

# SC

# SONNING COMMON MAGAZINE



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.....

**WISHING ALL OF  
OUR COMMUNITY  
A VERY HAPPY  
CHRISTMAS**

.....

**DEC / JAN 2018/19**

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DEC / JAN 2018/19

# FROM THE EDITORIAL TEAM

My magazine compilation day Sunday 11 November 2018 has been dominated by Remembrance, so I start my editorial with a verse from Wilfred Owen's Doomed Youth.

*What passing-bells for these who die as cattle?  
— Only the monstrous anger of the guns.  
Only the stuttering rifles' rapid rattle  
Can patter out their hasty orisons.  
No mockeries now for them; no prayers nor bells;  
Nor any voice of mourning save the choirs,—  
The shrill, demented choirs of wailing shells;  
And bugles calling for them from sad shires.*

Such horror does not fill our lives nor that of the current youth. The challenges we face cannot bear any resemblance and for this we should be grateful.

This issue is full of community activities which have already occurred and for the first time there are 6 pages worth, so much to report is a delight. The In Focus feature is devoted to Heath and Watkins. However, we are also looking forward to what is to come over the festive season; concerts, fairs, performances, Christmas lunch in the village hall, Santa's visit, fun and festivities.

On behalf of the whole team supporting this magazine I would like to wish all of our readers a very Happy Christmas and a healthy 2019. ●

*Diana*

Diana Pearman Editor

Email: editor@sonningcommonmagazine.org



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MAGAZINE

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## MEET THE TEAM ...



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# MAIDEN ERLEGH CHILTERN EDGE WHAT A GREAT START!

We are very proud of all those involved with Maiden Erleigh Chiltern Edge school. As we all know, those involved have been through challenging times and the dedication and resilience of staff is impressive – the community is lucky to have such dedicated staff. As a result the school has already made great strides. The results this summer, while not yet where we expect them to be, show that the students made positive progress, indeed provisional progress indicators show that the school holds its own against many of its neighbours. Furthermore interest in the school is growing and we had over 500 people at our recent Open Evenings and Open Mornings.

This term, the school has embraced a focus on culture and behaviour for learning which will underpin even greater successes in the future. What is pleasing is that teachers, students and visitors

have all commented on the positive atmosphere in the school. As a Trust we have reviewed the school's personal development and well-being work and we have seen some positive practice especially in terms of Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE) and the dedication with which the staff care for the students. I must also say that the students are delightful, and all my colleagues have been impressed with their maturity and commitment to the school. They are real partners in this school improvement journey.

At Maiden Erleigh Trust, we are very clear that school has a duty to develop the whole child and the school is certainly doing this. Already this term enrichment has been offered in the form of sports, music and drama clubs. The school rugby and football teams are holding their own and the year 10 and 11 team have beaten most of the local competition since September.



Over the next half term, the students will be rehearsing for this year's school show which is "Alice in Wonderland". The school is on a journey, and I realise that some people are struggling with some of the necessary changes we need to put in place. We are working closely with partners to ensure that any changes go as smoothly as possible and that we keep (indeed improve on) the culture and values of the school.

Thank you to all the parents and community members who are supporting our work, it is so important to the staff and students. There are some key dates the community may be interested in; our "Alice in Wonderland" show on 19 and 20 December. You are very welcome and we look forward to seeing you there. ●

**MARY DAVIES**  
Executive Headteacher

# SANTA IS COMING TO TOWN!

On Friday 14 December 2018 Father Christmas will be once again coming to visit Sonning Common on his tractor, driven by Paul Jenkins.

Last year Father Christmas raised over £500 for local charities, and this year will be raising money for FISH and First Responders Sonning Common.

Volunteers from the village are working hard to bring the evening together and hope that this year will be as successful as previous years. If you wish to get involved, please contact Helen Coyne at teamsantasc@gmail.com.

The route this year has been altered slightly to ensure we cover as much of Sonning Common as possible during the evening, and we apologise if we are not able to pass your houses but hope that you will be able to see us in a road near to you and support the local charities.

Our final stop will be at the Butchers Arms, we hope to be arriving there between 20.30/21.00, where Rob Blues will be offering mulled wine and mince pies to add to the festivities, all would be very welcome to come and join us there.

Follow Santa on the night for live updates on Facebook at: <https://facebook.com/socosantaclus/> ●



# TERM ONE AS AN ACADEMY

Some of you may remember that a parent organised a collection of the old PE kits which was sent out to Africa via a charity called Nasio Trust at this time last year. The same parent has now collected suitcases full of the old uniform which has been replaced by the new Academy one. A lot of this is actually brand new 'old' uniform – stock that the school had before it was replaced – that Maiden Erleigh Chiltern Edge have donated.

Debbie and her son Alex were all ready to go off to Kenya themselves during the October half term....when, literally 24 hours before they were due to leave, during a school rugby game, Alex broke his collar bone! So unfortunately the trip has had to be postponed. But.... the school had a charity day on the last day before half term, and chose The Nasio Trust (<https://www.thenasiostrust.org/>) as the charity. The children paid to come to school in their own clothes – or others of choice as you can see from the photos! The students took part in a challenging busy day rowing, cycling, running and walking to Athens. All the students who took part enjoyed it, and some Bishopswood pupils came along to put in a couple of miles. Year 10 really made the most of the non-uniform day with some interesting outfits! ●



## TEACHING AND LEARNING HIGHLIGHTS FROM TERM ONE

Science Department celebrated Biology Week with dissections of Kidneys (Year 11) and making stop motion videos of life cycles of viruses out of plasticine (Year 10).

Food Technology activities have included • Year 7 making their own recipe of savoury scones • Year 8 looking at the teenage diet and evaluating their spaghetti bolognese • Year 9 planned and cooked calzone and filling • Year 10 practical involving milk, making veloute, béchamel and roux sauces, plus rice pudding • Year 11 completed their second experiments as part of the non-exam assessment.

The cheerleading team have had a fantastic start to the year. Well done to all the students for their hard work and commitment. We look forward to seeing the current team back at practice in Term 2 and welcoming new students to the team.



On Saturday 6 October Maiden Erleigh Chiltern Edge hosted a Primary School cross country event for Years 1 to 6. The event was very well supported with around 250 students taking part, on what was a cold and wet Saturday morning. This however didn't dampen the spirits and the event, now in its 15th year, had its 10,000th student cross the finish.

This is a fantastic achievement and massive congratulations and thank you to Kevin Nutt for organising and running such a successful event for all these years. Thank you to all the students, primary schools and parents who came and supported the event. Plus, a big thank you to the CESA parent association who ran a kitchen and raised a significant amount of money for the school and the PE department. ●



## £2,247 RAISED FOR OUR LOCAL COMMUNITY FIRST RESPONDERS!

A small team of us put on a jacket potato lunch in Sonning Common Village Hall to raise funds for this valuable local service run entirely by volunteers. 72 people sat down to jacket potatoes with a choice of filling followed by fresh fruit, tea and coffee. First Responders Chris Brook and Sue Abbott gave a talk and demonstration of their equipment, in particular their recently purchased emergency lifting cushion which was bought by locally raised funds. So a big 'thank you' to all who came to the lunch, bought raffle tickets and items from Peter Rickards' wood turning stall and, in particular, the donors of substantial sums which really boosted the final amount raised. Sums such as this really demonstrate how much we value the services of these dedicated volunteers. ●

SUE NICKSON

# POSTCARD FROM THE ALLOTMENT

by CHRISTINE ATKINSON

Hidden behind the school swimming pool, and Bishopswood School building, is a patch of land that has been used over the years to grow fruit and flowers by the staff and children.



