

Drayton Chronicle

March 2021

Bonfire on page 4

Photo: Editor

Editor: Maurice Puddick

Volume: 44 Issue: 2

CHRONICLE INFORMATION

The next **Drayton Chronicle** will be the April 2021 issue.

Editor: **Tony Holmes, 53 Whitehorns Way (531180).**

Key dates for subsequent Chronicles:

Issue for	Deadline for contributions:	Issue date:
April 2021	Friday 12th March - Adverts Monday 15th March for contributions	Friday 26th March

Archive copies of the Chronicle are available on the Drayton website: www.draytonvillage.co.uk The current copy will be available on or near the same date that printed copies are distributed.

NOTES for CONTRIBUTORS

Contributions to and advertisements in the Chronicle are most welcome. Please be sure always to include your name, address and (in case clarification is necessary) telephone number. Without names we will usually not print an item at all.

However, please also note that the editor has to ensure that each Chronicle fits exactly into an even number of printed pages. The editor therefore reserves the right to place, edit, shorten or even reject contributions as required.

A contribution or advertising request can be sent to us in one of three ways:

The best is by email to editor@draytonchronicle.net Your contributions should either be embedded in your email as plain text or attached as a rich-text or Microsoft Word document! Requests for advertisements should be emailed not to the editor but to advertising@draytonchronicle.net Please note that advertisements eventually need to be in Word format, 9cms wide and, for a single block advert, about 4.5cms high. Please head your email and label any attachments with a name distinctive to you, not just 'Chronicle'. Also, make sure the editor or advertising manager acknowledges your email within 2 or 3 days.

If you cannot send your contribution by email, send us a good quality paper version, using fairly large, simple black typescript, without underlining on white paper, A4 or smaller.

Finally, we do accept hand-written items. However, in this case please write the names of people and places in capital letters. This does save a lot of mistakes.

Paper contributions should be either placed in the Chronicle letter box (outside Vickery's shop on Drayton Green) or posted to Vickery's at 5 The Green, Drayton, Abingdon, OX14 4JA.

After the deadlines listed at the top of this page, only urgent items will be considered for inclusion and then only if emailed or delivered directly to the Editor's house by the Wednesday following the deadlines.

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Requests for advertisements should (preferably) be emailed to **Stephen Fearnley**, the Chronicle's Advertising Manager, at advertising@draytonchronicle.net or placed in the box at Vickery's. If you wish to discuss your requirements, please phone Stephen on **01235 531347**

FIRST TUESDAY CONNECTIONS

Are you feeling lonely, isolated or in need of some friendly company? Now, in these COVID affected times, the USUAL monthly tea and chat afternoons have had to be suspended, **BUT** the 'support group' aspect is continuing, by phone, with a volunteers rota calling round, at least once per week.

If you'd like a chat, with a friendly sympathetic voice, please call me (**Jean Hager**) on **531558**.



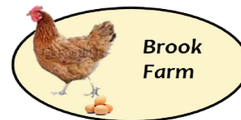
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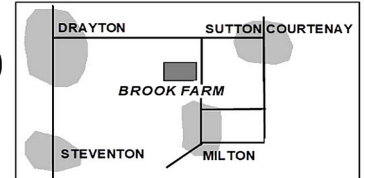


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Associate Priest Revd Meg Heywood 01235 537100
Associate Priest Revd Rosie Bruce 07707 087131
Pro-Warden Mrs Linda Johnson 01235 527521
Pro-Warden Mrs Val Cross 01235 535183

We are really pleased to say that the church remains open daily for private, individual prayer! Sunday – Saturday, 10 am—3 pm. For everyone's continuing good health, once in the building, please follow the guidelines for social distancing and use the hand sanitiser provided. Thank you. REGULAR SERVICES – We are sorry to have to tell you that there will be not be any Sunday services in Church for the time being. The situation will be reviewed on the 8th of March.

There are resources for Home Worship on the DAMASCUS Parish website www.damascusparish.org.uk or join one of the many 'virtual' services such as Oxford Diocese Church at Home at 10.00 a.m. www.oxforddiocese.online.church. Listen to 'Sunday Worship' on Radio 4 at 8.10am. Also watch Songs of Praise, BBC1 at 1.15pm. There is also the Church of England free phone line, 'Daily Hope' 0800 804 8044, offering a selection of prayers, hymns, songs and reflections. Please let us know if you are self-isolating and need help of any kind, so that prayer and practical support can be offered in a safe way.

A Prayer
Heavenly Father,
This time is in your hands.
Help us to look to you for hope and love.
Knowing that you are near to us.
May we feel the serenity of your endless love and compassion within us,
and with our family and friends.
Be with us all as we travel from winter into spring,
From darkness to light with you by our side.
Amen

YOU STAY WE PRAY

28th Feb – 6th Mar Chestnut Drive; Holly Lane; Walnut Way; Willow Way
7th - 13th Mar Furlongs; Plough Lane; Furrows End; Lammas Land; Virgate; Fallowfield Close
14th – 20th Mar Lockway
21st – 27th Mar Whitehorns Way
28th Mar – 3rd Apr Corneville Road; Crabtree Lane; Lesparre Close



DAMASCUS Parish Letter

We're all in the same storm, but not in the same boat!

Many of us are aware of the differing nature of the cost that the pandemic has had on people's lives over the last year. Some of these costs have been in the public eye, such as the NHS, and schools, and others less so, the asylum seekers, homeless and the loneliness experienced by many in isolation.

This darkness and uncertainty have evoked some fundamental questions about life: a quest for the values that build a better society, how do we relate to each other with compassion, dignity, and justice? Within the last year so much of the familiarity of everyday life has been stripped away and the impact of COVID-19 on friends and loved ones has led many to think about their own mortality. Many of us are trying to make sense of it all, whatever boat we're in.

