

# THE OXHILL NEWS

April 2022 No. 569



Walking around the village I surprised Martin Hunt who was busy pruning the roses in the church yard. Thank you Martin, and all the villagers who kindly tend our community spaces. ~ ed.

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## CLUB & GROUP CONTACT DETAILS

Carers4carers:	kcarers4carers@gmail.com or tel: 07947 893504
Oxhill Village Hall:	Jo Collings - Chair - 01295 680215 Ali Sayer - Hall Hire - 07970 922352 email: village-hall@oxhill.org.uk
The Peacock Pub	01295 688060
Tysoe Tennis Club:	Club Secretary: Carol Spencer email: carol.spencer234@hotmail.co.uk
Warwickshire Mobile Library:	01926 851031
WOT2Grow Community Orchard:	Liz Atkinson (680045), Paul Sayer (680451), Sue & Mike Sanderson (688080) www.wot2grow.co.uk

**If you would like to list your club or group in the Oxhill News  
please send details to [oxhill@btinternet.com](mailto:oxhill@btinternet.com)**

## CARING FOR FINCHES

*The words below were posted by Steve MacRae on the OWLS (Oxhill Wildlife Society) Facebook page. The post is republished in the Oxhill News because the advice benefits our villagers in how they care for our wild birds. ~ ed.*

I have seen, in my garden, 2 or 3 chaffinches clearly suffering from a well known bird parasite (*trichomonis gallinae*), and have found a further 2 dead chaffinches. This is, sadly, a fairly common parasite and particularly affects finches, especially green finches and chaffinches. Unfortunately once a bird is afflicted there is little that can be done to help. There are a few clear indications of infection to look out for. The bird will appear to have puffed up feathers, will likely be lethargic to the extent you can approach closely, and will have difficulty eating. Affected birds are also likely to be on their own.

The good news is that it is relatively straightforward to reduce the spread of this parasite.

**If you have bird feeders or a bird table, keeping these clean by washing periodically will kill the parasite.**

And since chaffinches prefer to eat on the ground, **it is essential to relocate feeders and tables, as the birds will eat food that's fallen from them.**

Both the BTO and RSPB have helpful information on this on their websites and I attach a couple of links below.

Please do what you can to help stop the spread of this, it is capable of wiping out an entire local population of finches within a couple of months, and we are about to enter the breeding season.

Thanks!

*Steve MacRae*



*Trichomonas gallinae affects bird's digestive system. It typically affects finches, and doves and pigeons. though any bird can catch the infection*

*Find out more at The British Trust for Ornithology or The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.*



## ST LAWRENCE CHURCH

As April comes, so Easter draws near- the highlight of the Christian year when the darkness and despair of Good Friday are replaced by the hope and excitement of new life: that acknowledgement that God has defeated all the worst things that can befall us, and offers us new life and a new beginning.

In the midst of the devastation and onslaught of Ukraine, not to mention the continuing covid crisis, how much, more than ever, do we need to know that God is in control; he is not dead, but lives, and brings new life to all.

### **Services in March & April – in St Lawrence Church unless otherwise stated.**

Sunday March 27 <sup>th</sup>	3.30pm	Mothering Sunday Service with tea and cake afterwards
Sunday April 3 <sup>rd</sup>	9.30am	Holy Communion
Sunday April 10 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Palm Sunday Holy Communion

### **HOLY WEEK**

Monday April 11 <sup>th</sup>	9.00pm	Compline – Late evening Prayer
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Maundy Thursday April 14 <sup>th</sup>	7.00pm	Holy Communion followed by vigil at <b>St. Mary's Church, Tysoe</b>
Good Friday April 15 <sup>th</sup>	7:30pm	Tenebrae - a service of light and shadows in which to watch with Jesus in <b>St. Mary's Church, Tysoe</b>
Easter Sunday April 17 <sup>th</sup>	9.30am	Easter Celebration
Sunday April 24 <sup>th</sup>	6.30pm	Evening Worship



Love unending  
 hung on a cross  
 quietly dying,  
 dying for me.

Love unending  
 close by my side  
 secretly walking  
 walking with me

Love unending  
 risen and free  
 joyously dancing  
 dancing in me. *Pat Marsh.*



# *Church of St Lawrence, Oxhill*

*Notice is hereby given* that the draft 2022 Electoral Roll of the Church of St Lawrence is on display on the Church notice board and, subject to any amendments, will be presented to the forthcoming Annual Parochial Church Meeting at the Old Chapel at 2.30pm Thursday 28th April All persons supportive of our village church who wish to have their names entered on the roll and who are not already included thereon are asked to complete the application form and return it to the Electoral Roll Officer, Douglas Nethercleft, before 28th April when the final version will be displayed.

The PCC would like to have a buoyant Electoral Roll – eligibility for inclusion thereon is simply a matter of having been baptised, considering oneself to be ‘C of E’, and being resident in the parish of Oxhill. If you haven’t enrolled already, please do so and / or become a Friend of St. Lawrence’s Church by joining the Parish Giving Scheme. The necessary (short!) forms are at the back of the church.

## ELECTION OF CHURCHWARDENS

\* \* \* \* \*

Notice is hereby given of a meeting of the parishioners at 2.30pm Thursday 28th April in the Old Chapel for the purpose of electing Churchwardens.

All persons whose names are on the Church Electoral Roll or the Parliamentary Electoral Roll of the Parish are entitled to attend and vote at the meeting.

