

The Courier



Uffington Parish Council

The Courier

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UFFINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Mike Oldnall

The Council

Uffington Parish Council has six councillors. They serve four-year terms, with elections next due in May 2023. The composition of the Parish Council is:

Mr Mike Oldnall (Chair)	01367 820369	mike.oldnall@uffington.net
Mr Simon Jenkins (Vice Chair)	01367 820776	simon.jenkins@uffington.net
Mr Graham Banks		graham.banks@uffington.net
Mrs Fenella Oberman		fenella.oberman@uffington.net
Mr Dale Pilchowski		dale.pilchowski@uffington.net
Mr Nigel Puddicombe		nigel.puddicombe@uffington.net

Clerk

Mrs Julia Evans	01235 833466	uffingtonpc.clerk@gmail.com
Mrs Julia Evans (Alternative)		parishcouncil@uffington.net

The Chair and Clerk may be contacted on the above telephone numbers or email addresses. Other Councillors may be contacted on the email addresses above.

The Council is pleased to say that face-to-face meetings continue but are subject to any Government changes. The Council meets on the second Monday of the month in the Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall, at 6.30pm. All residents are welcome to attend these meetings and raise and discuss any issues during the “open forum” session early in the meeting (normally 7.00 pm). The agenda is published on the Parish Council website and notice board at least three clear days before the meeting. We particularly encourage anyone intending to submit a planning application to come and discuss it with the Parish Council at an early stage. We may be able to help you to avoid unnecessary errors and suggest things you may wish to include to improve the likelihood of success of the application. If you have any doubts about this, please contact the Clerk or any member of the Council.

A copy of the Courier is always posted on the Village Website [Uffington Parish Council - The Courier](#) from where the links in each edition are live.

Advertising in the Courier. The policy on Advertising is available on the website - <https://www.uffington.net> The cost of advertising in four issues of the Courier (one year) AND inclusion on the website on the 'Essential Contacts' page or 'Local Businesses' as appropriate are very modest and as follows:

- ¼ page or less: £20.00
- ½ page: £40.00
- Full page: £75.00
- Advertisements on the website only: £10.00 (Links to external commercial sites are acceptable, at the discretion of the Council)

Anybody wishing to advertise should please contact either the Clerk or the Chairman of the Council – contact details are above. Copies of the Courier are distributed to a number of shops, pubs and other outlets outside of the UBW villages making it more attractive to advertisers.

Fernham Road Bridge. The Fernham Road bridge re-opened on 19 November. The temporary route for horses through the allotments to Waylands should no longer be used even though the 'bridle bridge' on the footpath remains in place.

Covid 19. At the time of writing, temporary measures have been put in place in response to the Omicron variant to slow its arrival and spread. Face coverings must now be worn in shops and shopping centres, in transport hubs and on public transport. In indoor settings where a face covering is not mandatory, or where you may come into contact with other people you do not normally meet, the Government continues to expect and strongly recommends that you wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces. From 15th December, Covid passports will be required to enter large venues, meaning that people will have to show proof of two vaccine doses or a negative test at entertainment venues. Wearing face masks will also become a legal necessity at most public indoor venues although they will not be needed in pubs and restaurants. Workers will also be asked to work from home wherever possible. Anyone requiring assistance should contact a member of the Parish Council or the person supporting them in the earlier lockdowns.

Uffington allotments – Calling all keen gardeners!

Uffington Parish Council has 29 allotments, located next to the footpath leading from Waylands to the Fernham Road. Plots are of roughly 100 square yards each. There are presently a small number of vacant plots, which are available to residents of Uffington, Baulking and Woolstone. There are also a couple of the, newly introduced, vacant half plots. Annual rentals are £25 for a full plot and £12.50 for half plots. The allotment year started on October 1st, so now is the right time to start preparing the ground for next season!

If you already enjoy gardening but want more space, or if you want to take on the challenges and exercise involved in growing your own produce, please contact either Barry Godsell (barry.godsell@btinternet.com) or Nigel Puddicombe (nigel.puddicombe@uffington.net), who will be happy to show you round on behalf of the Uffington Allotments Association, give you more details and help you choose the best option. If you just want to proceed, please contact the Parish Council at: uffingtonpc.clerk@gmail.com

Village Maintenance

- Hedges and verges. The general condition of hedges and verges around the village is currently good and householders are thanked for keeping these under control. Householders are reminded that they are responsible for ensuring their hedges and verges do not overhang pavements, footpaths or roads beyond the boundary of their property. In order to facilitate their use by pedestrians, we would be grateful if all residents would continue play their part in this to avoid the need for formal enforcement action.
- Ditches. It is essential that the ditches around the village run freely and riparian owners are reminded of their responsibility to keep them clear to minimise the risk of flooding.
- Maintenance. The Parish Council would like to thank the small group of residents who assist with maintenance work around the village, in areas which are the responsibility of the Parish Council.

If you need assistance with hedges, verges or ditches, or would like to join the maintenance group, please get in touch with the Parish Council at uffingtonpc.clerk@gmail.com

Jubilee Field Tidy



The second of the biannual Jubilee Field Tidy sessions took place on 6 November on a pleasantly mild day. The Parish Council would like to thank those volunteers who turned out to help clear undergrowth, clear fallen wood, and to prepare for and plant additional new hedging along the Upper Common Lane side of the Field.

