



Woodcote CORRESPONDENT

Vol 32 No 4
June 2021

Delivered free to homes in Woodcote, Exlade Street and Crays Pond

WOODCOTE CRICKET CLUB GOING FOR 141 YEARS

Yes, it's true, cricket has been played on our glorious Green since 1880 and judging from the level of interest in the club, it could be here for at least another hundred years! One positive feature of the Covid pandemic seems to have been a renewed interest in playing cricket and our membership is growing. We are also beginning to take small steps towards promoting cricket for young beginners with Saturday morning sessions in June/July. If you like watching cricket, Woodcote is the place to be with over 50 home matches scheduled between May and September. If you've never watched cricket, why not give it a try with the added benefit that the Red Lion is just over the road and always open throughout matches. You'll be very welcome and in good company as we attract lots of local support. Don't miss our annual Pete Aldridge Memorial Match (Woodcote v The Red Lion) and Picnic on the Green, which takes place on **Sunday June 11th**.

The club has made a promising start to the season, winning its first three matches. On Sunday 18th April we played at Peppard in a friendly and won by 2 wickets. Peppard scored 189 for 7 in their 35 overs and Woodcote replied with 193 for 8. Sean Bell top-scored for Woodcote with 45. On Saturday 24th April

we had a comfortable win over Purley 3rds by 166 runs. Ryan Lennard, Olly Nicholson and Stefan Gordon all scored half centuries as we reached 239 for 7 in 40 overs. Purley struggled to score against the Woodcote bowling attack and they were all out for 73. Bowling honours went to Pete Roberts (4 for 11) and Rakesh Patel (3 for 28). These two wins put us in fine fettle to win our first League match at

home to Farley Hill on 1st May. Batting first, we lost 6 wickets before reaching 70 runs, but a revival led by captain, James Worsfold (45 not out) and Vice-captain, Mark Pearson (43), took us to 195 for 8. We then bowled out Farley Hill for 155 to win by 44 runs. Bowling honours went to Olly Nicholson who took 5 wickets for only 18 runs.

In the match against Farley Hill we were able to play for the first time in our new

sponsored kit donated by Steve Bell of Stanrod Motors, Pangbourne, father of Sean, one of our regular players. We would like to place on record our thanks to Steve for his generous donation.

As always, we will be delighted to hear from anyone who would like to become involved in the club either as a player or in some other capacity. If you would like any more information, please contact me: sampeates@gmail.com; Tel: 07710 858366.



COMMENT FROM THE VICARAGE

Yesterday I officiated at a funeral. You might think this would be a sad or difficult thing to do but actually I count it as one of the great privileges of my role as a parish priest. There is something very precious about being able to assist a family at a time of need, and it is an immense privilege to be with people as they remember a life and all the significant and very personal moments that they hold in their hearts. To hear and see the depth of appreciation, affection and love that is shared is always a joy, tinged as it is with the sadness of loss at the end of a life. Sometimes, if tragedy has struck, there may be some anger and confusion, but even then, being the neutral person who is not a family member, who has enough life experience to be able to hold the pain with them for a while, is a moment of profound privilege. I try to help people see that a funeral can be a very positive occasion. As we gather in the church and memories are shared and a life is recalled by those who knew them; the words that are said, the music that is played and the tributes given all help us to acknowledge the significance of that life, what it has meant and what it will continue to mean long after the funeral has taken place.

Perhaps we have come to a fresh realisation as a result of the pandemic, as to how important a funeral is. One of the most difficult things for people to cope with has been the restrictions placed around funerals which have meant that many people have not been able to be at the services of friends and family; and although the online streaming has helped it is not always possible. For me, the act of gathering in the church is in itself both important and significant. It may well be that previous generations of our family have sat in those pews and mourned the loss of their loved ones. We might have been there before to support other friends and neighbours, but always we are aware that this is the right place to be.

A church holds the stories of the community, the highs and lows, all of which bring their own sense of upheaval and change, which if shared is somehow made more valuable. We know too that we, like those who have walked this way before us, will go out into the world, emerging from grief into life again.

I think that is at the crux of my seeing a funeral as a positive thing because I know that life does begin again even after the deepest sorrow. I have seen people broken by tragedy find their way in life again, and they do so with a humility and reverence for life. The sadness of loss may never completely go away but instead it adds colour and depth to all that comes after. My way of expressing this would be in terms of resurrection and life after death, which in the Christian tradition is what we believe in through the efforts of Jesus on the cross.

Death is no longer an enemy because Jesus has shown us the way to eternal life and has given us the means to be with God forever. We move from this life to the next and join the saints in glory. I also believe that resurrection happens on earth; in lives that begin again, in hope that overcomes despair, and in peace that prevails in times of trial. If we can be at

peace with our dying, then we are likely to be living more fully. I offer these words of Jesus as something to ponder and receive as a gift:

Peace I leave with you. My peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not let them be afraid.

With all blessings and prayers for your safekeeping,

Linda
Revd. Linda Smith, Tel. 01491 680979
Email: woodcotevicarage@btinternet.com

Services at St. Leonard's

We have a short service of Holy Communion every Sunday at 8.30am. Social distancing measures are observed and face masks should be worn.

We continue to monitor the situation regarding restrictions and will adjust what we can offer as and when the situation changes.

Online Services

We continue with our online services every Sunday at 10am and Night Prayer every Wednesday at 8.30pm.

We'd love people to feel that they can join us at any time – we are a very friendly and relaxed bunch! So please do email me if you would like details of how to join an online service.

We use the Zoom app for our services which is free for you to use. If you are not on the internet, it is possible to phone into a service. We are happy to advise you on how to access this.

HELP WITH LONG-TERM COVID



Over a million people in the UK are suffering from *Long Covid*, the accepted term for Coronavirus that lasts more than four weeks. And, sad to say, more than 70,000 people in this country have had Covid symptoms - fatigue, breathlessness, numbness, pain or partial hearing loss - for over a year.

