

# Finstock News 133

Serving Finstock, Fowler, Wilcote, Mt. Skippett and Finstock Heath

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***“If you invite a bear to dance, it’s not you who decides when the dance is over. It is the bear.” Russian Proverb, cited in The Week***

Time will tell whether this old proverb holds true! Growing up with the Cold War and having a clear memory of the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 it is stunning that the threat of deploying nuclear armaments returns, while a war unfolds on our doorstep in mainland Europe. It’s natural to feel helpless as we watch or listen to the news each day, but there are a host of diverse organisations doing an amazing job in trying to mitigate the worst effects, both in Ukraine as well as for the many people who have fled the conflict.

If you’re looking for opportunities to offer support then Charlbury Refugee Action Group (CRAG) have several links on their Facebook page ([www.facebook.com/charlburyrefugee/](https://www.facebook.com/charlburyrefugee/)) and West Oxfordshire have a number of links on their website too (<https://tinyurl.com/2uj4ymaz>).

As the Coronavirus pandemic begins to wane, we are faced with yet another crisis with global spin-offs. In the same way as Covid, we don’t know how long the crisis will last for, or what the impact will be on us as individuals. Let us show solidarity where we can and remain optimistic for an ending sooner, rather than later!



## JUBILEE WEEK

The Platinum Jubilee will be the last Jubilee for Her Majesty the Queen. It is a four-day celebration from Thursday 2nd June to Sunday 5th June – with events taking place all over the country.

Finstock is embracing the celebration with a series of its own events such as ‘plant a tree for the Jubilee’, Beacon lighting, the Music Festival and culminating with a street party for all, where you bring your own refreshments on Sunday 5th June. More detailed information and timings

in the next Finstock News.

Plant a tree for the Jubilee is a national initiative, but Finstock is going one step further. Each of the 44 pupils at Finstock School will be given a Bee friendly tree to plant on Wed 1st June along the west side of the playing fields – The Jubilee Avenue. The date was chosen to ensure that all pupils and staff are present. Families with children who don’t attend the village school will also have an opportunity to plant a tree on the Playing Field - but do let us know who you are (via The Editor, Finstock News) so that we don’t miss you out! A plaque located in the Village Hall will indicate for years to come which tree belongs to which child.

There will be a new goal post with net for the playing fields. This is due to be installed in April.

The Finstock Parish Council would like to thank James Woollard, of Wards Lane for his generous contribution that has made the Jubilee celebrations, the tree planting and new goal post possible.

Julian Stewart

## FINSTOCK FESTIVAL & SCHOOL FETE

**Friday 24th and Saturday 25th June**

The planning for Finstock Festival is well underway. Bands have been booked. Catering and Food organised. Bar licence applied for.

The Main Ingredient required now is for you all to join the party. Without you we have no Finstock Festival. We are all looking forward to the return of Live Music & hopefully lots of lovely sunny weather.

The build will start Tuesday evening, 21st June through to our opening on Friday 24th June. If anyone is able to help it would be greatly appreciated contact 868215 or 868140 for details.

**ROCK ON FINSTOCK FESTIVAL 2022.**

Colin Stringfellow (Chairman)

*You can also view the  
Finstock News, in colour,  
online at [finstock.org.uk/  
the-finstock-news](https://finstock.org.uk/the-finstock-news)*

# VILLAGE HALL

www.finstock.org.uk/village-hall • villagehallfinstock@gmail.com

With around 30,000 people each year suffering a sudden cardiac arrest it is imperative that bystanders know how to respond. A cardiac arrest can affect anyone at any time – from young children at school, to adults when they're at home, work or out in public places like our Hall. Without the correct treatment cardiac arrests are often fatal, with The British Heart Foundation's figures revealing that only one in ten victims survive. However, the chance of surviving a cardiac arrest jump from 6% to 74% if the casualty is in a "shockable rhythm" and a defibrillator is deployed within 3 minutes. And now Finstock has a second defibrillator, attached to the front of the Hall. Donated by the Hall's charity, the new kit was installed by Derek Bennett, of Howse & O'Reilly, the well-known electrical contractors. Howse & O'Reilly have also very

generously sponsored the Finstock Ale for several years, so remember the name when you need an electrician!

The new Audio-Visual kit is also installed in the Hall, so it is now possible for Hall users to stream tv, music, photos and other media in either the Main Hall, the Evenlode Room, or both. Our thanks to Noah Derrington for his great work in building our new system and providing a user guide. And we hope by the next issue to bring you further news of a ground-breaking display which will be very close to the village's heart.

Lastly, don't forget to book your diaries for the eighth Finstock Ale, to be held in the Hall on 2nd and 3rd September. We hope to have all your favourites from previous years, including horse racing (and maybe pig racing), an even better array of cask and craft ales handpicked by our enthusiastic team, great food and one or two new surprises. We will soon be asking for folks to sponsor a barrel as in previous years. We have had to miss the last two years for reasons we all know about, and our charity relies on the beer festival to support the Finstock Seniors' Christmas Lunch, as well as maintaining the low hiring rates you all enjoy, so let's make sure this is the best beer festival ever!