In the Bible there is a story about Jesus and his friends being caught in a storm. Some of Jesus' friends were skilled fishermen with a vast experience of storms on Lake Galilee. Yet, this storm must have been worse than any they had previously known because they realised that all their knowledge and skill could not prevent the boat capsizing and they were about to be drowned. The story says that in all this Jesus was blissfully asleep! The Living Bible tells us what happened next: '*Frantically they wakened him, shouting, "Teacher, don't you even care that we are all about to drown?" (Mark 4:38)* His friends learn something more about Jesus as he speaks to the storm and they arrive safely at the shore.

As Christians, we too have been caught up in storm and are having to look deeper into our faith and discover again some of the traditions that have been handed down to us. The strong affirmation of the value of each person to God, the importance speaking for those who are on the edges of our society, and we too are experiencing the suffering that has been common to everyone. We have been challenged to look again at the spiritual nature of our faith for ourselves rather than relying on others – finding God in nature or the more simplified quieter lifestyle, reading our Bibles, drawing on the deeper spiritual treasures of contemplation and companionship with God. Making sense of the suffering and cost of Covid in the framework of what we know of Jesus and his death and resurrection.

May all of us, whatever boat we're in, discover that Jesus is really with us – He is there in each of our boats, ready to be called upon. Let's get to know something more about Him – He wants to be part of all we're going through. The stiller of storms and the healer of our hearts.

Meg Heywood. Associate minister in the DAMASCUS Parish team.

Frogmore Tree Bridleway

Letters to the Editor



Photo: Editor & below

Hello,

I am not sure if anyone can help with this but as I was having a walk with my family today (Sun 17th Jan), we have spotted a pile of half-burned rubbish.



Photo: Monika

It is located on Frogmore Tree ByWay when you walk from Drayton to Marcham (through the tarmac road) and it is close to Old Canal and I believe next to the Drayton canal.

I have reported this to the Vale of White Horse District Council but was wondering if maybe local people have spotted some-

thing suspicious around this place?

As I mentioned the rubbish was half-burned but there are still so many metal pieces left around the pile.

I am attaching some photos I've taken. Perhaps this information could be passed to people in the village so they can help to find the people who've done it.

Thank you.

Regards, **Monika Rumianowska**



Still burning when the Editor took the main photo and the above on Feb 2nd.



Photo: Stephen Fearnley

Dear Editor,

There are families with children in our country today who are without the means to pay for a roof over their heads or for food to eat. Some are now homeless and trying to survive on food banks and charity. These sad facts are universally known and not in dispute.

There are people who, in the face of these facts, think it is morally OK to spend thousands of pounds on their pet public art projects.

They say Please do not complain, we have no choice under contractual law. Well I am complaining as loudly as I can and I wish other Philistines like me would do so too.. No manmade law is permanently unchangeable; not since the Law of the Medes and the Persians. In civilised society they can be, and often are, changed by public consent as circumstances change.

Someone once asked those listening to Him Who of you, if his child asked for bread, would give him a stone instead?

Do we want to answer Come to Drayton, we've done exactly that!?

Sadly, if we do, not all the nuts will be on the village green.

Alan Bourne, 70 Steventon Road, Drayton. tel. 01235 531761

Dear Editor,

I had advance notice of Alan Bourne's letter deploring the difficulties that many people face in these troubled times, a sentiment with which, I am sure, we all agree. However, he does so by linking them with Drayton's current expenditure on public art, and I thought it would be helpful if I put the matter in context.

Although it has been much debated at the time and since, such expenditure was a non-negotiable requirement of the funding received by all Neighbourhood Development Plans. In Drayton we have, at least, found a practical use for it. I do not know what the penalties would be if we diverted those funds elsewhere, but I am sure they would not be welcome.

Yours sincerely

Andrew Bax

Former Chairman, Drayton Neighbourhood Development Plan

To: editor@draytonchronicle.net

It was interesting to read about the former brick works in Drayton in the Feb edition. In the early 20th century it was owned by the Clarke Family. In St Peter's churchyard (opposite the church, under the yew tree on the right). You will find a headstone inscribed as follows: In loving memory of Emma Clarke died 26 January 1926 aged 66 years and Walter Bernard Clarke her husband died 27 February 1931 aged 69 years.

The headstone is made of bricks from their own Brickyard. I have never come across a brick built memorial before and I imagine it was allowed because of their connection with brick making.

Josie Midwinter (former vicar of St Peter's church)

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FREE NO OBLIGATION QUOTATIONS

Dear Editor

I had a telephone call last week from Gerald Redman's son in law sadly telling me that Gerald had died in the small hours of Boxing Day.

Gerald had been a long term resident of the Drayton Alms houses. He moved there in 1997 from his former home in Corneville Road but in 2018 he went to Brookfield Care Home by his own decision when he was no longer able to manage on his own.

I am sure many of you will remember Gerald bicycling far and wide and when he was no longer able to cycle striding out in all weathers. Some of us felt summer was on the way when he walked with no shirt on!

Gerald knew everyone and everyone knew Gerald and I feel I am not alone in saying that with his death this is the end of an era.

Yours sincerely

Camilla King

Clerk to the Trustees

Drayton Alms houses



**Kennington
Memory
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Living well with dementia

Registered Charity 1179830

How has lockdown been for you? We have all got frustrated at times at the restrictions on our lives and had to be patient. How much worse it must be for those living with dementia who don't fully comprehend what it's all about, and for those caring for them when there has been no relief from their constant responsibility and the demands of being stuck at home.

