

GORING HEATH NEWSLETTER

*News, Information
and Comment for
Goring Heath,
Whitchurch Hill
and Crays Pond*

February 2024
Issue 195

Visit us at:
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goringheathnewsletter@gmail.com

Goring Heath Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting

Goring Heath Parish Hall
B471 Whitchurch Hill
RG8 7NY

Tuesday April 9th 2024
8.00pm - 9.30pm
All welcome

Guest Speaker: The Manager, Hardwick Estate

Refreshments will be available.

For further information or to add to the agenda please contact the clerk at goringheathparishcouncil@gmail.com

or the Parish website at <https://www.goringheath.com>

Chair's Comments



Another year- perhaps another set of easily broken or forgotten New Year resolutions!

How about making one that will bring pleasure rather than denial! Vow to attend at least one village event if you have not previously done so.

The quiz is on next month. Can you bring along a team to out-fox the perennial winners? New blood (don't worry no actual blood is drawn although there is some heated enthusiasm) is always welcome. Even if you are very inept at answering any of Mike's fiendish questions, as I was last year, there is still lots of fun to be had. Winning isn't, quite, everything. And there is the fish and chip supper to give your brain some energy, and the bar to console you or to celebrate with!

Can you suggest some good resolutions to help the Parish for 2024? Do let me know your ideas - contacts at the back of the magazine.

Here are two that I am going to attempt;

- Take a bag to pick up litter at least once a week- I am forever walking along with grubby old cans, bottles and crisp packets, in my hand. Anyone driving by probably thinks I am the local alcoholic!
- Walk all the footpaths in the Parish. I do try to do this in my role as footpath rep but I always seem to miss some. There is a very extensive network in our area, mostly in good order.

On a related matter, if you are looking for a volunteer opportunity, or a way to become more involved locally – we are still looking for two more councillors. It really is not onerous. The monthly meetings are good natured, and, contrary to received wisdom, we are not a bunch of stuffy old codgers sitting in a dark room and talking drivel for hours. But, we are, mostly, not in the first flush of youth so it would be really good if someone younger, perhaps with school age children, joined us.

Unfortunately, we cannot offer the bizarre entertainment value of the meetings at Dibley, but maybe that could be your challenge for 2014.

Looking forward to the rest of the year, there are interesting plans being proposed for the running of the Hardwick estate, about half of which lies within Goring Heath. See the article in this magazine by Miriam Rose. The estate, once at the forefront of the organic movement, and still completely organically managed, is now spearheading new ways to manage a large country estate in the 21st century. As with the organic farming, I suspect many large landowners

are watching with interest to see how it all works.

Elsewhere in the parish, the plans for the pond at Cray's Pond are reaching fruition. The work to the trees should be carried out next month, as part of the plans to rejuvenate the pond, stop it silting up and reverting to scrubby woodland. Ponds are a vital habitat for numerous creatures and huge numbers have been lost over recent years. We are keen for our ponds, the Tine Pits as well as at Cray's Pond, to be preserved for future generations to enjoy.

Liz Collas

Chair of the Parish Council

Annual Parish Meeting - 9th April 2024

All Welcome!

If you'd like the chance to catch up with your local parish councillors and to find out what's happening in your local area, then come along to the Annual Parish Meeting.

It's at Goring Heath Parish Hall on Tuesday 9th April at 8 pm.

The Parish Council would like to extend a FORMAL INVITATION and special thanks this year to all the litter pickers, newsletter distributors and contributors, telephone box tidiers, speedwatch volunteers, footpath walkers, defibrillator monitors, playground keepers, fete volunteers and all of you who help us to keep this parish such a lovely place to live.

This year we will also be inviting a special guest speaker.

Miriam Rose from Hardwick will be able to update us all on developments on the estate which makes up a large area of the Parish. This will be in addition to reports from all our local clubs and societies, the bus, and other interesting developments such as the refurbishment of the playground and recent tree works.

REFRESHMENTS WILL BE AVAILABLE

For more information, or if you would like to see/ add to the agenda, contact the clerk at goringheathparishcouncil@gmail.com or take a look at Goringheath.com for further details.

Planning Decisions

The following planning applications, submitted between 20th October 2023 and 9th January 2024 have been considered. Where a decision is not given, it means the Parish Council has not yet received written confirmation from SODC.



| Premises and application details | Parish Council | Notes |
|---|-----------------|-------|
| <u>P23/S3820/FU</u> Land adjacent to Conway Cottage Cray's Pond. Erection of outbuilding (retrospective). Window removed from side elevation as shown on amended plans received 13th Dec 2023 | Objection | |
| <u>P23/S4120/FU</u> Palmer Cottage Meadow Goring Heath Road Whitchurch Hill Construction of new access road | No strong views | |
| <u>P23/S4248/LDP</u> 4 Hill Bottom Close Flat roof single storage rear extension with an associated patio less than 30cm high | No strong views | |
| <u>P23/S4267/HH</u> The Old Parsonage Goring Heath Road Whitchurch Hill Installation of new windows to front elevation at ground and first floor and removal of existing render to front elevation and installation of new breathable lime render | No strong views | |

We would like to point out that No Strong Views is one of only three choices that SODC gives the parish council. It does not illustrate tacit approval of an application. Typically it is supplemented with specific comments from the parish council highlighting areas of concern.

