

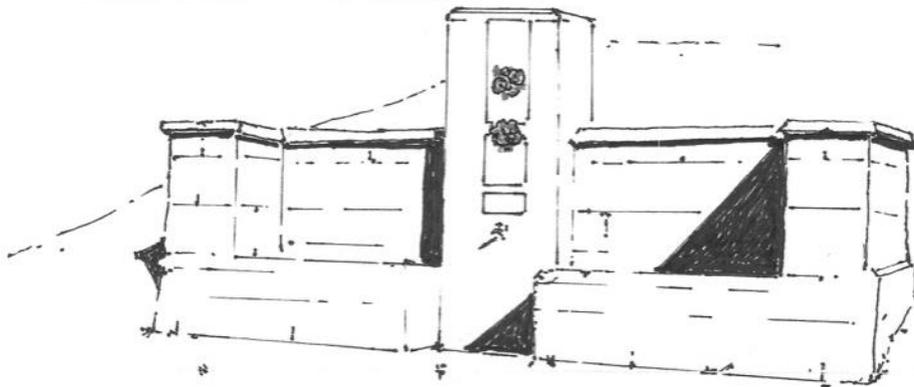
WHAT'S OFF

(The Coronavirus Edition)

in

Oakridge Lynch; Far Oakridge; Waterlane;
Bournes Green & Tunley

Oakridge War Memorial



75th Anniversary

VE Day 8th May 1945 ~ 2020

VJ Day 15th August 1945 ~ 2020

June / July 2020

Edition 245

EDITOR'S NOTE

As the Covid-19 pandemic continues, this will be the second edition of the What's On to be promoted online only; hopefully we will be able to resume the normal printed version in time for August & September. This style of circulation does mean that colour and photographs, can be included which cannot normally be reproduced, so we hope you enjoy this extra feature. Also included, some thoughts and comments from villagers on their observations of 'life in lockdown'.

Our thoughts are with those who have lost loved ones during this time, whether related to the virus or not, and who are unable to remember them in the normal ways; and best wishes go to those who are experiencing periods of ill health.

If you would like to continue to receive the What's On online in future, please visit the village website at oakridgevillage.org, and sign up to receive a copy direct to your inbox.

Credit goes to Andrew Davison for the temporary change of publication title.....!

Stay safe.

An apology.....

PLEASE NOTE: the correct phone number for Sophie McCracken (prescription collection co-ordinator) is 01285 706317 – numbers transposed in earlier listings – huge apologies to all concerned for phonecalls going astray!

25th JULY 2020 CLOSING DATE
for the next WHAT'S ON

COVER ILLUSTRATION BY DANNY WILSON

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E&OE

A POEM FOR THE PANDEMIC

*Covid-19 has brought such grief and harm
To countries, cities and homes worldwide
Tears, and sorrow and desperate fear
Such stresses and pain, too much to hide.*

*The Nurses and Doctors and ordinary folk
Being there for us all when we need them most
Wonderful friends with some time to spare
The bin-men, shopkeepers, deliveries and post.*

*Thank God for all helpers who've come to our aid
A card, or a letter sent to those all alone
In "lockdown" uncertain, with SO many fears
Thank heavens for contact, by writing, or phone.*

*When will it all end? Is the question we ask
To the Scientists and experts who strive
To come up with solutions, a pill or a jab?
Please! Do find the answer to keep us alive.*

*To all those who help us in SO many ways
Those on the front line, and us at the back
Hang in there, please keep doing your best
We do need you all each Jill and each Jack!*

LA Fry, 15th May 2020

COMMUNITY CORONAVIRUS SUPPORT

Whilst it is true to say that the vast majority of villagers are helping out their immediate neighbours in many different ways, it is useful to know that there is this further back up if needed. So, if you are self-isolating or have been advised to remain at home, please contact one of the co-ordinators below, who can in turn find someone to help with your shopping / prescription collection / chat etc etc.