When writing this we don't yet know what the Prime Minister will have announced on 22nd February about the easing or continuation of the lockdown. Hopefully with vaccinations rolling out apace, a date for lockdown let-up will now be in sight. Once this happens, it is likely that a Day Centre, such as that run by Kennington Memory Club, will be able to resume their sessions. These will operate with everyone who comes into the building having been vaccinated. There will also be all the necessary infection control procedures in place, so members and their families should have confidence that they are as safe as they possibly can be when at the Day Centre.

We're sure there may be potential members who would welcome the chance to attend, having been severely limited in what activities have been possible during lockdown, and contact with others outside their own household having been very limited. Carers may also look forward to the chance of a short period of respite during the Day Centre hours. If this is the case, please contact the organiser, Helen, on 07853 883496 to discuss getting a name on the waiting list, so that you will be contacted as soon as the start date can be confirmed.

kenningtonmemoryclub.org.uk

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Young People matter...



There was an elderly gent on Any Answers last weekend whose opinions really worried me. Now that he had been vaccinated, he thought that he should be able to spend his pension on going back to the world travel he had been used to. Forgetting the problem of the impact his travelling would have on global warming, most

people I know of my generation agree that, whilst we bask in the confidence that vaccination has given us, it is increasingly important that we spare a thought for our young people. Of course, it is right that vaccination has, so far, been focused on the most vulnerable, and that far more elderly people than young people have been hospitalised and died from Covid. But when society looks back at this period, I have no doubt that it will be the long term impact of Covid on younger people that will concern them most.

Young families with small children have been particularly badly affected. Trying to cope with home working, home schooling and lockdown have been a major challenge for them all. The stress on family life has affected almost every family to some extent. The potential long term damage of missed education is still not understood. Children are remarkably resilient, but we do not know what the long term damage to children's mental health will be. Confused and inconsistent announcements from the Department of Education have added to the stress felt by children and their parents.

The impact of the A level fiasco on secondary age children has certainly not helped the confidence of young people, many of whom are not certain what their qualifications are worth. The stress on University and college students has been just as severe. Trying to manage accommodation lockdown, online learning, and how to pay fees are making many feel that further education is simply not worth it. Others choose to stick at it if only to wait for job prospects to improve.

Away from University and college, young people face excess competition for too few jobs. The rising unemployment in young people is very worrying.

There is the potential for a "lost generation" – potentially less wealthy and less healthy than their parents and grandparents, growing up with the threat of global warming and further pandemics. It would be very easy to become utterly depressed.

What can we do about it? Much depends on national government, but there are things we can do locally and there are things that are already being done.

This is not the first time I have written about the Damascus Youth Project which serves the villages of Drayton, Appleford, Milton, Sutton Courtenay and Steventon. With professionally qualified youth workers and funded by all the Parishes, young people in our area have a support system denied to many in Oxfordshire. This work has continued throughout the pandemic. Supporting, encouraging and believing in the power of young people to improve society, the work of Damascus has been noticed both locally and nationally.

For the first time, there was an acknowledgment in the recent budgets of all political parties that much more help was needed by young people than was currently on offer. We have moved on from the idea that youth work is simply about offering youth clubs everywhere. Valuable as they are, protecting and engaging with vulnerable young people is an activity requiring expertise. Trained experts, as offered by the Damascus Youth project, are the obvious way forward. It will, of course, require financing. Too much of Damascus's time is spent worrying about fund raising. Properly financed, they could reach far more young people.

So, well done Roxy, Rita and all of the Damascus team and thank you for all the work you do.

How can the rest of us help? Some of us could offer jobs and apprenticeships to young people. Having a job, any job, is an important part of building confidence and self esteem. If you have a particular skill or position of influence, offer your services to Damascus who will always welcome it. All of us can help to make young people feel appreciated and that they are the future.

If this sounds like an angry rant, well it is. It is my generation that have created the mess. The least we can do is to stop worrying about our own, relatively fortunate selves and worry about the future of our young people.

Richard Webber Cllr

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Three glorious signs

Greetings again, and this time we are going to ask for your input with the entry signs for our village.

As you can see from the images on the following pages, we have had some suggestions from our chosen artists, Julie and Ron of Planet Art, as to which directions their beautiful artwork could depict?

The signs are required to incorporate the 30 mile an hour sign and the word 'Drayton' (obviously). We need to decide what else should be included:

1. **Twinning reference?** As most of you probably know, we are twinned with Lesparre Medoc, with the finalising ceremony here in Drayton in 2001. (Please see Stephen Fearnley's article on page 14). It has been suggested that we take down the twinning signs at the three entry points to the village, in order for the artwork to be seen without distractions. We need to keep the 30 mile an hour speed limit obviously, and the Drayton sign, but do we need to keep the twinning sign? I know a lot of you were involved with the twinning, and might feel strongly about this, but times move on, and as Stephen has pointed out, enthusiasm seems to have waned. By removing the signs, we will not be affecting the actual twinning of the two villages. It would just give our beautiful new artwork more prominence.
2. **Use the word "village"?** We are exploring whether we are required to keep the word "Village" in the signs. The artists have suggested that the signs will be more striking if they just state "Drayton", and we understand that the official postal address is in fact just "Drayton". We welcome feedback on this point.
3. **Ideas for content?** And this is the creative and fun bit! We would like your suggestions as to what should be included in the signs. So far, we have had:
 - a) Walnuts, which is a given.
 - b) Then pigs (Drayton used to be a part of Berkshire not so long ago, and there is a rare breed pig called a Berkshire pig). Relevant now?
 - c) Bricks (Drayton used to be a brick making centre with the clay pit behind the Wheatsheaf being a large source of material for thriving brickworks).
 - d) The church
 - e) A horse! Yes, Drayton is so called because of the dray horses that used to be washed down at the old pond that used to be in front of the old schoolhouse).
 - f) Any other suggestions that you think makes Drayton special to you? Children, please feel free to add your ideas.

