



Kidmore End Parish Council

Cane End

Chalkhouse Green

Gallowstree Common

Kidmore End

Tokers Green

Newsletter Winter 2020

Issue 138

The Chairman's Report



I hope everyone had a wonderful Christmas and I wish you all a happy and peaceful new year.

With the newsletter we aim to keep you in touch with what is going on in the parish, and to include information which we hope you will find useful or interesting. Don't forget that regular updates can be found on the website and can be emailed to you, if you subscribe.

This is the last time that I write as Chairman of the Parish Council since I will shortly be stepping down, although I will continue as a councillor for the time being. I anticipate that

the council will elect Caroline Aldridge as Chairman in January 2020. Caroline has been Vice Chair for several years, and we have worked together on many projects. Caroline is also on the Playing Fields Committee, the Newsletter group and helps out with allotments, as well as running her own business and having a family. I think her middle name is multi-task. Best wishes to Caroline.

I joined the council in February 2008, mainly because I had been attending meetings to request that the council buy grit bins and I decided that joining was the best way to get involved in what matters locally. I was elected as Chair in May 2012; I am not sure now of the reason I put myself forward, but it seemed right at the time.

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Since I joined in 2008, the council has undertaken many projects which I believe have benefitted the community. It has been rewarding to have been involved and this seems an appropriate moment to reflect on what has been achieved:

- Building of affordable housing in Gallowstree Common from 2014;
- Upgrading of the play areas in Kidmore End and Gallowstree Common;
- Implementation of a 20-mph speed limit in Kidmore End;
- Purchase of three phone kiosks and renovation of two, one this year being used as an advent calendar;
- Transfer of responsibility for cutting verges to this council from OCC, resulting in more timely cuts;
- Grit bins throughout the parish;
- Drafting of a neighbourhood development plan (in progress);
- Close working relationships with Kidmore End CE Primary School;
- Regular grants to local groups, including FISH, to support local transport provision since the local bus service disappeared;
- Upgraded website and email service to subscribers, enabling improved communication throughout the parish;
- Reopening of the allotments at Cane End;
- Resurfacing of the path in Kidmore End between the cemetery and church/school;
- Collaborative working with other parishes on the boundary with Reading opposing speculative development in the parish of Eye and Dunsden. A successful verdict for the parishes and SODC against Gladman has resulted.

Although this may not seem like huge steps forward, it is good to remember that this work is undertaken by a group of 10 volunteers on behalf of the community. If you would like to be part of change in the parish then please put your name forward to be co-opted on to the council.

And now on to other matters ...

SODC Local plan

We are waiting for updates from SODC about the emerging Local Plan, which hopefully will be available in the new year.

Neighbourhood Development Plan

Please see the website for information on the NDP process and how it is progressing. You will find regular updates including the results of the survey which was carried out after the public engagement events in September. Feedback from landowners has been used to update the housing and allocation paper. The NDP group are now working on policies and writing the NDP document.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

The CIL money is now available and we are considering how to use it. We have had some response to the request for suggestions: if you have any further suggestions please send them to the Clerk at clerk@kepc.info. The amount is £20,000 with a further £17,000 due in the next year. The money must be spent on 'infrastructure to support development of the parish'. This might include play areas, green spaces, cultural and sports facilities etc (see previous newsletter – available on website).

Road Safety

As you know, the Parish Council is trying to improve road safety with Community Speedwatch, and by becoming Superusers in order to speed up the repair of potholes. If you would like to be trained for either of these roles please contact me or Mr Penfold (clerk@kepc.info), or any parish councillor. The more help we have, the sooner the roads will improve.

We are also investigating buying speed limit stickers to go on our wheelie bins, to help towards improving road safety. Please let us know what you think about this.

When driving through the villages please remember to slow down when passing pedestrians, thank you.

Hedges

Now is the time of year to look at your hedge and if it is over the boundary of your property and encroaching on the roadside, it must be cut back.

The Reformation Pub

The pub in Gallowstree Common is now closed. The council has made a third request to SODC for it to be listed as an Asset of Community Value and we will know the outcome in January 2020.

Phone Boxes

The phone box at Kidmore End has been renovated and now contains local information. The box at Chalkhouse Green has been painted and cleaned.

Before Christmas the phone box at Kidmore End had an advent calendar in the windows, created by the children at the Kidmore End CE Primary School. A big thank you to all the staff and children. They also created some festive pictures for the phone box at Chalkhouse Green.

New Councillor

If you are interested in becoming a councillor, do please contact us. More help is always welcome, so if you think you would like to contribute, even if it is only in a small way, do get in touch.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mr Penfold, all parish councillors, councillors from SODC, OCC and other parishes, members of the NDP steering group and members of the parish who have helped and supported me over the last few years. Being on the council means that you do not work alone, there is always someone there to help and support.

Sue Biggs

chairman@kepc.info



Distributing the Newsletter

The editorial team relies on a band of volunteers to distribute the newsletter to your door. Most of our distributors are happy to continue to do this job, as it is a lovely way to walk around the village, bump into neighbours and have a chat. We are, however, in need of some additional help in Gallowstree Common where currently one person covers the whole village (157 newsletters). If you think that you could help, please let us know. It would also be helpful to have volunteers in the other villages to provide cover for holidays/illness among the existing distributors. If you think that you might be able to help, please let us know.

From the Rector



As I write, we are in the middle of what is for a lot of people one of the busiest and most intense periods of the year. When you read this, the dust will have settled, and I hope that you had a very happy Christmas and are not too worn out by the busyness of the holiday period. In January we get back to “normal” – whatever that looks like!

Without a doubt the period of celebration now behind us brings light to our lives amid the darkness of winter. But I think it's also worth us remembering that the rhythm of the church year goes on, and we hear the good news as it unfolds after the Christmas festivities. Epiphany reminds us that God's love is for all people, whatever their race, language or nationality; and at Candlemas (2nd February) we remember that the light of the world we celebrate at Christmas shines brightly. And soon, as Neil Scott outlines in his piece, we shall begin the journey towards Easter.

