



# THE PRATTLER

The Heyford Village Newspaper

October / November 2021

Issue No. 444

## Our Neighbourhood Plan Consultation



Let us know what you think by  
12 November 2021

Summary of the Plan Included in this  
Special Issue of the Prattler

## The Prattler

The Prattler is run by an active voluntary committee comprising of Sue Boutle, Christine Watts, Vicki Hamblin, Jez Wilson, Nick Essex, Richard Musson and Mary Rice. If you would like to submit articles or have any suggestions for future issues, please get in touch.

The Newspaper is supported by donations from the Parish Council, the Parish Church, the Baptist Church, Heyford W.I., Heyford Garden Club, Heyford Singers, the Bowls Club, the Village Hall and Heyford Picturedrome as well as the advertisers.

Thank you for the donations made by individuals in recent months. Thanks are also due to the volunteers who distribute it every month. It is all very much appreciated.

**Cover:** See inside for the Neighbourhood Plan Summary

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# PARISH COUNCIL NOTES

The September 6th, 2021 Parish Council meeting was held in the Baptist Church Rooms, with Social Distancing precautions. Online meetings for Councils are no longer legal.

**Post Office report.** The Chair reported that the battle had been won, and that the Post Office within the One Stop Shop was being retained – for the time being - and that staff were being trained. Many people worked hard to achieve this, and also on alternative plans. Council thanks them all.

**Damaged Streetlights.** We have had two recent incidents of streetlights being damaged by vehicles. In both cases attempts to get the perpetrators to pay for the damage have foundered. The light at the corner of Winston Close and Furnace Lane was hit by a van and trailer reversing. It was assumed that the van belonged to a contractor then working in the village, or to a subcontractor. The incident is on film but unfortunately the registration number is not visible and there is no identifying sign writing on the van. The contractor has denied responsibility. This is irritating as they must know very well who damaged the lamp post but will not admit it. The other incident occurred in Watery Lane with the demolition of an old-style concrete post by a van driver apparently delivering for a large national company. In this instance there was some evidence in the form of delivery details. Again, unfortunately, no registration or sign-writing visible on the van. Again, the company involved have denied liability despite it being perfectly clear who was responsible.

In my experience if you have the registration number, an admission of liability and clear photographs you will almost certainly get redress. If you have none of those things it becomes very difficult; and attempting to do so will be frustrating.

**Muck spreading.** Most residents will have been aware that recent muck spreading has caused some controversy in the village. Many residents have lived in the country for most of their lives and are used to muck spreading smells as a short-lived minor issue. In this case, however, the issue was much longer lasting and caused considerable discomfort for some residents, compounded by taking place during a heatwave when most would have liked to have windows open. This was not felt to be an option by many.

This issue has come up more often in the past two years and has caused concern nationally. There are articles and studies attesting to this. Whether something about the product (sewage sludge) has changed, or unusual weather conditions were responsible, is not yet clear – but a number of residents feel they have never

encountered anything as powerful as this before. A Councillor has suggested that; as this is a known issue nationally, affected villagers may wish to write directly to the local MP, Chris Heaton-Harris at (House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA or [chris.heatonharris.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:chris.heatonharris.mp@parliament.uk)) raising the issue and requesting that Defra tighten up their guidelines on how and when processed human waste is incorporated into farmland.

Whilst the views of those who feel that this is an acceptable part of village life have to be respected – the views of those who have suffered sore throats, nausea, streaming eyes, and whose houses were permeated by the smell for several days; must also be respected. Environmental Health came out and checked the fields and reported all proper measures had been taken, but no checks were made at houses of complainants as far as we are aware. Councillors have pointed out that it is the smell of ammonia that made this situation different from normal muck spreading incidents, and that the smell is still around some areas nearly 2 weeks later.

### **Public Participation at Sept 6th Meeting:**

Tom Dodd reported that his rainwater did not go into the sewers but into a soakaway. He reported this to Anglian Water and received a discount. He felt other parishioners might benefit from the same.

Ian Parris asked about the progress of the claim against Gigaclear for damage to the light in Winston Close. It had been heard from Highways today that Gigaclear had denied liability on the grounds that Mr Parris' film of the incident only showed a white van reversing into the light. The registration was not visible, nor was there any sign-writing to indicate that it was anything to do with Gigaclear. Mr Parris said that he and a neighbour were willing to go court on this matter. The Chair felt that this would never happen unless they could come up with further evidence, as the CPS would not undertake prosecution without additional evidence. Clerk to instruct Aylesbury Mains to restore the light to vertical.

**Furnace Lane issues.** Signs asking for consideration for horses would be introduced shortly. And it was hoped that additional repeater signs and a camera between the canal and Winston Close would be forthcoming. MM had spoken to Highways about speed reduction measures. CK referred to West Haddon's green ringed 20mph signs, and the Clerk would ask about the procurement process and experience.

Representatives of Barleys had informed Council that they would normally be stopping work at 18.00, but residents felt that 20.00 was a more realistic time in actuality. They had also stated that there would be no more than 30 lorries on site, and that there would be no issues with their vehicles getting stuck at the railway bridge. Residents reported that plans showed provision for 70 tractor units, and 50 trailers onsite. They also reported lorries coming out of the depot and turning left to immediately encounter the low bridge. Clerk to write to Barley, and to invite Helen Howard to the November meeting to discuss a review of signage for Furnace Lane.

**New Councillors.** The Chair welcomed Linda Hall and Mel McLean to Council, and Ian Parris was also co-opted and will be able to take his seat at the next



meeting. This means that Council is up to its full complement of 11, for the first time in a while.

## **Reports**

### **PCSO – by Chair. Charles Kiloh.**

Meeting to discuss PCSO contract update, held at Bugbrooke Sports & Community Centre on Monday 13th September 2021.

At the present time Bugbrooke are sponsoring a PCSO, shared by Nether Heyford. The contract is for twelve months, and this is our second year of having a dedicated PCSO. A PCSO is not a Police Officer and does not have the powers that a Police Officer has. The primary role is of engagement, a visible uniformed presence, intended to provide reassurance, liaise and make regular contact with all aspects of the Community.

The meeting held on Monday allowed Bugbrooke Parish Council an opportunity to discuss the ongoing situation with having a contracted PCSO, and the relationship between resident's expectations and what the PCSO can provide. Bugbrooke Parish Council invited me to attend the meeting, held at the commencement of their monthly Parish Council meeting giving me the opportunity to meet Chief Inspector Bashem, and Sergeant Greg Taylor of Northamptonshire Police. Both of these Officers have responsibility for PCSOs and are new in post. Sgt Taylor informed us a new PCSO, Chris Dudley, commenced duty as the designated, contracted PCSO for Bugbrooke and Nether Heyford on Monday 13th September. CI Bashem, stressed how valuable and important the presence of the PCSO was to the Community and to Northamptonshire Police. He apologised for the fact that the PCSO had on occasions been assigned other duties and assured the Councillors that these subtractions would only be in emergencies. It was agreed that the post had to be viable, and for both villages, value for money.

