

Village News

for Bishopstone & Hinton Parva

VE Day, the 75th Anniversary, in Lockdown
(See page 3)



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VE Day, the 75th Anniversary, in Lockdown (see front page)

In spite of the current restrictions, the parish managed to celebrate with, not an actual street party, but an outdoor tea while observing the social distancing rules.

Thank you to: Fraser Blunt; Sheila Collins and Karen Walker for the great photographs

Thank you also Lucy Walker for sharing this design (front page, bottom right) a logo for a Covid-type T shirt

Letters to the Editor

To the joy of myself and the team, we have received letters, more, please, more.

Ed

Dear Ed,

Yours truly can finally get one up on TF (Alas, a Shortage of Turnips, May 2020 edition) as he has only had a threat of mortality from our friends in a neighboring county, whereas I have actually been run over and left for dead by the side of the road by a resident of Berks, an apt abbreviation of the county name. The particular Berk was awarded 10 points (presumably for style, I was flipped up in the air according to a witness) and a fifteen-hundred quid fine (for dress sense?) by Oxford Mags and is still driving - so watch out, you might be next!

TS, Bishopstone



Will the person who inadvertently left this in the Lane, Hinton, please come and collect it.

Conta

The Editor

As a far-flung reader from Perth, Western Australia, who has visited several times, I enjoyed reading the amazing May edition of the Hinton Parva Newsletter. Coincidentally, I had just watched *Rediscovering Ancient Britain*, the Time Team's 2012 special, in which Tony Robinson explores

the Ridgeway, which we miss having the chance to explore. Covid-19 is a great leveller of opportunity. Under lockdown, we are all equally meant to stay at home and not go out for a walk. We are still facing future weeks of this with winter gloom descending. Thanks to the Royal Oak Hypermarket I will show more respect for turnips. Following our dreadful bushfire season, prices of more popular fruit and vegetables are sky-rocketing. Many adaptations I read about for hospital-ity businesses over there are just the same here. It must be very hard.

What an amazing Captain Tom story out of England. He makes me exercise arthritically with more determination, quite apart from the money he raised.

Hoping your readers stay well. We are all in this together!

Scilla Stack

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Or email:

customerservices@swindon.gov.uk

or phone 01793 445 500

Monday - Friday, 9.00am - 5.00pm

Originally...

...this was supposed to be an advert for food supplements, and now, spring of 2020, we've got other more important things on our minds. Vitamins & protein shakes feel a bit of a luxury; still, they are available if interested. Hope you get plenty of sleep, sunshine, time to think, read that book, and listen to some Bach.

For many years I have been using **Emotional Freedom Technique (eft)** on myself, to feel better, manage stress etc.

If anybody reading this would be interested in trying, or just learning a bit more about eft/tapping, I'm happy to schedule sessions on the 'phone, free of charge. (Fully qualified to teach and practice. Once c19 is over I am hoping to run a workshop in the Village).

Peter Svensson, Wellness coach

01793 710 537 or 07832 193 362



Recycling Matters

As a family, I'd like to think that we try to do all that we practically can to reduce, reuse and recycle, and be good ecological citizens, but I must admit that I do find some of it all a teensy bit complicated. Anyway, I've decided to try and up my game and share what I find along the way in an occasional, hopefully reader-friendly, piece in the News (Editor willing, of course!) so that more of us, unlike Kermit the Frog, find it easier bein' green!

I'm sure we're all largely up to speed with the fantastic kerb-side and household waste recycling services provided by Swindon Borough Council. If not, (we'll be having a test later – sorry – slipped back into home-schooling mode!) They have an excellent online guide with a very detailed A-Z listing of items they can and can't take and the state they need to be in – including reminding us to remove those little plastic windows from your envelopes, break down any card and cardboard for kerbside collection so that it is no wider than the lid of a recycling box. However, did you know that there are various other recycling schemes in the area which, as well as reducing your waste, may help raise much-needed funds for schools, charities or even boost your own income? If not, then



running due to Covid-19 restrictions but, if they aren't, hopefully they all will become so again as the restrictions ease.)

