

SC SONNING COMMON MAGAZINE

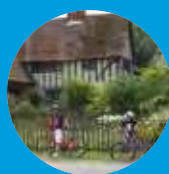
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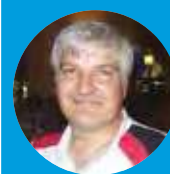
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FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

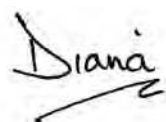
Another summer on the wane, another magazine to assemble and where have the last 2 months gone? Well the sun shone at least half of the time and as ever the people of SC have provided a rich selection of material to populate our magazine.

There are 2 fascinating stories. One, a celebration from a Spanish family (their children are pictured on the front cover) about their stay in SC and the other, a heart-felt, positive and hopeful story from Juliet Legg. The community pages are packed full of happenings from all age groups in the village and the Noticeboard publicises those to come. The work of the NDP is into its final stages. Please put the dates of the residents' exhibition in your diary, the weekend of 15 and 16 November, to be held in the Village Hall.

There is another questionnaire – this time about Leisure and Recreation in the village. Information from you all is needed to build our case, in order to replace the deficit that currently exists.

Please complete it and post, or email, by mid-October. This is our one opportunity to improve the situation through the NDP. It may never come again!!

Let us hope this 'season of mists and mellow fruitfulness' will bring the glorious colours, so our lovely countryside can be further appreciated.



Diana Pearman Editor

Email: editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org



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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.

SC SONNING COMMON
MAGAZINE

MEET THE TEAM ...



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Hannah Rice



Jo Stoves



Joan Grummant



Ros Varnes

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SONNING COMMON PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

GAMES AREA IS READY TO GO

The multi use games area is all ready to go now and the staff and children are very pleased with it.

Chris Hirst – SCPS Headteacher -
‘We have needed some extra space for children in the winter months when our lovely field is not able to be used, and we are all very excited about the games area. I am hoping to work with local clubs to provide some new afterschool sports for the children’. ●



Second village defibrillator presented to the school

The village is very lucky to now have TWO defibrillators available for locals to use in an emergency, as the second one was recently presented to the school and library by Millie's Dream Appeal.

This was set up by Millie's mum Sarah Roberts as her daughter suffers from a heart and lung condition. This is the 11th one to be installed locally. It is located in a locked box on the library wall, and accessible at all times, and the other is on the outside wall at Chiltern Edge School.

Miss Roberts said: 'This is where the growth of the charity has to go. We have to put the defibrillators outside buildings

so the whole the community can benefit in the event of cardiac arrest. We don't want people to be afraid to use them. The minute you ring 999 they will tell you where your nearest defibrillator is and give you the code to access the locked box instantly.'

The defibrillator, which cost £1,400 with a lock box, was fitted for free by electrician Dan Scott, from D J Scott Electrical Services.

Community First Responder Adam Negus attended the launch and said more volunteers were needed. For information, visit www.southcentralambulance.nhs.uk ●

CHILTERN EDGE STUDENTS ARE DELIGHTED WITH GCSE RESULTS

Students, parents and staff at Chiltern Edge School celebrated another excellent set of GCSE exam results during the summer holidays.

Highlights included record outcomes in Maths where 77% of students gained at least a C grade and a quarter of grades were at A*/A.

In English over 30% of entries in Language and Literature gained A* or A grades and in French, 88% of entries were at C grade or better.

Results for the 'English Bacc' were fantastic with 31% of students achieving at least C grades in a Humanities subject and a Modern Foreign Language, alongside their English, Maths and Science.

TOP PERFORMERS INCLUDED;

Oliver Breen	12A*/A and 1 Distinction
Sophie Walker	11A*/A and 1 Distinction
Clarissa Webb	10A*/A and 1 Distinction
Isobel Boxall	9A*/A and 1 Distinction
Kai Carlisle	9 A*/A and 2B
Emily Beech	9 A*/A and 3B
Thea Harland	7 A*/A and 1 Distinction 3B
Katie Packman	9 A*/A and 1 Distinction 2B
Dewi Rees	9 A*/A and 1 Distinction 1B

Headteacher Daniel Sadler said, 'These outcomes demonstrate that great teaching and hard work always deliver strong results. I am delighted that so many students have gained the qualifications they need to move on to their next step with confidence. I started at Chiltern Edge with this year group five years ago and they have been a credit to themselves and the school. I wish them the best of luck'. ●

Organ donation for Village Hall

Peggy Hamblin, a neighbour of Councillor Colin Reynolds is moving home. Her new home is smaller so she did not have room for the organ. Colin suggested it might be welcome at the village hall and this was agreed. However an organ is not easily transported but thanks to Wilkins of Henley they relocated it free of charge. The organ now has pride of place in the side room of the Village Hall and the hope is that local people will enjoy playing it. ●



MYTHICAL MAZE STORIES THRILL THE CHILDREN

As the summer came to an end, so did the special Mythical Maze story times at Sonning Common Library. A month of dragons, unicorns, trolls, monsters, yetis and other mythical creature stories, thrilled up to 16 children each week.

The annual Summer Reading Challenge was set up to encourage children to keep reading during the long school holiday, and this year's theme of the 'Mythical Maze' lent itself well to stories and crafts. Volunteers made and sold cakes at the library on Saturday mornings, to fund the craft materials.

Normal Saturday story times continue each week at 10am, and the next special story time will be on November 1st, with Bonfire night as the theme for the morning.

The library is now running as a volunteer supported community library. This means that there is only ever one member of staff on duty, and customers are being encouraged to use the self-service machines as much as possible, to avoid queues at the counter. **It is very important to remember to bring your library card with you!**

The volunteers are still learning the ropes, so please be patient with them, and with the staff, as they are all doing their best to cope with the situation they find themselves in. ●



LUNCH SPLENDIDO, MOLTE GRAZIE...

By 12.30pm on Friday 5 September some 66 villagers and friends were eagerly crowding into the village hall for what proved to be a very successful 5th Annual Village Lunch. This year the theme was Italy and all things Italian.

The newly refurbished hall was decorated with flags and bunting, posters of iconic Italian beaches and Venetian waterways lined the walls, and the tables were attractively laid up in colours of the Italian flag. Guests dipped Ciabatta bread in oil and balsamic, ate melon and Parma ham, a chicken casserole with salad and a deliciously light tiramisu. All this washed down with Italian wine and followed with coffee and sweets. Everyone appeared to have a good time despite an extremely challenging pasta identification quiz.

The event raised almost £600 which is to be shared between the new skate park and Village Gardeners. Chrissie Phillips Tilbury, the organiser, said "a successful fund raising event is always very satisfying but the bonus is to see so many people thoroughly enjoying themselves in convivial surroundings".

Very many thanks to Chrissie and Jill Vallis and their team of cooks and helpers for giving up their time and skills to provide such a fun afternoon. And thanks also to Margaret and Elaine for generously covering the cost of hiring the hall with a donation from Nottakwire. After every previous Village Lunch Chrissie has said "not again" but I understand she does have an idea for a theme for 2015. ●

Jo Stoves



SAVE OUR BANK APPEAL IS IGNORED



The village's NatWest branch closed its doors at the end of August after 64 years, despite objections from nearly 1,000 local people.