Party hire

Don't forget you can hire cutlery, glasses, plates, catering tea-pots, good folding chairs and tables from Goring Heath Village Hall at competitive prices, and it's nice and local.

For information and booking:

goringheathparishhall@gmail.com

District Councillor's Commentary

After many years on Goring Heath Parish Council, I stood for the District Council as I was not impressed by some of the decisions taken by the planning committee when I attended as a parish council representative.



Now I am on the District Council, and on the planning committee, I have been able to influence some of the decisions to be made in line with the values that I hold, and I am pleased that some of those decisions have been upheld on appeal.

There are still cases where approval is given for developments that I don't like, but it is really a good thing that these decisions are not based on personal preferences but in accordance with national and local policy. National Policy is set out in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and one of the main elements of the NPPF is that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Of course, just what is meant by sustainable is not at all clear, and there are often conflicting policies to consider about a development.

When it comes to considering actual planning applications, one of the matters that parish councils will feel most strongly about is retrospective applications, in other words a planning application for something that has already been developed. However, there is no local or national policy which requires that the fact that an application is retrospective is relevant to a planning decision; the decision must only be made on planning grounds. Similarly, an application cannot be refused or approved because of who the applicant is, or the claimed personal needs of the applicant such as family size or need to accommodate an aged relative.

One of the reasons retrospective applications come forward is that they arise as part of the process of addressing a planning enforcement matter, in other words development has taken place that should have had planning consent. A retrospective application regularises the position. Although many people have an expectation that enforcement means that the council – or demolition contractors – move in to remove or demolish what has been built, that rarely happens. Readers of the Henley Standard may be aware of the saga of an unlawful art studio that was built at Rotherfield Peppard. This was a case where the developer used all the options available to try and legitimise an unlawful development. However, I believe that demolition and site clearance is now in the offing. A huge expense must have been incurred by this developer in both building work and legal and professional costs, all wasted.

There are few cases as dramatic as this “Art Studio” at Rotherfield Peppard,

and very often a retrospective application, brought forward through enforcement, is granted. This is because the development does not cause “planning harm” and might well have been granted consent if it had gone through the normal, proper process. At other times changes are made to something that is already built to fix the objectionable aspects of the development.

Other countries take a more robust attitude. Some years ago, I was walking a coastal path in Turkey, and found that a waterside café recommended in my guide book had been demolished, as had several villas nearby that had been built illegally. I don’t suppose that the process in Turkey had taken as long as it does here, where the Art Studio case has been going on for about 6 years.

The Local Plan, drafted in compliance with the NPPF, sets out the policies for development, and while there is a current plan, a new Joint Local Plan (JLP2041) is being developed with Vale of White Horse. There will be a consultation opening very shortly. The results of the 2022 Consultation which will help to frame this new Joint Local Plan is on the SODC website, and it is interesting to see the variety of views that are expressed about issues. I would urge everyone to respond to the next round of consultations on the forthcoming Joint Local Plan 2041.

Peter Dragonetti

SODC District Councillor for Kidmore End, Whitchurch, Goring Heath and Mapledurham Heath



Chess Group

The first and third Wednesdays of the month see a group of players meet at the Sun Pub at 12 noon.

We play chess for a couple of hours with drinks and sandwiches available to purchase as lunchtime refreshment.

We are non-league, intermediate players, who just enjoy a game.

If you would like to know more please ring me on 07876531881.

You would be made very welcome!

Chris Bergmann

Dates for your Diary

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Sat 24 th Feb | Mike Holland Quiz Night |
| Wed 29 th Feb | Hardwick Estate: Public Consultation Meeting |
| Wed 20 th March | Whitchurch Preschool Bingo Night |
| Sat 23 rd March | Litter Pick - 10am |
| Tues 9 th April | Annual Parish Meeting - 8pm |
| Sat 25 th May | Whitchurch Hill Village Fete |

Goring Heath Litter Pick

Saturday 23rd March : 10am

Join us to tidy up the verges and paths of the Parish

Litter bags are provided, but please wear gloves. A parish Councillor will be on hand to assist at the locations

Meeting points:

Goring Heath Parish Hall Car Park
Old Post Office Crossroads

Stop Press!!

