

The Four Parishes News Magazine

BECKLEY
FOREST HILL
HORTON-cum-STUDLEY
STANTON St JOHN



Happy to be back!

October 2020

The editor writes:



As I write this, Covid-19 cases in many parts of the country are rising rapidly, and we are facing the possibility of a return to an increasing number of restrictions on our daily lives. For some in our community, that means increased isolation and perhaps additional financial worry, but the lockdown in March triggered many caring actions in our community and I'm sure that we will continue to look out for each other as much as possible.

In the wider community, work continues on the controversial SODC Local Plan (see page 12), and we are grateful to our local representatives who work hard to interpret the deluge of paperwork to enable us to understand the implications for our local area.

This month we have two more new advertisers so please check out the 'back pages' and support our local businesses as much as possible.

Julia Stutfield

All contributions to this magazine are the sole responsibility of the author and do not imply or represent any official editorial view or endorsement.

Our cover photo ...

shows four of Beckley School's new Reception children enjoying outdoor lessons in Tufted Duck Class.

*The photo was provided by Mark Szortowski,
Headteacher, Beckley Church of England Primary School*

If you have taken a photo which you think might be suitable for the cover of the next magazine, please email it to 4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com

We welcome contributions or notices for future issues.

Please send them to:

Beckley

John Baker Tel: 01865 351514 johnbaker245@btinternet.com

Forest Hill

Linda Goffey Tel: 01865 873078 linda@goffey.co.uk

Horton-cum-Studley

Carol Welch Tel: 01865 358122 carol_welch20@hotmail.com

Stanton St John

Sue Baker Tel: 01865 351449 susanjbaker24@gmail.com

The closing date for the Nov 2020 issue is 15 Oct 2020

The Four Parishes News Magazine is produced under the auspices of our four village churches for the benefit of the whole community. It is funded by advertising revenue, which is used to cover the printing costs.

We are dependent on volunteers to assemble the content, book and invoice the advertisers, compile and edit the magazine, collect it from the printers and distribute it throughout the four parishes. If you are interested in getting involved, please email Julia at 4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com

Recent issues of the magazine are available to view online at www.fourparishes.org.uk/magazine

Editor: Julia Stutfield

Assistant Editor: Jonathan Barker

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To advertise in the magazine please email JULIA
adverts.4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com

Benefice of Beckley, Forest Hill with Shotover, Horton-cum-Studley and Stanton St John

Ministry Team

Rev'd Anthea Beresford <i>Vicar</i>	anthea@fourparishes.org.uk Tel: 01865 351839
Rev'd Hugh Lee <i>Associate Priest</i>	hugh.lee@btinternet.com Tel: 01865 316245
Rev'd Stephanie Bullock	stephaniebullock9@gmail.com
Rev'd Dr. Elizabeth Hoare	liz.hoare@wycliffe.ox.ac.uk
Rev'd Canon Beau Stevenson	beaumont.stevenson@gmail.com
Betty Dye LLM	betty.dye10@gmail.com
Canon Prof. Nicholas Orme LLM	n.i.orme@exeter.ac.uk

Churchwardens

Beckley

Georgina Robson	Tel: 01865 351637	gina.robson@virgin.net
Betty Dye	Tel: 07910 356343	betty.dye10@gmail.com

Forest Hill

Jane Walker	Tel: 01865 872399	lyttleton@btinternet.com
Pat Fraser	Tel: 01865 875679	triciaann49@gmail.com

Horton-cum-Studley

Andrew Payne	Tel: 01865 351018	andrewrobertsonpayne@gmail.com
Lynn Whitaker	Tel: 01865 358838	lyndawhitaker@btinternet.com

Stanton St John

Sheila Pullen	Tel: 01865 351210	dave.sheila53@gmail.com
Deirdre Young	Tel: 01865 351745	youngdee@live.co.uk

Church Services in the Four Parishes, October 2020

	St Nicolas, Forest Hill with Shotover	St John the Baptist, Stanton St John	Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary, Beckley	St Barnabas, Horton-cum- Studley
4 Oct	11am Holy Communion HARVEST	9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion	11am Morning Prayer
	4pm Family Church via Zoom			
			6pm Taizé	
11 Oct		9.30am Morning Prayer	9.30am Family Service HARVEST	11am Holy Communion
	6pm Evening Prayer <small>(Book of Common Prayer)</small>			
18 Oct	11am Morning Prayer <small>(Book of Common Prayer)</small>	9.30am Holy Communion	9.30am Holy Communion <small>(Book of Common Prayer)</small>	11am Morning Prayer
	4pm Family Church via Zoom			
			6pm Iona Service	
25 Oct		9.30am Holy Communion		
	11am Joint Benefice Service via Zoom			

The government made the wearing of face masks mandatory in places of worship from 8 August. We are observing social distancing and recommended hygiene precautions, and Covid-19 Risk Assessments have been completed for each of our churches. If you would like to attend a service and have any questions or concerns, please contact Anthea Beresford (details opposite). Keep an eye on our website www.fourparishes.org.uk for any changes due to the current circumstances.

All are welcome to join our 'Zoom' online services. Simply get in touch with Anthea to request an invitation. If you are unsure about whether you would enjoy coming to church or just curious about what we do when we meet together for worship, this is a wonderful 'no pressure' opportunity to find out more about it.

