

# The Oaks



*Inside this issue:*

<b>Bucklebury Parish Council</b>	
<b>WB Councillors</b>	8
<b>Family</b>	10
<b>Organisations</b>	13
<b>Halls</b>	18
<b>Sport</b>	18
<b>Contributions</b>	20

## Bucklebury Parish Chairman's Letter

During the pandemic we, as a Council, have become much more aware that some in our community experience difficulty in obtaining the necessities of life, for example food shopping, medical prescriptions etc and need help. We are also conscious of some suffering social isolation and have seen our monthly coffee mornings help to address this. Another initiative, important for wellbeing, has been to provide access to an area for outdoor rest and recreation in the small meadow near the Cottage Inn. We are considering a small orchard in this area and improving the access from Morton's Lane for pushchair and wheelchair users. Wildflowers will be planted at another such area, the Hockett Field.

Another Parish Council asset is the popular Playpark and BMX cycle track at the Memorial Hall. Despite problems with littering and occasional vandalism we are determined to invest in upgrading the playpark's attractions and maintaining the condition of the cycle track.

Work on the refurbishment of the Victory Room was recently completed. If you have not already done so I urge you to go and see the first rate job that has been done on turning this 100 year old village hall into a 21<sup>st</sup> century facility. Financial support for this endeavour has come from, amongst others, the Greenham Trust. We are pleased to have Chris Boulton, the CEO of the Trust, as the guest speaker at our Annual Assembly on 5<sup>th</sup> May.

As many will be aware the issue of the next stage in the Local Plan consultation process has been delayed until the summer. Following the public meeting she held last August, Laura Farris MP has written to West Berkshire Council giving her views and expressing her concerns over the proposed development of 2500 houses in NE Thatcham. Last month she met with the Leader of WBC and our Ward Member,

Graham Pask, to discuss the matter. There have been changes amongst the senior WBC officers having responsibility for planning, resulting in a fresh perspective and reappraisal of the draft Local Plan. In addition there are signs Central Government will adopt a more flexible stance to the future housing numbers required in West Berkshire. These are all positive indicators in our fight against this proposed development but are no reason for us to lower our guard. While Thatcham Town Council lead on the traffic implications in the area of these thousands of new houses we are engaged on the environmental impact and are using the delay in the Local Plan process productively.

Looking ahead we have The Queen's Platinum Jubilee Celebrations in early June with events planned by several communities in the Parish. The Farm Park is also planning events over the long weekend; further information on this will come out shortly.

**Barry Dickens—Chair of Bucklebury Parish Council.**

Parish Council Chairman  
Barry Dickens

Parish Council Clerk  
Helen Pratt

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**Bucklebury Parish Council**

**Common Clearing  
and Parish Litter  
Pick**

Come to help clear litter from the paths  
of **Bucklebury**

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> April 2022**

**Meet Bucklebury Memorial Hall**

**2.00pm**

Equipment will be provided  
SKIP at the Memorial Hall

Free refreshments afterwards

**"Keep Bucklebury Beautiful"**

## Parish Council Matters Arising

### Fred Dawson Playpark

The children's playpark continues to be well used by local families and is a popular meeting place for parents and carers. It is wonderful to see how much fun our youngest parishioners have in the park.

The extremely popular basket swing was replaced after the previous one broke. We have Councillor David Southgate to thank for giving up his time to put up the new swing which has extra safety chains. Fun though it is to see how many teenagers can pile into a swing at once, please consider the little children



The new basket swing in the playpark

who use the equipment next, who may be on it when it gives way. We have no way of supervising the park. The equipment is intended for under 14s – although obviously adults do need to climb up the multiplay to retrieve children who are learning or just stuck.

**Anne Hillerton—Parish Councillor**

### The Bike Track

**Fact:** it would be cheaper for the Parish Council to have the bike track removed and the area returned to a field, than the cost of maintenance during the last three years. Maintenance doesn't need to be this expensive if everyone is considerate and abides by the rules.

The bike track has unfortunately been closed again. An electric bike, not allowed on the track, tore up the surface leaving deep ruts that would have been very dangerous for a wheel to be



The Bike Track

caught in. Our contractor was able to come quickly and repair the track but the new surface needs rain then dry weather before use.

When the track is closed the signage is very clear for those who can read, and for anyone who can't then the tape across the track surely is clear enough. There are a few people who feel that they can break the rules and ruin things for everyone else by extending the time the track has to remain closed. On the Monday the track was re-surfaced, during afternoon school time, someone with small feet and a bike was on the track presumably with a parent or carer, damaging the track. This took extra time and work to repair. For the rest of the week everyone stayed off but after the rain on the Saturday night and before it had a chance to dry, someone ripped the tape and cycled on the track making ruts in the soft surface. This resulted in the track needing to be kept closed for longer.

Thank you to those of you who stayed off even when you were very keen to cycle on the track.

The other problem at the track is shortcuts – crossing the grass between parts of the track. These degrade the surface until they look like alternative routes and so become even more used. We have had these re-turfed and re-seeded several times. The barriers are there to allow the seed to grow / turf to take / grass to regrow. The problem with shortcuts is that you end up going in the wrong direction. RoSPA (Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents) inspects the playpark and the bike track annually and one of the main issues is shortcuts. Please allow the grass to grow and do not make any or ride on shortcuts.

We hope that users enjoy the track but don't cause any more closures.

**Anne Hillerton—Parish Councillor**

## Bucklebury Conservation Area Appraisal Consultation

The small team working on this project is now producing a revised draft final report. It has been a long drawn out project for various reasons (not least the pandemic) but is now nearing completion. As always, the focus has been on describing the characteristics that make the conservation area special and how its particular merits can be retained for generations to come. For those new to the area, the small conservation area surrounds St Mary's church in the old village.



St. Mary's Church and Glebe Cottage in the conservation area

This draft report will be sent to the Chief Conservation Officer at West Berkshire Council who will circulate it to key colleagues in the council for comments. As it is a parish council led appraisal, the report will also be circulated to parish councillors for feedback.

Following this, it will be put out for wider public consultation. This will include residents in the conservation area and nearby householders, as well as all Bucklebury parishioners. A copy will be posted on the parish website, [www.buckleburyparish.org](http://www.buckleburyparish.org), and a hard copy will be placed in St Mary's church, so look out for these. All being well, they should be available in March/April. An advert must be placed in the NWN with 6 weeks given for any reply. Public consultation will also be via SurveyMonkey on the West Berkshire District Council website.

The process of consultation is designed to bring public understanding of the character of the conservation area and encourage public debate about any issues. After this process is finished the document will be adopted by WBC and will be a useful aid to planning decisions and appeals as well as an interesting document in its own right.

**Lindy Clarke & Hilary Cairns—Parish Councillors**

## Blossom into Spring

As part of their Blossom into Spring project, to remember those who have died as a result of Covid-19, West Berkshire Council donated three Great White Cherries (*Prunus Tai Haku*) to the parish, as they did to all parishes in the district. They are of a good size, about 3 metres tall and have been planted on the north side of the recreation ground in the village. Several volunteers, including our district councillor, Graham Pask, set to one sunny afternoon in mid December and planted and staked them. We have a watering regime in place and look forward to their beautiful pure white scented blossom in April/May.



Planting the Cherry Trees on the Recreation Ground

The Tai Haku cherry originates in Japan where it was grown for centuries and was the subject of many paintings. However it became extinct there and it was only in the 1920s, when a single specimen was discovered in a Kent garden by Collingwood Ingram, that it could be propagated again. He sent shoots to Japan, poked into potatoes to keep them damp, via the Trans-Siberian railway and soon they were growing again in Japan. All the great White Cherries in the world originate from this chance seedling. It is a beautiful tree, and hopefully the three trees will enhance the recreation ground for years to come.

**Lindy Clarke—Parish Councillor**

## Planning

Reviewing the planning applications BPC has considered since the last copy of The Oaks, there are several applications to which BPC has objected and they have subsequently been withdrawn. This is generally because WBC was considering refusing them and if applications are withdrawn there is a reduced planning fee for a subsequent application.

