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COMMUNITY**

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Village News

Issue 132/July 2022



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Editorial

It seems wrong to be talking about autumn already, when we are in the throes of such glorious weather. I wasn't a fan of the 40° heat (and nor was my garden!), but I have been enjoying the warm weather and – particularly – the sunshine, and hope you have too. Hopefully it will carry on well into September, although as I write we desperately need some rain. Rain overnight is fine with me!

It has been so good to get back to normality with all our summer events, even though the shadow of Covid still lingers. During the lockdowns, I swore that I would never take going out and meeting up with people for granted again, but it's amazing how soon we get back into the swing of socialising. I have to admit that I am still a bit wary of very crowded spaces, however, and haven't given up wearing my mask completely. I have heard of many people still coming down with Covid locally, but hopefully the vaccines have kept most people safe from serious effects.

I am sure you have heard about the proposal to erect a 5G mast and accompanying cabinets close to Jubilee Green (see the article on P15). Personally, while I am sure the mast will be an asset for the future, I am hoping that the planning office will refuse permission and that an alternative site will be found which will have less impact on the aesthetics of our village. Hopefully we can update you on this in the next issue.

As usual, we will be delighted to hear from any organisation in Downley (or the surrounding area) with news or information for the Winter edition, which will be out in mid-November – so don't forget to include your Christmas events!! You can submit articles via the email address editor@downley.org. Copy deadline is Sunday 30 October.

Anne, Editor • editor@downley.org

Jill - Tutor



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Downley Day News

Another Downley Day has come and gone, although this one perhaps stood out with the fantastic display of Ukrainian folk-dancing by the Prolisok Dance Ensemble who performed a series of song and dance routines that illustrated the rich cultural history of the country. The audience was left breathless by the sheer energy of the final dance!



Highlights also included the Falconry display and LEAP put on their usual polished performance. Thanks must go to Downley Descants, the High Wycombe Music Centre wind band and the Natalie Jane Dance troupe for entertaining the crowds who turned out in good numbers despite the occasionally damp weather. Thanks also to Temple End for sponsoring the dog show and Hillclimb for supporting the whole event.



Concert on the Common featured performances by Andy Hoger, Button Music and Hustler and a late entry was Beyond Paradise, a local group of young performers who opened the evening. Any other young bands are welcome to put themselves forward for a slot at COTC next year so please express any interest to info@downley.org.

The Downley Day committee will be holding its AGM on 24th October at 8pm at the Community Centre where we will be deciding who to award grants to. If any not-for-profit organisation, either in the parish of Downley or one which supports Downley residents, wishes to apply for a grant please contact info@downley.org. Your application should include details of your organisation, how much funding you are looking for and what it will be used for. Grants are usually awarded for specific projects or activities rather than routine running costs and are typically of the order of a few hundred pounds.

Dates for your 2023 diary:

- Downley Day – 17th June 2023
- Concert on the Common - 8th July 2023

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Downley Common News

The recent hot weather has had quite an impact on the appearance of the common over the past few weeks with the grassland area starting to look like a cornfield.

The really hot day on 18th July was marked by a fire in the field adjacent to the common behind St. Davids. This was caused by the electrical transformer on the pole on the south side of the field exploding and shedding sparks which set the field alight, as well as causing a power cut for much of the surrounding area until 3am the following morning. The fire brigade responded with six fire engines and were present for much of the afternoon and evening. The aerial photo shows the extent of the burning and shows that St. Davids itself was fortunate not to suffer damage. Walkers along Blacksmiths Lane will see the extent of the flames and appreciate how close they came to jumping into the adjacent barley field.



So can everyone please pay special attention to the risk of fire in these hot, dry conditions and refrain from activities such as campfires or barbecues in the countryside which can very easily get out of control.

The June work party was devoted to coppicing the hazel stands on the south side of the central grassland to both regenerate growth and to provide materials for the hurdle making demonstration at Downley Day. The photo shows the hurdle in progress and how materials readily available on the common can be put to good use if you have the time and the inclination.

Bill Thompson. DCPS

DOWNLEY PARISH COUNCIL MEETINGS

Meetings are held on 2nd Tuesday of the month

at Downley Community Centre, School Close 7.30pm

Up to 30 minutes are allowed for public questions

Agendas are posted on the Parish Council notice boards at least 4 days in advance. Copies of the Parish Council's Minutes are available at the Downley Community Library for residents to read. They are also included on the Parish Council Website.

Downley Parish Council, Community Centre School Close, Downley, HP13 5TR

The Clerk can be contacted on 01494 25 77 11 (office hrs 9am-1pm Monday – Friday)

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Downley Community Centre



Ukraine

As part of its community and charitable mandate, the Centre is hoping to offer free hirings, subject to availability, for English language classes for Ukrainians for one-to-one or small group sessions. Either the small Maple room (on left as you enter) or the library (Ash) would be made available.

Chipmunks

It is with much sadness that we recently lost the very enthusiastic Chipmunks leader - Margaret Bode. This long-established group is quite unusual as social clubs go and provides an outlet for all lovers of wood carvings to practice their hobby with like-minded friends. New members very welcome. They meet every Wednesday 10-12pm. downleychipmunks@outlook.com

Up Festival 2022 – Art Show



Left: Untamed tiger by Amelie Howitt. Centre: Tranquility by Carol Giddings. Right: Tree Creeper by Rose Timney

The organisers say this every year, but they really do think this was the best year yet - and on the 10 year anniversary! There were almost 300 visitors in all and some amazing feedback. A big thank you is due to the Community Centre team for their hands on support, the West Wycombe Art Group for the loan of their smart display stands, the new Art Show team and of course all of the talented contributors for their remarkable creative work.



Video

The inclusion of a 3.5 minute video tour has proved very popular and has now been added for quick access onto YouTube; simply enter “Downley Community Centre”: Alternatively visit downley.org click Venues, find a Venue, click Downley Community Centre and scroll down to the photo link “How to Hire the Community Centre”

Continued on P11



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Macmillan Cancer Support Coffee and cake morning Saturday 1 October 2022

Downley is again playing its part by hosting free of charge Macmillan Cancer Support for their World's Biggest Coffee Morning

Macmillan's biggest fundraising charitable event has been raising awareness since 1990 and providing funds for people facing cancer. Macmillan ask people all over the UK to host their own Coffee Mornings and donations on the day are made to Macmillan. In 2021 Macmillan raised over £11m from these events and this year aims to raise even more.

For its part, Downley raised over £500 last time so please support this fantastic charity again this year.

Having a Coffee Morning is the perfect chance to catch up over a cuppa and a slice of something delicious for a great cause. One in three of us will face cancer, and the money you raise at this Coffee Morning will help Macmillan make sure no one has to face it alone.

DOWNLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE – Management Committee

Downley Theatre Group

Our trip to "Mary Poppins" in May was wonderful; such an uplifting show with jolly songs, energetic dancing and plenty of colour – just lovely.

Since then, on 11 July, 29 of us visited the Superbloom experience at the Tower of London with a guided tour of the historic palace including seeing the Crown Jewels. It was scorching, although nowhere near as hot as the heatwave a week later, thank goodness.

As timescales for booking trips are short, we cannot advertise them in the Village News. To find out what we have in store, please contact us to have your details added to the mailing list.

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Downley Theatre Group
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Downley Gardening Society

Our plant stall at Downley Day had a treasure trove of plants at bargain prices. Lots of villagers took advantage of the many different flowers, herbs and vegetables on sale.

Our coach trip to Hidcote Manor saw a full coach of 44 members visit one of the most beautiful gardens in England. When it was taken over by the National Trust in 1948 it was due to its status as 'a garden of significance' and it is considered to be one of the most influential 20th century gardens in England.

Our next visit was to the Japanese garden of Alan and Marian Mayes in Talbot Avenue which was thoroughly enjoyed by our members. The garden even has a tea house. It is open under the NGS during the year if anyone else would like to visit.

Dates for your diary:

3/9 Autumn show

25/9 coach trip to RHS Wisley

17/10 talk in St James' hall by Nick Marriner on the birds and farmland project

21/11 talk in St James' hall by Amy Moffett on Horatio's garden

12/12 talk in St James' hall by Steve Batchelor on honey tasting

If you would like to become a member of the Gardening Society and join our meetings please contact Alison on downleygardeningociety@gmail.com or Julia on 01494 447323. Membership costs just £5 single and £8 family per year.

Please keep safe, enjoy your gardens and we hope to see members and non-members, who are always very welcome, at one of our events.



Simply Walk 'Signs of the times'

On 15th July Simply Walk celebrated their 20th Anniversary with a walk and a picnic in Hughenden Park. Some of the Downley group attended and helped to mark a very successful county wide activity for walkers for health and well-being. Downley was one of the early

adopters in the County.

