



Autumn 2022 Edition 161

# South Leigh & High Cogges News

## PARISH NEWS UPDATE

Most of the major subjects the Parish Council are dealing with are reported on separately in this newsletter but I have a couple of other updates.

### Bus Service?

We have the chance to get some money in order to fund a bus service which potentially could run through Standlake, Stanton Harcourt through South Leigh and onto Witney/Eynsham. This would be a regular ongoing service.

We want to assess the amount of village interest there might be for such a service. Could you therefore let us know if you felt this is something you would use, an idea of how many times a week and at what times. We're only trying to get a rough idea so you won't be held to anything you say. Please do let us know though.

Either on 01993 701137 or the above e-mail address or any of your other Councillors.

### Shores Green

The Parish Council is very frustrated about both these projects as OCC seem to be reviewing the whole plan. We haven't as yet got the whole story. I received a letter which seemed to say that the A40 project had been cancelled but following through with officers it seems it is being reassessed not cancelled. It seems that the cost of compulsory purchasing the land needed is proving too expensive

As for Shores Green we have had no formal notification but from what I can gather it too is being reassessed.

I'm sorry about the uncertainty and we will keep you updated as soon as we know more.

We would welcome any comments you have on these or any other matters

As this is the last newsletter before Christmas I would like to thank all the Parish Councillors for their hard work over this year and I would like to wish you all a very Happy Christmas.

*Nicky Brooks*



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## **Anaerobic digester**

Details have been forwarded on the village e-mail address and posted.

Peter Grant and I had a meeting with Acorn, re the Anaerobic digester on 10<sup>th</sup> November.

There will be a display in Village Hall 3pm onwards 29<sup>th</sup> November with representatives of Acorn attending.

Parish Council Meeting on the same date 7.30 - Item 10 on agenda - your views invited.

## **Emergency Plan**

Pretty much ready albeit waiting for comments from OCC.

## **Mobile Signal**

BT/EE and I had diarised a telephone call for 1<sup>st</sup> November for an update on the mobile signal. Adrian of the technology department of BT/EE rang me and there is, I am afraid, only sclerotic progress. They have assessed that a simple approach like true pruning or lopping will not improve the signal and they have investigated whether a new site for a new mast would be possible but either no site would work or no landowner is willing to assist and so they are assessing heightening the present mast which requires an investigation not only of its individual effectiveness but its impact on neighbouring masts. We have diarised a telephone call for 30<sup>th</sup> March. Before you say anything "like I thought we had already got to this position about 2 years ago" - So did I !!.

## **Parliamentary Boundaries**

The Boundary Commission have published its revised proposals - the final decisions are due on 1<sup>st</sup> July 2023.

The initial proposals and revised proposals are set out on the Boundary Commission website.

As far as South Leigh is concerned the current revised proposals are that we should come within a new constituency of Bicester and Woodstock (it had been called Bicester and the PC had suggested that it should be called Woodstock and Bicester) I think we can live with the name reversal!

However as they previously proposed we would no longer have parliamentary ties to the Witney constituency - WODC will remain our local authority.

As you know the PC put its initial views in a document dated 31<sup>st</sup> July 2021 which could be summarised as "By the separation of South Leigh from the Witney constituency there would be a breaking of significant local ties and a democratic deficit which would amount to more than "inconveniences attendant" upon the proposed changes." We gave examples.

The Boundary Commission have rejected that argument preferring not to break wards - Eynsham and Cassington are in the new constituency and as South Leigh is in the Eynsham and Cassington district ward it goes into the new constituency as well.

Further representations have to be made by 5<sup>th</sup> December 2022.

What do you think? Let me know your views on behalf of the PC [dick@southleighandhighcogges-pc.gov.uk](mailto:dick@southleighandhighcogges-pc.gov.uk). However please put in representations to the boundary commission. <https://www.bcereviews.org.uk> and type in your postcode to find the constituency and it should bring up Bicester and Woodstock and there is a green tab - "make a comment" and after you have made a comment let me know you have.

## **Thames Water**

Thames Water agreed as part of the work in Lymbrook Close to repair the footpath and that has been done satisfactorily.

I am continuing to press for phosphate stripping whilst liaising with Cllr Maynard (Lib Dem - Vice Chair of

WODC Environment Cmtte) on the strategic problems that there are with sewage and drainage provision.

In an e-mail I received on 12<sup>th</sup> November from a director of Thames Water who said:

"The aeration project concluded with the pavement/kerb repairs and my understanding is that the system is working well.

The current work on site is a minor project to install an additional monitor to record how much flow we are treating and provide evidence of whether or not the site is meeting its permit requirements for Full Flow to Treatment (FFT) at all times. This work includes installing (a) a small below-ground chamber, located near the inlet wet well, to house the flow monitor and (b) a new small on-site pump station which will return decanted liquor from the Sludge Holding Tank to the inlet of the aeration tank (this is to ensure that decanted liquor doesn't get counted as flow to site). This work is planned to conclude in approximately six weeks, during which time there will be small teams of contractors and individuals coming and going.

Two additional projects are currently in the planning stage. The first is the phosphorus removal project which we have discussed previously and which I know is a priority for the Parish.

The second project is to provide us with additional reassurance that the site is resilient and can always meet its permit conditions, particularly in terms of FFT (as mentioned above).

The intention is that these projects will be delivered by a single contractor, with a combined scope of work. So, although they will have different objectives, and separate reference numbers in our internal workings, for all practical purposes there will be a single project, keeping the length of work and any disruption to a minimum.

As soon as I have dates for this work I will let you know and we will then set up an early meeting with the project manager, so that he or she gains a good understanding of the local issues and constraints."

# View From The Vicar – December 2022

Season's greetings from the new Associate Vicar at Cogges and South Leigh. I thought it would be great to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you and hope that I get to meet you soon.

I have been a vicar for the last 10 years in Guildford Diocese. Prior to that I had my own business running leadership training courses for a variety of clients across the country. I arrived here in September this year, and it hasn't taken me long to feel at home and settled here. Thank you for your warm welcome.

The run up to Christmas this year feels different - muted, tentative, cautious. As the economic crisis bites, most of us are having to tighten our belts even further and try to make ends meet. On top of that we seem to be facing a barrage of bad news, that seems to have been relentless, moving us from one crisis to another. These are indeed dark and difficult times.