Colin Stringfellow points out the new defibrillator

## Finstock Craft Club

Craft club continues to meet every Monday at the Village Hall from 7.30 to 9.30pm. We are a drop in club so no commitment necessary to attend every week. Visitors are always warmly welcomed, wherever your interest lies. However, we have news of a new afternoon club as follows:

## Finstock Quilters

With immediate effect, if your interest lies in quilting, please join Finstock Quilters, every Wednesday afternoon from 2pm until 4pm. All levels of ability welcome. This is being run on the same lines as Craft Club i.e. drop in any time between the hours of 2pm. and 4pm. Refreshments available. First session free then £3 per session. For further information, contact rosacharlesworth@icloud.com"

*Kind Regards, Rosa*

If you would like to advertise in the Finstock News please contact Su Jordan at Tel: 07824 567765 advertfinstocknews@btinternet.com. Very reasonable rates:

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## FINSTOCK SPEED WATCH

**As time progresses, and our lives become busier and faster, so does the traffic.**

Having lived in the village on and off for 45 years I've seen some changes and one, certainly, is the traffic coming through and past the village. This is more so when Finstock becomes a short cut when the B4022 is closed or there's an event at Cornbury Park and there are traffic lights.

The B4022 clearly has some issues with water pipes and from my understanding, it's cheaper to repair them when there is an issue rather than replace the lot. But the disruption of the village roads will continue unless we do something about it. There is no doubt the B4022 will be closed or have traffic lights in the future, we cannot change that, but we can be more proactive and prepare for this.

In February the B4022 was closed again after bad planning by Thames Water. A diversion was put in place which, although not through the village, was ignored by many motorists who thundered through nevertheless.

The end result was an accident waiting to happen, with a child being hit by a car. Although very serious at the time, the child is home with her family starting on the long road to recovery.

Bluntly, it could have been any one of our children, elderly parents, relatives or neighbours, and nobody should be put in the situation of standing over a loved one lying in the road after being hit by a car.

The task of policing speed or lowering speed limits is an endless one, and if we want safer roads in our village, by encouraging people to drive slower, then as a community we need to do something about it ourselves.

Reducing the actual speed limit has a procedure and a time frame and includes a lot of paperwork.

The Parish Council have set the

ball in motion and are applying to OCC to change the limit through the village to 20 mph. Reducing the speed on the B4022 to 30mph is a separate issue. But alongside this, what can we do sooner rather than later? *[more on this on page eight – ed]*

I have set up the **Finstock Speed Watch Group**, with these proposals:

**Step 1** I have asked the Parish Council if we can have a Children Crossing / Pedestrians Crossing triangle on Well Hill – there's a blind spot as you come up the hill and with the hall in regular use there are certainly more adults and children crossing the road. I have also put this to the Village Hall Committee, which I believe they favour.

**Step 2** Many villages have been very proactive with speed through their village and now we are starting to see Speed Sensor Monitoring Signs in place, e.g., in Stonesfield, Charlbury, Shipton Under Wychwood and Field Assarts. I propose in the long term to see two on School Road, two on the High Street and two on the main B4022 that passes the village. These have had a considerable impact and results are positive. Vehicle activated speed signs are much better than a static one, that many don't notice.

They are expensive at around £3,300 each! However, if we only raise the funds for one it's a start and something we can build on!

I have applied for the Thames Valley Police Grant and will also be contacting local organisations as well as the County Council to see if we can apply for other funding as well.

However, if we wish to see change then we need to get involved as a community as well. I have set up a Funding page and donated £200 myself to get this started. The link is <https://tinyurl.com/2s4h4had>. If

180 residents just gave £20, that's the first flashing speed sign paid for! *(As we go to press the amount raised so far is £1400 – ed).*

There has been a lot of anger in the past about speed and certainly recently after a child was seriously injured. Lots of individual views have been posted on the village social media page about how we must do something about it, well now is the chance.

It's time for less talking and more doing! Please support this and let's all make the roads in Finstock a safer place for you and others around you

It's not what you say that defines you, it's what you do "

*Marc Thompson*





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## Walking our village boundaries

We all have boundaries, mostly in the form of fences and hedges but have you walked those that skirt the village?

I walked out with my dog on the day of storm Eunice and followed Blackberry Lane which runs along the rear of several houses which are built on what was Finstock Common. Pre-enclosure, this routeway would have been a much busier one with villagers taking their livestock to graze on the common. I also think it would have been much wider before enclosure. You pass the Gadden Well, a useful place for watering, before you meet the High Street and the Gadden gate or at least the site of the gate. This would have marked the end of the village and the start of the heath. The boundary continues across the High Street at the back of the low-slung cottage roof.

My route however, took me along the start of the Longcut (pronounced Langcut), another boundary. The path follows the rear of more gardens which not long ago were unfenced and you soon reach more open ground. The hedge line is thin in places and the official footpath is on the Finstock side, but if you care to step through into Ramsden parish you can still make out the old field boundaries which would have divided this area. The field is now one open space, ideal for large machinery but in truth not much else.

