

# South Leigh & High Cogges News

## PARISH NEWS UPDATE

Spring is coming and we would thank all those who have taken part in the various planting activities throughout the parish.

### A40 Dual Carriageway and Shores Green Junction

The A40 works remain on hold whilst OCC look further into the costings. You will have noticed that the work for the Park and Ride near Eynsham continues but that is a different project

The Improved Shores Green Junction planning application was supposed to be presented to the OCC Planning Committee last week but for unknown (to us) reasons it was cancelled at the last minute - there is no new date as yet. We have made representations to the committee regarding noise, screening traffic and lighting and asking that they give our Neighbourhood Plan due attention. We will follow this closely and keep you informed

### Anaerobic Digester

The developer has apparently submitted their application but this has to go through an internal process at WODC before it's published - we are already working behind the scenes to gather needed information but cannot do anything publicly until such time as we have sight of the full application

### Thames Water

You will know that Thames Water worked for nearly a year refurbishing the sewage tank in Lymbrook Close. Unfortunately within weeks of it reopening it was not coping with the amount of waste and between November and January was constantly discharging sewage into the Brook. We are very grateful for Dick and Rita's hard work and tenacity in keeping the pressure on Thames Water

### Precept

This is the amount of money that is given to the Parish through the local tax system. It pays for things like grass cutting, the upkeep and insurance of the village hall and any of the sundries that the village is in need of. Every year we are asked what we need to be able to fulfil this task. We have to buy all these services in and with inflation running at some 10% it was felt prudent to raise the precept by a similar amount. Details of the parish council accounts can be found on the Parish Council website.



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# PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE NICKY BROOKS



Love South Leigh  
Our Conservation Area bid

## **20mph Speed Limit on the main Roads throughout the village**

The application the Parish Council put in has been passed by the County Council. It will be a while before signs are put up and the limit can be implemented. In all honesty I don't think we expect people to travel through the village at 20mph but other villages have experience a general reduction in speed

The new Shores Green Junction (if passed) will have an effect on the amount of traffic coming though the village and OCC have agreed to install traffic calming devices after consultation. I mention this here as with the 20mph speed limit we can have this calming without adding street lights. We will be fully consulting with the Parish before any such calming methods are chosen

## **Solar Farms**

The building of the solar farm at 12 Acre farm is complete but it is yet to be connected to the grid.

The planning application for the larger development behind the Old Station has been passed by WODC but the developer has told us that its implementation will be delayed by at least 2 years because the grid has to be updated

Members of the Parish Council are always available to answer queries or help out (where we can) - do please get in touch if you would like to.

Nicky Brooks

## **South Leigh & High Cogges Conservation Area Update**

We are delighted to announce that our application for Conservation Area status has finally been submitted to the West Oxfordshire District Council (WODC).

As you know, this all started in 2016 and then re-surfaced in 2020. Since then, the topic has been on virtually every Parish Council meeting agenda and we have held numerous other meetings and two Parish polls. These gave the Parish Council a strong indication of the wide support from residents, the October 2022 poll resulting in a 74% support. The Parish Council, whose ultimate decision it was, endorsed the draft application unanimously at the November PC Meeting.

We then communicated with WODC in early December asking when and how we might present our submission (remembering that, we believe, this is the first new Conservation Area application they have received for 17 years!).

Happily, we heard back on 3<sup>rd</sup> February inviting us to submit the document that you have all received. It was duly sent by e-mail with a printed copy hand delivered to the WODC offices in Witney.

We do not know what the next steps will be, but we are pretty sure that nothing will happen very fast. That said, we have made solid progress and will keep residents informed as things develop.

Conservation Area Steering Group

Gary Nicholls 07920771897, Dick Pears 07850175729 and Martin Spurrier 07799368464

# View From The Vicar – February 2023

At this time of year every year, our hearts lift at the first signs of spring. Snowdrops, crocuses, and bluebells all herald the coming of longer, warmer, sunnier days ahead. Their bright colours stand out against the grey of winter that we have endured for the last few months. They are a joy to behold and stir a hope in our hearts that better days are coming. The world seems a slightly better place when we see their beautiful, bright colours scattered across the ground around us.



We don't have to dig too deeply to see that, although it feels (for many of us at least) like life is back to normal following the pandemic, in reality we are still experiencing the 'aftershock' impacts of Coronavirus. Add into the mix, the war in Ukraine, the earthquakes in Turkey and Syria, political and economic uncertainty, etc. and suddenly we have been made to realise that we are not in as much control as we thought we were. The world feels like it has become a darker, more uncertain place over the last few years.