The word I keep hearing people speak about is "Hope" – or "hopelessness". "What hope can we have for the future?" But there is Hope! There is good news! As we enter the season of Advent (Sunday 27<sup>th</sup> November to Christmas Day) it is a season when the church looks forward with hope to what is yet to come. Christians believe that Jesus Christ gives us hope because we know that He has promised to come again, and his kingdom and reign will be established, and in the end "There will be no more death or mourning or crying or pain, for the old order of things has passed away." (Revelation 21 v 4)

In a world where it seems to be everyone for themselves! It can be hard to have hope for the future. Yet Christians remain hopeful, joyful even, because Love lies at the heart of our faith and beliefs. We believe that God is love and that His kingdom will come and his will will be done on earth as it is in heaven. So we look forward to that day with hope.

Philippians 4 v 6-7 says, "Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."

In the new year we will be running an Alpha Course, an opportunity for anyone who has questions about faith, Christianity, God or Jesus to come and explore what we believe and why we believe it. If you have questions why not join us? The Course starts on 17<sup>th</sup> January at 7:30pm. You can sign up on our website ([www.coggesparish.com](http://www.coggesparish.com))

It is my prayer that you will have a **joyful** Christmas, full of **hope**, and you will know God's **peace** which transcends all understanding surrounding you and those that you love.

God bless, Rev Andy Reid

Recently I attended a conference where the speaker was beamed in via zoom. He was Dr Patrick Dixon and is Chairman of Global Change Ltd, author of 16 books on global trends including *The Future of Almost Everything*. Dr Dixon has spoken to audiences in over 60 nations. He also trained as an NHS doctor and brings his professional insight into new viruses and the impact of pandemics like COVID, through his work preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS which he began through a foundation he started 32 years ago, with programmes today in many emerging nations. He correctly warned of global risks from new viral pandemics, in books published in 1998 and 2015. He was zooming in from his yacht in Martinique, as he is taking 7 years to sail around the world - I had to confess my envy later.

Dr Dixon's talk was challenging, encouraging and inspiring and if you want to hear more about it invite me for a beer at the Mason Arms and I'll happily share his knowledge. Towards the end of his talk he asked us a series of questions that many of us may be asking (it was mainly church leaders in the room):

When will people feel like normal again?

What do we do next?

How do we engage with a bruised world that has 'coviditus' and an affliction of the spirit?

He then shared a couple of verses from chapter 11 of the letter to the Romans in the bible:

12 Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. 13 Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practise hospitality.

He emphasised the final two words Practise Hospitality pointing out that Covid has robbed many people of meaningful human contact over the last couple of years. Eating and drinking together is going to be a key to rebuilding lives and community. In this vein it is great to start thinking about some of the possible celebrations in the village later this year. I'm also grateful to David & Louise Taylor who are regularly hosting simple Sunday lunches, on behalf of the church, for anyone from the community who would like to attend.

Hospitality comes from a greek word which means extending love to the stranger or foreigner and one of the wonderful things about St James the Great Church is that it is kept open during daylight hours and reading the visitor book it's great to see the inspiration and comfort that strangers feel in that special place. We have begun to pray weekly in the Church on a Wednesday morning at 9.15am and all are welcome to join us. If you are unable to join us but have a prayer request please email it to [david@coggesparish.com](mailto:david@coggesparish.com) We are also trying a different service pattern to encourage new people to attend and indeed we are seeing some new worshippers join us. **Continued Page 13**





## South Leigh Strollers

On November 14th, 13 of us enjoyed a walk around some of the village rights of way enlivened by some really fascinating insights from Heather into local natural and social history. We will continue this theme in our next walk in the first half of January. Watch out for a village email with details or contact us.

David [davidreevestay-lor@gmail.com](mailto:davidreevestay-lor@gmail.com)

Russell  
[acherry1@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:acherry1@tiscali.co.uk)

## SLEIGHBELLS (NEW BAND NAME!) REPORT

NOVEMBER 2022 EVADNE ADRIAN-VALLANCE

Ringling for royalty has been something of a feature of 2022. In June, churches all over the country rang in celebration of Queen Elizabeth II's Platinum Jubilee, to be sadly followed in September by ringing in mourning on the announcement of her death.

Ringling the bells for a funeral is a sombre affair. The bells must be half muffled. This means that a muffle (piece of material traditionally made of leather) is placed on one side of the clapper (the part of each bell that swings and strikes) so that there is a loud strike followed by a muffled strike, producing a mournful and somewhat ghostly echo effect. Fully muffled bell ringing (material on both sides of the clapper) is usually reserved for the death of the Monarch, as was heard at Westminster Abbey on 19<sup>th</sup> September for the funeral of Queen Elizabeth II.

On this occasion, all churches were issued with guidelines for three separate ringing events. Accordingly, on 9<sup>th</sup> September, two of us took turns to toll the half-muffled tenor bell on the death of the Queen and again for the funeral on 19<sup>th</sup> September. In between, on 10<sup>th</sup> September, a full band supported by ringers from Marston rang unmuffled or 'open' in celebration of the Proclamation of King Charles III. This necessitated much bobbing up and down the tower to muffle and unmuffle by steeplekeeper, Martin Spurrier, for which many thanks.

Remembrance Sunday is another solemn occasion for half muffled ringing. Some of you may have heard the pre-service ringing as

well as the single tolling of the tenor immediately before and after the 11 o'clock silence.

Wider afield, early October saw some of our ringers on the Witney and Woodstock Branch outing to the Buckinghamshire and Hertfordshire area, where they tried their skills at six different towers and enjoyed a sociable lunch. More recently, St James has hosted the Witney & Woodstock Branch Practice, well attended by about fifteen ringers. Finally, with the aim of being able to provide instruction and support to beginners, Heather Horner and Ruth Leatherdale attended a Teaching Handling course in Kirtlington. They would be delighted to practise what they have learnt on any would-be ringers on the first and third Wednesdays of each month, 7.30-9.00.

In early November, the first AGM since before the pandemic was held in the Mason Arms. Heather Horner was re-elected as Tower Captain and Evadne Vallance as Tower Correspondent. Richard Law was elected as Deputy Tower Captain.



We would like to thank the Parish Council for their kind donation of £85 for the Bell Fund, from the Queen's Jubilee celebrations' budget.

## JO WILSON 1953 - 2022

The Bury family moved from Suffolk to Oxfordshire in 1920 firstly to High Cogges and then to Stanton Harcourt in 1930. Jo was the youngest of three having two elder brothers, Peter and David. An idyllic childhood was spent at Blackditch, their lovely home, with grass tennis court, stables and later a swimming pool. Jo always had lovely ponies and the first show of the season would be Witney YFC held at Stanton Harcourt next to the village hall, generously sponsored by the Bury family.