Playground refurbishment on the recreation ground starts
20th March 2024

Traffic management update

Following requests from residents across the parish, the Parish Council has investigated speed reductions at a number of locations in Goring Heath. We have requested Oxfordshire County Council (as the Highways Authority) to take further action as follows. Note that OCC carry out their own investigations and consult further, where required.

- Reduction of the speed limit on the B471 around the Parish Hall from 40 to 30 mph: OCC are pursuing this, recognising the presence of housing, the Parish Hall and the church, the lack of pavements and streetlights, observations on speeding and past accidents as well as the unanimous view of residents on that stretch of road. We have asked for an update on timescales but have not yet received this.
- Reduction of the speed limit on the B471 down the hill past the war memorial to W-O-T from 40 to 30 mph: Given the number of accidents on the hill we sought to link this to the above speed reduction. However, we were advised by OCC that the case for this speed reduction was harder to make. In order to make faster progress on the speed reduction past the Parish Hall we have shelved this request for the time being.
- 20 mph zone within the Whitchurch Hill village triangle including Hill Bottom and Goring Heath Road and all roads within the triangle, but not the B471: This is confirmed as being in the 3rd tranche of the “20 is plenty” programme in Oxfordshire, so we anticipate that further action will be carried out in the coming months.
- 20 mph zone to replace the 30 mph zone in Crays Pond. We have sought to link this to the village triangle scheme above, provided that it would not lead to delays. A response from OCC is awaited.
- Reduction in the speed limit past Penny Royal. We have recently asked OCC to consider extending the 40-mph zone from Crays Pond to a point beyond the housing at Penny Royal. No reply has so far been received.

The Parish Council would like to thank the volunteer Speedwatch team for the data that they have provided for the process.

Mike Holland.



Crays Pond Goring Heath Community Speedwatch Group

Review

The Community Speedwatch (CSW) Group was established in August 2022 by the Parish Council in collaboration with Thames Valley Police (TVP). The Parish Council funded the Speedwatch signs at the entry gates to both Crays Pond and Whitchurch Hill.

There are six TVP approved sites - two in Whitchurch Hill and four in Crays Pond - and the group has undertaken 58 speedwatch sessions since its inception.

The Philosophy: to be highly visible as a reminder to drive considerately, rather than to catch speeders.

The Process: speeding drivers receive a letter from the police specifying the location/speed and a reminder to observe the speed limits. Repeat offenders may get a visit.

Data Review

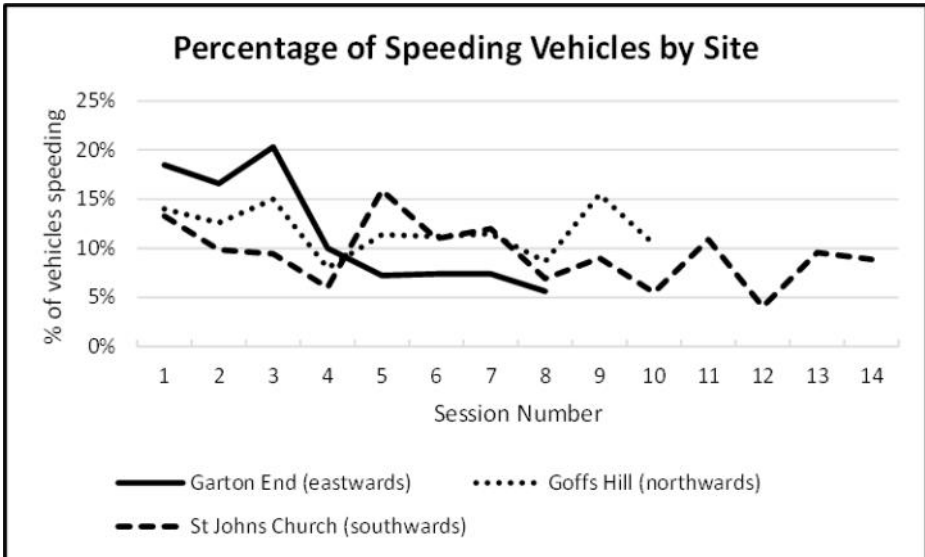
The majority of speeders come from three troublesome blackspots:

- Garton End, Crays Pond; traffic travelling east on the B4526 from Goring direction (30 mph)
- Goffs Hill, Crays Pond; traffic heading north on the B471 from Whitchurch Hill direction (30 mph)
- St Johns Church, Whitchurch Hill; traffic heading south on the B471 from Crays Pond direction (40 mph)

These three sites account for 33 speedwatch sessions since August 2022 (57% of all sessions) resulting in 399 motorists being formally reported to TVP for speeding. Going forward we want circa 75% of all sessions to be in these problem locations.

