

Steeple Aston

FEBRUARY 2020

ISSUE No. 558

Life



Inside SAL this month:

- Caroline Parsons in Steeple People
- Find out what Twiddle Muffs are
- Valentine's Day fun
- And much more...

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February 2020: CONTENTS

FEBRUARY FEATURES

Late Spring group	7
Twiddlemuffs	8

REGULAR FEATURES

Child's Play	16
Child's Play Answers	26
Church Matters	27
Eco Issues	9
Gardening Spot	25
Have you ever been to...?	17
In the Kitchen	13
Mind Games	6
Mind Games Answers	37
Poetry Corner	15
Quips and quotes	20
Sayings Explained	20
Steeplejack	18 - 19
Steeple People	5
The ARTS Page	7

REPORTS FROM CLUBS

& SOCIETIES	PAGE
Cricket Club	38
Golf report	39
Valentine Club	39
Women's Institute	35

INFORMATION

INFORMATION	PAGE
Bus times	43
Calendar	44
Church Services	42
Noticeboard	4
Steeple Aston Directory	3
Village Hall News	23

NEW ADVERTS

NEW ADVERTS	PAGE
MYCO Chess	35
Rewilding Talk	24
SACS Mass	21
VE Day	12

Click on the item above to go straight to its page. To return to Contents, click on the page number at the foot of the page.

Cover photo: Oliver Bartlett

Steeple Aston *Life*

COPY

All articles and letters to the Editor
Heather Sherkunov
editor@salife.co.uk

COPY DEADLINES

The copy deadline for SAL has now changed to the 15th of each month.

The copy deadline for the March 2020 issue is therefore 15th February.

ADVERTS

All adverts, and all advertising queries (*availability, prices, dimensions, suitability of illustrations, etc.*) to **Charlotte Bartlett**
salife.advertising@gmail.com

01869 347347

ADVERTISING DEADLINES

The deadline for advertising is the 15th of the month.

ADVERTISING RATES

Non-commercial adverts:

1 page (village events only)- £15

½ page - £12, ¼ page- £6.

Commercial adverts:

½ page- £15, ¼ page- £8

Steeple Aston Directory

Age UK		Richard Preston	340512
Allotments (Church)	Enquiries	Stuart Walton	347300
Angling Club		Antony Morley	tonyriver_83@hotmail.com
Archive (SAVA)	Chairman	Martin Lipson	347046
Badminton (Tuesday mornings)		Barbara Brewer	340423
Badminton (Thursday evenings)		Lydia Powell	347746
Beekeepers (Swarm collection, advice)		Anna Allen, Paul Honigmann	340160, 340665
Bell ringers		Graham & Dorothy Clifton	347273
Hand-bell ringers		Sally Cooper	347173
Brownies		Fiona McLoone	340132
Catholic Church - St Teresa's (Charlbury)		Father Tony Joyce	01608 642703
Cherwell District Council	Bodicote House		01295 227001
Choral Society	Chair	Ann Livings	233518
Church of England (St Peter & St Paul)	Rector	Rev Marcus Green	340903
	Church Wardens	Eileen Baglin-Jones	340099,C15
Methodist Church – Tackley		Rev Paul Carter	01865 243216
	Steward	Tim Bailey	01869 331516
Councillors - Cherwell District Council		Cllr Mike Kerford-Byrnes	07805 665393
		Cllr Bryn Williams	07836 271998
		Cllr Hugo Brown	
Cricket Club	Chairman	Peter Higgins	347493
Crimestoppers			0800 555111
Deddington Guides		Marian Trinder	340806, 07786001641
Deddington Health Centre	Appointments		338611
	Repeat Prescriptions	10am - 3pm	338847
	Out of Hours		111
Dr Radcliffe's C of E School	Headmistress	Frances Brown	340204
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Garden Club	Chairman	Richard Preston	340512
Golf Society	Chairman	Alan Brewer	340423
Horticultural Society	Show Secretary	Vicky Clifton	07817 025948
Meals on Wheels		Hanny Nicholson, Judith Lane	340823, 349052
Players	Secretary	Alan Wightman (07943 537909)	324875
Parish Council	Chairman / Clerk	Richard MacAndrew/ Cathy Fleet	347209, 347000
Police	24hr Call Centre	(non emergency)	101
Post Office & Harris Stores		Raj	340201
Pre-school			340863
Public House	Red Lion	Aidan & Kegan Madden	340225
Robinson's Close	Letting Agent	Katie Rushworth	340196
Scouts Group		Colin Cassford	243038
Sports & Recreation Centre	Letting Agent	Katie Rushworth	340196
Steeple Aston Walking Group		Anna Allen	340160
Toddler Group		Charlotte Clarke	07799 030490
Valentine Club		Richard & Daphne Preston	340512
Village Hall (see advertisement)	Letting Agent	Katie Rushworth	340196
Village Website	www.steepleaston.org.uk	Editor: Jenny Bell	347714
Volunteer Connect - Community transport scheme			0300 3030125
Women's Institute	President	Linda Needle	340028



“...folly is not always folly.”
Jane Austen

Steeple Aston *Life*

February 2020
Issue No. 558

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Editorial

You may have noticed that last month we had a striking front cover as we continue to look for a new Editor for Steeple Aston Life. Thank you to those who got in touch with offers of help. Hopefully we can find someone, or a team of people, to help with the magazine soon and all being well I'll update you next month with a progress report.

We have also been getting emails of support for putting the publication online - we're really pleased to hear views in favour of this. If you haven't seen it already, head to the village website (<https://www.steepleaston.org.uk/sal-magazine/>) where you will find the current edition and a small archive of previous editions.

This month we have some interesting features including Steeple People on Caroline Parsons from Middle Aston. Also, have you ever heard of Twiddle Muffs? No, me neither – find out on page 8 what they are.

Don't forget it's also the month of love with Valentine's Day on the 14th. Head to page 20 for some Valentine's themed fun.

To send me feedback on the magazine, or any ideas for content you would like to see, email editor@salife.co.uk.

With very best wishes,

Heather





Handbell fundraising

I'm pleased to report that we collected a mighty £1,432.10 this Christmas ringing the handbells round our two villages of Steeple and Middle Aston. We also entertained at the Preschool Xmas Fayre at Middle Aston House, Dr Radcliffe's Xmas Fayre, Nicholson's Nurseries, Wassail Evening and Gracewell Nursing Home at Twyford.

The weather was with us mostly but there were two evenings I had to cancel due to rain and we therefore had no time left to do the outlying farms. The team consisted this year of Diana Gardner, Dorothy, Graham and Vicky Clifton, Lawrence White, Catherine Cooper, Helen Arlett, Pam, Jack and Lewis Knowles, Bridget Lewis, Lily Brewer, Poppy Howard, Hannah and Rebecca McLoone, Freya Smith, Holly and Daniel Viner and Cooper Arlett.

