

# Drayton Chronicle

September 2021

**Soldiers of Oxfordshire**  
The art of E. H. Shepard (p.8)

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Editor: Maurice (Mo) Puddick

Volume: 44 Issue: 8

## CHRONICLE INFORMATION

The next **Drayton Chronicle** will be the **October 2021** issue edited by: **Tony Holmes, 53 Whitehorns Way (531180)**.

Issue for	Deadline for contributions:	Issue date:
October 2021	Friday 10th Sept - Adverts Monday 13th Sept for contributions	Friday 25th September

Archive copies of the Chronicle are available on the Drayton website: [www.draytonvillage.co.uk](http://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](mailto: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](mailto: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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All advertising **MUST** be paid for up-front, either in cash or via a cheque made payable to 'The Drayton Chronicle' and placed in the box at or sent to Vickery's.

Requests for advertisements should (preferably) be emailed to Stephen Fearnley, the Chronicle's Advertising Manager, at [advertising@draytonchronicle.net](mailto: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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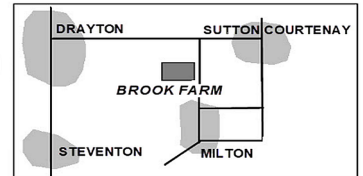
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part of the DAMASCUS Parish

[www.damascusparish.org.uk](http://www.damascusparish.org.uk)

Rector	Revd Helen Kendrick	01235 848297
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

## REGULAR SERVICES

We are very pleased that public worship can take place following guidelines from the Government and the Diocese of Oxford.

Sunday 8.00 am Holy Communion on 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of the month only.

Sunday 9.45 am Holy Communion (CW), except 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday when a non-Eucharist Morning Praise is held.

## Thursday morning service

The service will now start at 9:45 a.m. on the 1st and 3rd Thursdays will be a Holy Communion service with the 2nd and 4th Thursday given to Celtic Morning prayer.

For everyone's safety, once in the building we will all be expected to wear masks (unless exempt) and sanitise our hands and remain socially distant from those who are not in our bubble. We now have the joy of being able to sing.

We look forward to welcoming you.

You can continue to listen to 'Sunday Worship' on Radio 4 at 8.10am. Also watch Songs of Praise, (usually BBC1 at 1.15pm, but just check for times!). 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.

## PARISH REGISTER

### Baptisms

25th July - Rose Evelyn Mary Ellis

1<sup>st</sup> August - Louie Loe Watts

1<sup>st</sup> August - Olivia Mary Edge

### Funeral

27<sup>th</sup> July - Brian Dore

## YOU STAY WE PRAY, JUNE 2021

29<sup>th</sup> Aug - 4<sup>th</sup> Sept Binning Close; Haywards Road  
5<sup>th</sup> - 11<sup>th</sup> Sept Sutton Wick Lane; Greenacres;

Newman Lane; Conifer Drive

12<sup>th</sup>-18<sup>th</sup> Sept Hilliat Fields; Lyford Close

19<sup>th</sup>-25<sup>th</sup> Sept Manor Close; The Green

26<sup>th</sup> Sept- 2<sup>nd</sup> Oct High Street; Chiers Drive; Cheers Farm; Halls Close



## Brolly days

### Morning Praise services with a difference!

The alternative to going away!

### All Welcome!

Sept 19<sup>th</sup> St Peter's goes to the Caribbean

We look forward to seeing you

### PEBBLES

If you have a baby or toddler, you would be so welcome to join 'Pebbles'. We will meet again, on a Wednesday morning from 10.00-11.30a.m. starting on September 8<sup>th</sup>. Please email: [suedraytonpebbles@outlook.com](mailto:suedraytonpebbles@outlook.com) for more information. Look forward to seeing you!



## DRAYTON ANTIQUE COLLECTORS & VINTAGE FAIR

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Drayton, Oxon

OX144LG

### **DATES FOR 2021**

Sunday 5th September

No fair October

Sunday 7th November

Sunday 5th December

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## Letters to the Editor...

Dear Editor,

We are organising a history of Steventon exhibition for the 10th October. Do any Drayton residents have any old photographs, newspaper cuttings etc. that we could borrow. Of particular interest would be old parish magazines covering Steventon & Drayton from the 19th century.

Please contact: Dick Bosley Tel: 01235 835591 or [rbosley@talktalk.net](mailto:rbosley@talktalk.net)

Dear Maurice (Editor)

A very warm welcome to Tim & Nicky and their three boys, Hugo, Louis & Jamie who have moved into Church Lane from Long Wittenham.

Many thanks

Susan Brooks Agent 10

## The Arts Society, Abingdon

The committee of the Arts Society in Abingdon has in the past supported art projects for young people, for example 'Clear Sky' which provides play and creative arts therapy. The Arts Society recently decided they would like to support another local project. Leaders of the Damascus youth project have planned art activities for its young members which they hope will occupy and enthuse them through the summer holidays, one of the main activities being photography.



