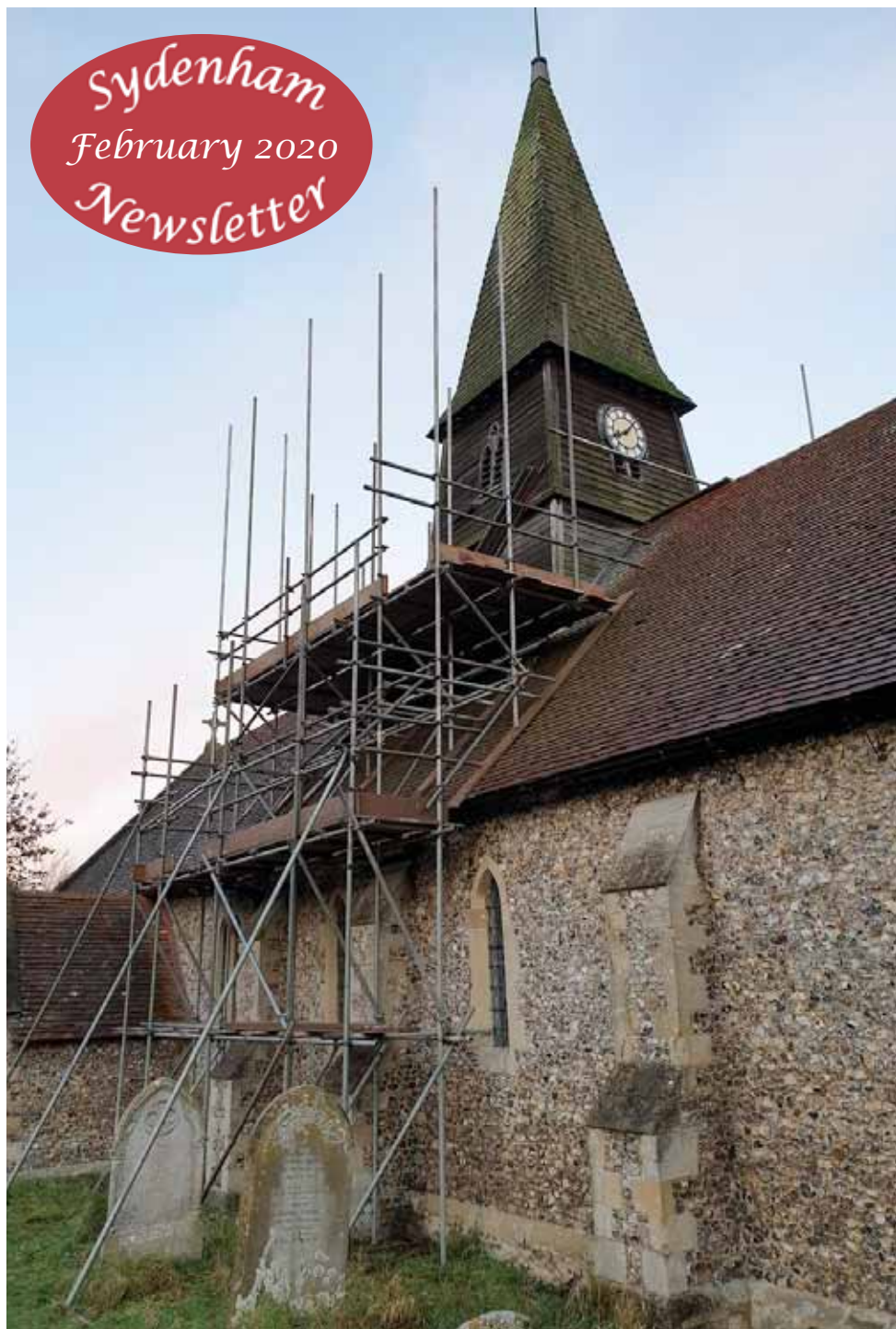


Sydenham
February 2020
Newsletter





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Editorial

Welcome to the first issue of the New Year and we hope you are rested, happy and healthy and coping with this relatively mild but wet and dirty period. What an awful day we had on Sunday, and with no electricity for about seven hours it was made more miserable! We are so lucky compared with what is happening in Yorkshire. However the days are certainly getting longer which I much prefer. We have daffodils, crocuses and snowdrops flowering which makes the village much more pretty. Dave Wilkins does an excellent job in maintaining the Playing field and Village Greens and the new benches make a big improvement. Have you noticed the bench inscription in the Playing field? A lovely memorial to Will Munday, who passed away last year.

We have reports of farewells for Lizzie & Ger and welcomes to Pippa and Mark at The Old Smithy opposite the Village Green and soon, a few doors away, I believe the newcomers to Gina's house, Keith and Jo will soon be here. Further along from the Green, demolishing Sydenham Grove starts this week. SOHA and the builders, Feltham Construction, held a local information meeting which was well attended, with the team explaining their proposals.