Additional Recycling Centres

As well as donating direct to a charity shop or via a collection bag popped through your door, old or unwanted clothes in still wearable condition can be donated at Marks & Spencer, H&M, New Look, or TK Maxx stores to be resold, reused or recycled to benefit charities. Some recognise your generosity with discount vouchers or reward points.

Tesco Extra on Ocotol Way in Swindon has a drop off point near the front entrance for soft plastics.

These are plastics that can't be recycled currently by Swindon Borough Council - crisp, chocolate and rice cake packets; sweets and biscuit wrappers; pet and baby food pouches; drink pouches (think Caprisun); yogurt tubes and pots, cling film, multi-pack film and film lids; any plastic bag such as fruit & veg, bread, pasta, and tissue bags.

Top tip – take rubber gloves! In my experience, it gets very full but sometimes just needs pushing down. All crisp packets can now be recycled – see <https://www.walkers.co.uk/recycle>

The nearest site to us is Aldbourne Post Office or, if you know a local who works at a Nationwide Building Society office (when they're not home-working), ask them to take them in for you!

The nearest sites for us for Tetrapak (milk, juice and ice cream cartons) recycling are in Fairford, Cirencester, Tetbury and Hungerford.

<http://www.tetrapakrecycling.co.uk/>
EMR Recycling (next to BMW) will

buy scrap metal, vehicle batteries, aluminium cans, cables, large domestic appliances and small electricals by weight. (To manage your expectations, a couple of old radiators raised the princely sum of £4.50, so you won't get rich quick, but it all helps and, if you're passing anyway...)

<https://uk.emrlocal.com/yards/emr-swindon-scrap-metal>

Finally, the Terracycle website <https://www.terracycle.com/en-GB/brigades> lists a whole host of products that perhaps, surprisingly, can be recycled and their drop-off points. These make money for good causes.

For example – air, home and laundry care packaging is collected in Chiseldon, Colgate products and packaging at Ramsbury Primary School, personal care and beauty packaging in Swindon,



Pringles tubes at Gorse Hill School, used writing instruments at Abbey Park School and many others. Maybe fundraisers in our community would be interested in following this up as a new revenue stream?

In the Walker household, we now have even more collection bags and boxes hidden under our stairs but it works for us and we just drop them off to the appropriate collection point when we're passing.

I hope you found this useful. If you have any green thoughts or ideas that you would like me to include or investigate in a future piece, do let me know either in person or via the Editor.



Karen Walker



welcome to my first instalment! (Please note, I haven't been able to verify that all of these sites remain up and

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Anyone For Tennis?

I did a marathon around my tennis court, supported by my family (who also ran various distances with me - the children each ran 5K which is a lot for a 5, 7 and 9 year old) to raise money for the NHS (I dressed as Elsa and a mermaid as I had promised the BBC I would if I managed to raise over 2K). In the end I raised nearly 3K.

<https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/leone-ward1>
We live at the Old Rectory in Hinton Parva and welcome anyone who would like to use our court over the next few weeks, although they need to call me first obviously! My number is 07962 926 606. As long as social distancing rules are observed, people bring their own rackets and balls and only play with one other person.

Leone Ward

Please note

The actual duck trail is only open to residents of the parish, Bishopstone and Hinton. It will be virtual (via YouTube) for those outside these villages.

Belinda Nicholls

Lockdown notes from the Village Hall

Initially, all doom and gloom from our humble committee; Bookings cancelled, Film nights cancelled, AGM postponed until further notice, no committee meetings or fundraising events to focus on. In short no income! Then out of the mist, we have a new secretary - welcome, Anna, we secure a lottery grant to help with refurbishments and repairs, the gardener does a wonderful overhaul of the grounds, then the sun comes out and the windows are cleaned :-)

What followed is now the infamous Bishopstone Flag Incident. In preparation for the 75th Anniversary of VE Day, and proposed subsequent socially distanced celebrations, a serious rummage in the BADS prop cupboard was commissioned. An expedition was mounted to the third floor of the hall. So high up in the attic, secreted away, only two individuals know precisely where that is - (one of them is a bat we won't go there) and the other a committee member sworn to absolute secrecy as to its location. Such is the nature of this clandestine organisation.