Planning applications in Uffington (with Vale reference number) – since the last edition of the Courier

The following applications are **awaiting determination**:

- P21/V3366/N4B, for development work at the following location: Moor Mill Barn Moor Mill Farm Uffington - Proposed change of use of agricultural buildings to dwelling house.
- P21/V3056/HH, for development work at the following location: 9 Jacksmeadow Uffington Faringdon - Extension to existing fence.
- P21/V2645/HH, for development work at the following location: The Clock House High Street Uffington Faringdon - Extension to existing outbuilding.

The following applications have been **granted**

- P21/V2988/AG, for development work at: Stable Cottage High Street Uffington Faringdon. The application is for: Agricultural building for lambing and storage of agricultural machinery. Removal of existing dilapidated sleeper building. This replaces P21/V2468/AG (see below). Approval Not Required
- P21/V2815/FUL, for development work at St Marys Church Broad Street Uffington - Replacement of stolen section of lead roof with Terne-coated stainless steel.

- P21/V2503/HH. Dragon Hill, Woolstone Road - Proposed first floor and side extensions to existing bungalow. Erection of detached garage building with accommodation over.
- P21/V2499/FUL - Land at Common Farm, Lower Common, Uffington - Variation of conditions 2 (approved plans), 3 (materials), 4 (landscaping), 5 (arboricultural impact assessment) and 8 (drainage) on application P18/V2990/FUL - erection of 3 dwellings and associated works including new access onto Lower Common.
- P21/V2473/FUL - development work at Oldlands Copse Station Road, Uffington - Change of use of the existing agricultural building to tourist accommodation.
- P21/V2468/AG - development work at Stable Cottage, High Street, Uffington – Proposed agricultural building for lambing and storage of agricultural machinery.
- P21/V2435/LDP - for development work at Spencer Cottage, Broad Street, Uffington - Proposed single storey rear extension.
- P21/V2298/HH - development work at Poachers Cottage, Green Lane, Uffington – Proposed first floor extension
- P21/V1908/HH – development work at 1 Jacksmeadow, Uffington, Faringdon, SN7 7GN – Proposed 2 storey side extension.

The following applications have been **declined** - none

The following applications have been **withdrawn**

- P21/V2464/DIS and P21/V2183/DIS - for development work at the following location: Land at Common Farm Lower Common Uffington Faringdon. The application is for: Discharge of conditions 3 (materials) & 4 (landscaping) on application
- P18/V2990/FUL. Erection of 3 dwellings and associated works including new access onto Lower Common

The following applications have been **Appealed**

- P21/V0009/HH. An appeal has been made against the refusal by the District Council for development work at Gate Cottage, Road Alongside Lower Common, Uffington.

The live list of 'Current' and 'Decided' Uffington applications can be accessed via the links on the website here: <https://www.uffington.net/parish-council/planning/> along with the latest details of the main 'Material' factors considered (and not considered) when assessing applications.

A420 Update

Yvonne Constance OCC Councillor

It is important to alert all to the ambitions of Swindon Borough Council (SBC) for the A420 between Swindon and Oxford, that SBC is proposing to dual the A420 - no doubt to meet their ambitions to develop a freight corridor - but at the expense of Oxfordshire villages. This will be news that concerns everybody, so here are my comments in response:

- The A420 was due to be dualled in time of Blair Government but the funding was redirected to the north at short notice. Any such scheme is unlikely to be funded now with the Government's major 'levelling up' agenda.
- Even if it were to be seen as do-able, planners would have to explain what would be gained by moving traffic faster to the Botley roundabout and A34, which is already the most congested road system in the Southeast.
- Local Transport Connectivity Plan (LTCP): Important to note that OCC is preparing to consult first stage of its next Local Strategic Transport Plan in Nov/Dec. Detailed transport plans will be consulted by end of 2022
- England's Economic Heartland (EEH) regional study: An A34/A420 road corridor study is also planned for 2022 (it was my initiative to get the A420 included in this urgent study) which is the best opportunity to get proper Govt attention to the real need to increase capacity on A34, probably by a relief road for strategic north-bound traffic with no business in Oxfordshire.

In OCC we are very aware that Swindon is working to place itself in the regional arc (Oxford to Cambridge) with its offer of space for new commercial development and more affordable housing. They will promote dualling the A420 in service of that ambition, but as it runs through Oxfordshire, we residents will have a lot to say about any such plan. Mostly, I do not see that it reduces traffic congestion around Oxford and it would be a lot of money to spend on more congestion!

