

NORTH ASTON NEWS

AUGUST 2013

No: 274



*Looking Back at the Fête
Welcome Rev'd Marcus Green, our new Rector
Minutes of the July Meeting, Gardening Club, Hall Forum and 'Beyond the Veil'*

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Chris Tuffrey, Chairman

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North Aston Gardening Club

Chris Tuffrey, Chairman. See above.

North Aston Pet Alert

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Nicholson Nurseries

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Email: office@nicholsonsgb.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 non-emergency: 101

Out of Hours Doctor: 08453 458 995

Upcoming Events

Coffee Morning

Wednesday 7th August 10:30 am, The Bakery

Gardening Club Meeting

Weds 14th August, 7:30 pm, #19 The Green

Coffee Morning

Wednesday 4th Sept 10:30 am, The Bakery

Your Village Chairman

Our 2013 Village Fête.

We did it! In spite of a few errors and omissions by me, we put on a hugely enjoyable and successful Fête again this year in glorious weather, and yet again this was due entirely to the generosity, the effort and the participation of so many people - individuals and whole families. It can only be achieved like this, and so a huge thank you to everyone who was involved. They are too numerous to thank, but I think we would all like to thank three people who once again went over and beyond the call of duty – Clive who untiringly prepared the Green and provided so much transport, back-up & other things, Marcus who as always did all of the printed matter and promotion (& also many other things), and John who yet again brought his unique and much-loved games for us to enjoy – all refreshed, repaired and in full working order.

There were many memorable moments during the afternoon – the look of happiness on the face of the boy who won ‘Guess the number of Sweets in the Jar’ was definitely one of them. Statistics will emerge next month, but the visitor numbers and income were both very respectable, though down on last year’s mega-fete.

Broadband

Will we be getting so-called Superfast Broadband (24 Mbps) delivered into North Aston in the next 2-2 ½ years?

The long wait for the answer to this question is nearly over. Oxfordshire has been among the slowest authorities in the country to negotiate a contract, and they are about two years behind the schedule set by Broadband Delivery UK, the agency set up to deliver superfast to 95% of the UK by May 2015; at a recent meeting with them they were unwilling to explain this except ‘it has been a very complicated process’. Since then the announcement date has slipped again.

That announcement, now due mid-August, will we believe name every community that will be supplied with superfast by the end of 2015. It seems likely that we will be included. If we are, then a green Broadband cabinet will appear in the village, and our slow old copper wires will get connected. If we’re not, then there is a back-up Defra fund we can apply to, there are private fibre installers like Gigaclear, there are wireless broadband options like Redraw, there is satellite broadband - all of which would need discussing. Some communities couldn’t wait this long; Islip has paid BT £11,000 to bring it in, Frilford and district have paid Gigaclear and got Fttp.

The Jubilee Bench

On July 11th Daniel brought his lovely oaken creation of dancing flames to the Green for the first time, and we together picked a site for it looking down the fields and across to Deddington Church tower. It came back for the Fête, and was much sat on. Now all we have to do is make a solid base and securely install it. Are there any volunteers please for a working party to do this – just a few hours’ work? It will be a really nice addition to the village.

If you have any suggestions about Village life, please do call or email me.

Tel: 01869 340200 ~ email: k.bourkeborrowes@btinternet.com

Kildare



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

Beyond the Veil

I will have to miss this year's visit by the Mikron Theatre Company, but I would urge anyone who hasn't seen these 'travelling players' in action before, to go along to the Orchard Barn on the 13th and be guaranteed a thoroughly entertaining and amusing evening of theatre.

I first encountered Mikron in the late 1970s, not many years after the group had been founded by Mike Lucas. Over the years many famous actors and actresses have worked their magic in pubs, village halls, and even private homes, criss-crossing Britain's waterways aboard the narrowboat *Tyseley*. Perhaps best known of the *alumni* is Mark Williams, who everyone will recognise as Ron Weasley's father in the Harry Potter movies. He is now a mainstream film and character actor, with numerous credits, but Archers fans will also know the voice of Buffy Davies. She plays Jolene at The Bull. Both cut their teeth with Mikron - as did several of Doctor Who's assistants.

This year's production, written by the cast, is entitled "Beyond the Veil" and follows the (mis)fortunes of DCI Mark Starkey, who thinks his new posting to a quiet village in the country will be a doddle. He's about to be disabused of that notion, as matters change dramatically when there's a sudden, unnatural death on the local allotment. Then there are the bees. Sound familiar?

You'll need to reserve a place by calling Julie Hillier at Nicholsons (340342) or emailing julie@nicholsons.gb.com. See the advert for more details.

Marcus

PS Does anyone fancy a couple of free tickets? We need two responsible adults to 'look after the refreshments bar. Please call Julie if you can help.

This Month's Birthdays

Thea Bourke-Borrowes

Freya 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, please let us know.

Announcements

Road Works

The southbound entry slip-roads at **Junction 10** of the **M40** will be closed overnight between the 31st July and 1st August. This will affect access both from the Services and also the roundabout on the A43. There will also be associated lane closures and delays are likely.