Jo was educated at St Helen's and St Katharine's in Abingdon. On leaving school Jo decided to go and work for Charles and Janet Cope in Standlake with their show horses and eventers, initially for one year. During this time Jo became one of the few people in the country to pass her Pony Club A test, a real feather in her cap. Twelve years later she decided it was time for a change and went travelling around the world, returning just in time for the hunting season.

In December at the annual Bury Dinner Dance at the Randolph, Oxford, attended by Alan, he thought it only polite to dance with host's daughter. Driving home Alan came across a damsel in distress, Jo had a puncture. Alan being the gentleman he is stopped and changed the wheel and that was the start of the romance. On 1st October, in St Michael's church Stanton Harcourt 39 years ago, Alan and Jo were married. Jo moved to Rectory farm house in Alvescot welcoming with open arms Alex, Tom and Izzy. How lucky they were to have such a step mother. They were soon joined by Fiona and Robbie. 25 years ago the Wilson family moved to College Farm, South Leigh, creating the magnificent family home it is today. I know it gave Jo great pleasure relaxing this Summer in the garden surrounded by her family.

Jo took great pleasure from her horses and loved preparing them at home for Fiona, competing in dressage and side saddle, Robbie's polo and latterly Tom's daughter Maisie's dressage on Jo's

lovely hunter. The whole family hunted and were very generous hosts before, during and after.

Jo was the best friend one could wish for totally confidential and giver of sound advice. Recently reflecting, Jo said I am so lucky to have three really good friends, one listens really well, one is a great practical help and one talks a lot.

I know Jo's dearest wish is that everyone will support the family, now and in the future especially Alan, Fiona and Robbie. Jo was taken from us far too early, we will all miss her terribly, farewell old friend.

*With thanks to Peter Colson who wrote the eulogy from which the above are extracts, and our condolences to Alan and family upon their sad loss.*



VILLAGE HALL



CHRISTMAS  
LUNCH

SUNDAY DECEMBER  
4TH 2022

SOLD OUT

## THIS MIGHT RING A BELL

Is anyone interested in the fascinating dark art of helping to maintain the award-winning bells at St. James the Great?

This is not an onerous task but is very interesting for someone with an interest in things mechanical. We are not asking you to become a bellringer.

The task involves oiling the bells monthly and keeping an eye on a number of other things so that when the bell ringers ring, they work faultlessly.

The bells were installed in 1907 by the best bell foundry in England and it is our responsibility to ensure they work as they were intended. Anyone interested, please contact the Steeple Keeper, Martin Spurrier, on 07799368464



## The Friends of South Leigh

If you know of anyone who needs support of any kind, please get in touch with one of the following. The Friends have wide powers to help in many ways.

John Ashwell  
(703534),  
Richard Law (773355),  
Rita Sawrey-  
Woodwards(774343),  
Sue Washington  
(775574) and Karen  
Wilson.

## QUIZ

Unravel these anagrams to reveal words that appear in the titles (first lines) of Christmas carols. Answers appear elsewhere here.

- |                 |                |
|-----------------|----------------|
| 1 TINSEL        | 11 ALE MRS     |
| 2 TIN ORE       | 12 RELY RIM    |
| 3 LACES SEWN    | 13 MERIT WIND  |
| 4 MEG RAN       | 14 GIN AILS    |
| 5 P.S. HER SHED | 15 CAR IN THIS |
| 6 HAUL TIFF     | 16 SEND GALS   |
| 7 HELM HE BET   | 17 USA LET     |
| 8 DIM THING     | 18 MEET GLENN  |
| 9 STIR NEW      | 19 REAL BIG    |
| 10 CATH WED     | 20 MISS CHART  |



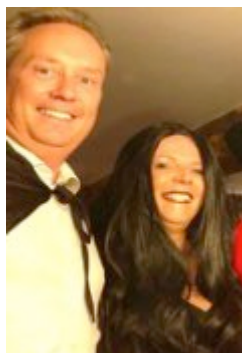
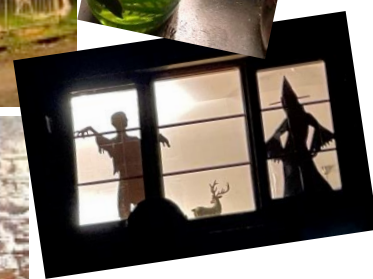
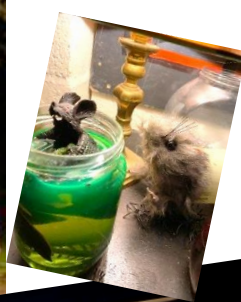
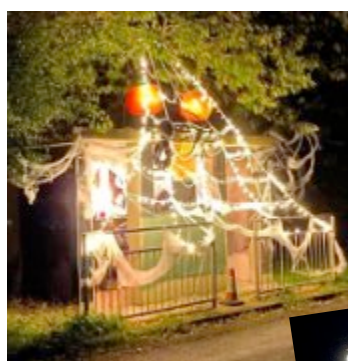
## On a wet and windy night...

Was that a witch... or was it the wind?

The South Leigh kids did us proud on Halloween and scared off every spectre in sight and had phantoms shaking in their shoes!

Dating back to the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain, people would wear costumes and light bonfires to ward off ghosts. In the eighth century, Pope Gregory III designated 1<sup>st</sup> November as a time to honour all saints. All Saints Day eve now incorporates some of the traditions of Samhain. Trick-or-treating, pumpkin carving (originally turnips in the UK but in America there were more pumpkins, and the idea caught on here), and dressing up. In the USA, it is a major event with a quarter of all candy sold annually purchased for Halloween! \*

The bus shelter, in its thirteenth edition since June 2020, formed a focal point for a coven of witches and wizards as they prowled Station Road chasing ghosts. The Spiders' Web was hosted by the Mother Witch and her ratty and mousy friends whom she preferred pickled or fried. A small colony of bats transferred to the bus shelter from St. James the Great's tower specially for the occasion. \*Histroy.com



### Witch or what?

The Halloween quiz at the pub was another spooky success with questions on witch and what?

Three suitably dressed individuals set the tone, maybe more scary costumes next year?

We have now been quizzing at the pub for over a year, only missing the summer months. We have already donated the money raised to: "Secret Santa" for eight village residents – just over £200, another £100 to Bridewell Organic Gardens near North Leigh and after a setback we have agreed to give £280 to Witney Round Table for a Ukrainian evening. We currently have £76 for "planting trees and enhancing nature" in our Parish. The next quizzes, always at 7.30 start, are on Sunday 27th November (Russell Cherry in the chair) and Christmas comes early for us on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> December (Graham Soame in the hot seat). So, why not turn up, raise money for our village and have fun!"