BPC's comments are generally based on planning policy, however, sometimes BPC may place higher importance on one policy than the Planning Officer, resulting in either no objection/refusal or object/approved.

Helen Pratt—Clerk to BPC

Reference	Description	BPC Status	WBC Status
21/00484/COMIND	<u>Vanners.</u> Erection of agricultural building to support the agricultural use of a 5 acre paddock for livestock.	Object	Approved.
21/00237/FUL	<u>Travellers Rest Farm</u> Application for change of use of field currently used for horse grazing to be used as a secure dog exercise field.	Object	Refused by WBC; refused on appeal.
21/00641/FUL	<u>Bucklebury Chase, The Avenue.</u> Demolition of the existing dwelling, annexe, garage and outbuildings and the erection of a replacement 5 bedroom dwelling with associated parking and access arrangements. Section 73 application to vary condition 2 (approved drawings) of previously approved application 17/02266/FUL.	No Objection	Approved.
21/00731/HOUSE	<u>Nuttage House</u> Proposed alteration and extension works to the annexe building at Nuttage House.	No Objection	Refused by WBC, taken to appeal.
21/00691/HOUSE	<u>Holly Trees, (formerly Chapel Row Cottage)</u> Alterations to the attached garage to raise the roof and insert dormer windows to the front and rear. Alterations to the rear of the property to create a circulation corridor at first floor level with dormer windows. Dormer windows to both faces of the eastern end of the property.	No Objection	Approved.
21/01690/FUL	<u>Briffons.</u> Proposed construction of a dressage arena (menage).	No Objection.	Approved.
21/01570/FUL	<u>Land Adjacent to Thatchers.</u> Proposed temporary approval for storage container (6 months).	No Objection.	Approved.
21/01677/FUL	<u>Verge approximately 30metres north of junction to Marlston Farm.</u> The proposed development works include construction of a 3m x 6m (18sqm) layby and a small set of steps (1sqm) and installing a post and rail fence around our kiosk.	Object.	Withdrawn.
21/01815/FULMAJ	<u>5-10 Paradise Way.</u> Demolition of 6 dwellings and ancillary structure, and the erection of 10 new affordable homes composed of two and three bed houses, all with associated access, parking, amenity and landscaping.	Object.	Awaiting decision.
21/02157/FUL	<u>The Cottage Inn.</u> Erection of fabric tent over part of existing rear external drinking area.	No Objection.	Approved.
21/02134/HOUSE	<u>Tiverton House, The Slade.</u> Demolition of existing conservatory roof and side walls at rear of property (existing foundations and base to remain). Build new single storey utility room on existing foundations and base of current conservatory. Utility room to consist of matching brick walls and appropriately tiled roof.	No Objection.	Approved.

Reference	Description	BPC Status	WBC Status
21/02233/HOUSE	<u>Folly Cottage, The Avenue.</u> Single storey rear extension.	No Objection	Approved.
21/02398/FUL	<u>Middle Wood, Hatch Lane.</u> Installation of Glen Farrow GF175 Biomass Boiler and “40ft” log drying container.	No Objection	Approved.
21/02148/FUL	<u>Zin Zan Place.</u> Replacement Garage.	No Objection.	Refused.
21/02448/HOUSE	<u>Baydon, Little Lane.</u> Demolition of part ground floor and erection of new first floor extension and oak porch.	No Objection.	Approved.
21/02408/HOUSE	<u>Chapel Row House.</u> Provision of a tennis court.	No Objection.	Withdrawn.
21/02474/HOUSE	<u>Avenue House, Hatch Lane.</u> Detached timber frame garage and garden machine store. <i>BPC objected to the second entrance which was removed from the application.</i>	No Objection.	Approved.
21/02505/HOUSE	<u>Smithincott, The Avenue.</u> Proposed extension to form garden room, extension of front dormer and gable wall and erection of new garage. <i>BPC objected to the garage which was removed from the application.</i>	No Objection.	Approved.
21/02522/COMIND	<u>Bucklebury Farm Park.</u> Refurbishment and extension of existing visitor barn and associated structures, new storage building and associated landscaping and amendment of route of public right of way.	No Objection	Awaiting decision.
21/02639/LBC2	<u>Copyhold Farm, Hatch Lane.</u> Dismantling and storing timber frame for future rebuilding.	No Objection.	Withdrawn.
21/02821/HOUSE	<u>Marywell, Chapel Row.</u> Erection of single-storey rear extension to south elevation and erection of two-storey front infill extension.	No Objection.	Awaiting decision.
21/02657/FULD	<u>Wimbles Barn (Adjacent Parish).</u> Change of use and conversion of existing barns to a residential dwelling and ancillary store, together with residential amenity space, landscaping, parking and associated works.	Object.	Awaiting decision.
21/02585/HOUSE	<u>Hilliers Lodge, The Avenue.</u> Demolition of outbuilding and erection of annex. The formation of 3 no. rooflights within the existing dwelling of Hilliers Lodge. 1 no. rooflight is located upon the south elevation and 2 no. rooflights to the north elevation. The three proposed rooflights will match the existing.	Object.	Approved.
21/02921/HOUSE	<u>Corner Croft, Hatch Lane.</u> Proposed front extension and new roof to original part of property with conversion of roofspace. Single storey side extension with new entrance, porch and associated alterations.	No Objection.	Approved.
21/03010/HOUSE & 21/03011/LBC2	<u>The Old Cottage, The Avenue.</u> Single storey rear extensions.	No Objection.	Withdrawn.
21/03056/HOUSE	<u>Glebe Cottage, Bucklebury.</u> Detached greenhouse.	No Objection	Approved.

Reference	Description	BPC Status	WBC Status
21/03222/FUL	<u>Middle Wood, Hatch Lane.</u> Installation of Glen Farrow GF175 Biomass Boiler and “40ft” log drying container. Section 73 application to remove conditions 5 (nil import of lumber) and 6 (benzo [a]pyrene) of approved application 21/02398/FUL.	Submission of a written statement.	Awaiting decision.
21/03174/FULD	<u>Garage adjacent to 9 Donnington Close.</u> Conversion of two garages/stores to a one bedroom flat including external alterations.	Support.	Awaiting decision.
21/03182/HOUSE	<u>Kiln Lodge, Hungerford Lane (Adjacent Parish).</u> First floor and rear extensions, garage conversion and alterations.	No Objection.	Awaiting decision.
21/03162/FULD	<u>Ivinghoe (Adjacent Parish).</u> Demolition of existing bungalow and replacement with a new dwelling and landscape enhancements.	Object.	Awaiting decision.
21/03219/HOUSE	<u>Marywell.</u> Erection of three-bay garage with storage.	No Objection.	Awaiting decision.
22/00022/HOUSE	<u>Marywell.</u> Demolition of existing swimming pool and pool house. Erection of replacement pool house. Formation of replacement swimming pool. Formation of tennis court.	No Objection.	Awaiting decision.
21/03191/FULD	<u>Broad View Farm, The Ridge.</u> Replacement of existing dwelling.	No Objection	Awaiting decision.

## Recycling

DO YOU RECYCLE ..... ?

**Clean Plastic Bottle Tops.** There are several points in Bucklebury Parish where clean, please clean, plastic bottle tops may be deposited: The Memorial Hall – large black bin by the front doors; Memorial Hall kitchen – small green bin on the window sill; Memorial Hall The Oaks kitchen – small green bin on the window sill; Bucklebury Primary School – small green bin in the lobby; The Victory Room – large black bin in the old entrance porch (facing the road); and The Telephone Box library at Chapel Row – small green bin.

Thank you to the wonderful people who empty the small green bins from the Memorial Hall kitchens into the black bin. It is appreciated and noted! Also thanks to Mrs. Kerry Gaumont who collects the plastic bottle tops from Bucklebury Primary School.