If you are one of those affected, you should know that PIP (personal independence payments) may be available. PIP is financial support for those who have an illness, disability or mental health condition, making it hard for them to do everyday tasks or get around. Income, savings and employment status don't affect your PIP eligibility, and PIP can supplement any other benefits you might be receiving. To apply, you need to be aged between 16 and your state pension age, and you need to have had these health problems for at least three months and expect them to continue. For help with applying for PIP, contact Citizens Advice Adviceline on 0808 278 7907 (for Oxfordshire South and Vale). You can find more information about PIP at www.citizensadvice.org.uk/benefits/sick-or-disabled-people-and-carers/pip/

A NOTE FROM THE EDITOR



What a relief it is to see life waking up again; not just in terms of blossom on the trees, and tulips and bluebells. Cinemas are reopening, family catch-ups are now possible, future events are being planned

(the Woodcote Fete is on!) One thing the pandemic has taught us all is to savour the little things and perhaps take things at a slower pace. How many of you are in a rush to go back to how things once were?

In this issue, we are delighted to see how quickly our pre-schoolers have adapted to being back at school again. The Woodcote Conservation Group has a competition for you. Do enter – there are prizes to be won! And finally, Gabby Robinson has written an interesting piece on neuroplasticity. Let us know what you think!

Until next month

Yvette



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PUBLISHER INFORMATION

Editor: Yvette Decmar *[via email]*

Articles for inclusion: to the editor by email to: wood-co@runbox.com, or letters may be handed in at the library. To be received by the 12th of the preceding month.

Advertisers: To place an advertisement, please email wood-co@runbox.com for details of prices and how to produce your ad in our house style. The deadline for payment and your finished advertisement is the 12th of the preceding month.

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Treasurer:	Helen Baker	01491 682240
Production:	Dan Oldfield	01491 681962
Distribution:	Trevor Back	01491 680617
Printer:	C Z Services	07860 630865
Cover Design:	Rob Spencer	

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Note: The Woodcote Correspondent is edited, produced and distributed by volunteers.

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CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT 2021

2020 was another busy year for the Village Green Committee. We are grateful to the Parish Council for the support they give to the Committee every year and to their rep, David Booth, for maintaining the close links. Andy Crockett resigned from the Parish Council in 2020, but we are pleased that he has remained on our Committee.

PLAY

With the exception of minor maintenance work, the Play Area equipment has been remarkably trouble free. This is thanks in no small part to the regular inspections which identify minor problems quickly so that remedial action can be taken before major expense needs to be spent on repairs. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking Ron Hows for his regular comprehensive reports which are invaluable in helping us to keep the play area safe.

The wet pour is an ongoing problem and some sections have needed to be replaced. Fortunately, the Parish Council has continued to pay for these improvements, as we could not afford to pay from our limited budget. We continue to keep other options for surfacing under review, but to change the surface product would involve an initial large cost.

There has also been a suggestion put forward to the PC that there is a need to update our whole Play Area with new equipment (Crowmarsh was quoted as a good example). Of course, such a venture would be very costly and would rely on a major fundraising effort. At present the area continues to be very popular and our task is to maintain it in good order.

TREES

A number of new trees have been planted, some adjacent to the Junior Football pitch and others alongside the Goring Road and adjacent to the Allotment hedge. This has been a Parish Council project of which we highly approve. The trees have been professionally planted by Kings and we understand that they will also take responsibility for the care of said trees including watering where necessary.

GREENS

We are delighted that we have now been able to install a second 'goal' on the Folly Field. A pitch for basketball and 5-a-side football has been marked out. All the signs are that this pitch is now being regularly used and we plan to complete the installation of a hard surface over the whole pitch area once finance becomes available.

Robert McDowell has continued to carry out essential work on the Greens. He has renovated the Catlin/Marcham seat and has carried out repairs to a number of other seats. Seriously damaged seats are being removed and concrete plinths installed for new seats. Robert also upgraded the area in front of the Youth Shelter with the installation of paving slabs and seeding of bare areas. Unfortunately, this has created a flooding problem which we hope Robert will be able to solve. We would like to thank Robert for his work.

There is a new grass-cutting contractor this year. We

will monitor performance and report to the Parish Council as and when we deem it necessary. The early signs are quite favourable.

Stuart Higley has continued to maintain the football pitch to a very high standard. The Football Club has carried-out a pitch assessment under the Pitchpower scheme and the favourable report received back enables the club to apply for a grant from the Football Foundation.

There have been a few minor incidents of vandalism and graffiti such as on the Youth Shelter, fire-lighting, mud-slides and seat damage, but in general nothing drastic. The same is true of dog-fouling which is now down to the minimum.

SPORT & THE FESTIVAL.

We congratulate the sports clubs on their success in promoting football and cricket in the village. The lack of cricket in 2020 seems to have sparked a revival in interest and the club looks to have a good supply of players for the 2021 season. The Cricket Club is planning to run some junior sessions this year for the first time.

Regrettably, the Covid pandemic caused the cancellation of both the Rally and the Festival in 2020. There will not be a Rally in 2021, but plans are going ahead for the Festival to take place in September.

PRACTICE GOAL

The practice goal has proved incredibly popular during Covid restrictions.

THE NEW PATH

The new path has been in place for over a year now and it has been very well used and added to the safety of the children of the village.

COMMITTEE

At our last AGM, Ken Groom stood down as Treasurer after a number of years in post. I want to thank Ken for his excellent work in looking after the finances and for all the other tasks he performed on the Green.

Once again, I want to express thanks to our committee members for their hard work and dedication which enables us to continue to have a Village Green which the whole village can be proud of. Special thanks are due to Ken Ison (Secretary) and Ron Hows (Equipment Inspector and Treasurer) not just for their admin duties but for the practical work in which they participate regularly and to David Booth our PC Rep. Andy Crockett has continued as a very committed member. Michael Aldridge has recently joined the Committee as our second PC Rep and we look forward to his input.

Thanks are also due to Lesley Crockett our litter-collector who continues to do a very good job.

We have a very small committee and we are all retired from work. We can no longer carry out the physical tasks we once performed in our working parties. We would love some younger residents to join our committee and eventually take over from us. Contact us if you are interested.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS



I am sorry to report that my dear wife Carol Gregory passed away on the 20th April after a 20-year long journey battling cancer. Many villagers will have met Carol when she used to be out and about walking our dog Bentley.

We've lived in our beautiful village in Behoes Lane for nearly 20 years and although we've largely kept ourselves to ourselves, both Carol and I have met so many lovely people when out walking. We were married for 43 years. Carol was only 63 and taken far too early but she is finally resting in peace now, God bless her.

Malcolm Gregory

WOODCOTE PARISH COUNCIL



PLANNING APPLICATIONS GRANTED BY SODC

P21/S0113/FUL Application proposal, including any amendments.

