

South Leigh News



PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Parish, Town, District and Police Commissioner's Elections Cancelled Until 2021. We have been notified by those in power that these elections have been cancelled. They were due to take place in early May. Your parish council will continue to serve for another year.

Coronavirus Crisis

We are in the final stages of setting up a support network for those who are self isolating – you should have already have received a leaflet through your door, so please, if you do need any help let someone know. If you can't get hold of the contact person on your note please call any of the parish councilors including myself: Nicky 01993 701137 or nicky@oxcomm.co.uk and we will sort something out

New Singing Group

We were in the very early stages of seeing if people would be interested in a very casual singing group open to everyone particularly if you don't think you can sing. There will be more details in the next newsletter – but for the moment thank you to all those who said they might be interested. Obviously, because of the current situation we will have to put it on hold.

Parish Council News

Your parish council has been very busy over the last few months with some large matters.

Solar Farm at 12 Acre Farm – this site is actually outside our parish but affects our views and rural settings. The developers came to our parish council meeting to give further information and many of you attended. The parish council voted to support the site with certain important queries. Since then there have been many meetings and e-mails attempting to sort out the detail to try to ameliorate the effect on our parish – particularly screening of the site, the height and number of the panels and its effect on the footpath that goes through the middle of the site.

This application was finally approved at the planning meeting the beginning of this week. We will continue to monitor its progress. More details can be found on the WODC planning website.



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PARISH NEWS CONTINUED

The South Leigh Charity – COVID-19

The South Leigh Charity has been helping people in the parish for centuries. Currently, its limited funds mean that, despite its wide-ranging powers, it can help people in need in only a small way.

To help us to do more, particularly now, the charity can accept donations.

If you know someone who might benefit from what the charity has to offer, or would like to make a donation to it, please contact, in confidence, one of the Trustees: Richard Law, Chair (773355 or ralaw1984@gmail.com), John Ashwell (703534), Malcolm Osmundson (774018), Sue Washington (775574) or Karen Wilson (771346).

THANK YOU JOHN ASHWELL

THANK YOU—John spends a large amount of time producing the fantastic news letters for the village. Even when the odds are against it he continues to ensure the village has updates.

SOUTH LEIGH NEWS

IF ANYONE YOU KNOW IN THE VILLAGE NEEDS A HARD COPY PLEASE LET US KNOW AND WE CAN ARRANGE FOR A PRINTED COPY TO BE POSTED TO THEM. SOME VILLAGERS WITH PRINTERS CAN HELP. WE ARE UNABLE TO USE OUR NORMAL PRINTERS.

Waste and Minerals Oxfordshire Local Plan

This Plan is under consultation at the moment and the parish council and others have written objecting to the possible siting of a biodigester on the road coming into the parish from Witney opposite the High Cogges turn. We will continue to monitor this although there is not likely to be any more news now until October 2020.

Consultation on Dualling the A40 and progression with the Shores Green 4 way Junction at the entrance to the village from Witney.

You will be aware of the suggested improvements to the A40 and the new suggested Park and Ride to be built at Eynsham as part of the new garden village. This includes a dedicated bus lane from the Park and Ride east to the first of the bridges (Duke's Cut) and a partial bus lane west bound.

OCC have now got the funding for the second part of this project – to expand the dual carriageway both ways from where it ends at the moment (by Barnard Gate turn) to the new Park and Ride and the return, and the extra monies required to extend the dedicated bus lane (above) all the way eastwards to the Woodstock Road and a complete and dedicated bus lane westwards. I believe this begins to make sense of their proposals and might tempt people onto the busses.

There is an agreed plan for Shores Green junction to become a four way junction. This seems to be in the early stages (although they say they want to complete it by the end of 2022) of planning and no detailed drawings are available as yet.

Both the above will have an effect on our parish – we will keep you informed as new information be-

comes available.

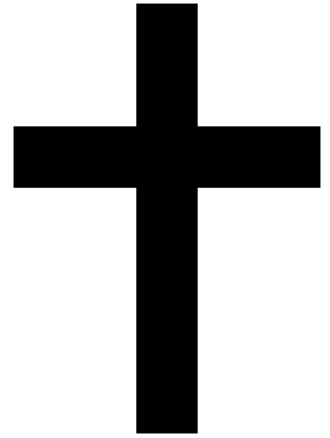
Martin Wilson has been negotiating with Eynsham Park Estate to renew the lease on the football pitch. This has taken a great deal of time and energy as it doesn't seem to be on the top of the Estate's agenda. We finally have a copy of the suggested lease and the parish council will be considering it at their next meeting at the end of this March.

In the meantime, Martin Spurrier and David Brooks have been continuing with their planting programme, Lysette Nicholls with her speed monitoring team and Graeme Soame is in charge of the repainting and improving the bus shelter on the A40 and the bridges with white metal fences that appear throughout the village.

Please do let us know if there is anything in the parish that you are concerned about – our contact details are on the village website and mine are below. You are also welcome to attend our parish council meetings which are held 6 weekly (when we are out of lockdown). If you want to raise an issue if you could just let me know beforehand as it helps me research the subject to be able to answer your question as fully as possible.

I hold a village e mail address list for keeping people informed of anything that's happening within the parish if you would like your name added please let me know. If on the other hand you are fed up with getting round robin e-mails all the time please let me know and I'll remove your name and contact details. Nicky Brooks 01993 701137 or nicky@oxcomm.co.uk

There is of course the village facebook page if you would rather.



As I write this it feels that the weather has finally turned towards spring and summer. All around me is the noise of my family at work to prepare the garden for summer. After the relentless rain of this winter there is the hope of spring, the daffodils are in bloom. The improving weather is a real joy amongst the worry and fear surrounding the Coronavirus outbreak. Who knows what we'll be facing by the time you read this with the ongoing Coronavirus epidemic? I better not speculate because so much could happen in just a few days.

The spectre of Coronavirus is a test of us as individuals and as communities. Will we continue to show our community spirit as a village as the news gradually worsens? The drive for self-preservation kicks in at times like this, doesn't it? The shelves are empty of hand sanitizer and other health supplies – my wife visited Boots in Witney late one morning to discover that although they had a delivery that very morning, they had already sold out again of hand sanitizer before lunchtime. The problem is that this can very quickly be a case of survival of the fittest. Those who can get there – the healthy and well resourced – get the limited supplies and the vulnerable who really need them miss out.

This month at Café Church to celebrate Mothering Sunday (although it was the week after!) we looked at the story of Ruth from the Bible. It is a story of a young girl who clings on to her mother-in-law in the most dire situation. Both Ruth and Naomi, her mother-in-law, had been recently widowed. Their relationship we might not think would continue, especially when Naomi says that she is returning to her homeland. But Ruth will not abandon the elderly Naomi, she is absolutely loyal to her – following her to a foreign land and making her home there with Naomi's people. It is a challenge to us to likewise remain loyal to those around us and continue to show them love even at difficult times. How can we look out for the needy around us and not just look after ourselves? How can this time spur us to build our community up and not let panic buying or even travel bans divide us?

