

NORTHEASTON NEWS

MARCH 2011

No: 245



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Useful Contacts

North Aston News

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Email: info@north-aston.co.uk

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Sue Hatzigeorgiou, Treasurer

Telephone: (01869) 347727
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Franca Potts, Secretary

Telephone: (01869) 347356
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North Aston PCC

Clive Busby, Church Warden
Telephone: (01869) 338434

Email: goosegirl@hotmail.co.uk

Kildare Bourke-Borrowes, Churchwarden

Telephone: (01869) 340200

Email: k.bourkeborrowes@btinternet.com

North Aston Gardening Club

Chris Tuffrey, Chairman. See above.

North Aston Pet Alert

Please notify of any Firework Parties

Deirdre Oakley: Tel (01869) 340646

Also email: info@north-aston.co.uk

North Aston Farms

Telephone: (01869) 347865 or 347888

Email: jemtaylor@mac.com

North Aston Organics

Telephone: (01869) 347702

Email: markstayorganic@yahoo.co.uk

Nicholson Nurseries

Telephone: (01869) 340342

Email: office@nicholsons.gb.com

North Aston 100 Club

Norman West. Tel (01869) 340368

CDC Local Councillor

James Macnamara, Lower Heyford

Telephone: (01869) 340109

Email: cllr.james.macnamara@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

Thames Valley Police

Telephone: 08458 505 505

Out of Hours Doctor

Telephone: 08453 458 995

Upcoming Events

Coffee Morning

2nd March. 10:30am-12:00pm. Old Bakery

National Census Day

27th March 2011

JS Bach St John Passion

5th March, Saturday, SA Parish Church, 7:30pm

Tickets £10. See back page for more details.



CHAIRMAN Chewing the Cud

At last we are seeing the first rays of spring. The days are lengthening and the daffodils are starting to come into flower. Happy days are here again!

Although you may not have noticed, there have been quite a few goings-on in the village during the month of February.

First we had the meeting for the Village Hall, and although the turn out was small, there were a number of apologies for not attending and enthusiasm abounded. It turned out to be a very positive meeting and we are now going ahead with the project. Marcus, John and I had worthwhile visit to Balscote Village Hall, where we not only came away with a lot of useful advice but also the plans and cash flow analysis for all their building work. Your three trepid heroes/villains have since been off on their adventures again, visiting a manufacturer of wooden buildings near Evesham. The more information we get the clearer our decision will be when it comes to selecting the type of building we need. Enough from me on this subject as there is more, in the newsletter.

However, before I leave the subject of the Village Hall, we are looking to co-opt more members onto the Village Hall Committee and would ask everybody, including new families who have moved to the village recently, if they would like to become more involved. You are all welcome to come to our next meeting in March (date to be confirmed) or, contact myself or Marcus and register your interest. Don't be Shy.

The Gardening Club is up and running, and once again a more detailed report is later in the News. If anyone is looking for a vegetable plot and does not want to commit themselves to a full-sized allotment, a member of our community has offered his. If anyone is interested please contact me. On the other hand, if you would be interested in a full allotment, please let me know.

The Oil Scheme is up and running and is creating good interest. We have had our first orders placed.

I had a conversation with Marcus the other day; he told me that it takes him two days a month to produce the village newsletter. We have to be grateful to Marcus and to John Harvey-Lee and Norman West for giving their time to ensure that we get our copy of the newsletter on-time every month.

Hope you all have
a happy March

Chris Tuffrey

You can call me by telephone on **07903 339155**, send me an email: **info@offac.co.uk**, or just knock on the door at The Green.

The North Aston Gardening Club is officially up and running. Our first meeting was held at Marcus and Franca's house (thank you both) and Norman West, North Aston's very own *Gardening Sage*, has agreed to become our first Honorary President.

From little acorns grow large oak trees and the group of people who attended the first meeting could be described as the acorns of this venture.

A lively conversation assisted by the odd glass of wine brought forth a number of ideas and an events calendar started to be formulated. The first event will be a Plant Swap Shop to be held on the 14th May, times and venue to be confirmed. Non-members will be invited to attend this event but whereas members will swap plants free of charge we will be asking non-members to make a small donation. We are also intending to stage our very own Autumn Flower & Produce Show to run in conjunction with the Harvest Supper, again date and time to be confirmed.

It is also intended to formulate a winter calendar of events so watch this space. Already a number of ideas are sprouting forth.

So for those of you who are undecided whether to join or not, what are the benefits - apart from mixing in extremely good company?

Discounts, of anywhere between 33.3% and 50% for Dobies Seeds. We will try to order four times a year.

Discount of 10% from Yarnton Garden Centre on production of membership card.

Discount of between 5% and 10% from Buckingham Garden Centre. This is subject to a £5.00 administration fee on their part.

There are several more opportunities that are currently being looked at where it may be possible to get discounts.

One subject that came up during the discussion was the possibility of James Taylor extending the current size of the allotment to cater for more plots. The good news is that he has agreed, subject to there being a demand. We are very grateful to him for his generosity. If anyone wishes to avail of a plot please contact me or Norman West.

Finally MUCK, MUCK and more MUCK! We have managed to get two loads of well-rotted horse manure, which has now been delivered to the allotments. Any gardening club members please help yourselves. We need to get it moved as soon as possible.

The next gardening club meeting will be on May 3rd. The venue will be announced in the next Newsletter. All new members please come along and join us

If you are interested in joining, speak to Chris or call him on 07903 339155, or email info@offac.co.uk.



North Aston Gardening Club

COFFEE MORNING

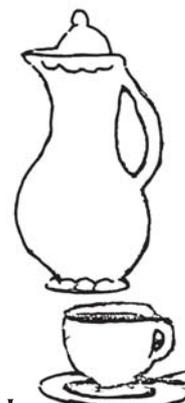
Come and join us for an informal get-together at the Bakery on the first Wednesday of each month. Tea, coffee and cakes will be served from 10:30am till 12:00 noon.

EVERYONE WELCOME!

If you would like transport, or a helping hand across the road, please ring Gwen Short (01295 810762) or Beryl Greenwood (340122) to arrange.



WE HOPE TO SEE YOU ON
WEDNESDAY MARCH 2nd





Mail to: info@north-aston.co.uk

Descending from the Annes

I wanted to write to let you know that I think the North Aston book is very nicely presented, very attractive and informative. It made my day, since my interest in the book is in what it says about the Anne family, who held the manor of North Aston in the 16th century. The book had exactly what I was hoping for – an image of the coat of arms on the church tower. I did not see that when I visited North Aston some years ago, and I only had a written description of it, which was ambiguous. The image ends the ambiguity. Thanks so much.