This task has recently been taken over by a team made up of the school caretaker, his wife (also parents of children at the school) and two other parents. The allotment team are Nesko and Helen Simic, Nan Brandsma and Amy O'Connor. Nesko is the team 'captain' as he has his own allotment and expert knowledge on vegetable growing.

This year the team set about overhauling the allotment, which had been a little neglected, and put their heads together to decide what to plant and to come up with a plan for the next two years. Nesko and Helen brought some interesting ideas to use within the space, including using ancient methods for the boundary that they picked up while visiting Shakespeare's birthplace in the summer. This involves using some of the raw materials already on the site. Hazel stems are used as posts and clippings from branches and stem are packed in between to form the boundaries. This process is always evolving as it degrades and is replaced and is completely eco-friendly and sustainable from the local site. The team would like to involve the children in these tasks in the future.

They started the project in January and are using organic fertiliser (horse manure and leaf mulch) and green manure. They have already successfully grown rhubarb, chillis, strawberries, raspberries, potatoes, tomatoes and pumpkin/squash. Other veggies and fruits weren't so successful but they picked some gooseberries, peas and cucumber. They have also grown some

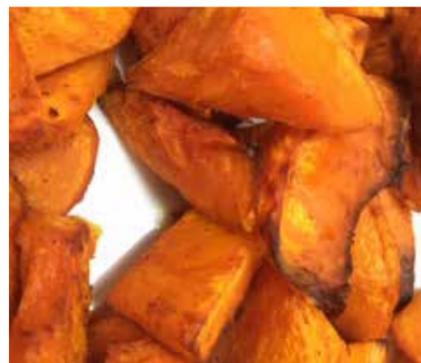
bee friendly plants which, as we all know, are the basis of good cross pollination. Sweet cherry, wild pear, hazelnut and dog rose grow along the fence line and the school fruit orchard is near to complement the allotment.

Amy told me "We will only grow what we are going to eat and think of different ways to cook with the produce too, we also are considering what is successful in terms of water use efficiency, especially over the summer holidays, a key growing time but with no one around! We gave the Year 6 leavers this summer a strawberry plant each from the runners of our plants. If the kites children are out playing whilst we are gardening, (which we do on a weekly basis throughout the year,) and we found a frog or two in the garden, we always show them what we have found."

A sale of cakes and produce from the allotment was held at the beginning of October and the funds raised will be used to reinvest in the allotment for seeds for next year and make ground improvements. It's all organic gardening and they get free manure from local stables for fertiliser. Some of the plants were donations to the classrooms but have been planted out in the plot.



Kites Kitchen, who run the school kitchen and supply the school meals are keen to be able to use any surplus that the allotment produces so that the children will see that the vegetables and fruit grown in their own school, can also be eaten at lunchtime. So, just before October half term, Nesko took two beautiful squash into the kitchen which were roasted and offered the next day to the children. ●



## THEIR AIMS ARE FOR THE ALLOTMENT GARDEN ARE:

- \* to be self-sufficient financially by selling produce and having cake sales to enable reinvestment
- \* to reuse raw materials already on the school site in our projects
- \* to get the children out more in the garden and maybe have a regular lunchtime gardening club in future
- \* and to involve the local community in sharing their produce and planting ideas and selling together in future.



# JUNIOR ACTIVE LEADERS



"We have been looking for some time for a course that would provide our students with the necessary skills to gain confidence and help us have active and fun filled lunchtimes. Junior Active Leaders has given our pupils new skills, that will no doubt be life-long. All our trainees have loved it and really grown in confidence. Our teachers have been astounded at what the pupils have achieved and want to use the games they have invented! We now have an extended lunchtime activity plan which our Junior Active Leaders will organize and run. Junior Active Leaders is a brilliant programme which I wholeheartedly recommend to all primary school heads."

CHRIS HIRST  
Head Teacher Sonning Common Primary School



This is how the Active Leaders scheme works  
Would you like to help your pupils become more confident, think quickly and decisively on their feet?

- Are you looking for something which might push them outside their comfort zones, but encourage collaboration, teamwork and mutual respect?
- Do you seek to encourage better verbal communication?
- Would you like to find a way to enable your older pupils to help make playtimes fun and engaging, help boost pupils' physical activity levels as well as offering valuable learning experiences beyond simply playing around

Junior Active Leaders addresses all the above. Over a series of 10 sessions, it provides training for your year 5 and/or 6 pupils to become confident, communicative, collaborative leaders and respected role models, leading games they have created themselves, with pupils from younger year groups.

Modelled on the proven Active Leader scheme ([www.activeleaders.co.uk](http://www.activeleaders.co.uk)), this successfully trialed primary school

programme can be scheduled to meet your needs be it the group's age, size or timing of delivery.

All sessions are led and supervised by a registered Active Leader Trainer.

As an added bonus, we invite you to have a member of your staff or PE team join the course to learn how to continue delivering the programme.

Each pupil is provided with a pupil pack containing a workbook, games booklet and t-shirt. At the end of the course the receive an individual report from the trainer and the Junior Active Leader Award certificate.

Costs comprise the trainers, the pupil pack and certificates (all supplied by Active Leader Operations). The school is asked to provide an indoor space with a flip chart or white board, access to outdoor facilities, basic equipment (cones, hoops, bibs, balls) and one point of contact for administration. Schools can access their PE premium or Sugar Smart Grant to cover costs.

For further information please contact Penny Snowden ([penny@psconsulting.uk](mailto:penny@psconsulting.uk) / 07767 778541) or [info@activeleaders.co.uk](mailto:info@activeleaders.co.uk).

## SESSION

- 1 Becoming a Junior Active Leader
- 2 Being safe
- 3 First Aid
- 4 Preparing to Lead: Communicating
- 5 Preparing to Lead: Choosing Teams
- 6 Preparing to Lead: Planning
- 7 Preparing to Lead: Including, encouraging, adapting
- 8 Planning and Leading
- 9 Inventing a game
- 10 Setting up a Playground Active Leader Club

## LEARNING ABOUT

- What makes a good leader?
- How to make sure there is a safe playing zone
- CPR and how to help someone who gets hurt
- How to give instructions
- How to choose teams
- Making a plan, setting out equipment
- How to make sure everyone is included and has fun
- How to plan, lead and think about what could be improved
- How to invent a new game
- How to set up a regular playground activity club, advertise and run it

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# HENLEY LIONS WINTER FUEL PROJECT 2018 APPEAL



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For the past 2 years Henley Lions have helped keep the heating on and cooker

running with the generosity of others donating all or part of their Government Winter Fuel Allowance. Last winter alone Henley Lions supported 20 families and individuals in Henley and the surrounding villages survive the winter with donations amounting to £5097. All sorts of emergencies can mean people move from managing to

not being able to cover all their costs and Lions working through NOMAD and Citizens Advice Henley identify those in most need.

Donations can be made online via [www.henleylions.org.uk](http://www.henleylions.org.uk) - click on 'Donate' and please identify your donation as 'Winter Fuel Project'. Please complete 'Gift Aid' if you can. Donations can also be made by cheque or bank transfer. Please email [donate@henleylions.org.uk](mailto:donate@henleylions.org.uk) or telephone 0845 833 7387 for information.

