

for Bishopstone & Hinton Parva December 2020

Village News



Not a very seasonal front page, but nothing is normal this year, is it? And we did want to publish some of the really brilliant Hallowe'en pictures from Bishopstone.

Pictures thanks to: Sheila Collins; Martha Warrick (beautiful image); Millie Green; Belinda Nicolls and Ushma Sargeant.

<https://bishopstoneandhintonparva.org> for breaking news



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Swindon & District

Swindon & District Samaritans

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What will 2020 be remembered for? For each person, the year will have had different personal achievements and challenges but, underpinning it all, will have been a global pandemic, which has provided immense trials but also heart warming triumphs like the awesome Captain Sir Thomas Moore's sponsored walk.

The pandemic also reminded us of the importance of checking in with others, of talking to allow us to share our emotions and experiences and to give support to each other so we can all feel part of a community and be connected to each other.

As we move towards the end of the year, our thoughts may turn towards how we will be able to celebrate the festive season with those we love.

Christmas may be a wonderful time of year for some, but it's also a time when feelings of loneliness, depression, and anxiety can be overwhelming - not least because of the pressure to be happy and merry. For many people struggling to cope, we'll be the only lifeline open when

many other services are closed.

Last year, Samaritan volunteers answered over 10,000 calls for help on Christmas Day. We want everyone to know that we understand that picking up the 'phone can be one of the hardest things to do if life is a struggle, but calling could be the one thing to save or change someone's life. Samaritans are here to listen, and every call we answer could be the call that ends with someone finding the strength to keep going.

No matter what the struggle may be – Samaritans are here for everyone who needs them this Christmas and every single day of the year.

Anyone can contact Samaritans for free any time from any 'phone

116 123 (even a mobile without credit)

or email jo@samaritans.org

'Tis the Season to be Jolly

Christmas; you can't avoid it. As I write, most of us are wondering what will happen? Will we be out of lockdown? Will there be some sort of amnesty so we can have fun? Do we order the turkey?

Now, let's pause a moment and think. What is all the fuss? Logically, it is a Christian celebration of the birth of Christ. If, sadly, we are not able to go to church, all we need to do is contemplate and pray quietly in our own homes. But that isn't how most

people see it, is it? They are thinking parties, food, presents. What on earth do you buy for a teenage Goth? Well, that's what I'm thinking anyway. Let's face it, this is the pagan festival it has always been.

Mid December. Long cold dark nights when, at the dawn of time, man was quite worried in case the situation didn't improve, some bright spark suggested that they appeal to whichever god (or gods) was deemed to be on their side, and some practical soul said, 'while we are about it, let's have a feast and a big bonfire to cheer ourselves up'. This idea really caught on. Around the winter solstice, the Germanic tribes celebrated Yule, as did the Celts. The Romans had Saturnalia and gave presents before they became Christians. It's hard to give up on enjoyable things, so somebody in the Christian church came up with a cunning plan. They moved the birth of Christ to the midwinter festival, (they planned the saints' days to coincide with the other pagan festivals also). So, aside from the time of Oliver Cromwell, we have carried on merrily as always.

For the midwinter, why don't we decorate our gardens and shout greetings, socially distanced, of course, and plan the party to end all parties when all this lockdown stuff ends?

Mogs Boon

Lose weight now! Ask me how

Peter Svensson, Wellness coach

07832 193 362

peter@swepan.com



Unfortunately, the proposed *Café on Saturdays*, which was due to open in December, has had to be postponed. But the good news is that we are hoping that we can hold a Christmas Carol sing-song in the Coombes (well OK ... the Car Park). Clearly it all depends on the weather, what the rules are after the 3rd December, and what Tier we may, or may not, be in by then. Social Distancing will have to be strictly adhered to should any event go ahead. Please refer to the Village Hall Website:

(<https://www.facebook.com/HintonParvaVillageHall/>)

in early December to check the latest news, or, if you don't have access to the internet, call 791521.

We sincerely hope that we can help villagers shrug off the winter blues.

Ken and Rod (on behalf of LHVH Committee)

The Village Hall Bishopstone

As we all plan to downsize our turkeys and reduce our figgie pudding recipes to an M&S meal for one, Christmas is nearly upon us. More *news* from the village hall follows to hopefully

raise some cheer as we enter the further gloom of Lockdown 2.0.