A letter from Anthea

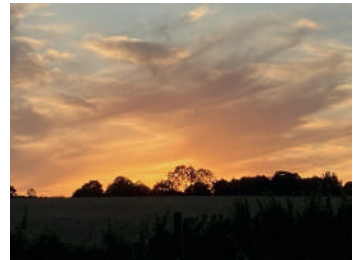
Hi everyone,

I wonder if you, like me, are not enjoying the shortening of the daylight hours. By the time you read this it will be October, so the days will be even shorter than now as I write in mid-September.



I love the autumn colours, as the trees begin to turn. But I confess it is already rather a shock to my system as the days are rapidly shortening. We have however, been blessed with beautiful weather of late - well, since the schools went back, of course!

But already are gone those gorgeous late-night summer evening walks, to settle my head before bedtime. I now must be organised earlier, if I want a relaxing walk in the beautiful countryside before dark. A huge blessing though, is that I have witnessed some fabulous skies over these last few days. Here are photos from recent walks: from Stanton to Forest Hill, and around Horton-cum-Studley. It was hard to choose photos as I have taken many, admiring the beauty of the ever-changing cloud formations, and the slowly setting sun over these last few days.



Walking is a time I reflect on what has been going on and look forward to what is to come. So much has happened since I last wrote to you, it is hard to believe it is just a month! We have celebrated two Harvest services, and the joy of our first Family Service since lockdown. You will find reports on these later in the magazine. This week I did my first 'Vicar-led Collective Worship' virtually, with Beckley School. What a delight that was! Except of course for the most difficult question I have been asked since arriving here: from the mouth of a Reception Class pupil! Please do not start a competition for who can ask the most difficult question! Anyway, that one will take some beating!



We have our first Iona and Taizé services coming soon, assuming Covid-19-related rules do not change.

It has been hard needing to be concerned about having too many people present at services to allow for 'social distancing'! Who could have imagined we would ever be worried about having too many people in Church! Hopefully, it is clear all are welcome in our churches, but we do need to ensure safety through 'social distancing'. Please be assured you have not been landed with a crazy new Vicar who is unwelcoming! It breaks my heart to have to be concerned over having too many people!

As we look ahead, we wonder how we will celebrate All Souls, Remembrance Sunday, and Christmas, as things are currently. And as I write, there are hints that we are on the cusp of a second wave of Covid-19, and the possibility of further lockdown, as has already happened in other parts of the country. However, we should not spend hours worrying about such things. We will find a way to celebrate and mark these occasions, even if not as we would normally wish. And the Bible is clear, that we should not worry. 'Do not let your hearts be troubled' we hear in the well-known passage from John 14, and my harvest sermon relates the words of Jesus from Matthew 20: 'do not worry about your life, what you will eat, or about your body, what you will wear. For life is more than food, and the body more than clothing.' And he goes on to say: 'And can any of you by worrying add a single hour to your span of life?'

These are extraordinary times, and there is much that we might be concerned over, but, excessive worrying will not help, as Jesus' words make clear. That is not to say that we do not need to be careful. These coming weeks and months might be difficult and unusual. I hope we will look out for each other, check in on our friends and neighbours, especially if vulnerable or on their own. I hope we can all find ways to unwind, however we might be able to do that over the coming weeks. For me, I hope I can continue with my walks with Bertie to blow away the cobwebs and find a time to reflect and plan. May we all find our own ways of doing this and may we all not let our hearts be troubled, and if they are, may we find someone to talk with, so we do not become overwhelmed.

God bless.

Anthea

CHURCH NOTICE BOARD

Family Services - with a difference!

September saw the benefice starting up its Family Service for the first time since lockdown. It has been a huge sadness that we have not been able to do this earlier, but we have been finding our way with services, and how we do these safely in the current climate.

The service was held in the churchyard which was bathed in beautiful sunshine. The photo shows how many hands make light work! A selection of chairs were laid out, socially distanced, and some brought rugs to lay on the grass. Nearly thirty of us met together in



fellowship which was wonderful, with ages ranging from 3-90+. It was a beautiful sight to behold. We brought our own mini-picnics, and ate them as Betty Dye helped us to re-imagine the feeding of the 5,000.



We look forward to our next Family Service to be held at Beckley Church, again in the churchyard, weather permitting, on 11 October.

Four Parishes 'Virtual Choir'

If you miss singing at the moment, please consider joining our virtual choir and adding your voice to the recordings for our monthly Zoom Service. Singers record hymns and songs at home, with guide tracks and detailed instructions provided by Julia Stutfield, who then mixes them together to sound like a choir. Although small choirs have been allowed to sing in churches, socially distanced, since 15 August, there is no sign of congregations or large choirs being allowed to sing, so this is a great opportunity to use your voice and perhaps learn something new. You don't have to be a church-goer to enjoy singing this inspirational music, and everyone is welcome to contribute, regardless of age or experience. If you would like to know more about what is involved, please contact Julia on 07766 103427 or julia.stutfield@gmail.com.

