

An aerial photograph of a lush green field. In the center, a large sculpture of a horse is formed by thousands of small purple flowers. At the top of the image, a wooden signpost with a blue sign is visible. The background shows some bare trees and a dark path or stream.

The Courier

Serving the Communities of
Uffington, Baulking, and Woolstone

Issue 193

Spring 2023

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to Giles Dawson, Email courier@uffington.net

The Council

Uffington Parish Council has six councillors. They serve four-year terms, with elections next due in May 2023. The composition of the Parish Council is:

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

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

Mr Graham Banks graham.banks@uffington.net

Mrs Fenella Oberman fenella.oberman@uffington.net

Mr Dale Pilchowski dale.pilchowski@uffington.net

Mr Nigel Puddicombe nigel.puddicombe@uffington.net

Clerk

Mrs Julia Evans 01235 833466 clerk@uffington.net

Mrs Julia Evans (Alternative) parishcouncil@uffington.net

The Chair and Clerk 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 Parish. A digital copy of the Courier is always posted on the Village [website](#) from where the links in each edition are live.

Cover photo: Drone shot of spring crocuses on Jubilee Field taken by Paul Mackie in 2019 for the museum exhibition that year - 50 years of Uffington.

Upcoming Parish Council Elections

On 5th April the names and number of nominations were made public by the District Council. Only five nominations were received by the Vale for parish councillors for Uffington. As this number is fewer than the available seven places, there will NOT be an election for Uffington parish councillors. All those who put their names forward will formally take office at the Parish Council meeting on May 9th. The five elected are:

Richard Charles, Katherine Foxhall, Simon Jenkins*, Fenella Oberman*, Mike Oldnall* *existing councillor

Any remaining vacancies can be filled by volunteers who can be 'co-opted' by the council subject to them being agreed by all existing councillors.

The election for District councillors will still take place on May 4th.

Voter ID. In order to reduce electoral fraud the Government has introduced the need for 'Voter ID' for the 2023 elections. ALL voters will require the necessary ID to vote on May 4th. Separate information on how to do this is on the website [here](#).

Annual Assembly – 17th April

The Annual Assembly is, as the name suggests, an annual opportunity for the Parish Council to report on its activities over the past year and its plans for the coming year. This year we focussed on the past year and only giving a very general outline of plans for the coming year as we are not permitted to commit to plans which might be changed by the new council after the elections and which will take office on 9th May. The agenda included presentations on the church clock and the acquisition of Uffington Gorse by the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust as well as a discussion on potential improvements and/or additions to the children's playground equipment. The presentation can be found on the village website [here](#).

The Courier Magazine

Magazine Distribution. Following the survey in the Courier in Autumn 2022, we asked those who wished to have the Courier delivered electronically to forward their addresses so we can remove them from the delivery rounds. Despite more than 70 people requesting this in the survey, only 6 addresses have been received – too few to reduce the number of copies printed! If you really don't want a paper copy, **please email mike.oldnall@uffington.net with your house address** so we can remove you from the next distribution.

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 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 please contact the [Clerk](#). Copies of the Courier are distributed to a number of 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**:

- P23/V0585/HH - 7 Jacksmeadow Uffington Faringdon SN7 7GN. Dormer loft conversion and front porch extension.
- P22/V2252/HH - Slate House Upper Common Uffington Faringdon SN7 7RU. Proposed rear extension and associated alterations. (As amended by parking plan

received 1st November 2022).

- 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 **approved**:

- P22/V2978/S73 - Dragon Hill Uffington Faringdon SN7 7RE. 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/V0142/LB - Tamerlane Cottage Packers Lane High Street Uffington SN7 7RT. Proposed replacement of flue liner which serves a woodburning stove. Raise height of the chimney stack and replace existing pot.

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 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.

Jubilee Field

The Jubilee Field continues to be well used and we are constantly working to keep it tidy, the grass cut and the trees maintained in a safe state. The last tree survey in March last year found that several of the ash trees were showing significant signs of ash die-back and were felled early in March 2023. We aim to replace them with other native species trees later in the year.

Poplars. All residents will be aware of the three very large poplar trees on the Jubilee Field, between Upper Common and the pond. The Parish Council has been concerned about the safety of these trees for some years, as they have become very large; falling branches, or the trees themselves, could create damage to people or property. Last year's comprehensive survey of all the trees owned by the Parish Council recommended that they be removed or pollarded and that the middle one was the most urgent for attention.