As we start a new year, do come along to any of our services and events; you are always most welcome!

James

The Parish Church



This article is being written on St Andrew's Day (hurray!) for inclusion in the January issue of the newsletter. Hopefully therefore, readers took note of the dates of the various Advent and Christmas events that were listed in the Autumn issue. We hope, too, that readers enjoyed a very happy Christmas.

Before looking forward to the New Year, it is worth recalling some of the events that took place in autumn.

The Wine and Song evening (now an established annual event) got off to a jolly start with the choir encouraging us to sing along with them in their rendition of “Drink to Me Only with Thine Eyes”. Very appropriate, as we proceeded to enjoy sampling the interesting selection of wines brought along by Nick Room, who not only informed us about the origins and characteristics of the various wines but also gave us an insight into the lives of some of the vineyard owners. We are so lucky to have Nick as our “resident wine expert”! Between the wines

we enjoyed a programme of musical entertainment in which ukuleles featured prominently. The choir sang two spirituals and Rector James, accompanied by Tim Walker on the electric guitar, sang "Have You Met Miss Jones?" and "Some Enchanted Evening". To complete a most successful evening we enjoyed a splendid finger-buffet supper.

A more sombre occasion was our All Soulstide service, at which members of a large congregation in St John's had an opportunity to light a candle in memory of someone still loved, although seen no longer.

The day prior to Remembrance Sunday was very wet but the sun shone the following morning on the large gathering assembled at the War Memorial for a moving service led by the Rector. Wreathes were laid by the representatives of a large number of organisations. It was pleasing to see such a good turn-out of beavers, cubs and scouts who, with the British Legion, marched with their colours to the church for the well-attended service which followed in St John's.

The sun did NOT shine on the occasion of the School/Church Christmas Fair. Despite the wet conditions however, the event was a great success and once again, we extend our thanks to the Head Teacher and everyone concerned at the school, for all they contribute so enthusiastically to the success of this wonderful community event.

Looking forward ...

One of the first events in the new year is the **Week of Prayer for Christian Unity**. There will be an ecumenical service on **Sunday 19 January at 6.30 pm in St Michael's RC Church, Peppard Road, Sonning Common**.

Also in January is the annual not-to-be-missed **Henley Choirs Festival (Saturday 25 January, 7 pm, in St Mary's Church, Henley)**. As well as making their own contribution to the programme, our choir will join with other local choirs to sing a big work - Part 1 of Haydn's oratorio "The Creation".

Easter is earlier this year, resulting in **Ash Wednesday** being on **26 February** (pancakes on 25 February!) on which day there will be a service **at 8 pm in Christ the King Church, Sonning Common**: a Eucharist with the imposition of ashes. Ash Wednesday, the first day of Lent, is so called because of the ancient custom of sprinkling ashes on the heads of public penitents. These days in the Church of England, receiving the mark of ashes on one's forehead is optional, but the mark reminds people of their mortality. "*Remember that you are dust and to dust you will return.*" [Genesis 3:19]

During Lent it is anticipated that, by way of preparation for Easter, there will be a **Lent Course**. Look out for details of this.

World Day of Prayer is on **Friday 6 March**. Look out for details of a united service.

On **Mothering Sunday, 22 March**, we hope to see a good number of families (including Dads!) at our **11 am** service at St John's, when posies of flowers will be distributed to the children for their mothers.

Palm Sunday is on **5 April** and as usual, the 11 am service will begin in the school with the distribution of palm crosses, after which we will process to St John's.

On **Maundy Thursday, 9 April**, we have the Commemoration of the Last Supper – **8 pm** at St John's.

10 April is Good Friday, the day of the Crucifixion. All are welcome, young or old, to join the ecumenical Procession of Witness which starts from **Christ the King car park in Sonning Common at 10 am**. There will be hot cross buns and coffee afterwards! In the afternoon there will be a benefice service of meditation and devotional music – **2 pm** at **All Saints' Church, Peppard**, for an hour.



Easter is the Feast of the Resurrection of Christ, the oldest and greatest feast of the Christian church. The arrangements for **Easter Day (12 April)** are –

9.30 am Eucharist at Christ the King

11.00 am Sung Eucharist at St John's

Everybody welcome; we expect full churches.

It has been announced that the Bishop of Dorchester will be retiring on 4 October 2020. Bishop Colin will be much missed, but we have at least one more occasion to look forward to – his visit to this Benefice (church as yet undecided) on 1 July for a service of Confirmation. Anyone interested in being confirmed is asked to contact the Rector.

Since the above dates are being displayed so far in advance of the actual events, readers are advised, in case of alterations, to check the details nearer the time. This can be done by reference to -

Our website: www.achurchnearyou.com

Our church magazine: The Lamb and Flag

Neil Scott (On behalf of the Parochial Church Council)

St. Michael's Church and Parish

St Michael's Parish celebrated its Patronal weekend on 27-29 September this year. Talks and reflection sessions were held throughout the weekend and culminated in a seven-course traditional Italian lunch on the Sunday, prepared by Parish Priest Father Michael. Over 50 parishioners attended the event and another is planned for next year, with a different international meal theme.

The St Michael's Church outreach programme continues with nursing home visits and services, and a free Snack and Chat lunch once a month, every third Tuesday of the month.

We welcomed a new saint in the Catholic Church, St John Henry Newman in November this year. Father Michael gave talks on the life of John Henry Newman at the parish as well as on our local BBC Berkshire radio station.

Each year the parish celebrates the dead during the month of November; graves at Kidmore End cemetery were blessed and a special service for the dead was held at the parish, open to all, Catholics or not.

This advent season we supported two worthy charities: Embrace the Middle East and Readifood. Loose change and notes are being collected for the Middle East Charity while non-perishable food items collected for Readifood.

