

SC SONNING COMMON MAGAZINE

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FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

Summer has arrived and long may it last!

Many of you will be aware of the furore caused by the proposal to limit the number of beds available in the new Townlands hospital. The Henley Standard has publicised the campaign against a reduction in the numbers. The Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, who are leading the consultation process about the proposed changes to care for the elderly residents of South Oxfordshire, have provided some information which can be read on the In Focus pages. The interim results of the consultation also appear in this issue of the magazine.

The activities in the schools feature highly in this issue showing exciting aspects of the children's learning and giving the dates of the secondary school Open days. Again a number of interesting articles have been emailed and provide a variety of views and experience ranging from memories, to hedgehogs and one way traffic.

I hope this edition is an interesting read?



Diana Pearman Editor

Email: editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org



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**SC SONNING COMMON
MAGAZINE**

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CHILTERN EDGE NEWS REPORT

By CHRISTINE ATKINSON

CAREERS EVENING WEDNESDAY 21 OCTOBER



Following on from our very successful Careers Fair last year, Chiltern Edge will be hosting its second one on Wednesday 21 October 2015 from 5pm.

If you think that either the company you work for, or the job you currently have might interest students and you would like to take part in this event, please contact Mrs Adamson at the school by email: aadamson@chilternedge.oxon.sch.uk ●

The great outdoors...

The students from the Curriculum Support Department (CSD) are very proud of their gardens. They have turned a concrete corner of the school grounds next to their building into an oasis of peace and quiet where students can 'chill out' and eat lunch during the warm summer days.

The Art and Design department have been helping the students with additions to the area in the shape of a bird box made from a plank of wood and they have built a bird table too.

Work continues in the 'allotment' too, which is in desperate need of some new

topsoil as the ground is not very good for growing fruit and vegetables. Raised beds have been built, and the students do persevere and have seen some 'fruits' of their labour in home grown lettuce and strawberries. Any offers of assistance with the soil would be gratefully received. ●



NATIONAL WOMEN IN ENGINEERING DAY 23 JUNE 2015

When you hear 'engineering' you think of buildings and men in hard hats, but it is a lot more than that... building skyscrapers, designing space ships, and inventing things that save people's lives – engineering also incorporates architecture, technology, research and quality control.

National Women in Engineering Day (NWED) was set up by the Women's Engineering Society (WES) to celebrate its 95th anniversary in 2014.

The aim is to celebrate the work that women do in engineering, and to showcase the great engineering careers that are available for girls.

Chiltern Edge were lucky to have a guest business speaker on NWED in June this year from Amec Foster Wheeler Energy Limited. Matthew Bridgeman led a session based on the government initiative to encourage more girls to take STEM (science, technology, engineering and maths) subjects in their education. They have used Twitter to advertise it - #notjustforboys

Matthew said "The idea of the session was to advertise the opportunities for women in engineering, break down the common misconception that engineering is only for men and of course have some fun! We very much appreciate

you allowing us the chance to do this and I hope we were able to get these messages across to the girls at a young enough age, so they can consider a future career in engineering as one of many options as they progress through their education. Our volunteers were all highly impressed by the participation and enthusiasm shown from all of your pupils and the maturity with which they went about the tasks, it made our jobs much easier! We'd all like to again thank you and Chiltern Edge School for being such a fantastic host and we look forward to working with you again soon." ●



SUMMER TERM NEWS FROM SONNING COMMON PRIMARY

By CHRISTINE ATKINSON

STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) Week

For a week in June STEM takes over the curriculum and the children get some hands on experience at using science and technology. Some of the employees from local firm Johnson Matthey came in to talk to the children during an assembly, and demonstrated some of their science 'tricks'.

The school also had a visiting instructor who came to talk to year 5 and 6 about engineering. They really got stuck into making structures from sticks and elastic bands including a fantastic ferris wheel!

Maths is obviously very important in engineering and science so the school entered a competition during the STEM week. Four mathematicians from Year 4 took part in a Maths Challenge at Waverley School, Wokingham. Headteacher Mr Chris Hirst said 'they worked in pairs to solve various challenges and maths games. They were excellent ambassadors for the school and threw themselves into the event with energy and good spirit. All their hard work paid off, when the boys' pair came 8th out of their group of 24 and the girls pairing came 9th out of their group of 24. They enjoyed a well-earned hot dog at the end. Well done!' ●



THE ANNUAL SCPS SUMMER FAIR

The Great Outdoors was the theme for the annual SCPS Summer Fair which was held in June. The school is very proud of its beautiful grounds which are used to their full potential during the fair.

In preparation for this year's theme the youngest classes in infants have been growing all sorts of lovely goodies in the school gardens. Enclosed beds were planted and the children have made use of recycled materials to make a scarecrow and various other bird scaring devices to protect their plants.

They have also taken a leaf (no pun intended!) out of The Village Gardeners book, and been reusing redundant items as planters. They have used wheelbarrows, old tyres and even the odd wellie!

The planted wellies were available to buy during the summer fair and so you may see some around the village on the odd doorstep - there are two on mine!

The rest of the school is looking very green and lush as the rain has been plentiful, followed by some lovely hot days to bring

on the lilies in the pond, and the poppies which were sown to commemorate the D-Day landings last year. I am told there are frogs in the pond; I have not seen any, but we did spot a dragonfly or two when taking the photos.

After a very wet night, and a damp morning, over 800 people braved the weather to come to the school Summer Fair, and were rewarded with the opportunity to make bows and arrows, hold huge spiders in their hands and sample the wonderful food and drink on offer. The usual face painting, coconut shy and wellie 'wanging' were popular as well as the raffle.

The school choir, the maypole dancers, the recorder players, the Year 6 Jazz band and the Glee club were fantastic and many thanks to the staff who help and encourage the children in their music.

As well as having a great time, a total of £3500 was raised - every penny of which the PTA will spend on providing facilities for education & recreation at the School, not normally provided by the Local Education Authority or County Council. ●

CHEERLEADING

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Cheerleading is a combination of gymnastics, dance and strength.

We both belong to Reading Superstars Cheer Group.

Emily is a flyer-who is thrown in the air, and caught by a team of bases. To be a flyer you need courage, sass and a great smile.

