

BARFORD NEWS

JUNE 2013

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Parish Council Notes

The meeting took place at 7.33pm on 1st May 2013 at Barford Village Hall and was attended by Cllr Bullard, Cllr Eden, Cllr Stiles, Cllr Turner and Cllr Woolgrove. Also attending was Mrs R Watts (Clerk).

Apologies for absence: Cllr Hobbs and Cllr Best.

Election of Chairman: The Parish Clerk welcomed those attending and opened the meeting as the first item on the Agenda was the election of the Chairman. The Clerk asked for nominations and Cllr Eden proposed that Cllr Hobbs, who had indicated his willingness to stand, be asked to be Chairman for the coming year. This was seconded by Cllr Turner and, there being no other nominations, was passed unanimously. Cllr Hobbs, being absent, will sign his Declaration of Acceptance of Office at the June meeting.

Election of Vice-Chairman: The Clerk asked for nominations. Cllr Woolgrove proposed that Cllr Bullard, who had indicated her willingness to stand, be asked to be Vice-Chairman for the coming year. This was seconded by Cllr Styles and, there being no other nominations, was passed unanimously. Cllr Bullard signed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office and took the Chair.

Appointment of Responsible Financial Officer: Cllr Styles proposed that the Parish Clerk be asked to stand again as Responsible Financial Officer for the coming year. This was seconded by Cllr Eden and passed unanimously.

Dog Bins: The Clerk reported that Cherwell District Council now only supply dog bins. It was agreed that the Clerk should ask Chris Cox to install the bin. Cllr Bullard had received a request for the bin to be installed at the corner of Mill Lane, rather than near the salt bin opposite the church. Councillors discussed the matter but unanimously agreed that the bin should be placed at the far end of the salt bin, opposite the church.

Allotments: Chris Cox had spoken to Cllr Bullard about the draft Allotment Agreement. Although there were one or two areas he would like amended or removed, he was generally in favour of the agreement. When the suggested alterations have

been made the Parish Council will look at the agreement again.

Cllr Turner has a plan of the allotments, indicating size and position of each one, and will let Cllr Bullard have a copy.

Speeding in Barford St John. It was unanimously agreed that the Parish Clerk should write to Oxfordshire County Council Highways asking them to re-instate the white lines in the centre of the road through the village to encourage motorists to keep in lane and reduce speed.

Weed Killing in Barford St Michael. It was agreed last year that some areas in the village would be sprayed once during the 2013 season. Areas soon needing attention were identified as Broad Close, Robins Close, Bishops Close, path between Lower Street and West Close, path from West Close out towards Horn Hill, steps into West Close and the vehicular entrance into West Close. The Parish Clerk will contact the grass cutting contractor to arrange a date. She will obtain proof from the contractor that he continues to hold weed killer certification and Public Liability insurance cover.

Appointment of Parish Councillor to the Village Hall Management Committee. Cllr Eden proposed that Cllr Turner be appointed to represent the Parish Council as a trustee on the Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC). This was seconded by Cllr Woolgrove and unanimously agreed. Two trustees are needed to represent the Parish Council and it was agreed to ask Cllr Hobbs if he would be the second one.

Proposed Village Hall Improvements. Gunilla Treen had written to Cllr Bullard advising the Parish Council of the VHMC's plans for maintenance work to be carried out in the village hall. Details were noted. However, the Parish Clerk was asked to write to the VHMC to remind them that they must first seek approval from the Parish Council for any purchases made, or works orders placed over £2,000. In some instances it might be possible for the PC to place orders and recover VAT.

Planning Matters

Details of planning applications can be found on the Cherwell District Council website http://cherweb.cherwell-dc.gov.uk/publicaccess/tcd/DcApplication/application_searchform.aspx

This site does not include 'Notice of Intent' for tree works in a Conservation Area (TCA)

Notice of Intent TCA (Trees) Received: 13/00096/TCA St Michael's PCC, T1 x Lime – fell. There were no objections.

Councillors were asked to note the following:

The Appeal by Gladman Developments (75 houses on land off Barford Road, Bloxham) took place at Bodicote House on 16 April. Outcome awaited.

The Appeal by Mintondale Developments (85 houses on land south of Milton Rd, Bloxham) took place at Banbury Cricket Club, Bodicote on 23 April. Outcome awaited.

Miller Homes have placed a planning application with Cherwell District Council for a further development in Tadmerton Road, Bloxham.

Reports from Meetings: Cllr Woolgrove attended one of Gladman Development's appeal meetings at Bodicote House. He reported that representation by Bloxham Parish Council was excellent.

Any Other Business:

Cllr Turner reported that Openreach cannot put fibre optic cables for fast internet connection over roofs or around trees. The copper beech on the triangle is causing a problem with installation to some properties. She will discuss options with Openreach but the tree, which is on PC land, may have to be felled.

Cllr Eden said that a letter in Barford News asked for a petition to be signed asking Oxfordshire County Council Highways to put double yellow lines around The Green to prevent parking. Councillors unanimously agreed that the Parish Council would **not** support this proposal.

Further to emails from Cllr Hobbs during the month, with effect 1 April 2013 HMRC expects all employers to submit their employees' earnings, tax and NI data online each time they pay their employees, called Real Time Information (RTI). Cllr Eden proposed that Lisa Styles deal with this matter. This was seconded by Cllr Turner and unanimously agreed.

There being no other business, the meeting closed at 8.45 pm.

The next Parish Council Meeting will be held on Wednesday, 5th June 2013 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Deddington CofE Primary School News

THE SUMMER TERM is as always a busy and enjoyable term, especially if the weather is kind and we can enjoy our wonderful outdoor facilities! We have the summer fete (June 29th) to look forward to plus Sports Day (27th June) and trips out and about for many of our classes. Two of our classes have been on residential trips. Year 6 ventured down to Yenworthy Lodge in the South West for 5 nights, where they enjoyed long walks on Exmoor, ropes courses, zip wires and even surfing in the sea. They had a thoroughly marvelous time and the staff who accompanied them, Mrs Sargant and Mrs Stevens, were extremely impressed with their positive attitude, determination and support they gave each other. Year 4 also had a great time on their 2 night residential at Grendon Hall in Northamptonshire, below is a report written by some Year4 pupils on their return.



Mrs Jane Cross, Deputy Head

"Year 4 had a fantastic time when we recently visited Grendon Hall. The journey there was by bus and took about an hour. When we arrived, a man called Michael told us all about the centre and also told us about a cat called Joey.

Our favourite activity was called 'Swamp Rope Course.' The courses were quite easy with a small chance of falling in. However some people jumped and managed to fall in! Another part was a bridge made up of wooden planks.

Our most challenging activity was the zip wire. To get to the top of the very tall tower we had to climb quite a long way. Our hands became very cold very quickly as we climbed the metal ladders. Once we reached the top, we were a little bit nervous but we showed courage and discovered just how much fun the amazing zip wire is. It was very fast! The Bosons Chair was equally challenging but required good teamwork.