A coffee morning and children's craft event was held in the parish hall on 1 December. The craft event will be an annual fixture for our young and not so young members of the parish. Children beginning to prepare for their first Holy Communion were also enrolled at mass on this day.

Looking ahead to January, St Michael's is delighted to be hosting this year's Christian Unity service at 6.30 pm, Sunday 19 January. The theme is based on St Paul's shipwreck on Malta so will have a nautical flavour. Representatives from all the local churches are coming; we look forward to welcoming them and all who wish to attend. The service will be followed by refreshments in the church hall.

St. Martin's Catholic Primary School serves the parish of St. Michael's and links between the church and school are strong. At the beginning of the year, to mark Education Sunday, the children's work was displayed in the church and on the first Sunday of each month, children from the school lead the family Mass at 10.30 am, which is always well attended. Father Michael also says Mass regularly at the school. This year, St. Martin's has benefited from financial support from the parish, which has enabled them to purchase the diocesan-recommended scheme for Relationship and Sex Education. The children at St. Martin's benefit from regular Religious Education lessons which focus on the Catholic faith, and Catholic life is also central to the school community.

The following annual social events continue, and everyone is welcome to join in;

- The Christmas Pudding Making evening in November;
- The Quiz and Curry event in January are now firm fixtures;
- For the adults in the community the Church continues to host the very popular flower arranging sessions just before Christmas and Easter - and all events are timetabled and advertised on the St Michael's and St Martin's Websites: www.stmichaelsonningcommon.org.uk and www.stmartinscaversham.co.uk.

Each year brings new ideas and events, as we look for ways to continue to help, connect and support the wider community and reach out to its most vulnerable members.

Yvonne Mubanga

Kidmore End CE School

Christmas is always frantic, festive and rather fantastic in a primary school. We opened the season in fine style with the Kidmore End Christmas Fair, which as always was a brilliant example of the school and church communities coming together and welcoming old friends and new into our school. This year the weather outside was grey and uninspiring, but inside the school was bright and inviting, with the most amazing psychedelic Grotto and plenty of tasty treats on offer to eat and drink. Reverend James and I had the pleasure of judging the Bake-Off competition, which we took very seriously indeed! As always, I enjoyed a bit of retail therapy at the 'Made in Kidmore End' stall, although not necessarily shopping for other people. Such a lot of hard work goes into the Christmas Fair, but seeing school full and bustling, with a palpable sense of community coming together for a good cause, makes it all worthwhile.

We always enjoy our events with the church; last term we enjoyed a joint Evensong with the church choir and more recently a lovely Christingle Service. Both services were very well-received and the singing from both adults and children was beautiful; we were all impressed with how well the children coped with the Evensong music as it is quite different to our usual material in school. On Advent Sunday we managed production of at least 50 Christingles which were then

taken over to church for the service. As always, Reverend James made us think about the Christingle in a different way, with his new friend Donovan, who has a wonderful recall of Bible verses (and is extremely stylish). The children enjoyed explaining the meaning of the different elements to Donovan, and we hope he enjoyed learning about them.



Our School Carol Service took place on 19 December, at the end of a very festive fortnight of Nativity plays and Christmas dinners. Kate and Sally in the kitchen did a great job of feeding everyone at Christmas dinner, and this year the School Council asked not to have crackers, but instead have a more environmentally friendly option of cardboard hats to decorate before the meal. Although it can be a tiring time of year, there is nothing like a hall full of children singing Away in a Manger to put you in the Christmas mood. The Nativity plays, whilst definitely entertaining, also encouraged us to reflect on the true meaning of Christmas, and the participation of our youngest children brought into sharp focus our value for this term, which is hope. We talk a lot to the children about their role in their own successful futures, and at this time of uncertainty I am certainly hopeful that our children will grow into safe, respectful adults who understand that they always need to be ready to learn!

Finally, we have loved being part of a community project to turn the village telephone box into an advent calendar! Our thanks go to Sue Remenyi and Caroline McAslan for letting us know of the plan. Our youngest children coloured the numbers and designed decorative strips for the small windows, while our Year Two children drew pictures for each of the windows. School Council helped to put it together and were very pleased with the result. Our older children donated small gifts, to be taken down to the phone box each week and donated to the Community Christmas Lunch guests in Sonning Common on Christmas Day. It has been such a lovely project to be part of, and we hope it brought smiles to many faces! The picture shows guests at the lunch enjoying a visit from Santa Claus.



We wish all our friends and neighbours a very happy New Year and thank you for your support and kindness throughout 2019.

Linda Hull, Headteacher

Around our Villages – Gallowstree Common

For this newsletter we are grateful to Jane O’Sullivan for her reminiscences from Gallowstree Common.

I have been fortunate to live in this beautiful part of South Oxfordshire for the majority of my life. I was born in Kidmore End and have spent most of my childhood and adult life living in Gallows Tree Common (like many things the spelling has changed).

I thought it might be fun to share some history and personal memories, especially as the village has grown and changed so much over the years.

Gallowstree Common was named after an oak tree that used to stand away from the other trees and was used as a gallows. The last hanging is thought to have been in 1825 for sheep stealing. The stump of the tree was removed at the time of the village enclosure act. I was told that it stood in the corner of the wood near to Kate’s Cottage in Wyfold Lane.



Gallowstree Common is the second largest hamlet in the parish of Kidmore End with an extensive agricultural and farming background. This picture is taken looking down The Hamlet towards Horsepond Road and the Chapel, long before the council houses were built. Many of the villagers worked the land, as shepherds, dairymen, bodgers or fruit pickers. There were also extensive fruit orchards growing varieties of cherries, plums, pears and apples and which were sold at markets in Reading.

The village had a shop, originally run by A G Page, which sadly burnt down. Subsequently the outbuildings were converted into a shop and post office (as shown in this picture) situated at the end of the Hamlet. I have fond memories of using the chocolate dispensing machine to buy a bar of Tiffin before a walk in the woods with my family. This is now a private house.



