



The Newsletter for Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney

© Issue No 183

September / October 2021



Aston Community Shop - The Future

As we pass the anniversary of the opening of our shop, we are having to consider where we are now and how to move forwards.

The pandemic has shown just how valuable a resource the shop is to many people. It has also meant that many people, with their lives and work lives on hold, have been available to offer their time to help run the shop. However, as restrictions are lifted, the dual effect is that many people are reverting to their previous shopping habits and some volunteers are less able to offer their time as they return to work.

So, how do we respond to these challenges? Firstly, we are going to have to keep opening hours under review, depending on volunteer availability. Please consider joining our team if you can. Secondly, we need to increase our profitability. We are keeping our heads above water and we are grateful to our regular customers for that, but to put us on a firmer footing we need to increase footfall and we need customers to not consider us as existing just to buy a newspaper or a bottle of milk or the odd item they have forgotten to buy at the supermarket but as somewhere that will cater for many of their day to day shopping needs. We believe the range of goods we offer is as wide as it can be for a small shop and that we can compete on price because we are all unpaid volunteers. So, we would ask everyone reading this article to consider in what way they can contribute to ensure that the shop has a viable future.

Do contact any of us on the Steering Group at acs@astoncommunityshop.co.uk, or when you are in the shop, if you can help in any way or have any ideas to help us move forwards.

Paul Read on behalf of Aston Community Shop

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Articles may be emailed to astonnewsletter@hotmail.com, delivered to 11 Southlands or Penny Black House, The Square.

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You can also find

Voices on-line

On the home page
of the Parish Website
**www.astonoxon-
pc.gov.uk**



Editorial



Hats off to all involved with the shop.

We celebrate the first year of The Aston Community Shop with our front page photographs. The shop is a great village facility, not only for the range of things on sale, but for the community spirit it fosters. The shop's second year will be a crucial one. More volunteers are needed if the opening hours are not to be reduced and ideally more volunteers could see the opening hours actually increased. What is on sale is also critical. The Community shop has many excellent lines, and although space is limited there is scope for development. Perhaps greetings cards, wrapping paper and the like could prove popular.

This edition is the last for "Greenfinch" who has been responsible for the Voices gardening column since November 2005. Greenfinch aka Cari Dawson has produced some excellent, informative pieces over that time and many of us have benefitted from her very practical suggestions. Thank you Cari for all your articles so reliably delivered. In November Kirsty Jackson will be writing our gardening column and we wish her well.

Russell La Forte refers to issues of parking and traffic in The Square in "The Parish Council News". In this edition we also have a letter and an article about traffic in The Square. There certainly are traffic and parking problems but common sense and courtesy usually manage to prevail!

Photographs and articles appearing in Voices are subject to copyright. Should you wish to copy anything in the last edition please contact the editors.

Editors

Richard Haines and Andrew Long

Dear Editors,



With reference to parking in Aston, I have felt for some time that there should be double yellow lines and no parking on the bend at the Red Lion pub. Vehicles parked on that corner force traffic passing through Aston towards Bampton to move to the right, and, although there is still room for two vehicles to pass each other, it depends on the driver coming from the Bampton direction to keep to their left, which does not always happen.

Last year, I was passing through Aston on my way to Bampton, when, on that very bend, I encountered a lady in a large vehicle coming towards me with her offside wheels almost on the central white line. To avoid the looming collision, we both stopped, whereupon said lady gesticulated rather haughtily to me to reverse (!) She being so obviously in the wrong, I did not want to reverse and, in fact, observed that, with my apparently superior driving skills, I would still able to drive forward through the remaining, albeit narrow, gap.

This I proceeded to do, whereby my earlier use of the word 'lady' was shown to be a misnomer, she finding the need to show me her middle finger. It is some time ago now but I suspect that, in response, I may have been guilty of putting out a cheeky tongue. Perhaps some thought could be given to restricting parking on that bend.

On another matter, we have vehicles passing through Aston and Cote at speeds well above the 30mph limit. This includes Pulhams buses, one of which I followed recently travelling at 40mph along Cote Road in Aston and continuing at that speed straight through Cote. I wonder if we could have signs put up informing drivers of their actual speeds, as villages such as Curbridge, Clanfield, Lew and Sutton have. Alternatively, I would be willing to join the team of volunteers informing drivers of their speed that I observed recently when entering Aston.

Yours sincerely
John Toughearn

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Royal British Legion (RBL) Poppy Appeal

House-to- House Collections: 2021

At the time of writing (mid-August), it is planned to hold the Poppy Appeal house-to-house collections this year, although the situation is under constant review. We local organisers have been advised to place our orders for poppies etc. by 1st September, preferably using an ordering portal which is now available.

I have not spoken to all of the Parish's dedicated collectors yet, to determine if they are prepared to collect as in previous years. New collectors would, in any case, be welcomed* as this would ease the burden experienced by some collectors. In addition, there is probably a sufficient number of dwellings occupied on the new housing estates, which would warrant them being covered by the Poppy Appeal.

For the first time, I think, collectors will be able to use contactless card machines to collect money, using credit/debit cards, smartphones or other smart devices, for the Poppy Appeal. There may be a limit on how many machines we can have for the Parish, but I will establish the need and apply for the number requested.

I am pleased that Gillian Long and Marilyn Ordish are prepared to count the proceeds of the collections, no doubt wearing masks and gloves and occupying a "bubble" in my dining-room.

Some of the items, such as the lapel badges, will be available for a stipulated minimum donation. This is not necessarily being introduced to increase income (I should think that most of our folk already exceed the amounts suggested), but to give people an idea, if required, of how much to donate.

Finally, it is the R.B.L. Centenary Year and a commemorative lapel badge has been produced, to be sold at a price of £4 each. I have obtained 50 badges, and I will display them during the afternoon of the Produce Show on 12th September. Any which are left unsold will be made available for the house-to-house collections.

*Robert Jones.
(01993 851663/robertofcosgrove@gmail.com)

Oxfordshire Plan 2050

Consultation



The latest consultation on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 has now launched and runs until 8th October.

The Oxfordshire Plan will set the development framework for the county for the next generation. It will affect all Oxfordshire residents, either directly (through development) or indirectly (through impacts on services, infrastructure, our countryside and rural character).

CPRE Oxfordshire is fighting to make sure that the growth options are deliverable without undue damage to our countryside and some otherwise good policy proposals for getting to net zero and restoring nature. That means guiding development to the right places and building high-quality compact housing to make the best use of scarce land.

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Find more information on the CPRE Oxfordshire website www.cpreoxon.org.uk
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Aston and Cote P.C.



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Music in the Square



Shelter outside the Red Lion

With poor weather forecast (accurately as it transpired!), some rapid, last-minute reorganisation was required for the format of the Music in the Square event in Aston on 21st August. Despite the poor weather early on, the day was a great success for our community, with 2-300 people attending over the course of the afternoon and evening – as well as over £300 raised for Aston School and the Community Shop. Hosted by the Red Lion and supported by Malik's Kitchen, entertainment in a range of musical styles was provided by local amateur musicians and in the evening by the wonderful Sarah C Ryan Band. Special thanks and congratulations should go to Toni Sinclair for organising the event, ably assisted by Anne and Bob at the Red Lion, as well as a

number of local volunteers too numerous to mention. Prizes for the charity raffle were generously donated by Kate's Cakery, Little Ox Brewery, Diddly Os Children's Clothing, Bella Pizza, Aston Garage, Malik's Kitchen, KJ Preserves and Aston Pottery.