Firstly, I am pleased to announce we have a new cleaning volunteer. I need to check GDPR regs before naming them but a big thank you

Pete's Prize Puzzle

We are told that that many of our readers enjoy a crossword, but hear that some of you have been foxed by a few of the cryptic clues. Our Christmas present to you is a guide to unravelling these cunning puzzles and giving you the answers to the November crossword, for which nobody claimed the prize. The connection is that they are all chocolates or something sweet.

After studying this guide, this month's crossword should be a cinch



Across

1 Ed in a fug bends the rules. 5 letters: *Ed in a fug*, in a suggests anagram, which makes the word *fudge* which means to bend the rules.

3 A gentle wave through this ice cream. 6 letters: A gentle wave is a *ripple*, a kind of ice-cream

6 Riki madly seeks cows drink. 9 letters: *Riki madly* is an anagram of *dairymilk* a drink provided by cows.

10 It used to be around 26 miles. 8 letters: A *marathon* is 26 miles, which was *snickers* former name.

13 Delightful people. 7 letters: answer *Turkish*. This is sneaky, see 6 down

15 The school bus with five or Carol without. 6 letters: The answer to 5 down is *double*, the school bus is a double *decker* or *Carol Decker* is a musician.

16 Turn around. 5 letters: *twirl* means turn around.

18 Twice Nickel we hear. 4 letters: Two nickels make a dime, 'we hear', means 'sounds like' but different spelling, *daim*.

20 This cat sleeps tonight. 4 letters: The *lion* sleeps tonight, a song.

for stepping forward to help. Next, the piano is ready for racing! This could be a new village pastime in 2021 with the new sleek racing wheels fitted to allow ease of movement. Importantly, social distancing has been enabled without any hirers plonking out a tune during a fitness class or Klung Flu lessons (pre lockdown of course) – thanks for that Russell.

Old Father Time is back in residence, but not yet *on* the residence, having been restored to his former glory. A working party is required to place him on the roof. The flag lowering party has been postponed, to be consolidated with the Christmas Tree Light Ceremony; all very official you know! We could add Father Time to that affair. We are too mean to enlist decorators in the current weather, so paint tins remain in hibernation until the spring. Fundraising is at an all time low with Amazon Smile raising just a few coins so far – sign up and add tiny contributions from your Amazon purchases to our Reg Charity 271165. Finally, please do have another look at the 500 club. Forms available from the Village Shop; pick up a form with your chops, so to speak. Online booking system is close but not champagne ready yet. Meanwhile please book via:

Richard 791 913

or richardw@eddingtons.co.uk.

Richard Walker, Chairman



21 Reward for this mutiny. 6 letters: Mutiny on the *Bounty*. *Bounty* is also a reward.

23 See 11. 5 letters: curly *wurly*.

24 I heard this was quiet. 5 letters: *wispa*, sounds like whisper.

25 Could include Chris Pratt, Zoe Saldana, Bradley. Cooper and Karen Gillan. 5 letters: These people were all stars in the *Guardians of the Galaxy* films. They are also a *galaxy* of film stars

Down

1 You might see this with snow or corn. 5 letters: *flake*

2 Nigel leaves confused Boston for improvement. 5 letters: *Nigel leaves* means remove *n* from Boston, confused = anagram, so we have *boost*, which is an improvement.

4 Don't eat this with more than six. 6 letters: the crossword was set when 6 were allowed to congregate for a *picnic*.

5 Do blue mix twice. 6 letters: 6 letters: *do blue*, mix denotes anagram; twice = *double*

6 Baker's dozen sugar-coated cubic pleasure. 7 letters: *Baker's dozen* = 13, refers to 13 across so *the sugar-coated cubic pleasure* is Turkish *delight*.

7 Our 25. 8 letters: 25 down is galaxy and the *milkyway* is a galaxy.

8 That is to follow processing numerical data. 8 letters: *ie* (that is) follows to number crunch = *crunchie*.

9 Sounds like gear owned by a feline. 6 letters: *gear kit*, sounds like (different spelling) feline *kat* = *kitkat*.

11 & 23 Pig's tail. 5 letters: *curly* with 23 across *wurly*.

12 Northern trucker's not for girls. 6 letters: refers to the Yorkie bar advert and that York is in the north.

14 I hear a backwards rower. 4 letters: rower is an oar which could be heard as ore, or ero backwards. As it is A backwards rower, it is a-ero = *aero*.

17 There's nothing about this ancient man theme. 5 letters: an anagram of *o* (nothing) and anient man *pict*, theme = *topic*.

19 Red one in seven. 4 letters: the red planet in 7 down (our galaxy) *mars*.

Christmas Crossword

All of the answers are words from a Christmas Carol – which one? (5 and 2 should help.)

