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Items for the next edition should be sent to the Editor by 1 September 2015. The Villager is published every other month and delivered free to all households in the village.

Editorial

This is the first time for a while that *The Villager* is almost wholly about news and events in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell. There was no room for my usual round up of goings on nearby, so apologies to those who usually get a mention. I try to give a balance between village items, which take priority, and other events nearby likely to be of interest or that might have a considerable impact on us. We will have to consider going up to 28 pages if this continues! We have been trialling some new fonts to give us more space and appreciate the help we have had from Janita Clamp on this. Do let me have your views on the new style of this issue or any other aspects of *The Villager* magazine as it evolves.

There are some serious articles to read and digest in this issue, in particular the impending closure of the Post Office and suggestion for moving it into the shop (see pages 14-15). There is also a very interesting piece about the life of Peter Lewis, a resident of some 35 years who died this April (page 3-4). I am constantly amazed at the talents and achievements of people who live right under our noses yet most of us know little about them. But we did get an opportunity to appreciate the diverse talents of some of you at the recent summer concert at St Agatha's, the fantastic Brightfest, our art exhibitions and the recent flower and produce show. Thank you to everyone who took part and helped organise these important village events.

With this *Villager*, are two enclosures – one is on a new event in September, a 5K Fun Run, and the second is an appeal (apologies for pun!) to Save our Bells at St Agatha's. I'm sure villagers, young and old, will give both of them their support.

I am writing this on the day after the Village Fete which was a fantastic success and very well supported (see page 6), thanks to the summer weather and efforts of James and his Community Association team and the Sangers who let us 'invade' their beautiful garden. As I looked around at 2pm before the crowds rushed in, I felt it was a delightful English scene, one that I felt lucky and proud to be part of.

I imagine many of you are now getting ready for your holidays so I hope you enjoy them and the rest of the summer.

Helen Connor

Peter Lewis (1925-2015)

As our homage to a perfect neighbour for 35 years, here is a condensed version of Dermot Campbell's tribute to Peter Lewis given in Saint Agatha's church on 30 April.

Colette and Jim Hastie

Peter was a private man and this was illustrated by the absence of information about his life at Cappaslade Cottage. Several years ago, I suggested scribing an autobiography for him, but he dismissed this as self-promotion, which was a real shame because a great piece of history was lost for ever when he died.

Peter was born in Sheffield in 1925. His parents were Bruce and Mirian Lewis, and his father was a manager in a Sheffield Steel Works. Peter joined the Royal Air Force during the latter stages of WW2 and had a distinguished career, during which he was awarded an MBE by the King and an OBE by the Queen. Initially he embarked on flight training but subsequently moved to engineering and remained a member of the Institute of Engineers until he died. He was involved in operating a fleet of Sunderland Flying Boats off Lake Tegal during the Berlin Airlift, flying coal in and visiting dignitaries out. He served a second tour in Berlin, this time working in Intelligence alongside a naval officer named George Blake on Operation Gold which involved digging a tunnel under East Berlin to tap the Russian telephone lines. According to official records, no one knew that Blake was a double agent at that time, however, Peter told me that the Intelligence Services did know before work on the tunnel was completed, and much of his work involved interpreting messages between Berlin and Moscow, in the knowledge that they knew that the Russians knew that they knew that they were listening. It was shortly after this that he was awarded his MBE.

Peter was then posted to Moscow where he met my aunt, Lisa Campbell, and they were married in 1956 while serving in Moscow. Lisa at the time was personal assistant to the Chargé d'Affaires and Peter was Assistant Air Attaché with the rank of Squadron Leader. They remained in Moscow for a further 2 years, travelling round on trains and making meticulous notes of what he saw, but there was a considerably more sinister aspect to this, and they routinely carried suicide pills, and several of his compatriots used them.

After leaving Moscow, Peter was promoted to Wing Commander and posted to Little Rissington as Chief Engineer of the then newly formed Red Arrows military display team. Peter had some fond memories of his time touring with the Red Arrows and recalled reprimanding the then Squadron Leader Ray

Hannah for flying his Fairy Gnat under the wing of a transport aircraft while it was being refuelled. He told me that he too was in trouble: while escorting a visiting dignitary into a dinner, he pointed to a large cake saying to a junior officer "What have you got in there, naked ladies?" To his horror, later in the evening, sure enough, a dancing girl burst out of the cake!