NatWest said its decision was based on declining branch customer usage and rising trends in digital banking. A spokesperson said: "We had to make the difficult decision to close the branch because the number of transactions taking place had fallen by 30 per cent over the last 3 years."

"This is because more and more of our customers are using different ways to bank with us, where and when it is convenient for them. The branch was only open for 18 hours a week and only 29 customers used it regularly, on a weekly basis."

However, Parish Councillor Dirk Jones, who organised a petition and protest against the closure, claimed the decline in available banking hours had been a deliberate ploy by NatWest to reduce the number of regular customers so that the closure could be justified.

"NatWest is throwing in the towel. It is not offering a service in the village any more. We all feel very strongly about the branch's closure," he said. "We won't be walked over."

A peaceful protest took place outside the branch on 21 July, organised by Councillor Jones, which was attended by 40 to 50

petitioners, many of whom had been using the branch for decades. Some customers didn't even live in the village.

One of the protesters, Carole Tanner, said: "We live in Didcot but we come here every day to see family and we use the bank regularly. It's nice to have a bit of personal service."

Her niece, Teresa Hopping, from Shiplake Bottom, who had four separate accounts at the bank, said the branch had been queued to the door that Monday morning.

Many of the protesters said they used the branch because it was convenient, easy to park at - particularly for the elderly and infirm - and because they were worried about the security of online banking.

Customer Clifford Barrett, who owns Stoke Row Garage, called NatWest's decision to close the branch "disgusting". He said he had been using the branch since the early 1970s.

Sue Frayling-Cork, who runs the Sonning Common Village Hall Management Committee, claimed NatWest was adopting a 'one box ticks all' approach to banking. "This is not satisfactory when dealing with individual human beings. We are very disappointed with NatWest," she said.

Gavin Owens, Chief Executive Officer (CEO) for NatWest in Berkshire, received the petition from a small group of protesters. He refused to address the crowd outside, remaining inside the bank during the protest.

With the closure of the branch, first opened by NatWest's predecessor, the National Provincial Bank, in November 1949, the building will be sold.

NatWest is hoping to install a cash point machine in the village centre and discussions are on-going as to its new location.

A bank spokesperson said: "We do understand that some of our customers do not use the internet or mobile phone app and prefer to be served over-the-counter. As a result we have come to an agreement with the Post Office so that customers can withdraw cash, check balances and pay money in free of charge at any of the 11,500 Post Offices across the UK." ●

Ros Varnes



TIMBER!!!!

The felling of a diseased, weakened and unsafe tree opposite the Village Hall.

THE VILLAGE CENTRE IS BUSY ENOUGH!



New housing developments in the village centre are unwanted, parking is poor and features like the flower-beds and telephone box should be preserved, according to the majority of residents who completed a recent survey.

Sonning Common Magazine (last edition) encouraged residents to provide their views on the shaping of the village centre (It's your village. What do you think?)

1. Do you support new housing developments in the village centre?

Yes	17%
No	83%
Don't know	0%

2. Should developers preserve village centre features like the flower-beds and telephone box?

Yes	96%
No	4%
Don't know	0%

3. Parking in the village centre is:

Good	0%
Adequate	13%
Poor	87%

Here are some sample comments:

"Infill is acceptable within reason.

Too much could result in overcrowded development."

"I only support more development in the village if it does not spoil the rural atmosphere. I do not want anything ugly or out of character."

"Backyard development in a busy village is ridiculous. The problems with large lorries blocking the roads and buses is a nightmare. It is also making parking very difficult. Well done to the developers!"

"Parking in Wood Lane is a disgrace. I hope we don't lose the bus service because of it."

"On Wood Lane there is too much

traffic. We have a pretty village and the gardeners have worked hard to get it looking good but people still park on yellow lines because they are too lazy to walk from the car park."

"The village does not need any more traffic in it, it's bad enough."

"Disabled parking is needed by the shops - not behind the village hall where the distance to walk can be too great."

"The houses gained are few but the land lost could serve the whole village. A new car park is needed."

"Further congestion in the village centre will make the road through more dangerous for pedestrians and motorists. There is plenty of alternative space for building much-needed new homes."

"Provide another car park in the village centre and restrict parking in Wood Lane."

"The village is congested and overcrowded. Remove housing to the outskirts in larger groups where services will be included."

"We need new housing and there is land available in the village centre - better there than on the outskirts, surely?"

What developments are taking place in the village centre?

The building of two pairs of semi-detached homes is underway behind Occasions on Wood Lane. The developer has recently applied to South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) to add four new garages on-site.

The construction of six new homes is due to begin on land behind the chemist's shop and indian restaurant. Both of these applications were won on appeal to a Government inspector.

In addition, the district council is currently considering an application to build a new business unit with a flat above it at the Green Lane/Wood Lane corner, necessitating the re-siting of the phone box. Sonning Common Parish Council opposed all of these developments on the grounds that they would result in an over-development of the village centre; be detrimental to its character and use as a service centre; and increase traffic and parking issues.

What happens now?

Sonning Common Magazine will provide the survey results to Sonning Common Parish Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Oxfordshire County Council and current and future developers of the village centre to inform them of residents' views. ●

Ros Varnes



Britain in Bloom Result

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NOTICEBOARD

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NATIONAL TRUST AT GREYS COURT

New volunteers needed

Volunteer to join the friendly team of room guides

Tessa Blake, the House Steward, explains why extra help is needed: 'Now that the property is open almost every day of the year, extra volunteers are needed to allow the house to open fully to the public and provide them with the best possible visitor experience. Volunteering at Greys Court is a great opportunity to meet likeminded people and engage with the public about the property's fascinating history and collections'.

No prior experience is needed. Full training and support will be given. Contact **01491 628004** or email tessa.blake@nationaltrust.org.uk

Girl Guide Leader

Could you be the next
Emma Gees?



Girl Guide Leader Emma Gees, a University of Leeds medical student is taking part in a Girl guiding Peer Education initiative which challenges young women to take action, to stop unhealthy body ideals affecting the next generation of girls.

Surprising? Not so, one of the ideals of the Guides is to make things happen! AND there is still the adventure sports, performing arts, travel and community action projects.

Sonning Common Girl Guides need a leader - there will be lots of volunteer Mums to help.

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The South Chiltern Choral society has a new Musical Director, Paul Burke, and we invite you to be a part of this new era for our choir. We are a mixed voice choir, rehearsing locally in Sonning Common on Monday evenings. We sing all kinds of fantastic music, from the classics to modern 21st century pieces.

Interested in joining? Come along to our rehearsals on a Monday at 7.30pm, Chiltern Edge School and give us a try. We will be starting rehearsals under Paul's direction for our Christmas concert, comprising music by Benjamin Britten. We will be especially pleased to see you if you sing Tenor or BASS!
Find out more on: www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk
or ring either Richard Larkin on 07557 049092 or Clare Powell on 07931 902495

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Club SC *news*

THE WOW FACTOR AT CLUB SC

Circus skills

Club SC enjoyed a fantastic evening in June, run by 'Shooting Stars' circus skills. The trainer was brilliant and it was amazing to see how much progress one could make on stilts, indeed some even graduated from the 'baby' stilts to using the very high ones with no support!