Either of these two options is very expensive, on account of the size of the trees. The problem created by pollarding is that it then has to be done regularly, so, after much deliberation, the Parish Council has decided that the centre poplar only, at this time, should be removed. A tree surgeon has been instructed and we await completion of the job in mid-April. A replacement tree will be planted in due course. Views on the type of replacement would be welcomed.

Village Maintenance

Litter Pick. The next regular roadside litter pick will take place over **the weekend 22-23 April**. Please get in your diary! Full details will be published nearer the date.

Hedges and Ditches. During the winter it is even more important than usual that hedges and ditches are kept in good condition in order to avoid restricting visibility or water flow. If you need assistance with hedges, verges or ditches, or would like to join the maintenance group, please get in touch with the Parish Council [Clerk](#).

Traffic Calming in Uffington

20 mph limit. Following the informal survey in the Autumn Courier and the news that Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) would meet the cost, the Council decided to register Uffington as a candidate site for the implementation of the 20mph scheme and was accepted into Phase 1. OCC has now conducted a legally necessary, formal, consultation

and at their Highways meeting on March 23rd it was been agreed to implement the 20mph scheme in Uffington. Implementation of the new speed signs commenced on 17 April.

Speedwatch

Simon Jenkins

The Uffington Speedwatch group consists of seven volunteers and it has been active since early December 2022. In that time, we have conducted twelve sessions at the five sites around the village approved by Thames Valley Police and sixteen vehicles have been reported to TVP for speeding. It is widely acknowledged that the Police do not have the resources to monitor speeding on a regular basis in rural areas such as ours, and therefore Speedwatch is the only mechanism available to residents to attempt to enforce the speed limit. We could it more frequently if we had more volunteers! If you would like to help, please contact simon.jenkins@uffington.net

Allotments

Nigel Puddicombe

The Uffington allotments (just off the Fernham Road) continue to be busy and we are looking forward to the new growing season and all the challenges that will no doubt bring. The large majority of plots are now let, however a small number of plots remain available to rent by residents of Uffington, Baulking and Woolstone. These each measure roughly 100 square yards and are plots that mainly have not been worked before but offer great potential as a reward for the initial hard work that will be required. If you are a keen gardener who wants to enjoy the benefits both of healthy exercise and of growing their 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 on behalf of the Uffington Allotments Association and give you more details to help you choose the best way forward. The current annual rental is £25 per plot.

Burial Ground

For those not aware, the Parish Council owns a non-denominational burial ground with almost 100 graves in it. Until recently there have not been any dedicated ashes plots, although ashes can be buried in grave plots. Ashes-only plots have now also been included. For full details of the services we offer via the burial ground and how to access them, please see [Uffington Parish Council - Burial Ground](#).

WHITE HORSE IN CROCUSES

Mike Thomas

Villagers cannot have failed to notice the beautiful 'White Horse' in purple crocuses recently in bloom to the west of the Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall and also featured on the cover of this edition of the Courier. The bulbs were provided in 2017 by the Rotary Club of Faringdon & District and planted by a group of Uffington villagers. They celebrated the centenary of the Rotary Foundation and recognise the amazing work Rotary International has done (with Bill Gates) since 1985 to eradicate polio across the world. Thanks largely to their efforts, only six cases of this dreadful disease were reported worldwide in 2021, and it is now found in just two countries (Afghanistan and Pakistan). With a final push, polio can, like smallpox, be completely eradicated for ever.

CORONATION PICNIC – Sunday 7th May

Following the successful popular village picnics held in 2021 and 2022 a similar event will be held to celebrate the coronation of King Charles III. The event will be part of the national 'Big Lunch' and held on the Jubilee Field. Whilst the details are still being finalised, the following activities are currently expected:

- Family picnics on Jubilee Field with Village Hall open
- Food and Drink sales (Teas, BBQ, Bar)
- Children's Games - various
- Music - TBC
- Climbing Wall
- Tug-of-war
- Evening Screening of Coronation Concert - TBC

If you would like to suggest or, even better, organise any other activities, please let us know as soon as possible – mike.oldnall@uffington.net

KISSING GATES ON FOOTPATH 4

Simon Jenkins

Building on the success of previous projects to improve the footpaths around Uffington (kissing gates have been installed on FPs 387/12, 387/17, 18 and 19, and 387/26 in recent years), the Parish Council is hoping to improve access this year in a similar way on FP 387/4 – that is the footpath which goes north out of the village to Moor Mill Farm, over the railway footbridge. We now have agreement from OCC but await approval from Network Rail but in the meantime we can proceed to the next stage when we will be seeking grant funding. The photos below show the poor state and limited accessibility of two of the stiles.