Sometime after his time with the Red Arrows, Peter was stationed in Singapore during the Vietnam War. Peter told me that his work in Singapore included flying the Ghurkas home and operating an outfit called Air America on behalf of the CIA. According to Peter, if you think that the UK was not involved in Vietnam war, you are mistaken. Other parts of Peter's military career took him to the USA and Canada and I understand that after retiring from the Royal Air Force, he spent some time working for private intelligence agencies based around Washington.

As well as being a decorated Officer in the Royal Air Force, a respected Engineer and an accomplished spy, Peter was a keen military historian and a great "oracle of knowledge". In spite of the fact that he had not personally been to university, he was offered an Honorary Doctorate by the then University of London for his contributions to historical research on WW2 in Italy. He was incredibly well-travelled and read, a fluent Russian speaker, fond of Russian literature, and a lover of music. The mountains and skiing were one of Peter's great passions and he visited Gargellan three or four times a year right up until he died. Peter and Lisa also shared a passion for sailing. Another of Peter's keen interests was gardening. He won an award for his roof garden in Camden Street and had worked tirelessly on the garden here at Cappaslade Cottage.

I think it is fair to say that Peter and Lisa had a really great life together. When Lisa became infirm and bed bound he cared for her for over 10 years, much of the time on his own. Peter took a keen interest in Lisa's great passion: Kipling and enthusiastically supported Lisa in her role as Honorary Secretary of the Kipling Society. I think a fitting end to this tribute to Peter's life is Kipling's poem "The Thousandth Man".

The Thousandth Man

Rudyard Kipling

One man in a thousand, Solomon says.
Will stick more close than a brother.
And it's worthwhile seeking him half your days
If you find him before the other.

Nine hundred and ninety-nine depend
On what the world sees in you,
But the Thousandth Man will stand your friend
With the whole round world again you.

'Tis neither promise nor prayer nor show
Will settle the finding for 'ee.
Nine hundred and ninety-nine of 'em go
By your looks, or your acts, or your glory.

But if he finds you and you find him,
The rest of the world don't matter;
For the Thousandth Man will sink or swim
With you in any water.

You can use his purse with no more talk
Than he uses yours for his spendings,
And laugh and meet in your daily walk
As though there had been no lendings.

Nine hundred and ninety-nine of 'em call
For silver and gold in their dealings;
But the Thousandth Man he's worth 'em all
Because you can show him your feelings.

His wrong's your wrong, and his right's your right,
In season or out of season.
Stand up and back it in all men's sight
With that for your only reason!

Nine hundred and ninety-nine can't bide
The shame or mocking or laughter,
But the Thousandth Man will stand by your side
To the gallows-foot - and after!

Community Association

Village Fete – Saturday 11 July 2015

Choosing the date of the fete is always a leap of faith and this year (like most years) we were extremely lucky with the weather and the support of the village. A big thank you to everybody who helped make this event such a success and one of the highlights of the Brightwell year; without all your hard work and generosity it could not happen. I am especially grateful to our Community Association Team who co-ordinated the whole event so well and our kind hosts Jim and Madeline Sanger who welcomed us to their lovely garden. I am pleased to say that we made £4363.98, a great effort.

Profits now get split between different village organisations, which bid to meet a specific funding need. All groups that want to apply for funds and haven't received an application form should contact our Treasurer, Susannah Mangion (tel 833757). While the rules are not hard and fast, we do try to favour organisations that have made big efforts to support the Fete and other fundraising events during the year.

Any comments and suggestions for the Fete in the future will be well received. Why not use *The Villager* to express your ideas?

Fun Run – Sunday 27 September 2015, 11.00am start

Our next event will be a 5K Fun Run through the village with the emphasis on fun. There will be certificates for those finishing the course and awards for the speedy participants. The start and finish is at the Donkey Sanctuary. Entry charges are £3 for adults (£4 on the day) and 50p for children under 16. Please email for registration form to: Brightwellfunrun@gmail.com. If you would like to turn up on the day, last entries are 10.30am.

Annual General Meeting – Tuesday 29 September, 7.30pm

Please come to the AGM of the Community Association at the Village Hall and enjoy a glass of wine and a chat with the Committee. New committee members are always welcome.