Annual Parochial Church Meetings (APCMs)

Like all charitable organisations, each of our four Parochial Church Councils (PCCs) is required to hold an annual meeting to elect members and review the finances and activities of the parish over the previous calendar year. Normally the deadline for APCMs is 30 April, but this year it has been extended to 30 November. The Bishop of Oxford has given permission for the annual meetings to be held electronically, and details of meeting dates are in the individual village sections.

Operation Christmas Child: Shoe Box Appeal National Collection Week, 9 - 16 November



We are not able to be a “Drop Off” location this year due to the Covid-19 virus, but we do hope you all keeping well at this difficult time and that things will return to normal in 2021.

For your nearest Drop-off location or Church Collection centre see: <https://www.samaritans-purse.org.uk/what-we-do/operation-christmas-child/>, telephone: 020 8559 1180 ,or email: info@samaritans-purse.org.uk
Church Collection Centres and Drop-off locations will be provided with cartons to put your donated shoeboxes in, to avoid contamination through multi handling. You can also follow instructions on how to do Shoe Box Online via the above link.

Ian and Erica Cave

GENERAL

“Knowing our Neighbours” (page 10)

This month we are, once again, celebrating one of the remarkable people living in our Four Parishes. Our aim is to focus on each village in turn, and the third article in this series is about Susan Canney, who is Director of the Mali Elephant Project.

Next month it is the turn of Forest Hill, so please do let us know if you have ideas about someone we should feature who has an interesting story to tell - in business, the arts, academia, healthcare or any other area. Please contact Jonathan Barker: 4parishesnewsletter@gmail.com.

“Knowing our Neighbours”: Susan Canney

Susan Canney lives in Horton cum Studley and is Director of the Mali Elephant Project. Located in West Africa, on the southern edge of the Sahara Desert, Mali has one of the last two remaining 'desert-adapted' elephant populations in the world. Their survival is under constant threat as the country has been ravaged by environmental degradation, poverty, poaching and more recently conflict and jihadist insurgency (but produces some wonderful music!). For a western conservationist like Susan it is one of the most dangerous places in the world to work.



Susan studied Natural Sciences and Zoology at Cambridge University and has worked on conservation projects all over the world. In 2003 she started working in Mali with Save the Elephants and WILD Foundation on a project tracking the elephants by GPS. This showed that a herd of about 500 travelled across an area 12 times the size of Oxfordshire, migrating to find



Photo: Carlton Ward

the food, water and refuge through the year. But their survival was getting increasingly

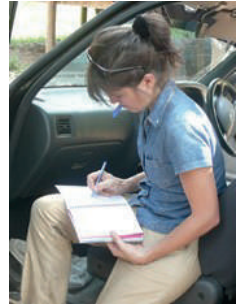
precarious. Susan explains: "the problem was expanding human activity and anarchic land use management. Unless action was taken fast Mali's 'desert' elephant population faced extinction but after 3 years of study, it was difficult to know what to do given the vast populated area and lack of resources."

Then Susan had a chance conversation with a local villager - would he mind if the elephants disappeared? His reply took her by surprise: 'if elephants disappear it means the environment is no longer good for us'. In a simple sentence it was clear he understood that elephants are a vital indicator of the overall ecosystem's health which benefits all life; a view that was confirmed by subsequent attitude surveys of the wider population.



Photo: Carlton Ward

These surveys also revealed that a common attitude was that every species has a right to exist and that it contributes something to the ecosystem that is unique to it, a notion that was described as being encapsulated in the word *baraka* or 'blessing'. Each species has its own *baraka*, and if a species is lost, the ecosystem is irretrievably diminished, and poorer in its ability to sustain life.



The local people also understood that human impact must occur within the physical limits of nature, but while different clans and ethnicities had similar governance systems of managing their pasture, forests, game and water sustainably, they were reluctant to respect the systems of others. The result was anarchic land use, environmental degradation and impoverishment.

The project's work is to bring everyone together to discuss the issues that concern them most including the issue of elephants. Once united in a common perception of the problems, they establish land management systems that also protect elephant habitat. A representative management



committee of elders is elected to make the rules and elected teams of young "ecoguards" ensure that the rules are respected. They also conduct environmental protection activities such as building fire-breaks and planting trees, watch out for elephant killings and monitor elephant whereabouts. Although the ecoguards only receive "recognition payments" they have resisted joining armed groups, despite much greater financial rewards, because they believe their work is more 'noble' and has status in the community.

“My life has been learning about the relationship between humans and nature, and this project is finding out more about the principles that are required for humans and wildlife to thrive together. We must protect and restore the living world's magnificence, abundance and evolutionary power. Diverse wildlife is an indicator of healthy ecosystems, and healthy ecosystems are the bedrock of human well-being.”

Jonathan Barker, Forest Hill

Save Sydlings and Bayswater Brook Green Belt Update SODC Local Plan

Inspector Jonathan Bore's 'letter' issued on 28 August, contains his '*preliminary conclusions on the key matters that arose during this examination*' can be found on SODC Local Plan Examination web page - IC12. It is felt strongly by the Group opposing development of Land north of Bayswater Brook (LnBB) that the objective from the outset was to find the whole Plan 'sound', despite any evidence to the contrary. In the 'letter' paragraph 24 concerns LnBB there are 3 main issues - 1. Sydlings Copse and College Pond SSSI; 2. The Green Belt and 3. The Transport Infrastructure.