Russell LaForte



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Parish Council News



The past couple of Summer (allegedly!) months have been a relatively busy period for the Parish Council. Flooding and drainage issues are probably the most longstanding and pressing matter for the Council, and one that directly affects many residents. Small consolation perhaps, but we are not alone in this as the matter is endemic across West Oxfordshire and indeed nationally. Our new WODC Councillor, Lysette Nicholls, convened a meeting with all local parish councils to share experiences and lessons in order to develop a more coherent and thus more powerful approach on the matter – addressing particularly the complicity of Thames Water. One initiative is to mobilise public opinion; Lysette's associated article, that the Parish Council commends it to you, is printed elsewhere in this edition.

We are pleased to report that further tangible progress has been made on traffic calming measures and no doubt you will have noticed that the latest phase of signage has now been erected around the Parish, this time focussing upon the more minor access roads. Meanwhile, the associated requests for adjustments to speed limit zones and the reduction of some from 30 to 20mph are currently with OCC for formal consultation. We have also had the Police undertaking speed recording in August and further visits are being planned. There is no update at the time of writing from OCC Highways regarding the thorny issue of traffic calming measures in the Square.

OCC plans for the proposed children's home on Back Lane are now at the pre-application stage. This follows a delay of nearly a year following a reduction in the requirement from a 6-bed to a 4-bed home for 12–16-year-olds. A single-storey design has been formulated that seeks to respect and complement the Conservation Area in which it is proposed to stand. The Parish Council and immediate neighbours have been briefed on the current status of the project and once (or if) the proposal enters the formal planning application process, all residents will of course have the opportunity to comment. Meanwhile on OCC matters, there is no update to report on North Farm. And finally, grants have been made to Aston Brownies, the History Group, Voices and the Community Trust, the latter to initiate the long-awaited multi-use games area (MUGA) project at the Village Hall.

*Russell La Forte,
Chairman Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council*

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W.O.D.C. Steve Good & Lysette Nicholls



Diana's statue, Kensington Palace

Things To Do

A Visit to Kensington Palace

I recently was offered the chance to visit Kensington Palace so did not hesitate as it was somewhere I had never been before. After reaching Victoria station we caught a bus which took us close to Harrods and the Royal Albert Hall as well as other well known landmarks.

When we got there we had to queue for a short time before being allowed in. There was a set route through the palace with attendants offering information and advice about the history of the exhibits.

One of the early cabinets displayed some gorgeous tiaras and necklaces. Then it was a slow walk through the various rooms up and down staircases which displayed some magnificent beautiful ceilings and numerous portraits of earlier kings and queens. If interested in Queen Victoria's early life and her predecessors there was lots of information however the main reason for our visit was to see some Royal fashions including biographies of the designers. However we were a little disappointed as there was only Diana's wedding dress and her going away outfit on display. I think most of famous and iconic ones have long since been sold for charity.

Once we exited the palace we passed through the usual gift shop and then made our way to see Diana's statue which had recently been unveiled however as it was set in a fenced in garden we could only see it from a distance so could not get a clear view. We then took a nice leisurely stroll through the gardens to find somewhere to have a belated lunch.

Lesley Brown

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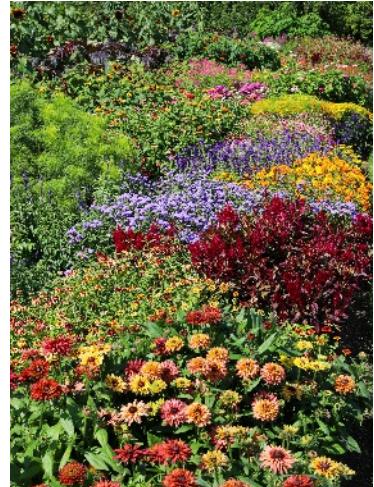
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If you go down to the Pottery today

If you find yourself with a spare moment during the day, or are looking for something to take you away from your home desk for a few minutes, why not pop along and take a look at the incredible floral displays currently on show at Aston Pottery? The annual border and bank are in full bloom at the moment, with thousands of flowers on show that will take your breath away.

Paul Lock



Is It Cricket?



When four weeks of the summer holidays loom ahead and you realise the grandchildren are getting older, one now a teenager, you have to start looking for some different type of activities to keep them busy. When someone suggested The Hundred cricket series it sounded like a great idea. We needed to Google it – what was The Hundred anyway? This is a new take on the game to try and encourage families and perhaps those who haven't followed cricket in the past to give it a go. Each team gets just 100 balls to make as many runs as possible and the teams winning went further up a League. Both women's and men's teams were involved which made an afternoon and evening of entertainment with each game lasting around two and a half hours.

This sounded like a good venture for the boys so we were able to book a family ticket at a very reasonable cost of £34 to the Ageas Bowl in Southampton. The games involved were between the Southern Brave and Welsh Fire. The Ageas Bowl was a great setting and crowds soon built up and added to the atmosphere. Teams appeared dressed in bright colours to a triumphant entrance of cheers and Mexican waves from the crowd – more like an American baseball game than cricket! It was entertaining with a lot of razzmatazz. Flame spouts appeared if four or six runs were scored and there was a break after every 10 balls with an interview or fun game that children could get involved in all displayed on big screens. The excitement certainly built up as the number of balls remaining decreased and the scores went up. We all enjoyed the experience and it certainly gave us an introduction into the world of cricket even though it wasn't the whites and 'cricket teas' of traditional matches. In both games that we saw Southern Brave won and ended up in their respective Finals with the men winning their final against the Birmingham Phoenix and the women losing their final against Oval Invincibles.

Many of the matches were televised so we were able to watch the final supporting the Southern Brave of course! We'd certainly recommend it as a family outing so look out for it in various stadiums next year for another round of The Hundred; maybe your family would enjoy it too.

Kirsty Jackson



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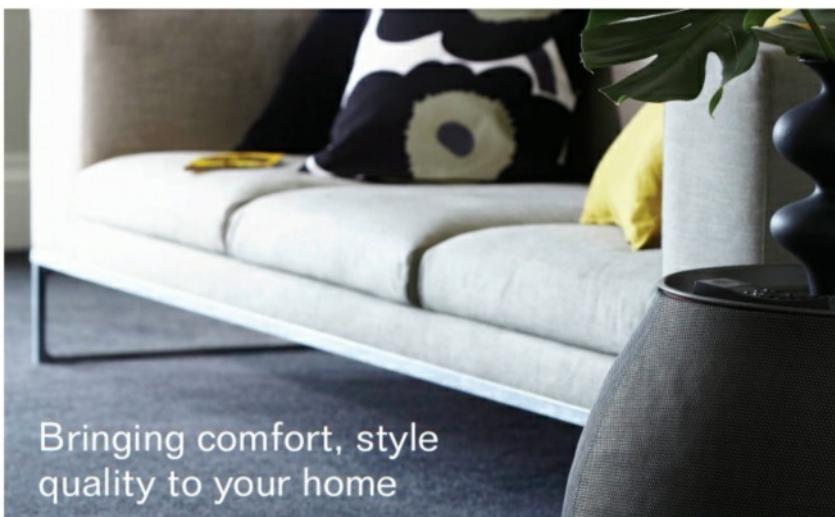
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Chillax



By the time you receive Voices, Chillax will have begun again after almost 18 months away. This term we will be inviting young people in school years 8 to 11 to join us once a month.