All monies raised will be deposited in the Henley Lions Charity Trust Account and will be ring-fenced for the Winter Fuel Project. ●

**For more information Contact:**  
**Ian Tritton, Henley Lions Community Service**  
**07789 201760**  
**[communityservice@henleylions.org.uk](mailto:communityservice@henleylions.org.uk)**

# AUTUMN SHOW

by JO STOVES

The end of the growing season in gardens and allotments culminated in the Horticultural Society's flower and produce show in the village hall in September. Bedecked with beautiful displays of garden flowers and delicious looking fruit and vegetables, the hall looked very colourful.

The show is an annual event and there were classes for flowers (both arrangements and specimen exhibits) vegetables, fruit, cookery, handicrafts, photography. There was also a well-supported children's section.

The Royal Society Banksian Medal for the most money won went to Keith Hedges who exhibited some exceptional

dahlias. His son, Martin, whose entries included some outstanding runner beans and an exceptionally large marrow, won the most points in the combined flower, fruit and vegetable classes and, keeping it in the family, Sue Hedges was overall winner in the floral art classes with an exhibit entitled "Nature Corner" and a very attractive petite arrangement.

10 year old Temperance Hunter put the adults on their mettle by winning the photography class Sunrise/Sunset.

Sara Batting presented the prizes. She spoke of the challenge gardeners had faced this year with "The Beast from the East" followed by extreme heat and drought, saying that the exhibits were a



testament to the tenacity and skill of the members. She also praised the society for its social impact - for the opportunity it provides for likeminded people to get together. The show was, indeed, a very pleasant way to spend an afternoon. There were some beautiful exhibits, some amazing ones, some thought-provoking ones and the chance to drink tea and eat cake whilst chatting to old friends and making new ones. ●

**For more information on the Society - [www.cehs.co.uk](http://www.cehs.co.uk)**

# DAFFODILS GALORE

by JOAN GRUMMANT

Thanks to a very generous donation, Sonning Common should be a sight to behold next Spring! A gentleman who has lived in Sonning Common since 1996, but who wishes to remain anonymous, has donated 1,000 daffodils to the Village Gardeners for planting. This is his way of contributing to the group, as he is unable to take a more active role, and to show his appreciation of the work done to enhance the local environment. The bulbs will certainly be appreciated by all residents during the dark days of winter and the good feeling they will bring will be a big 'thank you' for his kindness. Bulbs will be planted in many areas including Brind's Close, Peppard

Road, Widmore Lane, ends of Lea Road and Westliegh Drive, the corner of Ashford Ave/Reade's Lane and in the verge outside the local pharmacy.

The first Sunday in November was our Autumn Planting Out and this year as well as bulbs the winter bedding consisted of Sweet William, wallflowers, violas, sedum and trailing pansies. As always there were a lot of positive comments from passers-by, but please remember we welcome any help offered, and meet on the first Sunday and third Thursday of each month at 10am outside the Village Hall.

All are welcome -any ages! ●



# FOREST SCHOOL DEVELOPS YOUNG CHILDREN

We are so pleased to announce that our new forest school area is now up and running.

When we had our new building built in 2011 the idea of having our very own forest school seemed to be an unlikely dream. With training costing over £1,000 we had to fundraise hard. Thankfully we were lucky enough to be nominated for the Co-Op community fund scheme and with the help of the community's generosity we finally booked our training earlier this year. We also had enough money to cordon off an area in our garden to purposely use this as our forest school area. A big thanks to one of our Pre-School parents, Lee Chalk for all his hard work over the summer holidays for not only moving play equipment but building a fence, enabling us to create a safe and exciting area for the children to enjoy. We now have two Pre-School practitioners, Emma Lunnon, who is almost a fully qualified level 3 forest

school leader, and Amanda West who is level 2, who very willingly took on the training. We are planning on planting more trees, so it becomes more of a forest and having fires and using tools. So, what is Forest School?

Sonning Common Pre-School Forest School understands that child led play is massively important to all areas of development and allows children to take control of their own education!

Our Forest School Leader Emma said "Our aim is to provide children with regular visits to a natural environment during all seasons and weathers. Children will be able to take control of their own learning and play and will be supported in risky play as staff understand that children will become resilient and confident in their own capabilities if they are allowed to test their ideas and learn from their mistakes."

There are still spaces available at our

Pre-School, if you would like to come and visit us and look at our Forest School please call me on 01189724760 ●

CLARE SAUNDERS Manager





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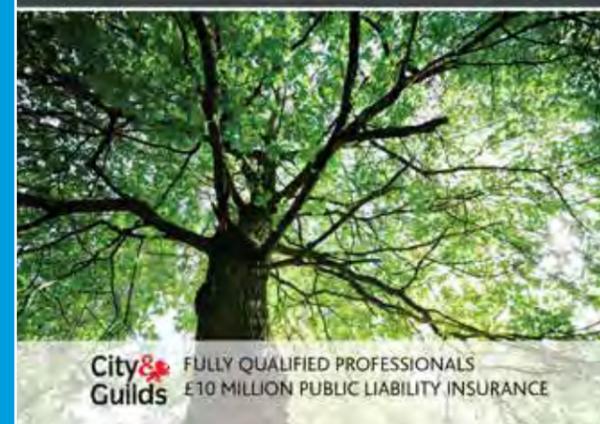
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Our programme of free daily walks will take a short break over Christmas: there will be no walks between Saturday 15 December and Tuesday 1st January (inclusive) We aim to have 2 trained leaders (volunteers) on every walk, one to lead the way, and the other to bring up the rear to ensure no one gets lost. In the event of really bad weather (heavy rain/strong wind/snow) the walks may be cancelled - but it has to be quite bad for that to happen!

Timetables are available from the library, the Health Centre and the Herb Farm, or on the website at [www.sonningcommonhealthwalks.co.uk/timetable](http://www.sonningcommonhealthwalks.co.uk/timetable).

Rosemary Dunstan

**MAIDEN ERLEGH CHILTERN EDGE**

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Tickets can be purchased from the school Reception  
Adults £7 / Concessions £4

Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> December  
Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> December  
Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> December

Show starts at 7pm  
Doors open 6:45pm

South Chiltern Choral Society Conductor: Paul Burke  
with The Hill Primary School Choir

**On Christmas Night**  
Bob Chilcott

**Behold New Joy** - Shawn Kirchner  
plus Christmas carols and songs for choirs and audience accompanied by flute, oboe, harp, percussion & piano

Saturday 8 December 7.30pm & Sunday 9 December 2pm  
Advance ticket sales from the SCCS website:  
[www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk](http://www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk)  
Adult £12 / on the door £14 Child 6-18 £6 / on the door £7  
Including interval refreshments & programme

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Come dressed as a Santa, support your local football team, have fun with your family, and look a bit silly.

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When?  
**Christmas Day**  
Where?  
**Sonning Common Village Hall**  
What time?  
**1 pm Lunch**  
Who's invited?  
Anyone on their own or can't face cooking a turkey for two

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Sonning Common Village Hall  
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**Library opening / closing times**

We're having a Christmas story and craft session for under 10s on Saturday 15 December - and home-made cakes will also be on sale!