James Davys, Chairman

PS More serious runners might like to get into training at the **Earth Trust 10k** on Sunday 6 September at Wittenham Clumps, visit www.earthtrust.org.uk for more details.

Parish Council Update

Defibrillators

Two defibrillators have now been installed in the parish – located in the phone box at the entrance to Greenmere and at Shillingford Hill. A third is planned for outside of the Village Hall.

Neighbourhood Plan

The council continues to develop the Neighbourhood Plan. If you would like to help, please contact the Parish Council office.

Community Led Parish Plan

Our Parish Plan was published in August last year and has been used as an example of ‘best practice’ both in Oxfordshire and across the UK. The report includes 45 actions to deliver over the coming decade, many of which are the responsibility of the Parish Council to implement. Eight of the actions have now been completed and the Council is looking at how more can be achieved on the ground such as improvements to the play facilities at the Rec.

Dog Mess

A habitual problem in the parish is dog mess, causing great concern to many people, particularly parents. We appreciate that the vast majority of dog owners are responsible so it is unfortunate that those who do not pick up their dog’s mess are causing this problem. The Council has received many reports of mess left in the lanes around the school, on King’s Meadow, The Rec, the grassed area at the bottom of Bell Lane, The Croft Path and at Slade End. Under local byelaws it is an offence not to clean up after your dog has done its business. The mess needs to be bagged and disposed of properly even if your dog has used the long grass or a field. The Parish Council has asked Community Police Officers to patrol the village over the coming months specifically to help tackle the issue. Spot fines may be issued.

Grass Cutting

Last year the Parish Council took over responsibility for grass cutting in the main village from Oxfordshire County Council. A new way of managing our verges, footpaths and lanes has been introduced using local gardeners to carry out the job. In this way we can maintain the safety of the highways yet allow wild flowers to mature. Many of the footpaths are included in the plan. It is intended to produce a guide for parishioners setting out how our verges and footpaths will be managed.

Hedges and pavements

Summer is here and the hedges and vegetation have grown well. The Parish Council would like to remind residents of their responsibility to keep hedges cut back to their property line so that the whole tarmac area is available. Please keep other vegetation under control so that the whole pavement width is free for pedestrians.

Jason Debney

Brightwell Parish – St Agatha’s with St James’

A very big thank you to all the villagers who contributed so generously to Jeremy Goulston’s farewell gift. Over £1,200 was given and Jeremy was overwhelmed with the kindness and generosity. He is looking forward to using the gift to help furnish his new vicarage.

Thank you also for a great attendance and atmosphere at the farewell evening and summer concert in June when we said goodbye to Jeremy after eight years as vicar. We were able to give him a great send off and wish him God speed as he moves to Uffington.

Appointing a new vicar

The process of finding a new Team Vicar has begun. In the meantime we will be welcoming visiting clergy to our two churches as well as being very grateful that Rev Janice Chilton is willing and able to take a couple of services a month.

Dates to note

In early September the Queen will become the longest serving monarch ever of the United Kingdom and we plan to mark the occasion with a service and bell peal on Wednesday 9 September. Other dates to note are 20 September, Harvest Festival and 8 November Remembrance Sunday.

Margot Shawyer (Churchwarden)

Goodbye & Hello at Brightwell Garage

Huge thanks to Paul Galloway, Matt Dunsdon and Pete Fryett for looking after so many of the village cars so well for a long time. Best wishes to them all in their future projects, and a warm welcome to the new owner, Ian Maconochie and manager, Jamie Davies who took over Brightwell Garage at the end of May.

Save Our Bells!

The Bells of St Agatha's Church have rung out over our village since the 13th century, accompanying local services, weddings, funerals and national occasions, perhaps most famously during the visit of George II in 1727. Their sound is part of the fabric of our community, for churchgoers and non-churchgoers alike.

However it has become increasingly apparent that, unless major restoration work is undertaken, the Bells may soon ring no more. Apart from general maintenance, the installation has not been modified since 1968 when two new bells were added to the previous six bells. The frame and bells of the old structure, originating in part from when the Bells were rehung in 1808, following the collapse of the tower in 1797 and its rebuilding two years later, now require strengthening and refurbishment. It is estimated that the cost of this work will be in the region of £45,000.