The leaflet about the restoration of the Anne Tomb, which you also sent, mentions that the tomb is of John Anne and his wife Alice Gifford. Do any of the local experts know who she was? I have been researching the Anne family for 15 years, and have amassed a lot of new information on them but I have never been able to identify her with any certainty.

The Heraldic Visitations (BL: Harl Mss 1556 & 1412, the second published as *Visitation of Oxfordshire*, vol 5, p 181) say she was a Gifford of Twyford, which is highly possible, as she bore their arms, but I have not been able to place her in that family. However, another branch of the Gifford family, those of Whaddon, bore the same arms. Yorkshire Pedigrees (Harl Soc vol 95, part 1, pp 13, 17) identifies her as a daughter of Sir John Gifford of Twyford, who did have a daughter Alice, but that Alice married Thomas Perwich of Leicestershire according to the same Oxfordshire Visitation, p 178. Perhaps this Alice remarried John Anne, but there is no proof of this. If you or one of the local historians could shed any light on this, I should be thrilled!

Best wishes,
Paul Delaney.

If anyone can shed light on this, please contact the News (info@north-aston.co.uk) or call in and speak with Marcus

Thanks John!

Extract from an email received at the News:

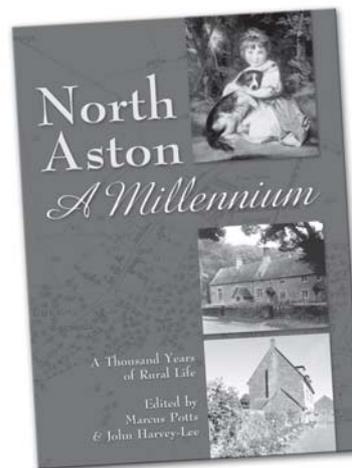
... While on the subject of the Newsletter, I would like to register my appreciation of all the conscientious dedication and hard work that John (Harvey-Lee) put into producing the Newsletter over many years.

I feel it would be wrong to let this change take place without some recognition of what John has been doing in his quiet and unassuming way over the years. Without his efforts I believe the Newsletter would have ceased to exist a long time ago, and I hope everyone appreciates his talent and what he has done for the village.

Good luck with the new format!

Best regards,
Ted Short

I am sure we all do appreciate everything that John has done, not only for the News, but for the village as a whole, and join with Ted in expressing our gratitude. Thank you John.



NEW TO NORTH ASTON?

~~£25~~
£15

Copies of *North Aston ~ A Millennium* are available to residents of the village for the reduced price of just £15.

Chronicling the history of the village from the time of the Roman invasion to the year 2000, this unique book is packed with previously unpublished photographs, maps and illustrations, as well as detailed historical information, personal accounts and anecdotes.

192 pages. ISBN 978-1-902863-18-4

Call in at Two School Cottages or phone 347356

CROWNS & CORONETS

A Celebration of the Wedding of

**HRH Prince William &
Catherine Middleton**

Friday 29th April 2011

The Village of Duns Tew will be celebrating the Royal Wedding in April with a children's party (4pm-6pm) followed by an evening dinner and dance (from 8pm).

Residents of North Aston have been specifically invited to attend. Tickets are £10 per head, to cover the cost of all food and entertainment, and bar prices will be generously subsidised.

The evening will feature a Hog Roast and music from the Oxford Jazz Agency band.

A children's Art Competition on the subject of "Kings & Queens" will precede the event, while the theme on the day will be Crowns & Coronets. Full details yet to be confirmed but will be published in the April News.

Further details from: info@north-aston.co.uk

Village Hall

The ball is rolling once again, and the moss has started to rub off at quite a speed following a very enthusiastic meeting last month. Admittedly, not a huge turnout, but with a host of "apologies for absence" and several very positive contacts subsequently, the momentum is definitely growing once again.

The hopes and aspirations of North Aston residents to create a community centre for the village goes back more than forty years, but sometimes it seems like that dim glimmer at the end of the tunnel gets no brighter. This time, we're determined to press on towards the light, and with your help and support, there might just be a realistic chance, this time, that we'll actually get there.

Now is not the time or place to rake over the coals, but in a nutshell, North Aston has been without a designated Village Hall since the old pavilion fell into disrepair nearly ten years ago. Yes, it's that long ago! The Old Bakery has fulfilled a very valuable role since then, but for reasons of accessibility, politics, size and location, it has never quite filled the breach. We should all be enormously grateful to Jeremy and James for allowing us to use the room, and also to Peach Pubs for their equally generous sharing of the restored barn at Park Farm. Without it, events like the Harvest Supper, or the Quiz Night staged last spring, could never take place.

We should also be appreciative of the on-going support of the Taylor family as we strive to create something bigger, better and more appropriate to our needs. Their position within North Aston means that it is difficult, or even impossible, to consider a Village Hall without their help and co-operation, so the fact that we have their support is something to be very thankful for.

The outcome of the February meeting was a renewed enthusiasm to carry forward the plans that were

generated by the last all-village survey of about five years ago. That highlighted the possibilities of two sites within the village - Beesley's Close overlooking the Green, and the existing Pavilion site on Watson's Ground. (Don't know your field names? Check *The Book!*). The preference then was for Beesley's Close, and the Council agreed, but for cost and practical reasons we are still having to consider the Pavilion site as a possibility.

To that end, it was agreed to press ahead with the creation of a Business Plan, with data and conclusions prepared for both sites. Nicholas Kneale, one of the most experienced business minds in the community, has kindly agreed to help with this.

The planning and cost implications of both sites also mean that we have to consider different types of building. If we were to site the Hall on Beesley's Close, then a stone-built front (at least) would probably be required to meet the requirements of the conservation area. However, that requirement would not apply to Watson's Ground, so we have also been looking at wooden buildings. Chris Tuffrey has been in regular contact with the Parish Council in Balscote, where they are nearing completion of a new Hall that would suit us very nicely.

Similar in many ways (size, population, needs etc) to North Aston, Balscote has chosen a pre-fabricated wooden structure for their new Hall, and it's very impressive. Do have a look at their village website at www.balscote.com and be inspired!

We have also visited another site, near Evesham, where a local community has created a multi-function building in conjunction with Keops (www.logcabins.co.uk). Much more modest in size and construction, it remains a very cost-effective option.

More news next month. If you want to know more, or would like to get involved, please email info@north-aston.co.uk. We need your support!

Marcus

This Month's Birthdays

Jos Busby

Pictured on the right, and please support his marathon run for charity if you can!

