

West Hagbourne news

April 2016 ISSUE 126

Parish Meeting

The Annual Village Meeting will be held in Hagbourne Village Hall on **Tuesday 24th May 2016** at 7:30pm Put this date in your diary.



Barn Fire

On the night of February 25th, the village of West Hagbourne was rudely awakened by the noise of fire engines rushing to a serious barn fire at Manor Farm. 45 firefighters from Didcot, Wallingford and Abingdon, as well as from as far afield as Wantage, Goring, Eynsham, Wheatley and the Royal Berkshire Fire and Rescue Service, were called upon to tackle the flames. Luckily the fire had been discovered quite quickly by Matt Lay who was asleep next door to the out-building. He became aware of popping sounds, looked out of his window and saw smoke & flames. Matt praised the speedy response of the emergency services. "The fire service were very good. They had about eight fire engines come out. It could have been a lot worse, I'm so pleased I spotted it before it could spread any further." The barn which was originally used to house pigs had been converted to storage units and a large work shop which led to the intensity of the fire. Arson was ruled out, the cause was probably electrical.

Transport

The days of our local bus service seem to be numbered due to further budget cuts at Oxfordshire County Council. The service is not cost-effective, despite providing an important lifeline for village residents who do not have a car or who no longer drive.

This will leave villagers needing to access Didcot, or appointments further afield, with the option of Didcot Volunteers www.didcotvolunteercentre.org.uk or an expensive taxi. Do you find the cost of a taxi to the station, or the high parking charges once there, puts you off choosing the train option? Maybe, though, there is a more local, informal, neighbourly solution to this transport problem? The editors are wondering if there is support in West Hagbourne for an informal list of people prepared to offer lifts to fellow villagers.

There would be a list of phone numbers you could ring if you wanted to make a journey.

The person offering the lift could say if they were able to offer the required journey,

Any contribution towards petrol costs, or offers of reciprocal lifts, would be by individual arrangement.

If you think you might be able to offer lifts to your neighbours and would like to sign up, please get in touch. If you are someone who might benefit from this service, what might make you feel more comfortable asking for a lift?

Village tidy up

The date for the annual village tidy up is **Saturday 16th April**. Anyone interested in helping to keep our village free of litter should meet at the bus shelter at 10am. Hi-visibility jackets, litter pickers and bags will be provided. Last year we had 14 volunteers. Let's see if we can beat that this year. The more people we have the less each person has to do.

Val Brownsword

STOP Police !

In early March the village formed the backdrop for a high speed Police chase involving officers on the ground and the helicopter flying overhead. The occupants de-camped and were pursued on foot, whilst tea was made for the emergency services in the Square.

Council Tax

Residents may have noticed an increase in the Parish Council part of their Council Tax bills. According to the Parish Clerk, at least half of this increase is to cover the cost of grass cutting that was previously met by a grant from OCC. Since OCC will be taking the same amount of money from you, this is effectively an increase in their part of the overall bill since they are 'delivering' fewer services. In order to produce a prudent balanced budget the PC opted for the rest of the increase so they can build reserves against future OCC/SODC funding changes.

Holes in road?

Despite lots of new tarmac being used on pavements that lead to nowhere and will be used by no-one around the new roundabout at the bottom of Hagbourne Hill the potholes in the roads around the village are ignored. The state of York Road and holes along Main Street have already caused three lost tyres this year, the cobbled kerbs remain un-repaired, the increase in large traffic has created deep ruts down the side of Brook Lane and its over fifteen years since York Road had surface dressing applied and it, like so many other roads, are badly in need of attention.

Buses

The bus survey devised by the Downland Villages Transport Group has been sent to all the villages on the 94/95 route. Please contact Val Brownsword for more details. Please fill it in even if you are not a bus user. Meanwhile, the Council has said that the contract for this service will end on 20 July. This date was chosen in order to ensure that subsidised bus services remain in place, in their current format, until the end of the 2015/2016 school year. They have notified the various bus operators, and state that the operators are working on options.

