

sonningcommon

magazine

celebrating **100 YEARS**

Centenary of SCPS

A weekend of celebration and a commemorative mosaic

Changes to the NHS

An interview with Dr Burnett and how the changes will affect us

Village Centre

Looking so good but more to do



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The editorial group from left to right: Jo Stoves, Joan Grummant, Christine Atkinson and Diana Pearman.

From the editorial group

“

As I write this, summer has eventually arrived and enables us to enjoy the lovely countryside we have surrounding our village, the centre of which is looking so good. In this issue we celebrate the magnificent work of the village gardeners who have made such a difference! However there are still problems to be resolved in Wood lane and we would welcome your letters and comments on this subject.

One of the main features, In Focus, is the Primary School anniversary celebrations that took place over three days in June, organised by a dedicated and remarkable group of young women. Alongside is a feature on the Mosaic made to celebrate the centenary designed by pupils and executed by Sue Tyldesley. Plus more stories of the interesting people who live in our village.

Another important feature that will impact on all of our lives is the changes to the National Health Service. The interview with Dr Burnett provides us with a much better understanding of how those changes will affect us.

The end of this year celebrates the 40th anniversary of the Sonning Common Magazine and a display will be held in the library. Please do let us have any old magazines and any other memorabilia associated with our local publication.

We continue to receive a variety of information from you – please do keep emailing them by mid-August for the next edition.”

Diana

DIANA PEARMAN Editor

Email: editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org

PS...

Sonning Common Magazine is on sale at the village library in Grove Road for £1.50 a copy. Annual subscriptions are available for £15. Contact Geoffrey Adams. Email: chairman@sonningcommonmagazine.org Phone: 0118 972 2134

Magazine contributions may be posted to:
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WHILE EVERY EFFORT IS MADE TO ENSURE THE ACCURACY OF INFORMATION PRINTED IN THIS MAGAZINE, THE EDITOR AND THE PUBLISHER CANNOT ACCEPT ANY RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE CONSEQUENCES OF ERRORS THAT OCCUR.

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The village that never was...

According to Fred Richens, local historian, this description has been used for Sonning Common. There are many people who live here who would not agree with this label. Villages are often renowned for their community spirit and these pages in our magazine are evidence of this spirit.

Following on from the traffic report which appeared in the June July issue of the magazine it seems timely to look again at our village centre. We are not a 'chocolate box' village that has a heart around a village pond or green.

The work of the village gardeners has given Wood Lane not only a very attractive visage but it is beginning to develop a village centre feel to it. The large walled beds, the multitude of pots and baskets, the Cherry trees, the phone box, together with the plaudits and appreciation frequently expressed by villagers in this magazine, 'shout' that this village is cared for and the people who live in it are not only willing to devote hours of their time to working on these flower beds but they raise the money as well, to pay for the plants. One of the indirect effects of all of this hard work is a highly significant decrease in graffiti and vandalism in the village centre.

There are many indications that people think that Wood Lane is looking better and better and that there is a desire that this should continue to be the case. However there are a number of issues still to be addressed. Some are identified opposite and there are probably many more. There is a need to engage in a dialogue with villagers about how they/we would like the centre to improve.

The Neighbourhood Development Plan team are employing a consultant on 16 September who will be working with Craig from our Traffic task group to devise a plan to tackle the identified problems, in our village centre. It is likely that his findings will be outlined at a parish council meeting on that evening. Look out for more information on this subject of concern to many residents. ■

DIANA PEARMAN



Some identified problems with the 'Village Centre'

- The main (Co-op) supermarket is located right on the main junction in the Village Centre. It offers shopping for both top-up provisions (speed) and provisions-shopping (weight); both these needs encourage users to park closely and "conveniently" to the store.
- Large articulated Co-op delivery vehicles need to have a delivery bay close to that junction in Woodlands Rd. This can limit flows and options near that junction, but is a requirement given the store location. These are other Delivery vehicle issues in Wood Lane.
- Very significant long-period on-road parking mostly on the NW side from 64 Wood Lane downwards – including strong over-hang from the (landlord-owned) bay opposite the Health Centre. (The open section of Green Lane is also somewhat used in this way as is Wychwood Close)
- Congestion, limited off-road parking capacity, random parking and access for buses and delivery vehicles.
- Safety including for pedestrians, the disabled + more elderly and cyclists
- Fragmentation of retail store locations interspersed with offices and residential homes
- Increasing future pressure from new homes and increased random park-and-ride use fuelled by the huge regeneration of north Reading, Reading station and the railway line.
- Increasing urbanisation attacking the desired local character and sense of village

LEIGH RAWLINS

Royal Horticultural Society visit

Last year, we were invited by the Thames and Chiltern branch of the Royal Horticultural Society to take part in their "It's Your Neighbourhood scheme".

This scheme is part of the wider Britain in Bloom initiative but is not competitive. Bench mark levels are used to recognise and applaud the achievement of the participants, as well as providing feedback and guidance for the future.

The three core pillars are 40% of the marks on Community Participation, 30% on gardening achievement and 30% on Environmental responsibility. Ben Stanesby came to observe and record our work on Monday 1 July and at the end of the visit recommended that given the quality of the work we should enter for Britain in Bloom.

Provided the group agrees and we receive more support, from the wider community, we can look forward to some exciting challenges for next year. ■



Honour the village gardeners?

When the houses were built at the end of Kennylands Road there was talk about it having a name to do with the village gardeners, but I see it is now called Maple Wood. Was that the builders' idea? It would be nice if we could honour those who have made our village look so good. ■

ANN CHIVERS, 27 Westleigh Drive

Changes in the village centre



In June and August 2012 plans were submitted by 2 different developers to build houses on separate, but adjacent plots, of land behind shops in Wood Lane. These were for 4 houses (semis) behind the Occasions block, and 6 houses behind the Chemist and Tandoori - each development with its own separate access on to Wood Lane.