Across

1 A baker's dozen extended for action. (8)

5 This is beautiful for the eyes, but bad for the stomach. (5)

6 Wet and white in fields now. (4)

8 You could see this could be after fore or behind hind. (5)

9 You would be rich with mixing the French melt. (6)

12 This season's written wrong. (6)

13 Praise in pebbles, stones and rocks. (5)

14 Ariel or Cupid found in majordomo once. (4)

16 Mixed trade found under foot. (5)

17 Rome's Trevi or Vegas' Bellagio. (8)

Down

1 Could you intelligently burn the candle thus? (8)

2 King Hawking or Baldwin. (7)

3 Cut backwards. (3)

4 Jack breaks forts when cold. (5)

7 Insect drags around slow gusts. (5)

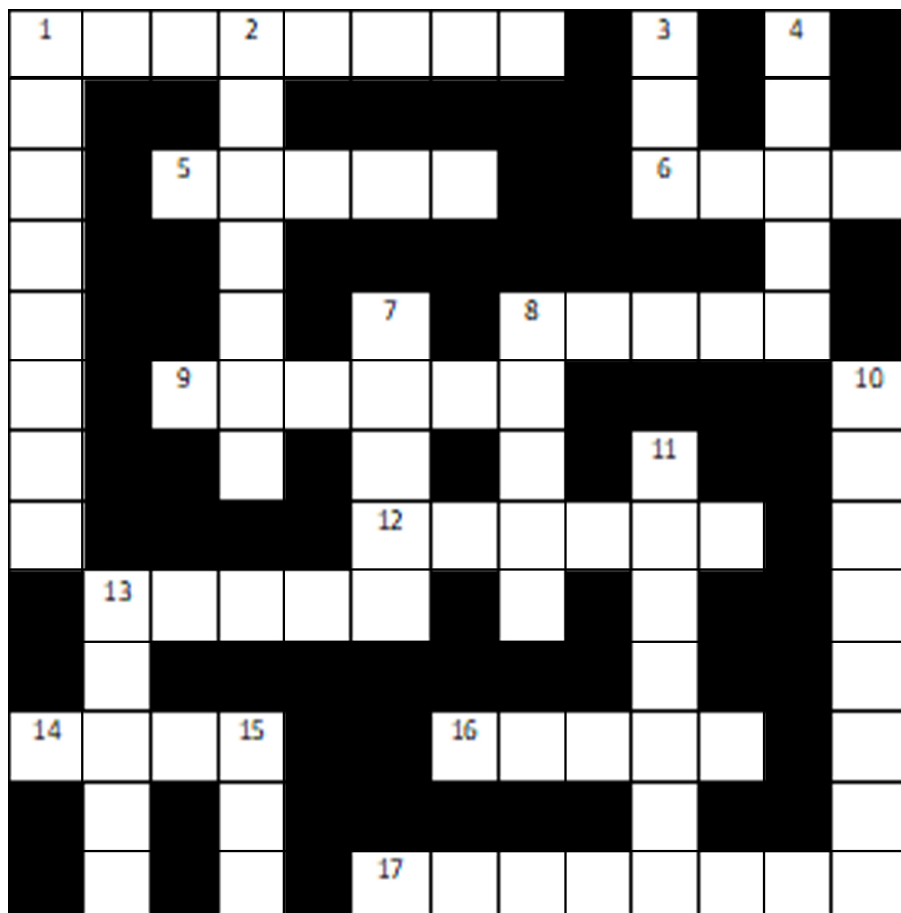
8 This honeycomb is illuminated inside. (5)

10 More masculine than 17 up this big hill. (8)

11 Not quite a game bird. (7)

13 This clots about nothing bold. (5)

15 Hopefully you've been won around this time. (3)



To be in with a chance of winning **this month's Star Prize**, name the connection between all the answers and send the completed crossword to the editor **by the 10th of the month**.

mogsboon@hotmail.com

or deliver to Brock Cottage, Hinton Parva.

Wanborough Farmers' Market

9.00am - noon

Saturday 19th December

**Wanborough Village Hall,
High Street, SN4 0AD**

The Harrow Inn opposite the hall, is kindly offering free parking for market customers. Produce includes fresh meat and fish, vegetables (sprouts!), honey and jams, Scotch eggs and pork pies, and Stainswick rapeseed oil. There will also be a Traidcraft stall, but there is not likely to be a café.