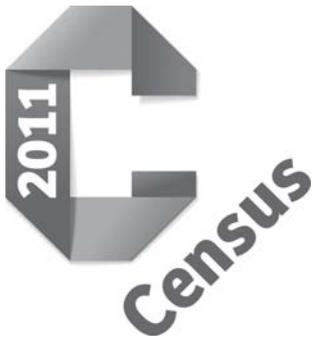
Stephen Rees

Joseph Stay

Many Happy Returns to all the North Aston residents who celebrate birthdays this month. If you're not listed, or know someone who should be, let us know. April looks like it could be a busy month!



www.justgiving/jos-busby



Every ten years since 1841 the British people have been asked to take part in a national census, and the next one comes around at the end of this month.

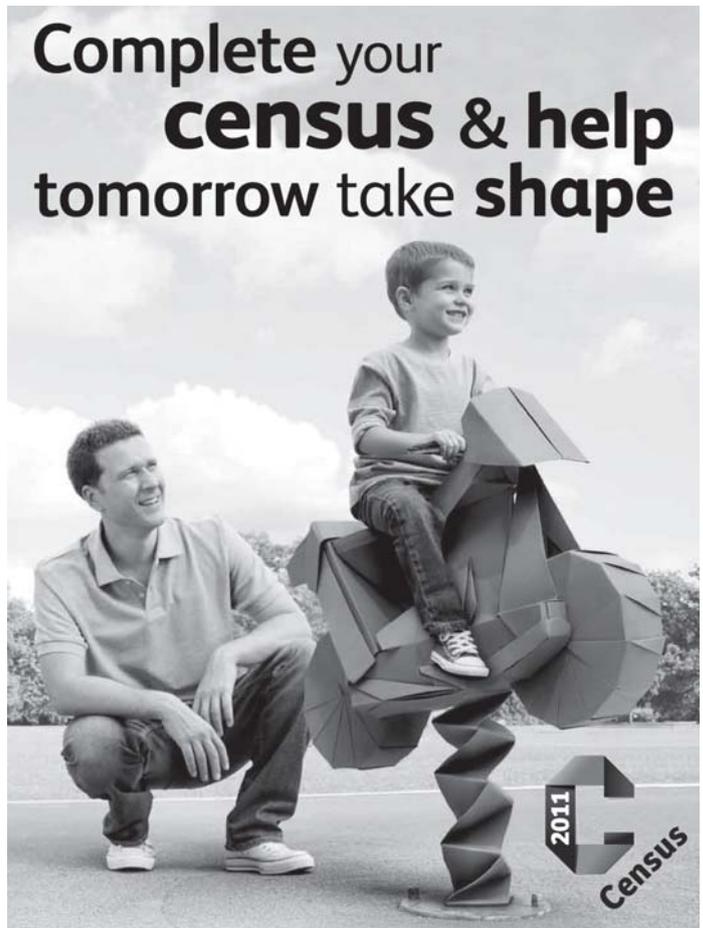
These days it may seem almost superfluous, since there are so many other ways

in which data is collected about us and the country we live in. Even so, there's no other single method by which the information can be gathered together in one place at one time, and the benefits far outweigh the inconvenience - or what some interpret as an intrusion of their privacy.

You can find out more information by going on-line to www.census.gov.uk, and there's a poster on the Noticeboard. The important facts are:

- Census Day is March 27th 2011
- It is compulsory to take part, and you can be fined if you don't.
- The questionnaire will arrive in the post soon, but you can complete the Census on-line if you prefer

Next month we'll have a look at a census return for North Aston from the late 19th century. It makes fascinating "reading"!



Complete the Census on March 27th

Jos Busby and the London Marathon

Just six weeks to go, and counting! Jos will be running the London Marathon on the 17th of April on behalf of INCTR (the International Network for Cancer Treatment and Research), a local charity in Oxford that helps in the fight against cancer in children in Africa. He hopes to raise £3000 and allow the charity to aid a classroom of children in Africa in their battle with Burkitt Lymphoma, one of the most common childhood cancers in tropical Africa. The cost of treatment is modest - as little as £100 will provide chemotherapy to save the life of a child.

Jos has resisted the temptation to go door-to-door, and has asked us here at the News to help spread the word. If you haven't yet done so, please complete the sponsorship form below and let him know his efforts have your support.



Virgin London Marathon 2011 JOS BUSBY SPONSORSHIP FORM

Thank you for your supporting Jos Busby's run in the **Virgin London Marathon 2011** on behalf of the INCTR Challenge Fund. The money raised will be used to purchase chemotherapy treatment for children suffering with Burkitt Lymphoma in Africa.

Name:

Home address:

.....

.....

.....

Post Code:

Amount: £ Gift Aid?*

You can return your form to Jos by posting it to:

Jos Busby, Dane Hill Farm, North Aston, Oxon., OX25 6JE

You can also place it in an envelope and drop it off, care of the North Aston News, at Two School Cottages, or hand it over to Clive or Trudy if you happen to see them in the village.

* If you pay UK taxes, please tick or state "Yes" if you would like the INCTR to treat your donation as Gift Aid. This will allow the charity to recover the equivalent of a further £2.50 on every £10 donated under the Government's Gift Aid scheme and, until 5th April 2011, a further 3p in every £1.

Thank you.



The Church MATTERS



Family Workshop - Saturday March 9th

Family Workshop, Saturday March 19th
in The Old Bakery, North Aston 2 - 5 p.m.

Hot Cross buns etc will be served. Come and get together with like-minded friends and help prepare for Easter. Help make a Simnel cake and decorate it with marzipan, plant seeds for the children's garden, and your own, and have fun.

Please call Dorothy on 349 939 to book a place.

Lent Course 2011

For those interested, the Rev Philip Beuzeval, retired Superintendent of the Methodist Oxford Circuit, will be speaking to us about 'Prayer - aspects and different styles', at **8:00 pm on Wednesdays March 16th, 23rd, 30th, and April 6th & 13th in Tackley Methodist Church**, opposite the Gardiner Arms pub. Everyone is very welcome.

The Churchyard Debate

You may remember we've been having a debate about whether the churchyard should be kept fully mown, or part-mown and part-wild. Two long-time village residents made a strong case for keeping it fully mown, especially out of respect for all those known to many people in the village who have been laid to rest there. The PCC accepted this, and so it will continue to be mown; we may ask the question again in the future.