Opposite this site is the village well, a grade II listed building, which provided water to the villagers up until the 1930s, when mains water came to the villages. Years later, in the early 1990s, we held carol



services with the children of the village around the well. Various members of my family have been keeper of the well keys, including my Great Aunt Edith Callis and myself.

There were originally three ponds in Gallowstree. Two End Pond, which was used by the local farmers for grazing cattle and horses, still exists at the far end of the village towards Peppard. Long Meadow Pond has been filled in and a house built on that site in the Hamlet. The third pond still remains in the corner of the woods near Kate's Cottage.

Originally the village had two public houses. The Crown and Anchor, situated in the Hamlet, was where the landlady was brutally murdered in 1922. Jack Hewitt, aged 15, was convicted after Sarah Blake, aged 55, was found dead in the kitchen. She had suffered more than 60 wounds across her head, neck and hands and her throat had been cut. The motive was thought to be robbery, but a box containing £400 was left untouched. Jack retracted his confession at trial but was found guilty and sent to prison, only escaping the death penalty because he was a child. He served 10 years and was released on grounds of good behavior, always claiming his innocence. Robert Sheppard was believed to have committed the crime but was never charged for it; later he murdered his girlfriend and a prison warden's daughter and was given a sentence of life imprisonment and certified criminally insane. The Crown and Anchor as it is now a private house.



The Reformation's future is uncertain just now. We all hope it will continue to serve the community and I know the Parish Council are working towards this. Local residents will fondly remember Mr and Mrs Young who ran the pub for many years, raising their three children who all remain local.



The Kidmore End Coronation Celebrations in 1953 resulted in the building of a sports pavilion at Gallowstree Common on land given to the parish for recreation. This was achieved through local donations and fundraising. Mr Paddick and Mr Callis were instrumental in building it, and the wives of the village decorated the interior. In 2011 the Pavilion was rebuilt and renamed the Diamond



Jubilee pavilion. Cricket and football are still enjoyed by many on the site.



The children's play area has also seen much development over the years. The photograph shows the first redevelopment in the 1990s which was funded by local fundraising with the help of the parish council. Since then it has seen more improvements and is enjoyed by many children around the area.

Historically there was limited transport in the villages: riding or horse and cart, charabanc or motor car if you were lucky enough to know someone who owned one. For many years Chiltern Queens buses ran a service 4 times a day to and from Reading which many of the parish used to get to work or school. Mr Lilley the driver, who lived in the village, would always know who was travelling. He would often wait for the children at their gates if they were running late (me and my sister in particular!). More of us have cars now and sadly there is no longer a bus service in the parish.



The Methodist Chapel was founded in 1877 and opened in 1880, and worshipping continued there until it closed in 1987. Sunday School was led by Miss Dewhurst and Miss Callis and children of varying religions from Gallowstree Common attended.

There used to be a garage business at Orchard Villa, the house at the junction of Reades Lane and Horsepond Road, run by my Great Uncle Bill and his Great Uncle John, offering repairs and services. This is now a private home. Harry Cook then bought the land at the end of the Hamlet and built a garage, around 1954, with petrol pumps (pictured here). He also built a bungalow called The Chine next door. Sadly, we no longer have a garage and the plot is now private houses.



As a child, I remember everyone knew everyone who lived in the village. There was a real sense of community spirit with a village association, annual fetes, barbeques, and the annual children's Christmas party with a visit from Santa Claus. I hope the new annual event at the recreation ground will rekindle this spirit and create more fun times for all residents.

Jane O'Sullivan

Tokers Green News

Recent activities and events in Tokers Green have included:

Xmas dinners at The Packsaddle for the men on 6 December (see photo) and for the ladies on 14 December;

- Carol singing around the village on 15 December - a joyful occasion whether you are a singer or at home listening;
- two Sunday mornings when a group spent a couple of hours pruning and cutting back some of the trees and bushes around the pond. This has opened up the pond and will reduce leaf litter falling into the water. We are still looking for ideas on how to pump out the silty water and welcome any suggestions as KEPC are sadly unwilling to provide funding;
- our regular catch-ups continue: in The Packsaddle during the evening of the last Friday of every month.



In 2020 our first event on the social calendar is the progressive dinner on 18 January.

We take part in a fun inter-village quiz league covering the South Oxfordshire region. Matches take place on Monday - Thursday evenings, roughly once per fortnight from October to May. We have a squad to select from so there is no pressure to be available for every fixture. If you would like more information about the team and the league, please call Joanne on 07960 231353.

Details of all these activities are sent round by email using a village distribution list; if you do not receive these emails please get in touch to be added. The same list is also used for the regular Neighbourhood Watch updates too. Individual email addresses are not visible as we put them in BCC to protect everyone's privacy. We also post details on the KEPC website too.

Please contact ian99beale@yahoo.co.uk for more information on these events and to be added to our village email list

Ian Beale

Get help with home repairs

Services and funds are available to help people (owners and private tenants) stay independent, safe and well in their homes. Oxfordshire County Council has developed a referral service to help residents (or carers) access the right organisations in their area, to get the help they need.

The type of help that can be provided includes services such as new boilers, repairs to boilers, loft or cavity wall insulation, access to a local and trustworthy repairs service and general advice on how to stay safe, well and affordably warm in your home.

For example, Mrs K, who lives in Cherwell District Council's area and who has cardiovascular disease, had her ageing heating system assessed as causing a danger to her health. The draughty doors and windows with rotting wooden frames were doing little to keep out the cold weather, making the house freezing cold. She accepted a referral to an organisation who helped with getting her heating system replaced along with new windows and doors. She says of the work done "I feel much warmer and am happy to have a heating system that works and is safe".