The clean plastic bottle tops are sorted into different grades (shown by a triangle with a number inside the triangle). Each grade is put into a different bag and taken to the recycling company Rubber & Plastics Collection Services Ltd. based in Cold Ash. Often lacking plastic grades are plastic tops for make-up, shower gel, toothpaste and spray nozzles, these are taken to Jana Little in Thatcham who collects for Terracycle. As previously mentioned any tops without grades which cannot go to RPCS and Terracycle are taken to the Veolia container in

the Waitrose car park in Thatcham (hopefully recycled or used for much needed power generation).

The army of sorters (Monstrous Regiment?) have now achieved a weight of : **154.2 Kgs** of bottle tops – with more to go! I know it is a drop in the ocean in the grand scheme of recycling, but it is OUR drop, we ARE doing something to make a difference, and a huge thank you to all of you who so assiduously clean and deposit your plastic bottle tops for recycling.

### **The Clothes Bank in the Memorial Hall car park.**

The Trustees of The Memorial Hall have received £130.00 from the Clothing Warehouse so far for items that have been deposited by people in the parish. Although this may not seem a great deal, when you think that most people take items for recycling to a Charity Shop and do not expect to receive any recompense it is a good step forward for monies towards a community project or a local Bucklebury charity.

The drop off point is a large green bin in the Memorial Hall car park on the right hand side of the hall as you drive in. It is good to know that not only are clothes and shoes being either sold and helping a business, or are being given away to people in need – and have you really missed anything you have deposited?!

**Hilary Cairns – Parish Councillor**

## Defibrillators

In Bucklebury, we have three defibrillators which are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year to any member of the public who may need one. They are located:

- On the right-hand side of Peaches stores, Broad Lane, Upper Bucklebury
- In front of the Victory Room, Bucklebury Village
- To the left-hand side of the front door of the Blade Bone at Chapel Row.

Each of the defibrillators is kept in a locked cabinet. The code to unlock the cabinet is C195; this is clearly labelled on the front of the cabinet.



The Defibrillator in front of the Victory Room.

No training is needed in order to operate the defibrillators. If you think you may need to use one, phone 999; the call handler will tell you where you can get a defibrillator from and give you instructions.

The defibrillators are all registered on “The Circuit” database which is used by the Ambulance call handlers to identify your nearest defibrillator. Each one has a number of guardians who check them on a regular basis, to ensure that everything is in order.

BPC (with the support of Bucklebury Tennis Club) is currently in the process of sourcing a fourth defibrillator to be installed somewhere on the outside of the Memorial Hall. In the next edition of The Oaks there will be details of exactly where it is located at the site.

Training courses on basic Cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) are being organised. If you are interested in attending such a session, please email the clerk with your name and contact details ([clerk@buckleburyparish.org](mailto:clerk@buckleburyparish.org)).

**Helen Pratt – Clerk to Bucklebury Parish Council.**

## Community Coffee Mornings

Community coffee mornings take place on the last Thursday morning of each month in The Oak Room, from 10.30am until 12 noon. This is a drop-in event for all parishioners. We have some regulars but would welcome more people. Teas and coffees are provided by the Parish Council and there is cake too. If you are a baker and have the time, you are very welcome to contribute, but it isn't a necessity.

The hall is lovely and warm, even with windows open for ventilation, and is a nice place to chat to friends old and new. We'd welcome parents and carers as there is space for small children.

We look forward to seeing you on the last Thursday morning of the month.

**Anne Hillerton—Parish Councillor**

## Bucklebury Annual Parish Assembly

7.45pm Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> May 2022

The Victory Room,  
Bucklebury

\*\*\*\*\*

**Guest speaker: Chris Boulton**  
CEO of Greenham Trust

## Changes in the Highway Code

The aim of the Highway Code is to promote safety on the road, whilst also supporting a healthy, sustainable and efficient transport system.

New hierarchy of road users. Road-goers will be ranked according to how vulnerable they would be in the event of an accident. H rules clarify this concept: Rule H1 : it is important that all road users are aware of the Highway Code, are considerate to other road users and understand their responsibility for the safety of others. But those in charge of vehicles that can cause the greatest harm in the event of a collision bear the greatest responsibility to take care and reduce the danger they pose to others. This principle applies most strongly to drivers of large goods and passenger vehicles, vans/minibuses, cars/taxis and motorcycles. Cyclists, and horse riders and drivers of horse drawn vehicles likewise have a responsibility to reduce danger to pedestrians. None of this detracts from the responsibility of ALL road users, including pedestrians, cyclists and horse riders, to have regard for their own and other road users' safety. People you encounter may have impaired sight, hearing or mobility and this may not be obvious. So cyclists must watch out for pedestrians, cars need to be careful of cyclists, and heavy goods vehicles need to be wary of everyone.

Previously, vehicles had priority at a junction. Rule H2 : From now on if drivers are turning into a junction and a pedestrian is waiting to cross the road, it's the vehicle that has to give way. The same now applies for pedestrians waiting at zebra crossings, as well as pedestrians and cyclists waiting at parallel crossings. Also the code states that as a driver you should not cut across cyclists, horse riders or horse drawn vehicles going ahead when you are turning into or out of a junction or changing direction or lane. This rule applies regardless of whether cyclists are using a cycle lane, a cycle track, or riding ahead on the road, you should stop and wait for a safe gap in the flow of cyclists if necessary. Cyclists may ride in the centre of a lane to make themselves more visible on quiet roads or streets (before moving left to let faster vehicles overtake when needed), in slow moving traffic, again moving left when the flow picks up again; and when approaching junctions or road narrowings, where overtaking might be unsafe. Cyclists are advised to keep at least half a metre away from the kerb, and drivers must leave at least 1.5metres of space at speeds up to 30mph, faster and more room is needed. 'Dutch Reach' (no, I had never heard of it either – maybe younger drivers have) is the practice of opening a car door with the hand furthest away from said door. This forces you to turn your head and look backwards, which might help you spot an oncoming cyclist or motorcyclist and prevent a nasty accident. Cyclists are reminded that only pedestrians (including those using

wheelchairs and mobility scooters) can use the pavement. Pedestrians are allowed to use cycle tracks, unless there is a road sign prohibiting them.

The Highway Code states: some rules include 'must' or 'must not' these rules are supported by existing laws. Those rules that include 'should' or 'should not' are only guidance and not supported by existing laws.

For more information: Government Publishing Service - Highway Code.

Information from: above; Which; Top Gear.

## West Berks District Councillor

Bucklebury Ward contains the parishes of Bucklebury, Midgham, Stanford Dingley and Woolhampton. Our District Councillor is:

Graham Pask Tel: 01635 864023  
Email: [graham.pask@westberks.gov.uk](mailto:graham.pask@westberks.gov.uk)

## WBC Councillor's Report

Wishing everyone a Happy and Healthy 2022!

This is a good time for me to update everyone on what I am doing "behind the scenes" to represent your views on the NE Thatcham proposals which are part of the Local Plan update. Following the very well attended meeting organised by Laura Farris in the Memorial Hall last August she had a meeting with Michael Gove to share our views and to seek a way forward, especially in looking to see if there was any flexibility in the number of new houses we were expected to take in West Berkshire.

We are continuing our work together and in early January I met with Laura and the Council Leader Lynne Doherty together with Eric Owens, who is our new Executive Director of Planning, to see what progress can be made ahead of the next consultation likely to be held in the summer/autumn. Eric has been in post for around four months and has been joined by Viv Evans as the interim Service Lead for Planning. Viv has extensive experience in senior roles such as Head of Planning, Director and Chief Executive in a number of Councils and is a welcome addition to our planning team. These two experienced Officers have said they will review all options with a new "set of eyes" including overall housing numbers and alternative sites. Our discussions have been positive and I will continue to keep everyone updated when I can. I report regularly to the

Parish Council especially Barry Dickens and Peter Spours and am happy to discuss whatever I can with anyone who contacts me personally.

By now you will have heard that our bin and recycling collection days have been changed to Fridays for all of our parish starting on 11<sup>th</sup> February for recycling and 18<sup>th</sup> February for rubbish collection. For many years we have had these collections on the same day of the week apart from changes following Bank Holidays, and I understand that no one likes these days to be changed. Over the years the collection routes have had new houses added on so the routes the crews take have become more scattered which is hardly efficient! Veolia are adding two new vehicles and crews to the collection fleet so we can expect the very reliable service we receive to become even better with the occasional non-collection of green bins to be minimised. I am sure we will soon remember to put our bins out on a Thursday evening!