Downley Simply Walkers have never in their previous existence had to cancel a walk. Not for snow, ice or other extreme. Then the Red warning went out for us all to take care in the approaching heat wave. It seems ironic that the only weather to stop us was a sun-filled day heading towards the 40 degree mark. So our Monday Walk was cancelled for safety reasons and we have been told to expect more like that in future – thank you Global Warming!

Over recent months, a number of our walkers have had to take time out to recover from Covid; very irritating for us all given the majority have been vaccinated-vaccinated-boosted-boosted! The upside is that we have been reminded what the benefits of Simply Walk are: fresh air and exercise in beautiful and varied countryside in the company of friendly, chatty people who care about each other. I've really missed it!

Jeanne Steward



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**Ms Beagles (former Downley resident)
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Downley Evening WI

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What a wonderful occasion was the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Such a remarkable woman and a great example to us all for her dedication and sense of duty. I hope you all liked the pompoms on the tree on Jubilee Green which were made by several of our members.

Next came Downley Day which is always a wonderful event in our village and so well attended despite the weather not being at its most summery. We had lots of people coming to our stall to try and win a prize and it was lovely to see so many other local organisations too.



We had a fascinating talk at our June meeting about Gertrude Bell and all her outstanding achievements for a woman of her time, although sadly not many people are even aware of her. Some of our members also visited a Japanese Garden here in Downley which is part of the National Garden Scheme so available to all. It's well worth a visit.

After a last minute change of speaker for our July meeting we had a fun evening finding out about the origins of many words and sayings, a surprising amount of which were invented by William Shakespeare. We're now looking forward to our annual Garden Party later this month.

Our speaker in August will be telling us about chloroform, an early anaesthetic, and September is about Ladies of the Grand Tour. We really do have interesting talks.

If you think you might be interested in giving us a try feel free to just turn up on the night or call Janet Durkin on 01494 535662 for a chat first. We have about 55 members and meet every second Tuesday of the month at 7.45 at St James Church. Everyone is welcome. Some ladies think they're not old enough to be in the WI but many of our members were in their 20s and 30s when they joined and love it so much they're still with us 40 and more years later.

Heather Read

5G Mast Location at Jubilee Green

This may be a little late to the table, but then timing has never been my strong suit. However, it is probably worth adding this to the debate that has been, as of writing this, close to the hearts and minds of Downley residents. The subject is Jubilee Green and the proposed 15-meter high 5G mast and its 3 utility cabinets.

Now before we get started, I must point out that I am not an anti-technology person. I love my village and I treasure its aesthetics and heritage. However, I do see the benefits of new technology and the continued progress of this country.

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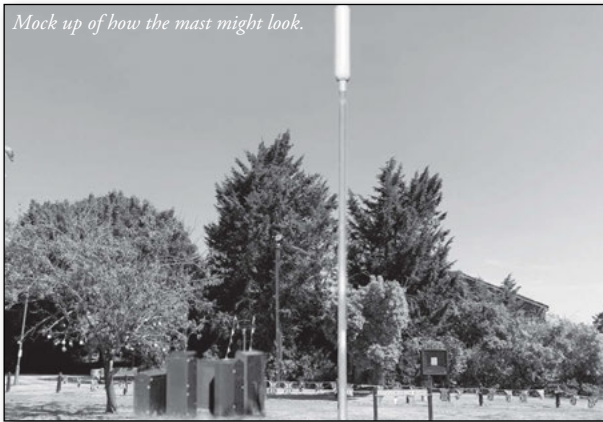
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So, it's good to get perspective on these points and to have a rounded view of the situation as it presents itself. Jubilee Green is a little slice of heaven. To be fair it is on the junction of a busy bit of road, but that is not to say that at times it is quiet and a person might steal a moment of serenity in a busy world. It is also a welcome sign for Downley: "Welcome to Downley, please enjoy this beautiful village, here is a little taster of what you can expect" the sign might say!

With few entry points to Downley, this is probably the most important due to its location. It is the convergence of Littleworth Road which connects to Hithercroft Road and Coates Lane, Plomer Hill which connects the Pastures, Plomer Green Avenue and Plomer Green Lane. These then tie in all the other lanes, roads and ways. And at the heart of it is Jubilee Green.

The Parish Council maintains the space and, together with Downley Day Committee, each year a Christmas Tree is placed on Jubilee Green to welcome visitors and residents for the festive season. The garden is always kept well and has a beautiful floral display throughout the year.



a nice well-established tree that is pruned and kept so as not to distract from the view.

So, the question, "Is this the best place for the 5G mast and is there an alternative that would fit better?" The site is public land and would, I am told, cost the utility company nothing in ground rent to put it there. It already has telecommunications running close to or through the site and access is easy for them. But does that alone make it the right location? Should the utility company pay for its equipment to be located on public land, or private for that matter? We have to pay them to use it after all!

If the issue was ground rent I am sure the utility company would pay, but it is not. Many feel that the location of the mast is wrong and no thought has been given to the negative impact it would have on the area and that perhaps an alternative site should be considered. Other sites could be: The land next to the Co-Op (this piece of land does have an agreement, negotiated by the late Barry Gay, to allow the community to access and use the land for a community garden; if the 5G mast was on the back side of the garden obscured by a fence -hazel is a nice choice - then the garden could still be used and another haven of beauty created in the process), or behind St James's Church on

So why spoil it now? Why cover it up for people entering the village? Why block the outlook for those wanting to sit in the garden and enjoy its space and beauty?

The proposed site for the 5G mast sits just in front of Jubilee Green, separated by a footpath, so is not directly linked, although the Parish Council do maintain this land also as part of the ongoing upkeep. It also has

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the parkland stretching down to Southview. This area is away from the main road and has good access for engineers.

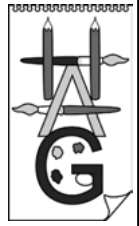
The question of radio frequencies and radiation has been bandied around. There is no actual proof (and it has been tested) that 5G or any other telecom mast gives off damaging waves. They are different to gamma, x-ray and microwaves in their frequencies for a start and would not pose a threat to life in anyway. If there were an issue, WiFi routers would not be in every home in the UK I'm sure.

The deadline for comment has passed, but debate and appeals will go on. Have your say, have an opinion and let's make sure that our village and its beauty spots remain for generations to come. But remember that technology moves on and we must allow infrastructure to improve - just in the right location.

Mark Starkey

Hughenden Art Group

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COFFEE STOP NEWS

Coffee Stop is now meeting regularly on the 1st and 3rd Monday morning each month at St James Church Hall. Due to popular request, we are now open from 10.30 am – 12.30 pm.



In October we will be celebrating 20 years since the opening of Coffee Stop. At our meeting on 3rd October we hope to welcome many of our past Volunteers and Visitors to help mark the occasion. Our photo album will be on display – a reminder of the many happy times spent at Coffee Stop over the years.

Are you looking for something new to do following retirement? Or have you just had a new baby and would love to get out for an hour just to talk to other people? Or maybe you are working from home. Why not take a break? We would love to welcome you to Coffee Stop where you will be able to meet other people from the village. It is a social get-together for everyone of any age. Can we tempt you with our home-made cakes? Help with lifts to St James Hall can be arranged if necessary.

We are always keen to welcome new helpers, whether to put up and take down tables, help in the kitchen, wait at tables or drive some of our regulars to and from St James Church Hall. We have a rota so you can help out as often as convenient.

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Hosting Ukrainians

For the last few weeks we have been hosting a Ukrainian mother and daughter. Since we've had lots of questions and comments from friends and family about how brave and 'good' we are to do this (we're not!), I thought I'd write a few comments about our experiences.

Back in February when Russia commenced their attack on Ukraine we, like many, were very distressed, worried and angry. We followed the news every day and made a contribution or two but the unspoken question we were asking ourselves was – would we be prepared to host a family seeking refuge? Our son had quite recently left home and we also had a spare room - so aside from clearing out some junk we certainly had the capacity - but would our future guests be trustworthy? How would the situation play-out over time? Besides which, the Government's refugee scheme was slow to get going and the 'matching' process seemed a bit vague so it didn't seem like there was anything definite to pursue. However, in April, via the street communication scheme, we heard that a local contact was trying to find hosts for Ukrainian families and we expressed provisional interest. After a couple of initial suggestions which didn't seem right for us (we would, after all, be offering space in our home and lives!), a mother and adult daughter were suggested and we put our hands up. We were able to get a level of reassurance from local contacts who knew our family well and recommended them as lovely people. A video call was arranged with our potential guests and the local contact and, with some nervousness, an arrangement was made.

They sent us their information and we made the visa applications on their behalf. Everything then happened very quickly – within days the applications were approved, we and our home were checked for suitability by the local council (to ensure safety for both parties) and we were DBS checked. Apparently, this hasn't always gone so smoothly – with Buckinghamshire having accepted hundreds of refugees.