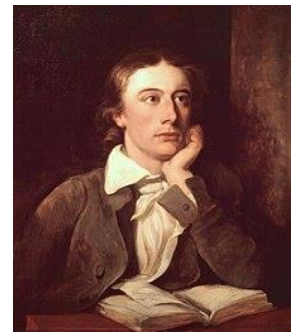
MS and GS



### Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness

'To Autumn' by John Keats

Season of mists and mellow fruitfulness,  
Close bosom-friend of the maturing sun;  
Conspiring with him how to load and bless  
With fruit the vines that round the thatch-eves run;  
To bend with apples the moss'd cottage-trees,  
And fill all fruit with ripeness to the core;  
To swell the gourd, and plump the hazel shells  
With a sweet kernel; to set budding more,  
And still more, later flowers for the bees,  
Until they think warm days will never cease,  
For Summer has o'er-brimm'd their clammy cells.



*Posthumous portrait of Keats by William Hilton, National Portrait Gallery, London (c. 1822). Wikipedia*

### An Amazing Natural Harvest

How well John Keats captured the essence of Autumn when he wrote his poem, and when you look yourself at Nature in September and October, how you can inwardly feel his appreciation of all She provides. The unusual and excessively hot and dry summer that we enjoyed this year had me wondering whether our commonly-seen flowers and then fruits would appear in any abundance this Autumn. Fortunately, Nature has a way of bouncing back from these extremes and the fruitfulness of September and October this year shows that She didn't give up at all and in fact produced an amazing and abundant natural harvest around South Leigh. This provides our wildlife with plenty of winter food as well as allowing us to return to our natural way of gathering what we eat in the way our ancestors would have done. I would like to celebrate the amazing natural diversity of this season with some of the photos I have taken on my walks in the fields around our lovely village in recent weeks. Each walk seems to reveal something new each day and I just love capturing the beauty.

Hips and Haws, familiar names of two of the most common Autumn fruits. Did you know that 'haw' is an old English term for hedge, from the Anglo-Saxon term 'haguthorn'...a fence without thorns? Hawthorn trees provide habitat and food for many natural species. Hips of course is an abbreviated term from 'rosehip'. It is commonly known that rosehips are very rich in Vitamin C containing around 426mg/100g of fruit, 0.4% by weight, and planting dog rose was encouraged post WWII to provide these fruits to make rosehip syrup to keep babies and children healthy. Who of us can remember that teaspoonful every morning at breakfast time?

### A Riddle of Nature

There's an interesting riddle relating to the dog rose, 'The Five Brethren of the Rose' which goes like this: *'On a summer's day in sultry weather, Five brethren were born together, Two had beards, two had none, And the other had but half a one'.....*the brethren refers to the 5 sepals of the dog rose, two of which are whiskered on both sides, two are quite smooth, and one whiskered on one side only.

The pits or stones in the sloes that we all love to collect and use to make sloe gin, contain trace amounts of hydrogen cyanide released from the cyanohydrins contained in the pits, which imparts the almond flavour that is so distinctive to sloe gin. Even our humble apple pips contain these chemicals; 100g of crushed apple seeds can yield about 70 mg of hydrogen cyanide. Hydrogen cyanide, by the way, is extremely poisonous, so best not to eat the pips!

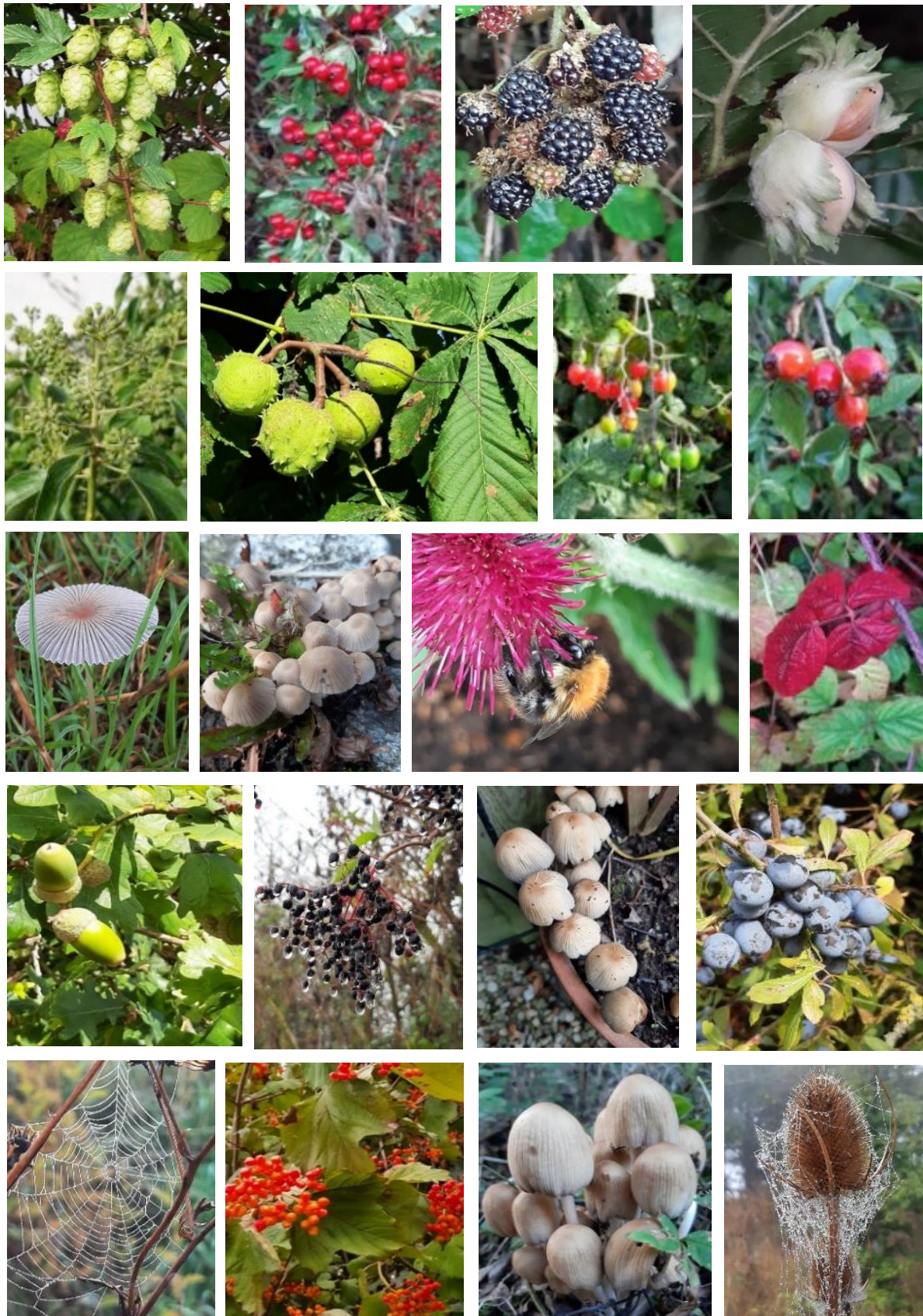
**Atropa belladonna**, the deadly nightshade produces very colourful berries in autumn after flowering. Carl Linnaeus who devised the classification system for living things in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, chose the generic name *Atropa* because of its poisonous properties, and the specific name *belladonna*, 'beautiful woman' in Italian, in reference to the cosmetic use of the plant during the Renaissance,



