

West Hagbourne news

April 2013 ISSUE 108



Spring cleaning

Have you been spring cleaning and discovered that you have lots of items you no longer need?

Want to recycle them and maybe get a little cash back? If you are interested in another **Village Garage Sale**, please get in touch with Sue Totterdell 850 080.

Guide Dogs

Can you help raise the next generation of Guide Dogs? The Guide Dogs organisation is looking for loving, caring homes for their Guide Dog 'mums'. In return you will benefit from looking after a really well trained family pet that will be readily accepted into your home.

You will get full financial support to cover feeding and veterinary costs, access to 24 hour support and advice from experienced Guide Dog staff and the knowledge that you will be playing a crucial part in helping blind and partially sighted people gain independence. If you think you might be interested or want more information, visit the web site at www.guidedogs.org.uk/guidedogmums or phone the National Breeding Centre on 0845 3727 432.

Your Plan!

So far, only 27 households have responded to the Community Led Plan survey sent out by the Parish Council.

This means that most householders' views will not be represented when the final plan for the village, covering the next 5 years, is drawn up. Your views about the future of the village are important and need to be heard. Please, if you have not already done so, fill in the survey as everyone should have their say.

If you have mislaid your form, copies may be obtained from Marion Judd on 850 143 or Sue Totterdell 850 080.

Lock keepers

"Last year, the Games Makers made a tremendous contribution to the success of the Olympics. On the river Thames, volunteers were making a similar impact helping boaters at the 45 locks along its length between Lechlade and Teddington. The Environment Agency, which is navigation authority for the Thames, is now recruiting for the 2013 season and are looking for volunteers who can commit to assisting at least one day a week between May and the end of September. Volunteers, who agree their hours with lock keepers but need to be available at least from 11 to 5, are particularly needed along the river between Reading and Lechlade. This is a great way to meet people and find out more about the Thames, its history, wildlife and management. Working alongside paid lock keepers, Volunteer Assistant Lock Keepers help boats pass through the lock safely: taking ropes, directing traffic, and operating sluices and lock gates.

All applicants are invited to an assessment at a local lock where the role is explained. They will be assessed to decide which site may be most appropriate for them and to ensure that they have the physical capabilities required. If successful, volunteers attend an induction course which focuses on safety and preparing them for the lock side. On the lock side the volunteers may, after completing their training, be signed off to take charge of the lock on their own for short periods, while the paid keeper is at lunch for example.

If you would like to find out more about volunteering on the Thames and to receive an information pack and application form, please contact the Volunteer team on 01491 828360 or email thames.volunteers@environment-agency.gov.uk

Road chaos

The Highways department spent a week in March digging up the pavement in Main Street. Tree roots had damaged one length of pipework and this was believed to be the cause of the road side gully's failing to clear the street of standing water.

Despite the work water is still on the road which turns to ice, so beware. Both road users and residents were astonished by the decision to divert all traffic along York Road.

Whilst the verges have suffered, including the one which forms the protection for the last bit of cob wall, thankfully nobody came to any harm. The promises of workmen who would discourage through traffic failed to materialise, HGV's continued to use the village, cars flew angrily along between parked cars and the bus companies had not been informed. On Monday afternoon three full size buses in a line eventually made their way home. But nothing had prepared anyone on Monday morning for the double decker which took twenty minutes to make its way along York Road. It alone can take the credit for discouraging much of the usual traffic for the remainder of the week.

Archaeology

There was considerable interest in the talk and exhibition, held at Cornerstone Arts Centre, Didcot, on the discoveries made by archaeologists digging on the western boundary of the town, in Great Western Park. Sadly, for those wanting to see more of the finds, the exhibition focused mainly on the role of the area as a dog walking route. Nevertheless, interest in the site continues and the local councils and the developers, Taylor Wimpey, have been approached by the 'Don't Dump on Didcot' group with a plan to preserve the remains in the form of a History Walk, celebrating the 9000 years of occupation of this part of south Oxfordshire.

Village tidy up

There will be a village tidy up on the morning of Saturday 27 April 2013. The meeting place will be at the bus shelter, at 10:00. Anybody who can help is encouraged to come along, and we hope that there will be a good turnout. It has been a difficult winter and some parts of the village would benefit from a thorough tidy up and removal of litter.

Some high visibility jackets will be available but if you have one of your own we recommend that you wear it.



News



Hard work

Driving into the village in spring, past bright yellow banks of daffodils, is a delight. It is a good time to remember all the hard work put in over the years by villagers (too many to name - but thanks, anyway), planting the banks and verges with hundreds of bulbs. They certainly cheer us on another grey wintery day. Sadly the most recent site of planting, along Moor Lane, has been smothered by the ditch maintenance that took place at the end of last year. Still, together with the colourful front gardens that can be appreciated from the road, these flowers truly lift the spirits. Don't forget to start planning your front garden for the Madge Trophy, later this year.