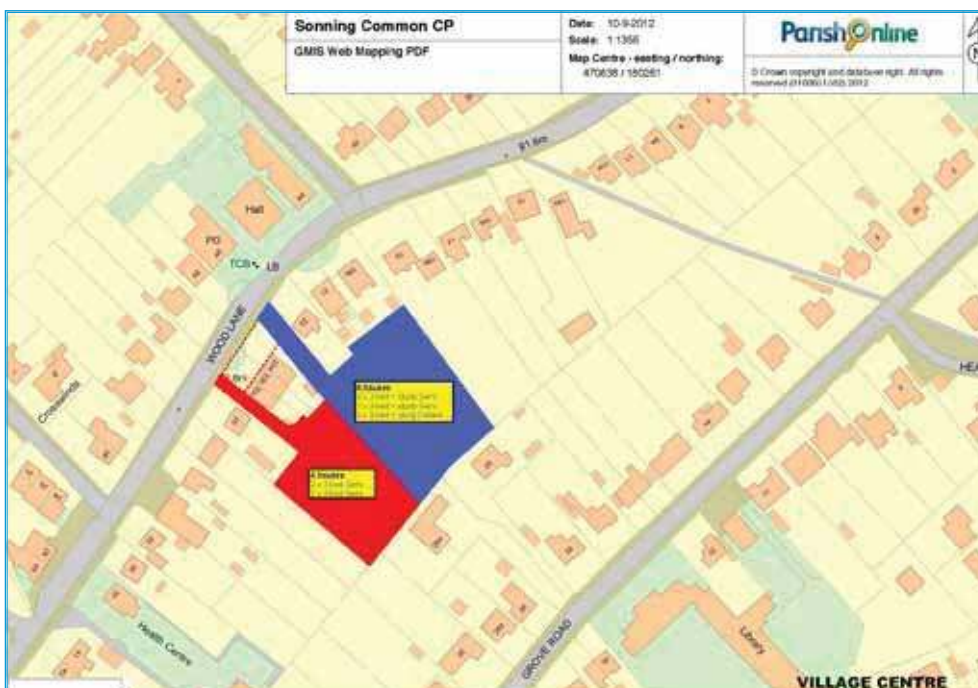
The Parish Planning Committee recommended refusal of both plans to South Oxfordshire District Council, who in turn refused permission. Both developers appealed against SODC's decision to the Planning Inspectorate.

Each developer's appeal was heard by Planning Inspectors appointed by the Inspectorate. Both developers' appeals were upheld by their assigned Inspector, thus giving them permission to build. Representatives of the Parish Council were present at both visits earlier this year as were SODC. There are no grounds for appealing against the Inspector's decision.

All the parish planning meetings agendas are published on the notice board around the village and at the Village Hall. These meetings are held every 2 weeks in the Village Hall in the evening. Members of the public are entitled to attend and prior to our planning meetings. We welcome opinions for and against any of the proposals on the agenda. These can be given directly to the Parish Clerk or via our or SODC's website. ■

BARRIE GREENWOOD

Our website is www.sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk.



Thanks to local people and businesses

The Village Gardeners would like to thank the following people who were instrumental in the re-siting of the telephone box.

Mr C Barrett who paid for the whole of the project, Ru Butler at Peppard Building Supplies for collecting, storing and delivering the box to its new home at no charge. Rob Smith who has done such a loving and careful job restoring it, including finding a small solar panel for the top and picking out the crowns in gold paint. Fred Nickson for his advice and for supplying the correct pillar box red paint and to SODC for approving planning permission

We are considering making the area where it now stands (near the charity shop) into an area where we plant herbs and vegetables for Sonning Common residents.

Thank you also to Steve Dixon at JDP for sponsoring the planting of our first tree at Wood Lane Close and to James Sadler and Gail Noble for planting it; also to Chris Colbeck for his cost free work and to the working party for clearing and renovating the area at B B Wines. ■

CHRISSIE PHILLIPS-TILBURY.



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Villagers visit our twin village Guichainville St Luc

As you receive this edition of the magazine, a group of 16 villagers, comprising 2 families and several couples and singles from all generations will be about to set off for a weekend stay in our twin village Guichainville St. Luc, France. This follows a successful visit by the French in November 2012 when we went to Henley, walked around Sonning Common and enjoyed a social evening in the Village Hall. Our next ventures are to devise a Twinning page on the Sonning Common website, to provide another source of information regarding the venture and to erect a sign with the name of our twin village. If you are at all interested in becoming involved in any way with the Twinning of Sonning Common and Guichainville St. Luc, please e-mail joquinton@gmail.com ■



Another successful Nottakwire's Concert

The Village Singing Group reached a high standard of performance and presented a varied programme which delighted the two audiences. 100 tickets, delicious home-made refreshments were sold, a silent auction and the two raffles supported by local businesses, our target of £1000 was reached.

This sum will be divided between local organisations, Lunch club, FISH, ClubSC, Village Gardeners, Rainbows, Skate Park and Sonning Common Magazine - our motto being the familiar "Every Little Helps!". Presentations will be on 12 July.

Nottakwire wishes to thank the local businesses who so generously provided prizes for the raffles: Carl Woods; Yeung's Chinese Take-Away; Forresters; Serenity; Tandoori Connoisseur; Day Lewis; Fish Bar and The Butcher's Arms; Daisy's at the Herb Farm and Bay Trees.

The beautiful flower arrangements were kindly provided by Sue Hedges and we had a wonderful team of helpers to whom we are greatly indebted.

We wish to thank and congratulate all our singers on their achievement. Also we thank our supporters for coming along on the day and being such responsive and generous audiences.

Please look out for information about our Christmas activity and support us again!! ■



Superb Art work at Chiltern Edge

The school are delighted with this year's work by the GCSE students and they were displayed at a private viewing. "These works reflect the energy, skill and commitment of a talented group of young artists, the development of their confidence in expressing their ideas has been wonderful to work alongside" said Ms Sue Leavett Fine Art GCSE teacher ■

German Exchange Trip

Fourteen Year 9 students (age 13/14) from Chiltern Edge went to stay for 10 days with their exchange partners at their school (Gesamtschule Hollfeld) in Bavaria.

The students learnt at first hand what it was like living in a German family and attending a German school. They enjoyed trips to München, Bayreuth, Bamberg and Nürnberg, as well as into the beautiful countryside. The group was made extremely welcome by the host families and by the Mayor of Hollfeld.

