New £5m medical centre

February saw a major milestone for local GPs and patients with a ‘turf cutting’ ceremony at the site of the new ‘Chipping Norton Health Park’ up behind the new hospital. The occasion saw GPs, patient groups, and staff clearly delighted with progress after a long time in the planning.

Pharmacy opens

The likely early 2015 move, by both West Street and White House surgeries, will see better facilities, clinic rooms, a pharmacy and parking. One immediate surprise sees the GPs already opening the ‘extended evening hours’ Pharmacy in a portacabin. More buses to help get to the new facilities will no doubt be on the ‘wanted’ list.

Old surgeries– what next?

Both existing GP buildings could see residential developments, with White House planning proposals and West Street site sale by estate agents Savills. More on all this news inside.

In this issue:

**Search for recycling solution**
The Town loses one recycling site, rubbish mounts, and County and District still debate who should build a new tip.

**Where next for housing?**
With more Chippy housing on the cards, the Town Council decides it cannot allocate sites and targets in their Neighbourhood Plan – it’s up to WODC.

**Local News:**
~ Recreation ground public meeting
~ Penhurst plans revealed
~ Upgrade for The Fox
~ Councillors’ ideas for the Police Station
~ A week of A Passion for Life
~ Latest in the Town toilet saga

**Plus Arts, Sports, Clubs, Schools & Letters**
Town recycling problems

Residents in Chipping Norton look set for more uncertainty over recycling facilities – and more problems with rubbish being dumped around the Town. First, the recycling bins in the Cattle Market car park behind The Fox are closing in May – reducing the sites in town from three to two. WODC, who are responsible for the ‘bring’ sites in town say this is being forced on them as the car park is now being reclaimed by owners, Hook Norton Brewery, who are to develop The Fox. This could see problems elsewhere in town – the other two sites, particularly the one in the New Street car park, are increasingly getting full and rapidly overloaded. Will there be a replacement site? Maybe. A WODC spokesperson told the News, ‘We have advised our contractor that when Cattle Market car park closes, additional support will be required for the remaining sites in Chipping Norton. However, we are also actively looking for an alternative location for these recycling banks.’

Still 40 mile trip to tip

The small and limited ‘in town’ sites are also being used to dump illegal items – either household waste or recycling items such as electrics that ought to be taken to a larger site (see pictures). One local resident wrote to the Town Council describing the New Street site over Christmas as ‘indescribably disgusting’ saying ‘it is obvious that without a proper recycling depot within reasonable driving distance of the Town people are using this site instead and it plainly cannot cope since it was never designed for such high usage’ (see letters page). With the County Council’s Dean Pit closed, and with WODC’s withdrawal of their plan last year for a potential new recycling centre at Greystones near Chipping Norton, residents in Chippy and the north-west of the County are still faced with a 40 mile round trip to either Alkerton or Dix Pit.

Who will find a solution?

When Oxfordshire County Council closed their Dean Pit household waste site (with full recycling facilities) they intended to find an alternative location. At the key meeting in 2009 officers had said Dean Pit was a ‘well used and needed site’. But County Councillors voted to close Dean Pit after local resident Lord Chadlington had told that meeting ‘an alternative site in a more convenient location with safer access outside the AONB should be found’. Some voted on the assurance that the County would build a new site at Kidlington and possibly one north near Enstone. Since then the County changed their minds, saying they would not pursue a replacement and that their ‘statutory duty’ is to provide only one site in the whole County. WODC subsequently stepped in proposing a recycling site at Greystones, but last year withdrew as they said it was no longer commercially viable. Local residents were disappointed and local district councillors were angry, trying, without success, to have this decision reversed. Their feelings were, however, registered and WODC, according to a December progress report on the ‘Joint Waste Management Strategy’, were still pursuing options on possible sites and solutions for Chipping Norton.

Buck passing to & fro

But now it seems that WODC might be pushing the whole issue back to the County to solve. WODC submitted a paper to the January Oxfordshire Waste Partnership Joint Committee setting out once again the need for a waste and recycling centre in this area. They stressed the cost of residents doing the 40 mile round trip to Alkerton (but no-one counts that cost in their ‘business cases’). The same WODC paper claimed the County is still seeking an alternative site after they closed Dean Pit. WODC Cabinet member Cllr David Harvey said, ‘At the meeting we reaffirmed the District Council’s view that it is Oxfordshire County Council’s responsibility to provide waste disposal facilities for the northern part of our district. This was supported by all those attending the meeting and the County Council said they would take this view on board as part of their review of waste recycling sites.’ So it’s back to the County for a ‘review’. Part of this ‘to-ing and fro-ing’ is due to the fuzzy boundaries between disposal (County’s statutory responsibility) and recycling collection (a District service to taxpayers and a commercial opportunity) of household waste (including recycling). Clearly a joint solution might well be a better route. News on what and when frustrated residents might expect from the latest ‘review’ is awaited.
Doctors on the move

Work has started on a new £5 million medical centre in Chipping Norton at Russell Way, off London Road next to the Community Hospital. The ‘Chipping Norton Health Park’ is a 2,000 sq metre development being jointly undertaken by the Town’s White House and West Street surgeries, which will both relocate from their individual premises in the centre of town. Construction is due for completion in January 2015. The contemporary style health park, to serve over 14,000 patients, has been designed by the specialist primary care team at the Bristol office of national property adviser GVA, who advised the GPs on land acquisition, and is project manager throughout the construction. HW Pollard & Sons are the main contractors.

Designed over three floors, the two surgeries will have 18 consulting rooms, 16 clinical rooms, and a joint pharmacy. White House’s Dr David Edwards said, ‘Both surgeries have been operating for many years out of older premises that are cramped and short of space, with poor access and parking for patients and staff. Patients of both surgeries can now look forward to facilities that are far more suited to today’s healthcare requirements. West Street’s Dr Jane Pargeter said, ‘This has been a project five years in the making, and we are all delighted that construction has now started and our dreams are very close to becoming reality.’ There will be a 64-space car park, bicycle park and ambulance drop-off point. The town and village X8 bus service has its terminal stop right outside the new surgery. But many patients, used to convenient town centre surgeries, may well want to see more frequent and convenient bus ‘shuttles’ going to the new site. Readers’ views are welcome – and they may also want to tell their Councillors and GPs.

Plans from The League of Friends

Jo Graves from the Hospital’s League of Friends told the News they were following developments at the new ‘health campus’ site with interest. They are keen to see the First Aid paramedic evening and weekend service there continue and are interested in longer hours in general. The League has funds available and is anxious to support local healthcare, including maternity unit projects in the pipeline. They will ‘watch and wait’ for other appropriate projects. They are also keeping an eye on the ‘commemorative stone’ at the old hospital.

New pharmacy in action

Many readers have already spotted the new pharmacy already open up at the hospital site — housed in a portacabin. The ‘Chipping Norton Pharmacy’, owned by all the Town’s GPs, will offer similar services to the existing Boots and Co-op pharmacies but has later opening hours. It will move into the new GPs’ building when it is ready. White House GP Melanie Hargreaves (pictured above with one of the pharmacists) showed the News team around saying ‘we wanted to have a pharmacy so that all the needs of patients from both surgeries can be met under one roof. People in Chipping Norton currently have to make a 26 mile round trip to get to an extended hours pharmacy. We acquired the ‘100 hour licence’ from Sainsbury’s after their supermarket proposal was turned down and due to licensing laws, we had to open before the end of January. The pharmacy is open 7 days a week from 7am until late with shorter Sunday hours. We are looking forward to providing a safe and accessible service to a population that we know and whose needs we understand.’ The pharmacy team welcome suggestions about their service and thank customers for their patience in this temporary location.

Mayor’s Ball – stop press

Chipping Norton Mayor’s Charity Ball this year will be on Saturday 3 May, 7 for 7.30 until midnight. Four course meal and dancing to the CNS Allstars. Black Tie/Lounge suit. Tickets £40 each (£45 after 1 April) from the Town Clerk’s office.

Annual Town Meeting

Chipping Norton Town Hall
Thursday 3 April at 7.30pm


The public Annual Town Meeting will include a report of the year’s activities and the chance to ask Councillors about Town affairs.
Could the Town take over Chippy’s Police Station building when it closes? A small sub-committee of Town Councillors, including the Mayor, did some brainstorming in January on ideas for retaining the building as a resource. Town Councillor Jo Graves, told the News ‘As reported last month an “Open House” at the Police Station saw many people express a wish for it to remain as a landmark building in our Town (I cannot believe it is not listed!!). The Town Council is endeavouring to keep this building and already there have been tentative enquiries with District and County, but no commitment. The suggestions for using of this rabbit warren of a building include: a Town Museum (we would definitely keep those historical cells!); office space; small meeting rooms; community cafe/restaurant; nursery/childcare. It would appear it is unsuitable for a library – such a shame! I know that the Town Council will need the support of the people of Chipping Norton, if this project, of the Community owning this building, is to come to fruition. The Town Council would be open to any ideas from our electors on suitable uses and I am sure there will be public meetings about this. Meanwhile please send any ideas on usage and fundraising to the Town Clerk cntownclerk@btconnect.com. Come on Chipping Norton let’s make this happen for us!’

**Plans for surgery sites**

With the two GP practices moving out of the town centre, both sites are heading for some residential development. White House Surgery has resubmitted plans for their site to include: two 2-bedroomed houses, two 3-bedroomed houses and a 1-bedroomed flat, in addition to the two flats already there, making seven homes in total. Ten existing parking places will stay. The access from Albion Street will remain the same, albeit one flat will be built over the entrance forming a carriageway arch. This is a resubmission of an earlier proposal approved in 2006 and extended in 2011 but which expires this year. Meanwhile West Street Surgery put their building, along with the adjacent shop, up for sale through Savills on 3 February. This grade II listed building extends to 9,247 sq ft and, with its car park, the site is 0.3 acre. The sales literature states ‘There is potential for the surgery and rear car park to be redeveloped for alternative uses subject to obtaining the necessary planning permissions.’ Local architects have drawn up ideas for conversion to residential, retaining the existing shop, with three new terraced houses in the rear, to give potential purchasers an idea of capacity.

**Developments at Penhurst**

It is now known that the developers for the Penhurst site are Beechcroft Developments Limited, specialists in retirement homes (see www.Beechcroft.co.uk to get a feel of the company’s existing development designs and ethos). Local residents were meeting the developer on 19 February to see outline proposals for the site and hoping to find out whether this would be one of Beechcroft’s ‘special developments’ which do not restrict occupancy to over-55s, whether it would include a care home extending to those with dementia, and whether affordable homes might be included. They are also interested in what will happen to the existing swimming pool, hall and workshop, opportunities for local employment and if the whole site will be gated or open to the public. The News will be reporting on design details and will publicise future wider consultation and dates when known.

**Local resident cycles to pub**

Saturday 8 February saw the entire Cameron family cycling from their Cotswold home to The Swan Inn at Ascott under Wychwood to open the Inn’s recently completed ‘Old Coach House’ function room. The Swan Inn had been closed for over three years and was purchased by its new owners; Richard Haddon and Michiel Verkoren. The Prime Minister congratulated all concerned and stayed for lunch with his family. The Swan hosts a quiz night on Mondays, a lunch for Seniors on Tuesdays, plus regular Curry Nights. The restaurant operates Wednesday through to Sunday lunch times. The Swan also caters for the village school, the Windrush Valley, in providing the children with their week day lunches.

**Upgrade at The Fox**

Hook Norton Brewery has major plans in the pipeline for upgrading facilities at The Fox in Chipping Norton, including adding around six new bedrooms. The Brewery’s Bruce Benyon told the News that they thought their large town centre site had great potential – which would most likely also include improved car parking for the hotel. The Brewery will be taking back their car park in Cattle Market in May (currently rented to WODC). Bruce said work could well start later this year.

**Recreation ground ideas**

What are your ideas for the New Street Recreation Ground? After the recent ‘wake up’ the Town Council are progressing with plans for upgrading their main recreation ground. Mayor Mike Tysoe told the News the Council are gathering quotes for a refurbishment but before giving a green light to any contractor they would like to hear the Town’s opinion on the schemes suggested. The Council will be holding an open consultation session in the Lower Town Hall on Wednesday 19 March 2-6pm, and this is a chance for the parents of Chipping Norton to give their opinions on what they would like at their playground, including new equipment. The Council
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The Council is ‘ring fencing’ any money budgeted for recreation grounds but not spent in the current 2013/2014 financial year to be added to the plans for 2014/15.