In order to provide support a member of the Arts Society committee who is also a Drayton resident, Pervin Shahin, generously offered to open her beautiful garden to the Society's members on two afternoons in August.

On both occasions the sun shone and the weather was perfect. The garden is glorious, intriguingly designed and ablaze with colour. Society members provided quantities of delicious cakes and Pervin and her husband, Lark, provided tea from their enormous decorative teapot and array of exotic tea-cups.

A Damascus team leader, Roxy Elford, talked about the holiday project and how they were planning various art activities and photographic tuition for their members, some of whom have lives that are not always easy and who are needing support. A main need will be the supply of cameras for those without one.

Chairs were arranged on the lawn as if in a small concert hall and the audience relaxed in the sunshine while Pervin, a superb professional harpist, and two of her pupils entertained us with a lovely surprise, a trio of harp music.

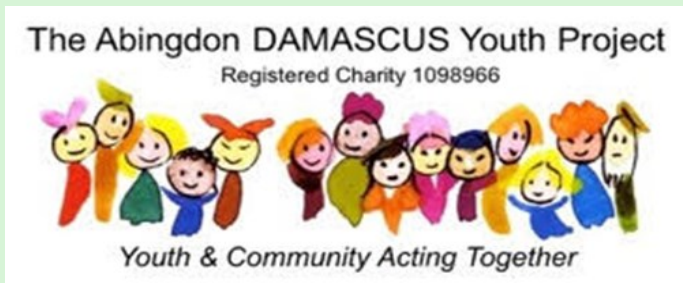
What better way to spend a summer's afternoon than enjoying afternoon tea, socialising with friends, and relaxing to the sound of the exquisite harp?

To crown it all £954 was raised over two days, of which £600 will go towards the inspiring work that the Damascus team do with local young people.

Many thanks are due to Pervin and Lark and good wishes to Roxy and the Damascus team.

**Jenny Pooley**





So, summer has been and gone in what feels like a blink of an eye! The team were super busy supporting young people from across all the DAMASCUS Parish's and it was great to see some young people being active and moving between villages to attend more than one of our sessions.

Summer is all about having some fun for us, so we hope those that came along to our sessions had fun! Under the gazebo we had some very deep and thought-provoking chats around cultural appropriation lead by one of our Youth Ambassadors as well as the usual fun quizzes and silly games to make us laugh. Football seems to be a winner when given a choice of sports – Drayton has some top strikers in the making! With Autumn and Winter approaching please keep an eye on our social media accounts for updates regarding the session as we may be inside more often!

The team put together a sugar and healthier alternatives workshop where we made flapjacks, looked at the sugar level in energy drinks and tasted new and different foods – I think it's fair to say not everybody enjoyed some of the flavours, followed by some fun games looking at recipes that can be made with left over ingredients! We were joined on this occasion by Niki from the Mental Wealth Academy who also helped us to understand the link between a healthy balanced diet and how we feel, this was super interesting!



Dear Editor, Drayton Chronicle

In the light of the safety concerns of Thames Valley police regarding the design of the Village Entry signs, I was wondering if there had been any health and safety evaluation of the proposed Walnuts on the Village Green.

It would seem that they are of a size that could pose a serious 'tripping hazard'. It is not difficult to imagine that they could result in various broken bones or teeth, if folks were to trip over them on their way to the shop or bus stop, especially in the dusk or at night. Who would be liable for paying out compensation?

That is apart from potential damage to car doors, if a driver were to inadvertently open their door while parked 50cm away from one of the stones.

But as cars have become anathema in these present times, that would probably not be too much cause for concern, even though most people who park at the Green are there to support local businesses.

As to a lot of shrubs dotted about, that is going to look very messy!

Why don't we just take the kerbstones back 50+ cm, to allow room for safer parking on the road, and put the walnuts on the Millenium Green as an art installation, underneath the walnut trees?

Yours faithfully  
Doreen Bourne

**Good evening** ([editor@draytonchronicle.net](mailto:editor@draytonchronicle.net))

*Regarding your recent article regarding the **outdoor gym equipment** being a good option for Drayton.*

*My daughter has been walking to Steventon and using the equipment 3/4 times a week since it's been installed.*

*Each machine has clear instructions on how to use it. She has said it's very popular and a wide range of age groups use the equipment.*

*It's a great way to meet new people and get fit and healthy at the same time.*

*We feel it would be a great asset to Drayton and the community. So it's a yes from us - please bring an outdoor gym to Drayton !*

*Kind regards*

**Michelle (Steventon Road)**



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I will be retiring from Neighbourhood Watch as Area Co-ordinator for Appleford, Drayton and Sutton Courtenay at the end of August and unfortunately, at the time of writing in mid-August, I have been unable to find a replacement.

Neighbourhood Watch members receive Neighbourhood Alerts from their Co-ordinators, which provide important information and updates about fraud, scams, local crime etc. However, anyone can register to receive these Alerts direct to their email inbox. Visit Thames Valley Alert at <https://www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk/>, and click on the 'join' button.