Oakridge Lynch	Caroline Priestley – 01285 760969 Sophie McCracken – 07782 262336 or 01285 706317 Claire Robinson – 07903 974577 or 01285 762867 Lyndsey Barnett – 07773 891947 or 01285 762818
Bournes Green	Beth Taplin – 07989 743068 or 01452 770872
Tunley	Louisa Crisp – 01285 760684
Waterlane	Katy Craine – 01452 770111
Far Oakridge	Vicky Beard – 07763 124285 or 01285 760339

Prescription collection co-ordination – Sophie McCracken 01285 706317

Local delivery services:

Ollie's Shop Oakridge Lynch – deliveries 01285 760239

The Butchers Arms – cooked food and drinks deliveries 01285 760390

Stancombe Farmshop - veg box delivery 01452 771077

Jolly Nice Farmshop & Kitchen, Frampton Mansell, Stroud GL6 8HZ 01285 760868

BUTCHERS ARMS TAKE AWAY MENU

We are absolutely overwhelmed with the support and comments regarding potential closures. This truly means so much to us knowing we have fantastic locals that are willing to support us in these uncertain times. Tel. 01285 760390

Sausage, creamy mash with seasonal veg & onion gravy... £ 11.00

Fish of the day with chips, peas, tartar sauce... £ 12.00

Scampi with fries, peas, tartar sauce... £ 10.00

Pie of the week with creamy mash and seasonal veg... £ 11.00

Pizzas

Classic Margarita: Tomato, mozzarella... £ 9.25

Mighty meaty: Chicken, ham, pepperoni, chorizo... £ 12.00

Hawaiian: Ham, pineapple... £ 11.00

Butchers Arms: Goats cheese, caramelised onion marmalade... £ 12.00

Smokey Texan: Glazed chicken, bacon, BBQ sauce... £ 12.00

Weekly Specials available

STROUD AND COTSWOLD COUNSELLING

Based in Far Oakridge, I am a qualified psychodynamic counsellor and an accredited member of the British Association of Counsellors and Psychotherapists (BACP). I work with a wide range of issues including bereavement, depression, anxiety, interpersonal relationships and eating disorders. I have many years of experience working with adults, young people and children from eleven years of age.

I can offer short-term focused work or long-term therapy and am currently offering telephone and video counselling to all my clients.

Please contact me, Franceska Champion, on 07411324808 or

franceska@stroudandcotswoldcounselling.co.uk

www.stroudandcotswoldcounselling.co.uk

THE CHURCH IN OAKRIDGE



meeting at St Bartholomew's

VICAR Rev. S Murray 01452 770897

CHURCHWARDEN Mr. Martin Green 01452 770322

OAKRIDGE WI

OAKRIDGE HISTORY GROUP

OAKRIDGE GARDEN CLUB

BISLEY-with-LYPIATT TWINNING ASSOCIATION

OAKRIDGE VILLAGE HALL

OAKRIDGE COMMUNITY CHOIR

All look forward to returning to meetings at some point in the not too distant future.....

PERSONAL

Sadly Valerie Mills died peacefully at home, with her family by her bedside, on 27th April 2020. Thank you very much for all the cards and wishes at this sad time; she's left a big gap in my life, but now it's time for a new beginning.

Ali Mills

COFFEE, CAKE & COMPUTER LESSONS



We'd like to offer a get-together (when lockdown is finished) for more about it. Maybe if you just want to know how to read emails, email a message, send someone a photo, take part in an online meeting, or anything else to help you navigate your device.

All very informal, all abilities, a chance to have a natter with others over a coffee and slice of cake at same time! No cost, date/time can be organised when we know who'd like to come along and when we're able to socialise again. Could organise further sessions if needed. Do let us know if you're interested – 01285 760331 / 07887 946523.

Meanwhile, during lockdown, if anyone is familiar with attending an online meeting and would like computer help sooner, then just let us know.

Sebastian and Penny

THE BUTCHERS ARMS

Butchers Arms

We must begin by thanking everyone in the village for the continued support throughout these difficult times.

We are constantly tweaking the menu to try and add a little variety (please see our website for the latest at www.butchersarmsoakridge.co.uk) and we are also serving takeaway drinks! We have recently begun to stock Tom Long Bitter from Stroud Brewery together with wines and local cider. We do have some takeaway containers but advise you to supply your own bottle. Empty milk bottles are a favourite, however, we have one regular from Far Oakridge who brought in a large teapot which when filled contained over four pints! (I'll let you guess who - answers on a postcard).

Whilst on the subject of takeaways - is there any demand for Sunday Roasts during this fine weather? We keep considering it but can't decide! If you have an opinion, or any ideas, please get in touch at butchersarmsoakridge@hotmail.com or visit our facebook page.

But, hopefully, when we reach stage three of the governments' 'road to recovery' we will be able to open in some shape or form. This could happen as early as the beginning of July and to celebrate we will be having a Sunday afternoon barbecue in the garden. See you all there!

Keep Safe

Greg & Bev

NATURE NOTES FROM WATERLANE



I was walking along the road to Oakridge contemplating what to write about in these difficult times, when I heard the uplifting song of the Skylark. It is one of Britain's best loved birds, inspiring composers and poets. Its sustained warbling song, which can last for 5 minutes without a pause, is usually delivered when the bird is flying high in the air, often nearly out of sight.