Variation of conditions on applications P15/S3449/O and P17/S1690/RM to facilitate phased completion with occupation of House 1 from 12/04/2021 whilst work continues on Houses 2 & 3. Changes to rear gardens of Houses 2 & 3, with level area increased by omitting the planted bank and creating a retaining wall instead, and with the small clump of domestic shrubs and old fruit trees to rear of house 2 removed, to create a whole newly planted garden space.

P15/S3449/O Outline Planning Permission for demolition of existing bungalow and detached garage and replace with three 3-bedroom dwellings & P17/S1690/RM Reserved Matters Application following Outline Approval.

P15/S3449/O Site Location Old Orchard (formerly Red Lane Bungalow) Red Lane Woodcote.

P21/S0307/HH Application proposal, including any amendments Proposed single storey side extension and new flat roof over the existing rear annexe. Site Location Beech Croft Beech Lane Woodcote RG8 0PY.

P21/S0413/HH Application proposal, including any amendments Proposed two-storey rear, side and front extension, single-storey front extension with internal alterations. Existing garage to be clad. Proposed gate entrance. Ravenswood Beech Lane Woodcote RG8 0PX.

P21/S0489/O Application proposal, including any amendments Outline application for demolition of existing buildings and erection of single dwelling and associated works including garaging and provision of new access onto Bridle Path with matters of appearance, landscaping, layout and scale reserved. Site Location No14a Bridle Path Woodcote RG8 0SE.

P20/S4825/FUL Application proposal, including any amendments Demolition of existing house, construction of two houses (amended plans received 21st March 2021, reducing height and floor area of unit B and increasing parking provision). Site Location Woodhaven Reading Road Woodcote RG8 0QX.

P21/S0827/HH Application proposal, including any amendments Single storey rear extensions. Site Location : 48 West Chiltern Woodcote RG8 0SG.

P21/S1007/HH Application proposal, including any amendments Single storey rear extension. Site Location 14 Bensgrove Close Woodcote RG8 0SJ.

PLANNING APPLICATIONS REFUSED BY SODC

P20/S3417/FUL Application proposal, including any amendments Proposed change of use of land to site seven log cabins for holiday accommodation, with associated drainage, access track and landscaping (As amended by plans 2021-01-15 to slightly amend the design of cabins). Site Location Land adjacent to Masseys Pightle Tidmore Lane Woodcote RG8

A NEW HOME FOR WILLIAM AND HARRY



Wild peacocks living in woods off Beech Lane, Woodcote have been told *enough is enough*. Their noisy, early morning cries and bold-as-brass strutting in people's gardens have prompted a few locals to complain to the Council.

Naturally this sparked protests from other residents who defended the birds' right to live in the woods (and residents' gardens). Sadly, the Council insisted that most of them should be removed, including William and Harry, whose names were chosen by Beech Lane resident Amanda Stewart.

Fortunately, they will be moved to the Fawley Hill estate, owned by Lady McAlpine. They will join another forty already living there so they should be in good company.

Now someone just needs to catch them all...

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WOODCOTE PRESCHOOL



We would like to welcome some more new children and their families to Pre-School this term so a big welcome to Archie, Jasper and Bertie.

This term's topics are School and Minibeasts.

School:

We started off this month with a school-themed week. We had a school role-play set up and lots of uniform for children to try on. The children had a great time pretending to take the register, call themselves by the staff's names and read stories and sing rhymes to their "class". They were practising their maths and handwriting. It was amazing for us to observe them in this role-play especially when they were pretending to be the Pre-School teachers. We have several children transitioning to primary school this year and this was the perfect activity to help prepare them.

Minibeasts:

Following on from "School" we moved on to learning about minibeasts. We have been watching our caterpillars grow and they have formed their chrysalides ready to be transferred to their butterfly habitat. The children have enjoyed seeing the changes that have happened and are looking forward to releasing the butterflies at our allotment once they have hatched.

We have made some trips to the allotment to plant the potatoes, peas, carrots, onions and parsnips and will soon be planting the beans. It is such an amazing opportunity for the children to have their own allotments and grow their own fruit and vegetables. It gives them an opportunity to learn all about growing, harvesting and eating healthy foods. We look forward to when we will be harvesting some of our vegetables so they can eat them with their homemade lunches. Whilst at the allotments, the children also spent a lot of time looking for minibeasts.

We have made bird feeders from pinecones that the children have been able to take home to hang in their gardens.

Father's Day:

We are looking forward to Father's Day and will be making our traditional pig shaped sausage rolls, cards and crafts to take home for our Dads. Hopefully next year we will be able to welcome the Dads back into Preschool for this occasion and to give them an opportunity to see their children at play.

Thank you:

We would like to say a huge thank you to the Co-op for the £200 donation that they gave us, that we

used to purchase a new fridge freezer. The support we get from the Woodcote Store is amazing.

Woodcote Baby & Toddler Group

Our Baby & Toddler Group is now back up and running again and has proved to be very popular. This is run by our committee members and a member of our staff. If you are interested in visiting the group you can book through our Woodcote Baby & Toddler Group Facebook page.

Holiday Club

We will be running a Holiday Club again this summer which will be held for 2 weeks during the middle of the summer. Please look out for flyers around the village and on our Facebook Page for information and we will put an update in next month's Correspondent.

If you are interested in your child joining us, please contact Wendy Powell on 01491 682300 or email woodcote.pre-school@hotmail.co.uk.

CHECKENDON PRESCHOOL



Our theme this term is *Changes*. We have been looking at changes in our environment. Our theme of Changes is a

lovely way to look at what is happening in the world around us as we move from winter into spring months. This can support children's seasonal understanding and the changes to the natural world. Spring is an exciting time of year with visible environmental changes that can help develop children's contextual understanding. We have been walking outside, looking at what differences we can see outside, such as leaves on the trees and the first signs of flowers starting to appear.

We have been very lucky to have been given some tadpoles to have at preschool. The children have had lots of fun watching them swimming around. This has encouraged lots of questions and lots of discussions. We have learnt about the life cycle of the frog, what they eat and how they grow and that frogs start off as eggs, learning lots of new words such as gills and frogspawn. As children develop speaking and listening skills, they're building the foundations for literacy and learning. Encouraging them to take turns, listening and asking questions as well as finding out the answers.

We have taken cuttings of the flowers from our flower bed and put them into the flower press, learning about the flowers and the names of the different parts of the flowers.