The Council have also given usage data for some of the routes. For the 94/95, the estimated passenger journeys are somewhere in the 40,000 to 45,000 region (the surveys counted slightly differently). The 94 on its own was ranked 19th in usage of the subsidised services; the 95 was ranked 25th. Considering paying and non-paying passengers, "the 94/95 was the fourth most used of Thames' subsidised services". That should give us hope.

Anecdotally we are getting reports of increased usage in the past few weeks: the Monday lunchtime bus I caught recently was almost full. Please do continue to use the bus. If paying passengers used it twice a month for a round trip, it would make a massive difference. Indeed, if you combined that with increased concessionary pass usage, we would not need a subsidy at all.



News



The data collected suggest:

- * it would be very helpful to prioritise bus/train connections in the morning and evening.
- * the "gap" between roughly 8:00 and roughly 9:15 is a big issue for people in the main commuter villages.
- * later bus services would be greatly appreciated and might reduce car usage.
- * commercial passengers would pay higher fares, provided these are still lower than the cost of parking in Didcot

The Downland Villages Transport Group would like to share their findings with Thames Travel in the hopes that the consultation data could have some impact on their thinking and so the next step will be to email Luke Marion noting that we have quite a lot of data and asking for a meeting with him to discuss our findings.

Val Brownsword

Celebration

This summer sees the celebration of the 90th Birthday of Queen Elizabeth II. The Parish Council and Village Association of West Hagbourne invite all village residents to come together to celebrate this event. The celebration will take the form of a garden party which will be held at the Horse & Harrow pub, where free BBQ and buffet lunches will be served from 12noon. Tea, coffee and squash will be included, but of course full bar facilities will also be available. Further details will follow on circulated flyers.

Bob Beacroft

We are sad to hear of the recent death of Bob Beacroft, Sue Lay's father, who had strong links with West Hagbourne. We hope to be able to include a few words about his life in the next edition of this newsletter. Meanwhile, our sympathy to Sue and her family.

Local changes

You may have seen something in the press recently about possible changes in local government organisation in Oxfordshire, with even the Prime Minister passing comment. In the early 1990s local authorities underwent re-organisation and in many places County and District Councils were replaced by Unitary Authorities. The Boundary Commission's recommendation for Oxfordshire was to maintain the existing two tier system, with four District Councils, plus Oxford City Council, as well as Oxfordshire County Council. This arrangement is again under review with District Council leaders asking government to agree their plan for the creation of new Local Unitary Councils and to support an ambitious Devolution Deal for Oxfordshire. The proposed four local unitary authorities are:-

- A new Southern Oxfordshire Unitary Authority would cover the area currently administered by Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire District Councils
- An Oxford City Unitary Authority would be formed in the centre of the county, covering the area currently administered by Oxford City Council
- A West Oxfordshire-Cotswold Unitary Authority covering the area currently administered by West Oxfordshire District Council and Cotswold District Council
- A Cherwell-South Northants Unitary Authority covering the area currently administered by Cherwell District Council and South Northamptonshire Council.

Watch this space for more information and for any opportunity to express your views on these proposed changes.

Madge Trophy

Madge Trophy - front garden summer displays will be judged during August this year so start planning now. Further details will follow in the next newsletter.

Water everywhere Gardening



The overflow of water onto Brook Lane between West Hagbourne and the first Coscote bend continues to cause concern. The source of the water appears to be the development on the edge of Didcot since it can be traced back to the newly-excavated ditch that runs alongside the footpath leading north from York Road, parallel to Park Road. The flow is unrelated to recent rainfall and many people have commented on how it seems to start in the middle of the morning since the road is dry when you go up to Didcot but awash on your return. The Parish Council and clerk are aware of this problem and the signs provided for 'flood' and 'ice' indicate that Highways are also aware. It remains to be seen how long this nuisance will continue.