It is the only British bird which habitually sings while ascending almost vertically, keeps singing while hovering and goes on singing while descending. When Richard Mackie had his dawn chorus walks, the skylark was among the first birds we heard due to the great height that it flew, enabling it to see the pre-dawn lighten before anything else.



It is a small brown bird somewhat larger than a sparrow but smaller than a starling. It is streaky brown with a small crest, which can be raised when the bird is excited or alarmed, and a white-sided tail. The wings also have a white rear edge, visible in flight. Its recent and dramatic population declines make it an endangered species. Likes open

countryside, from lowland farmland to upland moorland. Often inconspicuous on the ground it is easy to see when in its distinctive song flight.

Alan White

OAKRIDGE RAINWATCH



The rainfall in March and April, as measured by my rain gauge, was as follows:-

March..... 59.5 mm.....about 2.3 ins.

April..... 40 mm.....about 1.6 ins.

So far the rainfall in May is 4 mm.....about 0.15 ins!!

Gill Farrar

OAKRIDGE SHOW

Save the date....this year's Show is planned for Saturday 5th September.

It would be such a shame not to be able to celebrate all the hard work that is being put into the many allotments, veg plots, gardens, and home crafting activities, so watch this space and hope that gatherings will be permitted and the Show Will Go On!

CAN YOU HELP?

Are you able to help with some research.....the following message has been received on the village website:

I am reseaching the career of someone (a designer) who once lived in Tunley, Sapperton. Does anyone remember Andrew Denham Maclaren who lived in Tunley House (part of Tunley Farm) between 1937 and about 1965. If you have memories of him, please contact Duane at dkahlhamer@yahoo.com.

OAKRIDGE PLAYERS



Oakridge Players in Lockdown

The Players have been busy meeting virtually during lockdown. We've had a marketing meeting to plan enabling audiences to buy tickets online, they will still be available from the shop but for convenience through a ticketing website as well. We had an online Quiz evening with four teams of five members which went really well and we plan more in the future.

We've had to postpone the June production, but plan an online show sometime over the summer - A Bit of a Do! - like we've done before - via Zoom. We still expect to stage Faulty Towers during the winter of 2020 and news about that will follow. We've even planned virtual rehearsals via Zoom which should be very interesting!

It's our 100th year as a drama group and we were going to have a party this June but this is postponed. We hope to do something to mark over one-hundred years of drama in Oakridge Lynch sometime in the season.

We hope everyone is making the best of these difficult times, and assure our loyal audiences that we will be back on the Oakridge Village Hall stage in the not too distant future!!

With all good wishes from The Players.
Tim Toghill, Chair

STRAWBERRY BANKS & THREE GROVES WOOD

Please remember, access here is by footpath only - NO CYCLING OR HORSES - to protect the SSSI's fragile ecosystem. The owners have already seen evidence of damage, and the new kissing gates which have only recently been installed will be removed if this is not adhered to. Some good news however, 70 Marsh Fritillaries were counted on the Banks on 11th May which is very encouraging, as it was feared they would not survive.

COMMENTS ON THE PANDEMIC

From Jane Gregg, Oakridge Lynch.....

How lucky we are to live in such an amazing place during these unwonted times. With pathways radiating 360 degrees from this village, my 35yr old walking boots are now approaching the end of their life having been subjected to daily lockdown walks. I have explored pathways hitherto not on my radar, and etched on my memory will be observing the magnificent Oakridge "pandemic" of wild garlic. I believe the sheer abundance and vibrance of this beautiful bulb has superseded previous years. Maybe it's because my observation skills have concentrated during these times. Extraneous and wider commitments diluted allowing the mind to focus on detail. Sadly I have to admit this is the first year I have introduced this plant into my recipes. Hopefully I will now make it an annual event.



The dawn chorus has been a joy to remember and from my observations an increase in insects, especially bees, makes me sad this may all be lost after we go back to former ways.

The first NHS and Front Liners big Thursday clap was impactful. Echoes of the event could be heard across the valley which I found very moving and something I will never forget. I am sure if Aneurin Bevan could have heard it too he would have been emotionally touched.

Our local shop took up the challenge of keeping the village fed. Laura and Oscar introducing customer distancing, increased email orders, BACS

payments, delivery service, customising orders. What a great job they have been doing.

From Louisa Crisp, Tunley.....

These weeks during corona are so full of bonuses here in this tucked away part of Gloucestershire it's hard to count them. Here are a few....

