



GORING HEATH NEWSLETTER

*News, Information
and Comment for
Goring Heath,
Whitchurch Hill
and Crays Pond*

August 2022
Issue 187

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Autumn Village Show

Date for the diary - **10 September in Goring Heath Village Hall.**

Centre stage will be late summer fruit and vegetables, arts and crafts, baking, jam/chutney making, and photography. Entries are for all ages
- for anyone who just fancies revisiting an old skill, or just trying something new. A special section is for the under 12s.

For the non-gardeners amongst us some entries can merely be from plants easily found in our hedgerows. Photo topics are very broad too, leaving plenty to the imagination. No interpretation of the titles given is ever wrong.

Details of the entry categories were given in the previous edition of this newsletter. A full schedule will be available from anyone on the committee nearer the time (names are below).

The return of the Spring Show in April was very popular so we look forward to a similar level of entry and visitors. Yes, even if you don't feel you want to enter visitors are always welcome to the public viewing where tea, coffee and cake can be enjoyed whilst browsing the exhibits.

For further details, or a full schedule in September, please contact:

Liz Gibson 01189842012
Betty Butler 01491681780 or 07955182684
Sally Bergmann 07585195669.

We look forward to seeing you there.

Liz Gibson

Chair's comments

As I write this it is a day to hide inside - not as one would expect in this county from rain or winds, but from the heat! By the time you read it we will, hopefully, be back to our usual summer mix of rain and pleasant sunshine.



Outside there is nowhere better to be in a heat-wave than the seaside. We are quite a long way from the sea here, but we do have some lovely woods, which are the next best thing! The trees provide shade and a very welcome cooling effect.

One of our priorities as a council is to look after our countryside, especially the woodland, so I am concerned about any abuse that is being thrown at them.

Very recently a small patch of woodland was up for auction, with the suggestion that it might be available for development, and with a price tag which reflected this ambition. There was no chance of gaining permission for any real development but once the woods are divided into very small plots small infringements take place which are very hard to control. A vigilant parishioner alerted us to the auction and we were able to advise the auction house that the advertisement, whilst not exactly illegal, was at best misleading. This may have discouraged a purchaser.

In other parts of the parish the woods have been divided into lots and this has led to fencing, and the building of huts. Some activities are robustly challenged by the planning authority, such as the tree house that had to be removed after a long dispute, but other planning infringements are more difficult to prove, and some sneak in while no-one is really watching - such as the extension of the gravel store on Long Toll which is now encroaching on several trees.

Our areas of 'Ancient Woodland' (not just old trees, but areas which have been continuously wooded for a very long time) are areas of calm and beauty, which are available for us all to enjoy through the network of footpaths and bridleways. Let's keep them that way so they will be there for future generations to enjoy as we face increasingly common heatwaves.

Do let us know if you see any building or other activities whilst you are out enjoying the cool of these woodlands.

Planning Decisions

The following planning applications between May and July 2022 and May 2022 have been considered. Where a decision is not given, it means the Parish Council has not yet received written confirmation



Premises and application details	Parish Council	Notes
P22/S1087/FUL Land adjacent to The Sun Inn Hill Bottom Whitchurch Hill RG8 7PU Erection of detached 4 bed dwelling with detached garage and new access drive (revised energy statement submitted 6th May 2022 and repositioning of dwelling further back as shown on amended site plan received 30th May 2022)	Amended Planning application	
P22/S1653/HH Brindles Bridle Road Whitchurch Hill RG8 7PR A proposed single storey rear extension, alterations to existing roof profile (included lifting of ridge height) and three new traditionally proportioned pitched roof dormers, internal alterations and a side door canopy. a revision of previously approved application - reference P19/S2068/HH. LC to lead/report. Hunters Moon is with enforcement, and recent planning decisions were noted.	Planning Permission granted	
P22/S2375/HH Fishpuddle Cottage, Eastfield Lane, Goring Heath.RG87ST. Rear extension to existing property.		
P22/S2413/DIS 2 Well Cottages Goring Heath Road Whitchurch Hill RG8 7PQ Discharge of condition 11 (Surface water drainage works) on application P20/S4148/HH. Erection of two storey side and rear extensions and single storey rear extension, and formation of a vehicular access.	Planning Permission granted	
P22/S2188/HH Hurst Cottage Goring Heath Road Whitchurch Hill RG8 7PL Addition of a dormer to the front elevation of the proposed loft conversion,	Planning Permission granted	