This is the 39th year of this fantastic link between the schools: over the years some strong friendships have been forged and many students have returned privately to visit their partners. The German students visited Sonning Common in July for the second leg of the exchange. ■



A busy summer term for the Sports department at Chiltern Edge

Teams of rounders, cricket and athletics students have enjoyed their pursuit of outdoor sports. In the Oxfordshire Schools Athletics Tournament the following students excelled.

YEAR 7

Christian Floyd 2nd in 100m and 800m

YEAR 8/9

Tom Andrews 3rd in 200m

YEAR 8/9

Freddie Atkinson 3rd in Javelin

YEAR 8/9

Millie Williams 3rd in 200m and 4th in Long Jump

YEAR 10

Josh Goble 1st in 1500m

Three new Governors needed for Bishopswood School

At Bishopswood school we are looking for at least 3 new governors. Ideally these will be people living in the community who have sufficient time to take on the role. Bishopswood is a small school based on 3 sites, for children with severe and complex learning difficulties. It is very well supported by a close knit team of staff, parents and visiting therapists, by a local and the school's fund raising group.

Governors as a group are required to work with the Head teacher to

- Set stretching targets for pupil achievement
- Manage school finances
- Ensure the curriculum is broad and balanced
- Appoint staff
- Review staff performance and pay

It is an active rather than passive role so contribution from individual governors is welcome and valued. Ideally we would attract people from different backgrounds and skills.

We currently have a need for people who are comfortable with and enjoy data and finances. No previous experience is required.

Ideally individuals interested could take some time to visit the school and get to know how it feels to be part of the Bishopswood school community. It would also be great if we could attract someone who works in a local education authority, which does not have to be Oxfordshire. We do not currently have an LEA governor.

In terms of time commitment there are 2 meetings to attend per term, 1 in the evening and the other by arrangement. These meetings are usually held at the Sonning Common primary school. ■

FIONA LLOYD
Chair of Governors

Party time as WI celebrate the Coronation anniversary

Sonning Common Women's Institute members met for the June meeting full of excitement at the prospect of our Coronation Street Party to commemorate the Queen's Coronation of June 1953. This evening was to be a social evening above all else, and a super time was had by all.

The interior of the Village Hall was turned into a street party scene with the trestle tables out in full force with red, white and blue paper tablecloths adorned with party hats, sweets and sausage rolls to whet the appetite for food and fun. Members also made an effort to embellish their outfits with streamers, glitter hats, union flags and bunting.

What was particularly interesting was the range of Coronation memorabilia brought in by W.I. members for others to look at. There were photographs of members, commemoration pamphlets and literature, special Coronation

souvenirs given to children of the time, a June 1953 issue of Vogue magazine and even an order of service from the Coronation ceremony itself.

Overall the evening was very engaging and interesting. Stories were told, poetry read aloud, songs sung; there was even a pass the parcel! The meeting was a great success in bringing first hand anecdotal evidence of what it had been like to soak up the excitement and glamour of such an occasion as the Coronation, in a time of austerity. It seems that it was just what the people needed; a social occasion to bring communities together and to give people an excuse for a good old party.

Flower of the Month was jointly won by Ann Chivers and Angela Thorne with Christine Gibson in second place and Mairwen West in third. ■

VANESSA JONES



RAF Benson team to complete 'moped of hope' in aid of Bishopswood School

Bishopswood parent Corporal Dean Bristow and his team of moped riders will set off on a 'Moped of Hope' on 24 June. The team will ride from RAF Benson to Lands End, Cornwall, and back in convoy to raise money for his son's school. The pupils at Bishopswood School have severe and complex special educational needs which require a variety of costly specialised equipment, so are hugely grateful for the support that is being given by RAF Benson.

The team of mopeds will ride in convoy, stopping at various military bases along the way - all of which have pledged their support. Donations will be collected throughout their journey. To donate please contact the school office or visit the My Donate fundraising webpage www.mydonate.bt.com/fundraisers/mopedofhope

DAVINA TURNBULL Bishopswood School
Contact: 07747774327
Email: robanddavina@aol.com

■ Sam Metcalfe selling biscuits in aid of the Skate Park. He raised £16.91



Featured in the last magazine Lally (9) Emma (9) Tabitha (8) had run 5 miles to raise money for a school in Zambia. They were thrilled to receive a letter of praise for their efforts from John Howell.





JUST FOR KIDS

Hi guys,

It's been a cold summer so far and I hope it gets warmer! A story in here is about a dog being cold! I need some of your ideas to think of what to put in the next issue, so remember to email me about the things you've done over the summer and send me some pictures too.

Here's my email address: junior_editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org

ANOUSKA XXXX



Story Time!

Here's a story from Rosie Fort, age 13, about losing her dog.

Don't worry, it's just a story, she didn't actually lose Meg (I hope). It would be very sad if she did! Please send in any other stories that you have but first let's look at Rosie's:

Losing Meg

I woke up one morning and found Meg wasn't in her cage. I looked everywhere for her but she was not to be found. I thought of her out there all alone, cold, lonely, afraid shivering in a small, dark corner, hungry all over. We tried everything we could. We put up posters and handed out flyers. We heard nothing about poor Meggie for ages. Until, an old man turned up at the door. He had a scraggly beard and wore old, dirty clothes. Just then he pulled out something from underneath his top. It was a whining, shivering Meg! I embraced her, I was overjoyed. I turned around to say thank you to the man who wasn't there. ■



WORD

LADDER

Here's a word ladder – it's a little bit harder than the last one but you can email me if you don't know the answers.

Don't worry - it's not all alcoholic!

WINE

BEER

WRITER TIPS

If you feel like writing some stories over the summer holidays, here are some tips from Ed Wicke, who has written the Wicked Tales books. They are crazy stories for over 8s. You can find out more about him and his books at www.blacknbluepress.info

How do I write? Well, the process starts with an idea. Usually it's just something that pops into my head and I'll record it on my iPhone or on the computer in a Word file named "Ideainfo".

Ideas lead to plot sequences. Usually, I'll have in mind the opening scene or the first few stages of action. I might also have a good idea of the ending.