Honouring Cllr Rob Evans

Over 100 friends, family and local residents joined Mayor Mike Tysoe and Town Councillors in Chipping Norton Town Hall on Sunday 26 January, to celebrate the awarding of an Honorary Citizenship to the late Cllr Rob Evans. Rob had been told of the award, given by the Town Council for outstanding service to the Town and community, just before he sadly died before Christmas. The normal ceremony for the award, conducted by the Mayor, was adjusted with Rob’s badge of honour being presented to his cousin Ruth Jones, who had been Rob’s Mayoress when he was Town Mayor. Ruth thanked the Council on behalf of the family, saying Rob would have been proud to swear the oath associated with the Honour. Previous recipients of the award, John Grantham, Mike Howes and Drs Bruce and Sheila Parker, were there for the ceremony. Mayor Tysoe praised Rob’s long service to the Town since he had arrived from Wales in 1973 to teach history at Chipping Norton School. In speeches covering Rob’s contribution to the Town, Keith Ruddle mentioned Rob’s passion for the Theatre, and involvement with Radio Chipping Norton, NOMAD performing arts group, Choral Society, Save the Children, Clean up Chippy, and local history. Past Mayor Jo Graves covered his commitment to civic affairs, as a school governor, and projects on future of the Town including Town Appraisals. District Councillor and friend Geoff Saul covered Rob’s political service to County and District, his role at the ACE centre and his willingness to listen and work with everyone in the Town for the benefit of all.

£2m for old hospital site

As reported last month, the old Chipping Norton hospital site is up for sale again. The owners, St Charles Homes have decided to sell on. Agents John Shepherd of Hockley Heath are offering the site, with planning permission for 14 homes, for sale for a cool £2m (£2.66m per acre). According to the Land Registry, the site was bought off the NHS for £1.5m by the owners, before planning permission was granted, so they may hold out for a good price and the site could be derelict for a while. The neighbouring site of the, increasingly derelict, former Castle View care home and Chestnuts may soon be offered for sale by Oxfordshire County Council. The County had, apparently, been holding on to the sites, parts of which have been empty for over 15 years, whilst they decided where to locate a particular use. This site has now been ruled out of that search and so, the News learned recently, the County will be selling it along with the adjacent disused ambulance station. With all these key town centre sites again up for sale could the whole lot – all in or formerly in, public ownership – be considered together?

Walterbush Road repairs??

Chippy drivers have for months been bemoaning the dire state of the potholes and road surface along the length of Walterbush Road. Last year’s bad weather and heavy traffic along the bus route have taken their toll – while Oxfordshire County Council’s Highways budget hasn’t been able to deal with the problems quickly. The road has been ‘in a queue’ for action for many months. Chipping Norton County Councillor Hilary Biles was able to report at January’s Town Council meeting that there had been a ‘reassessment’ and the road had moved up to ‘number 1 on the reserve list’. The whole resurfacing work would cost £250,000 and Cllr Biles hoped that the money could be

Your new
Chipping Norton Pharmacy
is now open

Chipping Norton Health Centre
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chippingnortonpharmacy@btinternet.com tel 01608 648 000

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Pharmacy
London Rd
Over Norton Rd
Horsefair
New Street
West Street

The pharmacy will relocate to the new Chipping Norton Health Centre when building work is completed in 2015.
LOCAL NEWS

released for possible ‘schemes to be looked at for October’. Cllr Biles said she had driven down the road to show the relevant Cabinet member. Anyone with pothole issues should call County Highways and if there is no action contact hilary.biles@oxfordshire.gov.uk or call her on 01993 831822.

Tales of a cub reporter

‘There was only one small problem that I could see and that was the word ‘man’... Clearly they didn’t have me in mind.’ The small advert for a trainee reporter looked otherwise promising and was to lead to a career in journalism for a 17-year-old shorthand typist. The Editor was known as ‘God’, the Newsdesk was one telephone, two typewriters, two functional chairs and a table shared between three people. Transport was train, bus or on foot and the sports editor wrote in copperplate with a dip pen and an inkwell. Jenny Selby-Green’s newly published book describes being a cub reporter on a provincial weekly in the 1950s. She hooks the reader from page one of ‘To Bed on Thursdays’, with warm humour, eccentric characters and some jaw-dropping anecdotes. Memorable moments include scooping a rival paper by catching a parcel thrown from a moving train, afternoon tea with a corpse and a local hack mooning the magistrates after the seat of his tweeds stuck to a courtroom bench. ‘I started it for my own pleasure and historical interest, after my husband died,’ Jenny explains. ‘I joined the writers’ group at the Theatre and then West Oxfordshire Writers.’ Having settled in Chippy in 1997, after working on several provincial weeklies and magazines as a reporter, editor and freelancer; Jenny joined the Chippy News team for five years. The book is set in Buckinghamshire; from there she moved to Suffolk, ‘when my husband decided he didn’t want to be an architect anymore; he wanted to be a fruit farmer’, before coming to Hook Norton in 1979. ‘To Bed on Thursdays’ is Jenny Selby-Green’s second book. Published by Mosaique Press, it is available from online bookshops (Jaffe & Neale can order it for you) or as an e-book.

Fairytale birthday packages

One birthday boy or girl and at least seven friends could have a memorable day out thanks to a new birthday party package from Fairytale Farm. As reported last month, the farm has reopened to the public on Tuesdays and Thursdays until the end of March. However, if you book a birthday party on a day when it is closed to the public, owner Nick Laister says, ‘It will only be you and your friends on the farm, so you will have the place to yourselves.’ The party package is available until the end of March and includes exclusive use of Fairytale Farm for two and a half hours. All food is provided, as is a party host, a goody bag for all party guests and a free bag of animal feed for each child. The Farm package includes party invitations and a birthday card with a £5 gift voucher to use in Fairytale Farm shop. Tickets cost £16.95 per child, one adult goes free with every full-paying child and there’s a free return visit on each ticket. Bring your own birthday cake and candles or ask the farm to provide one for an extra charge. Fairytale Farm is designed for children with varying disabilities but is open to all. It is on the A44 just outside Chipping Norton. See www.Fairytalefarm.co.uk.

No decision yet on Aldi

In January, West Oxfordshire District Councillors discussed the issues arising from Aldi’s application for a food store next to the Cromwell Park Business Park. Since then WODC planners have been considering the advice of their own retail consultants, the conclusions of which are on the WODC website at planning application number 13/1547/P/FP, in a document entitled ‘supporting documentation’, (find the document sized 763kb). Alternatively, you can see the full document at WODC offices in Witney or the Guildhall in Chipping Norton. The Council’s consultants have found fault with Aldi’s own assessment in a number of areas. Whether this new food store is built or not could be really important to the future success of the town centre, so officers are taking time to review all the evidence thoroughly. The planning officer told the News that they would be giving Aldi until the end of February to comment on the findings of the WODC study, so it may well be April before the Planning Committee decides whether or not to give the go-ahead.

‘Money Matters Day’

Calling all parents of 0-5 year olds. Do you need to talk to the local council (council tax), housing association (Cottsway) Employment/Benefits agency (JCP), Utilities (electricity & gas), Citizens Advice Bureau etc? They and others are all at the ACE Children’s Centre ‘Money Matters Day’ Friday 4 April in the Family Centre and Hall 9.30am-1.30pm.

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The art and craft of guitar
Two News team members Kaye Freeman and Alison Huitt report on a sold out World Premiere of the film Aubade on 12 February at the Theatre.

As part of the appreciative capacity audience, we very much enjoyed Aubade, (Dawn Song) being the title of both the composition and the film of its creation. The process of composing the music and making the guitar on which it was played was beautifully captured in minute detail by local film director, Henry Astor. For 40 minutes we were transported into the world of luthier, composer and performer, sharing with us their art and dedication. William Lovelady, one of Britain’s most prolific and accomplished classical guitar composers, was commissioned to write a solo piece for Chinese guitarist Xuefei Yang (Fei) to be played on her new guitar being lovingly made by luthier Paul Fischer in his Chipping Norton studio. Paul is renowned as being on the cutting edge of the evolution of the modern concert guitar and made this one of beautifully grained Brazilian lacewood. Fei visited William in his Sarsden cottage while he was composing, playing the piece as it progressed. She also met Paul in his workshop as the unique guitar evolved, thus ensuring its shape and sound were designed for her style of playing. Following the film the audience listened in hushed rapture as Fei played. There was no doubt that she is a world-class classical guitarist and that this guitar was literally ‘made for her’. The evocative Aubade was her first piece and was followed by Spanish and Chinese based music equally sensitively played. The final treat as an encore was a lively tango. A memorable musical evening indeed.

Toilet tangle
Regular users may have noticed that Chipping Norton’s public toilets at the Town Hall have been closed quite frequently. At January’s Town Council meeting, the loos were the subject of some animated debate. The toilets, run by West Oxfordshire District Council and expensively renovated only a couple of years ago – have been flooding a lot with the cause difficult to isolate. The Town Council owns the whole Town Hall property, but leases the toilet sections to WODC, who could now decide that the loos are a liability and stop leasing them, which in turn could give the Town Council a headache (and possible more than a ‘penny’ to spend). WODC have no ‘obligation’ or statutory duty to provide toilets. Already, some local pubs, such as The Fox, are seeing non-paying customers using their toilets. Nearby Nash’s café does not have an on-site customer toilet and Councillors suggested that permission for the café was granted because of the proximity of town centre toilets. Town Councillors subsequently discussed all this with WODC. Mayor Tysoe gave the News an optimistic update, ‘we think we have found the problems and they are being dealt with – hopefully they are relatively minor leaks but as we all know, if water can go anywhere it will go through the smallest hole. It might be necessary to close the toilets from time to time if the works we are doing are not sufficient – only time will tell – but with a building this old leaks appear from time to time and they are sometimes very difficult to trace’.

(Brenda Morris from the Museum sent the News two local 48-year-old press clippings from 1965 reporting Cllrs Hutchinson, Withers and Gripper complaining about the state of the Town Hall toilets and pleading for improvements. Cllr Gripper said, ‘a town is judged on the state of its public conveniences’. A review in 12 months was promised.)

Chippy Girls Wear Bras
No, that shouldn’t be news – but these are not your normal bras. A group of Chippy women are to don their specially-decorated bras to walk 26.2 miles in aid of charity. The girls – including teachers, nurses and students – are to take on the Moonwalk on 10 May, in aid of breast cancer charity Walk the Walk. The Moonwalk starts at Clapham Common in south London, and will feature 15,000 men and women walking alongside those taking part in the Half Moon – a 13 mile route. The Chippy Girls, as they have called themselves, comprise Susan Frater, Jenny Fisher, Wendy Smart, Becky Fagan, Lizzi Findlay, Alex Sears, Tanya Harrington, Caroline Court and Kat Alden. They have been training with regular local long walks, but it’s not all hard work – as Jenny told the
News, ‘How often would you otherwise get to spend two and a half or three hours with friends, talking?!’ They are hoping to raise £1,000 for the charity. You can donate to them at http://moonwalklondon2104.everydayhero.com/uk/chippy-girlies.

Neighbourhood Plan news

At their January meeting the Town Council decided to back away from including big decisions on housing and employment in their Neighbourhood Plan. Specific policies on how much additional housing Chippy is to take, and where it will go, will now revert to the District Council. The Town’s project, already two years into the process, had been delayed awaiting final guidance on housing numbers in WODC’s still-awaited new Local Plan. Chipping Norton’s Project Officer, Monika Zemla, in a statement to the News, said that after considering options suggested by Planning Aid and WODC, the Steering Group and the Town Council would ‘submit a Neighbourhood Plan which does not allocate sites for development, but which focuses on a set of policies that seek to address the priorities arising from the consultation to date, for example type and tenure of future housing development’.

The statement said this was the ‘most viable and deliverable approach’ and ‘recognises the limitations of our capacity to produce a Neighbourhood Plan which allocates sites for development, the required Sustainability Appraisal and Strategic Environmental Assessment, and the prohibitive cost of employing consultants to undertake this work on our behalf’. The Steering Group will now focus on writing a Plan to include ‘a set of policies which will positively influence the determination of future planning applications for Chipping Norton’.

So, after two years of the project, the Town Council is no longer trying to get formal backing for how much and where they think housing should go in the Town – one of the main aims of these ‘bottom up’ Neighbourhood Plans. Why this action? To be fair, the process is new nationally, is evolving, and hitting issues elsewhere. An independent inspector recently said a plan in West Sussex should not proceed to a referendum because its Strategic Environmental Assessment did not meet legal requirements and the Plan’s housing target was not based on sufficiently robust evidence in identifying sites within a sensitive landscape. Similarities with Chippy may well have influenced the Town Council in deciding to pull back now, before committing further funds with a risk that the plan could also fail such tests. Chippy’s timetable and costs of the remaining work are now unclear. For more information or to get involved see www.Chippingnortontown.info or contact chippingnortonnp@gmail.com

Autumn Fair 2014

Another Autumn Fair is being organised by Transition Chipping Norton (TCN) for Sunday 5 October this year. This will be the third such TCN fair, and it is planned to occupy the Town Hall, the Market Place and the Co-op arcade. The main aim is to draw attention to and celebrate sustainable local food and drink and related crafts, together with energy efficiency opportunities. There will be outside entertainment in the form of music and dance, and competitions for all the family. More details nearer the time. If you would like to be involved as a stallholder, performer or helper, please contact Richard Averill on 643635.