BRITCHCOMBE FARM UPDATE



It is 12 months since a report was last made to residents, at the Annual Assembly in April 2022, about the expected planning application for mobile homes and a caravan park, etc, by Lovat Parks Ltd, at Britchcombe Farm. Many local residents felt very strongly that this would be totally inappropriate in such a sensitive location, and the Britchcombe Farm Working Group was set up in the autumn of 2021 to prepare to resist any such application.

The group was retitled during the last year as Whitehorse Hill Action Group ('WHAG'). The intentions of the WHAG continue to be to resist this type of development, but it is accepted that some people may be in favour, possibly on the grounds of local employment opportunities.

As a reminder, some form of planning application had been expected from Lovat Parks Ltd to follow up their 'Scoping Opinion' request in May 2021 to the District Council which specifically referred to Cross Roads field, which is in the North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), and is in full view of Dragon Hill and Whitehorse Hill. The purpose of this request was solely to establish whether the District Council would require an Environmental Impact Assessment for the work listed as "Bases for Caravans, Surfacing for Car Parking, Works for Minor Internal Access Roads, the Laying of General Utilities (Water/Electricity) and Drainage". The District Council decided that an EIA was not required, but it has since been made clear that planning approval would be required for the significant construction/engineering work which would be needed, despite approval for limited camping having been given in the past.

Where are we now? As nothing has happened you might think there is no need for a further report. BUT, a lot has gone on behind the scenes in the course of the last 12 months and we believe that we are as well prepared as we can be in the absence of any indication from Lovat Parks Ltd of their intentions. As students of military history will be aware, few plans survive the first contact with the enemy, so doubtless there will be much activity when Lovat Parks Ltd's development plans become clearer.

PRIMARY SCHOOL NOTICE BOARD

We have had a busy few months at school! We have had a new Jungle climber installed on our field, we gained 100% in our recent Health and safety inspection, Wayland class has been on their residential trip to Liddington and one of our pupils won the annual Christmas card competition run by our local MP who presented a copy to the Prime Minister. We have even managed to fit in a pyjama day to celebrate World Book Day!



This Easter (29th March 2pm and 6pm) we are staging an event in St Mary's church with "i sing pop"! All of our Key stage one and two children will be performing songs and working with a sound engineer.

Our PTA have been marvellous and supported Christmas trips for the children to the Panto and Roves Farm, plus our Easter event too.

If you would like to know more about all of the things we are up to then please take a look: <https://www.uffingtonprimary.org/>

UFFINGTON PANTOMIME RETURNS WITH 'HANSEL & GRETEL'

The many friends, family and supporters of Uffington Players will have been delighted to see this lively troupe back in action after Covid. It had been three years since the Memorial Hall rang to the traditional shouts of 'Behind you!', 'Oh no, you haven't!' and the like.

'Hansel & Gretel' was the advertised entertainment. It has to be admitted that the endangered pair themselves did not feature very much in the plot (the popular German opera gives them more of a shout); but this quirk was more than compensated by some outstanding turns by the grown-ups, most of whom are seasoned performers in the Uffington pantomime.

Set in 'Bakersville' and loosely structured around an episode of 'The Great British Bake-Off' – oh, where would modern panto be without the telly? – the script gave us several enjoyable stock characters. Keeping the action and atmosphere buzzing whenever he appeared, Pete Osmond ('Jimmy Dodger') is a natural comedian who would grace any panto on any stage. He was a permanent thorn in the side of his boss, 'Ma Kipling' – famous, of course, for her exceedingly good cakes. More on this domineering 'Dame' later.

Other highlights were provided by more veteran troupers, Christine Holley and Catherine Carrigan as 'Dough' and 'Knut', who kept up the banter in authentic style. Another pair, rightly greeted with wild applause whenever they appeared, were the two policemen 'Sergeant Scone' and 'Constable Crumpet', vividly played by John Helsby and Sean Hargrave (**see below!**). These comical coppers took the prize for both verve and audibility.



How encouraging it was to see so many local children taking part, singing and dancing (if not always speaking audibly!) under Ms Holley's direction. The lead teenagers, Sophia Hennington as 'Prince Persipan' and Elsie Preece as Ma's daughter 'Charlotte Kipling', made a touching couple with fine singing in their big duet. Pierre H made a suitably stropky 'Percy Pretzel', attempting to squeeze both VAT and Council Tax out of his targets.