For more information or to make a referral visit www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/homerepairs

Keep Kidmore End Green

A perspective on the evolving Neighbourhood Plan from a community group who are against houses being built on greenfield sites within the Parish.

We are following the work of the Kidmore End NDP Steering Committee with great interest. The neighbourhood events of February 2018 and more recently in September 2019 have kept us informed on the progress being made in preparing a joint Neighbourhood (Development) Plan for the five villages and hamlets in our Parish.

We strongly support much of the evolving Plan which aims to preserve the rural character of the Parish, and "... to protect, maintain and where possible enhance open space between, within and around our villages and hamlets."

Earlier this year we were delighted to read that South Oxfordshire District Council had advised the NDP Steering Committee that our Parish had already fully met its housing target, and so there was no longer any requirement for us to offer up sites for development in the Neighbourhood Plan. (The status of the emerging Local Plan to 2034 is unclear, and

SODC are now citing elements of the previous plan as the yardstick by which to assess planning applications. The NDP steering group were not personally informed that the Local Plan requirement had changed. You will find more information at <https://www.kepc.info/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/KEPCpanelslo.pdf> and http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/dynamic_serve.jsp?ID=999354516&CODE=8326364FDDDB13B6DFA2E373E5AFF5A00).



We were therefore surprised and disappointed to be told at the recent Parish briefing events and to read in the subsequent community survey that the Steering Committee was recommending a greenfield site in the Parish for development - a site in Kidmore End village that is currently being used productively to grow crops. This proposal is completely inconsistent with the stated aim of the Plan to protect, maintain and where possible enhance open spaces in the Parish. On being made aware of the Steering Committee's intentions, the owner of the land installed a locked gate to his field and erected a sign preventing access to a footpath which has been used by local residents and visitors for more than a decade. *[Editor's note: The landowner has informed me that this gate was erected to prevent walkers damaging the crop. Walkers were welcome to walk around the edge of the field, not across it. The only option left was to prevent access to everyone because some walkers were inconsiderate of others.]*

We feel the Steering Committee's decision to support the development of houses on a greenfield site in Kidmore End is rushed and wrong. It undermines the key message of rurality which is central to the evolving Neighbourhood Plan and sends an unhelpful message to potential developers that we welcome development on our open spaces in the Parish.

Please like or follow our Facebook page [@keepkidmoreendgreen](#) and visit to find out how you can join in and help to keep the Parish of Kidmore End green.

Stephen Roe MA (Oxon) on behalf of...

The members of KEEP KIDMORE END GREEN.

An Update from Councillor Peter Dragonetti



The new District Council, now controlled by the Lib Dems and Greens, has a different outlook in many ways from the previous administration. One of the reasons the Conservatives lost control was concern over the Local Plan that had been put forward, although, to be fair, perhaps another reason was the widespread disgust with the government at the time.

The Local Plan was not only opposed by many local people, but also by several Conservative councillors. The new District Council was all set to withdraw this controversial Plan and to prepare a new one, when the Secretary of State intervened and stopped us. It's a rather strange view of democracy when, after an election, the elected representatives are prevented from doing what they said they would do if elected.

Since then, a general election has taken place during which John Howell MP also came out against development on the Oxford Green Belt; this was one of the features of the Local Plan which the new council had opposed. It also seems he has, apparently with a number of other conservative MP's, objected to the Ox-Cam Expressway.

I hope that the huge amounts of government money that were about to be funnelled into Oxfordshire and the Ox-Cam Arc, to create the Oxfordshire Hothouse, will now be properly directed at those areas of northern England that have been so neglected for so long, and that the Northern Powerhouse will become something more than fine words.

Councillor Peter Dragonetti

Gardening



I do not need to tell you that we are having a wet winter. The weather has been horrendous, and there has been very little in the way of sunshine. This does however mean that my grass has completely recovered after the summer of 2018. It has taken a while, but I think that things are getting better. Try to stay off your waterlogged lawn if you can. It will not be long until the first cut of the season. I predict that a moss treatment will be a priority! The wet weather will have leached away nutrients as well, so a combined weed, feed and moss treatment will give your lawn the best start for 2020.

Now for ways to make it seem like the sun is shining in your garden. Plant a yellow, evergreen shrub. Good varieties include *Euonymus Emerald and Gold* (small but can be encouraged to 'climb' a wall or fence), *Choisya Sundance* (medium in size and grows in a natural dome), and *Eleagnus Limelight*

(large). These plants are loved by ‘municipal plantings’ and there is nothing wrong with planting an easy-to-grow, usually pest-free, plant in your garden. I do not have Sundance in my garden, just the green form, but my Euonymus Emerald and Gold and Eleagnus Limelight ensure that my garden sparkles, even on a dull day.

Mundane jobs to ensure healthy plants in 2020 include, in no particular order:

1. Removing all last season’s leaves from your roses. This will reduce the incidence of black spot in 2020 and is organic and fungicide-free.
2. Cleaning your greenhouse/shed/cold frame, and cleaning/maintaining your gardening tools.
3. Cleaning your saved plastic pots ready for the new growing season.
4. Taking surplus black plastic plant pots to the recycling centre. This plastic cannot be recycled at the kerbside, and if left in your garden provides luxury accommodation for slugs and snails.
5. Removing dead wood from shrubs and trees using sharp secateurs (see point 2).
6. Checking your outside pots for signs of vine weevil grubs (white, crescent-shaped grubs that eat roots and kill your plants over the winter. Susceptible plants include heucheras and polyanthus, but all plants are at risk).

As spring approaches, keep an eye on your precious herbaceous plants including hostas and delphiniums. These plants are loved by snails; putting up a barrier to prevent young shoots being eaten is the best way forward. Gravel, crushed eggshells and slug wool all have varying degrees of success. Vigilance is most important. When it is warmer, you can use nematodes to keep the slug population in check.

I put out food for the birds and ensure that clean water is always available. This is very important in cold weather and during droughts.