The Quad Bikes were great. It was quite muddy on the small track but great fun and very exciting.

At lunch time and dinner time the food was very nice. Lovely main meals and great puddings! Our bedrooms were comfortable and it was great to share rooms with bunk beds and our friends.

In conclusion our trip was brilliant and we all hope that when other children go that they have a great time too. We presented our work and photos to parents in an assembly. Thank you to all the adults who helped us with this unforgettable trip.

Report written by Billy, Theo and Malachy.

DUCK RACE 7th JULY 2013

Field will open at 2.00pm

First race will start at 2.30pm

There will be 4 races and a grand finale

There will be a race for 'Run What U Brung'

There will also be a BBQ.



If you wish to sit down - please bring your own seats as we are no longer able to source small hay bales. Those great big round ones are a nightmare to get in and out and the people that really need a seat find them hard to climb up.

All proceeds go towards Barford Recreation Facilities.

See noticeboards for updates.

T'committee



1st Deddington Scout Group

Cubs

FIFTEEN OF THE CUBS attended District Cub Camp at Horley in the middle of May, it was windy with showers but all the activities went ahead. The weekend started with a wide game, which involved running around the site trying to solve clues, it was, after all a detective's camp! Saturday started with a 6 mile hike (where we encountered a lot of cattle) which was followed by an afternoon of games & puzzles & the camp fire. Sunday was filled with climbing, shooting, archery & a brilliant laser tag game, best of all, the tents came down dry! Everyone went home tired & grubby – success.

Coming next – naturalist badge, athletics, local history & fire lighting.

Jo Churchyard C.S.L. jochurchyard@hotmail.com

Scouts

THE HIKE planned by the older Scouts went well although only 5 boys were available due to various school commitments. They completed a circular walk from the village to North Aston but they had to take a big shortcut due to them talking too much & walking too slowly. Is it a rule that boys can't walk without a big stick to whack undergrowth with?

The troop went to Horley the night before the cub camp to erect the tents, which they did very well.

Coming next – The 24 hour camp, hiking from Deddington to Horley.

Pete Churchyard S.L.

pete.churchyard@btinternet.com



**THE VILLAGE BIG LUNCH WILL BE
ON SUNDAY 2nd JUNE 2013
EVERYONE WELCOME JUST COME
ALONG AND BRING YOUR OWN
PICNIC . IT WILL NOW BE IN THE
VILLAGE HALL (AND GARDEN,
DEPENDING ON THE WEATHER).**



If you're using/hiring the Village Hall can you please remember to:

- take your **RECYCLABLES** (glass bottles) to the **RECYCLE POINT** at the Farm Shop



dispose of cigarette butts in the NEW CIGARETTE BINS located by the front door and the kitchen door (in the garden)

thank you
Village Hall Management Committee
April 2013

Welcome

To
Richard & Caroline Hefferan

Who have just moved in
To their new home
In B. St. J.

We wish you a very happy time
Here in our beautiful villages



Rainbow News

THIS MONTH we had fun making rolled beeswax candles and trying different types of honey; a very popular activity! Whilst we were thinking about bees, we planted nasturtium seeds in plant pots we decorated with 'mosaic' shapes. Hopefully these will attract bees when they're planted out in the garden, and the Rainbows were keen to try tasting the flowers when they appear too! Pickling the seeds as a caper alternative was a less appealing idea...

Our first aid evening was a big success- the girls learnt how to treat burns and scalds and how to call for an ambulance, practised putting on plasters and were taught how to put an unconscious person in the recovery position by our visiting first aid instructor, Alan Rampley, assisted by Tilly.

We made the most of a sunny afternoon playing dodgeball, French cricket and rounders in the village hall garden (the grass was a bit too long in West Close) and look forward to ending this term with a tour of the Warriner School Farm.

Hazel Neal
01869 337822
hmkn@sky.com

Barford Picture House

The last film of the season, postponed from February, was **VERTIGO**. Unfortunately not a huge audience this time.

Over the 2012/13 season we have had around 82 people attending the 6 films. After paying Hall rental we are able to donate £200 towards general upkeep of our Village Hall. New Season starts in October...keep a look out for the next selection of films.

Thank you all for your support,
Gunilla and Claire and Age UK.



BARFORD GARDENS SUMMER
ASSORTMENT
SUNDAY 14th JULY 2013



SCARECROW COMPETITION

To be judged on Saturday 13th July

In the past we have enjoyed some wonderful 'set scenes' of bathing beauties, tea parties, nursery rhymes etc.

This year we have been asked to have scarecrows that are more 'traditional' in style. So we would like you to enter a scarecrow that is a free-standing figure (not necessarily human!!) that could be stood/seated out in a field with minimum support.

Separate competitions for Adults and Children. They will be judged by a farmer and a non-resident visitor.

Please get to work on those Scarecrows - the more we have, the more visitors we can attract -



PATRIOTIC FOODIES AT THE INSTITUTE IN ADDERBURY



INDOOR EVENING FARMERS'
MARKET 6.30-8.30pm

Thursday June 13th.

For further details please contact Alison Frost
01295 816068 alisonjifrost@o2.co.uk

The Two Village Charities (The Hall & Fernhill Trust

and

The Shepherds & Bakehouse Charity)

are looking for a **new Trustee** to join them in the new year.

The charities meet four times a year.

This role may suit a parent whose child has benefited from a student grant in the past or someone interested in keeping the charities moving forward for the next generation.

Anyone interested, or if you would like further information, please contact:-

Robin Woolgrove (Chairman)
01295 720117

or

Helen Honour (Clerk)
01295 720987

BARFORD ST.MICHAEL

"SUMMER ASSORTMENT"

SUNDAY JULY 14th

with

OPEN GARDENS

Flower and Vegetable Containers

TRADITIONAL SCARECROWS

PHOTOGRAPHS

Gardening Books

and
Plants for Sale

2.0 until 6.0 pm

TEAS



theWI
INSPIRING WOMEN

MEDICAL DETECTION DOGS

(Trained to detect medical problems ranging from diabetes to breast cancer)

A talk by

Helen Payne

With her dog Edward

7.30pm

Wednesday 12th June

In The Village Hall

Visitors welcome to join us £4.00
At our WI Meeting

Well done Mum!



We're all very proud of you.

In the photo we are at the Barbican theatre in London, at Mum's graduation ceremony where she collected her MSc in Innovation, Creativity and Leadership (with Distinction).

from

James Duffy (aged 10)

Fernhill Club News

WE STARTED OUR new year playing bingo, then we had an interesting talk with slides journeying through Iceland with Graham Soden. At our next meeting we played bingo again and then on 22nd we visited Yarnton Garden Centre, always a pleasure.