Christmas/New Year

Monday 24 December: closed  
Tuesday 25 December: closed  
Wednesday 26 December: closed  
Thursday 27 and Friday 28 December: open 9 - 1pm; 2 - 5pm  
Saturday 29 December: open 9.30 - 12.30pm (Storytime as usual at 10am)  
Monday 31 December: open 2 - 5pm

We're always closed on Tuesdays  
Back to normal on Wednesday 2 January 2019

Rosemary Dunstan, library manager  
(Library phone: 0118 972 2448)



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Karen, Wood Lane, Sonning Common  
October 2018

*"To Andy and his team of efficient ladies, many thanks for seeing our recent sale through to conclusion despite the incompetence of another agent."*

Jeff & Carole, Essex Way, Sonning Common.  
September 2018

*"Bridges did a fantastic job of selling our home, with particular thanks to Liana for her tenacious attitude to progressing the sale. They found a buyer very quickly but the most impressive part was the sales progression."*

Jamie, Sedgewell Road, Sonning Common.  
August 2018

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# EVERYONE NEEDS SOMETHING AT HEATH AND WATKINS

By TOM FORT



**We all know how important shops are to a village – you could say they are vital organs that help keep the lifeblood pumping. We are amazingly lucky with our shops in Sonning Common. I do not know of a village in southern England which can boast a richer or more diverse retail mix, and they have helped make the village a draw for people from miles around.**

Over the twenty years I have been living here, I have seen the shops come and go. But through all the flux and change there has been one constant on the Sonning Common shopping scene – going all the way back to 1938. Anyone who does

not know I am referring to Heath and Watkins has been walking around with their eyes tight shut.

The world has moved on in the eighty years since two colleagues at a wireless company in Caversham – Jack Heath and Ted Watkins – got together to open a small shop on the north side of Wood Lane selling radios, cycles, spare parts and other useful items, and doing repairs. But some basic needs have not changed: for a lightbulb, a battery, a measuring jug, a pair of scales, a packet of rat poison, to mention a few at random. Meeting those needs has been the business of Heath and Watkins, and remains so.



I became aware of it early on, and of its genial proprietor, Mick Wells. In his earlier life Mick was a potato merchant, and I am sure he brought the same qualities to flogging spuds that he did to persuading me that buying two nailbrushes made more sense than buying one. To know Mick was to like him and to be friends with him; he simply had a natural-born talent for dealing with customers.

That has always been the magic of Heath and Watkins. Jack Heath and Ted Watkins got it up and running by the outbreak of war in 1939, and left it in the care of a good man, Jack Sweetman, when they went off to fight respectively in the RAF and the Royal Navy. They returned to pick up the reins, and in 1958 moved the business across the road to the more

spacious premises it still occupies today. After Jack Heath's death, Ted Watkins took sole charge, and he eventually handed control over to his son James, who ran it for more than 20 years up to 1990 before to selling it to a couple who subsequently passed it on to Mick Wells.

James Watkins, Sonning Common born-and-bred and his wife Jean – from Checkendon, but a hairdresser in Sonning Common for more years than she cares to remember – live in Grove Road. James, who went on to start and run a successful gardening and landscaping business, has nothing but fond memories of his time behind the counter at his dad's shop. And he was delighted to hear the news that Heath and Watkins is embarking upon a new era.

This is how it happened. My son Hugh's partner, Sharona Fairweather, has a considerable passion for growing plants and vegetables – a passion which, regarding the veg anyway, I share. She once told me that one of her dreams was to have a polytunnel, and I remembered that there was one – or the skeleton of one – behind Heath and Watkins. I went to see Mick, who had installed it and grown plentifully in it until an unfortunate incident with a bonfire put paid to the polythene covering. Sharona and I, with family assistance, re-covered it, installed raised beds, and started growing: spuds (Mick's advice on varieties of seed potato was invaluable), cut flowers, courgettes, mountains of tomatoes, peas, beans, you name it.



So we both began to see quite a bit of Mick and his family – including Greg Wheadon, who runs the priceless mower and cycle repair workshop behind H&W. And one day Mick, whose inimitable vigour and zest had been somewhat diminished by a succession of health problems, asked me if Sharona and I might be interested taking over. One thing led to another, and what began as a fanciful idea gradually took firm shape. Two months ago, on 1 October, Sharona took over the lease and – as I'm sure many magazine readers will know by now – has been running the shop ever since. She and my son are living in the flat above, and the future of this vital village asset is – for the moment anyway – secure.



It's been an adventure and I hope will go on being one. Sharona is insistent that the essential character of the business will not change, although she is keen to build on the gardening, plants, and home-making side of it. She is also determined to make the shop as eco as possible – so expect a campaign against plastic packaging and bags. Greg will remain on hand, knocking mowers into shape, sharpening chain saws, making bikes roadworthy again and generally solving the mechanical problems that baffle the rest of us. The shop has a motto – "Everyone needs something at Heath and Watkins". We happen to think that's true. ●



## A MOMENT OF FAME

Heath and Watkins filmed as the scene of crime in an episode of Midsomer Murders.



# Church news

## ST MICHAEL'S CATHOLIC CHURCH

The parish hosted its first Macmillan coffee morning this year. After each of the two Sunday Masses parishioners were encouraged to go to the church hall for coffee and cake. The availability of 'taster samples' by the church door seemed to do the trick. They were joined by others who had seen the event advertised locally. Over £500 was raised.

It is often forgotten that St Michael's has its own primary school, St Martin's, situated in Caversham Park Village. There is regular contact between the church and the school. School or individual class Masses and services are held on a regular basis to which parishioners are invited. The 10.30am Sunday Mass at St Michael's on most first Sundays of the month is led by pupils from the school. Preparation for First Holy Communion usually

commences just after Christmas. This is for all children, Year 3 or older, whether attending St Martin's or not. Catholic families with children of the appropriate age should contact the parish if they wish to participate

Christmas at St Michael's extends an invitation to friends old and new to join us

Pangbourne Silver Band Christmas Concert **Sunday 9 December at 5pm**

A popular concert where the band plays a wide range of Christmas favourites. Adults £5 children free. Includes mulled wine in the interval. Tickets from the church or office.

Carol Service organised by Bishopswood School **Wednesday 12 December 10.30am**

Christmas flower arranging workshop. Contact parish office **Saturday 15 December**

Advent Reconciliation Service a spiritual preparation **Monday 17 December 7pm**

Christmas Masses for families with young children **Monday 24 December 5pm**

Midnight Mass Monday **24 December 8pm**

Christmas Day **Tuesday 25 December 10.30am**

We are looking forward to joining the other Christian churches at Springwater in **January** to celebrate the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity together.

Contact details: phone **0118 972 3418** email **stmichaels.rc@hotmail.co.uk**, website **www.saintmichaelsonningcommon.org.uk**

## SPRINGWATER CHURCH

The Commissioning Service which was held on 22nd September was a wonderful event. A full house and a joyous time of celebration to welcome Kevin and Linsey Potter as our new pastors and introduce the leadership team. It was so good to see so many dear friends and family from far and wide. The cream tea was pretty good too!!

Kevin Potter and John Clokey are away in India as I write this. They are on a motor cycle tour to raise funds and awareness for 'Oasis', an organisation which runs hostels for people who have been trafficked and terribly abused. They also have a group of

street performers with them on the tour and they are attracting large crowds wherever they perform.

The time to celebrate Christmas is almost upon us, a busy time for everyone especially churches! At Springwater we will be having our annual carol service on Sunday 23 December.

A merry and meaningful Christmas to you all and a happy, peaceful and loving New Year.

Chris Girdler

For details of events/services: **www.springwaterchurch.org.uk** church office tel: **0118 972 4519**

## CHRIST THE KING AND ST JOHN'S CHRISTMAS SERVICES 2018

CANDLE-LIT SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS AT ST JOHN'S: Friday 21 December, 7.30.