Compost giveaway

South Oxfordshire residents, Come along with your own box, bag or container to fill up with free local compost. Saturday 9 April 9am – 11am at Rye Farm car park, Culham Road, Abingdon, OX14 3NN Sunday 10 April 9am – 11am at the old SODC car park, Benson Lane, Crowmarsh Gifford, OX10 8ED There will be Master Composters on hand to answer your gardening and composting questions, Love Food Hate Waste advisors to help you reduce your food waste and save money, and the waste and recycling team will also be there to answer any recycling queries or questions. Grab yourself some recycling goodies, compost bins (£10 cash!) and replacement kitchen caddies, buckets and liners (while stocks last).

Hagbourne Garden Club welcomes members and visitors alike (£2.50 for visitors). Talks commence in Hagbourne Village Hall at 7.30 with refreshments served from 7pm Further details available from Jane on 01235 816650 Thursday 28th April and Spring is well underway! A talk by Rosi Rollings on 'Plants For Bees' Members and visitors most welcome.

Bowls Club

'If you've ever wondered what it was like to pay bowls, why not go along to Hagbourne Bowling Club? Club Nights on Mondays are a mixed evening of bowls and socialising, rounded off with a meat draw (not to be missed). The Club is open from 6.30 pm Monday 4th April and new or potential members are always welcome so why not pop along and try your hand not just at bowling but also sample the social atmosphere and facilities of the clubhouse. Check out the web-site www.hagbournebowlingclub.co.uk for information about fixtures and social events.

Dragons 2016

Dragon Weeks will run between Saturdays 9th April-23rd April. Residents are again invited to display their dragons during these two weeks. Similar to last year, the weeks will be rounded off with afternoon teas and prize giving at Chapel Hayes on Saturday 23rd (St. George's Day) 2.30-4.30pm. Judging for the best dragons will take place sometime during those weeks. Further details will follow on circulated flyers.

Lunch club

The lunch club continues to meet on the third Friday of the month with about 20 regulars on the list. To sign up or to be included on the mailing list, please contact Marion or Sue.

Earth Trust

The Earth Trust offers a programme of activities over the spring. For full details see their website or sign up for their newsletter. Book on 01865 407792. On offer are:

Wildlife Wednesday at Wallingford Castle Meadows 6th April, 2pm-4pm. Learn about local wildlife and have lots of outdoor fun! £2 suggested donation per child, accompanying adult(s) free; no need to book.

Family Bushcraft Friday 8th April, 10am-4pm Bring the whole family and go wild in the great outdoors! Explore the woods, make shelters, learn how to make a fire and use a knife safely. We'll cook on the fire but bring a packed lunch too. £20 adult, £15 child; booking essential.

How to Grow Greens Saturday 9th April, 10am-3pm

Join The Little Salad Company to learn about growing your own salad leaves. The workshop will provide all you need to get started, from sowing seeds, dealing with pests and getting the most from your crops. For amateurs and more experienced growers. £20; booking essential

Wildlife Photography Walk Sunday 10th April, 8am-10am Local photographer Andy Hough will provide top tips on capturing beautiful images of wildlife during this walk around the nature reserve. Bring your own camera. £20; booking essential

Lighting the Queen's Birthday Beacon Thursday 21st April, 5.30pm-6.30pm

Join us on top of the Wittenham Clumps to light a celebratory beacon to mark the Queen's 90th Birthday. Exact time of lighting TBC, please check the Earth Trust website for details.

UBA

The Didcot University of the Third Age meets on the third Tuesday each month at 2pm at Didcot Civic Hall. Visitors are welcome to come to a meeting as a taster before joining. As well as a programme of talks and special interest groups, it is possible to join a range of trips. Destinations in 2016 include Bletchley Park, Wells, the Weald and Downland Museum, Richmond & Syon Park. Tel: 07802 237963 or Email: didcotdistrictUBA@virginmedia.com <http://u3asites.org.uk/didcot>

Marquees

After taking responsibility for the maintenance and hire of the Village Association marquee for many years, Keith Walton is stepping down. The Village Association would like to record their thanks to him, and to Val, for providing this invaluable service to the village over many years which has resulted in a successful fundraising resource for the Village Association. For details of the new hire arrangements please see the advert on the back page.