We have also been enjoying learning about ducks, geese and swans. Using google we were able to find out the names of the baby animals and what the mummy and daddies were called as well as what animals hatch out of eggs!

The children have really enjoyed these activities, which was then extended by drawing pictures of the tadpoles and flowers and baby animals, encouraging talk about their local environments.

We have also been learning about what it means to *read*. We have been learning that letters make words and words make stories. The children have been phonetically sounding out letters to be able to say simple words. We have also been thinking about how to look after our books and resources.

Checkendon pre-school has continued to be open during the covid pandemic and has continued to provide a nurturing, safe and caring place for the children to learn and grow.

On behalf of Checkendon Pre-School, we would like to say thank you for the support from our Pre School families, local community and the Village Hall Committee who have supported us during this time. Thank you for your continued support.

To find out more about Checkendon Pre-School, do visit our website www.checkendonpreschool.co.uk, call us on 01491 682589, e-mail preschoolcheckendon@gmail.com or just pop in – we always look forward to welcoming you to Checkendon Pre-School.

CABIN PRESCHOOL



Growing and Chicks

We were lucky to be able to watch eggs hatch again after our last batch of eggs didn't go quite to plan. This time it was so successful, and we managed to hatch 6 beautiful little chicks of three different breeds. The chicks had so much fun exploring Cabin whilst the children were working and the children adored watching them grow and the feathers developing on their wings. This fitted in so well with our theme this term of *Growing*.

We have planted many different plants, including carrots, rocket, beans, sunflowers and radishes. All the children have decorated a plant pot to pot an indoor spider plant, and we looked at the root systems and talked about what plants need to grow and then compared that to what people need to grow.

Outdoors, we have been exploring with lots of different veggies, taking them apart and using them to make some of our famous potion soup.

We read every day and also have a focus book which usually links to the topic, this term we read *Handra's Hen*, *Oliver's Fruit Salad*, *The Growing Story* and *Jack and the Beanstalk*.

Oliver's Fruit Salad prompted us to make fresh fruit salad, as we have not been able to do cooking this year and we are really missing it. This was a great way for each child to make their own and then eat it immediately and even before it was finished in some cases! We chopped up bananas, mango, watermelon, apple, pear and kiwi and some of the children were trying new things and loving it. It was so good to show and encourage the children to smell and describe each piece of fruit. I could not believe how quickly it all went!

Easter Trail

It already seems a long time ago, but thank you to all the families that completed our Easter Egg trail. This raised some much-needed funds for our children.

Cabin News

We still have many restrictions in place that means our parents cannot come into Cabin, but I am posting lot of photos on our Facebook page. If you want to see more of what we do, please visit it. I never put children's faces as a matter of safeguarding but lots of the beginnings of activities; afterwards is usually too messy!

Plenty of children will be moving onto school in September and, as we do every year, we have started to think about how to help them make a smooth transition. Being here on site works so well and makes for a very smooth transition, children already are used to sights and sounds of the playground, the teachers that pop over to say hello, and of course lots of graduated Cabin children that have successfully moved on still waving over the fence.

I am so touched when I have chats with them and they remember such fun times. Recently I was speaking to a couple of families that reminded me of a time we had a Cabin parent in to do some magic, which was wonderful.

If you would like to come into the Cabin Preschool please phone 01491 680854 or email info@thecabinpreschool.co.uk. I will be happy to show you round at the end of the day. If you have any worries or concerns, especially with your little ones that may not have been left with anyone during the past few months, we always work with you to design your own individual settling in programme. We like to start slow if we need to and make sure they are ready.

WOODCOTE CRICKET CLUB

Home Fixtures in June/July:

Wed 2nd June Woodcote v Moreton (League)

Sat 5th June Purley v Reading United (League)

Thurs 10th June Purley U13s v Abingdon Vale (league)

Sat 12th June Woodcote v Woodley (League)

Sun 13th June BBC v Ipsden

Wed 16th June Woodcote v Goring (League)

Thurs 17th June Purley U13s v Kingston Bagpuize (League)

Sat 19th June Purley v Checkendon (League)

Thurs 24th June Purley U13s v Challow & Childrey (League)

Sat 26th June Woodcote v Mortimer West End (League)

Sun 27th June BBC v Holton & Wheatley

Sat 3rd July Purley v Mortimer West End (League)

Sun 4th July BBC v Cholsey.



Peacocks in Woodcote



Cabin Little Ones with Their Chicks



Woodcote Preschool Activities

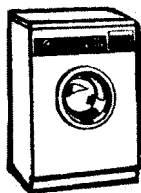


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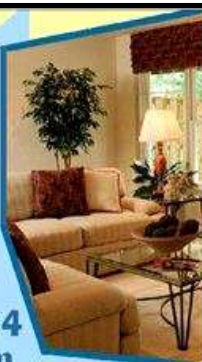
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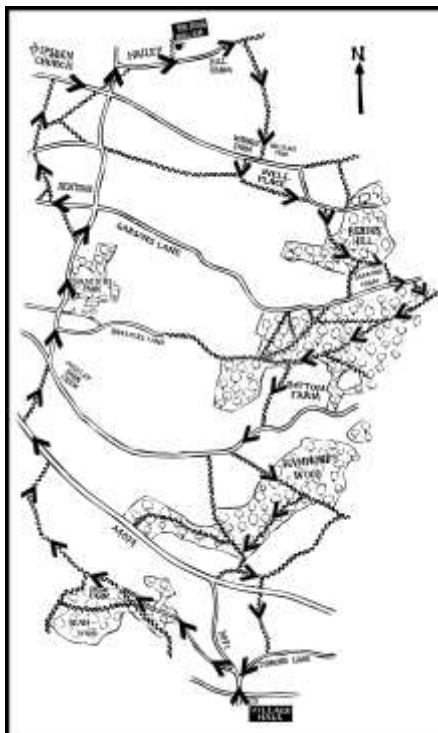
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WOODCOTE WALKS: PART 12

The King William, Hailey.

A perfect walk, with stunning Chiltern scenery, an ancient Church, a rural War Memorial and a wonderful pub commanding superb views. Tread in the footsteps of St Birinus, who brought Christianity to the Thames Valley in the 7th Century.

Distance 7.5 miles. Easy with some short climbs. Allow 4 hours to include a lunchtime stop at the King William.