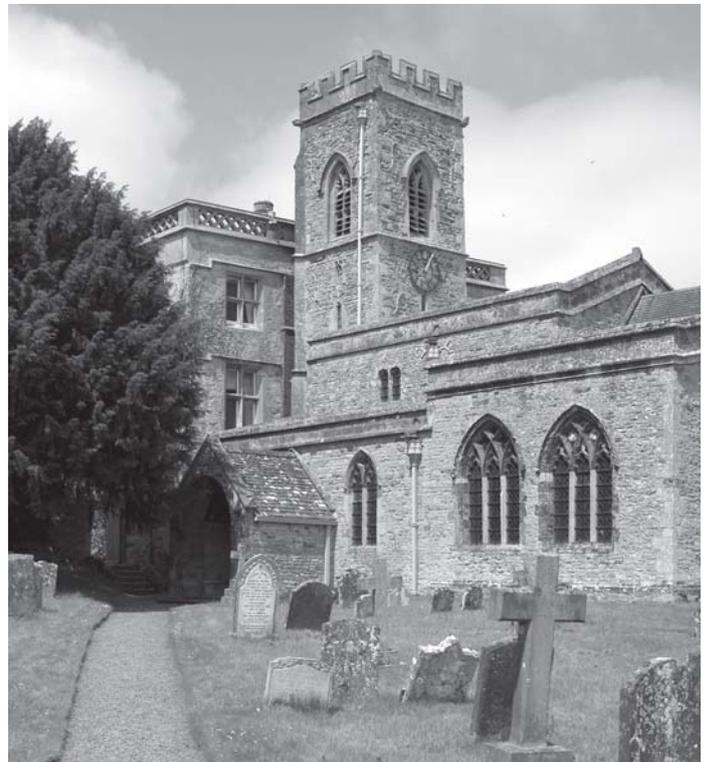
The Anne Monument

Although we don't yet have all the money, we have decided to go ahead, commit to the Conservators and get this conservation job done this year, hopefully in the summer.

We know where most of the money is coming from, but we are committed to raising £2,000 from private donations. See separate page in this month's News about what's going to happen and why.

Annual Church Meeting

Our Annual Church Meeting takes place on 26th April 2011 at 7 pm in St Mary's. As usual, the Meeting is in two parts. Anyone resident in the parish may attend the Parish Meeting and may also take part in the Election of the Churchwardens. The Annual Meeting, which immediately follows, is for those on the church Electoral Roll. To join the Roll, call Norman West (340 368), and get a form from him (it closes two weeks before the Meeting). Those who are not on the church Electoral Roll cannot participate in this meeting, but are welcome to attend and observe if they wish.



Any comments about the above are very welcome.

Please email Kildare: k.bourkeborrowes@btinternet.com or tel: 340 200

If you wish you can also email Clive: goosegirl@hotmail.co.uk or tel: 338 434

Any other member of the PCC will also be very happy to talk, and they are: Bill Adams, Richard Bailey, Nick Bevan, Beryl Greenwood, Jenny Martin, Ted Short, Jeremy Taylor and Norman West.

It's your Church

THE ANNE MONUMENT CONSERVATION

In The Church Matters of October 2010 we went into the degraded state of the monument, why it needs conserving, who would do it, and what they would do. One or two questions have since arisen and need answering.

Why will it not be moved into the Lady Chapel?

The answer is in two parts:

a. We made an application to the Oxford Diocese both to conserve it and move it; we have to get their written permission (a Faculty) to do anything like this. They required us to consult the experts on whom they rely - the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB). SPAB came and visited, and they said *yes* you may conserve it along the lines proposed in the conservation report but *no* you may not move it. That *no* is final, unless there is an overwhelming reason to argue against it, which there isn't. So, we aren't allowed to move it, and that's that.



b. The best evidence we have, I think, is that it is actually *in* its original position. Most (though not all) of these 15th century table tombs (or effigy memorials) lie in arches, sometimes with canopies, within sight of the high altar (and there's another good local example in Somerton church). The arch is old and probably contemporary. Even more tellingly; the base (east) end sculpting is rough and unfinished, is not meant to be seen and therefore was almost certainly made to abut into a wall, which is just what it does. There is no east end panel.



Will the conservation work, which will involve the complete dismantling of the monument, reveal any more about the identities of those commemorated - said to be John Anne & Alicia Giffard?

Again, the answer is in two parts:

a. It's very unlikely. These alabaster monuments were made by anonymous craftsmen in workshops mostly in the north midlands, and any inscriptions ordered were usually carved along the upper level of the base, just beneath the effigies. I don't believe there ever was an inscription, and that none will be found lower down.

b. The current best evidence we have from the historical timeline and from the heraldry strongly suggest to me that the two people commemorated are a John Anne, younger son of a Mr Anne and a lady née Giffard (and we have no real evidence about their Christian names), who was married to Elizabeth Alice née As(h)ton. He died c.1490, the approximate date of the monument. It is intended to describe the evidence for this and other findings about this family in a little book after the conservation (and we may well get a grant to cover the cost of producing this).

Can we recreate the three armorial shields held by the angels around the base?

No. Again SPAB would not allow this; they want these things left as they are. In any case the descriptions we have are a bit contradictory, and it would appear that the repainting done in the 1711 restoration was partly incorrect (although happily we do have earlier descriptions). We are recreating the armorial descriptions that we have from the Anne's house (the Manor) and the church, and they will be published.

If you would like further information about the tomb, or to support the restoration, please contact Kildare Bourke-Borrowes by email: k.bourkeborrowes@btinternet.com or telephone: 340 200

Announcements & Adverts

Home Help

Does anyone need a cleaning lady for a couple of hours a week? The lovely person who comes and looks after our house is very keen to do some more work in North Aston and has asked me to advertise for her. I can thoroughly recommend her. She comes with brilliant credentials. Anyone interested, please phone 347544 and I'll give you her name and number. Angie Hannah.

Clocks Spring Forward!

Don't forget that the start of British Summer Time takes place at the end of the month. At 1.00 am on Sunday 27th, the clocks "spring" forward across the UK, so it will instantly be 2.00 am and we're heading for Summer!

Need a Baby Sitter ?

Responsible baby sitting service available most evenings, including weekends.

Phone **Josh** on 01869 347356

(after 5:30 Mon-Fri or Sat & Sun anytime)

Mobile Library

Like many services in our region, the Mobile Library is under threat as a result of funding cut-backs. It's another case of "use it or lose it". If you value the facility of having a library that actually visits the village, then pop across to the telephone box and say hello next time it calls.

Every Second Thursday of the Month 09:40-09:55 by the Telephone Box

Not a member? Enrol at the library in Deddington, or on-line at www.libcat.oxfordshire.gov.uk. It's free.

Gardening and Lawn Mowing

Get your garden looking its best and ready for Spring! Clearing leaves, sorting out borders, and preparing for the new growing year. Can bring own equipment or use yours. Excellent rates.