1. SSSI - Contrary to the Inspector's comments no evidence-based mitigation policies to ensure that the SSSI is not damaged have been proposed or agreed with Natural England. It cannot be said that the SSSI will be protected and this is of great concern. We are starting a campaign to defend it and will inform local residents of dates and events.

2. The Green Belt - The Inspector states that the development of the Green Belt sites around Oxford will not cause urban sprawl from Oxford. Many feel the opposite is true. The Inspector did agree that the countryside would be encroached. For LnBB specifically there is no new defensible boundary and no mitigation, both are required under Green Belt regulations.

3. The Transport Infrastructure - There is a significant question mark about the financial viability for LnBB as the transport infrastructure costs for the schemes to alleviate the ring road and Headington roundabout are high. Non-viability would prevent the site going forward. The Inspector pounced on a third new solution, not included in the Local Plan. This proposes using "Oxford City's planning policies concerning reduced car use and sustainable transport priorities". This has not been assessed or modelled at all and it will not address the congestion on the ring road and Headington roundabout. It will make commuting into Oxford or around the ring road for current residents even more difficult and lengthy. 'Connecting Oxford' and the Oxford City bus gate scheme will also both increase traffic on the ring road and Headington roundabout and their effects have not been assessed either. The letter states "*The suggested wording has been agreed with the County Council and site promoters and can be taken forward for consultation as a*

main modification." Communication directly with Oxfordshire County Council shows that no such wording has been agreed to date.

The consultation on the "Main Modifications" of which the 'reduced car use scheme' is one, runs from 21 September until midnight on 2 November 2020. More information is available on the Beckley website.

Community Action Now

There is an opportunity before the Inspector's final report is published to influence the outcome by writing to Robert Jenrick, Secretary of State, Communities, Housing and Local Government, other members of his department and copying John Howell MP.

Points worth making on the SODC Local Plan -

- The Green Belt is not protected under current legislation - 6 out of 7 sites are in the Green Belt - 'exceptional circumstances' for developing the Green Belt 'are the norm'
- There is no democratic mandate for the SODC Local Plan; there is a democratic mandate for a new revised Local Plan which values the Green Belt, the environment and climate change policies
- SODC already has a current Local Plan to 2027 with a 5-year land supply, so has time to develop a revised Plan instead
- There is little confidence in the current Examination system

People to write to (more information on the Beckley website <https://beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk/?q=node/1107>):

Robert Jenrick robert.jenrick@communities.gov.uk

Christopher Pincher, Minister for Housing

christopher.pincher@communities.gov.uk

Luke Hall, Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government

luke-hall@communities.gov.uk

and **please copy John Howell MP** howelljm@parliament.uk

Please do consider sending a copy of your letter to the national newspapers.

Our Group is also seeking legal advice about a possible judicial review.

Any queries please contact your local parish council clerk.

Ginette Camps-Walsh



John Howell MP writes...

September 2020

As I write in the middle of September we are facing tighter measures to try to halt the recent rise in COVID cases. This is disappointing but not entirely unanticipated. There are, of course, many views on how the Government should respond to these issues and there will be some who are not happy with new measures either because they think they are not strong enough or because they find them too restrictive. Several very specific scenarios have been raised with me for guidance on what to do but it is impossible for the Government to set out the requirements in every individual situation. The key has to be in the distancing and hygiene measures that have been set out.

Reports of scams in relation to COVID Track and Trace are worrying particularly where people are trying to get money for supposed tests. Scams also risk undermining the genuine process which is important to help control the spread of the virus. There is no charge for Government COVID tests and NHS track and Trace will not ask for any sort of payment details, pin numbers or to download anything from the internet.

Now to a completely different issue that I know is dear to the hearts of many in the constituency - planning. The Government has published proposals on reforms to the planning system and the consultation is open until the end of October. I am pleased to see this as I think that radical reform of the planning system is necessary. The proposals, if accepted, will improve the way that councillors and local communities carry out an important local planning function - the production of a local plan. I mention local communities here because Neighbourhood Plans remain crucial for the future of the planning system and I am pleased that the Secretary of State has confirmed ongoing support for Neighbourhood Planning. I know will be welcomed by the many communities that have put a huge amount of effort into setting out their own vision for their future through a Neighbourhood Plan.

Whilst on the subject of planning many of you will know that I have long defended the Green Belt and look forward to being able to continue to do so under the new system. I was disappointed that the Planning Inspector

examining the South Oxfordshire Local Plan seems set to approve the release of sites within the Green Belt for development. However it is the job of the Inspector to determine this against all the other aspects of the plan and it is good to see that the designation of the land as Green Belt has led to a requirement that if Green Belt land is released then there should be compensatory improvements to the environmental quality and accessibility of the remaining Green Belt land, with measures supported by evidence of landscape, biodiversity or recreational needs and opportunities. Things do change over time and we cannot preserve things in aspic when competing needs create opposing demands but these protections do ensure that mitigations are put in place.

Another important issue on the agenda at present is what has become known as the green recovery - that as we emerge out of COVID restrictions and get the economy going again we learn from the environmental benefits of lockdown. This is something that has to be reflected across Government Departments and I continue to work with colleagues to be mindful of this as any new proposals come forward.