I first did this walk one Boxing Day. It proved the perfect antidote to the excesses of Christmas Day. We had a light lunch at the pub and a pint or two of perfect Brakespears straight from the cask. If you don't have time to do the whole walk, leave a car at the pub, walk there and drive back. Alternatively, if you want a shorter walk you can return by the outgoing route.

Start at the Village Hall and turn right into Oxford Road

(Red Lane), and after 200 yards turn left on the Chiltern way Extension, a broad tarmac track which after about a mile brings you to Dean Farm.

Walk to the right of the outhouses past beech hedge and tennis court, and at the footpath junction go straight on following the track between low trees.

After half a mile turn right at a stile and, following a yellow footpath arrow, walk up a bank into a field.

Turn left along the edge of the field, swing right at the end of the field and cross the stile.

Walk along the edge of the next field and cross the stile to reach the A4074. Cross the road with care, turn left and walk for 300 yards on the wide verge, then turn right on a Bridleway.

At the end of the Bridleway, you reach a road, go straight ahead up the hill.

Continue straight ahead at the crossroads following the sign to 'Ipsden via Quiet Lane'. Continue on this road passing Braziers Park

Continue to crossroads and turn left following the sign to Crowmarsh and Wallingford.

Walk past Newtown and immediately after the School, turn right and walk through Ipsden's tiny, quaint cricket pitch, passing in front of the scoreboard.

Continue on a narrow path which passes the mysterious Standing Stones. Descend to the road near the children's play area and walk straight ahead up a broad grassy Bridleway.

Continue on this track and at the top of the hill, as well as marvellous all-round views you will see ahead the War Memorial and the Church. The people of Ipsden chose a truly wonderful tranquil setting to honour their dead. The impact of the First World War on this rural community is illustrated by the surprisingly large number of men who served in the war.

After pausing at the memorial continue ahead to the Church of St Mary the Virgin. Just before the church notice the winding gear to raise water presented to Ipsden by the same Indian Maharaja who built the well at Stoke Row. The church itself is a gem with some parts dating back to the 12th century. It always seems to be open so don't miss the chance to take a look inside.

On leaving the church turn left up the road and then left again at the crossroads. (If the ground is dry there is a footpath on the left at 45 degrees which cuts off a corner). Turn right at the sign to Hailey and the King William. The views from the pub are breathtaking at any time of the year.



The King William (drawing by Stephen Hanna)

On leaving the pub (reluctantly) turn left and walk uphill for a short distance past Hill farm, then turn right on a bridleway which descends to some farm buildings at Well Place, where there used to be a rather quirky little zoo very popular with local families with small children.

At the road turn right and after 90 yards turn left on to a footpath.

After 100 yards up the hill there is a junction in the footpath. Carry straight on up the hill between yellow arrows marked Chiltern Way.

The path veers round to the left and after 300 yards you cross between the vertical posts which serve as a stile.

Walk along the right-hand edge of the field to another set of vertical posts which brings you to a road.

Turn right on to the road and almost immediately right on to another footpath (Chiltern Way Extension). Follow the footpath to the left along the side of the field.

At the trees turn right keeping to the left edge of the field.

At the corner of the field cross a stile and follow the path uphill across the field to enter another wood. You are now on Berins Hill where tradition has it

that St Birinus, who was sent from Rome to bring Christianity to the area in 632, built a chapel. Before entering the wood look back to enjoy the view across to the King William and beyond.

Follow the white arrows through the wood staying close to the right-hand edge of the wood.

Cross the stile after about 500 yards and take the footpath to the right of Garsons Farm.

At the road turn left and then right almost opposite the farm entrance into Yewtree Brow on a footpath marked 'Checkendon 1 mile'.

Descend the hill and at the bottom, turn right on a broad track. Walk straight ahead for 300 yards in the mixed woods and keep straight ahead when the track narrows

Turn right and follow the yellow arrow uphill. After 400 yards walking through woods on the edge of the hill, turn left and walk down 43 steps, through John's Gate, across two fields and enter a small gate next to the tennis courts at Bottom Farmhouse.

Follow the narrow path under overhanging trees and cross the garden by the lily pond to reach the road.

Turn right on the road and after 300 yards turn left on a 'Restricted Byway'.

Walk up the (muddy if wet) path between hedges on both sides and after relatively hard slog of half a mile look for a sign on the right, 'North Grove, Woodland Trust'.

Turn right at the gap and follow the path through the wood for 600 yards.

Leave the wood next to the five-barred gate and walk ahead to reach a road.

Turn left and then take the footpath on the right over two stiles to reach the A4074.

Cross the road and take the footpath straight ahead.

Next to a house, Field Cottage, enter a single gate which takes you through the garden of Massey's Pigtle (the correct footpath route) and leads you to Tidmore Lane.

Turn right and when you reach Oxford Road turn left to return to the Village Hall.

THE CORN EXCHANGE, WALLINGFORD

It is good news that the Corn Exchange has opened again. There are a number of cinema bookings available and we will be adding more films in the next few weeks. Please look on www.cornexchange.org.uk for programme updates.

All regular performances normally start at 7:30pm unless stated otherwise.

Tickets £8 for adults and £5 for under 15s.

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SAVE THE DATE FOR THE WOODCOTE FETE!



*Saturday 11th September
2021, 12-5pm, Woodcote
Village Green*

We are delighted to report that we have set a date for our wonderful Fete. Fingers crossed it will go ahead this year with as much normality as possible and be a very welcome return to fun community events.

There will be live music, food and drink to enjoy plus traditional village fete activities such as tug of war and our very popular dog show. Together with stalls on the village green and competition entries inside the Village Hall, it promises to be an entertaining afternoon!

The Competition Guide will be published soon on Social Media and be available to collect from Woodcote Library. It will have all the favourites along with some new entries reflecting on the past year.

Keep up-to-date with our planning progress - and see what we have in store - on Instagram (@WoodcoteVillageFete) and Facebook (Woodcote Village Fete). If you would like to be involved, you'd be very welcome. Please contact Linda Burton on 07956 136750.

Woodcote Parish Office is not open to the public due to the Covid-19 guidelines. Contact the Parish Clerk by email, clerk@woodcoteparishcouncil.org.uk or telephone 01491 681861 there is an answerphone.

CHANGE THE WAY YOU THINK, CHANGE YOUR LIFE!