If you'd like to find out if there's a Neighbourhood Watch scheme in your area, visit the Neighbourhood Watch website, and use your postcode to search for details, at <https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/>.

Many thanks for your support over the years.

*Bridget Haffenden*

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The Abingdon DAMASCUS Youth Project

Registered Charity 1098966



Youth & Community Acting Together

**EMPLOYER:** The Abingdon DAMASCUS Youth Project (Registered Charity 1098966)

We believe in developing inclusive communities in which young people have opportunities to be significant contributors. An important part of this vision is recruiting young leaders who have the passion to make a positive difference to younger people and their communities and aspirations to be youth workers. Subject to funding (31<sup>st</sup> August expected confirmation date) we are setting up two opportunities for young people aged 16 to 19 to train with us. Previous volunteering experience in youth and community work is essential. Both opportunities will involve supported street work. However, one will focus on the use of sports (particularly football) as a tool. The other is to assist in developing our social media content. If you are interested in youthwork as a career do get in touch with us.

We are committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, young people and vulnerable adults and we expect all volunteers and staff to share this commitment and undergo appropriate checks and training and provide references.

**CONTACT:** For more information, please contact

[rita.atkinson@googlemail.com](mailto:rita.atkinson@googlemail.com) or

[anne.whitehead284@gmail.com](mailto:anne.whitehead284@gmail.com).

If you are unable to access the internet, please telephone 01235 848694 or 07846663010

**DEADLINES:** Wednesday 15th September 2021.

Start Date: 1<sup>st</sup> October 2021.

**DAMASCUS Youth project is also supported, by the Parish Councils of Drayton, Milton, Sutton Courtenay and Steventon and Abingdon Town Council**

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## Some reflections on watching villages grow.

One of the major concerns of those who sat down to begin the Drayton Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) nearly 10 years ago now, was the need for the village to be more interconnected as this would generate a better sense of community. For decades village planning had been obsessed with all homes being immediately connected to the main highways. This led to endless ribbon developments with people living far apart from one another. The villages of Drayton, Sutton Courtenay and Appleford have all suffered. The Drayton NDP has ensured that each of the three main new developments is well connected within and also the main highways. There are now a range of interesting circular walks all round the village.

The new developments in Sutton Courtenay are less well connected to each other and the distances some have to walk to get to village services are a challenge, particularly to the elderly. The concerns of residents at one end of the village are often very different from those at the other end. Appleford has the same issues but being a much smaller village, generating a feeling of community is less of a challenge.

Marcham is rather different and, in planning terms is far more compact. Whilst like all families, Marcham is not above disagreeing with itself, it is not surprising that Marcham generally has a strong village community feeling. However, even here there have been issues within some of the new developments over some residents resisting planned connecting roads and paths.

The Drayton experience is that connecting roads and paths is the secret to generating functioning communities.

Covid has made it easier for all of us to hide from each other and to stop meeting and talking to one another. However, our village communities and their Covid Groups have done a magnificent job in minimising this damage. Indeed, our communities are probable better at caring for each other than ever before. As we come out of the pandemic, it would be tragic to slip back behind our front doors. There are very powerful economic reasons for encouraging working from home but not at the expense of community life.



## Holiday news

- The long awaited “build out” on Drayton Rd, Sutton Courtenay has now been agreed and is funded. Various legalities have to be gone through, but the project should be fully operational by spring next year.
- The application for Mill Rd Bridge has been passed and work should begin shortly. This will restore the pedestrian path between Drayton and Marcham.
- The repainting of all the white lines on the Milton interchange roundabout will be done in September.
- Appleford continues to fight for an adjustment to the new HIF Road. We expect to be see the formal application very soon.
- In common with many councils across the country, the national shortage of HGV drivers, together with the “pingdemic”, has lead to the temporary suspension of the Brown Bin service for the month of August in order to ensure there is no threat to other waste services. It is hoped to be able to reinstate the garden waste collection in early September. In the meantime, residents are asked to be patient and take their garden waste to the Drayton recycling depot where possible.

Richard Webber Cllr

[Richardwebber777@gmail.com](mailto:Richardwebber777@gmail.com)