CHRISTINGLE SERVICE FOR ALL THE FAMILY AT CHRIST THE KING: Christmas Eve, 4.30

Collection for the Children's Society that provides help and support for needy children

MIDNIGHT MASS AT ST JOHN'S: Christmas Eve 11.00pm.

CHRISTMAS DAY SERVICES AT CHRIST THE KING: Christmas Day 9.30

ST JOHN'S KIDMORE END: Christmas Day 10.30

# REMEMBRANCE

## REMEMBERING FRANCIS FREDERICK SLOUGH

At the village coffee mornings, hosted by Sonning Common WI, on 7 November 2018 a poppy wreath of over 100 knitted poppies was hung in the Village Hall. The wreath was hung around the plaque to remember Fred Slough who lost his life in the Falklands War.

Each November respect is paid to all the men and women of the British Forces who have lost their lives and we were particularly remembering Fred and the family and friends he left behind.

Some of the ladies who made the wreath remember Fred, who grew up in Sonning Common and attended the Village schools. Pam Pratt remembers Fred at Chiltern Edge Youth Club, taking part in bicycle trials in the local woods and talking

to her about his wish to join the Parachute Regiment.

Age just 16 Fred joined the 2nd Battalion Parachute Regiment. Sadly, paratrooper Fred died on 14 June 1982 at Wireless Ridge on the Falklands aged just 19 years old.

As well as members of the village and the Parish Council we were pleased that Fred's school friend Steve Goddard was able to join us on this occasion to remember his friend. Resident Alex Manning, himself a veteran of the Falklands War, spoke of the battles undertaken by the 2nd Battalion. Alex said we can all show our respect by wearing our poppies in honour of boys like Fred.

£42 was raised from the sale of the table poppies and was sent to the British Legion Poppy Appeal Fund. ●

SUE HEDGES



## WILFRED OWEN

One of the most famous Poets of the First World War was Wilfred Owen who lived near to Sonning Common in the village of Dunsden and worked as a Lay Assistant to the local Vicar from 1911 to 1913. His choice of Dunsden may have been influenced by his Aunt who lived in 'Alpen Rose' a large house, still standing in Kennylands Road and whom he often visited. Having been brought up in Shropshire he had moved south to study at The University of Reading. His time at Dunsden was not happy. He was appalled at the poverty in and around the village and felt that both the church and the local community did little to help. Many who lived there were both poor and illiterate farm labourers. Evening classes were organised to try and help the local folk to read and write.

Disillusioned by the poverty and after witnessing a terrible accident in Dunsden he moved to France working as a private tutor at the Berlitz School of Languages in Bordeaux. When war broke out in 1914 he considered joining the French Army but returned home and in 1915 enlisted in The Artists

Rifles Officer Training Corps and after training was commissioned as a second lieutenant in the Manchester Regiment. Posted to France he suffered a number of traumatic experiences. He fell into a shell hole and suffered concussion. He was blown up and spent several days lying on the battlefield amongst the bloody remains of a fellow officer. He was diagnosed as suffering from "Shell Shock" and was sent to Craiglockhart War Hospital in Edinburgh to recover. Whilst at Craiglockhart he met and befriended Siegfried Sassoon a poet, writer and fellow sufferer who had a tremendous influence on him and his poetry. On discharge he moved to Yorkshire for the winter where he wrote and revised some of his poems, and then he returned to active service in France!

On 4 November 1918, one week before the signing of the Armistice, he was killed in action. On this day he was also promoted to Lieutenant and was awarded the Military Cross for his bravery in a previous attack on an enemy strong point. Many people regard

Wilfred Owen as the greatest First World War Poet. He wrote about the horrors of trench and gas warfare. ●



## CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

In October a celebration of the end of WW1 was held at Kidmore End Memorial hall. It was well attended and made over £500 for Hall funds.

# NOT QUITE THE END

By **JOAN GRUMMANT**

## Successful village lunch celebrates an Autumn Special

Very successful Village Lunches that have been taking place in Sonning Common since 2009, because of a chance meeting between Chrissie Godfrey and Jill Vallis. Chrissie was volunteering at the Oxfam Bookshop in Caversham at the time and suggested putting on an austerity lunch of soup, bread and cheese to raise funds for Oxfam. It was a great success, fun to do and snowballed from there into the much larger but well attended village gatherings which were eagerly anticipated by all.

Jill bought a house in France and a meal with a French theme emerged. Jill researched suitable recipes. At a sample supper tested the menu and the French Lunch took place in 2010.

The lunches that followed were always meant to provide a good community focus and spirit while raising money for many worthwhile causes and average funds raised about £1,000 per lunch. Recipients were the Primary School Garden Club, Sue Ryder hospice and Village Gardeners. The Parish Council opened an account for the group and many willing volunteers emerged to manage the growing numbers

and increasingly ambitious menus. Their popularity grew with organisers enjoying the occasions as much as the participants.

Since those early days there have been many themed events including Italian, Spanish, Greek, Scandinavian, Russian and a Best of Britain Evening. The Back to the 60's meal in 2015 was extremely popular and full of nostalgia. Guests rose to the occasion and came fittingly dressed in many outfits that were obviously treasured old favourites and the musical accompaniment was enthusiastically received by all. Since 2016 the lunches have become annual suppers.

New initiatives have commemorated significant national events and Champagne Teas were held to celebrate the Queen's 90th birthday and the Royal Wedding of William and Kate. Eight Christmas Day superb lunches with all the trimmings have been enjoyed by couples, singles and not just locals.

All involved deserve a huge vote of thanks from us. It is a fine example of how strong community links are forged and sustained.

On 5 October Chrissie announced her retirement at the Autumn supper.

A sad end to such a good community

initiative. NOT QUITE. It is representative of our community that the WI have stepped up to decorate the hall and Sandy Onofrio will lead the team of willing volunteers on Christmas Day.

Tickets for 2018 are now on sale from Occasions.

Help is required on Sunday 23 December 10am for table setting up and laying and for volunteers on the day. ●

**Please contact Sandy on 07588 792200 sandi.onofrio@yahoo.co.uk**



# HALLOWEEN IS A CONTROVERSIAL EVENT...

but most local kids love the dressing up and walking around the village visiting their friends and neighbours for a 'trick or treat' - but mainly for the treats!

Carrie-Anne Johnson and her family LOVE Halloween and not only dress up, but also decorate the whole of the front of their house in Crowsley Way. It is becoming something of a tradition and last year they collected donations to the grand sum of £400 for the Thames Valley Air Ambulance.

This year the family wanted to support Charlie Ilsley, the little 11 year old boy from Emmer Green who is undergoing cancer treatment in Turkey. On the evening they collected a MASSIVE £1,500 (including a generous top up) from donations and raffle tickets to win a 32 inch tv donated by Philip Mullin of Sonning Common Garage. The family would like to thank him for this and also Ru Butler of Peppard Building Supplies who donated the materials for the wonderful castle entrance to the driveway. The Hare and Hounds also

donated funds raised from a raffle in the pub. Charlie came along with the family on the evening to meet Carrie-Anne's family and to draw the winning tv raffle ticket.

Christine Atkinson



# Parish news

The content of this page is the sole responsibility of, and is paid for by, Sonning Common Parish Council

## BECOMING A SONNING COMMON PARISH COUNCILLOR

**How would you like to have a say in remodelling the village centre, setting up new sport and recreation facilities and helping to shape housing development in the village?**

The Parish Council is looking to recruit two new members to contribute in a significant way to the life of Sonning Common.