Tabby is a base, who lifts holds and supports her flyer. A good base needs strength and stability.

Both roles need to trust the other. Being in a cheerleading team is like being in a family - it's a real bond. We have a great relationship with our coaches and have made some really good friends.

On 20 June we both competed at the British Cheerleading Association competition in Guildford. We were both nervous and excited. 102 teams competed and we performed our routines (2 and a half minutes) to music specially made for us.

Tabby's junior team didn't win a trophy this time, but it was our first competition and we learnt lots. Emily's team did amazingly well and came 4th out of 17 teams in the senior division.

There are also stunt, dance, hip hop and pom pom groups available for both boys and girls at Superstars.

If you would like to join us have a look at readingsuperstars.org.uk and come along for a free trial session! ●

By EMILY HIGSON & TABBIE LUSTED

CHILTERN PLAYERS NEWS



After a successful outdoor production of Pinero's *Playgoers* at the Reformation a good year ago, we are inviting you to charge your glasses again whilst we step on to another outdoor stage at the Butcher's Arms in Sonning Common on Saturday 19 September.

This time Breakfast for One is on the menu. Set in post-revolution France this short farce by renowned playwright David Foxton combines screens, swag

bags, maids, flue brushes and coincidences to produce half an hour of fun and silliness in the style of 'Allo 'Allo. There will be a collection for charity again: this time Cystic Fibrosis a charity close to the hearts of the Players.

Then later in the year on 9 December Trudy Featherstone-Haugh's book group invite you to join them for a Murder Mystery Supper at Peppard Memorial Hall. Guests interact with

the cast members in a promenade performance of *A Cracking Read*. Have a drink, eat supper and expect murder most horrid to be committed. There'll be a prize for the group who tracks down the murderer and gets the motive more or less right.

Tickets will be on sale in advance at a later date. Watch out for posters and publicity around the village and beyond. ●

NOTTAKWIRE DONATES TO VILLAGE CHARITIES AGAIN

Nottakwire is delighted to announce that, as a result of a very enjoyable and successful weekend event on 27 and 28 June, donations amounting to £1500 will be made to support the following Sonning Common Groups:

Club SC, Lunch Club, Village Gardeners, Sonning Common Magazine and the First Responders. Margaret and Elaine, Nottakwire Directors, would like to express their gratitude to all who supported this event so generously and enthusiastically both in our two great audiences and as either Stewards or our Refreshment Team looking after over 100 people on each of the two days.

We are privileged indeed to be living in a wonderful community where support is so willingly given and friends are many. Lastly we would like to say a huge thank you to all the Nottakwire members who worked so hard to make the event such a success.

Our new term begins on 11 September.

Nottakwire is for everyone in the community so if you are interested in finding out more about us please email margaret.moola@btinternet.com or telephone **0118 972 1248**. ●

By MARGARET MOOLA



Sign up for this year's Summer Reading Challenge!

The theme this year is 'Record Breakers'

Sign up to receive your poster, then read 6 books and visit the library 3 times before the end of September (that's once to sign up and 3 books per visit), to get stickers to put on the poster, as well as bookmarks, zip tags and wrist bands, and a medal and certificate at the end to celebrate your achievement.

Storytimes every Saturday in August at 10am

Special storytimes to make this a particularly record breaking summer. Record breaking animals and having a go at animal crafts. Plus home-made cakes on sale!

Teenage and adult challenge

Read a book from a genre you wouldn't normally choose, or write a review for a favourite book. (All entries will be put into a prize draw to win free days out).

Ask in the library for more information. ●

BETWEEN A ROCK AND A HARD PLACE

The extended period of consultation of our Pre - Submission Draft Plan ended on 12 June. We have received 18 replies/comments from Statutory consultees (landowners/developers, SODC and neighbouring Parish Councils and local service providers as well as National and regional organisations such as Natural England, English Heritage and Chilterns Conservation Board.

The very detailed feedback and comments from SODC showed that our Plan is on the right lines, but highlighted their concerns over the wording and detail in some of our Policies as well as the allocation of sites available for development. SODC are querying why some available non AONB sites are not allocated for homes.

We feel strongly that finding land for a sports and recreation ground for the village is very important in realising a balanced and sustainable development of the village and justifies the allocation of AONB land to achieve this vision. However it will clearly strengthen our ability to realise this vision if SON 15a (Chiltern Top) and SON 5 (Kennylands Paddock) were allocated for some housing development between 2017 and 2027. Thus we are proposing in our amended Draft Plan to move SON 15a from a reserve site to an allocated site for 37 homes, and discussions are taking place with the developers of SON 5.

We now know that the SHMA (Strategic Housing Market Assessment) will probably increase our allocation of homes by at least 55 - 60 and will not be announced until the end of 2015. We cannot wait that long as we need to have residents agreement via a referendum as soon as possible, so we are recommending an increase in the number of homes allocated in the Plan to be built between 2017 and 2027. These homes will be phased in over two 5 year periods (a delivery requirement of SODC so that they can maintain their 5 year land supply over the lifetime of the Core Strategy, thus preventing unwanted developments in South Oxfordshire).

The increase in numbers from our minimum allocation of 138 homes will act as a reserve in the event of any of the allocated sites failing to deliver their required number of homes.

These new recommendations will be subject to SC Parish Council and SODC approval.

In the meantime we have written back to those Consultees who commented on specific aspects of our Draft Plan. We have thanked them for their replies and have outlined what changes we have made, if any, related to their concerns. All these comments and our responses are recorded and available as evidence of our process, when the Plan is ready for examination.

Barrie Greenwood, Chairman NDPWP
gbgreenwood@hotmail.com ●



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Sue Nickson 0118 972 4520

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JO HUNT THE SHOW MUST GO ON!

By ROS VARNES

Village affairs aren't uppermost in the minds of most 13-year-olds. However, local issues always interested former parish councillor, Jo Hunt, even as a young teenager.

Jo, 48, of Grove Road, became the youngest ever member of Sonning Common Parish Council when she joined in 1988, at the age of just 21.

She served on the council for an incredible 27 years, retiring in May, and, during her tenure, held every major position on the council, including chairman from 1999 to 2001.