Walking along the quiet lanes is a pleasure again which we haven't experienced for probably 50 years.

Everyone has time to meet, stop and talk on a walk and share their enjoyment of the beauty around them which they are noticing and seeing with new eyes.

There is a peace in the very blue skies above which we had forgotten.

Everyone is looking out for everyone else, love abounds....

Things are getting done in the house and garden which we have meant to do for ever and never got round to them...

The 'peace' bench in the valley is at last regularly used with huge enjoyment by families and couples alike.



There was a young girl sitting on the grass in the meadow last week and I heard talking on her mobile and she mentioned to her contact that she had now met her neighbours for the first time and how nice they were!

Her voice was excited and full of joy. She said it was her first time out for several weeks. She was soaking up the sun.....

With love to all

From Diana Simon, Far Oakridge.....

There cannot be a better place to be in lockdown! The scary feeling for those of us over 70 about how we were going to manage - everything from shopping to health emergencies - was completely cushioned by the younger members of the community.

It came as a shock. At the end of March, we were told we must Stay At Home. Suddenly, the future was cancelled - no more WI, History Group, Sport. No supermarket shopping. No visitors, not even family. No wonder we were all feeling apprehensive.

Immediately, support started to arrive. A knock on the door offering shopping, emails offering collection of essentials from the surgery, distanced, precious, conversations in lanes discussing coping mechanisms. And phone calls. Proper ones, catching up on news of friends and family. Some of us came to grips with Zoom and Skype. The Parish Council web site offered sound advice. The Oakridge Community Web Site, too. The pub started a take away service. The village shop came into its own, becoming a real life line for many folk.

The generous response of the whole community was truly life enhancing. None of us will forget the unexpected arrival of flowers at Easter - emotions we didn't know we had surfaced.

Now here we are at the end of May. We got by with a little help from our friends. So far, so good. We're told a second spike might arrive. We won't be so fearful this time - we're lucky enough to live in Far Oakridge!
THREE CHEERS FOR VOLUNTEERS!!

From Ann Fry, Far Oakridge.....

The Lockdown & Me

What a strange and frightening experience the Coronavirus Pandemic is for so many folk worldwide. Here in this beautiful Gloucestershire village, for two "ancient Brits", it is just as traumatic as elsewhere I imagine, despite being surrounded by fields, trees and the song of birds.

Mother Nature is doing her very best to make life appear normal, but it is far from "normal".

To begin the "lockdown" I already had an issue, having had a cancerous lump removed from my breast on 31st January. My surgeon assured me she had 'got it all' but thought a course of radiotherapy may be a good 'bib and braces' job in March - so that was put on hold.

With a great deal of help from our two dear friends, Anne and Vicky, life was going along at a different, but gentle pace, then everything went totally out of control. On 18th April I was rushed at midnight by ambulance to the Tower Block at GRH with a strangulated hernia, and operated on at 7.30am on Sunday 19th after a truly excruciating painfilled night. Thank God, all went well due to the skill of the surgeon and wonderful nursing staff; all so very kind and caring. I was allowed to be sent home on Monday 20th, our lovely Anne came to bring me home and I have been gradually gaining strength, gently, day by day. My beloved husband of almost 63 years, John, has cared for me and every day is a bonus.

A gentle walk in the garden is pure joy. God willing not too many good friends and family will succumb to Covid-19! One day life will get back to the way it once was: WI, Garden Club, History Group all will be able to resume meetings. Meantime we keep as busy as possible, exercise the brain cells with crosswords, suduko etc, and keep in touch with friends and family by phone, letter and texts. John potters in the greenhouse, and we look forward to our own tomatoes, the rest of the garden is beyond us now, a tad unkempt, but who knows what 'treasures' might appear in our 'wild garden'?

2020 is certainly a very strange year; we all have our worries and fears, but there's so many kindnesses to appreciate and be thankful for. One day we will meet again with all our friends and family.



From Claire Robinson, Oakridge Lynch.....

2020 has been a rollercoaster. In January, our six-year-old daughter was diagnosed with a lifelong autoimmune condition. Only weeks after the shock of her diagnosis, when we had just begun to adjust to our new way of life, the world changed yet again.

At first, it was almost comical. Loo roll and pasta shortages in the supermarket. Parents knocking elbows in greeting at the school gate. A May Revels planning meeting where one dad sheepishly asked whether 'this coronavirus thing' might scupper things.

But when nurseries and schools were closed, the mood changed.

Like most, my initial reaction was fear: what happens if our daughter catches it? What if we are hospitalised, who will take care of her and her two-year-old sister? When would we see our elderly parents again? What if they caught it?