The majority of the money raised will be sent to Versus Arthritis for the care and research of this debilitating disease. A smaller amount will go to the Tower Fund for the restoration of the bells.

The exact amounts will be decided at the Bellringers' AGM held on 4th February.

Thank you so much to everyone who put money in our buckets and welcomed us at their door.

Sally Cooper, Handbell Leader

SAL Online

Not had time to read SAL? You can now read it from anywhere on your phone or computer. Find Steeple Aston Life online on the village website: www.steepleaston.org.uk

Reminder re copy and advertising deadline

A reminder that the deadline for sending in copy and adverts for Steeple Aston Life magazine is now the 15th of each month. Please see page 1 for more information.



Caroline Parsons

How long have you lived in Middle Aston?

44 years.

Where did you move from?

London but home was Northamptonshire.

What brought you here?

Marriage.

What do you like best about living in Middle Aston?

The view and the peace.

Is there anything you don't like about living here?

More houses, traffic and we are all in such a rush.

Give a potted history of yourself – in 40 words or less.

Brought up in Northamptonshire countryside with many animals, sent to boarding school in Suffolk miles from home (although I didn't mind), worked as a secretary in London till my marriage in 1974. Took to gardening, sold plants and ran a B&B.

How do you see yourself, in 5 words or less?

My glass is always full.

How do others see you, in 5 words or less?

Too talkative and doesn't always listen.

Early bird or night owl? Cat or dog? Optimist or pessimist? Technology: friend or foe?

Early (ish) bird, dogs always, cats never, optimist. Can cope with technology but am very impatient.

What was the best thing about being a child?

Damming the embryonic Cherwell which flowed through our land, learning to sail in North Norfolk where we still have a cottage, riding and being constantly outdoors.

What is the best thing about being an adult?

The older you get the more fun life is.

Tell us about any interesting hobbies you have

Horse racing, playing bridge, propagating plants, I love listening to radio

What are you reading at the moment?

I have just finished Calypso by David Sedaris. He is side-splittingly funny.

What would you save from your house if it was on fire?

My dogs, a Jack Russell, Meg and a dachshund, Mabel.

What do you do to relax?

Watch telly unashamedly.

What do you get grumpy/mad about?

Bad grammar and meaningless cliches, eg see you later (when they won't).

What makes you happiest in the world?

A sunny day in my garden, probably with a crossword puzzle or a book.

Tell us something about you that most people don't know.

That my house was severely damaged by fire on our wedding day.



???? Mind Games

1. William is the youngest of a group of seven people.

Marie is older than Claire and Peter but younger than John.

Claire is older than Jenny but younger than Peter.

Sarah is older than Marie but younger than John.

Can you put the seven in order of age, oldest first?

2. I am a climbing plant.

Change one letter and I am a drink.

Change another letter and I am part of an aeroplane.

Change a further letter and I am an item of jewellery.

Change one final letter and I make a musical sound.

What are the five words?

3. In the Rugby team's dressing room, there are seven places along the benches.

At the far end of the row is Ben.

There are two players between Ben and Courtney.

Tom is between Dan and Jack.

Courtney is between Jack and Joe.

Harry has the remaining place.

In what order are the seven rugby players?

4. In a Rugby World Cup sweepstake Sam got Australia, Andrew got France and Peter got Japan.

Did Lee get Italy or Wales?

5. There are seven cars waiting at the traffic lights.

The green car is immediately behind the black car and the white car is immediately behind the silver car.

The blue car is the last in line.

The red car is the only car between the white car and the black car.

There are three cars between the white car and the grey car.

What is the order of the seven cars?

Answers on p.37

Credit: Mensa website

The ARTS Page



We have been hosting the ARTS Page for the last few months, and this month are taking a step back, thinking about what it offers, how it could be changed and improved, and above all, asking for your input. REview/PREview has had a slow but solid start, and we have given some recommendations in the areas we know about. Please give us your thoughts and suggestions.

Here's a date for your diaries - the Musical Youth Company of Oxford (photo below) are performing Chess in April featuring some residents of Steeple Aston. Find out all the details on page 35.

Email us with your ideas and input for the ARTS Page at editor@salife.co.uk.

Nick and Heather Cleobury



The Late Spring Group - one year on

After a splendid lunch at the Red Lion the Late Spring group met once again in Tackley to catch up on news over tea, cake, and (oh dear!) more mince pies.

Since joining the group I have found myself becoming more confident and mentally stronger. Yes, I was nervous to first walk in and meet with others like myself but I needn't have worried. We listen and support each other and enjoy chatting about everything, often gaining some useful information.

Having lost my husband over two years ago I felt very alone with my feelings. Although my family are great, I did not want to be dependent on them.

The Late Spring Group is part of Age UK. It's not sad and we often laugh. I'm so glad I made that step forward. If anyone would like to know more, please telephone the organiser, Joan Douglas, on 07827 235453.

Gloria Elder

Everything you need to know about Twiddle Muffs

Whilst perusing the wealth of opportunities for trying out a new recipe, craft or type of daffodil in the class listings for the Horticultural Show Spring Show, you may have come across *Class 39 – “Twiddle Muff”* and felt a sense of bewilderment, questioning, maybe even awkwardness. To alleviate any or all these I've offered to write an article explaining what twiddle muffs are, how to make them, and why it would be great to get as many entries as possible in this class. Originally invented in 1997 by Margaret Light, for her grandmother, Lily, the Twiddle Muff is essentially a knitted 'tube', large enough to slip your hands into comfortably, and decorated with a range of bits and bobs attached inside and out. It is designed to provide stimulation for restless hands for patients with dementia.

I've worked as a mental health nurse for almost twenty years, and have spent most of my career working with people with dementia. I know that reading this most if not all of you will also recognise, from personal experience of family and friends, what a challenging environment an acute hospital can be for someone with dementia who can be disorientated, confused and anxious. We all know the cosiness of a warm place to bury our hands, and the relaxation we get from fiddling with button and ribbons. It's easy to understand how these twiddle muffs can provide such an important comfort and distraction for people with dementia in hospital.

Aside from the excitement of entering the show, and the possible glory of winning something, this class is also hoping to help out the John Radcliffe Hospital which is in desperate need of Twiddle Muffs. They are given to patients with dementia as a permanent gift, to use for their admission and to take home afterwards, and as people with dementia now make up their largest patient group they run out very quickly! I'm so pleased the Horticultural Society Committee have agreed that all entries to this class will be donated after the show to the John Radcliffe.