There may be temporary closures along **Fenway in Steeple Aston** this week (end of July, beginning of August) to allow BT to carry out work to overhead cables. Later in the month, from Tuesday 27th, further closures (some total) will take place whilst essential drainage and service connection works, for a new development, around Shepherds Hill, are carried out. The work may last for up to four weeks.

Intermittent delays may still arise through **Adderbury** and **Twyford** as work is completed on the new pedestrian crossing.

Lost & Found

A number of items were either lost or found on the Green over the course of the Fête weekend. These include:

A pair of good quality **Polaroid sunglasses**, possibly lost in the area around the entrance to Beesley's Close.

A pair of extendable pruning "loppers" with yellow handles were also lost.

A favourite short-handled heavyweight **hammer** with a distinctive red-painted head was misplaced during setting-up, and may have been taken home by another helper by mistake.

A visitor from Steeple Aston lost her small **blue purse** on the day of the Fête - did anyone find it?

A plastic **cake box** with a blue lid and handle was discovered during clearing up. Is this yours?

If you can help with any of these items, please call 347356 or email us here at info@north-aston.co.uk

Harvest Supper

The Harvest Supper this year will be staged on Saturday October 5th, in the Orchard Barn.

Please make a note in your diaries. Details will be decided at the next Village Meeting in September. Thanks to Niel and Liz for allowing us to use this fabulous venue once again.

Constance Sophie & Archie Frederick

Paul and Lisa Honess of Dane Hill are delighted to announce the birth of Constance Sophie (Connie) and Archie Frederick on 27th June 2013 at the JR hospital.

Warm congratulations to mother, twins, and proud father from everyone in North Aston.

Wedding Celebrations at Rosemary Cottage

A reminder of the announcement in last month's News that Tilly Kneale will be celebrating her marriage on Saturday 10th August with a reception at Rosemary Cottage.

Birthday Celebrations at Folly Field House

The Woodhead family apologise in advance for any evening throbbing back-beat during the evening of August 31 when the youngest Woodheads are celebrating belated 21st birthdays. They will be taking every care to minimise the noise.

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presents

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COMPOSER: CONRAD NELSON
MUSICAL DIRECTOR: REBEKAH HUGHES
DIRECTOR: ADAM SUNDERLAND

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mikrontheatre



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mikrontheatre

Tuesday 13th August 7.30pm

The Barn

The Park, North Ashton, Oxfordshire, OX25 6HL

Tel: 01869 340342

Tickets £9

Refreshments available.

North Aston Village Meeting

Thursday 4th July 2013 ~ The Minutes

Present: Kildare Bourke-Burrowes, Sue Hatzigeorgiou, Marcus Potts, David Greenwood, Beryl Greenwood, Alison Bailey, Clive Busby, Trudy Busby, Chris Tuffrey, Jane McArdle, Trevor Green-Parkes, Jeremy Taylor, David Hazle, Christine Hazle, Beverley Rees, Tony Rees, Mark Stay.

Apologies for absence: John Harvey-Lee, Niel Nicholson, Liz Nicholson, Nicholas Kneale, Nick Bevan, Sandra Reeves, Norman West, Tuck Hatzigeorgiou, Franca Potts, James Taylor, Jenny Martin.

Village Meeting

1. Welcome & Apologies

KBB welcomed everyone to the Meeting and introduced Trevor Green-Parkes of North Aston Hall and Alison Bailey of Hillcrest Care (at Park Farm House). He briefly explained the concept of the "two-meeting" format.

2. Approval of Minutes

KBB asked if the Minutes of the last Meeting, published in the May issue of the *News*, had been a fair and accurate representation of events. Sue Hatzigeorgiou said that the Village Audit needed to be minuted in a particular way, and that the official record would need to be amended slightly. Clive Busby also said that the way the colour coding for prioritising Highway repairs (with reference to loose kerbstones) had been incorrect, and that red denoted repairs that had to be made good within 24 hours, green paint denoted a two-week timescale, and white implied that a repair might not be effected for several weeks. CB also said that it had been he who had enquired about North Aston's possible compulsion to become a Parish Council, and about more powers for the Meeting, and not Chris Tuffrey. He believed this to be an "error in assignation of initials".

These points aside, there were no other objections or comments to add, and the Minutes were proposed for approval by CB, and seconded by Chris Hazle, and approved unanimously.

3. Treasurer's Report

SH handed out copies of her Treasurer's Report for the Village Meeting, showing the balance to date, and covering the previous three months. Money received included one half of the Precept, while money out was largely covered by the payment of insurance policies, of which a proportion was due for return from the Village Fund account. The balance remaining stood at £2039.

SH said that the village's Annual Governance Statement had been submitted to the Auditors, but that she had not yet had a response.

The Treasurer's Report was approved by David Greenwood and seconded by David Hazle, and passed unanimously.