There are currently 10 members of the Parish Council with vacancies for two new councillors to be co-opted onto the council.

Sonning Common Parish Council is an elected tier of local government. It has been granted its powers by Parliament, including the right to raise money (the precept) through taxation and to spend this for the good of the village.

The current council is non-party political and we debate and vote on matters as independent individuals. We then all get behind the decisions. A co-opted member has exactly the same status, rights and responsibilities as an elected member.

The Parish Council has a very wide remit, ranging from local planning issues and the Neighbourhood Plan to grant allocations, recreation areas, footpaths and highways, the village hall and the environment, to mention only a few.

We are an enthusiastic, pro-active council and our contribution to enhancing the life of our village at all levels is widely appreciated. The full council meets once a month

on Mondays at 8pm and is the key decision-making forum in the village. It is supported by two standing committees, Planning and Finance. Each councillor is normally a member of one of these two key committees. The Planning Committee meets twice a month on Mondays at 7.15pm and the Finance Committee meets once a month on Wednesdays at 6pm.

Our working parties include: Neighbourhood Plan 2, Memorial Hall Field, Village Centre, Environment, Recreation (skate park and play areas) and Widmore Pond. We now manage the village hall and the local youth club, ClubSC. The council is also currently represented on 7 external bodies.

All appointments to committees and working parties are decided at the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council in May of each year.

Philip Collings, the Parish Clerk, holds the Certificate in Local Council Administration, which, together with having the required number of elected councillors, enables the council to do anything that a private member of the public may do. This wide power is held by only a very few parishes in South Oxfordshire. We are very fortunate to have a clerk who has obtained this qualification.

The parish office is at the centre of all our work and gives expert, committed support. We enjoy excellent, positive relationships with our county and district councillors.

Being a parish councillor takes time and effort but can be extremely

rewarding. If you are interested in becoming a councillor and would like further information, please contact Philip Collings at the parish office. ●

**Tel: 0118 9723616.**

**Email: clerk@sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk**

*Carole Lewis, Chair of the Council*

### VILLAGE CENTRE WORKING PARTY

Do you have strong opinions about the village centre? How did you react to the vision for reorganising it that was put forward by Ben Hamilton-Baillie at the exhibition earlier this year? Would you like to be involved in shaping the future?

The Village Centre Working Party is looking for volunteers – it does not require a huge time commitment, just new ideas and lots of energy. If you're interested contact the chairman, Stuart Howe, on [stuarthowe@gmail.com](mailto:stuarthowe@gmail.com) ●

DOG POO on the pavement is increasingly a problem in Grove Road. Owners please clear it up and deposit in the designated bin at the corner of Grove and Kennylands Roads. ●

Sonning Common Parish Council  
Parish Office, Village Hall, Wood Lane, Sonning Common RG4 9SL  
T: 0118 972 3616

E: [clerk@sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:clerk@sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk) (Philip Collings)  
[deputyclerk@sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:deputyclerk@sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk) (Ros Varnes)  
W: [www.sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.sonningcommonparishcouncil.org.uk)

Reminder to all readers to use the Parish website for information

# HELPING REDUCE PLASTIC IN OUR OCEANS THE STORY OF WA CUP



bottles sold in the UK are spent on sending reusable items to schools in the most polluted countries in the world, alongside educational PowerPoints that provide tips on how children can reduce their plastic waste. The aluminium bottles are completely recyclable and bottles have already been sent to schools in China, Thailand and Vietnam.

Support for the initiative is growing and Clare has recently appeared on BBC Radio Surrey and SUSY Radio. Watch videos and follow their progress at [www.facebook.com/wacupmovement](http://www.facebook.com/wacupmovement) or [www.instagram.com/wacupmovement](http://www.instagram.com/wacupmovement).

By supporting WA Cup you are doing so much more than purchasing a water bottle. Pledge your support by purchasing a bottle (£8) or making a donation at [www.wacup.org](http://www.wacup.org).



Local girl Clare Thomson set up WA CUP (pronounced wake up) as a UK Registered Charity six months ago. The aim of the charity is to reduce plastic pollution in our oceans, achieved through education and the promotion of reusable items across Asia.



Working as a young teacher in Thailand and Vietnam Clare was horrified at the state of the plastic-strewn beaches, and determined to start a movement to help educate the children she was teaching about the devastating effects this is having.

Clare designed a WA CUP which is a reusable bottle. Proceeds from



Beach Mui Ne in Vietnam, described by one travel agent as 'only four hours from Saigon, on glorious unspoiled stretches of sand'. Clare surfed at this tropical paradise last year and the stretches of sand were unspoiled. Returning only 6 months later, this heart breaking sight greeted her.



Schoolchildren in Thailand showing their support for WA CUP!



# A LOCAL STAR IN THE MAKING?

By CHRISTINE ATKINSON

Jodi Anderson is in Year 11 at Maiden Erlegh Chiltern Edge Academy and lives in the village with her parents and brother. Her passion is playing music – and writing her own songs.



She's always enjoyed music and has written songs since she was very young, but when Jodi started at secondary school her interest in performing them herself grew. The music teacher (Miss Fay) was very supportive and helped with singing and performing skills. Jodi can play ukulele, guitar and piano and accompanies herself when singing.

Jodi took Music as a GCSE and started to perform at open mic (microphone) nights in the local area. There are two good venues in Henley where talented young people are able to hone their skills on appreciative local audiences. She has also performed at the Big Bash held in the summer at the Butchers Arms, and at her brother's Year 6 leaving party!

This went a step further when Jodi entered a national open mic

competition last year. Auditions were held in Reading and she progressed to the Southern England finals where she was up against around 20 other artists. At this point her luck changed.....

Although Jodi didn't win the competition she was chosen to receive an artist development award, one of four given this, which was for a year of support from a recording studio in Southampton called River Studios. The award was given to those thought to have enough talent to go further in the music industry.

The studios have given advice, support and encouragement for most of this year and enabled Jodi to grow in confidence, to the extent that she has now self-released her first single called MIRROR. This is a great step up for Jodi and very exciting as she hopes this will lead to further opportunities within the music industry.

As with most music now it is available as a download rather than a physical single and her friends helped with the photography and artwork. Chris Elliot from Gigshotz (a live events, video and photography production company) has also helped by making a video for the single which will be available soon.

Her focus for the next few months will be on her GCSEs and then she hopes

to take an extended diploma in music at college. Good luck with everything in the future Jodi! The single is available on most music platforms and Jodi has her own website where you can find out lots more about her.

[www.jodiofficial.co.uk](http://www.jodiofficial.co.uk)



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# FRUITS OF AUTUMN: AN EVENING OF WINE AND SONG

A chilly autumn evening in November saw some 60 people gather in Kidmore End Primary School hall to sample some delicious wines and listen to some very pleasant musical offerings.

Senior Wine Buyer for Waitrose and PCC Treasurer, Nick Room took to the floor to present an entertaining blind wine-tasting experience. During the course of the evening we were given four whites and four reds, with the added fun of using any wine knowledge or native wit to guess where they came from and what grape was used in the process.

There were white wines from the New World, i.e. Chile, Argentina, California USA and Australia as well as red wines from the more traditional wine-producing countries: France, Italy, Portugal and Greece. A delicious plate of canapés produced by Yvonne Room and Bev Allen enhanced the whole experience.