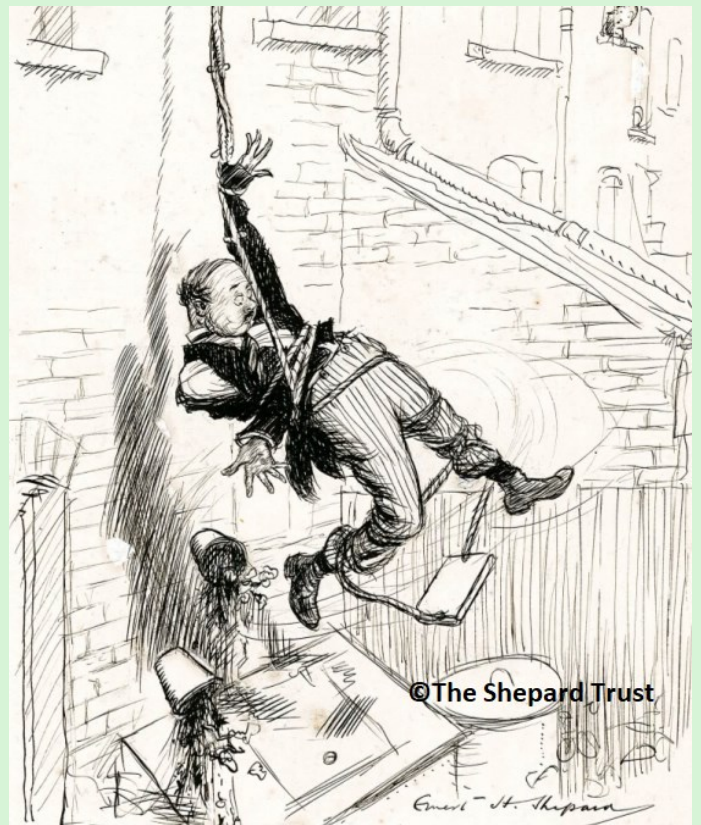
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SOFO Museum online talk to reveal Great War story of Winnie-the-Pooh illustrator E. H. Shepard.

E. H. Shepard, famous for his Winnie-the-Pooh and Wind in the Willows illustrations saw service on the Western Front and in Italy during the Great War - he was even awarded for gallantry.

An online talk followed by live Q&A session with speaker James Campbell at 7pm, Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> September 2021

Shepard's Great War sketches and humorous illustrations will feature in the talk throughout.

No ticketing or registration to view, but donations to support the museum are encouraged.

**Ernest Shepard** is best known for delighting generations of children with his charming illustrations for A. A Milne's Winnie the Pooh and later editions of Kenneth Grahame's Wind in the Willows in the 1930s.

Before he found the height of his fame bringing Pooh, Piglet and Tigger to life, he used his artistic talent to document his time in the trenches during the First World War through a series of humorous caricatures and detailed sketches.



©The Shepard Trust





**James Campbell** explores the life and Great War experiences of E. H. Shepard in this talk, illustrated with sketches and drawings from the artist's early career as a cartoonist right through his military service as an artillery officer on the Western and Italian Fronts.

Discover how Shepard was recruited by the Intelligence Corps because of skills, and how he would be awarded the Military Cross and a mention in dispatches for gallantry in the field.

Like previous online talks hosted by the museum, no pre-registration or digital tickets are needed to watch the talk - but viewers are encouraged to donate to support Oxfordshire's only dedicated military museum. Donations allow SOFO to tell more stories through events like this, as well as supporting the museum's work in preserving and presenting the county's military heritage and the history of all those affected by conflict in the region, soldier or civilian.

**SOFO Museum** first opened during the summer of 2014, tucked away in the beautiful gardens in the grounds of The Oxfordshire Museum and Woodstock Library, and just on the doorstep of Blenheim Palace.

More than a local military museum, SOFO is a museum that everyone can enjoy, from kids to parents and grandparents. We tell stories of how conflict has affected the county and its people, from soldiers serving on the front lines to ordinary people living on the Home Front.

Battles of the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry puts you on-board a Horsa Glider as it prepares to land in Normandy in the early hours of D-Day 1944, while Secret War explores the world of spies and espionage and lets you try your hand at sending and decoding secret messages.

A collection of over 3,500 objects and 7,500 archive items from two county regiments, the Queens Own Oxfordshire Hussars (QOOH) and the Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Light Infantry. These are our starting point for reflecting on the county's rich and diverse military heritage.

**Abingdon Reservoir – Latest News from GARD**

Despite restrictions, GARD has continued to monitor the activities of the water companies, engage with local and national stakeholders and provide informed and robust opposition to the proposed reservoir.

As a result of GARD and others' opposition, the regulators have required the water companies to undertake research to evaluate the reservoir and alternative strategies, before a final recommendation can be made. This is a 'gated process' which is when projects are phased, each phase marked by a 'gate' at which reports are provided to decision makers who then decide on next steps.

Gate One reports are now available for all options, but, most importantly, the reservoir (now being called 'South East Strategic Reservoir Option – SESRO), London Effluent Reuse and Severn – Thames Transfer. The reports are, in our view, flawed. Figures are quoted with almost no justification, there is no reference to key documents relating to embedded and operational carbon budgets, capital and operational costs, resilience claims and, most crucially, no reference to recent flooding studies. In all three reports, the proposal is to advance the projects to Gate Two. GARD has now submitted a detailed response to the Gate One reports. The reports, and our response, can be read here. <http://www.abingdonreservoir.org.uk/downloads.html>

GARD's response also expresses concerns that the documents were released in an opaque manner and without, as far as we know, any notification to local Oxfordshire organisations who have asked to be kept informed throughout the process. This all indicates that OFWAT and RAPID (the umbrella group that brings the regulators together) are not committed to a transparent process.