A school project first whetted Jo's appetite for local affairs. She explained: "When I was 13 I had to do a school project on something that was happening in my village so I asked my parents what a parish council did.

"They took me along to meetings so that I would hear about what was happening and my interest just grew from there."

Jo remembers one of the most challenging times for her was taking the council into the new millennium as chairman. It was a busy time,

particularly with social housing problems in the village.

Jo led the campaign to ensure that as many as possible of the new homes being built in Farm Close and Crowsley Way went to local people.

Prior to that she campaigned to save Sonning Common Library when it was first threatened with closure in the mid-1990s.

Jo made the difficult decision to leave the council because her job was becoming more demanding and she wanted to train to become a health care assistant, helping to dispense medicines, at Boots in Henley.

She said: "If it hadn't been for my job I would have stood again this year for the parish council but something had to go. I am sorry to leave but I wish all the new councillors the very best."

Local theatre is another great interest of Jo's. She organises all of the props for the Woodley Operatic Society's two major productions a year.

"Anything that needs to go on I am responsible for," said Jo. "The group says that if it wasn't for me doing

the props the show couldn't go on."

Jo and the other members of the Society are now busy preparing for a production of Gilbert and Sullivan's HMS Pinafore in December of this year. Previously, Jo helped out front of house at the Kenton Theatre for many years. ●



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COUGH TO HALF MARATHON

By PHILLIPPA TAPHOUSE

So...where was I? Oh yes running around Sonning Common in the hope of completing the Henley Half Marathon in October.

At this precise moment, I feel like I know Sonning Common like the back of my hand. I don't think there is one road that I haven't dragged my weary legs up or one hill left untouched by my plodding downwards complaining that my knees hurt.

But, since we last met, I have run over 7 miles (in one go without stopping) and this, dear reader, is a massive achievement. I am over halfway there!

I felt elated, on top of the world after this run, only to come crashing down the day after when I literally couldn't walk, or sit down or bend down or make any kind of movement. These are the bones and muscles of a 46 year old mother of three for whom Epsom salts and Deep Heat have become my new best friends.

Running, I have discovered, is not as easy as it looks. It is so dependent

on many factors. Sun, rain, snow, wind all play a major part. So does sleep, diet, alcohol, water and state of mind. Some days I fly like I have wings on my feet and other days I trudge (as my mother so eloquently pointed out). I look forward to when I will not wake up in the middle of the night worrying about the next day's run.

Running in the searing heat was a new experience during that record breaking week in late June. Bronwyn told me that in Singapore they run at midnight and now I can totally understand why. It was awful. For the first time, I had stitch which is apparently caused by breathing too quickly. The air was so hot, like a hair dryer in your face and I was practically gulping it so no surprise there. I definitely prefer frost and sub zero temperatures.

So for all my negativity, I do love getting out there in the sunshine and chatting with my running partners. We can actually gossip for 7 miles. Who knew that was even possible?

Of course, there are days when I wonder 'why did I set myself this challenge', but my running vest arrived in the post and that brought

me the answer. Three of us have decided to run for Parkinson's UK, a charity close to all our hearts and we would be so grateful if any of you could sponsor us. Raising money to help find a cure for this terrible disease is making all my agony worthwhile and every penny counts.

PS - thank you for all the shouts of encouragement around the village...they really do help but please...if you are a driver and you see us at the junction, please let us cross the road. You have no idea how difficult it is to get started once you have stopped...thank you.

www.justgiving.com/Phillippa-taphouse4



60 YEARS IN WOOD LANE CLOSE

By IRENKA MOTYKA

The backwoods of Checkendon hold poignant memories for many displaced Poles who were housed there, post-war and well into the 60s. We lived back to back, in the legendary Nissen huts that populated the campus; a microcosm of a larger world, a living memorial to the many who'd endured the brutal ravages of Siberian labour camps and other horrors. These brave folk, haunted by the inhumanity of the past, embraced the present and looked to the future.

In July 1950, at the age of almost five I found myself fortunate to move to a real, new bricks-and-mortar house in Sonning Common with my parents and older brother. It was wondrously exciting, but scary to an infant with no English, whose only outside experience at the camp had been visits to the doctor beyond. A more welcome exposure to the "foreign" (English) tongue had been the regular appearance of a flying angel on a motor-bike which bore an integral side churn of ice-cream. (Has anyone heard of this?)

As our "proper" house in Wood Lane Close was the last to be completed, my parents initially faced back-breaking work dealing with the rubble deposited during the building of 18 other homes in the development. In time they created a beautiful garden and a warm, loving home. Wojciech and Maria were both employed at Peppard Chest Hospital and later as nurses at Borocourt Hospital. My brother attended Henley Grammar School and my younger sister and I eventually followed suit for A-Levels.

As children we loved making dens in the meadow where the maisonettes were

later built. We were entranced by Guy Fawkes Night and loved the bonfire preparations on that same plot. We freely played hopscotch and tennis in the road, for car-ownership was a rarity. When our immediate environs became confining, we took walks to Woodcote, Stoke Row, Checkendon and Reading.

After our studies Jurek (George) worked at Hydraulics Research, Wallingford, whilst Ludka and I became teachers. Co-incidentally, I've taught at every school I attended: Sonning Common; St. Anne's; Chiltern Edge and currently, Henley College. Incidentally, our original 18 council houses produced 7 teachers, two of whom became head-teachers!

Four of the original residents still live here. One of the obvious changes is that garden frontages have opened up to enable car parking (without which there would be insufficient road length even if all the resident cars were parked nose-to-tail). A few of the original bare wire-netting fences still exist, gradually replaced over the years by hedges, and more recently even a fine brick and flint wall.

Today we can no longer enjoy cart-horse milk deliveries, the Polish grocery van, Corona pop drinks on wheels and Sunday church bells. Neither do we set our watches, observing the regular-as-clockwork half-hourly buses serving Stoke Row and Nettlebed (and offering a trip to Reading for sixpence).

My home and community continue to be my sanctuary, imbued with memories of my parents' early struggles, of my beloved family, and of the richness and sorrows that life has granted. ●



THE VISION FOR *21st century*

By DIANA PEARMAN



The nature of healthcare is changing and at an unprecedented rate. Care which was once considered to require hospitalisation is increasingly being delivered in people's own homes. There are many factors which have affected this shift in care.