I like to mix things up. I might be planning a story about a king that wants a teddy bear he saw long ago as a child; then I'll start thinking about whether there could be a Bad Santa as well as a good one; and then I'll think: why not have them both in the same story? And if five Easter Bunnies can be included as well, that's even better! This is how one of the stories in Wicked Tales Three actually happened. ■



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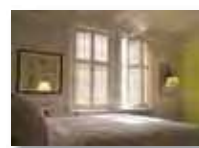
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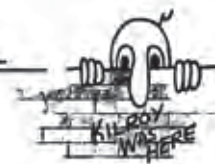
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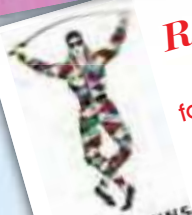
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Friday 27 September

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Please contact Geoff Adams
 chairman@sonningcommonmagazine.org
 0118 972 2134

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 Buy a drink and meet us in the Conservatory
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Playgoers production

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Chiltern Edge School



40th Anniversary of Sonning Common Magazine

Anniversary issue planned for December January edition
Exhibition in the library
Late November/early December

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A DIFFERENT WAY to celebrate

By **CHRISTINE ATKINSON**



Sonning Common Primary School has had many different activities to celebrate their centenary during the year so far. Everyone at the school dressed up as Edwardians, daffodils were planted in the shape of 100, children were photographed making a 100 shape on the field, a whole school photograph, a published book of the history, and now a wonderful mosaic display.

Sue Tyldesley, an ex teacher from SCPS who lives in the village, has a keen interest in art, and was approached by the school with an idea to create a mosaic from tiles of the school logo.

After some consultation, it was decided that it would have 12 square tiles (to represent each class) around a central one of the logo. The children's designs would be decided by a competition. Most of the winners were from designs by groups of children, but Arlo Carey (life cycle of a frog representing the pond), Alice Hathaway (the tower on top of the library), and Josh Copping (French theme) did the whole design on their own.



The winning designs were transferred onto squared paper and then canvas, before being tiled. Sue regularly visits France and found tiles there that were thin enough to be cut easily and shaped for the mosaic. "I brought back over 4000 tiles through customs, who did question me about what I was doing!"

Each class had 2 or 3 children working for a couple of hours with Sue to tile. She did the

main central part herself, and then decided where to locate each one dependant on boldness and colour. The reception classes (Kites) helped to mosaic a tile with the house symbols on it. This tile will be used as a cover for the spot where a time capsule will be placed at the end of the year.



The project was started in September 2012 and the final mounting was held back by the weather as grouting must be done when the temperature is at least 12°C – which was difficult given the winter and spring that we experienced!

Sue mentioned that thanks were owed to many people associated with the school, or friends of people at school, who helped with the project including Caroline Conway and the PTA, and of course the children.

The mosaic was unveiled in June just in time for the reunion evening events.

Perfect timing! ■

Sonning Common Primary School *Centenary Weekend*

By **CHRISTINE ATKINSON**



■ School centenary reunion provides opportunity for old friends to meet



As it is the centenary year at SCPS a committee of mums (Sarah Sayer, Hema Williams, Caroline Gudge, Jess Sarson, and myself) from school decided to take on organising a whole weekend of celebration in the summer.



The team started working on it after Easter and really wanted to make it a very special weekend for the school and village, with events on the Friday, Saturday and Sunday.

We had a very long list of tasks to do and enlisted the help of the PTA, and one of the dad's (Paul Gudge) to help us with a musical extravaganza.

We had booked an enormous marquee for the whole weekend, and Jess had the fantastic idea of getting the school children involved providing the decorations to liven up such a big space.

Each child had a paper triangle of bunting (all hand cut from wallpaper lining!), and a

cardboard cut out bird to decorate (very kindly printed by Blue Print and Design).

As June approached we watched the weather forecast each week hoping for the British summer to appear! The team from the marquee company arrived on Wednesday morning and very quickly got the tent up and ready for us to transform. The bunting and birds were just brilliant and the colour transformed the marquee as we strung them up all around and from hoops in the roof. Prizes were awarded for the best birds in each year group.

Almost the whole school attended the disco on Friday evening with the girls all dressed up



in the finest party dresses and a lot of hair gel for the boys! A lot of fun was had by all....

Then Saturday morning arrived with a forecast of short, sharp showers. Candelabras lent to us by the lovely Erica from Brambles florists in the village, and some other table decorations borrowed from Event Theming in Mapledurham helped to make the marquee begin to feel like a real party venue. Some glorious real greenery and floribunda was donated from various gardens and used to add to the Summer Dance theme. Two pigs were roasting at the side of the tent and all was looking good – then – the rain came! More like a tropical monsoon than short, sharp

showers! We had a waterfall in one corner of the marquee and a few other pots and pans to catch leaks. Luckily the clouds cleared for the evening, and once our two bands got going and the wine and food was served, the party was a great evening of dancing and fun. A huge thank you to local bands 'Within the Blood' (with our very own teacher Mr Rupert Loader on saxophone) and 'The Stoves' (with Olly Rees, a school dad, on the sound desk) for making it a great night.

Sunday was Father's Day and a huge turnout for the Picnic in the Paddock music event. Luckily we had a huge tent to eat the picnic in, as the great British summer rain continued. Paul Gudge had a great

line-up of musicians and entertainment which included the local Ukulele club, mums and dads and lots of the children from school, some of whom sang with their dads on Father's Day! At 4pm exactly, Nick Stacey finished his performance and asked everyone to help clear up. This was done in record time and meant that we could all get home and put our feet up with a cup of tea!

The whole weekend was a roaring success, and the committee hope that everyone enjoyed it as much as we did ... we would like to thank EVERYONE who helped, contributed, washed up, stacked chairs, decorated a bird and came along to make it happen! ■

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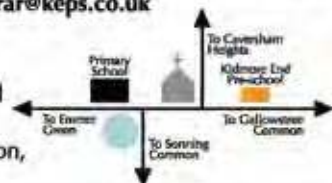
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Sonning Common

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS...

From the Chairman of the Parish Council

Cllr. Barrie Greenwood has stood down as Chairman of the Planning Committee, after many years of service in that capacity, in order to concentrate further upon the Neighbourhood Development Plan, which he leads as Chairman of the Working Party. His planning workload has been very heavy and we are all grateful to him for his commitment, drive and expertise. We welcome Cllr. Gail Noble as the new Chair of Planning, with Cllr. Leigh Rawlins as Vice-Chair. ■

COUNCILLOR DOUGLAS KEDGE, CHAIRMAN SCPC

Introducing Councillor Gail Noble

I find it interesting to be connected to the village in a way which can help make a real difference to the community.