## NOTICE OF THE ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

\* \* \* \* \*

This meeting, at which all on the Church Electoral Roll are entitled to vote, will take place after the Election of Churchwardens. An agenda for this APCM will be distributed at the meeting or is available on request.

There will then follow a very brief PCC meeting to elect the officers of the Council.

*Douglas Nethercleft*  
(Electoral Roll Officer)

# CHURCH FUNDRAISING TEAM

## Afternoon Tea with Prosecco

We are very much looking forward to seeing you at our **Afternoon Tea with Prosecco on Sunday 8th May at 3pm, in the Old Chapel**. As usual, the bakers of Oxhill will be donning their aprons, whisking sponges and icing fairy cakes in preparation for this delicious spectacle.

Do you have a favourite cake? Would you like it baked to enjoy as part of your Afternoon Tea with a glass of Prosecco, or tea if you prefer? If so, then book your place straightaway! The first three people to reserve tickets will have the opportunity to choose a cake (within reason) that they would like to see served at the Afternoon Tea. There will be scrumptious sandwiches as well as delectable home baked cakes of the highest standard as only the magnificent bakers of Oxhill can provide, all for the most reasonable price of £10 per adult ticket to include a glass of Prosecco, £5 for school age children and free for under 5s.

We are restricted on how many people we can accommodate so please reserve your tickets as soon as possible.

Contact Ruth Mercer on 07400 615999 or email [ruthc.mercer@btinternet.com](mailto:ruthc.mercer@btinternet.com).

## TOOLS WITH A MISSION (TWAM)



A person sitting at a desk Description automatically generated with medium confidence We are still looking for your second-hand tools for TWAM, we refurbish them, put them into trade packs e.g. Carpenter, Tailor etc.

We send them to third world countries, were prospective personnel are trained for up to six months in one these skills. On successful completion they a given a trade pack for them to take back to their village to provide an income for their family.

View [www.twam.uk/donatetools](http://www.twam.uk/donatetools) for tolls we are looking for.

Please contact Jim Saxton 07748324934 or [jims@twam.uk](mailto:jims@twam.uk)



## Celebrate in Oxhill on June 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, 2022!

Thank you to everyone who came to one of the two presentations we held in early March. As well as presenting the plans we have made, we asked people to volunteer to help in some way during the celebrations, and many people signed up. Thank you! We can only have a successful celebration with plenty of support from volunteers.

Tickets are selling very well; if you haven't ordered yours yet, please complete and return the form that came in March's Oxhill News, or email [oxjub@btinternet.com](mailto:oxjub@btinternet.com) for a digital copy. The ticket price covers **all** the food and events of the 2.5 days: the beacon lighting and torchlit procession, the Big Lunch, tea and cake followed by Happy Herefords burgers / hotdogs plus all the entertainment. Tickets are available exclusively to Oxhill residents until **April 5th** to give every villager the opportunity to get tickets, so get yours now! If the event isn't sold out by then, guest tickets for friends and family will be available to buy. Please indicate on the form if you would like to be put on the waiting list for guest tickets. First come, first served!

By now, you should have had a visit from a form collector but, if you have missed them, completed forms can be emailed or posted through any of the following doors:

Grenville Moore, Peacock House, Main Street  
Gaynor Fila, Primrose Cottage, Back Lane  
Patrick and Verity O'Donnell, 2 The Leys, Whatcote Road  
Geof and Rachel Beesley, 3 Orchard Close  
Joanne Griffiths, The Maples, Main Street  
Lis Stuart, Oak View, Green Lane  
Ruth Mercer, Struan, Whatcote Road  
Lucy Mercer, 16 Leys Field

Thank you for your continuing support.

Contact [oxjub@btinternet.com](mailto:oxjub@btinternet.com) or call 07400 615999 if you have questions, and please follow us on our Facebook page, Oxhill Celebrates the Queen's Platinum Jubilee!



# OXHILL VILLAGE HALL

**Quiz Night** - thank you to everyone who attended the quiz. We had an excellent set of questions set by Sue Philpott and Iain Macpherson kept good order as question master. At the end of the evening The Zombies won by a small margin. During the evening we held a small raffle & have sent the proceeds of £82.50 to the Disaster Emergency Committee Ukraine.



*Quiz Night. Photo by Dominic Connolly*

**Saturday April 23rd** is St. George's Day so we are holding a Best of British Evening, sausage & mash followed by something deliciously sweet! It's a 7.30pm start, please book well in advance with either Ali ([ali.sayer@btinternet.com](mailto:ali.sayer@btinternet.com)) or Jo, price £15 per head.

Phased work on the hall extension is progressing with the footings now underway & the drains going in. The application to the "National Lottery Awards for All" has resulted in a grant of £10,000 which should be in our bank account soon. The larger bid to the "National Lottery Community Fund" which involves much more detailed work has now been submitted for the second stage and I'm grateful to our local builders who have helped with estimates for the bulk of the building work. Again I ask if you have any skills you feel would be useful to please get in touch. We need some younger volunteers to help with the manual work.

Lastly keep the date **Saturday 3rd September** for a village fete to be held at Newborough House. This was planned & postponed twice due to the pandemic but we hope will finally go ahead this year. More details later.