The following pages show examples of designs put forward by Planet Art.

We welcome all ideas, although please note not all of them may be represented in the final design. Please respond by simply sending an email to publicart@draytonpc.org by 10 March.

So, let this be the **sign** of the times, make a **signifi-**cant impact on our village, and **signal** a new beginning. I had better stop now before I think of any more puns.

More nuts!

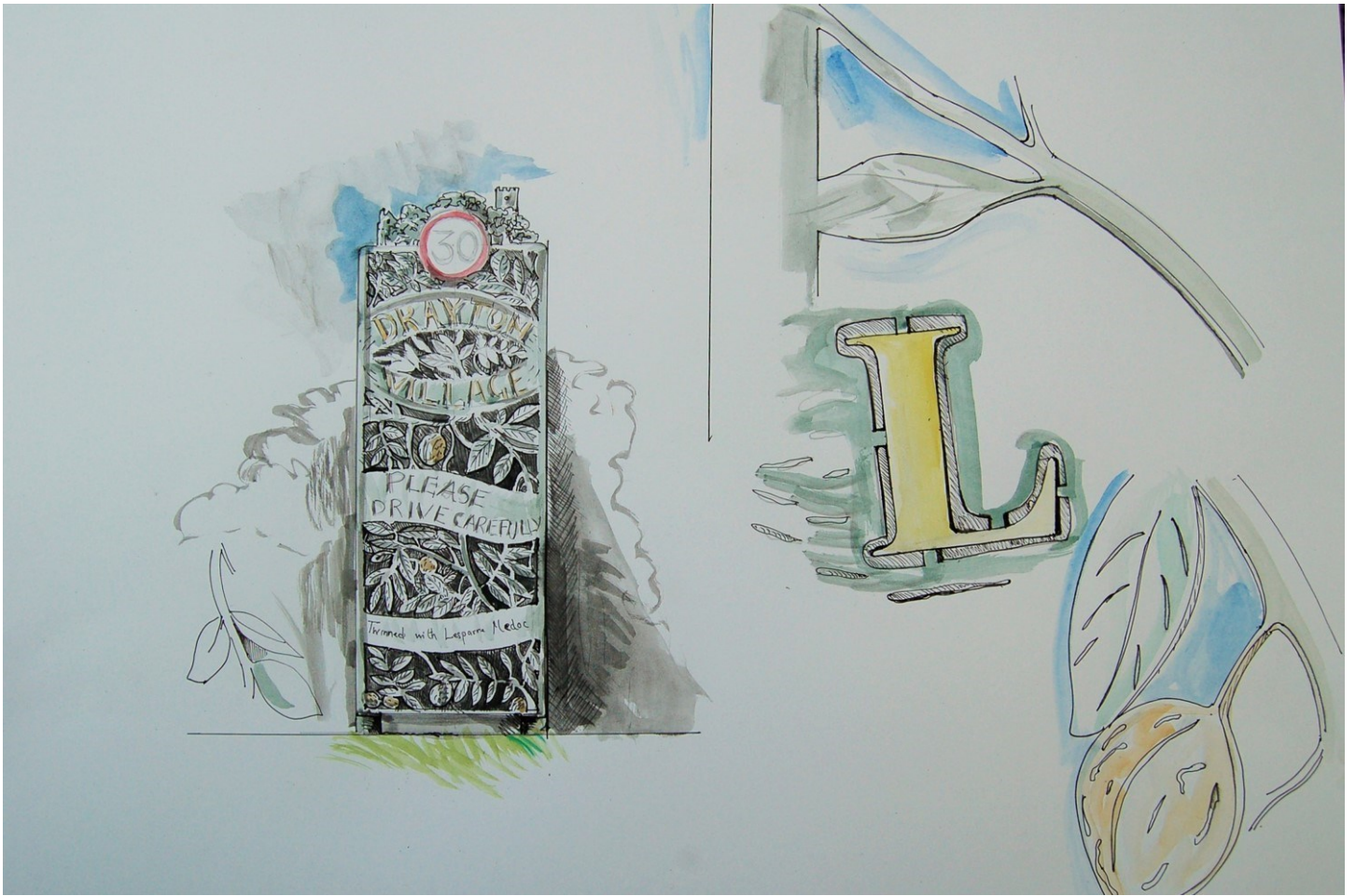


The feedback from our walnut survey has been a resounding success. Taking into account the emails on our public art address, as well as the ones logged at Lawrence Vickery's, the numbers are: 44 pro and 3 against, so a resounding success. Now it is up to the council to implement the project and we will keep you updated. Questions that have been asked are:

- a) Will the walnuts be held in place to stop them being nicked?
Yes, they are entirely vandal proof. They will be pre-cast with an integrated steel rod coming out of them, which will then be embedded in a block of concrete which will be cast on site, under neath the ground.
- b) What will they be made of?
Concrete. The artist works in steel and concrete, and tells me that when they are painted, one can't tell them apart. Concrete is just as durable.
- c) Will the colour be permanent?
Yes it will.
- d) Will they be put on the edge to stop cars from going on the grass?
Yes, as close to the edge as possible.
- e) How big are they?
40 cms wide or 124.6 cm circumference - enough to stop any cars/vans/lorries from arguing with them.
- f) How many will there be?
Seventeen.
- g) When will they be installed?
Timing will be announced when plans are definite.

