

# FULMER NEWSLETTER 71st edition

December 2022



## WELCOME TO THE 71st ISSUE OF THE FULMER NEWSLETTER

As always we have a variety of articles covering all the many things happening in Fulmer and it's good to hear how well The Studio is doing after only 12 months since opening, with the amazing choice of classes. If you haven't tried it yet do give it a go – there's certainly something for everyone.

Thanks go to our regular and loyal advertisers; those who have contributed to the newsletter; our readers and those who help deliver to each property in the parish.

Editors

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DAVID BRACKIN – Chairman, Fulmer Parish Council

Do you think you could give me hand? I'm terrible at asking for help, as many of us are, but we can all do with a helping hand from time to time. Have you the time? I know we are all suddenly busy this year and as costs increase, thoughts turn inwards. Have you fallen out of the habit of helping a neighbour or doing a daily good turn?

There's always something that a bit of neighbourly goodwill can improve, and I like to believe Churchill's aphorism that we make a living by what we get but make a life by what we give. Fulmer is special in many ways, but how we pull together as a community is one of the best and most worth fighting for. If you enjoyed the fabulous Fulmer Fireworks night, then you will know what I mean. Or throwing the welly at the Fulmer Family Fun Day, or boogying the night away at the Christmas party. Or perhaps you've been trimming and picking with the Conservation Volunteers to help us in the Best Kept Village competition. But none of these things happen without people giving up their time to organise, help out and get involved.

Now, after the Covid break more than ever, is the time to resolve to volunteer for something in the village. We've lost the habit of some of our regular events, and other long-standing volunteers have left or had to step back for reasons of health. I should at this point, very much like to thank Darren Jones for many years of helping to organise Fulmer Day, getting involved with organising Saturday morning litter picking and helping to run the Speedwatch group. He will be sorely missed by us all now that he has moved house.

There's a real risk that we will lose the right to close the road to celebrate Fulmer Day if we don't restart it next year. With another crash reported the night before I am writing this piece, the importance of an active Speedwatch group is constantly clear. And I think we would all like to improve upon this year's 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the Best Kept Village competition.

So, I wonder if you can give me a hand? I am looking for people to volunteer to re-energise the village events, to run Fulmer Day (or a Coronation Celebration if you prefer) to take on forming a plan for our 2023 Conservation work and to get involved. How this works is up to those who step up to the challenge, but none of this is done alone – I am always available to help where useful and the Parish Council can help support with modest funds for all community activities (and we have access to apply for substantial contributions where needs arise). We are also able to enable and liaise with Bucks where needed. Furthermore, I know that we have a very strong sense of community in Fulmer which means people will join in and lend a hand once a plan is set.

Gandhi's told us to be the change that you want to see in the world. If you think you'd like to change the world in Fulmer, then do please contact me, or Francesca Hall-Drinkwater.

David Brackin, Chairman Fulmer Parish Council  
Fulmer Parish Council & Duties 2022-23

David Brackin:	Chairman (chair@fulmervillage.uk ; 07970 793058) Finance Group
Susie Simkins:	Representing Fulmer in Bucks (Community Board, Police etc) Deputy Chairman; Councillor (susiemsimkins@gmail.com) Liaison with Pinewood Studios, Teikyo, RDA and Fulmer School Fulmer Newsletter Editor & Publisher
Ian Bocock:	Councillor, Trustee Fulmer Village Hall
Francesca Hall-Drinkwater:	Councillor (francescaatrushworths@gmail.com) St James Church Liaison, Churchwarden Parish Website Manager
Parm Khanghura:	Councillor (parm@connectglobalconsulting.com) Planning - inc Enforcement & Neighbourhood Plan
Lorette Du Toit:	Councillor (lorettedutoit@hotmail.com) Allotments liaison Chair & FPC member, Fulmer Sports & Community Assoc (FSCA)
Kathryn O'Reilly:	Councillor, Neighbourhood Watch & Police Liaison (kathryn@westmeathcapital.com)
Pauline Vahey:	Clerk (clerk@fulmervillage.uk) Proper Officer – Council administration & governance Responsible Finance Officer – Finance Group FPC member & Secretary, FSCA Liaison with Bucks Unitary Authority & other county-wide partners Communications
Others	
Barbara Zoltowoska:	Fulmer Village Hall Chairman- Barbara.e.zoltowska@gsk.com
Karen Nelmes:	Village Hall Lettings Secretary 07498 041253
Guy Hollis:	Unitary Councillor (Guy.Hollis@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)
Santokh Chhokar:	Unitary Councillor (Santokh.Chhokar@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)
Paul Bass:	Unitary Councillor (Paul.Bass@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)

## PERSONALIA

Deaths – we send condolences to the families of

Eric Price who died on 15 August 2022. His funeral took place at Fulmer Church on 16 September.

Anne Trott who died on 11 October 2022. A thanksgiving service was held in Fulmer Church on 31 October,

And for those of you who remember

Marjorie Frost who died on 2 May 2022. She worshipped at Fulmer in former years.

Eric Ernest Eatwell who lived in Church Row. As a boy he was a bell ringer in 1946, also

had family at Church Farm. There was a burial of his ashes on 11 August.

David Belcher who died on 21 October 2022. He worshipped at Fulmer in 1970's/80's. David ran the youth club, he was also a sidesman and bell ringer.

Jerry Gurney who died on 2 November. Jerry & Bridget lived for many years in Cherry Tree Lane before they moved to Devon. A service of thanksgiving for Jerry's life was held at East Portlemouth on 26 November.

Baptism & Marriage - we congratulate

James Reid and Francesca Bliss on the birth of their son George, who was baptised in St James Church Fulmer, on 9<sup>th</sup> July 2022.

We congratulate

Luke Bishop and Charlotte Metherell on their marriage in St James Church Fulmer, on 23<sup>rd</sup> July 2022. Charlotte is Lynn Mason's niece.

#### Anne Trott 1934 – 2022

Anne was born and grew up in the village of Abercrave, South Wales where everyone was in some way connected to the mining industry. Her father was the Blacksmith who looked after the ponies who went down the mines. He also was the local organist at the Methodist Chapel. She came from a very musical family who all loved singing and her father would regularly play the piano in the front parlour whilst Anne and her mother sang together. She enjoyed performing in the local Eisteddfod, reciting poetry and singing solo from a very young age. She was an only child until her little sister Averil was born 9 years later.

In 1953 Anne left Wales and trained to be a nurse at St Mary's Hospital Paddington. A caring person by nature she enjoyed the training and hospital life and became a charge nurse on the Medical Unit which she felt equipped her in life to be disciplined and stand up on her own two feet. She met her husband Ian at one of the hospital "hops" dances and they married in 1958.

Children followed and within 2 ½ years they had three daughters, living in Plymouth for the first five years then coming up to the South-East and settling in Stoke Poges for the next 23 years. The household grew as a new passion emerged and they bought their first Irish Setter puppy, Francis, followed by Ben then Shoonagh, which led to a litter of puppies (and two more dogs were added to the family). At the same time she was bitten by the “dog showing” bug and would be seen travelling up and down the country in a weekend going to the shows and winning the coveted red rosettes and trophies, even winning a first at Crufts. In total she had three litters, each with 14 puppies, and seven dogs who were part of the furniture!

At the same time back in the 80’s she re-trained in Aromatherapy and Reflexology and ran her treatment room from home. Always a giving person, she had that special touch and thoroughly enjoyed this new way of helping others.