Cancer Research success

Graham Raven, from the local North Cotswold Fundraisers for Cancer Research UK team, reports a successful year and wants to thank everyone who helped with events and donations. They have raised over £7,500 under new Chairman Gill Begnor with a Musical Evening, an Alternative Race for Life and more. Contact Graham on 645134 if you can provide willing hands to help. On Friday evening, 23 May, an event at Chipping Norton School will see a variety of dancing styles performed by local enthusiasts: Jazz, Tap, Ballet, Belly, Contemporary, Charleston, Can Can, Morris, Line and Country dancers. Graham says they need some good Ballroom dancers to complete the programme. Please contact Ronald Speirs, 645417 if you can help and for further information. Further details next month.
New Civil Funeral support

Chipping Norton resident Rachel Ward has recently embarked on a new job by qualifying as a Civil Funeral Celebrant. A Civil Funeral is not a religious ceremony and can include any content which holds special significance for the individual. Rachel told the News, ‘There is growing awareness of issues around death and funerals and of the choices available. A Civil Funeral is driven by the beliefs, wishes and values of the person being remembered and their family. More people are planning their own funerals now and it is so important to make end-of-life wishes known to enable a funeral that is fitting for the person who has died. I work with Funeral Directors around the County to create a ceremony that is unique, to tell the story of that person’s life. Sometimes I am asked to write and deliver a tribute, and some families wish to do this themselves. I can advise on readings, poems, music and even a hymn or prayer can be included’. With many years’ experience as a nurse Rachel feels privileged to work with individuals and their families as they approach the end of their lives. Rachel will be pleased to speak to anyone who would like to know more, including local groups. Contact 646901 or rachelcward@yahoo.com

Curl up with a book

With the recent bad weather we’ve been experiencing lately, the team from Chipping Norton Library can only suggest that there’s nothing better than curling up with a good book, whatever your age. There are some great new titles out, by some of your favourite authors. For Crime/thrillers try Simon Kernick, Nicci French, Linwood Barclay or Jeffery Deaver. Or why not try this year’s Costa novel award winner, Kate Atkinson ‘Life after Life’. Donna Tartt’s new novel, ‘The Goldfinch’ is also proving exceptionally popular. And if you don’t like reading, why not hire one of our new DVDs. Try ‘Frances Ha’ or ‘I give it a year’ for a good laugh. Watch out for events in the library over Easter and, of course, during the Chipping Norton Literary Festival.

Judith Bucknall Library Manager

Lido opening soon

The Lido in Chipping Norton is opening one week earlier than usual this year, on Thursday 17 April. In line with previous years, opening day is also the date of the AGM, so as well as digging out your swimming gear in time, please come along to the meeting at 7.30pm that evening. There is always plenty to do in the run-up to the season to get all the facilities ready but, this year, the team are also opening a brand new steam room. Work on that is continuing apace thanks to a dedicated team, but they would welcome help to get the pools ready for filing. Clean-up day will be Saturday 22 March from 10am to mid-afternoon. This is always a case of ‘many hands make light work’, so if you can’t wait to get back into your Lido, please come along and help out with any time you can spare. Tea, coffee and cake will be provided, likewise gloves and buckets, but bring your own wellies! Check www.chippylido.co.uk, Twitter@ChippyLido or facebook (ChippyLido) for updates.

Lido lottery

February’s Lido Lottery results were as follows: 1st prize, Mrs D R Johnson (150), £108.00; 2nd prize, Mrs T King (137), £64.80; 3rd prize, George Hunt (24), £43.20.

Katharine House news

Banbury Harriers Paul Bithell Memorial Fun Run: Sunday 9 March. The starting gun goes off at 10.40am at the Spiceball Park, Banbury. Take part in the one mile run (£1 entry fee) or the 2.5 mile run (£3 entry fee). Call Mike Hughes on 01295 252839.

Katharine House Annual Sale: Saturday 15 March, 11am–2pm, Adderbury Institute. Good quality donated items, knitted goods, books, toys, home-made cakes, lottery and refreshments. Christmas card competition: design your favourite Christmas image and it might become the 2014 Katharine House Christmas card. Entries welcome from both local artists and students of art, and from primary schools. Designs – on a square piece of paper – should be sent to Katharine House Hospice, Adderbury, by 31 March. An exhibition of the top designs in the café at Bloxham Mill Business Centre during April and May. Zumbathon 2014: join the fun on 26 April, Blessed George Napier School in Banbury, 2–5pm. £10 entry, or £35 for a family ticket. Katharine House May Ball: memorable evening at Bloxham School on Sunday 4 May (7pm start). Tickets £50

Last year’s clean-up had an unusual supervisor!
Exciting when the start of the growing year finally comes. Of course Chipping Norton, being (as we know) somewhat colder than the surrounding lowlands, has a slightly later growing season and when the seed packets say ‘Sow in March’ we have to take that with a pinch of salt! I have it on good authority from an old allotment hand that in Chipping Norton it is best to wait until Easter. Or as I was told last year, if you can sit on your vegetable bed minus your trousers without getting cold, then it’s time for seed-sowing.

This time last year we were waiting for snow to melt and the ground to unfreeze so we could begin spring digging and planting. This year, while other food growers throughout the country (including allotment holders in Oxford) have struggled with flooded land, up on the William Fowler allotments we have been luckier. However, with our heavy clay soil waterlogged since November, it’s been a frustrating winter and a long wait to be able to prepare the soil ready for seeds and young plants. With some seed orders having arrived in October, it is truly exciting when the start of the growing year finally comes. Of course Chipping Norton, being (as we know) somewhat colder than the surrounding lowlands, has a slightly later growing season and when the seed packets say ‘Sow in March’ we have to take that with a pinch of salt! I have it on good authority from an old allotment hand that in Chipping Norton it is best to wait until Easter. Or as I was told last year, (when an allotment novice) if you can sit on your vegetable bed minus your trousers without getting cold, then it’s time for seed-sowing.

The young children of Family Centre staff and users from the ACE Centre have raised over £400 by taking part in a sponsored Trike-a-thon. Many bikes, a track, and lots of energy were involved. The day was in aid of James, the child of one of the ACE centre familie (picturated above). Thanks to the considerable efforts of the Trike-a-thon-ers, James now has a special sensory mat.

The film ‘Le Weekend’ is showing on Saturday 15 March at 7.30 at Churchill and Sarsden Village Hall. Nick (Jim Broadbent) and Meg Burrows (Lindsay Duncan) give superb, lived-in performances as this married academic couple who mark their 30th wedding anniversary in Paris, the place of their honeymoon, hoping to rejuvenate their marriage. An intelligent, thoughtful and enjoyable film which will certainly appeal to mature audiences. All films £4.50 pay on the door. For more information and to book ring 659903 or email churchillmovies@btinternet.com.

The camera loves a natural beauty and, as such, there are many stunning photographs of Chippy and the surrounding countryside. But can you come up with the defining image of the area to snap up a prize in this year’s Oxfordshire Cotswolds Photographic Competition? You don’t have to be a professional photographer: you can be an enthusiastic amateur or simply lucky enough to be in the right place at the right time with your camera. The judges want to see an image that encapsulates what it’s like to live in the area. It could be a landscape at a particular time of day, a portrait of a typical street scene in the Town, a building or feature which has caught the light to great effect, or any other image that captures the uniqueness of West Oxfordshire. This year’s winner will receive a ready-to-hang canvas of their image donated by Witney-based Blueprint Imaging Ltd, and afternoon tea for two at Heythrop Park Resort. The winning photograph and some of the best entries will be used in the Council’s tourism marketing publications and on the Oxfordshire Cotswolds website. The closing date for entries is Monday 31 March. All images should be of high enough quality for enlargement to A4 size. For full details and entry form visit www.Oxfordshirecotswolds.org/photos or contact diane.blackwell@westoxon.gov.uk or on 01993 861553.

Save the date – Midnight Walk: Saturday 14 June. More details later.

Spring supermarket collection days: please contact us if you can help out at Tesco Brackley (4 April), Tesco Banbury (30 April), Tesco Bicester (9 May), Morrisons Banbury (19 May), or Morrisons Banbury (23 May). Call 01295 812161 for more information on these items.
**Phone Co-op’s PAYG SIM**

Hot on the heels of announcing growing membership and record profits at its AGM last month, local firm The Phone Co-op has announced a partnership with the Co-operative Group to launch the first co-operative pre-pay mobile package in the market. The SIM card will be available across 2800 Co-op stores or ordered direct. Chief Executive Vivian Woodell promises that the pay-as-you-go SIM package will be transparent and competitive. Telecoms products and pricing can be very confusing and this can undermine consumers’ trust. We want to tackle this head on. The Phone Co-op is owned by its customers and puts them first. The SIM package is one highlight of a concerted strategy of growth in 2014 for the co-operative. However, Vivian Woodell is keen to stress that its ethos of social and environmental responsibility is as strong as ever. In 2013 the Phone Co-op agreed to take over the Community Network’s teleconferencing services so that those who are isolated or lonely have a link to the wider community. It also completed three more large-scale solar PV projects in February last year and made further investments in renewable energy and community projects. At the AGM Shelagh Young was elected as the group’s new Chair saying, ‘It’s a real honour to be elected. The co-operative movement has been experiencing tough times recently and it’s been wonderful to be able to respond to critics of mutualism by pointing to The Phone Coop’s track record of success.’

**Advocacy training on offer**

Oxfordshire Advocacy is an independent, confidential, free service supporting adults in Oxfordshire to get their voice heard and their wishes taken into account. Volunteer advocates work with people needing support to challenge decisions, uphold rights, attend meetings, make a complaint. The charity is looking for volunteers to attend their next training courses: in Oxford these will be on 12, 13 and 20 June. For an informal interview, please contact: Jacinta.sands@oadg.org.uk, 01865 741200, or see www.Gettingheard.org.

**Could you help the Museum?**

Chipping Norton Museum of Local History is a real asset to our town – an Aladdin’s cave of artefacts and documents that chart the history of Chippy, situated in the centre of town at 4 High Street. But, like any museum, it cannot operate without a good supply of willing volunteers – and now, prior to its seasonal reopening in April, the museum has put out a call for new blood.

The Museum’s Curator Pauline Watkins has explained that the museum committee is in need of new faces – people enthusiastic about history and the future of the museum. But other volunteers are also needed – to help man the museum during its opening hours, catalogue documents, carry out administrative tasks, deal with enquiries: there are many things that the museum does, and all of them need help!

‘I know people are very busy,’ Pauline told the News, ‘but if people don’t come forward to help, in the next couple of years, we will have to look at our future.’ Finances aren’t the main issue for the museum, even though they have to continuously fundraise to pay its costs. Instead, Pauline added, ‘it’s people – volunteers – who are needed’. Without an influx of new helpers, Pauline believes that one of the options for the museum will be to close for a couple of days a week – currently, during its open season, it is open six afternoons a week.

The museum’s volunteers take on a variety of projects, including research and publishing local history books. They also deal with genealogical enquiries and visitors from around the world, especially from America, Canada and South Africa. They man stalls at local events such as the Town Festival and the Fibreworks’ Fibre Festival, sell teas at Chastleton House and promote the museum at its own regular stall in the arcade leading to the Co-op.

The museum currently opens from Easter to October, Monday to Saturday, from 2 till 4 pm. Volunteers with computer skills would be particularly welcomed; and anyone who joins Chippy’s History Society gets free admission to the museum. If you’d like to get involved, contact either Pauline Watkins, on 641712 or email paulinewatkins58@icloud.com, or David Nobbs on 643017. For more information, see the museum’s website at www.chippingnortonmuseum.org.uk. An annual Volunteers’ Evening is held shortly before the museum reopens – this year, it is scheduled to reopen the week before Easter. Further details of the volunteers’ evening and the reopening will be in the April edition of the News.
A ladies’ exclusive clothes swapping, shopping and pampering evening is being held on Saturday 29 March at 8pm in Churchill Village Hall. Clothes swapping, or ‘swishing’ as it is sometimes called, is a great way of refreshing your wardrobe without spending a fortune. It’s also a great way of recycling. The idea is everyone brings nice, clean, presentable, ‘once loved’ clothes lurking in their wardrobes, and other ladies fall in love with them and give them a new home. All donated items will be £1–£2. We will also have some brand new clothes – kindly donated by Asos and others – at bargain prices, and a spot of shopping from local sellers, including OOpsadaisy children’s clothes, Tamelia stylish African bags and Dunning & Jones’ beautiful silhouette children’s portraiture.

The evening is to support Rafiki Thabo Foundation, a locally-based charity supporting community development projects in Africa (in Kenya, Uganda and Lesotho), particularly for women and girls, and schools. Tickets £3 in advance or £4 on the door, including a drink on arrival. Groups – five tickets for £10. For more information, to buy tickets, donate clothes or raffle prizes, please email janet@rafiki-foundation.org.uk, or call Janet on 659269 or Lore on 658483.

Janet Hayes

Looking forward at St Mary’s

I’ve checked our website (www.stmaryscnorton.com) to make sure it’s up to date before writing this … and yes, even to the point of hearing a recording of last Sunday’s sermon! Log on, listen and find out what’s happening at your Parish Church. The weekly notices are normally available each Friday and there are archived pages on life at St Mary’s. Some years ago I stood in the hospital ward at the bedside of a seriously ill toddler. She was what I can only describe as, ‘wailing’. After a while the wailing stopped, a single tear came to her closed eyelids and trickled down her cheek. Then the wailing resumed. No audible word of prayer had been uttered. No ‘laying on of hands’, just a silent prayer and she eventually recovered. Sometimes a Christian’s faith shows itself in remarkable ways, sometimes less so. But in ‘A Passion for Life’ (see p14) there will be opportunities to hear about and question what faith in Jesus is about. Meetings were held in February to prepare, involving students from Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, who will join us in the local churches. Many of us lead very ordinary lives, with as many ‘downs’ as ‘ups’ but experience persuades us that our faith is well founded and not only sustains us, but is worth sharing with others.