It took many hours by road for our ladies to get to the Polish border and a few more to cross it. Once in Poland things went smoothly. The flight from Warsaw was their first and there were no problems at Luton. They only had hand luggage – one case of clothes having been sent via a cheaper route. The Ukrainian contact picked them up from Luton airport to greet them in their native language after such a long journey. The Ukrainian settlement scheme gives them a 6 month visa with full rights to work over here and, once here, they can extend this to a 3 year visa. They receive an initial cash payment to tide them over the first few weeks and are then expected to find work and integrate/contribute to their local community. They can also apply for Universal Credit but this really is a tiny amount, presumably designed to top up minimum wage to living wage – certainly not something you could live on if you had bills other than food to pay! For many, this has meant cleaning work as it can be done without language skills. We as hosts receive a payment too each month to cover additional costs/bills which we tend to use if we take our visitors for visits or enrichment activities (like trips to London, day trips or meals out etc). We haven't yet decided what we'll do with the surplus but possibly fund a deposit for when they are ready to move on from us and live in their own place (our initial commitment is 6-9 months).

Our biggest challenge with our visitors has been to support them to learn English as quickly as possible and to find employment (rather than cash in hand casual work). All the standard English courses were full so I enquired on social media and was delighted to get 3 English as

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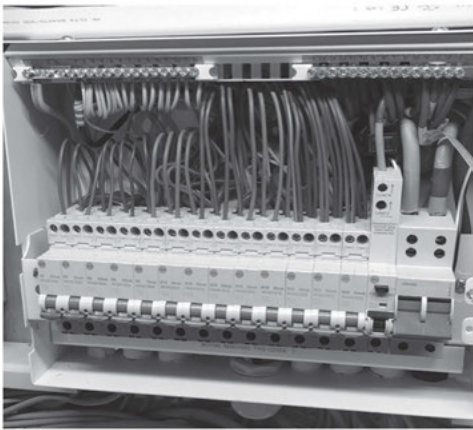
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a Foreign Language volunteers to run 3 hours of lessons each week. These are greatly enjoyed and appreciated. Our younger visitor is conversationally very capable now, works and practises hard with her studies, and she is seeking shop or café work. The mother did not come with beginner English but is starting to understand and speak a little more. For everything else she uses the 'Say Hi' translation app (you just speak in English to it and it speaks back to you in Ukrainian or vice versa), or her daughter translates. Finding work is a little trickier as everything here for the most basic jobs seems to require online applications and the interview process is very daunting in an unknown environment and a new language plus it is a more 'structured' process than they're used to. But we'll get there, as once they overcome the initial hurdles they are capable, flexible, reliable, cheery and hard working – all the characteristics employers seek!

Anyway, our hosting experience really hasn't been a problem. In fact, it's proving an enriching experience. Our guests look after their own catering and are very tidy - keeping the kitchen clean for us all and sharing their creations generously when suitable (interesting salads, soups and fried pancake/scone things, both sweet and savoury). We do not spend a lot of time talking with them about the situation in Ukraine but they use WhatsApp to talk with family and friends there and have access to Ukrainian media so they sometimes give us a bit of an insight into what's going on. All of the Ukrainians I've met sincerely hope that their stay here will be temporary – this isn't intended to be a new home for them; they still have homes, family and pets there. Although our ladies don't come from an area where there is current fighting, there was no economy for them to work in and the fear was constant as they could hear the planes and bombs in nearby cities.

If you're considering hosting then we'd be happy to help link you up with families. Just let your street rep know and they'll put you in contact with us or other Downley families hosting.

Andy and Melanie Ashton

Chiltern Wood School Chat

I am writing this as we have just finished the summer term and both staff and pupils deserve a lovely summer holidays after all their hard work this year.

Some of you will have seen the wonderful artwork created by some of our pupils on display at the art show this year. I was very proud to see what they had achieved and for it to be hung next to some excellent artwork created by local artists.

Sports Day events have also taken place and all pupils received a wonderful medal that was created by some of the Year 9 pupils from Alfriston School. This was the school I was Deputy Head at before I joined Chiltern Wood, so it was lovely for me to see two such amazing schools work together.

Our Friends of Chiltern Wood and lots of extra staff helped out on 18th June at Downley Day with the refreshments. We had a wonderful time and several of our pupils and their parents came to see us on the day. It was so lovely to be part of the local community.

We hope you all have a great summer and we look forward to telling you more of what is happening at Chiltern Wood School over the next academic year.

Rachel Chapman, Headteacher



Chameleon Singles Group



Chameleon's two BBQ's this summer were both well attended. Members enjoyed time out in good company with food to match cooked by our hosts who looked after us in their gardens. We had good weather and the shade offered at our second one was most welcome as this took place around the hottest day so far this year.

We have more events planned over the late summer and autumn months including day trips out, coffee mornings, walks, meals out, theatre and cinema. Our Lunch Club on the second Friday and Pub Night on the last Thursday of each month continue to be popular. We will also continue to have a social evening via Zoom once a month for those who are unable or do not wish to go out at present.

The programme for September and October will be out soon and as always will have a variety of events. Chameleon members put forward ideas for all events and are the hosts welcoming both existing and new members. We are very grateful to them all as without our hosts there would be no Chameleon!

If you are single, 40-60's, looking for a great social life and new friends then why not give Chameleon Singles Group a try? To find out more call our membership secretaries Terrie on 01494 445816, Trevor on 01494 529067 or e-mail: info@chameleonsingles.org.uk. Visit the group on-line at www.chameleonsingles.org.uk for more information and the current programme or connect with us through Facebook.

Cycling in South Buckinghamshire



Join your local Cycling UK groups this summer

The local Chiltern Hills Cycling UK group offers both led rides and coffee pot meets every Sunday. With the late summer and autumn days here, now is the time to get out on your bike, make new friends and enjoy riding in the great countryside that surrounds Downley and West Wycombe. There is sure to be something for everyone of all ages who wants to get out with both pedal bikes and e-bikers welcome. If you do not wish to do a full ride, then you are welcome to come part way. Cafes such as the Hughenden Valley Coffee Shop, Hildreths at Prestwood, The Potters Arms at Winchmore Hill and Costa in Great Missenden regularly feature in our rides list so you are never too far away from home.

To find out more visit our web site below for the latest news, contact details and rides.

www.southbuckscycling.org.uk

More general information about Cycling UK and becoming a member can be found at our national site.

www.cyclinguk.org

Downley Pharmacy - AUTUMN VACCINATIONS

We are once again in the vaccine season. Both Covid and flu vaccine protocols have been announced for vaccinations to start in September. Once again Downley Pharmacy will be delivering flu vaccines to all eligible cohorts via the NHS and any others that wish to receive via our private service. We have applied to be a Covid vaccination centre but as I write this at the end of July nothing has been confirmed and we are not confident of success even though we know many would prefer us as a site of choice!

There is always great confusion around how and where to receive your vaccine so hopefully the following will help:

Covid and flu can be administered at the same time if that is what the clinic is offering; this maybe the case for GP led centres such as Adams Park and the town hall.

It is not mandatory to return to where you have received vaccines in the past and your 3rd, 4th or even 5th dose of Covid vaccine does not have to be the same as previous doses.

When receiving Covid and flu vaccines separately a gap of 7 days is required.

It is not necessary to wait until contacted by your GP or NHS to arrange your vaccination; from September you can call 119 or go online for Covid vaccination appointments. It may be necessary to try more than once for a local availability.

Contact us for a flu vaccination appointment or watch out for information on when a walk-in clinic is being held.

Downley Pharmacy dates of walk-in clinics (turn up and wait no appointment times being given although we are happy to take names and reserve doses):

Thursday 22nd September 9.30-5pm • Saturday 24th September 9.30-2.30pm

Monday 26th September 10- 3.30pm • Wednesday 28th Sept 10- 3.30pm

Saturday 1st October 9.30-2.30pm

Plus others to be confirmed according to availability and delivery of vaccine.

Appointments can be made for other days by contacting the Pharmacy. It is preferable and more efficient if family members can attend together.

NHS flu and Covid vaccine eligibility:

- Over 65s
- Those clinically at risk as per previous programmes - eg diabetics, respiratory disease, renal or liver disease, clinically obese, those with learning difficulties
- Immunocompromised and their household contacts
- Frontline health and social care workers
- Pregnant women

Continued P25

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minis

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Contact Kimberley & Caroline –
downleymondayminis@gmail.com



Downley Parish Notice Boards

Notices for the Parish notice boards should be left at the Community Centre. Notices must be received one month in advance of the event. Notice boards are updated on the first Thursday of each month. Please post notices into the letterbox at the Community Centre clearly marked for the Clerks attention. Please notify the Clerk if you have posted a notice at the centre by emailing to clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org

**All notices must be for local non profit organisations.
Please ensure that A5 size notices are supplied.**

STREET LIGHTING

Please report all lighting repairs
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Adults between 50 and 65 years of age not in a clinically at risk group will be able to receive their NHS flu vaccination after October 15th.

