

Village Association News

DRAGONS!

St George's Day dragon display competition runs from Sunday 11th - Sunday 25th April.

Incredibly, it's almost time for the village's dragons to be emerging from their long hibernation! As well as Easter and all the welcome signs of spring this month, we also look forward to seeing the village decorated with dragons and St. Georges, in their many forms. No one could have foreseen, when we had to cancel our usual St George's teas and walk last year, that we would be in a

very similar situation one year on, with essential social distancing restrictions still in force. However, the fact that we were able to carry on with our dragon displays, meant that this village event was even more special, because it came at a time when the value of a strong community was even more important.

The Association were overwhelmed by the response last year, with 30 magnificent exhibits, plus several more households proudly displaying St George's flags and bunting. A big 'thank you' to you all, from

the committee, fellow residents and the many admiring visitors who passed through. Our judge this year is Caroline Coles from Upton, who is delighted to have been asked to judge the displays, and will be touring the village with her children some time during the fortnight. As usual, prizes will be awarded as follows:

Best display - £30.00
Runner-up - £20.00
Best Child's entry - £10.00.

The winners will be announced on the village website and the June newsletter. Another 'thank you' in advance of another enjoyable dragon turnout!

Madge Trophy, front gardens competition

This year the Madge Trophy will be run alongside the HUGS wildlife garden competition. As usual, the Madge Trophy will be judged on front gardens that can be viewed from the kerbside, but in addition to that, West Hagbourne residents have the opportunity of entering the HUGS competition, which will

be spread over the 3 villages (East & West Hagbourne and Upton), and can include back gardens as well. Details of this competition are given in the newsletter and on the HUGS website, and you will be able to enter from 1st May. Don't forget that all front gardens in the West Hagbourne parish are automatically entered for the Madge Trophy and will be judged on colour, planting schemes and design, with an additional wildlife-friendly element. More to follow in the June newsletter.

As we look a little further into the year, we are at this stage, very hopeful that we may be able to hold our Macmillan Coffee Morning in September. Of course, this depends on many factors, but fingers-crossed, we will be able to gather together in some way.

If you need any more information about any of these events, please contact Margaret Leishman - Chair, WHVA,

Margaret Leishman (Chair)



The original dragon in the pond from 2009

Vaccinations

The vaccination programme in Oxfordshire is progressing at pace and is on track to meet its target of groups 1-9, which is everyone up to and including all those aged 50 and over, receiving their first vaccination by 15 April. Don't forget to take ID when you go for your vaccination and if you have problems getting to a vaccination centre, please get in touch with the Village COVID help group, who may be able to help (Sue (850080) or Lillie (07712 429811)).

More than 56,000 people in Oxfordshire had received a Covid-19 vaccination by 14 March (latest data), which represents 38% of residents older than 16. For residents aged over 70, more than 90% have received their first vaccine

dose. More good news for the 60+ group is that the seven-day average infection figures are in single figures for the first time since last August. While this is encouraging news, it is not time to relax the rules. We can all hope that a continued fall in infection rates mean that later this month we will be able to go out for meals and drinks with others and even take a holiday if we stay in the UK.

Symptom-free testing

The roll out of community testing is expanding gradually, with it currently available for anyone who works or volunteers in a role where they have close contact with people outside their home or is a childminder. Please encourage anyone you know that falls into this category to pop along to their nearest centre for a test to protect others.

Parish Council

William Tyrell Charity

We are in urgent need of another Trustee. Nigel Darwin has moved out of the village and is retiring as a Trustee. We are required to have three Trustees and thus we need someone to join me and Valerie Brownsword. We are permitted to amend the purpose of the Charity which is currently restricted to 'providing relief to poor people in the village'. We intend to alter this to be more general. Wording we believe that the Charity Commissioners will accept is:

"The relief of those residents of West Hagbourne who are in need, by reason of youth, age, ill-health, disability, financial hardship or other disadvantage".

We need to have the third Trustee so that we can make the change formally and then identify suitable recipients of funds.

Could anybody willing to be a Trustee please contact me as soon as possible.

Sustrans track

We have been advised that the repair work on the Art benches is starting shortly. Our contribution will come from CIL funds we have received.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Parish Council will be on Wednesday 5th May at 19:30. The meeting will be held on Zoom. If you want something in particular to be discussed please contact the Clerk in good time before the meeting.

Michael Butler (Chair)

other news

John Watling

Villagers will have been sad to hear of the death of John Watling, a long term village resident, in February. His wife Doreen writes of how they came to West Hagbourne and explains their house's unusual name.