The Flag once found was first in need of an iron, before being mounted onto a sturdy baton by our engineering department. The installation party hummed a suitably jingoistic tune whilst a lad shimmied up the ladder, all spirited and mostly level. An official photograph was taken and posted onto the Faceweb a day before the VE anniversary. Within three minutes of posting, the error was spotted, conspiracy theories spread like wildfire - *death of the monarch; sign of distress* (no hall bookings); *easterly wind*. The truth was that, had the flag been put up the right way, we wouldn't have courted so much interest and generated some great social media banter and debate, all taken in good spirit. What remains to be solved is who, undercover of darkness, kindly reappropriated the flag to the correct and proper orientation?

Richard Walker

(Picture of the flag, front page top right)



Many people have been out and about more, reconnecting with nature. Checking crops and cattle this fine April/ early May, I have come across several examples of extreme human isolation. In glorious sunshine, amongst the blue bells, it's amazing where I have found people in various states of undress, and why not? The early butterflies have also been enjoying these bright days, and, in April, I have logged, small tortoiseshell, red admiral, peacock, brimstone, orange tip, wall, large and small white, and holly blue. I would be interested if anyone spotted more.

Contrast our restrictions on travel during the lockdown with the freedom of birds. I am thinking especially of our feathered friends from Africa, migrating to breed here during our summer just as the fieldfares leave for Scandinavia. The first to arrive is the chiff chaff, drab and inconspicuous, but from late March I hear their distinctive repetitive, almost annoying, *chiff chaff* chant nearly every day. Several weeks later, from 18th April this year, the swallows and martin's arrived, and my brother at Uffington heard the cuckoo. When I was really young, I remember monitoring the development of a fat cuckoo chick in a hedge sparrow/duncock's nest near to where I was growing up at Shellingford. The last time I heard lots of cuckoos was up on the Isle of Skye. I was there to climb the Cuillins; cuckoos like it there because of an abundance of meadow pipits to act as hosts for their uninvited nesting. Back home this year I have been struck by the frequent melodious songs I hear from lots of blackcaps. I have even been able to get my binoculars on them twice, the male with a black crown. A whitethroat has eluded me so far. Another pretty, though rare example, which can crop up on the downs later on is the yellow wagtail, another mi-

grant, and finer than the yellow hammer with a longer tail. Then in April every year on the downs, a flash of white on the rump as they move off betrays visiting wheatears. They pass through here spring and autumn for a short time only, with their distinctive eyeliner and love to perch on a hummock. Another summer visitor that you rarely see, but sometimes hear, on the downs are quail. I would not come across one every year but their call is very individualistic and, usually, they run on in front of you. Last October, at Chipping Norton, a small quail was shot by mistake on a partridge shoot. There are similarities in flight to partridge, but I have not come across this before. Perhaps this was a late juvenile, too weak to make the flight back to Africa. Another friend, near Broadway, tells me that his farm can harbour nightingales, which like coppiced woodland. This migrant is more common in Kent and Sussex. Similarly, turtle doves are now rare here and it is now over 40 years since I last saw one at Rectory farm but, as I mentioned recently, both these last two species are turning up in good numbers to the rewilded Knapp estate in Sussex. I also miss a spotted flycatcher which used to nest amongst Virginia creeper climbing the front of Rectory farm house; the creeper died, they stopped coming, and the last time I saw one was in Northumberland.

rwgreen42@gmail.com

Farmers' Market & Community Connect Coffee Morning

With current uncertainty we cannot say when the monthly Coffee Morning at the Farmers' Market will resume. What we can say though is that thanks to your wonderful generosity, we have raised nearly £7,000 for local charities since May 2017. Thank you!

