

# Steeple Aston *Life*

June 2021 Issue No. 574



Inside SAL this month:

- Hanging the new church bell • What does gardening do for you? • Making your own ice cream
- Have you ever been to Warwick Hall? • Steeple Aston Open Gardens • ...and much more

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## June 2021: CONTENTS

Click on the item's page number below to go straight to its page. To return to Contents, click on the page number at the foot of any page.

<b>JUNE FEATURES</b>	<b>PAGE</b>	<b>REPORTS FROM CLUBS &amp; SOCIETIES</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
How the PC spends your money	12	1 <sup>st</sup> Deddington Guides	27
Steeple Aston Open Gardens	13	AD&D Photographic Society	33
Replacement bell for church	22	Cricket Report	35
		Golf Society	33
		Valentine Club	31
		WI	31
<b>REGULAR FEATURES</b>	<b>PAGE</b>	<b>INFORMATION</b>	<b>PAGE</b>
Arts page	8	Bus times	43
Church Matters	39	Calendar	44
Editorial	3	Church Services	42
Editor's Letterbox	5	Directory	2
Gardening Spot	11	Noticeboard	4
Have you ever been to...?	18	Rubbish bin collection dates	43
In the Kitchen	17	Village Hall News	27
Poetry Corner	19		
Steeplejack	14-15		
Steeple People	7		
Sustainable Steeple	30		
Word pairs puzzles	21		
Word pairs answers	37		

Cover photo: Sheep at Paines Hill paddock by Catherine Crook

## Steeple Aston *Life*

### COPY

All articles and letters to the Editors  
[editorsalife@gmail.com](mailto:editorsalife@gmail.com)

### COPY DEADLINES

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

The copy deadline for the July 2021 issue is therefore 15<sup>th</sup> June.

READ STEEPLE ASTON LIFE ONLINE  
<https://www.steepleaston.org.uk/sal-magazine>

### ADVERTS

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

01869 347347

### ADVERTISING DEADLINES

Please note: there is a new deadline for adverts (black & white only), which should be submitted no later than the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month.

### ADVERTISING RATES

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1 page (village events only)- £15  
½ page - £12, ¼ page- £6.  
Commercial adverts:  
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Archive (SAVA)	Chairman	Martin Lipson	347046
Badminton (Tuesday mornings)		Barbara Brewer	340423
Badminton (Thursday evenings)		Lydia Powell	347746
Beekeepers (Swarm collection, advice)		Paul Honigmann	340665
Bell ringers		Graham & Dorothy Clifton	347273
Hand-bell ringers		Sally Cooper	347173
Brownies		Fiona McLoone	340132
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Church Wardens		Eileen Baglin-Jones, Graham Clifton	340099 , 347273
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		ClIr Bryn Williams	07836 271998
		ClIr Hugo Brown	
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Deddington Health Centre	Appointments		338611
	Repeat Prescriptions	10am - 3pm	338847
	Out of Hours		111
Dr Radcliffe's C of E School	Head Teacher	Frances Brown	340204
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Garden Club	Chairman	Richard Preston	340512
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Women's Institute	Joint Presidents	Merrill Bayley, Cathy Lawday	347802, 347209





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

## Steeple Aston *Life*

June 2021  
Issue No. 574

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# Editorial

"Summer afternoon – summer afternoon; to me those have always been the two most beautiful words in the English language." (Henry James, American author, 1843 to 1916.)

When does summer start? It depends who you ask. Meteorologists take a practical approach to the seasons. For them, summer in the northern hemisphere begins on 1<sup>st</sup> June and ends on 31<sup>st</sup> August. This makes it easier for climate data to be compared and analysed.

Astronomers, on the other hand, celebrate the first day of summer when the sun reaches its highest point in the sky – the summer solstice. This year it is Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> June, the day with the longest period of sunlight (over 16.5 hours in the UK). After this, it is all downhill until the winter solstice – this year on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> December, the day with the shortest period of sunlight (just under 8 hours in the UK).

For thousands of years, the summer solstice has been celebrated with festivals and rituals by many cultures – think druids and Stonehenge. For some it is seen as the middle of summer – hence 'midsummer day'. Incidentally, solstice is derived from two Latin words – sol (sun) and sistere (stationary). This refers to the fact that the sun appears to pause at the top of its journey before starting back down.

What does summer hold in store for us this year? Probably lots of unpredictable weather. Also unpredictable is the easing of lockdown restrictions. 21<sup>st</sup> June was planned to be the day when all legal limits on social contact were removed. However, as I write there are concerns over new Covid-19 variants which could disrupt the plans. This might affect some of the events featured in this issue of SAL. If in doubt, contact the organisers nearer to the date.

Stay safe.

**Robert**

This issue of SAL is printed in black-and-white. To see the photographs in glorious colour visit the digital edition at [steepleaston.org.uk/sal-magazine](http://steepleaston.org.uk/sal-magazine)

Taken in May this year at Blenheim by Catherine Crook







## A brother for Isobel

Claire and Peter at Walton House, South Side, are delighted to announce the arrival of their son Edward Alexander Coysh. Born at the John Radcliffe on 3rd May. A little brother for a very proud sister Isobel.



**INTERESTED IN THE HISTORY  
OF YOUR VILLAGE?**

**Steeple Aston Village Archive (SAVA)  
has organised**

**A GUIDED WALK  
around the heart of Steeple Aston**

**on Sunday, June 13<sup>th</sup> 2021 from 2.00 to 4.00pm**

Subject to Covid rules, our knowledgeable SAVA members will once more lead two groups of 15 people round the village, starting from the Village History Centre (next to the Village Hall) - one group will go clockwise, and the other anticlockwise.

Tea and cake will accompany an informal questions session at the end.

**“New” residents are particularly welcome.**

The event is free of charge, but donations are allowed!

However, places are limited, so **booking is essential.**

Please contact us by email:  
[steepleastonarchive@gmail.com](mailto:steepleastonarchive@gmail.com)

or telephone 01869 347046

## Landlord Chris offers a warm welcome to the Red Lion

Chris Gates is the new landlord welcoming customers to Steeple Aston's Red Lion pub. He took over in the first week of May at very short notice and has already been attracting lots of custom from locals despite the unreliable weather.

Chris and his wife Naomi live in Adderbury with their 17-year-old son Will and daughter Lottie, aged 13. Many years ago, he ran the Dog and Partridge pub there, now sadly turned in to flats, but more recently he has been running a trucking company and has spent long hours driving across Europe and as far afield as North Africa.

The pub is currently open from 5pm on weekday evenings and all day on Saturday and Sunday. Chris is advertising for a chef and hoping to start serving food at lunchtimes and in the evening soon. A menu offering good quality fresh local food and pub favourites is in development. There will also be a smaller takeaway menu. Meanwhile he hopes to get the pizza oven up and running even sooner.



*Photo: Nigel Francis*

# Editor's Letterbox

I would like to take this opportunity to thank those who kindly voted for me in the recent local elections. It is a great honour and privilege to represent our community and I always do my best to give everyone a 'voice' at Cherwell District Council (CDC). The past 15 months have been some of the bleakest in recent history, during which we have seen some outstanding acts of selflessness, charity and community spirit in the face of adversity.

There have been three district councillors for each Cherwell Ward since 2016, when the boundaries were changed to balance the number of residents in each ward. My fellow councillors are Mike Kerford-Byrnes, who is the first point of call for the east of the ward including Steeple Aston and Hugo Brown who is responsible for the west. I am the port of call for the central part. We do however cross over and should a conflict of interest occur such as a planning application or dispute then we willingly assist each other. Likewise, if one of us has a certain speciality or knowledge and is required to represent a resident in another parish not normally looked after by them, we will again step in when required.

The challenges faced by everyone during the pandemic have been unprecedented, during which we have witnessed many heart-breaking tragedies as well as stories of true heroics and initiative within communities, ours included. The lockdown has given us all an opportunity to re-appraise our lifestyles, our work/life balance, and realise how important the environment is to us, especially when it was peaceful without the constant drone of traffic and planes crowding our skies. It was a defining moment of clarity that made many of us appreciate what's important in life.

During the pandemic, Cherwell District Council stepped up to the plate to house all vulnerable and homeless people in the district, and provided each councillor with a £2k fund to support community initiatives throughout lockdown, such as food banks and Covid Volunteer Groups who'd shop for shielding or vulnerable individuals. The district council also funded many charities and not-for-profit organisations who were themselves supporting organisations within the district and, of course, our bins were still collected and front line services still continued during the difficult period.