Gerald Forse

Local News

A Worcestershire owner with a dog that died in 2013 from suspected Alabama Rot (Evesham Journal)

Vets and pets

‘Alabama Rot’ – the New Forest dog disease

Chipping Norton Veterinary Hospital has received several phone calls from dog owners worried about the media coverage of ‘Alabama Rot’ a new disease that has caused dog deaths in the New Forest area. Vet Martin Whitehead (tel 642547) sent this.

The telltale signs

This disease starts as skin lesions, usually on the face or the lower legs below the elbow or knee, that are typically 1-4 cm long and look like ulcers or erosions. Affected dogs go on to develop kidney failure over the next two to seven days. The cause of the disease is not known, so vets have no specific treatment for it, but with aggressive supportive care for acute kidney failure about 20% of cases have survived. This disease appears similar to a disease of dogs recognised in the USA for about 25 years called ‘Alabama rot’. Its veterinary name is ‘idiopathic cutaneous and renal glomerular vasculopathy’ which, in plain English, means ‘we do not know the cause but something damages blood vessels resulting in skin lesions and kidney damage’.

Not major cause for alarm

In fact only 16 cases have been identified in the UK so far, out of about eight million dogs in the country, all over the last 14 months, and most of them between Dec 2012 and March 2013. Most had been walked in the New Forest before their disease started, but cases have been seen in Cornwall, Dorset, Surrey, Worcestershire and County Durham. We emphasise that most skin lesions will not be caused by this disease, and most cases of acute kidney failure will also have another cause. If you see unusual skin lesions on your dog, particularly if on the lower legs, do take your dog to your vet, but because the disease is so uncommon, our advice is not to worry about it otherwise.

Think about vaccination

Because the disease is new and in the press it seems scary. However, there are several far more common, long-established diseases – not in the news – that can just as easily make your dog very ill or be fatal, including the bacterial infection leptospirosis, which can also cause kidney failure, and parvovirus. A 16-week old puppy died of parvovirus recently in our hospital, despite several days of intensive treatment. These diseases are much more of a threat, and you can effectively protect against them – make sure your dogs are fully vaccinated.
Support for town retailers

The District Council is selecting ten small retailers across West Oxfordshire as part of a business support package pilot scheme, and shops and cafés in Chipping Norton are hoping to be among the beneficiaries. A number of local businesses applied in February and are waiting for news on what could be a valuable package for their long-term success. Gail Savage of ‘All Dressed Up’ says of the scheme: ‘Like many businesses on the high street we are facing stiff competition from internet sales and the changing face of retail. Some expert analysis, feedback and mentoring could make all the difference as to whether we are sustainable in the long term. Market towns like Chipping Norton attract shoppers partly on the basis of being a unique and personal shopping experience, with independent, original shops, so any help to boost our businesses and keep them a feature of the high street is most welcome’.

The scheme has been developed with retail consultants Caprese Ltd, who will work with the ten retailers to identify potential improvements and action plans. Contact WODC for details on the next stage of this scheme, 01993 861482

The Cotswold Table expands

The success of The Cotswold Table’s three events in 2013 has led organisers to put on an even bigger spread in 2014. The Kingham-based farmers market, which brings together over 50 quality producers of cheeses, meats, fish and bread, along with artisan crockery, linens and tableware, is holding its next market 10-1.30pm on 23 March on the Green in Kingham. The event will also bring back favourites from last year: a Kids’ Corner with pottery painting, textile printing and chocolate button-making; and lunchtime food stands offering the likes of sushi, hog roast and wood-fired pizza.

There are three more markets this year in Kingham: 22 June, 21 September and 14 December. The spread isn’t the only thing on the table in 2014, though. Organisers are considering taking up offers to set up stall at several local events and festivals throughout the Cotswolds in the coming year. Bringing the delights of The Cotswold Table further afield, it’s a growing success story for a local concept.

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01608 643139

Farewell old friends

Michael Howes

The News was very sad to hear, just before publication, of the death of Mike Howes at the age of 76 after a long illness. Mike died peacefully, at home in Chipping Norton, with wife Terry, daughters Julie and Sarah, together with the Lawrence Home Nursing Team. ‘Gramps’ was much loved by Katie, Megan, Cameron, Hugo and Fraser. He will be hugely missed by everyone. He had just received Honorary Citizenship of Chipping Norton after his many years of service to the community. The News hopes to have a full tribute next month, after his funeral and thanksgiving service. The News team has sent the family their sincerest condolences.

Susan Claire Henderson

Sue Henderson (formerly Shepherd, nee Pratley) passed away peacefully at Katharine House Hospice on 5 February, aged 46, after a long battle with breast cancer. She was the dearly beloved wife of Rick, whom she married recently in a quiet ceremony at home in November, daughter of Rita and the late Ted Pratley and a much loved sister and auntie who will be sadly missed by all who knew her.

‘Sue the Postie’ was born, educated and brought up in Chippy, made many friends in the Town and was known, loved and liked by many. She was featured in the Chipping Norton News just over a year ago, when she retired early with ill health from the Royal Mail after nearly 23 years loyal service as a postie in and around the Town. Her then partner Rick Henderson and all the posties organised a surprise tribute party at The Fox and invited the News to join the occasion. Our story, from a longer conversation with Sue included many reminiscences of enjoyable and hard work in her job, which she loved. Even when she was ill, Sue remained outgoing and interested in everything and everybody.

For her funeral the family chose a Stars and Stripes coffin to reflect Sue’s love of all things American. A private cremation took place in Banbury followed by a service of Thanksgiving at St Mary’s Church, Chipping Norton on Monday 17 February. Donations for Katharine House Hospice may be sent c/o A L Sole & Son, Bidston Close, Over Norton, OX7 5PP. The News team send their condolences to family and friends. Sue’s family would like to take this opportunity to thank Rick for his remarkable commitment to Sue and her care throughout her illness.
A Passion for Life 6-13 April

A week abuzz with Questions

If you walk into an empty room and see a brick on the floor, even if you’re not the most inquisitive person in the world, the chances are that you’ll ask yourself why it’s there. In the same way, when we gaze out at the stars at night, it’s a fair question to ask ‘why is the Universe here?’ Likewise, when we look at the incredible variety of life around us, and think of our own place in amongst it all, it would be odd not to ask ourselves why are we here? What is life, this life, all about? What is there about this life to get excited about or passionate about? Have you thought like that? Well, in the run up to Easter (from the 6-13 April), Chipping Norton will be abuzz with those very questions.

In fact, it won’t just be our town that’s abuzz – the same thing will be happening around the whole of the North Cotswolds and even around the country. Here, though, for that whole week, the churches in the Town will be busy working together, inviting everyone to find out what really does fire us up with a joy and a Passion for Life.

Events and speakers around town

At a time when the church around the world is growing at a faster rate than it ever has done before, with tens of thousands of people finding a living faith in Jesus each day, we’ll be exploring why that might be. There will be free events all around the Town, led by visiting speakers and locals alike – in the Town Hall, in pubs, in cafés and in people’s homes. Everywhere, anyone who wants to take part will be invited to listen to talks or join in with discussions to investigate different aspects of what it is that leads Christians to have a livelier Passion for Life than they had perhaps ever thought possible. Among others, we’ll be joined by Michael Green (author of over 60 books including most recently Jesus for Sceptics, Lies! Lies! Lies! and I want to believe but…) Rico Tice (former rugby player, co-author of Christianity Explored) and John Lennox (Professor of Mathematics in Oxford, internationally renowned speaker on the relationship between science and religion and author of God’s Undertaker, and Gunning for God), all of whom will be talking and sharing their experience of how Jesus has given them a Passion for Life.

Crunch club, fun quiz, curry and more

We’d love you to join us and to bring your questions – however ridiculous or provocative you think that they might be. There’ll be early evening events when we’ll specifically look at questions like ‘how can we make sense of faith in God or Jesus when there’s so much suffering?’, as well as other common objections that we often raise. There’ll be family activities like Crunch Club Wednesday – Friday mornings in the Town Hall, a Gospel concert in the Parish Rooms on the Friday evening and a fun quiz on the Saturday. There’ll be free lunches every weekday – again in the Town Hall – alongside talks by Michael Green when he’ll look at what Jesus has to say about all sorts of things such as ‘Self-satisfied church people’, ‘Money – the bottom line?’, ‘Dysfunctional families’, ‘The best party in town’, and ‘What happens when we die?’. There’ll be a talk by John Lennox dispelling the myth that faith is in any way at odds with the evidence of science (or any other aspect of life for that matter). There’ll be breakfasts, a curry night, coffee mornings and much more, so make a note in your diaries and come and join the fun of discovering what reason there is to have a Passion for Life. For more information look out for our programme of events (to be published this month) or visit www.stmaryscnorton.com

Chippy’s own Folk, Gospel and Blues team have a free Gospel concert at St Mary’s Parish Rooms on Friday 11 April with Jane Gridley, Silverthorne, Rachel Chai and special guests. For further info call 641101.

James Kennedy (Vicar)
Chipping Norton Music Festival

7-22 March

A major reason for the Festival is to allow children to express themselves through music and drama in a non-competitive environment and to receive constructive feedback from a professional adjudicator. Members of the public can watch Classes and Masterclasses at the Town Hall. Sitting upstairs in the gallery or towards the back of the hall is such an enjoyable way to spend part of the day. The enthusiasm of the participants is catching. Audience tickets at the door: £1.50 per day, £5 to all classes.

This year there are over 140 classes in music and drama for all ages, individuals and groups, including strings, woodwind and brass, piano, voice, and composition through to verse-speaking. The Festival opens with the Youth Jazz Band Challenge in the School Hall — when eight jazz bands compete for a Trophy. Tickets just £2.50 in advance or at the door.

The three Masterclasses are in piano, senior vocal and classical guitar.

Visit www.cnmf.org.uk for tickets and more information. Tickets also available from Jaffé & Neale.

The Theatre

Ruby Anniversary Congratulations

This year is the fourtieth anniversary of our Theatre. The building, built in 1888 as a Salvation Army Citadel, was renovated and its original features preserved to become the charming and unique Theatre you see today. The Theatre has become a central focus in the Town; in addition to stage productions, its Art Gallery, cinema, and educational activities offer many aspects of the Arts.

Gallery: Behind The Scenes Chris Fothergill has been the Theatre’s Artist-in Residence for the past year and has been sketching and painting life in The Theatre and around the Town. His sketchbooks and drawings and paintings taken from them form this exhibition. 26 March-16 April.

Drama: Alarms and Excursions A series of short farces by award-winning Michael Frayn, writer of Noises Off and Copenhagen — produced by the Theatre. Performances until 12 March evenings 7.45pm & matinée 3pm 8 March.

Music: Budapest Café Orchestra This folk-based group from Eastern Europe returns to Chippy and includes Chris Garrick, a celebrated jazz violinist who has performed with Dame Cleo Laine. 7.45pm Saturday 22 March.

For information on all Theatre events please contact the Box Office in Goddards Lane on 642350 or visit www.chippingnortontheatre.com

CNMF Chair Tish Nicoll: In the Spotlight

The 102nd Chipping Norton Music Festival is here this month. Tish Nicoll has been the Chair of the Festival Committee that organises it for over twelve years. I interviewed her at her home in Kingham and learnt of her life-long love of music and drama.

From the age of five she sang and recited at poetry festivals and concerts in and around Aberdeen. She trained as a teacher of Speech and Drama, and in her spare time she became a well-known local opera soloist and director of plays. This experience has given Tish empathy with performers of all ages as they take to their stage. I am sure her welcoming smile must help to chase away many butterflies.

Love of singing was the reason Tish moved away to London so she could study singing under John Carol Case, a much-respected baritone and singing coach. She auditioned for the Philharmonia Chorus and enjoyed years of performing with them in many prestigious venues including London’s Festival Hall and La Scala, Milan.

When she moved from London her love of singing attracted her to our Music Festival, first as a performer in the Senior Vocal Classes, (something she still enjoys) and very soon as a committee member. She is now the Chair of the Festival Committee but was quick to tell me that the organisation is very much a team effort with everyone working together for the success of the Festival.

Tish is a Speech and Drama adjudicator on the panel of the British and International Federation of Festivals for Music, Dance and Speech and an examiner for the English Speaking Board which promotes and assesses spoken English in schools and colleges as well as in industry and business. These careers, combined with her passion for encouraging a love of music and drama, make her an ideal person to help organise Chipping Norton’s Music Festival.

Her work as an adjudicator takes her to national and international festivals but she enjoys singing with the Chipping Norton Choral Society whenever she can and being a member of The Rotary Club of Chipping Norton.