After paying close attention to A420 for past 5 years and representing OCC at the EEH regional meetings in that time, it's clear that the solutions lie in solving the congestion of the A34, which is the sole link road from Southampton to the

Midlands. At Hinksey Hill, A34 joins Oxford City's local ring road, then picks up A420 traffic at Botley, A40 and A44 traffic at Peartree, before connecting with M40 at junction 9 which becomes a near- permanent traffic jam. OCC has long identified the need to separate Oxford City's local traffic from A34 strategic traffic, and until that is resolved there is no solution to A420. Highways England is working (slowly) on plans to reduce the congestion but no proposals are likely for some time. Swindon Borough Council's proposal to dual A420 would not solve any problem at all: it would simply carry more Swindon/Oxford traffic faster from Swindon to the A34 traffic jam at Botley roundabout. It seems unlikely to convince any transport planner

I will repeat that OCC's current transport strategy (LTP4) is that Swindon's (HGV) traffic should use the M4/A34: the A420 is reserved for DIVERSION TRAFFIC only. If we can get that properly enforced that would be a real gain for our villages.

This will be on the agenda for future Parish Council meetings once the Local Transport Connectivity Plan (LTCP) is published. Residents are encouraged to respond to the survey or make their comments at a Parish Council meeting.

Britchcombe Farm

A number of Uffington and Woolstone residents became aware in September that Lovat Parks Ltd, the purchaser of c140 acres of Britchcombe Farm, including most of the former camping fields, was intending to develop the field known as Cross Roads (formerly Uffington Wood Bottom) into a permanent caravan park. An enquiry to the Vale District Council stated that the proposed development would include:

- construction of new caravan bases;
- provision of surfacing for individual car parking spaces adjacent to each caravan plot;
- improvements to the existing road surface, including road widening, at site's entrance;
- construction of minor internal access road(s) to provide access to the bases;
- laying of general utilities (water/electricity) and drainage.

It has to be recognised that the previous owner of Britchcombe Farm obtained approval from the Vale District Council for the use of several fields as camp sites; this legalised the low key, informal, mainly tented, seasonal, camping, which had

been going on unchallenged for many years. But, the devil is in the detail of what was actually agreed, which is being researched by the Vale; terms such as 'camp site' and 'caravan park' have different meanings, but have become muddled. Lovat Parks may well claim that these approvals may be sufficient to convert Cross Roads into a permanent caravan park, as described above, and are also likely to claim that such a development will bring employment benefits to the local area. A judgement then has to be made by the Vale District Council on the 'planning balance' - that is to say, comparing the benefits of a proposed development with the harm it would cause.

On discovering the likely extent of these proposals, a 'Working Group' was set up whose remit was to gather as much information as possible, including the relevant planning law, about the publicly stated intentions of Lovat Parks, with the intention of resisting these proposals. As is well known, Britchcombe Farm is located in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty and is adjacent to the internationally known heritage sites of Whitehorse Hill and Dragon Hill, all of which offer a considerable degree of protection from development.

The group is fortunate to be working with an expert in planning law and a number of 'partners' who share its views. In summary, the group's achievements to date include:

It has put together a coalition of 'partners', whose views must be taken into account by the Vale District Council in determining any planning application.

It has recognised that there may be a need for professional advice in responding to a planning application, which will need funds. To that end, a bank account in the name of Britchcombe Farm Working Group has been set up and plans have been prepared for a local fund-raising campaign, to be followed, if necessary, by a crowd funding initiative using Just Giving.

It has identified experts who will provide professional landscape and historical / heritage input, in response to a planning application.

Public relations / social media. Campaigns are in preparation to support our fund-raising initiatives, when the time is right.

What happens next?

At the time of writing, (late November 2021), the Working Group believes that it has done as much preparatory work as possible, until either an actual planning application for the work proposed above is submitted, or there is evidence of construction starting on site. Once that happens, this issue will be listed for

discussion on the agenda for the next meeting of the Parish Council and the Working Group will continue to advise. It will also use social media and the normal communication channels in our villages, including the Courier if time permits, to keep local people up to date and to mobilise support from those who are opposed to the development.

Local Business Information. Lists of local tradesmen and businesses which you may need and of scheduled local activities in the village are included on the inside back pages of the Courier. The majority of these are also listed on the village website. We should be pleased to learn of any errors, omissions, or any additional categories of advertisement you would like to see included in future editions. Please contact simon.jenkins@uffington.net (Tel: 01367 820776), or the Parish Council Clerk at: uffingtonpc.clerk@gmail.com

Village Hall. As a result of the easing of Covid 19 restrictions, the Village Hall continues to get back to full operating capacity with the activities listed at the back of this edition of the Courier already up and running. For Village Hall booking enquiries, please send an e-mail to: booking@thmh.co.uk or you can contact Geoff Rumble on 01367 820036.

Communications

- Village Web site. The village website can be found at <http://www.uffington.net/> The site is owned by the Parish Council, which pays the hosting and support charges on behalf of the village. Requests for additions and changes should be made to the Clerk, Julia Evans, at uffingtonpc.clerk@gmail.com or through the website. The website also hosts electronic copies of the Courier which allow readers to follow the links.
- Email notices. There is an email network of topical information which is sent weekly to those who have signed up for it. If you wish to join please notify Simon Jenkins on 820776 or email simon.jenkins@uffington.net For data protection reasons, email addresses are held securely and not disclosed to anybody else, or used for anything apart from Parish Council notifications and other information thought to be of general interest to residents, in accordance with our Privacy Notice.
- Village notice boards. These are at Uffington Post Office and Stores.
- Facebook page for Uffington Parish Council. The Parish Council now has its own Facebook page. This is gradually being improved and will complement the information available listed above. In particular, short-notice information

will be added whenever possible. Any ideas for other information you would like to see on the page would be welcome.