Our meetings in June start on 5th with a visit from our friends from Woodstock Museum, who bring a variety of visual aids and will talk about 'lotions and potions'. On 12th it will be playing cards, 19th an outing to be arranged and 26th bingo in the hall again.

We agreed, before the new programme was arranged, that each month would consist of one session of bingo, one of playing cards one would be an outing and one with a speaker or entertainer.

If you would like a programme please contact

Avril on 01869 338381 or . Mary 01295 252298

You would be most welcome any time you care to come. We meet every Wednesday at 2.30pm in the village hall in Barford St. Michael.

Mary Ashbridge



Barford Challenge 2013 And Maggie's 50



THE HISTORY

The Barford Challenge began some seven years ago when a group of mostly unfit but willing villagers thought it would be a good idea to 'do a bit of exercise' and do something a bit different. The Challenge was born.

I joined in the second year of the Challenge having read in the Barford News that there was a training ride taking place on a Wednesday evening and a Sunday morning for those interested. Despite the fact that I had not been on a bike for some years, I decided that I would have a go. To comments of "you'll never keep up" and "you're not fit enough". I set out on my first Wednesday ride. I need not have worried, Pete, Jeff, Mick, Andy and the gang were great, we completed a 12 mile ride, slowly (for them) and with lots of stops for me. My Challenge days began. That year Lizzie Eden and I were the only ladies amongst a gang of boys. We rode a twenty five mile ride to Stratford, picked up canoes and paddled down to Evesham, where Sylvia, Jill and Tracey provided an excellent lunch. Once refreshed we set off once again on our bikes to ride to the Malverns where we finished our day by walking the Malvern Ridge. We camped overnight and next day returned to Barford. It was a truly wonderful experience the fun the laughter and the fact that we had had a great day out doing something different.

We have completed several 100 miles rides and this year are completing our second Maggie's 50 - in memory of a wonderful lady and my bike buddy, who sadly died 2 years ago. More of that below.

THE CHALLENGE

Sunday 14 July 2013

Entrance fee £20.00

We have a devoted band of very fit, lycra clad cyclists that would put many a cycling club to shame and that is great. But, we feel that we have lost something of the essence of the Challenge and in an effort to bring back that spirit of **Yes I can Do This Too**, we are returning to basics. This year we plan a 25 mile ride out, a ten mile walk around, and a 25 mile ride back, with perhaps a celebration BBQ in the George in the evening. So if you have ever felt that you are too old, too young, too unfit, too busy, but are up for something a bit different, and want to have fun then this is for you.

There will be a meeting in the **George on Wednesday 10 July at 8.30pm** to set the route and finalise numbers taking part

The whole point of the Challenge is to challenge yourself to do something a bit different with a great gang of Barfordians, so go on give it a go. You may want to do just the ride out and the walk, or the ride out and back or perhaps just the walk.

Entry forms available from: Glynnis Eastwood, 10 Broad Close, or by email
glynnis.eastwood@talk21.com

Maggie's 50

Saturday June 22nd 2013

£20 Entrance fee including BBQ

This is a 50 mile circular route with a stop off at the half way point for refreshments near Stowe School. The ride will finish at Barford village hall. The proceeds will be donated to Maggie's website which was set up to contribute to funding into brain tumour research.

There will be a meeting at the: **George Pub in Barford St Michael on Wednesday 12th June at 8:00pm** – Please bring your entrance money. This is to discuss the details of the bike ride, and distribute maps, instructions etc. For those who did the ride last year the route will be exactly the same. **This is not a race.** Anyone who wants to cover the course in a fast speed can do so but **no one will be left behind** the slower cyclists will be accompanied.

Also we are hoping to have support vehicles who will carry first aid, spare inner tubes, and top up water as we did last year.

Starting at 1:00pm From Barford Village hall
BBQ from 7:00pm at the George pub non-riders welcome to join us (for a donation please)

George Williams Mob 07801 956642, email gselog@aol.com **Simon Whitworth** 07789 795465
Simon.Whitworth@Robin-appel.com

TRAINING SESSIONS FOR BOTH EVENTS

Wednesday Evenings 6.30pm - meet outside the village hall

Sunday mornings 6.30am - (Early Birds) 10.30 am (Late Risers) meet outside the village hall

We will gauge our rides to the ability of you. The fast fit boys can go one way and we unfit ones another.

Barford Green Garden Club
NOTES FROM OUR POTTING SHED
TIP OF THE MONTH

Our new **Summer Assortment** day on July 14th is well under way with several people having agreed to open their gardens and enter the competitions. Once again we will be raising money for village charities.

The Competitions will be open to all villagers and friends from outside the village.

Details and forms for the Competitions will be available at the Barford Market in June or from Linda Newbery 01869 337526, (Photographs) and Janet Payne 01869 336265, (Containers)

We have professional judges for both competitions and prizes will be awarded.

In the meantime....

PLANT YOUR CONTAINERS;

TAKE PHOTOGRAPHS;

THINK ABOUT SCARECROWS;

SORT OUT SPARE PLANTS for the Plant Stall

FIND ANY GARDENING BOOKS you no longer want and

PREPARE YOUR GARDENS!

This summer may be starting late but everything will catch up and hopefully be a blaze of colour.

Can carrots and beans be combined with flowers in a pot? Of course they can and other vegetables too.

TEAS will be in the Village Hall, **offers of cakes please to Trish Field 01869 338820**

DATES TO PUT IN YOUR DIARIES

JULY 13th Judging of Scarecrows

JULY 14th Summer Assortment organised by Garden Club

JUNE 23rd A Sunday visit to Kiftsgate, meet there at 2.30

JULY 24th Ball Colegrave Summer Open Evening

SEPTEMBER 7th – VILLAGE SHOW

OCTOBER 5th (Saturday) A visit to Waterperry Gardens to look at apples and autumn plantings. Time to be confirmed.

MOW,MOW,MOW....WEED,WEED,WEED.....

HAPPY GARDENING, PUT YOUR SHORTS AWAY and the sun may come out!!!



'Bye for now'
Spade and Fork



Congratulations!

To

Wolfgang and Barbara Alt



Who celebrated their Diamond Anniversary on 16th May 2013 and received a card from HM The Queen.

1st Deddington Guides

IT HAS BEEN GREAT to get outside again, after a long winter!

Some challenging questions found us exploring the market place, to begin with – we learnt a lot and realised that we may not be as observant as we thought we were.

Aah! The smell of the the wood-smoke – that's what it's all about – as we enjoyed our first cookout of the year! Thanks to Mrs. Bouverie for use of her garden – as ever a delightful evening in every way ... and those toasted marshmallows!

A hike through our beautiful countryside from Steeple Aston to Heyford was wonderful. So much to appreciate on another fine evening! It was warmer than we'd been used to, so the warm welcome at The Bell, Lower Heyford (once they got over the surprise order of 20 fizzy drinks) was appreciated!