Finally, I am pleased that we have reached agreement in principle for a free trade deal with Japan. The UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement was agreed in principle by Japan's Foreign Minister. This deepens the economic partnership between two democratic island nations who believe in the fundamental principle of free and fair trade and provides additional benefits for UK companies. It is also a sign that we will be able to make trade deals as I have always believed we would.

Now that Parliament has returned there is a busy programme. On many issues I make comment on my website so please do have a look. www.johnhowell.org.uk. If you have an issue that you would like to raise with me, if possible, please email me at john.howell.mp@parliament.uk. If you cannot email you can write to me at my constituency office - PO Box 84, Watlington, OX49 5XD.

If you would like to receive my periodic electronic newsletters, and briefings on specific issues, please visit my website www.johnhowell.org.uk and subscribe at the link on the home page.

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Wheatley Library

It has been a long time since we have seen our customers in Wheatley library and we miss you. We are working hard behind the scenes to get our library open as soon as possible. Many of our libraries across the county have reopened based on staffing resources, government guidelines and to provide the best possible access across the county. You can find the full list on <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/leisure-and-culture/libraries/reopening-libraries>



The Maple Tree, Littleworth Road, Wheatley

The Maple Tree is a community charity (registration no. 1174117) based in Wheatley. We serve families from Wheatley and surrounding villages, including Stanton St John, Forest Hill, Horton -cum-Studley and Beckley & Stowood. We also oversee the Forest Hill Baby & Toddler Group.



We bring you good news! The Maple Tree is cautiously introducing a limited programme! Sling & Buggy Walks take place from The Maple Tree on a Wednesday morning (10-11.45). Pre-booking is essential so we can keep on top of the numbers and we ask for a donation of £2.50 per family.

At the time of writing, Stay and Play is also returning on a Thursday morning commencing Thursday 24 September. This will initially run between 10-11am. Again, the cost will be £2.50 per session and pre-booking is essential.

If you are interested in either of the above sessions, please contact info@mapletree.org.uk to secure your space. You will then receive an email confirmation with details of payment methods together with a new registration form that we will use for track and trace purposes.

Finally, this is the very last report that I will write as Coordinator of The Maple Tree. I am leaving The Maple Tree on 30 September to move on to pastures new. I have really enjoyed my three years getting to know all of the local families and I will look back fondly at my time here. I wish The Maple Tree well for the future and thank everybody for their support which has been greatly appreciated.

Goodbye for now.

Hayley Hayle (Coordinator)

BECKLEY

Beckley Church

Please see page 5 for details of all church services during October, or visit our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Beckley Harvest Festival Celebration

Beckley Church Harvest Festival will be on 11 October at 9.30am. It is Family Worship and, if it is warm and dry, we hope to be able to stay outside, so **bring a rug or a chair and warm clothing**. If the weather is bad, we will be inside the church so please remember to bring a face covering for everyone over 11 years old.

During the week we shall be putting baskets outside the lych gate to collect tinned and packet food contributions for the Oxford food bank. If you would like to help decorate the church porch with flowers, please bring some along and, if you have time, help us on Saturday 10 October at 10am.

Betty Dye and Gina Robson

Annual Parochial Church Meeting, 14 October at 7.30pm

The Beckley APCM will take place on Wednesday 14 October at 7.30pm via Zoom. Members of the PCC will automatically receive joining instructions, but anyone else who is eligible and wishes to join the meeting is welcome to email admin@fourparishes.org.uk for an invitation.

Beckley and Stowood Parish Council

The October PC meeting will be held on Thursday 1 October at 8pm at Beckley Village Hall unless this has to change due to further Covid-19 restrictions. Parish Council information, including agendas, minutes and planning applications are available on the website www.beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk. The Clerk's email address is clerk@beckley-and-stowood-pc.gov.uk if you wish to contact the Parish Council.

Tennis Court and Playground – The children's playground, green spaces and tennis court are all open for use. Please follow government guidance on social distancing and if the open spaces are busy, you should not use them. Please take your litter home.

(continued on next page)

The Otmoor Flyer – The bus service has resumed on Tuesdays and Fridays in Beckley. Please see notices on the High Street and Village Hall noticeboards and on the Beckley website. Tickets available from the Abingdon Arms. Seats must be booked in advance.

Reminder from the Parish Council: Please clean up after your dog and dispose of bagged waste in the dual-waste litter bin on the playing field.

Beckley Bonfire and Firework Night, planned for Saturday 7 November has been CANCELLED for this year due to Covid-19 restrictions on events.



Beckley Church of England Primary School

Church Street, Beckley, Oxford, OX3 9UT • Tel: 01865 351416 • Email: office@beckleyschool.org
Website: www.beckleyschool.org • Headteacher: Mr Mark Szortowski

We were delighted to welcome children back to school in September, achieving 98% attendance by the end of the first week. In order to manage risk, things are a bit different at school. Some of our measures include staggered arrivals and departures, minimising contact and maintaining distance, ensuring everyone at school cleans their hands more regularly than usual and enhanced daytime cleaning.

We will continue to provide an ambitious and broad curriculum in all subjects. There have needed to be changes to some subjects - such as PE and music - to ensure they can be delivered as safely as possible. We are also making plans for the improved provision of home learning, including the use of new technologies such as Google Classroom, to ensure that children may continue to be educated at home if this provision is required.