Back on the Finstock side the field is now one large area and still called Brogborough, but in Pride's map of 1767 it is divided up. The Longcut boundary is a long one and has clearly moved over time as there is evidence in the copse on Ramsden Hill of ditches and banks. This of course is private land. These linear boundaries provide routeways for birds and reptiles and link different parts of the area and are to be cherished, as many have already gone.

Vicus

*Finstock Church will not be holding their Spring Plant Fair this year in May but are investigating the possibility of doing something at the Finstock Festival in June*

### THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

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Photographs thanks to team members and others.

Contact us as above, e-mail the Editor, or write to us at 53 High Street, Finstock, Oxon OX7 3DA.

### Plan ahead – Know the deadlines

Issue	Deadline
Feb/Mar	First of January
April/May	First of March
June/July	First of May
August/September	First of July
October/November	First of September
December/January	First of November

Please keep articles short. As space is limited, the Editors reserve the right to shorten long pieces in the interest of balance. *Finstock News* does not necessarily share the views expressed in readers' letters.

## DURING THESE MONTHS

1st April 1918 – RAF is founded.  
6th April 1941 – Germany invades Yugoslavia  
15th April 1912 Titanic strikes an iceberg and sinks on her maiden voyage  
7th May 1945 Germany signs unconditional surrender at Rheims

in France bringing to an end six years of war in Europe.  
14th May 1948 The independent state of Israel is proclaimed as British rule in Palestine comes to an end.  
22nd May 1989 Students occupy Tiananmen Square in Beijing

*“Everybody talks about the weather, but nobody does anything about it”*

– Mark Twain, quoted on Politico

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## Dates for your Diary

### 17<sup>th</sup> April | Easter Sunday

After the last two in lockdown, make this one a celebration with friends and family! Our seasonally inspired Sunday menu - plus our selection of champagne, wine and cocktails, indulgent desserts, and even little roasts for the kids - should do the trick.

### 10<sup>th</sup> May | Kathy Slack's Spring Supper Club

Kathy, our beloved neighbour and award-winning chef, returns for another of her veg-patch-inspired feasts. This time she'll be introducing experimental new dishes from her brand new cookbook.

### 24<sup>th</sup> May | Bar Talk: Emma Smith on Shakespeare

Wonderful author of “This is Shakespeare”, Professor Emma Smith, joins us for dinner - where she will talk about the man who could capture the human condition like no other and whose plays have stood the test of time. Our chefs will conjure a Shakespeare-inspired menu.

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THE  
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The shop directors are always grateful for suggestions on how we might improve our services, and genuinely take each one seriously. But sometimes, it's like opening Pandora's box. There has been a lot of talk recently about the profusion of delivery vans from all of the major supermarkets coming through the village. It's a sign of our busy lives that more of us prefer the convenience of ordering online and saving the time spent struggling around a supermarket with a heavy trolley. So not unreasonably, it was suggested to us that we too create an online presence where you can see what stock we hold, place an order, and have it delivered. Sounds very sensible. But how do you get started, and what's involved?

I thought I'd speak to my mate Ben, who has worked in retail systems for some years. Apparently, we would need to invest in a full EPOS system to log and manage all stock, so taking delivery would take longer. We'd need a new, expensive till in the shop. We would need a website, which would be connected to our stock system. And Ben reckons we'd need at least one fulltime employee, who would have to be paid considerably more than Karen, to maintain this system and fix it every time it went down; plus process any changes, including offers from time to time. How were we intending to make our deliveries? Would our range include anything frozen or chilled? A special vehicle must be purchased to deliver it in to comply with food hygiene regulations. And so it went on....

But even if we could afford the required investment (which we can't), the net effect would probably be half a dozen well-intentioned souls spending a bit more with us every week, and the directors having to do the deliveries because we can't even get enough volunteers for the shop, let alone for deliveries.

We did deliver essentials to folks who were sheltering during lockdown, and still do our best to help if someone calls us. And we are absolutely grateful for all ideas (I was taught in school that "there's no such thing as a bad idea") and we will explore all possibilities for improvement. So, keep 'em coming, folks.

*Rod Ireland*

#### **Our opening times are:**

Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri: 8.30am – 3.30pm (last time for posting 12 noon; P.O. shuts 1pm)  
Tue: 8.30am – 1.30pm (and P.O. as above)  
Sat: 9am – 1pm (no P.O. services)  
Sun: Closed



## **FINSTOCK FOLK – James Woollard**

### **What was it like growing up in Cornwall?**

We moved to Penzance when I was 12. It was tough to change secondary schools but it was an amazing place to grow up. At 16 however, I realised I needed a job and I was neither a good surfer or fisherman.

### **You've been a fan of Oxford United since the age of 10 – must have been a rollercoaster ride?**

My first ever live match was the 1986 league cup final where we thrashed QPR who had just beaten Liverpool, who had legends like John Aldridge, Ray Houghton and Dean Saunders in their side. Oxford then disappeared to non-league football. When I set up Polythene UK in Witney in 2007 they were getting close to coming back to the football league. We started sponsoring the girls football team to "be involved" and in 2010 we sponsored the back of the first team shirts and have been there ever since. We've outlasted four chairman and six managers and lots of players - so we feel part of the family there.