Traffic Calming in Uffington

In the Summer 2021 edition of The Courier, we outlined some of the options which the Council is considering to in order to help reduce vehicle speeds in Uffington. Since that article another pole has been installed opposite South View Farm on Woolstone Road and on which we can periodically mount the Speed Indication Device (SID). The next two short articles outline two further methods which we are currently considering. Before taking these further we are seeking views from residents on the desirability of such measures. Any thoughts on these can be submitted to the Parish Council Clerk at: uffingtonpc.clerk@gmail.com or discussed in the Open Forum at any Council meeting.

20mph for Uffington?

On 19 October 2021 Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) endorsed the 'Twenty is Plenty' campaign which aims to:

- Make streets safer
- Encourage residents to walk or cycle
- Reduce noise and pollution.

OCC will support towns and villages which wish to create 20mph zones – see [Plans to make 20mph the new 30mph in Oxfordshire](#) and there are currently several Oxfordshire villages taking part in trials of the scheme. Uffington Parish Council is considering whether the 'Twenty is Plenty' initiative is appropriate for Uffington given the ongoing complaints about excessive vehicle speed in the village. Options for implementing the scheme include putting limits only on specific roads (e.g. Broad Street only) or the whole village by replacing the existing 30mph signs with 20mph signs – or anything in between.

Two other factors to be considered are cost and endorsement.

- **Cost.** We understand that OCC is hoping to use some of their funds to create a range of standardised cost packages for different sized villages but this might still mean a cost of £10,000 plus for Uffington which would cover new signs and any necessary road marking. As this is currently not budgeted for and we do not know the amount, we would anticipate having to use some of our reserves if we decide to proceed.

- **Endorsement.** Whilst the aim of the project is to bring about ‘a change to drivers’ mindsets’, experience shows that this is slow and has limited effect. There are no plans to install fixed speed cameras or speed humps so the design will rely primarily on signs and road markings. Whilst we are unlikely to see an increased police presence due to resource constraints, we would anticipate that using the Speedwatch initiative (see below) would help considerably.

Further details from OCC can be found here: [Requesting 20mph | Oxfordshire County Council](#) **We would welcome feedback on these proposals and thoughts and ideas can be submitted to the Parish Council Clerk at: uffingtonpc.clerk@gmail.com or discussed in person at the Open Forum at any Council meeting.**

Uffington Speedwatch

The Speedwatch initiative uses local volunteers to monitor traffic speeds in towns and villages using approved ‘speed guns’. You may remember that the village had a small but successful Speedwatch group a couple of years ago but it ground to a halt for technical reasons followed by Covid! After a successful pilot, a new Speedwatch scheme has started in a number of places in Thames Valley Police (TVP) area, but not here, yet. More information is available here: [Community Speedwatchscheme](#)

PC Lee Turner is the Community Speedwatch Co-ordinator for TVP and responsible for rolling out the programme. His recent newsletter, which outlines the progress of the new scheme is viewable [here](#)

Based on previous village support for the scheme, the Parish Council has set some money aside for this and has decided that it would be a good idea for Uffington to register for the new scheme, IF there are enough people who would like to volunteer and get involved. Ideally, we would like a group of about 8 - 10 people (minimum 3 at a time), who should be prepared to do some on-line training and then to turn out from time to time; the most fruitful times previously were early mornings and late afternoons. If you are interested or need further information, please contact any member of the Parish Council.

Quiz Fish N Chips Night

Jeremy Moss – churchwarden

On Tuesday 26 October, an event called ‘Quiz Fish N Chips’ was held in St Mary’s

Church. The church was rearranged so that tables of six or eight were spaced out in the nave and transepts. The chancel was left untouched whilst the Quiz master was up front with the food and drink being produced from the west end of the church. A wonderful warm glow was created by the lighting and the happy chatter in the body of the church was most welcome.

There were over a hundred members of our community attending, of which one estimate said fifty per cent had never been inside the church before in their life. Ages varied from seven to late eighties. A very successful raffle was held with excellent prizes that had been teased and extracted from all our main community services/stores. Not a name worth knowing was not among the list.....so very many thanks to all those who promised meals, shopping, even an MOT and other



services. The memory of the evening, apart from the mad dash to pick up more than 130 fish n Chips from the Harbour in Faringdon, was the laughter, inter table rivalry and yes that warm glow. Well done indeed with special thanks to the hard work and indomitable spirit of those selling tickets before the evening itself. The real stars were Steve and Leanne. St Mary's church is certainly very grateful as it seeks to maintain the fabric but also many have expressed their gratitude for a most enjoyable evening. Perhaps we (the Church, the Friends, the Parish Council, the Sports Club, the School, the Pubs and even those that plough a lone furrow etc etc) have been brought a little closer to each other as one Community. Most certainly a

successful evening that was thoroughly enjoyed by so many. Thank you.