But, there is Hope! Just as the snowdrops, crocuses and bluebells herald the coming of a new season, so Easter also promises us that better days are coming.

The night before he died, Jesus sat with his disciples and spoke words of comfort to them. At that point they didn't realise what was coming. But Jesus knew he was about to be arrested and crucified and so he spoke words that would comfort them and give them hope for the future. In John's Gospel Chapter 14 we read his words...

***“Do not let your hearts be troubled. You believe in God; believe also in me. <sup>2</sup> My Father's house has many rooms; if that were not so, would I have told you that I am going there to prepare a place for you? <sup>3</sup> And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come back and take you to be with me that you also may be where I am...***

***Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid..”***

***(NIV)***

Jesus' words became more meaningful in the next few days after he had died on the cross. His words are extraordinary. They speak of life beyond the grave. They give us hope that there is something more, something significant to look forward to and that Jesus wants us to be where he is!

If you want to find out more about the hope that Jesus brings us and the promises that he makes, come and join us at one of our Sunday services. We meet on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays of the month at 10:30am, we also hold an evening service at 6:30pm on the 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of the month. And of course, we'd love you to join us for our Easter Celebration on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> April at 10:30am.

May you know the Hope Jesus Christ has won for us in your life in these coming days.

God bless,

**Andy**

**Rev Andy Reid**

**Associate Vicar, Cogges & South Leigh**

# SLEIGHBELLS REPORT FEBRUARY 23

EVADNE ADRIAN-VALLANCE

Bellringers love an excuse for a Quarter Peal Attempt (45 minutes of the continuous ringing of a method). It's a physical and mental challenge and, if it is successful, an immensely rewarding team effort. Very experienced ringers sometimes go for a Peal Attempt. This takes around three hours of non-stop ringing and is the bellringers' equivalent of a marathon, requiring considerable stamina.

So it was that on the morning of Monday, 30th January, you might have heard St. James' bells going rather splendidly and for a splendid occasion. A Quarter Peal was attempted and achieved in thanksgiving and celebration of the first ten years of Simon Kirby's ministry as Vicar of Cogges and South Leigh churches, and the method chosen was, appropriately, St. Simon's Bob Doubles.

Simon commented, "It was lovely to hear the bells and I feel honoured to have had a Quarter Peal rung to mark ten

wonderful years as Vicar of St. James and Cogges. Sue and I have thoroughly



enjoyed our first decade in West Oxfordshire and look forward to what the next one will bring."

We too look forward to the next ten years of Simon's ministry here and who knows, with practices going so well and progress rattling along, perhaps we will be ready for that Peal Attempt by then!



Five ringers came from neighbouring towers (North Leigh, Kirtlington, Freeland and Bletchington) and our own Tower Captain, Heather Horner, made up the sixth.  
1 Michael Probert, 2 Steve Vickars, 3 Julie Minch, 4 Colin P Taylor, 5 Alison T Merryweather-Clarke (C), 6 Heather Horner



## CORONATION CELEBRATIONS

We certainly want to celebrate the Coronation of Charles III and his wife Camilla as King and Queen on the long weekend of Saturday, 6<sup>th</sup> May, but we are having to be very flexible about the arrangements for residents of South Leigh & High Cogges.

We assume that many will be watching the Coronation on TV on the day itself, so we are arranging activities for Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> May and Monday 8<sup>th</sup> May, which is a public holiday.

### **For your Diaries**

Provisionally, we are planning lunchtime family activities at the Village Hall on the Sunday, and morning/lunchtime fun at the bus shelter on the Monday.

The need for us to remain flexible is because while the Minister of State, Michael Gove, recently encouraged all Councils in the UK to celebrate and wrote that the National Lottery had grants available, the National Lottery said that the processing time is 12 weeks and therefore it was probably too late to plan anything requiring money!



Regardless, we submitted a comprehensive programme of activities and a request for a grant in the hope that it might be processed quicker.

So, please put the dates in your diaries. We will certainly have activities around lunchtime on both Sunday and Monday and we shall distribute more detail, soon. If the National Lottery does grant us funds sooner, as they did for the Post Covid Party at the Football Field and for the four days of partying for the late Queen's Jubilee, then we will quickly add other elements, if they are available at that very late date. Certainly, though, with or without a grant, we'll have some Coronation fun.