Kaye Freeman
Children’s Events in various venues

Children will be able to meet some favourite authors, attend a tea party, take part in a workshop and more! Here are just some events on offer:

Ruby Redfort launches the Festival at The Theatre with her author Lauren Child who is also the creator of Charlie and Lola, for young children, and Clarice Bean. Ruby first appeared as the heroine of Clarice’s favourite books where Ruby featured as a 13 year old undercover agent and mystery solver. Due to her popularity, Ruby now stars in books of her own.

Flash Fiction For Children This workshop touches on structure, plot, dialogue, setting and character, and you will leave with your own short story. with Emily Barr and Craig Brown. 10+ years.

A Fairytale Tea Party Young children, dressed as their favourite fairytale characters, are invited to join author Abie Longstaff as she introduces Kittie Lacey, the fairytale hairdresser. 2-5Years

World War 1 Poetry Pupils have been composing poetry about the First World War. Those short-listed will read out their poems and the winner announced. Work by pupils will be on display around the hall.

Create a Picture Book with author and illustrator Tom Percival. Based on his best-selling Herman's Letters, Tom will use software to get the children to select various settings and characters to create their own digital picture book story. 5-7 years

All booking is at the Theatre Box Office, Goddard’s Lane in person, 642350 or online at www.chippingnortontheatre.com All tickets to be collected from Box Office.

Local Events: this month

Michelangelo: A Troubled Genius is the lecture by Douglas Skeggs for The Cotswold Decorative & Fine Arts Society. He looks at this tempestuous genius whose work at first fulfilled the ideal of the Renaissance before changing it forever. The Society's AGM is at 10.30, with the lecture at 11am, 12 March. Bradwell Village Hall, Burford OX18 4XF. Non-members welcome, booking not required (suggested donation £8). For further information please visit www.cotswoolfdas.org.uk.

Lenthall Concert: Wells Cathedral School Symphony Orchestra, conducted by Matthew Souter, play music by Mendelssohn, Barber and Strauss. 7.30pm Wednesday 26 March Burford School. Tickets on the door (£14) or in advance (£12) from Madhatter Bookshop High St Burford, 01993 822539, Music Stand High St Witney, 01993 774890, or call 01993 824949. Visit www.lenthallconcerts.org.uk for full details of this concert season.

In April:

The Pajama Game a CHAOS production

This West End Musical promises to be a lively production with a cast of popular performers from previous Chaos productions, Kieron Keeble, Diana Dodd and Martin Hannant from The Mikado last year, Debbie Radley and Fiona Bates, from Anything Goes (2012 production) and Ryan Souch making his début. 7.30pm 3, 4 and 5 April with a matinée on Saturday, The Theatre, Chipping Norton. Tickets sold at the Theatre.

St Matthew Passion by J S Bach

The Burford Singers last performed this masterpiece 10 years ago and they will be joined again by Canzona a leading Baroque ensemble and six soloists for a special Good Friday performance. Conductor: Brian Kay. 7pm Good Friday 18 April at the Church of St John the Baptist, Postal booking or in person 3 April, from The Mad Hatter Bookshop (see Lenthall details) or tel 01993 822412, details at www.burford-singers.org.uk

In May:

An Anagram of Murder by Seymour Matthews is the Spring production by the Nortonians Amateur Dramatic Society who say this modern, tense, dramatic thriller has enough twists to keep the audience guessing. 7.30pm 2 and 3 May in Methodist Church, Chipping Norton. Tickets £9 and £7 (conce) on sale from 1 April, at Coca and wegottickets.com. Please contact Andrew Pitman (01993 830930) or Lorraine Stacey (01993 831452) for further information.

CN Choral Society Concert

The programme will include pieces by Handel, Vivaldi and D’Astorga. Witney Methodist Church. 7.30pm Saturday 10 May. Tickets £10 from Jaffé & Neale, tickets@cnocs.org.uk or 684960. Under 14s free.

Oxfordshire Artweeks 3-26 May. North Oxfordshire’s artists will be opening their studios from 9 to 18 May.

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Mini Rugby
A view from the touchline

Chipping Norton RUFC coach Andrew Baud and the U8s line up against Shipston-on-Stour

With the Six Nations in full swing and England hosting next year's Rugby World Cup it's been hugely rewarding to follow a new generation of children as they discover and learn to play rugby together at Chipping Norton RUFC.

A dedicated team of coaches has been hard at work down at Greystones developing the mini section into a formidable little squad. Children can start mini 'tag' rugby at 6 years old and then progress through U7s and U8s before progressing on to 'contact' rugby in the U9s and beyond.

Our current U8 squad, with three seasons under their (tag) belts, are performing very strongly against their regional counterparts, most recently Shipston, Banbury and Faringdon and we regularly field three or even four strong teams at home and away matches. The success is testament to the support from coaches, parents and to the commitment of the 'mini' players themselves, who have been turning out every week to train and play, sometimes in some horrendous weather. With strong U6 and U7 squads too, that strength looks set to continue.

Most noticeably, at a time when overzealous touchline parents are making news headlines elsewhere, it's particularly heartening to see that mini rugby has got the sometimes difficult balance between competitiveness and respect for the game and each other absolutely right. The mini tag section has an everyone-plays ethos and enjoyment comes first, so if you want to join in, please go to the club website at www.pitchero.com/clubs/chippingnorton

The mini season culminates with Chipping Norton hosting the Oxfordshire Tag Rugby Festival on Sunday 6 April and, on current form, we have much to look forward to. Current minis will be old enough to play internationally by the World Cup of 2030 – I wonder!

Graeme Williamson

Trampoline Club

Half a term in and the club is in full flow for 2014. A great year ahead for Higher Energy Trampoline Club as we are looking for a lovely 8 metre high building to house our ever growing club. Achieving our dream will open more opportunities for the community as we could offer much needed training time.

We are delighted to have Gracie Ogden and Isobel Hughes join our U7 club development squad and huge congratulations to Jenny Bray who has been selected to train with the City of Oxford trampoline academy. For more info on all classes, please email higher-energy@hotmail.co.uk or call 07891 419793.

Fiona Middleton

Roller Hockey

Chipping Norton Skater Hockey club goes from strength to strength; recently coming third in a tournament in Hertfordshire and new players joining all the time. Three young members Jake Williams, Brett Massey and Devon Shadbolt, all at Chipping Norton School, are embarking on their BIPHA (British In-Line Puck Hockey Association) AAU Championships and FIRS World Cup opportunity in Las Vegas in July, having been chosen from hundreds of children nationally, during a rigorous selection process over a number of weeks.

As is usual with Amateur sporting events, the boys are having to raise funds to take up this opportunity. Earning their way where they can with the help of local town retailers, there are also plans for them to 'bag-pack' in our local supermarkets and the parents of course are involved in fundraising so make a date in your diary for:

A Darts Competition and Exhibition at Chipping Norton Football Club from 1pm on Saturday 5 April featuring Andy 'The Pie Man' Smith! For further details please contact: Ian Beasley 07912 087206 or John Massey 07795 488564.

Jake, Brett and Devon would like to thank Emma’s Trust, Isis Fluid Control (Station Yard), J R Kench, The Blue Boar, K F Early & Son, C L Langstone Plumbers, Staffs and Taylor-Wimpey for their support. A website is now in place for donations should anyone wish to support the boys in their venture: teamgbchippingnorton@hotmail.co.uk

4 Shires Swimming Club

We have hit the ground running – or I should say swimming – this year with successes already in three open meets and our biggest squad yet being entered into the Oxford and North Bucks County Championships. We have racked up 80 considered times amongst the 17 qualifying swimmers and are fielding an impressive 22 relay teams.

Membership has doubled over the last two years with improved performance. This is largely due to the dedication of our Chair, Caroline Mills, in conjunction with Head Coach, Kim Weetman. We now have a squad system that hones the skills of swimmers according to their ability and inclination to compete plus a training program that concentrates on the elements most relevant to the competition schedule.

Felicity Darwent has been selected to represent Oxford and North Bucks County Championships. We have racked up 80 considered times amongst the 17 qualifying swimmers and are fielding an impressive 22 relay teams.

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We feel that adult swimmers will be able to gain immensely from a structured training program. If you are interested, please contact our admissions secretary by email on membership@4ssc.co.uk. For all other enquiries please visit www.4ssc.co.uk.

Chad Whites U12 storm Villa Park!

Braving the 40mph winds and incessant rain, our hardy bunch of heroes plus parents and siblings ventured to Villa Park for a team excursion to watch a Premiership match – Aston Villa v West Ham on Saturday 8 February.

The match was a Family Fun Day with free activities in the Indoor Academy – favourite activities included measuring how fast each player could kick a football and a spot of sumo wrestling and we were fortunate enough to have our photo taken with the Aston Villa Mascot.

Following an entertaining first half several players and parents made a bee-line for refreshments and sustenance! Curry chips and Pukka pies washed down with hot chocolate appeared popular! The final whistle saw a home defeat: Aston Villa 0 – West Ham 2. After a final visit to the Villa Megastore to buy souvenirs to commemorate a great day out. it was home, some of us via another food and refreshment stop!

Seymour Mincer

Sport in Brief

Football: The Town’s 1st team sit top of the Witney & District Premier Division by three points. However they have played three games more than the side in second place. Due to the wet weather Chad Whites Under 12’s have just played two games in 2014. One win and one defeat.

Rugby: The 1st XV lost narrowly in the semi-final of the Oxfordshire Shield.

Motorsport: Alice Powell is hoping to raise money to compete in Formula E. The cars would run on electric and race in ten cities across the world from September to June 2015. Sean Walkinshaw is competing in European Formula 3 Open this year.

Cricket: For details on indoor nets and playing this year, please contact Ian Widdows on 07795 100952. Youth Cricket contact is David King 07801 758940.

Town Sports Awards: Nominations close on 28 February and then judging begins for the awards night on 27 March.

Graham Beacham
Conference for Amnesty Group

Five members of our group joined other group members from across the area at Amnesty’s South Midlands Regional Conference in Oxford in January.

In a relaxed atmosphere we listened to talks, discussed each group’s activities in 2013 and had the opportunity to put questions to the speakers and organisers. The conference started with a film tribute on the work of Nelson Mandela. Then Kate Allen, Director of Amnesty International UK, talked about the major changes that have taken place recently with the formation of Amnesty offices in countries in the southern hemisphere where staff will be at hand to campaign against injustice and human rights abuse, greatly reducing the number of staff in London, for so long a major hub in its operations. She reminded us that AI is the only GLOBAL Human Rights organisation and the work of each group makes a difference and gives hope to the oppressed and victims of injustice worldwide. She confirmed that AIUK’s priorities for this year will be helping people in need in Syria and a global campaign to stop torture.

Next meetings: 7.30pm Thursday 13 March and 10 April Lower Town Hall, new members welcome. Contact Priscilla Peace 01451 830459 for details.

Scouting around and about

Beavers: Last week we awarded two Beavers the top award any Beaver can achieve – Chief Scout’s Award Bronze. They left the Colony very happy! We have spent time making rockets, which we will launch outside when the evenings are lighter. We have also started a project tie dying fabric squares, that we will go on to sew together to form a Colony picnic blanket. We have had fun experimenting with gasses – much hilarity was caused by this!!

Cubs: This term, the cubs have been discussing the traditions, sports and foods in different countries. The food tasting evening was enjoyed by everyone; many thanks go to Rita Perry who cooked a variety of South African dishes including Cape Malay chicken curry; babootie and yellow rice; sadza and chakalaka; sugared dried fruit stick sweets and rooibos tea to wash it all down. There were also Indian sweets, French cheeses and poppadoms to try. The cubs enthusiastically tried everything, some said the chicken curry was the best thing they had ever eaten!

The global theme has been followed up with a trading game that involved the boys pretending to be poor orange growers and trying to earn enough money to cover their living expenses – this was much harder than they anticipated and they now appreciate why buying Fair Trade goods is so

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beneficial to farmers in developing countries.

The Rotary Club came to tell us all about the charity Shelterbox. After having raised money for a shelterbox it was very interesting to see what goes into the box along with the tent: a stove, blankets, plates, cups, cooking pots, water carrier, mosquito nets and a shovel were just some of the items that get packed into the box that will provide everything an extended family would need to survive in the aftermath of a disaster.

**Scouts:** The Scouts have had a busy few months with new leader, Roger Sinclair, now heavily involved in running the meetings and organising activities. One of the more unusual evenings as part of their Promise Challenge to learn about other religions was a trip to the Oxford Buddha Vihara (pictured). We learned about Buddhism from the monks and sat through their meditation and chanting. We have never seen the Scouts so quiet, sitting still and cross-legged on cushions for half an hour! They really did 6th Chipping Norton proud with their exemplary behaviour and a plethora of intelligent questions. We are camping in Chastleton at the end of March on a farm so there will be lots of exciting outdoor fun and learning important skills that will stand them in good stead in later life.

**Explorers:** Four of our Explorers are busy raising funds to travel to the Scout World Jamboree in Japan in 2015 with events such as bag packing and car washing. Added to this two of our younger leaders have just returned from a Scout International Moot in Perth (that’s the Australian one). There was a bit of a contrast for them when they returned home to organise a rather wet but fun Explorers’ winter camp. Explorers are also enjoying stargazing and learning to climb using indoor walls. Thoughts are also turning to the Duke of Edinburgh awards and the summer expedition season.

