



Everyone's a winner

Aston and Cote School Music Quiz

Friday February 3rd saw the return of Aston's own 'Smashey and Nicey'. The quiz was hard fought and anyone from the top 15 could have won it going into the last 'wipeout' round. The quiz was eventually won by The Rolling Gnomes who pipped 2019 winners, The Pheasant Pluckers by just one point. Indeed, there were only eight points separating the top five teams.

It was great to see some new teams taking part as well as some who have been loyal, taking part in every quiz since 2006. Special mention must go to the team voted best name on the night, Weapons of Mediocre Destruction and of course the Desperate Housewives who are normally the strongest team in the room, managing to finish in a very commendable 17th place.

The quiz has been running since June 2006 and has raised a total profit of £17,000, with this year's being one of the largest generating a fantastic £1254.35! All monies raised will help to pay for a reading shed for the children, which will provide opportunities to read at playtimes in a warm comfortable environment.

Special thanks must go to the FACS team of Rachel, Louise, Katie and Faye, who worked tirelessly on the night serving drinks and running one of the largest raffles anybody has ever seen!

We would also like to thank our loyal scorers, Sian and Fiona, who have been with us at every quiz. With a new head teacher taking over in September, hopefully Smashey and Nicey will return in 2024.

Rob 'Smashey' Taylor and Keith 'Nicey' Jones

Trail Winners

This year's Aston Christmas Trail was different! It involved participants using a smartphone and the 'What3Words' App to guide them around the village.

First they collected entry forms then, using the app, they located homes displaying Christmas themed clues. It sounded like magic to me, as a very non-technical person who owns a Nokia but it was not magic ... but G.P.S... a navigational system using satellite signals.

Every three square metres in Aston, the UK and elsewhere, is mapped out with three unique words. This system is utilized by the Emergency Services to respond accurately to a location when an emergency call comes in - the three word code can pinpoint the exact location. This is particularly important in remote areas with no road names etc.

This innovative trail was devised by Caron and Jack Glenn and the proceeds went to St James Church.

Lizzie Wood



Congratulations to Lottie and Isabel on winning the St James Christmas trail.

Trophy Winners



Aston FC Youth team celebrating their recent win in the Oxford Mail U11 Trophy Final. Pictured: Left to Right Front Row: Tom Buxton, George Hamilton, Toby Gidlow, Jamie Mobey, Jude Lewis-Mutch, Riley Pitts, Charlie Glaister, Daniel Sutton. Full story inside.



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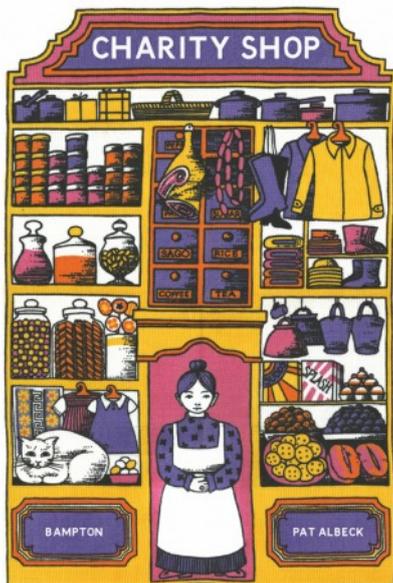
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Editorial

In this edition we begin two new regular features. Richard Bloomfield will be writing a "Going Green" column which will highlight sustainable living issues. Please feel free to contribute ideas; we're all in this together.

The other new venture is a hobbies and pastimes column: In this issue David Barber is sharing his enthusiasm for the ukulele! If you have an unusual hobby, why not share the details with us.

We can arrange an interview or, if you prefer, write something yourself. Contact Voices by email astonnewsletter@hotmail.com or call Helen Wheaton 684185 or Andrew Long 850271.

The cost of printing the Voices has increased, mainly due to a rise in the price of ink and paper. We will have to raise our advertising rates at some time in the future and we hope that the increases will be small. At present a small sized advert costs £40 for six editions. We are grateful to have had financial support from the Bampton Charity Shop in the past and have several paying adverts from Bampton organisations in this edition as well as information on the mapping exhibition in the Vesey Room until April 2nd. We hope to include more information and events in Bampton that can be beneficial to the people of Aston.

And finally, we would like to acknowledge our lack of originality when it comes to our recipe column: Brussel sprouts featured in both the November and the January edition! However, in this edition Milly has produced an excellent recipe for Easter Blondies ...enjoy!

Editors Helen Wheaton and Andrew Long

Aston and Cote Community Trust Update

The next Folk Night is on Saturday March 18th. The Scarecrows will be entertaining us. Tickets are £12 from Aston Repair Depot or Sylvia Brown on 01993 850553. Please come along and support the Village Hall.

Thank you to those of you who expressed an interest in the Treasurer's position. We have now made a selection.

Multi Use Games Area – This has now reached the planning application stage. We are also applying for a flood risk assessment.

The committee have decided to hire a large waste bin in order to avoid the overspill from the existing bin.

The Easter Bingo evening date will be confirmed shortly.

Don't forget to check out our website for news on forthcoming events.

Astoncotevillagehall.org.uk

Ian Dunstan
Chairman

Dear Editors,

Ref: Aston Community Shop

What a super-duper shop we have in Aston. Every so often I take my three-wheeler for its exercise. I go down Southlands, carefully crossing the road with maximum visibility and go to the Community Shop. Where there are rarely less than five or six customers and it's time for a catch up.

Grateful thanks to all the volunteers who manage the shop. Long may the shop continue to prosper. I can thoroughly recommend it !

Jennifer Mills



Good afternoon Editors

You forgot to show this in the recent edition of Voices! It certainly was a delight to see this beautiful tree in Waites Close. I know it took a lot of effort to do and is so worthy of a belated mention please in the next edition!

Regards

Lisa Austin

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All involved in 'Who Killed the Secret Agent?' in December were delighted to receive such good audience response. It was not easy to get going again after the long covid lockdown so it felt good to be so appreciated and we would like to thank all of you who came along to reward the effort of our hard work rehearsing and word learning.

Should anyone reading this be inspired to join us, we rehearse, when in production, on a Monday from 7.30pm to 9.30pm and you will be made most welcome. Contact Val on 850139 or Simon 852252. You don't need to be an acting luvvie as there are the backstage groupies to join as well, all contribute equally to a performance and there is plenty of laughter either on stage or backstage.