In 1990 Ian and Anne bought Fulmer Gardens House in Fulmer, a house that had many royal connections and history, but which hadn’t been treated so kindly in latter years and needed a lot of attention and love. This they both relished and they turned it back into a wonderful family home, which has been filled on many occasions as the family has grown with the additional 10 grand and 9 great grandchildren over the last thirty years.

Another big and important part of their lives was becoming members of the church community at St James, Fulmer. Not only did they love hosting monthly prayer meetings at their home but also joining the choir at the church and singing each week and performing in various Jubilee and Commemorative events, like the 400 year Anniversary of the church. Anne served on the “Feather duster” team keeping the church shiny clean and also loved baking and serving teas at Little Fishes midweek service for toddlers and Mums.

Anne always gave 100% enthusiasm to all she did. She enjoyed her family and was proud of everyone in it. She instilled old fashioned values of telling the truth, listening to others, avoiding gossip and was a stickler for annunciation! She was loyal and trustworthy, but never dull! Many have commented on her colourful style and flair, which she had in abundance, but her true beauty was from within, a caring, grateful heart, a strong faith in Christ and joie de vivre! She was bright and beautiful, and we will certainly miss her.



## Eric Kelsey Price 1937-2022

Eric needs little introduction to most people in the Fulmer area as many local people came to Fulmer Plant Park for their plants, trees, garden supplies and advice. He founded the garden centre in Cherry Tree Lane 40 years or so ago and being the hardworking man he was, devoted a huge amount of time to it. He had a vast knowledge of trees and plants gathered from his long career in gardening and apprenticeship at Windsor Castle gardens and estate.

Eric and I moved into Kingfisher Lodge, Cherry Tree Lane 25 years ago and loved the house and the area. When Eric retired he was always ready to give out to neighbours and friends help and advice with their garden planning and plants. He loved Cherry Tree Lane and kept the paddock which he owned immaculate and mown throughout the year and I think the 'Cherry Tree Laners' appreciated this as it enhanced the lane.

Kingfisher Lodge has beautiful and rare rhododendrons in the gardens, which in May are so beautiful and in every colour; he was so passionate about his rare plants and trees. At the rear of Kingfisher he made his lovely Japanese garden with trees in that style and carefully pruned to shape, this was his hobby until his death; he never stopped working despite suffering ill health for some years.

Many people will miss Eric and all his expertise, however the people who will miss him most will be his family and grandchildren. We had amalgamated our two families on our marriage and shared with pleasure our children and grandchildren who all loved Kingfisher Lodge and the paddock. The paddock has seen so many picnics and games over the years, our grandchildren of all ages making a beeline to play there on sunny afternoons, joined latterly sometimes by neighbours and their children.

Eric wanted to be buried in Fulmer churchyard and so his ashes will be there in the church where we were married and where his funeral service was conducted. It had a special place in his heart.

Thank you to everyone who attended Eric's funeral and to the many in the Lane who have supported me with their kind words and flowers.

Susan Price

### **Don't forget to remember ....**

2022 has been a very difficult year for so many. It's also been a year of remembering. Remembering is very important to us as human beings. I read recently that 'if we have no memory, we are adrift – because memory anchors us to the past, interprets the present, and charts a course for the future.'

Opportunities for remembering have been seen in vigils and memorial services across our country and around the world, following HRH Queen Elizabeth's death in June this year. Thousands and thousands of comments and signatures written in Books of Remembrance and many, many candles lit in memory of our late Queen.

At the end of October, St James Church, Fulmer, again held the Annual Memorial Service, the first since the COVID pandemic at the beginning of 2020 - an opportunity to remember loved ones lost and light candles in their memory. On Remembrance Day we also remembered through our hymns and our prayers, the laying of wreaths, the tolling of bells, The Last Post and 2 minutes silence, those brave men and women who gave their lives in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> World Wars and subsequent wars. All very poignant and meaningful occasions of remembering.

Annual events, such as birthdays, anniversaries and remembering significant milestones achieved are also meaningful to us, our families and friends.

There is much remembering in the Bible. 'Remembering' is 're-remembering', re-attaching something that has been cut off. God remembered us through Jesus and as Christians there are significant events that we remember each year and can read about in the Bible. The main church events are Good Friday and Easter. These are occasions for us to remember Jesus' death on the cross when he took upon himself our sin, all the bad stuff we've ever done, that separate us from God. Jesus' resurrection three days later, reminds us that He conquered death so that we too will be raised to new life and live for eternity with him when we die if we put our trust in Him. This gives us hope, a sure confidence in this life that we are secure in Christ, for there is no more condemnation, we are no longer separated from God for we are 're-remembered' by God through Christ.

Our late Queen often remembered Jesus Christ in her BBC broadcasts on Christmas Day. Amongst her memories of the past year, she would often talk of her faith. Here is an excerpt from Christmas 2012: *"This is the time of the year when we remember that God sent his only Son 'to serve, not to be served'. He restored love and service to the centre of our lives in the person of Jesus Christ..."*

We too can experience the remembering of Jesus Christ at Christmas, a significant time for Christians. It's an opportunity to remember not only the birth of Jesus, as we hear the Christmas story again, sing carols and also remember Jesus' death and resurrection in the bread and the wine at the Lord's Table on Christmas Eve night.

So, 'don't forget to remember' to join us for our special Christmas services this December, as we remember Jesus, Immanuel, which means God with us.

Do check out Christmas service details included with this Newsletter, or go to: [www.saintjames.org.uk](http://www.saintjames.org.uk).

Revd Jill Roth, Pastor – Fulmer St James, Gerrards Cross & Fulmer

## St James Fulmer.....

“God save our gracious Queen” – a phrase most of us have said all our lives. On June 5<sup>th</sup> we held a special Service to celebrate our Queen’s 70 years on the throne, joining in Fulmer, with many Churches through the land, as part of the memorable Jubilee weekend. The Church was beautifully decorated. Wine, refreshments and finger food were served afterwards. We were each given a booklet “Our Faithful Queen, 70 years of Faith and Service.”

After a wonderful Summer, weather at least, with temperatures beating records in many parts of the Country, by September 11<sup>th</sup> we were very sadly saying goodbye to our Queen at a Service of Remembrance. It seemed as if the world mourned her passing, so great her reign.

So, after Charles’s accession to the throne “God save our gracious King”.

Although we had little to do with the practical aspects of her support, we were pleased as a Church to be alongside Maria and her young girls, refugees from Ukraine. Sponsored, very capably, by the Robinson’s, Maria had one daughter at the Beehive nursery and one in Fulmer Infant School. She, herself, had a job at the Black Horse, before moving to Hampshire to take a role more suited to her career as a scientist. An immediate presence of the war in Ukraine.

The Autumn term saw the return to **Coffee & Chat** on a Thursday morning 8.45 – 10.00am. Usually for Fulmer Infant School Mums, Dads and carers and those from the Beehive this is open to all should you wish to come. Special events this term have been “Teddy Time”, November 3<sup>rd</sup> for the pre-schoolers who come with their Mums! On December 8<sup>th</sup> we will be making Wreaths. Other events will be planned for the Spring and Summer terms.

The **Vision Dinners** for all the St James congregations were held at the Centre September 30<sup>th</sup> & October 1<sup>st</sup>. Matt and the team spoke on our theme for the year, “Treasuring Christ Together”, stepping up to bringing others into the Christian family. The evenings were a great success and the food and companionship very enjoyable.