Are you convinced? The only thing left now is to let you know how to make one. Here are the guidance notes from the Oxford University Hospitals NHS Trust Fact Sheet on Twiddle Muffs: (also available here <https://www.ouh.nhs.uk/patient-guide/documents/twiddle-muffs.pdf>)



Cuff: Cast on 40 stitches using two strands of double knitting wool (or one strand of chunky wool).
Work in stocking stitch (knit a line, purl a line) for 11 inches (28cm).

Muff body Continue with stocking stitch and use up any oddments of various textures of wool.
Knit unit work measures 23 inches (58.5cm).

Cast Off.

Neatly sew the long edges together with purl side facing you.

Turn the muff inside out.

Push the cuff up inside the muff body and neatly sew together the two short ends.

Decoration Choose a good variety of decorations e.g. beads, buttons, ribbons.

Try to include at least six on the outside and 4 on the inside (more if you like). Decorations on the inside are useful for restless hands to be occupied whilst keeping warm.

Make sure everything is sewn on tight, so they cannot be pulled off.

I hope now you won't feel hesitant to google 'Twiddle Muff' - lots more inspiration, directions and examples online.

Claire Hall



“Making your money work for people and the planet”

The above sentiment and strap line are mine. The following strap line: “Your money has the power to change the world” is not. It belongs to Triodos Bank. ‘Who on earth are they?’ you may well ask. To be fair, I asked the same thing last year when sitting in a clients’ kitchen huddled around the kitchen table. Not my usual type of working environment but in this case the husband’s demanding work commitments prevented us doing it anywhere else.

In the process of completing a ‘fact-find’ - financial adviser speak for information gathering - I had asked the standard question, ‘Who do you bank with?’ ‘Triodos’, they replied. ‘Who?’ I said, feeling somewhat ashamed I hadn’t a clue who they were talking about? ‘Triodos,’ they repeated. ‘Dutch,’ they said. ‘Ethical,’ they said.

That conversation happened in summer 2019. Six months on and I am now the proud owner of a Triodos current account, savings account and cash ISA. Another of their strap lines is “change your bank change your world”. So I have done! Changing from NatWest (fossil fuel and nuclear power supporting NatWest) to Triodos (environmentally friendly Triodos) was not as easy as I would have wished. Leaving NatWest was fine - opening a Triodos account was challenging. I imagine that as they are so incredibly ethical, the process of proving that I am not a money laundering terrorist is more rigorous than with other banks. Living in my father’s cottage, as I do, means I don’t have any utility bills in my name. I fell at the first hurdle.

Then I had no paper bank statements to show them (I do not like to waste paper and wish to reduce the carbon footprint of our lovely postie). I fell at the second hurdle. So, my first attempt to open a Triodos account was unsuccessful. After a big sigh, however, I had another go. This time I succeeded. All hurdles jumped. Triodos do not have a high street presence. Their justification for this is that it allows them to commit more money to ethical organisations that help people and the environment.

Being of the generation that happily embraces mobile banking I was quite excited when I managed to download the Triodos app and access my new accounts. What I didn’t expect, however, was an option in the app that was headed ‘Community’. I eagerly clicked on it. Encircling the little blue blob that said I was on South Side, Steeple Aston were green markers. I clicked on the nearest ones to discover which local businesses Triodos had lent to or invested in.

Under the heading of ‘discover the impact of investing your money’ I found:

Agrivert - composting Ardley

Pigeon Organics - 100% certified organic baby clothes

Maricare - a care home that focuses on the physical, emotional, social, intellectual and spiritual needs of their residents.

Cotswold Fudge Company - combines fair trade ingredients with ethically sound packaging and products made entirely by hand.

It made the hurdling worthwhile. Changing your bank account is a great way of using your money to help save the world. Give it a go!

Please.

Joanna Coull



VICTORIA PRENTIS MP

MEMBER OF PARLIAMENT FOR NORTH OXFORDSHIRE

Meet Victoria:

Victoria holds regular surgeries for constituents in supermarkets and her office, and visits pubs across North Oxfordshire as part of her Pub Tour. Please check the website or call Victoria's office for more information about upcoming dates.



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SAVE THE DATE

FRIDAY 8TH MAY

Village Street Party - 12noon to 5pm

SATURDAY 9TH MAY

Songs from the 40s – 6pm to 9pm



More information to follow next month, but if you'd be interested to get involved in the organisation of the event, please contact Amanda Rodgers at amanda.rodgers1003@gmail.com or on 07793 553150

For and on behalf of **Steeple Aston Parish Council**



This month you are invited to elevate the humble onion - cooking's workhorse - to a starring role. We have a recipe with flavoursome, versatile, meatless ideas that won't leave you wanting. It can be served as a mid-week supper or lunch.



Onion Potato Curry Serves 4

Ingredients

1 1/2 tsp coriander seeds
1/2 tsp fennel seeds
1/2 tsp mustard seeds
1 tbsp sunflower oil
2 sticks of cinnamon
3 garlic cloves, crushed
5 dried curry leaves
1 green chilli, seeds removed and chopped
2 British brown onions, peeled and roughly sliced
2-3 tbsp coriander, chopped
5 medium-sized new potatoes cut into chunks
10 ripe vine tomatoes
250ml water
150g frozen peas
Approx. 3 tbsp thick, plain yoghurt

Method

Place the coriander, fennel and mustard seeds in a dry pan and heat gently until they are lightly roasted and aromatic. Pour into a pestle and mortar and grind. Pour the oil into a large, heavy-based pan, place over a medium heat and add the crushed spices, cinnamon, garlic, curry leaves and chilli, a pinch of salt and cook for two to three minutes. Add the onion, turn the heat down low and cook for 15 minutes or until the onions are soft and beginning to take on a golden-brown colour. Add the potatoes, tomatoes and water then cover and cook for 20 minutes, or until the potatoes are tender. Add the peas and cook for a further 15 minutes. Stir in the yoghurt and coriander leaves then season and serve with warmed naan bread.

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TUESDAYS

9:30 - 10:30 (Drop-in)

Upper Heyford Reading Room, OX25 5LB

THURSDAYS

9:30 - 11:00

The Marlborough School, Woodstock, OX20 1LP
Book at www.marlborough.oxon.sch.uk

19:30 - 21:00 (Drop-in)

Upper Heyford Village Hall, OX25 5LB

FRIDAYS

9:30 - 10:30 (Drop-in)

KGF Community and Sports Centre,
Lower Heyford, OX25 5PG

The Canal Studio

37 Freehold Street, Lower Heyford, Oxfordshire OX25 5NS
Klara Walters-James, T: +44 7799493510
klara@thecanalstudio.co.uk, www.thecanalstudio.co.uk

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www.activefamilychiropractic.co.uk

Poetry Corner



BE MY VALENTINE A CLOSE CALL

"Be my Valentine" she said
"tell me that you care
say all the things that you hold dear
please make me feel aware"

"the football's on the telly soon
the beer is getting chilled
she wants to hear my inner thoughts
I don't think she'll be thrilled"

"I am a bloke with little sense
of romance I know naught
and if I tell the truth right now
then in a trap I'm caught"

"Oh darling dear why speak you not
what charm can you impart
to woo me on this special day
and thrill my beating heart?"