### **You run a successful plastic business in Witney – how's that going?**

I didn't invent the wheel; I had worked for Polythene companies since I left school, (a chance meeting with someone in a pub who lent me £10K to go it alone), and always felt I could do better than the companies I worked for. I was always good at sales but I also studied accounts and read all the books, recognised that plant based / recyclable plastic was the future and the rest as they say is history. I'm proud that we are leading the pack in renewables.

### **What made you move to Finstock?**

Unfortunately, I separated from my wife in 2016 leaving Long Hanborough where I was a Parish Councillor. I love village life. Someone recommended Finstock and I met Guy and Jordan in the Pub and that was that. I bought the old cattery and I hope that is my "forever home" as long as Guy and Jordan stay at the Plough and Doctor Colin and Katherine are up the road – often knocking on their door for help (toilet rolls, chicken fillets and wine!)

### **You are funding the Village Jubilee celebrations. Why is the Village celebration important to you?**

I can see clearly that it's an inclusive village with a soul. I'm still new and there are many people I don't know yet, so say hello if you see me! I remember Jubilees as a kid and they had a lasting impression on me. I hope my contribution will help to make a lasting impression on the kids of today. Besides, if there's a little plaque somewhere with my name on that my kids can be proud of in many years to come - then that will make me very proud as well.

*James Woollard was talking to Julian Stewart*

# COUNTRYSIDE – CONSERVATION – ENVIRONMENT

*“The question is, are we happy to suppose that our grandchildren may never be able to see an elephant except in a picture book?” – Sir David Attenborough*



## BUTTERFLIES IN FINSTOCK

Nature in West Oxfordshire is under pressure as never before and the Wychwood Forest Trust is committed to facing up to the challenges this presents.

We aim to work with local communities to inspire people to restore and conserve the wildlife and habitats on their doorstep which will help recover more of the diversity that was once part of the historic Wychwood Forest.

Butterflies conjure up images of sunshine, the warmth and colour of flowery meadows, and summer gardens teeming with life. Sadly, three-quarters of British butterflies are in decline. The 56 species in Britain and Ireland are under threat today from unprecedented environmental change. Butterflies and moths have been recognised by the Government as indicators of biodiversity. Their fragility makes them quick to react to change so their struggle to survive is a serious warning about our current environment.

Habitats have been destroyed on a massive scale, and now patterns of climate and weather are shifting unpredictably in response to pollution of the atmosphere, but the disappearance of these beautiful creatures is more serious than just a loss of colour in the countryside.

*Conserving butterflies will improve our whole environment for wildlife and enrich the lives of people now and in the future.*

### Why butterflies are important



Butterflies and moths are part of our natural heritage and have been studied for over 300 years.

Butterflies and moths have fascinating life-cycles that are used in many countries to teach children about the natural world. The transformation from egg to caterpillar to chrysalis is one of the wonders of nature.

Butterflies and moths are indicators of a healthy environment and healthy ecosystems.

Areas rich in butterflies and moths are rich in other invertebrates. These collectively provide a wide range of environmental benefits, including pollination and natural pest control.

Moths and butterflies are an important element of the food chain and are prey for birds, bats and other insectivorous animals (for example, in Britain and Ireland, Blue Tits eat an estimated 50 billion moth caterpillars each year).

## Recording Butterflies

Recording and monitoring carried out by volunteers is vital for the conservation of butterflies and moths.

You can take part by recording butterfly sightings as part of the schemes listed below. By doing so you will be directly supporting conservation, but also improving your wellbeing in these challenging times. Here is how to get involved:

- Join the Big Butterfly Count to record what you see in your garden 15th July to 7th August. [bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org](http://bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org)
- If you can record regularly in your garden throughout the year then please take part in the Garden Butterfly Survey. This is the opportunity to record what is seen in the garden through the year, anything from daily, weekly or even just once a month... all records are helpful to get a picture of what is about. More details of this are at [gardenbutterflysurvey.org](http://gardenbutterflysurvey.org)
- If you prefer the flexibility to record butterflies 'as and when' with no particular commitment, and in many different places, then take part in the Butterflies for the New Millennium (BNM) recording scheme by submitting your sightings on a computer through BNM Online or smartphone using the free iRecord Butterflies app. Use whichever suits you best.

## Next Steps

If you would like to take part in any of these initiatives, please register your interest and contact details with Toby Swift, Reserves and Countryside Manager ([toby@wychwoodforesttrust.co.uk](mailto:toby@wychwoodforesttrust.co.uk)) so we can keep you updated with developments.

Free ID guides will be made available for all those registering for the regular Garden Butterfly Survey and recording forms can be provided.