Phone **Thomas** on 07522 342093 (Please note new number) or 01869 347918 after 4:30 Mon-Fri or Saturday & Sunday anytime.

Village Marquees & Generator

There are trestle tables, chairs and a hefty 4.0 kVA diesel-powered generator available for hire as well as three marquees - two traditional and one tubular-framed plastic. If you would like to book any of these items, or for further information, please contact Marcus (347356) or email info@north-aston-co.uk.

Computer Problems Solved

Look no further for a reliable computer repair and maintenance service. We'll remove viruses, fix hardware failures, boost the performance of your PC, or tackle a broad range of tasks.

Phone 07522 342093 or visit the website at

www.naenterprise.co.uk

ANM Environmental Services

Sewage Treatment Plant:-

Maintenance

Servicing

Repair

Breakdowns & Call-Outs

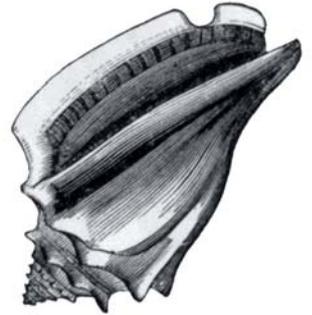
Pump Station:-

Maintenance

Servicing

Repair

Breakdowns & Call-Outs



Contact:- 07793 888 286

info@anmenvironmentalservices.co.uk

www.anmenvironmentalservices.co.uk

ORCC Trading Oil Scheme

Full details of this money-saving scheme for purchasing domestic heating oil were included in the January edition of the News. Basically, if you use oil for your domestic heating, then this scheme could save you hundreds of pounds every year. If you would like further details, or to join the scheme, please contact Chris Tuffrey, North Aston's liaison officer with ORCC. Call him on 07903 339155 or email: info@offac.co.uk. There is an annual membership fee of £20, but you could save many times this amount over the same period.

Fancy a Walk in the Park?

The annual Blenheim Palace Sponsored Walk takes place from 10:00am on Sunday March 27th. Organised by Sightsavers, in association with the Oxford Rotary Club, the walk is to raise funds to help save sight in some of the poorest countries of the world. Full details from www.sightsavers.org/Blenheim

Fish & Chips!

**Every Thursday afternoon from 5:00pm
until approx 5:45pm, by the telephone box**

If you're "on-line" and have your own email address, and would like to be informed of happenings in the Village, Neighbourhood Watch updates etc, please contact:

info@north-aston.co.uk

Use this address to submit items for the NA News.

Traffic Speed Monitor - January

Back to more normal conditions for January, after the snows of December, and the statistics reflect this. A total of 14,640 vehicles were recorded for the month, doubling up (to assume traffic travelling both ways) to an estimated through-flow of some 29,000 vehicles, which is much as we've come to expect.

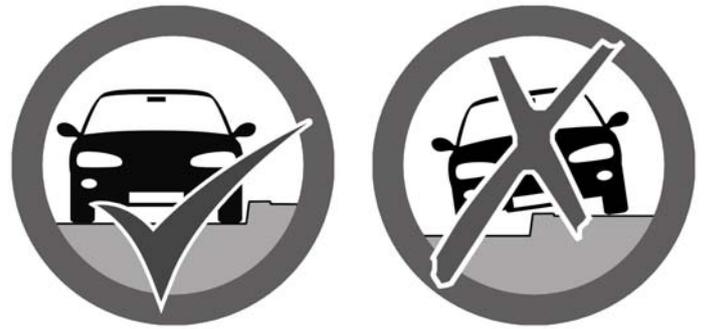
The fastest speed recorded for January was 61 mph, set at 22:06 on the night of Friday 7th. We seem to be finding that an upper limit of just over 60 mph is, sadly, a monthly feature in our data, although the next-quickest in January was 53 mph. Whether by coincidence or not, this was set just three minutes later on the same evening.

Obviously any car travelling at over 30 is going too fast, but if we examine all those going over 50 (of which there were 17 in January), four were set late in the evening (after ten), more than half were early-evening (between six and ten), and just two were morning runs (before ten). Three speeders went through during the "day".

There is also a record to suggest that someone goes through almost every day, at 08:45, and clocks between 45 and 55 each time. There's no proving (yet!) that it's the same person, but the daily figures suggest it might be. Watch this space!

5575 vehicles exceeded 30 mph (38%) in January, of which 2800 attained a speed that would result in points on their licence. 504 exceeded 40 mph, which is an increase (but not really significant) on our normal monthly figures.

During March we shall be setting some traps for habitual speeders, and will be photographing any cars spotted doing excessive speeds through the village. We just hope that doesn't include anyone resident here!



Parking on the Pavement

There have been several comments made recently concerning cars and vans parked across the pavement. As chance would have it, Regional and Local Transport Minister Norman Baker wrote to councils on February 23rd prompting them to use their powers to prevent parking on the pavement where it is a problem, and it seems it is becoming one here in North Aston.

The Minister said: "Parking on the pavement can be selfish and dangerous, putting pedestrians in danger. If a vehicle is blocking the pavement then people often have no choice but to walk in the road where they are at much greater risk of being involved in an accident."

"Most drivers are considerate and do not park on the pavement. However, there is a minority who do not use their common sense and dump their cars wherever it suits them without a second thought for others."

Strong stuff, but it is now proposed that parking with two (or more) wheels on the pavement will become a statutory offence and drivers flouting this could be liable for an on-the-spot fine of £70. Hopefully things won't reach that state here in North Aston, since there's really no need for cross-pavement parking in the village, but please do warn visitors and ask them to park in the road.

Break-ins and Thefts

Please be aware that we are approaching the time of year when sheds and garages are targeted for tools. We have already seen a rise in this type of offence, so please be extra vigilant and secure your sheds and garages as well as you can. There are relatively cheap shed/garage alarms available from DIY stores, and please mark your property with your postcode and house number or house name - offenders are less likely to take things that are clearly marked.

There was an attempted theft of lead from the church in Souldern on February 17th. The offender was seen making off from the roof. When he realised he had been spotted he pretended to call for a dog, but there was no dog anywhere nearby. The offender got into a vehicle - a silver Ford Focus registration number X762 BNB - and drove off. The man is described as having short, dark hair, quite angular features, white skinned, young, 5 foot 10 inches, slim, and wearing a dark jacket. He left behind a tea towel which he was probably intending to use to wipe his hands clean of the anti-theft paint. Please keep a lookout and if you see a similar person and/ or vehicle please can you call the police immediately - using 999 if necessary.