"My dearest love I'd plain forgot
to tell you of my plan
to wine and dine you somewhere posh
and show I'm still your man"

"pew, that was close, I've pulled it off
I'll find somewhere 'though late
and we'll be happy on this day
the match and beer can wait"

Peter Wild

I LOVE A GOOD QUIZ

A celebration of the Red Lion pub quiz, to mark its move from Mondays to Tuesdays.

Regular as clockwork on each Monday night
Folk go to the Red looking for a fight.
Not a fisticuffs, a brawl, or any sort of thumping
But to give the other teams a quiz-based trumping.

The teams of competitive locals
Trickle in through the Red Lion door
And settle in ready for battle
Fortified by a tippie...or four.

Armed with irony and pizza
Quizmaster Ian's the star of the show.
With impressions and humorous comments
You can tell that the man is a pro.

Sometimes when a question defeats us,
Ian provides cryptic clues
But we often still get the wrong answer,
(It could be the fault of the booze)

"Torchlight", "Romans", "Follies"
The team names defy explanation
And whichever team wins the quiz money,
Picks a charity for a donation.

Literature, History, Words
Each team has a favourite round
And it's probably the most fun you can have
For just a single pound.

Each person has their particular
Area of expertise.
Tim loves a round of "Sport",
But "Not "Entertainment" please!"

Who came before Henry the Fourth?
What's a cricket stump's height?
Where in the body is the pineal gland?
Which country invented 'flat white'? (Answers below*)

The name of the first English pope,
The medical term for a collapsed lung,
I know I know the answer
It's right on the tip of my tongue.

In January my brain throws up
the answer to a question asked in December
You see, I knew I knew it,
It was just that I couldn't remember!

* Richard II; 28 inches (71.1 cm;) in the centre of the brain; New Zealand; Adrian or Hadrian IV; pneumothorax.

Cathy Lawday



Winter Word Scramble

Unscramble the words below to spell words related to winter

eg KTASE = SKATE

1. SMTNNTIE _____
2. ILCEIC _____
3. MWSSNNOA _____
4. TESLE _____
5. LEGVO _____
6. PLSIERPY _____
7. OSKFALEWN _____
8. LSVHOE _____
9. IETWH _____
10. SFCRA _____
11. DZLZBRIA _____
12. WPDSOONR _____

Answers on p.26



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The site does not immediately suggest that any sort of industry might have taken place there – and probably the idyll we see today wasn't exactly what the workforce of the early 1800s (mostly aged between 9 and 18 years old we learnt) would have felt they were enjoying!

You enter the Mill through the small shop and via the light and airy café. These and the Mill are open each day between 10.30am and 4pm. Tours of the Mill cost £7 for adults, £6 for concessions and £3.50 for children.

Special Exhibitions and practical craft events take place regularly at the Mill. By a fortunate chance we visited in time to see the Basingstoke Embroiderer's Guild exhibition 'The Needle's Eye' which is on until March 22nd. Much of the work on display is skilled and beautiful. Whitchurch Silk Mill is about 40 miles away so you'll need to make time to visit but I highly recommend doing so and the journey is well worth the effort. The quickest way is straight down the A34 until you see the sign for Whitchurch (just past Highclere) or you can take the slower but more pleasant route across the Downs from Wantage. If you use Sat Nav the postcode is RG28 7AL.

Eileen Baglin-Jones

Parish Council Meeting Notes



The first meeting of the New Year, and all Councillors, District and County Councillors were present, barring one, starting to get on with proceedings.

No Public Participation (no public), so swiftly on to the Rectory Homes proposal for Sixty Foot. In general the Councillors were happy that the developers had taken their comments on board and come back with revised plans. There will be 10 houses, roughly in a line parallel to the road, but set back behind the verge, a hedge and grassy area within the site. There was a query whether the planned 2 parking spaces plus a garage for each house would be enough, given that no parking would be possible on Sixtyfoot. The houses are to be stone with slate roofs and it looks as if several trees will be planted within a planting scheme. The road improvements suggested for Sixtyfoot were considered satisfactory; a Safety Audit came up with detailed improvements to ensure that safety was a priority, though there was a question about getting a combine harvester through the narrow section by the Red Lion. Apparently all will be well if it runs over the road-narrowing

'build-out'. The plans were approved by the councillors but will still go to Committee at CDC, so public comments can still be made.

There is a lot of concern in the locality about the American Great Wolf Resorts proposals near Chesterton. Look it up on the internet - it is a very sizeable leisure facility scheme, water park, adventure park, hotel etc., etc. Is it suitable for North Oxfordshire? Your Councillors think that we are sufficiently far away from the proposed site not to send in objections though other Parish Councils are very worried, not least about the traffic it will generate.

To smaller planning matters. CDC has now prosecuted the owner of the derelict house on Paines Hill. They now have a Charge against the property and remedial work will be done... eventually.

As part of a National Planting Scheme one of the Councillors will be leading a working party to plant wild flowers around the top of the Beeches on Heyford Road. Do phone the Clerk if you would like to

Continued on next page



Rectory Homes proposal

Parish Council Meeting *Notes*



help. There is also money for tree planting, though it appears that the free trees come in multiples of 50 so quite a number of trees would need to be planted. Have we the space? It is really too good an offer to miss. The land has to be accessible to the public though may be privately owned. Some scratching of heads about suitable sites, any ideas?

The saga of mobile phone reception, (or not) continues: 50 replies were received to the PC's questionnaire, 49 complaining about the lack of signal in the village. One reply appeared to find the coverage quite satisfactory. The next step is contact with our MP. This also raises a question about the use of the new village defibrillator, now installed on the wall of the Sports and Rec. building, if one needs to phone in for instructions. (The postcode there, if you ever need to use it, is OX25 4SF). The old, refurbished defibrillator will be kept in the Red Lion and available within opening hours. There is a free 'Awareness Session' coming soon if you would like to learn how to use them, though I gather it is very simple and instructions are given.

Our County Councillor arrived with news that the grant has been approved towards a speed sign for the village. Evidently a number of sockets are now in place around the village to which this sign can be attached, so, it may well pop up anytime, anywhere. You have been warned!