Continuing on the subject of waste and recycling WBC is now asking you to register your car (up to three cars per household) to access the Household Recycling Centres, the process is simple in that when you attempt to book a visit on line you will be asked to enter your car number plate(s) which will be picked up by the ANPR cameras as you drive in. If you don't wish to do this online then phone the Council (01635 551111), go through to the waste team who will help and also make the booking for you. This system will save money on printing and posting permits!

I have written at length before about Traffic Regulation Orders on our byways and won't repeat this but may I remind everyone to phone the police if they see or hear any illegal activity. Thank you to the residents of The Slade who did this over the Christmas break, they received a good and positive response!

Finally and nothing at all to do with the Council (for once!!) changes to the Highway Code are coming in at the end of January primarily giving pedestrians and cyclists more priority at road junctions but also banning touching mobile phones and parking on pavements amongst some other changes.

As always please contact me on any WBC issues I can help with.

**Graham Pask—West Berkshire District Councillor**

## **Donnington Hospital Trust— A Brief History**

You may not know that located next to the Surgery at Chapel Row is Donnington Close, a supported residence owned and managed by the Donnington Hospital Trust. The Charity was founded in 1393 by Sir Richard Abberbury originally to provide shelter for twelve elderly men and a minister, in his manor of Donnington, Newbury. During the centuries the fortunes of the Hospital have followed those of its various Patrons and of course national events. Neglected in the 16<sup>th</sup> Century it was refounded in the reign of Elizabeth 1, only to be completely destroyed in the Civil War when it was engulfed by the siege of Donnington Castle.

Frances, Lady Bolingbroke left the Manor of Bucklebury in her Will to her sister Mary Winchcombe, who in 1699 married Robert Packer, Lord of the Manor of Donnington. Robert and Mary had five children but only one grandchild, Elizabeth who married David Hartley the Philosopher. To this day the Trust continues to be overseen by the Hartley Russell family, Willie being the current Patron.

A remarkable history of care in our community, Donnington Close is one of six Almshouse complexes managed by the Trust which provides 72 residences in Oxfordshire and Berkshire.

**Alasdair Jones-Perrott MRICS  
Chief Executive**

The Trust Office – 01635 551530  
email [office@donningtonhospital.com](mailto:office@donningtonhospital.com)



### **Thursday Coffee Mornings**

**Last Thursday of the month  
The Oak Room,  
Bucklebury Memorial Hall,  
10.30am – 12 noon**

Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> January  
Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> February  
Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> March  
Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> April  
Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> May



**All Welcome – come and enjoy a cuppa!**

## Family

### Bucklebury Community Bus

The week before Christmas, the Trustees were devastated to discover that our much-needed Bucklebury Community Bus had been stolen in the dead of night from the car park of The Cottage Inn. With virtually all businesses and organisations closing until January, we knew we faced a monumental struggle to resume the service without a bus. We took the regretful but necessary decision to suspend the service and provide parents with the maximum time to make alternative arrangements.

Despite already welcoming visitors for the holidays the Trustees broke away from family commitments to attend a series of virtual meetings. We reported the theft, gathered as much background information as possible, submitted a claim to the insurers, cancelled the fuel card – and began the search for another bus. With prices rocketing due to the lack of availability of used vehicles, we could not obtain an equivalent vehicle for the same value as our insurance paid out.

The Trustees have always run the bus as a sustainable and long-term facility for the community while keeping the cost to parents as low as possible, with support from Long Lane Garage and Cottage Inn landlord Gary Bush. Virtually every penny charged goes towards paying the driver, maintaining the vehicle and budgeting for the future. Each year we also put aside repayments received from VAT and Gift Aid to go towards a new vehicle which we had not anticipated buying until 2025 at the earliest.

Many phone calls later – and in the first week of January – we secured our new bus, one of the Trustees taking time off work to help inspect and collect. Remarkably we were unable to provide a service for only two days and we are grateful for the understanding of our parents and carers. A great deal of time was also spent taking advice from appropriate professionals on additional measures to avoid a repetition of the theft.

The bus purchase, and the cost of additional security, has significantly depleted our funds, which are under further pressure with the increased cost of fuel and covid safety consumables. We will continue to do our best to provide an affordable, safe and reliable means for parents to transport their children to Kennet School, supported by our very dependable and able driver, Claire.

**The Trustees of Bucklebury Bus**  
[buckleburybus@gmail.com](mailto:buckleburybus@gmail.com)

## 1st Bucklebury Guides

The Autumn term was a term of two halves. We started the term meeting at Thirtover Place in Cold Ash whilst we eagerly awaited the completion of the Victory Room renovations.

The girls finished their Conscious Consumer badge including designing and creating a full outfit from recycled and repurposed items. The badge culminated in a cook off with local and ethically sourced food items and a lot of Fairtrade chocolate.

As the evenings got darker and colder, we wrapped up for a Campfire and Cook out with hot dogs, S'mores and hot chocolate. We used magic powder to turn the campfire flames blue, had fun with sparklers and sang campfire songs with all of the actions.

The girls could not wait to get into the “new” Victory Room and couldn't believe the transformation. Their eyes lit up when they saw the size of the kitchen and they immediately began planning all of the things we could make and do in the new space.

In November, we joined young people from across the country, and took part in Parliament Week. The girls had a very lively debate about the value of homework and convinced everyone that even if you do not finish your dinner, you should be allowed dessert. The evening ended with a challenge to build the tallest model of 'Big Ben' out of newspaper.

The girls wanted to support a local charity during the term, so in the run up to Christmas we were joined by Rosie from West Berkshire Foodbank to kick off a collection in time for their Christmas deliveries. Rosie talked to the girls about what they knew about the foodbank, busted some myths and got them thinking about what they might be able to collect from home. In total, we collected over 80 meals worth of food, as well as toiletries, cleaning products and sanitary items which we dropped off at the beginning of December.

During December, the girls threw themselves into all things Christmassy. We had our first session in the kitchen, making Christmas fudge and singing along to Christmas tunes. The girls really enjoyed all being able to cook in there together, it even made the washing up fun!

We also held our first sleepover since the renovations. We again took full advantage of the new kitchen, with all of the girls making their own pizzas from scratch. They played games, made pom pom sprouts and got very messy marbling Christmas tree decorations with nail polish. Not a lot of sleep

was had, but it was a great way of introducing some of the younger girls to their first night away with Guides.

We have an exciting term plan for the spring, including starting “Rustle, Bustle and Squeak” a set of nature-based activities and



Rustle Bustle Squeak activities started in full swing with the Guides designing their own snakes and learning to tie knots by creating stick families

challenges to encourage the girls to find out about wildlife and plants in our area. The girls are working in small groups to plan their own activities which on completion earns them a badge segment that can be joined together to form a Caterpillar. We have also welcomed a number of new girls who have joined us on trial sessions.

If you would like to find out more about how your daughter can join us, please contact Vicky by emailing [buckleburyguides@gmail.com](mailto:buckleburyguides@gmail.com).

**Vicky Pratt—1st Bucklebury Guides**

## 2nd Bradfield Brownies

I can't quite believe we are in February already! It seems like five minutes ago that we took the Brownies climbing at the Reading Climbing Centre – an event that was very much enjoyed by all. Then there was the Christmas party which was brilliant fun. We also took part in the Remembrance Day Service and Carol Service at St. Peter's. It was lovely to see the girls getting involved.