It is possible that the theft of lead from the church in Adderbury recently may be a related crime.

If you have any information or concerns you can contact

Crimestoppers (anonymously) on **0800 555 111** or Thames Valley Police on **08458 505 505** to report incidents.



The Fox Crossroads

At the last Parish Meeting it was agreed that we would approach the County Council with a view to expressing our concern over the dangerous situation of the Fox Crossroads, where the North Aston and Duns Tew lanes meet the A4260 Banbury-Oxford main road.

Over the years the crossroads has been the scene of far too many accidents, a significant number of them fatal. In January there were two more incidents within the space of a few days, and there are close shaves almost daily.

In the first instance, we contacted representatives of all the other Parish Councils in our area, informing them of our intentions and asking for their support and suggestions. I am pleased to say that the response was both hugely understanding and unanimous. Messages of support were received from Steeple Aston, Middle Aston, Lower Heyford, Upper Heyford, Steeple Barton, Sandford St Martin, Deddington, Somerton and, quite resoundingly, from Duns Tew.

As well as straightforward messages offering to undersign any proposals we made, we also received emails, some fairly lengthy, with helpful ideas and suggestions. It seems everyone appreciates that the crossroads is dangerous and needs to be addressed.

One particularly helpful contribution pointed us in the direction of Oxfordshire County Council's Local Transport Plan 2011-2030, but it arrived four days after the deadline for submissions had passed. Luckily, a prompt phone call elicited an extension and we were allowed to submit an additional request for inclusion several days after the horse had bolted.

That submission, which also included reference to the Middle Aston lane, also became the basis of a second approach direct to OCC's Highways Department. The content of that document is as follows:

Submission from North Aston Parish Meeting

Request for consideration of revisions to two roads within the Parish of North Aston under the Oxfordshire Country Council Local Transport Plan 2011-2030.

1) The Fox Crossroads

Revision to the road junction between the A4260 and the undesignated roads from North Aston and Duns Tew (Located at 51.95440 N and -1.31798 W)

2) Middle Aston Lane, North Aston

The provision along the Middle Aston Lane, between North Aston and Middle Aston, of designated passing

places with associated signage (particularly along the section between 51.95448N/-1.31008W and 51.94681N/1.31056W)

FURTHER INFORMATION

1) The Fox Crossroads

Two further accidents took place at the Fox Crossroads during the first week of January 2011. Although one was relatively minor, the second resulted in serious injuries to one driver and the attendance at the scene by three fire engines, a doctor, several police vehicles, at least two other ancillary incident vehicles, and disruption to traffic lasting in excess of two hours. Such incidents at The Fox are, sadly, not uncommon.

Our concerns stem from many years of experience with road traffic accidents at this junction, where the Duns Tew and North Aston roads join the A4260. Prior to the opening of the M40, when considerable volumes of north-south traffic used the Banbury-Oxford road, it was a regular site for serious accidents, and deaths. After the motorway opened the density of traffic declined, and with that the frequency (although rarely the seriousness) of accidents at the Fox. However, in recent years the A4260 has become busier again – possibly as local drivers elect not to use the motorway. Whatever the reason, we have witnessed a marked increase in incidents in the last year or two, possibly heightened in recent months by the damage to and subsequent deactivation of the associated Gatso speed camera*.

North Aston recently installed a new traffic monitor in the village. It not only records the approach speed of all cars passing through the village, but also the date and time of passing. Data obtained since September, when the monitor was installed, has shown that typical monthly traffic through North Aston (not including traffic using the Middle Aston Lane or visiting Nicholsons Plant Centre) regularly exceeds 30,000. Nearly all these vehicles will be using the Fox Crossroads, and this gives some indication of the volume of traffic attempting either to cross, join, or exit the A4260.

The principal issue with the current road layout, aside from the volume of traffic attempting to use it, stems from the mis-alignment of the two joining roads. As currently aligned, the Duns Tew road joins the A4260 to the south (Oxford side) of the road from North Aston. As a result, vehicles turning right, from either direction, frequently end up head-to-head in the middle of the road – neither able to make the turn, and each obscuring the view of oncoming traffic. It is believed that this was the cause of the most serious of January's accidents.

The subject was included on the agenda for the AGM of the North Aston Parish Meeting on Thursday 13th January 2011, and after a period of animated discussion, it was agreed that the Meeting should, as a matter of priority, request that the situation of the road layout and safety of the junction at The Fox be included, if at all possible, for consideration under the OCC Local Transport Plan 2011-2030.

The Meeting concluded that North Aston residents should urge the Council to do whatever is within its power to make the crossing safer, preferably before there is another fatality. The Meeting's preference is that one of the following should be considered:

a) The installation at the junction of traffic lights

This would require the incorporation of traffic islands and bollards, but in essence, the existing road layout could be retained. This would generate a safer environment for traffic to join or cross the main road; would aid in deterring speeding, especially by those heading north from the dual carriageway section of the A4260; and would provide a safer crossing for pedestrians accessing the adjacent bus stops. It would also make the route more attractive to children cycling between Duns Tew and the primary school in Steeple Aston. The route also lies on the Oxfordshire Cycleway.

b) Replacement of Crossroads by a Roundabout

There is sufficient land available at the site for a conventional roundabout, with associated traffic islands and bollards. Such a roundabout would not require the electrical infrastructure associated with traffic lights, but would serve to offer traffic attempting to join or cross the A4260 a safer opportunity to do so. It would also achieve the objective of slowing through traffic, and with the inclusion of traffic islands, pedestrian access to the two associated bus stops would be easier than is presently the case.

c) Realignment of the Duns Tew Road

There is land available to allow the realignment of the approach road from Duns Tew such that it could approach the A4260 to the north (Banbury side) of the North Aston road. It could meet the A4260 nearer the position currently occupied by the existing bus stop. If provision was included for the widening of the road at this point, together with the inclusion of a clearly defined central reservation and associated traffic islands, the question of unsighted drivers occupying the centre of the road could be avoided. This would be safer than the current situation, but would not address the issue of traffic attempting to cross the A4260.

Bearing in mind the costs associated with the attendance of the Emergency Services at accidents at this location – and in such numbers as was seen in January – there is some thought that the cost of implementing one or other of these suggested revisions might be recouped fairly quickly.

SUPPORT

We have received notes of support for our submission from the following local parish councils:

Duns Tew (Clerk: Hilary Skaar), Steeple Aston (Chair: Margaret Mason), Steeple Barton (Chair: Janice Dyer), Middle Aston (Chair: Edward Dowler), Lower Heyford (Clerk: Cathy Fleet), Sandford St Martin (Clerk: Claire Poulton), Deddington (Clerk: Lorraine Watling) and Somerton (Clerk: Neil Good).