Also news that the OCC budget will have no cuts this year, money particularly going to Social Care and Highways. Utility companies will now need a permit from CDC to dig up roads. Hopefully this will mean improved scheduling and some liaison between

them, fines for overruns are now possible.

While on Highways, good news at last, Beeches Hill is going to be repaired. Water is still running freely down from the numerous potholes and leaks, beware if it freezes! This means that the hill down to the Rousham traffic lights will be closed for a fortnight, from 13th. - 24th. April. This brought a cheer from the Councillors, though the one with the tin of white pothole marker, who has been keeping up pressure on Highways, may find that he has less to do!

What do you think about the bright white street lights that have appeared around the village? Evidently all our sodium lights will eventually be replaced with these LED lights, as the old ones age. Councillors wondered if the LED lights were indeed an improvement. The new lights are much cheaper to run but the white glare from them is not necessarily appreciated. Let the PC know your view.

Lastly, thoughts turned to the precept for the coming year. The PC are setting a precept of £29,426, less than last year's. After some discussion on the new rules which have been issued about what may be covered by the precept all remains much as before. No doubt details, should you wish them, will be available from the Clerk.

Other than the usual chat about Dog Poo, (there appears to be more around again, dogs?? cats?? Foxes ??), that concludes the proceedings for January's PC meeting. Do come along in February and have your say - it's really quite entertaining.

Steeplejack's Minion.

Sayings Explained

“It's better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all”

We all know what this saying means, but do we know where it came from?

The line comes from Alfred Lord Tennyson's poem *In Memoriam*:27, 1850:

I hold it true, whate'er befall;
I feel it, when I sorrow most;
'Tis better to have loved and lost
Than never to have loved at all.

Alfred Lord Tennyson is now remembered as a rather dour old sage of the Victorian era. Nevertheless, he gave us two commonly used lines about love. He also wrote of 'a young man's fancy' in his 1842 poem *Locksley Hall*:

In the spring a livelier iris changes on the burnished dove;
In the spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love.



Quips and Quotes

“Keep love in your heart. A life without it is like a sunless garden when the flowers are dead.” – Oscar Wilde

“Love is not affectionate feeling, but a steady wish for the loved person's ultimate good as far as it can be obtained.” – C. S. Lewis

“*Love is composed of a single soul inhabiting two bodies.*” – Aristotle

“You know you're in love when you don't want to fall asleep because reality is finally better than your dreams.” – Dr. Seuss

“*A loving heart is the truest wisdom.*” – Charles Dickens

“The world is indeed full of peril, and in it there are many dark places; but still there is much that is fair, and though in all lands love is now mingled with grief, it grows perhaps the greater.” – J. R. R. Tolkien

“Where there is love there is life.” – Mahatma Gandhi

“Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind, and therefore is winged Cupid painted blind.” – William Shakespeare

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Village Hall News



'Wonderful Villages' Photo Competition

For all the keen and enthusiastic photographers in the village, win up to a £1,000 for your Village Hall and £500 for the photographer. Submit your entry and vote for others. Open to all rural UK Village and Community Halls. Entry is FREE. No purchase necessary.

Details of prizes, theme and entry dates are in the rules available from our Facebook page: <https://facebook.com/AlliedWestminster> and on <https://villagehallsurvey.com/rules-photo-competition-v1.pdf>

Please note: the competition will not focus on 'pretty, pretty' villages but will celebrate village life and the role of village halls in their communities. Judges will be looking for photos that encapsulate the sense of village community. Good luck to all who enter. Ends 15th March.

Sunday 7th June – NGS Open Gardens, Steeple Aston 2 – 6pm

Please note our letting agent is Mrs. Katie Rushworth, 01869 340196, email steeple-aston-village-hall@hotmail.com.

Collect keys from "Touchstones", The Dickredge, Steeple Aston, OX25 4RS.

Barbara Brewer, Chair

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When: Wednesday 25 March 2020

Venue: Nicholsons, The Barn, North Aston, Bicester, Oxon OX25 6HL

Rewilding is the large-scale restoration of ecosystems where nature can take care of itself. It seeks to reinstate natural processes and, where appropriate, missing species – allowing them to shape the landscape and the habitats within.

Rewilding is a really current topic (even featuring on the Archers!) so I am absolutely delighted that George has agreed to come and talk to us.

There will be plenty of opportunity to ask questions and even though Rewilding Britain is happening in all parts of the country George lives in Oxford so can talk about how rewilding can be used at a local level.

You can find out more at www.rewildingbritain.org.uk

Arrive for a welcome drink at 7pm.

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The Gardening Spot

Mindfulness in the garden?

So here we are in a new decade and to be honest, I am not in the mood for gardening whilst the days are still short, a bit cold and the ground is wet. So, what do I do but pick up another glossy magazine and become frustrated at what I read? Apparently, the latest thing about gardening is “mindfulness”! Now I hadn’t got a clue what “mindfulness” was, so I thought I had better investigate. According to Wikipedia, “*Mindfulness is the psychological process of purposely bringing one’s attention to experiences occurring in the present moment without judgment, which one can develop through the practice of meditation and through other training*”. Still confused I thought I would ask another gardener what their thoughts were on the matter. At this point I realised that I couldn’t spell some of the words he used and more to the point, the editor would not have allowed this article to be printed. However, the outcome of this short investigation into “mindfulness” in the garden confirmed my suspicions that this particular glossy magazine was printing a load of dribble. If we were to translate Wikipedia’s definition into practice in the garden, and let’s face it, Wikipedia must be right, instead of digging or hoeing the garden with the aim of improving growing conditions we should be mediating and judging very carefully what we are doing and who knows, possibly having more regards for the poor little weeds that are, after all, only trying to survive long enough to set seed and multiply.

Anyhow, enough of “mindfulness” as I then turned over the page in this super expensive piece of recycling fodder (should point out here that I didn’t actually purchase the magazine) and what did I find but an article about a family that have just moved from the big city to the country. Bit like “Escape to the Country” I thought. Yes, I know, too much time watching afternoon TV, but one needs some sort of relaxation or should I say “mindfulness”? Well, guess what they want in their garden? Chickens, a goat, a pig and possibly a peacock and oh, a raised bed to grow vegetables after being told that you can only grow straight carrots in a raised bed. Now I haven’t got a problem with chickens or a goat or even a pig as they are all very useful animals if you have the time to look after them properly, but I do have a problem with raised beds. I blame Monty Don for this as he used to promote raised beds like he had shares in the various plastic or timber contraptions that were to be found in garden centres in abundance. A raised bed is fine when you have very limited top soil or have a disability which restricts your ability to bend over, but to place a raised bed on perfectly good soil should be banned and I am sure, now we have a parliament with a clear working majority, this will be one of the first things they do once we are separated from Europe. Raised beds that are placed on good soil serve no purpose whatsoever and simply create more expense to the gardener and remove good growing space as you need a path to get around them. As for peacocks, well you can make up your own mind on that one.