Children will be dealt with via school or child health clinics in the usual way.

General plea whilst we are particularly busy, please allow one full week (5 working days) from a request being submitted for a repeat prescription for it to be ready. You may be asked to call back for non acute items if they are not ready.

Top Notes

“What a feeling!”

It's been a busy summer of both smaller and larger scale performances that have been truly wonderful to be a part of. We've been singing indoors and out - thank goodness the weather has been kind this year!

Our *Charity Summer Concert* at the end of June was a great success. It was fantastic to be back performing at All Saints Parish Church - such a wonderful venue which we haven't sung in since *The Mayor's Carol Concert* in 2016! We also performed again for the residents at *The Heights* - it's amazing to see the therapeutic effect that music has on our elderly community and it's so important to us to be able to include these performances in our calendar.

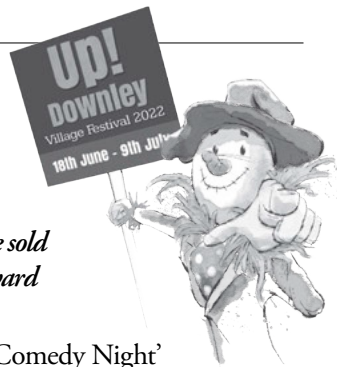


Looking ahead, we're excited to perform at the *Harpsden Hoo-Ha* this September - a new music festival to celebrate local talent, bringing the community together through food, drink and the joy of live performance!

The sun is still high in the sky but our Charity Christmas Concert is already booked! We hope you can join us at **All Saints Parish Church** on **Monday 5th December at 7:15pm**, for an evening of Christmas favourites, carols for all and brass from the **Salvation Army Band**. Tickets will be available shortly via the **Eventbrite** website - search for Top Notes Choir. We will again be supporting **Thames Valley Adventure Playground** who are celebrating their 40th year this year.

Please follow us on our social media channels (*Instagram & Twitter: @topnoteschoir, Facebook - Top Notes*) to stay updated on what we're up to as well as future concert and ticket information. You can also see us in action via our *YouTube Channel* or get in touch via topnotestunes@gmail.com for any general enquires.

A Big Welcome Back to the Up! Downley Festival



“From an event organiser’s perspective, I felt that the village really engaged with this year’s Up! Downley Festival. Those paid events were sold out and the open events were well attended. I for one am looking forward to next year and hoping that the village is too.” Mark Starkey

From an audience of nearly 400 for ‘A Bit on the Commonsides Comedy Night’ to 80 for the delightful ‘History Walk’ (we didn’t get around to counting all the heads at ‘Downley Day’ and ‘Concert on the Common’) Downley showed just how ready it was to support the festival.



In its 10th year the ‘Village Art Show’ saw nearly 300 visitors who enjoyed (so many took the time to tell us) the high standard of wonderfully diverse artworks. More art was on show this time alongside an open garden courtesy of John and Helen Willson “a steady flow of visitors spilling out into the garden from the studio some paintings were sold and donations for Ukraine taken.”



At the ‘Downley Showcase’ the village clubs, societies, and small businesses came together to display the wide range of pursuits, products and services they have on offer. It was colourful and impressive with a buzz of conversation between exhibitors. Disappointing then that visitor levels were low. There is no doubt that the village has much going on that the majority of us are unaware of. This message has to get out there.

However, one group representing one of our oldest local crafts were very pleased with the evening. The lacemaking group who meet at the Downley Community Centre had a number of potential new members interested in giving the craft a go. This is great news for both the group and those individuals who just might have discovered a new skill and a hobby for life. If you would like to develop a skill and express yourself the lacemakers would love to hear from you as would ‘The Chipmunks’ a Downley wood carvers group (who also meet at Downley Community Centre) and others. Start your search at Downley.org





For all things Up! Downley Festival including many photos visit our Facebook community page at:

[facebook.com/UpDownleyFestival](https://www.facebook.com/UpDownleyFestival)

If you think you might enjoy helping to put the festival together email festival@downley.org or let us know on the Facebook festival page above.

Fran Lazenby, Festival Committee Chairman





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The Chipmunks are a small group of Woodcarvers who meet up once a week at the Downley Community Centre.

We would welcome new members, experienced or not, to our group. We meet on Wednesday mornings from 10.00-12.00 in the Oak Room at the Centre, just off School Close. Whilst not teachers we are happy to give advice and help.

**For more details email
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J. Heartycough's Horticultural Hints

Autumn 2022



Wal, hello again to orl me ole mates, and wot a summer, a bit hot eh? Wal the Jubilee went orf very well I reckons, and just right for them roses, ours cum out just at the right time, them luvly buds could hardly wait to burst forth, so now I'm busy dead headin em and one on particular, a luvly yellor one, and I'm a'prunin it back really hard to get another flowerin before the years out, and the scent on a warm still evenin is just wonderful!

Wal, Autumn orlreddy eh, wal it seems like it, it cums round quicker and quicker, Ive ardly put the spuds in than I'm liftin em out- wot a luvly thing that is eh, that first glimpse of them lovely things just waitin to go into the pot with a sprig of mint, then butter on the plate, that really is a taste of heaven eh? Fork to plate in an afternoon, wal I suppose its fork to fork eh! Get it?! Of corse now its wot to do with the ground for the rest of the year- wal, you could get yor leeks in, but them is alliums, and the allium moth is devastatin em, wal wot a shame eh, wot a disaster-and if its not the moth it'll be downey mildew or summat else, so I'm packin up growin em, its not worth the bother, so I'll be sprinkling wild flower seeds or turnip seeds, and ope for the best. 'Wal' ses Mrs H, 'I thought for a minute he was goin to ave a big grump over them leeks but summat has cheered him up and that's sayin something eh?'

Wal I'm blowed, now I thinks about it, it really is a good time to go a bit wild, its about now you can get yor wild flower patch prepared, and sow a variety of them indigenous plants, get em goin in seed boxes or sprinkle em where you wants em, though I finds that don't orlways work, as them birds scratches around and pecks em up- so how about these to get you a'goin? (Orl of em shud be sown in the Autumn, so get yor seeds boxes cleaned up and some nice fins soil in em). So here's my list—Salad Burnet, but no fertiliser, they duz better in less fertile soil, Cowslips, wal you knows them, Knapweed, brilliant purple heads and a great nectar source, then there's Agrimony, luvly scent on a still Summers evenin, Lady's Bedstraw, great for ground cover, and finally for now, Primrose, wal that the most popular flower round here, wal almost - bluebells I reckons is top of the list. Wal wot is special about Primroses? Wal they wos Dizzy's favourite flower! So see how you gets on and let me know next year!

As for my French cousin Jean d'Artichoke, mention wild flowers to him and he gose wild! He's got orl sort of stuff he sprays on em to kill em orf, so he can get his Tabac plants in.

That's it for now,
Cheerio and a'bientot

J. H. Sent from my iSpade

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News from St James

“Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.” John 14:27



As we are in the midst of high interest rates and huge fuel costs, many individuals and families here in the UK are struggling to pay for food. The war in Ukraine continues and there have been many political changes. With all this going on it is hard to feel peaceful. This verse reminds us that, even though we live in an unpredictable world, God is able to give us his peace. I know that often people whom I have been praying for tell me afterwards that, even though the situation they were in was really hard and uncertain, they felt a sense of peace in the midst of it that was, humanly speaking, hard to explain.



One of the things that is really great about Downley, is the sense of community. All the activities over the summer gave people opportunities to gather together and have fun, even in the midst of other challenges they might be facing in their lives. At St James we always enjoy hosting our BBQ on the Sunday nearest to St James' day, so this year on 24th July.



Growing Hope High Wycombe is continuing to grow and develop and Estelle is now running free speech and language clinics two days a week at St James' as well as a monthly clinic for parents and children to learn new skills being run by a volunteer Occupational Therapist. Over the summer term she



ran a very successful course for siblings of children with additional needs at the Disraeli School. Fundraising is a continuous activity for the charity but we're encouraged by the finance being met to date; we continue to fundraise and apply for grants so we can grow the charity and meet the growing need of children and families in our community.

Upcoming events:

When Dreams Change - course for parents and carers of children with additional needs. Thursday evenings 7-9pm. September 8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th

Caribbean evening - Saturday 22nd October

Please check our website for more details and to sign up www.stjamesdownley.org.uk

*Heather Graham
Vicar of St James' Downley*

Downley War Memorial Hall



The second half of 1943 saw a continuation of Allied advances.