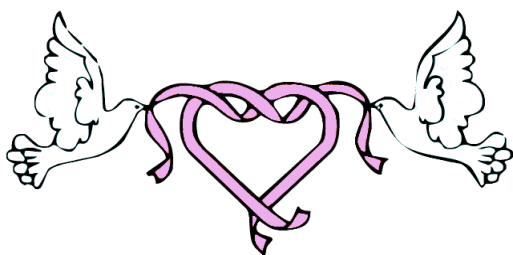
We have been preparing for future outdoor activities, including camp and looking forward to our annual bat walk at Wroxton. The senior guides have been invited to meet and learn all about Rangers at an open evening in Kidlington.

Girls can join Rangers, if they wish, after their 14th birthday – so exciting times ahead.

Maggie Rampley 01295 810069

Marian Trinder 01869 340806





David Cox and Christina Halliday

will be getting married

at

St Michael's Church

Barford

At

11.30 on Saturday 8th June 2013

Anyone who would like to attend the
church service will be more than welcome
to join us.

many thank s

Dave and Christina

**Deddington Tennis Club
Windmill Centre**



Chair	George Gibbs	01869 340538
Treasurer/ Membership	Trevor Stevens	01295 669135
Match Sec.	June Ward	01295 721110
Coaching	Steve Ashby	01295 263855

Summer Programme (April to September)

Monday	- 4:00 to 6:00	Junior Coaching
	- 6:00 onwards	League Matches
Tuesdays	- 10:00 onwards	Adult Club Morning
	- 3:30 to 6:30	Junior Coaching
	- 7:30 to 8:30	Adult Coaching
Wednesday	- 6:00 onwards	Adult Club Night
Thursday	- 6:00 onwards	League Matches
Friday	- 3:30 to 6:00	Mini Tennis Coaching
	- 6:00 to 7:00	Adult Improvers Coaching
	- 6:00 onwards	Adult Club Night
Saturday	- 9:00 to 10:00	Match Practice
	- 10:00 to 1:00	Junior Coaching
	- 1:30 onwards	League Matches
Sunday	- Mornings	Club Morning
	- Afternoons	Family Club Afternoon

Barford Village Market

In the Village Hall, 10-12noon

Saturday, 15th JUNE

**Home-made Scones, Preserves, new laid eggs
Artisan Breads, Cheeses & Olives and
all the usual food and craft stalls**

Ridgway's Farmhouse Ice Cream from Tysoe,

Home grown Plants - Fairtrade items

Cards & gifts - New stalls and traders each month

Not forgetting Tea/Coffee & Bacon & Egg Butties!!

We hold markets on the 3rd Saturday every month (except August)

Come along and support YOUR local market

All profits for Village Hall Maintenance

Ed's Postbag:

Hi Mariann



I wondered if it would be possible for me to let the people of Barford know what a great village they have and how much I have enjoyed my time in the Barfords. —:

I moved to Barford st John on January the 16th 2008. I would like to say a heartfelt 'thank you' to all my friends, neighbours, and people I have met over the past 5 years. I have been cycling, doing the Challenge, many parties, and many good nights in The George, laughing and joking with friends.

I have recently moved with my partner Colette to Deddington for a few months whilst we finish our jobs, and at the end of July we move down to East Allington near Kingsbridge in Devon to retire.

We will miss Barford very much and have a lot of very happy memories of the people, we will be up regularly to visit my son James and Georgie, so will keep in touch.

Thank you all so much.

Simon & Colette

Dear Editor

Ref proposal for double yellow lines around the village green.

We feel very blessed that we live in our lovely village overlooking The Green and have family and friends who chose to visit us here.

Whilst we do park in the areas that Mr Wilson has suggested should be no parking areas, we do not park 'at random' as Mr Wilson claims but do what we can to allow access for our neighbours.

Apart from the ugliness of double yellow lines and the time the Police would have to spend enforcing this plan, Mr Wilson's proposal fails to suggest any alternative for the people who can no longer park near The Green. My 82 year old Mother couldn't walk here from Banbury and if she can't park near our house she would need to park near someone else's property. Parking is also an issue in Church St, High St, Lower St, Murrey's Lane, The Rock, Horn Hill etc so there are limited parking places elsewhere.

Mr Wilson mentions counting seven cars parked at random, but on the areas he has highlighted I have often seen double that number of cars parked. There is no easy alternative place for that number of vehicles to park.

I do agree with Mr Wilson that a footpath would make the area safer and although no one would want to spoil the look of the Green some sort of road widening scheme might eventually be the only solution.

One option might be for a metre wide strip of grass to be removed from the outer perimeter of the Green and a footpath created that was sturdy enough for the occasional large vehicle to drive onto if necessary.

Any such plan would need to be done with great care to preserve (or enhance) the appearance of The Green and inevitably that would be expensive but if people are concerned about the safety issues raised by Mr Wilson then perhaps it is time to investigate our options in greater depth.

(Name supplied)

Daisy Pashley was born July 2003 and lives in Chipping Norton with her brother James, Mum and Dad (Lorna and Lee).

Very sadly in December 2010 Daisy caught Meningitis and was in hospital fighting for her life over Christmas of that year, which was a very stressful time for the whole family.



Daisy survived although due to the nature of the disease she had to have both her arms and legs amputated below her knees and elbows and now has artificial limbs. The picture above shows Daisy trying out some running blades in October 2012.

I'm sure that you can cast your minds back to being 9 years old and playing as young children do and of course Daisy will do the same, albeit with some adaptations in her life.

The website below is a tribute to what an amazing child daisy is and hopefully will raise funds so she can have the adaptations she needs. Please make time to take a look.

www.daisyp.webs.com

Deddington PFSU and Nursery

WE HAVE SPENT much of the term outdoors - digging, gardening, making bird feeders, looking for minibeasts, and beginning to practise for our forthcoming Sports Day on 21st June. The weather hasn't always cooperated but we try not to let that stop us! A busy parent's evening was held at the PFSU on 15th May and we hoped you enjoyed the opportunity to view your child's profiles and catch up on all they have done at the PFSU this year. Next term we will be thinking about keeping fit and healthy, and preparing the children for their moves up from Nursery to the PFSU and from the PFSU to school. Don't forget our summer ball which will be held at the Windmill Centre on Saturday 13th July - tickets will be available soon.



Lucy Squires
337484

Katharine House News

MIDNIGHT WALK 2013 LAST CHANCE FOR ENTRIES!

Closing date for our seventh Midnight Walk is 12 June, so get your entries in today! Entry is £15 and forms are available from Fundraising on 01295 812161, from any of our shops, or download a form from our website at www.khh.org.uk. Volunteers needed! We are now looking for route marshals to help us on the night. If you would like to help, please give Fundraising a call on 01295 812161. Last year this fantastic event raised almost £75,000 despite driving rain and blowing gales!