I understand many of the concerns related to parking but I think they are going to try their best to act responsibly and it was pleasing for those nearby to receive a letter explaining their intentions. They also attended the Parish Council Meeting and brought the councillors up to date as Cheryl has reported under Parish News.

January was rather quiet with little to report, but we have looked back at the Christmas Season and report on the very successful church services at St Mary's, a busy time not only for the Clergy but also for our two Pubs where Tina & Pete and Dave & Sharon did outstanding jobs catering for the village and friends.

The biggest news though (after Brexit) is that a new Rector has been appointed and the successful applicant is our current Curate Revd Jacky Barr. Jacky has been training here in the United Parish for the last couple of years and the selection team met last week. Bishop Colin of Dorchester was pleased to announce the decision late in the day and is copied below. Church Wardens Fi Kermack and myself and regular attendees are really pleased and welcome the decision and send their congratulations, love and support to Jacky.

Lent & Easter are just around the corner which from our point of view starts with the village Pancake races on 25th February. It's a children's event but we would love to see you there around the OSR.

The next Newsletter will be for the two months of March and April and we would love to receive your copy, reports and updates. Please let us have your news by the deadline of Sunday 8th March for inclusion to Fi Kermack, Paul Stancliffe or direct to me at royharry@aol.com



Church News

St Mary's Church Services

*Services from the 1662 Book of Common Prayer are marked **

February

Sun 16th 6.00pm *Evensong – *Revd Joan DeVal*

Sun 23rd 10.00am *Matins – *Revd Joan DeVal*

March

Sun 1st 10.00am *Holy Communion – *Revd Joan DeVal*

Sun 8th No Service

Sun 15th 10.00am *Evensong – *Revd Joan DeVal*

Sun 22nd 10.00am Mothering Sunday – *Revd Joan DeVal*

Sun 29th 10.00am * United Holy Communion at St Mary's –
Revd Dr Jacky Barr



Vacancy Update

Notice from the Rt Revd Colin Fletcher, Bishop of Dorchester.

Following a demanding and encouraging day of interviews on Friday 31st January, I am delighted to be able to announce that the Revd Dr Jacky Barr has been offered, and has accepted, the invitation to become the next Rector of your Parish. Needless to say I am delighted with this outcome and I greatly look forward to instituting her to this role in July.

The reason it will not happen until then is because she needs to have been ordained for three years, and to have successfully completed the training demands of her curacy, prior to

becoming the Rector. She will therefore continue to serve as your Assistant Curate until the end of May (Pentecost Sunday) taking time out, if needed, and in consultation with myself and the Initial Ministerial Training Officer, to complete the written and reflective aspects of her training.

She will, I hope, have a proper 'Farewell' as Curate on May 31st and she will then spend June moving house and taking time to prepare for her new role. Her Institution is likely to be in the week beginning 6th July 2020 but the precise date has yet to be set. Please pray for her in this preparation over the coming weeks and thank you once again.

Yours ever, +Colin Dorchester. The Rt Revd Colin Fletcher OBE.



Christmas Services

For us all Christmas is a very special family time, many of us have attended Church on several occasions and I would like to thank everyone involved for working through the services at St Mary's.

I'm sure we all recognise the Clergy efforts that make Christmas at Sydenham so special, but before thanking Joan and Jacky I'd just like to say thank you to the volunteers who put in effort behind the scenes. The Christmas tree dressing was delightfully dressed by Paul and members of the choir, the years old beautiful Crib dragged out of hiding for another term by Adèle who also spent an afternoon dressing the church windows with seasonal greenery hiding the candles, and lastly to Gordon McLeod for putting up the large cross on the main window, brightly shining with the lights. Gordon also put up the three Christmas trees on the green and Jen generously supplied the electricity. Thank you all!

The Rev'd Joan DeVal led the five services, from the Carol Service on 15th December through to Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve and the Christingle service on 5th January! We couldn't survive without our wonderful choir and organists and though unfortunately family sickness is inevitable at this busy time the choir did very well while missing some key members. In addition to singing at St Mary's they held performances at Bedgrove for Torch, sang at Hempton Field for the old folk, and at St Nicholas Carol Service at Emmington with retiring Bishop Colin of Dorchester. The choir and friends also, for the occasion of their annual choir outing, sang at the beautiful and historic Rycote Chapel with dinner at The Crown afterwards.

Dr Chris Hood is the principal Organist at St Mary's but Hugh Mackay played at the Carol service allowing Chris to lead and conduct the strong choir, and we were pleased to have Rosemary Keavey play at the Crib Service.

The Carol service was superbly executed and assisted by Fi, Siobhan and Gilly, starting off with a glass of sherry to warm the congregation of just over 100 and this year with alternating female/male adults brilliantly reading the seven lessons who comfortably stepped up to the task. The Sydenham Carol Service is so special and with a generous congregation the collection raised £300.