HGV'S

Residents are still reporting that large vehicles are coming through West Hagbourne. Although enforcement of the weight limit is rare, residents are encouraged to report any breaches that they see, ideally with a photo of the offending vehicle. In the interest of safety, under no circumstances should anyone attempt to follow or stop any vehicle. Remember, mobile telephones should never be used for any purpose whilst driving. An easy indication that a vehicle might be over the weight limit for this village is the presence of red and yellow chevrons on the back of the vehicle.

You can report breaches of weight restrictions in West Hagbourne directly to Trading Standards via <http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/weight-restriction-orders> or by phone (0845 051 0845) or email trading_standards@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Thank you!

Dave Totterdell has very kindly cleared the worst of the leaves and mud off the dip in Church Path. Thank you Dave!

Didcot A

As you will have read in the local press, at the end of March Didcot A power station is set to close. But, did you know that building of the original power station started in 1964 and was originally designed as a coal-fired station. Three of the four 500MW generating units were later converted to dual-firing, enabling the station to use natural gas as an alternative to coal. In addition, the station has the capability to use biomass fuels such as sawdust and wood chips on all four units. The 99m cooling towers no doubt contributed to the power station being voted the third worst eyesore in 2003 by Country Life readers although most local residents seem to have a fondness for their elegant shape and welcome familiarity. Did you also know that poet Kit Wright has published a poem entitled Ode to Didcot Power Station? Didcot has been described by Greenpeace as the second most polluting station and the ninth worst by Friends of the Earth but this should all change in 2013.

Of course, Didcot B, the first gas-fired station in the UK, will continue to produce 1,360MW, enough power to meet the needs of 1 million homes.

Spinal Injuries

Following on the success of Macmillan's Biggest Coffee Morning campaign, the Spinal Injuries Association will be holding the Great British Fish and Chip Supper on Friday May 17th. The idea is to get together with friends and share this most British of dishes, and at the same time, raise money to help people with serious spinal injuries. The Association provides telephone counselling, help and advice as well as campaigning on behalf of their members. If you want to find where the nearest supper is being organised, or would like to hold an event yourself, go to their website www.siafishandchips.co.uk or call 0845 071 4350 to request a fund raising pack

Ilstley Sheep Fair

East Ilstley Sheep Fair, which dates back to 1620, will be held this year on Sunday June 2nd between 12 noon and 4.30 pm in Penn Meadow.

There will be a craft tent, fun races for all ages, a children's entertainer, classic cars and bikes, a great selection of refreshments in the new look food hall, court and bar showcasing local real ales and so much more. With shire horse cart rides, Bungee Jumping, Fun Fair, Craft Tent there will be something for everyone. Bring your dog and enter the East Ilstley 'Crufts' dog show.

Madge Trophy

Judging for the best kept front garden this year will take place in June.

Village Association

Currently, the Village Association has no further plans for events in 2013. In the meantime, if anyone else would like to run an event for the village they would be very welcome to do so.

Plants to spare?

When you tidy your flower borders for spring, perhaps you will have some seedlings, or divisions of big plants that you do not need. I am hoping to run a Plant Sale in May to raise funds for Twinning and would be delighted to have anything you can spare. Either put it in a pot and call me to collect it or I can come round and pot it up myself. All contributions gratefully received. Sue Totterdell 850 080

Parish Meeting

This year the annual Parish Meeting will be held on the 16th May in Hagbourne Village hall at 7.30pm

Citizens Advice

"I've just found out that a shop I've bought goods from has gone bust. How will this affect my consumer rights?"

When a trader goes into administration its rights and responsibilities change. Depending on your situation you might end up losing out, so it's important to know what you can do to protect yourself.

For example, you might have a gift card. Once they go into administration shops are not obliged to continue to accept gift cards, although some may. So, if a shop is taking vouchers then make sure you use them while you can. If gift cards are not being accepted, hold onto them, as the situation can change.

If you've paid a deposit on an item you've not yet received, then whether or not you get it will depend on whether it has been 'earmarked' for you. If it has then the shop should fulfil your order, but if not then you may not see the goods. If you've bought something, like electrical or white goods, which become faulty, it might be easier to claim under the manufacturer's guarantee.

You can ask the administrators to add you on to the store's list of creditors, but realistically most customers will be a long way down the list. If you used a credit or debit card you may be able to make a claim from your provider, and if the goods or services you bought came with a manufacturer's guarantee or an insurance-backed guarantee, you may be able to make a claim under them. If the trader was a member of a trade association, contact them to see if they can help. You can find out more about what rights you have and what you can do if things go wrong, by going to www.adviceguide.org.uk or calling our consumer service on 08454 04 05 06.

Parish Council

U3A

The Didcot branch of the University of the Third Age meets on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 2pm in the Civic Hall. On Tuesday March 19th members learned about "the incredible world of the honey bee" in an interesting talk given by Steve Moll. The topic for the April 16th meeting is the Berks, Oxon and Bucks Air Ambulance. New members are always welcome. To join, just turn up on the day to register.