If you are interested contact either Simon or me or alternatively call in at Aston Repair Depot and speak to Vicky or Andy.

Val Crowson

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News and information from
Aston, Cote Shifford and Chimney
Parish Council

Also on line at

www.astonoxon-pc.gov.uk

Parish News



Traffic Calming Following the peremptory erection last November by OCC Highways of new 20mph speed limits across the Parish without first referring back to the Parish Council for our agreement, we asked for the views of residents on the new measures. We have now extended this feedback period for another month or so to encompass the Annual Parish meeting on 18th April, shortly after which, we will address the matter formally with OCC. Current opinion on the Parish Council varies, so we would value the views of residents.

Recurring Roadworks Residents will no doubt have noticed the recurring roadworks (and associated disruption) at the junction of Cote Road and Bull Street over recent months. These are due to repeated gas leaks from newer plastic piping meeting older metal pipework under this traffic bottleneck. The answer is to replace all the metal pipework, but thus far, the gas company have been refused permission from OCC Highways to close the road for up to 2 weeks to complete this major work. We have now written to OCC supporting the case for a one-off closure to enable a permanent fix to this recurring issue.

Terra Since the unanimous, welcome refusal on 5 December by WODC of Terra's application to build 40 new houses behind Marsh Furlong, residents will be aware of recent contractor activity on the proposed site since. We understand that this is on behalf of Terra and the local landowner, in anticipation of an appeal against the refusal being submitted. They have six months to do so and we continue to monitor the situation closely.

Hawthorns Stockade Despite their retrospective application being refused last November, Matthew Homes have yet to remove their fencing at the end of Bull Street. Following a request from the Parish Council, a WODC Enforcement Officer has visited the site and re-engaged with Matthew Homes.

Coronation Gate With the Coronation approaching on 6th May, we plan a permanent memorial to this historic event through the procurement of a commemorative side access gate from Church Lane to St James' Church, complementing the existing front gate that commemorates the Coronation of 1937.

North Farm Somewhat frustratingly, all has gone extremely quiet regarding North Farm. We understand that OCC (the landowner) and WODC (the planning authority) are now currently discussing the matter in detail, and we have been promised greater clarity in the next month or so. We shall see.

Photo ID Now Required at UK Elections Whilst this parish is not scheduled for elections this year, residents should note that from May 23, those wishing to vote in person (including nominated proxy voters) at UK elections will now be required to provide photographic ID (a wide range of documents are acceptable, and they need not be current so long as the photo is accurate). Those on the electoral register who do not have an approved version of such ID are able to apply, free of charge, for a 'Voter Authority Certificate'. Applications can be made online at <https://voter-authority-certificate.service.gov.uk>



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or via a paper form from WODC or calling in person at their offices (more information available by email to elections@westoxon.gov.uk or by telephone 01993 861410. Postal voters are not affected (having already provided signature and date of birth ID).

Save the Date.... The Annual Parish Meeting will take place in the Village Hall on 18th April, all residents are extremely welcome.

And finally If you have any questions or comments for your Parish Council and you are unable to raise it directly with a councillor, please forward them to the Parish Clerk by email on clerk@astonoxon-pc.gov.uk or by post, c/o 16 Foxwood, Aston, Oxfordshire, OX18 2DZ.

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



**Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney
Annual Parish Meeting 2023
Tuesday 18th April at 7.30pm in the
Village Hall, Aston.**

If you have a question that you would like to ask, even if you cannot attend in person, then please let the clerk know by the 11th April either through the contact form on the website (<https://www.astonoxon.com/contact.html>), by email to clerk@astonoxon-pc.gov.uk or by post to the Parish Clerk, Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council, 16 Foxwood, Aston, OX18 2DZ.

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Paul Lock Photography
Peter Smith Funeral Director
Vicky's After School Club

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Local Authority

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Flat, Flat, Flat, Flat

Yes, four flats and recently five are now available. They are situated at Kingsgate, Aston, a sheltered housing scheme just off Cote Road, behind the Fellowship Hall. I went to meet Jackie Hooper, the Housing Support Manager, to find out more.

Kingsgate was opened by the Baptists in 1976. A modern building with twenty-two flats for over-55's. It is designed for independent living with support by Jackie who has been the Manager for the past nineteen years. She now works part-time and manages the Finance House in Oxford.

Jackie supports residents and liaises with social services, GP's and Nurses and sets up care packages when needed. She is also responsible for health and safety and fire safety in both buildings.

The flats are self-contained with a kitchen, hallway, bathroom and combined bedroom – living area. There is a communal sitting room where everybody can meet up and there is a communal laundry. Three flats are on the ground floor and two on the first floor. There are two communal rooms upstairs and downstairs. A guest room is available with a charge of £10 a night.

Jackie emphasized Kingsgate was all-electric, no gas. It is presently run by Catalyst Housing Ltd but comes under the new management of Peabody Housing on 1st April 2023. Kingsgate's eldest resident was Ivy who lived until she was 104. Ivy passed away three years ago.

If you or anyone you know, is interested, please contact Jackie who is at Kingsgate Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday and available between 07:30 – 3:30 pm. Happy to have a chat and can be contacted otherwise – Jackie Hooper, Housing Support Manager on 01993 852498 / 01865 552537 / 07779 287643

Lizzie Wood



Jackie Hooper. Kingsgate Manager

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Computing for All Banking on the Computer

It is an unavoidable fact of village life that one needs to travel elsewhere to access certain services. While the Post Office can provide some basics, this is especially true when you require a bank. While we are fortunate to have a wide range in Witney, it seems that they are increasingly going the way of the supermarkets with humans being replaced by automated checkpoints. Fortunately it is relatively easy to set up an online account with your bank, and, indeed, some of the more recent entrants into the banking market don't have branches and only offer online services.

Most of the day-to-day banking services can be accessed through an online account which is accessed via the bank's website. While the details differ from bank to bank, the approach to security is mainly through multi-factor authentication ("something you have" like a card and "something you know" like a PIN - see the article in the last issue of Voices). Once logged in you are able to view your account balances and to see your statements. Generally, there is an ability to search the transactions and alter the period displayed. Downloading your transaction history can be useful if you want to further analyse your budget or feed the data into an accounts program.