By Gabby Robinson



Neuroplasticity is the term to describe how the brain can adapt to change and form new neural pathways. Put simply, it is how we rewire our brains, adapt, retain information and master new skills.

The last year or more of a higher level of underlying and consistent stress has more than likely created and strengthened new neural pathways, raising our base levels of stress and in doing so, affecting the way we are able to deal with stress.

So how can we guide our minds and bodies back into a more relaxed state by the process of neuroplasticity?

Up until the 1960's, experts and researchers believed that by adulthood, the brain could not learn or develop any further, that the brain's make up and capacity was permanent.

Nowadays however, it is understood the brain does not stop changing in response to learning, that nerve cells can constantly develop and many aspects of the

brain are "plastic" and therefore can change throughout adulthood.

This explains how a person who has suffered from a massive stroke is able to re-learn motor skills and how a person can recover after a traumatic brain injury, by re-routing the neural pathways and re-wiring the brain.

There is a well-known saying from neuropsychologist Donald Hebb 1949, that "Neurons that fire together, wire together", meaning the more you do something or think something, the stronger that habit becomes and the more defined that circuit or neural pathway becomes. The brain is trying to help by making that thought or action easily accessible and smooth. This describes how the pathways in the brain are formed and reinforced with the action of *repetition*. There is a level of truth in the saying "Practice makes perfect".

There are ways to enhance your neuroplasticity at any age. It is worth noting however that a child's brain shows a higher level of plasticity than that of an adult. A child has around double the number of synapses of that of an adult, a synapse being the structure that passes messages between nerve cells.

As a child grows up, learns and has new experiences, some of these connections are strengthened and others are weakened or die.

This process is known as synaptic pruning. By wiring and fortifying new connections and pruning away weak ones, the brain can adapt to its ever-changing landscape. If we make a habit of worrying or catastrophising, this increases the stress hormones and makes it our go to response and our neural connections become accustomed to firing in this way. Alternatively, if we focus on seeing the positives and the ease of situations, this too becomes our primary response.

So what can we do to improve our neuroplasticity, to maintain our brain function, reduce stress and keep well during stressful times?

1. Exercise is one of the best ways to promote the formation of new synapses.
2. Learning e.g., a new language or how to play an instrument
3. Traveling
4. Art and other creative pursuits
5. Reading a good book
6. Getting plenty of rest and good quality sleep

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WHAT ARE OUR SPIKEY RESIDENTS DOING NOW?



In spring, after emerging from hibernation in March and April, male hedgehogs are very active as they search for females with whom to mate. A hedgehog

pregnancy lasts about 34 days and, towards the end of this period, the female will build a nursery nest somewhere tucked out of the way.

So, at this time of year, female hedgehogs are giving birth to, typically, four or five young, called hoglets. Hoglets are born with spines. Ouch! Fortunately, newborns are covered in a fluid-filled skin which is quickly absorbed after birth allowing the spines to emerge quite quickly.

Hoglets are three weeks old before their eyes open and it takes them about three months to develop the necessary muscles to roll into a ball. This makes them vulnerable so it's important not to disturb them. When they are about four weeks old, they will start to explore and, if you're lucky, you might see a mother leading a small train of youngsters as she heads out on her nocturnal ramblings. By six weeks old, the young hedgehogs are independent and able to live alone.

Helping young hoglets

To give young hedgehogs a good start in life, the best thing to do is to **link your garden** with your neighbours' garden by making a CD case-sized hole (13x13cm or 5x5") at the base of your garden fence or wall to let hedgehogs through. If you would like some help making a hole, the Woodcote Conservation Group can lend a hand – just email info@woodcotecg.org.uk.

You can also put out **food and water**. Hedgehogs really benefit from extra food, using it as a supplement to their natural diet. Meaty cat or dog food, or special hedgehog food (sold at the Woodcote Garden Centre), are suitable. Please do not put out milk! Water is the only thing they should drink and a shallow dish or old plant saucer filled with water is ideal. If you'd like to make a hedgehog café, last month's edition had ideas and links to online instructions.

Finally, it is really important to **leave some untidy areas** in our gardens for nursery nests, and also to check the bottom of any hedges for hedgehogs before mowing or strimming as strimmers can cause nasty and fatal injuries to hedgehogs hiding there.

Please tell us if and where you have seen a hedgehog in Woodcote and/or if you have made a hedgehog hole – just email: info@woodcotecg.org.uk.

And now it's competition time!

Would you like to win a *prickly prize*? Then enter our competition by sharing your pictures and stories with us!

If seeing a hedgehog in the last few months has inspired you to paint a picture, take a photo, spy on

nocturnal activity in your garden with a trail camera, or write a story or poem, the Woodcote Conservation Group would love to hear from you. Please send your entry to: info@woodcotecg.org.uk

The competition closing date is **Monday 30th August**. The best entries will be put on our website <https://woodcotecg.org.uk/> and will be on display at the Woodcote Village Fete in September for everyone to enjoy. Not to mention prizes...

NEED A GOOD READ?



Our Wallingford bookshop ladies are on hand to advise...

There are often trends in publishing and currently the 1950's seems to be in vogue. So far this year we've had Louise

Hare's fabulous debut *This Lovely City*, set in the jazz clubs of 1950's London, and Rachel Joyce's perfectly brilliant *Miss Benson's Beetle*. And this month, Stuart Evers' *The Blind Light* and Patrick Ness's *Burn* are out in paperback, both of which are set at least in part during this period.



'The Blind Light' by Stuart Evers

The Blind Light is a sweeping saga of two families set over sixty years, from the late 1950's to the present day. Drummond and Carter first bond over a card game whilst completing their National Service. As part of their military training, they are posted to 'Doom Town', a government training ground used to prepare soldiers for the eventuality of a nuclear attack. What Drummond witnesses in Doom Town affects him, and by association those around him, for the rest of his life. Set to a backdrop of key political events over the period, *The Blind Light* considers how a culture of fear can impact individuals. It's an utterly absorbing read.



'Burn' by Patrick Ness

Patrick Ness has written a litany of thought-provoking literature for young adults, including of course the *Chaos Walking* trilogy, which has just been adapted for film. Patrick's books force teens to look at familiar situations from a new perspective, whether it's Moby Dick from the point of view of the whale,

or what happens when you're just an ordinary kid in a world full of superheroes. The inspiration for *Burn* was the idea that the film *Back to the Future* only really worked because Marty McFly was a white straight male. America in the Fifties wasn't necessarily the place to be if you were anything else. *Burn* is a thrilling tale of revenge and redemption during the Cold War....oh, and did I mention there are dragons... It's amazing! (Recommended for 14+ years)

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I WONDER IF BILL GATES HAS THESE PROBLEMS...