Exotic animals

Younger members of Club SC were treated to an evening of exotic animals from Dr Love of Highdown School and watched, fascinated, a snake eat a mouse and were able to hold tortoises, lizards and snakes.

Beat boxing

Older members of Club SC enjoyed an evening of 'beat boxing', where all drum and song sounds are made by one person using only their mouth and vocal chords to create a fascinating musical sound. 'Pieman,' an award winning beat boxer, ran a workshop showing - how to make bass drum, snare, hi hat and 'record scratch' sounds with their own mouths! So listen out for some unusual sounds in the village!

Driving Simulator Day

In August, youngsters were treated to a driver awareness course specifically designed for young people who are not yet on the roads. Two state of the art driving simulators were set up in the youth club and they pitted their skills against the computer to see how well they could drive with and without distractions. Much fun was had by all who attended.

Club SC nurtures Ultimate Frisbee GB Champion

Conner Limbrick, 15 from Sonning Common is now a world champion Ultimate Frisbee player thanks to a taster session held last year at Club SC. Conner has honed his skills and was selected for the GB team in May. He jetted off to Lecco, Italy to compete in the Ultimate Frisbee World Championships with the under 17s squad. They beat off stiff competition to bring gold home to the UK as World Junior Ultimate Champions 2014. Club SC are extremely proud of Conner and thrilled with his success in the sport.

Young Leaders training

Max Maughan, Alex Jolly and Calum Bulloch attended a 'Young Leaders' training course, run by our umbrella organisation, Oxfordshire Youth, where they took part in team building and survival activities such as high ropes, raft building and bush craft. Support for our young people to be qualified youth leaders is important to Club SC and the bonus is their qualification can be to put to good use at the Club. ●

BECKY JENKINS, Youth Leader



COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP AWARD

Nottakwire are proud to announce that they have been awarded the "Community Partnership Award" by Oxfordshire Youth Community Link Up Volunteer Awards 2014. This is in recognition of (our) contribution to Club SC.

A MOST INSPIRING VOLUNTEER

Billy Donovan, long standing volunteer at Club SC, Sonning Common Youth Club has won the 'Most Inspiring Volunteer' award at the Oxfordshire Youth Volunteer celebration.

Becky Jenkins, Youth Leader at Club SC nominated him 'We are so thankful to have Billy volunteering at Club SC. He has the ability to talk to young people and volunteers on all levels. Billy has gone from being a builder to a trainee teacher and is using his experience at the club to help him prepare for his new career'.

Billy is one of many volunteers who help at the Youth Club and contribute to its success. Others such as Adam Negus, our community first responder, was 'pipped at the post' for 'Volunteer of the year'.

BECKY JENKINS, Youth Leader

Club SC are currently looking for volunteers to help on Wednesday and/ or Thursday evenings. Can you help us? Just two evenings a month would help to keep the club running... beckyclubsc@hotmail.co.uk



Billy receiving his award from Andrea Tiganescu, Volunteer Officer at Oxfordshire Youth. ●

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MS J RITCHIE
Kidmore Lane, Sonning Common



"I had originally instructed another agent without success and I decided to go with Bridges due to their personal service. And I was not disappointed – the entire team were proactive not only in getting potential buyers through the door but in driving the sale through to the end."

MS A BROWN
Baskerville Road, Sonning Common



"Thank you all for the excellent service that we received during the sale of our property. You handled the matter very efficiently and your staff were helpful and friendly. We would gladly recommend your services to anyone wishing to buy or sell a house in Sonning Common."

MR & MRS B ASHLEY
Widmore Lane, Sonning Common



"Bridges were very professional throughout the sales process which was a marked difference to some of the competition. I would recommend Andy & his team to anybody looking to sell in the Sonning Common area."

MR A HARDING
Kennylands Road, Sonning Common

PROTECT RURAL OXFORDSHIRE (PRO)

Did you know that current plans for the county include 80,000 new jobs, 90,000 more residents and 100,000 more houses – all within the next 17 years? This proposed growth in housing is the equivalent of every town and village increasing in size by 40%.

The Oxfordshire Branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England is concerned about how the speed and scale of this development could cause irretrievable damage to our landscape and local communities, and the impact it will have on already over-stretched services and infrastructure particularly in rural areas.

It has launched a campaign – Protect Rural Oxfordshire (PRO) – to fight for a more sustainable vision for the future of the county.

www.cpreoxon.org.uk



THE BUGBEAR OF PARKING WOOD LANE DENTISTRY CAR PARK



Many thanks to all our patients for your continued feedback, this helps us to focus on the things that matter to you. Without doubt the biggest bugbear has been parking. Many of you have found yourself late for appointments as you have been unable to find parking only to find the waiting room virtually empty.

In order to help deal with your concerns you will have noticed that we have put up new signs in the car park to indicate the spaces owned by the practice. We will also soon require all patients parking there to collect a permit from reception to place on the dashboard of your car. This will help us to monitor those people abusing the parking spaces.

If you arrive and are unable to find parking you can contact the reception and we will let you double park those cars.

Many of you had requested a clamping scheme but we feel this would be too draconian for a village dental practice. We will of course keep parking under review and are happy to accept suggestions. ●

Vik Chughani

SOUTH CHILTERN CHORAL SOCIETY: NEW MUSICAL DIRECTOR/CONDUCTOR

Following the retirement of Gwyn Arch, the South Chiltern Choral Society is proud to announce the appointment of Paul Burke as the new Musical Director/Conductor.

Born in London, Paul studied with Robert Saxton at Worcester College, Oxford, and with Paul Patterson at the Royal Academy of Music.

Work for choirs has been a significant part of Paul's output. Highlights include "Tribus Miraculis" – which was premiered by Salisbury Cathedral Choir

and featured in Choir & Organ magazine – and "Fare Thee Well", which appears on a critically acclaimed Naxos disc of folksong arrangements.

His music is in Cathedrals and Churches across the UK, and broadcast on BBC Radio 3, Channel 4, and Classic FM.

Members of the South Chiltern Choral Society will start rehearsing with Paul from September. ●

David Doidge



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POORS' LAND CHARITY

By **DIANA PEARMAN**



The Original 'Sonning Common' is outlined in Blue and was enclosed in 1820, following the 'Inclosure Act' of 1816.

The larger Common was bounded by Gallowstree Rd, the edge of Old Copse, Woodlands Rd, Wood Lane and Reades Lane.

Poor's Land - Farmland, Allotments and small goat-paddock. Set aside for the 'poor' when enclosing the wider Common in 1820.

The Poors' Land charity continues to exist in 2014 in the ancient Liberty of Eye and Dunsden, which includes most of Sonning Common. Many residents may well be unaware of its existence.

Each year there is a distribution of money, at least £50, to anyone who qualifies. Two of the Poors' Land Charity trustees live in the village and an application should be made to them by the DEADLINE 25 October 2014.