We'll keep you posted!  
Martin S. 07799368464

### **Bartholomew Players present: "A Bunch of Amateurs" by Ian Hislop and Nick Newman**

Keen to boost his flagging career, fading Hollywood action hero Jefferson Steele arrives in England to play King Lear in Stratford – only to find that this is not the birthplace of the Bard, but a sleepy Suffolk village. This play is a heartwarming, hilariously dramatic twist of events.

**Venue:** Eynsham Village Hall, Back Lane, Eynsham, OX29 4QW

**Dates:** Wed 17th, Thurs 18th, Fri 19th and Sat 20<sup>th</sup> May 2023

**Doors open:** 7.00pm, Performance: 7.30pm **Tickets:** £10.00

**Available:** online from <https://www.trybooking.co.uk/CCIR> in advance from Evenlode DIY in Eynsham, from [bart.players@gmail.com](mailto:bart.players@gmail.com), or on the door

**Website:** [www.bartholomewplayers.co.uk](http://www.bartholomewplayers.co.uk)



## CHRISTMAS CHEER AGAIN

After a gap because of Covid, the Village Christmas Luncheon was back at the Village Hall on Sunday 4<sup>th</sup> December and was a great success.

Some 40 residents attended to enjoy an amazing Christmas spread with all the trimmings. A huge thanks to the Village Hall Committee and all who contributed, in particular Jane Lewis, Karen Wilson, Amanda Irving and Richard Law. Thank you, it really was an amazing lunch!

## Bridewell Gardens

Bridewell Gardens provides a mental health recovery service for West Oxfordshire, supporting people who have experienced severe and enduring mental illness. Bridewell is a creative and inspiring walled garden and vineyard where people can find hope in recovery, gardening and working with nature.

We look forward to sharing our beautiful gardens with you this year.

Bridewell's plant sale will be held on Saturday the **29<sup>th</sup> April 10am to 1pm** where you can browse a wide variety of perennial plants for sale in our stock bed avenue. Please note – the walled garden will not be open during the plant sale.

The walled garden and vineyard are open to the public for our Open Days: **Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> May, 18<sup>th</sup> June, 16<sup>th</sup> July, 10<sup>th</sup> September 11am-4pm**

Pop-up café in the garden for tea and cake. High quality plants for sale, home produced jams and chutneys and our acclaimed organic sparkling wine. Make a day of it, bring a picnic blanket and relax in the vineyard with friends and family. Speak to Bridewell staff about the recovery service and the support provided at the gardens. Dogs on leads are very welcome. Families and children are encouraged to explore the site.

No booking required. Suggested donation £5 per person.

Bridewell Gardens, The Walled Garden, Wilcote, Oxfordshire OX7 3DT

# THAMES WATER SEWER BLOCKAGES



**Thames Water have had several instances of blockages in South Leigh in the sewer network which has meant restricted use of facilities. Sewer misuse can also lead to pollution in the environment. They found that the blockages had been caused by wipes, other materials, such as fat and grease that shouldn't be flushed down drains.**

When anything other than the 3Ps (Pee, Poo, toilet Paper) ends up in a waste pipe, it can create a blockage. Blockages restrict the waste water flow and may cause raw sewage to back up into houses or gardens and reach rivers and watercourses, potentially harming

the environment.

We can all help prevent blockages by binning anything other than the 3Ps and disposing of cooking oil in the right way.

Thames Water serves almost a hundred Local Authorities' areas. Some of them have a cooking oil collection: e.g. Reading Council, Bracknell Forest Council...

For more information consult your Local Authority.

## WET WIPES

Wet wipes cause sewer blockages in your neighbourhood - they're unflushable even if they say 'flushable'. This includes baby wipes, body wipes, make-up wipes, toilet wipes and household cleaning wipes. Do flush away pee, poo and toilet paper. Don't flush away wet wipes, tampons or sanitary pads. Blockages can cause raw sewage to back up into people's homes, and nobody wants that in the neighbourhood. So, please – put wipes in the bin where they belong.

Enter your postcode to learn more about tackling blockages in your local area: [thameswater.co.uk/wetwipeform](https://thameswater.co.uk/wetwipeform)

## QUIZ

Unravel the anagrams to solve these teasers. Answers appear elsewhere here.