The PCSO will engage with all aspects of the Community, visiting Schools, Clubs, meetings, and bonding with our communities. It was requested that the PCSO role should be made quantifiable by a monthly report to Parish Council, covering local incidents, successful outcomes, and feedback to the Community in general.

Parish Council meetings in 2021 will continue to be on the first Monday of each month, (unless a Bank Holiday) and would start at 19.30. The next ones are on Monday Oct 4th and Monday Nov 1st. Full meeting.

**Reporting Highway and Footpath Issues.** The Clerk will report issues that Council is made aware of, but Council would encourage residents to use the Fixmystreet service to report issues themselves as there will then be no time lag; and first-hand reports are almost always better than 2nd or 3rd hand reports. The service can be found here

<https://www.fixmystreet.com/>

It is easy to use; you can have your own account and can check up on any issues you have reported.

Streetlights within the village can be reported to the Clerk, who will report them to the maintenance company. Please do not report to Balfour Beatty as they deal only with major Highway lights – i.e., motorway, A5 and A45.

Roadworks locally and nationally can be seen on this website:  
<http://streetworks.org.uk/live-traffic-works-map/>

*Clerk to the Parish Council: Guy Ravine Tel: 07935 931787*  
*E-mail: [netherheyfordparishcouncil@gmail.com](mailto:netherheyfordparishcouncil@gmail.com)*

<b>Councillor list with responsibilities and preferred means of contact.</b>	
C. Kiloh, 3 Church Lane. Nether Heyford. Tel. 07779 900860	Chairman. Planning, Finance.
L. Dilkes. 17 Furnace Lane, Nether Heyford, NN7 3JF e-mail <a href="mailto:thedilkesfamily@outlook.com">thedilkesfamily@outlook.com</a> 07967753216	Village Hall Rep, Youth Club. Vice Chair. Finance.
L. Eales – 3 Church Lane, Nether Heyford Tel. 01327 341707 e-mail <a href="mailto:lyndaeales@aol.com">lyndaeales@aol.com</a>	Allotments, Playing Field.
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A. Williams 26 Church St, Nether Heyford, NN7 3LH <a href="mailto:anthony.k.williams@talk21.com">anthony.k.williams@talk21.com</a>	Chair of Planning. Finance.

**Next Meeting Monday Oct 4th at the Baptist Church rooms.**



## Parish Church of St. Peter and St. Paul

### Services for October 2021

Sunday 3 <sup>rd</sup>	8:00 am	BCP Holy Communion Service at Flore Church
	10:00 am	Holy Communion at Church Stowe
	10:00 am	First Sunday Service at Flore Church – Harvest
	6:00 pm	Evening Worship at Heyford Church
Sunday 10 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Benefice Holy Communion at Church Stowe
Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Holy Communion Service at Heyford Church
	6:00 pm	Evening Worship at Upper Stowe
Sunday 24 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Holy Communion Service at Flore Church
	4:00 pm	Café Church at Heyford
Sunday 31 <sup>st</sup>	10:00 am	Harvest & Holy Communion Service at Brockhall Church
	6:00 pm	BCP Evening Prayer at Church Stowe

**Midweek Services** of Morning Prayer are held on Wednesdays, 9.30am via telephone conference call (not 27<sup>th</sup> October) and Fridays via Zoom at 9:00am. Details from The Rector.

During October we shall be praying for people living in The Green in Nether Heyford, for the Bliss Charity Primary School, for the shops, and for all the activities in the Village Hall and the Baptist Church Rooms. In Flore, we pray for people living on Hillside Road and Flore Hill. We pray for the Main Street and School Rooms in Church Stowe, and for Manor Farm, the Old Coach House and Manor Cottage in Brockhall.

## Services for November 2021

Sunday 7 <sup>th</sup>	8:00 am	BCP Holy Communion Service at Flore Church
	10:00 am	Holy Communion Service at Church Stowe
	10:00 am	Informal First Sunday Service at Flore Church
	6:00 pm	Evening Worship at Heyford Church
Sunday 14 <sup>th</sup>	10:30 am	Service for Remembrance Sunday at Heyford Church
	11:15 am	Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial in Heyford
	10:55 am	Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial in Church Stowe
	2:15 pm	Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial in Flore
	2:30 pm	Remembrance Sunday Service in the Millennium Hall
Sunday 21 <sup>st</sup>	10:00 am	Holy Communion Service at Heyford Church
	2:00 pm	Thanksgiving for a Life Service at Flore Church
	6:00 pm	Evening Service at Upper Stowe
Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup>	10:00 am	Holy Communion at Flore Church
	4:00 pm	Café Church at Heyford

During November we shall be praying for people living in Church Street and Manor Walk in Heyford, Kings Lane and The Orchard in Flore, Main Street in Upper Stowe and the Apartments in Brockhall Hall

## Food Bank

Don't go hungry – if you are in need of help, please contact Towcester Food Bank 07724 832043 (24 hours). [www.towcester.foodbank.org.uk](http://www.towcester.foodbank.org.uk)

Leave a message and they will phone you back. They can issue vouchers for food as well as a delivery or collection service.

Alternatively if you wish to help, please leave donations for the food banks in the box outside the door of 15 Middle Street where they are delivered to the banks twice a week.

Thank you.

Dear Friends,

In the film, 'Chariots of Fire', there's a scene where the Scottish athlete Eric Liddell is racing against his countrymen. One of his fellow competitors bumps into him, and Liddell crashes to the ground. The onlookers groan. Liddell is out of the race. But even as the other runners continue, opening a gap behind them, Liddell gets to his feet and sprints after them. In the final stretch, he passes one runner after another before crossing the finishing line the victor. Exhausted, Liddell collapses into the arms of his friends, who know from that day that he is destined for greatness.

In all our lives, there are times when we stumble and fall, when we are weary and discouraged, when we feel like we can't go on. Maybe you're feeling that way now, as we emerge from lockdown and restrictions. Perhaps you've lost a little confidence about going out, for example. In such times, what can we do? Where can we find the strength to get up and 'finish the race'?