*Jo Collings*  
*Chair Of Trustees OVH*

email: [itsjocollings@gmail.com](mailto:itsjocollings@gmail.com)

*Villager Ros Henry was recently interviewed for the Oxhill News. Below are extracts from the interview compiled from an audio tape and material from research done by Ros about her father. ~ Vanessa, editor.*



*Ros Henry attending the village Christmas Lunch 2014.*

## **ROS HENRY**

I was born in 1929 in England, but I lived in Malaysia until I was seven, as my father managed a rubber estate in the state of Johore. Malaysia was beautiful in those days. It was all jungle, rubber estates and palm oil estates. Johore was ruled by a Sultan with a council, of which my father was a member, so he took part in the government as well as working there.

I went back to Malaysia with my husband sometime in the 1980's and visited the plantation. The bungalow wasn't there anymore. The present estate manager was Chinese as they all are now. He entertained us to lunch and showed me around. There was very much less jungle, but otherwise it was much the same. The smell was also exactly the same. When I encountered the smell, I was just back again.

I went to boarding school in Malaysia until I was seven. It was a little boys and girls school up in the hills because it was cooler up there. There were only about 16 of us. I had two siblings who lived in Malaysia until they were seven. I was the youngest. When I was seven, my mother took me to the same aunt as my brother and sister in Wales, and then I too went to boarding school again.



*Tanglin School, Malaysia*

My parents came to the UK on leave in 1938 just before the war. At that moment Mr. Chamberlain was running about trying to get agreements, though not succeeding. The possibility of war was still uncertain and my parents went back to Malaysia. Then of course, the Japanese, as we all know, arrived in 1941 and proceeded down the peninsula very fast. So, at the very last minute my parents had to leave the state and went to Singapore.

My mother left Singapore on a British troop ship called the Empress of Japan. It unloaded troops just in time for the surrender. She managed to get on board with 3000 other women and children. A lot of ships that were leaving were bombed, but their ship escaped.

My father stayed like all other European civilians working there and they were lined up and marched off to a prison camp in Changi jail. He spent the next three and a half years as an internee under extremely harsh conditions.



R.M.S. EMPRESS OF JAPAN

CAROL FROM CHANGI

No room for God within the inn,  
He sleeps where oxen bide,  
While man rears up a Calvary  
For man at Christmastide.

No room for one bright star to shine,  
No sages come to kneel;  
Incendaries fill the shaken sky,  
The houses dance and reel.

No room for all the heavenly host,  
No space for them to sing,  
While Spitfires 'in excelsis' drone  
A ruthless carolling.

No room for loving friends to meet,  
No roof to cover them, --  
Save in the quiet heart that holds  
The crib at Bethlehem.

G.J.G.

*Excerpt from the Changi Guardian Christmas 1942.*

He arrived home in autumn 1945 at the end of the war. I was allowed home from boarding school for that week to meet him, which is very nice because I hadn't seen him for six years. He was cheerful but very thin with every bone showing.

We had a good relationship, partly I think, because he was a very good musician and I was interested in music as well. He talked a lot about his time in the prison camp to me. He had a lot to tell, but in a straight forward way. It wasn't about his feelings.

In the prison camp he gathered together an orchestra because he was a violinist. The camp orchestra was composed of instruments as varied as the musicians themselves. Some were professional musicians, Robert Eisinger, a classical pianist, and Farrell, a clarinettist. 'Stan' Cottrell, the trumpeter and tenor in the choir, was a member of the Salvation Army Band. Kauff, the bass player, had been in the Raffles dance band. Sidney Chapman, an accountant on drums and violinist Ron Akroll, a police superintendent, Ross of John Little's department store. J. L. Waters, an import manager and my father John, a rubber planter were accomplished amateurs. Loveday another violinist was a surveyor and G. D. Candioltis one of the accordion players was a Greek masseur, and the other, G. J. Merrifield, was a prison officer. The conductor, A. W. Crofts, was a band master of the FMS Police. There was also a choir and a Glee Club, and regular concerts.

The concerts were very important because it was the only time the women could meet their husbands.

The internees has to organise camp life for themselves in every way. They formed committees, they had lectures, they sang. They did what they could to keep themselves going and everything for themselves such as cooking and maintaining the camp. They brought in rice from outside the prison and got wood for fuel. They ran the prison camp under the extreme discipline of the guards. Hospital supplies, such as insulin for diabetics were non-existent and vitamin deficiency diseases were common.

My father didn't stay long in England, because of his work. He was very much part of the rubber industry, so he had to go back. He also went back as First Witness to give evidence in the war crimes trials about the brutal treatment of the prisoners because for a year and a half in prison he had been the men's representative.

He went back and of course my mother went back too, then came the Malayan Emergency. It was an uprising of Chinese communists who had learned guerrilla warfare in the war having been taught by the British. Their aim was not so much political independence as commercial independence. What they wanted was control of the rubber which, of course, was very lucrative. So their aim was to get rid of the British managers.

The Chinese bandits threatened managers with death if they wouldn't leave. Most of them stayed, and a hundred of them were actually murdered, including my father. He was supposed to go round his estate in an armoured car with protection, but on that particular day, and I don't know why, he decided to go off in his car with his assistant on his daily rounds. They ambushed him and shot him and the assistant. So my mother came home. She left everything again and came back to Britain.

This was 1948. They had only been back in Malaysia a couple of years. It's interesting to me that my mother's name is not mentioned in the funeral report. I don't think she stayed for it. I think she just came home absolutely straight away. She might've been somewhat afraid.

I was 19 and in Oxford studying for the entrance exam, not surprisingly I wasn't given a place, when my mother came back. She wasn't that old, early fifties. My father was 57 when he died and she was a few years younger. She went to live with her sister in Wales and they both lived together until she died.