4. Emergency Plan

Marcus Potts explained that he had been contacted by Cherwell District Council concerning the establishment of a "Emergency Plan". He said that CT had looked into this two winters previously, and had established a plan to cope with adverse weather. However, what CDC was suggesting was something far more structured, and would outline a strategy for coping with major disasters. While North Aston was unlikely to suffer from flooding, Great Tew had faced an emergency in the form of a major fire in April 2011. CB suggested that there was also the possibility of a plane crash, for example, and a plan that would allow the village to cope better with such a tragedy might be a worthwhile exercise. It was agreed that MP would investigate further.

5. Kerbing/Railing the Green

KBB reviewed the previous discussion regarding the alternative proposal to "kerbing the Green" by erecting a line of low-set post and rail fences. MP had visited Blenheim Palace recently and taken a photograph (top right) that showed how the Estate there had addressed the problem. Each short length of low-level post and rail was separated by a gap that allowed for easy pedestrian access, yet offered protection to the verge and deterred motorists from straying across the grass. It would also facilitate the reinstatement of the edge of the Green.



There was a brief discussion about the benefits of "narrowing" the road, and CT stated that Oxford's road safety policy did state that narrower roads deter speeding. Jeremy Taylor said he would look into this, saying that Bill Graham had some "cleft rails" that might be suitable and could be installed on a trial basis.

However, it was agreed that the bigger operation involved the cutting of the road surface itself to allow for reinstatement of the verge. It would not only need to be cut, but then dug out, refilled with soil, and turfed or seeded. A visible extent of grass would be needed between the new edge of the road and the post & rails.

The task of cutting the road could not be done by someone without the approved certification. It was thought that Richard Boss probably didn't have that qualification, but he might know a man who did. There was also a need to establish with the Highways Department exactly how much of the Green could be reclaimed, and still meet with their approval.

DH confirmed that anyone working on the highway would have to be certified under the Street & Roadworks Act (1991). He recommended talking with the Council and seeking their advice. He added that it would be necessary to install a traffic management system and cone off the area at the time the work was undertaken. CT said that he had always found the staff at the Deddington depot very helpful. TR said that he understood that RB was now working back at the Deddington depot, and might be able to offer some advice. CB established that CT probably had a 'plan' of the road, which might be valuable reference.

6. Loose Kerbstones

KBB said that he had been "very rude" to Highways earlier in the day concerning the lack of progress with regard to re-setting the loose kerbstones along Somerton Road. CB said that he had also phoned, but hadn't been so rude! However, whether as a result of CB's tact, or KBB's rudeness, the loose setts had been marked earlier in the day with bright green fluorescent paint. This implied that repairs would be enacted within two weeks.

DG pointed out that some of the loose stones had not been marked, and perhaps they should be. DH said that the granite setts would always work loose over time, as they were not embedded deeply enough. To work effectively they should have been set vertically, with more stone buried, but the village had insufficient stones at the time.

CH suggested that, even if the kerbs were fixed, the path (on the north side) was so overgrown that it was impossible to stay on the path anyway. Mark Stay said he would speak with Stephen and Dick (whose houses stand beside the effected pathway) and see if the vegetation could be cut back.

7. Broadband

KBB said he had "great news" about Broadband. Briefly, the Department for Culture, Media and Sport's "Broadband Delivery UK" guide had been reviewed, and looks set to bring high speed

Broadband to most of rural Britain, and Oxfordshire had managed to get £5 million out of the £500 million budget, making a total 'pot' of some £14 million.

Negotiations were now under way to bring fibre optic cabling to the more remote communities within the county, but it is taking ages. Their map shows a large 'white area' that the Council will attempt to tackle as a priority. They hope to deliver high speed Broadband to all but the most remote villages by 2015. North Aston is not the most remote. The main cabling runs beside the A4260, but we won't know the details of the plan until August. Digging will begin in January – if North Aston is included in the roll-out – and work should be completed within 2 years.

It is understood that the main cable would be routed to the short grey pillar outside 2 The Green, and will then be distributed to households within the village. If, however, North Aston is not included in the scheme, there is no appeal process. Should that happen, then we will have to investigate other means of achieving a high speed connection for the village.

Unfortunately, the alternatives are not very attractive – or effective. They are also expensive to implement privately. Wireless is not feasible here as there is no convenient high building or existing mast that could link with the fibre optic. "I think we need to wait and see the outcome of the current plan," said KBB, "and hope that we're on the list. If we are, then within two years we will have good Broadband, and downloading such things as movies will be feasible."

If North Aston was not listed, CT wondered if the village might be eligible for some kind of a grant to help with bringing in the supply ourselves. Trevor G-P said that he had been involved in the establishment of a privately funded Broadband supply at Gleneagles in Scotland, and that this had involved laying cables over some 14 miles to link with the nearest high speed connection. It had cost £1500 per mile, and that a number of local residents had supported the scheme financially.

KBB said he thought it best to wait for the announcement in August, and make a decision on any next step when the outcome of the plan was clearly understood.