The result unfortunately is that CDC, like many other district and county councils across the country, is showing a considerable deficit despite many, including CDC, dipping into savings to maintain front line services. The next few years will be challenging for several reasons, not only the ongoing

fight to keep Covid-19 and other viruses at bay, but to maintain services, encourage investment and business within the district, and protect the vulnerable as well as our environment.

Cherwell District Council has committed to reducing our carbon footprint and are already reducing the number of internal combustion powered vehicles on their fleet. The process has begun with the smaller vehicles, cars, vans and light commercial vehicles as the technology is not yet available for the larger refuse and heavy goods vehicles. CDC also has an extensive rollout of EV charging points planned within the district, initially in Bicester, Banbury and Kidlington and then a second phase within the larger rural villages. There will be 75 EV charging points within the next 12 months in car parks owned by CDC.



The district council is also addressing the excessive use of paper within the council. This can be internal use within and between departments, especially planning, and the reports and correspondence between councillors is being reviewed with the intention of becoming paperless or as near to it within the foreseeable future. There are several initiatives to reduce the council's carbon footprint as we strive to reduce the debilitating effects of pollution in the UK and globally.

Should anyone have a general enquiry which you feel we can help with then please do not hesitate to contact us. Our email addresses are:

[CouncillorMike.KerfordByrnes@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk](mailto:CouncillorMike.KerfordByrnes@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk)

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[Bryn.Williams@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk](mailto:Bryn.Williams@Cherwell-DC.gov.uk)

I look forward to representing the residents of Steeple Aston and our wider ward in partnership with Mike and Hugo and welcome the return of normality and the opportunity to once again meet face-to-face with you all.

**Bryn Williams**

**Cherwell District Councillor**



# VICTORIA PRENTIS MP

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### Constituency:

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 Orchard House  
Hopcraft Lane  
Deddington  
OX15 0TD

### Westminster:

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 House of Commons  
London  
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# Steeple People



Frances Pasteur



**How long have you lived in Steeple Aston?**

Almost a year.

**Where did you move from?**

We moved from London and then rented in Oxford for a few years before moving to Steeple Aston.

**What brought you here?**

The idea of raising our family in the countryside, with more space, the chance to grow our own food, have family nearby and have a dog...

**Where do you think of as 'home'?**

Here.

**What do you like best about living in Steeple Aston?**

The people. Particularly the incredibly kind ones who've brought our dog back when he's gone roaming!

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

I'm a wife and mum of two girls. For years I responded to nutrition crises in war zones around the world. I'm now senior nutrition advisor at Save the Children and a trustee for the charity Action Against Hunger.

**Early bird or night owl? Cat or dog? Optimist or pessimist?**

Early bird, definitely dog and I'd like to say optimist.

**As a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?**

A conductor. I spent many hours in front of an imaginary orchestra.

**Can you recommend a really good book?**

'All the Light We Cannot See', by Anthony Doerr.

**What's your favourite food?**

Anything home-grown. Failing that a real tiramisu.

**What do you do to relax?**

Read. Swim – if possible a wild swim. Or better still, camping by the sea with my family in warm weather.

**Who would you most like to have dinner with – dead or alive?**

My mother, who died far too young nearly thirty years ago. There's so much about life and the world I'd like to discuss with her.

**What do you get grumpy/mad about?**

Quite a lot that Boris Johnson does, in particular the drastic cuts in international aid, which no other G7 country has made this year.

**What makes you happiest in the world?**

Being at a table for a long lunch with family and friends of many different nationalities.

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

Alongside my team, I was expelled from Rwanda. It was political...

# The ARTS Page



We are writing this with a mixture of hope and caution about the Arts scene generally. During the pandemic, there has been so little to see and hear live, and the livelihoods of countless artists have been devastated. Wonderful though Radio/TV and streaming are, performers and audiences alike need the 'real thing' too.

We have over the last few months, as did Margaret and Derek before us, listed many events, given websites and some short commentaries. As these are also readily available online, many listed in previous editions, we want to move the focus to flagging up what has caught your attention, both past and future. So please send in reviews and previews from right across the arts scene, locally and further afield, to add to our contributions.

This edition is inevitably something of a holding exercise, as Arts organisations cannot look too far ahead with confidence yet. But as we, hopefully, open up, can we together make the Arts Page vibrant and eclectic with your enthusiasm and recommendations?

## **Ardley Parlour Concerts are now even closer to Steeple Aston!**

For improved Covid safety, your local house concerts have relocated from Ardley to Middle Aston House for the 2021 season. In partnership with Manor Farm Music Frivolities, professional concerts are being presented in an intimate setting, but now with restaurant and bar close at hand! First up is the highly talented Oxfordshire-based acoustic band 'Scarecrow' on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> June, followed by many of MFMF's favourite performers between now and Christmas.

For concert information and admission see [www.mfmf.co.uk](http://www.mfmf.co.uk) or email [music@mfmf.co.uk](mailto:music@mfmf.co.uk)

For venue details see [www.middleastonhouse.com](http://www.middleastonhouse.com) or ring 01869 340361

## **Music for a Summer Evening**

featuring the Aston Singers conducted by Nicholas Cleobury. Steeple Aston Church, Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> July, 7pm

## **'Changing Places' review**

Steeple Aston resident Carl Tomlinson's recently published three-part poetry collection, titled 'Changing Places', is a multi-layered achievement which speaks to the reader in a variety of ways. The poems are moving, sensitive and vivid with moments of wit and clever choices of vocabulary such as the rain '*trying to shake off the wind*' and heathland '*gorsed to yellow*'. Much of the work, perhaps especially in the first section 'Farm', has a tender thread of melancholy and remembrance of times past as the poet recalls experiences and people he loved during childhood. Visits to his grandfather's farm, for example, are recalled with clarity and in detail '*helping granddad ..... chasing the baler.... Riding the trailer... making echoing Tarzan calls under the bridge ...*' so that one is reminded of the importance of childhood experience which lasts throughout life.

But do not expect to read only warm and gently reflective poetry in this book. There is pain and grief on these pages too. The acute sadness when granddad's farm is sold shines through in 'Coming to Grief', also in the intense little poem 'Inventory' and above all in the painful 'To David on your 50<sup>th</sup> birthday' about the loss of Carl's brother.

During Lockdown music has lifted many hearts and given solace. Words can do the same and this collection is a satisfying example of the power of words to transport the reader to different times and places as the poetry shares deep emotion in an accessible and quietly profound way. Order from <https://fairacrepress.co.uk/shop/changing-places-carl-tomlinson/>

*Eileen Baglin-Jones*

## **Good audiobooks at [www.audible.co.uk](http://www.audible.co.uk)**

As we spend more and more time looking at various screens, what better way to give our eyes a rest and unwind than by listening to a good audiobook. They can also make marvellous presents.

**The Harry Potter series/JK Rowling** Narrated by Stephen Fry, who delivers a masterclass in bringing the world of Hogwarts to life. They are not just for kids!

**Pride and Prejudice/Jane Austen** This popular novel is now available as an audiobook narrated by Rosamund Pike ('Gone Girl' and 007 Bond films), providing a bright and energetic performance of this British classic.

*Heather*

Please be in touch with your ideas and suggestions, as well as exciting reviews and previews.

**Nick and Heather [nicholascleobury@btinternet](mailto:nicholascleobury@btinternet)**








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**[amanda@sustainablesteeple.com](mailto:amanda@sustainablesteeple.com) or 07793 553150**



# The Gardening Spot

## What does gardening do for you?

Over the past year or so, gardening has figured in so many lives whilst shut away in our own space. I am extremely fortunate as I have nearly one acre of garden to 'play in', although I use that term very loosely as an acre of garden for an old bloke like me is becoming a bit more of a challenge! In the past twelve months, with the expert guidance and assistance of my wife, we have painted all the ironwork around the garden, created a new gravel garden using over five tons of aggregate, added vast numbers of stones and numerous plants, and built a pagoda using what felt like a ton of timber.

We have moved plants around, dividing where possible, sown seeds of all varieties, had complete failures and numerous successes. And in all that time, we have felt safe, keeping isolated from others as much as was possible and achieving something at the same time. How lucky are we to have such an amazing space where we have spent what has felt like an eternity, away from others, to help reduce the impact of the pandemic. I have spoken to others, at a safe distance or on the phone, and they have all said the same thing, that our gardens have been a saviour over the past year.

Now that summer has arrived (I hope!) keep the weeds at bay – hoe regularly, taking care not to disturb your prized plants' root systems. After a very dry April and, to date (mid-May), a wetter month, June should bring some warm, dry conditions. Make sure you water planters regularly and don't forget to feed them as most composts have about six weeks' worth of food before they run out.