1st Stanford in the Vale Scout Group 50 year celebration

This year, we celebrate 50 years of the 1st Stanford in the Vale Scout Group. On a very sunny afternoon on the 17 October, members of the group and the wider community came together in Uffington to celebrate this milestone event. Many thanks to everyone who helped to organise this event. As you can see from the

pictures, the climbing wall, zorbing, BBQ and other Scouting activities were enjoyed by all. On the picture of the cakes you can see the winning design for our 50 year celebration badge that was created by the Beavers, Cubs and Scouts. The picture of flag shows the original Scout group flag which the Cubs were very lucky to see on a recent visit to the



Tom Brown's School Museum.

Our Scout group has Beaver, Cub and Scout groups in both Uffington and Stanford and an Explorer group in Stanford and helps over 100 young people enjoy fun and adventure whilst developing skills for life. Our



groups are very active outdoors, and frequently enjoy navigating around the surrounding countryside.

Please do get in touch if your child is interesting in joining Beavers, Cubs, Scouts or Explorers. Our friendly leadership team is also always looking for more support.



Volunteering within Scouting is easier and more flexible than you may think. Whether you can spare an evening a week or an hour a month, we have opportunities both behind the scenes and directly supporting young people. Full support and training are provided.



Not only is Scouting incredibly rewarding and great fun, but you'll also learn some brilliant skills transferable to the workplace and further education.

Interested in finding out more? Contact: Katharine Murkett, Group Scout Leader katharinemurkett@kascouts.org.uk

Village Christmas Tree

Despite the downpour about an hour before the scheduled Christmas Tree Lighting event on 1st December, some rapid reorganising took place to relocate into the Village Hall and the event went ahead as planned. It was a most enjoyable evening for over 100 villagers of what appeared to be aged from about 8 weeks to over 80 years old! There was a lovely family atmosphere and it was heartening to see such a good turnout - including Beatrice the donkey!



Our thanks to all those that contributed to the tree including Parker's Landscaping, the Parish Council and individual donors. The biggest 'thank you' however, goes to the Christmas Tree Committee and PTA for their organising such an enjoyable evening.

Opening of the Shepherds' Steps footpath on White Horse Hill

The photos below show the opening 'ceremony' for the Shepherds' Steps (footpath from Dragon Hill to the White Horse) on 7 December, featuring Rachel Sanderson, Operations Manager of Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (TOE), who provided the funding. Cross Roads field is in the background.



Queen's Platinum Jubilee – 2-5 Jun 2022

In 2022, Her Majesty The Queen will become the first British Monarch to celebrate a Platinum Jubilee, seventy years of service, having acceded to the throne on 6th February 1952 when she was 25 years old. An extended bank holiday, from Thursday 2nd to Sunday 5th June, will provide an opportunity for communities and people throughout the United Kingdom to come together to celebrate the historic milestone. The four days of celebrations will include public events and community activities, as well as national moments of reflection on The Queen's 70 years of service.

The Parish Council is hoping to sponsor some form of 'Village Picnic', similar to the successful Open Day on the August Bank Holiday, on Sunday 5th June. We need the support of the community groups and individuals to make this happen so if you have any comments or ideas, please pass them to any member of the Parish Council or come to a meeting. A tug-of-war and games for the children have already been suggested as activities.

A Visit to Uffington Station – September 2021

The following note and photos were kindly submitted by a visitor to Uffington from Swindon to photograph the Paddington to Gloucester steam special.

"Whilst exploring the area for a good photographic location, I headed, first, for the site of the former Uffington Station and then headed towards Faringdon and eventually found the footpath leading to the Uffington railway Footbridge where I took some photos of the steam train passing."

If anyone or organisation would like to take Ken Mumford up on his offer to come to the village with one of his "many PowerPoint presentations" please contact the Parish Council for his email details.



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Save the date: 'Caring for The White Horse – 3,000 years of a British icon'

The Uffington Museum Trustees are delighted to announce that David Miles will make a presentation at 6.30 pm on Monday 24 January 2022 in the Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall, Uffington on: 'Caring for The White Horse – 3,000 years of a British icon'. The hall will open at 6.00pm.

David was formerly Director of Oxford Archaeology and the Chief Archaeologist of English Heritage. He is the author of The Land of the White Horse and knows a huge amount about our local area.

COVID restrictions may well change before 24 January so numbers attending are restricted to 60. Please e-mail simon.jenkins@uffington.net to book a place and be prepared to wear a mask throughout the presentation

The museum itself is due to re-open for the 2022 season in April but in the meantime please visit our website

www.uffingtonmuseum.co.uk or follow us on Facebook. We will continue to have local merchandise for sale and donations are always welcome to keep this wonderful village asset up and running. You can also visit us at the Uffington Farmers Market from March onwards and the wonderful White Horse in steel art is still available to purchase – they make excellent gifts.

We continue to welcome new members and volunteers and for £10 a year or a life membership of £100, a family can join the Friends of Tom Brown's School Museum.

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UBW MINIBUS ASSOCIATION

We are delighted that our regular services to Wantage have resumed with appropriate Covid precautions. We have not restarted runs to Faringdon because we believe there is very little demand for them.

