

Village Association News

Winter Walk

On the 7th January 2024, 11 enthusiastic walkers left West Hagbourne along the embankment towards Upton. We then walked around the village before returning to West Hagbourne via London Road. Our route was almost entirely mud free – a remarkable achievement given how much rain had fallen over the New Year. The afternoon continued with mince pies and mulled wine and plenty of conversation. Indeed, the ratio of time spent walking: talking was about 1:3. What a wonderful, sociable way to start 2024.

Christmas Trees

Our village looked wonderful over the Christmas season. Many residents displayed a Christmas tree in their front garden, festooned with colourful, often flashing, lights. The collective effect was lovely. Thank you.

For the second consecutive year, the Village Association sponsored a 'village' tree, located under the Horse chestnut in the The Square. We would like to thank Victoria for her help decorating the tree. Her talent for Origami provided a collection of beautiful ornaments which included a Christmas stocking and a star.



Carols in the farmyard

The weather was kind to us this year and the carol service, held at Manor Farm on the 10th December was very well attended. We enjoyed mince pies and mulled wine while listening to a wonderful program of Christmas Carols. This event, which forms part of The Hagbournes' Christmas Tree Festival, raised £276.62 in aid of St. Andrew's Parish Church and Helen and Douglas House. A big thank you to Sue/Chris Lay for hosting this event, to Meryl and her choir for leading the singing and to everyone who attended.

Madge Trophy

DON'T PANIC! The Madge Trophy will not be held until August this year. However, a suggestion made at the Village Association AGM is worthy of

debate. On alternate years, the judging should only consider containers/planters, rather than the whole front garden. The containers/planters might include wheelbarrows, pots and/or hanging baskets. The advantage of this change would be that families with limited free time to maintain their garden could get involved in the competition. The Village Association would like to hear your thoughts on this possible change. Please phone 01235 851091 and leave a message. We will let you know the outcome of the survey in the April issue of the West Hagbourne News.

Dragon competition

The Dragon competition will run from 14th-28th April this year. During this time, we hope you will display a dragon in your front garden, clearly visible from the roadside. The theme this year is "Dragons by the seaside" and you can use any materials in their construction – let your imagination run wild! As always, there will be cash prizes for the

best dragon, the runner-up and the best children's entry.

On Sunday 28th April, the Dragon Walk will start at 2.00pm, leaving the bus shelter to follow a route which passes every dragon in the village. Afterwards, the Dragon Teas will be held at Woodleys, 2.30-4.30pm, by kind permission of Robert and Hazel. Come and enjoy a cup of tea and a piece of cake with your neighbours.

For the second consecutive year, we will be running a plant stall at this event to raise funds for the Village Association, so, don't forget your pennies.

Garden Open Day – Summer 2024

At their committee meeting on Monday 5th February the Village Association will start to formalise plans for the West Hagbourne Garden Open Day. If you are willing to include your garden in this event, then please phone Rosey on 07542 923328.

Rosey Gardiner (Chair)



Winter walkers



Carols in the farmyard



other news

Flooding

There was widespread flooding in West Hagbourne on the night of January 4th.

After a prolonged period of heavy rain, at around 8pm the water levels in the village began to rise. At first this was in all the usual places, with accumulations in Brook Lane, on the corner by the pond, at the westerly junction of Main Street and York Road and by the Horse and Harrow pub. As the rain continued, the water levels increased and around 8pm there were the first indications that Brook Lane was impassable and that water was building up in Main Street. Meanwhile, in Manor Close the ditch behind the houses was overflowing into the back gardens. As cars continued to come through the village, waves of water made the situation worse for homes beside the road. Eventually, in consultation with the police, farm vehicles were positioned to warn drivers that they would not be able to get through. By this stage the Village WhatsApp group had sprung into action, sharing information, and offers of help

and equipment as some houses saw the water approaching.

What was new in this flooding incident was that, in addition to the usual accumulations of water, more came down from Manor Close, completely flooded across York Road and then swung round at the corner and down past York Farm and into the Square in a continuous stream. Fortunately, the rain stopped at round midnight and by 1.30 am the water levels were beginning to recede and tired villagers went off to bed.