The health needs of the local population are changing. For example, the Henley area has a high proportion of elderly residents. There is expected to be a near threefold increase in the population aged over 85 years (the frail elderly) in the next 20 years.

It might be interesting for readers to note that in Sonning Common 14.1% of the population is aged 72-85 and 86+ is 3.4%. SODC figures are 8.8% and 2.1% respectively so by comparison much lower.

There is a growing body of clinical evidence both nationally and internationally which supports the view of clinicians that frail elderly patients often do not benefit from hospitalisation and may be better served by meeting their needs in their own homes. This is perhaps most evident in the way in which patients with dementia are treated, where admission to hospital can often be distressing and associated with notable deteriorations in the patient's general condition. As well as the growing body of clinical evidence, having care provided at or closer to home is what patients, their carers and families tell us that they want. The increased availability of technology has enabled diagnostic tests to be delivered closer to a patient's home. For example, a blood test which would have required hospital analysis

can often now be delivered at the patient's bedside with results available to the clinical team within minutes. Use of technology widely available to us on mobile phones has also transformed the way in which patients can be contacted and supported. The delivery of good quality care, close to home, without the need for a stay in hospital is at the heart of developing our proposed new model of care at Townlands. This care would include diagnosis, observation, treatment and rehabilitation and is known as 'ambulatory care' as it is not provided in the traditional bed-based hospital environment. This approach has been endorsed by many clinical groups such as the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) Acute Medicine Task Force, the College of Emergency Medicine as well as The Kings Fund and others. ●

health care



What Would Care Look Like to a Patient Using the Rapid Access Care Unit?



Mr Smith is an 85 year old from Henley. Although in good health and relatively independent, Mr Smith has fallen in his home. The ambulance team are called and assess Mr Smith's injuries – he appears to have no broken bones or serious injuries but the ambulance team want a more comprehensive and integrated assessment to ensure he is ok and prevent this from happening again in the future. The ambulance team call the Rapid Access Care Unit (RACU) at Townlands Hospital and, after a conversation with the clinical team; an appointment is made for Mr Smith to attend the unit the next day. The team arranges patient transport to collect Mr Smith and bring him to his appointment in the morning. Mr Smith is quickly seen by a clinician who makes an initial assessment and directs Mr Smith for

an x-ray on a swollen ankle. Following the x-ray and treatment for his ankle, Mr Smith is reviewed by the therapies team who assess Mr Smith mobility and suggest a few ways to keep mobile and a couple of modifications to help Mr Smith at home. Whilst Mr Smith is being prescribed pain medication for his bumps and bruises, the multidisciplinary team at the RACU contact the Integrated Locality Teams to put a package of care in place which includes installing new rails and banisters in his home and a visit later that week by the Occupational Therapist and Falls Prevention Service. Once all the arrangements are in place, Mr Smith is picked up by the patient transport service and taken home on the same day. ●

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INTERIM RESULTS OF THE TOWNLANDS CONSULTATION

Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) would like to thank the residents of Henley-on-Thames and the surrounding areas for their participation in the consultation about the future proposals for services at Townlands Hospital.

325 completed questionnaires and 36 written letters

All feedback received will be analysed and presented to the CCG's Governing Body meeting on 30 July 2015 as part of its decision making process.

An initial review of consultation responses has shown support for the proposed Rapid Access Clinical Unit (RACU) additional outpatients and the potential for additional diagnostic services, such as near patient testing.

Key areas for clarification remain. These are highlighted below:

- **Bed Provision** – the public have articulated a wish for the 2012 proposal of 18 beds to remain and be fulfilled. It is clear however, that there are different interpretations and understanding of the existing level of bed provision at Townlands and the current purpose of those beds. For example there are only 14 beds in Peppard Ward and many of them are used by patients from outside the Henley area.

The community has expressed a wish to have community beds available to provide end of life care and respite, although the beds on Peppard Ward are not currently used for this purpose.

It is clear that people value the proposal for step up beds, however the concern and request for 18 beds is specific to people requiring step down care.

- **Rapid Access Care Unit** – it appears that people are supportive of the principle of the Rapid Access Care Unit. Concerns have been expressed with regards the availability of the service and staffing levels.
- **Transition** – it is clear that this is a strong theme throughout the consultation. People have requested a clear plan on how services will move from a bedded model at Peppard wWard to an ambulatory model in the new hospital build. There are also concerns about the arrangements between the closure of Peppard Ward in November 2015 and the opening of the new Orders of St. John Home on the site (June 2016 at the latest).
- **Social Care** – concerns have been raised about the ability of social care to meet the demand of an elderly population. The consultation has been heavily dominated about concerns relating to care in the community.

- **Community Services** – concerns have been raised about the capacity of community based services to meet the needs of elderly population, if bed based care is not to be provided.
- **Funding** – the financial viability of community based care has been a concurrent theme throughout all the events, which includes the ability to recruit staff, fund changes to the structure of the new build hospital, and financial stability of the NHS at a time when cuts are being made to statutory services.
- **Order of St John Care Home** – concern has been raised that the number of proposed step up step down beds being provided in a care home is insufficient, and that there should be appropriately trained NHS nursing staff available to support these beds.
- **Mental Health** – A clear message is for additional mental health services and provision for younger people.

The CCG will report back to the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee in September 2015 with their decision and next steps. ●

If you do wish to receive further updates on the consultation please do let us know by emailing cscsu.talkinghealth@nhs.net

By BARBARA & GONZALO PEREZ

THE TIGGYWINKLES ARE THRIVING IN WESTLEIGH DRIVE

In the 1950's there were 36.5 million Hedgehogs in the UK. In 2015 there are fewer than a million and in 2007 they were made a conservation priority.

'Horace' as we affectionately called him, came into our garden late evening in March 2013. His arrival triggered the security light on our patio, where he had come to clear up the dried meal worms the birds had left behind. He continued to visit us each evening 9.15pm to 10pm and we provided him with copious amounts of meal worms. After a while we did some research about a hedgehog diet and learned that in addition to the things that nature provides, they are also partial to dog food and biscuits and also require a dish of water.