The resumption was made possible by the marvellous response to our plea for new volunteers to drive, and the very welcome return of some familiar faces. We know our returning passengers will wish us to thank them all very much.

The services start from Uffington at 9.30 on Wednesday and Friday, returning before lunchtime, and several calls are made on the way at points convenient for our passengers. Bus passes may be used, or alternatively there is a modest cash fare to cover our costs. Villagers not already familiar with our services are welcome to call 01367 820417 for further details.

The bus is also available again for villagers and local groups to use for their own social, educational and recreational purposes, customarily on a self drive basis. Please call the above number for details.

Finally, we would like to take this opportunity sincerely to thank those volunteers who have given their time to the association for a number of years but for various good reasons have reluctantly taken the decision to finish driving the bus. They contributed much to keeping us on the road when drivers were sometimes hard to find.

* * * * *

Hope that you have all enjoyed the stunning Autumn of 2021 and that it bodes well for the year to come in 2022

Hopefully the worst of Covid is now behind us and we can optimistically make plans for the coming year.

Here is our list of talks and visits to give you inspiration for next year.

2022 PROGRAMME

JANUARY – 20th Zoom meeting

TALK: DESIGNING WITH PLANTS THE GREAT DIXTER WAY

Fergus Garrett – Head Gardener of Great Dixter and Chief Executive of the Great Dixter Charitable Trust. www.greatdixter.co.uk

FEBRUARY 3rd

TALK: THE WINTER GARDEN AT SPRING COTTAGE

Val Bourne. Val Bourne is an award-winning garden writer, organic gardener and lecturer. www.valbourne.co.uk

MARCH 3rd

TALK: TREES – UNDER THE CANOPY

Ben Jones, Curator of Oxford Arboretum www.botanic-garden.ox.ac.uk/harcourt-arboretum)

APRIL 7th

TALK: HELLEBORES

Mike Byford from Hazles Cross Farm Nursery

www.hazlescrosfarmnursery.co.uk The nursery is home to the National Collection of Hellebores. Propagate and sell all hellebore species.

MAY 5th

VISITS:

Morning – 10.30am. Blackland House, Calne, Wiltshire SN11 8UQ.

£15 per head to include tour and refreshments. (25 max)

www.bayntunflowers.co.uk

A flower lover's garden at the foot of the Marlborough Downs, where owner Polly

Nicholson runs her organic flower business Bayntun Flowers.

Lunch: Picnic/pub/cafe

Afternoon- Iford Manor, Bradford on Avon BA15 2BA

www.ifordmanor.co.uk. £12.50 per head includes tour

15.30 – Arrival and Walled Garden Tour with either the owner or head gardener

16.00 – Refreshments available in café (not included)

MAY 14TH

PLANT SALE TRAIL

JUNE 2nd

VISIT: WOOLSTONE GARDENS

6pm Start with refreshments served. £3 visitors

JUNE 16TH

VISITS: Morning: 10.30am £10 Tour.

ROCKCLIFFE GARDENS, Upper Slaughter, Nr Cheltenham GL54 2JW.

NB: No refreshments available, bring your own or stop on the way.

LUNCH: Picnic/pub/cafe.

Afternoon: 2.30pm *£23.00 Tour and Afternoon Tea

UPTON WOLD GARDEN, Northwick Estate, Moreton In the Marsh, GL56 9TR

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JULY 7th

VISIT: Morning - Andy McIndoe's Garden at Sandhill Farm SO51 6JY

10am for 10.30am start. £10 Tour & Refreshments. (Min 25, max 50). Lunch: Picnic/pub/cafe

Afternoon – Harold Hillier Gardens, Ampfield SO51 OQA (Max 25). 2pm. £12.50 to include tour.

AUGUST – free

SEPTEMBER 1st

TALK: 'Scent in the Garden'

Stephen Lacey is a garden writer, lecturer, broadcaster and plantsman, with a particular interest in planting design.

He is a long-standing columnist and feature writer for The Daily Telegraph, and also contributes to House and Garden, the RHS Journal and Horticulture

Magazine. www.stephenlacey.com

£5 visitors.

OCTOBER 6th

TALK: Botanical Tales from the East – Japanese Gardens

Nicholas Wray, Curator of Bristol Botanic Gardens

This lecture looks at the history and evolution of Japanese gardening styles and highlights some of the key features and links between gardens and Japanese culture. The focus is on gardens in Tokyo, Nara and the cultural capital city of Kyoto.