We've made thousands of cups of coffee and tea, and hundreds of cakes, in that time; we've also made friends, met friends, and made a difference to a wide variety of charities with a local connection – ranging from the Hydrotherapy Pool, or Pennyhooks Farm (for adults with autism) to local branches of national charities, such as Headway (brain injury association). Your donations have always been hugely appreciated; what's more, the representatives who have come to tell us about the work that their charity does, have loved the friendly atmosphere of the monthly Coffee Morning, and the bustle of the Farmers' Market. So, from the Community Connect team – a huge thank you for every penny contributed (£6,733.34).

Stay safe!

Wanborough Farmers' Market

At the time of writing there is no change and so we don't expect to be running the June farmers' market.

Ken's Fish

Thursdays will be outside Wanborough village hall 2.00 - 5.00pm, Lotmead Dairy from 5.00 - 7.00pm.

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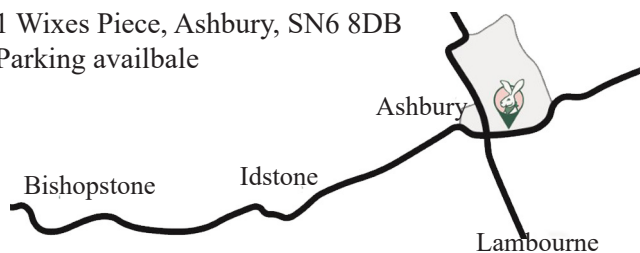


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The Vicar's Letter

Dear Friends and Neighbours,
Flying around the country in a company car only allowed views of large scale scenery to have any real impact. And this was undermined significantly when sour weather and poor visibility got involved. Walking, even when it's 'chucking it down' adds a completely different perspective. Smelling the rain, the fresh air; hearing the sound of a stream, the birds, the traffic, and even the sound of silence, can often open up our personal bubbles, if only for a little while. I'm wondering if this is what is happening within our homes now. From rushing in, late at night after a long commute, to rushing out not many hours later for another restricted view of ourselves, and our world has changed for many of us. If we were to mention a thing called a *party line* a decreasing number of us will remember picking up the *wired* telephone and checking to see if our neighbour, who shared the line, was already using it. Thankfully, this has changed and we have a freedom to ring friends and family, and, indeed, see them while doing so, wherever they are in the world. And at any hour of the day! If we do so from our mobile phones, it can be astonishing to think that we have more computer memory in our hands than was available to the rocket that put man on the moon. That one small step for man was a giant leap for mankind in so many ways. It gave us scratch resistant lenses, velcro, satellites that allow us to make those international calls, to travel with less chance of getting lost, and a huge amount of fire protection, health and safety equipment. So a journey can bring many, and sometimes surprising, benefits. Learning more about the people we live with or, for those of us that don't - how to be a hermit, has been a journey a bit like that one small step for man. Stopping to take in the view, like gazing at an amazing painting, can get us lost in all sorts of wonderful ways. We can all be inspired, but especially by those we spend time

thinking about. Hence the expression *being swept off our feet*. Rarely attributed to anything other than love, it's a wonderful expression that paints the picture vividly. In this beautiful season, I pray that you will be swept off your feet both by what surrounds you, and by the Author of it all.

Bill

Prayers

If you have anything that you would like our village prayer group to pray for please contact:

telephone - 790 088
villageprayers@gmail.com

Parish Contacts

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

01793 791 359

villagevicar@hotmail.co.uk

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01793 791 666

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tom@yeoldeforge.co.uk

St Mary's Bishopstone

Cleaning Rota

June	Lorna Ford & Linda Matthews
July	Fran Shishton & Karen Stevens
August	Jill White & Karen MacGregor
September	Chris Thomas & Gill May
October	Jane Golding

November Liz Warwick &
Jane Manktelow

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

Eastbrook Inbetweeners

Strange title for a piece that's supposed to be about the birds out and about on Eastbrook Farm isn't it? Bear with me, and I hope all will be revealed.

When Claire asked me to write this I thought it would be easy, after all, I am out working on the farm every day - I don't need to go looking for wildlife; I'm surrounded by it! But then it struck me that this is an *inbetween* time (hence the title, come on, keep up!).