As I write this, we are looking forward to World Thinking Day. This is celebrated annually on 22 February by all Girl Guides and Girl Scouts. It is also celebrated by Scout organisations around the world. It is a day when we think about our fellow members in all the countries of the world, the meaning of Guiding, and its global impact. This day was chosen as it was the birthday of Scouting and Guiding founder Lord Robert

Baden-Powell and of Lady Olave Baden-Powell, his wife and World Chief Guide. Celebrated since 1926, World Thinking Day is a day of international friendship. It is an opportunity to speak out on issues that affect young women and fundraise for 10 million Girl Guides and Girl Scouts in 150 countries. Wow that sounds a bit boring! Not at all – this year 2<sup>nd</sup> Bradfield Brownies are taking part in an online event with other units from across the South West Region of the country. The activities are based around food, and we will all be enjoying chocolate tasting, building towers and making banana muffins. It is amazing to think that our small unit who meet in Bradfield every two weeks is part of such a massive organisation and that there are girls in Australia, America and Europe looking forward to celebrating World Thinking Day in a similar fashion to us.

This term has been quite busy with the girls choosing to complete their Innovate Skills Builder. Again, this sounds a bit boring and like school, but no it certainly isn't! We are making edible towers, creating our own paint, and having a go at creating some masterpieces with foam, tape, and our home-made paint.

We are also off to Legoland! This trip was originally planned for 2020 but had to be cancelled for obvious reasons so we are very excited to be going. The event has been organised by South West Region Girlguiding so will be attended by Rainbows, Brownies, Guides and Senior Section members from as far away as Jersey and Guernsey.

We have got lots of plans including an Easter egg hunt, a taste testing session and making Easter cards. Next term has yet to be planned but as the weather will be getting better, we will be out and about. There will be an exciting activity of some sort – the Brownies may decide to go climbing again or there has been talk of a trip along the canal or even bell boating again.

Second Bradfield Brownies have spaces so if you would like your daughter to be part of a group of 10 million girls having a great time and learning lots of new skills, then visit [www.girlguiding.org.uk](http://www.girlguiding.org.uk) to register your daughter.

**Tigger (Vicki Beesley) - 2<sup>nd</sup> Bradfield Brownies**

**1st Bucklebury Guides is looking for adult helpers!**

No experience needed, just enthusiasm and a desire to have fun! Please email [buckleburyguides@gmail.com](mailto:buckleburyguides@gmail.com) to find out more.

## West Berks Ballet School

We're so pleased to be back to dancing again in The Memorial Hall and it was lovely to see our dancers after the Christmas break and to hear all their news.

We were delighted to welcome a class of 'soon-to-be-4' new ballet girls on Saturday mornings – Miss Lucie has made them feel at home already with her magical stories linked to learning ballet technique.

As we have deliberately kept the Musical Theatre groups to a small number of dancers, Claire was delighted to be able to invite families to watch at the end of last term. We were treated to a selection of dynamic routines from well-known musicals. The performers were thrilled to have sparkly costumes and to be able to dance in front of a live audience, which is what it's all about!

We even had a visit from the man in red – what a lovely surprise!



The man in red visiting West Berkshire Ballet School

2022 is performance year for the ballet students! Our cast of 90 has been busy rehearsing for their production of *The Sleeping Beauty* to be performed at Arlington Arts Centre on 4<sup>th</sup> & 5<sup>th</sup> June. Our amazing wardrobe mistress, Linda, has once again waved her magic needle and mountains of fabulous new costumes have been pouring forth – much to the obvious delight of the dancers. Of course, preparing for this full-length ballet with a cast ranging in age from 5 to adult has been fairly challenging under the current pandemic situation and it's rare that we have everyone together in their classes, which has led to a complicated understudy system – just in case!

We are continuing with our own one-way 'traffic' arrangement with the classes entering via the main entrance and leaving at the back of the hall which seems to be working well.

Once again, we would like to thank our families for the way they have supported us over the past two years and sincerely hope we can give all our dancers a fabulous 2022 dancing year!

**Jane Scholl, Claire Bowden, Holly Unnuk & Lucie Wilson**  
[www.wbbs.org](http://www.wbbs.org) and facebook.

## Bucklebury Primary School

The spring term is the fulcrum of the school year. It is the time when every child needs to gather pace in their learning and build on the foundations they have built in the autumn. It is an exciting time being as it is also the shortest term!

Our core value for the term is faith. We believe that every child should know the strength of living faith. Across the term through collective worship, in classrooms and throughout the school day, we will consider how crucial belief is for every one of us. Whether this is belief in ourselves, in each other or in God, we know that if we can say yes, it makes so much difference. As Henry Ford said 'whether you think you can, or think you can't, you're right'.

That wonderful children's programme, *Sesame Street*, once showed a song called 'The power of YET'. The message is rooted in the gospel value of faith. It reminds us that to succeed and learn we need faith and we must always remember that just because we can't do something today, it doesn't mean we shall never be able to do it. It can be found on youtube by the way!

In the continued context of the corona virus and its frustrating and painful impact on our lives, children in school will be striving to show the key learning behaviour of resilience this term. On the second day of term, it was Epiphany. We discussed how the wise men showed great faith in pursuing the star to see the infant. Of course their belief was especially crucial as they were from 'afar' and not Jewish. We are aiming to inspire each other to keep going no matter the challenges. We hope that by living out the value of faith and nurturing values of truth, humility and service, we can grow the whole child in every child such that every child shines.

Growing as humans is hard. Learning is a risky business. Believing in yourself, recognising resilience in one another and being ready to accept one is not there *yet* are all crucial in a learning community. Through the spring and toward the mysteries of Easter, we will be aiming high, working hard and remembering that excellence is never an accident and that ultimately, with faith in ourselves and one another, we can.

**Mr. Higgs—Head teacher, Bucklebury Primary School.**

## Organisations

### Bucklebury and Marlston Horticultural Society

Having been dormant for almost two years we have now sprung into action. Our new pink schedule is in circulation and members will find all the details of our 2022 programme within its pages. The first two successful meetings have already been enjoyed by our members, and attendance at both events is encouraging. The next evening meeting is on **Friday 25<sup>th</sup> March**, at 8pm in the Memorial Hall, when Austin Crabbe will give us an insight into the attractions at Englefield Nursery, a local garden centre which we should all support. We will receive some topical horticultural advice, and there will be plants for sale.

At our first meeting we were entertained by Michael Brown, on the eve of the publication of his second book, "A Guide To Medieval Gardens". We learnt many interesting facts during his illustrated talk, and at the end went home with a better respect for our garden weeds. The February presentation by wildlife photographer Tom Way was a succession of spectacular animal images, pictures which rewarded hours, or even days, of his patience to capture the personalities of his subjects. We were effortlessly transported to the hot, open plains of Africa without vaccination passports, tests or any other bureaucracy. Hopefully a taste of things to come.

Our Spring Show (**Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> April**) will move to The Victory Room down in the Village. Entries are staged from noon, and visitors can view the display and enjoy the fragrance of spring flowers from 2.30pm until 4pm. Entry is free, and refreshments will be available. **THIS YEAR ALL OUR SHOWS WILL BE STAGED IN THE VICTORY ROOM.**

If your garden has a few gaps, or you have pots to fill and you don't want to buy expensive Garden Centre plants which are imported from Europe, please come to our Cottismore Nursery evening on **Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> May, from 6.30pm**. You will be able to select affordable, good quality, locally grown produce and support the efforts of disabled gardeners in the process.

The Coach trip this year is to Sheffield Park in East Sussex, but not until October when we should enjoy unregulated travel and stunning Autumn colour. Before this, our next outing is to the RHS Gardens at Wisley, probably the best garden in the world, and it is on our doorstep. **NO COACH**, but you can travel in your own transport for **FREE!** Assemble at All Saint's Church, Upper Bucklebury, at **9am on Saturday 4<sup>th</sup> June** for final briefing and dispatch. You can bring friends and family, a picnic, but no dogs. Once inside you will be left to do your

own thing and return as you wish.

Our Summer Show is on **Saturday 9<sup>th</sup> July** in the Victory Room and our Autumn Show at the same venue on **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September**. Full details are in the schedule; take a look to see if you can manage to produce a few entries. Visitors are welcome to the hall during the afternoon (2.00-4.00pm). There is no charge to see all the wonderful exhibits.

The renamed Century Club has kept us financially afloat during the pandemic, and helps to keep subscriptions low. Draws are monthly and the annual fee is £12.00. If you would like further details, please contact Margaret Grannum on 0118 9713944.