OCTOBER 13TH

VISIT: Harcourt Arboretum Tour with Ben Jones TBC

NOVEMBER 3rd

TALK: ROSES

Stewart Pocock of Pococks Roses, Romsey, SO51 0QA

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DECEMBER 1st

TALK: by Woodchester Valley Vineyard from Stroud. www.woodchestervalleyvineyard.co.uk

Seasonal refreshments and wines to sample/purchase

Any enquiries please contact Pamela Preene parrottspreene@aol.com

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ELM TREE SURGERY SHRIVENHAM PRESCRIPTION COLLECTION SERVICE

Will patients ordering repeat prescriptions from the Surgery please note that they should now do so before 3pm on Friday, earlier orders would of course be welcomed. Prescriptions will then be available in the Post Office on the following Thursday. The repeat prescription telephone line at Elm Tree Surgery is open between 1.30-3pm each

* * * * *



Dear Friends,

In my last Weekly Sheet of 2021 I think I banged on too much about 'Sin' and not enough about that other side which Christ comes to convince us of at this time of year – simply but profoundly that he is "Emmanuel, God with us". He is particularly with us when we serve others in any way. I was moved by a docu-drama on Radio 4 in the run-up to Christmas about the

Solomon Browne – the lifeboat which was lost with 8 crewmembers alongside 8 members of the Union Star they were trying to rescue from wreck in a severe storm. Although the tragedy occurred in 1981 the village of Mousehole in Cornwall, near to where the boat was launched, has never fully recovered from the loss. But they are now getting ready as a village to fix a permanent memorial not only to the lifeboat crew but also to those on the Union Star for whom the crew gave their lives.

Those on the frontline in the NHS at the moment serve with the same sort of selfless attitude towards the front of their minds. This kind of service is costly but it also bears witness to a confidence which says; 'we care because we believe it is the right thing to do and that we have the healing resources and skill to do so'.

It has been good to bump into villagers old and new as one year ends and a new one arrives. Often, below the surface, lie questions of belief. Or, to put it another way, people are often asking a "What if... ?" question. Here, the Grinch who stole Christmas can come into conversation with John Betjeman: an unlikely pairing perhaps. Both were asking questions of meaning and truth. The Grinch: "What if Christmas, perhaps, means a little bit more?" Betjeman, in his poem "Christmas": "And is it true, This most tremendous tale of all?"

I am planning a new Pilgrim (faith returners/enquirers) group for the early months of 2022 and am minded to combine it with a Confirmation group. The aim for many, but not necessarily all, of the group would be Confirmation at the font of Christ Church Cathedral in Oxford on Easter Eve. The font, any font (but I love the venerable ones!), is a great place for beginnings...

As we brace ourselves for the coming year and all it brings, good and bad, let's pause to breathe in these rumours of where true nourishment lies. As we take our lateral flow tests or self-isolate with trepidation, let us drink in afresh the good news sung in the Uffington Carol; Heaven's child, love's pure light, walks among us from tonight... Merry Christmas, and a hopeful New Year, Everyone!

Jeremy Goulston

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NEW YEAR UPDATE FROM UFFINGTON TENNIS CLUB

Rob Hart
(Club Chairman)

Like everything else in 2021, the year has been one of ups and downs for the Tennis Club. Lockdowns and restrictions permitting we were able to run a restricted programme including our participation in our regular leagues and competitions. We also maintained our coaching programme for adults and youngsters. Hopefully we will be able to run a fuller programme in 2022, and more about this in the next edition of the Courier. Feel free to get in touch through the club website. The courts are open! I have listed below some of the main events of 2021:

In the summer the Ladies successfully remained in Division 2 for the coming year. We won 4, drew 4, lost 6, and finished 6th out of 8. Our mixed teams didn't fare as well, but lets hope for a more successful year in 2022! The Winter season is still underway and in the mixed group we have so far won 2 and lost 6. Our popular friendly and social matches sadly didn't take place in 2021, but we have high hopes for the coming year.

The weekly Club Night has been well attended, as has coaching for adults, juniors and children. We have managed to hold some of our social events, which included the Annual Tournament/BBQ, held in October, which was won by Luke Thomas and Wendy Thomson. Kenneth Mitchell and family kindly provided the BBQ. Sadly, we were obliged to cancel the Christmas Party.

As is usual, Club Membership runs from April – March. If you join after October there is a reduced membership fee. Any change to Club Fees will be notified in March. I think we are all feeling more confident about 2022 and by the spring we hope to be able to get our full program going again. Our club members remain resilient and enthusiastic. We made the best of our opportunities in 2021, and my thanks for the help and support of club members. We're all looking forward to the coming Season!

Rob Hart
Club Chairman

* * * * *

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richard james

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HANDYMAN - CRAFTSMAN – GARDENER

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Things have not been all bad - Since the start of the Covid pandemic in 2020, the hall has had to close for as many days as it has been open. Fortunately, we have been able to use the time to carry out three large and many smaller improvements, starting in 2020 with the installation of the new Audio-Visual system in the main hall, complete with a cinema-sized screen. In 2021, while the building remained closed for the first three months, a modernisation project was carried out in the main hall, in which the upright steel joists were boxed in and the ceiling and woodwork painted to improve the appearance of the room. More recently, the toilet windows and the door to the boiler room (all in poor condition) were replaced and a large extractor fan fitted in the small hall to improve ventilation.

This year, while Covid has remained a major factor, it has been possible to gradually open the building for specific activities and with the easing of restrictions, from July, we saw a move back towards more normal operation. By the beginning of Autumn, bookings had picked up and many organisations that had been forced by Covid to “hibernate” or resort to Zoom were now back in the building. While hirers must still consider social distancing for larger groups and ventilation of the two halls by opening windows and using the new extractor fan, the current level of use clearly shows how important the building is to the community, supported by valuable hire income from non-community bookings.

