



THE BRIDGE

March
2021

A monthly magazine covering people and events in our area of the Cotswolds, and delivered to Aldsworth, Asthall, Asthall Leigh, the Barringtons, Bradwell Village, Burford, Fordwells, Fulbrook, Holwell, Sherborne, Signet, Swinbrook, Taynton, Upton, Westwell, Widford, Windrush. *Volume 12, Number 2, £1.50*



Last month we showed Widford water meadows and this month Asthall “lake” which was photographed by Pete Freeman

“Have you had yours yet? “Which one did you have?” “Did you have any side effects?” In recent otherwise quiet weeks, these have become the default topics of conversation, at least among those referred to in the Prayer Book as being “of riper years”. If no-one has said this to you, you are probably very young.

“February-fill the dyke” did not quite live up to its billing, delivering very cold weather rather than rain. But January had already done a thorough job on our fields, gardens and indeed car parks. And now we find ourselves between seasons. The Tolsey is still (at the time of writing) festooned with humungous Christmas wreaths but daffodils are coming into flower and cricketers are sharpening their stumps and oiling their bats and their throats in readiness for the new season.

The Burford HGV ban has become a hot potato. It seems to have done what was intended in the town, despite the fact that foreign-registered lorries have herd immunity, but where are the displaced trucks going? At least some, it is alleged, are infesting local B roads and even country lanes and communities affected are less than happy. The debate continues. Let us have your views via editor@thebridgeburford.co.uk.

Sadly, but not surprisingly, there will be no Burford Festival this year but there will be the first Burford Literary Festival (no relation), lockdowns permitting. Perhaps spring will make it possible for more such local activities to take place and give us all a shot in the arm. We may then at last have more topics of conversation than you-know-what.

Editors

Since Burford News closed down The Bridge has had nowhere for deliveries to be made, but thanks to Sally and Steve Colter any communications to the editors and kind donations may now be left at Mrs Bumbles. This facility will move to the new post office once it opens.

Farmer George

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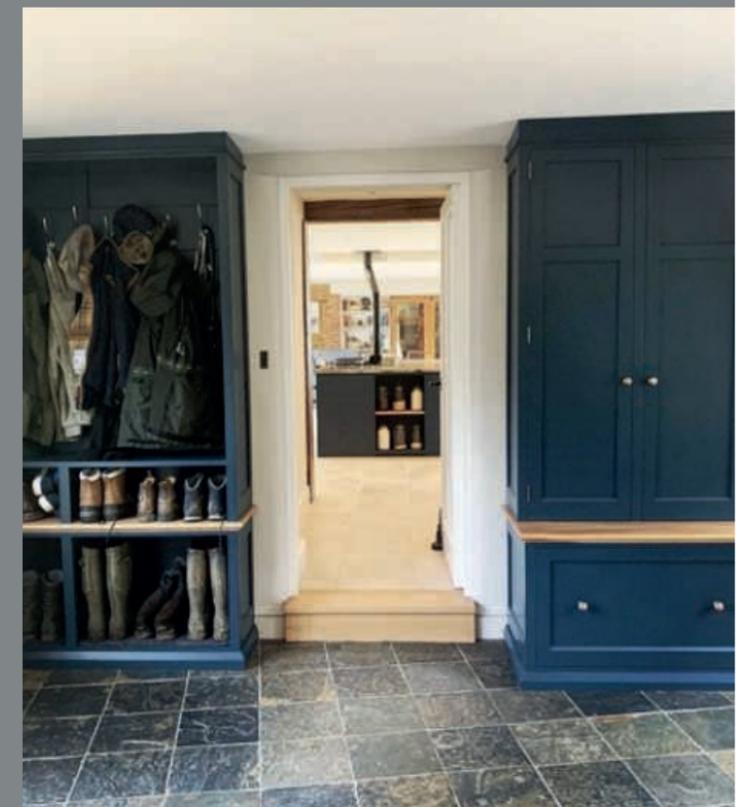


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BURFORD TOWN COUNCIL

“Defer no time, delays have dangerous ends” –
William Shakespeare

I thought of this when reading about the American airline, fed up with the time it took people to disembark when reaching their destination, which announced that it would release a rabid badger at the rear of every plane when it landed, thus encouraging passengers out through the front. I thought of it again when reviewing our February meeting. Everything we want to do or happen seems to be bedevilled by “unexpected delays”. Some of these are undoubtedly genuine, brought on by Covid, but I am becoming increasingly suspicious that Covid has become an excuse rather than a reason, especially for large institutions. I know a group who acquired a small piece of land last July and still have not had it registered at HM Land Registry, allegedly due to Covid. It is just too easy to blame incompetence on a friendly old plague.

Having got that off my chest, what actually happened at our last meeting? Quite a lot in fact, enough to merit “Miscellanea” as the alternative heading to this piece. We were delighted to welcome the pop-up post office in Mrs Bumbles. When we enquired when the permanent version would open next door we were told there had been “unexpected delays”! We revisited speed limits on the A40 now that the new puffin crossing is to be put in by the school and the imminent restructuring of the entrance to and exit from the Shilton Road consequent upon the looming completion of the new development. We had taken this up with OCC some time ago. When we asked what was being done, guess what – “unexpected delays”!

The preliminary work for the new puffin (not to be confused with pelicans or penguins, which are crossings, nor parakeets, pigeons or peewits which are not) has caused a little concern because workmen have been spotted on the Rec. This gave immediate rise to the conclusion that BTC was starting to build a luxury five star spa and retirement home for ex-councillors. This is something which would have had my whole-hearted support but, sadly, it only presages the setting up of a compound for Skanska (OCC’s contractor for the puffin) to store equipment and materials and portable loos. This will be a small area and will be vacated by Easter.

Whilst on the Rec so to speak, the curse of dogs off the lead and out of control is once again becoming a great worry, especially to our more senior citizens. It will be a great shame if the selfishness of a few owners who allow their Hounds of the Baskerville to jump on our old people forces us to ban dogs altogether but that it is what we are being

pressed to do. Please help to make that unnecessary by reporting any owners whose dogs you see misbehaving.

Of course, we spent a lot of time, again, on HGVs. Elsewhere in this issue there is a factual report of the current state of play. The main point of our discussion was the campaign by an OCC Councillor, Liam Walker (who is standing for re-election in Hanborough and Minster Lovell this May) to remove the weight limit immediately on the grounds that there has been an increase in HGV movements in Leaffield and Crawley. This will not happen. Our weight limit is the law of the land, at least until February 2022 when it comes up for review. When we asked for the weight limit we knew that the displaced lorries would have to go somewhere. That is why the limit is experimental for 18 months – to give time for surveys to be carried out to establish exactly where.

There is no reason why smaller communities should be disadvantaged. The solution is simple. The Leaffields and the Crawleys should apply for their own weight limit protection, as we did. Asthall, Charlbury, the Barringtons and Minster Lovell all have done so. Indeed it is the Charlbury limit which has given Leaffield its problems rather than us. So go to it, Leaffield and Crawley, we will give you all the help you need.

Here endeth the lesson!
John White - Mayor



ARCHIVE NEWS

Community Circulation Lists

Both the Burford & District Society (B&DS) and the Burford Archive (BA) have their own circulation lists to keep in touch with their members and followers. Each does so by issuing a free monthly e-newsletter, around the 1st and 16th of the month respectively.

Recently the existence of such mailing lists has also enabled their subscribers to instantly receive via their PCs or mobiles some urgent messages issued by the wider community. Examples have included (1) a notice from the surgery about the (then forthcoming) vaccination plans and (2) notification of the looming deadline for the submission of their comments to the OCC’s HGV weight limit consultation, (which expired on 6 February). The latter circulation resulted in 140 people (many of whom were previously unaware of the imminent closure of the consultation period) clicking through to open the OCC’s questionnaire. All this was achieved within a 36 hour period.

If you would like to be included in either or both of all the future circulations of the B&DS & BA, please email petermartin@btinternet.com quoting your first and surname, with your address, simply saying “Please add me to the the B&DS and/or the BA list”. This is a free service to the community.

Peter Martin

LOOKING FORWARD TO THE BURFORD FESTIVAL 2022

Save the date: 10 - 19 June 2022



Very sadly we have decided that Burford Unlocked, the three day event we were hoping to organise in June this year, will have to go the way of the Glastonbury Festival and Britain’s Got Talent. In the end the continuing uncertainties over when lockdown restrictions would end, difficulties in booking speakers, potential financial risks and most importantly the safety of everyone involved left us no choice but to cancel the event.