- |  |                               |
|--|-------------------------------|
| 1 RIPS SURE shock                          | 7 WIDE FLEX species of plant  |
| 2 SURE RATES valuables                     | 8 SILENT DANCE secret         |
| 3 EDEN STRIP leader                        | 9 PAPER SHOOT it's seen here! |
| 4 HARE WET.....due to rain or sleet may be | 10 GOAT BASE wreck            |
| 5 NINE RAGS tips for tax purposes          | 11 RAISE ON TAP split         |
| 6 DIRE ALES hope made fact                 | 12 LONER SPUD blaze of glory  |

## 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.



## OUR SILENT LITTER PICKER EXTRAORDINAIRE

If you have ever fumed at the sight of the litter just thrown mindlessly along our verges, we all need to be thankful to one person in particular who spends her time walking our lovely countryside picking up rubbish as she goes.

You may have seen the dark green litter bags neatly parked here and there on the road side throughout the Parish for the Council to collect. These are the fruits of Janet Soame's work.

Janet, who has been litter picking for six years, said, "I think of it more as a love of walking for physical and mental health and a love of nature. Picking up litter has become the knock-on action to be able to enjoy walking and nature without feeling like you are battling through a human infested wasteland".

"Annual Litter Blitzes are nice and productive but if a lot of people who enjoy walking were also to take a bag and a picker en route on their existing walks, a small community



*(Picture: Janet and a month of other people's rubbish).*

could be kept litter free relatively effortlessly". In January alone Janet collected 22 bags and in February 25. Each bag weighs about 10 Kgs, so that's some 235 Kgs per month. You can work out the total weight of rubbish over a year for yourself, but it is more than a ton!

What a Silent Heroine! Thank you, thank you, Janet, your silent work is much appreciated by us all.

## NOT NICE !

On the night of 8th February, a very unpleasant thing happened in our Parish. Two life-size brass statues were stolen from Ken and Nicky Brooks' garden at Church End.

Ken wrote in the WhatsApp *South Leigh Chat* the following morning, "Very sadly we were robbed last night. Someone (really two or more people ) took the gate to the churchyard off its hinges and then manhandled the life size ornamental deer we had by the pond adjacent to the church. I suspect they parked a delivery van at the entrance to the church.

"Obviously, it was planned rather than opportunistic which in some ways makes it worse. I must say it never occurred to me someone would go through the churchyard!

"We've told the police and apart from this note being a warning to everyone I also wonder whether anyone saw anything suspicious yesterday. I doubt there's any CC TV but I live in hope. We've lived here since 1989 and nothing has ever been stolen before."

If you saw anything suspicious or might have any video or door phone video footage, please let Nicky know on 01993 701137. Thank you.





## Power to your Elbow!

The Parish Council (PC) and the Village Hall Committee recently agreed to establish the Village Hall (VH) as a Community Emergency Centre.

This followed the extensive power cut last year and warnings from the National Grid that the UK 'could face a series of power cuts during the winter of 2022-23 if energy supplies are severely constrained'.

Accordingly, the Chair of the PC applied to our power company, SSE, for a grant to buy a generator so that we can be prepared for the worst. In this she was successful, for which *thank you SSE*.

In the meantime, the PC had prepared an Emergency Plan, with all relevant contact telephone numbers and immediate actions to be undertaken and by whom in the event of a crisis, and this was endorsed by the WODC.

A qualified electrician then surveyed the VH in early February and will be installing the cabling and switch gear on 27-29th March.

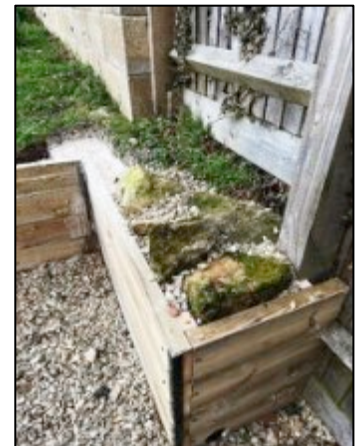
The survey involved estimating the amount of power needed to keep the VH running as near as usual in the event of a power cut so that the Community Emergency Centre will be able to offer a warm, lit and safe environment. The generator selected produces 7.5 Kw, so the only restriction will be the electric oven and, maybe, the dish washer. The gas hob will remain fully operative as will the gas heating and all the lighting and power points for laptops and phone charging. There will also be freezer space available, especially for temperature-critical medicines.



Martin S. was asked to steer this project and has liaised closely with the PC and the VH Committee. The generator and a suitable shed were sourced and acquired and the VH Committee decided where it was to be sited. Accordingly, a section of the sloping lawn next to the terrace was proposed and dug away by John A., Chair of the VH Committee, and Martin.