Appeal for funds

The Parochial Church Council has a Building Committee, headed by David Greasby with the Tower Captain of the Bells, Roy Thorpe, to manage this project. This will involve obtaining specialist appraisals of the installation and quotations for the work required, securing the necessary approvals, appointing a firm of bell hangers and overseeing the work being carried out by them. All this will not be possible, of course, without first obtaining the requisite funding for the project. Consequently we are establishing a Fundraising Committee to procure the funds required. This two committee approach was adopted successfully for the Church Room extension completed in 2012; I believe everyone was still speaking to one another by the conclusion of that project! Anyone wishing to join the Fundraising Committee will be most welcome (please call 837910). While there is important work to be done, we had good fun before in the organising which I am sure will be the case this time around.

Appeals to charities for grants will not be considered by most of them until we can demonstrate that funds or pledges for 30%-50% of the total needed has been secured. A local fundraising programme is therefore an essential prerequisite. A leaflet distributed with this issue of *The Villager* invites you to pledge a donation. There will be an Open Garden and Plant Sale on Sunday 27 September and a Safari Supper evening on Saturday 17 October, with a Bridge Drive next Spring. A Pub Quiz has already started our fund. Next year's concert at St Agatha's may be a contributor. Events organized for the Extension Appeal,

such as a Sponsored Walk and a Village Open Gardens day, are possible but all suggestions are invited – any idea, however big or small, will be welcomed.

I sincerely hope that the village will embrace this appeal as enthusiastically as for the Shop and the Church Room, ensuring that the Bells can be preserved and enjoyed by future generations

Tony Lascelles

Brightwell School goes to Yenworthy

On Monday 15 June the children from Discovery class embarked on their week long residential at Yenworthy, Dorset. Mr Herlihy and Mrs Bentovim boarded the coach at 7am with the pupils and stopped off at Wood Green School to pick up children from Springwell School. We had an absolutely fabulous time with the best weather ever. Here are some of the events we got up to...

Surfing at Yenworthy

Abbie Hawkins

On Tuesday we went surfing! Firstly, we squished into our wetsuits and boots. The boots were the hardest to put on because they could not get over your ankles! The wetsuits felt like you could not breathe. We also had a rash vest under our suits to protect us. Secondly, we learnt to catch a wave. I managed to catch it about three times! Last but not least we learnt how to stand up on a surfboard. We tried it on the sand then the waves. I managed to stand up on a surfboard 10 times!

The Yenworthy Experience

Joe Argus

Yenworthy was a brilliant experience as we did 11 amazing activities. We did canoeing, the web of life, rock pooling, morning chores, coasteering, climbing, wild swimming, hiking, the ropes challenge, the chute and surfing! The rock pooling was my favourite. In the morning I liked being an Eco Warrior. We learned to conquer our fears and learn new skills. I would rate Yenworthy a 9 out of 10.

Flower & Produce Show 2015



'The Power of Pink' obviously captured flower arrangers' imaginations this year, as we had a veritable pink hotspot complete with Barbie doll in that corner of the tent. Other highlights included some magnificent scarecrows on sticks. Our thanks to Hilary Rogerson and the Beavers, as well as Team Allsorts, for helping to boost our entries – but why so few contributions from the 9-12 year old age group? Many visitors to the tent have happy memories of childhood gardens-on-a-plate and similar challenges, and the junior entries always attract lots of interest.

Thanks, as always, to our hard-working committee and volunteer judges: John Sutton (allotments), Fay Crabbe (flower arranging), Sandra Halstead (fruit and vegetables), Ann Caister (cookery), Kate Malenczuk (arts and crafts), Nick Zalinski (drinks), David Brown (photography) and Andrew and Jenny Reid (juniors).

Sally Dugan

Trophies 2015

The Chilton Cup: James Harlow

The Win Glendenning Memorial Salver: Gina Coupar

The Talbot Rose Bowl: Derek Nightingale

The Talbot Cup: John Rodda and Josephine Butterfield

The Joan Sheard Cup for the best under-16 entry in an adult class: Natasha Zalinski (for photo: 'The Team Kit')

Junior Trophies:

(9-12 years) Rachel Daly and Benji Davys

(5-8 years) Joe Satchell

The Swan Allotments Cup for the best-kept allotment:

Paul Copley

Best exhibit in show (judged by popular vote):

Louise Paynter (handicraft)

LANDSCAPE Produce show results in separate file

LANDSCAPE Produce show results in separate file

Brightwell Post Office – the future

Many of you will have already heard that the Brightwell Postmaster is due to retire at the latest in March next year. The Brightwell Stores Management Committee has been approached to take on the provision of the service as a Post Office Local within the shop.