Duns Tew Parish Council discussed the Fox at their

Parish Meeting on Thursday 13th January. Steeple Aston and Steeple Barton included it on their agendas for their Parish Meetings on January 17th, while Lower Heyford discussed the junction at their Parish Meeting on January 20th. Middle Aston has also expressed full support for the redevelopment of the junction, and discussed the crossroads at their Meeting at the end of the January. Somerton held their meeting on January 24th, and have offered their wholehearted support. Sandford Parish Council does not meet again until March, but have added this topic to their agenda.

In essence, all these parishes appear to share North Aston's concerns over the dangerous nature of the crossroads at The Fox and urge Oxfordshire County Council to address this junction as a matter of urgency.

2) Middle Aston Lane

In 2009 North Aston Parish Meeting approached OCC Highways Department with the proposal that the Middle Aston lane might be awarded Quiet Lane status. Regretfully, this was declined. However, to ease the current, rapidly deteriorating nature of this narrow country lane, North Aston Parish Meeting, at its AGM on Thursday 13th January 2011, moved that the Meeting request Oxfordshire County Council to include the Middle Aston Lane in the Local Transport Plan 2011-2030.

The Meeting's wish is to see the Lane's distinctive rural nature safeguarded for the future. There is an increasing tendency for drivers, particularly those with four-wheel-drive vehicles, to ignore the natural boundaries of this un-kerbed country lane and venture cross-country to pass oncoming traffic. As a result, the verges, grassy banks and hedgerows have suffered considerable damage in recent years.

It is to be hoped that these actions could be deterred – or better driving habits and more consideration for the environment and other road users encouraged – by the provision of clearly marked and properly surfaced passing places.

In the relatively recent past such passing places did exist, and were respected and used by local traffic. However, with the increasing popularity of 4x4 vehicles, and the

. . . . continued:



The lucky winners of the February Draw for the North Aston 100 Club were:

First Prize (£10): D. Hunt (#139)

Second Prize (£5): Joyce Morley (#10)

Not a participant? Call Norman on 340368

abuse of common courtesies by some drivers, those places became less clearly defined, and once rendered indistinct, a free-for-all culture developed.

In association with the provision of properly constructed and defined passing places, the Meeting would welcome the placing of signs at either end of the lane requesting drivers to "Use Passing Places", and that signs identifying each "Passing Place" be erected.

The Parish of Middle Aston is known to be equally concerned by the declining condition of the Lane.

In conclusion, we hope that Oxfordshire County Council will be able to include both these submissions in the Local Transport Plan 2011-2030.

The first submission was made to OCC on January 14th. Then, on 1st February, the same proposal, slightly reworded to reflect the additional support we had received by then from neighbouring parishes, was also submitted to OCC Highways Department. Some short while later we received confirmation from the Department that our submission had been logged, and allocated a reference number.

This is where you come in! Since we published the minutes of the January Meeting, which included reference to our intention to submit these proposals to the Council, several residents have contacted us to express their own concerns, and to offer support and suggestions. If you share that concern, please write or email Highways Department yourselves. The more material they receive on this matter, and the greater the perceived support there is for the Fox Crossroads to be made safer, the better the chance that something might

actually be done. The reference number that must be quoted is:

Reference Number: 392979

You may write to:

**Highway Enquiries Team
Customer Service Centre
Oxfordshire Customer Services
3rd Floor Clarendon House
52 Cornmarket Street
Oxford, OX1 3EJ**

Or email: HighwayEnquiries@Oxfordshire.gov.uk

If you have any thoughts or strong feelings about this, please attend the next Village Meeting, or contact info@north-aston.co.uk

(* The Gatso has recently been replaced with a new unit)

**Bag it
Bin it!**



- Please ensure your dog doesn't foul on or around the Green. Please remove (or move) any waste from within three feet of any of the designated public footpaths in the Parish. Dispose of dog waste responsibly, preferably in your green bin at home. Biodegradable dog waste bags are available free of charge from Cherwell District Council, or from Eileen & Chris at The Green. It's your village - be proud of it!

NICHOLSONS

Food shortages? Grow your own with Nicholsons.



Vegetable seeds

From February our shop will be stocking a selection of seed potatoes and vegetable seeds for the first time.

Fruit

Our fruit trees produce blossom and fruit for many years. Please come and see the wide variety of fruit trees we have and speak to our friendly, professional, and helpful staff for advice on variety and pollination etc.

Prices on Fruit Trees are reduced from £30 to £26.50

Garden Tools

Nicholsons now stock a wide range of heavy-duty garden tools and we will be selling much of our old stock at discounted prices, so come in and grab yourself a bargain, before it's all gone!

The Park, North Aston, Bicester, Oxfordshire.

01869 340 342

Open weekdays 7.30 -4.00 & Saturdays in March, April & May 9.00-12.00.

www.nicholsons.gb.com

Councillor Calling



Pickled

I get a very odd feeling when I open the newspapers these days and see the constant attacks on local councils by the Secretary of State, Eric Pickles.

Councils are accused of over-paying their top staff, cutting services to the public and keeping bureaucracy, and buying too expensively. When I look at Cherwell, I see costs reduced by one third in five years, an active procurement team driving down purchase costs and the cost of its top team halved by sharing with South Northants.

As to services, this year I am cutting costs by £2.7 million, but only £0.3 million of that has any impact on service delivery at all. Meanwhile residents' satisfaction goes up year on year and our service levels have moved up from merely Good to Excellent. OK, we are not perfect and never will be, but it would be nice if Pickles occasionally recognised councils that have plugged away doing sensible things. If councillors only ever get rubbished in public, how can we expect to get good people to stand for office?

Chief Executive

We and South Northants now have a new Chief Executive, whose calibre is absolutely vital if we are to make the joint working successful by driving down costs without loss of quality. Her CV is on the internet and looks frighteningly high powered! Attracting someone so good should bring huge benefits, but will no doubt lead to suspicion that we've overpaid...

Planning Notices

One economy we are making is in Planning, where we are cutting back on publicising new applications to do only what the law requires. This means that they will continue to be advertised, but only in the Bicester Advertiser and Banbury Guardian, and neighbour notification will be done by posting the notices on-street and no longer by writing to neighbours (which costs an awful lot of staff time).

Consulting Parish Councils will be unaffected (and they are excellent at spreading the word) and all the details will still be available both on the Cherwell website and in Bodicote House. There is some concern around the "neighbour letters", so I think it is only fair to warn everyone to look carefully when you see a notice on a lamp post or telegraph pole near you so you are not taken by surprise.

