

The Courier



Serving the Communities of
Uffington, Baulking, and Woolstone

Issue 197

Spring 2024

Copy date for Summer issue Saturday 15th June 2024 to the editor Giles Dawson, Email courier@uffington.net

The Council

Uffington Parish Council now has seven councillors. They each serve a maximum of a four-year term. The composition of the Parish Council is:

Mike Oldnall (Chair) 820369 mike.oldnall@uffington.net

Simon Jenkins (Vice Chair) 820776 simon.jenkins@uffington.net

Richard Charles richard.charles@uffington.net

Kat Foxhall kat.foxhall@uffington.net

Dave Garwood dave.garwood@uffington.net

Fenella Oberman fenella.oberman@uffington.net

Nigel Puddicombe nigel.puddicombe@uffington.net

Clerk - Ms Sandy Adams 01367 680208 clerk@uffington.net

RFO - Mrs Julia Evans 01235 833466 clerk@uffington.net

The Chair, Clerk and RFO (Finance matters) may be contacted on the above telephone numbers or email addresses. Other Councillors may be contacted on the email addresses above.

The Council normally meets on the second Monday of the month in the Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall, at 6.30pm. Please check the website or notice board for confirmation. The agenda is published on the Parish Council website and notice board at least three clear days before the meeting. All residents are most welcome to attend these meetings and raise and discuss any issues during the "Open Forum" session early in the meeting (normally 7pm). We particularly encourage anyone intending to submit a planning application to come and discuss it with the Council before submission. A digital copy of the Courier is always posted on the Village [website](#) from where the links in each edition are live.

Cover photo: *Many thanks to Simon Jenkins for the cover photo of a gallant (or foolish?) moped rider at Shotover in February 2024. Hope springs eternal!*

Annual Assembly – 8 April 2024

The Annual Assembly will be held on Monday 8 April, starting at 7.00 pm, in the THMH – large hall. Refreshments will be available in the foyer from 6.30 pm. The ‘normal’ Council meeting (essential items only) will start at 6.00 pm in the small hall.

This is an important point in the year, as it is OUR opportunity to explain to all residents what has been achieved on your behalf in the last year, and to hear our proposals for 2024 / 2025. It is YOUR opportunity to raise any matters of concern to you; if we cannot help then we will try to find someone who can. We would like to see as many people as possible.

Unsurprisingly, the recent flooding will be one of the principal items on the agenda. Thames Water have declined to attend and we are waiting to hear whether OCC Highways will be able to attend so that we can ask them how they are proposing to address the problems identified in our recent Flooding Report.

Courier Magazine Advertising

The [policy](#) on Advertising is available on the website. The cost of advertising in four issues of the Courier (one year) AND inclusion on the website on the ‘Essential Contacts’ page or ‘Local Businesses’ as appropriate is very modest and is as follows:

- ¼ page or less: £20.00
- ½ page: £40.00
- Full page: £75.00
- Advertisements on the website only: £10.00 (Links to external commercial sites are acceptable, at the discretion of the Council)

Please note that in the event of non-payment, advertisements will appear in only one further issue before being discontinued pending payment.

Anybody wishing to advertise should contact the Clerk (clerk@uffington.net). Copies of the Courier are distributed to a number of local shops, pubs and other outlets outside of the UBW villages making it more attractive to advertisers. We would be pleased to learn of any errors, omissions, or any additional categories of advertisement you would like to see included in future editions.

Planning Applications in Uffington since the last Courier

The following applications are **awaiting determination**:

- P24/V0535/FUL - Ridgeview Fawler Road Uffington. Redevelopment of site to provide building for holiday/ short-term occupation.
- P24/V0517/HH - Gibbons Cottage Broad Street Uffington Faringdon SN7 7RA. Single storey rear extension; removal of chimney; & new outbuilding to replace existing outbuildings
- P24/V0309/LB - Peartree Cottage High Street Uffington Faringdon SN7 7RP. Installation of a wheelchair accessible wet room in the downstairs toilet/shower room.
- P23/V1740P23/V0771/DIS - Dragon Hill Uffington Faringdon SN7 7RE. Discharge of conditions 4(revised tree protection measures), 5(watercourse enhancement), 10(landscape scheme) & 12(Boundary details) on application P22/V2978/S73. (Variation of condition 2 (approved Plans) of application P22/V1141/FUL and removal of condition 7 (Proposed erection of 2no 4 bed detached (self-build) dwellings)).
- P23/V1740/LB and P23/V1739/HH - Lilac Cottage Woolstone Road Uffington FARINGDON SN7 7RF. Two storey rear extension to create larger kitchen to ground floor, and master bedroom with balcony to first floor.