It was clear our household would have to self isolate and not seeing our extended family (aside from their grandparents, our children have three adult siblings who don't live with us, as well as 12 cousins) has been tough.

Sleepless nights are a fairly regular thing these days. The most mundane aspects of life, like shopping, suddenly became difficult. I often stay up until the early hours to secure an online delivery, ordering food for a

number of villagers who are also vulnerable – making the most of those elusive slots and assuaging my guilt at having to use them. I like to help and find it oddly satisfying if I manage to get eggs, flour or bags of icing sugar for the eager bakers among our neighbours who have found only empty shelves in the supermarkets.

Being fairly active online, I set up WhatsApp and Facebook groups for villagers, so that people always have someone to turn to if their immediate friends or neighbours can't assist. People rallied round very quickly – a weekly farm shop delivery and regular prescription collections started almost immediately – and it's an efficient way of keeping in touch with a wider network of neighbours.

There are positives to lockdown as well. A greater appreciation of our surroundings, so easily overlooked during life's previously frantic pace. More time for walks, instead of driving everywhere. Precious time with two small children, who are changing so rapidly. Socially distanced cups of tea with friends on the other side of a gate.

Oakridge's community spirit is amazing. The first NHS clap was extremely emotional, a way to bring everyone together and remind us that we are part of something much greater than ourselves. We count ourselves so lucky to be part of this fantastic, protected place – there's nowhere we would rather be while the world is in such turmoil.

Our small children have loved hunting for the lovely painted stones that Beth Ordway has created and left hidden around the village.



Search for the hidden stonesand check out Beth's Facebook page @bettyrocks2020

This is what you're looking for!!



Comments on the Support Network....

"I think the system has been a great success Very reassuring in the early days and a great way to connect with neighbours. Our hamlet has also found its own method of supporting each other through a Bournes Green / Lilyhorn whatsapp group to coordinate shopping and prescriptions for self isolators and just to reduce the amount people need to move around.

I feel very fortunate that we all live in such a caring and friendly community and that circumstances have not been too challenging for our Coronavirus Support Network, but have no doubt it would rise to the challenge!"

From Emma Vickers, Far Oakridge.....

When all this is over, or when at least we are allowed to venture out and resume some of our old ways this is what I will remember about being locked down in Far Oakridge. It's the end of May and we're into week 10 of lockdown:

Most of all, the kindness of neighbours.

The reassuring reliability of friendship.

The solidarity of village life, all of us knowing we are in this together.

How truly fortunate we are to live in this place, surrounded by trees.

The daily remembrance and contrast of self isolation here and life in a hospital, struggling to work and survive in the towns.

The happy glimpses of increasingly familiar faces as we walk, run, cycle, occasionally drive by each other.

The relief of moving into summer and not winter.

How acutely we gardeners have noticed the transition from hellebore to honeysuckle, primrose to peony, snowdrop to sweet pea.

The constant rain, then the constant sun.

The welcome shade of the trees around the recreation ground, and the fact that someone kindly keeps on mowing the grass.

The sadness of the childrens' playground closed, and life curtailed .

The discovery of footpaths, byways, woods streams springs and meadows never before visited.

Time to see where we live, to listen, to watch, to linger.

(But not enough time, oddly, to do all those things you thought you'd do).

The generous and efficient and caring service of our local shop, keeping us going day after day, of the farm shops and supermarkets.

The pharmacy still getting our drugs.

The carers who know who they are, the angels in our midst, keeping an eye open, always attentive.

How much we owe to every person who looks after we who are isolating.

(All these new words to describe how we live).

The fellowship of local park runners.

All the men and women who deliver our parcels and post, our food, all the things we didn't know we needed so much, all the things we got effortlessly, thoughtlessly, easily without a care for the day when we would no longer be able.

The clear blue skies, the absence of air traffic.

The empty roads, and the growing encroachment of wild life sensing change; but no rabbits.

The annual return of the swallows, now when we need their heartening presence more than ever.

How truly fortunate we are to be alive, in this place.



There are plenty of beautiful walks to be had in and around Oakridge





April blossoms in the Cemetary

*From 'Bugged of Oakridge' (aka Diane Stoker).....
A wonderful example of crafting during the lockdown*



Art in Lockdown

We've all needed something to occupy us and keep our spirits up in the lockdown. Despite the difficulties imposed by Covid-19, the wonderful spring weather and the lovely area we live in provide us with hope and inspiration.