Wind Turbines

Cherwell now has an approved policy on wind farms, albeit "informal (non statutory) planning guidance", but still a "material consideration" for the Planning Committee. It received a surprisingly positive response on public consultation, with CPRE saying it should be tougher but without a furious response from the industry, so I hope we pitched it just right – some protection for homes without being so unreasonable as to be struck down on appeal.

Bus Passes

This is going to be quite confusing: responsibility for issuing bus passes shifts to the County Council from April but, to avoid disruption to the service, Cherwell will act as OCC's agent for the first year and continue to issue the passes. However, OCC has made some changes. On the plus side, the passes will now start from 9.00 instead of 9.30, which I know will be valuable to some villages, but the down side is that tokens will no longer be issued to those who want them – some 4,000 people. Cherwell is gearing up to issue a rush of new passes.

Meanwhile, we continue to budget for Dial-a-Ride for the coming year although the cost per user is huge and other Districts pay far, far less, so further funding is uncertain.

And finally . . .

Lies, damned lies and demographics: having been freed of government-dictated housing numbers for future planning policy, we now have to decide our own.

Independent demographers have reported their population forecasts, with growth of about 10% in the population by 2026. However, due to the changing age profile (a quarter more 80+ year olds, for instance) they suggested a 25% growth in housing numbers at 1.2 persons per home. It simply doesn't sound right – unless they are recommending that all the growth should be one-bed care-home apartments – so we have sent it back for further work to avoid allowing a target that would commit us to massive development sprawl unnecessarily. It may be a nuisance, but having a suspicious mind might just save us from disastrous long term decisions.

James Macnamara

Tel: 01869 340109

cllr.james.macnamara@cherwell-dc.gov.uk

NEXT VILLAGE MEETING

The next Village Meeting will take place on Thursday 14th April 2011 at 7.30pm in the Old Bakery.

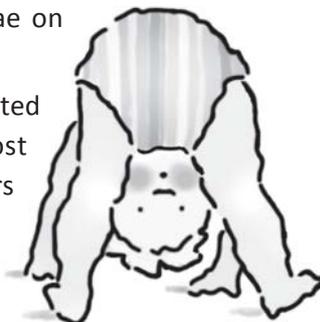
A full agenda will be posted on the Village Noticeboard nearer the time. If you have any items you would like included, please email your request to info@north-aston.co.uk.

DUNS TEW BABY & TODDLER GROUP

We are pleased to announce that as of the first Wednesday in March (2nd) Duns Tew Baby & Toddler Group is back! The Group will be meeting in Duns Tew Village Hall from 9.30-11.30 on Wednesday mornings - any parents and tots wanting to join please just drop in on the day or call Beth Leach or Helen McRae on 07817926366 and 01869 340029 respectively.

The previous committee left some of the more robust toys and a fund which will get us started again, but any donations of suitable toys/books/games/baby bouncers etc would be most welcome. If you do feel you have something we could use please give us a call on the numbers above to arrange collection. We are really excited to be starting this group again so please support us and spread the word - Thanks

Come along for a cuppa, play and chat. Drinks & snacks provided. £1.50 per family

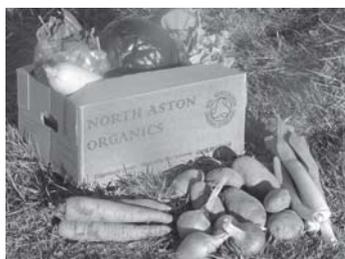


NORTH ASTON ORGANICS



Vegetable Stall

Open Mon - Sat from 9.00am in the car park behind the Old Bakery



- Wide variety of fresh seasonal organic veg at affordable prices
 - Minimal packaging
 - Zero food miles
 - Supporting the local economy
 - Too busy? Why not try our veggie box scheme
- Fresh veg delivered to you door.

Tel: (01869) 347702

NORTH ASTON ORGANICS

VOUCHER



Redeemable at the North Aston Organics
Vegetable Stall or with the Box Scheme

Valid until 31st March 2010

One voucher per
North Aston
household

£2.50



CHURCH SERVICES

MARCH 2011

STEEPLE ASTON

NORTH ASTON

TACKLEY

Sunday 6th

11.00 am
Holy Communion
Rev'd Mervyn Puleston

8.00 am
Holy Communion
Rev'd Mervyn Puleston

11.00 am
Holy Communion
& Children's Church
Rev'd Geoff Hunter

9.30 am
Children's Church
Mrs Dorothy Willatt

6.00 pm
Evensong
Fr. Robin Gibbons

Ash Wednesday, 9th

7.00 pm
Holy Communion
with Imposition of Ashes
Rev'd Mervyn Puleston

No Service

6.00 pm
Holy Communion
Rev'd Stephen Pix

Sunday 13th

11.00 am
Holy Communion
& Children's Church
(Prayers for Healing)
Rev'd Mervyn Puleston

9.30 am
Family Service
Mr Clive Busby

9.30 am
Holy Communion
Rev'd Mervyn Puleston

6.00 pm
Evensong
Fr. Robin Gibbons

Sunday 20th

6.00 pm
Evensong
Steeple Aston Lay Person

10.30 am
United Benefice
Family Communion
Rev'd Mervyn Puleston

6.00 pm
Evensong
Fr. Robin Gibbons

Sunday 27th

11.00 am
Family Communion
Rev'd Mervyn Puleston

9.30am
Village Praise
Mr Kildare Bourke-Borrowes

9.30 am
Common Worship
Morning Prayer
Rev'd Mervyn Puleston

6.00 pm
Holy Communion
Rev'd Canon Roland Meredith

Other Events this Month

Saturday **5th March**. Bach St John Passion, Steeple Aston Church 7.30 pm. Tickets £10 (£5 for students & children) Proceeds in aid of Vale House Botley Alzheimer's Home & SA Parish Church. Tickets from the shop or on the door. Call Heather Cleobury (340473)

A short service of Morning Prayer is said on most **Tuesdays** at 9.30 am in Steeple Aston.

A short service of Morning Prayer is said on **Wednesdays** at 9.00 am in Tackley.

Wednesday **2nd March**, North Aston, 10.30am to noon: Coffee in the Old Bakery.

Wednesday **2nd March**, Steeple Aston, 10.30am to noon: Coffee & Chat at The White Lion.

Saturday **19th March**, Family Workshop in the Old Bakery, North Aston, 2.00 to 5.00 pm, light supper.

Saturday **2nd April**, Family Workshop for Mothering Sunday, Steeple Aston. Children & Fathers Welcome. Details TBC.