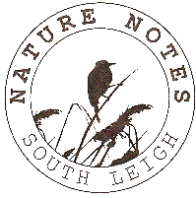
when women used the juice of the berries in eyedrops intended to dilate the pupils and make their eyes appear more seductive. Not something to try!

So here is a montage of Autumnal colour and diversity in and around South Leigh. Many of the species will be familiar to many of you, including the ones I have mentioned, so I have not included a legend to identify them, but do ask if you are curious!

*October 2022*







## Nature Notes

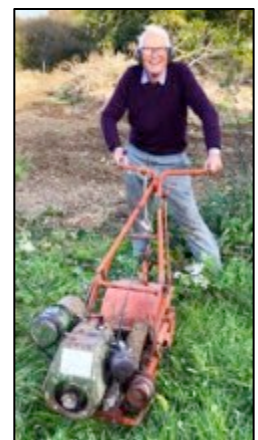
Martin Spurrier

### 'We plough the fields and scatter the good seed on the land...'

So goes the Harvest Festival hymn that was originally published in German in 1782. David Bury had kindly consented for us to plant wild flowers on the Old Crossing triangle of land where the tree root-damaged drain recently had been excavated and replaced.

In mid October, South Leigh's 'Mr. Wildflower', Graham Soame, mustered a band of workers to rotavate (below right) the land and remove the stones and tree roots to make nice 'bug hotels' at the back of the site. The area was then 'quartered' to ensure that we didn't miss any part of it and Graham sowed the seed in the oldest technique known to man, as in the photo below! In the Spring we should see another splash of colour in our village! Thanks to Graham, D'Arcy, Rita and Martin S.

And more wild flowers will appear opposite The Mason Arms on the bank of the Limb Brook. The owners of the pub, Justin and Charlie Sailsbury, kindly donated money for the plants and some tools



**DOGGED BY DIGGING ?**

Digging is one of the direst drudges that dogs the gardener. Even the most energetic digger breathes a sigh of relief when he reaches the end of a row.

But now the "Bantam", sturdiest of motor diggers, comes to the aid of desperate gardeners and gives them new hope and enthusiasm.

See it at the Chelsea Flower Show, 1950, Stand 13, Northern Road.

**THE HOWARD ROTAVATOR**

**'Bantam'**

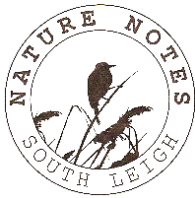
Basic Price £65

ROTARY HOES LIMITED, 131, STATION ROAD, EAST HORNDON, ESSEX. Herongate 222

and in early November a dozen patches of the bank were planted with wild daffs and wildflower plug plants. Again, thanks to Graham S. and Alan Crowder of Eynsham for preparing the ground.

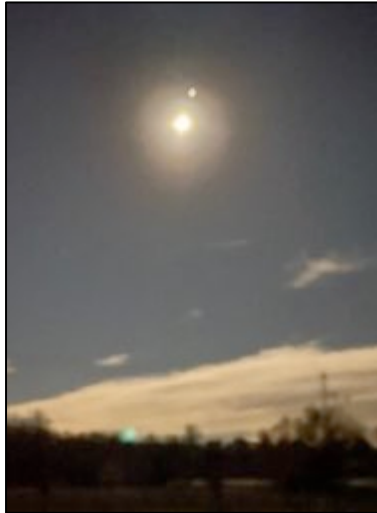
Thanks too to Teresa and Peter Grant, recruited as they passed by on their Sunday walk, and D'Arcy A-V. and Martin S. Caroline G. kindly provided the tea, coffee and Jaffa Cakes. Much appreciated.

*Our Howard 'Bantam' Rotavator dating from the 50s did the grunt work as it did recently at the church yard. The machine was conceived in 1912 by an Australian, Cliff Howard, to sort out his own garden. Friends then asked him to make one for them. Eventually he had Howard Rotavator companies in 10 countries around the world making his patented machine.*



Did you see Jupiter on 25<sup>th</sup> September and the Moon in November?

Jupiter was closest to Earth for 59 years. It is made up mostly of gas and is the largest planet in our Solar System at 11 times greater in



diameter than Earth. It was also positioned seemingly right next to the Moon (left). It takes 12 years for Jupiter to orbit the sun and was just 367 million miles from Earth in September. At its furthest point it's about 600 million miles away. The last time it was this close was in October 1963.



And while we are on matters celestial, how about the Blood Moon on 8<sup>th</sup> November (right)? There was also a lunar eclipse that night when the Sun, Earth and Moon aligned so that the Moon passed into Earth's shadow. The November full moon is called the Beaver Moon, a name given to it by Native Americans due to the heavy dam building activities of beavers in preparation for winter.

**The Limb Brook:** Following a visit in July to Watlington to see how that village has managed its stream (the Chalgrove Brook that is the only tributary of the Thames that supports a population of wild trout), work is progressing on planning a possible project to restore life to our Limb Brook. Rita S-W and Martin S. were kindly hosted by Mike Chadwick of the Watlington Environmental Group Watercourses Project.

We continue to take readings of the water pollutants in the Limb Brook and are meeting soon with TOE (Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment) regarding the scope of grants that may be available. TOE have kindly provided money twice for our Forest Restoration tree planting in and around the village.



### Forest Restoration Update from David B. and Martin S.



The current phase of the programme is complete. Thanks to grants from TOE (Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment) we were able to afford tall trees so that they are immediately visible above the hedges. Thanks too to

the Eynsham Park Estate for allowing us to plant on their land. In total we have planted more than 60 trees (see red dots) in and around the village, in addition to which are the Rachel Murphy's 1,600 trees and some 50 other private planting shown in green. We continue to source land for planting.