After about four weeks he arrived with two much larger versions of himself who hung around at night for several weeks partaking of the food and water left out for them. When the evenings got colder we made a hedgehog house which was waterproof, 'Horace' found this under the shrubs and camped out in this each night after feeding. He continued to visit each evening right up to mid-December. We now had a dilemma. We were going away for the Christmas holidays, so before doing so, we left four opened cartons of dog food and some water close by the hedgehog house, which had been eaten when we returned in January 2014, we also noted that the entrance to the hedgehog house was full of leaves presumably because 'Horace' was in hibernation.

During mid-March 2014 'Horace' again appeared on the patio and for food and water. Over the coming weeks he brought with him several other hedgehogs all about the same size as himself, and during late August two of them were accompanied by two much smaller versions, we presumed they were offspring, therefore was it 'Horace' or 'Henrietta' we had been entertaining?

We purchased a further hedgehog house for the increasing family, hiding it under yet another shrub, and confirm both houses were used during the winter of 2014. We awaited March 2015 with anticipation.

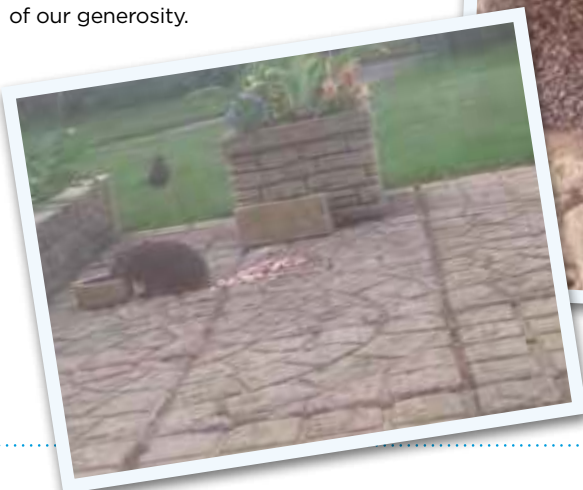
True to form on 19th March this year a hedgehog appeared on the patio, clearly we have no idea whether it was one of the previous contingent. It comes each evening sometimes accompanied by one or two others, they partake of the food on offer during late evening and through the night leaving the dishes spanking clean, and the biscuit and meal worms gone. We do however protect the food with wire mesh because on one occasion a passing cat took advantage of our generosity.

In mid-April we inspected the hedgehog houses and unfortunately found one little hedgehog had died. It was dispatched with due reverence.

We will continue to feed our spiky friends for as long as they continue to visit, and who knows we may be rewarded with some more little ones later in the year.

Perhaps if anyone believes they have one in their garden, (their droppings are easy to distinguish) put out a little sustenance and some water to keep the breed from vanishing altogether. ●

Ecologists classify Hedgehogs as an 'indicator species' - one that can be used to diagnose the health of the whole system. Their decline may reflect a more general crisis in the British ecosystem. Due to conservation work Red Kites have returned to our area - can we do the same for Hedgehogs?



HI EVERYONE! IT'S ZACK HERE.

Have you tried out the new skate park? It's great and I've already learnt tons of tricks. I really liked learning to do the half pipe (my friend told me how to do it). It's actually really simple. All you do is get your scooter or skateboard, and balance the middle of it on an edge. Then you carefully lean forward and (if you keep your balance) you'll end up on the other side! If you know any skateboarding tricks, tell me how to do it at junioreditor@sonningcommonmagazine.org and I will let everyone know about that trick next time. See ya!

ZACK



COW, PLATYPUS AND GOAT EVOLUTION

These are three games I have had for ages on my kindle and I love all of them. They are all the same but with different animals. The aim of the game is to put two of the same type of animals together and they merge into a new cool looking animal. I recommend this game for ages 6 to 10 but who knows - you could be one to 100 years old and still enjoy playing it! ●

FILMREVIEW Minions

My film review today is 'Minions'. I'm sure you've heard of 'Despicable Me' but have you ever wondered where his cute, yellow minions came from? Well, this hilarious film tells you how. The point of this film is the fact the minions need a leader so they go on a great adventure to get one. This is a must watch film for all ages. Email me if you like it. ●



BOOKREVIEW Out of this world by Ali Sparkes

I read a brilliant book called 'Out of this World' by Ali Sparkes. It's about a boy who finds that when he holds a crystal, he has the power to move things with his mind! He tries to find out if there are any other people like him, but he is being hunted. Will he be caught? Find out for yourself in this five star book!

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SONNING COMMON PRE-SCHOOL SUMMER FAIR

The brief summer rain did not dampen the spirits at the Sonning Common Pre-School Fair, which took place on Sunday 28 June, and was supported by the children, their families and the local community.

We had a café, treasure hunt, tombolas, face painting, hook-a-duck, hoopla and much more besides. Once the rain stopped, the bouncy castle was in full swing or rather full 'bounce' and a BBQ lunch was enjoyed by all.

Manager Clare Saunders was first in the stocks and after a cautious start the children really enjoyed the challenge to soak the pre-school staff with wet sponges!

One of the highlights of the fair was the Silent Auction. We had a fantastic selection of 55 prizes ranging from

two First Class train tickets, an olive tree and a signed Reading FC football, to personalised bunting, wine tasting and family days out. All prizes were kindly donated to the pre-school by local businesses and other independent businesses, including Sophie Bennett from BelovedByBetsy 'Donating my products to charity events is my way of giving something back to a community that has helped me to establish my business'.

We raised a fantastic £1,917 which is a tremendous achievement for a small local charity. The funds raised at the fair will be used to cover the costs of all new equipment, games, books, arts and crafts materials and other resources that make the Pre-School experience so rewarding for our children. ●



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AN OBSERVATION FROM ONE OF YESTERDAY'S PEOPLE

By **DICK BRADFORD**



As a resident of Grove Road I was interested to read the letter about Grove Road/Wood Lane car congestion and the suggested one way system.