Please use the door by the car park, be sure to wear a face covering, and be prepared to give your name and contact number.

See org>www.wanborough.info for confirmation or contact Sue or David Birley.

01793 790 438

sbirley@gn.apc.org

School Report

The school is still running . . . no major changes for us over half term (just lots of little ones to keep us on our toes; I think we could be ballerinas!) and we are all quite relieved about that. Having just got back into the swing of things, we pray that this continues.

Despite Covid, this is always a lovely term to be in school. We started by celebrating the 54kg of food that we collected for Harvest and donated to the food bank. What super generous parents; thank you. We have new topics in class. KS1 is looking at a book discussing moths and butterflies, studying the differences, then writing letters to tell people to look after our precious world around us and all that is in it. Bubble painting is always fun, especially when used to create moth wings ... and Miss Pearson seemed to be wearing interesting paint make up after that lesson!

Year 3/4 have concentrated so far on this term's school value, which is *trust*, and have been using a gorgeous book called, *The Wonder*, about a child who daydreams, to consider how those daydreams can take you far in

life. Daydreams can help inspire you. Think back to when you were younger and used to gaze out, imagining yourself as a grown up . . . although currently I think many of us are gazing at the window daydreaming of life returning a little more to normal.

Year 5 and 6 are using a book called, *The Carnival of Animals*. I am sure some of you will be aware of this book of poems, with the magical music that runs alongside, by Camille Saint-Saëns. This book promotes wonderful poetry writing, description and creativity through art and music. We also have Vikings marching through KS2 up until Christmas, so I am sometimes a little afraid to go in still . . . after the scariness of Romans.

Many in-school events are happening over the next few weeks, Remembrance, where we have made a wreath of wooden poppies, Children in Need day with a Pudsey bear art competition, NSPCC keeping safe morning, and then workshops that would have taken place in person, now happening online - Blue Cross and Fire Safety. We are getting good at thinking outside the box! Christmas is fast approaching; in school we are trying to adapt and keep as many of our traditions (new and old) as possible. We still have planned afternoons of fun, wearing our Christmas jumpers, eating a yummy Christmas lunch, and having some *escape room* fun.

Emma Lindsay



Sadly, the first SLW Community café day that was supposed to happen on the 5th December is postponed until mid-January due to National lockdown rules.

We are *hoping* to be open following Covid19 safety measures:

**12.00 – 4.30pm Saturday the 16th January,
Hinton Parva Village Hall**

Teas, coffee, homemade cakes & soup, live music, products homemade by women.

This falls in line with a mission of SLW – empowering women and their communities especially, affected by issues like domestic abuse and inequality, through musical activities and wellbeing related products.

We are raising awareness about these problems, giving them a voice and support, collaborating with Swindon Domestic Abuse Support Services (Swindon Women's Aid).

All proceeds from the café products' sale go towards supporting women and their communities through our ongoing activities such as musical workshops and community events, which are crucial but especially difficult to maintain in these Covid19 times.

<https://www.soundslikewomen.com/homemade-by-women>

Luiza Moir



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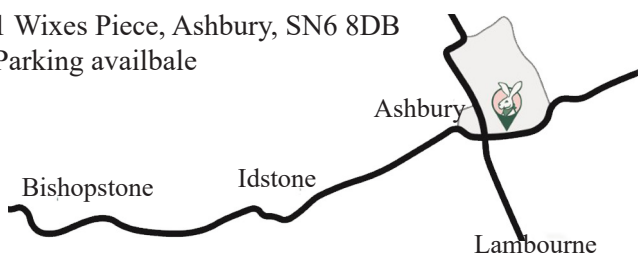


Opening Hours

- Tuesday: 10.30 - 4.30
- Wednesday-Friday: 9.00 - 4.30
- Saturday: 10.30 - 4.30
- Sunday-Monday: Closed

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Church Services in the Benefice