Once we are confident that processes are working well, we hope to reintroduce many of the extra-curricular activities we have been able to provide in the past. This will also be kept under review as it is our ambition to restart such activities when it is safe to do so.

As the overall situation continues to be fluid, Beckley School will remain alert to both local and national developments and are prepared for further changes if they are needed.

Mark Szortowski, Headteacher

Beckley & Area Community Benefit Society

'even More than a Pub' programme

October's virtual talk gives an account of how last year's Nobel Prize for Medicine was won by Oxford medics:

Sunday 11 October, 6.30-7.30pm: *How changes in oxygen levels led to a Nobel Prize in 2019* - by Christopher Pugh, Professor of Renal Medicine at the University of Oxford, Honorary Consultant Physician at Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust, Fellow of Kellogg College, Oxford. For access details, please see www.bacbs.org/

The following talk, on **8 November**, will describe the relationship between The Inklings (Owen Barfield, JRR Tolkien and CS Lewis), Bee and Church Cottage in Beckley, and The Abingdon Arms.

We hope also that further community walks will prove possible.

FOREST HILL

News from St Nicolas

St Nicolas Church continues to be open for private prayer on Wednesdays and Sundays from 11am until 6pm. Sunday services continue, observing social distancing, sanitising hands and wearing of face masks. Contact details are taken for NHS Track and Trace. The October services can be found on page 5 or visit our website www.stnicolasforesthill.org

Ride and Stride took place on Saturday, 12 September. Pat Fraser was the only St Nicolas competitor, many thanks expressed for her loyalty. The greeting participants throughout the day spent much time clearing ivy off the stone walls and the gravestones. Many thanks to them all and to Andrew, Judy and Ellen Brown who provided the gazebo.

Harvest Festival Sun 4 Oct at 11am, Parish Communion. Numbers will be limited, so to book a place please contact Jane Walker 01865 872399 or Pat Fraser 01865 875679.

Decorating the Church for Harvest will be on Saturday 3 October at 10.30am. If you have any gifts of fruit/vegetables etc., and are not coming to the service you could bring them to the Church between 10.30 and 12 noon on the Saturday. Sadly there will be no Harvest Supper this year.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting, 6 October at 7.30pm

Due to Covid-19 restrictions, the St Nicolas APCM will take place by Zoom. Members of the PCC will automatically receive joining instructions, but anyone else who is eligible and wishes to join the meeting will need to contact Peter Stutfield by email peter.stutfield@gmail.com or telephone 01865 876848 for an invitation.

Music at St Nicolas

On 15 August the government relaxed some of the restrictions on amateur choirs with the result that we were able to plan for a Choral Evensong at St Nicolas with 3 solo singers, carefully positioned in the Chancel so as to be well separated from the congregation and socially distanced from each other. We used guidance from the Royal School of Church Music to produce a detailed Risk Assessment and took great care to ensure the safety of everyone involved. We are grateful to our vicar, our churchwardens and our organist, for their support in enabling this to happen, and to the congregation who attended the service, even though they are still not allowed to join in any of the singing.

We are currently planning a **'Tudor Evensong' on Sunday 11 October at 6pm**, with 4 soloists from the St Nicolas Consort. The full music list can be found on www.stnicolasforesthill.org/musical-events. The website will be updated should we have to cancel at the last minute due to any new Covid-19 restrictions.

Forest Hill Village Hall

The Village Hall re-opened in July and throughout the summer we've been reasonably busy despite the difficult circumstances. Special arrangements have been made to conform with the regulations for safety and hygiene for users and these don't seem to be a problem. We were hoping to write a jolly piece encouraging more users of the Hall but alas the new 6 person rule has put rather a damper on social occasions.

At the moment the rules for hiring Halls have become very confusing so if you are considering our Hall for a meeting please get in touch and we can advise on whether or not it is appropriate. Lettings are via Dawn Dunbar on 873885 or dunbardawn1@gmail.com.

HORTON-cum-STUDLEY

St Barnabas

We are pleased to have resumed public services at St Barnabas, with morning prayers each Sunday at 11am. Those entering the church will need to read the notices on social distancing, which includes the mandatory use of face coverings.

Harvest Festival, Sunday 13 September

Many thanks to the PCC for organising this service so that everyone who wished to attend would feel safe. Many thanks, too, for all the donations for the Thame Food bank.



"A huge thank you from Thame food bank to all of you who gave food. I took over boxes full of donations. This was well up on previous years, to the extent I had to take it direct to their store. THANK YOU SO MUCH"

Lynn Whitaker

Annual Parochial Church Meeting, 7 October at 7.30pm

We had hoped this would be in the Millenium Village Hall but the recent change in Covid-19 guidance has stopped that. Therefore it will be virtual, as previously mentioned. Details will follow via email to those on the village list. If anyone wishes to receive emails and is not on the list please contact David Slingo on stbarnabaspchcs@gmail.com.

Pumpkin weigh-in and sunflower measure competition 2020



Date: Saturday 3 October 10am - 12noon

Place: Mill Lane (outside on the grass)

Please bring your pumpkin for weighing and cut down your sunflower at ground level and bring it along for measuring. We have a very long tape measure!