In western Europe they start moving north from Tunisia, re-capturing Italy's southern islands and bombing Rome. Mussolini was arrested and relieved of his offices and in early September the new government secretly signed an armistice with the Allies. However, with the country largely occupied by the German army fighting continued well into the following year.

Further north, it was more of a consolidation with increased bombing of strategic targets, such as a V2 factory and Heavy Water plant. In addition, preparations were under way for the invasion of Europe, Operation Overlord, with General Eisenhower being appointed Supreme Allied Commander.

In South West Russia a German offensive attacking the area around Kursk was launched in early July. Several months earlier Bletchley Park had intercepted high level signals outlining the plans and the Russian army was suitably prepared with greater depth of defensive positions and significantly more reserves. The operation was called off after only a week as the planned German reinforcements had to be diverted to Italy following the Allied invasion. The battle raged on until late August by which time both sides had suffered major losses. However, given their greater numbers the Red Army now held the initiative and from this point the Germans could only react to Russian advances.

Things were a bit more complicated in the Far East. The US Army had started "island-hopping" to push back the Japanese. One such island was Kolombangara and the Japanese were quick to reinforce their garrison there with overnight destroyer runs to land additional troops and supplies. On the night of 1 August, the US Navy attacked the destroyers with a force of Motor Torpedo Boats. One of these, PT109, was sunk when rammed by a destroyer; its Captain was future US President John F Kennedy. Two of the crew died in the collision and the boat was destroyed following an explosion. The rest of the crew swam over 3 miles to a nearby island. During the following three days they swam to a larger island where there was food and contacted some local Coastwatchers working for the US Navy who got a message through to their Base. They were eventually rescued on 8 August. Fighting on some islands continued until the end of the war.

In my last article I missed a few lines about Wilfred Harvey. Prior to joining the RAF, he had been a wood machinist at William Barrett's factory in Newland and played football for Downley Albion. He was 22 years old when he died.

Downley saw a fairly busy few months with James Newell of Newdean, Elsie Dean of Plomer Green Lane and Annie Edgar all getting married. The newly formed Downley Horticultural Society announced that the annual flower show would be revived and that it would incorporate that of the WI.

However, not all of the news was good. Fred Adaway (20) of 2 Well Cottages and Clifford Brook (17) of Jubilee Road were found guilty of wilfully damaging a wall. Fred was sentenced to one month in prison and Clifford was fined £3 (about £100 today) plus

damages and costs of just over £3. The wall was part of the bridge over the River Wye near Brook Street.

Mr J Bowler had asked Wycombe Council if they could reinstate the house refuse collection as rubbish was being dumped in the village, particularly along Turner's footpath. The Council declined stating that the bulk of normal house refuse would be collected as salvage leaving little more than the disposal of ashes which should not cause a problem to most people.

The death was reported of Fanny Styles, previously Redrup, who for some time had been the caretaker at St James's Church.

The National Trust announced that it had been given West Wycombe Park by Sir John Dashwood. The Trust had purchased most of the Village during the 1930's and Sir John had also donated Church Hill in 1935.

Coincidentally, a couple of weeks later came notice that Mr William Henry Abbey had died. In 1937 Mr Abbey purchased Hughenden Manor and soon after agreed to gift it, along with 170 acres of land, to the Disraelian Society subject to the raising of a permanent endowment sufficient to make the gift self-supporting. The Trustees were empowered to hand over the property to the National Trust as soon as they had raised the necessary endowment, which they did in 1947.

Slightly further afield, a High Wycombe photographer, Leading Aircraftman R Goodearl, having spotted a chair made in the town in a canteen at an airbase, decided to photograph any other examples whilst on his travels. The Bucks Free Press printed his latest example showing two of his comrades sitting in Windsor armchairs somewhere in the Middle East.

A couple of issues ago I mentioned Flying Officer H Winter-Taylor who, having ditched in the sea, was picked up by a German submarine. Unfortunately, his younger brother was not so lucky having died when his aircraft crashed in the Mediterranean.

The Government had encouraged local communities to raise money for specific items to support the War effort and during the autumn of 1943 it was "Wings for Victory". High Wycombe set a target of £400,000 which would buy 20 Mosquito aircraft. This was comfortably exceeded with a final total just over £500,000. One of the many fundraising ideas was an auction, with lots donated by local businesses and individuals. They included: a box of day-old chicks, a load of stable manure, a whole salmon and a new Philips radio. The last of these fetched £3000 and the salmon £2000. A box of 3 pairs of silk stockings raised £650. A pyramid of Fruit included three lemons that "were in Tunisia the previous day."

I am sorry to announce that Hazel Parnham, a long-serving Trustee of the Hall has had to stand down. We will miss her valuable contribution and thank her for all that she has done.

This has left us with another vacancy on our Committee and I would be pleased to hear from any of you who would be interested in helping us.

Finally, next year will be the Hall's centenary and the Committee has begun work on plans for a suitable celebration.

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Sunnybank

In “Little Gidding”, T.S. Elliot writes: “To make an end is to make a beginning.” That’s what endings do - they mark the finish of something while they usher in something new: a new beginning. Whilst the past is important and continues to affect us, it has a power for good but also the potential for ill. It contains wonderful memories and sometimes difficult ones too.

What a grace it is to begin anew, to make a new beginning.

During this summer at Sunnybank, we will be thinking and praying about the way forward for the Church and the opportunities and challenges that it will face in the coming year.

Fear, they say, often threatens to sink us when we worry over too many changes, or of perhaps growing too quickly for us to adapt. However, Christ assures us, as He did His disciples during the stilling of the storm, “Do not be afraid”. His promise is that He will be with us, strengthening and directing us as we journey together; all we need to do is to put our trust in Him.

As a small congregation, we have been able to achieve a lot in the past year – thanks to God who has been at the centre of all our affairs.

An exciting new nursery - Chiltern Hills - is due to open at Sunnybank in September. My thanks to everyone in the team who have worked so hard to bring this about and we wish the new venture every success.

Our Lent lunch in April raised money in support of the One Can Trust whose support continues to be increasingly in demand.

In May we joined other Downley churches in “Love-D”, playing our part by providing free ecumenical bacon sandwiches for passers-by at Sunnybank, and supporting other free community activities including games at The Pastures and afternoon tea at St. James’s.

Downley Day was a really lovely community day and thanks to all who came to join the fun. We were delighted to join with St. James and The Pastures again on the Common with games and to enjoy their delicious Caribbean food. The day provided yet another opportunity to make new friends and meet up with others.

Finally, there was the eight week walk that Clive Knapman undertook just after Easter for Médecins Sans Frontières, raising almost £5000.

And now, after a long time without one, we’re looking forward to celebrating the wedding of Tina and Richard in the church in September. Another new beginning.

“Life is ever changing. Old ideas are broadened and the vision of life is widened. A changing society is a living society. New systems put new vigour, new strength, and new energy in life. Change, though painful, is yet needful.” (Girish Sharma)

My prayer for each of us is that the presence of Christ will be felt in all these challenging circumstances - in the rough and in the smooth sailing. Most of all I pray that Christ’s presence will be so alive and awake in us that we can embrace the future with hope and love. The good news is that God, who is the God of both endings and beginnings, who accompanies us with grace and love, will journey with us as companion, guide, and friend.

With love and every blessing, Rev. Vida Foday

DOWNLEY LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

How Downley triggered a crisis in the Wycombe chair industry

Researching the census returns for nineteenth-century Downley is a frustrating affair. Nothing comes up if one just enters 'Downley'. We were 'West Wycombe Enumeration District 10' (or 16 or 5d, depending on the year) encompassing 'Downley, Littleworth, Plomer Green, Plomer Hill & Henley Pitch' from 1861. The challenges mount up: the 1871 census is almost illegible and has spelling errors; the 1881 one is faint; only a handful of houses are ever named (one in 1841, and five by 1891); and the first time a street is mentioned is 1891, and even then Chapel Street's houses aren't numbered. (It does make one wonder: Did no one get letters? Tax demands? Were exact addresses irrelevant? Did the postman just know where everyone lived?)

Stick with it and some fascinating things emerge. Apart from Plomer Hill, which didn't change much, District 10 was booming. In the fifty years after 1841, its population more than doubled, boosted by a surge of incomers from surrounding Bucks villages and, in some cases, from much further afield - London, Reigate, Warwick, Birmingham, Nottingham, Carlisle and even, randomly, France. In fact, by 1891, only one in five of the adults living on Downley Common was born there. Littleworth and Plomer Green aren't even mentioned in the 1841 or 1851 censuses; by 1861, they were distinct hamlets. In 1861, there were 21 houses on the Common; by 1891 there were 38.