Wednesday	2th December		No Service	
		Vigil of St Francis Xavier		
Sunday	6th December	10.30am	Holy Communion	Lyddington
		YouTube "A Little Liturgy for the 2 nd Sunday of Advent"		
Wednesday	9th December	7.00pm	Midweek Communion	Wanborough
		Conception of the Blessed Virgin Mary YouTube "A Little Eucharist for the Blessed Virgin Mary"		
Sunday	13th December	10.30am	Holy Communion	Bishopstone
		YouTube "A Little Liturgy for the 3 rd Sunday of Advent"		
Wednesday	16th December	7.00pm	Midweek Communion	Wanborough
		YouTube "A Little Eucharist for O Sapientia"		
Sunday	20th December	10.30am	Holy Communion	Wanborough
		YouTube "A Little Eucharist for the 4 th Sunday of Advent"		
Wednesday	23rd December	7.00pm	Midweek Communion	Wanborough
Thursday	24th December			
	Christmas Eve		YouTube "A Little Liturgy for the Crib Service"	
			YouTube "A Little Liturgy for the Christingle Service"	
		11.30pm	Midnight Mass	Lyddington
		YouTube "A Little Liturgy for the First Eucharist of Christmas"		
Friday	25th December	9.30am	Holy Communion	Wanborough
	Christmas Day	11.00am	Holy Communion	Bishopstone
Sunday	27th December		No Service	
	1 st Sunday of Christmas			
Wednesday	30th December		No Service	
Sunday	3rd January	10.30am	Holy Communion	Lyddington
		YouTube "A Little Liturgy for the 2 nd Sunday of Christmas"		

All dates and times printed are as submitted to the Editor.

The Services listed are subject to change, both by addition if our situation improves or by cancellation. To check nearer the time: 01793 791 359 or villagevicar@hotmail.co.uk

The Vicar's Letter

Dear Friends and Neighbours,
Merry Christmas! Who knows where we will be, or indeed who we will be with, when we read this. Written while in lockdown, preparations for Christmas, Remembrance, Harvest and Easter have all been very different compared to the many years previous to this. And yet, fields were ploughed, seeds were sown, grown and harvested, and calving and lambing still took place despite it all. Interesting to spend time remembering that while a lot has changed as a result of the pandemic, an awful lot has gone on regardless of it. Including humour. Apparently, the best way to avoid touching your face is to have a glass of wine in each hand. At its peak the gro-

cery stores in France looked like tornadoes had hit them. All that was left was *de brie*. Finally, Finland just closed its borders so no one will be crossing the finish line. Humour, however corny, can change any atmosphere and, because tears of sadness are next door neighbours to tears of laughter, then humour has to be a way forward, whatever situation we find ourselves in.

A very young Michael Caine played the role of a soldier in a movie where he was criticised for being a typical *Cockney*; specifically, only being chirpy when things were at their worst. Being born between Lord's Cricket Ground and the Synagogue I couldn't possibly agree. But it does highlight the point that we all need a bit of hope, even in the darkest of

times. The Crib is always pictured in the darkness of night, illuminated by the presence of Holy Figures.

Their Holiness was due in no small part to their pure simplicity. As is God's love for each and every one of us. It's unconditional, not time bound, and it really doesn't matter just how badly we have messed up in the past, right now or, indeed, the future. The only thing that's needed is the same activity that we love to engage in at Christmas, a little opening.

Opening our hearts and minds to the constant call of the One who made us all has resulted in all sorts of presents, as well as presence. So, go on, treat yourself. You may well be surprised.

With best wishes and prayers.

If you have anything that you would

like our village prayer group to pray for please contact:

telephone - 790 088
villageprayers@gmail.com

Bill

Parish Contacts

The Vicar: the Rev Bill O'Connell
 The Vicarage, Church Road,
 Wanborough, SN4 0BZ

01793 791 359
 villagevicar@hotmail.co.uk

PCC Vice Chair – Alan Taylor
 01793 791 666
 R2attayloralan@aol.com

Church wardens:

St Mary's

Roz Boot 01793 790 508
 John Lowry 01793 790 271

St. Swithun's

Tom Cripwell – 01793 791 148
 tomcripwell@gmail.com

PCC members:

Doug Stevens 01793 791 107
 doug@mowerfixer.co.uk
 Karen Stevens 01793 791 107
 kschurchview@gmail.com
 Penny Green 01793 791 310
 Tom Sargeant 07517 145 051
 tom@yeoldeforge.co.uk

Benefice Register

Funerals

Terence (Toby) Ford Burial St Swithun's Church	Aged 100	Thursday 15 th October
Alan Victor Hanks Kingsdown Crematorium	Aged 73	Monday 26 th October
Jean Florence Webb Kingsdown Crematorium	Aged 92	Monday 2 nd November
William "Roger" Whitfield Kingsdown Crematorium	Aged 76	Monday 9 th November

**St Mary's Bishopstone
 Cleaning Rota**

December Sarah Best & Jenny Isles
 Mary Darling, 790 700, is volunteering to stand in for anyone needing cover for holidays/illness etc. Many thanks to you all for your hard work keeping the church clean. We always welcome new volunteers on the rota, please join us!