8. Hillcrest Care

KBB then welcomed Alison Bailey to the Meeting, representing Hillcrest Care. She spoke reassuringly about the plans for Park Farm House, and the building work being carried out there. She also explained the nature of the work she and her team undertake.

She confirmed that planning permission had been approved for the work being undertaken, which would eventually provide accommodation for four young girls aged between 11 and 18 years and a permanent staff of three or four. All would live on site, with the girls travelling daily to attend Hillcrest's own school near Chipping Norton. She said that some of the girls might go on to attend local mainstream schools.

AB said that she hoped to receive the keys from the builders on 16th August, and that she and her staff were planning an 'Open Day' in early September. "We hope you won't know that we're even there," she said, "but we will always welcome visitors." She added that the girls come from 'troubled' backgrounds but the members of staff are very well trained and Hillcrest has an excellent reputation within their sphere of work.

CH asked if there were plans to increase the number of residents in the future. AB said that Park Farm House lent itself to just four residents [plus staff] and that was how many Hillcrest intended to accommodate there.

KBB asked if we were likely to see the girls in the village. AB thought it unlikely, as they were more likely to want to head for the 'bright lights' of Oxford or Banbury, but the girls are not really free to roam anyway, and are constantly monitored. KBB asked if it would be acceptable for a contact number to be published in the North Aston News. AB thought this would be fine. "We want very much to be part of the community" she insisted. "Being part of the community will be very important to us, but we shall also try to keep a low profile."

9. North Aston Hall

KBB then welcomed Trevor G-P and Richard from North Aston Hall. He then asked TGP if he could address a few issues that

concerned the village, starting with the state of the Middle Aston Lane. He said the road had been made very difficult to negotiate during the winter because of the mud and erosion of the verges caused by the contractors' vehicles working on the Lakes site. He said that many residents had been upset by the state of the lane, and also the condition of St Mary's Walk, down towards the church. He said that the Walk was the only access that the village had to the church, which is open daily for the use of residents and visitors.

TGP said that he had been brought in to manage the estate, and that he was very experienced in what he does. He said he was determined to build bridges between The Hall and the Village, and that he hoped to be able to draw a line under the misunderstandings of the past and move forwards.

He said that [the regular passage of construction] traffic along the Middle Aston Lane was now complete, and that sufficient [soil and] materials had now been delivered to the site. "We still have a number of [excavators and] construction vehicles on-site but they will be leaving in the next four or five weeks. The tipping vehicles have now finished their work." He added that the plan was to have work on the lakes completed within five weeks.

He said that he appreciated that there have been issues with the Lane, but the roadway would be cleaned and swept once the last vehicle had departed, and that the on-going situation would then be considered again.

With regard to St Mary's Walk, he said that the intention was to tarmac the roadway within the next two months. He said that there were other projects that needed to be completed in the area that might necessitate the movement of machinery and plant, and that surfacing the Walk could not be considered until that work had also been completed. However, the plan was to surface the Walk all the way to the church car park and beyond. The roadway will be properly prepared and surfaced, with a topping of black tarmac to a depth of 85mm. He said there might be a subsequent topping at a later date, and that adequate drainage would be provided to carry away surface water. He said that there would be the need to negotiate details with Christopher Woodhead, as the driveway to Folly Field House was now fundamental to the effective functioning of St Mary's Walk.

With regard to the Middle Aston Lane, MP said that repeated use by heavy lorries, often passing one another along the road, had resulted in extensive destruction of the verges. Also, there had been a loss of definition of the previously recognised passing places, which had in some lengths now merged into one another. He said he hoped that these passing places, and the verges between them, would be reinstated once the work at the Lakes had been completed.

TGP said that he was still "juggling balls" and finding it a challenge to prioritise the many projects he was having to deal with, but assured those present that all would be "put back to order" eventually. Some concerns were expressed over the driving standards of some of the Banbury Plant Hire personnel. TGP said that BPH would be off the site within the next couple of weeks, but he could not be held responsible for their driving standards. Comments from the floor suggested that any criticism would fall on deaf ears anyway.

JT was concerned by the reference to black tarmac for St Mary's Walk, and wondered if a paler colour could be used. DH explained that the top surface would wear rapidly, exposing the grey stones within, and the colour would soften fairly quickly. The eventual colour would be a close match to that of the existing surfacing between the Somerton Road and the entrance to The Hall.

TGP was asked about the extent of the surfacing, around and beyond the church car park. He implied that the Lane might be surfaced beyond the car park, but that the track eastwards, below the entrance to Bradenstoke Barn, would not be tarmacked. However, this extension of the lane would be "addressed", and drainage in particular would be sorted, to minimise future erosion.

SH expressed a concern for potential speeding, once the roadway was surfaced and smoothed.