Nutting ventured, **nutting** gained, so I think we've cracked it. I'd better **nut** go on,

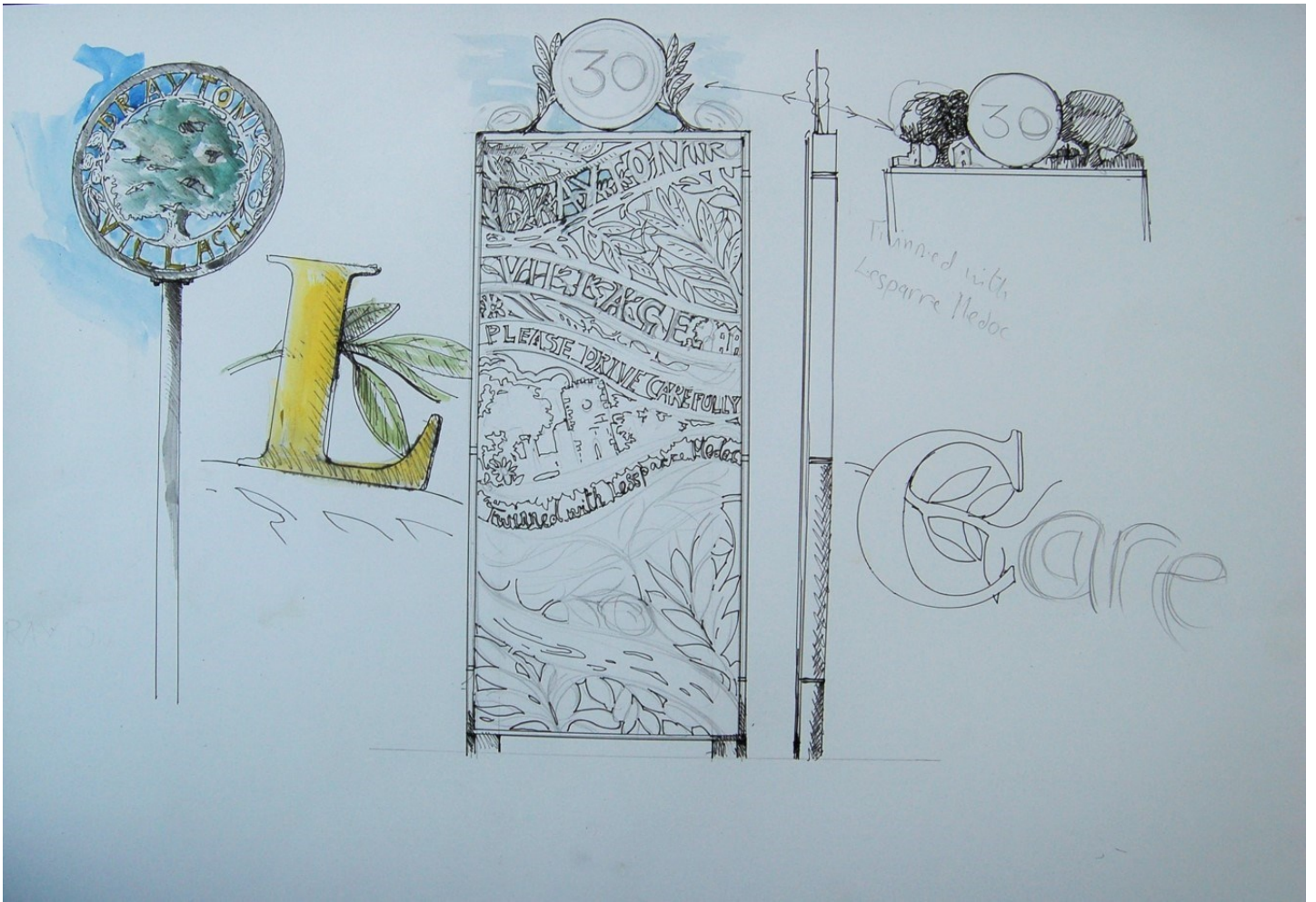
Pervin Shahin



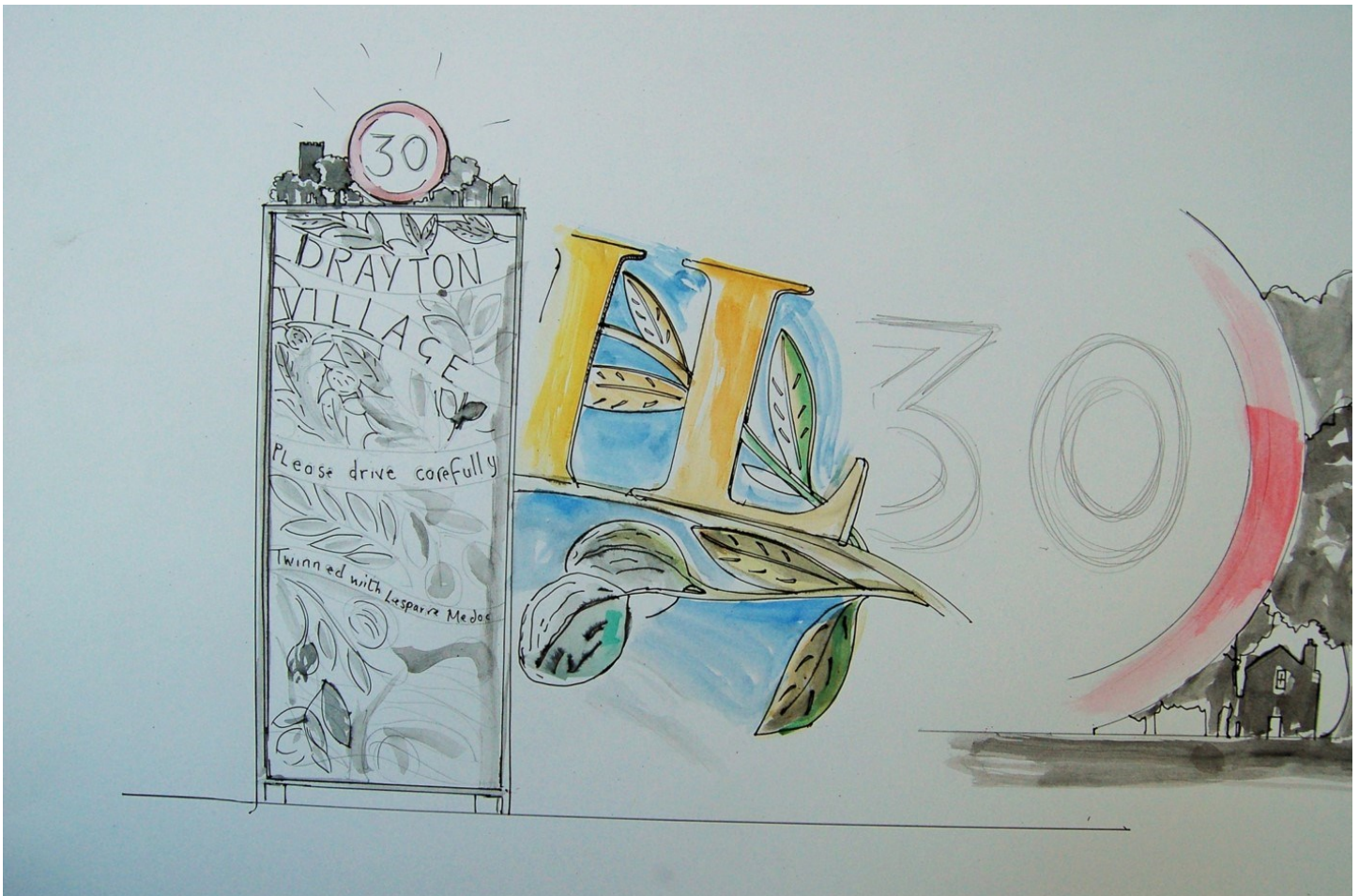
Idea to use existing structures. Leaving the 30 sign adding in laser cut galvanised and painted decorative signs with the same information on. Influences Walnut trees, iconic buildings in the village St Peters Church.