In Grove Road, I think everyone would agree, the main issue is the safety of the children and AA president Edmund King stated in the Daily Mail that 'instinctively you might think that a one-way street should be safer because traffic is going in the same direction. However, that can tempt motorists to drive faster and may prove a disincentive for pedestrians to stop and look properly before they step out'. Am I right in thinking the suggested one way system would turn Grove Road, Wood Lane and short parts of the Peppard and Kennylands Road into a circulatory system? If so, instead of two daily twenty minute periods of mayhem in Grove Road which I think most residents work around, there will be a constant daily flow of traffic as cars access all four roads and it will

also make for an interesting bus route. My observations, as a sometimes bored pensioner who goes out to watch the daily sport, are the following:

If drivers observed the no parking 10 metres from a junction rule it would help, I am always amused by the ones who park right on the corner by the police station and surprised that they are never booked. Traffic flow would be safer if they left larger gaps for moving cars to use as passing places and allowed residents enough room to get their cars out.

I am very impressed by the speed and skill that some parents show when weaving in and out of the parked cars and I hope their reactions are as fast if a child runs out.

Not an observation but a request, can I have one of those special passes that allow you to use the 'keep clear' zig-zag lines to drop off passengers without getting booked and will someone let me know the thinking behind parents parking their cars on the pavement forcing other

parents to walk into the road with their push chairs and children?

Maybe if a few more drivers showed consideration to others; obeyed the traffic rules; did not drive as if their child is safe in their car so that's ok then; and they were booked for offences I reckon it would solve a lot of daily problems. It is good to see some children walking to school but I am not convinced that the surgery car park as a starting point is showing community spirit at its best but hey, what do I know? I am one of yesterday's people watching today's people going about their business and I am pretty sure they do not require my age groups' approval for their actions but they should remember, it is their children at risk, not ours.

A suggestion has been made that an experiment should be tried with one way traffic only at school times morning and afternoon on Lea Road, Westleigh Drive and Grove Road to see if it eases congestion? ●

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TOM FORT CARD HELL

Does anyone else have this problem?

I have two debit cards in my wallet that I use regularly – one for my own account, the other for the joint account. They are issued by different banks, and one has the VISA printed at the same end as the chip, and the other at the opposite end.

My difficulty is that I can never – and I mean NEVER – remember which is which. And the consequence is that I almost invariably put in whichever one I am using the wrong way round. And have to take it out. And do it again.

And then I apologise – Lord, I am so bored with my grovelling apologies. And they, the staff, look at me in that particular way. It's called a pitying

look. "Don't worry, sir," they say. "We all make mistakes."

But I do worry. The same thing happens with the catch on the bonnet of my car. I have had the damned thing for nearly two years, but I still cannot remember how to release the catch at the front to change the oil or put in water. I have to get hold of the manual, try yet again to understand the idiot's illustration, fiddle and fiddle and start losing my temper – and suddenly, lo and behold, it opens.

There's another symptom I've noticed. I remember I have to do something. I know what it is. I get up from whatever it is I'm doing and go to wherever the thing I know I have to do is located. I get there. I stand. I look

down. I cannot remember what it was.

I know, I know. It's called getting old.

It comes to us all. Get over it, get used to it. But the trouble is that I don't FEEL old, not inside my head.

I feel young, energetic, mentally alert – and I'm not, not any more.

Anyone got any ideas? ●



COOKS CORNER By SANDY ONOFRIO

COOK'S CORNER

A couple of very easy dishes that are both full of flavour yet are simple, quick to prepare and require minimal equipment and fuss. Serve the chicken with green beans and saute potatoes, serve the lemon tart with fresh raspberries and a spoonful of crème fraiche.

CHICKEN CHASSEUR - serves 4

4 rashers streaky bacon (or pancetta), chopped
4 shallots, chopped
4 large chicken thigh fillets (or chicken supremes)
2 tablespoon tomato puree
225ml white wine & 225ml chicken stock
285g whole button mushrooms
chopped fresh parsley



Fry bacon, in a little butter, until brown and crispy. Add the shallots and saute for 2-3 minutes. Add the chicken and brown on both sides (a few minutes per side). Stir in the tomato puree, the white wine, the chicken stock and the mushrooms. Lower heat and simmer gently, covered for 1 1/2 hours, stirring occasionally. (Add a little extra water or stock if liquid fully reduces). Season and sprinkle with parsley before serving. ●

TARTE AUX CITRONS - serves 6

18cm sweet pastry case - bought
450ml double cream
50g caster sugar
3 lemons (zested and juiced)
150g Vanilla Yoghurt (fat free works well)



In a medium sized saucepan mix together the cream, sugar and lemon zest. Gradually heat, bring to the boil and continue boiling for 3 minutes.

Pour the squeezed lemon juice into a measuring jug, pour in the hot cream mixture, combine and then stir in the vanilla yoghurt. Strain through a sieve and pour into the pastry case.

Place in fridge and chill for a minimum of 3 hours. ●

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WARNING TO PENSIONERS IN THE WAKE OF THE NEW PENSION RULES

Five types of scams have been reported:

- Pension 'transfers'
- Pension savings become 'investments'
- Pension 'advice'
- Pensioners are offered services for a fee
- Contacting people by email or telephone, scammers persuade victims to hand over personal data like their National Insurance number and bank account details. Sometimes the scammers will use information they already have, such as name of the victim's employer or pension provider.

Pension scam advice

1. Inform someone else about a possible scam, an unsolicited phone call or text, or offer of money.
2. Never give out your bank details

or send money unless you are certain you can trust the person who has asked you to do this.

3. Don't feel pressured to make a decision straight away. Take your time.
4. Seek advice by calling the Citizens Advice consumer service on 03454 040506
5. Report a potential scam to Action Fraud on 0300 123 2040

People approaching retirement with a defined contribution pension pot will be able to get face-to-face help from a Pension Wise expert in their local Citizens Advice Bureau. Make an appointment by phoning Adviceline on 03444 111444 or dropping in to the bureau. For CAB opening hours, see the website www.ca.org.uk

Alternatively, visit the government's Pension Wise website or telephone 030 0330 1001. ●

AAA SCREENING PROGRAMME

An NHS screening programme that aims to prevent hundreds of premature deaths is available to all men aged 65 and over in the Thames Valley area.

Around 3,000 people, most of them older men, die in England and Wales every year from abdominal aortic aneurysms, which are formed when the main blood vessel in the body weakens and expands. The NHS Abdominal Aortic Aneurysm (AAA) Screening Programme aims to prevent around half of those deaths. www.nhs.uk/aaa.