The background

The Post Office wants at least 5,000 small post offices (as the newspapers have put it) to turn into cut-price 'locals' where a counter is shared with a shop. Currently, sub-postmasters are paid an annual retainer, plus commission on sales. The new name for this service will be Post Office Local. Currently around 900 have been established across the country, mainly conversions of small post offices already within shops.

Presently, the Post Office has over 11,500 branches spread across the UK. They say they are the Number One mail retailer in the country and the Number One travel money provider; and that they are the UK's fastest growing financial services provider. They go on to say; "*A successful Post Office Local integrates Post Office services into a vibrant and sustainable retail business, offered over the same opening hours to create a lively point for villages.*"

What's being proposed

The Post Office service cannot remain where it is currently located, and would have to be integrated into the shop! To achieve this, the Post Office will provide up to £10,000 to make any alterations needed in the shop: to purchase the necessary equipment required to run the Post Office Local, including two safes; the special till; and to install cctv. They will not pay for any ancillary work associated with the alterations – e.g. if the main heater in the shop had to be moved. The Shop Management Committee has been advised that an annual income of £2,902 - £3225 could be achieved, from paid commission only, based on sales achieved. Having explored how we could accommodate the service, there are probably two options but neither in our view is ideal. A planner from the Post Office visited on 17 July to look at possible options and these are being considered in detail, including costings, before we proceed.

Staffing

Any person working in Post Office Locals has to be trained. To this end, the Post Office initially trains two people, who then undertake to train any other staff, either paid or voluntary. The staff and volunteers trained to operate the Post Office side of the business can also serve in the shop, but not vice versa.

Based on the forecast income we would only be able to pay for a maximum of 8hrs work per week in the Post Office on the minimum wage. The remainder of the opening time would need to be covered by trained volunteers. In the region of 11 additional volunteers per week could be required, although this would need close scrutiny of high and low points in customer use of the shop, before we can establish exact needs. Two questions therefore require answering;

- Could we find sufficient volunteers who could dedicate the hours required and would be willing to undergo the training?
- Who, reading this article, would put their name forward?

Opening hours

The Post Office insists that a Post Office Local must be open the same hours as the shop into which it is going. At present our shop opens Mon-Fri 8.30 – 6, Sat 9 – 1, and Sun 9 – 12, a total of 54 ½ hrs per week. However, precedence has been established at a local community shop where the Post Office has agreed that, because the shop is manned by volunteers only on a Sunday morning, they needn't open the Post Office Local that morning. The same situation exists here in Brightwell. The current post office opens for less than half of the hours which will be required for the Post Office Local (in the shop).

The Brightwell Stores Management Committee would like to retain the Post Office for the village and to this end will continue to explore options, but the main crunch points to be considered are: staffing (paid and volunteers), locating within the shop and opening hours.

*Gina Coupar
Brightwell Shop, Management Committee*

Red Lion Pub Quiz Monday 28 September in aid of Swann Allotments

Come down to support the Allotments in raising funds for a deer fence to keep those pesky animals from eating their lovely veg.

Alison Bloomfield

It doesn't seem possible that we are nearly at the end of June and the year is halfway through. We are having a reasonable summer with enough rain to keep the gardens alive and enough sun to allow us to enjoy many outside activities. Our garden visits to Buscot Park and Lyde Manor were much enjoyed. It is unfortunate that we are having to travel further afield but nevertheless well worth the effort.

Our 'Claim to Fame' meeting in May was very enlightening; well done to those who shared their experiences with us. The next month was about some of Oxford's famous moments and personalities captured in film over a number of years. Many of the extracts were familiar to us as were the characters portrayed and interest was shown in the possibility of a guided tour of the landmarks. Alistair Lack was an excellent speaker and as a Blue Badge Guide would I am sure take us to corners of Oxford we have never explored.

On 8 September we have an open meeting, that means anyone can come, and our speaker will be Pip, a volunteer support manager for Save the Children. She will be talking about Projects in Peru. Do come along if you feel that the subject is close to your heart. On other occasions visitors are always welcome to our group meetings on the second Tuesday of each month. We meet at 7.30pm in the Village Hall. There is a small charge of £3.00 and there are excellent refreshments provided. Come along and meet us.