The 4pm Crib service nine days later was probably my highlight, seeing the church filled to the brim and of course Joan using her teaching skills to embrace the youngish family local congregation – not from Sydenham of course but half from Bethlehem and half from Nazareth. Inviting the children of both towns to search the pews for hidden figures of knit & wooden models of Mary, Joseph, the Shepherds and Baby Jesus to bring forward to fill the brightly lit Crib.

Later in the evening at Midnight Mass, over thirty attendees enjoyed the service.

Thanks also to you Joan – we are so fortunate to have you with your expertise, your skills and enthusiasm involving the children. It is so pleasing to see and also to share with the spectacular numbers in the congregation. They were lovely, successful events.

Pastoral Letter from the Revd Dr Jacky Barr. Assistant Curate.

Dear Fellow Traveller

A well-known metaphor is to consider the spiritual life as a journey and, in fact Christianity was originally known as the Way. The metaphor has leaked into other areas of life. For example, contestants on reality shows like 'Strictly' often describe their time on the show, and the subsequent transformation that takes place, as "a journey".



While covering a considerable number of miles on the motorway over Christmas, I had time to ponder how elements of motorway driving have things to teach and remind us about the spiritual life: both its challenges and its joys.

For example, the process of joining the motorway can be just like joining a new group or church. The inside lane can be clear of traffic and a smooth integration is achieved; or the lane can be busy enough to require the grace and kindness of someone already there to welcome you into the lane; or maybe its just so busy that you have to push your way in; or you arrive at the point of merger as one lorry is overtaking another and you just run out of slip road, this is a very uncomfortable and vulnerable moment! All these things can happen when we start something new: it can be very easy or it can be really hard work and a bit scary. But when we have made up our minds to get to our chosen destination, we find a way of coping with the beginning. And equally it's important for those of us, already on the motorway, to remember that sometimes someone new needs us to be kind and gracious to welcome them in.

There is a great sense of freedom and openness when the motorway is quiet and flowing freely: your journey proceeds unimpeded. The miles fly by, the music gets turned up, the singing becomes more flamboyant (in the privacy of my car, I really can do *all* the harmonies on Bohemian Rhapsody!). This is similar to when our spiritual life is going well, we feel close to God and God feels close to us. We feel in the flow of life and peak experiences abound. These times are to be treasured and stored in our hearts so they can encourage us when things are more challenging.

On the motorway, challenges can include the traffic slowing or, even more annoyingly, coming to a complete stop. Sometimes the gantry signs helpfully explain why: other times it remains a mystery. We can get stuck behind a lorry, which is frustrating because maybe they are going a little slower than you'd like, or maybe the frustration is because you don't have a clear view of what is ahead. All these challenges can happen in our spiritual lives. Sometimes it does feel like things have stalled or slowed down and we just don't know why. Other times we can't see what is ahead. Patience and resilience are required at these times: both on the motorway and in our spiritual lives.

There are as many reasons for travelling on the motorway as there are people. Sometimes those reasons are mundane and routine, and at others times they are highly charged, exciting and life changing. Some people are even travelling in the

opposite direction to us! This mirrors the reasons that people become aware of their spiritual journey. We are all so different and how we become aware of our relationship with God is unique to our life circumstances and events. Can we push the metaphor further by considering the different vehicles we travel in as representing our different life circumstances?

Driving often provides me much needed time to pray. Physically being between points A and B, often creates a spiritual in between-ness, a liminal space where awareness of God is heightened for me. A time to think and reflect.

What is common to all our journeys is that they have a beginning, a middle and an end. As do our lives: the reality is that we are travelling from birth to death. But travelling the motorway of life isn't just about moving between those points, the journey itself can be enjoyed, cherished and savoured, as well as being frustrating, heart breaking and challenging. An awareness of our spiritual nature, of God in our

lives, enriches and deepens our life experiences so that the travelling becomes all the more meaningful.

Happy and Safe Travelling to you all!

Jacky



Scaffolding and the Spire & Bell Tower

In late 2019 it was noted that water was entering the building through the bell tower & dripping into the church. The immediate cause appeared to be a missing section of cladding board on the south elevation of the tower.

The Church took the decision to erect scaffolding and from an inspection carried out from there, a number of specific problems have been identified. We are just awaiting approval from the diocese and then work should be able to commence.

Thank you to the winning Boxing Day quiz team as well as to Tina and Pete for their support and generous contribution to the church steeple funds. We will keep you informed of progress.

Annual Aston Rowant Hunger Lunch

The annual Hunger Lunch in aid of The Steppin' Stone Centre will be held on Monday 2nd March, 12.30-2.30, at the Church of St Peter & St Paul, Aston Rowant. All are very welcome for a simple lunch of soup & bread; cash donations and gifts of dry and tinned foodstuffs will be gratefully received.

As the name implies, The Steppin' Stone Centre in Oxford supports the homeless to re-integrate into the community; the Parish has supported it for many years.

Rona Knight 351 315

Poppy Collection

Thank you to the collectors and the village for supporting the Poppy Appeal.