Hopefully, all chance of frosts has now gone so you should be safe to plant runner beans and your bedding plants. If you are lucky enough to own a greenhouse, it is not too late to put in a few tomato plants and just about perfect for cucumbers. There is an old tale that tomato and cucumbers do not mix in a greenhouse environment. This is partly true, but easy to remedy. Tomatoes like plenty of ventilation and not too hot, while cucumbers like it steamy and damp, so you should be able rig-up

something to accommodate both their needs. Plant the tomatoes near the door and the cucumbers at the closed end of your greenhouse, then fix a sheet of plastic between the two crops. Keep the cucumber area well damped and part-shaded whilst ventilating the tomatoes once temperatures get around the 20°C mark.

As for your lawn, keep mowing, but not too low and give it a feed if the grass looks a little tired, preferably just before it rains. Deadhead flowering plants as necessary as this will encourage even more flowers and a late display.

Have you ever noticed what a difference there is from one year to another in the garden? My wife Daphne keeps a video diary of our garden by walking around with the camera at the beginning of each month. We thought we would have a look at the beginning of May 2020 and compare it with this year. You may remember that last year was really warm and sunny from March onwards and very few frosts. To our surprise, our wall-trained roses were in full bloom last year whereas this year, nothing, although they look really well. The Weigela was blooming as were many of the shrubs but, just like the roses this year, nothing yet. On the other hand, I have just planted out my first crop of brassicas in what must be described as the perfect conditions and my potatoes are peeping through the ground. This is the middle of May, by the way, as I am writing this article.

So, what does gardening do for you? Have you enjoyed the private space afforded by your garden or are you happy to admire other people's' work? Have you done more in the garden or less? No matter what your answer, I hope you take the opportunity to have a look around the six gardens that are open on the 20<sup>th</sup> June in our village and if you decide to visit Primrose Garden you can come and see what Daphne and I have been doing in lockdown.

**Richard Preston – Primrose Garden, North Side.**



## How your parish council spends your money

The Steeple Aston element of the 2021/22 Council Tax bill

For each of the past few years the Parish Council has published a commentary on the Parish ‘precept’, which is the local element of the overall council tax bill. Unlike last year, when the Parish Council managed to avoid any increase over the previous year, this year we have asked for an additional 2.2% (£558) bringing the total to £29,994. This article explains why we need the increase.

You might have noticed that Cherwell’s Council Tax demand refers to Steeple Aston having a 3.8% increase, which may have caused some confusion. Apparently, each year Cherwell assess the numbers of households paying full Council Tax and this year it has gone down, therefore increasing the amount to be paid by each household which pays full Council Tax. So we will only receive the 2.2% that we asked for, but Cherwell needed to increase individual payments by 3.8% to generate the required precept.

The increase in Steeple Aston’s precept this year reflects the fact that we have had to maintain some of the important village facilities, of which we have more than many villages. This is in addition to the PC’s ‘normal’ spending on grass-cutting, hedges, and weedkilling. Prominent amongst the responsibilities are the Playground, the Village Hall and the Sports and Recreation Centre. The costs of playground repairs, general maintenance, tidying, ROSPA reports, etc. are borne by the Parish Council. This year substantial repairs, replacement of fencing and equipment has been needed at the playground – one of the most heavily used in the area. A competitive tender was conducted and a contract for over £15,000 was entered into, with the excellent results that you can now see. The multi-use games area was also professionally cleaned, for the first time in many years.

We pay for daily cleaning, consumables and repairs to the toilet, some of which are necessary as a result of anti-social behavior. We’ve just installed a new high-specification door and locking system in the hope of reducing vandalism and misuse of the toilet. The door cost nearly £4,000. We are aware that some have suggested that CCTV monitoring may have been cheaper, but we are not convinced that this would be an effective deterrent (and identifying vandals still leaves the cost of repairs to be met). Bob Bickley has looked after the facilities for some years now, but in March he gave notice that he was

retiring. While we recruit a replacement, we’ve contracted with a cleaning firm to keep up the standards that users have come to expect. In addition to the toilet, we also pay for daily cleaning of the whole playground area.

Then there are the Village Hall and Sport and Recreation buildings to maintain. The respective management committees do a great job in acquiring funds for some improvements, most recently to the kitchen in the Village Hall, but other things, for example exterior decoration, roof and drainage repairs, and insurance, come out of PC funds. Repairs are often more expensive as the buildings are in the Conservation area. When the Village Hall roof covering was replaced in 2000, it cost over £65k, so the Parish Council has a prudent policy to maintain reserves of funding, which this year amounts to £65,576, with a view to the inevitable future repairs and replacements. This year we have also incurred solicitor’s fees to update lease documents associated with these buildings.

Each year, the PC makes grants available to eligible local organisations to help with their running costs in providing services to the community. This process is carefully managed to ensure that money is both needed and used effectively. Grant-making decisions, like all PC decisions about spending, are taken in our meetings and are open to public scrutiny. Grants this year have totalled just over £3,600.

In 2019 the PC responded to many requests from parishioners to try to reduce speeding in the village. We purchased the Speed Indicator Device that we’re sure you’ve seen in one of the five locations that it can be moved to, and we’re regularly monitoring the data produced. The machine cost over £3,000, but it seems to have been a sound investment as a speeding deterrent.

Once the detailed accounts of the parish council have been audited each year, we publish them on the village website, so you can see in detail where your money goes. We believe that the PC is providing the facilities that parishioners want, and we hope we have the balance about right in terms of the expenditure needed to support them, and a reasonable level of affordability. We hope you agree but, as always, we welcome feedback, to this email address: [parishclerk.steepleaston@gmail.com](mailto:parishclerk.steepleaston@gmail.com), or by attendance at our monthly meetings.

## National Garden Scheme (NGS) Open Gardens



*Acacia Cottage*



*Primrose Garden*

### **Steeple Aston – Sunday 20th June – 2 to 6pm**

Now is the chance to visit six gardens in your own village and have a look behind the high walls and closed doors that are typical of Steeple Aston. Admission, allowing you to visit all six gardens, will cost just £6 per person and can be purchased at the first garden you enter. Normally, teas would be served in the village hall, but due to the present situation, it has been decided not to do that this year. We are sorry for any disappointment, but you are always welcome to bring a flask with you. All funds raised will go to the charities supported by the NGS. The six gardens are as follows.

#### **The Longbyre - Junction of North Side and Fir Lane**

Hornton stone house (not open) in ¼ acre. Garden constructed in old orchard with a water feature, mixed perennials, shrubs, tubs, gravel paths and garden on different levels with many secluded garden rooms. Excellent view of the Edwardian Folly.

#### **Kralingen - Fenway**

One-hectare informal garden created over many years by present owners. Great variety of interesting trees and shrubs. Mixed borders lead down to the tranquil woodland, water and bog garden with candelabra primulas, bluebells, golden saxifrage, and a rose garden on old tennis court.

#### **Acacia Cottage - South Side**

Approx. ½ acre garden within high stone walls. Herbaceous border decked and paved area around Edwardian summerhouse and old stone barns. Box edged parterre with white planting in a courtyard setting.

#### **Primrose Garden - North Side**

A wide variety of gardening styles set within 1 acre of walled garden on a south elevation. Established herbaceous borders and island beds with a pond and marginal planting. A vegetable plot, soft fruit plot, polytunnel and two greenhouses. Borders to the house containing perennial, shrubs, bulbs, and annuals. Designed for year-round interest.

#### **Canterbury House - Fir Lane**

A varied and evolving 3-acre garden with large borders originally designed and planted by the garden designer John Hill. It contains a large walled garden, lovely herbaceous borders, ponds, a separate shrub border and a large vegetable garden. Convenient seating at key points.

#### **Combe Pyne - Water Lane**

Front garden has mixed herbaceous borders with rose bed leading to a back garden, primarily laid out for growing a wide range of vegetables.

Thank you in anticipation of your support and we hope you enjoy the day.

<https://ngs.org.uk/>

# Parish Council Meeting *Notes*



The Government, in its wisdom, has decreed that just as Covid numbers are starting to take off yet again it makes sense to insist that Parish Council meetings should be held face-to-face rather than online. So instead of meeting safely and comfortably on Zoom we were spread out around the Sports and Recreation Centre. We had a Risk Assessment for the meeting which said the windows and doors had to be open. The windows don't open in the S&R which rather put paid to that one. We were meant to be two metres apart, but that also did not happen, which was lucky really, as voices were very muffled by masks and if we had been that far away from each other we would have heard even less.