Margaret Smith

The Red Cross

The Red Cross House-to-House collection in May raised £646. Over the last 30 years this annual collection in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell and Mackney has raised over £11,000. Grateful thanks to everyone who has donated so generously and special thanks to the loyal collectors who have given their time over the years to raise this sum.

Sarah Wintle

Betty Bloom Dance Class for Children 2-16 years

Free Taster day Wed 16 Sept from 3.30pm

Brightwell Village Hall

To book contact Kally at bettybloomdance@gmail.com

Save the Children

The plant stall and coffee morning in the Hedley's garden this year raised £852.54. Brightfest, held on 13 June, was another huge success. The profits from it are being shared by three charities, and Save the Children are set to benefit by around £1,000.

It would take up too much space to name everyone individually who has given, helped and supported us to achieve such excellent results in these two events. Therefore please take this as a collective thank you, we really do appreciate it.

Celia Collett

Save the date

An Autumn Fair in aid of Save the Children is to be held at the Regal Centre, Wallingford on 30th October.

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Community Village Store

Everyone is very welcome to join us on Sunday 2 August to celebrate the 5th anniversary of the Shop's opening! We are having a tea party from 3–5pm in the car park outside the Shop (or Village Hall if wet) and the Village is invited! We can't promise a celebrity this time but you never know...

On your next visit to the Shop look out for fresh produce from the allotments (gardeners – all donations are welcome), the popular Red Dog cider (brewed in Benson using Brightwell's windfalls), and day to day items cheaper than Waitrose (AND you don't have to drive and pay car parking).

Do you have any spare time in the week or month and would like to volunteer for a couple of hours in the Shop? Pop in and learn more from Mandy or Margot – all would be welcome.

Mandy and Margot

The Villager AGM - Chairman's Report 2015

The year had again gone smoothly. The biggest change was the upgrading of both the laptop and the printer to ensure a better quality print and enable digital printing of advertisements. A new Riso was duly delivered and training given. It has been used for the last two print runs enabling smooth printing of text and advert. Purchase of a new laptop has been put on hold as we have use of a newer one kindly offered by Angela and Andy Lewis.

Martin Dix has taken on more of the Advertising Manager duties liaising with Trevor Morgan.

The change of time for assembly to the early afternoon is working well. Shena is managing to fill the slots even on Bank Holidays.

Betty Price would still like to step down as Treasurer and I would like to thank her for her continued work and to assure her we will actively seek a replacement.

I would like to thank the committee for their continued support and the various teams; production, printing, and distribution for their efforts which produce the magazine, not forgetting of course the scores of assembly and distribution volunteers who give their time, and also Paul Grainge our auditor.

Anne Brooker, Chairman

Brightwell Village Lunch

The numbers for the luncheon have grown rapidly which must indicate that we are doing it well. We are a great team!

We are very grateful to Adrian Morrison who puts out and puts away all the tables and chairs, no easy task and to the members who help in clearing away. Our thanks to Helen and Jan for the washing up.

It is very helpful if members telephone either Jacqui or Belinda in the week before the lunch as we do need to know numbers in order to plan the cooking of the meals. Looking forward to seeing you all at the next lunch on **Tuesday 29 September at 12.15pm.**

*Jacqui Brown (tel. 836018), Belinda Lee-Jones (836223)
and the team Olga, Eastlyn, Sue C and Sue N*

Allsorts Pre-School

Great news

Ofsted inspected the pre-school in May without warning and rated us 'good' in all areas. Our manager, the staff, children and parents all talked to the inspector, who said she was particularly impressed with the pre-school's links to Brightwell School. She also noted that Allsorts was good at developing literacy, focuses on safety and encourages good communication between the children's home life and pre-school. The previous inspection five years earlier also rated Allsorts 'good'. Since then the team has totally changed, as have the inspection criteria. The full report is available on our website (under prospective parents): www.allsortspreschool.org. In order for the pre-school to become outstanding, the more able children need to be challenged more. Plans are already in place to do so next year by running the literacy and numeracy programme for the Walnuts (children starting school the following year) right through the academic year. Many thanks to Natasha F who has set up and started running this programme and best wishes to her as she moves on from Allsorts.