The story of Ruth and Naomi is one of tragedy and bitterness which through the loyalty of Ruth and the generosity of Naomi's relative, Boaz, becomes one of blessing and happiness. A new family is birthed. But the most curious thing about Ruth's story is God's part in it. Never in the story of Ruth does the narrator say God did anything, but at the same time God is there in the background behind the scenes, never far from the action. He is at work through the loyalty, generosity and goodness of the characters of the story. It is through ordinary people living good lives of loyalty and generosity that God is at work to bring a great reversal, turning a deep personal tragedy into a story of great hope and healing. Hope and healing which starts with Naomi and Ruth, but then blossoms, first to a nation through Ruth's grandson King David, the greatest King of Israel, and then to the whole world through Ruth's greatest descendant – Jesus Christ – who will through his own tragic story bring hope and healing to billions around the world today.

We might not quite have that impact, but Ruth's example encourages us, no matter how bad the tragedy around us, to continue to show loyalty, generosity and love to those around us.



For the latest advice for churches and congregations:

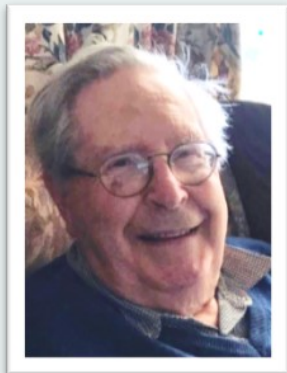
visit oxford.anglican.org/coronavirus-covid-19

If you think you have symptoms of coronavirus, visit [NHS.UK](https://www.nhs.uk) for advice

If you need to contact Simon Kirby please email office@coggesparish.com or call 01993 702155

THE BELLS RANG OUT FOR DAVID'S 90TH

BY MARTIN SPURRIER



The bells were ringing at St. James the Great church on Saturday, 7th March to proclaim the 90th birthday of former prominent bell ringer, David Smith (*Left*).

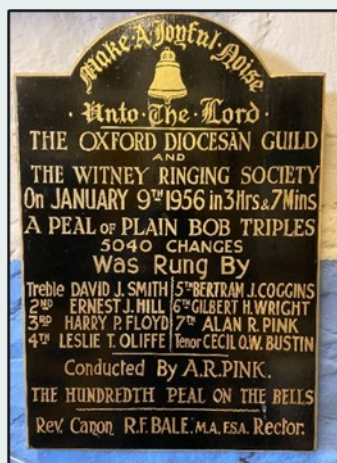
David was Tower Captain at St. James's for around ten years and remains the Tower Correspondent, liaising with visiting ringers. He and his family members were in attendance.

The celebratory 'Quarter Peal' on all eight bells was rung to a 'method' (pattern of ringing) called, appropriately for David's 90th birthday, 'Grandsire Doubles' and there were, also appropriately, 1,390 changes. Changes are where the bells change position in relation to each other and these were completed in exactly 51 minutes of continuous ringing.

David rang his first bell in 1953

and was the momentum behind the formation of two bands of ringers at St. James's. (1956 Board to the left)

Thank you, David, for many years' dedication to bell ringing. South Leigh ringers Heather Horner and Evadne Vallance also thank ringers from other local towers for their support on this occasion; it was Heather's first QP on eight bells, and would have been Evadne's though, in the event, she had to drop out at short notice. Thank you, too, to the Vicar and Church Wardens for their kind permission.



Clockwise from front right: Heather Horner, Sue Rhodes, Alison Merryweather-Clarke (Conductor), Julie Minch, Neil R. Ephgrave, Michael Probert, Andrew Goldthorpe and Nigel Eagle.

Ringling the Changes

Church bells have probably been ringing in South Leigh for over six hundred years, and big changes recently will ensure that they are not going to stop any time soon! Bell ringing was suspended in early March due to the need for social distancing.

South Leigh resident, Heather Horner, (*Left, ringing the No.2 bell*) was elected Tower Captain at the Tower AGM on 22nd January, and succeeds Alison Merryweather-Clarke, who held the position for over four years after the retirement of David Smith. Thank you to both Alison and David for your dedication and service. Alison has been teaching a new band of South Leigh ringers, and will continue to offer tuition to local learners.

CHAPS IN THE BELFRY

Accompanying the bats up in the belfry, meanwhile, Ian Thompson (*Far right photo, rear, with Michael Collett*) has handed over to Martin Spurrier (*Right*) and Michael as Joint Steeple Keepers. Thank you, Ian, for five years of keeping our bells oiled and ringing. Steeple Keepers are responsible for the maintenance and good order of the bells and their ancillary equipment, the turret clock and the Ringing Chamber. The clock, built circa 1750, was last restored by the people of South Leigh for the Millennium but had become unreliable and so is currently being surveyed. We hope that we can have it back in action soon after some professional TLC.

In the last few weeks, much work has been done in the Tower. The 'Ringing Circle' and rope guides have been adjusted in order to make ringing better for the bell ringers and to reduce the wear on the bell ropes. And soon, a new Maintenance Plan and work schedule will include sprucing up the Ringing Chamber at the West end of the nave, at ground level.

The current eight bells (*Right*) were installed in 1907 and the 'Sanctus Bell' was cast in 1399! Bells are cast in bronze and our largest is over 10 cwt. That's about half the weight of a small car. The sound of bells



is glorious and evocative. But ringing and maintaining the bells needs knowledge and training. In another edition, we hope to talk about the ancient skill of bell ringing and its history.



Find out more about bell ringing: contact Heather Horner, hahwindrush@aol.com Telephone: 01993 357389





THANK YOU



EXERCISE "SCRAPE & PAINT"

Three of South Leigh's road bridges over the Limb Brook on Chapel, Station and Barnard Gate Roads and the bus stop at Shores Green received a thorough spring re-furb in late March.

The coronavirus did little to deter a team of community volunteers led by Graham Soame on Saturday, 21st March and, by Sunday night, they were all scraped, primed and freshly painted. **There are still a few bridges to do up towards the A40, and the bench and bus shelter at Lynbrook Close, so volunteers for Phase II will be warmly welcomed.**

Just let Graham know at planning@soame.co.uk.

A huge 'Thank you' to Oliver, Barbara, Sophia and Elizabeth Jackson; Remy, Arietta and Harry Martin; Tim Lawson and Martin Spurrier; John Alexander, Martin Collett, and David Brooks; Russell and Anne Cherry; and Graham, Janet, Oliver and Valerie Soame. (MS)



The Final Result





SOUTH LEIGH FOREST RESTORATION GROUP

The early days of the South Leigh Forest Restoration are being very rewarding, if a little slow. But we expected this.

Good News! Launched in January, we have already planted or secured more than 40 trees and have rescued another 31 baby, self-set oaks from the hedgerows ready for planting (*Right*). The slow bit is gaining permission from land owners, but we have great news! At going to press, Eynsham Park Estate have kindly granted us permission for planting along Chapel Road and Church End. More details later.

In the meantime, happily, several households are pressing ahead. There are new trees in front of Acre Cottage in Chapel Road, we have been offered fruit trees for public spaces, and there's tree planting at Station Farm, Tarwood House, Glebe House, Shuttles Cottage and at The Manor House, that we know of.