**GARD AGM**

**7.30pm, 1<sup>st</sup> December at St Michael's (Church) Hall, Steventon. We do hope to see you there.**

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**David Johnston MP Member of Parliament for Wantage (inc: Didcot, Wallingford & Faringdon)**

Parliament is currently in recess. My last spoken contribution, on the last day, was a speech on housing and planning issues which you can watch on

my website or Facebook page. I tried (within a 3-minute limit for us all!) to get across why quite several constituents have concerns ahead of us seeing the proposed legislation later in the year. Contrary to the impression given by news articles, the definitive proposals haven't been published yet, and I am hopeful the concerns that I and others are expressing will be factored into them.

If you listen to some national journalists – of course not esteemed Herald/Oxford Mail ones – recess is some sort of long holiday for MPs. The reality is I am as busy as ever, and I have filled the days with surgery appointments, meetings with constituents and visits to local organisations given that I can do them every day, where usually I have to be in London Monday-Thursday when parliament is sitting.

I'm back at home in Didcot for most of recess and one of the best things about this summer compared to last year is all the events that are taking place across the constituency. I've had a great time wellie wanging at the Letcombe Fun Day and attending celebration events like the anniversary for the Driving Miss Daisy service and the garden party of the Didcot Good Neighbour Scheme, which I recently became a volunteer for.

One event was the fundraising football game at Cholsey Recreation Ground in memory of Charlie Allum, who was a player and manager for Wallingford Town FC, but sadly lost his battle against the rare cancer, cholangiocarcinoma, in 2011 – his son Chris is helping to raise money for the charity AMMF, the only charity dedicated to this particular disease.

I've spent a few more hours at Harwell's space cluster, where there are the largest number of space organisations within walking distance of one another anywhere in the world and we've welcomed the Vaccines Minister, Nadhim Zahawi. There's been table tennis at Richmond Retirement Village and questions from young people on the National Citizens Service; plenty of the constituency's 85 pubs for lunches and chats and catch-ups with charities such as Sofea.

Besides this, I've written my letter to Alok Sharma, President of COP26, outlining what came out of my pre-COP26 summit in July (again, you can read it on my website/Facebook page and I'll publish his reply) and continued my Opportunity Gap project with Claire Coutinho – our first report will be on the role of parents.

So, recess doesn't involve much rest. But it's been great fun so far and its nice to see the local area coming to life again.

As ever, if I can help with anything, do email me via [david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk](mailto: david.johnston.mp@parliament.uk)

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## **Brown Bin Suspension—Letter from Andy Cooke (Councillor)**

In a first for quite some time, I'm starting with a non-coronavirus-topic!

On August 2<sup>nd</sup>, following a big drop in the number of drivers from Biffa that reported for duty, the emergency contingency plan for waste collection was put into action, suspending Brown Bin collections in order to ensure the rest of the waste collection service could continue.

This has caused a lot of very understandable anger, especially at the poor communications coming out about it (why couldn't service users be directly emailed or texted to tell them what was happening?)

As I posted on the Drayton Families Facebook page, I asked a few questions and got some answers.

### **1 – Why was it announced at the last minute (on the day)?**

The answer was that it was an emergency/contingency decision in response to what happened on the day.

### **2 – Why did it happen? What happened to all the drivers?**

There were four factors which built upon each other.

- Covid has caused a number of drivers to be off self-isolating and/or ill
- Brexit has reduced the pool of drivers available to all organisations
- Covid last year prevented HGV drivers tests from occurring and there is a backlog
- Treasury changes to Off Payroll rules (IR35) have meant that the number of drivers available to all organisations has further reduced.

These factors aren't just limited to Biffa or the Vale. The Road Haulage Association is sounding the alarm on the entire area of HGV drivers and have alerted Government that supply chains to supermarkets may be badly disrupted. I have heard that military drivers may be brought in to ensure supermarket supply chains continue.

### **3 – Will we get a rebate? We've now missed three collections in winter and one in summer.**

We pay for 20 collections per year but generally receive 28. The additional service we receive isn't very well highlighted; people tend to assume we pay for and receive one service fortnightly. Should it look like we will receive under 20 collections per year (and no, they won't rush around trying to squeeze in several collections at the last minute!), then they'll start rebate proceedings.

As an aside, I think that there has been a failure to highlight this in the past – I have checked and it is in the terms and conditions, but not many people tend to read those. I've recommended that the council highlight that "Whilst you are paying for 20 collections per year, we normally aim to collect at least 26 and usually 28; there is no extra charge for the extra collections." I think this would go some way to avoiding anger like this in any future disruptions.