Chillax will take place at the Fellowship Centre, 7.30pm to 9pm on Friday 10th September, 8th October and 12th November.

If there are any changes to plans we will notify parents/carers and publicise on the What's On in Aston and Cote? Facebook page.

We look forward to seeing your young people again after such a long absence!

Kathy and Steve Neal



Doris and Derek

Gardening Notes

Here we are in September already, after a very mixed summer with plenty of rain to grow the weeds! By now you will be fed up with weeding, but you can always rogue out one or two when they put their heads up above the parapet, just don't allow them to set seed or scatter their seed about.

Yellow rudbeckia and heleniums are centre stage now, with lovely dahlias in all their rainbow of colours. Keep dead heading dahlias and they will reward with even more blooms. Dahlias need plenty of light and air and are better grown in a large patch, with plenty of sun.

What better reason to have an allotment, if only half a one, at £10 per year for half, really good value. I think Aston is nearly full, but there is plenty of room at Cote.

If you grow camellias or azaleas or even rhododendrons in tubs or borders, give them a good soak at least once a fortnight, as now is when they make next year's flower buds – if too dry now they won't flower well next year. A specific rhododendron and azalea fertilizer sprinkled round roots now will mean good flowers next year.

A lovely clematis to grow for this time of year is Tang Utica – clear yellow bells, very small, but beautiful, followed by fluffy seed heads that hang on all winter – cut it to the ground in February, and next year it will grow remarkably quickly, to cover a framework or a shrub. It will seed itself around if happy. If you combine it with Salvia Uiginosa (African Shies) of the palest blue, it is a stunning combination to flower well into the Autumn.

Do keep dead heading your roses as a second flush of flowers should come now. A handful of rose fertilizer or poultry pellets should help. I hope you have tied in the wands of new rose growth on climbers and ramblers, not too tight, to save them being snapped with the gales. These will prove invaluable to tie in properly in October when you prune, cut out one old stem and replace with one of the new growths, then taking it to horizontal if possible, to stimulate flowers for next year.

Goldfinch

Collared Doves

Collared doves look cute but really, they are a very tough and bossy type of bird. First introduced into this country in 1955, collared doves are a pale, pinky-brown colour, with distinctive black neck (as the name suggests). They have deep red eyes and reddish feet.

We feed the small song birds (goldfinches, blue tits and the like) that come to our garden, with sunflower hearts using the typical design of seed feeder. As the collared doves don't manage to feed very well from the seed feeder, I made the mistake of putting a few handfuls of sunflower hearts onto the patio and lawn for them. They quickly became accustomed to being fed like this and we now have as many as ten regular visitors.

One particular pair of collared doves became very tame and whenever I went into the garden they would appear from nowhere and perch on our garden chairs. Of course, I would immediately put food out for them and inadvertently encourage them even more. I considered them as a 'married couple' and named them "Doris" and "Derek". They realised that I came out of the house (via the French doors) so would take to sitting on the nearest garden chair backs and look in through the French doors.

The collared dove on the right in my photograph, is "Doris" and to her left is her son, "Derek" (the younger). For, "Derek, the elder, recently met his end in the claws of a sparrowhawk that spotted him from his perch in the nearby walnut tree and then swooped fast and low to pluck Derek from under the seed feeder. Whilst I didn't witness the actual 'kill', I disturbed the sparrowhawk plucking the feathers from Derek shortly afterwards.

This sparrowhawk lives nearby and regularly terrifies the many smaller birds as he takes his meals from the local population.

Lizzie Wood



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Brets once claimed the best burgers in Oxford and, supposedly, the best on the planet! Now there's a claim to be tested. But the coarse cut burger just won Britain's Best Burger, and they just got a 5* rating so maybe the boast is warranted! Brets recently opened in the Marriotts site previously occupied by Frankie & Benny's, a casualty of COVID. Opening a new eatery in these times seems brave or foolhardy, so congratulations for having a vision and getting in early to bring some normality to the high street. The lack of a proper outside secluded space that pubs usually have might put some off and although they've got a few tables out front, they alone would unlikely support opening. Although there's plenty of space for more, preferably with some lights, if the council allow it, so the relaxation of indoor eating restrictions couldn't have come at a better time.

And so to the food - what can I say, it's a burger restaurant! However, the ingredients are high quality and from sustainable and traceable sources. We tried Brets for a birthday meal and although three of five are veggie/vegan and one almost (my wife who had smoked salmon and avocado salad as a main) all opted for a burger rather than one of the other obvious veggie options, selecting the Moving Mountain V/VE version instead of the beef I had. There are six burgers to choose from including Wagyu, chicken and the aforesaid V/VE option, plus 13 options named from the fillings and sauces that accompany them.

Other dishes available are steaks, including a Tomahawk (shared unless you're really hungry), fish, chicken, pork and veggie options, all of which looked good. I've said on a previous review I'm not a fan of the 'gourmet' burger fad, where they pile loads of stuff in the bun and stab it with a wooden stake, but after a bit of light surgery, it resembled something from the good old days of the Wimpy that you could hold and get your mouth round. It has to be said that once the slab of tomato etc was gone, the bottom of the bun was a tad soggy, and one other mildish gripe was that the huge nicely crispy onion rings were underdone. However, you couldn't fault the burger (offered as medium or well done) and the triple-cooked chips were perfect. I was the only one to have a dessert (well it was my birthday) and the white chocolate bombe with hot toffee sauce went down a treat.

They do a nice range of breakfasts to 4pm and if you want a nice lunch or tasty evening repast before hitting the pub, Brets is as good a place as any if you're not out for a culinary experience, so I'd go again no question, but I'm aching for something more. I'm conscious this is the second review I've done where the primary options were fancy burgers, but the place I just had lunch is a world away and worth the trip so will be the next review.

Russ Avis

News from the Red Lion



Well, the return to trading at the Red Lion has been a bit of a mixed bag so far; we are hoping things will become more consistent as time goes by. There have been quite a few changes here at the pub, with some new faces behind the bar and we welcome Leah, Ian and Harry to the team.

Another important change is our teaming up with Malik's Kitchen to bring excellent food into the village in the evenings. What could be better than lovely food, a few drinks, catching up with friends and then being able to walk home afterwards?