Our big hope now is that we can get permission to plant 15 trees in clumps of three or four along the north side of the Football Field. The parish council's Football Field Committee has kindly agreed, so we need just one more permission to go ahead. For everyone's information, there are small stakes where we plan to plant the hardwood, long-life 'legacy' trees in each of the clumps.

Preliminary work has started on available grants and we have been granted, £450 by the District Council. This will buy tree shelters, stakes and trees for our first plantings. Many thanks to our District Councillor, Charles Mathew. And to Mike Kirk, who lives in Chapel Road and is the proprietor of Hadingham Kirk Gardens, who has kindly offered to give us 15 x 5ft trees and is also advising us.

Happy planting! David and Martin

See <https://southleigh.info> for the initial plan.

For more, contact: martinspurrier@hotmail.com 07799368464

Keep an eye out for information about Graham Soame's wildflower initiative or contact him at: planning@soame.co.uk Tel: 01993 772799

Ghosts that Screech in the Night

Let us know if you see Barney or Barnie!

You may have seen this story on Facebook (there's more about barn owls in this one), but here we are appealing for residents to report sightings so that we can

inform The Barn Owl Trust, which gathers national statistics. Thanks to all who sent in details after the Facebook story. Spottings were in Church End, Chapel Road, Station Road, and up Barnard Gate road by the A40.

continues page 8



Above: Planting in Chapel Road. Graham Soame, second from left, and David Brooks, Founder of the South Leigh Forest Restoration group, right, with Alan Crowder, left, and Martin Spurrier, seated.



The writer is no expert on Nature – not like Mr. Google, anyway! So, your corrections, opinions and/or suggestions are most welcome. Nature Notes is a miscellany of this and that, but it does try to answer some of the questions we've always wondered about... and some we haven't. Next time we'll look at South Leigh's Four-leaf clovers. MS

Ghosts that Screech in the Night

So... it was late February and at 7.20 pm and there he (or she – it's very hard to tell the difference) was. Barney (or Barnie) was sitting on the footpath post in the dark (*Left*).

I stopped, switched everything off and chatted to this owl person for a few minutes. He/she was 3 meters away.

Nearly our favourite bird.

Barn owls are the UK's second favourite bird after the robin. They are mystical animals and, because of specialized feathers along the leading edge of their wings, they have near-silent flight. This enables their extraordinary hunting ability. They also don't oil their feathers during preening like other birds as this increases noise in flight. The problem then is that if they fall into water, they can drown. So, if you have a deep water trough or steep-sided pond, leave a piece of wood in it for them to climb out on.

Barn owls have huge eyes, front-facing like us, and so they have binocular vision that helps in gauging distance. Most birds have eyes on either side of the head so are monocular, but have a huge field of vision. A woodcock, for example, can see 360 degrees.

A barn owl's eyes can weigh up to 5% of their body weight (for me that would be 8 lbs!). And they don't have eye 'balls' but elongated 'tubes' that don't turn, so they can only look forwards. But they have a very flexible and deceptively long neck under their feathers and can turn their heads through 270 degrees... and almost upside down, like the chap on the left. That makes me dizzy!

Even so, they hunt mostly by sound with their flat face acting as a sound gatherer. Their ears are just next to their eyes and at different heights, one facing down and the other up, so

they hear each sound at slightly different times, so twice. That helps them locate their prey, even if it can't be seen.

Partners for life Barn owls have a partner for life (usually about 4 years) and don't hoot or 'twit twoo' (the 'twit' is the amorous female tawny owl, and the 'twoo' is the interested chap saying, 'Hi!'). Instead, Barn Owls make a blood-curdling screech while their owlets hiss like a newly punctured Lilo in a pool.

Because of their screech, their silent flight and their ghostly white appearance, barn owls were associated with witches in the past and were hunted... Happily, they are now our No. 2 Top Bird!

So, please watch out for the barn owls. When we have a better idea of where they are, we can put up more owl boxes to encourage them to stay. Owls are not territorial so boxes can be as close as 50 feet, but each family will hunt an area with about a 1 km radius from their nesting site. In bad times, though, this can go up to a radius of 4 kms – that's from The Mason Arms, to Cogges Manor Farm, almost to North Leigh, Eynsham and Ducklington. Happy spotting! MS

Please let me know as and when you see Barney or his/her family:
martinspurrier@hotmail.com
 Telephone: 07799368464
 See also: barnowltrust.org.uk and hawkandowltrust.org

SOUTH LEIGH QUIZ

The theme is Oxfordshire place names. Numbers 1 to 9 are anagrams to unravel. Numbers 10 to 18 need the missing vowels inserted (the gaps are not relevant); 4 of these places have 2 words, 1 has 3 words. Then, unscramble the first letters of the answers to find 2 more places (a village and a town) for Numbers 19 and 20. Good luck! Answers appear elsewhere in this issue.

- | | |
|---------------|-------------------|
| 1 VET SONNET | 11 GRN GNT HMS |
| 2 PLANE TOP | 12 W DC T |
| 3 DOTING KIND | 13 MD DLS TN |
| 4 SWEET ROY | 14 TN |
| 5 PRY CODER | 15 NT HRW RTN |
| 6 PENS I D | 16 DDN GT N |
| 7 TT NO DRAMA | 17 VR NR TN |
| 8 I FLED FUN | 18 LTT LTW |
| 9 DO LISTEN | 19 _ _ _ _ _ (8) |
| 10 T HM | 20 _ _ _ _ _ (10) |

Update From The Parish Wardens

It's incredible to think that all the country's rains/floods started at the end of the 3rd week of September, exactly 6 months ago from when this item was composed! We have also been amazed to see that, despite the difficult underfoot conditions, so much of our Public Rights of Way (PRoWs) network has been well used over this period; this means that not only are these routes on the map, but they are also well established on the ground!

Since taking on the role of PPWs 7 years ago our long-term aim has been to improve the waymarking, so that users can be confident they are "going the right way". Having recently (at last) managed to acquire the required number of waymarking discs, these have been placed at strategic points (along with some new posts). Totally faded discs have also been replaced, but discs where only the colour (yellow for public footpath, blue for public bridleway) has faded—i.e. the directional arrow is clear—have been retained.

This seems a good time to draw your attention to the map (South Leigh Rights of Way) on the village website, where you will also find a series of walks from South Leigh that were included in 8 Newsletters between Spring 2007 (Edition 100) & Summer 2009 (Edition 109). Bear in mind that whilst the routes remain as back then, some information given 11 or more years ago is not now relevant, e.g. pub closure, Rushy Common Nature Reserve

now established, etc.

Since our last update a new footbridge has been installed on the footpath up from Rushy Common (nr. Cogges Lane), parallel with Tar Farm.

We must draw your attention to the diagonal path 'drawn' across the field from the field corner on the Church—Barnard Gate road—Twelve Acre Farm footpath to the wide opening in Bonds Lane, as this is not in fact the correct line of the Right of Way -- which joins Bonds Lane at the marker post opposite the footbridge at the crossways some 50 yds or so further along Bonds Lane in Church End direction; ironically, this crossways route has been impassable without waders for many months now!