The risk of having an AAA is higher if you:

- Smoke or have ever smoked
- Have high blood pressure
- Have a close relative (parent or sibling) who has had an AAA

Men in the Thames Valley are invited for screening, a simple non-invasive ultrasound scan, in the year they turn 65 while all men over 65 who have not already been screened can arrange an appointment. Men are six times more likely than women to have an AAA, which is why only men are screened.

'Screening is important because it can prevent many avoidable deaths by spotting aneurysms early, so they can be monitored and treated if necessary.'

Contact 01865 572636 to book an appointment. ●

ROYAL MAIL EMAIL SCAM

The victim receives an email purporting to be from the Royal Mail stating that they are holding a parcel/letter for the victim. The victim is then required to contact the Royal Mail to arrange for the item to be resent/collected.

By following the instructions within the email the CryptoLocker virus is subsequently downloaded to the victim's computer. This virus encrypts files on the victim's system and requests a ransom be paid in order for the files to be decrypted.

Additional incentive is added for early repayment as the ransomware states that the cost of decrypting the files will increase the longer the fine is outstanding.

Protect yourself:

- Look at who the email is addressed to. Is it generic or specifically addressed?
- Look at the quality of the images included on the email. Are they of sufficient high quality that they could come from Royal Mail?



- Do not open attachments from unsolicited emails regardless of who they are from.
- Do not click on the link supplied. Instead, go to the relevant website and log in from there.
- Check the address of any email received to see if it appears legitimate.

If you believe that you have been a victim of fraud you can report it online www.actionfraud.police.uk/report_fraud or by telephone 0300 123 2040. ●

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ALL PROPERTY MATTERS

TWINNING VISIT TO FRANCE

On Friday 12 June, eleven Sonning Common residents made their way to Guichainville in Normandy, France for the annual Village Twinning gathering. It was our turn to go to France this year as last year we entertained the visiting French families to historic tours of Reading, trips up the Thames at Henley and a Ceilidh evening.

We left Sonning Common on Friday lunchtime in a minibus and headed for the ferry crossing Dover-Calais. After a smooth crossing we drove a couple of hours to our newly twinned village of Guichainville near Evreux in Normandy and were greeted by a warm welcome from our host families. We had all been allocated a family to stay with before leaving home and they would become our hosts for the weekend. On our arrival at the family homes we were able to swap gifts; we all took copies of the Sonning Common magazine to catch up with what had been happening in both villages since we last got together.

The following morning we elected to undertake a variety of activities. Options included canoeing along the River Eure, a local hike and or a stroll around the town of Evreux for a look round a traditional French market.



Nearer to lunchtime, the villagers organised a picnic for us on the banks of the River Seine with traditional French cuisine including local cider and



of course wine! We were fortunate the weather was so good that were able to just bask in the sunshine and try our 'best' French on our hosts while the children played.

After lunch we were taken to Giverny the home of Monet the famous French painter and gardener. He lived there for over 40 years until his death in 1926. The gardens were spectacular in full bloom with the lily pond just as he painted it in one of his masterpieces. The house was also full of replicas of his paintings and lovingly restored. A fantastic treat for us from our French friends.



The whole group

The sun continued to shine all afternoon so we all stopped for a cool drink/ice cream in a traditional café on the Giverny estate.

We then returned to our respective French homes for a rest and change of clothes ready for the soiree.

The soiree was held in their village hall where all the hosts had made

something towards the dinner.

We sampled local drinks, Kir Normande, which is Cassis with Cider and wines from the region (and further afield!).

The feast continued for a couple of hours during which we took part in an Anglo-French quiz about literal translations of sayings from both countries.

With dinner finished, we embarked on a Karaoke session which was good fun and the children enjoyed it too.

At the end of the night the French hosts thanked us all for coming and continuing our support 'twinning with them'.

For our last day in Guichainville we were able to enjoy a long leisurely breakfast with our host families, sampling the fine Norman breads and pastries from the local patisserie.

We all met back at in the village square at lunchtime, said our goodbyes and headed back to Calais for the ferry home.

This is the third of such exchange visits and the great camaraderie continued, especially now that we are becoming good friends, both with our French hosts, as well as amongst the Sonning Commoners. The few children who went had a fantastic time trying out their French, meeting new friends and came away with pen-pals (well Instagram pals, the modern equivalent!).

I can highly recommend getting involved in the village twinning group, my children love it and we have made a lifelong friendship with a family in France, not to mention the friends we have made in Sonning Common as a result.

If you want to get more information on this please email joquinton@gmail.com

ELIZABETH CAIRNS

Parish news

The content of this page is the sole responsibility of, and is paid for by, Sonning Common Parish Council

WELCOME TO TWO NEW MEMBERS

The two new faces on the parish council are Stan Rust, of Kennylands Road, and David Richens, of Woodlands Road.

Stan and David were elected onto the parish council in May and have both offered to serve on the Planning Committee during the new four-year term.



Stan and his wife Heather, both retired science teachers, moved to Sonning Common in 1980. Their two daughters were brought up in the village and attended local schools.

Stan, whose main hobbies are gardening and photography, has managed to combine both interests in his volunteer role with the Village Gardeners.

He said: 'I produced the photographic evidence to support their Britain in Bloom campaign last year and it was through this that I came to appreciate the work that the parish council does on behalf of the village.'

A volunteer at Sonning Common Library, Stan is also an active member of the Reading U3A (University of the Third Age)

and an even more active grandfather to two young boys!



David, a widower, has lived in the village for more than two two-and-a-half years after being encouraged to move to the area from Guildford, in Surrey, by his

daughter who lives in Caversham. Said David: 'I was born and brought up in Surrey and lived in the same house in Guildford for 36 years. I hadn't really thought about moving until my daughter suggested it and I realised it was time to move out of the family home.'

'I decided to join the parish council because I felt that the village was under siege from developers and I wanted to do what I could to protect the village's interests.'

David, now retired, had a very long and interesting career as a set designer and art director for Thames Television. His interests include gardening and travelling and helping to look after his three grandsons.

Councillors Rust and Richens replace councillors Gail Noble and Jo Hunt who stepped down from the parish council in May. ●

WARM AND COSY VILLAGE HALL

Sonning Common Village Hall heating has been modernised by the installation of a new combination boiler and radiators plus improved controls.