## Public Consultation – Finstock for Nature

Finstock for Nature are moving ahead with proposals to enhance the wildlife and environment within the village. We are planning a public consultation on Saturday 7th May between 10am – 2pm in the Village Hall to canvas the views of the community about three possible projects:

A community orchard on the Parish Field;

A wildflower wildlife corridor along High St, including repair of the stone wall;

Flood mitigation measures in the corner of the Old Allotments field.

The meeting will include a small exhibition and presentation, plus a Question & Answer session. We would like to hear your views about these proposals and any other ideas that you feel we should include. We are also hoping to recruit more members to Finstock for Nature to support ongoing projects across the whole of the parish to enhance wildlife, improve the landscape and reduce carbon emissions from land use. So, please come and share your views and sign up for the future!



We were delighted to hear that so many of our CAG members as groups and individuals were recognised in the High Sheriff's Climate Action Heroes Awards launched this year. Eighteen groups, social enterprises, individuals, businesses, and other organisations picked up awards for their community action work, ranging from wildlife restoration work to renewable energy projects.



## Affordable Housing

West Oxfordshire District Council has been awarded £78,000 in funding to bring forward a planning application for Council owned land for eight affordable net zero carbon homes in Chipping Norton.

The brownfield site on Walterbush road in Chipping Norton will, subject to planning approval, provide custom built homes with environmentally friendly amenities and will incorporate a composting club for the local neighbourhood and an e-vehicle club with charging points.

Cllr Michele Mead, Leader of West Oxfordshire District Council said: *"This allocation supports our priority to increase the overall supply of good quality, affordable housing in our district."*

Councillor Marilyn Davies, Cabinet Member for Communities and Housing added: *"We are excited about this ground-breaking development in our district and grateful for the financial support we've received"*.

## GREEN BANKS FIELDS.

Over the winter months I have been happy for many of you to roam more freely round the outside of my field because most of the normal footpaths have been virtually impassable.

From 1st April you MUST – please – stick to the two Public Footpaths, the one from the main gate up on the right-hand side, and the one across the top of the field, please do NOT walk across

the middle of the field, or round the other two sides – it all needs to recover.

I would be grateful if you would also please pick up your dog poo, as this is very detrimental to the quality of the hay and very dangerous for sheep. There is a bin near the entrance to the field on the High Street.

Many thanks.

Viv Wightman

## THE BOWER (Finstock's "phoenix"!)

After a morning cutting hazel, members of Finstock for Nature have set about rebuilding the Bower on Well Hill, as you may have noticed! We extend our sincere thanks to **David Cecil** for generously enabling access to his woodland for coppicing the hazel. The village has a proud tradition of Bower building, formerly as part of the annual Finstock Youth Ale – a spirited event – that took place on Well Hill during the 19th Century. After a lengthy lapse, the tradition was revived in 2014 for the Finstock May Music Weekend. For 2022, we have pushed the Music Weekend back into the programme of events for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee celebrations – look out for details in the next issue of Finstock News.



## PODS – for accommodation, not coffee

In the last edition of the Finstock News the developer behind the Pods being built on Finstock Heath referred to an Open Day for the community to find out more and ask questions. At the time of going to press, we still have no further detail of when this will be, which is disappointing.

Whilst talking of Pods, another plan for a smaller development behind The Plough was the subject of discussion during the February Parish Council meeting. The Parish Council doesn't comment on decisions made on planning issues, while full details are accessible on the WODC website.

## FIVE ELEMENT ACUPUNCTURE

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## North Leigh Roman Villa

**Mosaic Open 13th April, 10am - 3pm**

I am delighted to let you know about our first ever Easter holiday opening of the mosaics. Our beautiful 4th century AD mosaic will be open for the day on Wednesday 13th April, 10:00am to 3:00pm – as it undergoes cleaning and conservation supervised by specialist English Heritage staff.

If you would like to join in with the cleaning, as has proved popular previously, please reply 'CLEAN' in the subject line to [nlrvols@gmail.com](mailto:nlrsvols@gmail.com).

At present we have spaces available at 11am, 1pm and 2pm, each for an hour, which will be allocated on a "first reply received first served" basis, therefore if you have a strong time preference, please include that in your reply.

We anticipate another two-day clean in mid-September and will be happy to compile a waiting list for that event should April's clean be over-subscribed.

We look forward to hearing from you.

## Investment at North Leigh Roman Villa

We have had the very exciting news that North Leigh Roman Villa is one of just four English Heritage sites to share in a £1m donation to the charity from the Michael Bishop Foundation. You will find more details of the donation here: <https://tinyurl.com/4kp3byhx>

Our site was also chosen to host English Heritage CEO Kate Mavor's recent interview with the Sunday Telegraph. The site's first taste of national publicity! To read the linked article, zoom in and the text should become legible - <https://tinyurl.com/2mx684zw>

As this year is English Heritage's Year of the Romans (because Hadrian's Wall turns 1900 in 2022) we have much to look forward to at North Leigh Roman Villa.