There is nothing like a Dame – James Broadbent as Ma Kipling

'Baron von Schwarzwald Kirschtorte' was largely involved in order to have his name mangled by the other characters in as many different ways as possible. Duncan Saunders easily surmounted this obstacle to make a very boo-able villain (hissing seemed out of fashion on the first night).

This event would not be the same without the perennial contribution of Beryl Packer, impersonating 'Witch Allspice' on this occasion. Her comic timing and range of facial expressions should serve as a model for her juniors (i.e. everyone else in the cast). But driving the whole affair along, as both lead director and the aforementioned Dame, was James Broadbent. He revelled in a range of eye-catching costumes, was never short of an ad-lib when hiatus threatened, and enjoyed an enviable rapport with the audience. At curtain-call time, he found the energy to ensure that all the backstage and technical crew were given their well-earned applause.

Further entertainment from Uffington Players is promised, again at the Memorial Hall, in October.

WASTE DISPOSAL

Simon Jenkins

– or, what happens to the contents of your black bin

Not so long ago, it was standard practice for many local authorities in UK to transport ship loads of rubbish to the Far East for disposal – ‘out of sight – out of mind.’ Then we began to hear stories of streams, rivers and even the oceans of the world being choked with ever-increasing quantities of plastic, and much more, and we had to think again. This remains a world-wide problem, but at least the UK has recognised this and is trying to reduce the amount dumped.

Two members of Uffington Parish Council volunteered for a tour of Viridor’s ERF (Energy Recovery Facility) at Ardley, near Middleton Stoney, on 16 March. It sounds a bit dry as an entertainment, but actually it was extremely interesting. The tour is only available to councillors at present but can be watched as a virtual tour on:

[What happens to your waste - Vale of White Horse District Council \(whitehorsedc.gov.uk\)](http://whitehorsedc.gov.uk) under the "black general waste bin" section.

Viridor claim to be playing a leading role in transforming the waste sector. Once there was ‘waste.’ Now, society recognises that ‘waste’ comprises valuable resources that we must all challenge ourselves to recover. By transforming domestic and commercial waste and recyclables into high-quality raw materials and energy, Viridor state that they are playing a key part in the UK’s transition towards a net zero, circular, economy by 2050.

Some of Viridor’s other ERFs have combined heat and power which uses their excess steam to provide heating and hot water to local homes and businesses, as well as electricity. The company is also working on carbon capture processes.

The site at Ardley was previously a limestone quarry (where fossilised footsteps of dinosaurs were found – see photo!) and later a landfill site. The ERF facility became operational in 2014. Today, everything which we place in our black bin goes to Ardley, and nothing goes to landfill. (There are separate systems for recycling the contents of the green, brown and food caddy bins).

At Ardley, we watched lorry loads of waste being emptied into a pit, from which it was transferred by huge five-clawed grabs (each grab containing the weight of a car) into a bigger heap and then over a very high separating wall into a blast furnace. Here everything is incinerated in a 24/7 process; the heat converts water into high pressure steam, which drives turbines, which generate electricity, which is fed into the National Grid, which powers 60,000 homes in Oxfordshire. Excess steam and carbon dioxide is cleaned and discharged to atmosphere through tall chimneys, and anything which cannot be incinerated (e.g., all metals) is removed from the ash for recycling elsewhere.

For more information, see:

[Viridor | UK's Recycling, Resource & Waste Management Company](#)



Spot your Councillors!

EXHIBITIONS FOR 2023 AT TOM BROWN'S SCHOOL MUSEUM

Following a winter revamp to our Gallery area, you are invited to visit Uffington's most famous teddy bear – writes curator **Garry Gibbons**.

Archie and the Poet

The extraordinary story of Sir John Betjeman and his teddy bear.

Launched on Saturday 8th April 2023, 'Archie and the Poet' at Tom Brown's School Museum, Uffington, explores the life-long relationship between poet laureate Sir John Betjeman (1906-1984) and his teddy bear, Archibald Ormsby-Gore, or as he was better known within Sir John's circle, Archie.

Sir John Betjeman, once a resident of Uffington, was introduced to Archie as a small child, from which time they became firm companions. Archie accompanied Sir John just about everywhere throughout his life and, as can be seen by the number of patches holding Archie together, it is evident he was a well-loved teddy bear. Whilst at Oxford in the 1920s, Sir John and Archie provided the inspiration for Sebastian Flyte and Aloysius in Evelyn Waugh's novel *Brideshead Revisited*. During his lifetime, Sir John gave Archie a number of different personas, including minister and amateur archaeologist. Archie was in Sir John's arms when he died in 1984.