Goffs Hill and Garton End are both equally bad regarding motorists who fail to slow down after passing through the gates on entry to the 30 mph zones.

The graph overleaf illustrates the trend for these three locations. Garton End has shown some improvement over time, possibly due to our activity and high visibility, but it remains to be seen if this is permanent, or just a temporary blip.



Ideas to reduce speeding

As well as highly visible speedwatch sessions, other interventions would help reduce speeding through the parish.

Speed cameras, or a Speed Indicator Device (SID) would be of benefit. Woodcote Parish Council has recently installed some SIDs on the approach to the village. The CSW Group believes something similar is needed at the three blackspots. We also support the efforts to reduce the speed limits in the parish, although speed cameras and/or SIDs would still be required irrespective of the prevailing speed limit.

Volunteers needed!

We are always looking for volunteers. If anyone in our community wishes to help make our rural roads safer, they are most welcome to join the CSW Group. When a volunteer first registers, they complete an online training course which is quite simple and straightforward—usually completed in one evening session. After completion there is further on-the-job training; new operatives will attend the first CSW session as an observer to ‘look and learn’. We welcome the participation of more volunteers to send out the signal that we are serious about road safety in our community.

For further information please contact the CPGH CSW Group Coordinator.

Email: crayspondcsw@sent.com or Twitter: [@crayspondCSW](https://twitter.com/crayspondCSW)

Hello From Whitchurch Pre-School

What a terrific Autumn term we have had, learning new skills. playing outdoors and creating new items to take home. Rain or shine we have been outdoors; out and about in the village visiting the local sites or at our allotment just digging around in the mud.



New funding for 2-year-olds and spaces available

From April 2024 many families will be able to benefit from the change to government funding which will give 2 year olds 15 hours free childcare. We currently have spaces available for new starters aged from 2 years upwards.

To get in touch email hello@whitchurchpreschool.org

- We're open from Monday to Friday during term time, from 8.45am - 3.15pm, with an early drop-off option at 8.30am and late pick up 3.30pm
- Free government-funded places are available for eligible two-year-olds and 3 and 4 year olds for 15 or 30 hours per week during term time
- We offer hot lunch option
- We are Forest School, Healthy Smiles and Hygge accredited.
- Children from out of the Whitchurch catchment area are welcome to apply.



Help our allotment and spend in Tesco!

We want to make more of our dedicated outdoor space, but as the space is large it quickly becomes overgrown and hard for the staff and parent helpers to manage. So, we need a new design to make it better for the children and easier to maintain.



We need the help of local garden designers, gardeners and those green fingered to make it happen and local trades people to donate materials.

If you can help spare any time or donate towards this cause, please get in touch at hello@whitchurchpreschool.org

Vote for us at local Tesco stores

We are also applying to Tesco for a grant to support our allotment as part of the blue token scheme. This could give us up to £1500 towards the work. Next time you shop in your local Tesco store please vote for us. Voting is

open and closes in March. Stores you can vote in include Goring, Didcot and Wallingford.

Bingo: Wednesday 20th March to support essential building repairs

Our pre-school building is in urgent need of repairs and renovations so we are raising money for this cause.



There are great prizes to be won including a personal training session from Hannah Dunbar and a family pass to Bucklebury Farm - plus lots more! Everyone is welcome so buy a ticket on our website: www.whitchurchpreschool.org There will be more events to come!

3 FREE and EASY ways to support Whitchurch Pre-School

1. Become a Co-Op Member and select Whitchurch-on-Thames Pre-School. For every £1 spent 2p will be donated to our cause.
2. Shop with Amazon, go to <https://smile.amazon.co.uk/> and enter Whitchurch On Thames Pre-School, 0.5% of your order value will be given to Pre-School.
3. Sign up to easyfundraising.org.uk to support “Whitchurch Pre-School - Whitchurch-on-Thames”. This website allows you to shop with retailers like John Lewis, M&S, H&M then sends us a donation of up to 5%. Register for free at: https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/causes/whitchurchonthamespresch/?utm_campaign=raise-more&utm_content=w4

To donate anytime scan the QR code here

or go to: <https://donate.giveasyoulive.com/charity/whitchurchpreschool>

Thank you for all of your support! Registered Charity: 1183193



Mike Holland Quiz Night!

Goring Heath Parish Hall
Saturday 24th February 2024
7.30pm

Cost £15 per person
including Fish and Chip Supper

Book your table for a team of up to six

email:

events@goringheathparishhall.uk



Goring Heath Parish Charity
Regd. No 1056772

**WHITCHURCH HILL
VILLAGE FETE**

Saturday 25th May

**Whitchurch Hill Recreation Ground
RG8 7NX**

Gift and food stalls

Amusements

Children's races

Brass band

Tea tent and mobile pub

Egg Throwing Competition

to win the prestigious

Martin Wise Trophy

Whitchurch Hill WI

As March and our Annual Meeting approaches, we come to the end of our calendar year of programmed speakers and events.



