Into Action

Chippy’s community and businesses rise to the Lockdown Challenge – while the Town finds new ways to work and play

First mention goes to The Chippy Larder scheme (part of charity SOFEA and now with over 450 members) and Mary’s Meals teaming up with over 50 volunteers delivering 100s of food boxes every Friday. The free Monday Food Bank at the Baptist Church is there for anyone in need. Chippy Cllr Rizvana Poole, who started The Chippy Larder, praised the Leisure Centre for lending their site (and staff!) as a terrific distribution base. She said that feedback has been overwhelmingly positive.

St Mary’s Emma Kennedy thanked the Town Council, Wild Thyme (cooking a hundred meals each week), allotment holders and others for their donations to support Mary’s Meals. The Church’s new town centre hub, The Branch, (in the former NatWest building) now full of freezers, is distributing over 500 free frozen meals weekly.

Locals have risen to the challenge – such as the hardworking Age Concern team at Highlands and volunteers in a new cross-Chippy initiative called ZipRound. Both will shop, deliver and offer other help. A big thank you also to our magnificent supermarket and food shop staff – and the many businesses who have adapted and now come to you – from The Tea Set with food boxes and Beadles with meat to Hookey Brewery with beer.

And Town Life marches on! This free short May News edition has some great reports – new babies arriving, scouts camping, new ways to keep connected to friends and family. But, for the moment, please stay at home for the NHS, Chippy and the world.

Celebrate VE Day

Celebrate the 75th anniversary on 8 May. Put up bunting – the British Legion’s Steve Kingsford (01295 780716) has some or make your own! Visit the Chippy British Legion website to download their video and sing We’ll Meet Again on your doorstep at 9pm. The Legion plan a major ‘end of WWII’ event on 31 August.

Blooming Blossom

Chippy’s countryside bloomed in April for some wonderful local walks – here’s the apple blossom at our lovely Community Orchard.

In this Issue:

- Town Council zoom into action and Mayoral election in June
- Cotswold Birth Centre busy with new babies
- Town Centre investment update
- Chippy Scouts carry on camping
- Lockdown music on your doorstep
- Chippy’s Alice Powell ready for Motor Racing
- Local keep fit gurus go online
- Green Gymmers’ war on weeds and more Local News, Arts, Sports, Clubs & Schools
LOCAL NEWS

Chippy says: welcome to our world!

Over 100 years since the first Chippy Hospital birth and our Cotswold Birth Centre hasn’t stopped! The three months to 30 March (the busiest day) saw 42 beautiful births of which 39% were for first-time mums. Pictured are a happy Jess with baby Darcie. The Centre’s Laura Bellingham says they are ‘running as usual’ including homebirths, with proper precautions and PPE in place. Congratulations to all and huge thanks to all our NHS and Care staff.

Town Council Zooms in

Chippy Town Council held a full meeting online via Zoom on 27 April. 15 out of 16 members attended – access was available to the public One News team member attended. The Council agreed ongoing financial help for local Covid-19 support work and agreed to postpone any Mayoral election until June.

Keeping Chippy fed – at home

Well done to staff in Chippy’s food shops who, after the initial March rush, caught up with essential supplies, and put in place health precautions for staff and customers. Thanks to all including Sainsbury’s, Co-op, Aldi, M&S, Costcutter, Esso Londo, Mighty Pie Co, Nash’s, Roger’s and Oats. Please follow the rules – dangerous behaviour is reported to the police! Many other food businesses have adapted fast including doing deliveries for the housebound. Patrice at Roger’s Deli and Two Jolly Cooks are cooking and delivering, The Tea Set has transformed itself to provide grocery deliveries. Wyatts, Beadles, G&G Italian Foods, Café le Raj, Hooky Brewery and more are delivering. Chadlington is well served with CSQ and Café de la Post delivering (The Café does pizzas on Saturdays). Rupert Parsons’ Womersley Foods website has a current list of small businesses providing food and services. Also see www.communitybasket.co.uk, a new website pulling lots of valuable information together.