Garry Gibbons, Curator, Tom Brown's School Museum says, 'It's amazing to think results of a survey carried out in 2010 has shown that 51% of adults still have their childhood teddies. This exhibition introduces just one example of an adult, albeit a rather famous adult, who maintained a life-long relationship with his teddy bear. Archie seems to have provided Sir John Betjeman an anchor in his life – a constant companion that was always there for him. I'm sure this exhibition will talk to many of those who retain close relationships with their teddies. Please do visit the museum and bring your teddy along as Archie is always delighted to meet new friends.'

SHARE YOUR TEDDY!

Post a photo of your teddy bear with a little information about her/him on the museum's Facebook page -- and share with your friends.

Scouring the Uffington White Horse: 1750-1900

This exhibition explores the who, when and what of scouring the White Horse over a period of 150 years through contemporary reports in the local and regional press.

Come along and discover how the 1st Stanford-in-the-Vale Cubs (Dragons section) have made their own fabulous contribution to a better understanding of this ancient local ritual.

Museum opening times for 2023: April 8th to October 29th. Open Saturday, Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays: 2.00pm – 5.00pm.

Admission: Free



The first two months of the year have seen 89 bookings by regular community groups and eight private functions. The “warm spaces” initiatives that started in November have proved very popular; and while the Wednesday morning sessions have now stopped, the Mother and Baby meetings on Friday morning continue to be subsidised until April. The Wednesday sessions were subsidised by a grant from the Oxfordshire Community Foundation but many who attended wished to make a donation and as a result, I understand the organisers have decided to pass two-thirds of the money donated to the Trussell Trust (a food bank charity) and one-third to the Turkey/Syria Earthquake appeal.

As reviewed elsewhere in this issue, Uffington Players took over the hall in February and delighted many of us with a pantomime entitled ‘Hansel and Gretel’. The story was a little difficult to follow but it had Hansel and Gretel, a Prince, his sweetheart, a villain, two inept policemen, a witch who seemed to be a fairy godmother in disguise, Mrs Kipling, Mary Berry, Paul Hollywood and custard pies. What more could you ask for? I see the Players have already block-booked the hall for the end of October, which suggests that after the deprivation caused by Covid lock-downs, they are on a roll. Role?

Looking ahead, it is pleasing to see the booking calendar filling up with many of our regulars, including the Swire Ridgeway Art Exhibition over the weekend of 22nd and 23rd April (see next item). We also have a new fitness class called “Clubbercise” at 8.00pm on Tuesday evenings and we wish them success.

The AGM in January highlighted for me that we have a number of regular community organisations that use the hall and attend our Council meetings to hear what the management committee have done and plan to do. We also have quite a few that simply use the building. I would like to make a plea to all our community users, it is your community hall and please take an interest in how it is managed and help us to look after it.

On that note, I would stress that the hall is a large building and takes a lot of work to keep clean. To keep hire charges down and to support our regular cleaner, we like to organise a periodic “deep clean” to get at the areas that cannot be covered in a regular two-hour clean

by one person. If you are a regular hall user, would you join a team in April to carry out a deep clean? Please let me or one of the management committee members know and we will look at arranging a session.

The AGM is also when a new management committee is appointed and for information, the members for this year are Geoff Rumble (Chair and bookings), Jonathan de Wilton (Treasurer), Terrie de Wilton (Secretary), Paul Armishaw (Caretaker), Mark Cracknell (Contracts), Anne Gill (Cleaning), Tanya Boyce (Health & Safety), Lindsey Hughes (Publicity/Facebook).

Hall users will be pleased to note the AGM agreed that the costs of hiring the hall should remain unchanged for another year.

SWIRE RIDGEWAY PRIZE EXHIBITION – April 22nd-23rd

Artists will once again be showing their creations, inspired by the Ridgeway, at the 7th annual Swire Ridgeway Arts Prize Exhibition at the Memorial Hall in Uffington on the weekend of 22 and 23 April.

The theme of the competition is ‘Spirit of the Ridgeway’, the aim of the competition being to bring the Ridgeway to life not only as a long-distance trail but as an artistic inspiration, and to show the Ridgeway, its history and environs, in all their aspects throughout all seasons. The event is organised by Friends of the Ridgeway, a charity, that welcomes everyone to come and view the artworks for free. An independent panel of judges will assess the artworks in four classes: wall art, sculpture, photography and writing, and the winners will be announced on the afternoon of Sunday 23 April.