Premises and application details	Parish Council	Notes
P22/S0868/FUL Copyhold Farm Lady Grove Goring Heath RG8 7RT Demolition of sub standard dwelling and erection of replacement single storey 2 bedroom dwelling	Planning Permission granted	

Planning

We would also like to point out that No Strong Views is one of only three choices that SODC gives the parish council. It should not be read as illustrating tacit approval of an application. More often than not this choice is supplemented with specific comments from the parish council highlighting areas of concern.

Parish Council Repairs and Maintenance

Many of you will have noticed the refurbished picnic bench at the Whitchurch Hill Recreation Ground play area.

Mr Tony Price who lives opposite the green, has done a great job at repairing the damage that was done some time ago. This was caused by the lighting of a portable barbeque on the table surface. He was able to dismantle the bench and repair it with ease. In fact, he has done such a good job, and he enjoyed it so much, he has taken on the refurbishment of the Parish Noticeboard at The Almshouses Bus Shelter which was badly damaged by the spring storms. And, as if that wasn't enough, he has promised to take a look at the Noticeboard at the Crays Pond Bus Shelter too.

Many thanks from all of us on the Council for undertaking this work. The parish Council have also noted that repairs are needed to the Well in Whitchurch Hill, and are seeking quotations for this work. We also note that the area around the well needs clearing and will achieve this in due course.

Amanda Holland

Clerk
Goring Heath Parish Council

District Councillor Comments

South Oxfordshire District Council interferes very little with most of our lives, as good councils and governments should, although we all benefit from the bins being collected every week, a regular unsung service that, bar things like last year's problems and the other occasional hiccup, operates pretty smoothly. Planning is the other big function of SODC that can affect us, and while Goring Heath is not likely to have substantial amounts of development thrust upon it, there is a steady trickle of planning applications that are considered by the Parish Council and decided upon by the District Council. Only if the applications are difficult do they come before the District Council Planning Committee, and that will be because either the parish council or myself have made that request. The other aspect of planning is enforcement, which is a much more difficult area where unlawful development has taken place either through ignorance or deliberately.

Until recently, all planning enforcement complaints were treated the same, and handled the same way involving a planning officer coming out to look at the issue and then deciding how the matter should be dealt with. This meant that an acrimonious dispute between neighbours on a very minor matter, which could be settled by agreement was handled in the same way as a serious case of complete disregard of planning law. This resulted in the system being clogged with a backlog of cases that were a mix of serious and minor. A new system has been set up where by new complaints are triaged, and dealt with according to their importance. The Enforcement Officers have also been equipped with portable devices to enable them to deal with issues in the field, which will of course speed matters up. The statistics show that the backlog of cases is now reducing.

Although it's now a distant memory, the destruction of the Council Offices at Crowmarsh resulted in the use of the current rented offices in Milton Park Didcot, and one of the first actions of the newly elected council on 2019 was to find solutions for ending the expensive rent and to build a proper office. Initially, the plan was to rebuild on the Crowmarsh site, but the effect of the pandemic led to a rethink about the size of the building needed, and the use of an alternative site in Didcot that was owned by the council has now been agreed on. However, the lease at Milton Park is now coming to an end, and the proposed new building is still at the paper stage. As an interim measure, use will be made of other property in Abingdon, while meetings will be held in Didcot Civic centre or elsewhere.