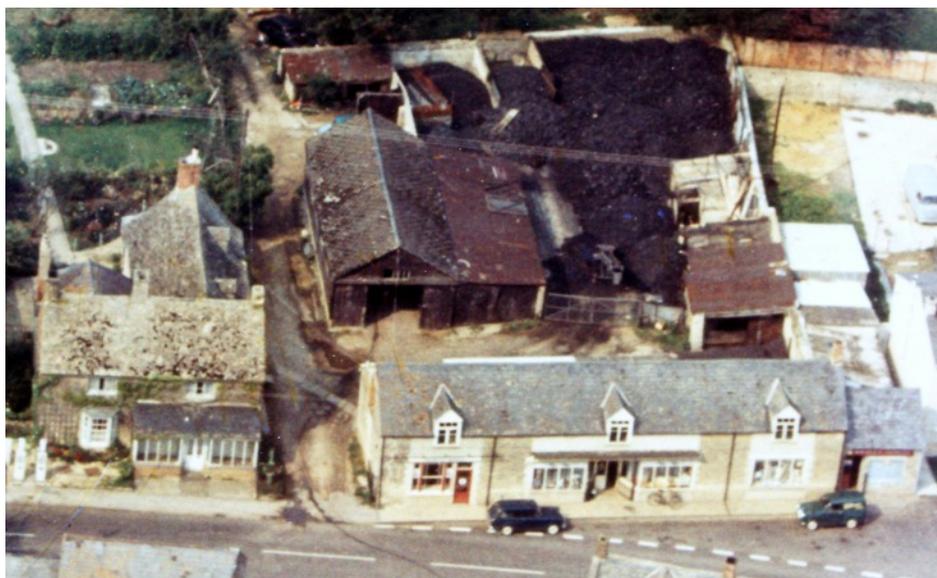
Most standard processes are available: you can set up standing orders, transfer between accounts and make payments especially as most businesses now routinely provide their bank details on their invoices. In most cases this removes the need for writing cheques (remember them?). Clearly if you have need to pay cash into the account then a visit to the branch is still required. However, many banks also provide a phone app with similar features to the web sites and we have started to see these apps enabling you to pay in cheques by loading in photos from your smart phone.

If you haven't tried it yet, it is worth giving online banking a go. Many people are finding it more convenient and accessible and most bank websites now have a fairly comprehensive set of services.

Tom England

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What's in a name?



Bovington's Yard

In Aston in the 1950s and 60s if you wanted to shop locally for groceries you went to either Bovingtons or Picketts. Pictured above is Bovington's shop and behind it Bovington's yard. It was from this yard that Jim Bovington ran his successful coal business.

To the right of the shop was the local butchers, run by Wesley Jones, later by the Anderson family and finally by Bob Nurden. In time, it became the village shop before eventually emerging as the "Aston Community Shop."

Pickett's Shop, now known as the Old Stores, closed in 1994 and the business, run by Roger Collett, moved across The Square to the present site of the Community Shop. The cottage behind The Old Shop is now known as Pickett's Cottage.

Andrew Long



Pickett's Shop c. 1966

500 Club Winners

January 2023

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No 308	£30.00	R. Simmonds
No 15	£20.00	N. & K. Barrett
No 166	£10.00	J. Battrick
No 99	£10.00	C. Smith
No 457	£5.00	C. & S. Barker
No 24	£5.00	G. Pridham
No 23	£5.00	D. Knight

February 2023

No 39	£40.00	A. & K. Jackson
No 20	£30.00	K. Trevena
No 153	£20.00	S. Beynor
No 120	£10.00	I. & B. Philips
No 267	£10.00	A. Long
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No 31	£5.00	Mr & Mrs Parker
No 50	£5.00	H. Pinner

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Aston History Group

A great atmosphere was apparent throughout the evening of our annual supper and social in January. The meal, a choice of tasty casseroles and delicious desserts, was prepared by members, and some challenging hands-on entertainment involved a picture quiz and solving clues about names on a local map.

Our February meeting was well attended despite the cold weather. Michael Heaney gave a well-illustrated and most interesting talk about the history of morris dancing. A document of 1448 refers to seven shillings being paid to “Moryssh dausers”, at the annual feast of St Dunstan on 19th May, by the Worshipful Company of Goldsmiths. Michael’s depth of knowledge about this subject was clear as he described the development and various forms of this popular entertainment through more than four hundred years.



Next meetings:
March 30th – ‘The Aston Dig’, a look at the recent excavations in Back Lane – a presentation by Charlotte Bishop

April 27th – Annual General Meeting and a talk by Sue Smith about Conscientious Objectors in the First World War in Oxfordshire.

The group normally meets on the last Thursday of the month 7.30 pm at The Fellowship Centre in Cote Road. Visitors are always welcome for a small charge.

Martin Bowley

1st Aston Brownies

The unit is well into the Spring Term now and the Brownies are busy working towards their Communications Skills Builder Badges all together during the Monday meetings. We also encourage the Brownies to use their yellow badge books and look at working towards various Interest Badges at home, and then if they bring their work in, it can check and sign it off, then order the relevant badges in.



Only last week the Unit took a trip to Witney to join up with other Units including 5th, Witney Brownies, 7th, Witney Brownies along with Witney Guides for World Thinking Day, where we celebrated being in Guiding, with a candle ceremony, some renewed promises, we had pancakes and cold refreshments and had a good old sing song. It was great to see the girls mixing with the other units and it was a great evening. Thank you to our 3 Duke of Edinburgh Gold Award students Tilly, Lucinda and Genie who assisted the Leaders so well, particularly on the Pancake table.

I am very grateful to all the parents that have come forward to assist on the parent’s rota. I totally understand that some parents will not be able to help due to other commitments. If any parents would like to join Guiding and assist the unit in providing this facility for the girls, please get in touch and I can explain the training format that the Guiding Association provide. As we go into Spring and the warmer weather, plans are being made to join other units in this district on trips for the girls, so very exciting times ahead.

Finally, the unit is able to accept new girls, for more details please get in touch on 07887974468 or karenthegardener123@gmail.com

Stay safe.
Karen Stay. Unit Leader

W.I.News

With the Christmas Season well and truly over we still had our group meal to look forward to in January which this time was at the Bird in Hand out at Hailey.