New members are always welcome, bring a friend or neighbour to any of our events. If you feel you have the energy to improve the Society, why not join our small and friendly committee? Contact John Wright (01635 863429).

Happy Gardening.

**Derek Matthews (0118 9712587)**

### Indoor Bowls

We are now back in full swing with bowls every Monday morning. We have a regular full house and as numbers have grown we have now established a second weekly session on Friday afternoons.

Our sessions are Monday mornings, 10.30 - 12.30 and Friday afternoons, 2.00 - 4.00 p.m. We aim to cover our costs with a small charge of £2 per person per session.

Whilst it is mistakenly seen as a less strenuous activity, there is plenty of opportunity to work off a few calories during the play, replacing the various barriers set out to challenge the bowlers and recovering wayward woods that have been misdirected keeps the non-bowling team mates very busy for most of the game. Our two lanes accommodate 8 participating players, but if more are present, we share the time and swap around so no-one sits out for long.

We usually have a mid-session break to allow for a drink and chat and a mix up of partners for the next round of bowling. We follow the guidance regarding Covid so there are no communal refreshments available, and we bring our own. However when the guidance is relaxed we will reintroduce coffee, tea and biscuits in the mid-session break.

We always welcome new faces. It is fun, it's exercise (more than you think!) and it is certainly a challenge to get the bowls where you intended i.e. in a winning position!

Come along to try it out, **EVERY ONE IS WELCOME.**

Interested folk should get in touch with me or just come along.

**Mike James: [m-a-james@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:m-a-james@tiscali.co.uk) 0118 971 2285**

## Bucklebury Walkers

We are a mixed group of walkers who meet, generally at The Cottage Inn, on the first Thursday of each month at 10.00am and walk for about 3 – 4 miles, and a shorter walk leaving at 10.30am and walking for about 2 miles. We then meet back at the venue for coffee (or go back to The Cottage Inn, where we also enjoy a lunch). You are welcome to join either group.

A smaller group than usual (thank you, Covid!) enjoyed a Christmas meal at The Cottage Inn just before Christmas – thank you Gary & staff for a very enjoyable evening.

Please contact me for more details or just turn up at any of the walks – the diary is in The Oaks and on the village website.

Please note that these are social walks and you are responsible for your own safety.

**Helen Relf, [grannyrelf@btinternet.com](mailto:grannyrelf@btinternet.com)  
01635 867619.**

## Tuesday Ladies' Club (TLC)

As I sit and write this report the sunshine is brightening up my garden and the bulbs are poking their heads up in the borders. It does feel as if Spring is on its way and we look forward to a brighter year ahead.

Despite Covid the TLC has been meeting over the last few months and after our initial social evening in September members have enjoyed an Autumn Quiz in October, thanks go to Wynne, and a fascinating talk on life in the Falkland Islands in November by David Edwards Moss. In December the TLC kicked off the festive season with a Christmas get together which was enjoyed by all.

The TLC programme for the next few months has been planned as follows:

- February 8th Talk on the West Berks Foodbank by Shelia Moore.
- March 8th Talk on the Kennet and Avon Canal by Jon Willis.
- April 12th Talk on What's new at West Berks Hospital by Dr Rob Tayton.
- May 10th Talk on the history of Thatcham Town Centre by Dr Nick Young.
- June 14th Garden Visit (Details TBC).
- July 12th Garden Party (Details TBC).

Meetings are held in the Oak Room at the Upper Bucklebury Memorial Hall starting at 7.15pm.

We would like to thank all our speakers for their extraordinary

flexibility over the past 2 years as many of their dates have been arranged and rearranged as Covid has seen fit! Also, many thanks to Wynne for taking on this, seemingly, endless job.

As we come to terms with a new normal in our lives and get used to living with Covid we are hoping for a slightly more predictable year ahead. Talking to members it appears that most people are happy to make their own personal risk assessments about what they feel happy to do and act accordingly. As ever, we remain flexible in our approach to mask wearing, and will endeavour to provide as much ventilation as possible in the Oak Room. As we move into Spring and Summer this gets easier, although there are never any weather guarantees in England!

We would love to welcome members, old and new, back to TLC when they are ready to do so.

TLC is a social group for women in our community and surrounding areas and all are welcome. The committee can be reached with any queries at the email address [buckleburytlc@gmail.com](mailto:buckleburytlc@gmail.com)

**Carole Clothier Membership Secretary of TLC**

## Has Bucklebury gone mad?

*Sound baths, yoga, pop-up dining and astrology events*

You may have seen or heard news of some delicious, quirky and wonderful offerings coming to the area. Among them are wine tastings & tapas nights, sound baths and cacao ceremonies.

Janine Ford and Heather Montgomery are working together to host relaxing and unique events at the beautifully renovated Victory Room. Janine also collaborated with Lydia Beneto-Turner, cook and owner of Lonely Lentil (a plastic-free local whole food supplier) to host a pop-up dining event at Upper Bucklebury Memorial Hall back in November.



Pop up dining in the Memorial Hall

Janine is a local yoga teacher, massage therapist and foodie with over 20 years experience who loves supporting other local businesses. Heather - also a keen foodie - is an extremely knowledgeable astrologer, Kundalini Global yoga teacher and blends the sound of her gongs with yoga and informative reflections on the state of the skies and its influence on our lives.



A Gong bath in the Victory Room.

Guests to Heather's monthly gong baths can expect to relax, hear about the stars and receive a mini massage whilst enjoying a sound bath. Delicious tea and cake provided by Lonely Lentil is served afterwards.

Gong baths, massage and astrology nights take place monthly. Weekly yoga classes take place every Monday - see below for contact details and websites.

#### Weekly yoga classes

Mondays noon to 1pm at Upper Bucklebury Memorial Hall  
To book a space or find out more, email: [jfordtherapies@gmail.com](mailto:jfordtherapies@gmail.com)  
Term dates & prices are available at [www.janineford.com](http://www.janineford.com)

#### Monthly gong baths & astrology readings

The next 'Soma & Soul' gong bath event is on 25th February. Tickets are available at [www.astro-gong.com](http://www.astro-gong.com)

Email Heather at [blackcygnetastrology@gmail.com](mailto:blackcygnetastrology@gmail.com)

#### Plastic-free whole foods & pop-up dining by Lonely Lentil

Order online for collection from Upper Bucklebury and find out about future pop-up events or private dining services. <https://lonelylentil.co.uk/> or email Lydia at [info@lonelylentil.co.uk](mailto:info@lonelylentil.co.uk)

Janine Ford—[jfordtherapies@gmail.com](mailto:jfordtherapies@gmail.com)

## West Berkshire Countryside Society (WBCS)

*The events below give you the opportunity to come out on practical tasks, learn new skills, meet new people and, above all, enjoy yourself. The tasks usually begin around 10am and finish by 3pm but you are very welcome to come for as much time as you wish to give during these hours. Please wear suitable footwear, clothing and gloves, and bring water, hot drinks and a packed lunch if you are coming for the full day. All the necessary tools will be provided.*

#### Sun-13 Mar-22 10.30am – 1.00pm Bucklebury Common.

Join the Bucklebury Heathland Group to help maintain this important heathland habitat. Meet at Angels Corner SU550 688.

**Tue-15 Mar-22 10.00am Cold Ash.** Maintenance work on the Parish Wildlife site. Park on the access track to Westrop Farm off The Ridge SU514 701. Vehicles carrying tools should park in the layby off The Ridge just by the allotments at SU514 699.

**Tue-22 Mar-22 10.00am Rushall Manor Farm, off Back Lane, Bradfield.** Woodland management and ride widening. Meet at the Black Barn off Back Lane between Stanford Dingley and Bradfield. SU584 723.

**Sun-24 Apr-22 10:30am The Woods of Hampstead Norreys.** A walk with Charles Gilchrist to look at the woodland spring flowers as well as some historic features of land use. Meet at the Hampstead Norreys Village Hall car park SU527 762.

**Tue-26 Apr-22 10:00am Rushall Manor Farm, off Back Lane, Bradfield.** Ride widening and brash clearance. Parking SU584 723 off road, park on entrance to the main ride.