As I write this in mid-April, it's about 10 days since I last saw fieldfares and redwings around. These Scandinavian thrushes come here to escape the colder winter weather in their homelands before returning there to breed as our Spring arrives. They strip the hedgerows bare of all the hawthorn berries before flocking into the fields in search of worms and insects. Talking of flocking, the huge swarms of starlings that we see, particularly in the pig fields over winter, have now dispersed to breed; many of these will be European birds taking advantage of our milder winters. (One pair hasn't gone very far though, as they have chosen to nest in the wall right next to the farm office door). Likewise, golden plovers are attracted to the muddy fields (and there was no shortage of mud this winter) but they have now moved North into the uplands where they nest.

So, as some birds leave us, others are just arriving. Higher up on the Downs the first wheatears are passing through. These relatives of the robin (they are all part of the Chat family) are en-route from sub-Saharan Africa, heading for our northern uplands and moors to breed. The name is a corrup-

tion of the Old Norse white bottom (to be polite!) because the white feathers on their rump are very obvious as they fly away from you. The first few swallows are also here, having made the long journey from southern Africa. They will be followed by the house-martins and swifts which, in turn, will be followed by the hobby. This small, very fast and manoeuvrable, falcon, feeds on swallows and house-martins, so you can appreciate it must be a pretty nimble flyer. Look out for a scimitar-winged falcon, slightly smaller than our resident kestrel, which looks like a giant swift in flight. Later on into late summer, you will find the hobby over lakes and ponds, catching dragonflies which it eats on the wing. The first of the chiff-chaffs have arrived, along with the willow warblers and, whilst their plumage is very similar making them difficult to tell apart, the songs are a giveaway; the willow warbler has a rich, melodic song whilst the chiff-chaff says just that - *chiff-chaff* - and very monotonous it is too. Another, more readily identifiable, warbler arriving here from Europe is the blackcap. Recent studies have shown that more and more blackcaps are choosing to overwinter here, probably due to the increased amount of food being provided in gardens so they are able to survive our winters.

Of course, it's not all about arrivals and departures; most of our birds are resident and here all year round.

The rookeries in the ash trees around the farm have been active since late February/early March, and the early-nesting rooks will now be sitting on eggs. For most of the other birds, the lengthening days and increased hours of sunlight are the trigger to pair up and start breeding. You may have witnessed the impressive display flights of both red kite and buzzard, where the males of both species circle to great height and then stoop rapidly downwards with closed wings to try and impress the females, before soaring back upwards again.

In the garden you've probably heard the repetitive *teacher-teacher* song of the great tit as he proclaims his

territory, and early mornings and dusk are good times to listen out for the beautiful songs of the blackbird and song thrush. I have a pair of wrens nesting just outside my window and regularly hear the male belting out his song whilst I have my breakfast; a ridiculous volume of noise from such a small bird.

In this strange time of *lockdown* I hope that you can find time to appreciate the wildlife that is all around us, either in your own garden, or, if you're local to Bishopstone, around Eastbrook Farm.

Finally, I had an unexpected visitor to my bird-feeders in the shape of a young buzzard. Not surprisingly, all the small birds had disappeared, but he wasn't interested in them; he was hunting the bank voles which scurry around under the feeders eating the seeds which the birds drop.

TF

Sail Training in the Time of Corona

I left the UK in mid-February, headed for the warm sunshine of Cuba where I joined my ship, TS Pelican of London, to embark on the next leg of the 2019/20 Ocean College Voyage - a 6 month long School-at-Sea adventure. We had started in Bordeaux back in October with 32 novice sailors aged 15-18, mostly from Germany, 3 teachers, and 8 Permanent Crew. We sailed from there to Vigo, on to Essaouira in Morocco, the Canary Islands and the Cape Verde Islands, before we crossed the Atlantic Ocean to the Caribbean, Curacao and Panama, where I disembarked for some much needed leave. The news about Coronavirus was at that time something happening in far distant lands, and I never imagined it would have much impact on us.