The arrival time for the meeting was meant to be staggered, I assume to ensure that at least some of us would miss some of the meeting. Interestingly, it appears that nationally, on average, more people attended Parish Council meetings when they were online than when face-to-face. So overall the Government's edict on face-to-face meetings has ensured that fewer people will attend and those that do will miss part of the meeting, be cold, and in more danger of catching the new Covid variant. A win/win for those against local democracy?

The Parish Council had a well-publicised Zoom meeting on 10 May to consider the revised application to develop the old chicken sheds at Hatch End. But because the meeting was after the Government's edict described above, the Parish Council had to confirm its stance at the face-to-face Council meeting a week later. The village website ([steepleaston.org.uk](http://steepleaston.org.uk)) has the full reasoning behind the Council's objections to the scheme. The objections can be roughly summarised thus: the development is disproportionate to the size of the village, its roads and its rural nature. The website also has revealing pictures which show the traffic problems the village already has, so that additional vehicles would make the traffic even worse, especially around school starting time when school and business traffic would be arriving together at around 9,00am. The main objections were:

- a) The employment generated could be around 200 people, but only 79 car parking spaces for staff and visitors combined are included. The parking would be especially unattractive as it would be close to the edge of the site and beside the road. The inadequate parking would mean there is bound to be additional parking along the road.
- b) The extra parking on the road would be dangerous for children walking to and from school as no footpath is being proposed between the school and the development site.
- c) The development is inconsistent with the character and amenities of the village.
- d) There would be traffic chaos both during the demolition and construction phases and when the site is operational.

It was suggested that the Parish Council might add to its comments that if approval was to be given, there should be specific additional conditions such as for a footpath and controls on the types of use of the units. The comments from Middle Aston will include asking for such conditions. Middle Aston is likely to suffer less than Steeple Aston in the demolition and construction phases because the roads to Middle Aston are either single track or already designated as unsuitable for heavy goods vehicles, but the Middle Astonites are extremely concerned about the traffic that would be generated when the units are operational. The comments from the Steeple Aston Parish Council will not include a request for conditions should the scheme get planning approval because it was felt that the strength of feeling in Steeple Aston would be misrepresented if such comments appeared to suggest that approval could be acceptable in specific circumstances. It was agreed that what mattered was to get extra evidence to support the case against the appalling traffic consequences resulting from such a substantial development.

The changes to national planning laws introduced recently allow certain buildings to be converted to housing after two years without new planning approval if they had been empty for at least three



# Parish Council Meeting Notes



months and there were no external changes to the buildings. So if the developers at Hatch End included windows appropriate for houses this could be an easy option for them later on if the original scheme was not a financial success.

The Parish Council is still short of one Councillor, but someone came to the last meeting to see if she is interested in applying to fill the vacancy. She was warned that if she should decide to apply she might be 'grilled' at the next meeting. I could not help feeling that, although this was said as a joke, it could have been a bit more encouragingly expressed.

Each year the Parish Council checks on its paperwork. We were told that the Standing Orders are 'heavily genderised'. I think that meant that the orders assumed that the chair and all Councillors are invariably male. There was an interesting discussion of the Parish Council's grievance procedure. In the past, the Councillors had split themselves into two groups so that half could decide on a grievance and the others would be available if there was an appeal. This time they considered whether it would be preferable to act as one group, even though this would remove the option for an independent appeal procedure. Apparently, grievances cannot be taken to the District Council unless due process has not been followed, and even then the content of the grievance is irrelevant. So in effect, the new arrangements would mean there is no real means of appeal. They will have a look at this again before deciding.

There was a discussion of whether the Councillors needed to continue to have a list of village Covid volunteers. They decided that the volunteers might continue to be needed, especially if the number of cases takes off again. The Councillors were proposing to check with the volunteers if they were content for their contact details to be retained for a bit longer.

In pre-Covid years there has been an annual village clean up along Sixtyfoot and on Heyford Road between the Crescent and Rousham Bridge. No decision was taken on whether there should be one this year as the Councillors were unsure if they had already left it too late, blaming the awful weather for the lack of enthusiasm earlier in the year. They noted that the closure of Rousham bridge for repairs has

been delayed and there is no information on when it will be rescheduled. One of the regular complaints in the Parish Council postbag is about dog poo and one suggestion that might possibly help was to make poo bags more easily available, for example by having some obtainable around the village at sites such as the wide pavement opposite to Kralingen.

The play area has had a make-over and it was agreed that generally the repairs were looking 'really good'. There is still a bit of fencing to be repaired and more bark to go down, but this should be completed in early June. There are mobile bollards behind the Village Hall which prevent vehicles being able to be driven round behind the Hall. The bollards are stuck and one of the Councillors explained she enjoyed using an angle grinder and would cut off the padlocks and see if the bollards could still be made to move up and down. She was described by another Councillor, almost certainly unjustifiably, as 'the mad angle grinder'; but the description did have a nice ring to it. The car park by the Sports and Recreation Centre will be jet cleaned and the parking bays marked out again.

We were told that there was still no news on the appeal against planning refusal for houses in the garden of The Beeches. But there was the news that the Great Wolf development at Chesterton has got planning approval and this will be a bit like a smaller Alton Towers with rides and hotels. It is estimated that this could involve about 500,000 visitors a year, so the main roads around here are going to be a disaster area from that. As well there could be considerable extra traffic going through the village to the Hatch End development if it gets planning approval, so I am definitely feeling depressed about the prospects for the local roads. Let's hope to have more cheerful news next month. At the time of going to the printers it is expected that the next meeting will be in the Sports and Recreation Centre at 7.30pm on 21<sup>st</sup> June. Do come

## *Steeplejack*

*This report is the personal view of the SAL reporter, and is not intended to be a complete record of the Council meeting. The official record - once approved - will be available at [www.steepleaston.org.uk](http://www.steepleaston.org.uk)*

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## Handmade homemade ice cream

There is a newish kid on the block. Woodstock has a wonderful not quite an ice-cream parlour. Alfonso sells beautifully naturally flavoured and coloured, well-stored, hygienically served ice cream. It is served with great enthusiasm – dangerously infectious, as it is not cheap. I had some young friends for tea this week. It got thumbs up from them.

Well folks – you can do just the same. Keep the batches small and use them quickly. Homemade ice cream, made without the help of an ice cream maker, tends to crystallise. The berry season will soon be here, closely followed by stone fruit. Once you have made some of these recipes, you will have learnt the basics and will soon be inventing your own. There will always be a pudding to hand, or something special to offer friends, who are now allowed to call round. Hooray!

### Loganberry Ice Cream (blackcurrant, mulberry, raspberry or damson too)

*This is the simplest form of ice cream, made with just sweetened fruit puree and cream. It will set harder than ice cream made with a custard base.*

700gm fresh loganberries; 225 light muscovado sugar; 285 ml fresh double cream

1. Heat the berries gently, just to soften enough to let the juices begin to flow. Push them through a plastic sieve into a bowl. Sweeten the puree, setting aside 120ml for the coulis (fruit sauce).
2. Whip the cream lightly and add to the larger quantity of loganberry puree. Put into a larger than needed plastic container with a lid and freeze for three hours. Remove from the freezer and beat thoroughly. Return to the container to freeze until firm.
3. Remove from the freezer 15-20 minutes before serving or move into the fridge for an hour, whichever suits you.
4. Serve three scoops in a wine glass and pour a little of the darker fruit puree over the paler ice cream.

### Lemon curd Ice Cream – makes enough for eight cornets

1 unwaxed lemon; 285ml double cream; 3 tbsp clear runny honey; 250g whole milk yoghurt; 150g lemon curd (the best you can buy)

1. Finely grate the zest and squeeze the juice of the lemon.
2. Lightly whip the cream until it starts to thicken. Using a metal spoon, fold in the lemon zest, yoghurt, juice, and honey, and then combine with the lemon curd.
3. Pour into a larger than needed plastic container with a lid and freeze for three hours. Remove from the freezer and beat thoroughly. Return to the container to freeze until firm.
4. Take out of the freezer 15-20 minutes before serving, or move into the fridge for an hour, whichever suits you. Serve in a little jar drizzled with honey, or in a cone.