We have had highs and lows. The significant lows have been the loss of members, Theresa Elsome in the summer and more recently Doreen Godley. We are a family of friends and feel their absences.

On a high we have had an excellent year of events. In the community we have run a couple of Saturday coffee mornings at the Art Cafe, run the tea tent for our Fete, and decorated the Well for the Coronation.

Within our group we've enjoyed lunch outings and a good selection of speakers. The Knit and Natter Group is proving popular too with some of the resulting craft items being donated to our local hospital. Our Christmas donation this last year was to the Wallingford Food Bank.

As I write we are looking forward to two more meetings and speakers before March - Anecdotes about Prime Ministers, and The Pleasure of Singing. The programme for 2024-25 will be published in the next couple of months.

If you are interested to learn more please give Frances a ring on 01189842162. We meet on the third Tuesday of the month at 10am in our Parish Hall. *Sally Bergmann*

Whitchurch & Goring Heath History Society

"Guess Who's Coming to Dinner?" is the title of our talk by Nick Brazil on Thursday 15th February. You might be surprised. Come along and find out at the meeting to be held at Whitchurch Village Hall at 7.30pm, with coffee and biscuits being served from 7pm. – not a full dinner unfortunately!

The talk follows the Annual General Meeting of the Society, which is now thirty years old. Looking at our records I see that Doreen Godley was on the steering committee right at the beginning, and has been treasurer and then committee member ever since, always active and involved in our discussions. She will be greatly missed.

As time moves on there is a danger that the history society itself becomes history. There is a need for an influx of interested people to carry on the study of the past as there is indeed always more to find out about our area, the people, the buildings, the events. Why not join us? Our subscription of £12 is a bargain against the £3 we have to charge for each meeting attended by a non-member. *Vicky Jordan*



Obituary: Doreen Godley

Many people were shocked and saddened to learn of the death of Doreen Godley, who died following a car accident when she hit a fallen tree near Penny Royal on 2nd January this year. She was a well loved long term resident of Whitchurch Hill, living until a few years ago in Rivacres with her husband Brian, moving after his death to a cottage in Goring.

Doreen had played an important part in the life of the community in Whitchurch Hill for many years. She was involved in the Twinning Association, WI and History Society, and she continued to join in with these local communities even after moving to Goring where she took an active part in in events and activities there.

Doreen Godley was a warm and friendly person, and her lively personality will be greatly missed.



Tots on The Hill

Come along and join the fun!

Every Thursday during term time, 10:00 - 11:30 am.
Let them: play, create, sing, snack and make friends.

While you enjoy a hot cuppa and a biscuit!

£3 per family.

@ Goring Heath Parish Hall

Whitchurch Hill (opposite St John's church)

For more information check out our Facebook page or email Debbie on

totsonthehill@myyahoo.com

REPAIR CAFÉ

Goring Village Hall

Saturdays 11:00am—1:30pm

First Saturday of every month

New, free repair service by volunteers to help reduce waste

Help reduce carbon emissions and Save our Planet

Bring up to two items needing repair or attention and we'll do our very best to fix them whilst you wait.

Voluntary donations are welcome to pay for hire of hall etc.

Refreshments available in Café Bellême



2024 — 3 Feb, 30 March, 1 June, 3 Aug, 5 Oct, 7 Dec

Information: 07789 871620

Enjoy a stroll but no-one to walk with?

Community Walks

As Chris and I did not move house as planned, our walks on the first Monday in the month continue as before.

Everyone is welcome. We walk for about one and a half hours - routes chosen to reflect the weather and season.

Some routes are always more familiar than others but there is always something new to see.

We gather at 10am at the end of Hill Bottom Close, by the post box.

If you want to know anything more just give me a ring on 07585195669

Sally Bergmann

Do you know any people who might need some help with small repairs in their home?

The **Home Improvement Agency** is dedicated to helping older and vulnerable people live safely and independently in their own homes by providing advice, assistance and grants for home adaptations, repairs, heating, dementia and safety within the home.

Their **Small Repairs Service** offers a handypersons scheme that will carry out small works within the home at a subsidised rate of £20 per hour for eligible households. The service is offered to vulnerable home owners who live within South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse districts. Vulnerable tenants may also use the service for jobs that are not the responsibility of the landlords.

The handyperson scheme is available to people:

- Aged 55 or over; or
- Have a disability or severe health problem that prevents them from carrying out the repair themselves.

What we can do?