Arty Allsorts

In June, a new member of staff, Helen C, joined us from Mongewell Nursery, and has seamlessly fitted into the team. Natasha H has been promoted to deputy manager. She was the brains behind an Allsorts contribution to Didcot's Cornerstone's annual Open Exhibition. The children drew pictures of their choice on the iPad (inspired by Hockney) under the title of 'Doodles'. These were printed out and displayed on a low plinth, so that children could easily see them. A group of Allsorts children met up in June to see their pictures.

The children had a lot of fun at their end of year outing to Beale Park. It was a lovely sunny day, so the paddling pool was a big hit, with the children also playing at the playground, going on a train ride, and seeing the animals.

Our major social event for adults was our Magical Midsummer Party on 20 June (see below). We still have some places left at Allsorts for next year. Please call 826387 or email allsortsadmin@btinternet.com. Messages will be checked, and replied to, intermittently during the summer holidays.

Team Allsorts

Allsorts fundraising update

Midsummer magic pays off

The joint Allsorts and Friends of Brightwell School (FoBs) Magical Midsummer Garden Party to celebrate 40 years of Allsorts was a huge success. The organising committee did a fantastic job transforming the school playing field into a wonderland, complete with stunning decorations and lighting, fantastic music and food, a fire pit and a well stocked – not to mention well utilised – bar.

Not only was much fun had by all, but the event also raised over £2,500. Funds will be split between the Allsorts garden fund and a new playground for the reception class at the school. This takes the total raised for Allsorts so far this academic year to around £4,300, £3,600 of which has been allocated to the garden project (we need £20,000 in total), and the rest to playroom supplies.

Special thanks go to everyone who attended, our sponsors, Winterbrook Nursing Home, the WI, the Scouts, Nick and Alison Zalinski, The Red Lion, The Village Stores, Jackie and Jenny for the BBQ, the band (*Who's Alice?*), all our volunteers and the huge number of local businesses which donated silent auction and raffle prizes.

Red Lion comes up trumps

We would like to thank Mark from the Red Lion for donating the proceeds of the pub charity cricket match (£235) to our garden fund. Mark also offered us the June pub quiz as an extra fundraiser, raising another £186.

Change of address

If you would like to donate to the garden fund please note that the address has changed to Sun Cottage, Bell Lane, OX10 0QD (the house is behind the big green garage, half way down Bell Lane and has a green conservatory on the front). Cheques are payable to 'Allsorts Preschool (Brightwell) fundraising' and bank transfers to 08-92-99 65654132.

To find out more about our project, go to <http://www.allsortspreschool.org/40-years-of-allsorts.html>.

Sally Jackson

Brightwell Art Club

The Art Club was pleased to welcome some new members this term. Janet, one of our tutors, started the term off with a still life which we could continue over the next two sessions, with further advice from her on how to use mixed media to enhance our paintings. We have also had a workshop with Denny and will be having a portrait session with Anthony.

Some members exhibited at the Annual Art Exhibition at the Methodist Church, Wallingford, and two of our members took part in Art Weeks, for the first time, with a successful display in the Red Lion. Another member, with two friends, had an exhibition in St Agatha's Church which coincided with the Church Spring Fair.

In the summer holidays our workshop will be 'Layering the Landscape' with Victoria Squires, and we also hope, weather permitting, to have an open air painting day.

We are a friendly group of people who welcome beginners as well as more experienced painters. More information can be found about us on the Village website, www.brightwellcumsotwell.co.uk under 'Local Services', so if you are interested in joining, please email me at brightwellartclub@gmail.com.

Veronica Wood, Secretary

Launch of Artist of the Month at the Red Lion

After the success of Oxfordshire ArtWeeks at The Red Lion and its history of supporting local artists, Mark has very kindly agreed to the pub hosting an Artist of the Month exhibition. It kicks off in August with our very own villager, Jean Johnson, who many of you know. Jean paints vibrant, happy paintings that are full of life and energy and always make you smile! So do please come along, see Jean's work and enjoy all that our lovely local has to offer at the same time. And look out for future exhibitions ...

This new venture will also be supporting local charities as Mark is taking only 20 per cent commission on sales, all of which will be donated locally. So you can buy some affordable art and support charity at the same time! If you would like to know more, or you know an artist who would like to take part, then please let Mark or me know and I will send some details.

Exhibitions are relaxed, informal and can be as large or as small as the artist wants. Contact Red Lion, 837373 or me on 824228, or mark@redlion.biz or susan@ganney.com.