Churches helping us connect

Need a chat? St Mary’s Church, alongside its food and family community initiatives, has a ‘good to talk’ phone team making calls to over 100 people each week – simply to chat and check all’s well. Don’t feel lonely – call 646202. Lots more on www.stmaryscnorton.com including Easter and regular services streamed from Vicar James Kennedy’s home or via podcasts. Local Methodists marked Easter with a cross of flowers (pictured) and Holy Trinity Church is open each morning for quiet individual prayer.

Taking care of us

CN Health Centre (and patients!) have adapted to telephone consultations, and safer building use. Our Pharmacies are coping better and delivering. Yasin at the Co-op says ‘call for advice if you need it’ and contact the NHS regardless of Covid-19! Katharine House Hospice, with extra NHS funds, has increased beds from 10 to 26 for more community care while still supporting existing patients. Spare a thought for Chippy’s care homes in lockdown with no visitors, with staff providing extra care for vulnerable residents. Henry Cornish report residents and staff are well with good supplies of PPE and other resources. Beech Haven thank everyone (especially children) who sent much appreciated cards, gifts, pictures and letters. Lawrence Home Nursing Team continues with free end-of-life care at home. Local charity Thrive North Ox has been supplying toiletries, craft and well-being packs via St Mary’s Church and Chippy Food Bank. Please donate toiletries at Co-op supermarket. Thrive’s work for needy local families has included urgent household items for one fleeing from domestic abuse. Send our care charities a donation if you are able!

Help from & for local business

The coronavirus crisis has seen many Chippy businesses go the extra mile. First a big shout out for our Royal Mail Station Yard posties and Post Office staff – putting themselves out and taking on extra emergency work. Pictured are local posties in fancy dress raising funds for local Covid-19 support. Ten million finger prickers for blood tests are being manufactured at Owen Mumford, Wigswam staff are making scrubs and masks, Applegarth Nursery, Gills, Tickityboo, Bippity Boo, Wild at Heart and Jaffé & Neale Bookshop are taking orders, may deliver, and some have begun to re-open. Plumbers, builders, emergency house services, car and bicycle repairs are available. Oxfordshire Libraries have started online book clubs and Chippy Library members can download the Libby App and get audio and e-books for free. Local businesses under financial pressure, are now accessing rates relief, one-off grants, job retention pay, and government-backed loans.

Town Centre investment proposals

WODC are still considering plans for converting Chippy’s old HSBC Bank into a 31-bed hotel. Developers Setha believe they have addressed the County’s parking concerns by offering financial support for public transport and increasing public car park capacity. New owners of iconic, part-medieval 2 & 4 West Street (astride Hitchman’s Mews) propose keeping a business/shop frontage but creating 4 flats upstairs and 2 mews houses behind. The Baker’s Hair building seems unaffected. No2 housed Hitchman’s Brewery for 200 years from 1796 while No 4 was a grand villa. The Town Council have raised parking issues. New owners have addressed the County’s parking concerns by offering financial support for public transport and increasing public car park capacity. New owners of iconic, part-medieval 2 & 4 West Street (astride Hitchman’s Mews) propose keeping a business/shop frontage but creating 4 flats upstairs and 2 mews houses behind. The Baker’s Hair building seems unaffected. No2 housed Hitchman’s Brewery for 200 years from 1796 while No 4 was a grand villa. The Town Council have raised parking issues.

COVID-19 Local Support Contacts

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<tr>
<th>Contact Name</th>
<th>Phone Number</th>
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<tr>
<td>WODC support for the vulnerable</td>
<td>01993 861077</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age Concern Highlands</td>
<td>01608 643320</td>
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<tr>
<td>St Mary’s food &amp; help</td>
<td>01608 646202</td>
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<tr>
<td>ZipRound Chippy volunteers</td>
<td>01608 524484</td>
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<td>CN Town Council</td>
<td>01608 642341</td>
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<tr>
<td>WODC info &amp; benefits help</td>
<td>01993 861030</td>
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<tr>
<td>Domestic abuse helpline</td>
<td>0800 731 0055</td>
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<tr>
<td>West Ox Citizens Advice</td>
<td>0300 930 9049</td>
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<tr>
<td>Oxfordshire Mind</td>
<td>01865 247788</td>
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<tr>
<td>Age UK Oxfordshire</td>
<td>01865 411288</td>
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ARTS & CRAFTS

Chipping Norton Theatre – Doors are closed, but a new Speak As One project invites anyone (Age 8-11, 12--18, & 18+) to send a 5-10 minute playscript. See website for ideas and master classes. Professional actors will record the best. Rapunzel Panto is selling well, and a full Autumn season is on sale early May. Fingers crossed and donate to the Head Above Water survival campaign! Tel 642350 or see Theatre website.