### Brown Bread Ice Cream

*The Victorians and Edwardians were mad about this, so was my mum. I found this recipe, splattered and sticky, in her own recipe book, only the other day. This is the custard base used in many ice cream recipes. It sounds odd, but brown bread ice cream is wonderful with any kind of fruit coulis, or fresh berries. I particularly like it with gently stewed plums, greengages or apricots. As this is a custard-based ice cream it doesn't need to be beaten half-way through freezing.*

455g wholemeal breadcrumbs; 340g dark muscovado sugar; 285ml fresh milk; 2 egg yolks; 570ml double cream; 75ml light rum

1. Preheat the oven to 200 C / Gas mark 6
2. Mix the breadcrumbs with the sugar in a processor, or with a hand whisk. Tip them into a large open tin and toast them for about 30 minutes, turning often with a fork to get them evenly brown and crisp. Remove from the oven and leave to cool.
3. While you are doing the above, scald the milk in a saucepan. Beat the egg yolks in a bowl, then pour in the milk in a steady stream mixing well. Return to the rinsed-out saucepan and cook over a low heat, whisking as it heats to form a custard. Set aside to get cold.
4. Whip the cream lightly and stir in the rum. Fold into the cold custard and combine the sugary breadcrumbs. Freeze in a covered container.

*Caroline Edwards*



# HAVE YOU EVER BEEN TO.....?

## Warwick Hall



No – it's not in Warwick, but in Burford, on Church Green. This has been a busy little area of the town since the Middle Ages. As well as the magnificent church with its fascinating history (built between 1175 and 1500) on the Green are also the Warwick Almshouses, built in 1455-6 to house 'eight poor persons from the town' and the first school building for boys attending the Grammar School. Attached to the Almshouses was the rather run down and not very convenient Warwick Hall – a sort of village and church hall which until recently was much in need of a thorough makeover.

Now it has had one and the result is a terrific multi-purpose community facility. One wall of the hall which faces the green has been preserved, but otherwise it is unrecognisable having been reconfigured, renovated and extended in a very imaginative way. There are meeting rooms of various sizes, excellent AVA equipment, cloakroom facilities, a garden area and Café Fifteen selling drinks and light meals, in normal times between 9.00am and 5.00pm.

At the time of writing Café Fifteen, which clearly attracts good numbers of the public, but which manages to offer a calm and quiet atmosphere, can only serve takeaway food and drinks, but the pleasant waitress assured me that they cannot wait to resume normal service!

Warwick Hall is not only a good place for coffee, but customers can often see exhibitions of various kinds. Between Friday 4<sup>th</sup> and Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> June two local artists will be exhibiting their work, so as well as refreshment you might purchase a picture or commission a pet portrait!



There's one other point of interest just off the Green which most people don't spot. Opposite those Almshouses, which the Earl of Warwick graciously agreed could bear his name, look for a carved stone set above the window at the end of the sturdy building which is now the home of the children who board at Burford School. The stone records the date when those two rooms and a small house for the schoolmaster were built by Simon Wysdom, Alderman and wealthy, generous wool merchant. This was the first school building with the stone showing the date of 1579. It is believed that since 1571 (when the school was founded) classes had been held in the room above the church South Door – the Parvis room. So this year Burford School celebrates its 450<sup>th</sup> anniversary – but that's another story.

If you look carefully at the architecture of Church Green it's easy to imagine how busy the area has been over the years. To walk into the churchyard and see the sparkling redeveloped Warwick Hall where people continue the kind of business and activity there has been through the ages gives a strong message that history is always all around us.

**Eileen Baglin-Jones**



## Litter bug

I'm feeling rather rubbish  
the reason is you see  
I had a walk the other day  
and brought my litter home with me  
so why do you feel rubbish?  
what is that all about?  
I want to be like all the rest  
but I'm the odd one out  
I need to be a litter bug  
so I'm not on my own  
it's called the herding instinct  
it's how behaviour's grown

It sounds like you and others  
need help to make you see  
this litter epidemic  
in your community  
is unlike other ailments  
the remedy is free  
ignore your strange desire and  
get herd immunity

**Peter Wild**

## To celebrate Bob Dylan's 80<sup>th</sup> birthday

All my heroes are getting old.  
They're all pretty well past their prime  
Their age is now 'mature' and 'ripe'  
And the same can be said about mine.

In the heady days of the sixties  
We thought that 30 was past it, old-age  
Now our heroes are well past their sixties  
But they're not ready to leave the stage.

Some of them died young, it's true  
Jim Morrison, Hendrix and Janis  
But the rest are now pensioners all,  
And I'm trying not to panic.

Bob Dylan was eighty in May  
Graham Nash is seventy-one  
But they're on the road and touring  
Still both going strong.

Paul Simon is seventy-two  
JJ Cale is seventy-four  
Eric Clapton's seventy-six  
But they're not knocking on heaven's door.

"I hope I die before I get old"  
Sang the guys in the Who  
But some of them are still rocking on  
And if they can, so can you.

So get out your flares and your tie-dye,  
Your strings of beads and your loons  
Turn up the vinyl really loud  
Revisit your youth ...  
and those wonderful tunes.

**Cathy Lawday**



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# Child's Play



## Word Pairs Puzzle 1

Find a word to fill each gap. The word must complete both phrases

Example: anti ..... distancing = anti social / social distancing

1. inner ..... class
2. anti ..... frame
3. pre ..... wave
4. over ..... natural
5. sub ..... biology
6. under ..... Back

## Word Pairs Puzzle 2

Match words from the box to make six pairs of phrases.

Each pair of phrases must have a word in common.

Example: green tea / tea set

~~set~~ meal colour firm hope  
getready fat ~~tea~~ feel plan  
friends photo faint flight meeting  
take chance stand finish ~~green~~

1. .... / .....
2. .... / .....
3. .... / .....
4. .... / .....
5. .... / .....
6. .... / .....

Answers on page 37.

**Cathy Lawday**

## Replacement No. 3 Bell for Steeple Aston Church.

Last year, I removed the bells from St. Michael and All Angels church in Ledbury, Herefordshire, for restoration and augmentation from eight bells to ten. Part of their scheme was to also replace two of the existing bells as they did not match the profiles of the others. When I got the bells back to our works it started me thinking the smaller of the bells to be scrapped might fit in at Steeple Aston.

It is thought our present No. 3 bell was cast in 1674 by Richard Keene of Woodstock. It was added to the ring when the bells were augmented from five to six bells. The inscriptions and date have been crudely removed by hammer and chisel from this bell. According to 'Sharps Church Bells of Oxfordshire' it was intended for another church. The bell is similar in shape to our No. 4 bell and assumed to be from the same founder.



The bell is very thin and has been heavily chipped around the lip to try and raise the note. A small amount of machine tuning was carried out in 1986 around the lip to try and further improve the strike note. The bell still lacks any resonance. The ex-Ledbury bell is almost a perfect match and only required to be tuned down from D# to D to be the correct note. It is a much better shape and profile and because of this produces a much richer tone.



The quotation for purchasing the bell and a new headstock for hanging it came to £4,000. I approached the Rector and Church Council about the idea of going ahead with the project. There were concerns due to the Covid pandemic whether we should be spending this amount of money when people were suffering hardship and we would not be able to hold fund raising events. Eventually I was allowed to proceed with trying to obtain permission from the Diocese and to raise the funds from outside the parish.

By chance while talking to a bellringing friend of mine about the idea he offered to donate the cost of the new headstock. This was followed by grants from The Doris Field Trust, The Diocesan Bell Fund, The Banbury Branch of Ringers and individual donations which took us to within a few hundred pounds of our target. The rest of the money will come from the tower fund.





The order for the new headstock to be cast was placed just before Christmas 2020. This arrived on April 7<sup>th</sup>, was machined, painted and fitted to the replacement bell.

On Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> April 2021 Graham Clifton, Nick Powell, Lawrence White, Keith Thomas and Jack Knowles arrived to install the bell in the tower. The bell was set up in the base of the tower. After preparation of a couple of hours the hoists were rigged up, the old bell removed from the frame and placed in the clock room for storage and the trap doors in the floors opened up ready. At 10am a small group gathered to see the bell, take photos and The Rector gave the bell a blessing. It was then slowly and carefully hoisted up to the belfry and installed in the frame. Everything was then reassembled and the bell was tested out at 12 noon. All agreed the bell has much more resonance than the old one and sounds great. At the present time, due to the restrictions, we are unable to test it out with all the other bells ringing together. We will have to be patient a little longer.

The details of the bell are: originally cast by Abraham Rudhall of Gloucester; the inscription was WILLIAM ; WINTER ; OF ; DIMOCK : ESQ<sup>R</sup> 1690. This has been reproduced on the bell we now have, plus RECAST 1929 ; OLIVE ROSA OAKLEY ; Mears & Stainbank, London.