However, this does mean that we can now focus all our efforts on organising a full ten day festival in 2022. Many of the events we were hoping to stage this year can be rolled forward. Of course that still leaves lots of gaps in our tentative programme so the organising committee are very keen to receive your suggestions for acts, speakers, artists, and activities covering as wide a spectrum of interest, age and budget as possible.



Please send suggestions to chairman@burfordfestival.org. Similarly we would love to hear from anyone who would like to help with running an event or joining the committee.
Bill Risebero - Chair, Organising Committee

Our website www.thebridgeburford.co.uk has updates on local news, previous features and topical photographs
And for more photos about Burford events do look at Burford Life on Facebook

census 2021



Censuses have been around for a long time. They go back at least to Ancient Egypt around 1750 BC and one of the better known ones was held in 6 AD while Quirinius was governor of Syria. The first in this country was Domesday Book, completed in 1086, and in later centuries bishops were asked to compile the numbers of families in their dioceses. The first modern census was in 1801. It found that the population of England and Wales was 8.9 million and that of Scotland was 1.6 million.

Since then a census has been held every ten years (other than in 1941) so it has come around again this year, the critical date being 21 March. In 2011 it was possible for the first time to complete the census information online and around 16% of people opted for that method. This time the government hopes that the majority of responses will be online although it will still be possible to complete the information on paper if you prefer.

The census is not just a question of head counting. Data collected will help to determine how services are planned and funded in our area, covering such issues as transport, education and health, and on cycle routes, schools and dental surgeries. The census will include questions about your sex, age, work, health, education, household size, and ethnicity. And, for the first time, there will be a question asking people whether they have served in the armed forces, as well as voluntary questions for those aged 16 and over on sexual orientation and gender identity.

We understand that everyone (perhaps meaning every household) will receive a letter during the coming weeks containing a unique access code to enable you to complete the census online. The letter will also tell you how to request a paper questionnaire if preferred. In the meantime more details can be found on Census.gov.uk
Editors/Clendon Daukes

For most readers completing the census should be straightforward but for others it could be challenging. Lisa Stead is the census engagement manager working in West Oxfordshire and she is very keen to work with voluntary groups across West Oxfordshire to engage with our communities. She would appreciate any knowledge that voluntary groups may have about the communities they work with, potential barriers they may face and ideas how such groups could help to promote the census to these communities so that she can support them. She can be contacted at Lisa.Stead@field.census.gov.uk or on 07452 942723. Further information can be found on the census website as above.



2021 AGM It was a great relief to all and the town's global reputation that, notwithstanding the frenzied excitement that annually surrounds the fiercely fought competition for places on the committee, this year's AGM passed without any accusations of vote-rigging. It is thought that the potential invasion of placard carrying dissenters, up the stairs of the council's offices in the Tolsey, was thwarted by the virtual nature of this year's procedures.

The office holders elected, who some might accuse of scraping home in the absence of nil opposition, are Chairman Peter Martin, Hon Secretary Kenneth Gray, Treasurer and Membership Secretary Cedric Reavley. Committee: Laurence Balbes (rep. Fulbrook), Sylvia Demmery (rep. Asthall & District), Julia Hart, Anthony Hodgkison, Frances Sparkes, Michael Taubenheim and John White.



2021 Programme By now everyone should have received a copy of their no expense spared technicoloured programme of events. It can also be admired on our website. If you haven't received yours, please contact Cedric Reavley cedric.reavley51@gmail.com.

New members are warmly invited Cedric will also be very pleased to hear from anyone wishing to join the Society as we start a new year. An application form can be downloaded from our website and emailed. Every member with an email address will also receive our monthly digital newsletters which combine local updates together with what we hope are interesting and entertaining video clips.

Memberships are due for renewal please Due on 1 January, subscriptions have once again have been pegged at £10 per person for our seven events. May we please urge everyone to complete the standing order wherever possible and also the Gift Aid sections. The latter enables us to claim an additional 25% contribution to our funds from the government, which makes such a difference.

Next Meeting, Tuesday 23 March. Tibesti Mountains Expedition 1965

The expedition to the Tibesti Mountains (located in the central Sahara, primarily in Chad with a small extension into Libya) took place 56 years ago in 1965.

In those days, this was one of several parts of the world that remained unexplored and a spirit of adventure was something to be applauded rather than belittled. Additionally, the army recognised the benefits and potential rewards of 'Arduous and Adventurous Training' following the success during the war of such irregulars as Wingate's Chindits and Stirling's Long Range Desert Group. So Sandhurst backed this challenging proposal to probe the uncharted South Sahara, though it imposed certain conditions, one of which was to experiment not having a nominated leader!



Our speaker will be Brig. Clendon Daukes who was commissioned from Sandhurst into the 4th/7th Royal Dragoon Guards. During his thirty years in the army he served in Aden and the Trucial States, Northern Ireland, Germany, the UK and Australia. He now lives in Signet and, amongst his many contributions to our local community, he was the founder of The Bridge magazine and a previous Chairman of the Burford & District Society.

Join us to hear an enthralling account of this extraordinary, never attempted before (or since) expedition into the depths of a hitherto unexplored region of the Sahara Desert during one of the hottest summers recently recorded.



This meeting will take place via Zoom.

Zoom. If you are new to Zoom or would like to check a few points, then you may find the guidance notes, that can be read or downloaded from the Burford & District Society's website, helpful on

www.burfordanddistrictsociety.co.uk/zoom-guide

Keep smiling and stay safe

Peter - Chairman - peteremartin@btinternet.com

FRIENDS OF BURFORD LIBRARY



Well, another month and no more encouraging news from us or Oxfordshire Library Services. Most libraries are closed, although some are operating a click and collect service: the details are in the February edition of The Bridge. Unfortunately the ebook story competition details arrived too late for publication.

Next time, I hope to have more hopeful tidings for you. World Book Day is on Thursday 4 March: swap with your friends?

Elizabeth Mortimore

THE WYCHWOOD PROJECT

Local artists launch community project to encourage fresh perspectives on nature

Do you have a favourite place, plant, or walk in the Wychwood area? Artists in residence at the Wychwood Project Nimmi Naidoo and Flora Gregory would love to hear from you. The artists would like to invite anyone living in the Wychwood area to share photos, videos, poems or artworks reflecting the places they love in the Wychwood Forest, to form the basis of an innovative virtual artwork that explores how we see the environment around us. Using these contributions, the artists will create an accessible webpage that celebrates our local environment, encourages us to discover new spaces, and helps us experience familiar places with fresh eyes. The Wychwood Project will also share contributions on their Instagram channel, to inspire audiences to engage afresh with the natural world around them.



Flora and Nimmi, known as the Mappists, create participatory art events that offer people different ways of connecting with nature. Recent events include 'Come into the Woods: Topples Wood', an opportunity for forest bathing and to connect to the woods through audio works, and 'The Map Room: Make your Mark!' where people mark the route of their Wychwood Forest walks on a map and talk about what they love about being in the forest. Flora and Nimmi both gained an MA in Social Sculpture at Oxford Brookes University. Social Sculpture is an art form that employs social processes, and puts forward the idea that we are all artists in that every aspect of life can be seen as creative.



So whether it's a space with wonderful birdsong, that one tree you always admire, a view filled with memory, or just a path you walk along every evening, the Mappists would love to see, hear, or read your impressions of it. Please send in anything you would like to contribute to miranda@wychwoodproject.org.uk (who will share it with the Mappists), and keep an eye on the Wychwood Project's Instagram (@wychwoodproject) to learn what others love about the Wychwood area. We hope you enjoy the project, and that it helps us all find fresh perspectives on the natural world around us, for lockdown and beyond.

miranda@wychwoodproject.org.uk

The Wychwood Project restores habitats in the area formerly covered by the Wychwood Forest, managing nature reserves in Witney, Charlbury, Woodstock, and Hailey. It also runs events and initiatives to help local communities engage with nature, from courses to a popular annual Forest Fair.



Miranda Davies - Communications and Events Officer

WALKERS TAKE NOTE!

Are you fed-up with doing the same old walks?

Walking in Oxfordshire www.walkinginengland.co.uk/oxfordshire is the website for you!



With hundreds of walks to download and print, free, it also has books of walks, contact details for all the walking groups in the county and much more. Whether you want to walk on your own or with a group all the information is there in one place.

There is so much walking information on the web but it is difficult to find. Walking in Oxfordshire

(part of the Walking in England suite of websites

www.walkinginengland.co.uk) – one for each county in England) has brought it together in one place so whether you are walking from home, or away on holiday, you will be able to find a walk suitable for you.



With walks from half a mile to twelve miles plus long, and a note of suitability for pushchairs and wheelchairs, everyone can find a walk to enjoy.

So home or away, check out the websites and get walking!