It was an excellent turn out, we enjoyed it very much, a very pleasant evening. After the meal the draw for the beautiful Quilted Throw was drawn and the lucky winner was Sue Caswell with ticket number 60.

For February it was back to a speaker and this time we had the Reverend Janice Collier who came to talk about her earlier career as a physiotherapist whilst she lived in and around Liverpool. There was quite a lot of amusing stories about who she cared for as well as how she was given the opportunity to go to Romania with Challenge Aneka - to care for sick and under privileged children. When asked why and how she became a vicar she said that would be another story for another day. So you never know... she may return.

With spring just around the corner we are now in the process of finalising this year's programme. So far as well as some interesting speakers and activities we have lined up a talk on women in the fire brigade as well as Zumba dancing from a chair.

We have been very pleased to welcome some new members recently and if you are still thinking about joining us, why not give us a try. We meet on the second Wednesday of each month at 7.30 in the village hall.

Lesley Brown

Garden Ramblings - Hosta Help!

One of my favourite plants in the garden are hostas. The wide variety, ranging from tiny green/blue leaves as small as your finger like 'Mouse Ears', lime green varieties, the unusual white leaves of 'White Feather' or the giant varieties with leaves which will fill a dinner plate, are all a source of interest in any garden.

I view with gardeners envy the photos in magazines of lush green hostas in all their glory and have even seen with my own eyes, when visiting other people's garden, that PERFECT hosta leaf with no nibbled holes!

Every year I rejoice at the bright green spikes that pierce their way through the soil in my pots and I promise myself that this year, I'm going to save them from slug decimation.....and every year, so far I've failed. I've tried all the tricks - wool, beer, eggshells and after dark slug and snail hunts but to no avail - by the end of the summer I always end up with the same lace nibbled leaves and the sinking feeling that I've failed my hostas again.

So this year is a new battle and I'm fighting it with renewed vigour and Nematodes! These little microscopic creatures are going to save my hostas so I read. They are a natural, biological and organic form of pest control. These hosta savers can be purchased on line and will arrive packaged in moist clay which I then have to mix with water and sprinkle on. These creatures like it warm so I have to check the soil is above 5 degrees and they are light sensitive so must be applied when light levels are low.

So when time and temperature are right - let battle commence. I'll do my bit, the nematodes will be working hard and fingers crossed we'll win the fight for perfect hostas this year!

N.M.D.



theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

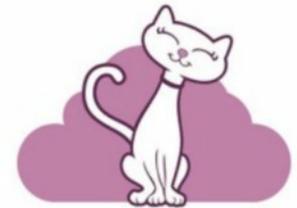
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Voices

on-line

On the home page
of the Parish Website

**www.astonoxon-
pc.gov.uk**



Introducing Hobbies – Have you got one? – If not, why not?

“You can’t just put it in the cupboard under the stairs like a tennis racquet when you get tired of it” was my mother’s response to an impassioned plea from myself, aged ten, for a pony.

Some hobbies clearly bring more complications than others. That said, hobbies clearly bring a great deal of pleasure to a large number of people whether they are short term crazes or lifetime obsessions.

A hobby is defined in the concise Oxford dictionary as “a favorite subject or occupation that is not

one’s main business”. Are you a collector? ... stamps, toby jugs, vintage cars, racing pigeons ... A creator (model airplanes, a knitter, baker?) The list is endless but with a common theme: Your hobby is important to YOU.

There are times when one’s hobby can spill over into family life. Have you run out of space on the mantelpiece for, yet another model of the Marie Celeste made out of match sticks? This, however, pales in the shade compared to the latest hobby of a recently retired friend of ours – cheese making! I only hope the family like both the smell and the taste of cheese!

My eldest son, now a sober citizen in his fifties, has just spent the last two weekends, assisted by his godson who is in his twenties and the cat (who never discloses her age), creating a three-foot-high model in Lego of ‘The Daily Bugle’ newspaper office out of the Spiderman series. Apparently, there were no missing pieces despite the cat. I suspect living with it, in a small house, could be problematic but its creation has obviously given a great deal of pleasure to at least two people.

‘Voices’ is embarking upon a series of articles on Hobbies. It will be interesting to see what hidden talent we have in Aston.

Enjoy!

Brenda Smith

Editors Note: If you have an interesting hobby or pastime, we would very much like to hear from you. Please get in touch by emailing Voices at Astonnewsletter@hotmail.com



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Taking up a new hobby

Both Christine and I have been members of the U3A for many years and have passed on skills and learned new ones. Now we have downsized to Aston, I decided to try out something new. Well, new-ish. I can plonk away on the piano, but it takes up too much space and I can tootle on the recorder, but a guitar has always attracted me as an instrument to learn.

But a guitar has six strings and I have only four fingers – this does not compute. A ukulele, however, well now, we could be getting somewhere – four strings, four fingers, a good start. A beginners' group in the Witney U3A added to the attraction. The loan of a ukulele to "have a go" was icing on the cake. I also had the advantage of being able to read music and know what chords are and some of the theory behind them – so I joined.



It didn't take too long to learn the notes and where to put the fingers to do scales and simple tunes – most "simple" tunes you can get by with three chords, four at the most as accompaniment, and so progress was fairly quick.

The big disadvantage, however, is that you are supposed to sing as you play the chords which is where I come unstuck big time – so fortunately the rest of the group can sing as well as play, whereas I just play on a newly acquired ukulele of my own.

David Barber

Oxfordshire Artweeks

Oxfordshire Artweeks opens on Coronation Day 6th May and runs until 29th May.

It's a chance to plan an outing during May as all artist's studios are open free of charge and there is an amazing variety of art on show throughout Oxfordshire including painting, ceramic, jewellery and sculpture.

Studios open on our doorstep from 13th to 21st May are in Cote, Bampton and Clanfield. See pages 66-67 of the Artweeks Catalogue, available to view now online at www.artweeks.org. Catalogue booklets will be available free to pick up at local venues from April.

Val Crowson

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News from Aston & Cote CE Primary School



The funfair in the playground

We have had an excellent start to Term 2 with the children excitedly embarking on their new class topics as well as continuing to build on their existing knowledge and skills. Our new staff members, Mrs Martin, Mrs Russman and Mrs Woodham-Davies, have quickly settled in and are already integral members of the staff team, making



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a positive impact on the children they work with.