Writing in the sixth century before Christ, the prophet Isaiah encouraged an exiled, defeated Israel not to give up, but to trust in God to look to the heavens, to the 'starry host'. In his book, 'Our Universe', author Roy Gallant notes that in the countryside on a clear night, the skies sparkle with stars not visible in the city. With our naked eye, we can see about 2,000 stars. With 7-power binoculars, that number increases to 50,000. And with a three-inch telescope, hundreds of thousands of stars become visible. The red giant star, Betelgeuse, is so far away that the light we see from it left the star before Columbus set sail for the new world. If we could travel at 186,000 miles per second it would take over 100,000 years to travel across our galaxy, the Milky Way. Yet ours is just one of countless galaxies in the universe.

So why does Isaiah tell the people of Israel to look at the stars? Well, really, he wanted them to look beyond the stars to the God who created them, the God who cared for them, whose care and majesty he describes in his writings. If the vastness, the greatness of the universe seems incomprehensible, how much more the greatness of the God who created it! The God who knows and loves each and every one of us, who 'gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak'.

Isaiah writes, "Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not be faint" (Isaiah 40:31). Words to hold on to in an uncertain world.

With every blessing,

*Rev Stephen (tel 01327 344436)*



## Nether Heyford Baptist Church

### Services for October / November

October 3 <sup>rd</sup>	10:30am	Harvest service led by Les Britten with monies raised going to Operation Agri for Uganda
October 10 <sup>th</sup>	10:30am	Worship led by Trevor Boys
	4:30pm	Songs of Praise returns led by Martin Buckby (with tea and cakes)
October 17 <sup>th</sup>	10:30am	Worship led by Wendy Manley
October 24 <sup>th</sup>	10:30am	Worship led by Clive Leahey
October 31 <sup>st</sup>	10:30am	Communion service led by Martin Buckby
November 7 <sup>th</sup>	10:30am	Worship led by John Perkins
November 14 <sup>th</sup>	10:30am	Remembrance service led by Les Britten
	4:30pm	Songs of Praise returns led by Martin Buckby (with tea and cakes)
November 21 <sup>st</sup>	10:30am	Worship led by Rev. Colin Pye from the Central Baptist Association
November 28 <sup>th</sup>	10:30am	Communion service led by Martin Buckby

### Events

October 2 <sup>nd</sup>	6pm	Harvest celebration evening
October 8 <sup>th</sup>	2pm to 4.30pm	Join us in the School room for tea and scones/cakes.
November 13 <sup>th</sup>	10:00am to 12:00	Coffee morning with proceeds going to Cynthia Spencer Hospice.

**All welcome**

As I write this article for The Prattler, Sue and I are on holiday in Devon and staying close to Lynmouth and Lynton. It is Sunday lunchtime and we have just attended the morning service at Lynton United Reformed Church. It was quite informal and one lady spoke, very spontaneously, about a conversation she had had with a neighbour. In summary this neighbour had said to this lady "you are unusual" and in that I guess she was saying that she was different, perhaps standing out as being in contrast to others, some might say odd. The lady gave a few more details in that the neighbour had qualified her statement by acknowledging that this lady was different because of her commitment to her Christian faith and that her faith was expressed in her living and her caring. Put another way, the neighbour was confirming that faith had made a distinct difference and it was unusual and that YOU ARE different. With harvest in mind and many churches and chapels celebrating harvest during the next few weeks (please see details elsewhere in The Prattler for services in The Chapel on the green) it made me think of the unusual, different, and odd shaped fruit and vegetables which are commonly referred to as "wonky fruit and veg" - at one time they would have been discarded and thrown away, but are now commonly sought after. Many of us can remember buying bags of broken biscuits from "Woollies." Yes - different, maybe odd, unusual, but still valued by some and appreciated by many.

I then thought of a clock I have at home - I love clocks and this one I am thinking of is distinctly different, unusual and nothing like any other clock I have. What makes it different? Well, below the clock face is the intricate detailed mechanism of the clock's working parts, dials, cogs, bits and bobs which make the clock work. It is unusual but it is interesting and fascinating. It reminded me of when I used to try and help people with learning disability gain a simple understanding of how the body works. Colleagues and I would use a plastic model of all the internal organs that could be removed, handled and then returned to their original and correct position in the cavity from which they had been taken. It is unusual as I guess that most people would have no idea how our body parts fit together. It reminded me of that lovely verse in the Bible that says, "we are wonderfully and fearfully made".

Returning to the harvest theme I recall that when I purchased the clock at a craft fare the seller gave me a wooden apple that I had shown interest in. It was unusual, different and odd in that one side of it was perfectly formed but the other side was marred, broken, damaged, wonky if you like and so unusual. The man knew that it would not be sold because of its damaged and broken state but I had an interest in and purpose for it.

Christians who seek to follow in the ways of Jesus will be unusual and different because Jesus makes us different. Christians are fallen, failed, flawed and broken people - marred people, as we all are, but Christians are people who have discovered that being broken and marred is not final, because we can discover forgiveness and that from forgiveness a different life, an unusual life can grow, develop and become something of worth.

Thank you.

*Martin*  
*On behalf of the fellowship at The Chapel on the green*

## Thank you Alwyne

On Saturday, 18<sup>th</sup> September 2021, I was very pleased to be invited to the Village Hall AGM, where the outgoing chairman, Alwyne Wilson was presenting cheques to The Prattler and the Village Hall. For anyone who has not been reading their Prattler over the last few months, Alwyne did a sponsored sky dive to celebrate her eightieth birthday and the sponsorship money was divided between The Prattler and the Village Hall. The business part of the AGM was dealt with satisfactorily quickly and Alwyne presented the cheques, she raised a magnificent £2400, which was divided equally between the two organizations.

When pressed Alwyne said she hadn't always been a daredevil but had loved every moment of the sky dive and would recommend everyone to have a go. It does make you wonder if she has the adrenalin bug now and what has she got in mind for her 81<sup>st</sup> (a swift ascent of Everest perhaps?).

All of us at The Prattler would like to congratulate Alwyne for such a magnificent achievement and thank her, for her very generous donation.

*Vicki Hamblin*





**DO YOU LIVE IN MANOR PARK?  
WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO DELIVER 'THE PRATTLER'  
TO YOUR FELLOW RESIDENTS?**

If so, please contact Christine Watts on 01327 340041.

Many thanks

## **Barron Walton**

Barron passed away on 27<sup>th</sup> July 2021 after battling a long illness. He was assistant head teacher at Campion and also the Editor of the Prattler for a time.

Sincere commiserations to all of his family.

## **Post Office**

We are very pleased to say that the Post Office will remain open at the One Stop. The hours at present are 9am to 2pm Monday to Friday.