We raised £386.26.

Ann Ashfield

And thank you to Ann too for organising it all as she does every year! Ed.

Pancake Day.

Shrove Tuesday is the day before Lent, and it's a fixed tradition here in Sydenham as the day we have Pancake races! We have been holding the races straight after school at 3.30pm outside the Old School Room for 'donkey's years', well before I came here.

The rules are very simple – get mummy to make you a small pancake and borrow a small frying pan, come along and join the gathering. You can race as much as you like and we have lot's, age ranges, say under fives, under sevens, girls only, boys only, mixed races and Mum's and Dad's races.

Afterwards in the OSR we have lovely homemade pancakes with lemon or orange and sugar and wash them down with tea or coffee for a small fee. All proceeds go back to the Church. Do come along and join the fun.

Roy

Thank you for Village Transport Support

I would like to thank villagers and friends for volunteering to drive me to the Churchill Hospital for radiotherapy treatment for a six weeks period over Christmas. Gilly, knocked on doors, rang many friends and gathered magnificent support for the thirty day virtual consecutive visits aided by Adele & Paul.

I did have a reprieve on Christmas Day and Boxing Day, but the treatment led to a relatively low key Christmas and I missed much of the Christmas activity including the successful Santa Sleigh ride & Carols around the Christmas Trees.

Sincere thanks to all involved. This stage of treatment is now over and we will await medical conclusions over the next few months.

Roy

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Comings and Goings

What a pleasant occasion at the Crown on Saturday 4th February when Lizzie, Ger, Elektra and Clemmie said farewell to their village friends. Lizzie and Ger arrived in the village in 2005 and both girls were born since then. We wish them well in their new home in Cuddington taking advantage of the eight acres of land – with a new pony on the books, chickens and maybe a few sheep!

The pub was wonderfully busy and so nice to see their many friends and neighbours attending.

They moved out the following weekend and The Old Smithy was vacant barely 24 hours before Pippa and Mark Williams moved in with lovely daughter Imogen. We are delighted to welcome them to Sydenham but they are no strangers, with Pippa having lived here when Mum and Dad moved into Washington Cottage, Chalford, in the autumn of 2008.

Pippa writes: “Mark and I lived there on and off over the last eight years, back in 2013 a few months turned into two years, whoops! We moved to Longwick in 2015, got married in 2016 and Imogen, now two, made us a happy family in November 2017.”

Pippa x

How nice to hear that Mel Wilkins has come home to live in Sydenham now that the two house barn conversion is virtually finished. There is still some work going on to the patio and driveway but the conversion looks impressive. Mel is living in the part nearest the road in what has been named The Nook! The far half conversion is named The Stableyard.

I'm sure we will be seeing a lot more of Mel, running through the village as part of her training. A couple of weeks ago she was participating in the National Cross Country Championships at Parliament Hill and finished 10th place out of 1038 starters whilst running for her High Wycombe club.

Mel is a busy athlete whilst working for employer Nike and she originally moved to Ryder's Farm with elder sisters Rebecca and Rachel back in 1998 with Mum Alison and Dad Dave who you will frequently see keeping the Village Green and the Playing Field in good order.

Welcome home Mel,

Roy



Sydenham Fayre

Sydenham Fayre planning has now started, and we are looking for additional help and committee members. If you can spare some time and would like to be involved, please do get in touch: Sydenham.fayre.june@gmail.com



Parish Council News

Sydenham Grove Redevelopment

Work is due to commence at Sydenham Grove on Monday 10th February with the delivery of a mobile unit and general site clearance, before demolition begins the following week. Feltham Construction have sent out a letter to villagers living near the site setting out information about working hours, parking provision and who to contact with any issues. Graham Blackman, the Contracts Manager for Feltham Construction, attended the February Parish Council meeting and provided an update on some queries raised at the recent exhibition about the works.

Front Hedgerow Outside Sydenham Grove

Due to Highway regulations regarding visibility splays, the front hedge on the site will have to be removed when the new access road is created. This will be replaced by a new hedge slightly further back. The revised planting scheme is available to view on the SODC planning portal.

Site Deliveries

The Contracts Manager confirmed that any deliveries will be transported directly on to the site and not on the road to help avoid congestion. The protocol for deliveries is for vehicles to wait in the layby at Postcombe and to phone ahead before delivery, to minimise disruption.

Parking

As the letter from Feltham Construction details, there is a Traffic Management Plan in place and contractors will try to park on site where possible. Feltham Construction are keen to work with villagers on issues about parking. If you are able to offer a location nearby for contractors to park, please do get in touch with the Site Manager directly (see details below).

Road Sweepers

These will be deployed regularly to assist in keeping the road clear of mud.

Proposed Timeline of Works

The Contracts Manager kindly provided a proposed timeline of works to share with the village. Please note that these are approximate timings.