CONCERT

Consensio Concert will be singing acapella at Brackley Methodist Church on Saturday 8 June at 7.30pm. Refreshments will be available and tickets £6. For more information please contact Fundraising at 01295 812161

DESIGNER & NEARLY NEW SALE

Chipping Norton Town Hall opens its doors 10am to 4pm on Saturday 15 June for a sale of quality women's designer and high-street branded clothing including Joseph, Gucci and Ghost. Entrance fee £4

BANBURY RALLY 2013

The weekend of 29 / 30 June sees the Banbury Rally running their 45th annual rally at Smiths Fields, Bloxham between 10am and 5pm both days and this year they will be kindly donating 10% of their profits to KHH. Organisers would much appreciate if any supporters are able to volunteer time to help during the weekend, please contact Dave Heritage 01789 550881. The event promises to be a fun-filled and action-packed weekend and full details can be found at www.banburyrally.com

FESTIVAL OF OPEN GARDENS

Our annual Festival of Open Gardens continues this month, beginning with the Hospice's own gardens on Sunday 2 June. A chance to see the beautiful gardens created and maintained by the volunteers of the Simon Weatherby Garden Trust. Details of all the gardens and opening times can be found at <http://www.katharinehouse.co.uk/opengardens.pdf>.

THE 9TH ADDERBURY CHARITY GOLF DAY

Come and challenge for some star prizes on 5 July at The Banbury Golf Centre in Adderbury and raise valuable funds for nursing care at Katharine House Hospice. Entry fee £35 per player, 1pm start. Coffee and bacon sandwiches to begin, matches finishing by 6pm with a buffet supper and prize giving. Don't miss out and book now by calling Nick Fennell on 01295 811059.

EASTER CHICK THANK YOU!

Thank you to everyone who supported our Easter knitted campaign, at the time of writing we have raised nearly £4,500. Amazing, and our grateful thanks if you were one of our knitters or sellers or bought a knitted novelty stuffed with the Crème egg. Thank you also to Kraft Foods for donating 1500 Cadbury's Crème Eggs.

Katharine House Hospice Newsletter

Did you receive a copy of our Spring Newsletter packed with updates, reviews and news? If not, and you'd like a copy and to go onto our mailing list to ensure you receive future issues, give the Fundraising Office a call on 01295 812161. Don't forget to let us know if you move, so that you don't miss out!

Are you following us on Facebook and Twitter?

Our pages are an excellent way to keep up to the minute with our news, events and lottery winners. Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/katharinehouse and at Twitter @khosp. Come and visit and say hello!

Thank you,
Nicky Hanson

Community Fundraiser



I want to say a big, big thank you for your support. I am chuffed to announce that I've raised an amazing £1,381.10, not bad for 45 seconds work (don't go there...).

It was an 'outrageous' experience (see photo) and I would definitely do it again but not next year as there may well be another challenge in the pipeline??!

Every penny makes a huge difference to those with or affected by Parkinson's, whether it's putting dedicated Nurses in post, funding groundbreaking research or the manning of 24/7 Helplines, your generous contribution will have a massive impact.

Once again, thank you so much.

Love

Lucy (Norman)xxx

Deddington Festival 2013 –

Tickets now on sale

11th Year of this Community Arts Event

Deddington 8 May 2013 Returning for its 11th year the 2013 Deddington Festival will take place from 21 June to 13 July 2013. The annual summer festival offers an innovative programme of music, performing & visual arts, appealing to all ages and interests. With music from Jazz, to Rock to Choral, to a writers' competition, to story-telling, art workshops, children's dance, a farm walk and a photography exhibition – most cultural leanings are catered for over the three week event.

Programme Highlights include:

CreativeKIDZ – Saturday morning activities at The Unicorn

Deddington Rocks - Friday 28 June, Market Square 4.30pm

Deddington Jazz - Saturday 29 June, Deddington Church 7.30-10.30pm

History Walk - Saturday 22 June, Castle Grounds 2pm

Art Exhibition – 22nd, 23rd, 28th & 29th June, The Studio, Hermitage.

for further programme information please visit

www.deddingtonfestival.org.uk

Banbury Museum Events & Exhibitions

Graduate Art & Design Exhibition: Then & Now

Highlights from graduates of Oxfordshire School of Creative Arts in Banbury

Till 15 June and 22 June – 6 July 10am – 5pm Free

An exhibition in two parts, featuring a selection of the best artwork from new and former graduates of Oxfordshire School of Creative Arts in Banbury. Includes Fine Art, Design Crafts and Graphic Design & Illustration.

'Altered Image' Prize Trail

Until 19 July during museum opening times. Suitable for children of all ages. Children under 8 years old may need a little help. £1.50 per trail booklet

Explore the galleries looking for the mystery artefacts that will lead you to your prize.

Art Cart Action: Crazy Crafty Creatures Until 19 July Drop in 10.30am-12.30pm and 2-4pm on Saturdays and every day during Oxfordshire school holidays. for 4+ years. £1 per child. Make and take home your very own crazy, crafty creature!

Please note that drop-in activities can be very popular. Drop in tickets are released for sale ten minutes before the advertised start time of the activity. Places are offered on a 'first come, first served' basis. There may be a short wait at busy times. For all family events and activities children under 12 years old must be accompanied by and remain with an adult at all times.

Monthly Archaeological Finds Surgeries

Tuesday 4 June and 2 July 10.30am – 4pm. Have your archaeological finds identified and recorded by the Finds Liaison Officer for Oxfordshire & West Berkshire, Anni Byard.

Get Crafty – Pavement Pictures

Saturday 22 June 2-4pm. Family drop-in activity. Pavement Pictures is back! Come and create your very own colourful and creative chalk pictures outside on the museum pavement. Lots of fun! For families with children aged 2 and over. £1 per family.

Throughout the Spring

'Small Talk' Activity Backpacks (for 3-5 year olds)

Perfect for children aged 3 - 5 years old. Available throughout the year, during museum opening hours £1 per backpack. Explore the museum with the help of Sally and Simon, our special puppets, and the themed activity backpacks.

'Drawing for All' Cart Monday – Saturday 10.30am to 4pm. For all ages. Free. Enjoy sketching the fascinating artefacts on display or the view along the canal. Materials, ideas and inspiration provided!

There are lots of museum trails for children including:

'Museum Treasure Hunt' – Discover the objects hidden in the museum. **'Teddy's Museum Adventure'** - Help teddy find all his favourite objects. **'Toy Trail'** - Look for all the toys hidden in the museum.

All trails (excluding the prize trails) cost 60p, include a free museum pencil and are available during museum opening times.

Village Show

Due to the late start for the growing season, the Committee have decided to put the date back to

Saturday 7th September



1st Deddington Guides

IT HAS BEEN GREAT to get outside again, after a long winter!