Thank you to everyone that campaigned to keep it open.

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## Quiz

Answers on Page 31

QOOOE2	Lang4uage	i / i
1	2	3
ACRIML	roforkad	Pot00000000
4	5	6
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7	8	9
KNOW it NO	BREN Jr	GMADEB
10	11	12
THYME PLAICE	ROBBERS	Polmomice
13	14	15
GOOD	ALLworld	XQQME
16	17	18

## Astronomy on the Green

For those of us who are night hawks and glance up at the sky around 02:30 will see the herald of Winter coming. By 04:30 Orion has fully risen and is as spectacular as ever. For astronomers he is a pleasing sight as long night skies will soon be back with us. Currently each week daylight gets shorter by 30 minutes, to me this is a promise of things to come. I admit this is an unusual perspective, and most do not welcome the expanding darkness. October and November (providing we get some clear skies – a rarity this year) offer a lot to the casual or amateur observer.

The Andromeda Galaxy (M31) is the arguably the furthest object visible to the naked eye, which is 2.5 million light years away from us. The most the eye will see is a large diffuse grey patch four times the diameter of the moon. It will be high enough in the sky from mid-October on from 8pm. To find it, locate the square of Pegasus (roughly due East) then follow the line of stars from the left middle star of the square, M31 is just above the second star in Andromeda. Unusually Pegasus and Andromeda are linked constellations.

The Pleiades (M45) is the next object, this lies lower down in the same part of the sky. Look to the lower left of M31, the bright star Capella then drift right and down (on the 21/10/21 it will lie between the moon and Capella). Six of the seven stars (sisters) will be visible to the naked eye. In binoculars or a telescope, the bright stars shine through a nebulous mist and are truly spectacular.

15/10 Jupiter appears as a bright star close to the moon.

21-22/10 Orionid's meteor shower (debris from Halley's comet)

23/10 Pleiades lies close to the moon.

31/10 BST ends, clocks go back.

November brings a chance to see Uranus with the naked eye. It will be closest to the earth on Guy Fawkes night which may not be the best viewing from the UK amongst all the fireworks! The gas giant is four times the diameter of the earth and orbits the sun on its side, possibly due to a collision early on in its formation. A faint system of rings encircle the planet at about 90 degrees. Its distance from the sun is 1.8 billion miles and it takes 84 of our years to complete one of its own. The blue-green colour is due to methane in its atmosphere and the cloud tops maintain an icy -220° c.

5/11 Uranus in opposition.

17-18/11 Leonid's meteor shower (unfortunately on a full moon).

If Astronomy interests you, I now have a Facebook group, just drop me an e-mail on [tony.boutle@protonmail.com](mailto:tony.boutle@protonmail.com) and I will send you an invitation to the group.

Clear skies all!

*Tony Boutle*

## Village Hall News

At last we were able to hold our much delayed AGM on 18<sup>th</sup> September and many thanks to everyone who attended. After 3 years sterling service in unprecedented times Alwyne Wilson stood down as chairman. I have a hard act to follow. Alwyne's last act as chairman was to present a cheque for £1200 to the Village Hall. This was raised by sponsorship of Alwyne's brave parachute jump on 4<sup>th</sup> September... Please do not expect this to be a regular activity of Village Hall chairmen.

We have seen a few changes to our management committee, with some members standing down after several years of service, others staying on, and one or two new members. Three of our retiring members are Lesley Dilkes, who has represented the Parish Council for eight years, and Simone and Peter Squire who have served for nine years, respectively as representative of the Bugbrooke and District Flower Society and as one of our Parishioner members. We are very grateful indeed to Lesley, Simone and Peter for their valuable contributions over the past years. We are delighted that Simone, assisted by Peter, will continue as our booking secretary – one of the most essential aspects of our operations.

We also record our appreciation to Arthur Hanley, who having served as chairman many years ago, gallantly returned to the committee as representative of the Heyford Singers for the past year. His place has now been taken by retiring chairman, Alwyne Wilson.

We are now getting back to some normality and many of our groups are back in the hall. Fingers crossed we do not have any more lock-downs.

On Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> September, Pat Patterson organised a garage sale in the village for Village Hall funds. This was a great success and raised over £700.00 and was enjoyed by everyone who took part. Many thanks to Pat for arranging this and visiting all the sites of the sales on the day. Even Pat's dog was glad to get home for a rest. The refreshments including many home made cakes were delicious. These events rely on many people to make them successful and I would like to thank the following for their generosity and time. David Cosby Estate Agent who has provided our very attractive signs advertising our events at the entrances to the village free of charge, Jill and Mike Langrish who provided the location maps, Wendy Goodman and Simone Squire who cooked the wonderful bacon rolls. The bacon came from our very own butcher, Heyford Meats and Glen very kindly provided the rolls free of charge. Alwyne and Judith our secretary also provided much needed help in the kitchen and last but by no means least many thanks to all our "Garage Owners" who took part on the day. I hope you had a very successful day.

Our next big fundraising event will be the Village Fete on 11<sup>th</sup> June. We have missed having a fete for 2 years so we want to make this a very special occasion. Please contact us with ideas and offers of help. We are hoping to set up a working group in the near future and would love to hear from you.

*Joan Kirkbride*  
*Chair*  
*Tel 01327340370*

### **Yes – Alwyne did it!**

Mind you, she didn't know in advance that she and her gentleman instructor would be jumping out of the plane at 10,000 feet (had thought it would be 5,000).

Or that they'd be free-falling for 7,000 feet at 120 miles per hour until the canopy opened and they gently drifted down for the remaining 3,000 feet.

In this case, ignorance truly was bliss.

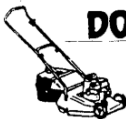
But it was one of the most amazing and exhilarating experiences of her life – to be highly recommended if you want to feel fully alive.

And - thanks to the generous support of so many sponsors - the sum raised was £2,400.

As a result, cheques have been presented for £1,200 each to the Prattler and the Village Hall.

Thank you all so much.

*Alwyne Wilson*  
*01327 340 803*

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George Rands after 6pm on Weedon 340678



## Dig September 21 – Anglo Saxon Cemetery

A few years ago ploughing near Nether Heyford in Northamptonshire unearthed the remains of 2 skeletons. CLASP was asked to undertake some exploratory fieldwork and subsequently has exhumed nearly 30 skeletons.

Fieldwork since then has revealed at least 35 inhumations, in a linear row of graves, the structured layout indicating that the cemetery was more than a family burial ground. Some of the burials are aligned roughly north/south whilst others have a west/east alignment with their heads positioned at the west end of the grave. None of the latter were interred with grave goods.