Personally I have found great joy and comfort from painting in the garden and the local area, and would encourage anyone to try their hand. I attach one of my paintings, hopefully an inspiration! Please don't hesitate to contact me for advice or comments on your work.

Good luck,
John Bailey
01285 760659
jrsbailey@yahoo.co.uk



From Lee Timms, Far Oakridge.....

I've answered to many names (especially when appearing in Oakridge AMDRAM, but none more important to me than....LEE TIMMS, collection 56.

I emailed NHS scrubs, Gloucestershire more than 8 weeks ago, I waited a few days and before I knew it, I was on the list for a delivery of fabric; little did I know I would be cutting sets to sew from 10 metres neatly folded and bagged along with thread and all the extras to make this worthwhile cause work.

So every Saturday for the past 6 weeks my bag of readymade pressed scrubs and accessories has been collected from the other side of the gates in exchange for a bag of fabric ready to cut and sew.....

Very quickly a "scrubbers" whatsapp was set up. We shared our photos of pockets being sewn together wrongly along with incorrect stitching, cutting and anecdotes along the way to keep us all motivated.....

I have now sewn my last batch and as we speak the Group is now closing as fabric has now reached factories and they shall be taking charge (although I'm told not in the same colourful fabric). We do intend to meet up when we are able to put names to faces and share our stories of how we held it together for all this time, NHS Heroes kept us sewing.

I have to say some thank yous. My neighbour Philip for printing the pattern on line, more than 50 A4 sheets for me to cut and stick together. Diana Simon for wanting to get her sewing machine out again and preparing and sewing the much needed fabric bags for scrubs to be put in. Emma Vickers for her delivery of flowers on more than one occasion from her poly tunnel and her lovely notelets that she kindly donated for me to send my good wishes which I placed inside every scrubs sewn. Helen and Claire for the donation of fabrics to allow the bags to be made. Last but not least my family: Oliver for sending the link and telling me, "this is right up my street"; Eve for sewing the odd bit and keeping me topped up with tea; and huge thanks to Andrew for his wonderful meals and supplying me with something stronger other than tea!

Just one of many memories from this lock down period.



THE NHS RAINBOW

The 'Clap for Carers', for the NHS, the Key Worker tribute – however you want to call it, Thursday evenings at 8pm have heard the valleys ring with clapping, whistling, saucepan banging, giving thanks to the key workers keeping the country going. Rainbow images have sprung up in windows around and about, here are a couple of photos taken locally.



The Oakridge Players put their stage lighting to good use by illuminating one member's house in rainbow colours during the evening for "clap for carers". The display could be seen across the valley from Frampton and hopefully brought a smile or two.



VE DAY IN THE VILLAGES

All plans for a village celebration of VE Day on Friday 8th May having been cancelled, here are a couple of photos of personal ways the occasion was marked.....



Lovely handmade bunting on a garden gate



Flags on the green in Far Oakridge



Ann Fry remembering VE Day

BISLEY-with-LYPIATT PARISH COUNCIL

Please see the Parish Council website for Ward information and minutes of Council meetings. www.bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk.

Rubbish Bins

We would like to remind people to act responsibly and either take their rubbish home or use the bins provided in the villages, particularly at the Playing Field and Tennis Courts. There has been an increase in litter, also along the road verges, and broken glass has been removed. There has also been a considerable increase in dog mess around the area – please remember to bag it and bin it by the Playing Field or by the School – or of course, take it home!

Allotments

There have been reports of theft and attempted break-ins of sheds on the allotment sites within our Parish. They have been reported to the authorities, but please remain vigilant – the only people on the sites should be existing tenants.

Verges

The Parish Council has long been concerned about the mowing of verges that are increasingly recognised as important wildlife corridors and has agreed not to cut grass verges until late July in line with [County Council policy](#) and [Plantlife Guidelines](#).

The Parish Council's concern was supported by residents who participated in the Neighbourhood Development Plan consultations (autumn 2019). Many from all the Bisley villages asked the Parish and County to stop strimming the verges –Oakridge residents were particularly concerned. Residents were also supportive of developing more wildlife corridors now - one of the most cost-effective method to support wildlife so species can move through the landscape when challenged by climate change. And grass verges are brilliant wildlife corridors – if allowed!!

The County Council now has a policy agreed in response to Green County Councillor Rachel Smith's motion to set up a highways & biodiversity action group pledging to address verges - one of the last remaining refuges for many bees, butterflies, birds, bats and bugs.