The next morning, after a car had been removed from Brook Lane, traffic cautiously resumed. In addition to the unprecedented amount of water - unseen for 40 or 50 years - it was noted that the flood water in York Road had deposited a lot of gravel and white powdery material.

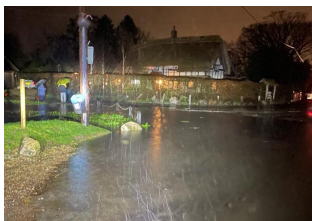
A second flooding event, following damage to a water main, was more of a problem. It took some time to register that many properties in the village had lost their water supply as most on-line reports referred only to the flooding. Loss of supply needs to be reported separately. Something to remember in the future.



Brook Lane



The Square



The Pond



York Road

Potholes

The wet winter has led to more than usual number of potholes. Particularly worrying were the large holes that opened up on the approach to the corner by Lizard Bank since these were obscured by deep puddles. After several vehicles had suffered damage, and intervention by our Parish Clerk, cones were placed to warn of the danger. It is really important to use Fix my Street to report potholes to the Council. If a pothole presents a real danger to cyclists and motorists, please also let the Clerk know since he can bring them to the urgent attention of the Highways Department.



Parish Council

At the council meeting on 3rd January Julie Freeland kindly agreed to be co-opted on to the council complete the required five members. The clerk will deal with the necessary formalities and this will take effect from the meeting on 13th March.

The council agreed to provide the Village Association with funds for the purchase of two gazebos and fifty chairs.

The council is negotiating with East Hagbourne Parish Council for a contribution to that council's work on footpath renovation.

Discussions are still in progress about the status of Moor Lane.

The next meeting of the Parish Council is on 13th March.

Michael Butler (Chair)

Buses



A revised 94 bus timetable came into operation in January.

Monday-Friday: slight change to the time of the second bus of the day during term time. The Didcot Station (DID) to Harwell Campus bus now calls at the Horse and Harrow both ways morning and afternoon.

Buses that call at the Moor Lane bus-stop travel anti-clockwise (DID, East Hagbourne, Coscote, West Hagbourne, Upton, Blewbury, the Mortons, East Hagbourne, Didcot and DID) - a trip of about 35 minutes to the Orchard Centre from Moor Lane. The return takes about 15 minutes. Buses run approximately every 2 hour, giving about an hour in Didcot.

On Saturdays, the first bus to DID via Blewbury and the Mortons is at 07:51 and takes 40 minutes. Buses are then at 2 hourly intervals from 10:27 to 18:27. Returning buses from DID to Moor Lane take 17 minutes, travelling via East Hagbourne and Coscote. They start at 07:35, then run at 2 hourly intervals from 10:10 to 18:10.

Deaths

It is with sadness that we note the deaths of long term village residents, Bill Warner and Roger Sweet. Bill was a regular winner of the Madge Trophy and Roger served for some years as Parish Clerk. We hope to include a fuller obituary in our next edition.

HUGS Update

Where are all the birds?

Britain has lost almost a third of all its wild birds since 1970*, but recent conservation actions have helped to drive the recovery of some of the UK's birds and we can all help to reverse the decline by adopting just a few simple steps.

It is estimated that gardens in Britain cover an area of 10 million acres. Individual gardens may be small but they create important green links with the wider countryside, forming vital wildlife corridors.

In your garden, hang bird feeders and provide a source of fresh water. Especially in winter, birds need high-energy, high-fat

foods. Many birds, especially small ones, die of starvation in long periods of low temperatures.

If possible, as well as your favourite flowers, grow shrubs and/or a hedge that flowers in summer and provide berries in winter and don't be tempted to cut back hedges every winter, as flowers and berries sometimes only form on second year growth.

* According to Dr Richard Griffiths, Head of Science at the RSPB):

'Everyone should be concerned that UK bird populations are continuing to decline... this is a crucial indicator of the condition of our environment and health of our natural world.'