Our next big service was **Harvest Festival**, an all-age service in a specially decorated Church when we were pleased to welcome the children from the Village and the school. The children took part, reading and interacting with a very good talk given by Ross Mungavin our Youth Pastor. Post Covid, we were again able to hold our **Memorial or Bereavement Service** on October 31<sup>st</sup> to remember and light candles for close relatives and friends lost recently or sometime back. Many attended and afternoon tea was served. On another sombre note, we gave thanks on **Remembrance Sunday**, November 13<sup>th</sup> for the fallen in all wars. We welcomed many, including our Unitary Councillor, Paul Bass.

Reverend Jill and I would like to thank all those that serve in any way towards running various activities across the Church.

So, we move into Advent and our Christmas services. You’ll be receiving a Christmas brochure “The Everlasting Light” outlining services across both Churches so I’ll just outline our St James Fulmer services here.

Sun 11<sup>th</sup> **Advent Carols** 11.15am

Fri, 16th Dec **Carols at the Pub** 7:30pm The Black Horse. Families do come, invite friends for carol singing, a drink and mince pie. Ross will give a short Christmas talk.

Sun 18 **Advent Carols** 11.15am. At 6.00pm **Carols by Candlelight** 6pm. A beautifully lit traditional service of readings and carols.

Sat 24 Dec **Christingle Carols** 4pm. For families, come and celebrate Christmas Eve with a traditional Christingle service. **Christmas Eve Service** 9:30pm. A quiet and reflective Christmas Eve Service

Sun, 25 Dec **Christmas Day Celebration** 11.15am Come and celebrate with us on Christmas day with a short service for the whole family.

Please join us for some of the above and indeed for our usual services into the New Year. A heartfelt Happy Advent and Christmas to everyone!

Francesca Hall—Drinkwater  
Church Warden.

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FROM OUR MP JOY MORRISSEY

### **Protecting the Green Belt in South Buckinghamshire**

Since my election in 2019 I have made protecting the Green Belt my top priority. I have argued for more protections for green spaces, agricultural land and wonderful local parks such as Colne Valley Regional Park and Little Marlow Lakes Country Park. I have made these arguments to planning committees, planning inspectors, Ministers and even the Prime Minister.

In the Ivers there is the triple threat of Pinewood Studios, a proposed motorway service area and a raft of data centre applications. Last year I founded the Iver Action Group, to bring together local councillors, residents' groups, and local people to find coordinated solutions for the problems faced in the Ivers.

Through that group we have organised a coordinated campaign to hold back these completely unnecessary and damaging projects. Currently we are fighting several major applications from first instance to appeal. I am engaging with Buckinghamshire Council, the Minister for Roads, the Department for Transport and HS2 Ltd to make sure that if these developments have to happen, it will be somewhere suitable for the purpose, rather than the Ivers.

I know that there is great strength of feeling from residents in and around the area of the proposed Marlow Film Studios in the Little Marlow Lakes Country Park. I have been to see the area many times and its importance to the local landscape, wildlife and biodiversity make it the wrong place to site such a development, a view I made abundantly clear in my objection to the application.

There are times where the fight against inappropriate development goes beyond the planning application and developers seek to appeal the decision of democratic local representatives. This is the case with the Beeches Park development in Beaconsfield, which seeks to place a significant amount of new housing on beautiful green fields, trampling ancient woodland in the process, when there are brown field sites available.

I have been in close contact with Buckinghamshire Council on this process and I am pleased to say that they are committing full and comprehensive resources. Appointing one of the most experienced planning consultants in the country and retaining King's Counsel to fight the appeal and show how seriously we take this issue.

My commitment to you is that I will continue to fight for you and your communities to protect our stunning countryside.

## FROM OUR COUNTY COUNCILLOR, Paul Bass

It's been a year since my last piece for the Fulmer newsletter; I know that as it was just after Remembrance Sunday. I must thank Susie for the reminder to put virtual pen to virtual paper. I'd argue that it has been a year of some highs and some lows at the Unitary and the Local Council. Fortunately, the recent political uncertainty in the country hasn't really impacted locally, yet, but there may be some challenges to come. Maybe I can focus on that first. There has been much discussion at Council regarding budgets. Delays to social care reform do mean some budget relief in the short term and the funding that supports the Council 'Helping Hands', a fund to support our most vulnerable in Bucks – will remain in place. On the other side, there are inflationary pressures from commissioned services in the care sector due to wage pressures and the increase in the National Living Wage. Even the windfall tax on electricity generators may come back to bite as Bucks does produce electricity from the Energy and Waste facility. So, it is a complex picture that will have more twists and turns in the months ahead.

There has been much debate, anger and frustration around the change in waste and recycling delivery just after Easter this year. This was felt across the legacy South Bucks and Chiltern areas, no area or round was untouched. There are still some pockets of disruption in the Fulmer Parish and the Parish Council has been very forward leaning in providing a first response for those impacted. The cabinet member has personally visited the Parish to see the issues first hand and the Fulmer Parish Council Chair, and myself, have a direct line to the Council Officers responsible for 'making better'. The Council are very aware of the ongoing reporting issues and IT 'failures' and are making efforts to improve this. I'll pass on one message, if your bin (any colour) hasn't been collected and you file an on-line report, it may come up with an error message. Although not communicated very well, this normally means that they are aware, and it has been rescheduled for the next or subsequent days. We will all continue reporting, calling and engaging on your behalf until the service is at steady state.

Winter is almost here, and the wet weather is certainly showing itself. There has been a lot of investment in the drains and gullies over the last 12 months and this will continue into next year. Problem areas will remain, and there will also be cyclic requirements to clear. Generally, the relationship with the highways team is very good and these areas are either routinely planned, repaired and cleared, or they react very quickly to call outs. Any concerns with localised flooding on the highways can be reported by the Fix My Street website – [fixmystreet.com](http://fixmystreet.com), or the app. There is also an emergency number to call if you consider there is a risk to life or property – in office hours 01296 382416, out of hours – 01296 486630. I have used it myself – it works. The same website should be used to report potholes and other highways related defects. They will be inspected, and you will get a response and updates. There are other emergency numbers for services at the Bucks website, just search for Bucks Council Emergencies. On the highways again, you should see Fulmer Road getting patched very soon, from the Oxford Road to the bridge across the motorway, and a little more - long overdue. One thing to note, the highways service providers will soon be changing, this is being monitored and managed very closely so you should see little / no disruption, of course the plan is for better. The plan to provide formal verge parking for the playing fields remains unchanged although the timeline is later than we hoped.

I had the pleasure in attending the Fulmer fireworks recently, a wonderful evening and great weather. My young family had a great time. Party season will soon be among us and I note St James' has a busy and varied itinerary and the Parish Council have their own party planned in the Village Hall. I hope everyone can find some joy and relaxation over the festive period, and please do continue to support your wonderful Parish Council.

### **PLANNING IN FULMER – Parm Khanghura, Parish Councillor**

In the 12 months between November 15th 2021 to November 15th 2022, a total of 37 planning applications for the Parish of Fulmer have been received and reviewed by the Parish Council – an average of 3.08 applications per month compared to the 33 received over the same period in the previous year. For comparison, Gerrards Cross Town Council received 307 applications in the same period, or just over 25.6 applications per month a fall on the previous 12 months from 374 applications. Iver Parish Council 261 (242 in the previous 12 months). Hedgerley Parish with 24 applications, remaining static. In comparison to our Parish Neighbours, Fulmer Parish has seen a marginal increase in the number of applications submitted. Iver Parish has seen an increase over the same period.