My dear husband John passed away in the JR hospital on the 9th February. It was almost 54 years to the day since we moved from our temporary accommodation on the AERE site into our newly built bungalow. John gave me his RAF logbook and said "choose a name". I found Sula Sgeir which was a navigational point the Canberras used in the North Atlantic, above Scotland: it's Norsk for Gannet Rock, and

gannets mate for life. John said "That's perfect".

We settled in with our son Nigel, a baby of eight months, enjoying our newly found rural life after living in suburbia - Bexley Heath - since getting married in 1960. Julian arrived in 1968, and my Father, who was a widower, joined us in 1975, thanks to Mr and Mrs Allen, who allowed us to place a mobile home on the orchard ground that bordered our garden.

Due to present COVID restrictions we have postponed the celebration of John's life until late spring. Nigel and his family live in France. We thank everyone for their kindness shown for our loss.

Doreen Watling, Sula Sgeir



Hugs Owl Project

In case you missed our news last month, we're delighted to have received funding from SODC for our owl project. We'll be installing nest boxes for Tawnies, Little Owls and Barn Owls in all 3 parishes. We'll be planting hedging, trees and wildflowers to enhance local habitat. Find out more info in our Owl Project Blog. As part of the project we're running a Wildlife Garden this year.

Wildlife Garden Competition

The competition will open on the 1st of May and we'd love to see lots of entries! Before then have

a look at our new wildlife garden page to see what the judges will be looking for. Below are five easy ways to encourage wildlife into your garden and provide more support to what's already there. See our latest Wildlife Garden Competition Blog for more information about the ideas below. You might:

- Let part of your lawn grow long
- Sow seeds
- Start a mini-pond
- Feed the birds
- Talk to your neighbours about hedgehogs

Caroline Hunt

Nature's Eye

Despite the occasional fairly warm day I have not yet seen a single flying butterfly in 2021, although we did find a sleepy Red Admiral amongst the apples stored in the garage in early February. To me, one of the harbingers of spring is the emergence of the first bee fly.

So far this year I have only seen

one. Note the long, rigid proboscis, used for collecting pollen and nectar. On 19 March the flower buds of primroses in my wildlife garden were starting to open and there were buds visible on the Snakes Head Fritillaries. I look forward to the flowering of the 200+ Cowslip plants in April, as well as other native flowers later on.



We now see perching Red Kites in our Manor Close garden almost every day. The image here was taken on 19 March using a 260mm telephoto lens.

Malcolm Brownsword

Community Connectors

Support is still available for those families in need as we ease out of lockdown. The Winter Support Grant scheme has been extended until 16 April 2021 and help is available in the form of supermarket and fuel vouchers or through the direct payment of energy or water bills.

If you are aware of any families in your communities that are struggling to afford food or

essential items, please ask them to contact the Community Support team. We can help with supermarket vouchers or refer them into one of our advice centres if they need more support than we can offer. Our contact details are:

Community Connector Team

Tel: 01235 422600 or email: communityconnectors@southandvale.gov.uk



Village in Spring

The daffodils throughout the village have been a picture. Those behind Manor Farm are particularly lovely while the crocuses and daffodils planted under the horse chestnut in the middle of the village have provided colour over several weeks. The wet winter has left us with full ditches and two mallards have been seen sizing up Moor Lane Ditch as a possible nesting site.

As we can begin to expect some warmer days and the prospect of spending more time in our gardens - still one of the few places we are allowed to be - we should all be aware of our neighbours and try, where possible, to limit loud noise, including from larger pieces of garden equipment, and other nuisances such as bonfires, to times when they will be least disruptive to our neighbours.

Sadly it seems some people passing through the village are leaving rubbish behind them. There has been a particular problem with the bus shelter, which is also the village's war memorial. In addition to the book exchange that has been set up there, it appears that bags of litter have been deliberately dumped. If you see anyone leaving litter anywhere in the village and on its approaches please report it to

'Fix my Street' so that arrangements can be made to remove it.

Spring Giveaway

Excess to requirements: Tete-a-tete daffodil bulbs (a dwarf, robust variety, will increase over time). Miniature tulips bulbs (red and yellow). Available from April. Contact Sue Totterdell, Meadows Edge.

Plant swap

Do you have excess plants raised from seed or from cuttings?

An informal plant swap is proposed. Take any excess plants, labelled, to the bus shelter on any Saturday morning in April between 11 and midday from where interested villagers can collect them.

Any plants not taken or retrieved by Saturday afternoon may be composted.