**Thur-19 May-22 WBCS AGM 7:00pm for 7:30pm start.** The AGM will be held in the Oak Room, Upper Bucklebury, Memorial Hall, RG7 6QH.

**Tue-24 May-22 10:00am Furze Hill, Hermitage.** Woodland and butterfly habitat management on this parish wildlife site. Ample parking at new village hall - through double gates off Pinewood Crescent SU512 740.

**Tue-14 Jun-22 10:00am Grimsbury Castle, Hermitage.** Parking near the Estate house at the castle - by the interpretation board. SU511 723 Clearing invasive rhododendron from this ancient hill fort.

**Wed 15<sup>th</sup> June 9:00pm Join Tim Culley on a short walk looking for Night Jars on Bucklebury Common.** Meet at the Crossroads on the Common SU556 961.

**Tue-28 Jun-22 10:00am Grimsbury Castle, Hermitage.** Parking near the Estate house at the castle - by the interpretation board. SU511 723 Clearing invasive rhododendron from this ancient hill fort.

## Bucklebury History Society

I would like to thank those people who contacted me to offer help with the history group's files following my request in the last edition of The Oaks. Things are moving on but if anyone would like to do some research or anything please do get in touch.

We have organised an open evening on **THURSDAY 28<sup>th</sup> APRIL – 7.30 p.m.** at The Victory Room, Bucklebury when Dr David Peacock will give us a talk on Jack of Newbury and John Winchcombe. Cost will be £2.00 to cover the cost of the hall and speaker fees. For more information please contact Helen Relf, 01635 867619, [grannyrelf@btinternet.com](mailto:grannyrelf@btinternet.com) or Wynne Frankum 01635 863372, [rwfrankum@outlook.com](mailto:rwfrankum@outlook.com)

We were sorry to learn of the death recently of a long standing member of the group, Sheila Kent. Sheila had always been such a very active member in so many aspects of Bucklebury life, including the History Group. Born and brought up in The Slade and raising her family with her husband, Ron, in Bucklebury, she had a detailed and extensive knowledge of the local area. This proved most valuable when she was one of the three editors of "Bucklebury In Focus", the book of historic photos produced to celebrate the Millennium. Having lived here all her life she invariably knew the location of and the identity of the people in the old photos as well as supplying detailed background information for the text.

Having, as a child, attended the Sunday school at the Congregational Chapel on Turner's Green, built to honour her ancestor, the farmer and preacher, John Morton, it became a huge part of her life. Latterly she served as Church Secretary organising services and preaching rotas. The Christmas Carol Services are particularly remembered during the final years of the Chapel's active ministry.

She was a great advocate of herbal medicine and many of her remedies proved very successful. The History Group will miss her very much and we send our sympathies to all her family.

**Helen Relf, [grannyrelf@btinternet.com](mailto:grannyrelf@btinternet.com)**

### John Morton

Imagine what it must have been like to have been born into a poor family in 1788 and when eight years old, your father dies. Disaster! Mrs Morton moved with her son, John, from Sunninghill to Hope Cottage, in the small hamlet of The Slade, Bucklebury, where they went to live with relatives, Henry Hoare and Sarah Hope, nee Hoare, probably a brother and sister.

John would have found himself in a large parish with a Lord of the Manor and one of the biggest commons in Berkshire. The common provided a livelihood for the 170 families living there who depended on its resources. These were many, including grazing and bracken for bedding their animals, water for their



Rev. John Morton (1788 - 1871)  
whose efforts in 1835 ensured  
the freedom of Bucklebury Common  
for all time.

John Morton's portrait in the Congregational Chapel

households, and wood for their fires.

John was fortunate because, in the days long before compulsory state education, the family must have been able to survive without his daily labour. Within walking distance, over the common and down the Harts Hill to the village of Thatcham, there was a Bluecoat School, that is, a charity school, which John attended. In those days only reading, writing, arithmetic and scripture would have been taught, but that was a good education when so many poor children had none and it stood John in good stead. He could not have achieved all he did in his life if he had been illiterate.

One day, the story goes, when he was about 13, on his way with his class mates, up the steep hill home from school he fell ill and they had to carry him home. He had a terrible fever from which he nearly died and when he recovered he was left with a bad limp. Although it was difficult from then on for him to join in the games with his friends, he did his best not to be left out and would join in where he could or go hunting squirrels with them on the common.

On leaving school he started to work on local farms and eventually moved to run Holly Farm.

In those days many people went to church. John and his

mother attended St. Mary's, the parish church of Bucklebury, but at that time nonconformist worship was gaining in popularity and when the newly formed congregational church opened in Thatcham, John found he preferred that. He became a Sunday school teacher and in 1816 started to preach in the open air, travelling round the local villages. Some people who worshipped at the established church did all they could to disrupt his simple sincere preaching and mocked and harassed him, throwing eggs, threatening him with cudgels and pouring derision on his sermons. Undeterred he continued, becoming a good public speaker and he became a familiar figure in the area. He attracted quite a following and his headquarters became a disused blacksmith's shop on Turner's Green, so called because this was the area on the common where the local bowl turners plied their trade.

John married Mary, nee Lyford and they had six children, two boys and four girls. Peter, born 1819, Lydia, born 1822, Mercy, born 1822, Mary born 1824, David, born 1826, Dorcas, born 1828. They all survived into adulthood and married. Some of John's descendants still live in the parish. *(to be continued)*

## Bucklebury History Group

Come along to our next meeting on

**THURSDAY 28<sup>th</sup> APRIL 2022**

**7.30pm in**

**The Victory Room,  
Bucklebury Village**

**Dr. David Peacock -  
Jack of Newbury  
and  
John Winchcombe**

Refreshments

£2.00 charge to cover cost of hire of the hall and speaker

**See you there!**

## Hector Newman

Following David Southgate's excellent piece on War Graves in the last issue of *The Oaks*, we have discovered another war grave in the parish, this time in the Church Yards of St. Mary, Marlston.



Hector Newman's grave at St. Mary, Marlston

Sergeant Hector Raymond Alfred Newman was a wireless operator on Vickers Wellington VIII and was killed on 5<sup>th</sup> May 1943 when the aircraft he was flying in crashed after stalling on takeoff from Limavady, Northern Ireland.

Royal Air Force Limavady, near Derry in Northern Ireland was the first of over 20 new airfields constructed in Northern Ireland during the war and was handed over to 15 Group. The base was used by Coastal Command in the fight against German U-Boats in the Atlantic Ocean and was home to several RAF Units during WW2 operating large numbers of Whitleys, Hudsons and Wellingtons of 502, 224, 221 Squadrons and 7<sup>th</sup> (Coastal) Operation Training Unit. The role of the OTU was to train and build together crews for Coastal Command's operational Squadrons, similar to the OTUs in Bomber Command.

It wasn't until we were trying to find out more details of Hector Newman that we found, to our surprise, that he was a cousin of my late father.

**Jason Allum**

## Halls

### The Victory Room

The Victory Room reopened on 8<sup>th</sup> November. The Victory Room has a new hall overlooking the recreation ground that will seat around 80 people. The historical feel of the old Victory Room is retained in a meeting room that will seat



The refurbished Victory Room

conference style about 16 people. We have a newly fitted kitchen and toilets including a disabled toilet. The design includes three internal store rooms as well as an outside store to support users of both the Victory Room and the recreation ground.

We held our first community event, a 'Call my Bluff' wine evening on December 11<sup>th</sup> which was attended by 65 parishioners. It was a great evening and many thanks go to the bluffers, Robin Ranken, Allison Butcher and Derek Matthews. The trustees plan to publish a schedule of events for 2022 shortly which we hope will include a Beerfest.

Last month, the trustees hosted the opening of Village Halls



The new hall ready for the "Call my Bluff" evening

Week organised by ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England) and the CCB (Connecting Communities in Berkshire). Village Halls Week is a national campaign, shining a spotlight on the contribution England's 10,000+ village halls make to rural communities. The event included an opening speech by Lord Benyon and was live streamed for the first time around the country.