NOTE: The UK's often undervalued road verges are home to over 700 species of wildflower - nearly 45% of our total flora – including 29 of 52 species of wild orchid. And as other grassland habitats disappear – [97% of meadows have vanished since the 1930s](#) - verges are a last remaining refuge for many bees, butterflies, birds, bats and bugs as the wider countryside becomes increasingly hostile. Red clover and lady's bedstraw, two of the top six verge species that support the highest number of invertebrates - are amongst the plants experiencing the most rapid decline.

Dark Skies Campaign

As you will remember the Parish Council supports this principle together with many other councils and groups. The BAA's CfDS has recently published its updated handbook for dark skies. The book can be downloaded here for free:

https://britastro.org/dark-skies/pdfs/CfDS_booklet_Rev07.pdf

Bonfires

Covid-19 and bonfires

Please be a good neighbour and do not burn waste on bonfires during the current crisis either at home or on your allotment

Covid-19 is a respiratory disease. People with underlying health conditions have been advised to self-isolate in their homes for 12 weeks. They need to go into their outside space for fresh air and open windows for ventilation.

Smoke from bonfires may cause problems for people with underlying health conditions such as asthma, bronchitis and heart conditions, so causing an extra burden on the NHS.

Any garden or household waste that cannot be collected as usual can be composted or stored until the current emergency is over.

DO NOT BURN IT



For more information and advice go to the Stroud District Council website.

<https://www.stroud.gov.uk/environment/environmental-health/pollution-and-nuisance/bonfires-and-smoke-smoke-control>

Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Council 20/04/2020

Vacancy

We still have a vacancy for anyone wishing to become a Bisley-with-Lypiatt Parish Councillor for the Oakridge Ward so please let us know if you want to step forward.

If you have any matters in Oakridge Ward please contact

Roger Budgeon Roger@greenshop.co.uk

Tony Martin brx44@ymail.com

Dennis Robbins d.robbins1945@btinternet.com

[More information at www.bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk](http://www.bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk)

Clerk - Debbie Meredith 01452 771089 admin@bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk

STROUD DISTRICT COUNCIL – RUBBISH COLLECTION

Recycling centres (Tips)

The Household Recycling centre at Horsley has opened for pre-booked appointments only,
<https://www.gloucestershirerecycle.com/>

Waste guidance for people with confirmed or possible coronavirus (COVID-19) infection

Personal waste (such as used tissues) and disposable cleaning cloths can be stored securely within disposable rubbish bags. These bags should be placed into a second bag, tied securely and kept separate from other waste in the house in which you are self-isolating. Keep aside for at least 72 hours before putting into your usual grey wheelie bin.

We recommend that people without wheelie bins who use authorised beige bags for their rubbish should place personal waste in a securely tied disposable rubbish bag (like a black bin bag) before placing in your beige sack.

Recycling, food and garden waste can be presented as normal.

In line with Government hand hygiene advice, please ensure you wash your hands after touching waste containers

DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS

Hello to you all, I hope you are all well and safe.

In the last few weeks, activity in the District Council has settled into a “new normal”. As you may have seen, we continue to collect all refuse with the exception of bulky items; most of the Business Grant money has been paid out; and other departments like planning and enforcement are doing what they are able to within the current restrictions.

First challenges

The first 'large' issue was the Business Grants. To date, only one matter had to be escalated in the ward.

In the last two weeks, the largest problem changed to Fly Tipping, excessive bonfires and noise complaints. There is some good news on this, the Recycling Centre at Hempstead is being reopened (by the publish date, they should be open). Unfortunately, the site at Horsley will not because of issues controlling "Social Distancing" at this location.

Locally, I have been working with the team in Stroud to handle fly tipping and bonfire complaints which have grown in number in the last 3 weeks here in our community too. There has also been a higher number of planning infraction complaints and noise complaints have risen from 14 to C.50 compared to this time last year.

UBICO related news

I hope you will agree, our UBICO staff are doing a fantastic job. Below are some key facts:

- Vehicle cleaning is taking place daily as social distancing cannot be adhered to when workmen share cabs.
- Green waste renewals and applications are on hold.
- There is presently a reduction in sweeping and street cleaning services.
- Waste volume has increased by 10%
- The centre that buys our recylates has continued to operate as normal.
- Agency staff have been hired to support those UBICO workers who are off.
- They have reduced workshop staff and ground maintenance staff for the time being.

Stroud funding from Central government

In other good news, funding from central government has presently totalled £1.2 million. This will offset a large proportion of this year's estimated budgetary loss of £1.6 million.

First council meetings

The first Full Council meeting took place on the 19th May (originally scheduled for the 14th May). The meeting considered some changes to the Constitution to enable Remote meetings and Emergency Decision making.