As is often the case the applications received have ranged from TPO orders (mostly permission request to fell trees) to the construction of new stand-alone buildings, to single and double storey developments as well as several conversions and change of use requests. There are always contentious developments, and we continue to work with concerned residents to deal with such developments as well as enforcement issues, working closely with the Council to address concerns raised.

The process is that the Parish Council is given a few weeks to comment on any planning applications before the South Bucks and Chiltern District planning officers meet and decide finally on each case. We have seen improved traction with the Planning teams now under a unitary body and have seen several historic applications finally move to a decision. Parish residents are welcome to attend the monthly Parish meetings to voice their thoughts and concerns on planning matters. We will continue to act as your conduit into the planning office to express your concerns and reflect your thoughts on planning matters in the Parish of Fulmer.

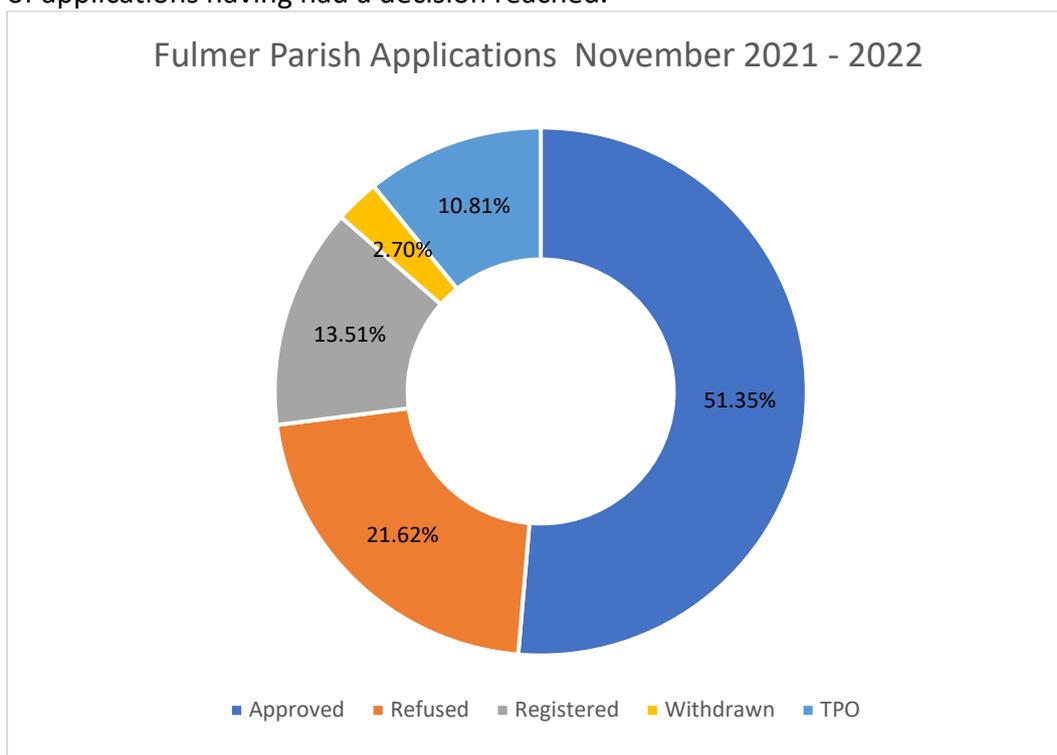
The main priority of the Parish council is to provide its views to the Planning Officers. We remain committed to the protection of village life and prevention from overdevelopment; our aim being to promote development which helps the Parish to continue to function as a participative community, preferring buildings for permanently resident families, over huge 'structures' that can sometimes attract temporary residents. We continue to consider a Neighbourhood Plan, waiting on the Local Plan to be finalised (having been withdrawn on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2020 with a fast-track approach aiming to have a pan-Buckinghamshire plan by 2025). We have registered our desire to create plan to the local authority and currently are exploring the process and available support.

In the 12 months from November 15<sup>th</sup> 2021, Chiltern & South Bucks Council have published decisions on 37 planning applications affecting the Parish of Fulmer.

Below are the number of applications received over the same period in the last 5 years.



In addition, the graphic below shows the split of the status of applications. 13.51% are still awaiting a decision – most coming as recent applications. Over the last 12 months over 86% of applications having had a decision reached.



The Fulmer Parish Council will continue to provide commentary on Parish views with regards to planning applications and to support and work with Fulmer residents with regards to a number of long-standing Enforcement activities working closely with Chiltern & South Bucks Council.

The Village continues to be very active with the increase of applications over the last 12 months, with the number of Planning requests high for such a small community. The Parish Council would very much like to hear from Residents of the Parish on how we work better in providing information and supporting any concerns for all planning matters.

## **Fulmer Village Hall**

Fulmer Village Hall is situated at the heart of Fulmer Village, opposite the 17th Century redbrick church, only a stone's throw from the equally historic Black Horse public house and surrounded by picturesque cottages.

A frequent winner of Buckinghamshire's Best Kept Village competition, the setting of the Village Hall offers a charming backdrop for any function or celebration.

Fully licensed for the sale of alcohol, facilities include a modern kitchen, numerous tables and chairs, disabled access to the main hall, a stage, one smaller meeting room and, of course, parking and loos, including a disabled lavatory.

The Hall can comfortably accommodate up to 120 people standing or 80 seated. It regularly provides a venue for family celebrations including wedding receptions, anniversary and birthday parties, both children's and adults', as well as seated dinners, catered from the kitchen.

It is also available for regular weekly or monthly evening activities.

The Hall is one of the best available locally, in the prettiest of settings, and offers excellent value for money.

Please call Karen Nelmes (Lettings Secretary) on 07498 041253 for more details and to discuss your specific requirements.

We look forward to welcoming you to Fulmer Village Hall!





## TEIKYO SCHOOL UK

A Japanese Boarding School providing secondary education for students aged 15 to 18.

It was a quiet summer at Teikyo due to the language schools we usually host still not being able to encourage students to travel to the UK despite the cessation of lockdown. It was probably just as well with the soaring temperatures that we experienced, more like the heat of a typical Tokyo summer.

The School closed on 19 September in respect of the Queen's funeral and the boarding students watched the service together on a big screen in the dining hall. They observed with intense interest and recognised the significance of the event.

We are getting back into a full timetable of events and activities. Since our last update we have held our first school fete at the end of September to be open to the public. We were fortunate with the weather and enjoyed the company of many visitors from the local community, one of our biggest crowds ever! Honey, from our apiaries on Campus were particularly popular, selling over 80 jars on the day. Visitors enjoyed the Japanese drum performance and workshop, pounding and eating mochi rice cake, writing their names in Japanese, and much more. Our students were proud to share Japanese culture and use their English to communicate with them.

Mid-term examinations have been completed and the Autumn School trip took staff and students off to Italy for sightseeing, museums, and art galleries.

November is the month of work experience for second year students and the School cross-country race, then we will all be prepping up for Christmas.

Dean Simpson, Bursar

Best wishes

幸運をお祈りしています

Teikyo School



## **The Studio**

### **King George's Fields Fulmer (KGFF)**

Since opening in summer 2021 The Studio has gone from strength to strength, providing both physical and mental support to the community.

From life as a run-down, ex-Guide hut, the trustees of KGFF used funding provided by Fulmer Parish Council to refurbish the building into a great space for the health studio. There was also a great deal of support from community members including the provision of a mirrored wall, sound system and equipment.