Some interesting and poignant examples of the burials include a young woman complete with perinatal foetus and what appeared to be a deviant burial, a skeleton face down and whose feet had been cut off.

Grave goods included a personal iron knife, and a spear, together with a shield boss and a copper alloy strap end with associated belt clasps located on the hip and shoulder. The spear and the shield boss are consistent with the 5<sup>th</sup> c AD. Other burials in the cemetery are associated with the late 6<sup>th</sup> early 7<sup>th</sup> c. Initial examination of the bone samples by the School of Archaeology at Oxford indicates that one of the individuals probably came from Scandinavia.

This year CLASP hopes to establish the final number of inhumations associated with the site and the overall layout of the burial rows, and to uncover more evidence of the different burial traditions at the site.

Financial assistance is needed to contribute towards the cost of the dig as well as to cover isotope and DNA analysis of the skeletons, together with treatment and preservation of the artefacts.

If you are able to help please go to JustGiving to make a donation, however small, all donations are gratefully received. Photos of the artefacts can also be viewed on the JustGiving page.

<https://www.justgiving.com/campaign/CLASP-Anglo-Saxon>

For further information about CLASP (Community Landscape Archaeology Survey Project) go to: <https://claspweb.org.uk>

## View from the Wildlife Patch

The first thing to say this month is to thank all who contribute to the publishing of The Prattler. Without this community resource many things in our village would just not work as well. There is also The Online Prattler where you will find The Wildlife Patch articles published in the months when there is no "Paper Prattler". I often use this resource to go back over time looking at previous articles where I find a catalogue of how we have developed since we first put a fence round The Patch.

On the patch right now, we are planning to sow the prepared patches with a Meadow Seed Mixture which I will order today. We expect to sow this in the coming two weeks and the seed will germinate between now and next Spring. We do not expect to do any more seeding of the site in the near future at least.

The hedge was cut just on the road side this year, enough to prevent it from obstructing the footpath. This way we preserve the young growth which provides food and shelter for many insects. The hedge top and allotment side will be cut during winter when most insects are in other stages and places.

The pond is looking really lovely as the plants are growing. It is now being taken over by more wildlife all of the time. We have our first mature Frogs moving in. These should hibernate in the pond and spawn next year. We have also seen Smooth Newts who should also lay eggs. These will hatch into "Newtpoles" which will feed on the frog tadpoles (their favourite food).

It has been proven that ponds attract insects which in turn enrich the biodiversity of the whole area. Our pond is no exception and several Dragonfly and Damselfly species have been seen laying eggs in the pond. There are also Water Boatmen, Pond Skaters, Whirligig Beetles (I love these names) and other species of Water Beetle, as well many other aquatic insects gradually moving in. Of course this will attract birds, some of which will find nesting sites on the patch.

There are a couple of small elms that succumbed to Dutch Elm Disease in a previous year. They are now getting to a stage where they are likely to fall. These will be felled and the wood placed around the patch to provide homes for many more insects and other invertebrates.

Managing the development of this project is both rewarding and exciting and will be for years to come. We need to ensure the project continues to be resource for the Community in future years. Whilst none of the team are ready to retire, we do need to ensure that the work of ongoing maintenance and development continues for years to come. The best way to do this is for new people to join in now. If you have a love of nature and the countryside, you are qualified.

If you are interested just contact me for a chat. You will find my contact details in the front of The Prattler among the other Parish Councillors.

*Dave Musson*



## In Nether Heyford

It was so good to be almost back to normal as Nether Heyford WI ladies met in the Village Hall for the first time since the outset of covid. We were joined by several of our husbands to listen to retired judge, Christopher Tickle, tell us of the complexities of sentencing people in our courts today. After this we were given several hypothetical cases and asked to decide what we would have done had we been the judge. It certainly wasn't as easy as it is sitting in our armchairs at home and disagreeing with verdicts heard on the TV and it was also good to learn that the judges who make these decisions are as in touch with real life as we are.

Our next meeting, on October 7<sup>th</sup>, is our AGM and we hope that all members who can will attend. After the business of the evening there will be a session of indoor games organised by Deborah Burrow. I'm sure all those who were there last time Deborah put together one of these evenings will remember how much laughter we had, so please remember Thursday, October 7<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

In November we are looking forward to meeting popular WI speaker, Alison Rockett, who will take us back nearer to our WI roots as we learn about beadcraft. This craft is, however, a traditional skill from the Acholi people in Uganda where Alison spent some time teaching at an international school. She will tell us how the Acholi tribes-people struggled against racism and to make a living and how intervention from various parties enabled them to learn to make beads and thus feed and educate their children. We hope we will also be able to learn to make the beads so the evening looks to be a really interesting one. Any ladies who would like to come along to join us and see for themselves what Nether Heyford WI is all about will be very welcome. The venue, as usual, will be the Village Hall, Thursday November 4<sup>th</sup> at 7.30pm and the cost for visitors is £5 (includes refreshments). We hope to see some of you there.

*Mary Rice*  
*Heyford Lodge*  
*01327 340101*



**Dear Diary,**

**October 1962**

I had a disappointment recently. I was due to meet my new date under the clock in the Derngate bus station and he didn't turn up. His excuse was that he must have been hidden behind a "green 'un", the sports paper, and didn't see me. I'll just call him M for now in case he doesn't last long. Anyway all is forgiven. He's an apprentice at Express Lifts, at the moment working with Tom Lawrence, who gets him to choose his horses for the bookie's runner at the factory. He's been to Heyford for tea with Tom and his wife in Furnace Lane. I've now met his parents and his brother. His mum gave him a ticking off for bringing me in through the back door. I don't know what she's worried about, we all have a coal hole and an outside lavatory.

M took me on a train from Northampton Castle Station to Wolverton last Saturday to visit his auntie, uncle and cousins. It passed through several small stations like Roade and Castlethorpe. His auntie spent the afternoon serving her extended family while his uncle rolled his fags for the week, both so laid back. He's got his eye on a Zundap scooter so it won't be long before we're spinning along country lanes.

Some of us girls went to see Breakfast at Tiffany's at the pictures last weekend, with Audrey Hepburn – lovely. There was a 'B' movie, then advertisements, cartoons and Pathe News, with a break for ice-creams before the big movie so we were there for hours, by which time the air was a bit thick with smoke.

I've got a French pen-friend who I regularly write to and I'm learning to paint and draw which I love. I've started going to the YMCA dancing by candlelight on Thursday evenings. I meet my friends in the Wimpy Bar for a burger, then we go up Cheyne Walk for dancing. It's only a short walk at the end of the evening to the Derngate Bus Station and, if he's there, M catches the bus with me and gets off at Jimmies' End where he lives. He's teaching me to Jive.