The discussion then moved to the topic of footpaths. Some concern had been expressed about the use of herbicides to control the growth of grass and weeds in 2012, and how this had

resulted in bare earth, mud, and instances of dogs being taken ill immediately after the application. TGP assured those present that the footpaths crossing land owned by The Hall would soon be marked clearly and mown. "We will do everything under the Hall's remit to ensure that we do all that we are expected to," he said. However, in return he expected villagers to act responsibly with regard to dog walking. He asked that dogs be kept on their leads at all times when crossing open fields, and that any fouling be cleared away immediately by owners. There was some suggestion that a number of resident dog owners were not clearing up after their dogs, and he asked that a notice appealing to owners to be more responsible be placed in the *News*. MP offered to make sure that this was done.

KBB expressed his gratitude to TGP for his presence at the meeting, and for his open and frank responses.

10. Community Plan

CT said that he had tried two years ago to get North Aston to move towards the preparation of a Community Plan, but on that occasion it had failed. He said that he had not been able to persuade the village to "come on board" the idea. However, he insisted that we need to look into this now, as a matter of urgency. Without a structured and implemented Plan, it could be that the village may have development "imposed upon us" as the local council comes under increasing pressure to meet the demand for new housing. This has already happened in Adderbury and Bodicote, he suggested, and North Aston could be next.

A Community Plan offers the village some control over what development takes place within the parish. It only takes half a dozen people to mastermind a complicated planning process, but last time CT and MP had attempted to tackle the preparation of the plan on their own. It required a greater input from other members of the community in order to work.

KBB said that the Meeting needed to be re-informed about what would be involved, and said that he would investigate.

That concluded Any Other Business for the Village Meeting, and so the gathering moved on to the Village Fund.

Village Fund

1. Welcome & Apologies

The same notes of those present and apologies for absence were taken as for the Village Meeting.

2. Minutes

The Minutes of the previous Meeting were approved with no matters arising; proposed and approved as before.

3. Treasurer's Report

SH explained the figures, as presented to the Meeting in the papers distributed previously. These included income from the 100 Club and the sale of copies of *North Aston ~ A Millennium*. There was also expenditure, including part payment for the new Jubilee Bench and expenses incurred during the Artweeks Festival in May. The Report was again approved by DG and seconded by DH and passed unanimously.

4. Jubilee Bench

KBB gave a brief résumé of the story of the bench, and how Daniel Durnin had been commissioned to design and construct a new bench in English oak to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the Queen's coronation in June 1953. He congratulated Daniel for securing a place at the Royal Academy of Art & Design, starting in September.

CT said he had already seen the bench, nearly completed, and it was indeed beautiful. He said he believed it would be ready the following weekend.

KBB hoped that the bench would be in position in time for the Village Fête. CT said he understood that DD had incorporated a frame that could be securely bolted into position, above a concrete base. MP said he would contact DD to determine a date when the bench could be brought up onto the Green for a "siting" decision.

5. Village Fête

KBB said that the organising of this year's fête had "fallen into his lap" and that he had prepared a five-page 44 point document to help him. He said that the event still needed more volunteers to assist on the day, as well as the loan of tables, chairs and gazebos. JT said that the farm might have some straw bales available that could be used to define the bowling alley as well as offer supplementary seating.

KBB said that he had contacted Cotswold Marquees with regard to the hiring of chairs, but any final decision on this, and other aspects of planning, would be taken at a specially convened Fete Committee Meeting to be held on the following Tuesday, July 9th. He invited as many as possible to attend. MP also made an appeal for donations for the various stalls.

KBB then asked if a decision could be reached there and then, ahead of the fête, regarding the dispersal of moneys raised. Last year, he explained, the funds had been split three ways. This year he wanted to have the decision made before the fête to avoid the arguments that had arisen in 2012.

Wearing his PCC hat, he suggested that the church has 'frugal' amounts of money, and to keep a medieval building open costs X, and to have a priest to take services adds further expense Y, and these two are about equal, amounting to some £10,000 or £11,000 a year. For the church to remain open it does need more money – all the time. It needs to receive a regular income and that's why the PCC appreciates receiving a donation from the fête each year.

He then said that the proposed Village Hall will also need a lot of money, and the PCC appreciates that the Village Hall will be a community venture.

At this point CT interrupted to say that, from the Village Hall perspective, the planning Forum wanted nothing from this year's fête. He suggested that the money raised be split two ways, as it had been in previous years. KBB, visibly relieved, agreed to the equal split between Church and Village Funds.

6. Flower & Produce Show

CT reminded those present that the annual Flower & Produce Show would be taking place on the last Saturday in August, the 31st. The schedule would be distributed in the July edition of the *News*. The closing date for entries would be three days before the event. He said the Show would follow a similar format to previous years, with some new classes, a few changes to the regular categories, and one or two had been dropped.

CT added that there would also be a Village barbecue in the evening following the Show. "It's a small club," he added, "but everyone gets involved." KBB suggested that the Flower & Produce Show was "one of the highlights of the year" and everyone was looking forward to it.

7. Any Other Business

North Aston Organics. MS reminded everyone that NAO would be hosting its annual Farm Walk on the 13th, and anyone from the village was more than welcome to join. He asked that anyone interested in joining the walk let him know, so that the appropriate number of cakes could be baked!