Malik is a very experienced chef and worked previously at the Dovecote - a large pub on the outskirts of Witney. Malik has agreed initially to provide a food offering from Wednesday to Saturday each week and if interest is there from the village then this may be extended to include a Sunday lunch once a month. We will also be able to cater for private events going forward so please bear us in mind if you have anything coming up and we will do our best to accommodate where we can. Currently food will be served between 6.00pm and 9.00pm Wednesday to Saturday so why not book a table?

We have the return of our popular fortnightly quiz nights with quiz master Richard Buss and the next one is on the 15th September. We are also looking forward to welcoming Aura back with one of their ever-popular Abba evenings on Saturday 18th September - we do hope that you can join us for some of these events. Further events will be advertised on the village Facebook page and notice boards around the village. Hopefully most of you will have seen our new Red Lion sign - there is a story to this! As a lot of you will have noticed the old sign disappeared probably about a year ago - this was because it was completely rotten and falling to pieces. The 'new' sign is actually made up from an old floorboard from the attic, which has been lovingly restored and the recycled lettering from the previous sign. We love that it's been made from the fabric of the building and it's also a very environmentally friendly effort. The new sign has been protected with a hard-wearing resin so that it should last for many years.

Whilst carrying out necessary renovation work in the attic we found a couple of quite old collection tins hidden away behind the walls - one is from the Aston Football Club and the other St. Dunstans which looks like it is a charity raising money for war veterans. They are not really related to the pub and if there are any groups in the village that would like them then please do get in contact - they are also empty!

Just a reminder of our opening hours:

Tuesday to Thursday	6pm to 10pm
Friday	5pm to 11.30pm
Saturday	3pm to 11.30pm
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Look forward to seeing you soon!

The Red Lion Team



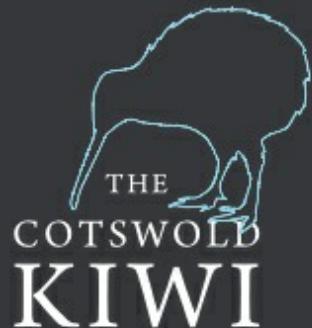
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Are You Sitting Comfortably?

Over the last eighteen months many residents have chosen to take their exercise by ‘stretching their legs’ locally around our own villages in the Parish. This also gave the opportunity to take a seat on one of the many benches for a well-earned rest and maybe to contemplate life and its meaning or just to watch the world go by.

Pictured are some of the 17 benches we counted in Aston and Cote (including those at St James and Cote Chapel). There are also quite a few suitable low walls where over the years villagers have been spotted sitting and having a chat.

Can you identify where those pictured are located and for extra points what (if anything) do they commemorate?

Richard Haines

Answers on page 21



1



2



3



4



5



6



7



8



9



10

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Aston and Cote Day Centre

I am starting a new day centre for seniors, called Aston & Cote Day Centre to be held one day a week in Aston. The aim of the centre is to provide a pleasant, relaxed and safe environment for seniors of our community and the surrounding area. A two course meal will be provided. It will be a good opportunity for people to meet socially and to share an enjoyable day together with a team of friendly volunteers. There will be various activities and musical entertainment.

Aston & Cote

Day Centre

A typical day would be:

Doors open for 10 a.m. and everyone will be welcomed with tea/coffee/ biscuits. We will have a very gentle, fun, seated exercise session, led by a qualified fitness instructor specialising in fitness for seniors. This is not obligatory. Then after the exercise various activities will be available such as arts and crafts, board games, quizzes, bingo, flower arranging, a sing-along, reminiscence and such like.

Lunch at 12 noon will be a freshly cooked, two course meal.

In the afternoon, musical entertainment will be provided, or occasionally a speaker will be invited in, or we will have team games like boccia, skittles and such like. There might be occasional visits from local school and pre-school children. There will be tea/coffee/ biscuits before finishing at 3 p.m. Also, there will be occasional local outings, to visit garden centres, local pubs etc.

I have a chiropodist who is willing to come in on a regular basis.

So, if any seniors of Aston, Cote, and the surrounding areas are interested in coming along to try this out you would be most welcome, and please get in touch with me for more information.

Also readers you may know of someone who might enjoy the day centre experience. Please let them know or contact me for a chat.

Finally, I have already had a fantastic response for volunteer helpers and cooks within the community and I must say a very big thank you to everyone who has been in contact. I would appeal to anyone else who might be thinking about volunteering to get in touch. The more volunteer helpers and cooks who can offer their time the better the centre will be. There will be a rota system set up depending on the dates that volunteers are available and whether they are available for the day or just a morning or an afternoon.

For more information, please get in touch with me, (Karen) on 01993851506. Mobile: 07887974468. E-mail: target.meuk@gmail.com

Karen Stay

Where in the Parish?

Where in the Parish would you find this gate and footpath? Answer on page 22.



Recipe

Plum Tray Bake (with a cheesecake ripple)

Plums are in season now. When baked in this creamy, spongy dessert they become even more juicy and sweet!

Makes ten squares. Cooking time 45 minutes. Cook's top tip! When cooked the surface of this tray bake should feel just firm to the touch. It will firm up slightly as it cools; if over-baked it may lose its moist texture.

Ingredients

200g cream cheese
1 tsp vanilla bean paste or vanilla bean extract
3 tbsp caster (or granulated) sugar
4 eggs
175g unsalted butter, softened, or margarine
175g muscovado sugar (dark or light)
200g self-raising flour
400g plums – halved, stoned and roughly chopped.

Method

1. Pre heat oven to 180 degrees/160 for fan assisted ovens. (gas mark 4)
Grease and line a 28 x 18 cm shallow baking tin with baking parchment, making sure that the paper comes higher than the rim of the tin.
2. In a bowl, beat the cream cheese until soft. Add the vanilla bean paste or extract, sugar and one of the eggs and beat using hand held electric whisk until smooth.
3. Place the remaining eggs, butter, sugar and flour in a separate bowl. Beat for about two minutes until pale and creamy.
4. Spread half of the creamed flour mixture onto the base of the tray. Then dollop half of the cream cheese mixture over it, spreading an uneven swirl through the base mixture. Scatter with half of the plums. Spoon the remaining creamed flour mixture on top and dot with the rest of the cream cheese.
5. Scatter with the remaining plums, then bake for about 45 minutes until risen and just firm to touch. Leave to cool in the tin before cutting into pieces. Lovely served warm or cold with cream or ice cream.

Monica Read



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Bell Ringing Starts Again

Sunday, August 15th turned out to be an exciting time for Aston Bell-ringers, as they came together for the first time since the start of the pandemic and were able to turn out a team of five to ring for the service. We all had smiles on our faces at various moments and even the bells sounded joyful. We have rung just two bells or three for a while. We have two husband and wife couples who ring which helped, but we couldn't manage the necessary distancing for more. We now feel able to come together again, ringing in short bursts and opening the doors in between.

During the past year, two members of our team have stopped ringing and we are now unable to put out a complete team of six. We would welcome any experienced ringers new to the village and if anyone wanted to learn to ring do come along any Wednesday at 7.30pm and see what it's all about.