As at going to press, the site has been prepared, a retaining wall built, the generator has been delivered, and the flat-packed shed in which it will be housed and secured has been assembled is half painted. Once the electrician has performed his magic, and a number of key people instructed in operating generator and its monthly test runs, our Community Emergency Centre will be ready by the beginning of April.

Martin S.





### Life goes on

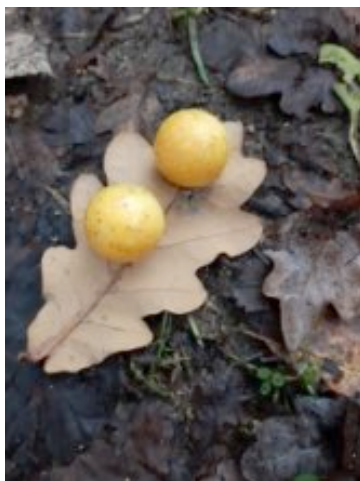
By Rita E Sawrey-Woodwards

The winter months from November through to February seem to not provide the flourish of Life in all its forms that Spring and Summer display. It is not so obviously visible, not so colourful; and yet there is so much to reassure us that Life of all sorts is happening in abundance; we only have to notice it.

Take the silken threads used by spiders to create their traps to capture their prey. A cold morning with the dew reveals the beautiful orb, lacy matted and sheet webs recently created by species of diligent spiders, themselves invisible but the evidence of their presence clear to see.



Then there are the oak apples that develop on oak leaves, seemingly lifeless, but in fact, a tiny wasp, *Biorhiza pallida*, has laid batches of eggs in the young buds of the oak, injecting venom at the same time. This has caused the leaf tissues to swell and soften. The eggs have hatched and the larvae have secreted further substances that have encouraged plant growth and globular galls to form. The gall provides a nutritious, protective environment and there may be as many as thirty larvae developing inside. Males and females emerge from different galls after two to three months.



What about the lichenised fungi? These are composite organisms arising from an association between a fungus and either an alga or a cyanobacterium, or even between all three, in a symbiotic relationship. Symbiosis describes the ecological interaction between two or more species where each species benefits. They come in many colours, sizes, and forms and are sometimes plant-like, but they are not plants. Here are some examples of lichenised fungi growing locally, often on tree branches or tree trunks. It is easy to ignore them, but they are a fascinating life form.



And finally, footprints. The soft wet mud allows us to see the animals whose travels have taken them on routes that we frequent. The deer footprints are clear to see and sometimes, you may find those of a wandering fox, though they are tricky to differentiate between those of our domestic dogs; the fur print between the pads evident with fox prints is often the defining feature.



So, there is Life happening all around us, even in Winter, as my photos show. Enjoy your walking and observing. Finally, Nature can throw up some amusing images. This was a tree trunk. Was I being watched or what?!



## Nature Notes

### More trees planted. A visit from Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment. *Jo's Little Meadow* set up.

Martin Spurrier

Another 270 trees have been planted in the village in the last quarter and the Operations Manager of Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (TOE) came to see the trees that the Trust has funded over the last three years.

Following our tree-planting story in the last edition of *South Ligh & High Cogges News*, the 270 trees are in the form of new mixed native hedgerow at two very visible sites.



Thanks to Rachel Murphy, who had cleared away the dead wood from the hedgerow at Church End opposite the village green, Rachel, her uncle Paul, Graham and Martin S. planted 90 whips there (Left) kindly provided by Ovo's 'I dig trees' scheme. The clearing of the hedge line has opened up a lovely winter view of Church End from Margery Cross.

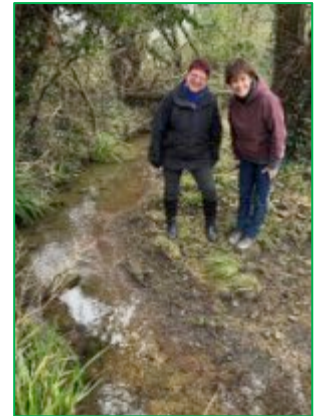
**TOE Visit** On 25<sup>th</sup> January, Rachel Sanderson, Operations Manager of TOE, was our guest. We showed her the Phase One trees planted at the

Football Field (below left with Martin S. and David B.), along Chapel Road

and in Stanton Harcourt Road. We have worked with Rachel on funding since we set up the *South Leigh Forest Restoration* group in 2020 and she has been most helpful. We have been awarded two TOE grants since then. While she was here, we also showed her the Limb Brook (Above right: Rachel and Rita S-W opposite the pub) from where it rises in the Parish to where it leaves. She provided us with invaluable contacts and information with regard to our ambition to restore the stream to its former natural glory. Rita, David B. and Martin S. said 'thank you' to Rachel with lunch in the pub.