Parish Council

Clerk

Andrew Wise
parishclerk@westhagbourne.org

Councillors

Mike Butler (Chair) 850523
mike.butler@westhagbourne.org

Hugh Lewis 851113
hugh.lewis@westhagbourne.org

Mike Telford 851236
mike.telford@westhagbourne.org

Oliver Doogue 851156
oliver.doogue@westhagbourne.org

Tony Baldasera 07411919718
tony.baldasera@westhagbourne.org

District Councillors

Anne-Marie Simpson
Anne-Marie.Simpson@southoxon.gov.uk

Jane Murphy
jane.murphy@southoxon.gov.uk

County Councillor

Simon Clarke
simon.clarke@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Council Meetings

These are held in Hagbourne Village Hall - see website for future dates. 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 sent to you. Shortly before the meeting of the Parish Council, the agenda will be circulated to all those on the list. To comply with legal requirements, a copy of the agenda will also be posted on the PC noticeboard.

www.westhagbourne.org/pc_minutes.htm

Planning updates

If you wish to be notified about planning applications that affect West Hagbourne you can sign up for email alerts.

Contact Andrew Wise:
parishclerk@westhagbourne.org

Parish email list

If you wish to be placed on this list, or to check that your entry is correct, please send an email to the Clerk at

parishclerk@westhagbourne.org

HGVs and Potholes

HGVs and potholes are a persistent issue on the roads in the village and beyond. If you can supply a photograph that gives some idea of the extent of a pothole this will help assess the urgency if its repair.

You can do this online at:
fixmystreet.com

Or:
highwaysenquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Telephone: 08453101111

Web site:
www.westhagbourne.org/noticeboard.htm#potholes

HGVs not delivering to an address in the village should be reported to Trading Standards. If possible, you should take a photograph but definitely write down a description and registration number as soon as possible. Reports can be made to:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/trading-standards/weight-restriction-enforcement>

Keep up to date

www.westhagbourne.org

The website carries information, news and contact details as well as copies of the minutes of all village organisations

other news

WhatsApp

If you would like to join the WhatsApp group, get in touch with Lillie Jamieson (07712 429811).

Village PO and Shop

Access bank accounts, top up prepaid cards & mobiles, or pay bills at the Post Office.

Hours: Monday to Thursday 9am – 12pm; Saturday 9am – 12.30.

Please note: the Post Office is closed on Fridays.

Pick up Easter treats at the Shop. We stock mini chocolate or crème eggs, and fresh home-baked cakes on Thursdays. Or bring home a delicious dinner for tonight: choose a tasty fish entrée, or savoury pies including 3 yummy vegan options as well as meat and vegetarian classics, all stocked in our freezers.

Hours: Monday to Friday 9am – 4pm; Saturday 9am – 12.30pm.

Shop volunteers welcome

Would you like to get more involved in the community?

We are seeking additional Shop volunteers aged 14 or older, even if for an hour or two per month. Contact Alice Smith by phone on 01235 813393 or text to 07474 937870, or by email at smith@hagbourne.plus.com

Advertising

This newsletter is entirely funded by income from the advertisements in it. It is edited by Sue Totterdell, with contributions from a number of villagers, designed by Mary Ann Le May, printed by Hugh Lewis and distributed by a group of volunteers. To ensure that it will be able to continue in its present form we would welcome new advertisers. If you have a business you would like to advertise to residents, please get in touch: editors@westhagbourne.org

other news

Welcome to New Residents

We hope you will soon be able to get to know your fellow villagers at a social event. We hope you enjoy living here.

other news

The Didcot Emergency Food Bank has moved to The Didcot Baptist Church, 43 Wantage Road, Didcot OX11 0BS. Telephone: 01235 813187 or email office@didcotbaptist.org.uk.

other news

If you have any news or photos or know of events you think might interest other residents, please contact the editor.

editors@westhagbourne.org



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01235 851423 or email littleacornsnursery1@gmail.com

Main Street, West Hagbourne, Didcot



Mary Ann Le May GARDEN DESIGNS

*Blissetts Main Street West Hagbourne
Oxfordshire OX11 0ND
01235 850523
www.maryanndesign.co.uk*

Marquees

The Village Association has two Marquees available for hire:

12 x 5 metres & 11 x 4 metres

at a cost of £50 each plus a returnable deposit of £75

Tables and/or chairs are also available at £50 plus a returnable deposit of £75

Please note that the Association will not be responsible for any claims for accidents that may occur during the rental.

For advance booking and details please contact **Robert Griffiths** (Woodleys)-
rob.griff@yahoo.co.uk

All donations go towards our village funds



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AED Emergency defibrillator

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In the event of an emergency call 999



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