John Harris - www.walkinginengland.co.uk john@walkinginengland.co.uk

10 March Zoom AGM 10.30am and Virtual Lecture (11am)

Understanding Ancient Egyptian Art: Wall Reliefs & Murals

With Eileen Goulding

In the light of the Covid-19 pandemic and, until further notice, our lectures and other events are being presented via Zoom (see below for more information).

Egypt has a wealth of artefacts dated to its ancient past that today can be classified as art. This lecture examines one genre, the magnificent representational art displayed in the wall reliefs and paintings found in their tombs, drawing on examples from the Old, Middle and New Kingdom Periods. It identifies the techniques, materials and different styles used and demonstrates its progression through the millennia to demonstrate how their accomplished artisans achieved the beautiful artworks we can still see today, more than 3,000 years after the burial tombs were sealed.



Eileen has an MA from the Department of Archaeology at the University of London, is a published author and an authority on the ancient cultures of the world. She specialises in the history, culture, myths and legends of the Ancient Worlds and is a keen maritime historian specialising in piracy in the Caribbean and the South Seas.

Members will be sent the Zoom invitation via our newsletter. Guests are welcome to join us with a suggested donation of £5 per person.



For more information on how to join the Zoom lecture, please contact Frances Sparkes on 01993 823943 or by email, publicity@theartssocietycotswolds.org.uk.

To learn more about The Arts Society Cotswolds and to keep abreast of any additional activities, please log into the website www.theartssocietycotswolds.org.uk
Frances Sparkes

17 March Special Interest Day
Music in the Great Art Collections of Europe
With Peter Medhurst



In the light of the Covid-19 pandemic and, until further notice, our lectures and other events are being presented via Zoom (see below for more information).

Many of the great – but smaller – European art collections are tucked away in side streets, country houses and provincial towns, known often only to connoisseurs and local communities. With an eye to important paintings, musical instruments and pictures with musical content, Peter Medhurst explores some of these quality galleries, and examines moments from the Mauritshuis in The Hague, The Fitzwilliam Museum in Cambridge, The Dulwich Picture Gallery in London, the Vleeshuis in Antwerp, and the Ca' Rezzonico in Venice. The lecture is illustrated throughout with music.

Session One: 10.30 – 11.30
Burghley House, Lincolnshire, Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge and The Bate, Oxford

Session Two: 11.45 – 13.00
The Mauritshuis, The Hague and The Vleeshuis in Antwerp

Session Three: 14.00 – 15.00
The Ca'Rezzonico in Venice and the Dulwich Picture Gallery, London



Peter Medhurst works in the UK and abroad as a musician and scholar, giving recitals and delivering illustrated lectures on music and the arts. He studied singing and early keyboard instruments at the Royal College of Music and at the Mozarteum in Salzburg

To book and pay, please visit our website <https://www.theartssocietycotswolds.org.uk/interest-days.php>
A Zoom invitation will be sent to all who have booked and paid.

For more information on how to join the Zoom lecture, please contact Frances Sparkes on 01993 823943 or by email, publicity@theartssocietycotswolds.org.uk
Frances Sparkes

COVID-19 VACCINATION PROGRAMME

By the time this is read many of you will have received your first vaccination. This will either have been the Pfizer or AstraZenica vaccine. At the beginning of February, when this note was drafted, our over 70s population will have been vaccinated. It was estimated that there would be a gap of between ten and twelve weeks between the first and second dose.



The programme of vaccinations in our area has been coordinated by our Primary Care Network (PCN) whose clinical director is Dr Austin (GP Partner) at Burford. Our PCN (Rural West) includes the Charlbury, Bampton and Burford surgeries together with the Broadshires Health Centre. This is a total of nearly 32,000 patients. The PCN set up the centre with all the equipment and safety measures necessary and vaccinated over 5000 patients within the first three weeks.

I am sure those of you who have attended the Rural West PCN's vaccination centre at Carterton will agree that its organisation was faultless. There have been over 60 volunteers, ranging in age from between 20 and 75. They have helped control the car park (coordinated by Cllr Nick Leverton, the mayor of Carterton), escort the frail and have assisted with some of the arrival procedures. These helpers have given up their time to play their part in the national effort finally to beat the virus.

You will have read of the complexities surrounding the management of the Pfizer vaccine in particular but doctors, nurses and volunteers have worked tirelessly to roll out a programme as efficiently, calmly and sympathetically as one could have hoped. We owe all involved a debt of gratitude for the selfless way in which our PCN has dealt with this heavy burden of responsibility. They and the staff at the vaccination centre are a credit to our community!
Clendon Daukes
Member, Burford Patient Participation Group (PPG)

THANK YOU

We would like to pass our deepest thanks for those who supported the 2020 Poppy Appeal. With your kind generosity we raised £3,965.45. Thanks again for your support and kind donations through these difficult times.

Poppy Appeal Organisers, Paul and Sally Andrew

THE BRIDGE JOINS NEXTDOOR

We are sure that many of our readers are already familiar with the Nextdoor website. It enables members to communicate via the internet with their neighbours in order to exchange news and views and seek information, help or advice. It is open to individuals, local businesses, voluntary organisations and public bodies. Unlike some sites, membership is restricted to people in the locality who have given their real names and have verified their identities. Nextdoor promises that they will not pass names, addresses or email addresses to advertisers and that conversations will not be indexed by search engines.



Various organisations in our area are already using Nextdoor and The Bridge has now joined them. We plan to use it, in conjunction with our website, to keep members informed of what is going on

around here. Given that the magazine is printed monthly and is sent to press a week or ten days before you receive it, it is difficult to keep you up to date and we hope that using Nextdoor and our website we shall be able to get the news to you sooner.

You can join Nextdoor at nextdoor.co.uk. or by downloading the app to your phone.

Editors

BURFORD OIL SYNDICATE

Covering Burford, Fulbrook, Taynton and Bradwell Village Only)



Next order date is Thursday 18 March 2021 by 5.00pm. Late orders will not be accepted. Deliveries for the March order are expected to be between 22 March and 6 April, depending on weather and market conditions at the time. The following order will be on Thursday 29 April 2021.

You can join the syndicate and order online at www.burfordoil.co.uk, or membership application forms, and order forms are available from Reavley's Chemist. Any questions please contact *Peter Higgs - 822462*



theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

THE FULBROOK AND BURFORD WI

We are a friendly, diverse group of women whose ages range from 20s to those still young at heart.

Whether you just want to socialise and have fun, learn new skills, be involved in the community or feel strongly about important issues and wish to make a difference through local, national and global campaigns, there is something for everyone.

Although currently unable to meet in person, we are keeping in touch and hope to resume our official monthly meetings at the Warwick Hall from April with an exciting programme of activities, talks and social events. More information on this next month.

If you are interested in joining or finding out more about the FaB WI please go to our website thefabwi.org.uk or contact me on 01993 822755 or, preferably by email gjaarnell@icloud.com

Jane Arnell

MRS BUMBLES DIARY

The post office is temporarily in Bumbles while we sort out the lease for next door. Everything is taking forever but we are getting there.

The post office unit weighs 350 kilos and arrived in a lorry from York. Three Post Office personnel drove from various places in the UK to install the equipment. The unit was 185cm wide and the door to Bumbles is 185cm wide.

On the installation date we took off the door to Bumbles and discovered something we should have thought of before. The door wasn't a rectangle – it was a trapezium. Do you remember them from school? It's a rectangle but the opposite sides of the rectangle are not parallel. This meant the unit did not fit through the door. Panic stations. The lorry drivers cracked first and would have happily driven the unit back to York.

There was no one with a clever plan so four of us ran at the unit, which was on wheels, and forced it through the door. It shot through the door like the cork out of a bottle of champagne.

It was then installed and it started up, whirred and all its lights flashed. It then needed to update with 500 plus updates to be successfully processed. This took over a day.

At 3.00 in the morning we got up and it had stopped whirring, clicking and flashing and the message on the screen said "Updates successful". The next day Lesley switched it on and it worked first time. Fantastic.

Just one thing. Do you know anyone who could fix our front door?

Steve Colter

KEEPING A STRAIGHT BAT

Swinbrook cricket club is optimistic that Covid restrictions will not prevent us enjoying a full season in 2021. Assuming we are allowed we will be running a training/practice/youth session every Friday evening starting on 24 April at 6pm. I will be in charge with other parents helping with the younger ones and nets and practice matches for all. I hope to get help from time to time from other experienced cricketers with whom I play Oxfordshire seniors cricket. With our England team under Joe Root flying high and as we are current One Day World Champions and cricket is back on terrestrial TV we are anticipating increased interest in playing and welcome players (male and female of course) of all abilities and ages to come and join us. Either contact us through the website or just turn up any Friday when the bar will be open and a warm welcome assured.