*Matthew Lee, North Leigh Roman Villa Volunteer*

## COUNTY COUNCIL NEWS

The new administration at the County Council has agreed its first budget. The budget is based on the nine priorities that the Fair Deal Alliance agreed back in May, which can be summarised as addressing the climate emergency, tackling inequalities and promoting the health and well-being of all our residents. We consulted extensively on this and have incorporated what we heard back from residents and stakeholders into the budget. We had a total of 1392 responses to our consultation compared with 652 the previous year, and we intend to continue to engage actively to hear the views of residents across a wide range of topics. To that end we are conducting a number of consultations, which can be found on Let's Talk Oxfordshire <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/>

The budget includes £8 million to introduce 20 mph speed limits across the county. Many Finstock residents contacted me after the very sad accident that occurred in February, when a little girl was knocked over by a car on School Road, asking if we could have a 20mph speed limit in the village. The answer is yes, you can, as this is now available to all communities that want it. There is a process to be followed to ensure that Finstock registers interest in having 20mph limit and I will be discussing this with the Parish Council.

Another hot topic in the village is the problems that occur with the pumping station on Dark Lane. There have been several instances of sewage flowing through the village near the Plough and I recently organised a visit from Thames Water to look into what can be done to prevent this from happening in future. As a result of this visit, Thames Water agreed that what was needed was a joined-up approach to managing flooding and sewage across the county, and we have decided to hold a day of "surgeries" for parish councils, where they can meet Thames Water, the Environment Agency, OCC and WODC all in one place to discuss the particular problems that affect their community. This will be an opportunity for the various agencies to learn what is needed to protect our villages in future, as the likelihood of flooding increases thanks to climate change.

*Liz Jeffman. [liz.leffman@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:liz.leffman@oxfordshire.gov.uk)*



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*60% of British adults wish their life was "more simple", while 41% say the pace of life is too much for them, up from 30% in 1983. More than half wish they could "slow down"*

*– quoted in the Daily Mail*



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We are delighted to open the gates to the public for our plant sale and Open Days in 2022.

We will be holding our plant sale on Saturday the 30th April where you can browse a wide variety of cottage garden plants for sale in our stock bed avenue. The plant sale is held in the vineyard – the walled garden will not be open.

The entire site will be open to the public during our Open Days on: Sunday 15th May, Saturday 18th & Sunday 19th June, Sunday 11th September 11am-4pm  
What to expect from the Open Day:

Visitors may explore all parts of the vineyard and walled gardens which are not usually accessible to the public. We will be selling our produce including Bridewell sparkling wine which is made from grapes grown in Bridewell's organic vineyard. From our pop-up café you can enjoy coffee and cake in the beautiful and peaceful surroundings of the garden. Dogs are welcome on a lead. Bring a picnic to relax in the vineyard and make the most of your day out in this idyllic corner of West Oxfordshire.

**Cost:** A suggested donation of £5 per person.

**The address is:** Bridewell Gardens, The Walled Garden, Wilcote, Oxfordshire, OX7 3DT (NB. do check a map before visiting us as sat navs are not reliable.)



### About Bridewell Gardens:

Bridewell Gardens offers a recovery service for adults who have experienced serious mental illness. The term 'severe and enduring mental illness' can cover a broad variety of diagnoses, including: schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, eating disorders, post-traumatic stress disorder and severe depression.

Anyone can be affected by a serious mental illness. There are over six thousand people registered with Oxfordshire GPs

who have a diagnosis of schizophrenia, bipolar affective disorder and other psychoses – that's the equivalent of the entire population of Chipping Norton living with the debilitating effects of what can be life-limiting conditions.

Living with a serious long-term mental health condition can impact every aspect of daily life. While everyone's experience is different, some of the ways serious mental ill health can affect us include finding it hard to make small decisions, for example choosing what to wear or what to cook; finding it challenging to leave the house, to drive or take public transport; avoiding regular social interactions, or new places; difficulties managing finances or maintaining relationships. These may seem like small things but can have a major impact on a person's life. It is not uncommon for people living with serious mental illness to become isolated, to feel alienated from society, to lose their feelings of self-worth and self-esteem. It can be very difficult to see any way forward or to feel hope in the future.

The approach used at Bridewell Gardens, social and therapeutic horticulture, is proven to be a powerful intervention for people recovering from serious mental ill health. The growing evidence of this is now informing public health interventions.

A typical working day at Bridewell might include any of a wide range of activities to meet the varied needs of people on site: sowing seeds, watering, weeding, clearing paths in the cottage garden or potager, pruning roses, fruit trees or vines, tending vegetable beds, harvesting soft fruit, making jams or chutneys, blacksmithing, willow-weaving, woodwork and caring for Bridewell's chickens.

Working with nature in the supportive community Bridewell offers plays a vital role, enabling people to make active steps towards recovery, to managing their mental health and finding seeds of hope in recovery. While next steps might be engaging in new social activities, taking up training, volunteering or paid work, recovery looks different for everyone.