**More Light for the Limb Brook** On the 29th January, we continued to cut back the hedge that was overhanging the stream opposite the Mason Arms in order to bring light into the stream. New life is already showing in the water following the efforts of the November work party, although there are other pollution issues that we are addressing. As we go to press the snow drops are popping their heads up along the bank and, soon, the other seeds and bulbs should start to say 'hello'! Thank you Graham, Peter, D'Arcy V, Valerie, Eve, and Heather with Caroline supplying the coffee and biscuits.



**The Old Crossing will be a splash of colour** We are thrilled to report that the triangle of land at the Old Crossing junction that was owned by Jo Wilson and was recently cleared for drainage work, now has a lovely new hedge. This follows the sowing of wildflowers there in October (See last Newsletter).

The 180 hedging whips were kindly provided by Eynsham Nature Recovery Network with from funds from Natural

England and help from Rachel S., and were planted on 15<sup>th</sup> February by a team of residents under Graham S's guidance. Here, for the first time since they recently became available, Graham acquired rabbit guards that are bio-degradable. We shall always try to use bio-degradable shelters in future. Their life is for 5-7 years. Thank you Heather, Marie-Therese, Rita, Valerie, D'Arcy, David B, Martin S, and Graham, plus Eynshamites Alan Crowder and Yip, with Caroline again providing the 'meals on wheels'. Sincere thanks and apologies for any omissions.

## Rays of Light!

Things were getting back to normal in December last year!

To prove it, on the dark and chilly night of Friday, 2<sup>nd</sup> December at 6.30 pm on the dot, Ray Agg's house burst into an amazing blaze of light with countless fairy lights of every colour and, not the least, three inflatable penguins riding a polar bear on the garage roof. Things were definitely back to normal in Lymbrook Close!



Residents clustered around the roaring brazier and hot buns and other goodies were handed around. Christmas was certainly on its way. Thank you, Ray.

## Bus shelter makes national news!

Can you believe it, our formerly disused bus shelter in its 15<sup>th</sup> Edition made it onto BBC Radio Oxford, into the local press and was featured on ITV's National News on 16<sup>th</sup> January?

Unsolicited, BBC Radio Oxford ran a story on the Chinese New Year-themed shelter only to be followed up through our own media contacts by the Oxford Mail and then ITV, which sent a film crew to cover the story! Fame at last! If you haven't seen the ITN 2.5-minute newscast, just let me know, Martin S. 07799368464. Stand by for Easter and the Coronation arriving at the bus shelter, soon!

Below: The BBC Radio Oxford Arietta Martin and Nicky Brooks are on camera with ITN's Natalie Varney website



# OXFORD CANAL, BLETCHINGDON, HAMPTON GAY & CHERWELL VALLEY

by Russell & Anne Cherry



**Distance:** 5 ½ miles. Allow 3 hours. Wear stout footwear.

**Parking/Start:** Opposite homes & Smiths depot on slip road off A4095, Enslow. G.R. SP479183

**N.B.** The 2 pubs shown on route on O.S. map are currently closed!

Go on from car & then L (S.P. Lower Heyford) onto Oxford Canal towpath, soon with River Cherwell close on L before reaching Enslow Marsh Sedgebed (information board). Kingfishers are often seen along stretch to Pigeons Lock. The red tiled Three Pigeons was once a pub, & there has been a mill on the site of Flights Mill beyond since early C13.

The Oxford Canal was constructed over 20 years from the Coventry end to bring coal from the Midlands to London via Oxford & the Thames. The canal was officially opened on 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 1790, & the next day the first boatload of coal arrived at Oxford.

Cross bridge at lock & 50 yds after bearing L take track (bridleway) on R (no waymarker!) to climb by hedge & golf course. Pass farm buildings on L, cross drive, & bear slightly R by hedge to reach road. Go L for 100 yds or so & take footpath on R (S.P. Bletchingdon) straight across field to footbridge. Maintain your direction across next field to hedge, then go diagonally L across field to metal gate. Stay on same line & at top of rise the path bears R to modern development on edge of Bletchingdon. Continue in same direction, in front of houses on L, passing between Play Area & car park to exit at road junction with village green ahead. Pass to R of green (seats here) & go along Oxford Road on R, & just beyond allotments on R take footpath ( S.P. Hampton Gay), bearing L across long field to gate then stile (waymarker) & follow alongside furthest farm buildings.