The following applications have been **approved**:

- P24/V0056/HH - Hendra Broad Street Uffington Faringdon SN7 7RA. Proposed timber storage shed with solar panel array to roof, erection of new greenhouse, new timber entrance gates, front porch, install Air Source Heat Pump and conversion of existing garage to habitable accommodation.
- P23/V2877/FUL - Jubilee Field Uffington. 5.35m tall Spacenet (children's play equipment) on the parish council owned Jubilee Field
- P23/V2732/HH - The Leys Upper Common Uffington Faringdon SN7 7RU. Extension and partial conversion of garage to include new front porch, along with over-cladding of north elevation.
- P23/V2452/HH - Gibbons Cottage Broad Street Uffington Faringdon SN7 7RA. Extend existing dropped Kerb (circa 3.5m) to the South of the property to create a new access. Remove the exiting small stone wall and gate to create access (to be constructed under permitted

development). Install free draining hardstand material.

- P22/V0345/FUL - Sowerhill Farm Uffington Faringdon SN7 7QH. Installation of an outdoor arena with lights change of use from agricultural to equestrian.

The following applications have been **refused**: - none

The following applications have been **withdrawn**: – none

The following applications have been **appealed**:

- Under Appeals References: APP/V3120/C/23/3314399 and APP/V3120/C/23/3314401:
 - P22/V1042/FUL - Land North of Baulking Lane Baulking Lane Baulking SN7 8NR. Permission is sought for change of use of land to residential, for one Gypsy Traveller family. The development to comprise one static caravan, one touring caravan, parking for two vehicles, associated hardstanding and infrastructure (retrospective).
 - P22/V1003/FUL - The Fairmile, Farm Land at Baulking Lane Baulking SN7 8NR. Retrospective change of use to 1 no. Gypsy/Traveller pitch, comprising 1 no. (static) caravan and 1no. (touring) caravan and associated works.

The appeal hearing for these applications was due to have taken place on 23-25 January 2024 but was delayed again. No future date for this hearing has yet been notified.

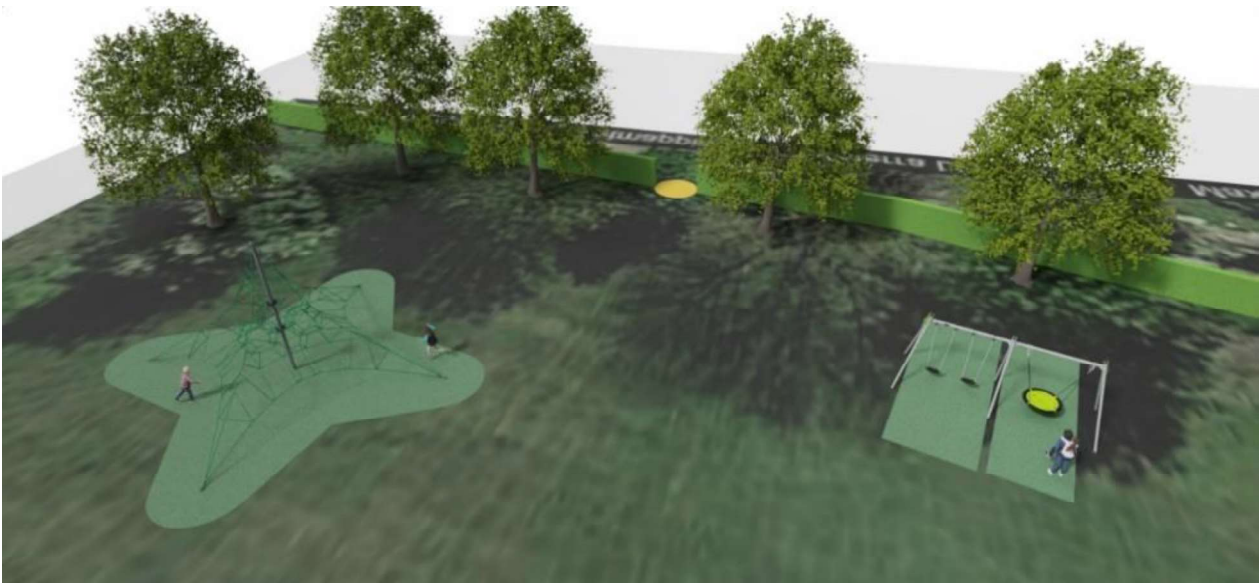
The live list of 'Current' and 'Decided' Uffington applications can be accessed via the links on the VOWHDC website here: <https://www.uffington.net/parish-council/planning/> along with the latest details of the main 'Material' factors considered (and not considered) when assessing applications.

In order to keep villagers more up-to-date with planning applications, we have also started including new applications, as they are received, in the weekly email bulletin. If you are not signed up to this (some 400 people are already!) and would like to be, please let simon.jenkins@uffington.net know.

Jubilee Field

Poplars. Following professional advice, the remaining 2 poplars have now been felled. To compensate for their loss we will be planting replacement, native species, trees as part of the ongoing redevelopment of the area. We have already had a generous donation from the Future Trees Trust of some new native hedging plants to go along Upper Common and are considering suggestions for the development of the rest of the area. If you would like to put forward or discuss any suggestions, please come along to the Annual Assembly in the Village Hall on Monday 8th April.