Village gardens

The village gardens are starting to burst into leaf and it should soon be possible to see where any gaps have arisen over the winter. The tubs under the horse chestnut tree have had mixed success with the tete-a-tete daffodils providing their reliable burst of yellow but the small tulips in the central barrel do not so far seem to be the multi-coloured planting that was expected. It has been good to see that the crocuses have put on a good show and we have hopes of these establishing and spreading over the next few years.

Parish Council

Clerk

Andrew Wise
parishclerk@westhagbourne.org

Councillors

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mike.butler@westhagbourne.org
Valerie Brownsword 850 668
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District Councillors

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South Oxfordshire District Council
01491 823000

County Councillor

Patrick Greene 813 396
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Oxfordshire County Council
01865 792422

Council Meetings

are held in Hagbourne Village Hall

- 4th May Annual Meeting of the Parish Council
- 24th May **Parish Meeting**

Minutes of meetings of the Parish Council are available online.

If you cannot find them contact the clerk, 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

Annual Parish Meeting

will be held in Hagbourne Village Hall on Tuesday 24 May 2016 at 7:30 pm. All parishioners are welcome.

You are reminded that there is a lot of information on the village website. For example, on the "Notice Board" page there are useful items on how to report HGV traffic passing through the village and potholes.

On the "Information" page there are various items including a list of planning applications in the village.

Mike Butler, Chair

HGV's & potholes

Please report potholes direct to Oxfordshire Highways. If you can supply a photograph that gives some idea of the extent of the pothole this will help assess the urgency for its repair.

You can do this online at highwaysenquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk telephone: 0845 310 1111

or by writing to: Southern Area Office Oxfordshire County Council Milton Road Drayton OX14 4EZ

www.westhagbourne.org/noticeboard.htm#potholes

Planning

If you want to be notified about planning applications that affect West Hagbourne, you can sign up for email alerts. This can be done directly on the SODC planning website, or you can ask the Parish Clerk to put your email address onto the village mailing list. Contact Andrew Wise, Parish Clerk, parishclerk@westhagbourne.org

local events

If you have items you are prepared to give away, send us a short advertisement with the details for inclusion (free of charge) in the next newsletter.

Saturday 16 April

10h00 Village Tidy Up
Meet at the bus shelter

Saturday, April 30th

Hagbourne Garden Club
Annual Plant Sale & Coffee Morning
11.00 - 12.30 Kingsholme, Main Road
East Hagbourne Free Entry!

Wednesday 4 May

Annual Meeting of the Parish Council 19.30
Hagbourne Hall

Saturday 7 May

Plant Sale
Twinning Association
10.00 - 13.00 Orchard Street, Didcot

Tuesday 24 May

Annual Parish Meeting
19.30 Hagbourne Hall

Saturday 21 May

19.30 ADMS Summer Concert
Haydn Creation
tickets from Sue Totterdell

Common Threads at Artweeks

This year Helen Winthorpe Kendrick will be exhibiting her textile artwork in collaboration with Alison Garnett. The joint exhibition, including taster sessions and demonstrations in embroidery, crochet and spinning, will take place in Wallingford Methodist Church Hall, St Leonard's Square, Wallingford, OX10 0AR.

The exhibition will be open;
Thursday 19th May 6pm-8pm
Friday 20th May 10am-4pm
Saturday 21st May 10am-4pm
Sunday 22nd May 12:30pm-4:30pm

Next edition



please e-mail copy for inclusion
in the June issue **by May 30**
editors@westhagbourne.org



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Marquees

The Village Association has two Marquees.
£25 plus a returnable deposit of £50
The Association will not be responsible for any claims for
accidents that may occur during the rental.
12 x 5 metre and 11 x 4 metre
Tables and chairs are also available.

For advanced booking and details
please contact **Rob Robert Griffiths (Woodleys)**
rob.griff@yahoo.co.uk
All donations go towards our village funds.



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