- February to early March: Bat removal and demolition of existing dwellings
- March: Complete demolition, start access road and drainage
- April: Incoming services, road brought up to base coat.
- May: Foundations and substructure blockwork
- June: Foundation, drainage, sub-structure blockwork.
- July: Brickwork to joist level and some of the houses to roof plate level.
- August: Brickwork continues. Roof trusses fitted on some of the dwellings, roof tiling of first units.
- September: Brickwork nearing completion, other roofs being covered in.
- October: Scaffolds coming down. Internal first fix, electrics, plastering etc.

Reporting Issues and Updates

If you have any concerns or issues during the works, please contact Richard Foster, who is the Site Manager. His mobile number is 07516 030190 and he will also be on site every day. Please do not contact the Parish Council as we will not be in a position to assist with any immediate concerns or issues.

Feltham Construction will also continue to provide regular updates to the community as to progress of the works and upcoming stages of development. These will be communicated to villagers via Sydenham Mail and also through the community Facebook group.

If you would like to receive Sydenham Mails (our village email communications), please email sydenham.mail@gmail.com to be added to the circulation list.

Feltham representatives will also be attending Parish Council meetings each month to provide updates and to give an opportunity for villagers to meet the contractor.



SSE undergrounding

As you may have seen, SSE have restarted their work on undergrounding the electricity supply to the centre of the village, from Kingston Stert to Holliers Close. There is still a considerable amount of work to be done to complete the scheme but we hope that it will be completed over the next few months – to hopefully reduce the chances of further power cuts!

Speeding and proposed chicane

The plans for the proposed chicane in Park View/Sydenham Road is with OCC Highways for approval and we are waiting an update on the next steps. The village's recent grant application to the Councillor Priority Fund was successful, providing supporting funds for this project.

Neighbourhood Plan

The examiner's report has been received and final recommended amendments are being made to the Plan before it is submitted to SODC. The referendum process is due to start in the next couple of weeks with the referendum itself taking place at the end of March 2020.



Footpaths and bridleways

A grant application has been submitted to improve accessibility on the Thame Park route, enabling the stiles on this route to be replaced with gates. The Parish Council are continuing to investigate options improving the ground conditions and access to Sewells Lane.

Village Emergency Plan

We are in the process of updating the village emergency plan. This community plan ensures that in an emergency, the Local Authority and emergency services can work with the community in the most effective way to deal with any unforeseen event.

We are looking for volunteers with specific skills, such as medical support for humans and animals, as well as those with resources that may be useful in an emergency, ie. those with generators or 4x4 vehicles. Volunteers contact details are added to the emergency plan and these are shared with the emergency services only but are not made public.

If you can offer any specific skills or resources and would like to volunteer, please get in touch with the parish council:

parishcouncil@sydenhamvillage.co.uk.

Village Communications

If you would like to receive Sydenham Mails (our village email communications), please email sydenham.mail@gmail.com to be added to the circulation list.

If you have content that you would like to be included in Sydenham Mail, please email the Sydenham Mail team sydenham.mail@gmail.com. Updates are

typically sent weekly and information is collated over the course of the week. The village Facebook page is also available for any urgent updates or requests.

To get in touch with the Parish Council directly, please email parishcouncil@sydenhamvillage.co.uk. Alternatively, you can call 01844 873690 – please leave a message and the Parish Clerk will get back to you. Our Parish Clerk works part time, but if you have any urgent issues, you can always speak to a parish councillor directly.

Next meeting

Our next meeting will be on 5th March 2020 at 7.30pm in the OSR. Everyone is welcome to attend.

Cheryl Belson

Planning details

P20/S0011/FUL Manor Farm, Brookstones, Sydenham OX39 4LZ

Conversion and alteration of existing barn to form dwelling with parking and amenity space.

Parish Council recommendation: objection

P20/S/0187/HH Wykehams Barn, Brookstones, OX39 4LY

Glazing amendments to existing full height glazed screens

Parish Council recommendation: no objection

P20/S0322/HH & P20/S0323/LB Forge Cottage, Sydenham Road, Sydenham OX39 4LT

Provision of external flue to rear (retrospective)

Parish Council recommendation: no objection

P19/S4390/HH Clemvelling, Thame Road, Sydenham OX39 4LA

Construction of single storey side extension, flat roof rear dormer and velux roof lights in association with loft conversion, removal of flat roof over existing utility room and replace with pitched roof, removal of existing glass roof to conservatory and replace with flat roof. Internal alterations in association with structural changes.

SODC Decision: planning permission granted

Feel like a Spring break? Why not try Cornwall. Cottage available between Polzeath and Daymer Bay in North Cornwall, sleeps 6.

Within walking distance of beaches. Tennis courts on site. Dogs welcome. Special rate of £450 a week. Contact Jane Errington on

01844 352256, or jane.errington47@btinternet.com

Our January Meeting

A day in the life of an Invigilator... read on....

Our speaker was Anne Borrowdale who introduced us to the world of the invigilator.