Sarah Best 791 121

Care for Gravesides

Headstone Cleaning and Grave-side Maintenance

There are many reasons why people cannot attend to their loved one's graveside. Disability, living too far away or find visiting too emotional. We offer you a peace of mind service of care and maintenance for gravesides in Swindon, primarily looking to benefit those who have been self-isolating/shielding and have had to endure the various travel restrictions... particularly the older generation.

Pictures

We can send you pictures of your loved one's graveside by post or email so you can see the high level of care we take.

Headstone Cleaning

We take great care with the cleaning of headstones and use a professional headstone cleaning substance.

Flowers

If you wish fresh flowers at the

graveside we can talk to you about your preferences and arrange to pick up a prepared wreath or bouquet from your choice of florist

Maintenance

We will trim the grass, edging remove any debris and care for plants or shrubs around the graveside. We normally work within a ten mile radius of Swindon.

Telephone 07771 541 075
 www.careforgravesides.uk

Garry Watts

Garry has family members buried in St. Swithun's cemetery and has, therefore, offered an introductory free of charge service to parishioners as a goodwill gesture in order to establish his reputation whilst the venture gets underway.

More Church Bloopers


St Thomas Ensburly Park Parish Magazine:

Bertha Belch, a missionary, will be speaking tonight at Calvary Memorial Church. Come and hear Bertha Belch all the way from Africa.

Next Sunday's preacher can be found hanging on the notice board in the porch.

We are pleased to note that there has been a change of mind by the Housing Department regarding the name for the new Housing complex for the elderly. *St Peter's Close* did seem somewhat inappropriate.

Sunday School
St. Andrew's Church,
Wanborough



Unfortunately, owing to the present circumstances there will be no Sunday school in December. For further information: 01793 791 359 or villagevicar@hotmail.co.uk



Just now it's mild, after a very wet October, which has prevented much of the winter corn planting on heavy land for the second year in succession. Daffodils and crocuses are already peeping through, and there is a definite dawn chorus to greet the morn, so birds may think it's spring! But steady on, let us get back to autumn, the season of mellow fruitfulness.

Our hedgerows and gardens have been almost groaning with the weight of berries and fruit. Our ancient garden Perry pear has dropped nearly a ton of fruit, which will provide breakfast fruit juices for guests at the Royal Oak, Bishopstone. Unharvested apples and crabs on the floor can almost be a hazard to walkers. We have two ornamental crabs in our garden (*malus prunifolia splendens*) which are a splendid rich red sight.

Of the other red berries in the woods and hedges, I find it rewarding to be able to cut holly for Christmas from my own farm plantings. My neighbours and I have also planted many spindleberries (another favourite) which are now at their best. We are assisting that natural process which is said to generate a new species every 100 years in a 25 meter hedge run. Whitebeam, rowan and guilder rose are also red-berried. Then there are the clusters of hawthorn haws and rose hips. When the wild rose loses its leaves, the hips attached to the bare twigs can give a rather interesting orange-red naked structure. In

gardens, more red berries are showing brightly on cotoneaster and pyracantha. In the spring, yews can produce their conical red fruits, known as arils, which are not poisonous unlike the leaves of yew which are very poisonous to farm animals but, interestingly, not so to the wild fallow deer in Ashdown Park, which seem to be resistant. Birds harvest these arils, especially mistle thrushes, and this year, with all the berries, the redwings and fieldfares will have a field day over the coming winter days!

This year down in the New Forest because of the abundance, they are extending the commoners' rights to graze domestic pigs on the fallen oak apples and hazel nuts, called pannage, a practice in place there since 1079 under William the Conqueror.

We are hopefully looking forward to more cheerful times at Christmas after these dreary lockdowns. It is easy to find sloes which are numerous, either in the vale or on the downs, to make the winter tippie. With winter warming you can briefly put them in the freezer rather than wait for a good frost. Sloes are the fruits from blackthorn, which, when flowering white like snow in April, can give rise to the term of a *blackthorn winter*.

Richard Green

A correction from last month

As a lover of pre-war cars, I have to protest to Dickie that the battered car used by Herriot in episode I of All Creatures Great and Small is not an Austin but is, in fact, a Vauxhall Light Six!

P Bailey

Recycling Matters

When discussing how we can have a sustainable



future, David Attenborough recently said, 'My simple motto is this: do not waste – don't waste electricity, gas, heat, food, and paper.' So, a few more ideas, with a Christmas theme, to help us all emulate the great man.