If you are new to the area and have not been to the hall yet, more information and pictures can be found on www.thmh.co.uk

The future is looking decidedly uncertain - A lot of effort has gone into improvements to the building and to making it available this year, when allowed. Sadly, our once busy and enthusiastic team of volunteers is getting smaller and smaller as personal circumstances and old age take their toll. The charitable status of the organisation only requires four meetings each year but to actually keep the hall running, it needs a management team that includes not only a Chairman, Secretary and Treasurer but sufficient membership to take “portfolio” responsibility for Hall Maintenance, Bookings, Health & Safety, Cleaning, Contracts and Marketing.

The hall AGM is on Monday 24th January (starting at 7.30pm), which is when a new committee is elected for 2022. It is clear, at the time of writing, we will be losing more committee members than gaining new ones and without new volunteers at the AGM we will be unable to fill the majority of the roles that keep the building operating efficiently and financially sound. If you value our community building, if you use it or wish to use it in the future, please consider attending the AGM and offering a small amount of time by helping to fill one of these roles. We have publicised the lack of volunteer support more than once during 2021 but the need is becoming urgent and offers of support will be welcomed with open arms. The Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall cannot and will not operate efficiently with a skeleton crew and time is now running out.

We hope everyone is well and continuing to stay safe.

We have been rehearsing for our next Pantomime for a number of weeks.

With the resent COVID news and the government guidelines and advice we feel we need to decide, for the safety of cast and audience, if our production should still go ahead.

We will be deciding this in the new year.

Sorry we can not give you any further information at this time.

If you think you would like to be involved in this or future productions or would like further information, please contact Christine Holley 01367 820474 or email christineholley28@hotmail.co.uk

Wishing you all a Happy Christmas and a Happy New Year.

* * * * *

SNOWMAN

'Build me a snowman, build me a snowman, please Daddy.'

'I am too busy to build you a snowman, why do you want me to build one?'

'Because when we first come here about a month ago, you didn't notice there were no children living near me, I have no one to play with. I am so lonely, and if I had a snowman, I could pretend he 'was my friend and make me feel happy'

'Oh! My darling, I'm sorry, I'll start building a snowman right away, with a smile on his face and call him Mr Happy'.

'Thank you, Daddy. When children hear about the snowman, they will all come to visit me and, Mummy will make all of us a lovely tea, then all the children will invite me to their homes. We will all make lots of friends!'

'Oh, when Guy Fawkes Day arrives, we will make a figure of you of put on the fire and, hang a notice on it saying (This is funky Daddy). He! He! He!'

'I'm not sure what funky means or if it is funny, but be careful young lady, as I shall be playing a trick on you. Ha. Ha. Ha'

Yes, that will be fun, don't you agree?'

'OK Daddy, I will look forward to that.'

That is how a snowman brought happiness to a family.

Pat Gaule

* * * * *

Local businesses (Telephone numbers are all 01367
unless shown otherwise or mobile numbers)

Bookkeeping: Karen Swash 821128.
Building and Garden maintenance: Ricky Thorpe 07877 589438.
Catering: 'Famished Flamingo Event Catering' Chris Higgs: 07884 167800 chris_higgs@live.com
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Public Address systems: M&S Sound Systems. Bill Mattingly 820605. https://www.yell.com/biz/m-and-s-sound-systems-public-address-faringdon-88205/
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Scheduled local activity information

Day of week	Time	Activity	Ages	Where	Contact
Mondays	9-10 am	Circuits	Adult	Village Hall	Lucinda 07967 157620
2nd Mondays	6.15-8.30 pm	Parish Council		Village Hall	
Tuesday	10-11am	Tai Chi	Adult	Village Hall	If interested, attend to make enquiries
Tuesday	12.30-1.30pm	Pilates	Adult	Village Hall	Fiona-wright@outlook.com
Tuesday	6-7.15pm	Beavers	Children 6-8	Village Hall	Dave Barnes 07811 424978
Tuesday	7.30-9pm	Bell ringing	12 and over	St. Mary's Church	
Wednesday	7-8.30pm	Guides	Girls aged 10-14	Village Hall	Uffingtonguides@gmail.com
Thursday	9-10 am	Exercise Class	Adult	Village Hall	Lucinda 07967 157620
Thursday	6:30-8 pm	Cubs	Children 8-10	Village Hall	Katharine Murket 820270
Thursday	7.-9pm	Scouts	Children 10-14	Village Hall	Katharine Murket 820270
1st Thursday	7:30-9pm	Gardening Club	Adults	Village Hall	Pamela Preene 820251
Friday	9.30-11am	Baby & Toddler	Children 0-5 parents must stay	Village Hall	Katherine Foxhall 820923
Saturday		League football	Adults	Sports Club, Fawler Road	Jason Wilkins 870487

Village Hall. For Village Hall booking enquiries during the pandemic, please send an e-mail to: booking@thmh.co.uk or you can contact Geoff Rumble on 01367 820036.

If you spot any errors or would like new information included please contact Julia Evans, Clerk to Uffington Parish Council on uffingtonpc.clerk@gmail.com)

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