MISS JO HUNT, 18 Grove Road

MR LEIGH RAWLINS, 6 Woodlands Road

This charity has an interesting history dating back to the early 19th century.

Enclosure is a familiar strand running through the history of the English countryside. It can be summarised as a one thousand year process of replacement of the Anglo-Saxon system of open fields and common land by the present system of privately owned enclosed fields. The peasants who worked under the open field system were allocated strips of land which could be spread across a huge area which was unproductive and inefficient. As farming methods improved with the introduction of machinery it was realised that enclosed fields would make farming far more productive. So the enclosure acts were passed by parliament and enforced

across the country during the early 1800's.

At this time Sonning parish comprised four "liberties": Sonning Town; Earley; Eye and Dunsden; and Woodley and Sandford. Sonning was an unusually large parish with a large river running through the middle of it. As it straddled the Thames, it comprised parts of Oxfordshire and parts of Berkshire. The extent of the parish from north to south, which is to say from Sonning Common as far as the valley of the River Loddon south of Lower Earley, was some eleven miles - which meant that for some it was a very long walk to church.

8 April 1816, we find the following notice:

The Proprietors of Estates within the parish of Sonning, in Berks and Oxon, are requested to meet at the White Hart, near Sonning Bridge, on Friday the 19th day of April inst. At twelve o'clock, for the purpose of conferring upon and adjusting the provisions of the Bill now before Parliament for Inclosing the Open Commonable Lands and Waste Grounds within the said parish.

JOHN ROBERTS

Clearly it proved possible to make the adjustments in a satisfactory way,

because the Act was passed shortly afterwards, and the next stage in the process began. This involved the posting of a notice in the Reading Mercury on 22 July 1816, calling a meeting. It took until August before an Act for Inclosing Lands in the parish of Sonning, in the counties of Berks and Oxford," was passed.

After the common land disappeared with the enclosures of the early 19th century, the scattered families of Sonning Common continued to work on local farms. Until the end of the century little changed and who owned the land they worked on mattered little; agricultural labourers were beholden to the farmer who rented the land.

However in many places across the country there were riots and long periods of unrest, particularly because the common land where anyone could graze their animals had been enclosed into fields for agricultural purpose. It was recognised that it would certainly be prudent to temper unpopular measures of enclosure with some form of compensation.

A typical form of compensation for enclosure was the setting up of "fuel charities" deriving their income from parcels of land retrieved from enclosures and known as "the poors' land". This is the origin of the Poors' Land charity which still exist today. ●

NDP FOR SONNING COMMON

SON SITE STATUS REPORT

The first draft of the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) has been completed and will be available for residents' views and comments, at a display in the village hall on 15 and 16 November 2014.

Under the SODC Core Strategy 2027, 138 new homes have been allocated to Sonning Common (SC). The NDP has drafted proposals for the number of homes on each SON site. Residents most affected by these developments have been invited to meetings to give feedback on the site proposals.

However, the latest Government requirement, known as the Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) may result in more homes being allocated to SC and these would need to be built by 2031, under a new SODC Local Plan. SODC have advised the NDPWP to make provision for a reserve allocation of extra homes for Sonning Common.

BARRIE GREENWOOD Chairman NDPWP

Old Copse Field SON 1

Proposal: Status to remain as farmland and to be confirmed by NDP

Bishopswood Middle Field SON 2

Proposal: 50 homes

Residents: Will be consulted on proposal in October

Access: Via SON 3 onto Reade's Lane

Memorial Hall Field SON 3

Proposal: Community Sports space

Residents: Will be consulted on proposals in October

Access: Onto Reade's Lane

Chiltern Edge Top Field SON 15a

Proposal: 37 homes

Residents: Consulted on proposals 7 June 2014

Access: Onto Reade's Lane

Chiltern Edge Lower Field SON 15b

Proposal: Not included in the NDP as a preferred site

Kidmore End Valley Field SON 4

WITHDRAWN by Landowner

Kennylands Paddock SON 5

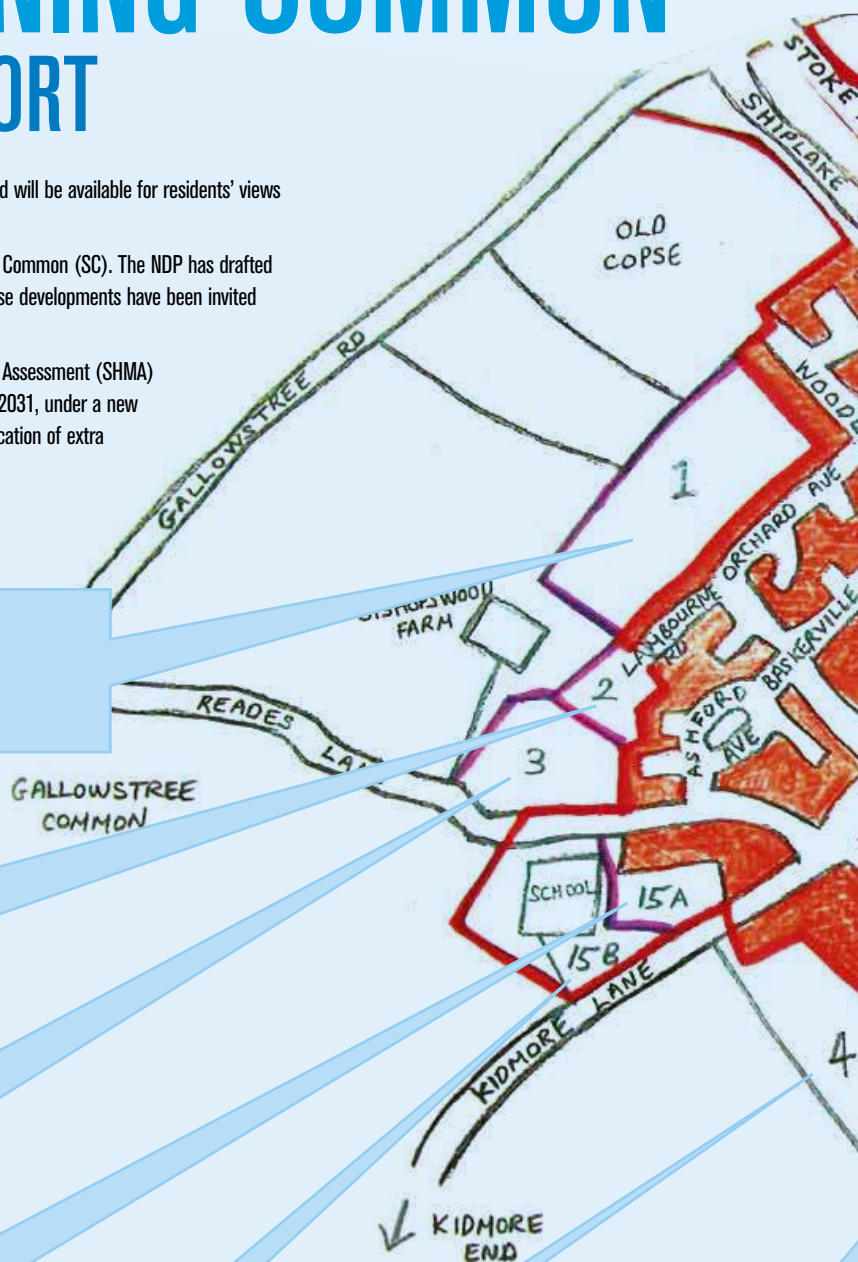
Proposal: Not included in the NDP as a preferred site