Hamlet	1841		1891	
	Population	Households	Population	Households
Plomer Hill	39	9	34	8
Plomer Green	-	-	117	27
Littleworth	-	-	44	12
Downley & Downley Common	288	55	517	108
Total	327	64	712	155

So, what drew all these people? Job opportunities. Chairs, unquestionably. The most repeated word on the 1891 census is 'chair'. (Fifty years earlier it was 'Ag Lab' - agricultural labourer - with 'chair' in second place.) Two thirds of all the District 10 adult males (defined as 11+, since 10 was the school leaving age) worked in the chair industry in some capacity or another. The majority - over 120 of them - were generic 'chair makers' or 'apprentice chair makers', but one also sees a few chair turners ('bodgers'), chair bottomers (dangerous work!), chair framers, chair polishers, chair matters (a mystery), and chair packers. Many may well have made Windsor chairs (on which, see below) - Wycombe was famous for them.

And the other third of the 1891 male population? A few boys stayed on at school, three dozen men worked on the farms, a dozen worked as general labourers, and three ran the pubs, and then it's as though there was one of everything possible needed to make the District 10 community completely self-sufficient: a butcher, a baker, a grocer, a general storeman, a coal dealer, a dairyman, a shoe maker, a bricklayer, a stone mason, a sawyer, a wood carver, a cabinet maker, a blacksmith, a wheelwright, a carrier, a nagman, a mechanic, a gardener, a teacher, a lawyer, and even - how useful - a soldier (Sgt. Jesse Bristow, 3rd Oxford Light Infantry), and two plate layers (who laid railway tracks). To this one can add the work done by those District 10 women who earned livings as domestic servants, laundresses, dress and shirt makers, lace and bead

makers, and rush mat makers. Women monopolised just one part of the Downley chair trade (but one you need to remember, for it brought Wycombe to its knees): twenty of them were the chair caners.

The self-sufficiency of the District 10 community would have been enhanced by the fact that in the 1880s most of the chair workers would have been able to work locally. At least three chair factories (if that is not too grand a term) may have operated up on the hill. The biggest of these was run by William Collins, who employed 56 people in 1881. He was 25 at the time and had inherited the business, established 30 years before by his grandfather, from his father Henry in 1877. Mary Collins (no relation) ran another factory which employed 27 men in 1881. Enos Bristow, Downley born-and-bred, employed 55 hands in 1881 when he was just 33, having established his business from scratch. The ability to work locally – to avoid the four or five-mile-round walk to High Wycombe or West Wycombe – unquestionably made life easier for men and women of District 10.

It all sounds very idyllic and compared to the 1850s, it probably was. The words ‘pauper’ stopped appearing on the District 10 census returns. However, the chair industry should not be romanticised. The Bucks Free Press called it a ‘system of slavery’. A six-day week operated, and many endured a 14-hour day, working from 6 am to 8 pm. Some of this work, like bottoming a chair seat using a hand-adze, was dangerous (which might explain the frequent use of the word ‘cripple’ on the 1851 census) and some hazardous. Workers risked the lung diseases associated with dust, while finished chairs were stained with a mixture that included nitric acid and urine. However, the real source of grievance was low pay and impossible piece rate targets. Worse still, some employers used the illegal ‘truck system’, paying their employees part in cash and part in tokens, which could only be spent in expensive shops run by themselves or relatives.

To improve matters, Wycombe’s workers formed a Chairmakers’ Union in May 1872. Something like half the local chair work force joined this union including, almost certainly, the Downley caners. Matters came to head in July when Henry Collins of Downley, a local Wesleyan preacher who had recently inherited W Collins & Son, locked out his caners. Frustratingly, we don’t know why he did so, but the women’s cause was clearly felt to be a just one since the workers (possibly Downley folk?) at Benjamin North’s factory in West Wycombe and at Alfred Stone’s factory in Wycombe declared a strike in sympathy. In retaliation, the chair manufacturers of Wycombe collectively decided to lock out all union labour. Crisis ensued as the chair industry spiralled down into stagnation. This bitter dispute took months to resolve, and the vicar of Wycombe deserves credit for mediating the settlement (an end to the truck system and fixed and fair piece rates) that lasted to 1913.

On an end note, Methodism is sometimes hailed as a reason why England avoided a workers’ revolution in the nineteenth century, so there is a delicious irony in the fact that, here, an Anglican vicar resolved a crisis triggered by the actions of Downley’s Wesleyan preacher.

A date for your diary – Saturday 1st October 2022

There will be an interactive talk by Stewart Linford, furniture maker, on:

‘The remarkable story of our National Chair: The Windsor’

Downley Memorial Hall at 7:30 pm. Tickets £4.00 payable on the door, but can be reserved in advance through Mike G. Morgan, 01494 514252 or mikegmorgan65@gmail.com

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Top Notes



Downley Cricket Club

Sterling work done by Den Cox, Martin Birkett and others has made play possible on the Common, despite very dry and challenging preparation conditions. The hot summer days have made bowling difficult up and down the county, but Downley's batters have (mostly) risen to the challenge.



The Club is fielding just the one team this season, and some very good ex-players like Aaron 'AB' Brown, Matt 'Mavo' Avery have returned to play the occasional match. Rumour has it that others are intending to turn out again in late season. Also transferring to us has been the accomplished cricketer Graham 'Boycs' Swales, who has begun to take wickets regularly with his unusual bowling style.

In recent matches there have also been some outstanding performances, despite our promotion to a higher division this season, including young Joe Holmes putting in career-best performances for Downley with bat and ball. His extraordinary 69 against Lacey included the most amazing hitting with Dad Jimmy almost unable to watch as he approached his first 50 for the club. Then came Downley setting off in pursuit of Ballinger's mountainous 264 (aided by some uncharacteristic generosity in the field with 10 dropped catches!). On a baking hot, energy-sapping afternoon Billy 'two-helmets' Powell scored 61 in the company of Rajat 'Virat Kohli' Khator's magnificent 130 not out, followed by big-hitting Rob 'Spreckers' Spreckley, we came within 2 runs of pulling off an incredible win.

At the time of writing we also welcome back our university players including newly-graduated Charlie King. In the match vs Great Hampden he took a catch described by one of the opposition as the best catch he had seen for 15 years.

Nets on Mannings Field take place on Wednesdays at 6pm and new players are always welcome. There's plenty of fun and laughter amidst fine-tuning of skills in readiness for Saturday battles.

At the end of August we will hold our end of season President's Day, a fun-filled 6-a-side tournament with non-regular cricketers joining the more seasoned performers. More details to follow soon.

If you would like to join the Club, to play, umpire, score or help in any way please contact us on webmaster@downleycc.co.uk

art

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Hillclimb Garage



Work Experience Students, Downley Day and an Awards Final

Wow! What a summer we are having in 2022 with this beautiful sunshine. As always, things have been very busy at Hillclimb Garage this year, which seems to be flying by..!



It was our absolute pleasure to have Sophie and Grace join us for their Work Experience Placements through June and July. The Motor Industry is dominated by male technicians and we are working hard with our industry bodies to attract more females into the sector. So it was fantastic to have TWO female students with us over the summer....! Both Sophie and Grace showed great interest and a natural flair and ability to understand all elements that make up the operation of a modern garage. The programme was a huge success and both girls have been offered further opportunities with us in the future. Well done girls! #GIRLPOWER

There is still time to get your car 'Summer Holiday' ready by having our Free Summer Health Check and perhaps treating the Air Conditioning to a Re-Gas and Service to keep you and the family cool during those days out and your holiday Staycation.

We were once again proud to take part in and sponsor Downley Day this year. The weather wasn't quite as kind as last year, but we still enjoyed a fabulous day where we met up with lots of customers and local people. The cars on display were hugely popular and our sincere thanks goes to the owners for allowing us to exhibit them at the show. Our 'Guess the number of Balloons in the Aston Martin' competition raised over £130.00 for Hearing Dogs for Deaf People and our very own garage mascot, Lexi, won the Sit Down Competition in the Dog Show!



After our Garage of the Year success last year, we are very excited to announce that we have reached the Final of another National Competition this year. The British Independent Garage Awards are presented to those garages that have demonstrated they are investing in training and modern technology and providing outstanding customer service. The winners will be announced at the awards ceremony in August and we very much hope to bring home another trophy to Downley!

Finally, thank you to everyone who continues to support us. As your local, independent garage we, in turn, are here to support you and maintain your vehicle to the highest standards. Whether it be petrol, diesel, hybrid or full electric and you need a MOT, Service, Tyre, Repair or just a complimentary check over to ensure tyres are inflated and oil is topped up, we remain 'At Your Service'.

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From Westminster

Steve Baker - MP for Wycombe



Parliament is currently in recess for the summer. The last parliamentary session has been incredibly busy not least with the resignation of the Prime Minister, although he remains in office until the new Conservative Party leader is announced in the first few days of September. When Parliament is sitting I must be in Westminster from Monday through Thursday, and I attend constituency events on Fridays and at weekends. If you have a particular place or event you would like me to visit during recess please let me know using the contact details at the bottom of this newsletter, and I look forward to bumping into many constituents over the summer.