Some challenging questions found us exploring the market place, to begin with – we learnt a lot and realised that we may not be as observant as we thought we were.

Aah! The smell of the the wood-smoke – that's what it's all about – as we enjoyed our first cookout of the year! Thanks to Mrs. Bouverie for use of her garden – as ever a delightful evening in every way ... and those toasted marshmallows!

A hike through our beautiful countryside from Steeple Aston to Heyford was wonderful. So much to appreciate on another fine evening! It was warmer than we'd been used to, so the warm welcome at The Bell, Lower Heyford (once they got over the surprise order of 20 fizzy drinks) was appreciated!

We have been preparing for future outdoor activities, including camp and looking forward to our annual bat walk at Wroxton. The senior guides have been invited to meet and learn all about Rangers at an open evening in Kidlington.

Girls can join Rangers, if they wish, after their 14th birthday – so exciting times ahead.

Maggie Rampley 01295 810069

Marian Trinder 01869 340806

Catherine Blackburn 01295 258008

Village Show Schedule – Saturday 7th September

Vegetable & Fruit Classes

1	Three Beetroot, with tops cut to 10cms (4ins) approx.	
2	Three Carrots, long, with tops cut to 10cms (4ins) approx.	
3	Three Courgettes	
4	Three Onions	
5	Five Shallots	
6	Three Potatoes of one variety	
7	Three Runner Beans with stalks	
8	Five French Beans with stalks	
9	Five Cherry Tomatoes	
10	Three Round Tomatoes	
11	A Cucumber, house or frame	
12	A Pair of Vegetables (same variety) not in other classes	
13	Five Single Assorted Vegetables	
14	Largest Marrow	
15	Three Apples of one variety, eating or cooking	
16	Dish of one variety of soft or stoned fruit	
17	Adult Fun Class: A Vegetable Animal	

Cookery Classes

18	Six Flapjack pieces	
19	Four Cheese Scones	
20	Six Chocolate Brownies	
21	A Victoria Sponge Sandwich, Raspberry jam, no Cream	
22	A Family sized Apple Pie	
23	A Ginger Cake (men only) Recipe in Barford News	
24	A Jar of Jam	
25	A Jar of Marmalade	
26	A small pot of Lemon Curd	
27	A Jar of Chutney	
28	Sloe Gin (decanted into small bottle)	

Flower Arranging Classes

29	An arrangement in a gravy boat	
30	An arrangement with herbs	
31	A miniature arrangement 10cms (4ins) overall	
32	An arrangement for Harvest (max 12"w x 18"h)	

Cut Flower Classes

33	A single Gladiolus	
34	A sunflower in a vase	
35	Three Dahlias	
36	Three Roses	
37	Four Marigolds (one variety)	
38	Four Fuchsia heads in a saucer of water	
39	Six stems of Sweet Peas	
40	Vase of mixed garden flowers, 6 varieties, (max.18 stems, no o	

Crafts

(NB Crafts must not have been entered previously in the Show)

41	A Handmade Toy	
42	A Handmade Cushion	
43	A hand knitted or crocheted article	
44	A piece of needlecraft (<i>embroidery, tapestry, patchwork, cross-stitch</i>)	
45	You Made It, Let's See It (<i>Handmade article not covered in other classes</i>)	
46	Drawing or Painting: any subject, any medium (<i>mount or frame optional</i>)	

Photography

(13cm x 18cm or 5" x 7")

47	A Child/Children at Play	
48	Barford Weather	
49	A Chair	
50	A Holiday View	

Children's Classes

7 Years and Under (age to be stated on all entries)

51	A Colouring Picture (available from the Post Office)	
52	A Handmade Mask	
53	Four Rock Cakes	
54	A Vegetable Animal	
55	You Made It, Let's See It (<i>Handmade article not covered in other classes</i>)	

8 - 15 Years (age to be stated on all entries)

56	A photograph (Any Subject, 13cm x 18cm or 5" x 7")	
57	4 Decorated Cupcakes	
58	An Illustrated Map of the Barfords	
59	A drawing or painting (any subject, any medium)	
60	You Made It, Let's See It (<i>Handmade article not covered in other cl</i>	

IT IS NOW SIXTY YEARS since the Coronation. At that time I was doing my National Service, between leaving School and going to University: this enabled me to have a very small part in an historic event

Some months before the Coronation, a number of us from R.A.F. Hullavington (in Wiltshire) were chosen to march in the parade. Most of us were reasonably tall, and I am just over six feet: people of similar heights, however, can have different lengths of natural stride, whereas for purposes of group marching a regulation stride is required. My own natural way of loping along means risking either kicking the person in front, or leaving a heel to be thumped by the person behind – or both: but, obedient to the common cause, all my marching was undertaken wearing an invisible tight skirt.

That extra elegance apart, however, the change was very welcome. Several times a week, initially, we downed spanners or typewriters or whatever, and assembled to march, sometimes singing, along the leafy roads and lanes of Wiltshire. Being out of camp during working hours, we had a sense of licensed truancy, and even when the going was tiring we formed a pretty merry bunch: on the road to Malmesbury there was (and still is) a shop on a bend by a stream, and there we would often pause, buy an orange or whatever, and loll on the banks, resting.

Those directing us were firm in the manner of an adroit orchestral conductor – aiming at a really crisp performance while being perfectly reasonable. With no great strain, we became increasingly fit and, once we began to carry rifles, increasingly adept and synchronised while “changing arms” as the weight on one shoulder became too much. We were, after all, working towards a round trip of some thirteen miles.

The times given to this preparation increased, until about a month before the Coronation itself we moved to R.A.F. Northolt to join up with contingents from all over the country. Flight Tech Smurthwaite (of blessed memory) was in immediate care of us, and I rarely travel on the London Underground without having an image in my mind of this tall quiet ginger-haired man pecking among us like a mother hen, to make sure that we were each O.K.. Doubtless he was almost unconscious of his characteristic concern, but it has stayed with me all this time.

Over the next weeks we steadily increased our expertise, and gradually lengthened the distances we did. Officers with growing quantities of “scrambled egg” (gold braid) on their caps surveyed us, and huddled together in groups chewing over (I assumed) every possible contingency: the fact that in the event they were to omit a few matters of which a child of five could

have warned them, didn’t reduce at the time the feeling that we were caught up in something quite momentous.

It was good to be near London, and I personally went into London on numerous evenings to see a play or go to a concert.

Then, about ten days, maybe, before The Day, we moved to Earls Court – where some nine thousand of us slept (on straw-filled mattresses). We were drawn from all the Services, and from the Commonwealth as well as this country. Some of us were to march, and others to stand to attention lining the route – a strain and tedium I was glad not to have to face. Strangely, I have absolutely no memory of where (or, indeed, whether) we ate.