Bridewell offers hope. In the words of people who have attended the recovery service:

*"Bridewell has enabled me to look towards the future and dream of the things I want to do and who I want to become."*

*"Thanks to Bridewell, I now live a happy and hope filled life full of love, laughter and adventure".*

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## SCHOOL NEWS

### Oak Class:

This term Oak Class have continued learning about Kings and Queens of the past through our topic 'Magnificent Monarchs'. The children have created amazing fact files and have really enjoyed learning more about the history of England. We have created bird feeders and written instructions for 'How to Make a Bird Feeder'. In English, we have also begun looking at Legends and written our own stories inspired by 'George and the Dragon'.



### Cedar class:

Our children in Cedar Class have been culinary experts in our topic 'Eat the Seasons.' They have learnt the benefits of seasonal eating, how to prepare food and cooking techniques, and made their own spiced lentil soup. Key Stage 2 have also been learning about the human life cycle, comparing this to other animals' life cycles in their topic 'Human Reproduction and Ageing.' We have continued to learn about the features and characteristics of land in agricultural regions across the world in their topic 'Sow, Grow and Farm,' growing our own cress and visiting a local allotment to find out about the ideal conditions for growing vegetables. We have thoroughly enjoyed reading our texts 'Charlotte's Web' and 'Farm Boy,' and continued to celebrate our love of learning in World Book Day. The children came to school in their pyjamas, watched a live story-telling lesson and took part in the 'Drop Everything and Read.' In The Write Stuff, we have loved writing stories based on the film 'Varmints' and poems based on the story 'Moth' by Isobel Thomas. We look forward to updating you on our learning in Terms 5 and 6!

## Mrs Kathleen Hemmings.

My lovely old friend - Mrs H. to everyone - of High Street, Finstock - reached the incredible age of 100 years, on February 4th. She had a lovely day with friends calling in throughout the day, with cards, and having wine and birthday cake, then a lovely meal out in the evening, with son Rod and family.

She received her card from The Queen - and was very excited about that!! And she stated that she didn't want presents, but donations for Cancer Research - she raised the incredible sum of £350.00.

Then, on Sunday 27th February, the Benefice Service was held in Finstock church - Mrs H. often came to church with me before the Pandemic - so I collected her on that morning, for the service, which she enjoyed, then afterwards nearly everyone stayed to wish Mrs H. a somewhat late Happy 100th! We drank her health with Prosecco and Michael made and iced a cake with a Huge red candle in the middle, which she blew out to a great round of applause. It was another lovely occasion - and I know Mrs H. really enjoyed her 100th birthday celebrations.

Mrs H. is an amazing lady, and an inspiration to us all!

*Viv Wightman*



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## DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS

Our rivers are polluted, fishing seems like a distant memory and swimming is now to be avoided due to the constant damage to our environment. Sewerage and unwanted items pour into our rivers, down our high streets in the district and drains overflow through an ageing system.

In 1989 the government privatised our water system, selling off the basic route to life - water. This was done to solve a budget black hole in the hope of improved services to the customer. Oh, the folly of times gone past when short term gain put profit before people.

The reality and truth whatever Thames Water misleadingly says is born out in reality. The Rivers Evenlode and Windrush are polluted as the failed infrastructure and lack of infrastructure improvements impact on our daily lives.

Let's work for change! I have spoken to all the political parties at West Oxfordshire District Council and with their support have proposed a cross party motion calling on Thames Water for a detailed financial investment breakdown on pumping stations and spillage details with a view to taking actions from the information supplied. This was successfully passed by the council without exception.

We cannot accept any more excuses. Action is needed now.

For further assistance email me - andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk

*Cllr. Andy Graham 07908832632*

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## Finstock Unplugged

Feedback on our meeting on January 31st 2022: The reward for getting back to live sessions promptly after the December Zoom was that this gathering was very well attended, despite the fact that some of our company were held up by a road block outside Charlbury. Craig and Colin G were in great form, as was Jim, who went all jazz and Duke Ellington in this session – a possible antidote to his prolonged immersion in ‘pure’ folk as Creative Producer for the rapidly approaching Folk Weekend Oxford? (For FWO, put 22-24th April in your diaries, please!)

Colin Pitts decided to come over from Evesham to join us for the evening and it was a treat to hear his song ‘Looking for England’, one of my personal favourites. Anabel gave us subtle versions of songs by Steve Knightley, while Rachel sang two of her newer compositions, including ‘Ship of Fools’, a timely and powerful comment on the situation we find ourselves in today. Claire was in good form too - playing jazz piano for one of her numbers. Ben, Steve, Mike G, Toby and I had fun attempting three of our songs. Steve from Combe and Sylvie from Aston also contributed fully. Our Finstockian Mike B was cheerful and cheekily melodic as ever; he can always be relied upon to add good-natured humour to the proceedings, and we even had some doughty souls who had decided to come along just to listen. We were also glad to welcome Richard F and Helen S, who visited for the first half of the evening, working on a photographic project. Over the course of the evening everyone was able to offer a variety of material and enjoy a break in the middle for chat - all very informal and friendly.

Folk Weekend Oxford is a festival that developed out of Oxford and which celebrates all things folk and dance. While in progress it takes over most of the performing spaces and good pubs in Oxford. After having to go online for two years, a committee of enthusiasts has been planning an explosion of live entertainment. Apart from the two Producers, the Festival is run entirely by volunteers who represent and try to promote folk, Morris and social dance in all their forms.