For a number of years now parents at Downley School have contacted me with concerns they have had about their children's education. I have raised these with various organisations including the school itself and the Local Education Authority. I was sad, though not necessarily surprised, to see Ofsted has recently visited the school and identified areas for improvement. I know parents are extremely concerned about Ofsted's findings, but the feedback I have received was many parents were pleased with the interim head who was asked to step in until the end of the summer term. I know two new joint heads with extensive experience have been appointed to see the school through the next stage of its development. Over the coming months I want to be assured the children's education is improving; the children and parents deserve no less.

Another local issue which I know is causing consternation is the possible siting of a 5G monopole on Jubilee Green. I believe good mobile connectivity is important but can appreciate the concerns that such a tall structure will be sited in a prominent area approaching the village. This will have an undue impact on the street scene and public green space. Planning matters need to have the widest possible public consent, and I have written to the Council's planning department to raise these concerns and also ask if it is possible to use the current telecommunications mast, adjacent to Hithercroft Road, for 5G technology.

I know many people want to go on holiday, especially as overseas travel has been so problematic for the last couple of years. There are currently long delays applying for a new passport or renewing an old one, due to an unprecedented level of applications to HM Passport Office. I am proud of all the work my staff have been doing to help people obtain passports for travel where it has been possible to do so. If you are experiencing problems with the Passport Office and have been unable to resolve them through the passport office advice line, please contact the constituency office and we will do what we can to help. I hope everyone has a lovely summer holiday this year whether they are staying in the UK or going abroad.


As I write, preparations are underway for the Commonwealth Games to be held in Birmingham. The UK has an outstanding reputation for hosting major sporting events.



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Not only will we be celebrating sporting success but we will also be strengthening the crucial ties between our 72 nations and territories. The Games will help deliver a fantastic legacy for sport, culture and the economy. I would like to wish good luck to all the athletes competing and am sure we will all be cheering them on.

**If you would like to get in touch with me, please email: steve.baker.mp@parliament.uk.
If would like my help with a particular urgent issue, please phone my constituency office on 01494 448408**

Happy Birthday Downley Descants



We have a birthday to celebrate - Downley Descants is ten years old! Who would have thought from our humble beginnings in 2012 that we would become what we are today, a much appreciated local community choir who always strive to improve both musically and performance-wise.

You may have seen our joint concert with Wycombe Concert Band in June which was part of the Up! Downley Festival and hope you agree with all the positive comments received afterwards, about the tremendous improvement we have made recently. This is due, in no small way, to our highly professional music team and the inclusion of new members, both ladies and men, so we have a much more balanced choir. Although ticket sales for this concert were very slow to get going, by the evening of the concert it was a sell-out. We decided this concert would be for charity and hence we set the ticket price at £12; we hope those of you who came thought it was well worth the money.

We were amazed to have made £920 which was donated to Rennie Grove High Wycombe. They were absolutely delighted and assured us the donation would be 'ring-fenced' for use in the local area. Many thanks to members of the choir and band for their donations of hampers for the raffle and our audience's donations for refreshments.

We start back on 8th September and I suppose it won't be long before Christmas music is on the agenda again. First though we embark on a new venture for us, a concert away from Downley!

We have been invited to sing at Christ Church in Flackwell Heath to help raise funds for a charity local to them. Plans are going well for this and our members are practising the pieces during the summer break (hopefully). We will hold our usual concert at St James' Church in December so would be delighted to see as many of you as possible at either of the upcoming events; please see below for contact details.

If you are interested in trying us out, please contact our chairman, Lyn, on 07974026213 or by email grannyandbobby@tiscali.co.uk. We are a community choir for the residents of Downley and the surrounding areas and as such we do not insist on the ability to read music, nor do we have any auditions. The community aspect is of great importance to us with any surplus made donated to charity. Since our start in 2012 this figure is in excess of £11,000

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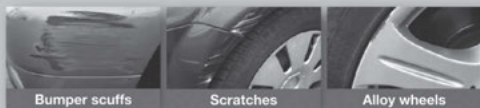
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Buckinghamshire Council News

For more information and to keep up to date with the news from Buckinghamshire Council please see <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/news> or, as always, contact me – see below. You can also view full

Council, Cabinet and committee meetings as a webcast either live, or watch the recording in full on Buckinghamshire Council Website.



New Guardian's Guide website launches

Buckinghamshire Council has launched a unique website to support people who may be taking on the role of a Special Guardian in a child or young person's life. The innovative 'Guardian's Guide' website – makes it easy for guardians and parents involved in Special Guardianship Orders to gain access to a variety of helpful information, advice and support.

Buckinghamshire Council launches 'Online Safe Spaces' portal

Buckinghamshire Council has launched an Online Safe Spaces web portal to support people experiencing domestic abuse.

Online Safe Spaces – which is operated by Hestia as part of their UK SAYS NO MORE campaign – is a discreet portal that opens in a pop-up window from Buckinghamshire Council's website. The portal provides support, advice and helpful contact numbers for those at risk of domestic abuse. It leaves no internet history trace and provides quick exit options for the person seeking information. To access the portal, people simply need to click on the Safe Spaces logo, which can be found on the footer of every page of the Buckinghamshire Council website.

Planning enforcement success for Buckinghamshire Council

Buckinghamshire Council has issued the highest number of planning enforcement notices outside of London according to the latest national data

A planning enforcement notice is issued when an individual or developer is found to be in breach of planning control – it might be that someone has carried out works without planning permission when it was needed, or that they've done something that wasn't within the granted permissions. It's a key priority for Buckinghamshire Council to clamp down on breaches of planning control – the process exists to make sure any work or development is appropriate and legal within nationally set planning laws. In Buckinghamshire we're serving notices and taking early action against any breaches of planning control which is part of the reason we're standing out for taking action. The aim is to intervene at the earliest opportunity to seek a remedy for the planning breach as quickly as we can.

A simple thank you to our Simply Walk volunteers

More than 70 Simply Walk volunteers gathered in the glorious sunshine at Hughenden Manor in July at a special picnic in their honour. In this, the programme's 20th year, the message was plain and simple – Thank You! Without the assistance of the 200+ volunteers who do everything from leading walks to behind the scenes organising, the popular scheme, which currently operates 72 walks a week across the whole county, would not be able to run.

Paul

*Cllr Paul Turner: Buckinghamshire Councillor for Downley
paul.turner@buckinghamshire.gov.uk 07825 842292*



Health Assessments

Working in partnership with Agilis Health.

Health assessments are a fantastic way to quickly get a clear picture of your health. They offer medical checks using simple blood tests, taken at home by you.

Each assessment comes with a minimum 15-minute call with a nurse to discuss your results, with advice on follow-up actions you may like to take.



WWW.AGILISHEALTH.CO.UK

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20 Markers

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The Baseline Blood Count, plus an understanding of your kidneys and liver functions. Also includes an indicator of good cholesterol levels to help you understand your long-term risk of heart disease.

COMPREHENSIVE HEALTH CHECK - £135.00

35 Markers

Expands on the Health Indicator Blood Test, with a breakdown of your 'bad cholesterol' levels. Also checks for iron deficiency, anaemia, diabetes and inflammation in your body.

ALL INCLUSIVE HEALTH REVIEW - £235.00

36 Markers plus ECG & Blood Pressure

Includes every marker from the other health assessments, plus HBA1C (diabetes). You will also receive an ECG and blood pressure check in a pharmacy, and a 30-minute nurse call.

For a full list of tests visit:
www.agilishealth.co.uk/health-assessments

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WORKING FOR A SAFER COMMUNITY

Wycombe District Neighbourhood Watch Association

JOIN NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH!

Neighbourhood Watch is now celebrating its 40th anniversary since it was established in England and Wales. It now has upwards of 2.3 million members across the country. A Neighbourhood Watch scheme is proven to reduce crimes such as burglaries, vandalism, cons and scams, and car crime. So, if there is no scheme in your road, why not volunteer to be a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator and help to protect your home and community? It might take a couple of hours per month, but it could make a real difference to you and your neighbours. Lots of information and support are available to Co-ordinators.

Firstly, visit your neighbours to see if they would like to see such a scheme. There can be any number of households involved. Schemes are generally run for about 15 – 20 houses in the same road, but sometimes more with the help of additional Co-ordinators.

Then contact Wycombe District Neighbourhood Watch Association to arrange an informal start-up meeting with all interested households to talk through the benefits and responsibilities. There is, of course, an application form to fill in and you should be a suitable person to represent your community but, once that is done, you are ready to start.