The projects are diverse, ranging from walking the footpaths regularly to check they are passable and recommending maintenance programs, all the way up to major works like the new skatepark.

The workload is flexible; meetings are in the early evening, so I can balance being a Parish Councillor with a full time job as a Garden Designer. It is challenging at times and sometimes frustrating, but ultimately rewarding. ■

COUNCILLOR GAIL NOBLE



Widmore Pond

Two teak benches kindly donated by a village resident have been purchased to replace the broken down bench at the North side of the pond, which has recently been removed. These have been made into one by a local craftsman to form a semi-circular bench, now installed. An illustrated sign board mounted on a lectern-style stand will give historic and other information about the pond. This is currently being designed and is planned to be installed later this year. Periodic cutting of the grass and tidying of the hedges and trees is being maintained. The ducks are watched over and fed with proprietary duck food by local residents. ■

COUNCILLOR JANE DIWELL, Chair, Widmore Pond Committee
(A sub-committee of Sonning Common Parish Council)

Looking after your money

To ensure that your Parish money is correctly managed - the Council's accounts are audited twice per year - an 'internal' audit which reviews the processes and an 'external' (year end) audit which verifies the figures on the Annual Return.

The 2012-13 internal audit was (as usual) successful and complimentary. In August we will find out if, again, we have a successful external audit for the 2012-13 accounts. ■

PHILIP COLLINGS, PARISH CLERK AND RFO

Talks with the Post Office

The chairman Douglas Kedge, the parish clerk Philip Collings and I met with two representatives from One Stop Ms Sharon Holcroft Regional Manager and Ms Kirsten Lowe Retail Area Manager on 2nd June to relay the concerns expressed by local residents about the quality of service provided by the new Post Office section of One Stop.

We had a very frank and open discussion which resulted in the One Stop representatives making it clear that our concerns would be investigated and addressed as a matter of urgency. They emphasised their commitment to the local community and have agreed to be involved in fund raising for the skate park. They have asked for a meeting in 4-6 weeks time to review progress. We will keep you informed through this page. ■

COUNCILLOR CHRISSIE PHILLIPS-TILBURY



Japanese Knotweed

This pretty weed is easy to recognise by its 'zig-zag' leaf pattern and mottled purple stems but it is lethal to buildings and drains by penetrating the finest of textures or cracks and then expanding to crack them open.

All sightings of it should be reported and experts engaged to destroy it as it can be disastrous both to your home and any valuation. See website <http://sonningcommonparish.co.uk/> for guidance ■



Parish Council Meetings in September, October, November:

FULL COUNCIL MEETINGS:

Mondays 8pm on Sept 16 , Oct 21 and Nov 18.

FINANCE MEETINGS:

Wednesdays 7:30pm on Sept 11, Oct 9 and Nov 6:

PLANNING MEETINGS:

Mondays 7:30pm on Sept 2 & 16 , Oct 7 & 21 and Nov 4 & 18

Meetings are held in the Village Hall

CONTACTING THE PARISH COUNCIL

For all matters please contact Philip Collings, Parish Clerk on 0118 972 3616 or email clerk@sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk

This page has been paid for by the Parish Council and will appear in every future edition.

Health reforms: What do they mean?

AN INTERVIEW WITH...

Dr Andrew Burnett



“The really great thing about being a GP in Sonning Common is that patients are so supportive of the practice.”

In April the Government introduced health service reforms, described by some commentators as the most far-reaching changes to the NHS since its foundation in 1948. Now that the new system has had a chance to bed down, Ros Varnes asks Dr Andrew Burnett, senior partner at Sonning Common Health Centre, how the reforms are affecting patient care locally.

Scottish-born Dr Andrew Burnett sees the NHS as continually evolving, with significant changes being introduced every few years by successive health ministers.

Although the extent of the latest NHS reforms may be exaggerated, he feels, they nonetheless provide GPs and patients with an exciting opportunity to have a say in how the health service runs.

Perhaps the biggest reform affecting general medical practice is the introduction of Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs), which are made up largely of GP representatives.

CCGs are undoubtedly powerful bodies, being responsible for 60 per cent of the NHS' annual budget.

Oxfordshire CCG has six localities which oversee health care provision for 650,000 residents. Together they control an annual budget of £650 million.

Dr Burnett is keen to point out that while GPs direct how the CCG's multi-million pound budget is spent, financial professionals deal with its management.

GP representatives work through CCGs, commissioning much of local health care. They commission all emergency care, elective hospital care, maternity services and community mental health services.

This ability to 'shop around' for health services has introduced a new level of competition into the market, which has received a mixed reaction from the

medical profession and general public alike.

Dr Burnett sees pros and cons with the opening of the health market to increased competition. He says: "The tendering process has dramatically shaken up hospital services.

"The advantage is that people can often be seen more quickly and efficiently at a different hospital. The problem is that it has also fragmented the health service with one part of the system not always knowing what the other part is doing.

"Private health care providers can sometimes cherry-pick services which are cheap and easy to provide while leaving the more difficult and expensive services for conventional hospitals to deliver, which is unfair. But broadly I approve of patients having more choice."

The new reforms work on the principle that greater choice should be provided for patients in the best possible locations for them. This usually means closest to patients' homes. And CCGs have been tasked by the Government with delivering on this principle.

One improvement to local health care provision has been the introduction of ultrasound facilities at Townlands Hospital in Henley.

As director of the south-east locality within Oxfordshire's CCG, Dr Burnett is central to decision-making on local health care. The south-east locality stretches from Thame to Sonning Common, Wallingford to Henley and oversees health care for 90,000 residents.

Since Oxfordshire is perceived by the Government as being a healthy and affluent area, our CCG is in the bottom 10 per cent of funding per head of population. This places a particular strain on the budget, as Dr Burnett explains.

"The health service has contributed to people living longer. In Oxfordshire the number of people over 85 is growing by more than five per cent a year. This places a huge burden on health and social care budgets, which has to be addressed, otherwise the health service could do nothing else but look after the frail and elderly. We need to make sure that older people remain healthy and independent.