My mother settled down to a very different life on the borders of Wales from her life in Malaysia, which had been of course, very sociable with servants and parties.

They got on well even though they were very different. My aunt had been to Cambridge and read English. She never worked, but back then few women did. And my mother was in the first war as a VAD. That's a voluntary nurse which is the sort of things young ladies did as war work.

In 1942 my mother had got home just in time for my brother's embarkation leave. He had joined the air force as a bomber pilot in the Middle East, in Egypt. Luckily my mother saw him before he left because was killed just a few months later when he was 20. He's buried in Libya, in a war cemetery.

It was such a peculiar time, the war. So many strange things happened and you accepted it because that's how it was, you couldn't do anything about it. My school was an example.

My school was evacuated from its normal buildings which were on the south coast to a hotel in the Lake District. We took over a hotel that it was attached to a railway station. There were trains and people all the time. We had travellers and porters and engine drivers. We used the station building as classrooms. It was only a branch line so it wasn't very busy, but obviously trains came and went. Steam trains in those days.



*School girls in Keswick 1940s.*

One year my classroom was on the ground floor, which had been a waiting room. People sometimes used to come in and sit there and not realize that we

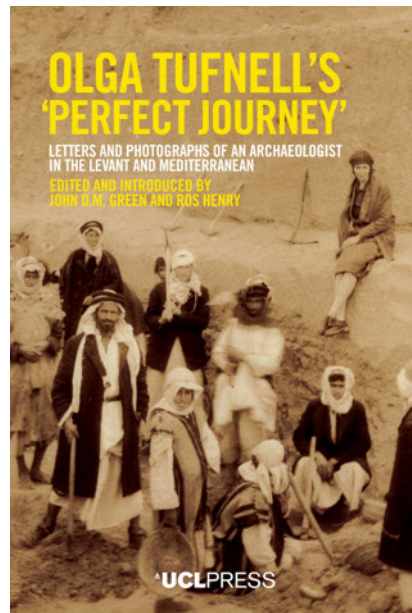
were having a lesson. It was very funny. I can remember vividly we were having a scripture lesson on the journeys of St Paul. A woman came in with a huge basket and sat down and was quite puzzled at what was being told about St Paul. We were all mixed up with a station and the life of a station.

Upstairs and downstairs were our classrooms, apart from the little booking office. We could talk to everybody which we did, obviously. One day a troop train arrived full of American GI's. And was stationed there for the night. Every hotel bedroom was crammed with beds turning them into dormitories. We were all hanging out with the window, waving madly and they were throwing packets of gum up. My house mistress arrived and said "What are you doing? Come away from the window."

After the war in 1945, the school went back to Brighton. It was very boring. We were allowed out to a village called Rottingdean. The prefects were allowed into Brighton but not onto the pier or into Woolworths or the cinema. You could go and have tea or something on a Saturday, but that was very tame compared with running about Keswick, because in Keswick, we were all over the town. We had piano lessons in people's houses and gym in the parish hall, plays in the youth hostel and exams in the art gallery. We also climbed the hills and used the lake for swimming and rowing.

Everyone's war was different and obviously my war was different from other villagers who lived through the war like Janet Gardiner, Myrtle Knight or Diane Harper.

**Last year Ros was co-author of a book** published by UCL Press entitled *Olga Tufnell's 'Perfect Journey': Letters and photographs of an archaeologist in the Levant and Mediterranean*, about an archaeologist who as a young woman excavated in the Middle East, for whom Ros had worked many years ago.



## MILKMAN MEMORY

*by Reg Gethin (who used to live in the village)*

When I was a child, our milkman came round with his pony and trap and a couple of churns of milk. (Rural Shropshire!)

We went out with our enamel milk can, he dipped his measure in the churn and filled the can with a quart of milk - which settled with a thick layer of cream on top, ready to skim off - Mother never had to buy cream!.

Everyone knew the milkman, Arthur Garmston, a local small holder/dairy farmer and purveyor of local news.. His milk went from the cow, through the cooler, into the churn and into the pantry ready for use (no fridge - no electricity until 1947!).

The pony knew the route and stopped at each house without being told.

Then, when Arthur retired, we had Hans, an ex-German prisoner of war, with a petrol flat-bed milk float. And milk in bottles & crates! Progress? Hans had married a local lass when the war ended. We had a minor influx of Germans & Italians who had been prisoners & worked on our farms during the War. Quite a few liked England, came back and married locals. We accepted them as part of our rural community - good chaps, who, like our lads, had had no choice about going to war.



## PLANT SALE

### Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April – Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> May

## DONATIONS NEEDED

A kind request to the gardeners, growers and makers of Halford for donations to the forthcoming Shipston Home Nursing Plant Sale.

From the garden, we need:

**Plants, flowers, vegetables, lettuce & salad, bedding plants, herbs, pot plants, house plants – anything you can sow, grow and donate.**

From the kitchen, we need:

**Cakes, biscuits, brownies, pickles, jams, chutney and any other delicious goodies you can bake / make.**

Donations are needed by **Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> April** latest.

To discuss any donations and how you can help, please contact me as follows:  
Emily 07775 751 121 / [me@emilymellor.co.uk](mailto:me@emilymellor.co.uk)

This year, the Plant Sale will take place from Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> April to Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> May (across many villages). Halford's stall will be held on the lawn at The Folly, Idlicote Road, Halford CV36 5DG.

There will be a warm welcome, ice cream, tea & coffee (and cake!), and lots of lovely things to buy!

