘heritage trail’ across the village including all sites of historical interest will be fully investigated.

These might include:

- St Nicholas Church
- Village Hall
- Village School
- Village Green
- Village Pond
- Cricket Club – current & former locations
- Current & former village pubs - The Bell, The Old Plough, The Boot, The White Horse, The Red Lion, The Pig & Whistle
- Houses where traditional crafts were formerly carried out
- Other listed buildings and houses of historical interest

The current schedule of all Listed Buildings in the village is available on this link:

<https://britishlistedbuildings.co.uk/england/chearsley-aylesbury-vale-buckinghamshire>

Discussions will be resumed about setting up a Chearsley Village Historical Society on a more formal basis, with representation from all interested parties in the village. The work of the new organisation might include:

- A programme for meetings, including presentations by invited speakers
- Setting up 'project groups' to manage village events – e.g. 'Chearsley School Reunion', 'Chearsley Pub Revival Day'
- Setting up an archive of historical materials, including digital records

The Parish Council has agreed to lend its support to the 'Historical Chearsley' programme, including sponsorship of individual activities and events.

At this stage, it is not possible to give any detailed budgets for planned events in the coming year and beyond, but these will be prepared in advance of all activities taking place to accompany any requests for funding from the Parish Council.

Appropriate financial support and grants will continue to be sought from other potential external resources.

**14<sup>th</sup> December 2021**