- Home safety and falls prevention
- Home security
- Keysafe installations
- General household repairs
- Minor plumbing

Dementia Assistance

Working closely with Dementia Oxfordshire we have created a referral pathway that improves home support and quality of life within their home. Memory aids like calendars, clocks, whiteboards and safety measures such as locks, key safes, gas checks and signage can be requested immediately then delivered and installed FREE to the client.

Get in touch by emailing hia-sv@oxford.gov.uk

Or call us on 0300 373 5663

HOME
IMPROVEMENT AGENCY
hia-sv@oxford.gov.uk
0300 373 5663

OUR SERVICES INCLUDE:

- SMALL REPAIRS SERVICE
- REPAIRS AND ASSISTANCE
- DISABLED FACILITIES GRANTS
- DEMENTIA ASSISTANCE

www.oxford.gov.uk

OXFORD CITY COUNCIL

The Whitchurch Society's Art and Craft Exhibition 2023

This year's exhibition was a very enjoyable village event, held over the weekend of 18th/19th November in Whitchurch Village Hall, Manor Road. The exhibits were judged on the Friday evening by 4 external experts, and the winners were chosen in all the art, craft and photography categories, entered by adults and young people. The theme for the Joyce Voysey Prize was ' Re-use, Reduce, Recycle' and, not surprisingly, this encouraged a wide range of imaginative creations, especially from the younger exhibitors.

It was a very successful exhibition, with more exhibitors and more exhibits than in many previous years. This welcome increase is no doubt because we used Facebook for the first time to reach out to a wider audience, encouraging new talent to enter for the first time. As a result, there were 14 adult exhibitors who had never taken part before. In total, there were 192 entries across the full spectrum of classes, in art, craft, photography and new media, from 116 exhibitors, both adult and young people. It was enjoyed by many visitors over the weekend, as were the refreshments which were served on both days.

The full list of the prize winners can be found via the link on the Exhibition webpage on the Whitchurch website (whitchurchonthames.com/groups/artscrafts.html). The website's Photo Gallery holds a great selection of photos of the exhibition.

Also, on the stage, the three local schools, namely Whitchurch Pre-School, the Whitchurch Primary School and the Oratory Preparatory School, had set up impressive and colourful displays of school work by their students. These are always enjoyed by all the visitors.

I would like to thank all of the great team that helped in many ways to set the exhibition up, and without whom it would be impossible to achieve, in the tight schedule. My special thanks also must go to the planning and organising team (Sarah & Adrian Dixon, Wendy Ferguson, Jean-Marc Grosfort, and our new team member, Kate Lowe) and to the Whitchurch Society committee, for all their hard work and support which made it another successful show.

And remember, it is never too soon to start work on your entries for the 2024 exhibition!

Sally Woolhouse (*Exhibition co-ordinator*) sally@wotarts.co.uk



Thank you to everyone who has supported us and donated prizes and brought tickets for our Christmas Hamper raffle fund raiser. The total raised was £400.

We have been able to purchase new Paw Patrol small world resources, which the children are delighted with and will provide hours of fun! Contact us at www.checkendonpreschool.co.uk, phone 01491 682589, e-mail preschoolcheckendon@gmail.com or just pop in!

Woodcote Volunteers

We are entering a busy time now that Christmas and the New Year have passed. Our drivers and office team are working hard to provide Woodcote and surrounding villages with a service that some describe as a lifeline. Our clients are so amiable, so interesting to chat to, it really is a pleasure to be of use.



We cover the following villages – Woodcote, Ipsden, South Stoke, Whitchurch Hill, Crays Pond and Checkendon. (Residents of Goring have their own volunteer driver service). We can take people to medical appointments, social and recreational activities and probably anything else you can think of! As long as you live in our area and have no access to transport (including public transport) we can take you to where you need to go – with the only proviso it is relatively close. We take people as far as Oxford hospitals but that is about the limit – about 20 miles radius of Woodcote, give or take.

We do not charge but ask that you cover a driver's expenses, currently 45p per mile. We ask for a flat rate of £1.50 per journey if the drive is entirely within Woodcote. If you would struggle to pay a driver's expenses, please mention this to our office team when you book, as we may be able to help.

TO FINISH.....

A warm welcome to our latest new driver, Robin. Thank you so much for giving your time. As I write, he has already done his first drive and found it really enjoyable. If you are considering becoming one of our drivers, we would love to hear from you! Please go to our website to find out more and how to contact us.

As usual, if you need a driver, please don't hesitate to call our office on **01491 681171**. We collect from Woodcote and immediately surrounding villages. **Please give us as much notice as possible before the date you need us.** One of our friendly office workers will answer the phone between 9.30 and 11am on weekdays (excluding public holidays) and you can leave a message on the answerphone at other times.

Find out more about us by looking at our website:

www.woodcotevolunteers.org.uk

Or visit our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/woodcotevolunteers

Charitable Educational Grants

The Secretary of Whitchurch United Charities would like to remind all families that the Charity has funds available to help meet the costs associated with educational needs such as books, equipment or educational trips.