Note D (1172 Hz). Weight 4cwt 1qrt 13lbs or 222kg.

**Graham Clifton, Tower Captain & Bellhanger**



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# Village Hall News



The Annual General Meeting of the Steeple Aston Village Hall management committee was held by teleconferencing on the 10<sup>th</sup> May 2021. The full committee is listed below, showing which group they represent.

Barbara Brewer	Tuesday Badminton	(Chair)	Amanda Rodgers	Village Rep
Margaret Bulleyment	Choral society	(Secretary)	Chris Clarke	PCC
John White		(Treasurer)	Stuart Cummins	Archive
Janine Beckwith	Thursday Badminton		Richard Preston	Valentine Club
Deborah Morris	Village Rep		Cathy Fleet	Parish Council
TBC	Arts Programme Co-ordinator		Rose McCready	Garden Club
Esther Brown	WI			
Torquil McLusky	Scouts / Cubs / Beavers			

In the next few months the committee will be deciding on a programme of events for the forthcoming year. If there is a specific event you would like to see in the programme or if you have any new ideas, please contact me or any committee member.

The village hall is open, but now under Step 3 of the Government guidelines. This will be for those groups who are permitted to start back again.

Please note our letting agent is Mrs. Katie Rushworth

01869 340196. Email [steeple-aston-village-hall@hotmail.com](mailto:steeple-aston-village-hall@hotmail.com)

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

Always remember, clean hands, social distancing and don't forget your mask.

**Barbara Brewer chair**

## 1st Deddington Guides Report



We're back! Hurray! Lovely to be together again, meeting out-of-doors which we love! We've welcomed seven new members, who've been patiently waiting to come along.

The quiz trail round the market place kept us puzzled and was great fun. Our first cookout of the year .... aah the smell of the woodsmoke .... was a real success, not too many burnt sausages! Our thanks to the Fenemores family. Thanks are also due to Brian and Janet Bond for allowing us to explore the woods and try our hand at building shelters .... there were some amazing creations!

The hike from Adderbury to Deddington via the Papermill gave us all a chance to wear off some energy and appreciate the lovely countryside around us. This is our favourite term .... out and about each Tuesday. Girls over ten years come along and see what we get up to.

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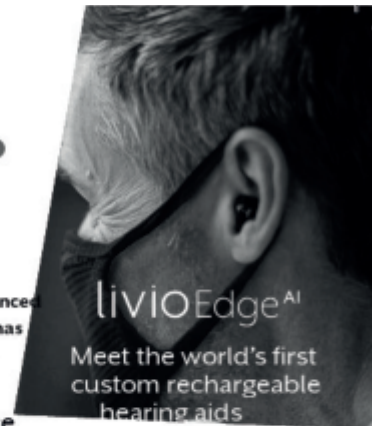
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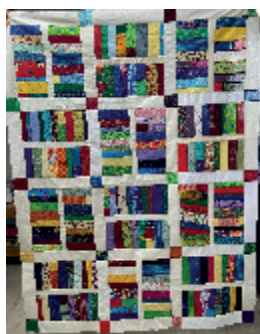
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## A few of our recent projects

Throughout lockdown we have continued to receive donations of things that people no longer have a need for (thank you!) and have been upcycling them ready to head back to markets this month. Here is just a snapshot of some of what we have been working on.



### Scrap Quilts

We turn the fabric donated to us into a wide range of products, including jewellery/make up bags, peg bags, dress/suit bags, beach bags, shoppers... but there are always scraps of fabric left over which are too small to be useful, but which we just cannot quite bring ourselves to throw away! We have now found a brilliant solution and have turned those scraps into beautiful quilts; some for sale and some for donation to a charity which gives quilts to sick babies, children and teenagers as a source of comfort.

### Produce Bags

Old curtains are something we receive a lot of! Many of them we make into either dress/suit bags or shoppers and carry-alls, but we are always left with the linings and they have been mounting up! Now we have a solution – produce bags! Not only do these solve our lining conundrum, but being reusable, they are a fantastic, sustainable alternative to both plastic and paper bags! Hand printed with natural fabric paints; they are also much more interesting than the plain, boring ones you can buy in the shops! Available on our website now.



### Bird Scarers/Garden Ornaments

Much as we love birds, we do not love what they have done to our pea seedlings! We have been playing with ideas for bird scarers for a bit as last year's tin foil food dishes and foil covered jam jar lids, whilst effective, were not very aesthetically pleasing. So, when a metal slatted blind arrived needing a new life, we were both delighted and inspired, and a series of blue flower hangings were born!

### Sofa Cushion Cover Bag

When half a floral sofa cushion arrived in a bag of fabric, there was a moment when we thought we might be defeated. Yes, potentially, we could use some of the fabric to make a couple of gift bags, but the big pattern made that more of a challenge and unpicking the seams felt a bit daunting. However, we do hate to be defeated! So, we came up with this; it was not quite finished when SAL went to print, so you can find finished pictures on our website!



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## THE VALENTINE CLUB

By my reckoning, most of our existing members have now had their second job and are looking forward to getting their lives back on track after 16 months of isolation from their friends and families.

As our club has not been able to meet since February last year, we are all looking forward to meeting for the first time at Middle Aston House on Tuesday 20<sup>th</sup> July at 2.30pm for a 'high tea' and a chat whilst enjoying the superb surroundings of the parkland around the house. We have been so fortunate in achieving a grant of £500 from 'Bring Joy' and sponsorship from Finders Keepers (Bicester) for an additional £250 to enable us to finance this event and enable us to offer this to all members and prospective members absolutely free of charge.

On Tuesday 17<sup>th</sup> August we will be visiting Rousham House and Gardens for yet another tea and a chance to wander around the most amazing gardens in England as recommended by Monty Don and many other renowned garden experts.

Our first meeting back in Steeple Aston Village Hall is planned for Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> September and then back to normal service, whatever 'normal' might turn out to be, come the autumn!

Finally, we would like to thank David Fonge for a very generous donation to the club in memory of his late mother Phyllis (Joan to us all) who enjoyed the club so much for many years and is missed by so many of the members.

For more information about the club go to [www.steepleaston.org.uk](http://www.steepleaston.org.uk) or visit our own website [www.valentineclub.wixsite/aston](http://www.valentineclub.wixsite/aston) or simply call me on 01869 340512.

Kind regards to everyone, keep smiling and keep safe.

**Richard Preston – Group organiser** [Richard.preston5@btopenworld.com](mailto:Richard.preston5@btopenworld.com) or 01869 340512



## WI Report

The WI is beginning to wake up after the long lockdown hibernation. In my new job as president, together with the hard-working committee, we are finalising a programme of speakers, activities and outings for the coming year. We are excited at the prospect of meeting up again, renewing old friendships, and making new ones.

If you are feeling lonely, if you've got post-lockdown blues, or if you just feel ready for a change and something new, then come along to one of our meetings. If you are a new resident in Steeple Aston, the WI is a really good way to meet people and begin to get to know the village. All women are welcome – young or old, married or single, with children or not, working or retired...we'll make sure you all feel at home.

We will have a stall at the Church Fete on July 10<sup>th</sup>, so come and see us for a chat. Please call or email me for more information. If the prospect of attending a meeting on your own is a bit daunting, ring me and I'll make sure you have someone to go with, to keep you company.

Steeple Aston WI has run for over a hundred years and is the longest-established branch in Oxfordshire. Some of our members have been in the WI for over 40 years, whilst others have joined just this month. So come along and join in as we take the WI forward into the next century.

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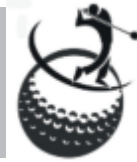
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# Steeple Aston Golf Society



Friday the 11<sup>th</sup> June cannot come soon enough. Just a reminder of what and where we are holding our first golf day since our last outing in September 2019. **The Springs** (Wallingford Road, North Stoke OX10 6BE) are still saying we are OK for 11th June, so this will be our first meeting of the year.

This course was designed by Brian Hugget. It is 133 acres of parkland bordered by the River Thames, within which lie three lakes and challenging wetland areas. The course has traditional features like a double green and sleepered bunker with sleepered lake edges of typical American design. Bring plenty of balls for the 18 holes, par 72, on a 6470 yards course. Bacon bap and coffee on arrival. 18 holes, two nearest the pin, winner, runner-up and guest prizes, Main course and dessert all for £45.

Revised dates for our future meetings are

Wrag Barn - Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> July

Wychwood - Friday 20<sup>th</sup> August

Kirtlington - Friday 17<sup>th</sup> September (Captain's Day)

For more information, please contact Alan or Chris on 01869 340423 / 347173.