New Playground Equipment. We have now received planning permission from the VOWH for the spacenet (needed as the spacenet will be over 4m high) and have submitted a bid to release the necessary funding. Assuming we get the necessary funding in place to enable us to place the order for the equipment we hope to have it ready for use in time for the summer holidays – when we also hope the Jubilee Field will be dry enough!



Village Maintenance

Village Maintenance Contract. In the Winter 2023 edition of the Courier we sought interest from potential contractors for the new Village Grounds Maintenance Contract. At the January 2024 Council meeting it was decided to award the contract to the bidder who offered the best value for money but unfortunately they subsequently withdrew their bid. As a result the Council has decided to re-tender the contract; either as a whole or in separate parts. Outline details are given below.

Contract Scope. The task is assisting with the maintenance of Council owned land which comprises: the Jubilee field and surrounding hedges and ditches, the Parish Burial Ground and the Parish Allotments. A degree of flexibility may be required and work on other smaller areas may be required from time to time and as agreed between the Council and the Contractor. The main tasks are:

Jubilee Field

- Strimming the verge outside the Field, the shop area, around trees, plantings etc as necessary.
- Clearing the stream on 2 sides of the Field of summer growth and debris.
- Clearing the grips and gullies into the stream from the road.
- Monitoring pond levels and keeping the pond clear of debris.
- Clearing brambles and undergrowth from the boundary of the Field.

Junction Vision Splays

- Cutting the grass to allow safe visibility at key junctions in the parish (3-4 times in summer only).

Allotments

- Mowing the grass in the car park area, the footpath area and between and around the 30 plots.

Equipment. The Council is unable to provide any equipment and the Contractor is expected to provide all necessary tools etc. This is likely to include a range of hand gardening tools, a motor mower (45cm), a strimmer, bow saw/small chain saw (for minor tree surgery).

Duration of the Contract. The initial contract will be let for 1 calendar year starting as soon as possible. The estimated total number of hours for the above tasks is approximately 170.

If you are interested in this work in all or any part(s) of it, or know anyone who might be, please let the Clerk (clerk@uffington.net) know so that we can discuss the details.

Maintenance Volunteers. If you would like to join the village maintenance group, please get in touch with the Parish Council Clerk (clerk@uffington.net) so we can get your name on the list (which is necessary for insurance purposes).

Hedges and Verges. The Council continues to minimise its ecological impact by leaving the hedges and verges uncut for as long as possible – except for junction splays where it would be dangerous to leave the verge uncut. The next cut of the verges will therefore take place in the early summer with hedge cutting left until after the nesting season.

Field Tidy and Litter Pick. The next Jubilee Field Tidy and Litter picks will be on **Saturday 23 March and Saturday/Sunday 13/14 April 2024** respectively.

Allotments

Nigel Puddicombe

The Uffington allotments continue to be busy and the large majority of plots are now let. However a small number of plots (or half plots) remain available for rent by residents of Uffington, Baulking and Woolstone. These plots each measure roughly 100 square yards and are plots that mainly have not been worked before but offer great potential as a reward for initial hard work. If you are a keen gardener or wish merely to enjoy the benefits of healthy exercise and growing your own fruit and vegetables, please contact either Barry Godsell (bandhg@hotmail.com) or Nigel Puddicombe (nigel.puddicombe@uffington.net), who will be happy to show you round and give you more details. The annual rental is £25 per full plot.

THE FLOODING OF WINTER 2023 / 2024

The winter of 2023 / 2024 was exceptionally wet by any standards, resulting in extensive flooding in many parts of the country, and an unusually large number of 'named' storms. The month of February was reported as the wettest since records began. In comparison with much of the rest of the country, Uffington was relatively lightly affected, albeit with extensive flooding on roads which threatened many properties and severely impacted vehicular traffic, and on surrounding farmland. Nonetheless, we are aware of at least four properties which were flooded.

The Council produced two reports on this flooding. The first dealt with the blockages in the Uffington Brook which were slowing the usually rapid dispersal (once it stopped raining) of flood water from Uffington, which led to the regular flooding of Broadway, Woolstone and Fernham Roads. All residents should be very grateful to those landowners who have reacted quickly to improve drainage

on their land. The second report, which is on the website, <https://www.uffington.net/app/download/19252552/Report+on+Flooding+Winter+2023+Part+2+Final.pdf> examined the higher-level issues contributing to flooding and also the very disturbing increase in pollution caused by the inability of Uffington Sewage Treatment Works (STW) and village sewers to deal with the quantity of sewage generated, especially when swollen by rainwater. For example, the Thames Water (TW) monitoring device installed at the STW showed that:

- Raw sewage was discharged into the Uffington Brook for a 16 hour period on 18 March 2024 – which was one of the very rare sunny days in recent months, without any rain.
- Raw sewage was discharged for 329 hours in 2022 – a dry summer and for 1200 hours in 2023!