By David Sutton

I have always been vaguely distrustful of online savings accounts, preferring to trot along periodically to a High Street branch, clutching my little red savings book. But what with the pandemic, and also the lure of a whole extra 0.1% interest, recently I finally succumbed and opened an online account. And there's no doubt that it's very convenient to be able to transfer money to and fro just by sitting at your computer. If you can get into the account, that is.

The trouble started the other day when for the first time I tried to access it to get some money *out* rather than put it *in*. Up came a security warning telling me that I would be receiving a message on the phone that I had specified in my contact details when I set up the account, and I was to follow instructions. I raced downstairs. 'Quick, where's your mobile, you're going to get a message' I said to my wife. 'Why?' she said. 'Something about security on our savings account'. 'Why my mobile?' she said. 'Why not yours?'. 'Oh, I don't know, never mind that now. Where is it?'. 'I think it's in my handbag.' I rush to get her handbag. Just then, our landline rings. 'Can you answer that and tell them to go away, we're busy'. She answers it. 'This is your security message. Press # and then enter the number you see on the screen'. 'Oh, right, I must have given them our landline number, not your mobile', I say. I press # on the phone but then can't see any number to enter. 'What number?' I say. 'Maybe it means a number comes up on your computer screen rather than on the phone, and that's what you then have to enter on the phone'. 'Ah, right'. I race back upstairs, swearing rather loudly, and arrive back at the computer just in time to see the message 'You have been timed out'.

I try again, thinking I now understand, but what I forget is that it is not enough just to press the # key

on the phone, you have to press the call button as well. So the automated voice just keeps saying 'Press the # key' and I keep saying 'I am pressing the b----y # key you moron' and the next thing I know, I get the message that my account has been suspended and I have got to apply for a new temporary password which will take up to five days to arrive.

I go back downstairs and break it to my wife that there will be no money today. 'Wait', she says. 'Isn't it a joint account?' 'Yes', I say. 'So you've set me up as an account holder too, with my own access?' 'Ah, that's right', I say. 'Well then', she says, 'I'll come upstairs and I'll bring the phone in case and I'll do it and you keep out of the way'.

Well, that seems to go all right and this time we don't get a phone call but she does have to answer one of the security questions I set up for her. 'It wants the name of my oldest male cousin'. 'Go on then, just enter it'. She does, and it is rejected. 'Why is it rejecting it?' 'What did you enter?' 'Well, Ron of course, that's his name.' 'Oh, sorry, I forgot all about Ron when I was setting up the account, I thought your oldest male cousin was Pete. Never mind, just enter Pete'. 'But my oldest male cousin isn't called Pete'. 'Look, it doesn't matter. The computer has no idea what your eldest male cousin is really called. I could have said it was Engelbert Humperdinck and as long as you entered that it would accept it'. 'Who on earth would have a cousin called Engelbert Humperdinck?' 'Engelbert Humperdinck's cousin, possibly?' I say. 'But look, you're missing the point. Just enter Pete. Forget Ron. There is no Ron. Ron is kaput. Ron is no more. Ron is a dead Ron'. 'I don't like telling lies', she says. 'JUST ENTER PETE', I scream, my nerves being by this point a little frayed. She does so, muttering rebelliously to the computer 'It's really Ron, you know'.

And we finally get the money out. Simple really.



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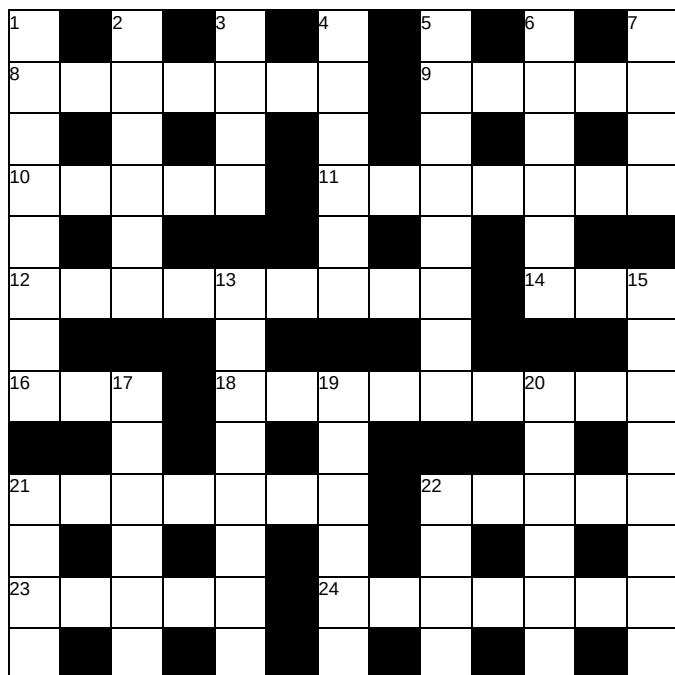
Saving Time

Automate processes using cloud based accounting

Contact Us For A Free Consultation

01491 874332
Lisa@mortimerburnett.co.uk
www.mortimerburnett.co.uk

JUNE CROSSWORD



Across

- 8 Try again back in Blair territory (7)
 9 Stars work around port (5)
 10 Pack for a quiet trip (5)
 11 Ill-starred girl grabs a grand after leading up north (7)
 12 Southern sides meet on joint craft (9)
 14 Peruvian ready to star (3)
 16 Cleo's heart goes out to MGM star sign (3)
 18 Centred but can't elude disorganisation (9)
 21 No! Not applicable to go north for this figure (7)
 22 Sit in abandoned property (5)
 23 Six go about middle of forty sixth sign (5)
 24 Do and do in (7)

Down

- 1 Engaging suggestion (8)
 2 Outfit a race to leaderless country (6)
 3 Long to send quiet one to Newcastle (4)
 4 Dig the first pretty Irish lake (6)
 5 Give way when close pal crumples (8)
 6 Astronomer's catch (6)
 7 Merely held by iron lynchpin (4)
 13 Linguistically challenged with single channel radiance reduced over time (8)
 15 Badly behaved girls lead test upheaval (8)
 17 Householders lose home but remain proprietors (6)
 19 Sign of illness (6)
 20 Gold taken in trust – no time for bull (6)
 21 Explosive reversal of river (4)
 22 God returns to Egyptian seaport (4)

MAY CROSSWORD SOLUTION

C	O	E	R	C	E		A	C	C	E	P	T
	P		A		G		R		A		O	
L	E	P	I	D	O	P	T	E	R	I	S	T
	R		D				I		E		T	
B	A	L	I			L	O	C	K	D	O	W
			N		O		H				A	
J	A	R	G	O	N		O	F	F	E	R	S
	G			D		K		O				
P	R	I	M	R	O	S	E		R	U	S	E
	O		O		N			E		W		
Q	U	A	R	T	E	R	M	A	S	T	E	R
	N		S		R		O		T		L	
A	D	D	E	R	S		B	A	S	A	L	T

WOODCOTE VOLUNTEERS – RE-OPENING 21ST JUNE

Join our team!