“We had over 90 exhibits, of very high quality, in 2022,” said Mike Lewington, chair of Friends of the Ridgeway. “These are tangible proof of the inspiration that the Ridgeway and its surroundings give to artists who, in turn, invite the rest of us to see the Ridgeway through their eyes and flights of fancy.”

Those who cannot get to Uffington for the Exhibition will be able to view all the artworks on the Friends of the Ridgeway website by Saturday 22 April. One can also see last year’s exhibits online at <https://ridgewayfriends.org.uk/swire-ridgeway-arts-prize-2022/>

This year we are contributing to the [celebrations](#) of the 50th anniversary of the official opening of the Ridgeway National Trail in 1973, the patron for the anniversary being broadcaster and anthropologist Mary-Ann Ochota.

The exhibition at THMH will be open from 10am to 5pm.

Review of RIDGEWAY – a political thriller by Nick Watts

GVD

It is good for residents of the Vale to encounter a novel – in this case, a political thriller – with a recognisable local setting. 'Ridgeway' marks the debut in fiction of Nick Watts, who knows the area well and also brings an enviable knowledge of the political scene to his writing.

Centre stage is Tom Scobie, candidate for a Parliamentary constituency in south Oxfordshire. At the same time, he is on the trail of the chairman of his local party organisation, suspecting him of involvement in the 'accidental' death of the previous MP. The plot moves briskly and there is good characterisation, especially of Tom's supportive doctor wife Anne and his 'rough diamond' former colleague Sid – not to mention the influential peer who is out to get the interfering Scobie. The author seems uneasy about naming the location of many events in the novel. Local readers, however, will not have any difficulty identifying 'Wandage', 'Uffingham' and 'Farrington' (while Oxford and Didcot survive unaltered). Much of the action takes place on the winding roads above the Vale: Tom Scobie survives one of several threatening episodes in his trusty Land Rover.

An ambitious author usually has their eye on the next opus. A sequel to 'Ridgeway' is duly trailed on the final page.



A fine combination of tree and hexagonal bench, recently installed at the Woolstone / White Horse crossroads on the Wantage-Ashbury road

FROM UFFINGTON VICARAGE

Jeremy Goulston

Lent is a time for patience, a time for taking stock and a time for discerning where our true gifts and calling may lie.

It has been my privilege, over the past few weeks, to visit Bob Iles who lives about as close to White Horse Hill as you can get below the tree line. His knowledge of nature, how the water table has dropped dramatically over the years for example, is quite amazing. Barn owls regularly visit his garden shed. Now very near the end of his innings, he tells me with joy that he's very ready to meet his Maker.

I am also hugely impressed by Bob's love of the Church; having been Churchwarden and Tower Captain, he recounts the 'joys' of stoking coke in the Church boiler on Saturday evenings before the Sunday service - thank goodness we don't have to do that now! We will miss him but, as we have done for so many others in this community, celebrate him with love when the time comes.

With the news of Lisa and Malcolm Bradbury's retirement to Cornwall, we will lose two more people who have made a really positive impact in the Village - Lisa working tirelessly to give the children all they need to thrive as little humans, and Malcolm providing solid support with cycling proficiency, church finance, and - more recently - delicious soup for the Warm Space at THMH.

I have hung back from making appeals for help, in terms of personnel, for fear of appearing too 'needy'. Part of me now wishes I hadn't for the simple truth is that, with the loss of our Treasurer and with only one Warden for more years than I care count, St Mary's needs your help now more than ever before. You don't need to be a churchgoer to be our Treasurer, you simply need good enough affinity with numbers and a desire to help.

I would very much welcome any volunteers to try their hand as Churchwarden, with a more experienced Warden alongside you. A willingness to walk with the C of E, a sometimes quirky but ever-open Church, is all you need. The great thing about serving the community is, as those who have done it know, that the rewards are deep (if not financially)!

We have enjoyed making the church a bit greener lately and we hope, with your help, to encourage greater biodiversity in the Churchyard. The poet Philip Larkin described his parish church as 'a serious house on serious earth' - we know the depth of this but we also know, as Beryl will tell you, how to laugh as we seek to support the village and keep connected with the spiritual side of life.