Due to its high standard of finish and well-priced hire out rates, KGF has been able to attract top trainers, offering a very diverse range of activities to both young and old, including Yoga; Kettlebells, Meditation, Pilates, Body Combat and Dance classes.

Revenue has also been good, which has allowed us to significantly reduce the outstanding finance and provide additional funding for KGFF in order to facilitate other charitable activities.

If you would like to attend some of the wonderful classes please go to: [thestudiokgff.com](http://thestudiokgff.com)

## **FOOTBALL IN FULMER**

Gerrards Cross & Fulmer FC kicked-off the football season in September. The club continues to flourish with 22 squads and 327 members between the ages of 7-18; it uses multiple sites for training and matches across Gerrards Cross, Fulmer, Wexham and Farnham Common. The club is entirely volunteer led with a mission of providing a fun and safe environment for young people to play football and learn the beautiful game.

The girls game continues to grow. We now have approximately 70 girls registered with the club and we are very proud of our girls development - 4 of our members recently signed with Oxford United's Women's Academy having learned the game in Fulmer

The 2022 season saw our first season in league cricket which was very successful. It was the first time in our long history that we have played league cricket.

**Playing performance in 2022** - We entered Division 2 of Chilterns League to start our league career playing 16 matches, winning 15 and drawing one. We won the league by a big margin and have been promoted to Division 1 next year. Congratulations to all the players who played league cricket and brought home the trophy. The results of our friendly matches were not quite the same with 16 wins, 14 losses, 2 matches cancelled and won abandoned due to rain. Overall, we must say that we had a successful year on the field. We had 16 new members during the year which helped our playing strength. We had two players scoring over 1,000 runs for the season: Priyan with 1,183 and Khashif with 1,051.

The annual **President's match**, which took place on 24 July, saw a win for the Club. In the 27 years of the President's matches, the President's XI have won 14, Fulmer 11, 1 was a tie and a draw. The day started with the traditional lunch, a good part of which was supplied by Kiki and Peter and served with the help of Sue Box and other helpers from FCC. As is mostly the case with this match, the weather was fine. The President's team won the toss and elected to bat and scored 215 for the loss of 6 wickets. An excellent 113 not out from Priyan, 41 from Brijesh, 29 from Nick and an important 23 not out from Sam, saw us home in 37 overs for the loss of 3 wickets. We wrapped up a wonderful afternoon with a BBQ and a few drinks. All thanks go to Kiki, Peter and members of the Guinness family and Sue and other members of the Fulmer CC for making it such an enjoyable day.



**Off Field activities** - David Timms has done a great job in getting the end of season statistics. We should also mention Ben Fisher who attends each home game and manages the bar while the match is in progress. He also does a great job with packing up at the end of the day and making sure the pavilion is properly secure before leaving. I am pleased to report that Ben has been awarded the **Unsung Hero Award** by Buckinghamshire County Cricket. Ben's name and attributes went forward to the ECB National Awards and we are delighted to report that he received a Highly Commended award.

## BUCKS CRICKET AWARDS 2022

### BEN FISHER – FULMER CC



Tony King, our Hon Treasurer, does a great job in keeping the finances under control, making sure that all players pay their dues, and Armando Borges does a lot of work behind the scenes as a Hon Secretary. Our skippers Priyan, Peter Bradford and Tony play a big role in getting out teams and managing our playing performances.

The club is looking to acquire a new lawnmower and any donations towards the cost of this would be greatly appreciated.

Awards for 2022 8 October 2022

**Batting** - Most runs - Priyan Vijay, 1183; Highest innings - Mani Raza, 154; Best average - Priyan Vijay, 62.26

**Bowling** - Most wickets - Waqqas Hashmi, 36; Best in a match - Waqqas Hashmi, 7-35  
Best bowling average - Mani Raza, 10.56; Duck Cup - Julian Gibbs

**Qualitative Awards** - Players' player – Priyan Vijay; Best fielder – Namit Panday; Manu Kapila Award for Best Young Player – Joe Acland; Most improved – Brijesh Lath; Most valuable player – Waqqas Hashmi; Outstanding contribution – Khashif Hashmi  
Chairman's award – Priyan Vijay

**New Players Welcome** - We have excellent playing facilities and are a very friendly Club. New players, of whatever standard, are always welcome. Please refer to our website for contact details [www.fulmercricquetclub.com](http://www.fulmercricquetclub.com)

**2023 Season**

We look forward to our league season in Division 1 of Chilterns League which will be much tougher than Division 2. Indoor nets will commence in February. Please refer to our website.

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## Fulmer Family Fireworks Night

Fulmer Family Fireworks Night took place at King George's Field, Fulmer on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2022. Tickets were sold online in advance and as luck would have it, this was the driest night of the week and the sold-out event attracted over 830 visitors from Fulmer, Stoke Poges, Iver Heath, Wexham and the surrounding areas. Once again, Buckinghamshire Council supported our application for a road closure for the evening on Fulmer Common Road. Everyone who didn't walk from the village was able to drive and park safely and car parking spaces for those with a disability were made available in the car park. The evening kicked off at 6pm with a welcome from our dazzling LED stilt walkers...



...and live music from Buckinghamshire band, The Remedy. The band, headed by James Manders, featured James's son Jack, runner up in Young Drummer of the Year 2022. Jack played drums on the night and received a lot of compliments for his awesome riffs.



Hot food was provided by The Barbarian Grill and Aroma Pizza, with Cakes and Hot Chocolate for those with a sweeter tooth.



Both the inside bar (run by Brendan and Paul) and outside bar (run by Liz, Kay, Catherine and Charlotte) were kept extremely busy from the start of the evening but as these intrepid volunteers ran both bars so efficiently, no one had to queue for long for their mulled wine, beer or favourite tippie. At 7pm Danny The Fire Performer, from Somerset brought us his talent, putting on a dazzling 30 minute show. His fire performance included fire eating, dancing and juggling with flames and culminated in a firework extravaganza. To the delight of all our visitors, a spectacular fireworks display lit up the sky at 7.30pm.



The Grand Raffle was drawn by David Brackin, Chair of Fulmer Parish Council and the numbers were called out by MC Ian Finan. A fabulous selection of prizes were won by very happy ticket holders. The prizes, donated by a variety of local businesses and local families, included a selection of free classes at The Studio, KGFF, tickets for Pinewood Cinema, a variety of golfing days out, a free Magic Show, various health and beauty treatments and lots of bottles of booze!

Fulmer Family Fireworks Night was organised by Ian Finan, Liz Finan, Andrew Nealon and myself with the support of the trustees of Fulmer Sports and Community Association. But it was our many fabulous volunteers on the night, whose hard work made the event so special and such fun. Over £3000 was raised which will go towards helping the King George's Field, Fulmer Charity to maintain and improve the facilities at KGFF for the benefit of residents of Fulmer village and the surrounding areas.

Linda McKenzie, KGFF Trustee

*Many congratulations to all involved who for another spectacular and fun Firework Event – Linda and her team of helpers deserve much praise for all the work they do to make this a much loved date in Fulmer's calendar - Editors*

#### BLACK PARK NEWS

It has been a busy summer and autumn in Black Park, as well as making the park a safe and welcoming place for our visitors we have also been delivering several projects that are aimed at improving the parks ecology, habitats, and landscape.