Alternative ideas. Screens will be cut out so drivers are able to see through them. Existing rotten wood barriers taken out. Looking at the state of them they only have a couple years of life left. Rotten at the base.



Alternative design ideas. Flowing, using canal as reference.



Information which appears on them will be part of the consultation with the steering group. 2mm galvanised and painted. Using existing supports.

Letter from David Johnston MP for Wantage



I'm trying to get everyone to complete my Grove Station Survey by midday on 1st March. I've been campaigning for Grove Station to reopen since I was elected and the purpose of the survey is to show the level of local support and give the Government an indication that it would actually be used if it

was reopened – so please complete it if you haven't yet!

In the Armed Forces Bill Debate recently I was able to highlight our constituency's contribution to the country's efforts – not just in being home to institutions like the Defence Academy at Shrivenham and the 11 EOD and Search Regiment in Didcot – but in service by some of my predecessors, too. As most of you will know, when the seat was Abingdon the MP was Airey Neave, who had a proud record of service in World War 2; his predecessor was Ralph Glyn, who served in World War 1 and was awarded a military cross.

We were having the debate because since 1688, the consent of parliament has been required for the raising and keeping of a standing army. In modern times, this means that every 5 years parliament is asked to give consent to an Armed Forces Bill, without which there is no means to ensure service personnel obey orders. The Government used the Bill to do other things such as update the Service Justice System, extend the use of posthumous pardons for abolished sexual offences and further enshrine the Armed Forces Covenant in law. The latter means local authorities will have to have due regard to service in decisions they make about health, education and housing – and rightly so.

I take a particular interest in the armed forces as my dad served in the army for 18 years. The army has of course played a key role in our superb vaccination efforts – at the time of writing we have passed the Government's 15 million target, which is a remarkable achievement in such a short space of time. From volunteering several times I have seen first-hand the fantastic efforts of our medical staff and volunteers – and the relief local residents feel when they have their first jab.

I recently became one of the Conservative Environment Network's Net Zero Champions. What this means in practice is I will be campaigning for nature-based solutions to help tackle climate change, including stopping the sale of peat for use in horticulture, protecting and improving our blue carbon assets and undertaking a national capital audit. More on this in the future – and some other campaigns.

While I am not doing face to face meetings at the moment, I am still doing telephone/Zoom surgery appointments – to book one of these or contact me about something else, do email me at david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk

St Peter's Churchyard

Thank you for doing your part in clearing up the grave of your loved ones in our churchyard last year.

This year we will be having a "spring clean" tidy up again on 27th March.

Just a reminder, the diocesan policy is to be eco-friendly, only cut flowers, biodegradable wreaths or silk flowers are to be left on the graves.

If you have put plastic flowers and/or Christmas wreaths on your family's grave, could you please take them away before the 27th of March?

Thank you.

Val and Linda

Prowardens



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A letter from Andy Cooke, your local councillor...

Coronavirus

Cases in Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse are still dropping, albeit still somewhat higher than the levels we reached late in the November lockdown. They are, though, a LONG way down from the peak in early January; we just need to stay careful a while longer.

As I write this, we have achieved our first target of vaccinations: 15 million of the most vulnerable people have received a first dose. Of course, it takes three weeks before protection has fully kicked in (so only 6.5 million are yet protected – but that number is increasing rapidly day by day as more people pass 21 days since being vaccinated).

The spring and summer we will have depends almost solely on how well this continues and how high vaccine take-up remains. It is, fortunately, very high at the moment – the conspiracy theorists haven't got much traction.

The lockdown is bringing down cases rapidly; hospitalisations follow this ten days later, and deaths ten days after this. Vaccination gives us an exit to avoid being trapped into a lockdown-release-lockdown cycle.