St Mary’s Craft Bags – Around 200 families are getting creative, collecting free bags with kits and materials (thanks to all who are helping) from the church porch each Wednesday. One week’s theme of resilience saw home-made bird feeders inspiring some bird-spotting and lots of terrific art. (pic: ‘Travel and Friendship’) Our U3A Craft Group are turning pillowcases to scrubs!

Street music has taken off – Some great singing in Rowell Way every Thursday before the NHS Clap, while Churchill Road has a 15-strong doorstep band (from 8 households) whose members range from 13-70+ & include key workers and St Mary’s School orchestra graduates! Voices plus trumpets, clarinets, flutes, recorder, cello, saxophones, keyboard, guitars and a hand-made shaker (thanks, Alan Brain) have rendered Lean on me, Always look on the bright side of life, Bridge over troubled water and more. More stories please.

Chippy Ballet is blooming – 16-year-old Dan Chambers has won a coveted place for a professional degree at London’s Central School of Ballet. Dan trained with Chipping Norton School of Dance and was inspired by Ballet Central on tour at Chippy Theatre. He is pictured with his local ballet teacher, Ali Maxwell, who runs adult classes at Glyme Hall. In lockdown, Ali runs online classes for adults (men and women including some ‘silver swans’ in their late 70s). Try it! Contact alimaxwell6@yahoo.co.uk and see www.11roubles.com.

Oxfordshire Artweeks 2020 – offer a daily themed virtual trail through our finest art, including Chipping Norton, 2-24 May, details on the Artweeks website.

Charlbury Refugee Action Group's Tea Concerts – With no concerts, the best visiting musicians are recording special podcasts – see CRAG’s facebook page and please donate, as refugees may be hard hit by Covid-19. A virtual Easter tea party raised over £1000.

WEST OXON WI here to help – WOWI is a band of very resilient women: whether self-isolating, delivering for others, working at home or home schooling; all missing family and friends but keeping in technouch including with Zoom (a full ‘meeting’ with quiz was a huge success). Enjoying allowed walks, gardening, baking, clearing, crafting projects (pictured are lovely brooches made by a member during lockdown) and chats with neighbours sitting on their drives. WOWI are also helping via Highlands – call them 643320 or WOWI’s Hilary Dix (646228 email wowi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk.)

Chippy Lions – have ‘Message in a Bottle’ plastic bottles for your fridge to hold your emergency details, and a label for inside your access door. Emergency services can then quickly find your medical details and next of kin. There are also ‘wallets’ for car or pockets, from chemists, or Lions Liz and Mike (644678).

CLUB NEWS

Scouting undaunted! Helen Harris reports Chippy’s Scouting continuing at home and online! Easter weekend saw 30, from Beavers to Explorers, join the Oxfordshire County Camp in tents or home-made Bear Grylls-style shelters in back gardens. Everyone gets a another night on their ‘nights away’ badge. Busy Cubs made cards for local care homes, built Lego models, and joined virtual cub meetings – all in uniform, with flag break, badge work and a game.

Your own Green Gym – With groupwork suspended, individuals are tending sites, eg: weeding the Community Orchard and weekends at the Health Centre garden. 200 whips (young trees) from the Woodland Trust were planted in the William Fowler Wood and nearby. All good exercise and useful too! Take a walk and see – and join on Wednesdays when all this is over. Jenny Harrington (643269)

Chippy Folk Club Night goes ‘virtual’ – An amazing experience, reports Rachel Chai, ‘all from our own homes: enjoyment of shared songs, laughter, learning to Zoom, strumming along, and new topical songs. It’s more important than ever to keep connected.’ Thanks to Patrick, Mandy and Paul for admin, tech and crowd control! To join on Monday 11 May, sign up at chippingnortonfolk.org.uk and wait for details (15 in each session).