Thank you to those who have already offered to help support our team.

However, we still need a few more drivers. Could you offer an hour or so a week to provide

much-needed support?

The Woodcote Volunteers' office will re-open on Monday 21st June to take bookings from 1st July onwards (subject to Government Guidelines)

The service is for the ill or elderly, for those without other means of transport, for journeys to and from doctors, hospitals, dentists and other care/ service providers including local shopping. We will also consider any other relevant special requests for help.

There is no regular commitment required and bookings are made only when you are able and available to help.

We provide a service to the people of Woodcote, Crays Pond, Whitchurch Hill, Goring Heath, Checkendon and Ipsden.

The office is open each weekday morning from 9.30 to 11am. Telephone: 01491 681171.

Why not join our volunteers to help serve your community as a driver or join the rota of those willing to take calls in the office (in the Woodcote Village Hall)?

Please contact the office for details, or before 21st June, contact Ken Groom 07950 083856 or Ken Ison 07713 401400, ken.ison@btinternet.com.

DATES FOR THE DIARY – JUNE

- Tues 1st * BMMHS Zoom Talk: 'The Zeppelin Onslaught – Britain's Forgotten Blitz'. Email zoom@bmmhs.org. 2.00pm
- Wed 2nd * St. Leonard's open for private prayer. St. Leonard's Church. 2pm-4pm.
* St. Leonard's online Night Prayer. Email woodcotevicarage@btinternet.com. 8.30pm
- Thur 3rd * Wallingford Photographic Club Zoom talk: 'Aerial Photo Reconnaissance'. www.wallingfordphoto.club. 7.30pm
- Sun 6th * St. Leonard's open for service of Holy Communion. St. Leonard's Church. 8.30am
* St. Leonard's online church service. Email woodcotevicarage@btinternet.com. 10.00am
- Wed 9th * St. Leonard's open for private prayer. St. Leonard's Church. 2pm-4pm.
* BMMHS Zoom Talk: 'The Battle of the Nile'. Email zoom@bmmhs.org. 7.30pm
* St. Leonard's online Night Prayer. Email woodcotevicarage@btinternet.com. 8.30pm
- Sun 13th * St. Leonard's open for service of Holy Communion. St. Leonard's Church. 8.30am
* St. Leonard's online church service. Email woodcotevicarage@btinternet.com. 10.00am
- Mon 14th * Henley & District Stamp Club Zoom meeting. www.henleyphilatelic.org.uk. 7.30pm
- Tues 15th * Wallingford & District Art Club on-line demonstration: 'Multimedia painting'. Email admin@wallingfordartclub.org.uk. 7.30pm
- Wed 16th * St. Leonard's open for private prayer. St. Leonard's Church. 2pm-4pm.
* St. Leonard's online Night Prayer. Email woodcotevicarage@btinternet.com. 8.30pm
- Thur 17th * Wallingford Photographic Club Zoom talk: 'Taming the Chaos'. www.wallingfordphoto.club. 7.30pm
- Sun 20th * St. Leonard's open for service of Holy Communion. St. Leonard's Church. 8.30am
* St. Leonard's online church service. Email woodcotevicarage@btinternet.com. 10.00am
- Wed 23rd * St. Leonard's open for private prayer. St. Leonard's Church. 2pm-4pm.
* St. Leonard's online Night Prayer. Email woodcotevicarage@btinternet.com. 8.30pm
- Sun 27th * St. Leonard's open for service of Holy Communion. St. Leonard's Church. 8.30am
* St. Leonard's online church service. Email woodcotevicarage@btinternet.com. 10.00am

SMALL ADS

LOCAL HANDYMAN :: No job too small. DIY jobs in and around the home. Kitchen and bathroom renovations undertaken. Call James 07961 882281

JUNE DATES (continued)

- Mon 28th * Henley & District Stamp Club Zoom meeting. www.henleyphilatelic.org.uk. 7.30pm
- Wed 30th * St. Leonard's open for private prayer. St. Leonard's Church. 2pm-4pm.
* St. Leonard's online Night Prayer. Email woodcotevicarage@btinternet.com. 8.30pm

FORTHCOMING DATES IN JULY

- Thur 1st * Wallingford Photographic Club Zoom talk: 'Mongolia - from Steppe to Eagle Hunters'. www.wallingfordphoto.club. 7.30pm
- Sun 4th * St. Leonard's open for service of Holy Communion. St. Leonard's Church. 8.30am
* St. Leonard's online church service. Email woodcotevicarage@btinternet.com. 10.00am
- Tues 6th * BMMHS Zoom Talk: 'The Real War Horse'. Email zoom@bmmhs.org. 2.00pm

PANGBOURNE ART GROUP

Pangbourne Art Group is planning on reopening its Wednesday afternoon sessions on 23 June from 1pm to 4pm at Pangbourne Village Hall.

Any local artists interested in joining us please ring: Debbie Hildred on: 07591 505707 or

Liz Ford on: 0118 984 3359

We are also planning our Annual Exhibition at Pangbourne Village Hall on 16th & 17th October.

DID YOU KNOW...?

You can get a FREE Covid-19 test even if you don't have symptoms? If we can all continue getting tests, then eating inside restaurants and pubs again could become a permanent fixture! For more information, visit www.nhs.uk and click on 'coronavirus' for updates and information on how to arrange a test.

CLOSING THOUGHT

Do not fear to be eccentric in opinion, for every opinion now accepted was once eccentric.

Bertrand Russell