If you would like to join us in this great endeavour, please drop me a line or speak with me or anyone else connected with St Mary's - they will tell you about the challenges, but also, I hope, about the difference the Church and belief has made in their lives. I hope to have seen many of you over the Easter celebrations; perhaps at the Palm Sunday walk from Shellingford to Uffington. A major date in the spring diary is the Thanksgiving Service for King Charles III at 10am on Sunday 7th May before we celebrate on the Jubilee field in the afternoon.

With every blessing on you, and your family.

CHURCH CLOCK RESTORATION FUND

Jeremy Moss

Thank you very much indeed for all the contributions made to our Church Clock Restoration Fund so far. The generous donations have in some cases been accompanied by fond childhood memories of the clock when at Uffington School. In these times of inflation and higher costs, these donations have been most welcome and are critical as far as repairing the clock for our village community. Thank you for your generosity and memories too.

We have three quotes, one from the original manufacturer (1910) and installer, one from another national firm whose founder attended his first horology course in Uffington Village Hall in 1979 and a third received recently from an experienced clock repairer/restorer of repute in the Bristol Diocese.

I have put together a Clock Committee made up of two members of the PCC, one from the Parish Council and a hardworking, public-spirited member of our Community. The Vicar is naturally one of the Committee of five too. The aim is to submit the quotes to the Diocese, confirm whether we 'automate the re-winding' or not, to confirm the quote to be accepted and at the same time to raise a further £25,000 over and above the £13,000 raised so far.

I have been most encouraged by the response so far across our community but am adding the details below for those who have not had the opportunity to contribute yet....

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UCCRF....Bank – Santander or <http://www.justgiving.com/campaign/St-Marys-UCCRF>.
Thank you very much for your support.

UFFINGTON CRICKET CLUB

Joe Parman

As you read this, the cricket season will just be getting under way.

Last season began with the club worrying about its very existence, but ended with winning promotion into Division 7 of the Cherwell League and winning the Cherwell League's Keith Crump Memorial Cup - each of which was a fantastic achievement. This season our ambitions are to repeat that and win another promotion and another cup, all the while playing with a smile on our faces.

Across the season we already have 37 fixtures in the diary - a mixture of Sunday friendlies, Saturday League and Cup games (45 overs per side), and Wednesday League games (20 overs per side) running from late April all the way through to early September. Indoor nets have been taking place on Sunday evenings at St Hugh's School, Carswell.

We are always happy to welcome new players of any level of experience. One of the things we don't have at the moment is a junior section but we'd love to change that. If you have a son or daughter aged 8-14 who is interested in playing cricket, please let us know!

Contact us through the website <https://uffingtonoxon.play-cricket.com/home> or email Joe Parman (joeparman@outlook.com) if you are interested in getting involved in any way - playing, umpiring, scoring, training, sponsoring - we'd love to hear from you. Or just come down and watch a game and have a chat!"

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UFFINGTON TENNIS CLUB

Rob Hart

As the clocks have gone forward and the evenings stretch, I thought you might like an update from the Club. Firstly though, a very warm welcome to Neil Reynolds, who joins the Committee as our 'estates' member. Any questions on infrastructure, please contact him on neilacreynolds@gmail.com.

We will soon move to evening club nights again. To kick this off formally, season open days are to be held 1000-1200 Sunday 23rd April and 1800-2000 Thursday 27th April. Club nights will then run every Thursday throughout the summer. Everyone very welcome. Before then, the courts are block-booked for the purpose, so feel free to gather informally as weather and daylight allow.

Our fabulous summer tournament will be held 1300-1700 Sunday 16th July. More details to follow closer to the time.

Our AGM will be held 1900-2030 Wednesday 3rd May. Again details will be sent closer to the time, including a link to join online.

We plan to organise at least four friendly/social matches (two at home and two away) over the summer and really want all members to have the opportunity to play. If interested, please get in touch with julietmoss@hotmail.co.uk.

Our participation in local leagues is about to start again too, with both a men's and a ladies team entered. If you can play in the men's team, please contact robhart100@yahoo.com and if you can play in the ladies team please contact anne@woolstonelodge.co.uk. We're always short of players - so please do volunteer.

And to close, we're just in the process of finalising our coaching programme for the summer, so more details on this very soon, and we have some exciting initiatives being explored with the LTA to develop and improve our club, so please stay tuned! Hope to see you on court soon.

Memberships are due for renewal. The club website has all membership packages set out, all of which remain highly competitive and offer really good value for money across a year of use. Strictly speaking, memberships should have been renewed by March 31st.....for seamless access to the courts and continued play. Just a nudge.