For more information – Shirley Warren 01865 300977

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Sports News from Aston and Cote CE Primary School

The children were excited about the return of our annual tennis championships. The year 5-6 competitions were particularly close; nearly all the children from those years signed up and both the boys' and the girls' finals decided by a single point with Ben and Izzy winning. The year 4 competition saw wins for Riley and Izzy. There was also more tennis success for our year 3-4 tennis team as they won a tournament held at Witney tennis club. We have had plenty of within school tournaments throughout the year such as cross country, quadkids athletics, rounders and even a class volleyball tournament for years 5/6. However this tennis was our first competition physically competing against other schools for over a year and we are all looking forward to taking part in more next year.

Sam Hook

ASTON & COTE BADMINTON CLUB

We are a friendly club which would welcome new members aged 15 years onwards. We meet at the Village Hall on Thursday evenings 7.45 - 9.15pm.

Annual Membership:

Adults: £6.00

Juniors(15 - 18): £2.50

Games Fees per (evening):

Adults: £2.00



News from Aston and Cote CE Primary School



The 3D frieze using recycled materials

For the first time in many months, some of our classes were able to go on school trips. Windmill 2 thoroughly enjoyed their visit to the Cotswolds Wildlife Park while the children in Kingsway and Oatlands had an amazing outdoor adventure at Hill End. The end of the school year was as busy as always and although the parents were unable to join us because of COVID restrictions, the children still had a great time. As with so many things, the KS2 play was very different to previous years when we performed to a large audience at The Shed theatre at Cokethorpe School. This year's play was filmed in the school grounds but still included great acting, phenomenal singing and dancing, outstanding solos and a powerful message of hope. Our two sports mornings were a great success with the children showing resilience, determination, sportsmanship and above all, having fun. We were very proud of our Year 6 House Captains who helped to set up the races for the younger classes and made sure they made their way back to the starting line at the end of a race. The whole school also took part in a house rounders tournament – Dragon House were the champions this year having scored an incredible 81 rounders between them. As part of their class topic, the children in Westerleigh class wrote persuasive letters to the Prime Minister about climate change and ocean pollution. They were delighted to receive a letter from 10 Downing Street thanking them for efforts in raising a number of important points. At the end of each school year, our Year 6 pupils produce a piece of art work for the school – you may have seen many of these on the walls and fences around the school grounds. This year's children created a beautiful indoor 3D frieze using recycled materials – it will certainly be a lasting reminder of a super group of young people who we are all going to miss very much. We wish them all the very best as they move on to their secondary schools.

Fiona Taylor, Head teacher

Look out for a Curved Ball

When Windows 10 was released in 2015 Microsoft said it would be the last version of Windows. However, this year they have both announced Windows 11 and given an end of lifecycle date to Windows 10 when they will stop actively updating the software.

The good news is that Windows 11 will be a free upgrade for existing systems assuming they meet the hardware requirements. This is where the curve ball occurs! Besides the normal requirements of storage, memory needs etc. there are two additional needs to run Windows 11. "Secure Boot" and a TPM, standing for "Trusted Platform Module".

Secure Boot is a setting stored in your machine's BIOS which is what the computer does first when turned on. The BIOS stores information such as memory configurations and where the operating system is so the computer knows what to run first. Secure boot means that if any of these settings are changed (either intentionally or by malicious means) the computer on it will warn you something has changed and make you confirm it was intentional.

TPM is a bit more in-depth. In a basic sense it can be used by any application that requires security or encryption. Think of the TPM like a bouncer – if application asks for access to a specific part of the system or a check against a password the TPM will check if that application is authorised and supply the access or verify the password with the encrypted details stored inside the module.

Enabling Secure Boot (which has been around since Windows 8 so it may already be enabled on your system) is done in the BIOS – normally accessed by pressing F2, F12 or DEL as the machine turns on – it varies per manufacturer so a quick Google search will tell you what to press.

The TPM part is either a "you have it or you don't". The minimum version required is 2.0, released in 2014. If you don't have TPM then you can't (currently) run Windows 11 without some technical work-arounds.

So, what does Windows 11 bring? A sleeker interface, support for direct-storage access allowing applications (mainly games) to load faster, re-designed widget section and control panel and native support for many Android apps directly in Windows.

Andrew Sparrowhawk



WI News

I think we are nearly there at long last as we can now have our monthly meetings in the village hall. However for August we managed a small get together with some of our members in Mim's garden eating homemade cake and tea which was very pleasant and the sun was shining for a change.

Unfortunately as it was not possible to organise a speaker at short notice as the ones we had lined up were taking advantage of the new found freedom and had booked holidays so we are now planning to have our harvest supper in September.

However going forward for October we have lined up a speaker who will be demonstrating different ways of tying and wearing a scarf this could be useful with the winter coming sooner than we would like.

Then for November we hope to have a meal in a nice restaurant with a cake to celebrate 90 years of our WI in Aston.

We are always looking for varied speakers and are open to any suggestions so if you are new to the village and would like to see what our meetings are all about as well as getting to know some lovely people why not pop in at 7.30 on the second Wednesday of the month into the village hall .

Lesley Brown

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Yellow Lines in The Square



If Harry Potter was to wave his magic wand and grant you magic powers to paint yellow No Parking lines anywhere on the roads in Aston. Where would you paint them? Remember – this is a fairy story. If, with a second wave of his wand he could give you the power to either remove parked cars or place them strategically as traffic calming measures (I use the word ‘calming’ advisedly) where would you put with them? The answer can include ‘in the ditch’ but must be printable.

Sadly this also is only a fairy story. The implementation of yellow lines is a power shared by the County Council and the enforcement authorities and encumbered with so much red tape that even the stout hearted quail. Mention yellow lines and hundredweights of legislation will descend upon your head.

- Who will enforce them?
- Have they any ‘clout’ in law?
- Would you want them outside your own house if it meant that even you could not park there?
- Would it be OK for the shop to unload but not OK for customers to park?

County, District and Parish councils plus the Police could be ensnared in tangles of red tape for months or even years and the end result would probably be what?

Admittedly heavy lorries and occasional extra wide farming equipment has taken its toll in the Square from time to time but the damage has been made good - so far.

Imagine a lovely old square with its carefully tended war memorial and surround disfigured with traffic signs, yellow lines and thinly veiled hostility to motor vehicles. This is not Aston. Harry Potter may have a magic wand but his solution for Aston, and especially The Square, would not appear to be yellow lines. Perhaps a magic spell is required to make drivers more considerate? That really would be magic!

Brenda Smith

Shaun Guard
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Alphabet Quiz

Compiled by Andrew Long

A simple twenty question quiz, but all the answers begin with the letter B. Answers on page 21.



1. Who is this film star?
2. Who is this cartoon character?
3. Of which country is this the flag?
4. At which battle in 1314 did the Scots defeat the English?
5. Which singer married Jay-Z in 2008?
6. What was the name of Michael Jackson's pet chimpanzee?
7. What is the name of the hero in the series of adventure books written by W.E. Johns?
8. What is the American equivalent of the yeti?
9. Which sport is Lebron James a star?
10. What is the nickname of New York?
11. Where in the UK would you find the 18th-century Assembly Rooms and the Royal Crescent?
12. Which 18th-century German soldier was famous for his exaggerated accounts of his adventures?
13. Holly Golightly is a character in which Truman Capote novel?
14. What is the name of the layered pastry dessert made of filo pastry, filled with chopped nuts, and sweetened with syrup or honey?
15. Which village lies 4 miles due south of Aston?
16. Complete the title of the Rimsky Korsakov work: "Flight of the ...?"
17. Which chess piece can only move diagonally?
18. Which reality tv programme was named after a George Orwell character?
19. The Bullring shopping Centre can be found in which British city?
20. Belle is one of the main characters in which Disney film?