I know some people are worried about the speed of development; I did cover in a previous column how these have built upon earlier work on SARS-1 and MERS over the years, but I was struck by an analogy from a professional doctor:

"If I asked you how long it takes to get across Central London in rush hour, you might give me one answer. But if the Queen urgently needs to get through central London, with her police escort clearing the way and all that kind of thing, then it's going to be a much quicker journey. Everything is cleared out of the way, she doesn't deal with traffic jams or anything like that. And that's what they did with this vaccine.

"They cleared everything out of the way, focussed on this vaccine, pulled everybody together and had people working non-stop. So it has been rushed in the sense that it's been done quickly, but it's not in the sense that it's not been taken through every step of the process that needs to actually be done."

The MHRA and NHS have also been watching for side-effects (especially negative ones, or any hints of long-term ones) like hawks. Well over a hundred million people have now received the vaccine worldwide. It's not unheard-of to feel fluey for a day or so as your immune system starts to power up, but this is about it.

In addition, the cynic in me has noted a few cases where rich and powerful people around the world have cheated or jumped the queue to get vaccinated early (such as the Canadian casino boss who flew to the Yukon and posed as a motel worker to jump the queue). If these people are falling over each other to get this vaccine (some are offering thousands to try to get a private vaccination early) – well, I'm not going to step back and give them my place in line.

As before:

If you need any help, or feel you may need it, during this lockdown and beyond, please contact our Community Hub (which is always staffed regardless of the major incident): Telephone: 01235 422600

Website: www.southoxon.gov.uk/communityhub

Email: communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk

Please don't hesitate to contact our Community Hub on the telephone number, website, or email address above.

Local businesses – please sign up to the South and Vale Business Support mailing list by visiting www.svbs.co.uk - it's the quickest and most direct way to find out as soon as grant funding is available locally.

There is more advice and options for support at <https://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/vale-of-white-horse-district-council/coronavirus-community-support/support-for-people-who-need-help/>, which has the Community Hub details, links for financial guidance, food banks, and Housing Support.

Christmas Support Payments (Wet-led pubs) – deadline extended!

The application deadline for the Christmas Support Payment for wet-led pubs that have been severely impacted over the Christmas period due to temporary local restrictions has been extended by a month to 28 February 2021. This one-off grant provides £1,000 to pubs that receive less than 50 per cent of their income from food sales.

Additional Restrictions Grants for businesses

The latest Additional Restrictions Grant scheme for businesses is now open for applications.

This is the discretionary scheme to provide financial support to businesses who have been excluded or unsuccessful from other government grant schemes.

We're processing applications on a first come, first served basis, so please encourage businesses to apply immediately. To find out if they're eligible and to apply for the grant, local business owners should visit the Additional Restrictions Grant page of our business support website (go to svbs.co.uk – and please sign up for the South and Vale Business Support newsletter if you haven't signed up already).

Symptom-free testing centre

We are working with partners in Oxfordshire to deliver a new symptom-free testing system, which has begun by testing employees from Thames Valley Police and Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue.

Around 1 in 3 people with COVID-19 have no symptoms but can still pass it on and so regular testing of key workers will help us to stop the spread of the virus.

We can now confirm that one of the three sites providing this service is at The Beacon in Wantage.

The initial roll-out of the testing to blue-light responders has been going well, and the centres will soon be providing the service to other groups, including health and social care staff who are not covered by the national initiative. This service is available on an invitation-only basis and we're working with employers to identify staff who need testing.

Garden Waste

With great relief, the Garden Waste programme is back in motion! Collections should restart from the week beginning 22nd February. This was delayed due to many of our bin crews being off sick or needing to self-

isolate; we have just reached enough levels to restart, albeit on tight staffing levels (we're hopeful they won't dip again and cause further disruption).

That's all for this month. We look to be (finally!) on the last lap with this damned virus. Stay safe a

while longer, get your vaccination when it's offered, and we'll be able to look forward to a good summer.

Stay safe,

Andy



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Drayton Twinning - video

Two years ago, (April 2018) I wrote about the Drayton twinning group and its activities and about its failure to flourish. I asked at the time if there was anyone who might be interested in pursuing twinning or who might like to be put in touch with members in the French group. One person responded but did not follow up their interest.

I am writing now to record the fact that it is twenty years since Drayton twinned with Lesparre Medoc. Sadly, no group visits have taken place for several years but individuals have stayed in touch. Recently a video of the twinning ceremony has been uploaded to the web for anyone who might be interested. It shows the ceremony in the village hall including the signing of the agreement. A copy of the charter can be seen on the website along with some details of the history of the association. The ceremony in Drayton actually took place in August 2001 following the original ceremony in Lesparre the previous August. Twinning information can be found at: www.draytonvillage.co.uk/village-information/drayton-twinning/. There is also a link to the village website from the Chronicle website. As I said in my previous article we had regular visits alternating between us going to Lesparre and them coming to us. Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the visits and around 90 of us were involved during that time. Our visits were always interesting and informative.

I thought it might be nice to include a couple of photographs from our visits. In between cultural visits we spent a lot of time sitting down eating superb meals – often al fresco – and sampling the local wines. You might be interested in a view from a defence bunker at Soulac-sur-Mer just north of Lesparre which we visited in August 2010 and a game of boules played in Drayton.



The village is receiving new signage at the entrances and in view of the absence of support over the last few years for twinning, it is planned that twinning signs will not be incorporated into the new signage. I would be happy to put villagers in touch with people in Lesparre should anyone wish to visit on a family/exchange basis but cannot guarantee success. There remains a lot of good will between the two groups with occasional personal visits. Anyone who would like to get in touch can call me on (01235 531347).

Stephen Fearnley



This year is the Centenary of the foundation of the Royal British Legion and although we have only a small branch we plan to celebrate the year so far as is possible.

We will have another Tea Party for members in the summer and a Curry Lunch on Remembrance Sunday in November.