We have seen an increase in lettings since re-opening the hall. A list of all the users of the hall is on the Victory Room page on the Parish Council Website and will also be on our new website. We are currently working on implementing a new website with an online booking system that will hopefully control the heating system. If there is anyone willing to help us, we would like to hear from you. Please contact me on one of the numbers below.

We will be holding a hall opening event and an open day for everyone to come and see the new hall in the not too distant future. We wanted to see the current level of covid cases decline before we arranged the event.

Sadly, due to family reasons Diana Hunt has stepped down as letting secretary for both the Victory Room and recreation ground. We thank her greatly for her many years of service. Also Lucy Unamba has stepped down as secretary but has offered to continue assisting us with the Beerfest. We thank her for many years of service as secretary. This means we are looking to fill both positions and if anyone is interested in volunteering please let me know.

**John Brims**  
**Chair of the Trustees of the Victory Room**  
**0118 9713308 or 07799 348451**  
[jbrims@outlook.com](mailto:jbrims@outlook.com)

## Sports

### FC Cougars

FC Cougars are a fun and friendly youth football club based in West Berkshire. We have players from Bucklebury, Thatcham and the surrounding areas. We welcome boys and girls of all abilities who are keen to play regular football.

A big welcome to our new players who have joined FC Cougars in the last couple of months. Our Under 7s are now running two five-a-side teams for our Sunday matches with a group of Bucklebury based players recently joining us. Most of our teams are now at capacity but please contact us to check on available places!

Next season we will be running some extra teams and will have over 100 players from current year 1 to year 9. In late spring we are looking to start a new youngest age group for children currently in year 1. If your child would be interested please contact us now.

All our age groups play in the Reading and West Berkshire League, with home and away matches on Sundays. We are very grateful to Bucklebury Primary School who allow us to play on the school field on Sunday mornings. Our Under 7s, Under 8s and Under 9s are all based at the school for home fixtures.

Our older age groups are also looking forward to returning to midweek evening training at Bucklebury Recreation Ground when the light evenings return soon. The winter has been drier and warmer than usual so football has continued without a break since the summer, but our parents in particular are looking forward to supporting their children from the side-lines in warmer, sunnier conditions!

For more details on the club please contact Graham Loader on [graham@fccougars.com](mailto:graham@fccougars.com) or see our website at [www.fccougars.com](http://www.fccougars.com)

**Graham Loader—FC Cougars**

## Bucklebury Badminton Club

Despite the ongoing pandemic, the club has operated more or less normally. Tuesday club night has been well attended and matches against other local clubs have been taking place. We are fielding several teams in the mixed, ladies and new open league.

We held a fun tournament in September when John Holloway and Olivia May proved to be the strongest pair beating Alan Arnold and Molly Brown in a hard fought final. Other challengers included David Haines playing with Cara Brims and Andrew MacDonald with Elizabeth Craig.

In October the members and their plus ones had a social gathering at West Berks Brewery and in December the Christmas Dinner was held at The Cottage Inn. Both events were well attended and enjoyed by one and all.



From left to right John Holloway, Olivia May, Molly Brown and Alan Arnold

Please feel free to come as a visitor at any time. We are a sociable and inclusive club. We welcome players of all ages and abilities. Secondary aged children may come if accompanied by a responsible adult. There are more details on our website or

email if you have any questions.

VENUE: Elstree School, Woolhampton, RG7 5TD

DAY: every Tuesday 8 to 10 p.m.

COST: £5 for visitors (deducted from subscription which is £120 per annum **pro rata**. £60 for students)

CONTACT: Margaret Neville 01635 873811  
[margaretnev@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:margaretnev@yahoo.co.uk)

WEBSITE: [buckleburybadmintonclub.com](http://buckleburybadmintonclub.com)

## Bucklebury Tennis Club

The Committee and all Members are delighted that **Bucklebury Tennis Club** has been awarded by **Berkshire Tennis LTA the Berkshire Club of the Year for 2021**. This is a recognition that as a two court club with floodlights, we offer all members opportunities both socially and competitively with our drill sessions, juniors and our consistent success in the Newbury and District League and Berkshire League competitions. A formal presentation of the award is yet to be arranged.

Bucklebury Tennis Club continues to flourish for recreational play, drills, junior coaching and competition.

### Drills:

Drills continue to be very popular with sessions on a Monday and Thursday evening.

For further details contact: Karen Pegg: [kppegg61@gmail.com](mailto:kppegg61@gmail.com)

### League Tennis:

League tennis continues over the Winter season. Bucklebury Tennis Club has 3 Mixed Teams in the Newbury and District Leagues. Bucklebury Tennis Club has a Ladies Double Team in the Berkshire Leagues. A great credit to the Captains and all team players. Preparations are being made for the Summer season.

### Junior Coaching:

It is hoped that Junior Coaching will resume again in the Summer across all year groups.

### Club Membership:

New members and visitors are most welcome. There is plenty of opportunity to play - Men's Mornings; Ladies' Mornings; Club Nights; League matches (both Newbury and Berkshire); Social tennis. Visitors or non-members can play on a pay and play basis. Details regarding membership and visitors are on the website:

[www.buckleburytennisclub.com](http://www.buckleburytennisclub.com)

*Please contact our Membership Secretary, Norman Casson: [normancasson@aol.com](mailto:normancasson@aol.com) if you would like to join or there are any queries.*

**Robin London: [robinlondon145@gmail.com](mailto:robinlondon145@gmail.com)**

**[www.buckleburytennisclub.com](http://www.buckleburytennisclub.com)**

# Parish Diary Dates

## February

28th Bucklebury Planning Committee 7.45pm Committee Room at the Victory Room, Bucklebury.

## March

3rd Bucklebury Walkers 10.00am/10.30am To be confirmed.  
14th Bucklebury Parish Council 7.45pm Committee Room at the Victory Room, Bucklebury.  
25th Horticultural Society 8.00pm Memorial Hall, Upper Bucklebury.  
28th Bucklebury Planning Committee 7.45pm Committee Room at the Victory Room, Bucklebury.  
31st Community Coffee morning 10.30am—12noon The Oak Room, Upper Bucklebury.

## April

2nd Common Clearing and litter pick 2.00pm The Oak Room, Upper Bucklebury.  
3rd Horticultural Society Spring Show 2.30pm—4.00pm Victory Room, Bucklebury.  
7th Bucklebury Walkers 10.00am/10.30am The Cottage Inn, Upper Bucklebury.  
11th Bucklebury Parish Council 7.45pm Committee Room at the Victory Room, Bucklebury.  
24th Bucklebury Planning Committee 7.45pm Committee Room at the Victory Room, Bucklebury.  
28th Community Coffee morning 10.30am—12noon The Oak Room, Upper Bucklebury.

## May

4th Horticultural Society From 6.30pm Cottismore Nursery.  
5th Bucklebury Walkers 10.00am/10.30am The Cottage Inn, Upper Bucklebury.  
5th Annual Parish Assembly 7.45pm Victory Room, Bucklebury.  
9th Bucklebury Parish Council 7.45pm Committee Room at the Victory Room, Bucklebury.  
(Annual meeting)  
23rd Bucklebury Planning Committee 7.45pm Committee Room at the Victory Room, Bucklebury.  
26th Community Coffee morning 10.30am—12noon The Oak Room, Upper Bucklebury.

## June

2nd Bucklebury Walkers 10.00am/10.30am The Cottage Inn, Upper Bucklebury.

## Contributions

Material to appear in The Oaks should be sent neatly typed for scanning or as a word-processor document (e.g. MS Word), attached to an e-mail and sent to “[clerk@buckleburyparish.org](mailto:clerk@buckleburyparish.org)”. Don’t worry about layout as it will be re-formatted to the house-style. Please supply any pictures or artwork as separate files, as they are not usually recoverable from word processor files and don’t forget to include captions for the pictures.

All contributions appertaining to the Parish are very welcome but the Parish Council reserves the right to adapt or omit submissions.

The deadline for submissions is the 20th of the month preceding publication.

Barry Dickens

Published in February, May and October

By Bucklebury Parish Council.

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