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1st Aston Brownies



Hello Everyone, I hope all Brownie families are keeping safe and well. We have been informed by Guiding Head Quarters that no “inside”, face to face meetings will take place during September. So, we as a unit have decided to start the term on the 7th, September at 6p.m. via Zoom. All parents have been notified on how this will work. I understand that Guiding H.Q. will review the situation at the end of September and as soon as we know more, we will let all concerned know. For the new term via Zoom the brownies will be focusing on the Theme Award Badge, “Be Well” so we have lots of exciting activities lined up for everyone. Also, within the autumn term we have asked the Church if we can get involved with the Harvest Festival and the Christmas Concert. The unit will also be taking part in the Remembrance Sunday service in The Square. The unit would love to be involved in some way with the Aston Fete next year.

We have been in touch with the Village Community Shop and offered to get involved if there is anything we can do; we have some suggestions already so watch this space!! The Astonbury 2021 Music Festival have very kindly said yes to us being involved next year, which is very exciting so again watch this space for more information. The unit would like to say a very big thank you to Hannah Sparrowhawk for all of her time and efforts supporting the unit as a young helper, unfortunately she has decided to leave as exams are now priority for her, which we totally understand, and we all wish her the very best.

I just want to point out to parents that the girlguiding.org.uk site is well worth checking out as there is so much information and ideas there with plenty of badges to earn and lots of ways to develop new skills while at home.

Don't forget the unit's private and secure WhatsApp page, if you have any queries/comments leave a message there.

Finally, just a reminder that the unit is in a position to accept new girls, for more details please get in touch with me on 07887974468 or karenthegardener123@gmail.com

Meanwhile, stay safe,
Karen .Stay, 1st Aston Brownie Unit.

Cryptic Crossword

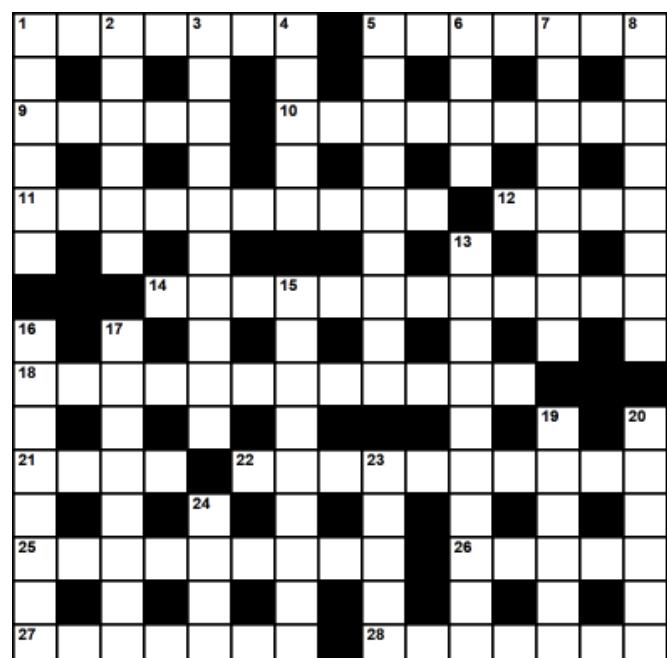
By Caroline Gray

Across

- 1 Club also broadcast as firedog (7)
- 5 Back legs and knock to find root (7)
- 9 Cold void freed pandemic (5)
- 10 A navy runt gets his ticket (3-6)
- 11 A bull never is naughtily temptable (10)
- 12 Not out (4)
- 14 Is lilac basic proof of being elsewhere? (7,5)
- 18 Tea-chests in a swirl of science of insensitivity (12)
- 21 Match included in elite's testimony (4)
- 22 Spooner's mischievous JP announced clemantine's father (5,5)
- 25 Endless spell over girl's name is playable (9)
- 26 Follow a path (5)
- 27 Seventh rope covers genitals (1,6)
- 28 London district gripped by azaleas tending to run rampant (7)

Down

- 1 Gore a man in a shady retreat (6)
- 2 Roman four laid bizarrely for light festival (6)
- 3 Rude dress left muddled and drifting (10)
- 4 Italian artists mutate into these turtles (5)
- 5 Back of the neck still at odds with one of the judges (9)
- 6 Swap hands to make vegetable smell (4)
- 7 Nicer out, inducing hypersensitivity (8)
- 8 Damn epic overturned last year (8)
- 13 Innoculates and cast vain civil engineer adrift (10)
- 15 O slog on chin, its an instruction (9)



- 16 Aardvark of the bastard other hag (8)
- 17 Ancient language heard without judgement (8)
- 19 Example from noun safety-net is insecure (6)
- 20 Barked madly and slowed (6)
- 23 Time group and find small quantity (5)
- 24 Hi soldier does exercises (4)

Answers on page 22

500 Club Winners

July 2021 Draw

No. 23	40	D. Knight
No. 246	30	R. Haines
No. 31	20	Mr & Mrs Parker
No. 377	10	R. Anderson
No. 120	10	I. & B. Philips
No. 303	5	M. Price
No. 163	5	P. & E. Juniper
No. 214	5	J. Souch

August 2021 Draw

No. 171	40	P. West
No. 325	30	J. & A. Warner
No. 51	20	C. Hook
No. 192	10	V. Fallows
No. 62	10	R. Daniel
No. 264	5	G. Long
No. 103	5	P. Thurman
No. 247	5	S. Haines



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Nature Natters

Hedge your bets

Ten years ago, an ecologist named Rob Wolton started surveying his local hedge in Devon. He identified over 2000 species in his hedge including shrubs, birds, insects and spiders. That makes it one of the richest habitats in the country, so hedges matter.

In 1965 Max Hooper came up with a way of dating hedges.

Take a 30 metre stretch of hedge and count the number of species

of woody plants. Multiply this figure by 110 to give the age of the hedge. I just tried it on the back road between Cote and Aston, and counted 2 species – hawthorn and Willow, which gives an age of 220 years. This suggests that the hedge dates from 1800 which is roughly when this area was drained, so it looks about right.

As hedges go, an age of 200 years is nothing to write home about. In many parts of Britain there are hedges aged over 1000 years. Some of them were planted around coppiced woodland. Others were what was left as a boundary when wildwood was cleared for farming. Documentary evidence shows that there are hedges that go back to pre-Roman days.

But the hedges of Britain have been disappearing for years. The 1947 Agriculture Act offered grants for the removal of hedges, and an estimated 10,000 miles of hedge were lost annually till the act was repealed. Now there are grants of up to £11.60 per metre for putting in hedges on agricultural land and substantial fines for the unapproved removal of hedges.