We have all been in exams and envied the invigilator, sitting seemingly not doing anything in particular for hours, whilst we are beavering away racking our brains for the correct answers to the paper before us.

However we were assured that training has to be given for such a task. Exam candidates have to be checked before they start, so they have nothing that may be construed to be "helpful". Banned are pencil cases that are not transparent, glasses cases, packets of tissues, even water bottles with labels, which may contain notes, and the correct calculator and not a computer. All mobile phones are removed, placed in numbered envelopes and held in secretary's office. One invigilator was quoted as saying "if you have a label on your water bottle, raise your arm and I will cut it off" Observation is the main objective to ensure there is no communication between candidates.



During the exam requests for extra paper, spare pens, ruler etc., can be made so a stock of equipment is usually kept for emergencies. If candidates finish early, they may request to leave and people skills are required to manage the rules, and also entrants who become over wrought with nerves or pressure.

Distracting external noises such as ice cream vans, bins being emptied and in one case the dismantling of a marquee, which had numerous metal poles, had to be dealt with to keep a good environment for the exam room.

The invigilators themselves can be distracting, heavy footsteps walking around the room, looking over the shoulders of the candidates and one rocked on a chair fell backwards and knocked himself out. The famous one is someone who fiddled with his cigarette lighter in his pocket and set fire to his trousers.

Who would have thought the world of the invigilator could be so exciting.

June Hall

Our February meeting is a change from the scheduled speaker (*who let us down at the last minute*). We now have Sydenham's very own Nick Potts coming to tell us all about his and Janet's exotic trip to India and Nepal last year.

It's in the OSR on Thursday, 20th February at 7.30pm (for about an hour). Anyone who hasn't seen their holiday snaps shouldn't miss this!! Non-members very welcome - come and cheer Nick on!

The WI calendar before Christmas was also really busy with our annual Christmas party complete with games, presents, a delicious meal and the essential visit from Santa.

We also organised a visit to see the chilling but edge of seat play 'Lazy Bones' at the Oxford Playhouse as well as attended a talk given by the former Director General of MI5, Stella Remington. All brilliant events!

If you are interested in coming along and joining our jolly bunch of ladies, please contact Sandra via Sandra@harmonycottage.co.uk

Siobhan



John Howell writes.....

January 2020



This is my first newsletter since the General Election and as I write Parliament is in the midst of debating the Queen's Speech given at the opening of this session of Parliament. The Queen's speech sets out the programme of legislation that the Government intend to pursue in the forthcoming parliamentary session. Principally, Bills introduced in the speech can be brought forward for discussion in Parliament in the session. The debate allows MPs to express views on proposed legislation before the work of turning Bills into legislation begins. In the course of the parliamentary session Bills will be brought forward at different times. Members will debate them, committees will scrutinise them, amendments will be tabled, the House of Lords will also scrutinise and may suggest amendments, and MPs take a final vote. All this work shapes the Bill at the various stages until following the final vote it is sent to the Queen for Royal Assent and then becomes law.

With a large number of new MPs there will be changes in roles in the coming weeks and months to give people new opportunities. Firstly there were elections for Deputy Speakers with candidates from the main political parties put forward. There will then be elections for people to chair the Select Committees. In the House of Commons there is a Select Committee for each government department. Their work is to examine the work of the Department including spending, policies and administration. These departmental committees decide upon their own lines of inquiry and then gather written and oral evidence. Findings are reported to the House. There are also Bill Committees set up to scrutinise each new Bill laid before Parliament. There are many other roles to be assigned to MPs and the Prime Minister has also indicated that he is likely to make changes to his Ministerial team in due course.

There is also a range of APPGs – All-Party Parliamentary Groups. These are informal cross-party groups providing for discussions on issues of particular interest to members. These groups are essentially run by and for members of both the Commons and Lords, though most also involve individuals and organisations from outside Parliament in their administration and activities.

Each APPG has to be re-established following a General Election. I follow the work of a number of APPGs and am vice-chairman of several. This month have been elected as chairman of the following:

- **The Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) APPG** which seeks to help change the culture of dispute resolution in the country by providing a valuable forum within Parliament to discuss the latest development in Alternative Dispute Resolution and to promote its wider use.
- **The River Thames APPG** which seeks to unite River Thames riparian parliamentarians to improve, protect, promote and enhance flood risk management, navigation, moorings, sport, recreation, environment, planning,

tourism and education. To enhance and increase access, safety, information, employment, facilities, services, infrastructure, value and use of the entire river and its corridor environs from source to sea.

- **The Fusion Energy APPG** which seeks to inform and advise parliamentarians on the present status of research; how to maximise UK industry income and export potential; how fusion can benefit from government investment; how fusion fits into the new research landscape under UKRI.
- **The Digital Currencies APPG** which seeks to promote an appropriately regulated environment in which digital currencies may grow, and to raise awareness of digital currencies as an alternative means of financial investment and transactions.