Some key council updates are below:

Council tax rates have been reduced for some individuals in the district. The approach is to first help those already receiving support. I did challenge this with the CEO and shared my opinion that a larger benefit could have been made, across more households, if a test were created to allow those not on pre-existing subsidised council tax rates to be considered first. Otherwise, many instances resulted in residents with a tax rate of 'Nil', whilst others struggled on the fringes of affordability through no fault of their own. Without discussing opposing political positions, this was rejected.

Key SDC statistics include:

- SDC is receiving 650-700 emails per day. 75% of these are actioned the same day.
- Weekly call figures are 1586, 1574 of those are answered straight away.
- 700 Stroud District businesses have been contacted about grants.
- 10 out of 362 staff are off. 2 related to COVID. This reduced the week after to 5 staff off.
- The business rates grant has seen C.2525 applications totalling £28 million. This started with 304 grants totalling 3.4 million WC. 13th April

Vulnerable Individuals

The Government has identified 1.5 million very vulnerable people, of which about 15,000 are in Gloucestershire. The District Council is telephoning or if necessary, visiting all of these to ensure they are okay and access what additional help they need. We can also do our part by ensuring we call our loved one and vulnerable relatives. I joined the Gloucestershire community hub and commend the great work that each community is doing to support our neighbours.

Planning

Although the Ebley Mill office is closed, planning officers are working from home. Non-controversial applications are being process and work continues on the Local Plan although it is not clear that this can be completed in the current timescale set, as it requires further Public Consultation which would be impossible to do in the current circumstances.

Finally

Finally, to end on a positive, the amount of people turning to their gardens, heightened awareness of pollinators and the reduction in emissions has shown how quickly Mother Nature can repair herself. *Gardeners' World*, amongst other programs, are doing a terrific job at

promoting gardening from flats, patios, balconies and shared spaces. An additional 30 million people tuned in to watch the latest series!

The ramification of this pandemic reach far and wide and there are continued concerns about PPE, testing and how we will move on from the "Lock Down" when the time comes.

If you have any specific questions let me know, and please stay safe.

Thank you, *Councillor Tim Williams*

As always, please feel free to get in touch with me on the below:

- Timothy.er.williams@outlook.com
- Mob: 07920754700
- Send / deliver a letter to Ebley Mill SDC offices

LOCAL PLANNING NEWS

Information relating to local planning issues, as outlined on the Stroud District Council website. Here is a summary of local planning news in the period 25th March to 22nd May 2020:

S.18/2027/HHOLD Alterations to windows, Clair Cottage, Oakridge Lynch	Permitted
S.20/0164/CPE Separate dwelling, Frithwood, Far Oakridge	Permitted
S.20/0840/FUL Change of use from residential annexe to holiday let, The Old Vicarage, Oakridge Lynch	Awaiting Decision
S.20/0677/LBC Changes to Library, Waterlane House	Awaiting Decision
S.20/0644/HHOLD Raise roof to single storey element, Frithwood, Far Oakridge	Awaiting Decision

Further details can be found on the Stroud Council website <https://publicaccess.stroud.gov.uk/online-applications>. For Parish Council planning input, check the website www.bisley-with-lypiatt.gov.uk.



Empty streets in Ciren



The school allotment, such a favourite with the children, stands empty.



When the lockdown began on March 23, Citizens Advice Stroud and Cotswold Districts quickly mobilised staff and volunteers away from face-to-face interviews to give one-to-one advice over the phone and via email. Since then the charity has helped over 800 people. Help can be given with applying for universal credit, navigating the government's job support schemes, how to manage paying bills, relationship breakdown, as well as many other issues.

There has also been a surge across the South West for the National Citizens Advice website with 78,483 visitors during the busiest week.

Martin, a volunteer Adviser said: "This service is vital now more than ever. There's so much anxiety around this virus and what it means for people's health, wellbeing, jobs and finances. As a volunteer, it feels good to be able to help and it's a privilege to work with such an experienced team of advisers."

Sarah Telford, Chief Executive said: "I am so proud of our volunteers and staff who have quickly rallied round to ensure no-one needs to face the financial challenges of Covid-19 alone. So if you're in need don't hesitate to pick up the phone or drop us a message, our advisers are ready and waiting to help."

The Helpline numbers are **0808 800 0510 or 0808 800 0511 Mon to Fri 10am to 4pm**, calls are free from landlines and most mobiles. For email enquiries visit our online email page <https://www.citizensadvice-stroudandcotswold.org.uk/stroud-cab-email-advice.php> and complete a short online form with a few sentences about your problem.