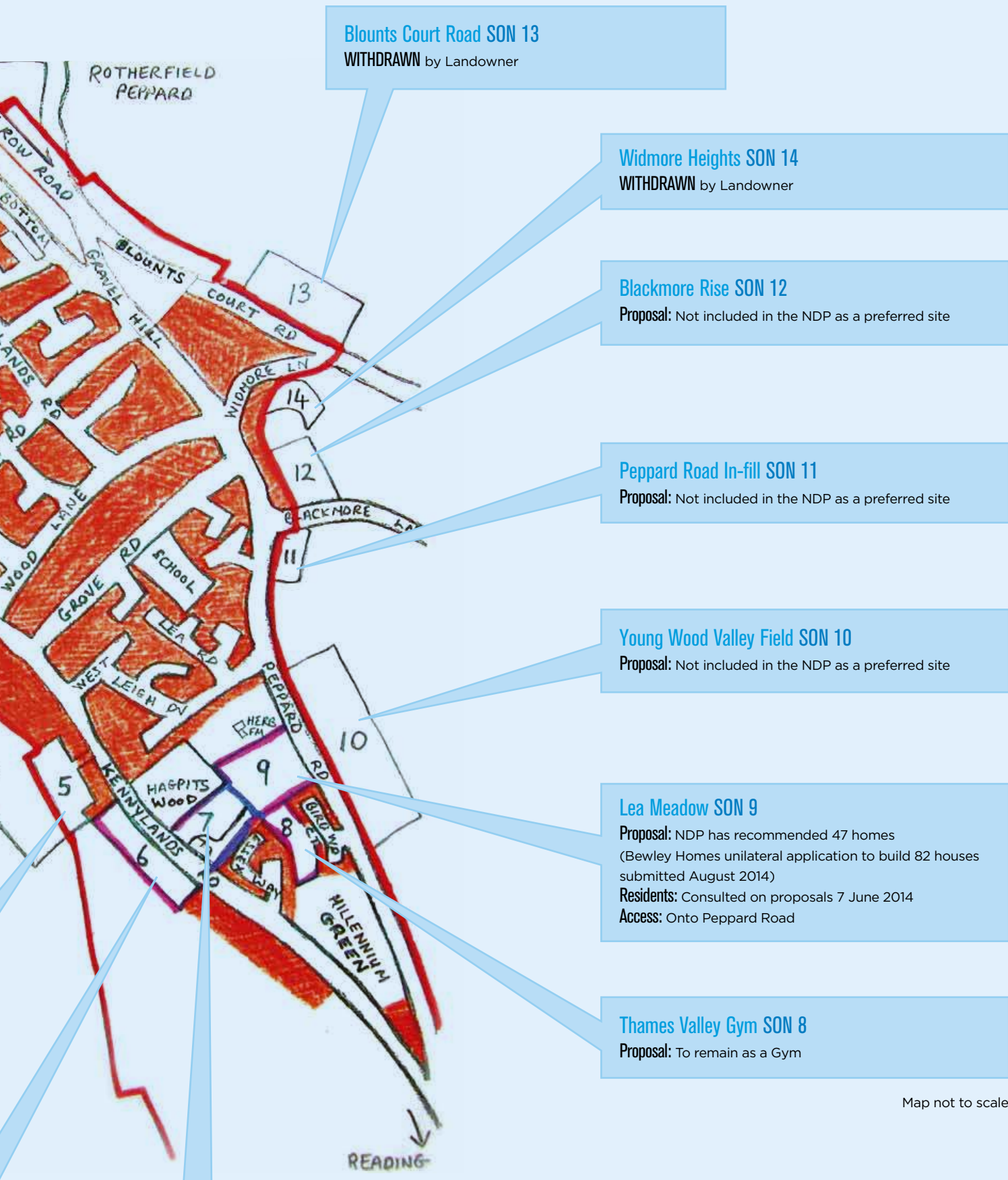
Kennylands Road In-fill SON 6

Proposal: 26 homes

Residents: Consulted on proposals 4 June 2014

Access: Onto Kennylands Road one entrance and one exit





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HELLO EVERYONE,


It's Zack here. I hope you enjoyed your summer holiday and will tell me what you did at junioreditor@sonningcommonmagazine.org

I went to Greece - it is so hot there I was like the hottest potato you ever touched! Now it is back to school and I'm already thinking about Christmas. If you are too, why not book your tickets to see a pantomime at the Kenton Theatre? Details are below.

Until next time,

ZACK





MY TIP

Guess what? I have a secret minecraft tip you can only find out on my second ever video on YouTube.

To get there, type in 'minecraft snapshot 1.8 Zack H' and go to page 3 and find a fox picture. Press on it and press video, then touch the video named minecraft snapshot 1.8 channel 2 or how to make your own trainer with pokemon mod. P.S. The tip is the snapshot to get update 1.8, so watch the second one for the tip. ●

WHAT AM I UP TO?



I am making videos and putting them on YouTube so if you ever see a picture of a cute minecraft fox or find a video with Zack H as the name of the video's creator, please watch it.

I'd really like it if you'd post a comment and leave a like. If you make videos, tell me at junioreditor@sonningcommonmagazine.org and I will write about them so you get extra views and likes. ●




BOOKREVIEW

The Last Wild by Piers Torday

★★★★★


My best friend, Finlay Harris, gave this to me for my birthday and it's really good and interesting. It's about a boy who can't speak but finds out he can talk through his mind to animals. Unfortunately, there are no animals left in the world... or are there? I'm giving it 5 stars, and think older readers would like it. ●



SNOW WHITE AND THE SEVEN DWARFS

Would you like to see a pantomime that just has children in, instead of adults?

You should ask your parents if they'll take you to see the Henley Children's Theatre show, Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs. It'll be at the Kenton Theatre from 31 December 2014 to 4 January 2015 and will be really good. Oh yes, and I'm in it too! ●





A SPANISH PERSPECTIVE ON SONNING COMMON

We are a Catalan family of four who live in Mataró, a coastal town near Barcelona and in August we had the most wonderful experience in the charming village of Sonning Common.

At the beginning of the year, we decided that we would do a home exchange in the summer to the UK. It was our first time, and we were very lucky to find the loveliest family willing to come to Mataró: the Quintons. A family with whom, after so many emails and messages before, during and after our holiday, we have become good friends!

On 25 July at Gatwick airport we met and talked to our exchange family. Then, following their instructions, we drove to Sonning Common where we found what was going to be our home for almost three weeks. How excited we all were to discover a perfect English house with an amazing garden and everything we could possibly wish for!