Our hopes of getting a brush-cutting team "in early Spring" have been put back because (a) of ground conditions, (b) our Co-ordinator is currently convalescing after surgery, and (c) who knows, THE virus may play its part!

With lengthening daylight, and hopefully improving ground conditions, we hope you will be encouraged to get some fresh air by using the extensive PRoW network in our parish—and, don't forget, take secateurs with you to help keep those invasive brambles and blackthorn back!

Good walking.

Anne and Russell Cherry

Village Hall

We regret to announce, as a result of Covid-19, that the village hall is now closed to everyone for all purposes. It will reopen *only* when circumstances allow.

South Leigh Village Hall Committee

60 Bottles of Cider & Beer For Sale

Due to the closure of the village hall, which will be reviewed in June, we have 60 bottles of cider and beer together with 16 small bottles of

Becks and Heineken.

If you are interested please call

John Ashwell 703534

CLUB 100 WINNERS

March 2020:

Jake Lawrey & Matilda Murphy

Feb. 2020:

Beryl Jones & Sam Woodland

Jan. 2020:

Janet Soame & Greg Murphy

Calling all humans in South Leigh & High Cogges!

A NATURE RECOVERY NETWORK in SOUTH LEIGH & HIGH COGGES – JOIN US NOW!

Britain is...

“the most nature depleted country in Europe”

‘The State of Nature Report’

Is that ok with us in South Leigh and High Cogges?

No! No! No!

Young and old, each of us can help make our villages better to live in – simply through wildflowers. They are easy, charming and inexpensive. Get the family involved with or without Mum and Dad! Give them their own garden (as well as a computer)! Let’s get this going now.

HOW do we do that?

There are 310,000+ miles of rural road verges in the UK & 1,600 wild flower species can grow there!

Between our two communities we have about 3 miles of verge (6 if you count both sides), plus the adjacent gardens and fields.

Beautify our verges with wildflowers

So, imagine the splash of colour as wild Agrimony, Autumn Hawkbit, Bird’s foot trefoil, Bladder Campion, Ox Eye Daisies, White Campion, the Common or Lesser knapweed and, of course, red poppies burst into bloom? Most are perennial, so they just come back for us each year.

And let’s plant trees too

Building on David Brooks’ dream (and his plan!) to plant “1,000 trees in South Leigh over the next 5 years”, we can all help bring the place alive with trees and flowers.

Why? Here are 5 simple reasons:

- Trees and plants breathe in poison and breathe out oxygen. They bind the earth together and help prevent flooding.
- They give shelter and food to birds, bees and other fauna.
- They add to the natural beauty of South Leigh and High Cogges.
- *They make us feel good, too!*

2020 is a big year for the environment as Glasgow hosts the UN Climate Change.



“If we act now”, says David Attenborough, we might stave off the worst effects of Climate Change and nature loss”.

So, let’s go! So, let’s go! Maybe the current restrictions on our movements present a real opportunity to be in the garden?

Can we really make a difference?

Yes! Yes! Yes!

Eynsham has grasped the nettle and has their own Nature Recovery Network. It’s a mass movement “from the bottom up”, meaning local village people take the actions, themselves and together, to help and restore nature.

South Leigh is much smaller, so it’s easier for us and we have a greener heart. So, we can do it, too!



How? Try these ideas for size?



Plant trees in 2020: Native ones, heritage fruit trees, all trees add something for nature. See the South Leigh Forest Restoration programme on the village website and call me or Martin S. for ideas and help.



Provide habitats for insects, birds, wild animals: Make 'hedgehog highways' between gardens and houses. Plant long grass areas, insect hotels, log piles, old trees for insects, etc.



Ponds big and small: Safely designed and located, they boost wildlife. Watching a dragonfly emerge from its casing is one of my special South Leigh moments. Have open water, native plants in and around a pond. It's easy.

See a lovely little water garden (*Right*).



Plant wildflower patches in our gardens: Easy to set up, need cutting maybe twice a year.



Plant wildflowers along verges: Safely back from the carriage-ways, the national charity "PLANTLIFE" say they make nature corridors for bees, butterflies and other insects and link the gardens and fields around us.

Just contact me, or view
"Plantlife" at <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/>.

Did you notice them at Marjorie's Cross last year? It was a trial for this year, so watch out for them!

Give wildlife and the environment a high priority:

Think before using pesticides, is there another way? Work with our neighbours and talk with them about what we can do and what we have done.

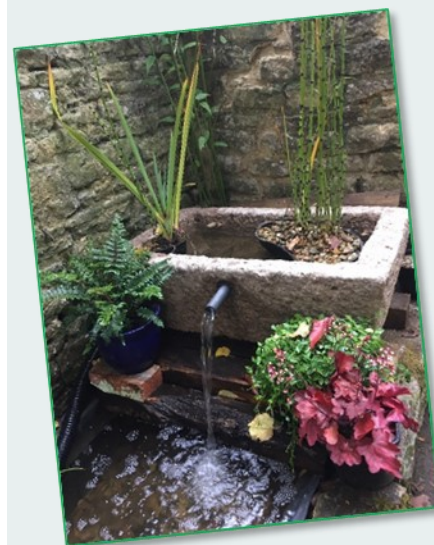


It's all fun to do (honest!). Seeing and hearing insects around your wildflowers or your mini Water World, you really will get the "buzz", and there's really is no sting in the tail!

What's "ETD" ?

We Brits have long prided ourselves on our manicured gardens, but it's not necessarily good news for nature. Watch out for "ETD" (Ecological Tidiness Disorder) – in other words, let nature have some scruffier patches!

This outline plan was planted by Graham Soame, helped by David Brooks and Martin Spurrier, and encouraged by many more in our village. It has the support of the Parish Council.



CALL TO ACTION:

NOW we need everyone to do a little and the current 'stay at home' might be the perfect time, so that we can see a lot.

Let's aim at seeing a difference this year and a really BIG difference in 2021.