"Demand for health care will exceed the supply, as people live longer. In a culture where people demand health care 24 hours a day, it can be difficult to provide all the services they expect, particularly in a rural area.

"To try to meet this demand we must make sure that care is provided more efficiently. There is a lot of wastage in the system. For example, sometimes people go to Accident and Emergency at hospital when their ailment could be dealt with at a local GPs' surgery or by a pharmacy.

"In non-emergency cases people should seek advice from the NHS on telephone number 111 or their GP or pharmacist.

"Every time a person is admitted to hospital as an emergency case it costs £2,500. An emergency ambulance costs £300 and an

outpatient's appointment £100. We need to work with people to ensure they use health care appropriately."

According to Dr Burnett, one exciting aspect of the reforms is that GPs' practices and local authorities are now working more closely together to improve public health and well-being.

"Over the last 20 years social care, provided by local authorities, and the health service had drifted apart," he says. "In the south-east locality we are working very hard to ensure that social workers are integrated more into GPs' practices because this makes a real difference to people.

"Social workers drop into our practice on a regular, informal basis to share information on mutual clients. We are able to work together to support elderly clients so that they can live in their own homes for longer and maintain their independence."

Dr Burnett has been based at Sonning Common Health Centre, which looks after 8,400 patients, for 28 years. With his new responsibilities he now works at the health centre for 3.5 days a week and is with the Oxfordshire CCG for 1.5 days a week.

He says: "The really great thing about being a GP in Sonning Common is that patients are so supportive of the practice." ■

Helping to shape the **NHS**

The reforms to the NHS mean that patients as well as medical staff can have a say in how the health service runs.

A drive is on to encourage each of the 83 GPs' practices in Oxfordshire to set up a Patient Participation Group (PPG). Around 60 surgeries currently have such a group and the numbers are growing all the time.

PPGs are groups of active volunteer patients who, via regular meetings with practice staff and GPs, provide feedback on the services offered and how improvements can be made for the benefit of all.

Gathering patients' views of the services offered by their practices allows GPs to keep track of what works and what doesn't. It also gives patients a channel through which to pass on comments and suggestions to the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (OCCG) about the other health services in their areas.

Professor Louise Wallace, OCCG's lay member for patient participation and engagement, said: "Patients must be at the heart of decision-making about their care, and their views are important to shaping services for themselves and others.

"If you're interested in having a say in the way your local health services are delivered, getting involved with your practice's PPG is a great place to start. Not only can joining a group help to shape the delivery of services but many members also find that volunteering is a great way to meet new people and develop new skills."

To find out more about joining the Patient Participation Group at Sonning Common Health Centre, contact practice manager Helen Freeman. Phone: 0118 972 2188 Email: helen.freeman@nhs.net



Tom Fort

DOG STUFF



Meg had her first birthday last week (for those of you who have not been paying attention, Meg is the small dog acquired last year with the aim of enlivening Fort family life). We gave her a meaty bone, which she spent some time getting intimate with on the lawn before burying somewhere.

This burying of bones is one of several annoying habits she has developed. A favourite hiding place is in one or other of my raised beds, which results in my seedling beetroot and turnips being scattered hither and thither. Since Meg – like all animals – is of

low intelligence, she usually forgets where she has left it. Exhuming old beef bones when you are weeding is not pleasant.

I am also irritated by her evident affection for me. My returning after an absence of no more than a few hours is enough to send her into frenzies of adoration. She squeaks with excitement, leaps repeatedly against me legs, and if I dare to sit down she jumps on my head and tries to lick my ears. All most provoking.

On the other hand she is pretty well-behaved on walks, leaving me to free to ponder deeply such matters as what to have for dinner, the general futility of existence, and the deplorable behaviour of some other

dog owners – which brings me to the subject of (dare I say it in the Sonning Common magazine?) dog poo.

I am very meticulous about picking up Meg's modest deposits. Others are not and I hate them. I often fantasise about confronting them and reducing them to tears with a withering onslaught of sarcasm and eloquent abuse. But I never see them – because, I am sure, they and their beasts perpetrate their horrible crimes under cover of darkness.

For the record, it is my view that anyone who allows their dog to foul the footways is no better than the vandal who sprays graffiti on the health centre wall or smashes the glass in the bus shelter. ■

Sonning Common Village Quiz

2013 results

by Fred Curzon



The Twentieth Annual Village Quiz was held at Sonning Common Primary School on Friday 22 March. Twenty teams took part and at the half-way stage previous winners, Comets, were two points ahead of The Teechers with Dead Rats Society, Red House Drive and Scatterbrains a further point away in third place. It remained very close and as we entered the last round Comets led The Teechers by one point with Red House Drive a further three points adrift. With a full house in the last round Comets held on to win beating

The Teechers by three points in a very exciting contest. This was a second victory for Comets whose team was made up of Joan Lamprell, Chris Bickerton, Pete and Collete Bailey and Steve and Trish Rockell. I had decided that this would be my last Village Quiz. It was a most enjoyable evening and a lot of fun. I was overwhelmed by the messages of goodwill, gifts and cards and an extremely generous collection. Now I have to choose a suitable memento of so many enjoyable evenings.

I am grateful to all those who have supported the quiz since its inauguration in April 1994 and my special thanks go to members of the Sonning Common Primary School PTA committee for all their help. They provided a bar, held a most successful raffle and with the surplus from the quiz I understand raised a healthy sum of £590 which can only be good for the pupils at the school. I also acknowledge Pat Butler's help over many years. The Village Quiz will continue and my successor(s) will be announced in due course. ■

(Our apologies to Fred these results should have appeared in the last issue of the magazine)

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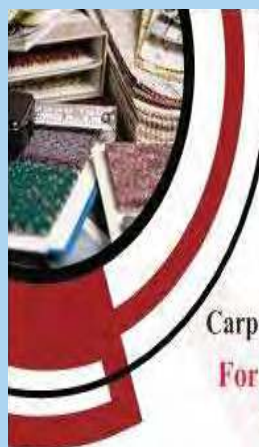
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NEWS

CRICKET

On a beautiful Sunday afternoon two teams of dads, whose kids play for the Rotherfield Ashes, competed at cricket! The game started with the U7 team batting first and scoring a very impressive 125 in their innings. After a break to enjoy a picnic with their watching families, the U12 team went in to bat. As the sun beat

children played their own games around the clubhouse, the score climbed. With two overs left the U12 team kept the runs going and passed the target with a score of 126.