We already knew that the village was in an excellent location, and that we would be able to visit all the touristic places around: Historical Oxford, breathtaking London, lovely Henley with its river, the family-friendly museum in Reading, the amazing National Trust houses... and we did. We enjoyed each of these visits. What we did not expect, and were gratefully surprised to find in Sonning Common, was such a warm community with so many interesting things to do.

In the first week of our stay, we went on a bike ride following a little tour recommended in the Sonning Common Magazine, a ride that took us to the historical pub "The White Horse", where the parents enjoyed a refreshing beer and the children some crisps and juice. Soon after that, we learnt that the community organizes some activities that we could do, so on Saturday morning, we decided to go to the local library; it was story time, and our children, Ona (8) and Adrià (10) listened to some wonderful tales and did some arts and crafts with the other children there, helped by the friendly librarians. Another great activity was organized by the Ashmolean museum, where the children heard an amazing story about a dragon and learnt a great deal about plants, animals and history. After that, while the children were making colourful paper dragons, we met some lovely Sonning Commoners who told us about the place and the history of some of its houses. An invite for tea and dinner by a lovely family which started a friendship that we hope will last.

In the library as well we found another activity organized by the community: "the Health Walks". We definitely had to try them. The next Saturday afternoon it was pouring with rain so we thought it would be postponed (in our country, when it rains, we stay in!) but it was not, so we missed it... We were luckier the following Saturday and had the most pleasant walk

through lovely fields while enjoying the most interesting conversation. On the day of our departure we had the best breakfast possible. We went to "The Bay Trees" and enjoyed their delicious scones with clotted cream and a lovely cup of real tea served in delicate china cups and saucers. We felt just like a wealthy aristocratic family from the 19th century!

To finish our perfect stay we had another pleasant surprise when we went to have a look at the charity shop: they had organized an activity for the children and they welcomed us with juice, coffee and biscuits. Our children made some bracelets and funny monsters and the volunteers let them choose a book to take home!

All in all, we can say that we really enjoyed our stay in Sonning Common and that we felt really sad about having to leave. However, we know that we will always remember our time in this village and hope that the friendship that links us to Sonning Common will bring us back very soon! ●



Family Valls (Ingrid, Adrià, Ona & Alex)

FROM GUICHAINVILLE-ST. LUC TO SONNING COMMON

By JO QUINTON

The twinning group is delighted to report on the second visit to Sonning Common of a party of villagers from our twin village of Guichainville-St. Luc, Normandy, France. The group of 16 French arrived in separate vehicles late in the evening of Friday 18 July and were then ferried to their respective hosts all over the village. In some cases this was the second time hosts have welcomed the same guests here but mostly it was a first visit from the French, having hosted a group of 20 English in September 2013.

The next morning we awoke to high temperatures but drizzle, which fortunately soon cleared in time for our quiz of Reading, starting and ending in Forbury Gardens and taking in the abbey

ruins, marketplace and almshouses. This was kindly prepared for us by Dave Robinson, History teacher at Chiltern Edge. A picnic on the banks of the Thames followed, before returning to Sonning Common to prepare for the evening's entertainment; a barn dance and barbecue at the primary school, which was enjoyed by all.

The weather was still good by Sunday lunchtime, when after a hearty breakfast we all met together at the Village Hall to unveil the plaque inside the entrance, celebrating the new connection between our two villages. As we waved our visitors off, thoughts turned to the future and how our links will continue. My personal hope is for some sporting or other community

connection to be formed. Guichainville – St. Luc has particularly strong table tennis and fencing clubs, is a village slightly smaller than ours, but with lots going on. ●

If anyone is interested in getting involved and potentially going to the village next time please contact joquinton@gmail.com



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FROM LIME TO PINK

Many residents will have been surprised that only a few weeks after the much heralded launch of the new 'Lime' gas powered buses on route 2 that suddenly, or so it seemed, the buses went 'Pink' and became route 25!

Councillor Colin Reynolds, who has a watching brief on local transport as part of his role as Parish Councillor and member of the Neighbourhood Development Plan working party, had various email communications with James Freeman, Chief Executive Officer of Reading Transport earlier this summer.

This article includes extracts from James Freeman's responses, shown in italics.

Councillor Reynolds question concerned the recent significant changes to our bus route.

This is a good question and deserves a detailed response. The reality is that these changes are not in fact very significant at all and most people will see little if any change to their service.

As you know, the Lime routes were introduced earlier this year in order to stimulate new traffic on the old Vitality route, with the help of new buses and a new image – as well as putting extra resources into the timetable to improve reliability.

The new look and feel of the service did indeed increase overall use by more than 10%, so to that extent it worked –

although because of the extra costs (it had to use 6 buses instead of the previous 5 to counteract slower journey times caused by congestion) the route still lost quite a lot of money.

The timing of the Lime routes' introduction was driven by the delivery of the new buses. We always knew that at some stage the route would need to be split at Reading town centre to improve reliability, but this could only be done when the rest of the Reading town service network changed, because of the interaction of services. By this I mean, for example, that the Lime route formed part of the combined service for Grove Road. (Editor's note: that is Grove Road, Emmer Green not our Grove Road)

No sooner had we launched the new buses and the new image then we learned that Reading Borough Council's reconstruction works on Reading Bridge were likely to cause delays and congestion for a lengthy period this summer and through to next March potentially. So we decided that we had better make the move sooner rather than later.

The introduction date of 7 July was driven by the date when the rest of our network changed for the start of the summer season. In fact the changes for Sonning Common residents are confined to a change of route number from 2 to 25 and colour from Lime to Pink and the fact that the buses will no longer cross the town centre to Burghfield and Mortimer, which very few people take advantage of

anyway. The important thing is that the times of buses and level of service to and from Sonning Common is almost exactly the same as it was.

To conclude and to recap, the service after 7 July is pretty much the same as it was before 7 July – with the exception that if people do want to go to Bath Road or beyond, then they need to change buses in the town centre, and they will be riding in pink gas buses rather than lime gas buses. We hope and expect that not being connected to services on the other side of the town will improve the overall reliability of the service.

My thanks to James Freeman for allowing these extracts to be reproduced for the SC Magazine. ●



TOM FORT

Sport is life

Playing sport has been a huge part of my life, and – despite advancing years and accelerating decrepitude – it still is. Aged 12, I brandished my little bat, and I was Ted Dexter, England's cricketing hero against the West Indian pace barrage. With my football I was Manchester United's Dennis Law, without the Scottish accent or – more to the point – one percent of his talent.

Later rugby eclipsed football, but there was always cricket. Then I became too creaky for rugby, but I continue to play cricket, even though these days I move about as fast in the field as the hand on the clock on the village hall.

Team sports and individual sports have given me joy and taught me so much. But there cannot be sport without somewhere to play it. And it will not have

escaped your attention that this village of ours – so splendid in so many ways – is woefully provided with sporting facilities.

Some years back the then parish council disposed of the Bishopswood playing fields. There were two cricket grounds there as well as football. Now there is just a junior football club that does a magnificent job but is wholly independent of Sonning Common.

We have a cricket club, but no cricket ground. Our football club plays elsewhere. We have no sports hall – nowhere for badminton or table tennis or netball. A village of this size which flourishes in so many ways needs and deserves more.