In the warmer months you may have spotted terrapins basking in parts of the lake in Black Park. These non-native animals were released here likely following the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtle craze, where many people kept them as pets. What people didn't realise is they can grow to the size of a dinner plate! It is illegal to release them due to the negative impacts on the environment they are now classed as an invasive species in the UK. Terrapins eat lots of native invertebrates, water plants and even fish. Alongside this, despite it looking like a lovely place for a terrapin to live, harsh winters have devastating consequences and many die. The trapping is completely humane. The terrapins climb up them to bask in the sun, naturally heading to the highest point and gently fall into the middle of the trap. When these are set properly later in the year, they will be checked daily to remove any terrapins trapped. The way it has been designed means other wildlife could easily get out and we don't trap anything other than then terrapins. Since 2021 we have been working with The National Turtle Sanctuary to remove them from Black Park Lake and rehome them. Last year we caught and re-homed 12 and in 2022 a further 2 were removed. We think there are another 2 left in the lake, but we have already made a significant reduction in their population and ecologically the lake will be in much better shape without them. The Black Park Terrapins are now living in a specially built enclosure at the National Turtle Sanctuary in Lincolnshire. They have a great spacious set up designed by experts in herpetology to provide the turtles with the conditions they need to live healthy, happy lives. We hope our shelled friends will be very happy there. For more information head to their website - <http://www.lincswildlife.com/national-turtle-sanctuary/>

This autumn we have been carrying out a significant amount of forestry work in Black Park, this is all based on our 10-year Woodland Management Plan that has been developed with the Forestry Commission, the Government department responsible for our woodlands in the UK. Forestry work and the thinning of trees is a vital part of woodland management in Black Park and timing of the work is crucial. The main breeding season for birds and bats is spring through to summer, so this period must be avoided, however if we wait too long into winter the chances of the machinery getting stuck and making more dramatic mess in and around the woods increases enormously. So autumn is when we try to fit in projects of this kind.

We're really pleased that the contractors we worked with in 2018 were available once again. Practicality Brown and Powell Forestry worked together to deliver some great results last time. It's not easy doing this kind of work with such large machinery whilst leaving relatively little collateral damage to the remaining trees, woodland floor, tracks and verges. The main machine, the 'harvester' has an operational weight of well over 20 tonnes. It is about 8m long and the arm that does the cutting adds another 8m to that! Weaving through the trees, away from hard surfaces, inevitably leads to some bumps, dips and scratches. We do appreciate that many of our visitors would prefer not to see our trees cut down and removed. We use a form of woodland management called Continuous Cover forestry. Rather than clear-fell a whole section at a time and replant, we have been using a more sympathetic approach of thinning for many years. The idea is that when the machinery and timber leave site, what's left is space for young trees to grow alongside their larger and older neighbours. This makes the woods more interesting structurally and visually as well as more biodiverse. The richness of a woodland's wildlife is mostly found at the margins, where light is most available. By removing some trees we let light reach the woodland floor even within the heart of the woods. This maintains the seedbank by allowing any dormant seed a chance to grow and

therefore increases opportunities for wildflowers/grasses and young trees and shrubs. Our acidic soils host a whole range of native wildflowers, which need varying levels of light. For example, Lesser Skullcap (*Scutellaria minor*), Cat's Ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*) and Tormentil (*Potentilla erecta*) are all found in Black Park. You will probably have seen around the park that the favoured locations for most of our butterflies, dragonflies and other invertebrates like hoverflies and bees tend to be where light levels are highest. Timber sold from our forestry creates income. The materials are processed and used for a combination of fencing, joinery, animal bedding, biochip and firewood. With a site like Black Park continuing to produce home grown timber, we can contribute to reducing carbon emissions globally, by less imports whilst support the local economy.

As we approach Christmas and the end of a busy year, The Country Parks Team, would like to thank Fulmer Parish residents for their support throughout the last year, we know many of you are regular Black Park users and often our eyes and ears on the ground, from spotting fallen trees to letting us know when a cow on the heathland is looking unwell; without this type of support our work would be a lot harder and a lot less enjoyable.

**Tim Williams**, [tim.williams@buckinghamshire.gov.uk](mailto:tim.williams@buckinghamshire.gov.uk)



### **Stoke Poges, Wexham & Fulmer Horticultural Society**

**All about Herbaceous Borders** - The Society's Autumn programme started on 21 September with a most interesting talk about the origins of the herbaceous border given by Carolyn Foster with a wonderful set of slides and lots of practical tips.

**Table Show and Seed Swop** - Our speaker for our Autumn Members Social Evening, Matt George, was unfortunately taken ill with Covid at the last minute and was unable to present his talk 'Wildlife in the Garden', but we hope he will come next year and tell us about establishing wildflower meadows and encouraging bio- diversity in the garden.

However, Franzi Cheeseman stepped in and presented an interesting talk on seeds, their germination and methods of dispersal. This was very timely as it coincided with a new initiative, where members were able to swap a variety of different seeds.

Some 50 people attended a very convivial evening, enjoyed a buffet provided by the committee and voted on the entries in the 14 classes in the informal Table Show. John Burrowes was the overall winner of 'Best in Show' for his colourful collection of vegetables.

**AGM** - The AGM was held at St Andrew's Church Centre on Saturday 12 November at 2:30 pm, it gave members an opportunity of meeting during the daytime, enjoying afternoon tea provided by the committee and hearing a presentation by Tom Webb, "Bird song in the garden". This not only showed the birds but also allowed us to hear their songs.

After 9 years Ruth Rooley retired as Chairman. Maureen Barton was elected Chairman. Five additional members were elected to the committee, joining those who are continuing to serve, thus ensuring the continuity of this unique, traditional Society founded in 1884.

New members are very welcome, £8 Single Membership; £12 for Joint Membership (2 adults in the same household, children under 16 free); £15 for Family Membership (2 adults and young people aged 16 - 18, or 25 if in full-time education) Member benefits include Free entry to the Show and all events.

### **Programme for 2023**

Wednesday 8 March – Spring Members Social with Table Show Illustrated Talk and finger Buffet – 8 pm at The Stoke Poges School

Saturday 22 April 10 am – 12 noon at the Village Centre– Annual Plant Sale

Wednesday 10 May – Lecture Evening – 8 pm at The Stoke Poges School

Saturday 29 July – Annual Show 12.30 – 5.30 pm at The Stoke Poges School

Wednesday 13 September – Lecture Evening 8 pm at The Stoke Poges School

Wednesday 11 October- Autumn Members Social Evening with Table Show, Illustrated Talk and finger Buffet at The Stoke Poges School

Saturday 18 November – AGM – 2.30 pm St. Andrew's Church Centre

Further details website [www.hortsoc.org](http://www.hortsoc.org) or Facebook

*Our grateful thanks to Ruth for her regular articles on all the activities of the Club during her Chairmanship – Editors*

### **FULMER ART CLASSES (Adult, part-time)**

Would you like to learn some new skills, spend three hours a week being creative and take some time just for yourself?

ColourWheel art classes are a fun and inspiring place to learn how to paint and draw.

- They are held at the Fulmer Cricket Club Pavilion on Thursdays and are a wonderful place to learn, make new friends and produce beautiful art.
- The classes are designed for both beginners and improvers; and there are morning and afternoon classes to suit busy schedules.
- You will receive tuition and guidance from our teacher allowing you to produce artwork using a variety of mediums over a 14-week period.
- We start with pencil drawing, setting the building blocks of skills for the course. We then work with charcoal, ink, pastels, watercolours, and acrylics.
- All art materials are supplied.
- The techniques of drawing and painting are taught and progressively practiced with subjects such as landscapes, still life, figure drawing and portrait.
- In the last two weeks of the course students work on a personal project choosing a medium they love and particularly enjoyed.
- 

Our next term starts on 5th January 2023. Why not come along and see our current classes in action? Join us for a free lesson, you would be most welcome.