On Saturdays we will be playing in the enlarged Cherwell League and I am delighted to report that even the away games are not far away. There will, as usual, be plenty of Sunday games which are always a little less competitive and a great opportunity for the 'occasional' player to get a game.

Swinbrook CC also enters a team in the local Aunt Sally league on Thursday evenings and much to our surprise our very inexperienced team won promotion at their first attempt in 2019. No Aunt Sally last year of course as 'she' got Covid!

Andrew Wingfield Digby

LETTER TO THE EDITORS

Following on from the letter about social distancing and exercise, it would be helpful if runners wore masks, as some of them tend to spray people with water droplets, when they are running and gasping for breath. I am a runner and believe that you should have consideration for other people.

L. Brannan



TOLSEY MUSEUM



This less-than-flattering caricature of John Banbury appeared in the earliest account of Burford's history in 1861, by The Revd John Fisher, Burford's curate for a short time. Described by Fisher as 'Late Parish Clerk', it seems that John Banbury was no longer in office by then, but the inscription on a silver teapot suggests otherwise.

The somewhat strange wording is as follows;

Presented to Mr John Banbury in testimony of esteem by the inhabitants of Burford on his resigning the office of Parish Clerk which he had held for 34 years and 7 months, September 1862.

A remarkable record, but why the apparent discrepancy over dates? Did the inhabitants of Burford take a long time to decide that a gift should be made? We may never know.



The certainty is that the teapot was already second-hand when presented in 1862, as the hallmarks for 1811 confirm the typical 'London' style of that time; and some scratch-marks on the base show it passed through a dealer or pawnbroker. What stories this teapot could tell!

A further question is, did the presentation include the milk jug and sugar basin? Well, the jug may have been, although again it is a Georgian piece, with rubbed hallmarks for c. 1810; but the surprise is the sugar basin. Although this matches the tea pot in style, it was made a century later in 1908.

As well as being parish clerk, John Banbury kept the Eight Bells Inn near Church Green, and was also a maker of men's breeches. Descendants moved to Woodstock, becoming successful Gentlemen's Outfitters there for much of the 20th Century; another, Mr. Laurence Banbury of Bridgnorth, generously donated the tea set to the Tolsey Museum a few years ago, when this intriguing story began to unfold.

Chris Walker - tolseymuseum@yahoo.co.uk

SLEEP SOUNDLY!

This 19 March is World Sleep Day and local Burford pianist Christina invites you to a 'sleep weekend' comprising three sessions (take your pick) of meditation and lying classical music concerts - she warmly welcomes local Burford residents to try it out.

"Together, we'll meditate and tune in with how we're feeling before and after the concert. You can lie down either in your bed or on a yoga mat. Whilst your body is in a deep resting state you'll be open to absorb the music's healing benefits. It's on Zoom, but most of the time you'll just be using your ears, so can feel connected without staring into a screen. We originally started this series as in person concert experiences in huge churches filled with up to 100 lying down people listening to piano and choral music - it's quite incredible the sense of connection and social atmosphere generated by both performers. At 'lie down and listen' concerts, people would literally not leave afterwards, staying to enjoy hot chocolates, hug and in some cases kissing each other!"

The sleep weekend comprises:

- 19 March 9.00pm World Sleep Day Special
- 20 March 9.00am Morning Tune In
- 21 March 6.00pm Sunday Slow Down

Join for just one or two or all three. For more details and to book go to www.liedownandlisten.com

Pianist and composer Christina McMaster moved to Burford during 2020. She graduated from the Royal Academy of Music and has collaborated with a huge range of artists and genres. Most recently she performed with folk legend Peggy Seeger at Kings Place, London and wrote music for a climate change and sustainability film by Mary McCartney. Christina has performed at UK festivals and venues including Cheltenham, Aldeburgh and QEH and worked with composers leading composers She has also appeared regularly on Radio 3 and Classic FM.

Be sure to follow @liedownandlisten on Instagram to be part of the 'Inner Landscape' nature and music project - where Christina improvises music to inspiring scenes around Burford, including stunning scenes captured by local photographer Catherine Chapman. If you'd like to have your local nature videos set to original music - send them in!



Christina McMaster ARAM www.christinamcmaster.org
Instagram @chrissymcmaster www.liedownandlisten.com
#artoflistening

BURFORD LITERARY FESTIVAL

Save The Date

It is nearly a year since I was handed the reins to the bookshop and what a year it has been. Who could possibly have foreseen how the last twelve months were going to affect every one of us. As I sit here on a rainy Thursday afternoon with the doors to the bookshop Covid-closed, I would like to focus not on a year of disappointment and difficulties but on the year to come.

Spring is on its way and bringing with it longer days, budding trees and hopefully some warming sunshine to which we might all tip our face, take a deep long breath, albeit possibly through a face mask, and rejoice at new life to come.

Until then I have turned my mind to bringing our bookish community together and what better way to bring the community together than a literary festival and hence I give you the inaugural

Burford Literary Festival 23 and 27 September 2021



Burford Literary Festival will be the perfect place to celebrate your love of literature, see your favourite authors in action including fiction, non-fiction, poetry and of course children's literature. We will also aim to give a platform to new authors and those whose voices haven't been

heard in the mainstream as well as launching our annual Young Writers Competition.

You can follow our blog and get up to date information at www.madhatterbookshop.co.uk and of course from the bookshop – when we are allowed to open once again.

Until then thank you for supporting the Madhatter Independent Bookshop. You can find all the books you need and more at <https://uk.bookshop.org/shop/madhatterbookshop>

We very much look forward to seeing you all in person in the bookshop very soon.

Kim_kim@madhatterbookshop.co.uk

Congratulations to Ottie Sanders who has been awarded a full music scholarship to Cheltenham College.

Ottie, who currently lives in Bradwell Village, has been studying the violin and piano, as well as singing, since she was five years old.



BURFORD SCHOOL

Here at school life continues apace. We are still welcoming in some students each day but hoping very much that we will be able to open our doors to all our students in March. Local MP Robert Courts paid us a visit in February to see, first-hand, how life goes on during a lockdown; we have been running Covid testing for staff since early February and, of course, teaching continues online.

Sports stars turn out in support of our students

Over the past year we have been using our social media sites to deliver a series of short motivational videos addressed to our students from a range of sports individuals. Thanks to a member of our sports staff, Mr Cowley, the students have received messages from sports personalities and athletes such as Gabi Logan, Will Greenwood, Vernon Kaye, and Alex Payne.

On Friday 29 January former England cricket captain Michael Vaughan joined students live on a Microsoft Teams call. The students asked insightful and probing questions regarding the game of cricket, the future of cricket and Michael's career highlights. It was a real treat and an inspirational call for all those who took part and Michael was impressed by their enthusiasm and interest.

The road to women's international cricket



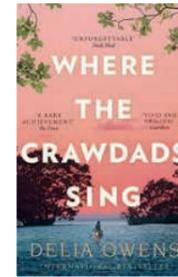
Burford student Abi Norgorve, one of the school's high performance athletes, has been selected to join the Southern Vipers Academy Cricket Squad based at The Rose Bowl in Hampshire. Abi completed a number of selection days and received coaching from Charlotte Edwards, former professional cricketer and captain of the England women's team.

Abi was one of the youngest at the trials but her selection shows recognition of her commitment and dedication to the sport.

Business in booming!

Budding entrepreneur Jen Sawitzki in Year 11 has been enjoying high demand for her latest venture - Dark Matter Decks - bespoke, custom made skateboards. Jen took part in the Tenner Challenge last year, when she set up 'Venus Cards', producing environmentally friendly greetings cards, and her success encouraged her to diversify. Do take a look at her amazing skateboards at <https://jensawitzki.wixsite.com/dmdecks>
Sarah Duckworth - Marketing Manager
www.burford.oxon.sch.uk

ALICE'S BOOK GROUP



Who would have thought it? Alice's Book Group stole a march on The Duchess of Cornwall. *Where the Crawdads Sing* by Delia Owens was one of four books chosen by HRH for her new book group. Burford is also well aware of another of her choices, Charlie Mackesy's *The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse*. The others were Hilary Mantel's *The Mirror and the Light*, William Boyd's *Restless* and *The Architect's Apprentice* by Elif Shafak.

Though not for reasons of loyalty to the crown, our group thoroughly applaud her choice, *Where the Crawdads Sing* is indeed a beautiful book, though many of us found it a mite difficult for the first few pages.

Beginning in the Carolina coastal swamps in the 1940s, it tells the story of a resourceful child living in isolation and extreme poverty and of her resilience as she grows to maturity.