Interspersed amongst the wines were a selection of musical numbers: the church choir kicked off the evening with two pieces: The Rose and Molly Malone, then later: father and son duo David and Simon Classey with the time-appropriate numbers *Blowing in the Wind* and *War Child*. Linda Martin on the ukulele and Janet Hallett brought us *Country Roads* and *Blue Moon*. Then later a touch of jazzy class from Rector James Stickings accompanied on guitar by Tim Walker in *A Nightingale* sang in Berkeley Square. The whole evening was rounded off with an excellent raffle and James' and Tim's encore: *Funny Valentine*. A promise to repeat the experience the following year was met with great enthusiasm.

All in all, a delightful evening raising some £750 for much needed funds - going towards, among other things, electrical and building maintenance for both St John's and Christ the King churches. ●

Rosemary House



# AN EMAIL FROM OUR URBAN JUNGLE

Yet another busy year for me work wise which has seen me globetrotting yet again, I was amazed that neglecting the garden as I did it still produced a magnificent display, an abundance of figs, grapes, and yes bananas, yes you heard me right, bananas, albeit they weren't of the edible variety and the heatwave did not last long enough to produce full sized fruits, is this a first for Sonning Common?

As you may be aware bananas grow where the average temperature is 27 deg C, close to the tropical regions, my

south facing garden certainly bettered that, 40+ on many occasions, this and the heatwave that we experienced produced just those ideal conditions and one of the banana plants flowered. This was all very exciting, the downside to this is that once a banana has flowered it sadly dies, however it will have produced pups which in no time will be towering at 3 metres plus next summer. Bring on 2019. ●

Mick Stanyer



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# QUIZ, RAFFLE, COMPETITION, SHOW AND ALL IN THE LIBRARY



Competition was fierce at the FoSCL Quiz, with the Comets putting in a stratospheric performance to scoop first prize. Around a hundred people attended the event which raised nearly eight hundred pounds for Library funds. Much of the profit came from a raffle generously supported by local businesses, including Laithwaites, Brambles, The Mill at Sonning, The Tandoori Connoisseur, the Sonning Common Fish Bar, Pressed for Time and the Co-op.

National Libraries week was marked by the presentation of the prizes in FoSCL's short story competition. We had 40 entries this year - with some outstanding winners. Sophie Stone took first place in the under 11 category with "The Pearl"; the runner up was Jacob Vorster with "The Fox Catcher"; first place in the under 16 category went to Freya Handley with "A summary of my Life"; the runner up was Gabriele Stone with "Moments can never be foretold"; Sheila Walker came first in the over 16 category with "Cat and Mouse"; Molly Hancock was runner up with "Society Problem#249". A special judges' award went to Freya Hammond with "Pocket sized Neve saves the day". A big thank you to this year's sponsors Stephen Anthony Developments and TA Fisher.

The Library Lion came roaring into Sonning Common in October - but instead of baring his teeth he showed his

intelligent side and visited the Library. The show, a mixture of music and drama performed by Untied Artists, was a big hit - entertaining an audience of children and parents during half term. FoSCL hope to be able to help pay for similar shows in the future.

There'll be Christmas refreshments on the afternoon of Friday 21 December and the library will be open for business between Christmas and New Year. As ever, a massive thank you to Friends and Volunteers. ●

## HELEN FORT



# COOK'S CORNER

By SANDY ONOFRIO

Two recipes (much enjoyed) that were on the menu at the recent Autumn Celebration supper at the village hall.

### APPLE AND CIDER CAKE

- 200g self raising flour
- 200g margarine
- 200g golden caster sugar
- 4 eggs
- 120g sultanas
- Can of cider
- 2 Bramley apples, peeled and chopped
- 4 red skinned eating apples, sliced with skin on
- 60g melted butter
- 60g demerara sugar



In a small bowl cover the sultanas with the cider. Cream the fat and sugar together and add the eggs, flour, sultanas and chopped apples. Spread into an 8" square tin and arrange the sliced apples in neat rows on the top. Brush with the butter and sprinkle with the demerara sugar. Cook for 25/30 minutes at 180/Gas 4 until the apples are lightly browned. ●

### CUMBERLAND SAUCE

- 1 lemon
- 1 orange
- 4 heaped tablespoons good-quality redcurrant jelly
- 4 tablespoons port
- 1 heaped teaspoon mustard powder
- 1 heaped teaspoon ground ginger



Peel strips of the zest from both the lemon and the orange then cut into small strips (1/2 inch) as thin as possible. Boil in water for 5 minutes then drain well. Put the redcurrant jelly in a saucepan add the port and melt, whisking them together over a low heat for about 5 or 10 minutes. Sieve through after to get rid of any lumps. In a small bowl mix the mustard and ginger with the juice of half the lemon until smooth, then add the juice of the whole orange, the port and redcurrant mixture and the strips of lemon and orange zest. Mix well and the sauce is ready to use. Cumberland sauce can be stored in the fridge for two weeks. ●

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# HEALTH ADVICE

DID YOU KNOW?

## Flu vaccines

We would like to reassure patients – over 65 years - that we will have sufficient vaccines to immunise those who require it. Please phone Reception to book in your flu jab if you have not already done so. The health centre will add extra flu clinics if required and after 11 November will be able to offer flu jabs during any practice visit.

## Keeping Well

Cold weather can be bad for our health, especially for people aged 65 or older, and people with long-term conditions such as COPD, bronchitis, emphysema, asthma, diabetes or heart or kidney disease. Being cold can raise the risk of increased blood pressure, heart attacks and strokes. Over 65 you are eligible for the pneumococcal vaccine, which will help protect you from pneumococcal diseases such as pneumonia. Over 70 you are eligible for a Shingles vaccination.

## IF YOU ARE FEELING UNWELL

- visit the pharmacist at Day Lewis for advice
- have a supply of painkillers such as paracetamol and ibuprofen in stock at home for colds and sore throats
- check you have sufficient prescription medication especially at Christmas and New Year

- ordering online to save going out in the cold
- collect a leaflet 'We're here to help you stay well this winter' from the Health Centre

## Keeping warm

The ideal bedroom temperature is 18C but keep your bedroom window closed when it is cold and 21C in the living room but you may wish for warmer if sitting down for long periods at a time, try to remain active. You can obtain a FREE thermometer from Oxfordshire AGE UK call 0345 450 1276 and ask for the 'network'. It is a good idea to have hot drinks and meals; keep supplies especially when the weather is bad and difficult to get out.

FISH provides transport, shopping trips, tea parties, befriending and much more. Phone 0118 972 3986 or Email: [office@fishvolunteercentre.org.uk](mailto:office@fishvolunteercentre.org.uk)

Register for FREE Utility Priority Service in the case of utility failure of power, gas or water supply. If registered they will provide additional support. More information from Oxfordshire County Council Emergency Planning Team 01865 323765 Website: [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/emergencyplanning](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/emergencyplanning)

## Warm Home discount

People who have difficulty paying

their energy bills might be able to take advantage of the Warm Home Discount, a new kind of grant offered by the government and energy suppliers. It is a scheme that provides people on low incomes with a single discount of £140 on their winter electricity bill.

The discount will not affect your Cold Weather Payment or Winter Fuel Payment.

If you don't receive the discount automatically, you might be eligible if you have a low income and receive certain means-tested benefits. Bear in mind that energy suppliers could have different eligibility rules.