Hedges are important because they don't only offer a home for so many species, they also work as corridors between wild places. So, animals can travel from one woodland to another along a hedge without being exposed to the dangers of open country. Hedges matter.

James Gray



A hedge between Aston and Cote

"New" Bird Hide

The new BBOWT bird hide is actually on the banks of the Thames not too far from Ten Foot Bridge. We were hoping to include a photo in the July edition, but the weather proved difficult. The hide is quite some way both from Shifford Lock and the Trout at Tadpole. However it can be accessed via the Thames path from either direction and is well worth the walk. The photographs show the hide and a view of the Thames taken from inside the hide.



Andrew Long

Must We Accept Sewage in Our Streams and Rivers?

Keeping The Pressure On Thames Water To Change – Your Parish Council Needs Your Help.

By WODC Councillor Lysette Nicholl and the parish councils of Northmoor, Southleigh, Standlake, Stanton Harcourt, Sutton and Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney

Raw sewage is being dumped in rivers and streams near where you live with in ever-increasing frequency, duration and volume. The current inadequate system of government regulation means that even where sewage works are failing to cope on a catastrophic and illegal scale, more housing can be and is, routinely added to the Network. This is nothing to do with lack of legislation; there is plenty, but it is not being applied.

Take **Stanton Harcourt** sewage works as an example. It **dumped untreated sewage on 132 occasions for a total of 2,484 hours** into a small woodland brook which flows into the Thames near the Eynsham toll bridge and Swinford Water Treatment Works. Between September 2019 and March 2000, these same works dumped untreated sewage almost continuously for about six months. With similar events happening all over the county and country, the repeated claims that we have heard that these events happen due to heavy rain to stop people's homes from flooding turn out to be untrue. People have been seriously misled and so it seems have the planners who have agreed to add another 104 homes at Stanton Harcourt following Thames Water assurances that their infrastructure can cope. This will add an estimated 32 tonnes of sewage a day at Stanton Harcourt alone.

Aston's sewage infrastructure cannot cope and in January and February this year there were further examples of sewage backing up in homes and streets, yet Thames Water continually say that they have capacity to accommodate new houses and thus raised no objections to major housing developments in the village.

How about **South Leigh**? A staggering **3,342 hours of untreated sewage was dumped from 154 events in 2020**,

whilst for Standlake and Northmoor, sewage works at Standlake recorded 443 hours from 24 events in 2020.

And this does not include the huge volumes of tankering that goes on for months in both villages which is never taken to Standlake works but instead to Witney or elsewhere. The point being, the system there is also failing and, as residents will know, it has been for years.

Answers to Are you Sitting Comfortably

1. On The Square – King George V. Jubilee 1935
2. Kiln Close – no plaque
3. By St. James front door – 75th anniversary of VE and VJ day 2020
4. St. James Wall - Silver Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. 1977
5. Playing fields (by willow arch) - Aston and Cote Village Fete 1989
6. Playing Field (north east corner) - 50th anniversary of VE and VJ day 1995
7. Cote - Silver Jubilee of Queen Elizabeth II. 1977
8. Far end of Bull St. – Silver Jubilee Seat 1935

Whose fault is this? **Thames Water is your water company** and no, you can't change it as it is a monopoly that has never been forced to invest to cope with demand. This needs to change and we need to pressure both Thames Water and the Government to change their approach. You can read more about all of this on the www.windrushwasp.org website.

The parish councils of Northmoor, Southleigh, Standlake, Stanton Harcourt, Sutton and Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney have been working tirelessly to get Thames Water to resolve issues in their respective parishes and would like you to help them by applying even more pressure. Representatives from the Parish Council in your area met recently virtually with Lysette Nicholls (District Councillor) to work together on this issue – to our knowledge the first in West Oxfordshire to do so.

So what can you do? You can write and complain by email to Thames Water at:

customer.feedback@thameswater.co.uk or in writing to:

Thames Water
PO Box 436
Swindon
SN38 1TU

You do not have to have untreated sewage running through rivers and streams where you live, just so that the water industry can make a profit.

Furthermore, despite their assurances to the contrary, Thames Water's infrastructure in our villages clearly cannot cope with additional housing, but now we can all help! The time has come for people like you to make your voices heard. Complaints get registered and the more complaints the more pressure can be brought to bear. This is because the number of complaints is a key performance indicator for Thames Water – so the more the complaints, the higher level (of priority) for them. They can be held to account by the Regulator, DEFRA and the Environment Agency accordingly.

Complaints can also be registered to the government to make the water industry deliver an adequate and legal service. These should go to;

rebecca.pow.mp@parliament.uk and ask for your message to be forwarded to her ministerial office.

9. Bull St. (opposite Waites Cl.) – Postie Richard Godwin
10. Corner of Southlands – The Queens Golden Jubilee 2002

Answers to the Alphabet Quiz

1. Brigitte Bardot
2. Bambi
3. Bulgaria
4. Bannockburn
5. Beyoncé
6. Bubbles
7. Biggles
8. Big foot
9. Basketball
10. Bath
11. The Big Apple
12. Baron Munchausen
13. Breakfast at Tiffany's
14. Baklava
15. Buckland
16. Bumblebee
17. Bishop
18. Big Brother
19. Birmingham
20. Beauty and the Beast

C J Smith

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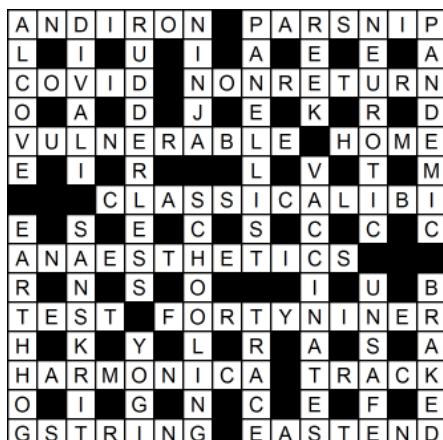
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Answer to Where in the Parish?

At Chimney Meadows, on the left just
after you cross the wooden bridge over
the River Thames cutting.

**Answers to the Cryptic
Crossword**



History Group – we'll meet again!

Following an eighteen month break the History Group committee are really looking forward to welcoming members back to regular meetings. We start with a social evening.



Thursday 30th September – A social evening open to all

7.30 pm at the Fellowship Centre in Cote Road

This will be an opportunity for existing members to meet up again, and for anyone else to come along and find out about the group's activities. Light refreshments will be available. Aston History Group was first formed in 1994 and recently realised an ambition to publish a history of the parish.

Aston History Group Programme – 2021 / 22

30th September: Social Evening

28th October: '1066 Oxfordshire's part in the Norman Conquest' – a talk by Julie Ann Godson

25th November: 'The Poppy' – a talk by Bill King

2022

27th January: Group supper and social

24th February: 'The Guilds' – a talk by Julian Sayers

31st March: 'The Impact of the First World War on women's lives' – a talk by Katherine Bradley

28th April: The group's AGM

Martin Bowley

Choir News

**"Sing like no one is listening,
dance like no one is watching..."**



With so many people new to Aston over the last year and restrictions lifting perhaps you are looking for something to do which will get you involved in village life. How about joining a singing group?