By the time we had sailed from Cuba and reached Bermuda things were changing, but the news we saw still didn't give us any impression that the world was about to implode. We left Bermuda on 6th March and I didn't set foot on land again until 23rd April.

A sail training voyage is supposed to be challenging; through the medium of sailing - working, living and play-

ing together in what is essentially a 35m long metal box (45m if you include the bowsprit) we teach our trainees not only about sail setting, knot tying, weather forecasting, navigation, cleaning, cooking, and maintenance but also about resilience, patience, fortitude, kindness, empathy, teamwork, and tenacity. We usually get to also see a bit of the world while we do all this. We got plenty of the sailing part over the next couple of months, but the seeing the world aspect was suddenly rather curtailed.

Our Atlantic crossing went relatively smoothly, a few days of strong winds had us belting along under canvas for a while, but a large high pressure system had other ideas and sat over us for the majority of the mid Atlantic, necessitating the use of the *iron topsail* kept down in the bowels of the ship instead of the quieter canvas version. News came through to the ship in dribs and drabs, via our satellite email system, but we had no access to actual news outlets. We knew before we arrived in Horta in the Azores that we would not be allowed ashore, but still thought amongst ourselves that all of this was a massive over-reaction and that the voyage would continue pretty much as planned.

We anchored off Horta on the evening of 19th March and finally had 'phone signal. We called our families for the first time in 2 weeks and it finally started to sink in; the world had changed. The next day, that message was fully hammered home when we finally got alongside - we were to be the last ship allowed in, purely to pick up fuel and food and then leave immediately. No gangway was landed, the workers who brought us our stores all wore masks and kept their distance, despite the fact we had been isolated on a ship in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean for the last 14 days and had come from a country which, at the time of our departure, had had no cases - there was no way we could be carrying it, but no-one was willing to take the risk.

To be continued... Tamsin,
Chief Mate, TS Pelican of London



It's Size that Matters...

Growing giant (well, bigger than usual!) vegetables can be a lot of fun, and the results are just as edible and tasty as normal sized veg. It's still not too late to have a go this year, but get moving as quickly as possible. Here are three examples that don't need huge amounts of space or complicated activities as the crop grows!

massive onions

These are always grown from seed rather than sets, and sown on Boxing Day. But the easy alternative is to buy mature seedlings now, from the Robinson sisters who have a super nursery up north. Easy to order on the internet or by phone (mammothionion.co.uk). I grow mine one each to a bucket, with holes punched in the bottom and filled with multipurpose compost. Put three small canes and some string round the onion plant so you can keep the leaves upright, keep the soil moist (but not soaking!), and feed with Miracle-Gro or tomato feed once a week. You can get a lot more complicated with soil types and different feeds – but you'll be surprised by how big your onions are, grown the easy way!



super-long carrots

First buy some seed – choose a packet with long pointed carrots as they will give the best result. Now acquire some 18 inch lengths of flexible plastic agricultural drainage pipe (I beg mine from the farm, who always have some lying about, otherwise any agricultural merchant). Dig an 18 inch hole in the ground to fit the pipe vertically and push the soil back round



the pipe, then sieve some soil mixed 50:50 with multipurpose compost and fill the pipe up to the top. Water well, then sow about five seeds just under the surface. Cover over with a jam jar or lemonade bottle until the seeds germinate, then carefully thin to only one seedling. Keep the soil round the pipe moist and feed once a week as with the onions. Come the autumn, pull up the pipe, carrot and all, then wash out the soil with a hose – one beautiful long smooth carrot! You can do the same with parsnips but it's a little late to start this year...

The longest runner beans

Dig over a small patch of soil and add lots of compost. Then put three long canes in a triangle about 2 feet apart, and tie the three tightly together half way up so they form a three sided "X". Plant a runner bean (or sow a couple of seeds) by each cane. As the bean grows up the cane, pinch off any side shoots, and any flowers from the bottom half of the X.