### **4 – Why were people not contacted directly? Email, text, phone calls?**

There is no system for emailing customers in place. Customer services for the bin collections was outsourced a number of years ago as part of the 5 Councils Partnership and did not include a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system in order to save money. The 5 Councils Partnership proved to give worse services than before with minimal or no saving on money; it was one thing we (the opposition at the time) campaigned on. When we took over in May 2019, we started to insource services to overcome this. We had to wait for the contract periods to expire (and then not relet the contract), so Customer Services were insourced on 1 April this year. When they were, it was noted that what email addresses did exist were full of errors. And, importantly, the contractor at the time had failed to secure permission to contact people on those addresses as required under GDPR. We've been building a new CRM and starting to source the contact details, but this does take time.

### **5 - What's being changed to prevent a recurrence and when will services resume?**

As above, Customer Services have now been insourced and a CRM is in the process of being brought up. On the specific issue, Biffa has increased driver wages and is running a recruitment drive, but the driver's issue is nationwide. Taking on new Garden Waste customers has been suspended.

Looking at the nationwide picture on drivers, it's not looking like it will clear until the end of August at the earliest. The suspension will be for one month, and reviewed at the end of August.

Every effort is being made to avoid any disruption spreading to other services (food, recycling and rubbish collections). If driver shortages cause disruptions to extend to these, please leave your (green, black, and food) bins out for up to three days and Biffa should come around to catch up on those.

I'm sorry that this has happened. Personally, I think that if a CRM had been available and the details communicated out better, people would have been less angry.

## Coronavirus

So far, it looks like the gamble on cases has more or less paid off. There was a big spike around the 19<sup>th</sup>, but it dropped to a stable(-ish) level and has been around there for three weeks now.

Cases in the Vale spiked over 100 per day in mid-July but dropped to a daily average around 40 per day for quite a while. In recent days, however (at time of writing), they appear to have increased noticeably, to the 60-75 per day level.

Hospital admissions and hospital/ICU occupancy has dropped against case levels by a long way but seem to have stabilised at about 3% of cases ending up in hospital (far lower than before the vaccine rollout). At the moment, admissions in Oxford (where most of our hospitalised covid cases go, along with much of those in the other District Councils in Oxfordshire) are around 5-6 per day, with 25 people in hospital as of the 10<sup>th</sup> of August (dropping from over 40 late in July) and no-one in mechanical ventilation beds. I expect this number will increase somewhat as information catches up with today's date.

As of yesterday (15<sup>th</sup> of August as I write), 101,864 people in the Vale (87.2% of adults) have had their first dose and 89,046 (76.2% of adults) their second. These percentages are fractionally lower than those for England as a whole; this is down to demographics – each age group in the Vale is slightly higher than the national average at taking up their vaccines.

Repeating my word of caution from last month: whilst the vaccines work very well at protecting against serious illness (technically, they don't do the protecting; they work by training your immune system how best to fight a brand-new foe), they do not provide a magic suit of armour.

Following two doses and fourteen days to come up to speed, effectiveness seems to be:

- Against symptomatic disease at all: 66%-90% (That is, your chances of developing symptoms are a third to a tenth of what they would have been if you were unvaccinated).
- Against severe disease (hospitalisation-level): 95-97% (Your chances of being so ill you're hospitalised are between a twentieth and a thirtieth of what they were when unvaccinated)
- Against death: 97%+ (Your chances of being so ill that you die are decreased by a factor of over 30).

This does leave a residual risk, albeit a lot lower than before being vaccinated. However, if you are considered vulnerable (or even if you'd like to avoid a potentially rather unpleasant illness, even if you're far less likely to have a bad outcome), it would be wise to be cautious until this peak subsides (it has to run out of susceptible hosts sooner or later).

Whilst cloth masks protect others rather than yourself FFP3 masks (which are quite a bit more expensive, unfortunately, although FFP2 masks, which are cheaper, do nearly as well as FFP3 masks) do give considerable protection to the wearer. In addition, keeping away from less ventilated indoor spaces and keeping some distance from others where possible, and reducing the average number of daily interactions would have a significant effect.

The choice is down to infection or injection.

**Self-isolation rule change:** You've probably picked this up by now, but from the 16<sup>th</sup> of August, if you are double jabbed (and received your second dose more than fourteen days ago) or under 18, the legal requirement to self-isolate is removed. You should still take a PCR test if you're identified as a close contact (order one online, or by calling 119, or by going to a test site).

## Planning Rules

Following a motion passed by full Council in July, the Council Leader has written to the government to request that it scraps its proposed changes to planning laws – in order to maintain the right of local residents to engage and comment on planning applications and be able to influence the development of their communities through Neighbourhood Plans and Local Plans.

The Council has urged the Government to review the permitted development rights which could allow development to happen without the need for planning permission and to enable councils to set strong local planning policies to help protect the environment and reduce carbon emissions.