The £16,000 upgrade was funded by the village hall management committee helped by a £4,500 grant from the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment and was managed by the parish council. ●



ACTION PLAN FOR SKATEPARK

The parish council is disappointed and dismayed by a vandalism incident which took place at Sonning Common Skatepark less than two months after it opened.

On the night of Thursday 25 June - the brooms used by youngsters to sweep and maintain the park were burned, bin stands vandalised and rubbish and glass strewn around the site.

Police are investigating the incident and anyone with information is asked to contact Thames Valley Police on 101.

Douglas Kedge, chairman of the parish



council, said: 'The vast majority of young people have been exemplary in their attitude towards the park, both in the way they have maintained it and respected other users.'

'The parish council is absolutely determined that the actions of a few people will not damage the enjoyment of the park by many. We want to form a management committee for the

skatepark - made up of users, parents and other interested residents - to manage, protect and enhance the park for the benefit of the community.'

'We are also liaising with the police over patrolling the park and adopting a robust approach to dealing with any incidents of anti-social behaviour up there.'

A 'jam' to celebrate the park's opening is planned for the autumn.

Meanwhile, a new Mini Wheels Track for young children (pictured), which opened at the Lea Road play area in June, is proving to be very popular and a useful training ground for the skatepark! ●

Sonning Common Parish Council
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Church *news*

Rector Graham Foulis Brown will celebrate his final service

20 September 2015
11am in St John's

The Right Reverend Colin Fletcher of Dorchester Abbey will be in attendance.

Buffet lunch to follow in Kidmore End School.

Music composed by Francis Brewitt Taylor who will lead the choir. ●



Third Thursday – use it or lose it!

On 18 October 2012, the first meeting of Third Thursday was successfully held and welcomed a consistent number of friends. So what is it – a meeting at Christ the King on the third Thursday of every month from 2pm to 3.30pm. We enjoy each other's company and news, tea, coffee and biscuits and even a paperback library exchange. There is no charge; it is all free! Importantly, it is not just for our regular church goers: it is for anyone in the community.

That's the good news! However, sadly in recent months we have lost five friends and our numbers have dropped rather dramatically. We don't want to stop meeting – but it's up to you!

Not just do we want the pleasure of your company, we also need help in the following ways:

• Transport • Meeting and Greeting • Setting up • Serving tea, coffee and biscuits

If you find it difficult to get to Christ the King, we will always provide transport for you. You can contact me either by talking to me at St John's - or to Val Heywood at Christ the King – or by ringing me on **0118 9472855**, or by email on **bramble2@talktalk.net** and we will organise a lift.

This has been such a worthwhile activity but it's looking a bit like a 'use it or lose it' situation! If you know of anyone who might be interested in coming along in any capacity, please invite them to do so. Everyone will be warmly welcomed but- most of all - we want YOU!! ●

Jenny MacGregor

LITTLE LAMBS

Little Lambs is a friendly church group at St John the Baptist Kidmore End, primarily for children under five and their parents/carers.

It generally meets between 9.30am and 10.30am on the last Wednesday of each month during term time for a short service and craft activity. More than a dozen children attend each session.

It was created by Felicity and Michael Cooper in 2007 with the aim of meeting the spiritual needs of young children and it is noticeable that toddlers soon become 'acclimatised' to church, particularly as the sessions follow a regular pattern. Even small children can appreciate liturgy and symbolism, making use of all the senses. Each month the service concentrates on a particular theme and all the major feasts of the church calendar are included. Since 2008 Kidmore End Pre-School children have also attended.



To help the children to understand the needs of others Little Lambs has supported 'Operation Christmas Child' sending shoe boxes filled with gifts to children in developing countries. Other donations include a project run by 'Us' (formerly USPG) that is helping an isolated community in the Philippines to rear animals and grow crops **www.weareus.org.uk/harvest** and the Pre-School has been twinned

with one in Africa under a scheme that provides sanitation to some of the poorest parts of the world **www.toilettwinning.org**

If you would like to come along to Little Lambs after the summer holiday, we would love to hear from you.

Felicity and Michael Cooper:
telephone 0118 947 7862 or email
felicityandmichael@btinternet.com ●

AUGUST 2015

SUNDAY 2	Felt-makers get together. Bring lunch and a project to work on - Village Hall	10am - 4pm
MONDAY 10	FISH - Tea party - Village Hall	2.30pm
THURSDAY 20	FISH - Pub lunch	11.30am
THURSDAY 27	FISH - Henley Farmers' Market	

SEPTEMBER 2015

SATURDAY 5	Chiltern Edge Horticultural Society, Autumn Show - Chiltern Edge School	2.30pm - 4.30pm
SUNDAY 6	Felt-makers get together. Bring lunch and a project to work on - Village Hall	10am - 4pm
MONDAY 14	FISH - Tea party - Village Hall	2.30pm
MONDAY 14	Royal British Legion Women's Section - Craft day - Batten House	2pm - 3.30pm
THURSDAY 17	FISH - Pub lunch	11.30am
THURSDAY 17	Sonning Common Women's Institute - Centenary party with entertainment from singer Hannah Woolford. Visitors welcome - Village Hall	7.30pm
MONDAY 21	Sonning Common Parish Council - Village Hall	8pm
THURSDAY 24	FISH - Henley Farmers' Market	

The FISH Volunteer Centre runs regular door-to-door shopping trips to Tesco in Henley every Monday morning and to Henley Waitrose, Henley Farmers Market, Morrisons in Reading and Reading Town Centre every month.

The programme of shopping and leisure trips for each month is published and distributed on 20th of the preceding month and bookings are taken from that date. Copies of the programme are available the FISH Volunteer Centre, Sonning Common Library, the Christian Community Action shop, Pet Country Supplies and on request from Carson's Chemist. The monthly programme of trips is posted on noticeboards in both Peppard and Sonning Common.

Details of all minibus trips can also be found on the FISH website www.fishvolunteercentre.co.uk

For more information and to book any trip call **0118 972 3986** any weekday between 09.30 and 11.30 a.m. ●



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For further information, please ask for the manager
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www.alphabetdaynurseries.com

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