We look forward to seeing you that weekend, and raising necessary funds to help our local community supported by this wonderful charity, so on behalf of Shipston Home Nursing, a heartfelt thank you in advance.

Happy growing & baking!





# OXHILL GARDEN CLUB

## GARDENERS QUESTION TIME

**Wednesday 6th April  
Oxhill Village Hall  
Starts 7.30pm, but doors open from 7pm.**

This is a new venture for the club and we have a panel of 4 local experts to answer your questions. Please think up your own questions and even bring an example of a plant or something you want an opinion on. If you can let us have some questions before the meeting, that might help.

Questions to Peter RF at [rfn364@btinternet.com](mailto:rfn364@btinternet.com).

£2 on the door which includes coffee/tea and biscuits. You have to pay for the wine !



# HERITAGE FARMS

## OXHILL NEWS

As requested at the Parish Council meeting in the autumn this is an update on the farm program likely to effect the village.

Because we farm more traditionally than some to keep the land in ‘good heart’ to help the environment and wildlife, we have crop rotation with spring corn, as well as autumn corn and grass leys for our sheep to graze and fodder crops such as stubble turnips.

We also have areas specifically for wildlife – bird feeding stations and skylark plots, as well as overwintered stubbles and 6 meter strips round the arable fields.

As a result of this the land known as ‘Fithers’ near the brook at the bottom of the village will be in a grass ley for about the next 3 years. It will mainly be grazed with ewes and their lambs from March each year. As will the grass field next to ‘Bakers Lane’ (the lane to the sewage works, historians why was it called that, I do not know!).

There is a footpath close to the houses and barn in Fithers and across the Bakers Lane fields, so please can you keep you dogs on leads when walking there, and please know where your dog is when you get home.

In the past we have had a few unfortunate incidents with dog attacks and it is very distressing for everyone involved.

Grazing Fithers will also mean more sheep movements on Whatcote Road (good for traffic calming!) when they are brought in for worming, etc. The sheep don’t often go into gardens, but if your gates are open it can happen and we apologise if it does.

For those of you relatively new to the village, we have land over quite a large area from near Wellesbourne to Brailes and you will occasionally find us walking sheep from one block of land to another.

We walk them, whenever possible, because it is much less stressful for them than being loaded into lorries and also it is very good for their feet.

Lastly a BIG THANK YOU to the Parish Council and all those of you who wrote to the District Council supporting our planning application.

*Tom Heritage*

# OXHILL ART GROUP



Oxhill Art Group will start again on Thursday 7 April 2022. For those of you who are new to the village, we will meet from 2.00 pm to 4.30 pm in the Village Hall. This is an informal group where you can learn some new skills, work on a new piece, or complete a work in progress. Beginners are very welcome as are more advanced artists. We usually run for six to eight sessions and the cost for each session is £15.00. There is no obligation to attend all sessions.

Please contact Grenville Moore  
01295 680664 – mobile 07968 789968 – email [gren.moore@gmail.com](mailto:gren.moore@gmail.com)





*by Ruth Mercer*

There is nothing better than a freshly baked Hot Cross Bun on Good Friday. This recipe makes delicious buns and, once tasted, you will never want to eat a shop-bought bun again! It has the interesting addition of a finely-chopped eating apple which adds to the flavour and texture of the buns. I use a stand mixer with a dough hook to mix the dough. If you want to get ahead, make the dough in the evening, let it rise slowly in the fridge overnight, take it out of the fridge and continue at stage 4.

## HOT CROSS BUNS

### **Ingredients**

Bun dough:

- 500 g strong white bread flour
- 10 g salt
- 75 g caster sugar
- 10 g instant dried yeast
- 40 g butter, at room temperature
- 2 eggs
- 120 ml warm milk, preferably full fat
- 120 ml cool water
- 150 g sultanas
- 80 g chopped mixed peel
- Finely grated zest of 2 oranges
- 1 eating apple, cored and diced
- 2 tsp ground cinnamon

For the crosses:

- 75 g plain flour
- 75 ml water

For the glaze:

- 75 g apricot jam

1. Put flour into a large mixing bowl and add the salt and sugar one side, the yeast to the other. Add the butter, eggs, milk and half the water. Mix together and continue to add water slowly until all the flour has been mixed in from the sides of the bowl. The amount

of water you use depends on the flour: you may not need all of it or you may need a little more. The dough that forms should be soft, not wet. Keep mixing until the mixture forms a rough dough.

2. Tip the dough onto a lightly floured worktop and knead for 5-10 minutes. (If you have a stand mixer, just keep the dough mixing with a dough hook.) The dough will feel wet to start with but will eventually feel soft, silky and elastic.
3. Lightly oil a large mixing bowl and place the dough in it to rise. Cover with a tea towel and leave it to rise until it has doubled in size. This will take at least an hour but you can leave it for up to 3 hours.
4. Add the sultanas, mixed peel, orange zest, diced apple and cinnamon and knead until all mixed in.
5. Cover and leave to rise for 1 hour.
6. Turn out the dough onto a worktop and fold the dough inwards repeatedly until all the air is knocked out. Divide into 12-16 buns, and shape into balls. Place in rows on baking trays lined with baking parchment or silicone paper, about 1" apart. Place each baking tray inside a large plastic bag and leave to prove for 1 hour, or until the buns have doubled in size. Test that they have proved by checking that they spring back when prodded with a finger. Preheat the oven to 220C / 200C fan.
7. Whilst the buns are proving, mix up the flour and water for the crosses. Using a fine nozzle on a piping bag, pipe crosses on the buns. If the buns are lined up evenly on the trays, it is easy to just pipe across each row of buns with one line.
8. Cook the buns for 20 minutes or until golden brown, When the buns are in the oven, warm the apricot jam with a little water. Sieve the jam if you can be bothered. As soon as the buns come out of the oven, brush the tops with the warm jam.
9. Cool on a wire rack.