The problems faced by the village, as well as by most other parts of the country, are caused by:

1. Lack of maintenance of essential infrastructure over many years, particularly relating to the treatment of sewage, and to the culverts, ditches, and drains etc which are an integral part of the highway network.
2. Lack of investment / capacity to keep pace with the rate of building and the increasing population, particularly relating to the treatment of sewage. This is a nation-wide problem and the Council was pleased to make a contribution to the activities of WASP (Windrush against Sewage Pollution), an organisation which is taking a leading role in holding water companies to account.
3. Climate change, the impact of which in UK appears to be that there will be hotter, drier summers and warmer, wetter winters than in the past. What used to be classified as '1 in 100-year events' are now happening very regularly – e.g., 10 named storms in the period October 2023 to February 2024 – and for which we believe provision must be made by government.
4. Funding (or perhaps more accurately, lack of funding).

A detailed 'Action Plan' was therefore submitted in February 2024 to the Environment Agency, Oxfordshire County Council Highways and Thames Water, itemising the locations where improvements were most urgently needed. The report was also sent to David Johnston OBE MP, Oxfordshire County Council and Vale of White Horse District Council.



Flooding from the main sewer and damaged verge at allotments allowing the stream to overflow onto the Fernham Road – Feb 2024

We invited Thames Water (but they declined) and OCC Highways to attend the village Annual Assembly on 8 April, where we hope that we may be able to find out what action they are proposing to take. Given the range of situations and solutions it is imperative that homeowners who know, or think they are or might be at risk of flooding of any type, consider the risks and act accordingly BEFORE the emergency arises.



. Sewage pollution in the pond on the Jubilee Field – Feb 2024

Excellent advice is given in the guide 'Homeowners Guide to Flood Resilience' downloadable from [FloodGuide_ForHomeowners.pdf](#).

The full report is on the website and can be read or downloaded from here: <https://www.uffington.net/app/download/19252552/Report+on+Flooding+Winter+2023+Part+2+Final.pdf>

ANNUAL PANTO AT THMH

The Editor

Great Teamwork! would be an appropriate definition of, and plaudit for, what Uffington Players exhibit every February at the Memorial Hall. Their latest and highly original pantomime – sorry, 'Pantostein' – was no exception. This is a company in which the lead director and writer Duncan Saunders had the joy of being cast as The Monster: not many (of his own) lines to learn plus fab and frightening make-up to apply.



'Pantostein', with as silly a plot as you could imagine, gave multiple opportunities to performers young and not-so-young, united by their love of this curiously British genre. Of the older generations, all our favourites were on parade: in masculine attire and on hissable form was James Broadbent as Big Farmer, while Christine Holley flew the flag for thoroughly ethical scientific research as Doctor Stein. John Helsby gave great amusement as a deep-Southern preacher Canon Fyre, his fellow-clergyperson and sidekick being Parson Snows, played by the agelessly vivacious Beryl Packer (see above); and I continue to be mightily impressed by that superb thespian Pete Osmond, on this occasion hurling himself around the stage as the doctor's charming factotum, Igor.

Music and dancing are, of course, essential ingredients in the panto mix. If things in this department were a little rough round the edges on opening night, I dare say all was well by the final performance.

If the many teenagers in the cast of 'Pantostein' (representing characters such as Cara Van, Gale Force and Willy Makeit) retain both their taste for treading the boards and their local connections, then the future of the Uffington pantomime as an annual entertainment is assured.



James Broadbent – 'Big Farmer'



Pete Osmond – lending a hand as 'Igor'

THOMAS HUGHES MEMORIAL HALL

Geoff Rumble

Hall bookings have started well for 2024. The building is clearly a popular venue for local regulars and for newcomers. The pantomime returned in February and we have the Swire Arts weekend lined up at the end of April.

The AGM in January confirmed that hire fees have, up to now, been keeping pace with running costs. However, a valuable three-year deal on electricity has come to an end and major expenditure items such as this, gas and insurance are going, or have already gone up significantly. After holding hire charges steady since 2018, it is necessary to make some changes and an overall increase of 5% will be made.

Membership of the Management Committee has now decreased “to a skeleton crew” and we really need new volunteers to provide management support. Please don't be shy in offering help. New faces and ideas will be welcomed.

An area where major change is about to happen is with the booking system. For many years, hall bookings and payments have been made via the Uffington Stores and we are most grateful to Rose, Sarah and Dave for providing this service. As the number of bookings has increased, this has placed considerable pressure on them and it is now time to move into the digital age and consider installing an internet-based booking system. If anything, we are behind the times as many community buildings such as the village halls in Stanford in the Vale and Letcombe Regis already operate this way.

The Committee is starting to progress this and we will keep everyone informed. For those worried that they “don't have the technology”, there will still be a bookings contact at the end of a phone!

We are very grateful to the White Horse Show for providing grant support to the project to install an audio-visual system in the small hall. This will take place the week after Easter and will not affect hire of the large hall. The new system will be able to connect with a laptop, offer Bluetooth connectivity with a mobile phone and allow the use of our Amazon Firestick plus fibre Wi-Fi to connect to live and recorded television.