This is Delia Owens's first novel. However she is an award-winning nature writer, and it is her obvious love of all things in nature that makes this book exceptional. Her observational narrative brings these inhospitable swamps before our eyes. In fact the land is as much a character in the story as the humans. Her sensitivity is not restricted to the natural world. It is fascinating that the language develops throughout and mirrors the growing experience of the characters. This tale is much more than a biography of its leading character as it embraces both a murder mystery and a touching love story. We enjoyed the fact that many of the people are given depth. They may be evil, or unkind, but most have redeeming features, and even the shortcomings of the "baddies" can be understood; and best of all, some are really lovable too.

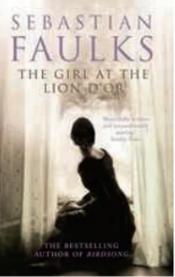
As is usual when we thoroughly enjoy a book on all levels, there seems little to say without revealing too much plot. Perhaps it is a failing of human nature that we find it easier to express disapprobation than praise, but every box was ticked by this book. To be picky, there is not a lot of humour, but the setting and plot do not call for it.

I suspect humour will be very evident in our next choice, a book that has been out a while, and which sounds fun: *The Thursday Murder Club* by Richard Osman is set in a retirement village, and I foresee we may have to endure the characters being described as old when they are younger than many of us.

[Veral Marshall](#)

CAROLINE'S CLASSICS

Despite Faulks being in my authors' Top Ten – I have a small bone to pick with the publishers. Who isn't influenced by a book's reviews before diving in (or you wouldn't be reading this)? Well, I'm issuing a 'spoiler alert' as the first review gives away this moving story's ending. *The Girl at the Lion d'Or* is a doomed love affair between a young girl and a married man, so your mindset is coloured from the first page to expect a common cliché.



However, on the flip side, I found my senses and anticipation were actually heightened. I was even more alert to signs of the relationship disintegrating. Although I'd read this pearl of a novel before, I still couldn't help but root for heroine Anne and, even more interestingly, for her lover despite their inevitable destiny.

Set in the lace curtain-twitching French village of Janvilliers shortly after the First World War, a young woman seeks waitressing work at the mediocre Lion d'Or hotel – the European equivalent of Fawlty Towers. Immediately Faulks sets up Anne as a tragic, vulnerable and abandoned figure. What's more, she's deeply wounded by a scandalous mystery in her past. Signing the hotel register, you read: "Surname: Louvet. She had grown used to this lie. The local lawyer had advised her as a child to abandon her family name when it was appearing daily in the newspapers."

But this is a fiercely determined female with spirit and perception, yearning to find someone to understand and stick by her. When she first sees outwardly worldly and confident local landowner Charles Hartmann playing tennis with pals, Faulks says: "She was convinced with a certainty that was both delightful and frustrating that she already knew him; that she knew him in fact better than these friends of his did, and that any slow acquaintance they might go through would be a waste of time because she had already seen into the heart of him."

Their liaison blossoms and there is a fascinating shift in the balance of power especially after Anne discloses her terrible past. This forces the entitled and stoical Hartmann to grapple with new strange and swirling emotions and to confront his real self. His 're-birth' and struggle is the story's perhaps unforeseen yet true heart. You may think you know the ending but it is both harrowing and redemptive.

[Caroline Fisher](#)

EDITORIAL POLICY

As is customary with publications, the decision of the editors on what can and cannot be published is final. In particular, they will edit or decline to publish anything which in their opinion includes personal attacks on any individual, or is offensive, in bad taste or potentially defamatory. Opinions expressed by contributors are entirely their own and the appearance of any letters or articles in *The Bridge* does not indicate that the editors agree with them. Items may also be edited for clarification or length and may be rejected. Where items or services are offered for sale, or advertised, the provider is responsible for ensuring that the goods or services are safe and of good quality. The editors may refuse to publish advertisements or other statements about unsuitable items or services. *The Bridge* does not accept responsibility for the accuracy of advertisements and does not endorse any goods or services which are advertised. All items submitted for inclusion must give the name and address of the writer and an email address or telephone number. By submitting any article, announcement, letter or advertisement to *The Bridge* you are deemed to have agreed to the above.

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HUFFKINS HELPING TO KEEP KIDS OCCUPIED DURING LOCKDOWN

Huffkins has launched a new initiative to help keep children entertained at home during lockdown. #HuffkinsAtHome offers a range of free printable activity sheets aimed at children aged 3-11 years.

For younger children, including those of pre-school age, a range of colouring-in and spot the difference sheets are available. Each colouring-in sheet also includes additional activities of varying difficulty and effort, such as spelling, writing and maths tasks, suitable for primary school aged children.

Adventure Trail sheets are also available, to make daily outdoor exercise more fun. Children are encouraged to look out for things on the 'map' on their local walks and tick off what they see.

In keeping with what this Cotswolds brand is known for, Huffkins has also shared recipes for their tasty Rocky Road and Triple Chocolate Brownies. These are suitable for older children to complete with minimal supervision, or as a fun 'messy play' activity for younger children with a responsible adult. The recipes have been simplified for home baking and allow children to choose their favourite 'star ingredients'. More recipes will be added soon.

Josh Taea, managing director of Huffkins, said: "Lockdown is tough on everyone, but we know it's extremely difficult right now for parents, who are juggling home-schooling with working from home or day to day chores. #HuffkinsAtHome has been created to try and ease some of that burden. The simple activity sheets can be easily printed at home and should help to keep the kids occupied for an hour or two each day. The flood was awful timing for us given that we've also had to limit our tea room service due to lockdown. But we've always been inspired by the amazing community spirit in the Cotswolds. So while things are a little quieter for us, we decided to use our time to help people and give something back. #HuffkinsAtHome is just one of the ways we're doing that. If the activity sheets and recipes prove popular, we'll continue to launch new ones every week until kids can safely go back to school."

Dee @huffkins.co.uk

HONoured CITIZENS OF BURFORD

Following a local enquiry, BTC's Maggie Andrews has kindly provided The Bridge with a list of previous and current holders of The Burford Medal.

The late Reg Bishop, Mr & Mrs Lomas, Eileen Curtis, Audrey Bayliss, Clare & Christopher Baines, Avery Baines, Grev & Kath Wain, Candy & Bob Dodge, Jack Rose.

Current holders:

Chris Walker, Peter Gould, John Marks, Keith Davies, Penny Barraclough, Raymond Moody, John Yeatman, Barbara Agg, Charles Williams Jnr, Peter Harris, David Woolley, Barbara Jeacock, John Spencer, Alice Temple-Bruce, David Buckland, Veral Marshall, Cedric Reavley, Manfred & Gabi Schotten, Phil Adams.

The next medal awards take place in 2022.

Editors

FAREWELL TO THE OIL TANK?



We readers were asked in last month's Bridge whether there is any prospect of oil tanks being a thing of the past in Burford in the light of the community initiative to install ground source heat pumps (GSHP) in Swaffham Prior, Cambs.

It so happens that the Warwick Hall is heated by GSHPs. The plant room in the garden has two heat pumps; one to produce high temperature water and one to produce lower temperature water. They are both rated A+ for efficiency and draw warmth from six 135 metre deep bore-holes. The accompanying photograph shows the drilling rig in operation in 2015.

The capital cost, which was estimated to be approximately £100,000.00, has been paid. However, it is not possible to be exact about the electricity running costs of the GHSP as they are included with the overall lighting, kitchen and other equipment running costs. We receive Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) payments of some £7,000 to £8,000 pa.

There were inevitable teething problems with the installation, not least just becoming used to the demands of its operation in a building with sophisticated engineering design. However, things have settled down such that we now generate warmth for the underfloor heating system and hot water for the taps.

Given our experience, it would not be wise to say that this type of system would suit domestic properties in our area. GSHPs are an expensive investment and they need to be managed by someone with a good understanding of their operation. On the other hand, they do offer a renewable energy alternative to fossil fuels. They may be the sort of heating system with which we will need to become familiar in the future.

Andrew Butcher, Roy Tarbox and Rory Darling

SHILTON ROAD DEVELOPMENT

It is now some four years since the go-ahead was given for the construction of new homes on the site on the west side of Shilton Road, Burford. This followed a successful appeal by Hallam Land Management of the refusal of planning permission by WODC.

The proposed development created a lot of controversy and much heated debate, not least in the pages of this magazine.

Anyone who has travelled along or, indeed, lives in Shilton Road (in other words most of our readers) will be aware that construction work is now well under way. Many people have commented that until the builders moved in they had not appreciated quite how big the area under construction was. Sales offices and show houses have appeared and marketing is under way using the name Cotswold Gate.

The development has three parts. Lioncourt Homes are building around 90 houses with three, four or five bedrooms. There are seven types of house, all with suitably rustic names such as The Walnut and The Sycamore. Details of the houses are a bit limited although the specification states that they will be equipped with gas central heating. Surely some mistake?