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UFFINGTON COMMUNITY GARDEN - April 2023

Heather Abel



Last spring was cold and dry, suddenly followed by a summer of drought! What will we get this year? So far, the prolonged hard frost took our broad beans, which were coming on a bit too fast, whilst onions and garlic didn't flinch! We try to be ready...but who knows? That's gardening!

As usual, we will be growing as much and as wide a variety of organic fruit and veg as possible in a planet-friendly manner. Flowers are really important at the garden and their different shapes and appearance attract different insects, including pollinators. So a flower can be a daisy or a tall spire of 'tubes' or a landing platform of tiny florets – all reaching out to different hosts. Catering for wildlife is just as important as catering for our dinner plates – but actually, having a beautiful buzzing environment makes gardening, a joy.

Heather and Olivia – with leeks!

In January, we participated in the RSPB Garden Birdwatch with 16 keen 'twitchers', both young and old, braving the cold. We now have log seating, so not every visit involves hard work! We're still eating the produce from last year and it's great to have new people to share it with. Come and see for yourself!

We meet most Saturdays from 2 – 4pm, behind the Fox and Hounds pub.

No membership fee, no commitment, no experience needed.

Contact - 01367 820709 or just turn up! www.uffingtoncommunitygarden Also on Facebook.



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UBW MINIBUS ASSOCIATION

John Hatcher

Excellent news!

We are delighted to welcome two new volunteers to the minibus team.

Gill Ward has taken on Administrator's responsibilities, and Richard Charles will be a driver. Gill can be contacted on 07971 083636 for bookings, and our regular passengers will meet Richard on the bus in due course.

Our Wednesday and Friday morning services to Wantage continue as before and it is a pleasure to report that private bookings of the bus by villagers are picking up. We hope to see yet more of you using the bus for your social and recreational events, and perhaps get back to where we were before Covid stopped us all in our tracks. It's your bus!

Thanks for the support.

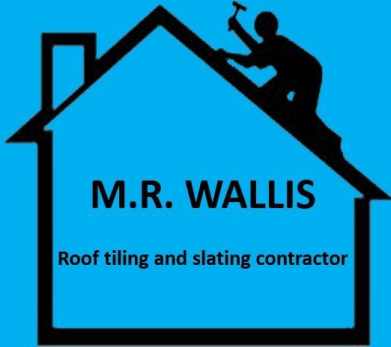
The advertisement features a background image of various barbering tools including a pair of scissors, a comb, and a straight razor. A semi-transparent white box is overlaid on the top half, and a teal box is overlaid on the bottom half.

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Uffington Gardens Open Day



Dog Show and Games



Sunday 11th June 12pm to 5pm

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Tickets:
Adults £5:00 U18 free

All proceeds to White Horse Gardening club and St Mary's Church



Parking for gardens at
Thomas Hughes Memorial
Hall Uffington SN7 7RE

Dog show and children's
games 2pm to 4pm at
Field House SN7 7RD

Scheduled local activity information

Day of week	Time	Activity	Ages	Where	Contact
Mondays	9-10 am	Circuits	Adult	Village Hall	Lucinda 07967 157620
Mondays	7-8pm	Fitness	Adult	Village Hall	Michelle Southey 07826 524463
2nd Monday of month	6.15-8.30 pm	Parish Council		Village Hall	Parish Clerk clerk@uffington.net
Tuesday	10-11am	Tai Chi	Adult	Village Hall	If interested, attend to make enquiries
Tuesday	12.30-1.30pm	Pilates	Adult	Village Hall	Fiona-wright@outlook.com
Tuesday	6-7.15pm	Beavers	Children 6-8	Village Hall	Dave Barnes 07811 424978
Tuesday	7.30-9pm	Bell Ringing	12 and over	St. Mary's Church	Hugh Baxter 820014
Wednesday	6pm	League Cricket 20 overs	14+	Sports Club Fawler Road	Joe Parman joeparman@outlook.com
Wednesday	5.45- 7pm	Yoga	Adult	Village Hall	Sophie Khan 07788 418469
Wednesday	7-8.30pm	Guides	Girls aged 10-14	Village Hall	Uffingtonguides@gmail.com
Wednesday	7-8pm	Fitness	Adult	Village Hall	Michelle Southey 07826 524463
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	Children 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 Parents must stay	Village Hall	Jessica Mildenhall jessi-ca_mildenhall@hotmail.com
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 + accompa- nied 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 [Julia Evans](#) the Parish Council Clerk

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