Eligible students are young people between the ages of 5 and 25 years and whose permanent residence is within the parish of Whitchurch.

Applications are processed twice a year, with the closing dates being 31st March and 30th September. However, late applications are considered if the available funds for the previous 6 month period have not been fully allocated.

All applications and decisions are treated in strict confidence by the Trustees.

If you would like to know more, please do contact Sarah Dixon (our Grant Application Secretary). Phone: 0118 984 4262,

e-mail: whitchurchunitedcharities@gmail.com

**St. Bartholomew's C of E Chapel,
The Allnutt Alms-Houses, Goring Heath, RG8 7RS**

Open to the Public --All Welcome

Sung Eucharist 1st & 3rd Sunday of the Month

Sung Matins 2nd & 4th & 5th Sunday of the Month at 11am

*Said Holy Communion at 9.00am on 2nd & 4th Sunday with
special prayers for the sick*

All Services are taken from the book of Common Prayer

Chaplain: Rev Peter Dewey, -- 07784912935

revpeterdewey@yahoo.co.uk

**Publicise your event and increase attendance by
giving us the dates.**

IT IS FREE

We welcome event dates from all local charities and groups for listing in the Newsletter. Please send the details to the Editor at:

goringheathnewsletter@gmail.com

Please allow sufficient time in advance for the publication of the appropriate newsletter. Contribution deadlines and publication dates are on the inside back cover.



Rosie Care

Dementia and Palliative Care
Trained and Experienced
Public Liability Insured, Enhanced DBS
Own Car and Blue Badge
Contact me on:
Tel 01491 682437 Mobile 07966 509 908



RG8 Badminton

We play at the Langtree Community Sports Hall in Woodcote on Thursday evenings.

Our Christmas games night this year was in memory of Chris Uden. Chris was a member and chair of the club for many years and made the club the success it is today. Chris was also our social secretary and organised our annual Christmas games and parties with great enthusiasm. Chris sadly passed away in October after a short illness. He offered his time as a volunteer for Reading Samaritans. We had a collection at the Christmas session and along with a club contribution we donated £191 to this worthy cause. Congratulations to the winners of this year's Christmas games night, Martin and Perdy.

We welcome both junior (14 years +) and adult members. All that we ask is that you are not totally new to badminton – that you know the rules and basic shots (even if they don't always work!). Juniors should have received some form of coaching. Fees are the equivalent to £3 per session – half for juniors. If you want to know more and would welcome some fitness, fun and friendship then visit our website www.rg8badminton.co.uk or ring **Julie on 07980 413026**.

Hardwick Happenings by Miriam Rose, Estate Manager

It's a pleasure to update our local community once again on the goings-on at Hardwick. The recent flooding has been dramatic but without damage for us here as we are lucky not to have any buildings on the floodplain, and our boater community have shown their resilience, canoeing across deep water to reach their boats.

In the last newsletter we informed you about the upcoming public consultation on Hardwick's future which we will now be holding in the Whitchurch Village Hall, with wine and cheese afterwards, on **29th February from 7 – 9pm**. We decided to put the date back to give us more time to prepare. I do apologise for any inconvenience caused. This will be an opportunity to find out about the succession changes and upcoming plans, including changes to the Stud Farm, and, as our local stakeholders, have your say about the future. Please do share this information with your neighbours especially around Whitchurch, Whitchurch Hill and Goring Heath, our closest communities.

All are welcome!

Flower power

Many of you may not know that Hardwick's woodlands are host to one of the UK's rarest orchids. Lady Orchid (*Orchis purpurea*) is a classic plant of the North Downs in Kent, but beyond Kent the species is extremely rare. Formerly it occurred into the Surrey North Downs and the South Downs in Sussex, but it was last seen in these two counties in 1959 and 1976 respectively.



However, in May 1961, a single plant was spotted in Bottom Wood by local man Roger Kemp. In the following years it disappeared but reappeared again in the 1970s after clear-felling allowed more light into the woods. By 1997, some 29 flowering spikes (and a total of 46 plants) were recorded from this small spot, creating a beautiful display. Since 1961, single Lady Orchid plants have been found at four other sites outside its usual range, including at the classic orchid site at Hartslock near Goring. In at least three of these sites the orchids are thought to have been introduced and have mostly failed to persist. However, genetic 'fingerprinting' has shown the Bottom Wood orchids to be the same as other UK plants, and its persistence here, suggests that it is most probably a truly natural and native colony.