First of all, use up what you have or find it an alternative home or purpose. The bulk of a product's environmental cost is often in its manufacture and transportation. So, for example, if you already have sparkly Christmas wrapping paper and cards at home, use them up and buy a greener alternative next time. Foil, glitter or plastic on cards and wrapping can't be recycled. In the case of the Christmas cards you receive, come Twelfth Night, these bits can be cut off and the rest recycled or repurposed as shopping lists or postcards (great for stand-out competition entries!) A simple way to tell if the wrapping paper is recyclable is to do the scrunch test. If it unfolds by its own accord then it contains non-recyclable elements.

Etsy (great for supporting UK small businesses and unusual presents) have some lovely reusable, fillable, Eco Christmas Crackers – made by Keep-ThisCracker. They're a bit bigger than normal too, good for sneaking a slightly bigger present inside!

And, finally, a few eco-friendly gift suggestions – or treat your home: reuseable water bottles, coffee cups, shopping bags or straws, washable face-coverings, bars of soap, or beeswax wraps and silicone covers to reduce the use of cling film (once you've used it up of course!)

Merry Christmas!

PS. Pets at Home's pet food pouch recycling bin in aid of the Air Ambulance is open for business again!

Karen Walker

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We're about to announce details of a brand new day release course here at HB's Royal Oak, for one or two of the good people of Ashbury. It's a short course in understanding irony with a bit of humour thrown in. It seems our little farm shop behind the pub was raided in mid-November because of my light hearted reference to Oxfordshire people's fondness for sheep, in a previous edition of the Vicar's personal newsletter to his faithful flock. At least a year ago, and in that time I have clearly changed my mind about Ashbury in particular... This revelation comes from Mr RF of Ashbury, who used a very rude word (sheep, along with a descriptive term) on the Exceedingly pious Bishopstone and Hinton Parva village Facebook page when he heard that someone stupid had raided the till here for £7.50 but ignored wine, fillet steaks, toilet paper, sticky toffee pudding, and a full poppy charity box with a total value of £500 (please don't tell anyone...). As a direct result of the violent armed raid and the Vile abuse aimed at me through Facebook (and previous anonymous letters postmarked ASHBURY, with first class stamps attached) I am waiting impatiently for my letter from the local police offering us all some victim support counselling, which we jolly well will be taking up! I cannot think of a better way to waste public money well, that is apart from COVID and HS2, of course.

In the unlikely event that the perpetrator was from Ashbury, he or she obviously got lost on the way home

since the long discarded debris was found at Foxhill, having been thrown out of a car window (just missing the car behind) and then run over by what appears to have been a moon rocket launch vehicle. Roger that, as they say in local police jargon. Mr F has now been barred from the Bishopstone FB page of course, so that means he'll have to go to the postbox again. Second class is usually enough to get a letter to Bishopstone, we find.

Anyway, what's a newsletter like this for if not to spread some fun around? As a late-in-life pub landlord, working for the munificent Ms Browning, we are all born to serve—whether this is beer, politics, pork chops, or humour, we try to deliver, on the whole without offence.

It's probably time to think about Christmas since this is titled a diary—some of the gloss appears to have gone off it this year, for reasons I refer to above. Covid that is, not sheep. We will have a simple Christmas menu available for anyone from the day Boris lets us all out. Booking always helps, you don't need to pre-order, and the normal daily-changing, also simple, menu will continue to run alongside. Thanks to everyone who enjoys the Flying Pig parked on the Ridgeway; we love doing it, rain or shine. Every day as far as I can see, through to new year. We might take the occasional Monday off.

New year—well apart from slightly odd closing times, we're open for food and booze all day. I

will be waving my SDS around. It's a social distancing stick.

Pip pip, Interesting year!



Bishopstone Stores

9.00am - 6.00pm Monday - Saturday

10.00am - 2.00pm - Sunday

I've survived my first month or so at Bishopstone Stores! What a great time it's been – getting to know our wonderful regular customers and meeting some new ones! As with any new job for anyone, it's been a learning curve for me, but most certainly an enjoyable one.

One thing that has surprised me is that Christmas is just around the corner?! What a year it's been, in so many ways, for so many people. It feels like March was only a few weeks ago, yet here we are heading full speed into the festive season! Are any of us ready?

Hopefully, here at Bishopstone Stores we can help you instantly feel more organised and prepared! We've got fabulous Organic Turkeys and succulent unsmoked Gammon available to order now and collect from the shop anytime after 17th December. Combine that with getting all your other essentials from us and your festive feasts are guaranteed to be mouth-wateringly delicious. You really can't beat homemade pigs in blankets!