*Picture:* David B. and the tall trees planted within the hedges along Church End thus restoring the avenue of Elms that used to lead to the church.



# STANTON HARCOURT, NORTHMOOR, THE THAMES & ITS MEADOWS

Russell & Anne Cherry

A low level walk (with a choice of 3 pubs!). Wear stout footwear. Avoid in flood conditions.

**Distance:** 7 miles. Allow 3 hours, excluding stops.

**Parking/Start:** By roadside, Main Road, Stanton Harcourt, at sharp bend at access to school. G.R. SP414058

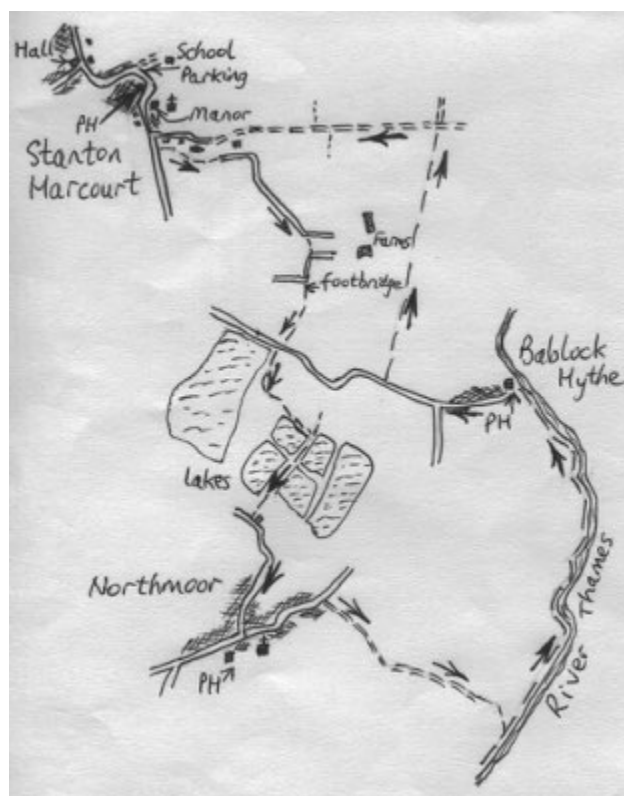
Walk on through Stanton Harcourt & after sharp R & L bends cross Steady's Lane then after 50 yds take footpath on L. Follow alongside fence beyond stile, soon bearing R for short way then maintaining original direction to join lane beyond metal gate. Go straight ahead, bearing sharp R, & later passing through open fields. At sharp L bend (leading to farms) continue straight ahead on grassy path through opening in trees (waymarker on tree) & bear slightly R to join lane corner. Now go straight on for a short way to where lane bears sharp R. Here go straight ahead on footpath, crossing footbridge to follow alongside fence into open field, then straight ahead by hedge to road.

Now go R for a few paces, then L on footpath to follow alongside high metal fencing with lake on R. The path bears sharp L away from lake & when you join another path go R, passing more lakes (Linch Hill Fishery) onto grassy path & on to join Chapel Lane. Go L here to arrive in Northmoor opposite church. The route is L, but you may wish to stop at The Red Lion (community pub), a short way to R.

Walk along road past church, then after around 150 yds beyond Causeway Cottage on R at speed limit signs take footpath (wide firm track) on R, winding its way through meadows. Where track ends at L turn into field go straight ahead on grassy path, cross brook, & bear slightly R across meadow to join Thames Path. Now go L & stay alongside river for 1 ¼ miles to reach The Ferryman Inn at Bablock Hythe, an ancient Thames crossing—a Roman ford then a ferry point for around 700 years from the late C13.

Go along road from pub car park to road junction, then continue straight ahead for about 300 yds & go along bridleway (S.P. Thames Path) on R. Stay alongside hedge on well defined waymarked route to join lane at crossways. Now go L to return you to Stanton Harcourt. Just before reaching lane end

look over gate on R for a fine view of the Manor house & associated buildings, with the Great Kitchen (square tower with octagonal top) & Pope's Tower (both C15 & Grade I Listed). Pope's Tower gets its name from the poet Alexander Pope, who stayed here in early C18 when translating Homer's Iliad & recorded his stay with a carving on a glass pane.



Retrace your steps back through village, with another glimpse of the Great Kitchen, etc. over wall. Be sure to visit the interesting & historic church off to R at sharp L bend. Parts of St. Michael's Church retain Norman features. The church contains several monuments to the Harcourt family, who have owned the Manor house & estate since the C12. Also here is the shrine of St. Edburg of Bicester, a saint from the C7; in 1537, during the Dissolution of the Monasteries, Sir Simon Harcourt saved her shrine when destroying the Bicester Priory church, & brought it here. Outside the church is a memorial stone to 2 local lovers who were killed by lightning during Pope's stay, with an epitaph written by the poet.

You now have the option of visiting The Harcourt Arms on the way back to your car. RC

# Parish Path Wardens' Update

## Reinstatement of Lost Paths

Good news for walkers who last summer found some of the cross-field footpaths in the northern part of the parish obstructed or in some cases completely hidden by mature crops. The land agent at Savills, acting for the landowner, Eynsham Park Estate, has given a written commitment to reinstate all these paths and to spray them in spring before crops reach 6 inches in height. We feel confident the intention is now there, but will monitor closely.

## A Map of Our Footpaths and Bridleways

If you haven't discovered all of the parish's traffic-free country walks yet, take a look at the interactive Ordnance Survey map at <https://osmap.online/southleigh>. Display it full-screen on your computer or smartphone and zoom in to view a more detailed map. Paths are the dashed red lines; or green dashed lines when zoomed in.

## The Season of Mud and Puddles!

In wet winter months our impermeable clay soil can make paths squelchy, muddy or even impassable. Preparations for this have included laying gravel on the two muddiest and slippery spots on the bridleway from Barnard Gate Road to Eynsham (with thanks to the Parish Council for funding and to Graham Soame with his trailer).

In the narrowest parts of Moor Lane too, deep mud can collect in the dips. So we've tried to facilitate circumvention of these dips by widening the path in the trouble-spots.

## Other repairs and improvements

Recent work by OCC's Countryside Access Team and Eynsham Park Estate includes the renovated wooden walkway next to the village hall, the removal of fallen trees across paths, and repairs to the small bridge across the Limb Brook near Shuttles (Chapel Road), the stile in the same field, and a wobbly stile near Green Farm. Another stile between Bond's Lane and Station Road is to be repaired too.

We'd also like to thank those of you who take secateurs with you on walks and help everyone by cutting back some overgrowth. Please remember though not to leave cut brambles on the ground as they can injure animals or puncture bicycle tyres.