Peter Dragonetti

SODC District Councillor for Kidmore End, Whitchurch, Goring Heath and Mapledurham

Duke of Edinburgh Award student takes on local litter

Have you ever noticed how much litter there is around our local area? Well, I did. That's why for my silver Duke of Edinburgh's award, I decided to do litter picking. I did this a year ago too, for my Bronze award. I care deeply about the environment and wanted to incorporate it somehow into the award. COVID made it a lot more difficult to find something to volunteer for, so I thought litter picking was perfect. I walked from my house, down to Hill Bottom, and back up along the road and round. You might even have seen me walking around a few times!

Starting in November, I finished this June - continuing through the chilly winter was tough but I didn't give up! I have been amazed and somewhat confused at the things I have found: metal knives, Lego, horse brushes, (yes more than one), a pair of scissors, firework canisters, a screwdriver, a



pair of boots and an unopened 2L bottle of water. I picked up as much as I could, and if I couldn't take it with me, I put it in the nearest bin. You would be surprised at how much I have found stuck in the bushes from people throwing it out of their cars - I think I picked up hundreds of tissues! Not to mention face masks and also cigarette butts; I'm certain that the usage of them has increased over this period of time, as when I began, I barely found any. In the future, I plan to keep litter picking occasionally to keep our countryside clean and tidy. I hope that people might have noticed a change in the amount of litter around here, and that they remember to take their rubbish home with them.

Amelie Way

Damage to Footway

The Parish Council spent a good deal of time and money getting the roadside footways along the B471 created and maintained. This year we have appointed new contractors and have been able to introduce a Roadside Verge Nature Reserve regime.

So, when contractors laying fibre cables dug up the footway from Crays Pond to Shirvells Hill. we were appalled to see the state in which the footway was left. Not only strewn with loose stone but with an inspection cover so poorly laid that it constitutes a major trip hazard.

The PC reported this situation to Fix My Street and we are confident that we can get this dreadful workmanship put right.

In the meantime, apologies to those who use this path.

Martin Wise

Charitable Educational Grants

The Secretary of Whitchurch United Charities would like to remind all families that the Charity has funds available to help meet the costs associated with educational needs such as books, equipment or educational trips.

Eligible students are young people between the ages of 5 and 25 years and whose permanent residence is within the parish of Whitchurch.

Applications are processed twice a year, with the closing dates being 31st March and 30th September. However, late applications are considered if the available funds for the previous 6 month period have not been fully allocated.

All applications and decisions are treated in strict confidence by the Trustees.

If you would like to know more, please do contact Sarah Dixon (our Grant Application Secretary). Contact details: telephone: 0118 984 4262, address: Flint House, Hardwick Road, Whitchurch on Thames, RG8 7HH or e-mail – whitchchurchunitedcharities@gmail.com

Plant Stall for Ukraine, run by Chris and Sally Bergmann



A huge 'Thank you' to everyone who contributed in any way to the Spring Plant Stall on Hill Bottom.

A good number of you donated plants, giving a good selection for sale from March to June. As one person commented, it was an opportunity to buy a plant that you wouldn't necessarily consider buying from a garden centre - at a fraction of the price.

Together we raised £350, a drop in the ocean but every little helps.

Thank you again.

Sally Bergmann

Whitchurch Hill Village Fete, the last Saturday in May 2022

It's two years since the Recreation Ground has looked so green and manicured, of course, its Saturday May 28th——Fete Day!

It's a lovely early morning and John Gray is busy putting out the pitch markers, a goodly number of volunteers have gathered to put up the tents and gazebos. The electricity is connected and the speakers set up. Quickly the Green takes on a completely different appearance. It's really looking ready for a great day with all the Stall holders arriving and setting up.

The Parish Council manned BBQ has been lit, the Bottle Stall is loading up with the amazing number of donated bottles, the magnificent Beer Tent (in aid of the Crays Pond Community Group) is stocked up and the WI Tea Tent laid up with sparkling china, tea pots and scrumptious cakes and scones with strawberries and cream. The fantastic Raffle prizes, donated by local businesses, are displayed and the ticket sellers, are ready with their books of tickets.

Now it's nearly 2 o'clock, so forward steps the brilliantly attired Mike Holland our M.C, to give the signal for the Maidenhead Community band to play the fanfare and open the Fete. It's open!