We also plan to re-surface the floor in the storage area and the foyer. The date for this is the week commencing August 19th; unfortunately the building will be unavailable for hire during that week.

At the moment, a reminder that the website is thmh.co.uk

Bookings are made through Uffington Stores and for any queries, I can be contacted at geoff.rumble@btinternet.com or 07747 846197.

UFFINGTON COMMUNITY GARDEN

Heather Abel



Gardeners are always talking about the weather and it's always unpredictable. We've had lashings of rain and then there's the wind... But if life gives you lemons – make lemonade! Or a dead hedge!

In years past, gales have caused havoc and the recent strong winds did in fact bring down a quite large ash tree. Luckily the fallen tree fell sideways with the westerly winds and avoided causing any real damage.

We have been aware of Ash Die-Back for some time as it has spread across Britain once the disease arrived on our shores. The trees become brittle and inevitably die yet some will survive and develop immunity, as happened with Dutch Elm disease years ago. As one of our most common native trees disappears from the landscape, the need to support the environment as best we can becomes even more pressing.

So, on finding the large broken tree on its side – we set about cutting it into manageable pieces and distributing the logs before being left with a large pile of twiggy branches. Rather than have a massive bonfire, we decided to lay it along the edge of the site to form a 'dead hedge'. A dead hedge is a wonderful habitat for a myriad of little creatures which in turn feed the birds and bigger creatures,

thus helping the whole eco system to flourish and thrive. Not only that – but it looks pretty cool too! And in time will rot down nicely into compost to replenish our amazing soil which in turn, locks up green-house gases.

Come and join us – Saturdays from 2-4pm. Always welcome and plenty to do.

FROM THE VICARAGE

Jeremy Goulston

I am typing this on a grey day in March and it is the very heart of Lent. At midday the vicarage was battered by a rainstorm of almost biblical proportions and the land is drying out all too slowly. To make the day even more Lenten (and leaden) Woody escaped this morning after I had failed to close the gate. I found myself riddled with extremist tendencies as I chased him down the drive; screaming ‘Woody!!’ amongst other things and praying that he didn’t rush into the road in front of four wheels.

Chastising myself over my intemperate outburst and language, I remembered that Christian practise is more than simply moralism, it is grounded in self-knowledge or at least some attempt at being aware of what’s going on inside us. During Lent, and whenever we ‘confess’, we are asked to suss out some of the pretences and deceits by which we live our lives, as well as some of our unconscious prejudices and attitudes.

This isn’t to make us feel bad about ourselves. Sadly too much church teaching in the past seemed designed to do just that. The 14th century mystical writer, Julian of Norwich, is a healthy corrective to this way of thinking. She once wrote; “I understood that the Lord looked on me with pity and not with blame”. The word ‘pity’ meant, in those days, something much deeper and more compassionate than the way in which we use it today.

The purpose of becoming more aware of ourselves and more conscious of what’s going on inside us isn’t to beat ourselves up but to be honest about who we are and more hopeful about our potential for spiritual growth. So whilst we rightly condemn all forms of extremism and can be glad, I *hope*, of the ‘high bar’ set by the Government’s new definition of extremism, my own faith takes me beyond condemnation to a serious sense of personal accountability for my own life and also for the society of which I am a part.

Woody brings me down to earth (sometimes quite literally) because he provokes and challenges me, but he is also forgiving and leads me into new things and encounters. In this sense he reminds me of the 'Hound of Heaven'. He and the people he hangs around with (everyone given half the chance) help to sand the extremist corners off me. Often because of social media and isolation people with extreme views, all of us at times, don't encounter a smile or someone who puts forward a more moderate take on the world.

I am thankful all our Churches, from Lent lunches to Palm Sunday Walks and Easter Services, offer some of the latter as well as moments for self examination which is hugely worthwhile.

Just before I slope off on sabbatical, leaving churchwardens and a goodly ministry team in charge (with welcome help from Church House including Bishop Gavin on 2nd June, Jane Haslam the Associate Archdeacon on 9th June, plus our Welsh Canons and Max helping too) we will be trialling 'Tower Kids', our new Sunday School in Uffington, at 10am on 12th May. Look out for news of this, and/or ask me or Amelia Wright for further details if you or family are interested.

A very Happy Eastertide to Everyone!

COMMUNITY MINIBUS

Minibus Management Committee

The new minibus was ordered after the last Courier was published. It may be here when you read this as it is being fitted out at present. We intend to put in on display for everyone to see and will provide details for the Uffington Village News when that happens.

The purchase was made possible by generous grants from our sponsors Oxfordshire County Council, the White Horse Show Trust and the Connected Communities Fund. We are most grateful to them, to possible further sponsors and everyone who has provided input and support for the project.

Since the impact of Covid, when use of the minibus was limited, we have seen sufficient patronage to indicate that replacement of our aged bus is justified. The expressions of support from our sponsors and our Parish Council provided an additional incentive. However the viability of the minibus over its full life will only be assured if the current usage is maintained and hopefully increased.