There will be many key issues up for debate over the coming months. As always I am interested to know the views of constituents on the various topics as they come up for debate. Whether on a topic before the House or something else, if you have an issue that you would like to raise with me please do email me at howelljm@parliament.uk or write to me at the House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA or my constituency office (PO Box 84, Watlington, OX49 5XD) to share your views.



Patients urged to help the NHS help them this winter

Winter is traditionally the busiest time of year for the NHS, and so patients are being reminded to only use Emergency Departments in Oxford and Banbury in an emergency. There are a range of alternative options available for non-emergency situations to ensure you get the appropriate care you need, and save an unnecessary trip to the Emergency Department.

What's available?

- Self-care is the best choice for minor illnesses and injuries – a range of common winter ailments can be treated at home with a well-stocked medicine cabinet. Having a winter plan – such as keeping stocked up on medicines, keeping your home warm, and looking out for neighbours – can also be beneficial.
- Local pharmacies can give advice on several conditions, such as coughs, headaches, upset stomachs and skin conditions, as well as advise on stopping coughs and colds from getting worse.
- NHS 111 has call handlers who can help you choose the right health services for your needs, as well as a website. NHS 111 can put you in touch with a clinician, a GP, book you an appointment at your nearest minor injuries unit. You can also use NHS 111 online 111.nhs.uk Minor injuries units can treat deep cuts, small burns, sprains, sports injuries, & infected wounds. To find out your nearest MIU please visit the Oxford Health website

Bits & Pieces

A New Home for the Santa Sleigh

Dear Roy & Gilly, I just wanted to let you both know we have found a parking spot for the sleigh and it will go to Chalford Farm.

Huge thanks to Gilly for her efforts in locating a possible new home and she had suggested I contact the Westons and it paid off. All the best,
Phil and the Sleigh Committee

OSR 200 Club – Christmas Day Draw

The Inn was bursting with customers in the three hour opening period before people dashed home to eat Christmas lunch. Everyone was on tenterhooks but Buster quickly sobered up to take charge of the bag containing the 213 number counters and Ray Tompkins kindly took charge of the six page name sheet which would identify the winners of the two Christmas prizes on offer!

Looking around Buster quickly identified Ray's mother Margaret and invited her to draw the £50 cash prize. As the number 142 was drawn Ray was heard to say, I recognise that number and sure enough he had actually won – the envelope containing the cash was handed over and the enthusiasm quickly moved onto who would win the big one of £100. I think Buster was taken aback because he again didn't move very far, turned around and invited the nearest guest to draw the prize – this time it went to number 94: Amanda Grosvenor, from Brookstones.

Well done to the two winners.

The February Draw

With Ray working away, Sheldon took over the names sheets to call out the nine winners of the monthly draw. Meanwhile of course Buster was preparing to circulate the bar getting visitors to pick out the winners. Thank you landlord David for the encouragement enabling us to use your premises and to Howard, Simon, Sheldon, and all the others involved.

The winners are:

32	Rory Kermack	£5	171	Harry Ashfield Smith	£10
135	Eyore	£10	126	Alexander Church	£10
157	Paul Grafham	£10	210	Shaun Hunter	£10
92	Cecily Church	£10	18	Tigger	£15
57	Vicki Roe	£25			

Thank you to all involved for your continued support for the OSR

Roy



Waterperry Gardens

One of the highlights of winter – the arrival of snowdrops – will be celebrated during Waterperry's Snowdrop season from the end of January and throughout February (entrance fee applies).

As the gardens at Waterperry start to swing into life again, the Galanthus carpet the old orchard and riverside walk.

These wonderful heralds of spring providing the first hints of colour after winter. Not forgetting the wonderful display of the jewels of the Mountains. Over 600 different Prothallium Saxifraga can be found in the newly renovated Walled Garden, and to follow with the planting of 6,000 daffodils in bloom in the new daffodil meadow, spring really is the perfect time to visit the gardens. Pat Havers, Head Gardener said 'this is her favourite time of the year. A month of promise, there is an energy to gardens and the Gardeners!'



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February at Waterperry

Alphabet I Spy: 15th – 23rd February

Family fun over the February half term. Spy the whole alphabet in the gardens and win a treat. Suitable for all ages. £2.50 per child, who must be accompanied by an adult for whom the garden entrance fee applies.

Snowdrop Season: February

With more than 60 different snowdrop varieties carpeting the ornamental gardens from the end of Jan with the main show in Feb, enjoy a walk around the gardens to see these little heralds of spring in a magical setting. On Sat 22nd & Sun 23rd February 2020 enjoy a free guided tour at 11am, 12.30pm and 2.30pm (normal garden entrance fee applies)

DIARY DATE: Mum's get free garden entrance on Mothering Sunday – 22 March and The Easter Bunny Hunt 28 March to 21 April

For more information please visit
www.waterperrygardens.co.uk

As a partner garden of the Royal Horticultural Society, our gardens are open free to individual RHS members every Friday throughout the year. Simply show your membership card to get free access to our beautiful and inspirational eight acre gardens.