We are also very grateful to Chippy Rotarians for raising funds to repair the scout minibus gearbox – vital for our planned summer camp in the Lake District where we will be undertaking lots of adventurous activities in the mountains.

We are still looking for leaders interested in helping teenagers and who enjoy outdoor activities. Please contact Chris Braund (cbbraund@aol.com) or Cathy Elliott (catherine.elliott0200@googlemail.com). Come on it’s fun!

**Scrabble in the Chequers**

Please come and join Chipping Norton Scrabble Club’s current members, on Thursday 27 March – our 10th Anniversary! We will be playing Scrabble in the barn of The Chequers pub, Goddards Lane from 8pm until late. Thanks to landlord Jim for the use of the room. We’d love to meet new members, any age, so do come along for as little or as long as you’d like. We are very much a social Scrabble Club, so don’t feel you have to be great at it, we like to chat and have a laugh as well. For more information, or to contact me, please go to http://chippyscrabble.webs.com We look forward to meeting new people.

**Sarah Turner**

**Railway Club 40 years on**

The 40th season of our Railway Club began with the AGM on 4 February. A whole year of interesting meetings to look forward to; with two outings, in May and September.

At the AGM there was much to discuss. How to celebrate 2014, our fortieth anniversary? In May members with their spouses/partners will indulge in a very special treat; a visit to the Severn Valley Railway for Sunday lunch on a refurbished 1940s Pullman Dining Car. Great Menu and a red carpet to the carriage too, Coach full already! The autumn outing in September will be to the Seaton Electric Tramway in East Devon. More celebrations at our December meeting, but details later in the year.

Back to the AGM. A gratifying number of members attended, around 50+. The Committee were re-elected, all willing to serve another year. The Chairman announced we will no longer be seeing our favourite speaker Dave Baker each September, with his variety of archive cine films. He has been coming to us for over 20 years. Sadly, he has had a stroke and is unable to continue entertaining Clubs and Associations.

Following the business we had a speaker, a return of Hook Norton man, Jonathan Perks. He really is (dare I say it?) a Railway fanatic and spends most of his leisure time travelling the UK and Europe visiting preserved lines, large and small. He is also a Steward on some of the charter mainline railway trips. His slides were of 2013 visits; many of which the Club
had visited in the past. He will certainly be asked to come again in the future.

On 4 March ‘Coventry Kid’ Chris Youett will be back and on 1st April Mike Walker will talk on ‘Railway Signalling – The Mechanical Age’. It goes without saying that we always welcome new members and visitors to our friendly Club.

Estelle Brain

Rambling Club visit Tew

A bright and clear Candlemas Day presages more winter to come, they say, but enabled the ramblers to enjoy a very pleasant walk around Great Tew.

Starting from the car park in the village we made our way up the hill, across a field beside the saw mill, admiring the ornate chimney, and eventually out on to the Ledwell Road. We walked along beside the newly rebuilt estate wall, leaving the road where the wall ended, and took a stony track which skirted a boundary ditch or ha-ha. All that way, and no mud! But we did encounter a couple of slippery places later, as we returned to the village, noticing that the little cottage with the collection of horse and oxen shoes was being rebuilt and greatly extended. I hope they’ve kept the ox shoes!

It was quite a short walk, probably less than three miles, but well planned for the present unreliable weather and underfoot conditions.

Next month, 2 March, with more rain and floods forecast (and even worse, if ‘they’ are right) our walk will probably have a mile or two of tarmac too. We meet in the New Street car park and set off at 1.30pm, and are always glad to see new faces. For more information, phone 641222.

Liz Desbrow

Green Gym helps BBOWT

The Berkshire, Bucks and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust have asked us to help with another reserve, this time near Glyme Farm, so we have spent two sessions clearing blackthorn seedlings to keep the site open for wild flowers and butterflies. Further afield we have worked in the Millennium Wood at Kingham and the Vessell Wood at Evenlode. In Chippy itself we have weeded Church Street and continued to clear the triangular site near Travis Perkins where we hope to plant trees for eventual pollarding for firewood. Finally – and not least – the week before Christmas we spent a couple of hours sorting out our tool store, cleaning and sharpening the tools, and then we repaired to the Old Mill Cafe for a festive meal.

So far we haven’t had to cancel a session because of the weather but it has certainly been very muddy under foot!

So if you don’t mind the mud, join us on Wednesday mornings and get fit while caring for the environment. There are jobs for all ages and abilities, there’s no joining fee and lifts may be available. Visit www.chippygreengym.org, or call me on 643269 or email jennyharrington@btinternet.com. Everyone is welcome!

Jenny Harrington

Single File fights the gloom

Single Filers were determined not to be put off by an inclement January. Over 20 current and potential members attended a return to the Fox Hotel for our fortnightly club night on the 17th and on the 31st twelve people braved the elements to meet up and landlord John made us very welcome. Amongst activities during the month we enjoyed a trip to the Sheldonian in Oxford for a Viennese New Year Concert and lively foot-tapping Cuban music at Chippy Theatre. A visit to an art exhibition in Oxford proved very interesting and a Sunday lunch carvery at the Crown & Cushion was an ever popular event. And in an old fashioned games evening at a member’s house we played Cluedo and Scrabble. However, bad weather did put the Kibosh on two walks. Better luck next month.

Single File is a social group for single people of diverse interests and backgrounds aged between 50 and 70 including the widowed, separated and divorced who enjoy meeting to pursue a variety of activities. To find out more, phone 077655 98518 or email enquiries@singlefilecn.org.uk or find us on www.singlefilecn.org.uk

Conservative Lunch Club

Our luncheon club meets at the Blue Boar on the second Thursday of the each month at 12.30, for a main course and coffee (£10). The programme of speakers for the coming year will be available shortly. If you would like to join us, you would be most welcome, please call me on 645793 for details and to book your place.

Richard Benfield
Chipping Norton Rotary roundup

Stroke Awareness and Health Day (Know Your Blood Pressure) Saturday 1 March between 9am-1pm in the upper Town Hall. An opportunity to find out your blood pressure for free, taken by Oxford University Medical Students, and to chat to local health professionals including representatives of the Lawrence Home Nursing Team, Affordable Warmth-Sustainable Energy, Diabetes UK, First Responders and Healthwatch Oxfordshire. There will be coffee, tea and soft drinks available courtesy of the Rotary Club of Chipping Norton so please come in and have a chat and a cuppa!

Frank Jazz: winners of The Bob Ellis Cup at last year’s Youth Band Challenge

Chipping Norton Music Festival Once you have had your blood pressures checked, you will be fit to attend the opening extravaganza of the Chipping Norton Music Festival – the Youth Band Challenge on Friday 7 March starting at 6pm in the Chipping Norton School Hall. There will be eight bands for you to listen to for the miserly ticket price of £2.50. Brochures for the Festival will be available from Jaffé & Neale.

Chipping Norton Festival plans are now under way for Sunday 22 June. If you hope to be an exhibitor or to take part then please start thinking what you want to do and at approximately what time. We will provide contact details for the management team as soon as possible.

Who are Rotary? There are some who reckon that to be in Rotary you have to have learned a strange handshake and a silly walk, wear a bow-tie and spend all the time looking down on those less fortunate than you. I hope you, gentle reader, do not think that.

But who are Rotary, and what type of people are Rotarians? Well, they are mostly professional or business people – possibly a slight smell of bow-tie? – who want to do something useful with their spare time, and are interested in being part of something that lets them give to others what is needed to make life better. Our club has been involved in helping individuals locally, but more often we support charities. Local charities have included the CAB, the Riding for the Disabled, Life Education Classrooms (which go to local primary schools as an anti-drugs and smoking initiative) and the Air Ambulance. Nationally we have supported CLIC Sargent, MIND, Help for Heroes and St Mungo’s. Internationally we have in the main supported Shelterbox as it so effective at supporting people who have lost their homes and we have also helped an area of Uganda to have safe drinking water.

We organise things in and around the Town. You have probably gone to something organised or sponsored by the Rotary Club – the Chippy Festival, Chippy Jazz, the Fireworks display up at the Rollright Stones or perhaps our Race Night. We have spent our time helping you to give to these causes as well as supporting them ourselves, and we are part of an organisation of 1.2 million people worldwide who have clubs in nearly every country in the world. It’s all pretty neat, really.

How do you join if you are interested? Well, contact the Club through our website – google us if you need to - or go and chat to a Rotarian at one of our events or contact me (677156/ 07896 326149). We are looking for people who want to make a difference, who want to use their own time enjoying themselves making other people’s lives better. If you are that type of person, get in touch with us.

Simon Hamilton

Alzheimer’s Group

Chipping Norton Carers Group Mondays 10 & 24 March 10.30-noon at the Fox Hotel. If you care for someone with dementia come along and talk to others.

Alzheimer’s Café Wednesday 5 March 2-4pm at the People’s Church, Horsefair, Banbury. For those who have dementia or their carers. Share information and experiences, or just have a cup of tea and a chat. Friendly Alzheimer’s Society staff and volunteers are there with information and support.

Singing for the Brain Mondays 3 & 17 March 10.30-noon at Colin Sanders Innovation Centre, Mewburn Rd, Banbury. Fun, stimulating sessions, for people with dementia and their carers.

Cotefield Café Wednesday 19 March 2-4pm at Cotefield Nurseries, Oxford Road, Banbury, OX15 4AQ Social group at...
a local garden centre. Buy refreshments from the café and enjoy a social afternoon!
Please call Frances or Shirley at the office on 01295 255957 for more information on any of these events.

Stargazers’ undampened enthusiasm

Our follow up Street Stargazing event on 7 February was a partial success, cut off in its prime by yet another Atlantic storm steaming in from the southwest. Bold CNAAGers have taken full advantage of any short breaks in the bad weather to continue to observe and image the supernova in M82, the Cigar Galaxy close to Ursa Major. In March we are looking forward to an evening at Middle Barton and on the 12th paying a visit to Bicester Young Farmers for an evening’s observing. Our list of professional monthly speakers continues to grow along with our membership but this month we briefly pause to take stock with our AGM on Monday 17th. The first week of March is also National Astronomy Week and for our contribution we will be at the Dept of Astrophysics on the 5th and back in the town centre hopefully on the 7th. March through to the end of May can bring about some stunning clear evenings and CNAAG exists to cater for everyone interested in space and the cosmos. Everyone is welcome to any of our meetings and full listings of our events etc can be found on the CNAAG website, www.cnaag.com The popularity of astronomy continues to grow and if you are looking for a new interest, or rekindle an old one, please get in touch.

Robin Smitten

Walled garden at NOOG

North Oxfordshire Organic Gardeners first Chippy-based meeting, in the Parish Rooms, in February had a timely and warming theme. Riki Therivel of the Oxfordshire Community Woodfuel Programme gave a hugely instructive and practical talk on woodfuel, covering all varieties of burners and stoves, as well as the differences in the type of wood used. Wood is still the cheapest form of fuel available and there’s plenty to go round, especially if sourced from local woodlands — much of which is free in return for an afternoon’s labour. Their website www.oxonwoodfuel.org.uk is a rich source of very useful information.

Our March meeting will focus on hands-on gardening. Julia Scott from Worcester will tell the story of the process she and her husband started 19 years ago to restore a derelict half-acre walled Victorian garden. Featured on Rick Stein’s BBC Fresh Foods, it now includes pond, fruit growing area, potager and flower gardens, all interspersed with common and uncommon culinary and medicinal herbs. Julia’s speciality is herbs and she’ll be bringing an array to sell: Saturday 5 March, St Mary’s Parish Rooms, 7.30pm. On 2 April Barbara Saunders will demonstrate how to prune ‘stone fruit’ trees. Do come along to these friendly events: £3 non-members (£1 members). Phone Tracy Lean 01295 780710 or email tracylean@gmail.com for more information.

Bridge Club boom!

In the last year Chipping Norton Bridge Club has grown to nearly 70 members. We meet weekly on Tuesdays at Chippy Bowls Club for a duplicate session from 7.15pm. Play is quite competitive but in a friendly atmosphere. We have annual club competitions and also enter several national simultaneous pairs events during the year which attract strong players from near and far.

On Thursdays from 2pm we hold a more relaxed bridge session where you can turn up with or without a partner. This is suitable for less experienced players.

The local bridge (and life) partnership of Pat and Peter Perry both recently reached the dizzy heights of National Master. To get to this level required dedication not to mention skill. Congratulations.

On 21 January we had our popular New Year Party. The
room was full with 40 members enjoying a pleasant meal followed by some slightly tipsy hands of Chicago bridge.

If you would like to know more phone either Secretary David Megson (645382) or Chairman Richard Dixon (644939).

Kingham and the Wychwoods Rotary

Retired midwife Frances Barnsley pictured at The Cotswold Maternity Unit in Chipping Norton in the room named after her

What makes the very popular retired midwife who has delivered hundreds of local babies start helping new born babies in Mongolia and Burma when she should be in her garden taking life a little easier?