Mole Catcher. CB asked that the Mole Catcher be invited to return to address the returning problem of moles on the Green. It was agreed, and CB was invited to organise another visit.

Burco Boiler. The original Burco Boiler, used by the village at events and coffee mornings had failed. It was agreed unanimously to approve the purchase of a replacement.

Marquees. There was a brief discussion about the current state of the village's canvas marques, and whether there was a need to purchase or hire another. The village already has two traditional canvas-topped marques, and it was agreed that this was probably sufficient. The canvas top of the oldest marquee has now been disposed of, and so too the plastic marquee, which was ripped in heavy winds two years ago. It was agreed that the canvas sides from the oldest marquee should be kept.

This concluded the Meeting.

Date for the Next Meeting.

This was set for the second Thursday in September, the 12th.

North Aston Gardening Club

The Gardening Club held its first ever Garden Meeting hosted by Jill and Geoff Rawnsley on the 10th of July.

Reports from the evening suggest that it was a great success and enjoyed by all who attended. Members were impressed by Jill's lovely garden and Geoff's veg plot and it was a great opportunity for members to talk about gardening (!) and exchange tips and ideas.

Unfortunately I had to miss this meeting but am happy to be able to look forward to the next summer treat in store as Chris Hazle has taken up the mantle to host the next Garden Meeting on Wednesday the 14th of August at 7.30pm.

In addition to a guided tour of Chris' garden, we will be finalising plans for the upcoming Flower & Produce Show, which will be held on the 31st of August. You should have had your entry forms with the July newsletter: anyone who needs additional forms please get in touch with me (Nether Cottage).

Thanks,

Lynn

PS. Don't forget that the F&P will be followed by an Auction and a "bring your own" Barbecue Supper.



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
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Email: northastonorganics@gmail.com

Tel: ((01869)) 347702

Village Hall FORUM

With several key members of the Forum absent this month and last, on holiday, with obligations elsewhere, or heavily involved in the Fête, the next Forum meeting will be in September, and has been pencilled in for Thursday 19th, one week after the Village Meeting.

In the meantime, we have received feedback from Claire Sutton-Abbott, the Design & Conservation Officer at Cherwell District Council. With regard to the various sites under consideration, her comment with regard to the proposed site on the corner of the Green (currently the children's play area), is that CDC would not support this either on conservation or planning grounds due to its proximity to neighbouring residents and what she termed "the extension of the village envelope".

However, a site within Beasley's Close itself would have considerably 'more mileage', but several aspects would have to be considered carefully. The first would be 'additional parking', and where this would be provided and how the movement of vehicles and visual impact might be mitigated. The second would concern the impact on nearby dwellings, and CDC would prefer the building to be further to the west of the plot to mitigate this; in other words, nearer the middle of Beasley's Close. Evidently, this is something we will have to discuss, as I don't believe she has taken into consideration the other nearby properties, or the greater impact on the view.

Claire also offered opinions with regard to the style of the building, stating that "any building will need to fit well with its surroundings". She believes that a timber-clad building would not be favoured, "as these rarely have a good appearance after around 5 years and ultimately prove difficult to maintain. A stone-clad structure would be more fitting, but may have serious cost implications for the village." Strangely, this is at odds with the advice given to us by her predecessors, who steered us towards a timber-framed building and away from the "tythe barn" structure we had originally envisaged. She is evidently unaware that we already have timber-clad buildings in North Aston similar to the design for the planned Hall.

As expected, she inferred that there would have to be careful consideration of aspects such as access, height, scale, massing etc, and also the question of its proximity to the village Conservation Area. A building in Beasley's Close would have an enclosing effect on the Green, which currently is a very open area despite the substantial and mature trees. She also wanted to know if there were future plans for a playing field etc to complement the Hall.

So, not all bad news, and not the outright rebuttal some had anticipated. Onwards and upwards . . .

Marcus



The Church MATTERS



REVD MARCUS GREEN IS TO BE OUR NEW RECTOR



Marcus will join us officially on Wednesday September 11th (Induction service by Bishop Colin in Steeple Aston Church at 7:30pm - everyone is invited), and we already know that he has an interesting and diverse range of interests and influences: Northern England - where he was born and grew up, and where he is currently involved in climate-change research fund-raising programmes at Leeds University; Wales - where he was ordained and where he was a curate for five years and then Vicar of St Catherine's Pontypridd for over 10; and Oxford - where he was at Merton and Wycliffe Hall.

He comes to us with a very wide experience of working and worshipping with a huge variety of people and organisations, and is very obviously completely at home and enjoys the company of everyone from young children upwards and people of any faith or none. In his own words 'Ministry is relational; my role is to be where people are'.

One aspect of his many talents which will appeal widely is his interest in music. He plays music and sings all the time (brass instruments, piano, organ, guitar) and this has led him into many interesting areas - he was even Chaplain to the Syd Lawrence Orchestra until recently.