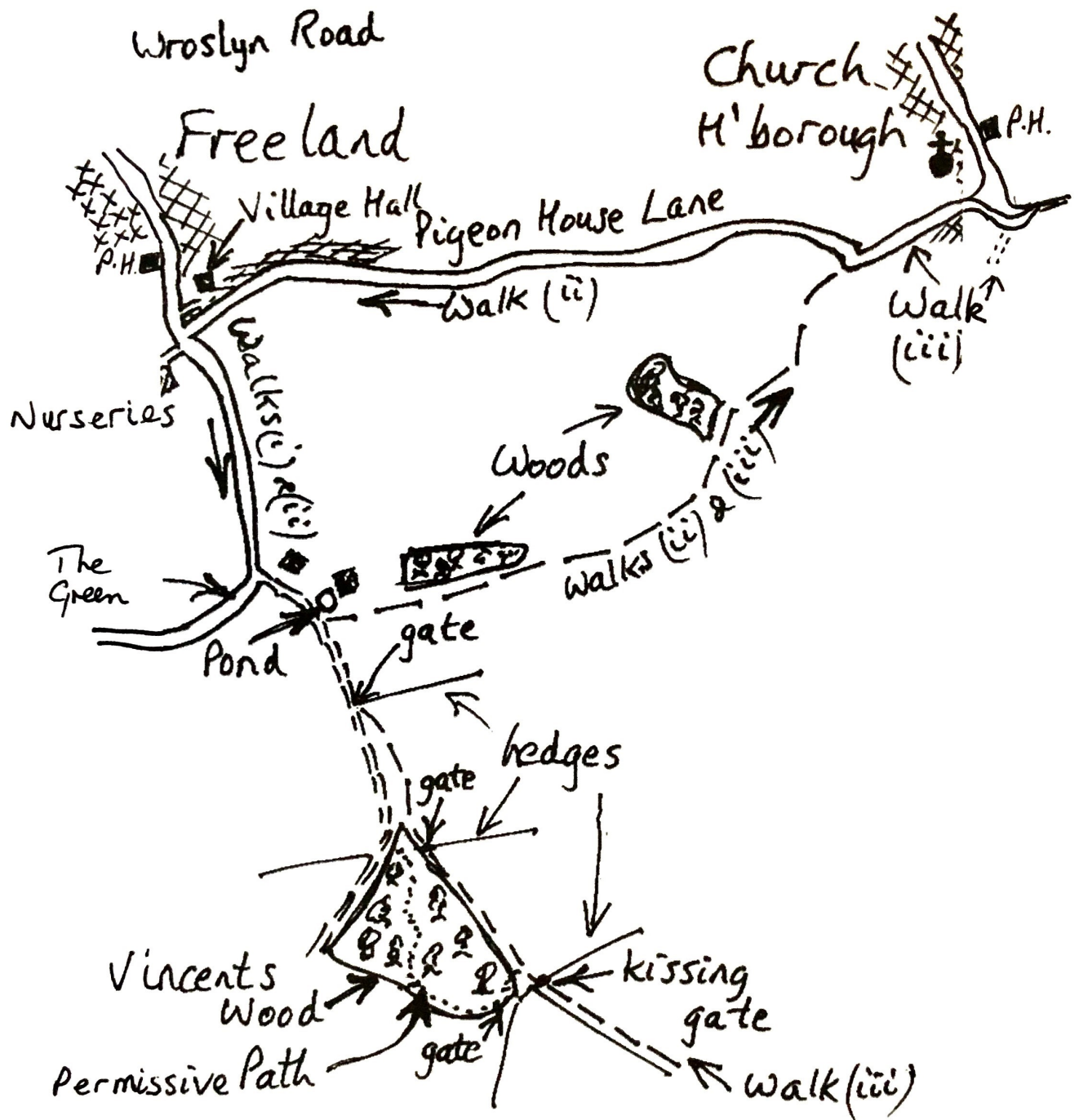
No more talk, let's act! Contact me at any time!

Graham

Contact us at:

Graham Soame:
planning@soame.co.uk
Tel: 01993 772799
Martin Spurrier:
martinspurrier@hotmail.com
Tel: 07799 368 464

FREELAND—VINCENTS WOOD
(BLUEBELLS) —
CHURCH HANBOROUGH



CHURCH HANBOROUGH

A choice of (i) a short walk through a delightful bluebell wood, (ii) a longer circular walk via bluebell wood, or (iii) combining bluebell wood with “Church Hanborough—City Farm—Freeland area” walk in Summer 2017 Newsletter, Edition No. 141/on village website. All walks start/end near a pub!

N.B. The walk through the bluebell wood is on a Permissive Path, not a Public Right of Way; be sure to stay on the path so that not only you but others too can enjoy the bluebells on this popular seasonal walk.

Distance: Walk (i) 1 ¼ miles, allow up to 1 hr. Walk (ii) 2 ¼ miles, allow 1 ½ hrs. Walk (iii) 4 miles, allow 2 ½ hrs. Can be very wet/muddy in places after heavy rain. Wear stout footwear, whatever the weather.

Start/parking: Walks (i) & (ii) Freeland Village Hall, Wroslyn Road, G.R. SP 414126. Walk (iii) Outside churchyard opposite Hand & Shears P.H., Church Hanborough, G.R. SP 426128

Walks (i) & (ii) : From Freeland Village Hall cross road and go L to sharp R bend at The Green. Cross here with care and bear round to L on lane to L of green to reach pond and seat. Then go straight ahead on track (S.P. Bridleway Eynsham). After around 150 yds go straight ahead through gate to pass between hedges. Shortly after bearing round to R go L on clear path into wood (Permissive Path). Stay on this winding path, later bearing L to follow alongside fence at far edge of wood. When reach wood corner (after passing gate in fence) bear L to drop slightly then climb gently for about 15yds to path junction, then go L (back on Public Right of Way now) between hedges. When reach small grassy open area bear L by edge of wood to re-enter wood, then go through kissing gate into open field. Go straight ahead, pass through gate on L in field corner and now go R on track (bridleway) you were on earlier, to bring you back to pond.

For walk (i) re-trace your steps ahead, back to Village Hall, or The Oxfordshire Yeoman – a popular country pub. The Victorian church (just beyond), with C13-style wall paintings, is also worth visiting.

For walk (ii) go R from near pond, on footpath (S.P Church Hanborough), passing through gate to R of house drive, and stay by hedge on L to drop down and pass through gate, then continue ahead & cross stile on L in bottom corner of long field. Stay by wood on L then bear R on gentle rise to go through gate by 2nd oak tree and then bear R to gate by telegraph pole, with Church Hanborough’s spire ahead. Go L & drop down to gate onto minor lane (Pigeon House Lane), and now go L to return to Freeland.

Walk (iii) : Firstly follow route description in 1st 2 paragraphs of ‘Church Hanborough—City Farm—Freeland area’ walk as in preamble above, i.e. up to “....over brook into field”. (N.B. the wobbly footbridge and missing plank referred to in 2nd para have both since been sorted).

Then go straight ahead with hedge on L, through gate, then 2nd gate in field corner. Go sharp L here by hedge with meadow on R. Go through small kissing gate ahead and after a few paces go L on clear path (Permissive Path) into Vincents Wood. Stay on this path, firstly dropping down for about 15 yds then climbing a short way, then go R alongside fence at wood edge. The path then bears R to wind through wood and join track (bridleway). Now back on Public Right of Way, go R here, between hedges, pass through gate and continue ahead to reach pond with seat.

Go R here on footpath (S.P. Church Hanborough), passing through gate to R of house drive. For rest of route description refer to last 2 paragraphs of ‘Church Hanborough—City farm—Freeland area’ walk as above. Russell and Anne Cherry



Village Hall

WI Meetings

All WI Meetings due to be held before the June Garden Party have been cancelled. A decision will be made about the latter in the near future.

Village Hall Committee

Richard Law (Chair)

773355

Dorothy Carden – Noad (Secretary)

703840

John Ashwell (Treasurer)

703534

Debi Deacon (Bookings)

773314

David Brown

703765

Sue Washington

775574

Caroline Auger

834899

South Leigh Summer Fayre

The SLSF Committee has decided there will be no Summer Fayre in 2020.