The phenomenal journeys (including 2 days by car over the mountains and then 10 hours on the back of a motorbike) and family experiences of Frances Barnsley will make for a unique presentation on Monday 10 March at The Mill House, Kingham. The public are very welcome and can stay for dinner with Frances and club members for £12.50. Particularly if you wish to stay for dinner you need to call club secretary Kay Shortland on 01993 832927.

Paul Jackson

Horticultural Association

Over 50 members and friends supported our local speaker Clive Rand at our January meeting, when he spoke and showed pictures of The French Garden Festival. The festival which is held in the Loire Valley is very different from those held in England.

On Wednesday 19 March in the Methodist hall, Philip Aubrey from Alvechurch making a return visit, will give an illustrated talk on Ponds and Water Features.

At the March and April meetings our membership secretary, Emma Bayley will be collecting the subscriptions for the next season, commencing on 1 April. Subscriptions remain at £10 – this covers winter speakers and light refreshments – members will also be entitled to discount on garden items at five outlets in the area (membership cards will need to be shown.)

Visitors (£3 each evening) and new members always welcome. For more details contact the secretary Eileen Forse on 643275.

Brenda Morris

Historians explore Mad Houses

The Local History Society had an extremely interesting talk on 10 February on the subject of the Mad Houses in Hook Norton by Don Radcliffe. We learnt that in 1720 the only lunatic asylum in Oxfordshire was in Hook Norton. It was a large house in Bell Hill and was run successfully by the Harris family for many years until it was sold to Henry Tilsley from Chipping Norton in 1825. Tilsley was a surgeon and apothecary who eventually bought another house in Hook Norton in Downend which was also used as an asylum. He also rebuilt and extended Bridge House which catered for around 40 people. The Downend site had three acres of garden in which the 70 inmates – both men and women – grew their own produce. They were well treated and had good solid food and many of them left after several months care.

The next meeting of the Society on 10 March will be a short AGM followed by a talk on the Swing Riots – agricultural riots of the area by Shaun Morley. 730 in the Methodist Hall.

Brenda Morris

Stormy weather at the Folk Club

‘The wind and the rain’ featured in the lyrics of some songs at February Folk Club, but the stormy weather did not deter a roomful of performers, with new faces from Shipston to Swindon! There was music from every genre; folk, blues, instrumental, but the ‘Somerton Gentlemen’ were impossible to classify with their Italian inspired – ?? Some were almost professional in standard, whilst others exploited the tolerance and encouragement given to those starting on their musical journey; all abilities are welcome.

Next month on 10 March there is a choice between the Chipping Norton Music Festival at the Town Hall – Monday is folk class night – and the normal club singaround at the Blue Boar, at the earlier start time of 7.30. See the new website at www.chippingnortonfolk.org.uk for more info.

Sing, play or just listen; just £1 at the door.

Dave Wallace
Chipping Norton School

‘School We’d Like’ competition: three representatives of a team of thirteen students (pictured) have successfully reached the regional semi-finals of this national competition to come up with an innovative idea to change your school for the better. The team from Stour (Abigail Hollis, Edward Baker and Tazu Walden) presented their idea, ‘Lock and Learn’ (an exciting concept of using laser tag to make maths lessons more enjoyable) at the Museum of London on 30 January. We hope to find out shortly whether the team will compete in the national final for the prize of £5000.

Rugby Master Class: On 6 February former South African international player Thinus Delport and former England player Craig Gillies came to school to run a coaching master class with thirty Year 7 students. The master class was offered by Sky Sports’ Living for Sport initiative as a reward for Chipping Norton School’s continuing dedication to running many projects (including an Olympic Festival for Primary Schools) to try to get local young people more involved in sport. The master class was highly motivational, fun and overall a great success. Ethan Bennett commented, ‘It was a great, fun experience and I learnt a lot of new things. My favourite bit was when they joined in with our game at the end’.

U11 Swimming Gala: On 21 January ten primary school swimming teams came to Chipping Norton School to take part in the annual U11 CNPS swimming gala. Community Learning Lead Jo Phillips ran the gala with Year 12 Sports Leaders and staff from Four Shires Swimming Club. Four Shires support the event with their expertise and look out for promising swimmers. These swimmers are asked to go along to join Four Shires Swimming Club which offers an ideal opportunity for young swimmers to show off their skills and swim for a competitive club in the future.

The gala had a wide range of relay and individual races. The overall winner of the swimming gala on the day was St Mary’s CE Primary School, who also won the ‘Big School’ competition. The Middle School winners were Holy Trinity and the Small School winners were Chadlington School. Congratulations to every pupil who took part; you worked hard and made it a great event. Thank you to all school and Four Shires staff who assisted in the running of this event.

Art Workshop: Chipping Norton School continues to offer a variety of workshops to its Partnership Primary Schools and it was with great pleasure that the Art Department hosted the Year 4 & 5 Able Gifted and Talented Art Workshop on Tuesday 4 February.

The 33 pupils from the Chipping Norton Partnership of Schools were divided into groups lead by Chipping Norton School Year 11 Arts Leaders. Each group had their own names; Frog, Crane, Lily, Butterfly, Lotus and Koi.

Mrs Corley (Head of Art) and Miss Ashton started the pupils off with an introduction to origami and demonstrated some simple paper folding. The pupils worked with their leaders and made different objects (including a frog, swan and a beautifully crafted flower) progressing from simple folding to more complicated patterns. Everyone worked hard and felt a great sense of achievement but had fun at the same time.

Each pupil went home with their origami creation, a new skill and a certificate. Well done to all who took part. Thank you to the CNSArts Leaders and teachers.
Holy Trinity Primary

Foundation Stage Children: have been very busy this term learning about people who help us and have had lots of visitors in to talk about their jobs. They have also visited some work places.

Visitors: Farmer Tom Goffe from Middle Barton brought his tractor into school for the children to see and sit in. They were amazed by the size of the tractor wheels and loved pretending to drive it. Farmer Tom also talked to the children about what it was like to work on a farm.

Dogs for the Medics dog handler Heather brought in her dog, Edward who demonstrated his special sense of smell, by finding tiny lumps of cheese hidden around the classroom. The children learnt that dogs like Edward are trained to help ill children.

They are looking forward to a visit from PCSO Harrison to talk to them about her role in the community. She will also be talking to the school in assembly about ‘Stranger Danger’.

Visits: The children walked down to the Fire Station to meet Shaun the Fireman. He talked to them about keeping their homes safe and what special jobs firemen do. The children particularly enjoyed being allowed to use the water hose and to sit in the fire engine.

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Some of the children went to Pizza Express in Banbury to find out what it is like to be a chef. They made a pizza each which they brought home to enjoy with their families.

Even after all this, they still had time to visit the Henry Cornish Care Centre to perform some of the dances they had learnt with Mrs Wallace, our visiting specialist dance teacher.

Igloo: the Foundation Stage children are very excited about their latest design and technology project, which is making an igloo out of plastic milk bottles.

Oxford United Football Tournament: Michael Pearson (Year 6 pupil) reports: On Tuesday, 21 January, eight of us went to Abingdon for a 6-a-side football tournament. We scored a few goals but unfortunately we didn’t get through to the finals. We all had a great time. It was a fabulous day. Thank you to Mrs Woolley for organising this.

Swimming Gala: Katie Blundell, Year 6, reports: The Year 6 Partnership Swimming Gala was a great experience and I am pleased I was part of the Holy Trinity team. The team was made up of four girls and four boys from Year 6. All of the races were relay races of four children. We did very well in the heats and won the middle school trophy. When it came to the finals we won one race. So, overall we came 3rd out of 11 schools. The Gala was very well run by the Sports Leaders from Chipping Norton School and the Four Shires Swimming Club. Thank you to them all.

Volunteers needed: Next term we are starting a new whole school maths project. We are looking for community volunteers who would be willing to help us for one afternoon per week (or just part of the afternoon if you prefer). You will be asking the children pre-written questions and helping them move towards their exciting new targets. Please contact the school office on 01608 643487 if you are interested in being involved.
**St Mary’s Primary**

**Swimming Gala:** Hannah Burman, A Team Captain, reports: St Mary’s A & B Teams went up to Chipping Norton Leisure Centre to take part in a Partnership Swimming Gala. The A team swam brilliantly and managed to get through all four finals, winning two of them. In the overall score St. Mary’s A team won the trophy for the ‘big schools’ and were overall winners of the tournament. It was great and we had lots of fun. Leah Hawtin writes, ‘I really enjoyed the gala. I raced in the freestyle and breast stroke races and our team came first in the freestyle. I found it really challenging, but had lots and lots of fun’.

**Able, Gifted and Talented Workshop:** Cerys and Martha report: Along with Amber, Charlie, Victoria and Vivek we all met up at Chipping Norton for the Art, Able, Gifted and Talented Activity. The theme was origami, which originates in Japan. Set up on a number of different table were origami objects which we could make. There were: Swans, Cranes (birds), Lotus Flower, Lily Flower, Butterflies and Frogs. We found it very challenging to follow the instructions, but it was great fun and inspiring.

**Polar Regions Topic:** Our reception class have had an exciting project this term linked to our Polar Regions topic. We decided to build an igloo using milk bottle cartons … a mere 428 were needed! Chippy, as always, was very forthcoming and after a real community effort we hit our target! Many thanks to everyone who helped in this. We began building as term started in January and after a couple of weeks of construction the children have enjoyed being explorers in the finished igloo. If you would like to see the end result please go to the school website and see the fun we had!

**Pop Art:** This term year 5/6 have been exploring Andy Warhol’s Pop-Art. They looked at a variety of his work including, animals, cartoon characters and portraits of famous people. They began by drawing their self-portraits on canvas. ‘It was great fun using bright colours to paint my face, even if my mum did think I looked like Medusa’ reported Martha Miller Yr6.

Then from what they had learnt they went on to create larger pieces of work, choosing one of the techniques. Holly class decided that they would take on the challenge of doing portraits of School staff. Even the Headteacher was happy to be Pop-ARTed! Class teacher, Mrs Williams said, ‘I love it! I look so much younger!! Tilly Clifton said, ’It was great fun drawing my teacher and painting her in wacky colours’. Lewis Kelt said, ‘It was funny seeing how different everyone looked’. Mrs Dunn said, ‘It’s been lovely listening to the children talking about each other’s work’. ‘A great success! Well done everybody’.

**Africa:** This term year 3/4 have been learning about Africa. Looking at the different countries that make up Africa and looking at African Art. Josh liked making the clay masks the most. ‘I’ve never done anything like that before but I’m pretty pleased with it. Joining the nose was the hardest!!! We painted animals in the style of Edward Tingatinga’. Isobel chose a Giraffe and said, ‘It was quite hard putting the pattern of dots in the right size – I liked my finished picture’. We also made a Kigogo game which in Kenya they make out of wood but we used egg boxes and decorated them with African designs. Shafrin said, ‘I beat Bethany and Jenny and will show my sister when I take it home’. We have on display a map of all the countries in Africa designed with their flag – it looks amazing!!
Chadlington Primary

**Sporting Success:** Chadlington School was the Small Schools winner recently at the Chipping Norton Swimming Gala held at the leisure centre. We are having to have a special shelf built to display all our recent trophy wins!!

**New School Library:** The school has embarked on a major project to create a brand new school library space complete with hundreds of new books and ebooks. The school has bought an exciting package called JuniorLibrarian.net to integrate with the School’s online learning systems and a wonderful, inspiring reading area is being funded by the Friends of the School. We hope to officially open the library during the Chipping Norton Literary Festival when we will be visited by a famous author.

**Music Mark:** The school is very excited to have been awarded recently the highly coveted Music Mark in recognition of its achievements and ongoing commitment to musical activities both within and outside school.

**Outdoor Classroom news:** Work is due to begin soon on our exciting new outdoor teaching area providing shade and shelter hopefully in time for the Summer Term.

**Term Topic:** The whole school thoroughly enjoyed a trip recently to Warwick Castle exploring the term topic of Dragons and Castles.

Middle Barton Primary

We have had an exciting start to the Spring Term. We have applied for Artsmark status so that we can celebrate and strengthen our arts and cultural provision within school. We had a moderator in school on 28 January and all of the classes enjoyed an afternoon full of Art and Craft activities. The afternoon went well and we will hear whether we have been successful over the next few weeks. Linked to this, we have sent off the fantastic pieces of artwork that the children have completed for the ‘Young Art Oxford’ competition in aid of Cancer Research UK. There were some beautiful pieces sent in by the children – good luck to all who entered their work.

On 31 January, KS2 were lucky enough to go to a Music Concert at the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford. Whilst KS2 were busy watching (and helping!) the fantastic Orchestra, KS1 enjoyed a day celebrating Chinese New Year. There were lots of fun activities that the children took part in, from making their own big Chinese Dragon (pictured) and dancing to Chinese music to tasting Chinese food.

The Big Breakfast on also in January was a huge success with lots of the children coming in to school early to enjoy a bacon bap, a sausage sandwich or porridge. A big thank you to all those who organised the event!

Great Rollright Primary

Our Family Valentine’s Day party was held at the end of last term, with fun and games for the children, and wine and nibbles for the grown-up. These social events provide opportunities for parents and villagers to come together, as well as raising essential funds for the school. This month our Ladies’ Curry Night promises to be really entertaining, with great food and good company.