Give Sarah a call on 01629 676979 to arrange your free taster lesson.

RIDING FOR THE DISABLED, Fulmer Branch

Fundraising

As we approach the end of 2022 and gain some normality after a tough couple of years of Covid, we're hoping that 2023 will see more fundraising opportunities.

We currently have 11 events pencilled in the diary and hope to be attending at least 2 in Fulmer. All of these will be posted on our Facebook page and on our website, [southbucksrda.org](http://southbucksrda.org). Please keep any eye out for them and come along and support us.

We always have lots of projects on the go. At the moment we're fundraising for a new mechanical horse; this is an important piece of equipment for RDA groups and opens up all sorts of new opportunities for our riders. Mechanical horses come at a high price so we see this as an ongoing project that will take us a while to achieve.

We're also fundraising for new hats as the regulations have been changed, we're constantly having to replace fencing, maintaining field shelters and machinery.

We currently have 11 horses and ponies but ideally need 14 to enable us to operate and accommodate the needs of all of our riders. We have to carefully select the equine to get the right temperament and then train them to work to RDA standards, this comes at quite a price so again it is a long-term project.

For further information on South Bucks RDA Fundraising please contact our centre Manager Frankie Paine on 01753 662796 or our Fundraising Trustee, Alan Lawrence on 07881 950147 or email [enquiries@southbucksrda.org](mailto:enquiries@southbucksrda.org)

# Did you know?

By the time you are 80 years old, you will have walked an average of 110,000 miles – the equivalent of walking around the world five times!<sup>1</sup>

It's easy to take our feet for granted but poor foot care can lead to problems in the future that can negatively impact our daily activities. It is therefore important to take good care of your feet and seek help from a foot health professional if any problems such as athlete's foot or verrucae persist.

## 5 Simple Steps To Good Foot Care<sup>2</sup>

You can keep your feet in good health with these tips from the NHS:

### Wash Your Feet Often And Dry Them Well

Use warm soapy water every day and make sure to dry between your toes to avoid a build-up of fungus

### Moisturise And File Dry Skin

Carefully remove dry skin with a foot file or pumice stone. Be careful not to take too much and damage the new skin underneath

### Cut Toe Nails Straight Across

Never pick or cut toe nails at an angle as this can cause painful ingrown toe nails

### Wear Shoes And Socks That Fit

Pay particular attention to the width of your feet when choosing shoes and socks, making sure they fit properly and comfortably

### Treat Fungal Nails<sup>3</sup>

Yellow or discoloured nails can be unsightly and sometimes painful. Over the counter treatments are available or, if these do not work

for you, there is a treatment called Clearanail® that makes tiny holes in the nail plate. These holes allow topical treatments to reach the nail bed in much higher concentrations for fast and effective results.

Your local chiropodist can help. If you are unable to treat any foot problems at home, contact your local foot health professional. They can offer treatment and advice for foot problems such as hard skin, verrucae, athlete's foot, ingrown or fungal toenails.

### References

1. How far does the average human walk in a lifetime? Available at: <https://sciencemadefun.net/blog/think-about-it-thursday-how-far-does-the-average-human-walk-in-a-lifetime/>. Last accessed: December 2018.

2. Tips on foot care. Available at: <https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-body/tips-on-foot-care/>. Last accessed: December 2018.

3. Clearanail®. Available at: <http://www.clearanail.com/home-page>. Last accessed: December 2018.

## Sore feet? We can help!

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THE EATON PRACTICE  
Chiropody & Foot Health

In my article of last June I discussed the astonishing role of fungi and the 'wood wide web' and said that until fairly recently I had known nothing about this. Which had led me to list some other things I wish I'd known long ago:

- why do leaves change colour in the autumn?
- people often insist on only planting native trees but what's a native?
- why is it that in woods beeches do better than oaks?
- what's meant by describing trees as hotels?
- what's a fossil tree?
- why do China and California have so many more tree species than Europe?
- which of the world's trees are the tallest, biggest and oldest?
- why do sequoias (wellingtonias) grow twice as tall in California as in England?
- are trees as static as they look? how do they grow?

This list is a very mixed bag but I've enjoyed looking into the answers. Some will know all this already but I hope others may be interested in at least some of them:

- *Why do leaves change colour in the autumn*  
As the trees prepare for winter their active component, chlorophyll, is withdrawn back to the roots to become a source of winter food ready to rise again in the spring. The browns, reds and yellows are the residual chemicals left behind in the leaves
- *People often insist on only planting native trees but what's a native?*  
Obviously oak, ash and beech but what about the elms and sweet chestnuts and walnuts brought here by the Romans? And the sycamores and Norway maples brought by the Vikings? In any case the best antidote to global warming and rising tree diseases is to maximise diversity of trees. We should be planting non-natives as well as natives (sometimes called exotics). Examples are Turkey oaks and London planes, cedars and hemlocks, tulip trees and hickories, even trees from the southern hemisphere like podocarps and eucalyptus.
- *Why is that in woods beeches do better than oaks?*  
It's because they do better in shade. They take their time to grow but as they mature they push through the canopy and shade out their competitors which over time will weaken and die, even oaks. Which is why beeches are sometimes known as predators, and why the best oaks are the isolated examples you see in parks
- *What's meant by describing trees as hotels?*  
One of the many things I didn't know was the extent to which trees provide lodging for multiple species both animal and vegetable. Each one is like a hotel, even a small city. Oaks provide habitats for over 2000 forms of wildlife ranging from birds to tiny insects. The California redwoods are even more prolific with whole ecosystems growing in their canopies including hundreds of lichens and

epiphytes as well as birds and mammals and insects. Many of the mammals never come down from the canopy, spending their whole lives 300 feet up in the air.

- *What's a fossil tree?*

It's a tree previously known only from the fossil record and thought to be extinct. The best known are the dawn redwood and Wollemi pine, both extinct until live examples came to light.

The dawn redwood is a deciduous conifer. Its botanical name is *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*, 'meta' meaning it's not really a sequoia even if it looks a bit like one. It was found in SW China in 1943 and people were baffled until a Japanese botanist realised he'd seen a fossil version. So it wasn't extinct after all.

The same happened with the Wollemi pine found in the Blue Mountains in Australia. In 1994 a ranger found something he didn't recognise and sent a cutting to the scientists at Sydney's Botanical Garden. Once again they were baffled until someone found the same thing in a drawer full of fossils. Its botanical name is *Wollemia nobilis*. The *nobilis* does not refer to its not-very-noble appearance but to Peter Noble, the chap who found it. What a great way to achieve immortality, giving your name to a tree!

Both trees have been widely propagated and I have two examples of each.

- *Why do China and California have so many more tree species than Europe?*

It seems they avoided the Ice Age. South-west China was particularly blessed, nearly tropical in latitude yet its high altitudes fostering temperate trees rather than jungle. By contrast in Europe, as trees tried to escape the advancing ice by moving south, they were blocked by the east-west barriers of the Alps and Mediterranean, and then, when the ice retreated, the survivors were blocked from returning. Which is why, for example, of the 124 species of maple 92 are from China, 14 from North America, and under 20 from the rest of the world. Within America California was the least affected by the Ice Age and is prolific by comparison with the rest of North America, eg of the 45 species of *Ceanothus* found in the US and Canada 43 are native to California.