Children, staff, parents, and governors were all delighted that Mrs Chadwick was appointed as the new headteacher of the school. I certainly can think of no one better to lead the school in future years and know that I will be leaving it in very safe hands. I have absolutely no doubt that the school will continue to go from strength to strength under her leadership. Although she doesn't formally take up her post until September, we are already working together closely to ensure a smooth transfer.

Another exciting development for the school is that preparatory work for our new classroom is now taking place. The architect has visited the school to ascertain what is needed while electrical and site surveys have begun. Although the classroom will not be ready for use until some point in the next academic year, it is wonderful to know that it is really going to happen.

Just before the half term break, we underwent a SIAMS inspection - this gave us the opportunity to identify our strengths and areas for development as a church school. The report particularly recognises the positive impact that our Christian vision has on personal growth and learning and on the excellent support given to those in need, enabling all stakeholders to flourish in our setting. Over the coming months, we will be addressing the areas for development so that we can further strengthen our existing good practice.

Our Sponsored Pancake Toss on Shrove Tuesday was great fun - we were absolutely amazed at how many flips the children managed! We are incredibly grateful for the staggering amount of money which has been donated as a result - so far we have banked a superb £1418. This money will be used to help fund our new Reading Den which will hopefully be installed on the school field in the coming months. The pancake races at the end of the day were also thoroughly enjoyed by everyone who took part - it's certainly a lot harder than it looks, running along as fast as you can whilst flipping a pancake at the same time! As always, our children rose to the challenge.

Our focus book for book week was 'Midnight Fair' by Gideon Sterer. The week got off to a fantastic start with the arrival of a funfair ride on the school playground - this certainly was a 'wow' event! We are very grateful to Phil West for his help in organising and subsidising the cost of this for us.

Fiona Taylor
 Head Teacher



The sponsored pancake toss

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What a Difference a Year Makes!

After the drought of last summer, we were definitely reminded this winter that Chimney Meadows Nature Reserve lies on the floodplain of the River Thames!



It has been an exciting time, seeing the recently constructed Shifford Weir bypass channel, designed not only to help fish move more freely, but also provide habitats for wetland wildlife and connect the river and floodplain, develop and in action.

Soon after completion (November 2021), grey heron, great white and little egret were noticed standing next to the channel, along with wading birds such as green sandpiper and later on curlew and snipe. Over the summer, wasps created nests in the bank and dragonflies and damselflies were observed laying eggs, whilst 8 cattle egret put in an appearance. Kingfishers and grey wagtails were seen more frequently and vegetation such as watercress and water forget-me-not colonized the banks. Signs of otters became a common feature.

A year on, a fish survey revealed minnow, stone loach, bullhead, dace, chub, bleak, roach, perch, gudgeon were present in the meandering 450m channel and approx. 450 were caught in a 100m stretch.

As the river went into flood, water started to spill out of the channel as planned and November to January, there were spectacular displays of wildfowl on and flying over the flooded fields – more than 4,000 teal (collectively known as a spring), several hundred wigeon, over 150 pintail, approx. 60 gadwall, geese, mallard and coot. By February, water levels were dropping, but where there was still standing water, large flocks of lapwing remained.

In recent weeks curlew have been heard, returning to breed. To catch a glimpse of them walk along the Thames Path this spring/summer and enjoy views from the new bird observation platform, funded by LEADER. For further information visit Berk, Bucks and Oxon website (www.bbwt.org.uk).

Lisa Lane



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Going Green - Sustainable Living

Last Christmas my mother gave each of her three children an amaryllis bulb, with the challenge to see who could get the first flower. Spoiler alert – I lost convincingly, but more on that later.

Having been asked to write about sustainable living I am going to start with a question: What do you think and feel when you see these words and phrases like these?

Climate Emergency Extinction Rebellion Insulate Britain

69% of global wildlife populations lost in 48 years (Living Planet Report 2022)

Daily, we are inundated with information, statistics, life-stories and protest reports. For some people these are a call to action, but for many it's a case of information overload; the consequences of climate change wash over us because they seem too big to process.

If we ever let events and information sink in, we may feel a range of emotions: anger, frustration, powerlessness, hopelessness, apathy, or a mix of all of these. These are all legitimate emotional responses that may change from day to day. As we try to process these feelings, one thing that helps is to let them encourage us into action. These acts may be small or large, but they help us not to feel like we've buried our heads in the sand!

In the next editions of Voices we'll examine actions that can be taken to respond to climate change.



Our new nursery class caters for children from 2.5 years old until they are ready to start school.

Places are available in sessions as follows:

2.5 year olds – mornings only
(9 – 12) 3 – 4 year olds – 15 hours:
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The first action can be small and simple: plant something and watch it grow. We lost the amaryllis flower race, but watching life grow from a hopelessly dead looking bulb is a thing of amazing beauty. In a small way, it empowers us to hope through the things we can influence and to celebrate the beauty of the planet.

Richard Bloomfield

Phoenix to Flames of Glory - Aston FC U11's



Left to Right Back Row: Freddie Isherwood, Oscar Rice, Riley Clark, Sophia Tingley, Santi Sunblad, Harry Whittington, Jack Rackham

Left to Right Front Row: Tom Buxton, George Hamilton, Toby Gidlow, Jamie Mobey, Jude Lewis-Mutch, Riley Pitts, Charlie Glaister, Daniel Sutton

In late June of 2022, despite years of effort and countless hours and days on the training pitch and playing very competitively in the Witney and District league under the brilliant leadership of Kevin Alcraft and with the support of Simon Sunblad sadly the decision was made to fold the Aston U11's team. Due simply to not having enough players able to commit on a Saturday with the jump from 7 a side to 9 a side.

After contacting local clubs to see whether they would keep a group of five players together, it became evident that sadly wouldn't happen. A group of friends decided to Phoenix the team – by moving to the Oxford Mail league meaning games would now be on a Sunday, allowing players from other local teams to come and play. We advertised on websites, hand delivered flyers and held an open evening ...it became evident that a team could be formed.

A quick friendly then the new league season was upon us, and despite hitting the post five times, the crossbar three times and missing a penalty we lost our first ever competitive game 2-1.