We're looking forward to his arrival, and his first Service here will be our Family Service at 9:30 on September 22nd. In the meantime, you can already contact him if you wish at steeplerector@hotmail.co.uk, and we'll publish his phone number when it has been allocated.

The main image above shows Marcus with his beloved Matt, who sadly died last year. You can find out more about our new Reverend, his interests and beliefs, by visiting his on-line blog at;

<http://salvationssongs.blogspot.co.uk/>

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: casb@north-aston.com or tel: 338 434
or our priest Father Mark Clavier: mark.clavier@gmail.com or tel 349 267

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, Jane McArdle, Ted Short, Jeremy Taylor and Norman West.

It's your Church

From Thames Valley Police

This month's information and appeals for witnesses:



Speed Checks

TVP will be carrying out more random speed checks in the area over the coming weeks. Following a request from locals, PCSO Cooper conducted a speed check with the Speed Indicator Device (SID) in the Caulcott dip in early July. In a period of just forty minutes, 82 vehicles passed through travelling in the direction of Upper Heyford village, and 24 of those were in excess of the 40 mph limit. Our own records suggest that a similar percentage of vehicles exceed the limit through North Aston even when the speed sign is working - and it's considerably more when the battery fails. We shall be asking TVP to carry out an SID survey here shortly.

Theft of Number Plates

There have been a number of instances recently of vehicles having their number plates removed while using car parks in Bicester. If the plate on your car or motorbike is not fitted using tamper-proof screws, then it's well worth looking into adding these. Ask at Halfords or any other motoring retailer.

Horse Thefts - not!

There have been rumours circulating recently in the local horsey community that a number of horses have been stolen. This is not accurate. Two horses did escape from stables in the Goddington area last month, but they were recovered successfully and reunited with their owner.

Thefts from the Mill

In case you missed our appeal last month, the police are still seeking information relating to the theft of gardening equipment from The Mill in late June and early July. If you have any information that might help the police in their investigations, please contact PC Sullivan through the Thames Valley Police 101 advice line.

Should you wish to contact the police about any non-urgent matter, please use the 101 number. They want to hear from you, no matter how trivial you think the incident may be.



Well, that headline probably grabbed your attention, but please read on as well, because this is important - even if you don't own a dog.

Over the past few months the amount of pet excrement being left behind by dog walkers along the footpaths within North Aston has started to increase again. It's unpleasant, it's unhealthy and, the 'bottom' line is, it's also illegal. If you are a dog owner, and you allow your dog to foul on or beside a public footpath, you can be taken to court and be liable to a fine of up to £1000.

As you may have noticed, because the signs went up last month, certain footpaths in the parish are now "under observation" and dog owners seen to allow their dogs to foul the footpath area, and not clearing up after them, will be reported and will be dealt with. There's no excuse for it. Bags are freely available - ask Eileen Gilmore if you haven't got any - and it only takes a moment to collect up the poo, tie a knot in the bag, and take it home to put in your green bin.

Classifieds

Cleaner Needed!

If anyone currently has a cleaner who might like to do an extra couple of hours in the village once a week, or even once a fortnight, I'd be very grateful to hear from them. We have no children and no pets and we're very tidy! Call 07767 221534.

Lamps for Sale

We still have some of the Ikea lamps for sale, as advertised in last month's *News* (see full details there).



These are of two types. The first is the Ikea Kvarrt spotlamp in black, with flexible stem and fitted with an expensive low-wattage, high-intensity LED type bulb.



The second is the Ikea Jansjo lamp, in white with neat flexible stem and small high-intensity LED spotlight.

The lamps are priced at £10 each, including bulbs. Please email info@north-aston.co.uk or call 347356 for further information. All money raised will go back into Village Funds.

RIDE & STRIDE



This year's Ride & Stride in aid of the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust (and specifically our own church of St Mary's) will take place on Saturday September 14th.

Sponsorship forms can be obtained by calling John Morrison on 01865 876625. Last year the Ride & Stride raised over £120,000 for Oxfordshire churches.

It is accepted that not all the dog walkers using the footpaths are residents here, so if you see a visitor allowing their dog to foul the path, speak with them. Ask them to deal with it - offer them a bag if they don't have one. If they don't respond well, let us know by emailing the *News*.

Our local landowners accept their responsibilities with regard to the footpaths that cross their land, and they mow them, keep them clear of weeds and obstructions, and make it easy for us all to appreciate the countryside we live in. Reward their generosity by clearing up after your dog.

Why is it important? Unlike waste from herbivores, such as sheep (only likely to be toxic when the ewes are pregnant) and cattle (which does contain certain parasites but is otherwise largely non-toxic) dog waste is packed with bacteria that is specifically harmful to humans. Accidental ingestion can lead to serious kidney disorders, intestinal illness, cramps and diarrhoea, especially in children. There are 23 million faecal coliform bacteria in a single gram of pet waste. It may also contain parasite larvae, such as roundworm which can migrate through the body causing damage to the brain, lungs, kidneys, liver, heart or eyes. When people (especially children) come into contact with dog faeces and then touch their mouths, they can easily become infected.