We think passengers and drivers will appreciate the improved level of comfort and convenience. The leaflet we sent to all local households explained how to join our regular services or book the bus for private or group use – the contact address is below.

One problem remains. The minibus exists for the purposes of the whole community and all activities help to cover our operating costs. However, the regular Wantage services provide the majority of the earnings and we could not function without them. We have already highlighted that we are losing long-serving drivers of these services, for unavoidable reasons. They need to be replaced if we are to be able to provide the same in the future.

We would warmly welcome volunteers with a car licence who can spare about one morning a month on a Wednesday or Friday. Our team enjoy driving these services, which are a lifeline for some of our regular passengers. Please come and look over the bus when we get it if you feel you can help.

Let's hope for a successful year, with the minibus well utilised. Whilst we were confident enough to embark on the project our budget was set to ensure that in the unlikely event of an early failure through lack of support our sponsors grants could be refunded to them. Contact us at ubwminibus@outlook.com



FROM THE HEAD TEACHER

Rachel Cook

Uffington Primary School has been promoting reading for pleasure through its World Book Day events. During the week, parents and members of the community were invited into the school to share a story with the children and talk about the importance of reading. The children enjoyed lots of other reading activities too, including a reading lunch and a visit from author, Rab Ferguson. Rab's books, The Late Crew, form an award-winning children's book series about young carers investigating aliens! The children at Uffington School are very lucky to have exclusive signed copies in their library for the children to enjoy.

The school's Pupil Parliament also organised an Uffington Book Swap to support having access to a wider range of books, at no extra cost. The children are hoping to make this a permanent fixture in the village and are planning to provide access during school holidays too. This will be a fantastic resource for the whole village who will be able to swap and enjoy pre-loved books for free!

FROM THE MUSEUM CURATOR

Karen Pilcher

After a very busy winter the museum will be opening to the public on Easter Saturday, March 30th.

This year's exhibition features the Wellington Bomber DV595 that crashed in a field outside Uffington in 1942 with the loss of six lives. We will have on display the personal accounts from two Uffington residents who remember the event and who captured their memories for the museum – Brian Tilling and Jim Jones. Together with memorabilia loaned from RAF Welford and the Wellington Aviation Museum, the exhibition will detail the events of that fateful night.

Garry Gibbons, our previous curator and Jane Golding (a Friend of the museum), have spent a lot of time researching the crash and adding to the story; we are very grateful for their commitment and hard work. As an additional event, Jane will be holding a talk in the THMH on Wednesday 15th May at 7.45pm on the Wellington Bomber crash.

The museum will continue to exhibit the history and archaeology of the area including the White Horse and Wayland Smithy. We have permanent displays on Thomas Hughes and 'Tom Brown's School Days' and also the time that the late poet laureate Sir John Betjeman lived in the village. We have a mock Victorian Schoolroom and continue to record the changes in village life in Uffington with nearly half the collection consisting of photographs and articles from the late 1800s to the present day.

As a reminder, the museum is run entirely by volunteers and is one of the smallest in Oxfordshire. It was granted Accreditation status in 2013 by Arts Council England and successfully renewed in 2017. We would love to see more visitors from the local area - it is after all a village asset, with the building owned by the Parish Council and therefore maintained with financial contributions from the council precept.

Uffington Museum will be open 2pm to 5pm every Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holiday from Easter until the end of October. Entry is FREE. We have local merchandise for sale and donations are always welcome to keep the museum up and running. You can visit us at the Uffington Farmers Market and the wonderful White Horse in steel art is available to purchase – they make excellent gifts. Please don't miss the opportunity to visit this 'little gem' of a museum and see our new exhibitions for 2024.

Uffington Museum, Broad Street, Uffington SN7 7RA

www.uffingtonmuseum.co.uk





The 2024 White Horse Show may seem a long way off but planning starts for the next Show immediately after the last one. The Show Committee meets monthly to make sure marquees, traders, arena events, classic cars, motorbikes and tractors, donkeys, dog shows, Punch and Judy, Professor Crump, hot food, cold food, the beer tent and many, many other essential components of our traditional country show are booked and arranged, ready for those two days in August when the sun always shines!

And here are just a couple of reminders as to why our community has held a White Horse Show for fifty years –

- Firstly, we live busy lives and with the uncertainties caused by global warming, war, inflation and a general worry about what the future holds, it can be reassuring to get together and enjoy a couple of days, to remind ourselves what country life and community really mean.
- Secondly, the White Horse Show raises capital to enable grant funding to be awarded to community projects. In the last year, the Show Awards Committee has confirmed grants to help fund the St Mary's Church Clock restoration, to support the purchase of specialist grass-cutting equipment for the Cricket Club, to help the purchase of sound equipment for the

Uffington Players plus an audio-visual system to be fitted in the small hall of the Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall. The Show has also helped make possible the purchase of a replacement vehicle for the UBW Community Minibus Association. These are all significant expenditure items for local organisations and they highlight how fortunate Baulking, Uffington and Woolstone are to have grant funding available from within our villages.