Hardwick was recently successful in its application to Natural England's Species Recovery Fund, a national project to protect and enhance rare habitats, for a project to create pockets of 'woodland pasture' around the lady orchid and other rare orchid and other plant sites in our woodland, which should help the plants to grow and thrive. The ongoing success of the scheme will rely on volunteers managing the site going forward. If this is something you'd be interested in please get in touch:

forestry@hardwick.co.uk

Community Defibrillator

There is now a defibrillator available for community use outside the Path Hill Outdoors office at Path Hill Farm. We can arrange short training sessions for groups who wish to learn about its use.

Magdalen College Barge Restoration

The Swan at Streatley recently auctioned off its Magdalen Barge – one of the last remaining ferro-concrete hulled vessels in the country – due to increasing high costs and inflation.

The Barge is one of only five remaining barges from the original 23. This one survives because of its ferro-cement hull, groundbreaking in its time, and this hull is still now completely sound, surviving the test of time!

The sides need work but much of the original superstructure is solid and repairable according to buyer Paul Austin-Clark, who will be restoring the barge at Hardwick.

Paul is asking people to donate anything they can to 'float the boat', however, those who are able to pay a donation of £200 or more will be allocated a full day of hosted Magdalen College Barge activities.



Upcoming events

**29th February 2024, 7 – 9pm: Hardwick's Future:
Find out more and have your say**

Whitchurch Village Hall, wine and cheese to follow. A public consultation for local people regarding Hardwick's future with a focus on changes at the Stud Farm.

COUNTY and DISTRICT COUNCIL INFORMATION

SOUTH OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILLOR

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Council Offices: Abbey House, Abbey Close, Abingdon OX14 3JE
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OXFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCILLOR

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01865 792422 www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

| | | |
|----------------|---------------------------|--------------|
| POLICE | Thames Valley Police | 0845-8505505 |
| POLICE | PEC – Non-Emergency Calls | 101 |
| POTHLES | - | 0345-3101111 |

South Oxfordshire District Council New Department Numbers

Main Customer Service Number: 01235 422422

- ◆ **Planning** 01235 422600
- ◆ **Building control** 01235 422700
- ◆ **Environmental health, food and safety** 01235 422403
- ◆ **Licensing** 01235 422556
- ◆ **Elections** 01235 422407
- ◆ **Car parks** 01235 470118
- ◆ **Community safety** 01235 422590
- ◆ **Street naming and numbering** 01235 422344

EMAIL ADDRESS FOR NEWSLETTER

You can get in touch with the Goring Heath Newsletter by emailing:
goringheathnewsletter@gmail.com

This is for any queries, correspondence, feedback and copy submissions.

The Goring Heath Newsletter is published by the Parish Council six times a year and is delivered free to every household in the Parish.

To contributors to the Newsletter:-

It would be most helpful if copy could be submitted to the editor as a document attachment to email and sent to goringheathnewsletter@gmail.com

The views and opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Parish Council.

| Deadline for contributions | Publication month |
|----------------------------|-------------------|
| 15th March 2024 | April 2024 |
| 17th May 2024 | June 2024 |

LOCAL GROUPS—CONTACT DETAILS

| | | |
|--|--|-------------|
| Chiltern Society Footpath Representative | Liz Collas | 01491680466 |
| Chiltern Society Path Maintenance Volunteers | Howard Dell | 01494764149 |
| Goring Heath Parish Charity | Chris Whatmore | 01189844022 |
| Goring Heath Scouts, Brownies and Guides | Doreen Pechey | 01491681236 |
| Goring Thames Sailing Club | Jennie Wood | 01491875619 |
| Pilates (Friday Morning) | Michele Houston | 01491575205 |
| RG8 Badminton Club | Julie Drury | 07980413026 |
| South Oxfordshire Archaeology Group (SOAG) | Nancy Nichols | 01189787829 |
| Tai Chi and Qigong | Karen Pounds | 07867954786 |
| Tots on the Hill, Baby and Toddler Group | Debbie Leach | |
| | totsonthehill@myyahoo.com | |
| Whitchurch Hill Camera Club | www.whitchurchhillcameraclub.com | |
| Whitchurch and Goring Heath History Society | Vicky Jordan | 01189843260 |
| | vickyjordan5@hotmail.com | |
| Whitchurch and Goring Heath Twinning | Wendy Ferguson | 01189841262 |
| | wendyefergie@gmail.com | |
| Whitchurch Hill WI | Frances Strange | 01189842162 |
| Woodcote Volunteers | Jane Forde | 07850158274 |

Goring Heath Parish Hall: Bookings and Enquiries: Chris Whatmore 07850691920
Email: whatmore@talk21.com

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Advertising in the Newsletter

The Newsletter is issued every two months and covers Goring Heath, Crays Pond and Whitchurch Hill. The rates for advertising are £15 for half a page and £25 for a full page advert.

To find out more, please contact us at goringheathparishcouncil@gmail.com