Please rest assured that we will satisfy ourselves that each venue is completely COVID compliant before sending out an invitation to you. If all goes to plan, we hope to see you all on 11<sup>th</sup> June when we should be in Step 3 of the roadmap, with 30 allowed outside and the Rule of 6 indoors.

*Husband and wife are on the 9th green when suddenly she collapses. "Help me dear," she groans to her husband. The husband calls 999 on his mobile, talks for a few minutes, picks up his putter, and lines up his putt.*

*His wife raises her head off the green and stares at him. "I'm dying here and you're putting?" "Don't worry dear," says the husband calmly, "they found a doctor on the second hole and he's coming to help you."*

*"Well, how long will it take for him to get here?" she asks feebly. "No time at all," says her husband. "Everybody's already agreed to let him play through."*

**Alan Brewer, chair**

**AD&D** Photographic Society



We enjoyed a fascinating evening with Tony Bramley, FRPS, who runs 'The Light Academy' in Essex. The talk about 'Inspiration' was thought-provoking and provided a different vision of what to use as a starting point for taking an image and how it can be difficult to find a unique viewpoint.

Tony revealed that art and artists, magazines such as Vogue and other photographers inspire his body of work. He also explored cinematography as an inspiration, in particular films such as '2001: A Space Odyssey', 'Lawrence of Arabia' and 'Blade Runner'. Tony encouraged us to get out of our comfort zone and try something new, to go back and do it again, to stop being a perfectionist and simplify a shot. He prefers to emphasize the elements of line, colour, texture, shape, form and space and the principles of balance, movement, proportion and repetition. He finished with the idea that a shot is for you; it is only a picture. Photograph the ordinary and make it look extraordinary.

Tony kindly appraised the inspiration behind photographs submitted by members. Lindsey Smith explained her landscape was inspired by a recent talk about shooting at sunset; she looked behind her and created a beautiful image. Miggy Wild had been inspired by Gladys Knight at a concert and had produced a superb portrait of her favourite singer. John Cavana explained his view of the Vasco de Gama Bridge in Portugal had been on his list of shots to capture and the sky and foreground were a bonus in the image. Colin Lamb had wanted to portray 'travel' and felt the pile of suitcases on display at the Quanton Railway Centre was a unique view.

Our next meeting on 2<sup>nd</sup> June at 7.30pm will see Richard and Janet Burden present 'Greenland: a land of icebergs and Inuits'. If all goes well, we are hoping to meet in person in July. So watch this space. You are welcome to join us.

**Anne Hunsley ADD Photographic Society [www.addphoto.co.uk](http://www.addphoto.co.uk)**

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**Look out for details of WI events in the SAL calendar.**

## **Lifetime Achievements...**

First, congratulations to Stan Owen and Nigel Doggett, who both passed 1,000 runs for the club in the final game of last year.

## **First game of this year vs Bicester & North Oxford...thanks to Phil Chesser**

A new season and a new skipper (sort of) – welcome back to the top Captain Scotchbrook. Our first opponents were Bicester & North Oxford, who arrived looking like they knew how to play. Jon started off the season well by winning the toss and electing to field. We were also welcoming back former regular Alex Ramos, who had not played for five years, and Alex Hatzigeorgiou who was equally out of practice. It therefore only seemed right that they opened the bowling.

Alex R took a few balls to get going, but once in his stride bowled an excellent and pacey six overs at 0-30. He deserved a wicket and would have got one had our wicketkeeper not put down a (tough) chance off the opening batsman, who at the time was on 10 and went on to score another 71! Alex Hatz's first ball for four years resulted in a wicket – not the best ball ever, but just held up off the pitch enough to confuse the batsman, who sent a catch to Hugo 'safe hands' Rittson-Thomas. The other opener and his young batting partner then started to make hay until Nigel Doggett (1-33 off 4) bowled a beauty to remove the left-handed number 3.

The run rate continued to climb steadily as opener and visiting Australian smacked the ball around the park, including several into the 'four runs' tree off Pete Higgins (1-48 off 6). Pete eventually got his revenge by bowling the opener for 81. Pete and the skipper also effected an excellent run out of the Aussie, who was backing up rather overconfidently. The old-timers have still got it! A good cameo from Sam Hatz saw his usual variety and just eight runs from two overs, but the remainder of the innings belonged to Paul Longman (3-34), who having bowled his first three overs in reasonably expensive fashion from his least favourite end (he and Jon have since made up) returned to the pavilion end to take three wickets, the last of which was his 100<sup>th</sup> for the club. Big moment for SACC's answer to Swanny. His death bowling, ably assisted by Hugo Rittson-Thomas, reduced the run rate significantly, with Bicester ending on 192-8 off their 30 overs, when 240 looked likely.

## **The result was never in doubt.....**

After a COVID-friendly break, the match returned with SACC's oldest-ever opening partnership – 119 years between Jeremy Farrar and Greg Renk. We could have done with their partnership matching the number of years. Alas it was worth just five before Greg was bowled by the very useful opening bowler. Enter recently-retired skipper Nigel Doggett, who watched briefly as Jeremy smacked a few boundaries before being bowled by the other, rather useful, opening bowler for 16. Nige was then joined by his successor, and Jon took on the captain's role unusually biding his time and staying on 0, while Nigel took the attack to the bowlers, until trying it one time too many and being out LBW to a (very good) 12-year-old for 25. Cometh the hour, cometh the captain, and it was then a Chairman/Captain partnership of 46 that gave us a sniff. Jon hit a few beautiful lofted drives over mid-on and mid-off before being bowled for 37, and at 110-5 and with more than 10 an over the game looked pretty much up. And it was. Pete Higgins nudged his way to 15 before being bowled by one of the returning opening bowlers, the other of whom then dispatched Alex Ramos and Sam Hatz in quick succession. Steeple ended up on 125-8, a valiant effort, but falling well short of our higher quality opposition.

However, it was great to be back and here's to a long and enjoyable season largely free, hopefully, of excess ball sanitisation and other restrictions. And let's hope the rain stops!!

Best wishes to all.

**Peter Higgins Chairman SACC**



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3. pre heat / heat wave
4. over act / act natural
5. sub marine / marine biology
6. under paid / paid back

### Word Pairs Puzzle 2

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stand firm / firm friends  
feel faint / faint hope  
fat chance / chance meeting  
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*Photo: Catherine Crook*



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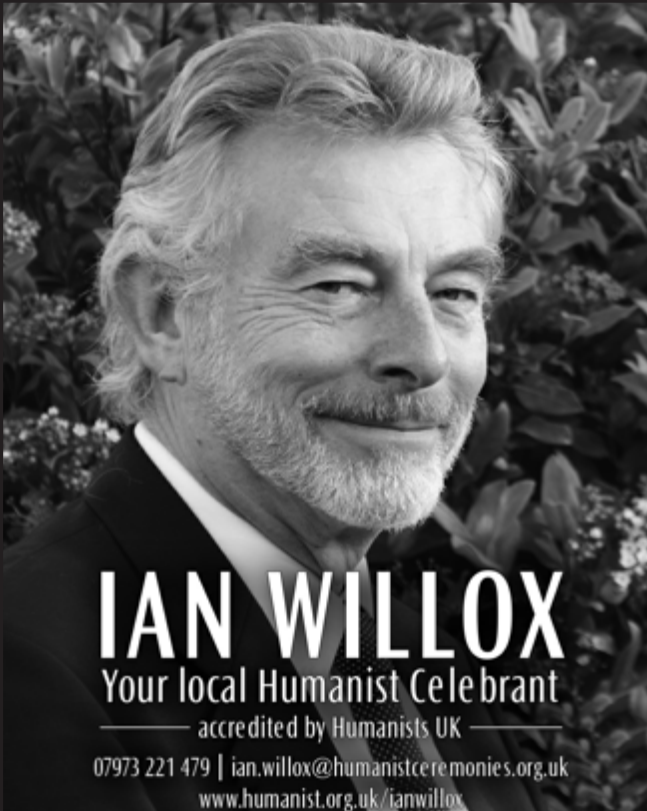
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# Church Matters



Some people will soon be living as if the last fifteen months or so never happened.

Some of us will take a lot longer to move past the enormous events of this last year and more.

I remember, not long after I had been ordained, seeing a family who had lost their mum. The two young adult kids, brother and sister, almost came to blows in front of me. He hardly said a word; she hardly stopped speaking. Both of them genuinely felt the other one didn't care because they were handling the whole situation so differently.