Go through gate in fence on L just past buildings, then 2<sup>nd</sup> gate (waymarker) onto track, where go R for 100 yds & then L at opening for 40 yds to line of gates through paddocks (waymarked route) off to R. If you prefer, use alternative route round paddocks to last gate, per notice here. Then head across field, on same line as route

through gates & keeping parallel with wood on R, to cross stile with fine view of Hampton Gay ahead in its setting & Shipton-on-Cherwell & Cherwell Valley to R. The path bears L & down to pass through gate in hedge. Now go between 2 telegraph poles in field to gate onto lane at Hampton Gay. Go R then stay on same line across field (not off to R) to pass in front of the ruins of the Elizabethan Hampton Gay Manor.

Hampton Gay was once a much larger settlement than now, but agricultural depression led to population decline from around 100 to just a handful today. Beyond the manor stood a flourishing paper mill, producing a ton of paper a day in the C19. The mill was destroyed by fire in 1887, as was the Manor later that year. At that time the Manor was sub-divided & the mill owner lived here. The mill owner had already received insurance money following fires at the mill, & the insurers were apparently suspicious about the Manor fire & so no money was paid out.

Bear R beyond Manor enclosure to Hampton Gay church. The route is through gate (waymarked), but firstly enter churchyard via gate to L of stone wall, pass in front of church then R to see the headstone of 19 year old Benjamin Taylor of Wolverhampton, whose life ended tragically nearby on Christmas Eve 1874. This young man was among 34 killed & 60 injured in what was then the worst railway accident in history. On that bitterly cold fateful day, with deep snow & penetrating frost, several carriages on a Paddington to Wolverhampton train came off the rails with many going down the embankment & some ending up in the iced-up canal.

Return to route at gate, then bear diagonally L across field to drop down to the River Cherwell. Pass under railway bridge, then along waymarked path across meadows & bridge over river to head towards Shipton-on-Cherwell church, to reach canal bridge to R. The route here is R on towpath, but if you wish to visit church then cross bridge to gate into churchyard.