The second part is the work of Beechcroft Developments. This consists of 67 two- and three-bedroom apartments and two-bedroom houses. These will be arranged in three courtyards with gardens in the middle, as shown in the photograph. These are going to be occupied by people aged 55 or over and there will be an estate manager, a guest suite, lift access to most apartments and an "honesty bar" (is that an oxymoron?)



Beechcroft say that their apartments will be energy efficient with heating from air source heat pumps and low energy lighting. We couldn't find any reference to such things as solar panels, waste water collection or whether there will be electric vehicle charging points, something that will surely be essential within a few years.

The Bridge spoke to both sales offices. Both said that they had received a lot of interest from potential buyers but were a little cagy about how many homes have so far been reserved. Perhaps they will update us on this later on. They report that it will take around two years to complete the development.

The third part is a care home with up to 78 occupants. We have no details of this at present.

Assuming that there are 90 houses with an average of 2.5 people per house, 1.5 per apartment in the over 55 accommodation and full occupancy of the care home, this suggests that there could eventually be around 400 residents, increasing the population of the town by around 30%.

Editors

Housing market during lockdown



MP REPORT

I know how challenging 2020 was for all of us and that, in some ways, 2021 feels all too familiar. However, though we may be in lockdown now, there is light at the end of the tunnel. With three vaccines now approved for use in the UK, including our own local Oxford/AstraZeneca jab, we are now well on the way to vaccinating our top four priority groups in record time. This is a hugely significant achievement which is testament to the inspirational leadership that has been shown by local NHS organisations, GPs and health coordinators. This, along with longer days, lighter evenings and the beginning of a beautiful West Oxfordshire spring is sure to lift spirits in this challenging time.

I have seen the excellent work of everyone at our local vaccination hubs for myself. The professionalism and efficiency they are showing is proving everyone's dedication to this vital cause. I am also encouraged that so many people across West Oxon are taking up the vaccine when offered. It is this dedication and resolve which speaks to me in these challenging times and shows me that we will overcome this.

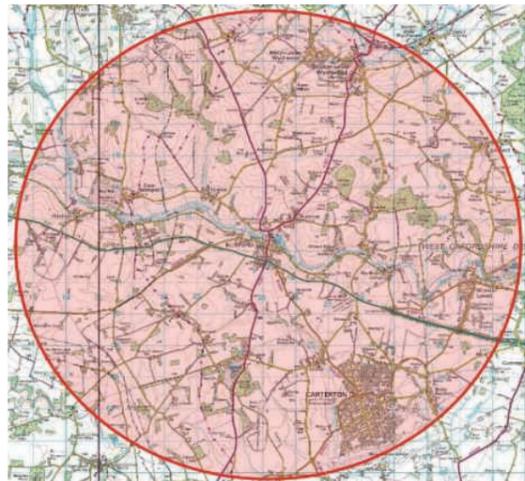
We are also once again seeing the huge outpouring of community spirit and goodwill that warmed us all in 2020. I would encourage everyone to check in on family, friends and neighbours, particularly those who may live alone, the vulnerable and those separated from their loved ones. Sometimes even just a phone call can do the world of good.

My team and I continue to work hard from home on your behalf and we remain accessible throughout lockdown. Please do not hesitate to get in touch at robert@robertcourts.co.uk if there is anything at all we can do.

Robert Courts

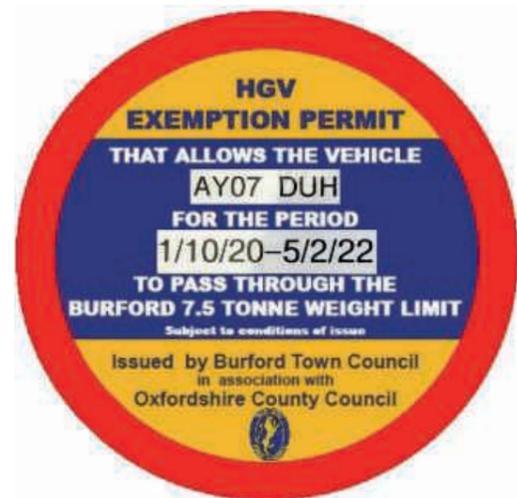
HGV REPORT

The ongoing consequence of the introduction of a weight limit in July 2020 in Burford was that BTC had to monitor the HGVs that breached the weight limit, send warning letters to the owners and, for repeat offenders, collect the evidence for OCC to take the drivers to court. The Traffic Order said that HGVs could deliver to addresses in the town but a permit system had to be put in place for those that wished to drive through. BTC took responsibility for a limited permit scheme for businesses that had a local base and delivered locally. We had to install equipment to record HGV number plates 24/7 and employ someone to administer the scheme. All this has been done.



Red Zone:
4.8 mile radius

Permits were issued for individual HGVs from businesses which had an operational base within a 4.8 mile radius of Burford called the “Red Zone”. These permits allow delivery within the Red Zone but not outside. A total of 122 HGV permits have been issued by BTC to 16 businesses. They can be seen on their HGV windscreens.



BTC HGV Permit

Apart from goods vehicles allowed by the Traffic Order, such as WODC rubbish wagons, tractors and fire engines, on an average weekday in January there were 45 HGVs over 7.5 tonnes maximum gross weight on Burford High Street. Of these 24 had permits, six were delivering to addresses in Burford and 15 were breaching the weight limit. 73% of the offenders were given a formal written warning (very few offend twice), 21% of the offending owners could not be identified (either due to problems with the DVLA or insufficient light to see the number plate both of which issues are being addressed) and 6% were foreign (which unfortunately neither BTC nor OCC can do anything about even with Brexit!). Incidentally buses and coaches do not carry ‘goods’ but carry ‘people’ and are not covered by the weight limit.

The weight limit has been an outstanding success for Burford, as well as Shipton Under Wychwood, Chipping Norton and South Newington, all of whom contributed to the sign funding. The next challenge is when OCC has to decide whether or not to make the experimental Traffic Order permanent when it runs out in February 2022.

We are often asked what information do we need if a member of the public wishes to report a lorry breaking the weight limit. The first thing is to report it to peter.denning@burford-tc.gov.uk. Peter would like as much of the following as possible:-

- 1) **Date and time;**
- 2) **Direction of travel (southerly, up the hill – or northerly, down the hill);**
- 3) **Registration number;**
- 4) **Company name and as many other details as you can catch as it flashes by;**
- 5) **Photo if you have your mobile phone with you.**

Burford Town Council

CROSSING THE WINDRUSH RIVER

Burford has due to its geographical location (the clue is in the name, shared by all British towns offering a shallow ‘ford’ crossing over a river) been a market town for centuries. Developing considerable wealth through a trade in wool, leather, agriculture in parallel with associated commerce, hospitality and latterly tourism, the town has been a vital local hub for many small rural communities. As this trade and regional pace of commerce has developed and increased, so inevitably has traffic, most especially in those towns offering a safe crossing over natural obstacles. The A361 (Burford High Street) remains one of the few safe crossing over the River Windrush. Indeed, it is that very iconic characteristic of the town that lends this monthly magazine its name.

Burford Town Council’s commendable initiative and energy in the implementation of an experimental 7.5t TRO (Traffic Regulation Order) is to be applauded. Acting in the very best interests of its community’s historic property and safety, the council has raised funds and local political awareness successfully to secure a

better future for the town. Locals and visitors alike recognise and respect the difference that the absence of the HGV traffic has made.

In parallel however, and herein lies the issue being addressed by the recent Oxfordshire County Council consultation, the **regional** impact of this arbitrary traffic ban was never assessed. As a consequence, the estimated 400-600 HGVs transiting through the town daily, confronted by the experimental TRO weight limit since August 2020, have been forced to seek alternative routes. The tough reality of the official Highways’ alternative routes offered, being the westbound A40 to Northleach (with an impossibly tight roundabout) or eastbound A40 to Oxford (inevitable congestion) is that these are unworkable, time/cost consuming or indeed inefficient.



Consequently, local and more often international (commercial SatNav following) HGV traffic is using, or at very least proving, alternative routes through the neighbouring, single lane villages. These often tiny communities (50-300 dwellings) are seeing an increase in HGV traffic, often in breach of existing TROs, with haulage contractors admitting to knowing no cost-effective alternative to crossing the Windrush. If the damage being done to Burford High Street was justification for the implementation of the weight limit, it is but small compared to the same being experienced in the neighbouring Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire villages. Verges, footpaths, bridges and culverts are damaged, while heavy commercial and car traffic plus our pedestrians attempt to find space on the narrow lanes.