This year we have had work trips to the seaside and NME (New Musical Express) concerts; after all there are several office girls and apprentice boys to fill the buses. I went on holiday with my friend Janet, to Poole in Dorset in July. We stayed in a boarding house for a week. M went to Blackpool in a caravan with 4 other mates and wrote to me twice.

Saturday evenings are mostly spent in town. Regular double-decker buses are full going in at teatime, returning at the end of the evening, packed to the gunnels. If one of our regulars is late for the bus, the driver hangs on at the request of the rest of us. One of our most popular drivers is Ron who lives in the village. He knows us all, teases us if we are late, but looks out for us on the journey. Of course there is always a conductor on the bus to ring the bell, keep order and take the fares. If the bus breaks down he can walk to the nearest phone box to ring for a replacement bus. The driver has a separate cab at the front, not accessible from the bus itself.

Aunt Beatrice came to tea last Sunday. Mum panicked, we cleaned thoroughly, we made salmon sandwiches & a cake and got out the best china. This auntie is well-off, lives in London and wanted to bring mum & dad a present of a really heavy vase which now takes pride of place on the piano. Mum embarrassed me by telling auntie that I have an office job, a shorthand/typing course at the Technical college and I'm courting a lovely boy who is doing an engineering apprenticeship. I was glad to escape to church for the 6 o'clock service.

There are now new homes off Watery Lane and talks are being had about a new estate at the end of Close Road on the field behind Furnace Lane. The builders are Wilson.

There's a Jumble Sale in the church rooms on Saturday. I shall go along because you can get some good bargains, a cup of tea and biscuit and I like reading so I'll head for the book stall.

*Polly*

## **Sarah Anderson Rawlins**

Selected from thousands of nominations, local resident, Sarah Anderson Rawlins has been honoured as one of 102 Pearson National Teaching Silver Award winners across the country.

Sarah was honoured with a Silver Award in The Award for Excellence in Special Needs Education for her outstanding commitment to changing the lives of the children she works with every day.

She has been integral to Riverside Meadows Academy being identified as one of the top five Special schools in Cambridge and Peterborough for examination results, and has ensured that every pupil gains a qualification from their first term at school, supporting their belief in themselves and creating the foundation for future success.

"My school Riverside Meadows Academy is a specialist school setting for over 100 learners with SEMH needs. I'm a very proud Head of School and would like to thank Mike Brassett and Geoff Thorneycroft for their kind words and for my family for their support."

The Silver Award winners are being honoured as part of the wider celebrations for 'Thank a Teacher Day', a national campaign to honour and recognise school staff for their incredible work.

<https://www.inyourarea.co.uk/news/inspirational-st-neots-teacher-honoured-in-prestigious-uk-celebration-of-teaching/>



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## Bugbrooke and District Flower Society

Our meetings are held in Nether Heyford Village Hall on the fourth Monday of the month at 7.45pm. We have a demonstration by a fully qualified NAFAS Demonstrator who is always willing to give advice and tips on the use of flowers and foliage. All the arrangements are raffled at the end of the evening.

At our next meeting on the 25<sup>th</sup> October we will welcome Margaret Rumens with her demonstration "Anything Goes".

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> November we look forward to Kathy Stangaard with "Joyous Noel". Our Christmas meetings are always very special so please come along for a very entertaining evening.

Visitors are always welcome so do join us for a relaxing evening watching how bunches of flowers are transformed into beautiful arrangements.

For more information please follow us on Facebook or contact Dianne on 01604 830063 or Simone on 01327 342167.

# Allotment News

## Vacant plots

From time to time allotments become available because people move away from the village or find they don't have the time (or energy) to do them justice. We are aware that in the coming months we may have one or two plots available to rent in 2022. If you would like to take on one of these, then do get in touch using the usual contacts found at the end of this article. We have plot sizes to suit all tastes so come and have a look at what is on offer.

## Looking after your allotment

People often ask how much time you need to spend on an allotment to keep it in good, productive order. There is no simple answer, but there are simple tips that can certainly make the task much easier. Here are a few:

1. Bare soil is a magnet for weeds. So unless you want to spend all day weeding to keep the plot clear, then cover it – preferably with plants. If you can't manage that, use a landscape fabric to cover it until you are ready to start growing. We have just sown three beds with green manure. That is a simple seed mixture that will grow over winter, cover the soil with green growth and add nutrients as it grows. In the Spring, you simply dig it in.
2. Get rid of your perennial weeds (dandelion, dock, bindweed and the like). They are the thugs of the plant world and prove very difficult to remove once established. Remove them while they are young and you'll save yourself a lot of work. NB - one mature dock plant can produce 60,000 seeds in a year, that's a lot of weed!
3. Try to create raised beds, or at least beds with wooden borders around them. That will keep creeping weeds at bay and allow you to spread compost or manure without losing it to surrounding paths. Working just one bed at a time and keeping the others covered is also more satisfying, as you can see what you've achieved at the end of a session.
4. And finally, the subject about which I often wax lyrical ... COMPOST. Cover your beds in the stuff at every opportunity. It smothers weeds, feeds the soil, stops it from drying out and, if you work on heavy clay, it opens up the soil and lets in air.

A fellow allotmentee informed me that she and her husband are this year trying out a "no dig" approach to their allotment. I told them that was a wonderful decision. "No dig" is a topic that deserves a whole article to itself, but suffice to say, it works. We have not dug our plot for ages. We simply rake,

hoe and add more compost ... and then more compost. Get rid of the small weeds as they pop their heads through these layers and all will be well. And just think of all the hard work you will be saving yourself.

For more details on that subject search for [www.gardenorganic.org.uk](http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk) or [charlesdowding.co.uk](http://charlesdowding.co.uk) They are the people who really know about this subject.

## **Resources**

We continue to welcome all donations of equipment (and wooden furniture). It is put to good use and it has been particularly heartwarming to see so many people from the village taking advantage of the community picnic area. The local garden club used the space for their annual summer picnic in August and a good time was had by all.

People taking advantage of the community cut flower border has also been a feature of the summer, with the dahlias proving particularly popular.

Resources and community spaces have been well used over the year and respect shown to all those good folk who have allotments to tend. A big thank you to everyone for their help in making that happen. Without your support and vigilance it would not be such a success.

One grumble (and I did say I'd do this when required). Can the person who borrowed the small border spade with the new wooden t-shaped handle, please return it to the community tools bucket by the shed. It is there for everyone to use.