Now there is an opportunity, via the Neighbourhood Development Plan, to secure land to meet this need. It is no done deal, but there is a chance. To take

it, we need to make a compelling case to the powers-that-be, to proclaim loud and clear that this village demands the facilities that its status warrants. To that end, I'm asking every household that receives this magazine to take a little time and to fill in the questionnaire below. ●



LEISURE AND RECREATION SURVEY

How would you assess the sport/recreational facilities in Sonning Common - poor/adequate/good? (please circle one of these)

In your opinion which of these are the most important? Please rank in order of preference, 1 as the favourite and so on.

- ☐ Aerobics
- ☐ Badminton
- ☐ Basketball
- ☐ Cricket
- ☐ Dance
- ☐ Fitness suite
- ☐ MUGA (all weather pitch)
- ☐ Netball
- ☐ Pilates
- ☐ Softball
- ☐ Swimming Pool
- ☐ Table tennis
- ☐ Yoga

Please list any other facilities that you think our expanding village deserves?

.....

.....

.....

.....

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.....

Please return your questionnaire to the Village Hall letter box or scan your responses and email deputyclerk@sonningcommonparishcouncil.org

Many thanks from the NDP working party. This information will be extremely helpful.

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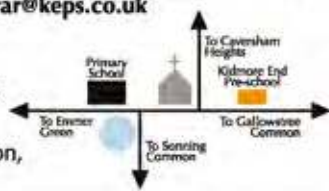
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Call Debbie on 07802 347 943 or see www.debbiepage.org



BEHIND THE SCENES AT THE CHARITY SHOP



By JOAN GRUMMANT

The Christian Community Action (CCA) shop in Sonning Common is looking for ways of generating new income to support their work and also maintain their buildings, for roof repairs at the moment. But this money would then be diverted away from community initiatives, so it is searching for some very necessary new donors and sponsors.

CCA is a Reading based charity which offers practical help to those in need in the Reading area. The flourishing shop in Sonning Common, one of five in the area, is a real anchor for the movement and is very well supported by local residents. It has a big turnover of donated goods and is run by manager Jenny Esslemont and eighteen regular volunteers. The shop works on a three week cycle to sell the goods so there is always something new and interesting. In fact the shop is so well supported that some of the goods are spread out to their other shops, where they may be struggling for goods.

Jenny and Mireille Haviland (Community Relationship Manager and Fundraiser for all the shops) spoke about their plans, 'We want to further develop the support in the community side of our work and thereby establish a really strong local network'. As well as fulfilling a real social need of a place for people to visit and talk that encourages friendship and caring, the

CCA also offers practical help to those on low incomes or benefits. It has a furniture outlet at Silver Street that provides good quality restored items at reasonable prices. Support centres also provide kitchen and bedding packs, household goods and baby equipment.

The CCA provides work placements to people needing to make that leap to paid employment. It receives referrals from Yeldall Manor Drug and Alcohol Rehabilitation Centre and New Directions. In the last year twelve of the volunteers have gained the self-confidence and self-esteem necessary to secure paid employment.

New volunteers would be very welcome. It is a very enterprising and welcoming shop that provides such an essential service in our village and beyond. ●



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5. The other sticker is placed on the inside of your front door.



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As a minimum it will save the Emergency Services valuable time identifying you and your emergency contacts. By telling whether you have special medication or allergies or not, it is a potential lifesaver and provides peace of mind to users and their friends and families.

Bottles, which are free of charge, can usually be found in your local Chemist or Doctors Surgeries. Thanks to a number of other organisations, you may also find that you can obtain one through your nearest Neighbourhood Watch group, Age Concern, Council Offices, Housing Associations and many other places including Police stations. If you are unable to find a Bottle, please contact your local Lions Club. ●

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ALL PROPERTY MATTERS

Memorial to A GENTLE GIANT

By JULIET LEGG



When a loved one passes away it is often customary to ask for a donation to charity instead of flowers for the funeral. This began our association with the Brain Tumour Research charity.

My husband, Nigel Legg, died just six weeks after being diagnosed with a brain tumour at the age of 49. Since we moved to Sonning Common in 1999 Nigel had been a committed member of the community. He was a Parish Councillor, helping with reading at the Primary School and Junior Table Tennis coach at Peppard Memorial Hall. How did this energetic "gentle giant" succumb to a tumour so quickly? I mean, cancer survival rates have increased, haven't they?

In June my sons, Michael and Jamie, and I were invited for a tour of the University

of Portsmouth to witness first hand how the scientific research into brain tumours is battling to improve outcomes for patients.

The dreadful statistics are that more children and adults under 40 die of a brain tumour than from any other cancer yet brain tumours receive just 1% of the national spend on cancer research. 16,000 people each year are diagnosed with a brain tumour and only 18.8% survive beyond five years, compared with an average of 50% across all cancers.

Brain Tumour Research was launched in 2009 to raise awareness of, and funding for, scientific research. One of the seven research centres is at the University of Portsmouth where we met Geoff Pilkington, Professor of Cellular and Molecular Neuro-Oncology who talked about the investigations taking place such as tumour cell invasion into healthy brain tissue, effective drug delivery and personalised medicine. We learnt that the powerful protection mechanism that is the blood-brain barrier means that many of the typical treatments to fight cancers occurring elsewhere in the body cannot be applied to brain tumour patients.

The centre costs £1 million a year to run, that's £2,740 a day!! When

Michael, Jamie and I set up a Just Giving page to give somewhere for family and friends attending Nigel's funeral to donate, we decided to set ourselves the target of raising enough money for a day of research. After raising that amount, we were not only invited for the tour but given the opportunity to place a plaque dedicated to Nigel on Brain Tumour Research's Wall of Hope at the University of Portsmouth.

Various activities contributed to the money raised such as fun runs, a duathlon, an afternoon tea and even a no-make-up selfie! It's turned out to be quite fun so with Jamie's sponsored swim, my Dad's Muddy Bike Ride and another afternoon tea on the horizon our friends and family will have plenty of opportunity to be parted from their cash for this worthy cause! ●

Find out more at:

<http://www.braintumourresearch.org/>

Donate at:

<https://www.justgiving.com/Juliet-Legg/>



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Parish news

WORKING FOR THE GOOD OF THE COMMUNITY

From Douglas Kedge, Chairman of the Parish Council

You may have been surprised to see in the Henley Standard of 1st August a letter from Paul Harrison, a District Councillor representing Sonning Common Ward, stating that ‘Sonning Common Parish Council is a profligate council too eager to waste public money and is not working for the good of the community.’

The next week five more letters were published that all described and, indeed, extolled our work. Those letters are republished as an insert in this magazine. No letter since has supported the aspersion.

Over 90% of our income, the public money, is the Parish Precept – that part of your Council Tax bill that is set and then received by the parish

council. At the moment a Band D home will be paying £1.21p per week for all our services.

Until the contested election of this parish council in 2011, the policy of the previous unelected parish council was to retain, or even reduce, what was a very low precept compared with other large villages in South Oxfordshire. They felt that little needed doing in the village!