Since then, the team has won the last 19 matches scoring more than 80

goals and conceded only four - resulting in promotion from the D to the C league and currently in pole position to again be promoted to the B league, being the highest ranked team in West Oxfordshire at U11.

The standout moment of the season thus far was on the 8th of January this year when the team won the Oxford Mail U11 Trophy Final against Stonefield Strikers FC 4-1, with two goals from Riley Clark and one apiece from Charlie Glaister and Jack Rackham.

At the time of writing this piece we have just reached our second final of the season this time the Oxford Mail U11 Knockout Trophy Final likely to be played on the 12th March at the Aston Playing Fields, KO 10.30am if you would like to join the regular 50-60 supporters on a Sunday we would love to see you.

The Aston FC U10's reached the final in the same competition under the leadership of Chris Jordan and Ashley Edwards.

It would be extremely remiss of me not to mention the wonderful players and their amazingly supportive parents and my great friend Luke Glaister for all his efforts this season. The very kind

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sponsorship that was offered by lifelong friends Jack Mungall , Kylie Woollard and James Woollard of Polythene UK. Aston resident, business owner, number one supporter of the team and his grandson Oscar Rice, Mr Kevin Bunyan of KBS and Mr Patrick Hook who's support of the team and Aston Youth Football Club is an amazing example of the impact a business leader can have on a community like ours in Aston. We are extremely grateful to him and his family for their continued support.

Owen Clark

S J Cooper

General Builder

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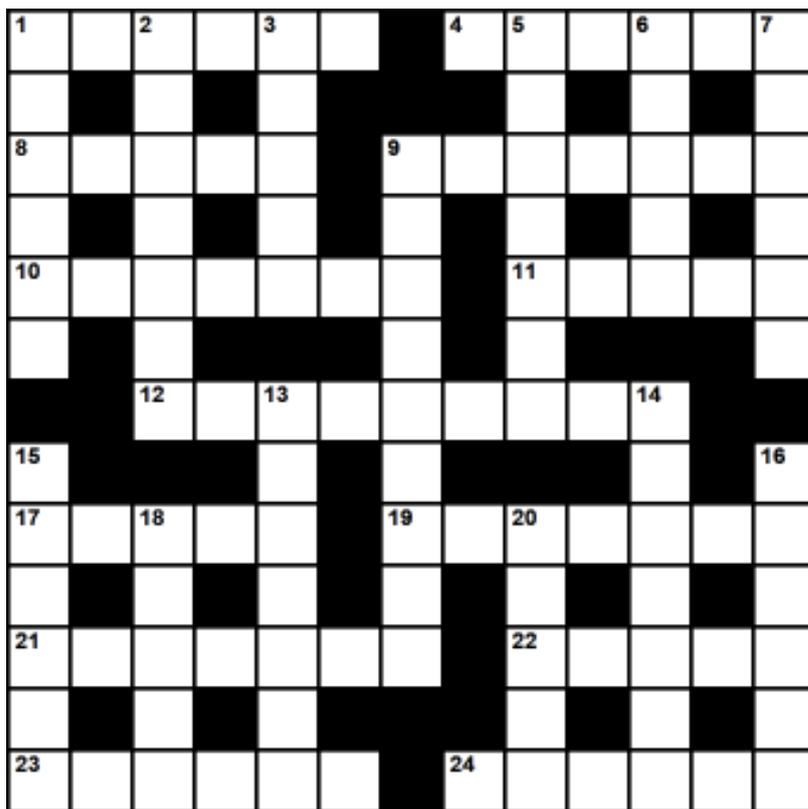
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Crossword Puzzle



Across

- 1 Scallywag (6)
- 4 Arrival (6)
- 8 Comic turtles (5)
- 9 Anti (7)
- 10 Sage (7)
- 11 Banishment (5)
- 12 Small figure (9)
- 17 Russian cottage (5)
- 19 Rather old (7)
- 21 Nobleman's rank (7)
- 22 Sand-eel (5)
- 23 Conclusion (6)
- 24 Fairground ride (6)

Down

- 1 Fame (6)
- 2 Cavities (7)
- 3 Warning device (5)
- 5 Regional accent (7)
- 6 Boredom (5)
- 7 Named (6)
- 9 Repeated beyond a joke (2,7)
- 13 To give up (7)
- 14 Piece of jewelry (7)
- 15 To stick to (6)
- 16 Soft mineral (6)
- 18 Healed (5)
- 20 Lie low (5)

Answers on page 21

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The Aston and Cote Day Centre

Alphabet Quiz

A simple twenty question quiz, but all the answers begin with the letter K.



1. What is the name of this Swedish rock band?
2. Where in Oxfordshire would you find this church?
3. What is the name of this Australian marsupial?
4. In which martial art are long poles used?
5. What is the name of Africa's highest mountain?
6. Energy is often divided into potential and.....?
7. Ray Davies fronted which band?
8. What is the name of the only football team playing in The Scottish League which begins with K?
9. Samuel Coleridge Taylor wrote a poem about which Mogul ruler?
10. What is the bingo call for number one?
11. Which famous pass in Pakistan borders Afghanistan?
12. The disease scrofula was once known as?
13. Which palace at Crete became the centre of the Minoan civilization?
14. Which is the largest village in Oxfordshire?
15. What canoe, a palindrome, was originally used by the Inuit?
16. What surname is shared by the film stars, Buster, Diane and Michael?
17. What is the name of the national airline of the Netherlands?
18. What is the first name of Pottery Throw Downs expert judge Brymer Jones?
19. Who made "exceedingly good cakes"?
20. What was the name of Dr Who's robotic dog?

Compiled by Andrew Long

Answers on page 21

The Aston and Cote Day Centre

Another two months have passed since the last Voices. We reopened after the Christmas break on Wednesday January 4th and it was great to see all our members again – and it seemed they were just as happy to be back as we were.

The “Aston and Cote Day Centre” is a “warm place” in all senses of the word – we offer a happy, safe place for people to meet up with old friends and then have a beautiful freshly cooked hot meal to warm the “inner person”!

Our days, as usual, start with some gentle seated exercise, followed by a two-course lunch then other activities in the afternoon. Recently we have devised a “Name that Tune” game – a great success – together with quizzes, bingo, musical requests and sing-alongs, (particularly popular, often the cause of gales of laughter). Also, regularly we have musicians in to play live music.