This event has contributed considerable sums of money to village causes and would like to thank you for your support.

The SLSF Committee now only has three members and urgently needs people to get involved.

Please contact Karen Wilson, Martin Collett or Jane Lewis if you can help by joining.

They will review the situation later this year and decide if there is an appetite for future Fayres.

WE NEED YOU



HOGWATCH SPRING 2020

I have decided, due to the decline in our local Hedgehogs, to continue to monitor them for this year in order to try and give them all the help we can to halt their decline.

But I cannot do it alone. I need the help of all you lovely people of South Leigh and High Cogges. So I urge all you Hedgehog loving people to PLEASE, PLEASE let me know if, and where you see a Hedgehog, or any droppings in and around our village. I will be eternally grateful and so will our Hedgehogs. This is to see if we can find a way to help and support our local Hedgehogs.

Also if you need any help or information, just let me know.

So please either:-

Email me, brianhutchings100@gmail.com

Phone or text, 07437 358587

If our Hedgehogs are to survive and possibly increase in the future, then they are going to need our help.

I have mapped the areas in which they have been seen over the last 3 years, as they appear to be declining within those areas, we need to give them all the help that we can and hopefully they will increase in numbers.

It's in the areas where there have not been any sightings of Hedgehogs that we need to put in a lot of effort to make those areas much more Hedgehog friendly. If the habitat is right and there is connectivity, then the Hedgehogs should appear.

So why are Hedgehogs struggling now when during the first half of the last century they were doing so well?

By the 1950's it was estimated there were around 35million Hedgehogs in Britain but this was based on limited data and was probably an over estimate, but even so, there were far greater numbers than there is now, probably nearer and as many as 30million. A much greater number than the 1million estimated today.

So what was different back then?

Back in the 1950s the countryside was a lot different to what it is now. Farms and farmland and farming practices were very different. Many farms were smaller, fields were smaller with many more hedgerows and these weren't trimmed as they are today, so they were taller, wider and with much more shrubby growth at the bases. There were far more grassland and wildflower meadows. With this there would have been many more insects, birds and rodents,

meaning more prey for Hedgehogs. There were many field ponds, lots of scrubby and rough areas and corners providing much more habitat for wildlife, all living in connection with each other. There was much less development, towns and cities were much smaller. There were fewer roads and dual carriageways would have been very rare and it was at a time when there were no motorways. There were far fewer cars, vans and lorries and they travelled much slower. The countryside was much more Hedgehog friendly back then, it suited them, they were thriving in a countryside that they had evolved to live in.

Coming back to the future, the countryside is very much different. Smaller farms have been integrated into larger farms. Fields have become larger by the removal of hedgerows to accommodate larger machinery making farms more economical.

The loss of hedgerows and copses to create larger fields has resulted in fewer resting and nesting sites and less protection for Hedgehogs.

Ponds were filled in, scrubby areas cleared and brought into cultivation. More grassland along with wildflower meadows have been put under the plough, with that we lose a lot of habitat for many insects, birds, rodents and amphibians etc. There has also been a lot of development. Many motorways and dual carriageways have been built, also many new A roads and with them comes a lot more traffic and faster vehicles. There is, of course, continuing urban sprawl and general building of new houses, and far more now than ever before. There are also many industrial sites and individual units and some of them are very large. All this building is also loss of wildlife habitat, habitat which is lost forever.

With the countryside so different now and far more development than when Hedgehogs numbered 30 million, it's no wonder that our Hedgehogs are struggling.



For now, we can do a few simple things that will be of such enormous help. They are:-

1:- To cut or make 13cm holes in the bottoms of your boundary fences or walls to give Hedgehogs access to yours and your neighboring gardens, to give more vital and much needed habitat, creating a Hedgehog Highway.



2:- Leave water out during hot and dry weather, remember to keep it replenished.

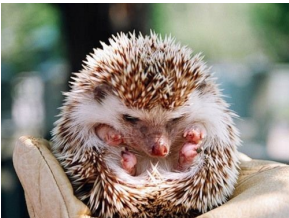
3:- Feed them meat based dog or cat food, wet or dry during the Spring and Autumn and To give them a cosy dry bed for the Winter.

Our native Hedgehog numbers have plummeted by at least half since the millennium. Since our beloved Hedgehog has declined so massively within arable farmland, so sensitively managed wildlife friendly gardens have now become increasingly important.

To create the near perfect habitat for Hedgehogs we would need to live and farm and have countryside like it was in the first half of the 1900s and we know that's not going to happen.

So we have to create habitat that we know will suit Hedgehogs. We need much more natural habitat, rough areas, more hedgerows and many areas of wildflowers and many small areas of trees.

A trial is being tried that is to put wildflower strips through the middle of arable fields to encourage insects that prey on crop pests, thereby reducing pesticide use which may also benefit wildlife such as Hedgehogs.



So please do what you can to help me to help the poor and struggling Hedgehog. Lets see if we can spot more Hedgehogs this year than we did in 2016.

Brian Hutchings, Upper Wayside Cottage.

Motion-sensitive security lights

South Leigh residents are fortunate to live in a dark skies area, with no street lights and thus low light pollution. We can see the stars, which is not possible for many city dwellers.

Recently, a rash of motion-sensitive security lights has erupted on Station Road, disturbing wildlife and passers-by alike, as they are set too high, picking up any movement on the footpath. The direction and angle of sensitivity should be adjusted to cover just to the property boundary, rather than extending to the pavement and roadway. And there is a security light shining straight down Church End which appears to be permanently on, blinding both pedestrians and drivers. It is a sad reflection on modern society that people feel they need such protection, but please, use them with discretion and common sense.

Heather Horner, Windrush Cottage

HEDGEHOG FUN FACTS

1. Hedgehogs have excellent senses of smell and hearing, but very poor eyesight.
2. Hedgehogs have about 5,000 spikes each. The spikes last about a year each, fall out, and then a new one grows in its place.
3. There are 15 different species of hedgehogs.
4. Slugs, beetles, and caterpillars are staples in the hedgehog's diet. Their eating habits have earned them the title "gardener's friend."
5. Hedgehogs are born in litters ranging from one to eleven.
6. Hedgehogs who live in cold climates hibernate in the winter, and in warmer climates they sleep through heat and drought.
7. Hedgehogs are nocturnal animals who sleep during the day and come out at night.
8. Hedgehogs are lactose intolerant.
9. Hedgehogs' coats provide them with a formidable defense from their predators, such as the fox.

LITTER BLITZ & COUNCIL ACTION



This Year's Litter Blitz collected a horrendous amount of other people's rubbish. As a result, you may have seen new CCTV warning signs that the County Council has put up, and will

move around, for us.

The Blitz took place on Sunday, 26th January and a team of volunteers covered Church End, Chapel Road, Station Road and up to the A40 at Barnard Gate.

They filled more than 12 large black garbage bags plus two Land Rover loads including, from one point, 28 Vodka bottles and a full roll of carpet. There had also been a commercial scale dumping near the A40.