Throughout the whole of this time we were, as may readily be imagined, inspected, so that not a mite travelling piggy-back on our shoulders would have been missed. For The Day itself we were issued with new boots – and no-one appeared even to glance at us. I remember discussing with the person next to me whether “they” would have noticed if we had marched forth in pyjamas. The issuing of new boots achieved two things: a polished appearance and, if my own case is any guide, eighteen thousand pulverised feet.

In fairness, we didn’t have to be inspected, because the whole atmosphere had become one in which we took responsibility for a cheerful and willing participation as A Part of History.

But, though we had become something of a single machine, the trouble with creating a machine is that it is possible to forget that a programmed machine has to make its way through unforeseen conditions.

The first condition was rain: for this we had to take our cape/groundsheets to keep ourselves presentable until the parade itself. That was fine: on arrival at our starting-point, however, we were told to put these in a heap designated for the R.A.F. – the entire R.A.F.. At the end of the day we were given the order, “collect groundsheets.” “Yes, Sir!” No kit inspection after that was free from the fear of one’s service-number on it being seen to be wrong.

In the years since that day I have met with three other people who had taken part: one was the Colonel of his Regiment, and another a man who had lined the route: with the latter, who had been in the regular army, I confirmed what happened to the sailors. For these men, plonked like bollards along the way, the unanticipated rain had a joke in store: their hats had been smartened with Blanco – and as the rain descended, the Blanco ran down their faces until these heroes were gradually transformed into clowns.

Another small matter had been overlooked by these grave impressive seniors who had troubled

over us at Northolt. Although we had become superbly in unison in our “changing arms” (that is, shifting rifles from one shoulder to the other), so that the manoeuvre looked like a single machine, on The Day itself some people had (strangely) turned out to watch: not a window, not a ledge, not a pavement-space behind the troops, seemed to be without its occupant; moreover, most unexpectedly these people, young and old, cheered and clapped and hooted for joy. Fine and dandy – except that what happened to our changing of arms, on which so much time and effort had been expended, was that no word of command was remotely audible. What we did (ever-enterprising) was to look ahead and think, slowly, “Oh, gosh; they seem, don’t they, to be changing arms. Ah. Well perhaps we’d better do so too.” Which, independently, we did: one can only imagine that a close-up film of this long-rehearsed drill movement will reveal something like a drunk porcupine deciding slowly to fall from one ditch to another,

None of which, of course, mattered. The Wing Commander who should have been calling out our commands, and who for all I knew was doing so, abandoned protocol, drew his splendid sword, and waved it towards the prettiest girls on the rooftops.

We were never quite sure where Her Majesty was in relation to us, and though we travelled the route she took, we were some of the few people there that day who saw absolutely nothing of the event itself. It is interesting to reflect that this may have been the case of most participants in many of the famous events in history: things which “every schoolboy knows” must have been unknown to almost everybody there. At the Battle of Hastings, how many noticed an arrow falling into King Harold’s eye?

Eventually we returned to Earls Court and flaked out, with our sand-papered feet, onto our bunk beds and straw. Our reward was a rum ration: this was no “tot”, but a regally generous ration delivered into our tin mugs – and so there my memories end.

S.A.C John Adrian Greeves. 3138479



Babysitting!

I’m Tilly and I am available for
babysitting,

I live in Broad Close Barford St Michael.

I am 1st Response First Aid trained.

You can call me on 01869 337822 or on my
mobile at 07557 095681.

Banbury Rural Neighbourhood CRIME NEWS

The team was responsible for the arrest and remand of four burglars this month. A burglary took place at an address in **Barford St John** during the day. The offender entered the house by an unlocked door and came face to face with the owner before stealing a gold chain and making off. The team launched an investigation and during the course of the evening we received two further reports from member of the public in Hook Norton and Adderbury that a suspicious male had been seen trying to enter their homes. Sgt Richard Miller and PC Jen Culley located a suspicious car with four males known for crime and burglary. Sgt Miller was able to link the males to the burglary and all four were arrested. The males have been remanded awaiting trial.

You can contact the team by emailing us at:

BanburyRuralNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk or you can call us on 101 our non-emergency number. Please dial 999 in an emergency.

Samantha West

Neighbourhood Policing Administrator - Cherwell LPA

It’s not a 999 emergency,
but you need medical help
fast.

There’s now 1 number to call:



Sandford St. Martin Cricket Club Fixtures



Date	Opponents	Venue
1st XI – Division 2		
June 1	Bledlow Ridge	Away
8	Banbury III	Home
15	Oxford Downs II	Away
22	Cublington	Home
29	Bicester & N. Oxford	Away

2nd XI – Division 6		
June 1	Banbury IV	Home
8	Oxford & Bletch Ns II	Away
15	Didcot	Home
22	Bledlow Ridge II	Away
29	Bledlow Village II	Home

Sunday Fixtures		
June 2	Oxenford	Home
9	Oxon U14s *Ground Hire)	Home
16	Steeple Aston	Home
23	Oxford Downs.	Away
30	Chairmans XI	Home

Midweek Fixtures		
June 13	S.O.A. v Gentlemen of Worcestershire	

NATURE NOTES 116

AFTER THE BITTER COLD of February and March, the weather had slowly eased through early April, and I was able to conclude last *Nature Notes* by writing that the 15th was ‘... sunny and warm ... a real Spring day ... 17.5°’! Current weather conditions were being controlled by a succession of Atlantic Low Pressure areas moving in from the west. Day temperatures in this third week of April ranged between 15° and 17.5°, although nights were cold with frosts from the 19th (–3.5°) to the 21st. Winds were generally SW and chilly, with damping showers and sharp scuds.

Several Solitary and Bumble bee species were visiting early flowers, and Swallows were beginning to arrive at their traditional nesting sites. Early nesters such as Buzzard and Kite were looking for Voles, small Rabbits and road-kill.

I revelled in the sounds of the nesting Rooks, their lazy, toneless ‘caw’ing are to me, timeless; so different from the aggressive, sonorous sounds of Carrion Crows. The air seemed full of small birds, especially Blue Tits, Dunnocks, Robins, ‘wheezing’ Greenfinches and tinkly Goldfinches.

On the morning of the 21st, quite the earliest date I have ever known, ‘my’ House Martins arrived at their artificial nest on the corner of my house. After a couple of ‘familiarising’ circuits, both birds went in and were quickly patching up the entrance hole with mud and changing the nest lining. Wonderful!