Above the X keep pinching out any side shoots, and the main tip when it reaches the top of the cane. When you've got two or three good trusses of beans per plant, remove any other flowers or trusses. When the beans on a truss are about 4 inches long, thin the beans down to two per truss. This means that all the energy in the plant is being directed to half a dozen beans (rather than side shoots or more flowers), which will hang down from the upper half of the X. Feed as above, and watch in amazement!



Gardening Tips for June

June is the midpoint of the year and a very important for gardeners. The longest day of the year is 21st June, so new plants do most of their growing in this month, when there are high levels of light and good temperatures. So here are a few tips for what you could be doing in your garden this month.

1. Mow the lawn at least once a week
2. Plant out your summer bedding plants and don't forget to water regularly.
3. Hoe your borders to keep down weeds. It's best to hoe when the soil is dry and the weather is hot so the weeds shrivel and die.
4. Sow the seeds of biennials such as wallflowers or honesty. If you sow now, you can plant them out in the autumn and they will flower the next spring.
5. Feed your roses with a rose fertiliser containing trace elements and magnesium, as roses can exhaust the soil very quickly.
6. It's not too late to sow runner beans and other tender vegetables such as courgettes straight into the garden as the soil is nice and warm by now.
7. If you are sowing seeds in the garden in June, cover them with a bit of netting with some fleece on top. This will protect the emerging seedlings from the hot sun.
8. Watch out for blackfly on your broad beans. If you've got lots of birds in your garden the small birds like wrens and blue tits love to eat them. Failing that, you could squish them in your fingers, if you're not squeamish, and spray with a weak solution of washing up liquid and water. Some people add a pinch of cayenne to the water! There are commercial insecticides available that are organic.
9. Plant out brassicas, broccoli, kale, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, and cabbage as soon as the young plants have made four or five true leaves.
10. And finally, dust off your garden chairs, fetch a large gin and tonic and watch your garden grow.

Adrian

Mrs Rose Bouquet (Bucket)

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Left to right: Nick Sturmey; PJ Kruger; Emily Anger; front Rita Bronze

After years of playing doctors and nurses, Royal Oak staff and myself have finally done something more useful - we're feeding doctors and nurses, and probably night porters and cleaners and all the other key support staff.

As I write this, we've delivered our first 300 meals to Covid ward night staff at Great Western Hospital - 100 meals on each of three days this week, and probably for the next 6-8 weeks. This is a serious labour of love

- your and our key workers are being fed on mostly organic kidney and butter and black eyed beans, cabbages, onions, kale, Eastbrook minced beef and beef meatballs, pulled Eastbrook lamb in a gentle curry, macaroni cheese with HB lardons. Most of the thanks go to Rita Bronze, PJ Kruger and Nick Sturmey who are running the pub kitchen for payment, as you know, in raw turnips, six days a week. Each meal is created from scratch - the amount of labour needed is remarkable to produce just 100 individual portions, each nutritionally balanced, suitable for microwaving at a work station at midnight and to be eaten with a fork, and every one adhering to some stringent rules laid down by Swindon Borough



often dangerous, conditions, and, secondly, and I say this modestly, to enable a simple local and often interesting local institution (viz HB's Royal Oak) to have an extra string to its bow as it struggles to stay afloat without any hotel or bar or food customers. We've started to achieve the first—let's see how we manage the second bit. I've no doubt Boris wants the pubs to open, but even he can't see an end to some of this. We might find out more very

Council, with whom we have had some correspondence, as you can imagine. It's all been made possible by two £5,000 donations from two of our local customers, one of them from Ashbury!! Their aim was twofold - firstly to feed people working in harsh, and

soon, but I'd be surprised if we were serving food or beer inside the pub before September. And what it will look like, and what and how it will serve, is not entirely clear to any of us. If anyone wishes to support your Bishopstone pub's efforts to feed staff at GWH, there's a page called Pub Grub for Scrubs, within the Brighter Futures page on the GWH site. The Pub Grub page dedicates all donations to the food that we're producing for GWH staff. When it's gone, it's gone. £10,000 in the kitty currently will provide between 2,000 and 2,500 meals. Brighter Futures is the official charity whose aim is to raise money for all of GWH's activities.