Councillor Calling



Pioneer Square

The new shopping complex in Bicester is now open – you can hardly have missed it! – with the new Sainsbury and cinema both finished on time and a number of shops and cafes already moving in. Unfortunately, I missed the actual opening ceremony due to another commitment but took the first opportunity to have a good look round.



It looks good to me, with easy links to Sheep Street and to parking. Fingers crossed that the traffic and buses keep circulating freely: so far I've not experienced any jams so the only complaints I've heard are from residents opposite about the look of the car park – and Sainsbury are already on the case and working up new designs.

Parking

The section above Sainsbury belongs to them and they have made their 526 places free for two hours with an third hour costing £1.70 (I gather the signage isn't too clear, so you may want to watch out). The rest of the parking in Bicester – Market Square, Cattle Market, etc – still belongs to CDC, with charges still in place, which leaves an odd situation, confusing for visitors, with half the parking free (up to two hours, at least) and the other half to be paid for. Once we see how it's working, there'll be a full review to decide how all Cherwell's car parks will work in future.

It's even more complex in Banbury, which is envious of Bicester's free places, but where Cherwell's are just the cheaper half of the parking, with other providers charging more. (The proportion will reduce further with the planned expansion of the Castle Quay shopping mall across the canal and onto the two Spiceball car parks). So the practicalities are complex enough, but that's by no means the most of it...

The Love of Money

Money, of course, is at the root of this, with parking contributing some £900,000 last year in Banbury and £700,000 in Bicester, over a tenth of the council's budget.

With yet another squeeze coming on – our government "grant" (in reality, payment back to us of some of what our businesses pay in Business Rates) is to shrink by a further 10% in 2015 – and Council Tax capped by government, making ends meet without parking charges would be quite a challenge. However,

my successor in the financial hot seat does not intend to do this alone so we've just set up a Budget Planning Committee to combine the talents of many other councillors to work on these problems. I won't attempt to predict the outcome: ideally, we'd boost local trade with free parking, absorb the grant cut and keep Council tax frozen for another year without any impact on services to residents by continuing efficiency savings, not least from more joint working with South Northants and Stratford District Councils – but it will take a lot of hard work and late nights to see if that can be made to happen in the less than ideal world we live in.

On Another Level

County Council budgets are under just as great pressure as District and one cost cutting proposal that has been causing concern is to narrow the criteria for free school transport.

Although not a county councillor, I represent Cherwell on the county-wide School Organisation Stakeholder Group and so had a forum to air concerns directly to the decision makers about the impact this might have in our area – especially on the Warriner. I am glad to say that, while the proposal has not been completely dropped, it has been deferred as a result of the level of concern.

I am hopeful that the relatively tiny savings (£340,000 after four years – a lot of money to me and you but marginal in terms of the county's budget) will be hugely outweighed by the difficulties.

Keeping it Local

Planning, meanwhile, is sometimes about preserving what's best about our area and not simply adding yet more swathes of new building. Locally, four parishes are putting through Neighbourhood Area plans so they, and not developers, decide where new housing should go. This is a complex process so perhaps it is not surprising that it's the larger parishes (who are also most under threat) of Bloxham, Adderbury, Hook Norton and Stratton Audley who are doing this. Open to all, though, are suggestions for the new Local Heritage Assets Register, which can be buildings, monuments, landscapes or any other manmade feature. If accepted, they will have some protection as sort of local Listed Buildings scheme – so do contact CDC's Design & Conservation team about anywhere you think deserves protection but is not Listed by English Heritage.

Meanwhile, enjoy this glorious sunshine while it lasts!

James Macnamara

Tel: 01869 340109

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



The lucky winners of the July draw were:

First Prize (£25): Vicky Taylor (#127)

Second Prize (£5): C Walkerdene (#37)

We cannot now accept new members to this year's 100 Club, but the handful of existing members who haven't yet renewed must do so without delay. Please return your fee to Norman West, or call him on 340368. You've got to be in it to win it!



CHURCH SERVICES

PARISH WORSHIP IN AUGUST 2013

STEEPLE ASTON

NORTH ASTON

TACKLEY

August 4th - Tenth Sunday after Trinity

No service

10.30
United Benefice
Revd Mervyn Puleston

6 pm Evensong

August 11th - Eleventh Sunday after Trinity

10.30
United Benefice
Revd Mervyn Puleston

No service

6 pm Evensong

August 18th - Twelfth Sunday after Trinity

No service

No service

10.30
United Benefice
Revd Stephen Pix

6 pm Evensong

August 25th - Thirteenth Sunday after Trinity

No service

10.30
United Benefice
Revd Stephen Pix

6 pm Evensong

Note: As with previous years, August can be a "lean time" in church attendances, hence the four United Benefice services. Families are welcome to **all** services.

Mid-Week Services & Morning Prayer - Every Week

9.30 am
Morning Prayer, **Tuesdays**

9.15 am
Morning Prayer, **Wednesdays**

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 August 7th