As the afternoon rushes past with the Punch and Judy, Swing Boats, Round-about and Storyteller all being enjoyed by the children, the Dog Agility and Ferret Racing, by everyone, and the team of Raffle ticket sellers, so busy. And all the time, friends, who haven't seen each other for ages bumping into each other and trying to catch up with all the news. The BBQ, Beer Tent, Bottle Stall and the Tea Tent all selling out, fast.

Then the Children's races are over, the dogs have performed their last Agility Show and the Ferrets have run their last race of this afternoon, the Raffles have been drawn, so time for the pack up. If you didn't buy your strawberries or vegetable plants or that last slice of cake, you're too late as they are sold out!

Just one last important job for our MC Mike to 'compere' at this Fete——The now traditional end to the fete, the Egg Throwing competition. It can't be missed, it is such competitive fun! Won (almost as traditionally) by Martin Wise. Then it's all over for another year and the clearing up begins in earnest!

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So thank you all so much, to everyone for all the work before, setting up, during, and after the Fete. Nigel Chaffey with some help, again doing his amazing job of ‘removals’ of tables, chairs and lots more, saving hours of returning items to their original places.

Thank you too for all the bottle and raffle donations with the hard working team of ticket sellers and bottle collectors as they are such fund raisers for the fete. (The list of raffle donators follows this article).

A special mention for Gordon Painter who stepped in at short notice to act as Treasurer

But please, we need volunteers to come forward and run future fetes, as Nick, Maz, John Gray and I have organised our last fete—definitely— but it has been great to see it come back on such a lovely afternoon, after that enforced break.

Please let one of us know of any local causes to which we can donate.

The last thank you goes to everyone who came and supported this community event, as without you all, none of it would be possible.

Theresa, Nick, Maz Elsome and John Gray.
The retiring fete committee.

Distribution of Fete money—Where does it go?

We are often asked “Where does the money raised by the Fete go?” Aside from a small amount put aside for equipment upkeep, most of the money we raise goes towards donations to good causes. We focus these on the local area, with an occasional donation to a National Charity that has had some role in the village, such as Macmillan Cancer Relief.

While we have been making such donations for many years, a quick glance at our records for the past six years shows we have donated over £8,000 in that period to a range of deserving causes and projects. These include the Goring Heath Scouts, the upkeep of our Parish Hall, maintenance of St.John’s Church, Hospices, a traffic safety system at a local school, a contribution to the Parish Defibrillator, local Volunteers, a Hospice and the upkeep of local landmarks such as the Well Structure at Goring Heath and the restoration of the War Memorial.

John Gray

**With many thanks for all these Raffle donations to the
Whitchurch Hill Village Fete 2022 by local shops and businesses**

1ST Prize: £60 voucher for The Ferry Boat, Whitchurch

2nd Prize: Hair cut voucher for Albert Fields, Goring

3rd Prize: Voucher for set lunch for 2 for The Highwayman Inn, Exlade Street

4th Prize ‘Astronaut Suspended ’mobile (O3 Interiors, Pangbourne)

Strawberries (Tolhurst Organic) + wine (Prosecco)*

£15 voucher (The Pangbourne Cheese Shop) + wine*

£25 voucher for The Goring Grocery +wine

£25 voucher for Virgo Hair and Beauty, Pangbourne

£25. For Garlands Organic and Natural, Pangbourne + wine

£20 voucher (Lina Tandoori, Pangbourne) +wine

Selection of Co op groceries

Hanging basket (Woodcote Garden Centre) + Gardening pack (Goring Hardware)

Tigi hair products (Forresters, Pangbourne)

Bayliss & Hardings luxury vanity case (Inspirations, Goring)

Fish and chips (The Plaice, Woodcote) + wine*

Breakfast pack (Sheila Feltham)

Tea pack (Sheila Feltham)

Chocolates + wine (Prosecco)*

* Wine provided by Ninos, Pangbourne and Coop