On the 23rd, small puffs of white cloud on a NW breeze heralded day-long sunshine and the year’s highest temperature to date – 21°. It was on this day that one of those peculiar little mysteries that make Nature so fascinating, was revealed. For some weeks Bas Butler and other allotment holders had spotted a pair of our own English (Grey) Partridges foraging around the top of the allotments and a private garden. I happened to be with Bas on his allotment when the owner of the private garden called us over. She was clearing up part of the garden area and had moved an overgrown, disused wire pen, standing less than 2m from her house. Clearing the inside, she uncovered a ground nest containing six beautiful, smallish, olive-green eggs that had been hidden by the bird under a layer of loose moss. She wanted to know what they were. Both Bas and I recognised them straightaway as Grey Partridge eggs! What a rarity these days! Quickly we replaced the moss cover, the wire pen and as much of the overgrowth as possible, and left. The owner kept a distant eye on the nest site and, after a few days, crept up to see if anything was happening. From low down, the lady could discern a sitting bird, but it had the long tail feathers of a



Pheasant! A Pheasant sitting on Partridge eggs? Was that weird or what? This situation continued into May, but then the sitting bird disappeared. Upon checking, the nest was found to be empty, with no evidence of eggs or young. Predation seemed to be the best answer, so, we shall never know what youngsters (if any) would have been raised, and the mystery of a Pheasant on Partridge eggs remains!

During this spell of warmer weather many of the Spring creatures appeared. Solitary Mining Bees were digging little mounded burrows in lawns and waste places to house eggs and larval provisions. *Andrena fulva* is one of these, and is attractively covered with foxy red hair. Mining bees are parasitised by a host of interesting species such as *Nomada* bees. These are small, elongated, hairless bees, coloured with black and yellow bands, and look more like small wasps than bees. They cruise slowly and menacingly through the grass looking for the burrows of their mining victims. There are many small, parasitic solitary wasps also engaged in finding similar victims.

Also engaged in parasitism is a very distinctive, true fly, *Bombylius major*. It looks like a very fast delta-winged aircraft, but it can fly very slowly as it cruises over sparse ground, and often perches, watching for potential victims. Its wings are black edged and it has a long, fixed ‘tongue’ projecting from its head, like a gun.

There are also many small mason bees at this time, so called because they utilise old nail-holes, etc. in walls for their nests. They have as many predators and parasites as their mining cousins.

Predatory birds such as Kestrels by day and Owls in the dark and Herons both by day and night, were hunting to feed their young. Occasionally a Kingfisher appeared luminously, along the R. Swere, and Roe deer were to be seen in fields all over the parish.

This warmer weather lasted until the 26th when the temperature dropped to 12° max and freezing point at night! Since the 24th, a large HP system had been moving in from the Atlantic. The wind went up to NW and started bringing cold Arctic air with squally showers down from the north. It all came in on a full moon so we guessed it would be cold for the next quarter. And it was! Maximum temperature on the 30th was 13.5°, but at night it fell to –4°; which meant that ice had to be chipped off windscreens in the morning. By now most of Nature was keeping its head down and, while most vegetation withstood the assault, April left us with a spiteful kick in the gardens! But the HP was moving on and May dawned on a cold clear sunrise as a new batch of Lows came in from the NW.

From -4° at night, the afternoon rose to 18° on a light NE air as the wind started to 'box the compass'. This set a pattern and, from the 2nd to the 7th the nights were clear and cold (-1° to 2°). Considerable cloud built up quickly and evaporated again during daytime, temperatures for which climbed from 18° (1st) to 25° (7th) but the wind was fickle and chilly as the weather warmed. I was suspicious. This was too much, too quick, too early! Earlier bitter winds had dried the ground and shriven the young crops; now everything was being baked as well.

However, with everything bent on procreation, Nature didn't seem too distraught. Birds everywhere, especially tits and thrushes, seemed to be nesting intensely. On the 4th there was a big fall of Whitethroats, which seemed to be singing and leaping into the air from every bush around Barford St. John. There were also Blackcaps and Lesser Whitethroats.

But for me the great joy was in the butterflies. There were plentiful Peacocks looking for nettles, small but useful numbers of Orange Tips and Green-veined Whites seeking out Garlic Mustard along the hedges and Cuckoo Flowers in damp meadows. And I spotted my first Comma, Red Admiral and Holly Blue of the year!

Birds of prey seemed to be well into breeding, but Kestrels were still very evident hover-hunting, as they had not yet gone into their secretive nesting period. Rooks cawed sleepily over their nestlings, Green Woodpeckers laughed all over the place and Moorhens, a scarcity this year (is it those ghastly Mink again?) were clucking around a few ponds. Masses of Goldfinches, all over the villages, didn't seem to have begun nesting. And 'my' House Martins were sitting tightly.

Owing to the late bud-burst and foliation of trees and hedges, many small birds, most noticeably Tits, that rely on huge numbers of tiny caterpillars, were struggling to find food.

But things were changing. On the 7th, the hottest day so far, persistent Lows with complex frontal systems were massing to the NW and moderate (welcome) rain fell over a mild (9.5°) night. Day temperatures began to fall and on the 11th and 12th they stood at 13° .

The 12th was the occasion of our annual 12 hour bird species count over a 10 x 10km square so four of us including Bas Butler, Ian Hobday and myself set off to see what we could find. By mid morning we had completed the Barford section of our square, reaching 50 bird species, which was excellent for such a cold Spring. We *did* hear the Cuckoo, although very briefly, near Marpool, the status of which is a comment on these brutish and uncaring times, as is the case also with Chiffchaff

and Willow Warbler. Other interesting species were Red-legged Partridge, Lapwing, Greater and Lesser Black-backed Gulls (aerially) Lesser Whitethroat, Raven and Reed Bunting.

Elsewhere, one experience stood out like a beacon; a single field near Bodicote was absolutely swarming with House Martins, Swallows and Swifts, even a Yellow Wagtail – long since a mere memory locally. Why the plethora of insectivores? The field contained numerous cattle and therefore cowmuck also. What do huge numbers of insects need to feed and breed in/on? Cowmuck, above all else. Sheep droppings are of little value and horse products are not much better. So, when people complain there are no 'Swallows', the answer is:–

No cows = No muck = No flies = No Swallows

So, support our cattle farmers and bring back the cattle to our fields, while there is still time!

During the afternoon, in more distant parts of the square, a further fifteen species were added before rain stopped play at about 3.30pm, bringing the overall total to 65 species.

The 13th was cold (11°) and a chilly W breeze drove through showers all afternoon. I hadn't seen 'my' House martins for 3–4 days and I wondered if they had deserted the nest through cold and lack of food (or had been picked-off by some predator). But the 14th was a little warmer (13°) and some intimate twittering from the nest revealed the Martin's presence over mid-morning.

Now, as I close these Nature Notes on the 14th, there has been a dawn frost of -2° . There is a cold SSE breeze and cloud is building, but there are lengthy periods of warm sun. The temperature is already higher than yesterday, so things may be looking up again.

Unfortunately I can't foresee any real change for the better before the first week of June.

Let's hope I'm wrong.

Ron Knight

Live Mealworms For Sale
(Dried mealworms also available)



100g = £1.50

Feed wild birds, chickens, fish and reptiles
Or use for fishing

Contact Lorraine 01869 338 048
07866 808626