The farm shop in the pub garden continues to look after local and further afield customers; rave reviews for Lotmead asparagus, HB's lush ice cream, pulled pork and beef steaks; and the fresh organic veg twice a week from Coleshill; yoghurts and butter and cream and help yourself milk from Berkeley Farm, via Eastbrook cows.

Our food is occasionally more expensive than it might be in Asda, but it'll be cheaper in the long run, I would suggest, when our children are looking for decent planet saving food. We plan to keep the shop when the madness is over, if people indicate they want it.

TF

The Hocker Crop

Bobbing About's hocker plants are growing well and you may still be able to purchase a few from The Royal Oak Hypermarket





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Exhausted of Hinton Parva Home thoughts from - well - er - home

I'm going to start this month with an apology. I'm hoping it will find the right audience.

Let me set the scene for you. Dearly Beloved and I have long been in the habit of doing weekly parkruns; for those who aren't in on the secret, these are 5k events which are held at 9.00a.m. every Saturday morning in various locations around the globe, staffed by volunteers, and free to participants. I know; it's astonishing what people get up to, isn't it? Well, that's what parkrun used to be; these days it's a virtual thing, with those of us who previously measured out the miles with five or six hundred other runners/walkers now measuring the miles out alone (or with the significant others with whom we're socially isolated, of course).

So it was, that a Saturday or so ago, I was trotting along the Lane in HP with DB. The Lane doesn't offer much scope for a full 5k, so we have a convoluted route that involves going down the Lane, back up the Lane, out towards City Corner, back to the Lane, down the Lane again, then back up the Lane. As you can see, there's much to-ing and fro-ing involving the Lane. On this occasion, as we started our run, we passed a couple out walking their dog. *Morning*, we merrily said as we passed them. Some time later, we returned up the Lane, and passed the couple again. This time, DB said *Hello, again*; I smiled in their general direction, being far too short of breath for pleasantries.

Off we trotted along to City Corner. Then back we headed to the Lane. And, lo and behold, who should we see but the same couple, clearly on their way home from their walk. As we passed them this time, I made the sort of wheezy noise of which Darth Vader would have been proud. This may have alarmed them - but I think what really scared them was DB's breathless assertion as we passed them (for the third time) that we'd be seeing them again soon.

So - sorry if that was you, and you thought that you were being terrorised by mad, running, stalkers. Please feel safe to walk down the Lane again. Maybe don't do it on a Saturday morning, however, if you're of a nervous disposition.

Last month, I reported that the Lane was full of strange people (no, not the kind that terrify people on Saturday mornings; the sort you've never seen before). They haven't lasted long. I can only assume that they didn't much like exercise having tried it out for a few days. I wonder whether they'll be trying it again, now they're allowed to go anywhere in England to do it. Fancy driving all the way to Newcastle, only to find that exercise there is just as uninspiring there as you found it at home.

On a positive note, I'm delighted to say that we're in sync with the latest snappy slogans. DB has invested in a new and rather fancy hoe (that's a sort of gardening implement, for those non-gardeners out there - though maybe we're all now gardeners, there having been little else to do over the past weeks). We can safely say that we're now fully alert to the dangers lurking in our beds, and are fully in control of our weeds.

Mrs Mantelpiece

And Almost Finally...

Hope you enjoyed our seafaring piece on page 9. If you



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Well, we have been locked down for eight weeks or so now; who would have thought that we would survive? Who would have thought we would be so busy? Initially I thought perhaps I'd have time to clean the windows, sort out the garage, do some dusting...I haven't even cleaned the windows yet. I haven't mowed my lawns for years; that is Thing 2's job. Due to the present situation, he can't come and

do this. My lawns turned into fields, but, a few days ago, some of my mates turned up with mowers and strimmers and tackled the largest lawn. Brilliant, thank you, I'm really grateful. Now to do battle with the next one.

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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