## Village Hall

### Village Hall Committee

Dorothy Carden – Noad  
703840

John Ashwell (Treasurer)  
703534

Debi Deacon (Bookings)  
773314

David Brown  
703765

Sue Washington  
775574

Caroline Auger  
834899

### Club 100 Winners

September - Maisey Wilson and Nicky Brooks

October - Nicky Brooks and John Alexander

### VIEW FROM THE VICAR

Our desire at St James is to be a community which practises hospitality but the reality is that Covid has taken its toll on our church community, as it has many churches across the nation. We have seen some regulars move away and others not yet return because they are still isolating. This has led to a situation where the church is struggling financially and also needs some practical help with things like simple bookkeeping. We do not expect people who don't attend worship to contribute to the costs of ministry at the church, however I would ask you to consider whether you might be able to help with the fabric and maintenance costs of the building so that we can continue to keep it in good order and open for the village and the visitor.

If you would like to talk to me about any of this please do get in touch.

May you know the hospitality of friend and stranger at this time and the restoration of your spirit,

With every blessing,  
Simon



Love South Leigh  
Our Conservation Area bid

## Conservation Area Update

From the Conservation Area Steering Group: Gary Nicholls and Martin Spurrier.

One might well be forgiven for asking 'what is the latest situation regarding the Conservation Area' as it has been going on for many years!

This all started in 2016 until the West Oxfordshire District Council was unable to progress it because of a lack of resources.

South Leigh would not lie down, though, and some two years ago, we re-activated the matter with the Parish Council authorising a Working Group to investigate the level of interest among residents for another application. The overwhelming view was that we should go ahead.

The Working Group raised funds from residents and retained a Heritage Consultant to help assemble a draft submission. This was twice submitted to the Parish Council and, after various amendments and much public consultation, every letter box in the Parish received a full set of documents before a second village poll to gauge the level of residents' interest.

This latest poll in late October recorded 74% support from residents. District Councillor, Carl Rylett, (sitting left) kindly supervised the poll count (picture right).



## What's next?

So, what happens now?

The Parish Council has always reserved the right to make the final decision and that is expected to be made at the next Parish Council Meeting in late November. The 'Working Group', now called the Conservation Area 'Steering Group', and will do just that.

If the Parish Council decides to authorise the Steering Group to go to the next stage, that will involve the Parish Council submitting the updated draft application, which all residents have received, to the WODC.

That said, the WODC has not awarded Conservation Status to any area for 16 years that we are aware of and it has no permanent staff to deal with the matter but farms it out to consultants.

That does pose another problem as the consultants are on the WODC's payroll and the WODC's objectives today are very different to 16 years ago. Today, they are very much aimed at meeting new housing stock targets. However, they are obliged by law to take our Conservation Area application seriously and we shall be ensuring that this happens.

At this stage we are unable to forecast a timeframe, but please rest assured that the Steering Group will be working tirelessly to ensure fair and reasonable progress within the obligations of the law.

Thank you for your patience, and we shall keep you informed as we have done in the past.

*Gary Nicholls and Martin Spurrier*

The Parish Council's authorised Conservation Area Steering Group  
Gary Nicholls: 07920771897 and Martin Spurrier 07799368464



## LOCAL FOOD - Meet The Grower

Most of you will be aware of the little stall of home-made preserves and honey outside Windrush Cottage on Station Road. Here's some background about the producer of these delicious local products.

Heather has been growing organically all her life. She started by collecting bluebell seed when she was six years old, which she planted in her little patch in her parents garden in Leicester. The excitement of realising that "I did that!" when a small forest of green appeared next spring has never been forgotten. A series of allotment gardens, in Leicester and later in Eynsham, have supplied healthy untreated food for a whole lifetime, and a wealth of experience in horticulture and propagation. Her success with fruit created a surplus, and an instinctive abhorrence of waste prompted the creation of *Heather's Garden* range of preserves. All Heather's fruit is home-grown organically, no pesticides or other chemicals. Jams are made from whole fruit, jellies from just the juices.

A wide-ranging interest in biodiversity, wildlife and ecology ensured that at some point Heather would keep bees. Her first training was as a teenager in Leicester, though it was not until a move to Oxfordshire and the rural surroundings of South Leigh that she was in a position to pursue beekeeping as a hobby. Now the bees at Windrush Cottage forage locally for nectar to produce honey, and help to pollinate the diverse range of flowers in the gardens, verges and hedges of our locality. The bees (and Heather) welcome visitors, just ask if you would like a guided tour of the apiary in the garden of Windrush Cottage.

Now the sales blurb! With Christmas coming, jars of something local and unique could make the perfect gift, or a treat for yourself. There are some seasonal specials, such as *plums* or *pears in brandy*, and Heather generally manages small batches of *lemon curd*, made with fresh lemons, eggs from Windrush Cottage hens, honey from the bees, and English butter. If the weather is fine you will see the display outside on Station Road, though as winter approaches it will always be available inside the porch, honesty box provided. Just ring the horse bells if you need extra supplies, otherwise no need to knock.

And the awkward bit! Heather has kept preserve prices stable for 5 years, and they will remain at £3 until Christmas. But in the New Year it will be necessary to raise the price to £3.50, it can no longer be avoided. It really helps that many customers return their empty jars for re-use, the best sort of recycling.

Mentioning re-use, anyone got a collection of preserving jars in the back of the cupboard that rarely get used? Kilners, or clip-top, or any brand. Heather can fill them with summer fruit for winter treats - plums or pears or whatever - donations or bartering.

Contact:- Heather Horner, Windrush Cottage, Station Road, South Leigh, OX29 6XN

Phone 01993 357389 email [hahwindrush@aol.com](mailto:hahwindrush@aol.com)

### *Heather's Garden*

#### **Jams & Jellies @ £3 per 250g jars**

Blackcurrant Jam  
Celebration Plum Jam  
(with a dash of brandy)  
Damson Jam  
Gooseberry Jam  
Greengage Jam  
Loganberry Jam  
Raspberry Jam  
Rosepetal Jam  
(full of eastern promise, new item)

Strawberry Jam

Seville Orange Marmalade  
Marmalade with Ginger  
Lime Marmalade  
(robust flavour, all high in peel compared to commercial)

Lemon curd  
(honey from my bees, eggs from my hens, + butter)

Blackberry & Apple Jelly  
Forager Jelly  
(this year hips, haws, sloes, crabapples)  
Hedgerow Jelly  
(this year elderberries, rosehips, blackberries, crabapples)  
Honey Apple Jelly  
Medlar Jelly  
Quince Jelly  
Redcurrant Jelly  
Rosehip Jelly