Dragons 2013



Once again, our annual Dragon competition to celebrate St Georges Day will be held between Monday 15th – Saturday 27th April. Judging will take place during the week of 22nd April. This year there are great hopes that the police will have located the missing dragon unfortunately involved in a crime scene last year, as the pond is now full!

Broadband

Following the appeal to villagers to fill in the Oxfordshire County Council online survey to establish the demand for better faster broadband in West Hagbourne I am delighted to say that 33 of us replied.

We said we wanted to be included in the OCC's aims of providing 90% of homes in Oxfordshire with superfast broadband which is defined as 24mbps and above. This speed is substantially better than the speeds that we currently enjoy.

Having looked at the results for the county it is apparent that there were not that many communities where more than a third of homes responded. That means that we have demonstrated that there is strong demand here with a level of responses that will hopefully help us to achieve the faster broadband that many would like.

Full results of the questionnaire are available on the OCC website here <https://myconsultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult/ti/oxonlinepersonal/consultationHome>

Clerk

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Councillors

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County Councillor

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Oxfordshire County Council
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Slowing traffic down

To encourage through traffic to slow down the Parish Council have a stock of "Twenty is Plenty" stickers for you to attach to waste bins, so that when they are put out they will be seen by drivers. Stickers are available from Michael Butler at Blissetts on Main Street and from Valerie Brownsword at 14 Manor Close



Meetings

1st May Annual Meeting
3rd July Ordinary Meeting
4th September Ordinary Meeting
6th November Ordinary Meeting

Minutes of all meetings of the Parish Council are available online. If you do not have access to the internet, call the clerk and a printed copy will be delivered to you.

www.westhagbourne.org/pc_minutes.htm

Highways work

The work that required the closure of Main Street was completed on time. Broken and blocked drainage pipes were the main problem, with tree root intrusion in some places. New drains have been installed, with tree root resistant liners. The diversion through York Road caused a few problems. An enormous double decker coach trying to manoeuvre its way through the diversion had not been expected and the promised replacement transport for schools did not materialize. The Council would like to thank residents of York Road for their patience.

Planning Applications

Planning applications are notified to the Parish Council by SODC from time to time, usually with a three week period for views to be expressed, which makes it difficult to organise a public meeting to discuss them unless there is about to be a scheduled meeting of the Parish Council. In future, the Clerk will be responsible for deciding whether there should be a public meeting to discuss a planning application.

Minor applications which are not considered to affect the village will not normally be discussed at a meeting and the response from the Council to SODC will be that there are no strong views. However, a public meeting will be held if a majority of councillors believe that it is appropriate. Villagers can also request the Clerk to appoint a public meeting if they believe that an application raises issues which affect the village, and the Clerk will discuss the matter with councillors before making a decision. More important applications will be discussed at a meeting in any event, before the Council expresses a view to SODC. In future, planning applications will be circulated to all parishioners on the email list.

View applications

You can search for any current or past planning applications, see decisions based on your post code at <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=ApplicationCriteria&TYPE=Application>

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Discover the spectacular archaeology found by developers of Great Western Park

Find out why Didcot is set to lose two more huge areas of countryside to housing in the next 15 years

Investigate the planning process that led to Didcot west being chosen for development, against planners advice

Advertising

For sale or wanted small ads are free if you live in the Parish, but all other advertising revenue pays for the production of the newsletter and the costs associated with the web site.

Or if you would like a feature on your **local business** please e-mail copy for inclusion to editors@westhagbourne.org



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local business feature

Garden Design

A successful garden design depends principally on three things: the client's wishes, the site's possibilities and the designer's ideas. But I always feel there is a fourth dimension to aim for: something intangible, almost esoteric. And that something is atmosphere: the special feeling you get from a space that is intimate and relaxing but inspiring, uplifting yet soothing, and which connects almost on a sub-conscious level.

Having done my soapbox bit, I will describe my business from a more practical point of view. Flexibility is the key, and this depends on what

is wanted. It could be just advice and discussing ideas and possibilities, or producing something more formal in the way of plans so that the garden can be built and planted. A plan has the advantage that the garden can be built in stages if necessary, depending on immediate needs and finances. The first thing to do is to look around the garden and discuss an in-depth wish list which should have all the details needed to keep everyone happy. After measuring the garden the next stage is usually a pencil concept drawing which can be used to walk around the garden to see how things will feel and where everything is to go. Sometimes further sketches or a mood board may be necessary to illustrate the ideas underlying the

design which can then be explored in more detail. Once the design is agreed upon I draw up an outline or presentation plan which will have all the details necessary for building the garden. Planting plans, setting out information and construction diagrams can be done later, depending on what is needed. The next step is to be a meeting with a contractor to get a quotation and to agree timings. I can monitor the work if required, recommend sources for sculpture or garden structures etc, and supply good quality unusual plants which are often unavailable at garden centres.

Mary Ann Le May

www.maryanndesign.co.uk