I am rewarded by the huge variety of vertebrates and invertebrates that share the garden with me, and the fact that many of these animals reduce the number of pests in my garden.

I am busy looking at my seed catalogues at the moment. In addition to all the seeds that I saved in 2019 (including lots of British natives), I will be growing *Pimpinella major* (pink cow parsley), *Angelica sylvestris* (purple angelica), *Cosmos bipinnatus* (white cosmos) and *Veronica gentianoides*. These plants are all species forms, which means that flowers are accessible to insects and all these flowers are loved by bees.



Caroline

Weather

| | Average Minimum Temperature | | Average Maximum Temperature | | Rainfall | |
|--|-----------------------------|------|-----------------------------|------|----------|------|
| | Cent | Fahr | Cent | Fahr | mm | in |
| September | 10.2 | 50 | 19.8 | 68 | 88 | 3.5 |
| October | 6.8 | 44 | 13.7 | 57 | 115 | 4.5 |
| November | 3.3 | 38 | 8.5 | 47 | 118 | 4.6 |
| Rainfall - 3 months to end November 2019 | | | | | 321 | 12.6 |

Overall Autumn 2019 has been wetter, cloudier and slightly cooler than normal. The total rainfall of 321mm/12.6in is almost double that of Autumn 2018. This has been the wettest Autumn since I started doing these reports in 2013.

The first three weeks of September were warm and dry with 12 days when the maximum temperature was over 20C/68F. The bulk of September’s rain fell on 23rd/24th (31mm/1.2in) and 28th/29th (15mm/0.6in); 25mm/1in of rain fell between 5 and 9 am on the 24th – I ‘enjoyed’ a very wet dog walk that morning.

October and November were dominated by unsettled weather with most days being wet (23 days and 26 days respectively).

The warm spell in early September gave us more sunshine than normal, but the remainder of Autumn was cloudier and therefore less sunny than the average.

The first frost was on 2 October, slightly later than last year. The first significant frost (i.e. when I had to scrape my car) was on 27 October but it was not until 7 November that we had the first sub-zero temperatures overnight; there were a total of five nights with sub-zero temperatures in November.

Lowest and Highest temperatures for 3 months to November 2019:

| | Lowest | | Highest | | Highest Rainfall | |
|-----------|--------|-----------------------|---------|-----------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| | Cent | Fahr | Cent | Fahr | mm | in |
| September | 4.9 | 41(7 th) | 26.3 | 79(15 th) | 31 | 1.2(23 rd) |
| October | 0.3 | 33(27 th) | 17.6 | 64(1 st) | 12 | 0.5(5 th) |
| November | -2.5 | 28(18 th) | 13.8 | 57(1 st) | 21 | 0.8(6 th) |

Chris Brook

Winter Plan



The parish council has written and agreed a winter plan. This plan includes:

Grit Bins at:

- Junction of Wood Lane and Horsepond Road, Gallowstree Common;
- Junction of Rokeby Drive and Tokers Green Lane, Tokers Green;
- On Chalkhouse Green Road between junction of Tanners Lane and Chalkhouse Green Lane;
- On Kidmore Lane between Kidmore End and Sonning Common;
- On Tokers Green Lane, between Kidmore End and Tokers Green.

Support for Vulnerable Parishioners

The aim is to:

1. Have a system within the parish to support vulnerable parishioners to get essential foodstuffs, prescriptions and, if required, transport to doctor's surgery in Sonning Common.
2. Have a group of co-ordinators who will have a list of parishioners with 4-wheel drive vehicles or winter tyres and who are willing to support vulnerable parishioners as above.
3. Personal details of residents would not be given out. This is a voluntary service and cannot guarantee that all requests will be met. The volunteers carrying out the tasks in support of this plan do so as their own risk.
4. The winter plan is available on the website.
5. The contact details of the co-ordinators are:

Sue Biggs – 0118 9723456

Jane O'Sullivan - 07725790838

Jane Williams – 0118 9722166

And now, our request for help - could anyone who feels that they would like to help and has a 4 wheel drive car or winter tyres please contact the parish clerk at clerk@kepc.co.uk. Thank you

Clearing snow

There may be concern about clearing snow from roads and paths. The following information is from the government website:

You can clear snow and ice from pavements yourself. It's unlikely that you'll be sued or held responsible if someone is injured on a path or pavement if you've cleared it carefully.

When you clear snow and ice:

- *do it early in the day - it's easier to move fresh, loose snow*
- *don't use water - it might refreeze and turn to black ice*
- *use salt if possible - it will melt the ice or snow and stop it from refreezing overnight (but don't use the salt from salting bins as this is used to keep roads clear)*
- *you can use ash and sand if you don't have enough salt - it will provide grip underfoot*
- *pay extra attention when clearing steps and steep pathways - using more salt may help*

OCC has also prepared a guide to snow clearance, see link below.

Council gritting

You can find out which roads will be gritted in icy or snowy weather (see link below). The grit bins have been funded from the Area Steward Fund, who we would like to thank for this support.

Oxfordshire Snow Guide

<https://www2.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/sites/default/files/folders/documents/roadsandtransport/safety/snowguide.pdf>

OCC's salting/gritting plans

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/street-maintenance-z/salting-and-snow-clearance>

Severe weather advice from SODC

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/street-maintenance-z/salting-and-snow-clearance>

Thank you

The Parish Council would like to thank the kind people who have cut back the burgeoning vegetation around the post box, phone kiosk, seat and noticeboard at Cane End. You have done an excellent job and the area looks much tidier, thank you so much.

We are still looking for ideas about what to do with the phone kiosk. Please sent your ideas to the clerk, Mr Penfold, clerk@kepc.info.

Message in a Bottle Scheme



Winter approaches again, and it is important to prepare for the short days, dark nights and cold temperatures. Look after your personal resilience and well-being by making sure that you have prepared well in advance.