We are a friendly, relaxed group of ladies who simply enjoy meeting up and singing. We are led by Mary Wade. The choir, variously known as A Burst of Blue or Aston Ladies works on a variety of songs, mostly popular in style, but with occasional forays into more folky or classical genres. Although we don't do many performances we get involved in the village Christmas concert and do hold our own concerts from time to time.

Apart from the fun and the opportunity to make new friends there are many recognised benefits both mentally and physically to singing. There are no auditions and although we have musical notation available it's definitely not necessary to be able to read it to become involved.

We meet Thursday evenings in the Fellowship Centre (except the last Thursday of the month).

You are welcome to come along and have a try and hopefully you'll be persuaded to join us - we always look forward to gaining new members.

Look out on the village Facebook page for when we will be starting up again or contact Kirsty Jackson 850622.

What's On

Church Services

St James, Aston and St Mary's, Shifford

Service pattern

First Sunday	9.30 St. James	Holy Communion
Second Sunday	9.15 St Mary's	Holy Communion
	9.30 St James	Family Service
Third Sunday	9.30 St James	Holy Communion
	6pm St Mary's	Evensong (Sept only)
Fourth Sunday	9.30 St James	Family Service

These services are regularly live streamed via Facebook



Aston and Cote Community Church at the Fellowship Centre

We have resumed our normal meeting pattern post-lockdown and are meeting most Sundays at 10.00am. Our services are family friendly and informal. We usually have organised 'Sunday School' activities led by experienced teachers and once a month the children stay in the main meeting throughout for a family service. Over the next few months we will be exploring the book of Isaiah - probably the most famous of all the Biblical prophets and whose writings will be familiar to anyone who loves Handel's 'Messiah'!

We invite you to join us on any Sunday, or contact us for more information on accc2021@outlook.com, or via our website Aston & Cote Community Church – Fellowship Centre, Cote Road, Aston OX18 2DU (astoncotec.org.uk)

Covid-permitting, we hope to be able to increase the variety of activities we put on over the autumn, including the return of Chillax (youth group for 11-14s) and the Tearfund 'Big Quiz Night'. Watch this space!

Alastair Barnett (Pastor)

5 September	Worship with Sunday School
12 September	Worship with Sunday School
19 September	Family Service
26 September	Worship with Sunday School
3 October	Worship with Sunday School
10 October	No meeting in Aston - we join our wider family of churches for a Celebration in Oxford
17 October	Worship with Sunday School
24 October	Worship with Sunday School
31 October	Family Service

Andrew Long - Chair & Editor (Content);
 Richard Haines – Treasurer & Editor (Technical);
 Martin Bowley - Secretary & Lay up;
 Paul Lock - Lay up;
 Tom England - Lay up;
 Liz Harper - Advertising;
 Susan Haines - Distribution;
 Lizzie Wood;
 Brenda Smith.



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Diary

September

Thursday 30th

History Group
Social and Catch Up
All welcome
7.30 Fellowship Centre

October

Thursday 7th

Parish Council
7.30 Village Hall

Friday 8th

Chillax
7.30-9.30
Fellowship Centre

Wednesday 13th

WI
"How to tie your scarf"
7.30 Village Hall

Thursday 28th

History Group
1066 Oxfordshire's part
in the Norman Conquest
Julie Ann Godson
7.30 Fellowship Centre

November

Thursday 4th

Parish Council
7.30 Village Hall

Wednesday 10th

WI's 90th Birthday
Celebration
The Plough Alvescot

Friday 12th

Chillax
7.30-9.30
Fellowship Centre

Aston Community Shop

Shop Opening Hours:

Mon – Wed 08:30 – 16:00

Thu – Fri 08:30 – 18:30

Saturday 08:30 – 14:00

Sunday 09:00 – 12:00

Post Office

Post Office Opening Hours:

Monday 09:30 – 12:30

Wednesday 09:30 – 12:30

Friday 12:00 – 15:00

Not a Normal 9-5 Job

I try to find local people with unusual jobs and in this case the first indicator was a helicopter on a trailer parked in Southlands, Aston.

There is nothing usual about Stacy Lee Pullen. Yes, Stacy! His father named him Stacy on the basis of the Country and Western song, about a boy named Sue, that it would make him tough. He answers to Stacy or Ace.

Sadly his parents separated and Stacy stayed with his dad in Southlands. Aged only 16 and two weeks before he was due to take his GCSE's Stacy's father unexpectedly died.

Stacy abandoned the exams and bravely took himself off to work to provide a living to keep his home. Quite something for a teenager. He worked at a local garage for four years, fitting in a little bit of wild behaviour normal for his age!

Aged 21, he began driving lorries and tedious journeys were used to learn



The helicopter spotted in Southlands

Russian; which he can read but not write. Next, he progressed to become a Transport Manager for BMW (78 lorries and 128 trailers). He was motivated by the Polish drivers to speak Russian and his lifetime dream is to visit Russia and Ukraine.

Now he has his own company, Tomcat Transport Ltd, and with his trailers he can move cars and light aircraft, he is hoping to move more aircraft. His work takes him to Scotland, at least once a week (very difficult to tie him down). At present he is studying for his Operator's Licence with a move to a new yard.

Aged 22 years he met his wife Elspeth, at a party in Birmingham. Coincidentally she was from Appleton, Oxfordshire. They married in 2014 and have two children, Obi four and Lara two. Elspeth has her own business "Wagwash" to fit in with a busy domestic life.

Ace has a keen interest in flying and is a Primary Flying instructor with motor gliders and has clocked up 550 hours of flying. He squeezes in a hobby, with other enthusiasts of flying with the use of a computer simulator, which allows him to fly all around the world in sophisticated planes, such as fighter planes.

He would like his business to be more involved in rescue and recovery of light aircraft and is building a larger trailer to cater for them.

I was lucky to catch him at home, where I was able to learn of his achievements, and in my opinion he is "flying high".

Lizzie Wood



Stacy (Ace), with Lara and Obi

The Adventures of Mr Toad

As the nights draw in why not settle in a comfy chair and listen to "The Adventures of Mr Toad"? If you haven't yet caught up with the recording it can be found using this link. <https://youtu.be/gnr4XdtODzQ>

I found the performance thoroughly engrossing. Perhaps it helped knowing the actors involved and Andy Ball, Barry Gillibrand, Gill Long, Joy Matthews, Mark Goss, Richard Buss, Simon Hoskins, Sophie Fuller and Vicki Fuller delivered a very entertaining piece. But performing a radio play is not just a case of reading a prepared script in the right order. The performers had developed their characters and had been directed in their endeavours by ACTS stalwart Val Crowson. The piece was recorded and edited by Barry and I must say the whole thing worked well.

"The Adventures of Mr Toad" was recorded during lockdown, when rehearsing and performing in front of a live audience was not possible. The whole endeavour enabled the actors to keep their hands in before the next production is commissioned. Hopefully it will not be too long before our thespians are treading the boards once more.

Andrew Long