We're a bit like that as a nation now. Some of us are running to embrace every freedom we can – every minute at the pub, or shopping, or at a concert or doing sport. And some of us are looking at that behaviour and finding it all so irresponsible. We just want to be *sure*. Exactly like that brother and sister I saw years ago, we're in danger of failing to spot that we're all going through exactly the same emotions as each other – it's just that we are different people and so we handle the same things differently. So what do we do?

Jesus put it this way: Love your neighbour as yourself. Be kind to each other. Remember that the person in front of you is a person too. None of us is the whole world; and the amazing truth that Jesus brings, is that both you and I and every person we struggle with are all wonderfully, amazingly, completely loved by God. We need to trust the love.

And share it.

**Church Services:** At the end of June, if all goes to plan, we will resume our full rota of weekly services across the three churches of our Benefice for the first time since early March 2020. A service in each church, each Sunday. Our weekly benefice open air communions are very much appreciated by some, and we'll stick a couple more in the diary over the summer because of that. But we are going back inside, and we're hoping it's for good! We'll be following all the guidance we are given – so keep an eye out for that. If you still want to wear a mask when the requirement is lifted of course you may. I think we'll have hand gel with us for quite some time.

But do come and worship with us: I'm glad we've had the online services – thank you so much for watching them and for all the lovely emails you've sent about them; we'll keep putting them out from time to time – but now it's time to come back to church. You are very welcome to join us.

**Church Fete:** And on July 10<sup>th</sup> we are planning (weather permitting!) to hold the Fete. Everyone welcome! I am very grateful for everyone who is coming to help and be a part of this, for all the stall holders, for everyone joining in with classic cars and those making teas and cakes and all sorts of goodies, for the Abingdon Swingtime big band bringing the music this year, for Nicholsons offering us some sponsorship, for some super raffle prizes from local businesses, for children's games and activities – and so much more! Let's have a really great day together – whether you come for the whole afternoon or just feel that you want to pop in briefly.

**Summer Concert:** And to celebrate the gradual return to freedom that's happening – mark the evening of July 17<sup>th</sup> in your diary. Nick Cleobury and the Aston Singers, plus special guest artists, are back with us for another Steeple Compact Concert – an hour's beautiful music, maybe drinks in the churchyard afterward, a terrific way to enjoy a splendid summer evening.

And let's keep praying that moments of hope may last and build and grow, and that all the good we have somehow found in the past year won't fade, but become even stronger in the days ahead.

Remember to check our website [www.sntchurch.com](http://www.sntchurch.com) for more news!

**Revd Marcus Green**



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# Church Services

	North Aston	Steeple Aston	Tackley
<b>Sunday 6th June</b>		<b>10.30am United Benefice Open Air Communion</b> Revd Marcus Green <i>Indoor Morning Prayer if wet</i>	
<b>Sunday 13th June</b>	<b>10.30am United Benefice Open Air Communion</b> Revd Marcus Green <i>Indoor Morning Prayer if wet</i>		
<b>Sunday 20th June</b>			<b>10.30am United Benefice Open Air Communion</b> Revd Marcus Green <i>Indoor Morning Prayer if wet</i>
<b>Sunday 27th June</b>	<b>9.30am</b> Morning Prayer Richard Bailey	<b>11am</b> Morning Prayer Revd Marcus Green	<b>9.30am</b> Family Communion Revd Marcus Green
<b>Sunday 4th July</b>	<b>9.30am</b> Holy Communion <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> Revd Marcus Green	<b>11am</b> Holy Communion <i>Book of Common Prayer</i> Revd Marcus Green	<b>5.30pm</b> Evensong Revd Marcus Green and Canon Robin Gibbons

# Local Info

## Steeple Aston Village Hall

Hiring Fee Caution

<b>Hall (meeting night)</b>		
Represented Clubs.....	£9	
Non-Represented Clubs.....	£17	
<b>Hall Only (social occasion)</b>		
Represented Clubs.....	£32	
Others.....	£53	
<b>All Facilities (social occasion)</b>		
Village Residents .....	£65	£200
Represented Clubs.....	£65	£200
Others - up to 6 hours.....	£110	£300
Others - over 6 hours.....	£160	£300

<b>All Facilities (off peak - 4 hours)</b>		
Village Residents .....	£30	£75
Represented Clubs.....	£30	£75

<b>Committee Room</b>		
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 Bulleyment (347346)

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

## Rubbish bin collection day is Thursday

### June

3<sup>rd</sup> blue & brown  
 10<sup>th</sup> green  
 17<sup>th</sup> blue & brown  
 24<sup>th</sup> green



### July

1<sup>st</sup> blue & brown  
 8<sup>th</sup> green  
 15<sup>th</sup> blue & brown  
 22<sup>nd</sup> green  
 29<sup>th</sup> blue & 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

**Mail to:** [rec.trust@googlemail.com](mailto:rec.trust@googlemail.com)

Chairman - Torquil McLusky - Tel: 347914

Treasurer - Chris Cooper - Tel: 347173

## BUS TIMES

### STAGECOACH S4 BUS SERVICE

Bus services are slowly returning to normal. This timetable is effective from 7 March 2021.

#### From Steeple Aston (outside Post Office) to Oxford (arrival time in italics)

##### Mondays to Fridays (except public holidays)

0624 0702 0746 0920 then hourly to 1520 1621 1721 1821 1932 2047 2217  
 0702 0800 0844 1003 1603 1702 1802 1902 2010 2125 2255

##### Saturdays

0704 0804 0919 then hourly to 1819 1932 2004 2217  
 0746 0846 1002 1902 2010 2125 2255

##### Sundays and most public holidays

0903 1033 1203 1333 1503 1633 1803  
 0944 1114 1244 1414 1544 1714 1844

#### From Steeple Aston (outside Post Office) to Banbury (arrival time in italics)

##### Mondays to Fridays (except public holidays)

0752 0855 0957 then hourly to 1457 1600 1700 1800 1900 1955 2107 2222 2352  
 0835 0935 1035 1535 1638 1738 1838 1929 2024 2135 2250 0020

##### Saturdays

0759 0857 0957 then hourly to 1557 1657 1757 1855 1955 2107 2222 2352  
 0835 0935 1035 1635 1731 1831 1924 2024 2135 2250 0020

##### Sundays and most public holidays

0917 1037 1207 1337 1507 1637 1807 1937  
 0953 1113 1243 1413 1543 1713 1843 2005

Times subject to change. Before starting your journey please check the timetables at [www.stagecoachbus.com/timetables](http://www.stagecoachbus.com/timetables) E&OE

### OURBUS BARTONS

OurBus Bartons has now returned to their 'Pandemic Timetables'. It offers services through Steeple Aston to Chipping Norton (Wednesdays) and Bicester (Fridays). See [ourbusbartons.btck.co.uk/](http://ourbusbartons.btck.co.uk/) for details and times

# Steeple Aston Calendar

Few village events are taking place during lockdown. Check the village website at [www.steepleaston.org.uk](http://www.steepleaston.org.uk) (Home > Calendar) for the latest information.

<b>June</b>			
Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup>	Recycling Collection (p10)	Robinson Close	10am to 12noon
Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup>	SAVA Guided Walk (p04)	Village History Centre	2 to 4pm
<b>Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>SAL July issue copy and advert deadline</b>		
Sunday 20 <sup>th</sup>	Steeple Aston Open Gardens (p13)		2 to 6pm
Monday 21 <sup>st</sup>	Parish Council meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm
Thursday 24 <sup>th</sup>	"Scarecrow" Concert (p08)	Middle Aston House	
Saturday 26 <sup>th</sup>	Deddington Farmers' Market (p09)		
<b>July</b>			
Saturday 10 <sup>th</sup>	Church Fete 2021 (p25)	Robinson Close	
<b>Thursday 15<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>SAL August issue copy and advert deadline</b>		
Saturday 17 <sup>th</sup>	Music for a Summer Evening (p08)	Steeple Aston Church	7pm
Tuesday 20 <sup>th</sup>	Valentine Club (p31)	Middle Aston House	2.30pm
Saturday 24 <sup>th</sup>	Deddington Farmers' Market (p09)		

Due to coronavirus many clubs and societies are unable to meet in person but may still meet online. Please contact the organisers for the most up to date information. Contact details can be found on page 2.

**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) closed at present**

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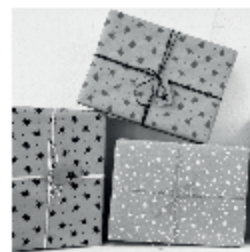
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