Thanks go to everyone:

The team included: Family Soame, Richard Law, Garry & Lysette, Oliver & Barbara Jackson with Elizabeth & Sophia, Anne & Russell Cherry, Rachel Murphy with Matilda and Quentin, Jane Lewis, Richard Law, Martin Spurrier and the Ashwells.

Many apologies if we have missed you off this list, but a huge thank you. And thank you, again, to everyone involved and to residents who quietly pick up litter throughout the year.



VOLUNTEERING PRESS RELEASE

It's time to celebrate the enthusiasm and passion of Oxfordshire's volunteer and community organisations. The Districts and City have been inundated with offers of help to support those residents who are and will struggle to cope over the coming weeks and months, for which we thank you all. The need for assistance has, however, come further into focus as Government announced the most vulnerable in our communities will need to self-isolate for 12 weeks.

Oxfordshire has united to support the initiatives of 'Oxfordshire All In' and 'Oxford Together'. We recognise many of you are already working / volunteering in your communities but for anyone who finds that extra 10 minutes, these sites can help coordinate your effort – whether delivering essentials, putting the bins out for someone, or being on the other end of a phone, there are hundreds of opportunities available across Oxfordshire for you to get involved.

To ensure that residents know where to turn, all community groups, community organisations and local businesses are being asked to include details of their initiatives on the [Oxfordshire All In Response Map](#). If you have linked with your District or the City Council already – please do not worry we will make the link. Let's maximise your ability to spend the time helping our communities.

If you live in Vale of White Horse, South Oxfordshire, West Oxfordshire or Cherwell then please visit [Oxfordshire All In](#) who can help and have details on all opportunities across Oxfordshire.

To volunteer in Oxford City, please register your details at [Oxford Together](#)

We thank you for your incredible efforts so far and we know that together we can help support each other and keep our communities thriving through these difficult times, however please ensure you continue following government advice to stay safe and well.

For more advice and information on Covid-19, please visit [Public Health England](#).

Speeders: Slow down or lose your car!



We've had enough of people speeding through our village and are now reporting speeders to the police. This could also lead to permanent traffic calming measures in the village.

With the help of the Thames Valley Police Community Speed Watch initiative and an approved speed camera, if a speeder is reported three times, the car owner will receive a police letter; six and they could get a police visit and

could lose their car for anti-social driving.

Our new Parish Councillor, Lysette Nicholls, is leading the programme and she and a team of some 20 resident volunteers are out with the camera, bought by the Parish Council.

"The behaviour of some drivers is irresponsible", she stressed. "In the half mile before the speed trap in Chapel Road, there are ten '30' and/or Speed Watch signs before they see two or three people in high-vis jackets with the camera", she explained, "Even so, drivers go past at 37 MPH and more".

Traffic Calming

For some time, the village has been asking to have traffic calming measures to slow down the road hogs. This might be a chicane, speed humps, or '30' signs that light up. This has to be decided but, for anything to be approved by the authorities, we have to produce evidence that our residents are being endangered by speeders.

"We shall keep collecting the data and working with the police until we have all the material we need for a more permanent solution", Lysette concluded.



Thames Valley Police's Robb Webb instructs South Leigh's Speed Watch team in the use of the speed camera.

Martin Spurrier

QUIZ ANSWERS

- 1 STEVENTON
- 2 APPLETON
- 3 KIDDINGTON
- 4 TOWERSEY
- 5 CROPREDY
- 6 IPSDEN
- 7 TADMARTON
- 8 NUFFIELD
- 9 LIDSTONE
- 10 THAME
- 11 GORING – ON – THAMES
- 12 WOODCOTE
- 13 MIDDLE ASTON
- 14 EATON
- 15 NETHER WORTON
- 16 ODDINGTON
- 17 OVER NORTON
- 18 LITTLE TEW
- 19 KELMSCOT
- 20 WATLINGTON

MISSING TROWEL

A couple of years ago I was gardening at 7 Lymbrook Close and misplaced my trowel. I have been hoping to come across it however as yet haven't.

I have come to the conclusion I must have misplaced it in the village.

If you have come across it, it was a long trowel with an orange handle, from memory, please can you let me know.

It was a present from my mum.

Jackie

SEASONAL SOUTH LEIGH RECIPES

Looking back through past seasonal spring recipes, I can see that they feature all the wonderful ingredients that signal that spring is here. Recipes using new potatoes, the first of the season's rhubarb, asparagus and fresh herbs such as chives, wild garlic and young nettles. Not to mention spring lamb, chicken, eggs and of course, as it's Easter, chocolate. This year, the situation is very different as we are all in the midst of the Coronavirus lockdown. Shopping is difficult and getting together with extended family and friends is out of the question, so this spring I am putting together a few recipes that use mainly store cupboard ingredients. Of course, you can scroll through some of the previous spring recipes - there are quite a few that use basic ingredients, or vegetables and herbs that you might have in the garden - I hope they may tempt you into the kitchen. Stay well and well fed. Eve Lawson

Wheaten Bread ~ Makes 1 loaf

This Irish soda bread is easy and quick to make and doesn't create much washing up as you just need one bowl. It makes a delicious alternative to yeasted breads and goes with everything from marmalade to mackerel paté.

300g wholemeal flour
300g plain white flour
1½ tsps salt
1 level teaspoon bicarbonate of soda
400ml milk
2 tsps of lemon juice or cider vinegar
2 tbsps vegetable oil

Preheat the oven to 200°C, Gas 6. Lightly oil a large baking tray.

Mix all the dry ingredients together in a large, wide bowl and make a well in the centre. Mix the milk with the lemon juice, or vinegar, and stir in the vegetable oil. Pour this into the well and using your hand, quickly mix the liquid and the dry ingredients together. Do not over-work this mixture - the less you handle it, the better - but quickly add more flour if the dough is too wet or a little more milk if too dry. You are aiming for a very soft, but not sticky dough. Sprinkle the work top with a generous amount of wholemeal flour and tip out the dough.

With clean, dry hands, quickly and gently form the dough into a round loaf shape, turning it over to hide any gathers. Place on the prepared baking tray and flatten out the loaf slightly. Sprinkle more flour on top and then, using a sharp knife, cut a deep cross in the dough.

Bake for 25 - 30 minutes. When cooked, the loaf will sound hollow when tapped on the base. Turn the loaf upside down for the last 5 minutes if necessary. Remove from the oven and cover with a damp tea towel while the loaf is cooling as this will keep the crust soft.



Cauliflower and Turmeric Soup with Toasted Pumpkin Seeds ~ Serves 4

A cheery, bright yellow soup, to brighten up even the dullest day. Don't waste the stalk and leaves of a cauliflower they are really tasty - just discard the very outer leaves and toughest part of the stalk.