The Show committee is a small group of people who put it together each year and this would not be possible without the support of many volunteers to help do the groundwork in the week leading up to the Show, looking after entry gates, car parking and other supervision during the Show, then take it all down when the Show is over.

Please put the Show dates on your calendar – Sunday 25th and Monday 26th August -. and please be ready to help. Don't forget - two hours of your time as a volunteer gets you free entry to the Show.

WHITE HORSE GARDENING CLUB

Karen Pilcher

The White Horse Gardening Club meetings in Uffington are held on the first Thursday of every month excluding January and August. Meetings are held in the Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall in Uffington (SN7 7RA) from 7.30pm to around 9pm with plenty of parking available.

The hall opens at 7pm and there is always a raffle. Annual subscription is £20 and members receive a 10% discount off plants at Bampton Garden Centre. Non-members are very welcome at a charge of £5, although membership is more cost effective.

During the summer months the talks give way to garden visits for an additional cost and usually include a stop for refreshments.

In February we had a lovely visit to Worcester College in Oxford, with a guided tour by the head gardener Simon Bagnall. The bulbs in flower and wonderful scent of the Daphne shrubs, even in a very wet month, were fabulous. We have also enjoyed the talks given by Kate Gould on 'Designing Your Own Garden' and Peter Skeggs-Gooch on 'Clematis' – both attracting nearly 70 members and visitors.

Please don't forget the village plant sale on Saturday 18th May from 10am. Plants will be sold by various gardening members around the village including the Community Garden.

Here is the calendar for the coming few months:

April 4th - Hidden Gardens of the Cotswolds – speaker Victoria Summerly

May 2nd - Dahlias for the Garden – speaker Steven Edney

June 6th - Visit to Kingston Lisle Gardens

June 13th - Gardening with Ornamental Grasses – speaker Katherine Crouch

June 18th - Visit to *Green and Gorgeous* near Wallingford

July 4th - Visit to Ham Court, Bampton

Further info, please contact Hilary on hilarydeakin@me.com

UFFINGTON TENNIS CLUB

Rob Hart

It's been a dark damp winter, but longer days and lighter evenings are ahead, and we're very keen to get the club out of hibernation and back on the courts for a superb summer of tennis. There is lots to look forward to, so please read on, put all the dates in your diary, and get involved with as much as possible – we love to see the courts in use!

Membership. It's that time of year again and annual membership fees are due for the 2024-25 season by March 31st. With the difficult cost of living increases we've seen recently, we've decided to keep fees the same as last year, to encourage people to renew their membership. The club website has been

updated ([Link](#)) with the new joining options and we'd really like to encourage you to sign up again early. In order to survive, the club needs its members.

Courts. From now on – following such a warm and wet winter – we will be having the courts professionally cleaned to keep them in good condition. We are also still working on our project to improve and replace the path from the clubhouse and carpark to the courts, in order to avoid the requirement for wellies during winter play. More to come on this soon.

Club Nights and AGM. Club Night this season will be Wednesdays, starting at 6pm. We usually get a good turn-out for these and encourage all players, members (or not yet), to join us for the inaugural one of these on April 17th. We will have a short social afterwards to introduce any new players, which we'll combine with our very brief AGM. You can be assured of a warm and encouraging welcome.

Matches. We've had a very successful winter mixed league season finishing top of our division! Hoorah! Well done and thank you to everyone who played throughout some fairly cold and dark evenings and weekends to achieve this. As we look ahead to the summer leagues, we will be entering Men's and Women's teams, managed by Neil Reynolds and Dominic Weston-Smith for the Men, and Anne Hollingworth for the Women. Please email them via the following links ([Men's](#) and [Women's](#)) with your name and contact details (mobile and email), and any times you know you're not available, as soon as you can. Finally, we are organising a pre-season friendly match against Shrivenham at 7pm on April 3rd. We will field three mixed pairs and will join Shrivenham for a short social afterwards. If you'd like to play, please email Rob Hart (robhart100@yahoo.com) before March 31st if possible.

Tournament. We always hugely enjoy our annual tournament and social event and will be aiming to run it again this year at the club courts. We are going to try an earlier date this time to avoid the holiday season, and to take advantage of the spring weather. If you'd like to play, please email Rob Hart via the following link by April 30th and put 1pm on May 19th in your diary. More detail to follow soon.

As we head into Spring with the welcomed appearances of snowdrops, crocuses and other flora, it has been over 12 months since the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust (WBCT) took over the lease from the Woodland Trust (WT) for Uffington Gorse. WBCT is strongly committed to not only restoring the 200m of canal and towpath at Uffington Gorse, but maintaining the beautiful woodland so that everyone can enjoy this special place.

Over this time, the West Vale Branch of WBCT volunteer work parties (that meet every Wednesday morning) at Uffington Gorse have been very busy and made fantastic progress with tasks such as:

- Removing a large number of discarded tyres that have been taken to be recycled.
- Removing trees from the canal and towpath and cutting the logs and brash.
- Carrying out further investigations by digging trial pits at the Station Road end of the canal area to see if any remains of the old bridge can be located.