Basically, we fear that the proposed changes could allow the more ruthless developers to run roughshod over local concerns and throw up developments and ignore such niceties as affordable housing, local plan requirements, providing infrastructure, and so forth. At the moment, we can influence these through Neighbourhood Plans, (which the Council has been strengthening as they've been ignored too often), Local Plans, and Planning Committees (although the Committee occasionally has its hands tied by legislation, it could become completely powerless).

## Table tennis tables

On a more light-hearted note (God knows, we need that...), table tennis tables will be appearing across the Vale of White Horse and South Oxfordshire over the summer. These are part of an ongoing initiative to help residents be active and healthy.

Permanent tables will be in St Edmunds Park in Didcot (free), Ladygrove Park in Didcot (free), Southern and District Community Centres on Great Western Park (with a small charge), Kennington (free), Chalgrove (free), Shrivenham (free), and Beckley and Stowood (free).

**Andy Cooke**

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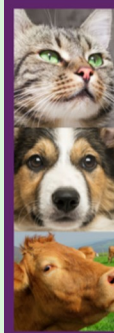
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## Village Hall Report

Hall bookings are getting back to normal, most of our regulars are back, or have given us a date to restart. Gemma's **Clubbercise** should be back in Sept (Tues evenings), and I'd guess her RockBox class might well follow soon after?

Also on the exercise front, we've gained a **Dance Fitness** class (by Laura, Fridays at 6pm) and they seem popular so far.

Our long-lost **Bowls club** have managed a few sessions in their Weds evening slot, and THIS month intend to get started with some of their regular afternoon sessions (Mondays at first), so welcome back to them! I hear they could use **some new blood**, so if you think you can guide a bowl down a curving path on a short mat, come and give it a try? They're a friendly crowd, low fees, and, most important, generous with the tea and bikkies!

For anyone thinking of a weekend booking, we're almost full up from October through towards Christmas, so if you were thinking of a child's party, do please CHECK SOON (& it could be too late already). One of those weekend bookings is Sunday Sept 5th, the next **Antiques Fair**.

Oh, and we should be getting the stage curtain wire and track fixed soon, so could those groups who use it treat the new version gently (it's expensive)?!

Tony Holmes

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## *Boars Hill Walk* by Kevin Carter

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*Boars Hill is an elevated and largely wooded area between Oxford to its north and Abingdon to the south. It has dozens of very fine houses and gardens. It has been a home to an extraordinary number of poets, including Mathew Arnold, Margaret Louisa Woods, Robert Bridges, John Masefield and Robert Graves. The archaeologist, Sir Arthur Evans, famous for unearthing the Palace of Knossos, on Crete, also lived there, in Youlbury House. He left most of his estate to the Boy Scouts movement and also built a lookout, Jarn Mount, at the top of the hill.*

Leave the Fox Inn car park and turn left onto Foxcombe Lane. Walk past the driveways to some large houses and a few trees before reaching a junction, the road joining from the left being Berkeley Road. Cross it and continue past a large open space (which used to be a golf course; you can see the 'dreaming spires of Oxford' from here).

Three-quarters of a mile from the Fox Inn and just before reaching more houses there is a gate into the meadow, full of buttercups and other flowers. Take it and walk straight down the hill for three-quarters of a mile, continuing through several gates but always in a straight line, until you reach Chiswell farm.

At the large farm, before the gate, there is a path left at 9 o'clock. Ignore this, instead going through the gate onto a track, then turn left. In 200 yards the road bears right and you continue straight, along a footpath uphill. You will pass a rather splendid house on your left and then the footpath merges onto its gravelled driveway.

Half a mile from Chiswell Farm you will come to a junction with a lane, with a Carmelite Priory on your left. In front of you is the inviting Youlbury Wood, which is a scout camping location (and hence is technically private but is easy to access on quiet days the bluebells in Spring are spectacular). Turn left onto the lane, heading south until you reach Sandy Lane just as it turns through 90 degrees (with Jarn Mound signposted to your left).



However, our route is along the Sandy lane to the right, downhill. In less than half a mile you will find a driveway to the right, with a footpath beside it and a very inviting footpath to the left across a small field and signposted to Jarn Mound. This attractive, narrow path goes up and down, over a track and on, until you emerge onto a small lane, at the end of which is the entrance to Jarn Mound. If you have time this is a worthy diversion: to climb the steps to the top and perhaps walk around its base.