#### **Honeys @£7.00 per 1lb jar**

Windrush Cottage (runny)  
Cogges Manor Farm (set)  
Cut comb – premium product 1/2 lb £7.50

#### **Ginger Vinegar**

£2 per 750ml

#### **Pears or Plums in Brandy**

Large	800g	£10
Small	500g	£ 7

# Seasonal South Leigh Recipes

Here are a few wonderfully quick and easy recipes to have at the ready over the next couple of busy months. Green grapes are available all year round but we tend to buy more over the Christmas period. They are always great with cheese, in a lunch box or added to a fruit salad, but why not try them in this beautifully simple but flavoursome savoury dish? Happy Cooking! EL

## Chicken with Green Grapes and Tarragon

Serves 4

225g seedless green grapes  
15g butter  
15ml olive oil  
4 chicken breast fillets  
150ml chicken stock  
zest and juice of one lemon  
a few sprigs fresh tarragon or 1 tsp dried tarragon (or use a sprig of rosemary)  
salt and freshly ground black pepper  
150ml single cream  
50ml dry white vermouth or white wine, optional  
chopped parsley, steamed rice (see recipe below) and green vegetables, to serve



Bring a small pan of water to the boil and plunge in the grapes. Boil for 1 minute then drain and rinse with cold water. Set aside until ready to use.

Heat the butter and oil in a large frying pan or skillet. Add the chicken breasts and cook over a medium-hot heat until they are lightly browned on both sides. Reduce the heat and add the stock, lemon zest and juice, and the tarragon (or rosemary). Season with black pepper and a little salt. Cover and simmer gently for 8-10 minutes, depending on the size of the chicken breasts. Add the grapes, cream and vermouth or white wine, if using, and heat through gently. Serve with chopped parsley, steamed rice and green vegetables.

Muscat grapes - You don't often see muscat grapes in the shops as they have a very short season, but if you do they are definitely worth buying. They have a heady, light floral, aromatic taste and smell - a little like lychees or a wonderful wine. They would be fabulous in this recipe but you won't be disappointed using simple, green, seedless grapes which are available all year round.

*Muscat Grapes © Eve Lawson*

## **Miso Salmon**

Serves 6

6 x 150g (approx.weight) salmon fillets  
1 x 200g jar white miso paste  
130g demerara sugar  
160ml sake or dry sherry  
sesame or vegetable oil  
toasted sesame seeds, optional

Mix together the miso, sugar and sake (or sherry) and pour into a flat dish, large and deep enough to lay the salmon in one layer. Place the salmon in the marinade, skin-side up. Cover and leave the fish to marinade in the fridge for up to 12 hours, no longer or the fish may become tough.

Heat the oven to 200°C / Fan 180°C / Gas 6. When ready to cook the fish line a baking tray with baking parchment and drizzle with a little sesame or vegetable oil. Lay the fish, skin-side down on the baking tray and cook for 6-8 minutes, depending on the size of the fillets. Remember, the fish will continue to cook for a little bit after you have removed it from the oven and it is important not to over-cook the salmon. Sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds, if using, and serve with rice and steamed vegetables or a lightly dressed green salad.

## **Salmon with Orange and Soy Sauce**

Serves 4

4 tbsps soy sauce  
zest and juice of two oranges  
a thumb-size piece of root ginger, finely sliced  
1 clove garlic, peeled and finely sliced  
4 spring onions, sliced  
4 x 150g (approx. weight) salmon fillets  
4 good handfuls of baby spinach leaves, washed and drained  
4 x nests of medium egg noodles, cooked according to the packet instructions.

Mix the soy sauce, zest and juice of the orange, the ginger, garlic and spring onions together and place in a flat dish, large and deep enough to lay the salmon in one layer. Add the salmon, skin-side up, cover and leave in the fridge for approximately 30 minutes or up to a day.

Preheat the oven to 200°C / Fan 180°C / Gas 6. Uncover the dish and bake for 10-15 minutes or until the fish is just firm to the touch. Remove from the heat. Place the spinach leaves in a colander and pour over boiling water to wilt them. Drain well and add to the sauce around the fish. Serve with prepared egg noodles.

## **Steamed Rice with white, black and red quinoa**

Serves 4

260g basmati rice  
140g white, black and red quinoa  
a few drops of vegetable oil  
800ml boiling water

Heat the oil in a large pan. Add the rice and quinoa and stir to coat in the oil. Add the water and bring back to the boil. Immediately cover tightly and reduce the heat. Continue to cook over a very low heat for approx. 15 minutes or until the rice is cooked. Remove from the heat and fork up the rice so it is nice and fluffy. Cover with a tea towel and keep warm until ready to serve.



## NEWSLETTER

Any opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editors.

If you are not currently on the residents' circulatory list please contact Nicky Brooks on [nicky@oxcomm.co.uk](mailto:nicky@oxcomm.co.uk) to receive important updates.

## THANK YOU, *Rita E Sawrey-Woodwards*



In September, I decided to take up the Cancer Research UK Challenge to walk 300,000 steps to raise money for ongoing research into cancer. The current statistic with regards to cancer is that 1 in 2 of us will somehow be affected by it in our lifetime, in ourselves, in our family or in our friends, so I felt it a very worthwhile endeavour. I actually walked over 380,000 steps, nearly 180 miles, in September and raised £840 in donations. Can I say a personal 'Thank you' to all those friends who generously donated to my walk.....together we have made a difference to our fight against cancer.

## QUIZ ANSWERS

1 SILENT night 2 We three Kings of ORIENT are 3 Good King WENCESLAS  
4 Away in a MANGER 5 & 10 While SHEPHERDS WATCHED their flocks by  
night 6 O come all ye FAITHFUL 7 O little town of BETHLEHEM 8 It came upon  
the MIDNIGHT clear 9 See, amid the WINTER'S snow 11 Angels from the  
REALMS of glory 12 Ding Dong MERRILY on high 13 In the bleak MIDWINTER  
14 I saw three ships come SAILING in 15 Good CHRISTIAN men rejoice 16 As  
with GLADNESS men of old 17 Christians, awake, SALUTE the happy morn 18  
God rest you merry, GENTLEMEN 19 The Angel GABRIEL 20 O CHRISTMAS  
tree

## *Heather's Garden*

### NEW SEASON WINDRUSH COTTAGE HONEY!

Difficult season, limited harvest, necessary price increase £7  
for 1lb

New range HOME-MADE PRESERVES price maintained £3  
Honesty box selection always available in porch (no need to knock)