*Hot Cross Buns cooked by Ruth Mercer*

**OXHILL PARISH COUNCIL**  
**DRAFT PRECIS OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD**  
**ON 8<sup>TH</sup> MARCH 2022**

**To approve the minutes of the meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February 2022**

This will be carried forward as not enough Councillors were present and who attended the February meeting.

**Matters Arising**

The state of Blackford Way has been reported to Highways. The Parish Clerk is awaiting a response.

**To receive a report from the County Councillor**

A report was received and circulated from Cllr Chris Mills.

The main items included:-

A support letter from the Chief Executive regarding the situation in Ukraine.

Support for communities during the Ukraine Crisis.

Loneliness.

Help to Support pharmacies.

Children and young people in Coventry and Warwickshire are invited to take on a heroic challenge to win £2,500 for climate change funding for their school.

County Councillors Grants.

The full report will be available to read on the village website.

**To receive an update on the Climate Mitigation meeting**

Severn Trent will be attending the meeting. Councillors are to encourage village attendance at the event.

**To discuss the repair of the directional sign on Green Lane/Whatcote Road**

This sign is damaged.

*Action: Cllr Rivers Fletcher to take a photo for the Clerk to report to Highways.*

**To receive an update on planning**

The following update was given;

One application had been received since the last meeting:

*22/00129/TREE, Tree work at White House, Main Street. No objection by SDC.*

**Financial Report**

*The following payments were approved under statutory powers:*

£25.98 to L Stuart (seed order)

£100.00 to Cool Trailers (trailer for Jubilee Party)  
£511.20 to Parish Clerk (hours)  
£127.80 to HMRC  
£58.50 to Parish Clerk (mileage)  
£9.06 to Parish Clerk (expenses)

The Queens Platinum Jubilee was briefly discussed. Tickets are being sold by the Church. The question was asked what happens if a profit or loss is made.

*Action: The Chair to speak to the organisers for clarification.*

### **The following correspondence was received and circulated:**

Email from Cllr J Feilding. Role of Councillor  
Shipston Home Nursing, donation request  
Warwickshire Police, Quarterly Police meetings  
SDC, New 13+ Waste Service starting August 2022

One item of correspondence was highlighted:

Shipston Home Nursing, donation request. Shipston Home Nursing provide Hospice at Home nursing care for adults with incurable illnesses who want to be looked after in the comfort of their own home. They provide services to Oxhill and other neighbouring parishes. Some residents have been patients in the past although Councillors were unsure of exact numbers. It was agreed to give a donation of £500.00. Proposed by the Chair and seconded by Cllr Connolly. The home will be asked to log exact village numbers for future reference.

### **Councillors Reports**

A thank you letter was sent to Mr Barnyard re the recent bridge repair.

Some trees along Main Road require attention following recent storm damage. They were previously reported but nothing happened.

*Action: Cllr Connolly to speak to a local contractor.*

The road sign on Green Lane/Tysoe Road is damaged.

*Action: The Parish Clerk to report to Highways.*

Cllr Rivers-Fletcher gave an update on the VAS. The Warwickshire Road Safety Partnership have created a long strategy document. They support cameras and the use of Speed Indicator Devices is encouraged. So this idea will be explored further. Poles will be required to fix the cameras to.

*Action: Cllr Rivers-Fletcher to contact Highways about the installation of poles.*

### **To discuss future meeting dates**

It was agreed to go back to meeting every other month. Therefore the meetings in April, June and October will be cancelled. The meeting will be changed in September from 13th to 6th.



A week or so ago we discovered this wonderful toad in our inglenook fireplace, he is the absolute epitome of a fairy tale toad, I'm not sure if he had hibernated over winter or had just wandered in, toads are astonishing at squeezing into the tiniest cracks and crevices and I like to think he had spent the winter with us. During renovations of old buildings builders have often found toads hibernating in the middle of two foot thick walls with no obvious way in!



The mating frogs were picked up on a doorstep down back lane, unfortunately I have picked up four frogs killed down Manor lane and have had reports of a couple of toads squashed, very sad but it does prove that we now have an abundance of both and indeed there is already quite a lot of frog spawn in Manor pond. Grass snakes have also started to emerge from hibernation but please don't be afraid they are quite harmless and do not bite, indeed if startled or disturbed will often lie on their back motionless with gaping mouth feigning death, just move away and after time they will quickly slip away.

*Grenville Moore*



# WOT2GROW COMMUNITY ORCHARD



So spring is here! And how welcome it is to have some sun and calmer weather although still a while before the risk of frosts is over.

All around buds are bursting and the blossom is starting to look good. In the hedges the blackthorn is out and also some gorse locally although not at the orchard! The wildflowers are coming along and the cowslips were just out the last week in February.

The good news is that Tysoe PC have donated a crab apple tree so we have our trio of donated Queens green canopy trees representing the villages.

Work continues with spring pruning and grass cutting is in the offing! If you would like to help then do get in touch – use the contact numbers below or message us via the web site.