## **The Community Orchard**

Our fruit trees have put on a growth spurt over the Summer and we have high hopes for our fruit next season. If you are one of the good people who made the orchard possible by making a generous donation just two and half years ago, do come and have a look at what you made possible. It really does look like an orchard now.

The plastic tree guards we fitted when the trees were planted two years ago, will be removed this Autumn and some new tree stakes added.

## **Keeping in Touch**

If you wish to know more about the allotments or about anything in this article then don't hesitate to contact either:

Lynda Eales - 3 Church Lane - 01327341707 - [lyndaeales@aol.com](mailto:lyndaeales@aol.com)

Mike Langrish - 28 Manor Park - 01327341390 - [langrish\\_heyford@hotmail.com](mailto:langrish_heyford@hotmail.com)

*Mike Langrish*



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## Heyford Garden Club

[www.heyfordgardenclub.com](http://www.heyfordgardenclub.com)

The Garden Club finally managed to meet together for the first time in eighteen months for a stripped down flower and vegetable show. There was a good attendance despite the ongoing health situation and in view of the challenging growing conditions this year there was a good display of produce, the floral section being particularly impressive. Mike and Jill Langrish were runaway winners with a strong showing in almost every class. John and Rosemary Dunkley were runners up and third place was a tie between Anne Haynes and Irene and Phillip Reeves.

### November

Our programme for the year ahead is still somewhat undecided as it is proving difficult to book speakers at present, however at our next meeting on the 11th October Mike Langrish will tell us about gardens that he and Jill visited in Canada.

### Blight

In the last article I said that our box hedges had been infected with blight. Well either I was wrong (quite likely) or our box plants have recovered (much less likely) but they now appear to be in perfect health. Maybe the disease is lurking underneath the foliage and will suddenly break out, only time will tell. On the other hand blight of another sort did attack our tomatoes on the allotment, as it did to other gardeners this year. The infection was helped by some hot humid weather in late June and early July. In my case I planted my tomato plants too close together which helped the infection to spread. The source of infection is from infected potato plants, usually tubers left over from the previous year, something difficult to avoid on allotment sites. Ironically however this year we had the best crop of tomatoes we have had for a long time as fewer of the fruits rotted than usually happens with blight and they ripened much earlier this year. If it hadn't been for the blight our crop would have been phenomenal! Another success this year was our damsons which for once had few maggots in them.

### Some Things to do in October

- 1 Divide and replant herbaceous perennials
- 2 Give lawns a last cut and trim
- 3 Prune climbing roses

### Some Things to do in November

- 1 Clear up leaves from paths and ponds (but don't be too tidy!)
- 2 Plant tulips in pots or beds
- 3 Put grease bands on fruit trees to stop winter moth

*Mark Newstead*

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Website: [www.netherheyfordvillagehall.com](http://www.netherheyfordvillagehall.com)

Phone: 01327-342167

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





[www.heyfordsingers.org](http://www.heyfordsingers.org)

*Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;  
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,  
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core*

### **From To Autumn**

By John Keats 1795 -1821

It has been an *interesting* summer to say the least! Cautious steps towards what we all long to think of as normal, unsettled weather with extremes of heat, rain, cloud and wind, staycations for holidays, even extensive tomato blight for gardeners! But there were also moments of sheer delight, in sporting achievements, in families again sharing time together, of birthdays and weddings with lots of people!

Autumn is like a *sensory conveyor belt*, and is a season of more predictability and acceptance ... we hope? Like many folk I particularly love this time of year, as summer slides into autumn and we move through the inevitable changes that the season brings. The gardens are gently fading with late summer flowers glowing like jewels, leaves beginning to turn as the trees claim their time of seasonal glory. Fields have yielded up their harvest, been newly ploughed and re-sown, whilst the hedgerows and orchards have ripe pickings for jams and jellies, chutneys and cider, a feast of autumnal *tastes*!

Throughout all this 'change' the countryside seems to *radiate* colour and magnificence, especially on those wonderful autumnal days when the sun shines. As the evenings gradually darken the *smell* of woodsmoke permeates the air; the earth, leaves and fading plants give off a rich, organic smell as they decompose. Who can resist running through heaps of crunchy leaves on the ground, or watching children throw them in the air and squeal with glee as they float down!

Then as the months progress we *feel* the changes of autumn. The central heating goes on, maybe a thicker duvet, favourite woolly sweaters are worn, and boots, scarves and gloves come out. We accept and embrace these new chilly days. And then not to forget the *sounds* of autumn. We recently attended our grandchildren's Harvest Festival, last year's cancelled like so much else in 2020. It was sheer joy to hear young children read their poems, and sing both newly learnt and much loved, familiar harvest songs. The weekend cheers and roars from supporters at football, rugby, and other sporting fixtures become an autumn soundscape, as do the familiar theme tunes of returning TV programmes. And inevitably there will all too soon be the commercial songs that announce the festive season, although with emptier high streets will these possibly be less obvious?

As for Heyford Singers, whilst they may be bypassing harvest music, they are busy rehearsing and preparing for their Christmas Concert in December. Yet again a

feast of music and songs, traditional, new, fun and inclusive. More details of the programme and tickets to follow.

*Jill Langrish*

If you would like to find out more about Heyford Singers please look at our website  
[www.heyfordsingers.org](http://www.heyfordsingers.org)



## **Heyford Cricket Club**

The nights are drawing in, and the cricket season has come to a close - at times we have wondered where the summer was?! All three adult teams secured varying mid-table finishes to cap off a successful season. The 1st, 2nd and 3rd XI finished eighth, fifth and third respectively, with plenty of entertaining games and a few defeats snatched from the jaws of victory which could have seen more successful finishes for all. The most important bit, in the current climate, is that we managed to complete a full interrupted season playing the game we love.

A couple of highlights from the second half of the season including a maiden century (109) from Connor Robson against top of the league Overstone Park, and Sally Cory scoring her first half century (51\*). With the ball, two of our more seasoned players picked up the rarest of cricketing feats, both Chris Peck and Al Lovell took hat-tricks. Stalwart Peck actually took two hat-tricks in the space of a month, and Al went one better taking 4 wickets in 4 consecutive balls.

Within our junior cricket section, we had record numbers all season with over a hundred children learning and enjoying the game. With teams representing the club at Under 10s, Under 11s and Under 12s, we are creating a bit of reputation of having much more fun than our opposition - which is what it is all about right? Often matched up against teams from the biggest and best clubs in the county, we've gone from participating, to competing, to winning games without any step back in the level of enjoyment. This progression is a testament to the great work that our team of dedicated and supportive volunteer coaches.