Message in a Bottle is a free scheme offered by the Lions charity in Oxfordshire. It helps emergency responders and staff to know that you use medication or have medical needs, should they have to assist you. It's a simple scheme: the bottle contains your medical list and lives in your fridge, whilst the sticker goes on your door to alert emergency personnel.

Be a good neighbour and promote the Message in a Bottle scheme to your friends who use medication. The Emergency Services will look for the **GREEN CROSS SYMBOL** and find the information in the bottle, which is kept in the fridge.

Bottles are free of charge and can usually be found in your local Chemist or Doctors Surgery. You may also find that you can obtain one from the following organisations;

- Neighbourhood Watch group
- Age Concern
- Council Offices and Housing Associations
- and many other places including Police stations.



If you are unable to find a Bottle, please contact your local Lions Club at www.lionsclubs.org/en or Chris Brook, our local first responder, on 07789 717017.



Sonning Common Health Centre celebrates its 50th Anniversary in July 2020.

The Health Centre team would like to invite all former staff to a celebration event on Sunday 28th June 2020. If you or someone you know has worked at the Health Centre please let us know. Contact Lesley Chambers lesley.chambers2@nhs.net , 0118 9721615 or leave a message for her at reception.

Roads Update

I am the (volunteer) Superuser trained by Oxfordshire County Council to help Highways identify work needed on the roads within our parish.

I am able to identify and approve potholes that are at least 40mm deep and up to 2 sq m in size. This means that I have to get down and measure the depth, length and breadth of the holes - difficult to do when they are full of leaves or water. The potholes are then repaired using a 'Sweep & Fill' process.

My role also includes checking for any reports that have been made on 'FixMyStreet'. In early December I met the Highways Officer to discuss what work is needed:

Mill Lane – many defects (potholes) were identified. The 6 most serious were marked up and should have been repaired within 48 hours. The Highways Officer has identified this road as one that needs to be repaired by the 'Dragon Patcher'. I don't have dates for this as it has yet to be scheduled, and they also need to decide if they can do it using '15 minute delay' boards or if they will have to apply to close the road whilst they patch the whole length.

Dip between Tokers Green & Kidmore End – there is a plan to permanently fix this. They will insert concrete runoff strips and sort out the drainage at the side of the road. Timescale not known as it has to be funded and scheduled.

Wood Lane, Kidmore End

- Flooding outside Oakridge Farm. There are no potholes to be repaired. It will not possible to sort out the flooding as this is the lowest point on the road and there is nowhere to redirect the water.
- Potholes along road opposite The Old Orchard to The Old Nurseries. These will be fixed, but they are too dangerous for me to mark up.
- Holes in the passing places along the stretch from Ashfield to Cold Norton. A lot of this is displaced soil from cars having to pull in; he will get a gang out to level those areas out, timescale not yet known.

Potholes outside the New Inn – The Highways Officer will review exactly where the potholes are in relation to the edge of the highway, and any that are in the highway will be filled.

Butlers Orchard – there are 2 potholes at the junction with Tokers Green Lane and the Highways Officer does believe these are the responsibility of OCC to fix.

I have identified around 20 potholes in the village of Kidmore End that need fixing so far; 12 have been marked with white paint and the remainder will be done when the weather allows. These will then be entered on the OCC database as requiring work. I plan to enter them all at the same time so that they can be scheduled together. They should then be actioned within 28 calendar days.

I will obviously work around the villages within the parish as time and weather permit, and report whatever I find.

Chris Brook

Community Speedwatch Update

The Speedwatch team has been at work again. We were at the New Inn on Wednesday 27 November and welcomed a new volunteer, David Schofield, from Gallowstree Common. We are delighted to report that we found no speeding cars, and many parishioners either stopped their cars to have a chat or spoke to us as they walked past. The only comment that I would make is for drivers to just slow down a little bit more if there are pedestrians and puddles. Please be considerate of other road users.

On 4 December, we were at our favourite location in Gallowstree Common: the junction of Horsepond Road and Wyfold Road. The session lasted just over an hour, starting at 8.30 am, and it was a cold, foggy day. The majority of road users took the conditions into account, however it is disappointing to note that 8 cars were found to be doing in excess of 35 mph. The Speedwatch team were all very visible, not only wearing high vis vests, but also standing next to a rather large Speed Indicator Device.

The relevant information has been sent to the police to be entered into the Speedwatch database. The offending vehicle owners will receive warning letters and repeat offenders may incur further action.

Traffic speed through the parish has been a concern for a considerable time, and the parish council has been actively working with the Speedwatch team since October 2018. If you would like to join the team, please email the clerk, Mr Penfold, at clerk@kepc.info for further information.

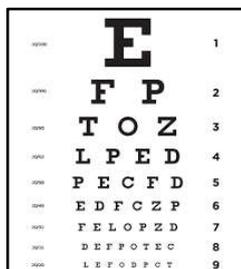
Each Speedwatch session lasts for about an hour, so if you do volunteer, you will not be expected to help for the whole day!

Caroline Aldridge

At least 50% of sight loss cases are avoidable

Learn more about your own eye health at 1:30 pm on 30 January 2020 at Sonning Common Health Centre.

According to the RNIB at least half of all cases of sight loss are avoidable, yet more than 14 million adults in the UK have not had an eye test for more than 2 years.



To help you better understand your own eye health, the Patient Participation Group of Sonning Common Health Centre has arranged for Neil Frost and Catalina Borneo of Frost Borneo opticians to give a short talk on eye health at the Health Centre on 30 January 2020 commencing at 1:30 pm.

All patients of the surgery are welcome to attend the presentation which will be held upstairs in the Palmer room. There will be refreshments after the presentation and the event is free. Numbers are limited, however.