Looking ahead, our programme is arranged through to July with musicians, speakers, and activities. If the weather behaves itself, there could well be a couple of outings. We are also going to have a presence at the Aston Fete on June 17th to look forward to.

We are always looking for volunteers – in particular we need two more cooks to join our voluntary cooking team.



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Nature Natters - Dogs

One of the side-effects of lockdown has been an enormous increase in the number of families with a pet dog. So, I was very interested in some stuff I read recently about dogs, and it has made me look at ordinary family dogs in a very different light. The first thing is that all dogs are descended from wolves. It used to be thought that some dogs were descended from jackals, but it's clear now that they all come from wolves. So, dogs are really wolves at heart even the lovable Labrador sleeping by the fire.



Then somebody pointed out that wolves howl, but, with the exception of hounds, dogs bark. So, foxhounds don't bark in pursuit of a fox, they bay, which is a communication between the hounds and is much like wolves howling. So, the suggestion is that dogs have evolved to bark as part of their contract with humans. That relationship between humans and dogs goes way back and is surely based on dogs helping humans hunt. But any relationship needs a form of communication, and the suggestion is that a dog's bark is just that – a way for dogs to communicate with humans.

So, this hypothesis was tested in the best scientific method. First each dog's barks were recorded, but not just the one bark, they were recorded in different situations such as when a dog is the wrong side of a door, or when the postman rings the doorbell. It turned out that every dog has a range of barks for different situations. The important thing though is that when the different barks were played to the dog's owners, they could identify what the dog was barking about. So, dogs have evolved a way of communicating with humans and are pretty good at manipulating us.

James Gray

School Sports Report



After our success at the Witney school's cross country, our best teams and runners made their way to the West Oxfordshire round. The races were tough and the competition tougher. Ethan, the lone Aston runner in the U9 race finished in a very respectable 7th place.

In the U11 races the boys team finished in 8th place and the girls finished in 5th.

The highlight of the morning came from

Abi who after 2,000m worth of running found some extra energy to sprint past someone round the final bend to earn herself an amazing bronze medal.

The year 4 boys enjoyed a sunny, and slightly muddy, afternoon at Cokethorpe playing football. We took two teams of eager children and after a quick warm up we were straight into our games. Both Aston teams won their games comfortably with lots of names on the score sheet. The Cokethorpe children voted Ned the player of the match due to his saves in the first half and his great passing and shooting in the second half.



Sam Hook

Promoting British Food and Farming

It won't be long before we start lambing our sheep. We have 300 breeding ewes who will lamb between the end of March and end of April. Whilst tiring and quite demanding on our family, it does bring a lot of reward, helping new life into the world.



Easter is upon us. An opportunity to celebrate with family and friends and eat lots of tasty treats too.

So, I thought I would share with you my easy-to-follow recipe for Easter Blondies. You can get the kids involved with this one and try not to snaffle too many mini chocolate eggs in the process!

You will need:

225g butter
100g white chocolate
250g light brown sugar
150g caster sugar
3 large eggs
1 tsp of vanilla extract
300g plain flour
1 tsp baking powder
160g mini chocolate eggs

Method

Place the butter and chocolate into a small bowl and melt in the microwave. Allow to cool for 5 mins. Mix the light brown and caster sugar together with the eggs. Add the vanilla extract.

Slowly start mixing the butter / choc mixture into the eggs and sugar bit by bit. Add the baking powder and flour to the mixture and mix. Use a rolling pin to crush 80g of mini eggs (saving 80g for later) and add to the mixture.

Spoon mixture into a greased tray and bake for 40 mins at 200c. Bring out of the oven. The cake should be slightly wobbly. Press the remaining mini eggs into the top of the cake.

You can find more tasty recipes in my new e-book No Fuss Meals For Busy Parents by visiting:

<https://www.millyfyfe.com/store/No-Fuss-Meals-for-Busy-Parents-E-Book-p516676969> or follow the pages on social media @NoFussMealsForBusyParents or www.nofussmealsforbusyparents.com

Milly Fyfe
Podcaster - Influencer - Food Producer - Blogger
Creator of the food blog 'No Fuss Meals for Busy Parents'
Food and Farming podcast 'The Countryside Kitchen meets'
Dare to be Different!

Hoppy Easter



Can you find twelve decorated eggs in this picture?

ANSWERS

Solution to the Crossword Puzzle

R	A	S	C	A	L	A	D	V	E	N	T
E	I	L				I	N	I			
N	I	N	J	A		A	G	A	I	N	S
O	U	R				D		L	U	L	
W	I	S	E	M	A	N		E	X	I	L
N	E					A	C				D
			S	T	A	T	U	E	T	T	E
A			B			S			A		G
D	A	C	H	A		E	L	D	E	R	L
H		U		N		A		O		R	P
E	A	R	L	D	O	M		G	R	I	G
R		E		O				G		N	U
E	N	D	I	N	G		D	O	D	G	E
											M

Answers to the Alphabet Quiz

1. Katatonia.
2. Kencot.
3. Koala.
4. Kendo.
5. Mount Kilimanjaro.
6. Kinetic.
7. The Kinks.
8. Kilmarnock.
9. Kubla Khan.
10. Kelly's Eye.
11. The Khyber Pass.
12. King's Evil.
13. Knossos.
14. Kidlington.
15. Kayak.
16. Keaton.
17. KLM.
18. Keith.
19. Mr Kipling.
20. K9.