Looking forward to seeing everyone. Any

queries contact Cathy Jenkins (07941 245726)

Parish Council News

The Parish Council continues to meet remotely on the second Thursday of every month. If you would like to attend please email the Parish Clerk at hortoncumstudleyparishcouncil@gmail.com. The advice from Cherwell District Council is that unfortunately remote meetings will continue for the foreseeable future.

The AddER group, led by David Slingo continues to be available to support Parishioners who are in need of help, especially if we find we have a second wave of Covid-19. We still have funding for tablet computers for those would benefit from them to keep in touch with family members or want to do their shopping over the internet and do not have access to a computer.

The Village transport group, have recommenced and can provide transport to the Surgery in Islip. The group have been through a Covid-19 risk assessment and the Parish Council has provided funding for hand sanitiser and cleaning provisions. For further details, please contact, Jill Meyjes: 01865 351496

Millennium Village Hall

Since lockdown has been relaxed, it has been good to see the tennis courts back in action and the play area being used. The hall itself has remained closed but we are expecting to open it on 1 Oct. As mandated by government it will have had a 'deep clean' before opening. The closure does represent a major financial problem as we have had no income for 6 months. However, our Treasurer is hopeful that we will obtain a grant as recompense for loss of income from hirers.

The play area has just had its annual inspection. No major problems were identified.

I am conscious that we desperately need an AGM which is long overdue. I had hoped to have it in October but we thought it would be wise to delay until November but conceivably we will not be allowed to have it then. It will be question of 'watch this space'.

Finally, we are very grateful to Colin Badger for having organised mowing of the field. It is looking in good shape.

D P Jewell Chairman Millennium Hall Committee

Horton cum Studley Gardening Club

I hope you are enjoying the autumn colour as well as autumn fruit in both hedgerows and gardens. It is September as I write and the colchicums (naked ladies) have just put in an appearance. The large strappy leaves, which appear after the flowers (hence the naked), are untidy and take up quite a lot of space but I think the flowers may be worth the investment. I have *Colchicum byzantinum* "Innocence" (white) and *Colchicum speciosum* (purple) - just a few flowers of each as it is their first year but they hold promise, always provided the slugs leave them alone.

Helianthus salicifolius (willow-leaved sunflower) has produced small yellow daisies more than 6-foot up, far too high to see properly, but grown for architectural impact rather than colourful flowers. At the other end of the scale is the dainty *Acis autumnalis*, (autumn snowflake) in my gravel bed, no more than a foot in height, with tiny nodding, bell-shaped, white flowers.

Sadly, our autumn programme has had to be cancelled but we hope to start up again in 2021 and will meet remotely if not in person.

For more information about our club contact the chairman, Susan Burge 01865 351310 or see the website:

www.horton-cum-studley.org.uk/community/clubs/



STANTON ST JOHN

Stanton Church

Please see page 5 for details of all church services during October, or visit our website www.fourparishes.org.uk.

Annual Parochial Church Meeting, 15 October at 8pm

The Stanton APCM will take place on Thursday 15 October at 8pm via Zoom. Members of the PCC will automatically receive joining instructions, but anyone else who is eligible and wishes to join the meeting is welcome to email admin@fourparishes.org.uk for an invitation.

Harvest Festival, Sunday 20 September

Stanton Church was beautifully decorated for the Harvest Festival Communion Service as the photos show. Sadly we cannot show all the beautiful arrangements. Thank you so much to all those involved in supplying the flowers, vegetables and grain, and those who gave their time to make the church look so beautiful.



A new CD from Ashley Goodall

Ashley Goodall, who in the past has generously given a number of choral concerts in Stanton Church in support of our fundraising activities, has released a CD with his new group, Circle, an evolution of the Shotover singers, supplemented by the renowned James Bowman. The music is described as 'Folky Choral in nature', and samples can be heard by visiting the website <https://circle.hearnow.com/>

The CD costs £10 + postage and packing, with **25% of the purchase price going to church funds if you purchase it directly by emailing Ashley at circle@circlemusic.co.uk**. When ordering, please state that you would like to nominate Stanton Church as the beneficiary.

Stanton St John Parish Council

Stanton St John Parish Traffic Management Survey

In September SSJ councillors will be posting a questionnaire through your letterbox for completion and return to the Village Shop. We hope that you will take the time to consider the questions and to communicate your thoughts to us. Below is a copy of our covering letter which explains the reasons why we need some feedback on the subject from you:

Dear Parishioner,

By the time you get this letter you may have read the September Parish Newsletter and in particular Ginette Camps Walsh comments regarding future housing development in our locality. Already, we are increasingly being made aware of issues concerning traffic management and these will undoubtedly increase as time goes by.

We are circulating the attached questionnaire to every household in the parish. We wish to make sure that we get views from all parts of the parish in order to achieve a coordinated and inclusive approach to various traffic problems emerging in the parish. We have chosen to issue paper questionnaires. This is because we have a very limited number of parishioners email addresses and not all in our parish have access to modern technology.

Although we have limited powers and financial resources we feel there are some areas where we could make a difference particularly those relating to traffic volumes, verges, pedestrian safety and parking. We need to point out that this consultation process will take time. We will need to gather data, analyse, publicise, discuss and consult with parishioners; we will also require the involvement of The Highways Agency or other agencies.