## News from the Charlbury Medical Centre

Our appointment system is now back to how it was before Covid with the advantage of a mixture of both Face to Face and telephone consultations whichever one is appropriate for you – so patients can choose whether they would prefer a telephone or face to face consultation with their GP. For those not wanting an urgent appointment there is no difficulty in getting through after 11am. There is approximately a two week wait for a non-urgent appointment.

Please remember that although the phone lines are open from 8am., non-urgent calls should, if possible, be made later in the morning. This leaves the lines open for patients who are very unwell, or have worrying symptoms and need to consult the GP on the same day. If a patient requests an urgent appointment the patient will discuss their problem with the on-call GP who has control of all the urgent appointments.

Some of you may have already heard that Dr Brookes-White is going on a year-long sabbatical from April. Dr Brookes-White’s patients will be cared for by Dr Khan. The medical centre will write to all Dr Brookes-White’s patients informing them of the change.

Dr Khan is currently providing maternity cover for Dr Hurney who returns to work in April when she will resume the care of her patients.

It’s not anticipated that there will be any further changes in GP staffing for the foreseeable future.

### The Health and Care Bill

Members of the West Oxfordshire locality forum of patient groups wrote to Jeremy Hunt MP, chair of the Health and Social Care Select Committee commenting on some of the proposals in the Bill and our MP, Robert Courts has responded to our comments. We have not yet received a reply from Jeremy Hunt, perhaps due in part to the unfolding events in Eastern Europe.

### Healthshare

We are interested in hearing about your experience of using Healthshare, who hold the contract to provide musculo-skeletal (bones and joints) services in Oxfordshire. If you have anything to say, good or bad, please get in touch.

*Susan Smith, Charlbury Patient Participation Group, steering committee.*

*“All I ask is the chance to prove that money  
can’t make me happy”*

*– Spike Milligan, quoted in The Independent*

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## SPRING FLOWERS - SOME OF MY NATIVE WILD PLANTS



The striking, purple **Pasque flower** is now a very rare plant in the UK, restricted to just a few chalk and limestone grasslands and found on only a handful of nature reserves. It flowers in the spring, usually around April and is a delight with its upward bell-shaped flowers of deep purple satin petals covered in long, silky hairs with bright yellow, stamen-filled centres and feathery, grey-green leaves. It's found in only a few places in the Chilterns, Cotswolds, East Anglia and Lincolnshire. It enjoys well drained soils, doing well on rockeries or in wild grass areas.

Another stunning perennial, is **Purple Loosestrife** with spires of intense magenta flowers, attracting insects for nectar throughout the summer. It favours damp soil next to the pond, but it is very adaptable and is able to thrive in sunny garden borders. Several smaller garden cultivars exist, some with paler pink flowers.



The slender and delicate beauty of **Devil's Bit Scabious**, with its vibrant

blue flowers from June to September is worth centre stage, near a path or pond edge where you can enjoy it close to. Like all scabious, its rich supply of nectar is irresistible to butterflies and moths. Its strange name refers to its thick root which ends so abruptly folk thought that the devil had bitten this off!

A welcome delight in damp grass is **Lady's smock**, also known as "Cuckoo flower" or "milkmaids". This is another delicate beauty whose pale pink flowers give a tapestry-effect amongst the grass. Plant it in sun or light shade and enjoy attracting orange tip and green veined white butterflies into your garden, as it is an important food plant for both larvae and adults. Allow Lady's Smock to seed naturally and you will soon have small drifts of colour all through the spring.

For a wonderful sight of frothy, creamy-white flowers with a wonderful honey fragrance there's **Meadowsweet**, used in medieval "strewing herbs" to disguise bad smells in houses; a splendid late nectar source for hoverflies and bees and a food plant for moths.



Another wild gem is **Ragged Robin** with its open, pink or white petals and branching

red stems, giving months of pleasure and nectar for a range of insects.

If you want a statuesque umbellifer, growing up to 2m high in sun, or light shade, **Angelica** is a good choice, with its pink and white flowers offering plenty of nectar to hoverflies and other insects. This plant is the source of crystallised angelica, used for cake decoration, but if you leave the architectural silhouette of the hollow stems through the winter sparkling with frost, you are also preserving lots of safe hibernating spaces for insects too.

All easily grown from seed or plug plants, happy gardening!

**Robert**

### A few jobs for the garden

- Tie in new shoots on climbing plants to ensure support for stems as they grow.
- Keep on top of removing weeds, particularly perennials, to prevent them taking over.
- Feed – or weed and feed – lawns to give them a spring boost.
- Prune spring shrubs, after flowering.

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- Want somewhere to entertain?
- A space for your children to play?
- Or maybe you just need a quiet place to relax, a calming, scented corner, just for you?



I can provide a full garden design, planting plans or a simple garden report – some ideas of how you could best use your outdoor space and the types of plants that you like and would suit the environment.

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