It was a lovely family afternoon and many thanks to Rob McDonnell and Simon Atkinson for arranging it - and managing to persuade 22 dads to take part!

PRESENTATION DAY AND ROTHERFEST

The summer certainly arrived with a bang as the sun beat down on Bishopswood on Saturday 6 July. The annual presentation day was already special as it is the club's 40th anniversary year. The day was extended into the evening for a festival atmosphere with some families camping overnight too. One of the original team who set up RUFC, and now a trustee of the club, John Lambourne took to the stage to give out some of the awards to the boys and girls. Following the ceremony



the music began with a cover band and was followed by some of our very own fantastic, talented local musicians. The evening was rounded off with a DJ session for those with energy left!

Another fantastic RUFC presentation day – Many thanks to all involved – and especially to our chair, Andy Davies. ■



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Freda Musgrove

If you recollect seeing a tall slender lady, very elegantly dressed, at the village shops or in her garden in Woodlands Road, you are probably remembering Freda Musgrove.

As a keen member of the Horticultural Society, Freda was known for her colourful and immaculate garden in which, of course, her husband Steve did most of the spadework. They won the spring front garden prize on two occasions. As a member of the W.I. (Kidmore End and subsequently Greys), Freda won prizes for jam and cakes.

Sadly, she and Steve became more frail as the years passed and after falls at home moved to The Close care home at Burcot near Abingdon. They settled comfortably in very pleasant surroundings, but despite excellent care, Steve died in June 2011. Freda made friends despite her increasing deafness and was quite content in her new "home". From May of this year she began to fade gradually, and with no pain or distress died peacefully in her sleep on Saturday 22 June – the day before her 91st birthday.

She will be remembered for her elegance, her gentle ways and cheerful disposition even more than for her skills in the garden and kitchen. ■

JILL VALLIS



Church news

A big thank you for your generous contributions to Christian Aid this year.

£1350 was collected around the villages for the needy in developing countries. Also thanks to Eileen Pearson who, as ever, was at the forefront, organising and totting up.

Gift Day took the form of a wonderful concert at St John's in June and we thank all of you who attended, performed and made a donation in support of our churches.

Whilst on the subject of music: Are you male? Do you love singing? We need your voices for St John's choir. Choir practice takes place every Friday from 7.30 to 8.30. Please contact Frances Brewitt-Taylor on 0118 948 2743 and get involved or email her on francesbt@googlemail.com

COMING SOON:

Saturday 14 September

Get on your bike (to borrow a popular local phrase) for the Ride/Stride event in support of Historical Churches in Oxfordshire. Stride? You can walk it if you wish. The idea is to visit

as many churches as possible in a morning/afternoon/day and collect some sponsorship towards the upkeep of our churches. Come along to one of the churches from 9.00 on that day – preferably with your bike.

Sunday 6 October

Harvest Thanksgiving at Christ the King at 9.30 and St John's at 11.00 followed by a delicious lunch at Kidmore End School at 12 ish. Further details later.

DON'T FORGET:

A chance to have a chat, cuppa and cake at the 3rd Thursday Drop-in from 2.30 to 4.00 at Christ the King Church, Sedgewell Road. Need a lift? Jenny McGregor will be only too pleased to help you if you phone: 0118 947 2855.

Discussion Group starts in September the first Wednesday of each month at Christ the King at 7.30. Contact Neil Scott for details at neilscott92@sky.com

The Little Lambs church group for under-fives meets on the last Wednesday of the month in

term-time between 9.30 and 10.30 for a short service, messy activities and refreshments at St John's. Contact Felicity Cooper on 0118 947 2855 for further details.

SERVICES:

August

4th August: Christ the King - 9.30, St John's - 11.00 (usual times)

11th August: St John's - 11.00

18th August: Christ the King - 9.30

25th August: All Saints Peppard - 10.30

September

Usual times except:

29 September: All Saints - 10.30

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ROSEMARY HOUSE

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Ronald Bunnnett

People become absorbed by the village and the village absorbs them. So says Ronald Bunnnett and perhaps this is why he enjoys living in the village.

He is one of Sonning Common's older residents, Ron is fast approaching his 90th birthday, having moved here in 2006 from Gallowstree Common. But his links with the village go back further. He was Bank Manager here for 11 years before he retired in 1983 and before that he remembers coming out from Reading on the bus with 2 colleagues to man the branch between 10.00 and 12.30pm before catching the 12.30pm bus back to town with the morning's takings in a leather bag!

Ron was born in Bury St Edmunds and moved to Taunton when he was about 10. He joined the National Provincial Bank there when he left school in 1940. He was 15 years old and, as a clerk, earned the princely sum of £1 per week before deductions.

But, no sooner had his banking career begun than the war started in earnest. Ron joined the Local Defence Volunteer having lied about his age (he was 16 and not 17) and for 2½ years patrolled the river and guarded the gas works and the railway sidings and took part in "futile schemes" or training exercises as they were known by the officers.

April 1943 brought his call up papers and basic training in Bradford where the infantry training and signalling experience he had gained in the LDV proved useful. Posted to a signal training regiment, Ron saw active service as a gunner and signaller in India and Burma before being repatriated in 1947; returning to one of the coldest British winters on record. During his service Ron kept a diary (strictly against regulations) which he used as an aide memoir after the war.

Now Ron spends time reminiscing and has many tales of his wartime exploits to tell – like finding a Burmese python some 4 feet long and as thick as a man's arm coiled on the bank of a river they were about to cross and one of his colleagues picking it up by the tail and flinging it across the river. There were children in a jungle village playing a hopping game on squares drawn in the dust. When asked, the children said they were playing "hopscotch". There is also the tale of Ron bumping in to a Taunton bank colleague when in Calcutta.

Ron says about the village that it has an "indefinable quality". "People become absorbed by the village and the village absorbs them" and that, in all his time living and working in Sonning Common he had met very few people whom he didn't find honest, open and friendly. ■



10TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SONNING COMMON CHARITY SHOP

Who we are and what we do?