This month we’re looking forward to World Book Week, and to our Science week! We have Exploradome and Oxford Science visiting the school. We are also holding a Children’s Science Fair and during the week the children will be hearing
from parents working in scientific fields, to help them understand the relevance of what they learn in class.

We are all excited about our Storytelling Café on 29 March, when we will be transforming the school into a magical storytelling venue! Listening to stories is a popular activity here and our regular reading partner sessions where the older children read with the younger ones are very popular.

**Acorns Primary**

**In Good Voice for 2014:** Nearly 60 children from the Stour Federation went to the LG Arena in Birmingham for the Young Voices concert. This is the annual opportunity for pupils to be part of a huge choir of over 6,000 school children and to perform to an audience of 10,000 friends and family members.

Children had the opportunity to perform with X-Factor finalist (and Queen of the Jungle) Stacey Solomon and professional singers Wayne Ellington and Keith Semple. The favourite songs of both the teachers and children were the hip hop medley where the children had a dance battle with the parents and rapped the theme tune of ‘The Fresh Prince of Bel-Air’ and singing ‘Livin’ on a Prayer’ by Bon Jovi, including an air guitar solo by Mrs Ayres!

Thanks to Alex West, who has done a superb job organising the event and practising the songs with the children! Footage of the concert has been uploaded by the organiser to www.youngvoices.co.uk.

**Gardening Club:** The Gardening Club finished the season before Christmas with a meal cooked on the fire pit, where the children and adults enjoyed bacon, eggs, beans and tiger bread. The children experienced lighting the fire and cooking for themselves. Plans are underway to try to develop our allotment into separate plots during this academic year.

**Enstone Primary**

Come along and enjoy an entertaining night at the annual Enstone quiz night on Friday, 21 March at the school hall, doors open 7pm. Tickets are £12.50 per person, which includes curry supplied by a leading local curry house and a beverage. The choice of curry will be mild chicken or vegetarian. A licensed bar will be operating.

Enter as a team up to eight people, or if you would like to enter as an individual we will find you a team. Please send you team member names and your team name to Kim McAdam at kimmcadam@gmail.com or call 01608 678359. Bookings will be accepted up until 14 March. Please advise of any dietary requirements.

The event is a fun fundraising event for the Friends Association of Enstone School. If you have any questions please contact Kim McAdam.

**Windrush Valley School**

Auditions complete and casting announced – all the children are very excited to start rehearsals for our annual Easter production, this year Snow White, with a difference! We are looking forward to performing at New Beaconsfield Hall on the large stage, with professional lighting and sound. For some of the children, this will be the first time they have performed in front of such a large audience – watch this space.

Well done to our U11 netball squad, who put up a good performance at Kitebrook School recently (11-3). Albertine Wheeler, Jessica Todd, Emily Whitear, Delphine Townley, Abigail Mackay, Sophie Rowe – with a special mention to Yr.4 Emilia Belardo, who stepped in to the GA position admirably. Unfortunately, due to the terrible weather the U9 tag-rugby and U11 football teams were unable to play their games at Kitebrook, but we hope to re-arrange soon.

**Sibford School**

Sibford School head of Early Years, Nicola Watson, has been awarded an MA in Early Childhood Education from the University of Sheffield. Nicola, who was a family lawyer and mediator before becoming a teacher, did her dissertation on Supporting Social Development in Young Children. ‘I’m really interested in encouraging the social and emotional wellbeing of very young children,’ said Nicola, who joined Sibford School in 2009. ‘This course gave me the opportunity to build on the mediation skills I gained over my years in the legal profession and to re-focus them as principals for working with young children. Encouraging children to interact and communicate effectively and peacefully with each other is also very in keeping with the Quaker ethos of Sibford School.’

On 19 March, Sibford School will be hosting a free Creative Fun Afternoon. Youngsters between the ages of 2 and 4 will be able to enjoy a range of hands-on activities including painting, salt dough modelling, printing and sand & water play. Meanwhile parents and carers can enjoy refreshments and find out more about Sibford’s Early Years provision. The Creative Fun Afternoon will run from 2-3.30pm. To book you place call 01295 781203.
Be proud of the Town

We always look forward to reading Chippy News and the February edition was no exception. Until we reached the Letters page – 'Dog Mess in Spring Street', 'Town's Empty Buildings', 'Town Toilet Problems'. Just three residents' observations that go some way to endorsing the 'Crap Towns' report last year that Chipping Norton had made it to the list of one of the worst places to live in. But as much as we love the Town our three readers certainly have a point. There is such a lack of care by some residents, shop retailers and the local council must surely share blame. Visitors to the Town must look up at those wonderful Regency Buildings on Top Row and then look down at the sad row of shops, most of which look shabby and in need of a good fascia scrub-up and a coat of paint. They might even consider buying a broom and sweeping the dirt and dog-ends from the pavement area to their shop. Let us all feel proud of our town, make it attractive for visitors and for Heaven's sake provide toilets!

John Whittle

Recreation Ground a 'battlefield'

In response to your request for views on the New Street younger children's play area I would like to say I wholeheartedly agree with your findings that the fenced off area for the younger children is a total dump compared to Churchill, Chadlington and many other local villages. As a recent addition to the number of Grandparents who take their Grandchildren to the area, in my opinion, the worst part is the uneven and unsafe ground conditions. It puts you in mind of a battlefield rather than a supposed safe environment for Toddlers who are always falling over the tufts of grass and lumps of soil as they try to move from one apparatus to another. As a lifelong Chipping Norton resident I am totally ashamed when I go to the area with visiting friends and their children. I am glad the Council has now taken this subject on board and hope they will provide a safe and pleasant area for our children, grandchildren and also for those visitors who stop on their journey past the common.

Patrick Nolan

(See article page 4 for details of Consultation Session 19 March - Ed)

Take your rubbish home

On walking through Withers Court last Sunday morning (2 February) I was disgusted to see the amount of litter and food waste left under the seats. What is the matter with the people concerned? It is not fair of them to expect the Council, the Co-op, Beales or Nash's to clean up after them. If this was you, next time please take your rubbish home with you!

Eileen Forse

Poppy appeal

We are delighted to announce that the total collected by The Royal British Legion, Chipping Norton Branch was a most excellent £9,264.18p. Our thanks go to our Poppy Organiser Malcolm Holland, assisted by Alan Hicks and everyone who helped with the collecting. We would also like to thank everyone who generously donated to the Poppy Appeal.

Steve Kingsford

The Chipping Norton News Team welcomes letters but reminds writers that name and address must be supplied and that the opinions expressed on this page are not necessarily those of the Team.

Local resident (name and addressed supplied)

(See main article page 2 – Ed)
Sgt Chris Pike has arrived as Neighbourhood Sergeant at Chipping Norton for the next few months. This update is from him, other police and press reports. Call police on 101 with any information.

**Allotment Shed alert!** Several allotment sheds were broken into on 8 Feb at Enstone with lawn mowers, fuel and rotavators taken. More sheds were burgled and attempts to gain entry into locked garages in and around Chipping Norton. Police are asking everyone – especially near allotments – to be extra vigilant and report anything.

**I pad stolen:** On 22 January around 12.30pm a person had an I pad stolen from a carrying case which was left on the bench in the New Street recreation ground. If anyone knows anything please contact police on 101. Please be careful not to leave valuable items unattended.

**Criminal damage:** Chadlington has suffered vandalism to car windows and mirrors, fences and bins. PCSOs are working with the Council to find the culprits. Between 24 and 25 January overnight offenders smashed windows and a communal door at flats on Cornish Road.

**Cannabis plants:** a raid of a Chipping Norton property again revealed a number of cannabis plants growing. The suspect is known to police and will be dealt with accordingly.

**Anti Social Behaviour:** Staff at the Chipping Norton Co-op are reporting youths congregating by the escalators and causing general disorder and anti-social behaviour (ASB). The neighbourhood team are on to this. Two youths have also been dealt with for shoplifting in the store.

**Shoppers beware:** Police have received several reports from shoppers with purses stolen in various Chippy supermarkets and shops. Please make sure your valuables are secure and out of sight.

**ESSENTIAL INFORMATION**

**Chipping Norton News Club**

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**Schools Work:** Police have been at Chipping Norton School alerting Year 10 pupils about cyber crime and bullying via social media sites.

**‘Have Your Say’ Events:** Police will be around in town and village centres to meet local people ~ Chipping Norton 1 & 3 March 10.30-11.30; Charlbury 1 March 10.30-noon; Over Norton 28 April 4.30-5.30.

**Join a Neighbourhood Watch** as a way of becoming actively involved at preventing crime in your area, looking out for each other, especially the elderly and more vulnerable: working together as a group, to help tackle local issues: anti-social behaviour and criminal damage. Police would like to work with residents to start schemes for Chipping Norton. Would you like to help? You can get free crime alerts, advice, news updates, door chains and bars for the vulnerable, message in a bottle schemes, potential insurance discounts and more.

If you are interested contact coordinator Deborah Hextall @thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk or on 01993 893866 or PCSO Cheryl Harrison from your local Neighbourhood Police Team on 101. Alternatively, return the slip below to the WODC Info Desk at The Guildhall.

**April deadline: Friday 14 March**

Final copy should be sent to Chipping Norton News, c/o Hill Lawn House, 22 New Street, Chipping Norton, OX7 5LJ tel/fax 643219. Items should preferably be typed, on disk or sent via email to chippymail@aol.com

**Sales Outlets and Subscriptions**
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**Advertising and Sponsorship**

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The Chipping Norton News is printed on FSC approved paper.
Keeping Healthy

Do you have any views on the standard of health and social care in Chipping Norton? And are you looking after your own health? Read on.

Views on local health issues

The new Healthwatch Oxfordshire, set up as a consumer champion, want to hear your views. They have identified four issues for immediate priority. First, make sure that health and social care organisations in Oxfordshire listen and respond to the concerns of staff, and to reassure whistleblowers that they are being taken seriously. Second, assess the problem of access and waiting times to see local GPs. An online survey throughout January and February has been gathering information about the issue. Third, examine the issue of 15-minute visits in domiciliary care. Healthwatch will be asking if these visits are of value for patients, carers and staff alike. Fourth, pilot the idea of support visits. Healthwatch will be asking if these visits are of value for patients, carers and staff alike.

Take your own blood pressure

High blood pressure is just one of the risk factors for developing heart and circulatory disease and you may not know you have it. West Street Surgery told the News they now have a machine that allows their patients to check their own blood pressure. You can pop along to the surgery at your convenience to try it out — it is in the upstairs waiting room with clear instructions on how to use it. If you know your blood pressure always seems to go up when the doctor or nurse takes it, why not take your own reading before your appointment. The surgery also has some new digital weighing scales with the blood pressure machine so you can check to see if you are a healthy weight and get advice about how to lose weight.

Or come and find out...

This year’s Stroke Awareness and Health Day (Know Your Blood Pressure), organized by Chipping Norton Rotary is on Saturday 1 March between 9am and 1pm upstairs in Chipping Norton Town Hall. Find out your blood pressure for free, taken by Oxford University Medical Students, and meet local health professionals including Lawrence Home Nursing Team, Affordable Warmth — Sustainable Energy, Diabetes UK, First Responders and Healthwatch Oxfordshire.

DIARY

March (News out Monday 24th February)

1st ACE Centre Open Day
2nd Rotary Stroke Awareness Day in the Town Hall see p22
3rd Ramblers 1.30pm New Street car park - details 641222
4th Stroke Club 2-4pm Highlands Pancakes for Shrove Tuesday - details 642209
5th Railway Club 7.30 Lwr Town Hall see p21
6th NOOG 7.30 Parish Rooms see p23
7-22 Chipping Norton Music Festival see p15
8th Charlbury Farmers’ Market 9am-1pm The Playing Close
9th Folk Club 6.30pm at The Town Hall: Folk Class of CN Music Festival or 7.30 Singaround at the Blue Boar see p24
10th History Society 7.30pm Methodist Hall - see p24
11th Methodist Coffee Morning 9.30-11.30 for Home Missions
12th CNWI 2.15pm Lower Town Hall see p19
13th Amnesty meeting 7.30pm Lower Town Hall - see p19
14th CHIPPING NORTON NEWS DEADLINE see p31
15th CN Farmers’ Market 8.30-1.30
16th Le Weekend in Churchill 7.30 - see p10
17th Astronomy Group meeting 7.30 The Fox see p23
18th Stroke Club 2-4pm Highlands Mary Newman on Penhurst School - details 642209

April (News out Monday 31st March)

1st Stroke Club 2-4pm Highlands April Fool’s Day memories
2nd Railway Club 7.30 Lwr Town Hall see p21
3rd U3A 2.30pm Methodist Hall Andrew Thayer - Buddy Holly & the Beatitudes
4th NOOG 7.30 Parish Rooms see p23
5th Annual Town Meeting 7.30 Town Hall see advert p3
6th Money Matters Day 9.30am-1.30pm at the ACE Centre - see p6
7th Ramblers 2pm New Street car park - details 641222
8-13 A Passion for Life Churches Together events see p14

Looking after your own health? Read on.

Keeping Healthy

Do you have any views on the standard of health and social care in Chipping Norton? And are you looking after your own health? Read on.