As you all know Covid 19 has made access to public meetings such as the Parish Council challenging, especially for those with limited access to technology. Please consider providing us with an up to date email address or phone number so that we can do our best to keep you informed. We hope that you will complete the form and return it to us. Rowan in the village shop has kindly agreed to act as a central collection point for us.

Please return the questionnaire by posting through the domestic letterbox of our village shop by 16 October 2020. If you need another copy of the form please get in touch with Tom Goss on phone no. 07812409390.

Dog fouling. The vast majority of dog owners are careful and considerate enough to clear up after their pet. However we have had a number of complaints recently (especially from residents) regarding fouling on the allotments off Pound Lane, The Millennium Green, The SSJ Recreation field and the footpath between SSJ and Forest Hill. We ask every dog owner to please clear up after their dog. Please bag and leave your dog litter in one of the dog waste bins situated around the village or take it home with you for disposal. Your co-operation would be greatly appreciated by all residents.

Garden bonfires. Please be considerate and careful if you choose to set a bonfire. Please remember that smoke and odours travel well beyond physical boundaries and may be causing discomfort and distress to those with breathing issues, washing on the line or simply trying to enjoy a day in the garden.

Building work. Summer is the time when much building work takes place. We ask those carrying out such work to be considerate to others likely to be affected by their activities.

Stanton St John Charities (charity no. 202853)

Parishioners within Stanton St John are eligible to apply for help with winter fuel and heating costs for 2020/2021. Persons of any age may apply but funds are limited and priority will normally be given to households which have no regular wage earner or are state pensioners. If relatives or neighbours are aware of anyone who may benefit from the grant, but is unlikely to see this notice, the Trustees would be pleased to receive the information. Previous applicants will be contacted directly.

To assist them in the allocation, the charity trustees have requested that new applications be made on a form available from The Village Shop, Middle Road, Stanton St John. The form should be returned to Richard Ebbs (Stone Cottage, Mill St.) or the village shop, in the envelope provided, by Friday 30 October 2020.

Information on the form will be treated in strictest confidence by the charity trustees. Further information from Richard Ebbs, 01865 351491 or richard.ebbs38@btinternet.com.

Stanton St John WI

We were able to hold a very enjoyable Summer Garden Party on the afternoon of Tuesday 4 August. Courtesy of Fariba and John we managed to maintain our physical distances, have plenty of space to walk around their beautiful garden and appreciate the views but most importantly to meet up with friends whom we had not seen for months. Unfortunately we are now in a situation where we had to cancel our proposed meeting for September at extremely short notice and it is difficult to know what we can do in October in groups of six. Members will be contacted as soon as we have planned something but in the meantime we wish you all good health and look forward to seeing you as soon as possible.



Gemma Johnson BSc MChS HCPC Podiatrist / Chiropodist

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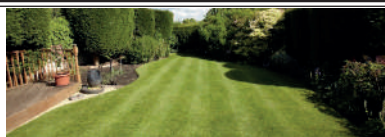
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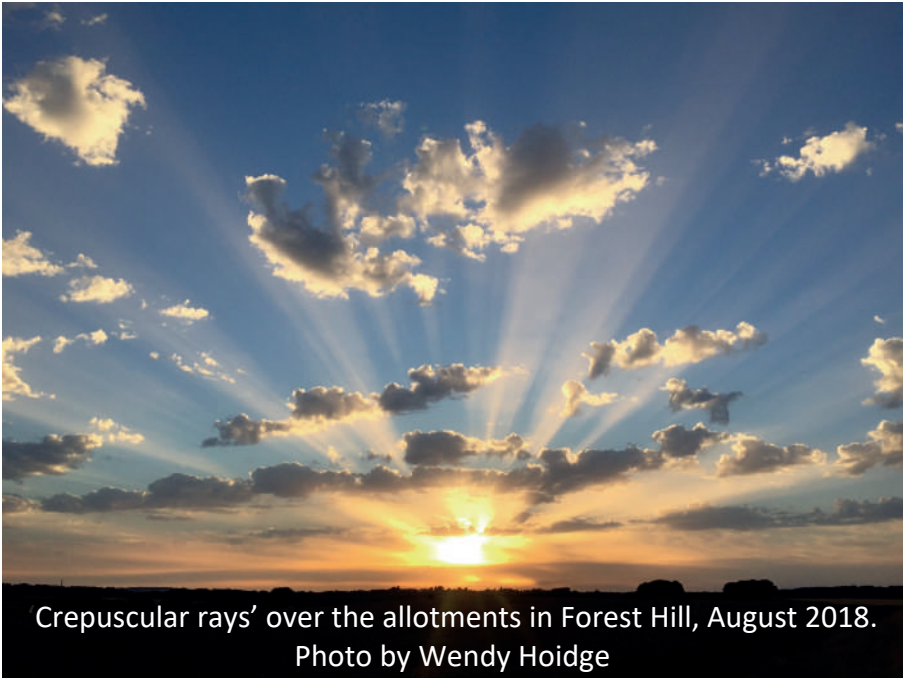
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'Crepuscular rays' over the allotments in Forest Hill, August 2018.
Photo by Wendy Hoidge



Sunset over the Green in Horton-Cum-Studley, December 2019.
Photo by Daniel Lindenbaum