Caroline Hunt

Community Speedwatch

Road safety is important to us all. If you are a driver, pedestrian, cyclist or horse rider (or all of these!) you will be aware that our local roads can be unpleasant to use and sometimes dangerous. Rural areas have a far higher incidence of road casualties than urban ones, with their unlit, narrow roads, blind corners and inadequate footways. However, it is SPEED that is paramount. The introduction of the 20mph limit within the village, has highlighted the excessive speeds of some vehicles, with many residents expressing their concerns about this issue.

At the request of the Parish Council, I have volunteered to coordinate the launch and running of a village Community Speedwatch group. With the backing of Thames Valley Police (TVP), its purpose is to educate those drivers who choose to ignore the speed limit, putting others' safety at risk. Speeding

across the Thames Valley region has reached epidemic proportions. Communities like ours are taking action to reduce this illegal and anti-social practice, to make their roads safer to use and improve the quality of their lives - and everyone else's. 20 is plenty!

So far, 5 volunteers have volunteered to join. After registering as operators and passing a short, on-line training session, they will be ready to take part in roadside training and monitoring. These sessions will take place on days and at times convenient to the operators. Equipment is supplied by TVP. If you would like to support this initiative and join the Speedwatch group, please let me know - email: mjleishman707@gmail.com or mob: 07792 165305. Thank you.

Margaret Leishman.
Coordinator - West Hagbourne
Community Speedwatch Group

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
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Dan Tozer 07795 047934
daniel.tozer@westhagbourne.org

District Councillors

Ben Manning
ben.manning@southoxon.gov.uk

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

County Councillor

Jane Murphy
jane.murphy@southoxon.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

Lunch Club

The lunch club had a successful Christmas Lunch on Friday 15 December and in January. Sadly it looks as though the landlord is on the move and the pub lease is being re-advertised. We are planning our February lunch for Friday 16th. Updates via the WhatsApp group and email.

Sue Totterdell,
Meadow's Edge



Monthly Meetings are on the 3rd Tuesday in the month at Didcot Civic Hall, starting at 2:30 pm .

2024

20 February: How to be a Gardener in the 21st Century - Timothy Walker

19 March: Curiosities in the Cotswolds' Part 1 - Alan Copeland

If you have a query please email bulletin@didcotu3a.org

Marian Nicholls
Bulletin Coordinator

Newsletter delivery

Delivery of your newsletter depends on a network of volunteers, each of whom delivers between 10 and 20 newsletters, every two months. Is this something you could do? New volunteers are needed so that some of the current team can 'retire'. Please get in touch with editors@westhagbourne.org

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

Planning

Pumping station: extension for another 10 residential rooms and ancillary services. Consultation period ends 7th February. This property will house adults with learning difficulties with resident carers.

<https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/?s=Planning>

Application No: P23/S4360/FUL

Permission to build six houses in the field opposite the pub has been refused again. This was the same site where around thirty houses were originally planned.

Horse & Harrow target decision date: 24th February.

other news

Headline in the Herald this week was about 800 homes more homes for Didcot under the SODC/Vale Joint local Plan 2041. Closing date for comments is 26th February.

<https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/planning-and-development/local-plan-and-planning-policies/local-plan-2041/>

Electoral boundaries are changing.

<https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/?s=boundaries>

Recent unprecedented floods in West Hagbourne may be linked to a reduction in land area available to absorb heavy rains. Are the local drainage systems working?

other news

Our MP David Johnston wants suggestions or comments about flood defences locally. david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk

Marquees for hire

If you are planning a party the Association has 2 marquees, tables and chairs that are available to hire. For further details please contact Robin Wilkes at va@westhagbourne.org

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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Mental Health Concerns?

I AM DONNA, a Senior Mental Health Practitioner offering a range of bespoke mental health services designed to help improve your mental health and overall well-being. My consultations are held either on Zoom or at clinics at West Hagbourne or Headington, whichever you prefer. If you have any mental health concerns, call me on 07541 556039 or visit mentalhealthrelease.com.



The West Hagbourne Emergency Defibrillator is located in the Telephone Box in the Square

In the event of an emergency call 999



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for more information and photos

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