West Oxon WI here to help – WOWI is a band of very resilient women: whether self-isolating, delivering for others, working at home or home schooling; all missing family and friends but keeping in technouch including with Zoom (a full ‘meeting’ with quiz was a huge success). Enjoying allowed walks, gardening, baking, clearing, crafting projects (pictured are lovely brooches made by a member during lockdown) and chats with neighbours sitting on their drives. WOWI are also helping via Highlands – call them 643320 or WOWI’s Hilary Dix (646228 email wowi@oxfordshirewi.co.uk.)
**SPORT & KEEPING FIT**

**Chippy Swifts** U12 Dan McAndrew summed it up: ‘I love Manchester United, I love everything about football, I love being a Swift. But I don’t like the lockdown – I understand the reasons, but it’s boring. The perfect Saturday morning is a last-gasp Chippy win, after putting our parents through agony, followed by a cake from Kim. We have a great squad and I know we’ll be back, and that staying home is the right thing. Thank goodness for BBC and old World Cup games.’ Keep it up, Dan (back row, 2nd from right)!

**Four Shires Swimming Club** can’t get to the pool but are there for the long term, says Heidi Portlock. A WhatsApp group helps with lockdown boredom and missing friends – with fitness and diet tips, quizzes, photography and even a bake off. Back in the pool soon! Visit [www.4ssc.co.uk](http://www.4ssc.co.uk) for further information.

**Chippy’s Alice Powell** hit Motor Racing headlines last year with an amazing 3rd place in the all-female W Series, blazing a global trail for women. In March, The Observer featured Alice, all set for the new season and ‘pretty gutted’ about the Covid postponement. But as she says ‘everyone’s health is far more important’ than racing.

**Out and about** an hour or so each day has Chippy folk getting more exercise than ever! Joggers can do the NHS’s Couch-to-5K and Map My Run (try them!). Children enjoy walks spotting the teddies sitting in windows round town or finding the mysterious fairy trail that has magically appeared in the woods alongside Banbury Road behind Applegarths Nursery. There are 12 fairy homes to find, plus embellishments such as fairy clothes hanging on a tiny washing line, mini toadstools etc.

**Keep Fit** at home with stair climbing, garden jogging, Joe Wicksing and more. Chippy’s keep fit coaches can help! Karen Biles’s free Fitness and Yoga Facebook group has mini classes on Yoga, Fitness and Mindfulness plus paid online classes. The Chipping Norton Physio team run free YouTube and paid Zoom Pilates sessions – see their website. Keep healthy, keep well.

**SCHOOLS NEWS**

**All three Heads** at Chippy’s schools applaud parents, staff and particularly children, for adapting fast to a strange new world, with lessons at school for a few and home learning for most.

**Chipping Norton School** just managed to give Year 11 and 13 students a great send-off on 20 March – with a backdrop of June-style weather. Much to the delight of his own two children, Deputy Head, Alan Trainer, raised an amazing £1615 for local families most in need, with a head shave sponsored by staff, students and parents! This is a real tribute to the School community and it’s all going to Chippy Food Bank.

At **St Mary’s Primary** the key workers’ children at school have used the lovely weather for the exciting job of planting 15 saplings provided by the Woodland Trust. They also planted lavender, which they hope the bees will love. Chippy’s Aldi store surprised the children with a donation of Easter treats (pictured)!

**Children still at Holy Trinity Primary** created a rainbow, made an Easter garden, baked, made kites, joined fancy dress PE with Joe Wicks, and learnt to play some great music. Children at home have been busy and creative, with some wonderful models from a 30-day Lego challenge. Year 3 had a go at collecting objects for each alphabet letter from around the house and garden. **ACE Nursery School** staff recorded stories and activities for children on YouTube and sent out amazingly rich newsletters, encouraging feedback and photos in return.

So what about a June return to school? As **Top School Head**, Barry Doherty, said, ‘we simply don’t know how long it will be before normal classes resume. Until then we shall all make the most of home learning, take care of our most vulnerable families and try our very best to be the school that our community needs – to maintain that sense of normality and continuity’.

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**Essential information:** Special Free Lockdown Newsheet published by the Chipping Norton News Club. Contributions welcome. Next special edition deadline Sunday 17 May. Contact Chippymail@aol.com or 01608 643219. Printed by KMS Litho (01608 737640).