Looking to and ensuring the best future of the beautiful woodland at Uffington Gorse, WBCT have been awarded a grant to create a ten-year woodland management plan that will be reviewed and assessed by the Forestry Commission. Work to start on the woodland management plan and to carry out a tree safety survey at Uffington Gorse is expected to commence in late May 2024.

In the future, we are planning to dig trial pits in the tip area of the canal to understand its composition as well as investigate the de-silting of the canal. This will help to inform us of what will be required and to help us to actively plan for the restoration of the canal and towpath. We will continue to share our plans with the Parish Council and local residents.

We are very grateful for the support from the Uffington Parish Council that allowed us to cut the hedges along the Uffington Gorse perimeter.

If you would like to join our team, or could offer any assistance towards our plans, please contact us via the email address below. Additionally, if you would like to input or comment on any of these issues, then please also contact us at: westvale.branch@wbct.org.uk . Wishing you all a wonderful Spring 2024!

BENEFICE DRAW

We held the latest Benefice 200 draw on 17 March. The winners were:

£200 - 175 - Graham Meacher

£100 - 32 - Beryl Packer

£100 - 188 - David Forster

£50 - 140 - Laurence Hollingsworth

£50 - 99 - Jeremy Cale

£50 - 40 - Rev Jeremy Goulston

£50 - 3 - Val Chapman

£50 - 57 - J&S McCullough



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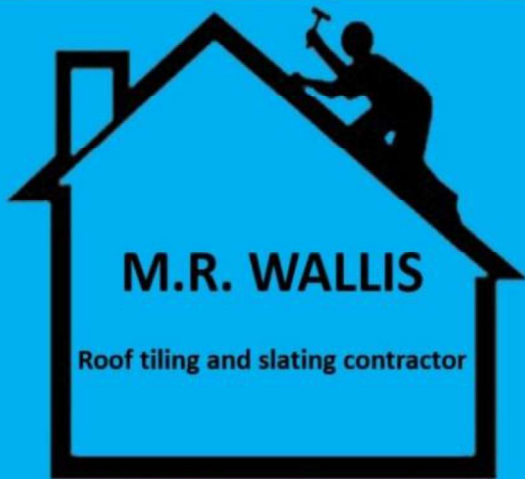
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A photograph of a small, scruffy dog with white and brown patches sitting on a brown suitcase. A yellow spirit level is placed on the suitcase next to the dog. The background is a blurred outdoor setting.

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Scheduled regular local activity information

Day of week	Time	Activity	Ages	Where	Contact
Mondays	8:30–9:30 am	Circuits	Adult	Village Hall	Lucinda 07967 157620
Mondays	6.45-8pm	Fitness	Adult	Village Hall	Michelle Southey 07826 524463
Tuesday	10-11am	Tai Chi	Adult	Village Hall	If interested, attend to make enquiries
Tuesday	11.30-12.30pm	Pilates	Adult	Village Hall	Fiona-wright@outlook.com
Tuesday	6-7.15pm	Beavers	6-8	Village Hall	Dave Barnes 07811 424978
Tuesday	7.30-9pm	Bell Ringing	12+	St. Mary's Church	Hugh Baxter 820014
4th Wednesday of month	7:30pm	WI	Adult	Village Hall	whitehorsewi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk
Wednesday	6pm	League Cricket 20 overs	14+	Sports Club Fawler Road	Joe Parman joeparman@outlook.com
Wednesday	6– 7pm	Yogalates	Adult	Village Hall	Carolyn Courtney 07825414609
Wednesday	7-8.45pm	Guides	Girls aged 10-14	Village Hall	Uffingtonguides@gmail.com
Thursday	8.30-9.30 am	Box Fit	Adult	Village Hall	Lucinda 07967 157620
Thursday	6:30-8 pm	Cubs	Children 8-10	Village Hall	Katharine Murkett 820270
Thursday	7-9pm	Scouts	10-14	Village Hall	Nathan Reade 07768 073363 Katharine Murkett 820270
1st Thursday of month	7.30-9pm	Gardening Club	Adult	Village Hall	Pamela Preene 820251
Friday	9.30-11am	Baby & Toddler	Children 0-5	Village Hall Parents must stay	Jessica Mildenhall jessica_mildenhall@hotmail.com
Friday	1 pm	Yogalates	Adults	Village Hall	Carolyn Courtney 07825414609
Saturday		League football	Adults	Sports Club, Fawler Road	Jason Wilkins 870487
Saturday	1pm	League Cricket (40 overs/side)	14+	Sports Club, Fawler Road	Joe Parman joeparman@outlook.com
Saturdays	2-4pm	Community Garden	Adult + accompanied children	Community Garden behind pub	Heather Abel 01367 820709 heather.abel@hotmail.com

For Village Hall booking enquiries, please contact Uffington Shop on 01367 820977 or check in the Hall booking calendar booking website www.thmh.co.uk

If you spot any errors or would like new information included please contact [Sandy Adams](#) the Parish Council Clerk

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