Diary

March

Saturday 18th

Folk Night

7.30 Village Hall

Thursday 30th

History Group 'The Aston Dig'

A talk by Charlotte Bishop

7.30 Fellowship Centre

April

Tuesday 4th

Informal Art Group

2.30 Fellowship Centre

Thursday 6th

Parish Council

7.30 Village Hall

Wednesday 12th

WI 'Women of Oxford'

7.30 Village Hall

Tuesday 18th

Annual Parish Meeting

7.30 pm Village Hall

Thursday 27th

History Group

AGM &

'Stories of conscientious

objectors in WWI Oxfordshire'

7.30 Fellowship Centre

May

Tuesday 2nd

Informal Art Group

2.30 Fellowship Centre

Thursday 4th

Parish Council

7.30 Village Hall

Wednesday 10th

WI Resolutions / Talk on Honey

7.30 Village Hall

Weekly Groups

Mondays

Toddlers

9.00 - 11.00

Fellowship Centre

Mondays

Brownies

6 - 7.30 Fellowship Centre

Wednesdays

Day Centre

10am - 3.00 pm

Fellowship Centre

Thursdays

Badminton Club

7.45 - 9.15 Village Hall

BAMPTON COMMUNITY ARCHIVE



EXHIBITIONS TALKS & EVENTS GIFT SHOP

*with locally made unique
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The Old Grammar School,
Church View, Bampton,
Open Daily 10am - 4pm
www.bamptoncommunityhub.org

Folk Night

Sat 18th March

Aston & Cote Village Hall



Featuring
Scarecrows

Supported by **Under the Wychwood**

7:00pm for **7:30pm start**

Tickets £12

Tickets on sale from Aston Repair Depot
and Sylvia, 2 Cote Road. 01993 850 553

MARTIN DREW

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Ingrown Nails • Fungal Conditions • Verruca

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PHONE FOR APPOINTMENTS

01993 851130

Established 10 years



Our Motto "Prompt Attention"



Exciting New Community Project
working with the over 65's. We
are looking for more Volunteers
to join our team for a few hours
every Wednesday morning/
afternoon. Venue is Fellowship
Centre, Aston Village.

For more details ring
Karen 07887974468.

Due to a change in
circumstances,
the Fete Committee
is planning a slightly
different event
this year on

Saturday June 17th

Watch this space !

..... **Church Services**

St. James, Aston



**Aston and Cote
Community
Church**



Service pattern	
First Sunday	
9.30am	St James, Aston, Holy Communion
Second Sunday	
9.15am	St Mary's, Shifford, Holy Communion
9.30am	St James, Aston Family Service
Third Sunday	
9.30am	St James, Aston Holy Communion
6.00pm	St Mary's, Shifford Evensong
Fourth Sunday	
9.30am	St James, Aston Family Service



Date	
19-Mar	10.00am Worship, talk, and Sunday School
26-Mar	10.00am Worship, talk, and Sunday School
02-Apr	10.00am Worship, talk and Sunday School
09-Apr	10.00am Easter Day Family Service
16-Apr	10.00am Worship, talk, and Sunday School
23-Apr	10.00am Worship, talk, and Sunday School
30-Apr	10.00am Worship, talk, and Sunday School
07-May	11.00am King's Coronation Weekend Family Service and picnic
14-May	No meeting in Aston (10.30am Celebration service in Witney)

Do also check for notices of any changes and updates, on the church noticeboard, WhatsApp, The St James Facebook and other social media. These services are regularly live streamed via Facebook

This spring, we continue our Sunday morning services, with talks based on the Faith, Hope and Salvation that we experience through faith in Jesus.

Once every two months we meet with our sister churches in the local 'Roots and Rivers' network for a joint Celebration. Please contact us for details of how to take part in these celebrations. Please contact Alastair Barnett on acc@rootsanddrivers.uk for more details, or go to our website at <https://astoncotecc.org.uk/>

Andrew Long – Chair and Editor (Content)
 Helen Wheaton – Editor (Technical)
 Ian Peat – Treasurer
 Martin Bowley – Secretary and Lay Up
 Paul Lock – Lay Up
 Tom England – Lay Up
 Liz Harper – Advertising and Distribution
 Lizzie Wood
 Brenda Smith



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 Aston, Cote, Shifford and Chimney Parish Council for their grant

Mother & Toddler Group

9am – 11am
Fellowship Centre

Baby Corner. Toddler Toys. Crafts. Songs and Games
£2.00 per family

Please come along and meet new friends

Bampton Library Opening Times:

Monday 2-5pm and 5.30-7pm
 Tuesday CLOSED
 Wednesday 10-12.30pm
 Thursday 2-5pm
 Friday CLOSED
 Saturday 10-12.30pm
 Sunday CLOSED

All Welcome !

Shop Opening Hours:

Mon – Wed 08:30 – 16:00
 Thu – Fri 08:30 – 17:00
 Saturday 08:30 – 14:00
 Sun & Bank Holidays 09:00 – 12:00

Post Office Opening Hours:

Monday 09:30 – 12:30
 Wednesday 09:30 – 12:30
 Friday 09:30 – 12:30

Eating Out - The White Hart, Fyfield



Trawling through my restaurant bookmarks to find somewhere nice for our wedding anniversary, I came upon the White Hart in Fyfield. We last visited four years ago for my 61st and decided to see if it was still as good as we recalled.

The trouble with sample menus is that sometimes you choose a restaurant because a dish catches your eye, but then arrive to find it's no longer on the menu and nothing else takes your fancy. My wife was looking forward to pan fried sea bream, new potatoes, crab, tender stem broccoli, crab sauce & lovage oil, only to find the bream had been replaced by skate wing. She'd never tried skate, so asked how it came and if it had bones, and on hearing yes, asked if they could be removed. Initially, the server thought it might not be possible during the busy 1pm sitting, but the chef kindly obliged, and she loved it. It's this type of service that dictates whether you return.

Being less adventurous, I had the rare and excellent aged rib-eye steak, very good chips, sautéed mushrooms, cherry tomatoes, rocket and watercress, declining the choice of sauces.

For dessert we both chose sticky toffee pudding, warm toffee sauce, praline tuille and vanilla ice cream – still as excellent and light as we remembered from our previous visit. With a glass of Sicilian wine, and dessert washed down with a sweet Sauterne, it was an excellent meal.

The building is a restored 15th century Chantry House, but the food is definitely modern British, with much grown in the on-site garden or sourced as locally as possible. They make their own pasta, bread, ice cream and even horseradish sauce, and the wood-fired kitchen provides pizzas on selected days.

A nice touch was the anniversary card on the table and, as we ate dessert, a tray with 'Happy Anniversary' in chocolate calligraphy that impressed with the steady hand it must have taken. Considering it's not exactly visible to passing traffic, just a few seconds off the A420, it was pretty full, so they must be doing something right. It's hard these days to get a good meal for much under £50 a head, but as long as the quality and service is good, we don't mind splashing out, so give them a try.

Russ Avis