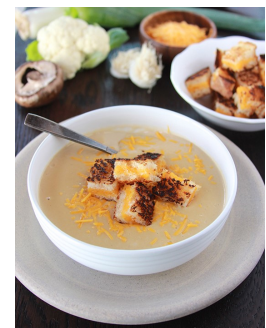
1 onion, chopped
vegetable oil
1 heaped tsp ground turmeric
1 small cauliflower
1 parsnip, peeled and cubed
1 litre chicken stock
salt and freshly ground black pepper
chopped parsley, coriander or chives, to serve
crème fraiche or natural yogurt, to serve, optional

For the toasted pumpkin seeds:

100g pumpkin seeds
1 tbsp runny honey or maple syrup
salt, pepper and chilli flakes (optional)

First prepare the toasted pumpkin seeds. Mix the seeds and honey or maple syrup in a non-stick frying pan. Season with a little sea salt and chilli flakes (if you want a bit of spiciness). Heat gently until the sugar bubbles and the seeds begin to pop. Tip the hot mixture onto a sheet of baking parchment and set aside to cool and go crunchy.

Heat a little vegetable oil in a large saucepan and gently fry the onion for a few minutes. Stir in the turmeric then add the stock and bring to the boil. Break the cauliflower into small florets and roughly chop the stalk and tender leaves. Add the cauliflower and parsnip to the stock and simmer gently until they are completely soft. Blitz the soup with a hand-held blender, food processor or potato masher. Season to taste and add the chopped herbs. Serve with crème fraiche or yogurt and a sprinkle of toasted pumpkin seeds.



Chocolate and Oat Cookies ~ Makes 12

Cooking with the children, who are now off school and getting restless, is a good way to keep them occupied. When I was young I liked to cook when I was bored (I still do!) My friend, Helen, and I would make buckets of these delicious cookies. They don't take long to make - or eat! The addition of coffee really brings out the chocolate flavour but you can leave it out if you wish.

100g self-raising flour
2 tbsp cocoa powder
100g caster sugar
75g rolled oats
100g butter, melted
1 tsp instant coffee diluted in 2 tsps hot water, optional

Heat the oven to 180°, 170° Fan, Gas 4. Lightly grease and flour a large baking sheet or line with baking parchment.

Sift the flour and cocoa into a mixing bowl. Stir in the sugar and rolled oats and mix well. Pour in the melted butter and coffee and mix to make a soft dough.

Taking walnut size pieces of the dough, roll them into 12 or so balls and arrange on the prepared baking sheet, squashing each cookie down slightly with the back of a fork.

Bake for 10-15 minutes. They will still be soft so leave them on the tray until cool.

No-bake Chocolate Biscuit Fingers

Don't even think about the calories in these incredibly moreish treats. You can cut them into fingers or bite size squares. You can add other bits and pieces to this mix, e.g. nuts and dried fruit, but we like it just as it is.

500g digestive biscuits, crushed into a mixture of small crumbs and some larger pieces
100g caster sugar
4 large tablespoons golden syrup
200g butter
4 heaped tablespoons cocoa powder, sieved

Grease and roughly line a baking tin, approximately 20cm x 20cm.

Gently heat the sugar, golden syrup and butter in a saucepan until the sugar has dissolved. Increase the heat until it comes to the boil then immediately remove from the heat and whisk in the cocoa powder.

Pour the chocolate mixture over the crushed biscuits and quickly stir to make sure that all the biscuits are coated. Tip the mixture into the prepared tin, press down gently and cool in the fridge. Lift out of the tin and cut into squares or fingers.

Shepherdless Pie ~ Serves 4

This is a very adaptable dish made with mainly store-cupboard ingredients. You can vary the type of beans you use, though the black beans do lend a depth of colour and a richness to the pie, making them a good substitute for the 'shepherd'. You can pretty much substitute whatever vegetables you have - I have made this with cauliflower, canned sweetcorn, courgette and sweet red and yellow peppers. It is also good to mix other vegetables such as sweet potato or celeriac into the mash topping.

1 large onion, peeled and finely diced
2 garlic cloves, peeled and finely diced
vegetable oil
1 tsp smoked sweet paprika
4 spring onions or 1 leek, sliced
2 sticks celery, sliced
1 x 400g can of black beans, drained
1 x 400g can red kidney beans, drained
150g button mushrooms, sliced,
1 x 400g can tinned chopped tomatoes
1 tablespoon honey
Fresh parsley, roughly chopped
Juice of 1 lime or ½ lemon
Salt and pepper to taste
Mashed potato, for topping

Pre-heat the oven to 200°C, 180° Fan, Gas 6. Heat the oil in a deep frying pan and cook the onion and garlic over a medium heat until the onion softens. Add the paprika, spring onion or leek, and celery and sauté for 2-3 minutes, ensuring they are coated in the paprika, before adding the mushrooms and mixing again. Add both of the beans and mix well. Tip in the tinned tomatoes, parsley, honey and lime or lemon juice. Season and continue cooking for a further few minutes. Spoon the bean and vegetable mixture into an ovenproof dish and top with the mashed potato. Cook in the pre-heated oven for about 25-30 minutes or until the top is browned and the mixture bubbling around the edges.

Chunky Smoked Mackerel Paté ~ Serves 3-4

Peppered smoked mackerel fillets are great for this recipe as the paté is automatically seasoned. However, if you can't get peppered fillets simply use the non-peppered variety and add lots of freshly ground black pepper to taste. If you prefer a smooth paté, give all the ingredients a quick whizz with a hand held blender or in a food processor.

3-4 peppered smoked mackerel fillets, skin removed
2 tbsp horseradish sauce
2 tbsp yogurt, crème fraîche, cream cheese or cream
a really good squeeze of lemon juice and a grating of lemon zest
chopped parsley or chives

Place all the ingredients in a small mixing bowl and, using two forks, break up the mackerel so that all the ingredients are combined but the paté is still chunky. Check the seasoning and chill until ready to serve.

NEWSLETTER

Any opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editors John & Liz Ashwell.

With the present situation in lockdown we are unsure if the next newsletter will be in digital format or paper.

Please keep up to date by looking at the Facebook page or the web-site www.southleigh.info

If you are not presently on the residents circulatory list please contact Nicky Brooks on nicky@oxcomm.co.uk to receive important updates.

POEM—TREES

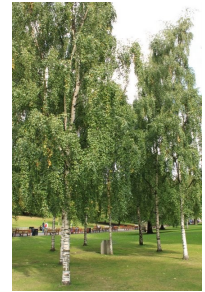
The silver birch is a dainty lady,
She wears a satin gown;
The elm tree makes the old churchyard shady,
She will not live in town.

The English oak is a sturdy fellow,
He gets his green coat late;
The willow is smart in a suit of yellow,
While brown the beech trees wait.

Such a gay green gown God gives the larches –
As green as He is good!
The hazels hold up their arms for arches,
When Spring rides through the wood.

The chestnut's proud and the lilac's pretty,
The poplar's gentle and tall,
But the plane tree's kind to the poor dull city –
I love him best of all!

by E. Nesbit (1858 – 1924)



ST JAMES THE GREAT

There are no services being held in the church at present and the diocese have instructed us to keep it locked , but our vicar Rev Simon Kirby is holding online services at 10am on Sunday mornings and a prayer meeting on “ZOOM” on Thursday mornings at 9am.

If you would like to join either of these online gatherings the details can be found on the St Mary's Cogges website. Coggesparish.com and also on Facebook.

The app can be downloaded and is free so you can join in events or just listen.

We are all missing seeing each other in these difficult times but this is the next best thing.