- *Which of the world's trees are the tallest, biggest and oldest?*

The tallest are the giant redwoods, up to 370 feet tall, growing along the Pacific Coast north of San Francisco. They are thirsty trees but they don't need to rely only on rainfall. They receive half their water supply via fog rolling in from the Pacific. The biggest (by volume and weight) are the sequoias, some over 300 feet tall and one, the General Sherman, weighing over 6000 tonnes – enormous! By contrast the largest mammal, the blue whale, weighs a mere 200 tons. Its lowest branches start at 150 feet up and stretch 150 feet outwards, with a diameter at the start of over 6 feet. That makes the branch (150 feet in the air) bigger than a mature elm tree.

The oldest are the bristlecone pines which can live to 5000 years old. Their trick is to grow in seriously hostile conditions, at altitudes above 10,000 feet. This means

they grow exceedingly slowly, which in turn causes their wood to become particularly hard with their tree rings very close together. This insulates them from the bugs and fungi that kill other trees. Their one enemy is lightning but, provided as little as 15% of their bark remains intact, they will still absorb enough water to remain alive. So they often end up looking like *Worzel Gummidge* scarecrows, waving dead arms in the air, but still producing their needles and cones. When I went to see them, one of the trees looked young, perhaps eight feet tall; yes, said our guide, it's probably no more than 300 years old. It's striking that all three of these species grow in California.

- *why do sequoias grow twice as tall in their native California as here?* In Britain (where they are called wellingtonias) they rarely exceed 150 ft whereas in their natural habitat they grow to over 300 ft. There they live in a relatively limited area, the west-facing parts of the Sierra Nevada at altitudes between 3500 and 6000 ft, receiving heavy snowfalls in winter, and benefiting from a combination of slow melting of the snow in the spring followed by very hot summers. In England we plant them much closer to sea level and lack the Californian summers. They do pretty well here but their growing conditions are very different.
- *Are trees as static as they look? how do they grow?* When you observe trees, they seem almost stationary, and I never knew what frenetic lives they are leading, albeit in slow motion with timescales more in decades than years, let alone our own weeks and months. Each tree is a hive of activity, its cells working non-stop, bursting with electric impulses and chemical transformations, relying on photosynthesis via the chlorophyll in its leaves. This creates a sort of gas exchange, drawing carbon from the atmosphere and expelling the oxygen arising from its water supply, the water being drawn up from its roots, together with mineral nutrients. The carbon is then converted into sugars and starches. It's striking that only about a third of the sugars go into growing the tree's wood. Another third goes into its leaves and bark and fruit. And a whole third is sent back down to feed the 'third party' fungi around its roots. For the first third, growing the tree, the actual mechanism is its cambium, a very thin vertical layer running up inside the trunk. This acts as the engine room. It adds cells to either side to form the internal plumbing (vascular tubing, working by osmosis and capillary action), growing outwards towards the bark carrying the sugars down to the roots (phloem), and inwards for the tubing which brings water and minerals up from the roots (xylem). The astonishing thing is that the cambium is barely visible, only a very few cells in thickness. So each tree is a hive of activity. And that's just the tree. As mentioned above, every tree is also host to a small city of birds, mammals, insects, parasites, above all fungi.
- In conclusion, if thinking about trees leaves you wanting to know more, how about joining the Bucks Tree Club? See Bucks Tree Club ([google.com](http://google.com))

## THE JEWEL IN THE CROWN



Those of us lucky enough to have seen the magnificent Koh-i-Noor diamond at close range will be united in feeling its awesome force. It possesses an extraordinary intensity that has to be seen to be believed. Its name means 'mountain of light' and it is set as the centrepiece of the British Imperial Crown and was placed on the Queen's coffin at her recent funeral. Go back 20 years to the funeral of her mother on 9 April 2002. The day had been declared a national bank holiday, and in contrast to her daughter Queen Elizabeth II's funeral, it was comparatively low key due no doubt to fewer mobile phones and less media invasion. This meant that the route of the cortege carrying the Queen Mother's coffin from Westminster Abbey to its resting place in St George's Chapel, Windsor had not been generally disclosed. Hence its final journey was somewhat modest in comparison. The presence of drones and phones were not yet evident. Word got around that the hearse would travel up the A4 (a very unspectacular route, then and now), to eventually cross over the River Thames at Datchet and then proceed to Windsor Castle. A few of us had gathered, mainly residents, shopkeepers, railway personnel and bystanders (parking was not a problem) – to witness its solemn passing. We then heard that the procession was on its way. Carrying a small automatic camera, I positioned myself on a mini-roundabout near the railway crossing and was delighted to bump into a fellow colleague who had also decided to join the small crowd. There didn't appear to be any press or cameras present, so apart from several traffic policemen the atmosphere was expectant but dignified. Glancing at the railway crossing, we were relieved to see that the gates were firmly shut. Anyone who has taken that route to Windsor will have experienced the same last minute anxiety! The sun was shining brightly on that April day as the outriders suddenly appeared on their gleaming motorbikes. Then came the procession of several highly polished cars that shone in the sunlight.

Finally the hearse approached the junction which is quite a difficult one to negotiate considering its size and precious load. The small crowd stepped back and gasped in unison, many covering their eyes as though blinded. The effect was one of a thousand flashbulbs going off, or a streak of lightning. But no, it was the magnificent Koh-i-Noor diamond (which originally weighed 191 carats) that was the centrepiece of the crown which had been placed

on the coffin. The entourage had slowed down and the spring sun almost set fire to the jewel in the crown. 'Mountain of light' seemed a very appropriate description.

The Queen Mother wore this crown when she was crowned as the Consort of King George VI, and to state openings of Parliament and again at the Coronation of her daughter, Queen Elizabeth II in 1953. So today, it was placed in prime position.

The Coronation of King Charles will be held next year on 6 May but the issue of regalia – particularly the Queen Consort's crown is a highly sensitive one, given the controversy over ownership of the diamond which originated in India and is also claimed by other countries in the region. It appears to have belonged to a powerful Mughal ruler who, in 1628 had it set into his throne in the heard of a gleaming peacock. The diamond found its way through several dynasties until it returned to India in 1813. By 1849 it belonged to the Maharaja, 10 year old, Duleep Singh, and his mother, Maharani Jind Kaur. The British imprisoned her and forced her son to sign a legal document, giving away the diamond and all claim to sovereignty. It was then sent to Queen Victoria, and as some claimed that it would bring misfortune if worn by a man, Prince Albert had it mounted in the crowns of Queen Alexandra and Queen Mary. The crown has subsequently been worn by the Queen Mother and our late Queen Elizabeth II.

Today there is a significant nervousness, given the controversy regarding ownership of the diamond: which brings into focus the forthcoming Coronation. One option is that the gem, which is held in a detachable platinum mount, could be taken out of the crown before it is used, or Camilla could wear a different crown instead. The original plan was for the Queen Consort to be crowned with the late Queen Mother's crown when her husband acceded to the throne. That was certainly the agreement a few years ago when the whole idea of the Duchess of Cornwall becoming Queen Consort was first mooted. But times have changed, and this Majesty the King is acutely sensitive to these issues. The history of the world's most infamous diamond remains a massive diplomatic grenade. To have set eyes upon this sensational jewel is truly a privilege, never to be forgotten. As to whether or not we'll see it again at the forthcoming coronation, nobody knows. It surely must be an issue much discussed at the moment.

We will just have to wait and see .....

SUSIE MATTHEWS

*Thank you Susie for another fascinating piece and so relevant with next year's Coronation –  
Editors*



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