Susan Ganney

Red Lion – what’s on

And if you would like to know more about what’s on at the **Red Lion** during August and September go to www.redlion.biz. There will be BBQs and live music in the garden on a few summer evenings alongside the regular jazz most Sunday nights. Salads are being offered as an alternative to our full Sunday roasts and normal Sunday lunch menu.

Hannah

The Bach Centre – improvements to access

The building work in Bakers Lane went on a bit longer than we hoped, but we are very pleased with the result. One of the main advantages is that we have greatly improved disabled access to the Centre. Mount Vernon is a 19th century Victorian cottage standing on a raised garden. Access to the front is via narrow steep steps. When visitors in wheelchairs arrived we used to have to carry them up the side steps, which wasn't ideal either for our staff or for visitors. The new ramp at the side is a huge improvement. Parts of the garden remain difficult for unaided wheelchair users – especially those paths laid by Dr Bach himself, which we are reluctant to change for obvious reasons – but overall access is much improved. Visitor rooms and other facilities including the seminar rooms and shop are all on the ground floor. And the disabled loo has been moved nearer the house and has been brought up to modern standards.

For blind and partially-sighted visitors – and dog lovers in general – we welcome well-behaved dogs in the house and garden. Guide and assistance dogs have access to the training rooms as well, and all other open areas. Parking is still limited at the Centre but we do our best to guarantee a parking place to visitors with mobility problems, so if you are visiting and have a particular need for parking, yes, phone ahead (01491 834678) and let us know.

Stefan Ball

Wallingford Gardening Club

Summer Garden Visits 2015

13 August at 6.30pm, a return visit to 'Hearn's House' at Gallowstree Common RG4 9DE.

3 September at 6pm, visit to 'Home Close' at Southend, Garsington OX44 9DH.

All visitors are very welcome to join us. Further details from: 01491 836867.
Talks at Ridgeway Community Centre will resume on 8th October.

Isabelle Darby

Brightwell-cum-Sotwell Post Office

Your Post Office is open in the Village Hall at the following times: Monday to Friday 09.00 to 13.00. Saturday 09.00 to 12.00. The Last Collection Time at the Post Office by Royal Mail is 11.05 am. For the full range of facilities available at your Post Office please see the website at www.postoffice.co.uk.

For your summer holidays we have:

- Travel Insurance from as little as £2.05 a day. Available for UK and anywhere abroad. Can be purchased over the counter at your local Post Office.
- Euros available over the counter. Special rates for over £500.00. Other currencies can be obtained within 24 hours at your local Post Office.
- Travel Money Card Plus available in most major currencies with your name and can be used like a credit card but with no charges. UK Sterling Cards also available again for use like a credit card. Both can be Topped Up. Leaflets available.

We also have banking facilities, most cheques and cash can be paid in and cash withdrawn for almost all major banks from the Post Office Counter PIN PAD.

Mike Powell

VILLAGE DIARY

August

2	Village Shop 5 th Anniversary Celebration	Village Shop	15:00
11	WI Summer Garden Party		
	Quilting Group	VH	10:00
25	Quilting Group	VH	10:00

September

8	WI Open Meeting – Save The Children	VH	19:30
	Quilting Group	VH	10:00
9	St Agatha's Service & Bell Peal to mark the Queen's Reign		
16	Betty Bloom Dance class taster	VH	15:30
20	Harvest Festival	St Agatha's	11:00
22	Quilting Group	VH	10:00
27	Fun Run (starting and finishing at Donkey Sanctuary)		11:00
	Open Gardens & Plant Sale (for Save Our Bells)		
28	Pub Quiz in aid of Swann Allotments	Red Lion	20:00
29	Brightwell Village Lunch	VH	12:15
	Community Association AGM	VH	19:30

Advance Notice

11 October	Apple Day at the Red Lion
17 October	Save Our Bells Safari Supper
31 October	Save The Children Autumn Fair at the Regal Centre
8 November	Remembrance Sunday

Refuse Collection (Food waste each week)

Grey bins	13 & 27 August
	10 & 24 September
Green (& brown) bins	6 & 20 August,
	4 (Friday) & 17 September

Village website

For more information about Brightwell-cum-Sotwell visit the village website:
www.brightwellcumsotwell.co.uk