In 2012 this parish council, knowing just how much needed to be done to improve our community life, decided on the first of three increases to the precept that have enabled us to do most of what we were elected to do – as described in the letters. We now have about the same precept amount as other large villages with energetic parish councils – Sonning Common needs and deserves nothing less.

Every year we publish a detailed report to residents explaining the rationale for our precept – the first time this has been done here. Only two complaints have ever been received whilst much support has been expressed. ●

Bus shelter in Kennylands Road commissioned by the PC in 2013



VALUE FOR YOUR MONEY

John Stoves, Chairman of the Parish Council Finance Committee

Cllr Harrison has criticised our administration costs apparently without understanding the work we actually do and the resources needed to do it. Of course our administration costs have risen since 2011 - we are actually doing very much more in and for the village.

Your elected Councillors take decisions that our parish office then implements and administers as well as

copied with all the routine paperwork imposed by Government – this all costs money. For example two new activities, the Neighbourhood Development Plan and the Skate Park project, are each taking a lot of support time and effort from the office.

We really welcome the fact that many residents now phone, e-mail or call in to our office for help and advice.

Our Parish Clerk, Philip Collings and his Deputy, Ros Varnes, try to help everyone who asks them – this takes time and costs money. We believe that our officers do an excellent job that is generally well recognised and appreciated so we see the carefully considered cost of running our parish office as money well spent on your behalf. ●

Church news

A TRIBUTE TO JENI

A compilation by various contributors reflecting aspects of her life...

Jenifer Titchener was born 1940 in Swanage, where her mother had family, but quickly returned to their own home in Sudbury with her father and two brothers.

Although just a small child she clearly recalled her ashen-faced father telling her how a gust of wind had luckily carried a V1 rocket away from her home, to, very sadly, destroy several houses nearby. After this incident, in 1944, Jenifer and her brothers were taken to Devon to escape the London bombings. They returned to Sudbury after the war where Jenifer grew up and started her interest in the girl guide movement through Sudbury Methodist Church.

Jenifer began her working career following her father and grandfather to join the General Electric Company as a shorthand typist. Her administrative efficiency led to her working for Lord Weinstock, one of the most revered, and feared, business men of his era.

Her next career move brought her to Johnson Matthey and Sonning Common in 1976 where she worked as Personnel Officer until her retirement in 2000. She was always a great listener and support to all staff, but it gave her special pleasure to see the next generation of scientists reaching their potential.

The Guides became a big part of her life and, after being a Brownie and Guide herself, she ran the rainbows unit in Sonning Common, progressing in 1990 to become Division Commissioner for Chiltern and Chairperson of the Oxfordshire Trefoil Guild.

Jeni was a long term committee member and latterly secretary to the Chiltern Edge Community Association. She played a key role in its ability to raise funds and distribute them to a wide range of local people and organisations, including young people who like her, longed to travel.

Jenifer was an adventurous traveller, taking in USA, France, South Africa and Australia amongst others. She



left behind an extensive network of friends and godchildren throughout the world.

If you wanted to achieve something, or needed a helping hand, Jeni was selfless with her time and energy.

Making a positive difference to other people's lives was the way she chose to live her life.

Jill Greenwood concludes 'In the 30 years I have been a member of the Chiltern players there has only been one other occasion when a whole evening has been a dedicated tribute to the life of a member. Jeni is the second and on Friday 5 September a packed audience at Peppard Memorial Hall celebrated her contribution to the players'.

A fitting tribute to Jeni Titchener. ●

HARVEST FESTIVAL SUNDAY 5 OCTOBER 9.30AM

Thanks for the safe gathering in of the harvest originated in the 19th century.

Christ the King – All are welcome. Afterwards, in Kidmore End School, there will be a Harvest Lunch - free on a bring-and-share basis (tickets needed so number attending is known please).

ALL SOULSTIDE SUNDAY 2 NOVEMBER 4.30PM

St John's, Kidmore End - All are welcome. Those who wish will be able to light a candle in memory of someone.

Names to be specially remembered and read out - to be submitted, beforehand, to the Rector (tel: 0118 9723987), or to one of the Churchwardens - Mr Robert Lynch (tel: 0118 9724699); Mrs Karen Broadbent (tel: 0118 9724606).

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 9 NOVEMBER 10.50AM

War Memorial in Kidmore End followed by service at **St John's Church** - All are welcome.

Watch out for details of our Christmas Fair (a joint church/school event) - possibly the best Christmas Fair in the area! It will be held in Kidmore End School.

Readers are reminded that our church website is lambandflag.org ●

October 2014

WEDNESDAY 1	Village Coffee Morning hosted by Sonning Common Women's Institute. Open to all. Raising funds for local community projects - Village Hall	10.30am - 12noon
SUNDAY 12	Felt-makers get together. Bring lunch and a project to work on - Village Hall	10am - 4pm
MONDAY 13	Royal British Legions Women's Section - Talk on British Birds by Mr Eggleton - Batten House	2pm - 3.30pm
TUESDAY 14	Chiltern Edge Horticultural Society - The Spice of Life (Tropical Flowers, Spices, Tea Plantations and Life in Southern India) talk by Gwen Barton - Peppard Memorial Hall	7.30pm
THURSDAY 16	FISH - Pub lunch	11.30am
THURSDAY 16	Sonning Common Society AGM - Sonning Common Library	7.30pm - 8.30pm
THURSDAY 16	Sonning Common Women's Institute - 'Reading Station' a talk by Chris Butler. Visitors welcome - Village Hall	7.30pm
MONDAY 20	Sonning Common Parish Council - Village Hall	8pm
THURSDAY 23	FISH - Henley Farmers' Market	
THURSDAY 30	Sonning Common Society - "Lest we forget" - a talk by Mike Willoughby on WW1 & local area. All welcome, free entry, refreshments provided - Sonning Common Library	7.30pm - 8.50pm

November 2014

SUNDAY 2	Felt-makers get together. Bring lunch and a project to work on - Village Hall	10am - 4pm
WEDNESDAY 5	Village Coffee Morning hosted by Sonning Common Women's Institute. Open to all. Raising funds for local community projects - Village Hall	10.30am - 12noon
MONDAY 10	Royal British Legions Women's Section - Group meeting - Batten House	2pm - 3.30pm
TUESDAY 11	Chiltern Edge Horticultural Society - Adventurous Container Gardening talk by Stuart Lees - Peppard Memorial Hall	7.30pm
MONDAY 17	Sonning Common Parish Council - Village Hall	8pm
THURSDAY 20	FISH - Pub lunch	11.30am
THURSDAY 20	Sonning Common Women's Institute - "If Dickens had a camera" a talk by Tony King. Visitors welcome - Village Hall	7.30pm
THURSDAY 20	Chiltern Players present "Wife After Death" - a comedy - Peppard Memorial Hall	8pm
FRIDAY 21	Chiltern Players present "Wife After Death" - a comedy - Peppard Memorial Hall	8pm
SATURDAY 22	Chiltern Players present "Wife After Death" - a comedy - Peppard Memorial Hall	8pm
THURSDAY 27	FISH - Henley Farmers' Market	
SUNDAY 30	Felt-makers Exhibition Day - Village Hall	10am - 4pm

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