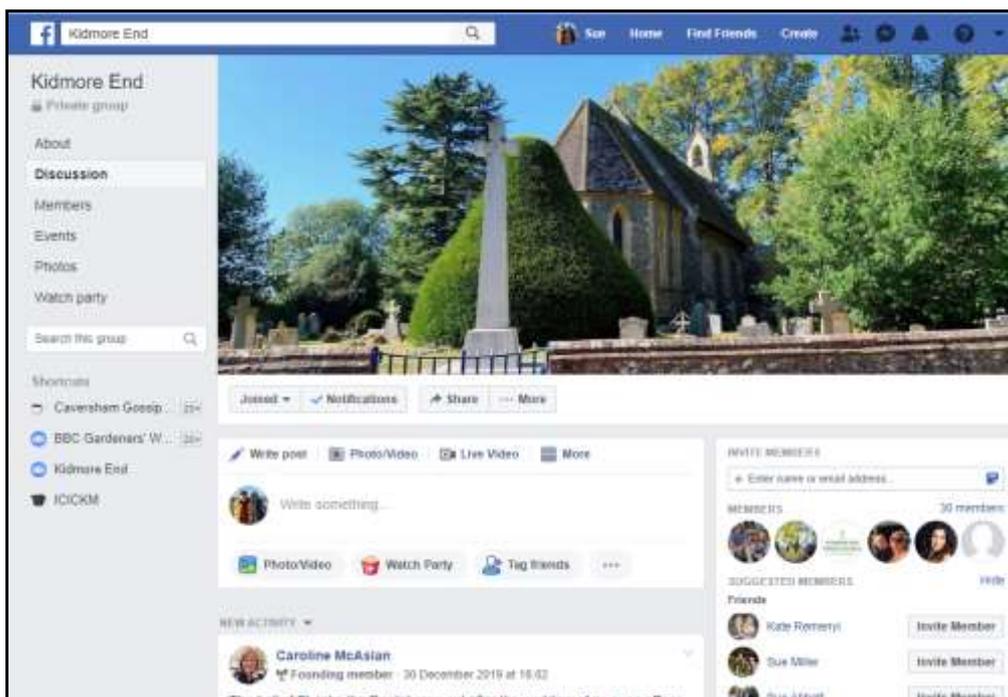
Please reserve your place by contacting the PPG by email, schcpgg@gmail.com, or by completing a PPG contact form in reception at the Health Centre.

Kidmore End Parish Online



We hope you enjoy reading this newsletter. We would like to remind you that you can also find it, in full colour, on the Kidmore End Parish Council website. <http://www.kepc.info>. The website is updated on a regular basis and is the place for you to keep up-to-date with the goings on in the parish villages. You can register your email to receive notifications when the website is updated. We are planning some articles on the history of the parish in coming months and will soon be posting some old photographs of people and landmarks. Please do take a look and let us know if you recognise anyone, or if you have any photos or historical gems of information to contribute. We will be including an article on the history of Kidmore End Primary School in the next newsletter so anything you might have to contribute to this would be most welcome.

The Kidmore End Facebook Group is a place for you to keep in touch with events and activities taking place in the parish villages – we encourage you to join the group and post photos and comments of parish related activities. Follow this link to join the group: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/552127868860166/>



Kidmore End also has The Ladies of Kidmore End WhatsApp group, which is another source of valuable information, not only about events and activities but it also serves as a resource to seek local recommendations for services from gardeners to babysitters etc. To join the group, send a text to Sonia Matthews on 07951 056005.



If you are involved in any other online communities around the parish please let us know and we will mention it in the next newsletter.



Winter 2020

Parish Council Meetings:

22 January 2020
19 February 2020
18 March 2020
22 April 2020

8pm in Kidmore End Parish Room including 10 minutes public session.

Friends of Sonning Common Library Application form

<http://www.kepc.info/news.php#foscl-application>



Are we missing your club or society? Would you like to see their activities listed in the Newsletter? Do you have any news items or pictures for the Parish?

If you would like to contribute to the next edition, or to the website we'd be delighted to hear from you. Articles can be sent to editor, members of the editorial board or directly to the website webmaster – see right panel for contact details

The **closing date** for the next edition is **6 March 2020**.

Useful Numbers and Contacts

Thames Valley Police, non emergency 101
emergency 999
website www.thamesvalley.police.uk



Crime Stoppers (anonymous) 0800 555 111
Victim Support 01865 751511
SODC email: info@southoxon.gov.uk 01235 422422
Open: Mon-Thu 8.30 am - 5.00 pm
Fri 8.30 am - 4.30 pm

ORCC Directory of Transport Schemes 01865 883433
email orc@oxonrcc.org.uk

Oxfordshire Rural Community Council,
Jericho Farm, Worton, Oxon OX29 4SZ

Oxfordshire Highways 0845 310 1111
www.oxfordshirehighways.org

Fix my Street <http://fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk>

Parish Councillors

Parish Council Chairman

Sue Biggs Email chairman@kepc.info

Clerk to the Council

Roger Penfold Email clerk@kepc.info
Telephone 0118 947 3130

District Councillor

Peter Dragonetti Email peter.dragonetti@southoxon.gov.uk
Telephone 01491 576352

County Councillor

Kevin Bulmer Email kevin.bulmer@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Telephone 07803 005680

Citizens Advice Bureau (Henley & Woodcote)

Website www.caox.org.uk/henley

Telephone 03444 111444

Henley appointments: Mon, Tue, Thu 10-3pm; Wed 2-6pm;
Fri 10-1pm

Telephone advice: Mon, Tue, Wed 10-6pm; Thu 10-6.30pm; Fri 10-4pm

Services also available at Woodcote Community Centre. (Call 03444 111444 for appt)
Fri 10-11am

Kidmore End Parish Room

Bookings:

Guy Johnson Telephone 07920 100065



Diamond Jubilee Pavilion at Gallowstree Common

Bookings:

Roger Penfold Telephone 0118 947 3130

Kidmore End Memorial Hall

Bookings:

Debbie Page Telephone 07802 34794

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