Further details are available from <https://www.gov.uk/the-warm-home-discount-scheme>

Citizens Advice can help. Contact us in person during opening hours or on the telephone (Adviceline 03 444 111444). For locations of offices and opening hours see [www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/oxfordshire-south-vale](http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/oxfordshire-south-vale)

**citizens  
advice**

## EAR SYRINGING AT SONNING COMMON HEALTH CENTRE



The same as many practices in Oxfordshire, Sonning Common Health Centre stopped ear syringing at the end of March for all patients. Please note these exceptions:

- If a hospital's Ear, Nose & Throat department is treating you and have requested it.
- Pre-referral to the Audiology (hearing) clinic.

There is a link to Ear Wax Guidance, which gives useful information on the SCHC website ([www.sonningcommonhealthcentre.co.uk](http://www.sonningcommonhealthcentre.co.uk)) and this guidance is available in paper form at reception at the health centre.

## BEREAVEMENT GROUP

I am a qualified integrative therapeutic counsellor and having spent many hours talking to bereaved families, I have approached Sonning Common Health Centre so that we can initiate a Bereavement Group for anyone who feels they would like to share their feelings with people who have had similar experiences.

The meetings will be held approximately once a month. The first was on Wednesday 28 November 2 pm to 4 pm at the FISH Volunteer Centre in Kennylands Road. The only cost involved will be a contribution towards refreshments.

If you feel joining the group will be beneficial to you, please contact me by email -

[jill@dragonfliescounselling.co.uk](mailto:jill@dragonfliescounselling.co.uk)

# JACKIE'S CRAFT COLUMN

## CRAFTY CHRISTMAS TREE

Use your imagination and creativity to decorate your very own 'pine-needle-free' Christmas tree.

### What you'll need:

- Paper plate
- Scissors
- Hole punch
- String/ribbon
- Green paint and paintbrush



1) Paint both sides of the paper plate green – this will form your tree.



2) With the help of an adult, start at the outside of the plate and cut a spiral until you reach the middle of the plate.

3) Using the hole punch create equally spaced holes along the spiral.



4) Tie a length of ribbon through the hole in the centre of the spiral – this will be used to hang your decoration.

5) Cut a star out of coloured paper and stick to the centre of your spiral, the top of your Christmas tree.



6) Cut out decorations for your tree from coloured paper. You could paint them, decorate them or even print and cut out your favourite Christmas characters to hang for the tree – use your imagination!



6) Finally tie a piece of string around the middle of the pine cone and hang from the web. Now you can display your creation in your house or garden.



7) Using the hole punch, make a hole in the top of each decoration to hang them from your tree.

8) Tie a piece of string through each decoration and the holes you made earlier along your paper plate spiral.



Once your tree is decorated it is ready to hang up in your home. Why not make smaller decorations to hang on your Christmas tree or gift to friends and family.

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# DIARY DATES

## DECEMBER 2018

**Saturday 1**  
11am - 2pm  
Sonning Common pre-school Christmas Fair. Sonning Common pre-school

**Monday 3**  
2.30pm  
FISH - Tea party. Village Hall

**Wednesday 5**  
10.30am - 12noon  
Christmas Coffee Morning hosted by Sonning Common WI. Open to all. Village Hall Thursday

**Saturday 8**  
4pm  
NOTTAKWIRE Carols for all. Village Hall

**Saturday 8**  
7.30pm  
South Chiltern Choral Society - On Christmas Night. Chiltern Edge School

**Sunday 9**  
2pm  
South Chiltern Choral Society - On Christmas Night. Chiltern Edge School

**Tuesday 11**  
7.15pm  
Chiltern Edge Horticultural Society AGM. Peppard Memorial Hall

**Friday 14**  
Santa on a tractor

**Saturday 15**  
10am  
Christmas story and craft session for under 10s. Sonning Common Library

**Monday 17**  
8pm  
Sonning Common Parish Council. Village Hall

**Tuesday 18**  
7pm  
Chiltern Edge School presents "Alice in Wonderland" Chiltern Edge School

**Wednesday 19**  
7pm  
Chiltern Edge School presents "Alice in Wonderland" Chiltern Edge School

**Thursday 20**  
7pm  
Chiltern Edge School presents "Alice in Wonderland" Chiltern Edge School

**Friday 21**  
2.30pm  
Christmas refreshments. Sonning Common Library

**Tuesday 25**  
Christmas lunch. Village Hall

## JANUARY 2019

**Monday 14**  
2.30pm  
FISH - Tea party. Village Hall

**Thursday 17**  
11.30am  
FISH - Pub lunch

**Thursday 17**  
7.30pm  
Sonning Common Women's Institute - Let's Talk Rubbish! a talk by Ellie Bunn (SODC) Village Hall

**Monday 21**  
8pm  
Sonning Common Parish Council. Village Hall

**Thursday 24**  
FISH - Henley Farmers' Market

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Bondright Roofing Services	Back	Pilates ABC	35
Bonner Locksmiths	12	Property Maintenance	29
Brambles Floral Service	33	Red Kite Electrical	9
Bridges Estate Agents	16-17	Robin James Opticians	9
Carl Woods Butchers Ltd	26	S J Hinton Carpenter & Joiner	35
Carpet Fitter	2	Sonning Common Beauty	35
Caversham Aerial Services	2	Sonning Common Garage	30
Compass Water Softeners	12	Sonning Common Pet Care	12
Computer Repairs	29	Sonning Common Pre-School	2
Curtains, Blinds, Pelmetts,	30	Spruce Property Maintenance Service	13
Davis Tate Estate Agency	8	Stafford & Son (Garden & Building Maintenance)	9
Elements Kitchen Design	2	Studio One (Pilates, Matwork & Yoga)	8
Ell's Decor	9	T C Fuller Plumbing & Heating	35
Family Hairdressing	12	Tandoori Connoisseur	35
Functional Physio	Back	TexturePlus (Interior & Exterior Decorating)	30
G B Transport (Removals)	29	Time 4 Pilates	9
Girl Power (Electrician)	9	Tomalin and Son Funeral Directors	Back
Graham Blake Soft Furnishings	13	TV Aerial Services	29
Heights Tree Care	13	Wee-Cot Seating	26
Henley Antiques	26	Wood Lane Dentistry	2
Henley Glazing & Window Centre Ltd	35	Wheeler's Electrical Contractors	30
Influential Computers	13	Zero Dry Time (Dry Carpet Cleaning)	29
Jefferies Accountancy Services	29		
Kiwi Feet (Toe & Foot Care)	9		
Kennylands Gymnastics	13		
Kidbys Sheds	9		
Laurence Hansen (House & Property Services)	12		

The FISH Volunteer Centre runs regular door-to-door shopping trips to Tesco in Henley every Monday morning and to Henley Waitrose, Henley Farmers Market, Morrisons in Reading and Reading Town Centre every month.

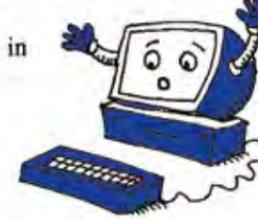
The programme of shopping and leisure trips for each month is published and distributed on 20th of the preceding month and bookings are taken from that date. Copies of the programme are available from the FISH Volunteer Centre, Sonning Common Library, the Christian Community Action shop, Pet Country Supplies and on request from Carson's Chemist. The monthly programme of trips is posted on noticeboards in both Peppard and Sonning Common and is also sent to individual email addresses. If you would like to receive a regular monthly copy, please email busmanager@fishvolunteercentre.co.uk with the message 'bus programme please' and your name.

Details of all minibus trips can also be found on the FISH website [www.fishvolunteercentre.org.uk](http://www.fishvolunteercentre.org.uk)  
For more information and to book any trip call 0118 972 3986 any weekday between 09.30 and 11.30 a.m. ●

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