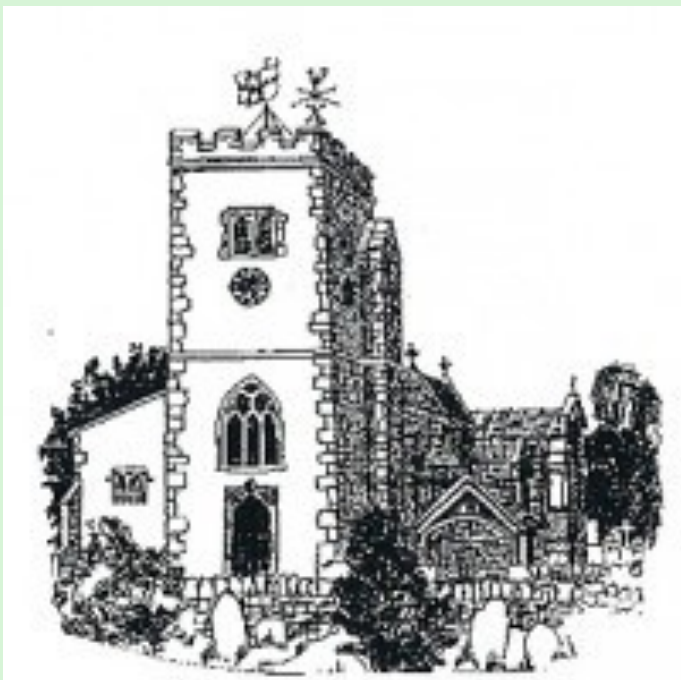
However, the next part of the walk is down the steep hill opposite the Mound's entrance. After 300-400 yards there is a turning into some houses and, behind you after passing it, a footpath sign. Take it and follow the path through some woods planted largely with holly, much of it with a fence on your left. This takes you down to the side of a field which leads back to the Fox Inn after a further three-quarters of a mile.



**The Great Fire** that swept through the High Street of Drayton in the reign of George III began in a house next to the Wheatsheaf on Sunday 16th April 1780. Upward of 30 houses went up in flames. So catastrophic was it for the village that a wide appeal was launched, and books were opened to receive subscriptions at London, at Oxford and at Abingdon. The appeal was worded thus: "The loss by this fire has fallen chiefly on industrious farmers and labourers, many of whom have lost their all. Only a few hundred pounds, in value, of the Property was insured.



"The neighbouring gentlemen.... have formed themselves into a committee for the purpose of collecting relief for the sufferers and distributing the public bounty. And in order to make a distinction between those who are totally ruined and others who are partly or wholly enabled to support their loss, it is intended to divide the sufferers into classes and to relieve them agreeably to their respective merits".



## Drayton Ablaze

Hark: through the Groves a dreadful Cry,  
It echo's o'er the plains,  
The precious sacks of Corn and Hay,  
Fell victims to the flames.

Sad shrieks and cries from cot to cot,  
Each weeping Infant trace,  
And mark the horrid frightful looks,  
Upon each aged face.

The village with confusion fill'd,  
Whilst multitudes draw near,  
The rapid flames at noontide day,  
Did strike each heart with fear.

The sufferers' names I cannot describe,  
Save only just a few,  
But all alike ye generous hearts,  
I recommend to you.

To everyone that can bestow,  
Even the smallest mite,  
To each poor sufferer lend a hand,  
I humbly now invite.

Av..y Ty...ls might loss,  
Thomas, and Robert too,  
Likewise the loss I recommend,  
Of worthy Thomas D.W.

John H..de, an aged honest man,  
Which long time has been blind;  
You that are with compassion fill'd,  
Pray bear him in your mind.

John Cheer, and William Cheer also,  
Sustained a heavy Loss,  
And many poor distressed souls,  
Endured the fiery cross.

John H...t, John Wy..t shared a part,  
Destruction by the flames,  
John Ly...d too, these are few,  
Of these great sufferers names.

There was two worthy good Divines,  
Submitted there and slav'd,  
Through fire and water, mud, and dirt,  
Fain would the village be saved.

The freighted Warblers left the spray,  
And took their winged flight,  
Whilst mortals were obliged to stay  
To see the mournful sight.

Go see the village drop a tear,  
Drayton in Berkshire's fall,  
Is an object of your Charity,  
I recommend to all.

Courtesy of Eirwen Jones (1978)



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### Oxfordshire Plan 2050

The latest consultation on the Oxfordshire Plan 2050 has now launched and runs until 8 October.

The Oxfordshire Plan will set the development framework for the county for the next generation. It will affect all Oxfordshire residents, either directly (through development) or indirectly (through impacts on services, infrastructure, our countryside and rural character).

CPRE Oxfordshire is fighting to make sure that the growth options are deliverable without undue damage to our countryside and some otherwise good policy proposals for getting to net zero and restoring nature. That means guiding development to the right places and building high-quality compact housing to make the best use of scarce land.

**We urge you to respond to the consultation – it is our best chance of influencing both the outcomes of this Plan and the OxCam Arc proposals.**

**Have your say NOW – it's too late to act when the bulldozers arrive.**

Find more information on the CPRE Oxfordshire website [www.cpreoxon.org.uk](http://www.cpreoxon.org.uk)

Julia Benning | Communications Manager

## STEVE WOODLEY GENERAL HANDYMAN

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### Word Search

In this case, there are 14 hidden Oxfordshire towns and villages. None of them are too far away, with some very close indeed!

RE: Last month's ice cream word search, due to the closure of Vickery's Hardware shop, entries could not be placed in the box. The winner and answers will be announced in the October edition.



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