The responsibilities of a Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator are to share information and to liaise with the neighbourhood policing teams and residents to improve community safety. Basically, this means:

Distribute (usually by email) the Thames Valley Alert messages – these email bulletins from the police report on crimes, crime threats, forewarn of known scams, and they are an invaluable way of keeping abreast of issues.

Take delivery of and put up Neighbourhood Watch signs in the road – these are great deterrents to opportunist thieves!

Advise households on simple security measures such as property markings, how to deal with cybercrime, car crime, bogus callers, and rogue traders – Neighbourhood Watch and Thames Valley Police website have lots of information on all of this.

Encourage neighbours to report any suspicious activity to the police, either by calling 999 if a crime is taking place, or 101 for non-emergency calls.

Discuss any specific concerns you and your neighbours may have, such as anti-social behaviour or a spate of crimes, with the neighbourhood policing teams.

Keep up-to-date records of members and encourage new members to join. Make sure you keep an eye on elderly or vulnerable neighbours and ensure they are advised of all relevant information.

For more information, please contact us at office@wdnhwatch.plus.com

Downley Diary | Round-up of Regular Activities

DOWNLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE - AUTUMN 2022

Hall Bookings: bookings@downleycommunitycentre.org.uk or call Cathy on 07580 953 181

GROUP	DAY	TIME	NEW MEMBER WELCOME	CONTACT
Art Group 1	Tuesday Term-time	10.00 - 12.00		Sue 01494 443393
Art Group 2	Monday	10.00 - 12.00		alastair.pike@artsmartuk.com
Bridge Club	Thursday	18.15 - 22.15	✓	paulf.goddard@icloud.com
Carers Bucks	4th Friday	13.00 - 15.00	✓	Sue.Connolly@carersbucks.org 0300 777 2722
Children's Dance Group.	Wednesday	16.45 - 18.30		Zoe.k.thompson@hotmail.com
Chipmunks Woodcarving	Wednesday	10.00 - 12.00	✓	downleychipmunks@outlook.com
Community Library	Monday	10.00	✓	enquiries@downleylibrary.org
	Thursday	15.00	✓	
	Saturday	10.00	✓	
Craft Group	1st Tuesday	9.30 - 12.30		Helen 01494 564414
Dance Classes (Ballroom & Latin)	Tuesday	19.00 & 20.00	✓	karen@comedancingwithme.co.uk
	Wednesday	19.30 & 20.30	✓	0787 353 8709
Downley Parish Council	2nd Tuesday	19.30	✓	clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org 01494 257711
Downley Wine & Beer Club	2nd Wednesday	20.00 - 22.00	✓	stevedavison200@icloud.com
First Class Learning	Saturday	10.00 - 13.00	✓	Himanshu 07949 590466
Hartbeeps	Wednesday	9.30 - 11.30		hannah.dixon@hartbeeps.com 07745 861615
Kingdom Dynamics Chapel	Sunday	10.00 - 12.00		Sharon 07961 822347
Lace Making	Thursday	13.00 - 15.00		Frances 01494 524835
M00 Music	Friday Term-time	9.00 - 11.30	✓	elvan@moo-music.co.uk
Mondays Minis <i>formerly Toddlers/Bumps etc</i>	Monday Term-time	9.30 - 11.30	✓	downleymondayminis@gmail.com 07704279102
Musical Mayhem	Thursday	9.15 - 12.15		Monica info@musicalmayhem.co.uk
Pilates	Thursday	18.30 - 19.30	✓	Emma@asenseofbalance.co.uk
Simply Walk	Monday	10.00	✓	Starts from the Community Centre
	Thursday	11.00	✓	simplywalks@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
Twins & Multiples Club	Friday	10.00 - 11.30	✓	wendy@questcost.co.uk
Ukulele	4th Thursday	10.00 - 12.00		Sylvia sylvia.chadwick@me.com
Wycombe Spiritual Centre	1st & 3rd Friday	18.30		ashleydarkwood@gmail.com
YOGA	Monday	19.30 - 20.30	✓	Louise lerayogaandtherapies@gmail.com 07894 050092

SUNNYBANK CHAPEL, MOOR LANE - AUTUMN 2022

Hall Bookings: margaretstagg75@gmail.com or call 01494 530 736

GROUP	DAY	TIME	NEW MEMBER WELCOME	CONTACT
Downley Descants	Thursday Term time	20.00 - 21.30	✓	grannyandbobby@tiscali.co.uk
Natalie Jane Dance Class	Monday Term time	14.45 - 21.00	✓	natalie@njdance.co.uk
Natalie Jane Dance Class	Tuesday Term time	17.00 - 20.30	✓	natalie@njdance.co.uk
Natalie Jane Dance Class	Friday Term time	15.30 - 19.00	✓	natalie@njdance.co.uk

GUIDE AND SCOUT CENTRE - AUTUMN 2022

Hall Bookings: margaretstagg75@gmail.com

Rainbows/Brownies	Monday	16.30 - 19.00		gill.lawrence@btinternet.com
Rangers	Monday	19.30 - 21.15		gill.lawrence@btinternet.com
Rainbows/Brownies	Tuesday	16.30 - 19.00		gill.lawrence@btinternet.com
Guides	Tuesday	19.00 - 20.30		margaretstagg75@gmail.com
Beavers/Cubs/Scouts	Wednesday	18.00 - 21.00		ric.j.adams@gmail.com
Dog Training	Thursday	18.30 - 20.30		suzannebullworthy@hotmail.co.uk
Beavers/Cubs/Scouts	Friday	18.00 - 21.30		gsl3rdDownley@gmail.com
Dog Training	Sunday	10.00 - 12.00		lisa@shunty.co.uk
Woodlands Preschool	Daily	08.30 - 16.00		admin@thewoodlandspreschool.co.uk

ST JAMES CHURCH - AUTUMN 2022

Hall Bookings: hilmad1842@gmail.com or call 07973 770 180

Downley Evening WI	2nd Tuesday	19.45		
St James Church Coffee Morning	Thursday	10.30 - 12.30		
Top Notes Choir	Monday	19.45 - 21.45		
Chepping Wycombe Trefoil Guild	2nd Thursday	19.45		

ST JAMES HALL - AUTUMN 2022

Hall Bookings: hilmad1842@gmail.com

Art Club	Thursday	09.30		
Coffee Stop	1st and 3rd Monday	10.30 - 12.30		
Downley Gardening Society	3rd Monday	20.00		
Karen Pilates	Wednesday	09.30		
Natailie's Meditation Class	Wednesday	20.30 - 22.30		
Philatelic Club	Alternate Thursday	19.30		
Sing and Sign Baby and toddlers	Tuesday	10.00 - 13.00		
Sunaina Prolife Pilates	Saturday	08.00-09.00		
Tuneless Choir	1st and 3rd Tuesday	19.30 - 21.00		

DOWNLEY WAR MEMORIAL HALL - AUTUMN 2022

Hall Bookings: dwmh.bookings@gmail.com

Sunshine Montessori	Weekdays Term time	08.00 - 18.00		roden-sunshine@tiscali.co.uk 01494 442057
Pilates	Monday	19.00 - 20.00		karensynergypilates@gmail.com 07786 567376
Yoga	Tuesday	19.20 - 20.45		07904 438411
Fencing 1 to 1	Wednesday	17.30 - 19.30		
Yoga	Thursday	19.15 - 20.45		07904 438411
Yoga	Friday	10.20 - 11.50		07904 438411
Fencing 1 to 1	Friday	17.30 - 19.30		

USEFUL CONTACT DETAILS

Life threatening or critical situations only

Telephone: 999
and ask for relevant service
AMBULANCE • FIRE • POLICE

HEALTH

NHS Direct 111
Downley Pharmacy 01494 513 060

POLICE - NON EMERGENCY

Report 101 or www.thamesvalley.police.uk

COUNTY COUNCILLORS

Cllr. Paul Turner paul.turner@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
Cllr. Maz Hussain maz.hussain@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
Cllr. Melanie Smith Melanie.R.Smith@buckinghamshire.gov.uk

DOWNLEY PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk clerk@downleyparishcouncil.org
01494 257711 (office hrs 9am-1pm Monday – Friday)

Further suggestions of what should be listed here to the editor
editor@downley.org

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Downley Village News

Editor: Anne at editor@downley.org

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Copy: Please send text in editable format and photographs as separate files in high resolution. Copy should be sent to editor@downley.org.

Any copy or photographs sent to this address may also be used on the downley.org website and facebook page: facebook.com/Downley.Community

Steering Committee: The Downley Communications Forum set up as part of the Community Plan, provides oversight to the Village News, the Village enews and the downley.org website.

Chairman: Bill Thompson; **Secretary:** Peter Loadman
Treasurer: Bob Cook; **Webmaster** Mark Starkey

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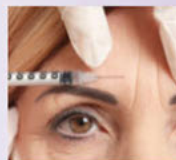
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COMMUNITY