Waterperry Gardens – eight acres of beautifully landscaped ornamental gardens, a quality plant centre housed in the Victorian walled garden, Art Gallery, Gift Barn, Garden Shop, Museum of Rural Life, Saxon Church and Teashop offering home-baked lunches and some of the best cakes in the county!

Pub News

The Crown Inn

Here we are already into February and the fast approaching spring. The nights are now noticeably drawing out which is always a positive mood changer!



Tina and I would like to thank everyone who popped in over the Christmas period. The Boxing day quiz tradition was in full swing again with a fantastic turn out of 70 people. A very big thank you to Mark Jones for taking the time to plan and host the evening.



Tony Blakeley is hosting our Valentines night quiz, the subject is music. We are fully reserved for this night so thank you to all that have booked. Sunday the 8th March is The Biggest Pub Quiz. This will be a Sunday evening after our lunch service; MP John Howell will be our Quiz master. The pub will close as normal on Monday 9th and additionally Tuesday 10th that week.

Mothering Sunday is fast approaching too.... 22nd March. We will be adding a third sitting for this day. Tables from 12:00-12:30 / 15:00 -15:30/ 17:30-18:00 Booking is essential.

Don't forget that we offer a food takeaway service. Available from 18:00 to 20:30, Just phone and order and we'll give you a collection time. If you have a Birthday or special occasion and you'd like a venue to celebrate it – we can help too. Hosting, Catering, Entertainment, we can take the hassle out of these events.

Best wishes to you all, Pete, Tina & Sparky.

The Inn at Emmington

February, the month of love, and there's plenty to love, cherish and adore going on at The Inn over the next few weeks, whatever your passion.

First up is Valentines weekend when we will be serving a special menu on both Friday 14th and Saturday 15th February so you can treat that someone special or simply come out for a nice meal if you're not into all that 'lovey dovey' stuff! Prosecco by the glass, a crackling fire and freshly prepared food, why not treat yourselves!

For the sport lovers out there, we are showing all Six Nations rugby games with free bar nibbles for all England games – next up is England against Ireland on Sunday 23rd February at 3pm, always a passionate encounter.

Beer lovers are always welcome at The Inn and this month we have a new rugby beer from Gundog ales called Scrumdog; Chiltern ale's 40th anniversary Ruby Ale as well as offerings from Rebellion, XT, Loddon and Loose Cannon. Our three ale handpumps are regularly changing as well as our offering of strong scrumpy ciders as backed up by our inclusion in CAMRA's 2020 Good Beer Guide.

If food is more your passion, we serve food every midweek evening as well as lunch on Saturday and Sundays. Thursday night is steak night – a ribeye steak with all the trimmings and a drink for £15.95 per person and we have just started fish and chip Friday – beer battered cod and chips and a drink for £13.95. On Sundays we serve a beautiful rib of beef as well as one other roast and a vegetarian option and a selection of traditional homemade desserts such as apple crumble and treacle tart with custard.

Saturday 29th February, Leap Year Day, is a must for music lovers when local Chinnor band The Muttz Nuttz play at The Inn. The band have been together almost 20 years but don't get to play many local gigs any more due to other work commitments. We will be serving food from 6.30pm for those wishing to dine before the music starts at 8.30 / 9.00pm – bookings essential as we are expecting a busy night. A big thank you to all those who came to listen to Broken Bones back in January – the band played to a packed house and are back at The Inn at the beginning of September. We have live music booked most months throughout 2020 and details of all bands playing can be found on our website with reviews of most bands on the music website Lemonrock.

As we Spring into March and April, we have Mothers Day on Sunday 22nd March and will be hosting a Quiz night on Saturday 28th March to celebrate our three years at The Inn. Details to be confirmed but we are planning a fun night of a quiz and bingo with a buffet to say thank you to all who have supported us over the past three years. April will bring Easter Sunday Lunch ; fine weather !?; and live music on Saturday 25th April with rock band 'Bad Penny' playing at The Inn for the first time.

So whether its live music, home cooked food, real ale or simply enjoying a pint at your local.....what's not to love, see you soon **David, Sharon and Family**

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THE INN AT EMMINGTON

PUB & RESTAURANT

BED & BREAKFAST
ACCOMODATION

01844 351367

David, Sharon and family welcome you to this traditional countryside Inn, dedicated to providing excellent food and real ales in a friendly, welcoming atmosphere.



Dinner, Monday - Saturday
6pm to 8.30pm
Saturday and Sunday Lunch
12.30 to 3pm

Reservations 01844 351367

CAMRA Good Beer Guide 2020
3 changing real ales and scrumpy ciders
Large beer garden with Aunt Sally throw
Car parking - Dog friendly pub
Ground floor bedrooms



Seven modern en-suite bedrooms
Chiltern Hills or garden views
Rates include full English breakfast

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