So, I have this one request. If any of you lovely people who are reading this come to visit our garden and see me or Daphne leaning on the hoe and staring vacantly into space, we are probably experimenting with “mindfulness” or possibly just tired and weary after a few hours hard graft caring for our plants which are spoilt something rotten and often bow their heads in acknowledgment of our sympathetic care for their needs.

Richard Preston – maybe I’ll go back to reading The Beano!



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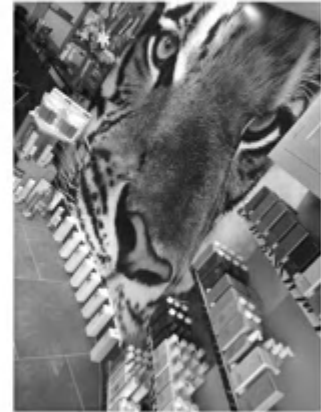
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	Child's Play Answers		
	1. MITTENS	7. SNOWFLAKE	
	2. ICICLE	8. SHOVEL	
	3. SNOWMAN	9. WHITE	
	4. SLEET	10. SCARF	
	5. GLOVE	11. BLIZZARD	
	6. SLIPPERY	12. SNOWDROP	

Church *Matters*



Two years ago we pushed the boat out and hold a 'Creative Lent'...and it was so amazing we've decided to do it all over again! There was a 'reverse collection' right at the start of Lent. All the adults in church one Sunday were given £10. Even the children were given something. But there was a catch! We asked everyone - do something with it. Anything you like. And, if you manage to make any profit from your 'doing something with it', bring it back at Easter as a celebration. Often we think of giving up things for Lent but Lent shouldn't be about 'less' in life. It should be about preparing for Easter, about getting our hearts ready for the most wonderful gift of love that comes at the Cross and at the Resurrection of Jesus. All of us have gifts. We are all rich one way or another. Some of us have lots of stuff - material possessions or healthy bank balances. That's obvious riches. But some of us have lots of time. That's a gift many people I come across deeply wish they had. Some of us are very rich in the people around us - we have really good family and friends. Not everyone does, and this is a gift we should hold dear if it's ours. Some of us are fortunate to have a wealth of talents - we're able to do lots of things. Others feel very poor next to some of these folk. Some are rich in compassion. Some are the life and soul of every room they walk into. Humour pours out of some. Love from others. All of us have gifts. All of us.

Jesus told a story once about giving gifts out to people - and seeing what they did with them. Some used their gifts for others; and they ended up with twice as much as they began with. Others hid their gifts in the ground, frightened of losing the little they thought they had. Jesus praised those who risked giving away what they had to bless others. That's life! He said: Love God, love people. If you really get what faith is about, you will do what you can to share what you have to bless others.

Two years ago we put our gifts to the test; and the relatively small amount of cash we gave out at the start of Lent had actually grown by 2,000% by Easter. But even better than that - we had all gained friends and time spent together and genuinely felt we had grown in love and in experiencing all sorts of kindness. On March 1st this year, the first Sunday in Lent, everyone who comes to church will be given the chance to take away £10 - along with the challenge to use their gifts and bring back the fruit of their labours at Easter. But we're adding a twist: this year we'd love folk to work together. At least two people collaborating on every project or activity or event.

Before then... join us for the Snow Drop tea on the afternoon of Sunday 9th February. It's always lovely to see the flowers in the churchyard and enjoy the amazing cakes provided inside. The Ash Wednesday service to celebrate the start of Lent will be at 10am on February 26th in Tackley church; all welcome. It's now the run-up to Easter, and that's always a good excuse to pop back to church and remember that the greatest gift any of us receives is God's love. Always here. Always for us.

More news is always available on our website: www.sntchurch.com. Bible Study happens most Mondays at 2pm in the Rectory.

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Next Date – Sunday April 5th – new from old project: jewellery up-cycling

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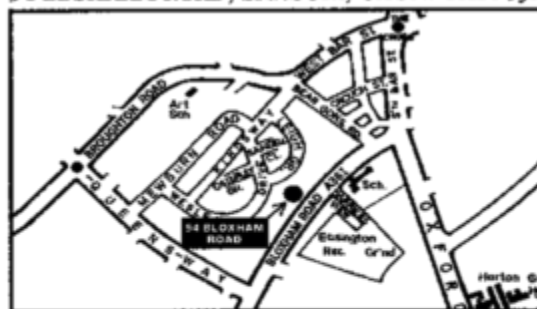
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*Frances Hodgkins (1869 - 1947)
'Ibiza', 1934
Sold for £17,000 in 2019*

Over the last 100 years WI members in the UK have campaigned on an incredible range of issues, increasing public awareness and bringing about policy change. Their successful campaigns have included women on jury service (1921), and in the police force (1922); equal pay for equal work (1943); Keep Britain Tidy (1954); cervical cancer screening (1964); and a call for more midwives (2012). At the first meeting of Steeple Aston WI of 2020, members handed in their ballot papers, voting on resolutions put forward by the national WI. The result of the vote throughout the UK will decide what will be the focus of the WI's national campaign this year.

President Linda Needle opened the meeting, welcomed everyone and dealt with a few items of business. She showed members a plaque that has been made to celebrate 100 years of Steeple Aston WI. It says:

To commemorate the centenary of the formation of Steeple Aston Women's Institute in March 1918. Celebrating 100 years.

The plaque will be put up in the foyer of the Village Hall.

Once business was dealt with, the fun part of the evening began with a few games of bingo. Lucky winners were Mary Rushworth, Julie Smith and myself. There was a break for tea and cake, and a chance to catch up on each other's news, and then Janice Kinory provided a quiz. It consisted of 25 city maps, and we were asked to identify the cities.

Finally the raffle winners were announced. Pauline Beadman won a WI calendar; and Esther Brown won a plant – a fitting gift for her new home.

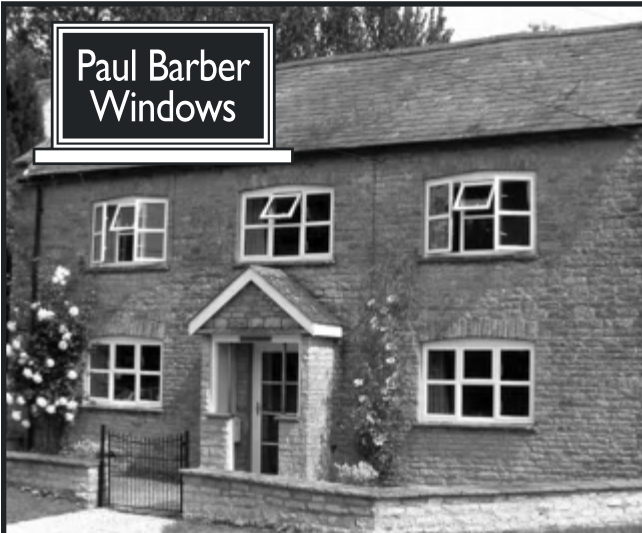
Next months' meeting is at 7.30 on 11th February, when John Taylor will speak about the countryside and natural history, focussing on the world of small things in a talk entitled "Life in a nutshell".