Recent visitors to the shop will know that it's not just our fabulous food range that has expanded but we now also have some perfect gift ideas for all your loved ones.... If you haven't smelt the incredible Coodle Candles yet you are missing out, and the indulgent new skincare range by Bramley, packed with glorious essential oils, is the perfect pamper partner! We really do have something for everyone...even the awkward ones! (Chocolate...always a good solution for the awkward ones!) My thanks go to all those who have stepped through our door and supported us and to show our appreciation you will see our new loyalty scheme falling into place. Start collecting reward stamps each time you shop with us and you'll soon be in line for a discount!

Hope to see you all soon

Lynne



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Exhausted of Hinton Parva

Notes from another lockdown. . .

On 31st October, shortly before Boris Johnson announced a second lockdown to a weary nation, I was in a local supermarket seeking a pumpkin. I searched high and low, front and back, but nary a one was to be found. While the shelves of loo rolls were being restocked in anticipation of another bout of weird panic buying, interest had clearly shifted to pumpkins. Or perhaps the fact that it was Halloween had something to do with their absence? Whichever, one disappointed boy had to make do with a Halloween watermelon in lieu of the more traditional vegetable. It was a better option than a swede or turnip; easier to carve and not looking like a shrunken head once a candle was inserted. Watermelons could catch on; they could entirely supplant pumpkins in the nation's psyche. . .

There have been other disparities between this lockdown and the last; it's not just about the vagaries of panic buying. All those keen exercisers that we met in the early days of Lockdown 1 (let's call it L1) have entirely disappeared. Well, they disappeared within a few weeks of the start of L1, never to be seen again. We thought they might resurface for L2, but there's no sign of them yet.

And what would a lockdown be without a good Dominic Cummings story to add a bit of interest.? This time, the speculation (or should that be Spec-savers; other opticians are available) is not so much about the likelihood that someone would test their eyesight with a drive to a local beauty spot, but more about what he had in his cardboard box as he left Downing Street. By now, we may have narrowed down the possibilities - two trending answers being *Larry the cat* and *the PM's head*. If both of those have been seen by the time you read this (the latter in situ on top of his torso), then the more prosaic *contents of his desk, a map of the north-east, and an eye test chart* answer might be correct.

The good news, as I write, is that an effective vaccine is on the horizon.

Despite the fact that various people have declared themselves so convinced of its safety that they are urging their mothers to have it, (not necessarily a guarantee of confidence, in my book), there are still a lot of nay-sayers out there. Of all the conspiracy theories this pandemic has engendered, my favourite by far is the one that asserts that the vaccine contains something that will affect our Brians. Truly - that's what it said on t'interweb. Since I personally don't have a Brian, I'm not all that worried by this - but I imagine the families of Brians around the world are feeling rather nervous. Perhaps this links to the Life of Brian in a way that none of us have yet grasped??

Since we've touched on conspiracy theories and large orange things, I feel duty bound to mention the shenanigans in the USA. I'm hoping that the situation at the White House will have been resolved peaceably by the time you read this, but I'm less confident of it than a person who wants their mother to have a COVID vaccination. The future's great; the future's orange might apply to phone networks (yes, yes; other phone networks are available), but it might not be so relevant to pumpkins and American presidents.

Mrs Mantelpiece



And Almost Finally...

Looking back over the editorials of the past year I have been horribly repetitive,

so OK, I promise not to mention the C word, no not Christmas, the other one.

But about Christmas, or not to Christmas, or whatever. I've decided to order everybody a similar present, I have never denied that I'm lazy, and no, I'm not going to tell you what it is, there is a vague chance that one of the recipients-to-be might happen to cast an eye over this rambling.

Also on The Day I'm going to roast a large chicken. I have no idea whether there will be anybody to share it with,

but, in the worst scenario, my cats are going to have the best Christmas dinner that they have ever eaten.

Anyway, whatever happens over the next few weeks, the team and I wish you the very best, and, as the standard farewell of this year says, stay safe.

mogs X

Finally

The views of individual writers expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, the parish council, or the church. If you have any feedback, questions, or would like to submit a story for inclusion in the Village News, please contact one of the editorial staff listed below:

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1 Little Hinton Farm Cottages, Hinton. Please note that names and contact details must accompany these letters, but, of course, we will not publish your details unless requested to do so.

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