The Community Orchard is just behind the allotments on the Shenington Road in Tysoe.

Liz Atkinson (680045), Paul Sayer (680451), Sue and Mike Sanderson (688080)  
website [www.wot2grow.co.uk](http://www.wot2grow.co.uk)



*Cowslips February 2022*



*Early Blossom*

## SELL-OUTS!!

Well, as reported last time, we knew ticket sales were going well for the Cotswold Events booking for the “Just Take That” tribute band and our own booking of “Tom Spats Langham’s Hot Fingers”, but better than that, it turned out they were both a sell out! It was so good to see Shipston enjoying fun nights out again and we captured some great snaps and videos – take a look at our web-site gallery and FaceBook page for more.

We’ll report back next time, but in March, we’re confident everyone also had a great time seeing “Richard Leach’s Street Band” and one of the regularly organised Lions cinema nights who screened “Emma”.



*Tom "Spats" Langham's Hot Fingers*

April brings yet more entertainment with our booking of

## **“Bateman Brothers Jazz Band” on Friday 29th April.**

Tickets will be available from <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/townsend-hall> or from A. Clarke Electrical Services in town.

Take a look at <http://www.ianbateman.com/bateman-brothers-jazz-band> to whet your appetite.

Get other dates in your diary too! May brings Cotswold Events back for a 60’s experience and we’ve got yet more great jazz with “**Sally Minchin’s String Quintet**”. If you haven’t given jazz a go before, we urge you to try us out. For around a tenner a ticket it’s a great night out and you get to see some top musicians – in the unlikely event it turns out not to be your thing, we also have a fully licensed bar!

Signing off with the usual reminder - we’re a venue funded as a charity, so please keep supporting us by attending our events and at the many clubs / sports we have available.

Visit us at [www.townsendhall.co.uk](http://www.townsendhall.co.uk) to find out more.



## STOUR SINGERS PRESENT DVORAK AND MOZART IN CONCERT

Stour Singers are delighted to present a concert at St. Edmund's Church in Shipston on Saturday evening 7th May at 7.30.p.m., featuring Dvorak's Mass in D and Mozart's Solemn Vespers – a beautiful combination of music. The choir will be joined by four professional soloists and organist. Alan Fairs (bass baritone) and Cathy Bell (mezzo) return to sing with the choir, and are joined by Ana Beard Fernandez (soprano), Daniel Joy (tenor) and Ashley Wagner (organist).

Dvorak composed his Mass in D in 1887 for his friend, the architect Josef Hlavka, for the consecration of the private chapel Hlavka had built onto his palace. It is an exquisitely melodic piece, written with organ accompaniment, and meant a lot to Dvorak himself, as he wrote to his patron "It could be called: faith, hope, and love for God almighty".

A century earlier, Mozart wrote the Vespers as his final choral work for Salzburg Cathedral, and concert-goers will be moved by the lyrical Laudate Dominum, as part of this concert.

Tickets are available at a cost of £12.50 (free to accompanied children) from A. Clarke in Shipston High Street, and from choir members.

Stour Singers look forward so much to sharing their love of music, and always welcome new members. Making music together is a real pleasure, so - if you are tempted – do please contact the choir coordinator, Yvonne Ridley on 01789 269587, with a view to joining for the autumn season.



*Stour Singers choir rehearsal.*



## Struggling with your energy bills? Act on Energy can help

### Free Energy Advice and Home Visits on a one-to-one basis

Tailored energy support and impartial advice for everyone, including benefits advice through Warwickshire Welfare Rights Advice Services.

### Free small energy saving measures for those in Fuel Poverty

For the vulnerable, energy efficient light bulbs, reflective radiator panels, draught excluders.

### Free boiler grants

For households that own their home and are on benefits or have a low income & have poor health.

### Access to Government's Green Homes Grants

For energy efficiency measures for the home.

### Help with £100's off your energy bills from your energy company

- Winter Fuel Payments of £100-£300.
  - Warm Homes Discount £140.
  - Priority Service Register extra help such as meter reading, priority in an emergency/power cut, locking cooker valve, Free annual gas safety check.
  - Energy Company Hardship Funds for debt.
  - Smart Meters enable you to track your energy use.
- \*\*Eligibility criteria applies for some measures\*\*

Call Free: 0800 988 2881

Email: [advice@actonenergy.org.uk](mailto:advice@actonenergy.org.uk)

[www.actonenergy.org.uk](http://www.actonenergy.org.uk)

Facebook: [actonenergy](https://www.facebook.com/actonenergy)

With the underlying cost of energy, it is not possible to save large sums by switching suppliers at the moment. However, you can still take actions to reduce your energy usage and make savings on your energy bills. This can be over £350 per year\*

- ✓ Contact your supplier to have a Smart meter installed to monitor usage
- ✓ Cover draughts to stop the cold getting in
- ✓ Thick curtains can help keep the heat in
- ✓ Wear lots of thin layers to keep you warmer
- ✓ Plan events and activities to keep you moving
- ✓ Turn the thermostat down 1C, ideal temperature is between 18 to 21C
- ✓ Only boil the water you need
- ✓ Put lids on saucepans while cooking
- ✓ Have shorter showers and fewer baths
- ✓ Do at least one less machine wash a week, and wash at 30 degrees
- ✓ Turn the heating off even if you are popping to the shops
- ✓ Turn off appliances when not in use, instead of leaving on standby
- ✓ Turn off the lights
- ✓ Avoid using a tumble dryer
- ✓ Reduce your dishwasher use by one less a week
- ✓ Insulate your hot water cylinder

Visit [www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/](http://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk/) energy-at-home for more tips and information on switching your energy supplier

\*According to the Energy Saving Trust based on a typical 3 bed gas heated property

# Energy Price RISES



## Help Advice Grants Support

With spiralling household energy costs and the price cap increase rising by £700 from April, many households in our district will be struggling.