In addition, we piloted our women's and ladies cricket taster sessions in August. Thoroughly enjoyed by those that came along, and something we'll explore the viability of further heading in 2022. Huge thanks to Coach Cliff Simms for his support with the project.

The season is not quite over, with two key events still take place at the time of writing. The club is delighted to be back off on a somewhat hastily organised tour to

Southend-on-Sea in late September. This, our 14th tour, is a weekend where quite unapologetically the cricket plays a secondary role to us enjoying the 'social side' of Heyford CC.

Finally, the season will be rounded out with the Annual Presentation Dinner on Saturday 13th November. A great tradition that will round out the cricketing year, reviewing all of our achievements, recognising our top performers and celebrating all things Heyford CC over dinner hosted at Bugbrooke RFC. If you wish to attend, tickets are £30, please contact a committee member, check out the website or email [heyfordcricket@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:heyfordcricket@hotmail.co.uk) for this, or any other correspondence with the club.

As a club, and we cannot say it enough, we must thank the many many volunteers that make the club tick. From committee, to grounds, to junior coaches and everyone else in between. Wishing everyone a wonderful winter, and it won't be long before we are popping another coat of linseed on the bat in readiness for the 2022 season.

## Welcome Packs

Welcome packs are available for newcomers to our Village. The information in them helps people feel at home quickly.

If you notice that someone has moved in recently, get a pack for them by calling:

Sue Morris  
21 The Green  
Nether Heyford  
01327 349387

## Quiz Answers

1. Three men in a boat
2. Foreign language
3. Right between the eyes
4. Criminal
5. Fork in the road
6. Potatoes
7. Within reason
8. Missing link
9. Postman
10. No two ways about it
11. Son of a gun
12. Made in Great Britain
13. Another time, another place
14. Honour among thieves
15. Mother-in-law
16. Good looking
17. It's a small world after all
18. Excuse me

## Heyford Bowls Club

Well, another outdoor season comes to an end with our Gala Day when members showed their originality and wit with a magnificent display of fancy-dress costumes. The winning triple was Richard Holland, Jill Welch and John Dunkley, and a barbeque rounded off an excellent day.

We will be putting the green to bed for the winter on October 2<sup>nd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> and hope the weather is kind for grass growing. Our Annual General Meeting is on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> October and our Annual Presentation Night Saturday 20<sup>th</sup> November, both in the clubhouse.

Various social events are planned; quiz October 8<sup>th</sup>; fun night October 29<sup>th</sup>; quiz December 3<sup>rd</sup>; Christmas party December 18<sup>th</sup>; the first three are Fridays, the last one is on a Saturday; all are in the clubhouse. And by that time, we shall be anticipating a full outdoor bowling season with no disruptions and the club's tour to Weymouth in June.

Until then, keep safe, keep strong, and keep in touch with one another.

*Geoff Allen*  
349909

## Heyford Short-mat Bowls Club

From the beginning of June 2021 we were able to return to some sort of normality and welcome back our members in a covid safe manner to afternoon bowling sessions in the Village Hall. This was successful with an average attendance of 12 people, which was very enjoyable. Following on from this, restrictions were eased and some members preferred the evening session. This was re-started on September 1<sup>st</sup> and the attendance figures are slowly increasing for both sessions. Afternoon sessions times are 2pm – 4pm and evening times are 7.30pm to 10pm.

We welcome back all our members, the current charge is £2.00 per session with a short break for tea or coffee. We also would welcome any new people who are looking for an enjoyable time with a bit of gentle exercise. We can provide 'woods' (bowls) and offer 3 free sessions so you can see if it is something you would enjoy. We only ask that you bring slippers or fairly smooth bottomed shoes, the rest is up to us, you don't need previous experience and our lovely members will help you settle in.

If you have any queries please contact us on: 01327 340016 or email: [r-haddon@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:r-haddon@tiscali.co.uk)

## Flood Watch

Weather patterns across Northampton and the surrounding area continues to show significant variations. The Village has experienced extremely low levels of rainfall through June, July and August with the first substantial rainfall occurring on 14th September. Our annual rainfall to date is 70% of normal whereas Towcester has experienced 160%. For the whole of August the temperature remained below average at 20 degrees centigrade and only rose above 25 degrees in the first week of September (the first time to exceed 25 degrees since the third week of July). According to Met Office definitions 3 days above 25 degrees constitutes a “heat wave”!

Officially our “summer” will end with the Autumn equinox on 22<sup>nd</sup> September. However the shortening of daylight hours has been all too evident with sunset at the end of September at 18.42 when the daylight hours will have reduced by 5 hours since the longest day. Clocks will go back to GMT time on 31<sup>st</sup> October when sunset will be at 16.36. Longer range forecasts continue to show low probability of significant rainfall whilst temperatures will cool towards 5 to 9 degrees by mid November.

Continued dialogue with the E/A causes me concern as no clear plans emerge with regard to urgent repair work to the E-W and N-S culverts or any sign of progress on low cost upstream storage solutions. Instead the E-A seems to be diverting its effort towards a concept of Property Level Resilience with a framework to be established by October 2025? supported by a DEFRA fund of £120M. During this period potential contractors will complete a bidding process so they can demonstrate expertise in defining a properties flood defence needs. Although this survey does not involve the property owner in costs the proposed solution and installation will be borne by the owner. As things currently stand FiA grants will only be available to properties that have already been flooded. Does this mean an end to Community based flood defences? If true, this is a retrograde step. Experience has shown that in spite of a comprehensive network of rain gauges and river level monitors, live satellite and radar data predictions of flooding events is failing to provide adequate warning. As a result any resilience system dependent on an individual having to deploy flood protection measures ie. flood gates is of dubious benefit over a fully customised defence system.

From 1<sup>st</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> of November Glasgow will host the much awaited Climate Change Conference.

*J. Arnold.*



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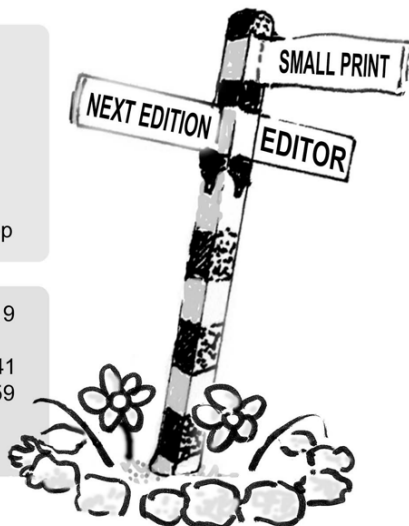
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