Christian Community Action is a charity committed to helping local people who are in need by demonstrating God's love through meeting people's practical needs. CCA distributes furniture to people on limited means through our support centres and provides a listening ear and a friendly face to people in difficult circumstances. We also offer supported volunteer placements, including formal training, through our charity shops.

Nick Crowder, a man with a vision, in 1992 started to collect unused furniture and pass it on to those in need. 21 years later we have five charity shops in the following areas: Oxford Road, Southcote, Whitley and Sonning Common and a new one just about to open on the Wokingham Road. Each shop has a support centre and there is a weekly drop in centre at Caversham Baptist Church, where clients are given a meal.

In 2012, 3,220 people visited our support centres - in need of furniture, bedding, cooking utensils, crockery, baby items and food as well as a rest,

a chat and be listened to. In 2011 it was 2,824 people. There is evidence that hardship will rise again significantly, as from April this year, Crisis Loans and Emergency Support Grants currently administered by Job Centre Plus will cease and a cap on Housing Benefit comes into force. This will result in more people needing help.

How can you support us?

FURNITURE DONATIONS

Donate your unwanted furniture – phone 0118 951 2338 or visit <http://www.ccam.org.uk/home/furniture-donations>

CHARITY SHOP DONATIONS

Take your unwanted clothes, household items and bric a brac to your local CCA Shop: 62 Wood Lane, Sonning Common, RG4 9SL. 0118 924 2851

VOLUNTEER WITH US

Volunteer at your local CCA shop - please contact the Manager Sheila Stevens for an application form.

SUPPORT US FINANCIALLY

CCA needs the support of monthly standing orders to meet our ever rising running costs as we expand. If you are able to support us with a monthly donation please contact Mireille Haviland on 0118 951 2336 or visit <http://www.ccam.org.uk/home/support-us> by downloading a standing order and Gift Aid Form.

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By a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator



An often repeated mantra of crime reduction is the precaution of 'marking' property, particular valuable items. Fairly cheap marker pens are available which allow you to 'invisibly' mark electrical items with postcode and house number; the ink only becoming visible under ultra violet light.

A more advanced addition to this forensic marking range is the 'SmartWater' brand. This clear and harmless liquid is made up of varying combinations of a number of chemicals which provide a unique identification code in each batch. The liquid is invisible to the naked eye, but glows green under UV light. Each pack is different and absolutely unique – there are billions of potential combinations (much like human DNA). Once bought, the individual formula can be registered back to the buyer – and traceable to a single address!

It can be painted onto valuable items (e.g. laptops, MP3 players, televisions, antiques) so that if the items are stolen and later seized by the police, the markings can be checked

and items linked with their owners. A person who has been arrested for any offence and brought to a custody suite equipped with SmartWater detection facilities will be screened to see whether they may have been stained by SmartWater or any other ultra violet tagging agent.

The South Oxfordshire and Vale Community Safety Partnership has recently provided funding for the provision of large Ultra violet lanterns to detect items that have been marked with SmartWater, ultra violet pens or other forensic marking products. These lanterns are being used across the area by neighbourhood policing teams and priority crime teams not only on stop checks but also when carrying out warrants and also on our



regular checks on local scrap yards. Full tins are expensive at £500 a time, but the police have come to an agreement with the supplier for small tubes to be made available through the police for a one-off price of £15. These tubes are good for dabbing up to 50 items. (On the web, they cost £60 each, plus £60 a year for a licence, so this is good value).

The Sonning Common Police Office in Lea Road has a limited number of SmartWater marking kits suitable for homes which will mark



up to 50 items at a heavily discounted rate of £15 per kit which is a one off cost with no annual fee. The Police Office is open from 10.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. Monday to Friday – so call in and purchase your own individually coded kit. If you would like to find out more about SmartWater then visit www.smartwater.com where you will see that the home marking kits normally retail at £60 plus an annual fee of £60.

Smart Water is sun and bleach resistant. The compound can be used in different ways. Some business premises are using it as an invisible spray that goes off after break-ins, covering offenders. It won't wash off, even with scrubbing. It probably takes 3-4 weeks to wear off skin, and is unlikely to come off clothes. Viewable under ultra violet light, and with the individual make-up able to be detected, it's a very good means of securing property. Alternatively, it's possible to dab just a small amount of Smart Water on property, including jewellery and valuables.

One rather novel idea for crime prevention was the spraying of a church lead roof with Smart Water using water pistols! ■





August 2013

FRIDAY 2	Chiltern Players at Reformation pub - Playgoers production	8pm
THURSDAY 15	FISH - Pub lunch	11.30am
WEDNESDAY 28	Chiltern Players at Reformation pub - Play readings	8pm
SATURDAY 31	Chiltern Edge Horticultural Society Autumn Show - Chiltern Edge School	2.30 - 4.30pm

September 2013

WEDNESDAY 4	Village Coffee Morning hosted by Sonning Common Women's Institute - Village Hall	10.30am - 12noon
FRIDAY 6	60's annual lunch - Village Hall	12.30 for 1pm
MONDAY 9	Sonning Common Village Hall AGM. Guest speaker followed by a light lunch - Village Hall	12.30pm
FRIDAY 13	Nottakwire practice - Village Hall	9.45 - 11.30am
MONDAY 16	Sonning Common Parish Council - Village Hall	8pm
THURSDAY 19	FISH - Pub lunch	11.30am
THURSDAY 19	Sonning Common Women's Institute - Seated Exercises led by Jeanette Hughes. Visitors welcome - Village Hall	7.30pm
FRIDAY 20	Notts group - Village Hall	9.30am
WEDNESDAY 25	Chiltern Players at Reformation pub - Play reading	8pm
WEDNESDAY 25	Chiltern Edge school Open evening	6.45 - 9pm
FRIDAY 27	Village Quiz - Village Hall	7.30pm
FRIDAY 27	Nottakwire practice - Village Hall	9.45 - 11.15am
SATURDAY 28	Woodlands House Open Garden - in aid of Bishopswood school	10am - 4pm
FRIDAY 26	Nottakwire practice & end of term lunch - Village Hall	9.45 - 11.30am

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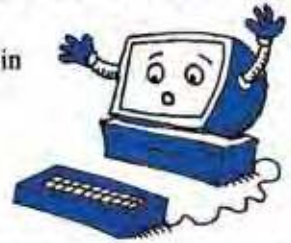


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