If you are interested in joining the WI, please contact Linda Needle on 340028.

Cathy Lawday



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Snowdrop Sunday

Sunday 9th February

2.30 - 4pm

Snowdrops in the churchyard
Sunday afternoon walk
Homemade cake and tea £1
in the church

PLUS BOOKSTALL



Mind Games Answers

1. John, Sarah, Marie,
Peter, Claire, Jenny
and William
2. Vine, wine, wing, ring
and sing
3. Dan, Tom, Jack,
Courtney, Joe, Harry,
Ben
4. Wales. The initial of the
name matches the third
letter of the country
5. Silver, White, Red,
Black, Green, Grey,
Blue

The Cricket Report



2020 SACC Season

Phil Chesser, Hon Fixtures Secretary and Most Improved Batsman of the Decade, is busy putting together the Fixtures for the 2020 Season. Jock has dusted off the Gloppitta Gloppitta Machine (vd Jack Lemon in "How to murder your wife") and we will soon be rolling the pitch again. Before the excitement of a new season however it is worth reflecting on the Averages for the 2019 Season:

Batting Averages 2019 (must have batted 3 times at least)

Name		Runs	Out	Ave	Innings
Nigel	Doggett	208	6	34.67	7
Hector	Higgins	49	2	24.50	3
Phil	Chesser	107	6	17.83	5
Jon	Scotchbrook	144	9	16.00	8
Arthur	Higgins	93	6	15.50	6
James	Liebrecht	46	3	15.33	3
Sam	Hatzigeorgiou	15	1	15.00	3
Peter	Higgins	40	3	13.33	7
Greg	Renk	35	3	11.67	4
Paul	Nicolaides	16	3	5.33	4
Hugo	Rittson-Thomas	9	2	4.50	3
Jonty	Renk	14	4	3.50	4
Paul	Longman	7	2	3.50	4
Graham	Bullen	3	3	1.00	3

Notably in 2019 we did not score as many runs as usual; we sorely missed Rob Wilson-Fry at number 3, but don't tell him! This meant that our playmakers, notably Jon Scotchbrook, were coming in to face the new ball, a bit like Joe Root for England but without the double century! Luckily our very own Joss Butler, Phil Chesser was often able to remedy earlier collapses. We are looking for a Rory Burns!

Bowling Averages 2019 (must have bowled 3 times at least)

Name		Overs	Runs	Wkts	Average
Greg	Renk	7.0	33	4	8.25
Peter	Higgins	31.0	140	12	11.67
Paul	Longman	28.0	82	7	11.71
Arthur	Higgins	20.0	107	6	17.83
Hector	Higgins	8.0	44	2	22.00
Jonty	Renk	31.0	157	6	26.17
Hugo	Rittson-Thomas	18.0	91	2	45.50
Nigel	Doggett	13.0	92	2	46.00
Olly	Doggett	18.0	79	1	79.00
Stan	Owen	15.0	109	1	109.00

Our bowling was strong this year and had Greg managed to turn his arm over one more time (must bowl 4 times a season to qualify), he may have stolen the bowling crown! Jonty Renk had his best season with the ball, but we desperately need a metronomic opening bowler to keep the pressure on. Again, we do miss Rob W-F! He never used to take any wickets, but conceded few runs, which allowed Paul Longman to pile the pressure on and take wickets. So just an Anderson and a Burns then.....

More Stats...

Next month the Life Time Averages and news of our 2019 Season.

Peter Higgins, Chairman



THE VALENTINE CLUB

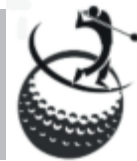
Our first meeting of the year will have occurred after the 'press date' for SAL so more information on that and our visit to Dr Radcliffe's School in next month's edition. Interestingly, I sometimes get asked, "what do you do at The Valentine Club?" as there is this myth that we all sit around a table, drinking tea and playing bingo. That might have been the case 50 years ago but not anymore. Because we are probably the biggest seniors' group in Cherwell, we can attract high-quality speakers and entertainers. Entertainers such as Jackie Maynard, an X-Factor finalist of 2018 is coming in April, followed in June by Kerry-Jean who appears all over the country as one of the best cover singers to be found. Speakers on such subjects as the origins of Nursery Rhymes to Magnetic Therapy are on the programme for 2020. Then there are coach trips including steam train rides to river boat trips and Aerospace, Bristol and most of these trips include a meal. All this for £10 a year and teas at meetings for just £1!

For our February get-together on Tuesday 18th starting at the earlier time of 1.30pm we will enjoy a generous helping of fish and chips, cooked and served up as you order followed by scrumptious puddings supplied by members themselves. And to contradict what I just said, we will be playing bingo for some star-prize.

If you want more information about the club, have a look on our very own website at www.valentineclub.wixsite.com/aston or give me a call.

Richard Preston – Group organiser – Richard.preston5@btopenworld.com or 01869 340512

Steeple Aston Golf Society



What is a Purple Patch? Is it a moment of excellence in a period of mediocrity?

I would like to know how long that lucky period lasts, as this year my golf has been outstanding. The judgement comes from your peers along with your handicap reductions and the matches and trophies that you have accumulated. Every time you play a round of golf your score card is entered into the computer for handicap adjustments. At the start of the spring season, my handicap had crept up to 16 following the cold, wet, winter, but by the end of the season it had gone down to 12.

I have adjusted several things to achieve this – I went for a slightly fatter grip on my clubs, replaced the studs in my shoes for better stance and stability and gained more control of the ball, by shortening my full swing to a three-quarter swing. I am also hitting the ball further, not only off the tee, but also by hitting the second shot from the fairway with more accuracy.

My putting has also been a strong part of my game, especially when in two games I scored 42 and 43 having putt only 22 and 23 times. There's an old saying 'Drive for show, putt for dough.'

Jack Nicklaus once said, 'Sometimes the biggest problem is in your head. You've got to believe you can play a shot instead of wondering where your next bad shot is coming from.' All in all that bit between my ears is enjoying its Purple Patch. Oh, I nearly forgot to mention my very first hole in one, on the 15th at Burford back in October, in a Cotswold Club v. Burford match.