The Committee meets on Zoom on 15th Match for its bi-monthly meeting and will discuss plans and other possible activities. We are keen to attract new members, particularly those with a service background but all are welcome. New arrivals in the villages who are interested should contact me on Tel 832077.

Our President, Pat Bucklan, decided to stand down at the end of last year and the Committee agreed to let the position remain unfilled for the present. We now have a new Treasurer, Simon Tupe, following the retirement after 18 years' service of Rodney Clewley.

Nick Thompson Chairman **Steventon and District RBL**

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Youth & Community Acting Together

So, March has arrived, and the team are in full flow with the expanded staff team we are out delivering more than ever. Our support sessions in the village have given the young people a safe place to express and work on their concerns, we have delivered sessions around communication, positive relationships, maintaining motivation, improving and maintaining good sleep patterns, building positive mental health as well as delivering a workshop around the perception of tobacco.

These support sessions have helped to create mini success stories for our young people. Whether it be an improvement at home with communication and talking about the tough stuff or celebrating better mental health and reflecting on how they got to that point, its great to see and hear!

“Because of all the lockdowns I’ve had trouble finding the motivation to complete my work. Since coming to these support sessions and working with Roxy I’ve managed to get back on top of my college work, find the time to speak to friends and feel so much better for it.”

As an integral tool to our delivery this team expansion has meant that we are now able to increase the amount of street work we can deliver during this time of great need. Keep an eye out for the team as they regularly walk the streets in the evening as well as the gazebo popping up for our mobile support session.

We have a new walking project for the older residents of the village! The idea of this project is to get more people out exercising and getting that important fresh air! The team have devised a daily target that raises and falls over the course of 30days to try and achieve or beat. If you would like to take part in the challenge and have the walking chart and pedometer safely delivered and collected after, then speak to the team today.

Instagram live sessions have had a successful implementation into our work plan. This is a free space to chat with our youth workers and play fun interactive games together. Details as to when and who is going to be live are released on our social media pages each week, you can find them below!

Do contact any of us on jamesq.ycat@gmail.com, jakef.ycat@gmail.com, roxy.ycat@gmail.com, emi-ly.adyp@gmail.com

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RAINBOWS IN DRAYTON !



Rainbows continue to meet on Zoom this term, and much look forward to resuming face to face meetings as soon as they

are permitted to do so.

I would like to thank the Rainbow Leader Elaine, the seven Rainbows and their parents for their continued help and enthusiasm.

If you would like to know more about Rainbows please visit www.girlguiding.org.uk and look at information for parents, or contact:

draytonrainbows@gmail.com

Mary Thompson

Abbey District Commissioner.

Coffee Break Quiz winner!

Congratulations to Heather Mole from the High Street who won the Bird Name quiz in the February Chronicle with the correct anagram of 'COMEDY'.

Many thanks to all those who entered the competition – a great response as usual!

Margaret Inger

The Drayton Short Mat Bowls Club have been Informed that sadly a former member of the club, **Anna Bartlett** has passed away. She and her deceased husband Maurice will be remembered for the fun times at various club Christmas dances. Anna always made sure that anyone on their own was encouraged to join in. She will be missed by her friends.

Val Locke, Chair



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Neighbourhood Watch isn't about being a nosy neighbour! Groups of neighbours come together to form a 'scheme', sharing Neighbourhood Alerts from Neighbourhood Watch, the police, Action Fraud, and other agencies. This information relates to both local and national issues.

During the pandemic and particularly during lockdowns, when many of us can't come together face-to-face, receiving regular information really helps people to feel part of their community and in touch with one another.

If you'd like to become a Neighbourhood Watch member, or would like more information, please get in touch by emailing nhwsuttoncourtenay@outlook.com or call 07762 597118.

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Friends of the Ridgeway - Swire Ridgeway Arts Prize

Your readers, and particularly the artists amongst them, may well be interested to hear further news about the Swire Ridgeway Arts Prize and associated Exhibition to be held in April 2021.

The Friends of the Ridgeway were very disappointed to have to cancel the Swire Ridgeway Arts Prize in 2020. However, we are delighted to announce that the



Swire Ridgeway Arts Prize will be held next year in in April 2021.

If practical and possible, there will be an exhibition in Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall, Uffington; if not possible

there will be an online exhibition and prize giving.

The aim of the competition is to bring The Ridgeway to life not only as a long distance trail but as an artistic inspiration, and to show The Ridgeway, its history and environs, in all their aspects throughout all seasons. The theme of the competition is 'Spirit of the Ridgeway'. Prizes are offered for works of painting, sculpture, photography and writing (poetry or prose), with separate prizes in each category and an overall winner. The prizes will be awarded at the Ridgeway Friends Day on Sunday 25 April 2021 or online at that date.

If possible there will be an exhibition of works submitted for the competition. It will be open to the public on Saturday 24 April and Sunday 25 April 2021 in the Thomas Hughes Memorial Hall, Uffington (Broad Street, Uffington, Oxfordshire, SN7 7RA), located in the centre of the beautiful and historic rural village of Uffington in the Vale of the White Horse. If a physical exhibition is not possible, there will be an online exhibition and prize giving. The Ridgeway Friends Day will be on Sunday 25 April 2021 which will include our AGM as well as the arts prize giving.

A flyer for the Exhibition is attached, and full details are available on our web-site, at : www.ridgewayfriends.org.uk

We hope that the competition and resulting exhibition will be as interesting and exciting as last year.

I shall of course be glad to respond to any questions.

Anthony Burdall

Chairman, Friends of the Ridgeway

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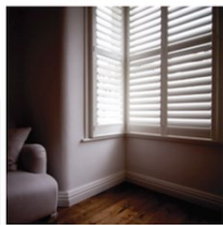
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