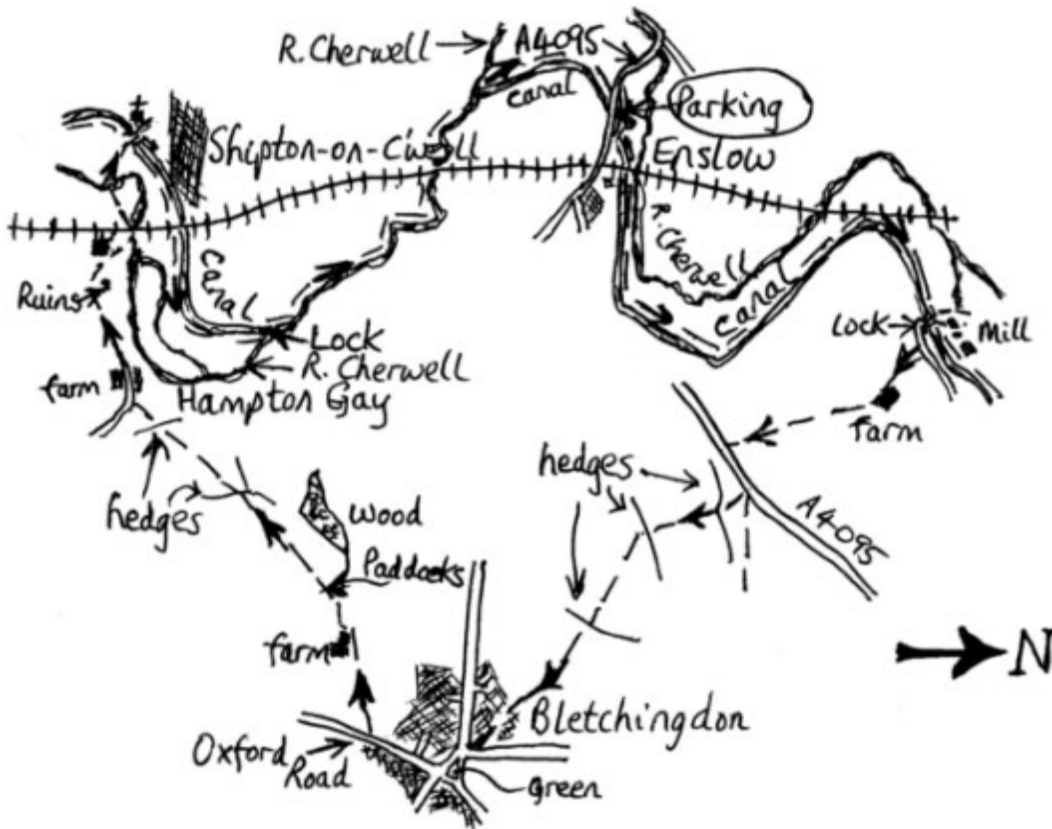
# OXFORD CANAL, BLETCHINGDON, HAMPTON GAY & CHERWELL VALLEY

by Russell & Anne Cherry

Along towpath at end of housing you pass red brick bridge supports of the former branch line that ran to Blenheim & Woodstock station, opposite the Palace entrance gates on Oxford Road. The last train ran in 1954. You then go under railway again (site of 1874 disaster) & on to Shipton Weir Lock.

When the canal reached Banbury work stopped for 8 years & another Act of Parliament was required to raise more money. Shipton Weir Lock is 1 of 2 diamond shaped locks south of Banbury, allowing the passing of similar quantities of water to larger locks without the expense of larger gates, & also allowing more boats to pass through at a time. For the next ¾ mile the canal & river are one—another measure of economy.

You then cross arch bridge, pass Bakers Lock & moored boats with the dishes of Whitehill Satellite Earth Station ahead, Go under road bridge then bear L back to your car.



## Village Hall

### Village Hall Committee

Dorothy Carden-Noad  
703840

John Ashwell (Treasurer)

703534

Sam Kelaher (Bookings)

07583 930145

David Brown

703765

Sue Washington

775574

Caroline Auger

834899

### Club 100 Winners

December Jake Lowry and Evadne Vallance

# Seasonal South Leigh Recipes

There may not be much in the garden just yet but frozen vegetables are always a good standby. These two recipes can use either fresh or frozen vegetables, depending on what is available. Don't hesitate to vary the recipes - try kale or cavolo nero in place of spinach and when the wild garlic is out, use that instead. As soon as the garden chives emerge from their winter hibernation, add a handful of chopped chives to the fritter mixture - they will look and taste delicious!

## One Pot Honey, Mustard & Garlic Chicken

Serves 2

4 chicken thighs, skin on but trimmed of excess fat  
1 tblsp honey  
1 tblsp wholegrain mustard  
2 garlic cloves, peeled and crushed  
zest and juice of 1 lemon  
300g new potatoes, washed and left whole if small,  
halved or quartered if large  
sea salt and black pepper  
1 tblsp olive oil  
100g frozen peas  
a few handfuls of spinach leaves



© Eve Lawson

Heat the oven to 200° C / Fan 180° C / Gas 6. Place the chicken, skin side up, in an oven-proof dish that will be big enough to fit all the ingredients fairly snugly. Mix together the honey, mustard, garlic and the lemon zest and juice and pour over the chicken thighs. Squeeze the potatoes in between the chicken pieces then season with a little salt and pepper, drizzle with oil and roast in the oven for about 35 - 40 minutes.

Check that the potatoes are soft and the chicken skin is nicely browned, then toss in the peas and green leaves, giving the dish a little shake to allow the peas to settle into the sauce. Return to the oven for 2 - 3 more minutes until the green leaves have wilted and the peas are hot.

## Crispy Sweetcorn Fritters

Makes about 10

250g frozen sweetcorn kernels, defrosted (equivalent to two fresh corn cobs)  
5 tblsp cornmeal or polenta  
1 tblsp flour  
1 tblsp cornflour  
Sea salt  
2 eggs  
100ml milk  
Pinch of chilli flakes (optional)  
Vegetable oil, for frying

Take 50g of the sweetcorn kernels and whizz into a purée with a stick or mini blender. Combine the cornmeal, flour, cornflour and a good pinch of salt in a large bowl. Whisk together the eggs and milk, then stir into the dry ingredients. Add chilli flakes, if using, then stir in the sweetcorn purée and the whole kernels to coat in the batter.

Heat a little oil in a frying pan and when fairly hot, but not smoking, drop rounded spoonfuls of the mixture into the pan. Lower the heat slightly and fry until golden brown on the underside, then carefully turn over and cook the second side. Repeat, cooking batches until all the mixture is used. Serve hot.



## 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@southleighandhighcogges-pc.gov.uk](mailto:nicky@southleighandhighcogges-pc.gov.uk)

to receive important updates.

## COPY DEADLINES

**18th May**

**18th August**

**18th November**

## QUIZ ANSWERS

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