A successful run in sport is understood to be a Purple Patch – supposedly from the fact that Roman Emperors used to wear purple togas. So just watch out for my spring collection in 2020!

Alan Brewer, Chair



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	North Aston	Steeple Aston	Tackley
Sunday 2nd February	9.30am Holy Communion <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> Rev Marcus Green	11am Holy Communion <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> Rev Marcus Green	5.30pm Evensong Rev Marcus Green
Wednesday 5th February			3.30pm Tackley Praise: Pet Service (<i>with Tackley CE Primary School</i>) Rev Marcus Green
Sunday 9th February	9.30am Family Service Rev Marcus Green	11am Family Service Rev Marcus Green 2pm Snowdrop Tea	5.30pm Holy Communion Rev Marcus Green and Canon Robin Gibbons
Sunday 16th February	9.30am Holy Communion Rev Marcus Green	11am Holy Communion Rev Marcus Green	5.30pm Informal Service Rev Marcus Green and Canon Robin Gibbons
Sunday 23rd February	9.30am Morning Prayer Richard Bailey	11am Morning Prayer <i>With Children's Church</i> Rev Marcus Green	9.30am Family Communion Rev Marcus Green
Ash Wednesday 26th February			10am Ash Wednesday Holy Communion
Sunday 1st March	9.30am Holy Communion <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> Rev Marcus Green	11am Holy Communion <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> Rev Marcus Green	5.30pm Evensong Rev Marcus Green and Canon Robin Gibbons

Local Info

Steeple Aston Village Hall

	Hiring Fee	Caution
Hall (meeting night)		
Represented Clubs.....	£9	
Non-Represented Clubs.....	£17	
Hall Only (social occasion)		
Represented Clubs.....	£32	
Others.....	£53	
All Facilities (social occasion)		
Village Residents	£65	£200
Represented Clubs.....	£65	£200
Others - up to 6 hours.....	£110	£300
Others - over 6 hours.....	£160	£300
All Facilities (off peak - 4 hours)		
Village Residents	£30	£75
Represented Clubs.....	£30	£75
Committee Room		
Represented Clubs.....	£6	
Non-Represented Clubs.....	£12	
Discount for represented clubs – 15% for six block bookings		

Letting Agent : Katie Rushworth (340196)
 Chairman: Barbara Brewer (340423)
 Secretary: Margaret Bullement (347346)

A represented club must send a representative to the Village Hall Committee meetings.

Rubbish bin collection day = Thursday

February	March
6 th green	5 th green
13 th blue and brown	12 th blue and brown
20 th green	19 th green
27 th blue and brown	26 th blue and brown

Steeple Aston Sports and Recreation Centre Letting Charges

Social Function peak times (up to 6 hours) £55
 Social Function off-peak (up to 5 hours) £27.50

Meeting of represented club: £11 per session

Caution Money for Private Lettings: £100

Letting agent: Katie Rushworth - Tel: 340196

mailto: rec.trust@googlemail.com

Chairman - Torquil McLusky - Tel: 347914

Treasurer - Chris Cooper - Tel: 347173

Bus times

This timetable is a guide only - please consult local listings for up-to-date information and weekend times.

S4 BUS SERVICE (Mon - Fri)

Buses from Steeple Aston (outside post office) to Oxford

06.29 07.07 07.44 09.23 then every hour till 15.23 16.24 17.24 18.24 19.22

Arrives Oxford

07.07 08.05 08.42 10.06 then every hour till 16.06 17.09 18.09 19.09 20.04

Buses from Steeple Aston (outside post office) to Banbury

07.57 09.00 10.02 then every hour till 15.02 16.05 17.05 18.05 19.05 20.00 21.00

Arrives Banbury

08.40 09.40 10.40 then every hour till 15.40 16.43 17.43 18.43 19.34 20.29 21.29

MIDDLE BARTON BUS (Mon - Fri)

Bus from Steeple Aston (Nizewell Head) to Heyford Station 07.35 18.08

Arrives Heyford station 07.39 18.13

Bus from Heyford Station to Steeple Aston (Nizewell Head) 18.13

Arrives Steeple Aston (Nizewell Head) 18.16

5 BUS SERVICE (Wednesdays)

Bus from Steeple Aston to Chipping Norton 09.00

Arrives Chipping Norton 09.40

Bus from Chipping Norton to Steeple Aston 11.50

Arrives Steeple Aston 12.26

8 BUS SERVICE (Fridays)

Bus from Steeple Aston (outside Post Office) to Bicester 10.41

Arrives Bicester Village railway station 11.06

Bicester Tesco 11.12

Bicester Avenue 11.16

Bus from Bicester to Steeple Aston (outside Post Office)

Bicester Village railway station 13.37

Bicester Tesco 13.43

Bicester Avenue 13.48

Arrives Steeple Aston (outside Post Office) 14.05

Steeple Aston Calendar

FEBRUARY			
Sunday 9th	Snowdrop Sunday	Church/ churchyard	2.30pm
Tuesday 11th	WI meeting: John Taylor "Life in a nutshell"	Village Hall	7.30pm
Saturday 15th	SAL March issue final copy and advert deadline		
Monday 17th	Parish Council meeting	Committee Room	7.30pm
Tuesday 18th	Valentine Club fish and chips	Village Hall	1.30pm
Tuesday 18th	Gardening Club meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm for 8pm start
Saturday 22nd	Deddington Farmers' Market	Deddington	9am
MARCH			
Sunday 8th	Crafternoon Tea	Village Hall	2 – 4.30pm
Tuesday 10th	WI: Birthday night and alpacas	Village Hall	7.30pm
Sunday 15th	SAL April issue copy and advert deadline		
Monday 16th	Parish Council meeting	Committee Room	7.30pm
Tuesday 17th	Valentine Club: "I went to a wedding in Delhi" by Ann Sharman	Village Hall	2.30pm
Tuesday 17th	Gardening Club meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm for 8pm start
Wednesday 25th	Rewilding by George Levvy	Nicholsons	7pm
Sunday 29th	Spring Show	Village Hall	2.30pm
Sunday 29th	SACS Spring Concert: Haydn & Mozart	Church	7pm

Choral Society Rehearsals. Village Hall - 7.45pm - Mondays
Badminton. Village Hall - 10am -12.30pm - Tuesdays
Bell Ringing practice. Church Tower - 7.30pm - Tuesdays
Scouts. Sport & Rec Centre - 7.30pm - Tuesdays
Baby and Toddler Group. Sport & Rec Centre - 9am -11am - Thursdays
Cricket Nets. Robinson's Close - 6pm - Thursdays
Badminton. Village Hall - 8pm - Thursdays
Village History Centre (SAVA) open 10am-12pm - Saturdays

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