The solution must surely lie in a compromise, allowing for the increase in population, housing and commerce while protecting the delicate, historic and environmental infrastructure of the region. Our plea and call to both Oxfordshire and Gloucestershire County Councils, Highways and Police is to complete a thorough survey and plan and implement a regional solution. In the interim, matching Burford’s initiative, the neighbouring villages will continue to lobby and seek also to protect their communities.

Jan de Haldevang - Chairman, Barrington Parish Council

LOCKDOWN BITES AT CROCODILE ZOO

Many of our readers must have visited Crocodiles of the World near Brize Norton village, and perhaps have taken children or grandchildren there. It is the UK’s only crocodile zoo, being home to over 100 crocodiles, caiman and alligators representing 19 of the 24 crocodylian species, as well as other animals such as meerkats, otters, and giant tortoises, not to mention a rare Komodo dragon. It is a registered charity and was founded by Shaun Foggett, a lifelong reptile enthusiast and leading expert, in 2011. It moved from its original home at Crawley Mill to the present site in 2014. It is one of the most important attractions which bring visitors to our area.

Sadly, the zoo has been hit hard by the events of the last 12 months. It was forced to close during the first and second lockdowns of 2020 and between lockdowns had to operate with restricted visitor numbers and pre-booking only. It closed again on 5 January 2021 in accordance with Covid regulations and at the time of writing there is no reopening date in sight. All the animals are being cared for by the dedicated staff team but this is costing tens of thousands of pounds per month to cover expenses such as food, heating, veterinary bills and medication.

Despite constant lobbying there still appears to be no specific support from the government and the Zoo Animal fund remains inaccessible to zoos, unless they are down to their last 12 weeks worth of reserves, by which time it is too late as arrangements to rehouse the animals could not be made at such short notice.

However, readers can help to support the zoo in a number of ways and these can be found on the Crocodiles of the World website. Donating by phone or online is very easy. You can also buy gift vouchers for Keeper Experiences and Adopt an Animal. You can also spread the word about the zoo to friends and family via social media.



Hopefully Crocodiles of the World will receive good news soon in terms of a re-opening date, but having lost income from what would have been a very busy half-term all hopes now are pinned on possible Easter re-opening and/or government support. The zoo contributes to vital conservation work around the world and provides joy to so many visitors. We simply cannot lose such a special place, which would also be a blow to the visitor economy on which many of our struggling local shops and cafés depend.

Editors

WODC COUNCILLOR REPORT

WODC can achieve a balanced budget for the next financial year, 2021/22, thanks to government Covid support grants and a hang-over of the new homes bonus scheme which should have ceased but is remaining for one more year. There has been a £1.8m shortfall in income which these payments negate. 2022/23 does not look good, however, and due to capital requirements a £9m deficit is looming over a five year period.

Hydrology has obviously been the main subject for home study over the December/January period. I have seen so many people assessing the flood position in the Guildenford car park, and taking photographs, since it flooded on 23 December 2020 until now, 10 February 2021. Just a trickle is coming over the millstream bank now and the car park has almost dried out. The toilet block has been awash several times but is now switched on and back in action.

The prolonged period with successive bouts of further heavy rain has demonstrated that the speed of water flow downstream of the bridge and through the car park is critical, the faster the better. Any back up or slow down causes the water to back up on the upstream side of the bridge because the four arches become overwhelmed and blocked. The water then rises up the ramp beside the bridge and could flow into the Lower High Street as it did in 2007. That floods about 15 houses and the church. Because the flooding was over such a long period we were able to monitor this occurrence and remedial action was taken. Further remedial action is needed to clear vegetation and repair banks along the millstream. The millstream is classified as main river by the Environment Agency because it forms part of the River Windrush flood protection area.

Island House was flooded this winter and there was water ingress into the fabric of the church rendering the vestry very wet. Obviously the building is not tanked due to its age. Two pumps were installed in the churchyard to get rid of floodwater. Unfortunately, such flooding is becoming an annual event, October 2019, December 2020 and January 2021.

Derek Cotterill - 10 February 2021



OCC COUNCILLOR REPORT

On 9 February OCC approved its annual balanced budget. New investments and high levels of protection for frontline services are the chief features of the budget that Oxfordshire County Council set for 2021/22 and beyond.

The council is dedicated to investing in services that will have positive long-term impact for local communities. The budget reflects this, with more than £25m of additional funding included. Some of this funding has been previously agreed, but £9.5m of this is new for 2021/22 to help meet additional demands, including within adult social care.

A total of £19.6m of savings will also take place in total across all services although £14.6m of these savings were already planned and are centred on the transformation of services to make them more efficient while protecting the frontline.

Council Tax proposals:

A 1.99 per cent rise in basic council tax will take place from April plus an extra one per cent which would be required to be spent on adult social care under national rules, making a total of 2.99%.

The government's rules allow for an extra three per cent council tax rise for adult social care on top of the basic council tax. However over recent months COVID has squeezed residents' household budgets. OCC have therefore levied just one per cent of the adult social care precept, which then leaves the county council able to plan on the basis of levying the remaining 2% for the 2022/23 financial year, if needed.

Central government has provided additional funding to OCC of £72 million to date for the year 20/21 within the total funding for all of Oxfordshire's six councils of £300 million. This additional funding has helped OCC and the other councils in Oxfordshire to support residents throughout the pandemic. It will ensure that in addition to contributing towards our own costs and lost income, we can support businesses, care providers, the voluntary sector, schools, individuals, vulnerable residents and homeless people to name but a few of the groups.

The capital programme shows that OCC is investing £1.4 billion into infrastructure across the county that will help with the planned growth to deliver much needed houses, especially affordable homes, so that residents can look forward to a safe and secure home to live in.

Over the coming decade OCC is investing:

£260 million in schools

£617 million in major infrastructure projects

£338 million in highways improvements

£70 million in property improvements

£9 million in vehicle and equipment replacements with a focus on our target of being carbon neutral by 2030

It is not just this important target for the county council that highlights our green credentials as OCC have already reduced carbon emissions by 40% since 2009 as well as achieving recycling rates of almost 60% - the best of any county council.

A total of £1m long-term funding would be invested in expanding the youth services in Oxfordshire. A study is due to report in the spring on the needs of young people and how the wider partnership of the voluntary, community and public services can best provide support. An additional £500,000 of one-off accelerator funding will also be provided to develop sustainable long-term approaches and help tackle the impacts of the pandemic on young people.

An extra £400,000 is proposed for highway maintenance focused on additional resources for vegetation and drainage clearance plus supporting the roll out of a trial currently being undertaken enabling parish councils to implement 20mph schemes in their villages.

Please do not hesitate to contact me and keep well and safe.

Cllr Nicholas Field-Johnson nfjuk3@gmail.com and nick.fieldjohnson@oxfordshire.gov.uk



SUCCESS FOR THE 2020 TREE CHALLENGE!



I'm approaching the end of my 2020 tree challenge. Together with the Wychwood Project, we've been giving away trees and planting small copses and hedgerows of native trees with a vision to link up the landscape, and enhance the networks for nature. Recently, we've been working with the Blue Cross to regenerate their site and improve the natural environment for the animals there and also with the Swinbrook estate, already a haven for wildlife, to plant a shelter belt along the A361 and various smaller copses. We've had lots of local individuals planting one or more trees in their gardens, Burford School have planted heritage fruit trees, Burford Town Council planted on the Rec - it all adds up. Fingers crossed, and all things permitting, we will have exceeded our target and have planted upwards of 2200 trees by the end of March, plus a further 2000 hedging trees. Trees, of course, aren't the only solution to our biodiversity crisis; nature needs a variety of habitats, but in the right place they certainly help.

In spite of Covid restrictions we've managed to organise small and socially distanced planting almost every weekend since late October and many weekdays as well. It's such a lovely way of getting out into the countryside, chatting and meeting new friends, and the sense of achievement at the end of the day is immense. Do please get in touch if you'd like to know more or come along and help to plant a few trees before the end of March. No pressure whatsoever to plant lots of trees, every one in the ground is a help!

LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY NETWORKS

One of the few benefits of lockdown has been the opportunity to join online talks and webinars, and for me I have zoomed in to a number of fascinating talks on the environment. These have been alarming (in terms of the massive amount we need to do to restore biodiversity in our local area and beyond) but sometimes very encouraging. I wanted to share one such talk by the Eynsham Nature Recovery Network. The community of

Eynsham has come together and formed a Nature Recovery Network. The idea is based on 'charity begins at home' - by improving our own gardens and streets, drawing on local expertise and bringing in external help when needed, very quickly you are dealing with a much larger land area and everyone reaps the benefits. The network includes individuals, community groups, local businesses and councillors in Eynsham and the surrounding parishes and together they have worked wonders! They only started in 2019 and already they have done surveys on a wide range of birds, animals and plants and are using the data gathered to create a baseline from which to set and monitor targets and to influence planning (of course the proposed Garden Village is a key priority for Eynsham); they've planted community orchards, wildflower meadows and ponds; they're testing the water quality (supported by the wonderful WASP), they've started nature activities for children, families and people with autism and learning disabilities and they're working with schools and all sorts of different community groups - the list goes on. The most important thing they wanted to highlight was that there's a role for everyone - there's a great deal of expertise in the town in all fields and together with enthusiastic generalists they are moving mountains.

Could we take on a similar challenge in Burford? If you'd like to be part of something similar, please get in touch: lucy.staveley@gmail.com 0792 986 1712
Lucy Staveley

LOCAL FIRE CHIEF RETIRES



Charlie Williams, watch manager at Burford fire station, has retired after 42 years, no less, with Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue. In 2016 Charlie was awarded the British Empire Medal in the Queen's birthday honours list. The citation stated that the well-deserved award was "for services to fire safety and the community in Burford".
Editors

CHURCH AND TOWN - THE WAY FORWARD

Burford Parish Church congregation has begun to look at where we might put our efforts and resources for the next decade or two in Burford. I've been here about 18 months, and we've learned a lot about how our local community holds together during the pandemic lately – the time is right to do some forward thinking.

One of the things we would like to do is to get to know our community better, so that we can plan a shared future together more effectively. Some of our congregation live in Burford, of course, but many travel on Sundays in from villages and towns round and about, so have less chance to get to know local people. We invite you to respond to four questions to help us plan:

What do you know about activities at the Parish Church and the Warwick Hall, as they were just before the first lockdown – were you involved at all?

When you think of the people that live in Burford, what are the greatest challenges they face?

In what ways would you like the relationship between the Parish Church and the town to be strengthened?

What would you like to see happen in the Parish Church and Warwick Hall in the future?

And also to give us four pieces of information about yourself:

Your age

18-34 35-49 50-64 65-79 80+

Where do you live?

Burford, Fulbrook, Taynton, Asthall, Swinbrook or Widford or elsewhere

How long have you lived there?

Whether you usually attend church (any church)

You can tell us who you are if you want to.

.....
The questionnaire is available online on the Church website, www.burfordchurch.org/community-survey.

You can also simply write your responses on a sheet of paper and post them, or drop them off to the Vicarage or the Warwick Hall (easier parking on Church Green) or ring me if you prefer, on 01993 822275.

The Burford Community Team % The Vicarage
Church Lane, Burford OX18 4SD

It would be helpful to have your responses by Monday 22 March, 2021 please.

Tom Putt





BURFORD and DISTRICT SOCIETY

New to Burford and area?

Welcome. The Burford and District Society will be happy to deliver your free copy of the 'Living in Burford and District' pack with details of many of the town's local facilities, clubs and societies.
Simply email your name and address to pwoxfordshire@gmail.com

LOCAL CHURCH SERVICES

Church of England - Burford Benefice

Two services are being streamed online every Sunday until further notice: a traditional Common Worship service at 9.30am and a more contemporary worship service at 11.00am. These can be accessed via the website www.burfordchurch.org where any change to these arrangements will be announced.

Roman Catholic - Parish of St John Fisher and St Thomas More

The celebration of Mass is permitted but with the pressure on our health care system still at a critical stage it has been decided that public services should be temporarily suspended.

Mass is streamed from St Joseph's Carterton every Sunday at 10.00 am via Zoom - please see catholicchurchburford.org.uk for details and the latest information.

Dan Boyle

THE BRIDGE TIMETABLE AND CONTACTS

The closing date for entries to the editorial sections of the magazine is 10th of the month preceding publication. Please send articles and information to:

editor@thebridgeburford.co.uk

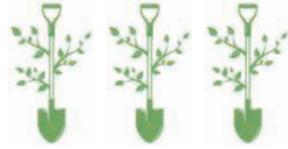
Alternatively, you can leave letters and articles at Bumbles Post Office in Burford for us to collect.

Advertisements need to be received by the 12th of the month preceding publication. Please contact:

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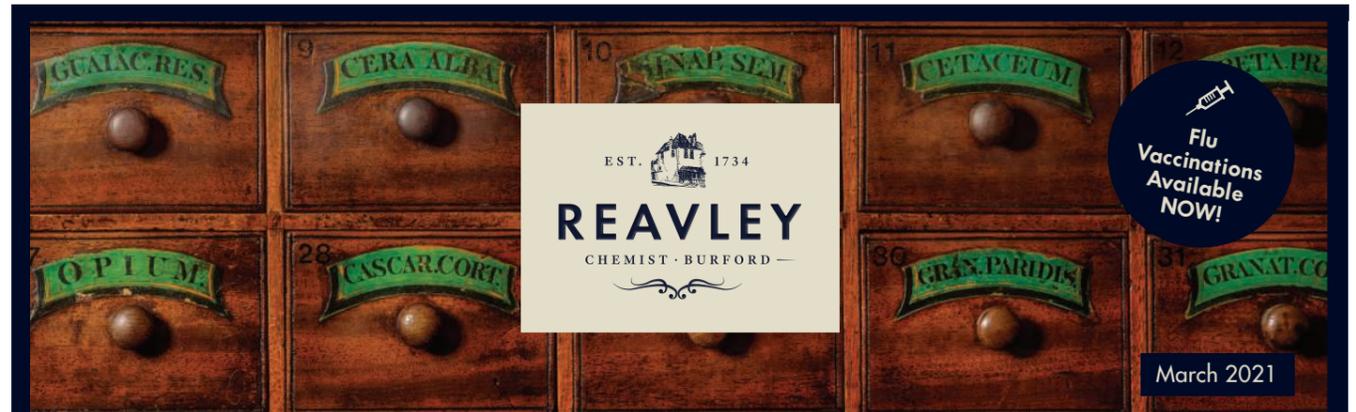
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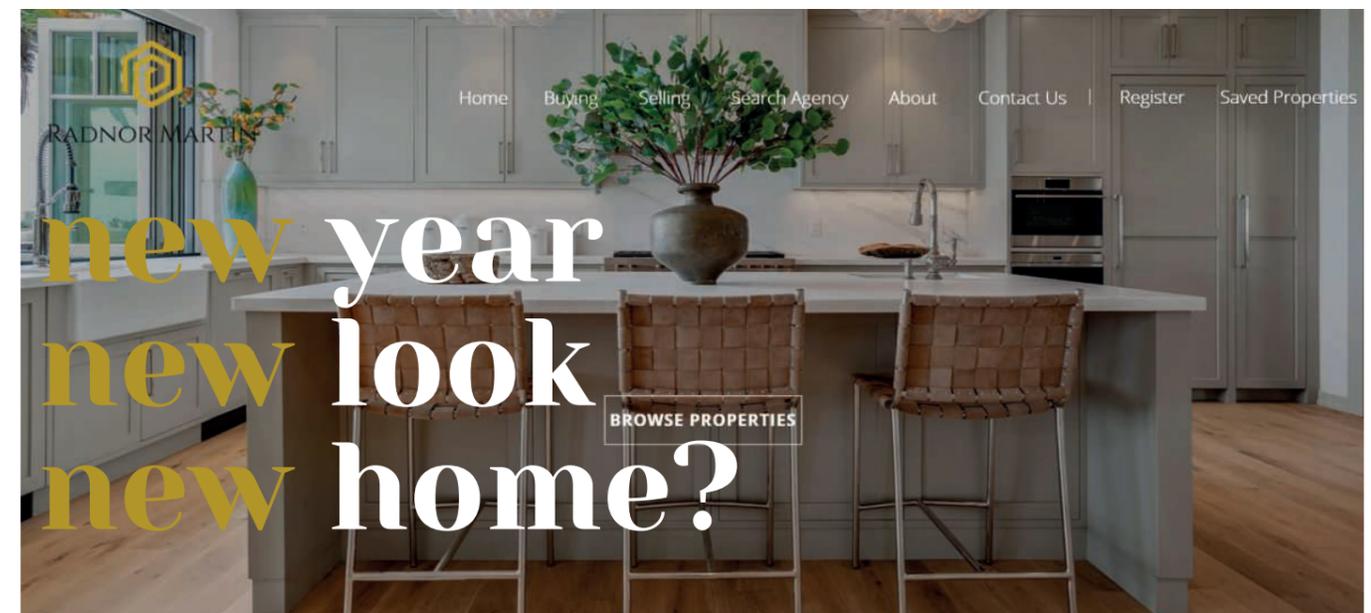
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