Stratford-on-Avon District Council would like to signpost you to the government and local support packages available to households as well as professional organisations who are able to offer advice and support during these difficult times.

## Government Energy Bill Discount Scheme

All domestic electricity customers in Great Britain will receive "an upfront discount on their bills worth £200" this autumn.

The £200 will be recovered from bills in £40 instalments each year for five years, starting in the financial year 2023/2024. It is expected to be added to the standing charge on bills. We will provide more information as soon as it's available.

## Council Tax Rebate

The Government has asked all Councils to administer a scheme to help with rising fuel costs. This £150 non-repayable council tax rebate is to be paid to all households that are liable for council tax in bands A to D in England. The rebates will start to be issued by Stratford-on-Avon District Council between April and September 2022.

The quickest way to receive your payment is to sign up by direct debit to pay your Council Tax. Visit [www.stratford.gov.uk](http://www.stratford.gov.uk) for details

## Support from Stratford-on-Avon District Council

### Council Tax Reduction Scheme

Households on a low income including the self employed may be entitled to a reduction in their Council Tax.

To find out if you are eligible visit [www.stratford.gov.uk](http://www.stratford.gov.uk) for details

### Discretionary Housing Payments

This can be awarded in addition to a housing benefit award or a Universal Credit housing element, in unavoidable exceptional circumstances, eg. health issues, urgent debt. Visit [www.stratford.gov.uk](http://www.stratford.gov.uk) to find out more.

### Housing Benefit

Housing benefit was replaced by Universal Credit in 2018, however you may still get Housing Benefit if you are state pension age or living in temporary accommodation or accommodation where care and support is being provided.

Visit [www.stratford.gov.uk](http://www.stratford.gov.uk) to find out more.

## Other support

**Citizens Advice South Warwickshire** offer a range of advice and information including benefits, debt & housing advice.  
tel. **0300 330 1183**  
[www.casouthwarwickshire.org.uk](http://www.casouthwarwickshire.org.uk)

Check you benefit entitlement visit [www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators](http://www.gov.uk/benefits-calculators) to maximise your income

**Warwickshire Local Welfare Scheme** for vulnerable residents at times of unavoidable crisis when they have no other means of help.  
tel. **0800 408 1448** or **01926 359182**  
Monday to Thursday 9am-5pm  
Friday 9am-4.30pm

Contact **your energy supplier** as soon as you can if you are worried about paying your energy bills. Suppliers must work with you to agree on a payment plan you can afford under Ofgem rules. This includes reviewing a plan you have agreed before.

Contact **your energy supplier** to check to see if you are eligible for extra help with the Priority Services Register - a free support service to help people in vulnerable situations.



# Climate Change Mitigation Event

Saturday 23<sup>rd</sup> April

10am – 1pm.

At Oxhill Village Hall



- Come and find out how small changes can make a difference to climate change.
- Ways to reduce your use of water and electricity- helping the environment and reducing your bills.
- Ways to reduce plastic in everyday lives.
- Find out about free products.
- Ways to reduce food waste.
- Creating a wildlife pond / container environment.
- Creating a wildflower area.
- Free bee friendly / wild flower seeds.



Nothing But  
Footprints

SEVERN  
TRENT  
WATER



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DISTRIBUTION**  
*Serving the Midlands, South West and Wales*

grüum.



# British TV Sitcoms

Name the TV shows from the pictures. Answers on the back page.



1.



2.



3.



4.



5.



6.



7.



8.



9.



10.



11.



12.



13.



14.



15.

# WHAT'S ON IN & AROUND OXHILL

## APRIL

Wed 6th	19:30	Oxhill Garden Club, Village Hall
Thurs 7th	14:00-14:30	Mobile Library, outside Village Hall
Sat 23rd	10:00-13:00	Climate Change Mitigation Event, Village Hall
Sat 23rd	19:30	Best of British Evening, Village Hall
Thurs 28th	14:00-14:30	Mobile Library, outside Village Hall
Every Thursday	11:45ish	Awesome Coffee Van, outside Peacock Pub
Every Sunday	15:00-16:00	Churchyard Wildflower Area clean up

## MAY

Sun 8th	15:00	Afternoon Tea, the Old Chapel
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## TV Answers

1. Red Dwarf
2. Goodnight Sweetheart
3. Bless this House
4. Benidorm
5. Mrs. Brown's Boys
6. Love thy Neighbour
7. Just Good Friends
8. Keeping up Appearances
9. 'Allo 'Allo
10. Absolutely Fabulous
11. Birds of a Feather
12. Extras
13. Citizen Smith
14. George and Milfred
15. Gavin and Stacey

## PC MEETINGS

The date of the next PC Meeting is **Tuesday, 10 May 2022 at 7.30pm**. This meeting will be held in the Village Hall. The Agenda for the meeting will be shown on the PC Website or a physical copy will be displayed on the Notice Board by the Peacock a few days before the meeting.

April						
M	Tu	W	Th	F	Sa	Su
				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	

## BIN COLLECTION CALENDAR



Check the date on the calendar to identify which bins go out for collection.

