

London Colney News-Winter 2011

Parish Council Report

Ian Orton, Chair of Parish Council

Can I wish you all on Behalf of the Parish Council a Very Merry Christmas and a Great New Year!

2012 with the Diamond Jubilee and the Olympics not to mention all the usual community activities provided by the Parish Council is going to an amazing year:

Starting with the Queen's Diamond Jubilee – London Colney will be one of the 2,012 communities lighting a Beacon at 10.30pm on Monday 4th June 2012 to celebrate 60 since the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth. The Beacon will be in the centre of the village next to the clock and we are looking for someone who lives in London Colney who was born

on 4th June 1952! Do you know anyone who fits the bill? If so please let the Parish Council know.

The Olympics next year will take place between 27th July and 12th August and the Parish Council are planning a Film Festival as part of the Cultural Olympiad. For five nights in the London Colney Community Centre we will be showing films that you have chosen as your favorites – keep Tuesday 31st July to Saturday 4th August nights free for the London Colney Film Festival.

The Bonfire Night celebrations this year was probably the best attended ever with almost 3000 people enjoying the fireworks and the other facilities that were available and thousands of pounds

were raised to help provide additional support for activities for young people in the village and a good time was had by all!

Sadly not everyone wants to enjoy a good time and the recent acts of petty vandalism being carried out by a small

>>2

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"There goes another one!" Enjoyment on every face at the London Colney Firework display on Sunday 6th November. Record numbers and record takings for local charities.

number of people who live in London Colney are disturbing, the Police have indicated that most vandalism is alcohol related so if you are aware of any under age selling or consumption of alcohol please let the Police or the Parish Council know. We are working with the community groups to work with young people who do not feel able to use the youth facilities that are on offer. London Colney has around 10 acts of anti social behaviour per week, which is very small in a community of 10,000 people; but if we all work together to tackle anti social behaviour we can stamp it out!

I am always keen to hear how your Parish Council can improve things, if you have any ideas I can be reached at: chairman@londoncolney-pc.gov.uk

I look forward to hearing from you.

Christmas Competitions

Editor

We've had a wonderful response to our Christmas Competitions. Thanks so much to the staff and children of Bowmansgreen, St Bernadette and London Colney Schools.

The cover competition was very challenging. Clear decorative lettering is hard at any age so very well done to Sophie Stockwell, age 8, from St Bernadette. We've combined your heading with a lovely border by Joseph Horton, age 6 from Bowmansgreen. Two more dazzling borders from Sumayyah age 9 from London Colney Primary and Annalia Sparks age 8 from Bowmansgreen are on pages 16 and 17 surrounding the Christmas stories.

The 100 word stories on a Christmas theme were amazing. Cllr Blyth and I spent a happy afternoon reading them all and choosing the most interesting. The subjects range from snowmen with attitude to Christmas trees with a very bad attitude. From traditional dreams of abundance and gifts at Christmas to talking turkeys and a happy ending for a piece of tinsel.

We hope you enjoy reading the first eleven.



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Parish Council Events

December 2011 to January 2012

If you would like more information, to take part or volunteer to help with any of the following events please contact projectmanager@londoncolney-pc.gov.uk

Christmas Ball – Friday 16 December 7.00pm

A magical night, music and dancing till midnight, a five course meal and charity raffle. This year at the Community Centre Caledon Road. There might be some tickets left - worth phoning 821314 to enquire...

Popular Local Band ‘The Push’ are performing in the London Colney Community Centre on New Year’s Eve. Tickets from the Parish Council Office at £12.50. More about ThePush on page 8.

Christmas Lunch at the Luncheon Club is on Tuesday and Wednesday 20th and 21st December from 12 - 2pm. There might be some tickets left - worth phoning 821314 to enquire...

The Village Panto, Jack in the Beanstalk is on Sunday 15th January 2012, 12.30pm

Tickets £5 each or £15 Family Ticket (x4) are available from the Parish Office, London Colney Community Centre, Caledon Road, London Colney & Barkers Estate Agents, 188 High Street, London Colney (doors open 12.15pm). Book now to be sure of a treat to look forward to once Christmas is over.

Our Annual Burns Supper will be held on Friday 27 January from 7.30 to Midnight. Tickets available in the New Year.

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NEXT ISSUE SPRING 2012

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Articles should be sent to the editors c/o: Maria Aguado, 369 High Street, London Colney, AL2 1EA Tel: 823528 (phone manned evenings and weekends only) or e-mail: editor@londoncolney.com

The editors of this magazine rely on contributors for the accuracy of their articles. We regret that we cannot check all the facts, but we are happy to consider printing corrections if errors are brought to our attention. Whilst the editors endeavour to include all items submitted by the deadline given, pressure on space may sometimes mean that items will be held over for consideration in future issues and may not therefore appear in the current issue. Articles may be edited for length or clarity.

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Greek Day at Bowmansgreen

Jacky Potter

Olympic Winners were rewarded with a Greek Feast at Bowmansgreen's Greek Day in October 2011



Year 5 children at Bowmansgreen Primary School were transported 2500 years back in time recently when they enjoyed their Greek day. Dressing up in costumes reflective of the time, the children became History Detectives, investigating artefacts such as pottery and long jump weights to find out what life was like for the Ancient Greeks all those years ago.

In keeping with the spirit of the times and linking with the forthcoming exciting events of next year, they also held their own mini-Ancient Greek-Olympics, involving Long Jump, Javelin and Stade, or sprint races. Rewarded with garlands of olive wreaths, the winners were presented to their class mates who acted as the Ancient Olympic Council.

The memorable day culminated in a Greek feast, with the children sampling typical Greek foods, such as pitta, humous, taramasalata, tsatziki and of course olives!

All of this at the end of four weeks of study during which the topics ranged from

gods and goddesses, through Ancient Olympic Games, and onto warfare, resulting in a recorded 'radio broadcast' of the Battle of Marathon, complete with on-site reporters!

A farewell message

We would like to take this opportunity to thank everybody who contributed in any way to making our last few weeks at

Bowmansgreen School so memorable. We would also like to thank you too for the cards, donations, gifts and personal messages we received on the occasion of our retirements. Bowmansgreen is a very special school and will always have a place in our hearts.

Thank you.

Maureen Fisher and Sarah Duggan

"Party yourself into shape"



With Naomi

TUESDAY 8-9pm

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WEDNESDAY 9.30-10.30am

Adventure World/Harpers Gym, Perham Way AL2 1PU

All Zumba classes are £5 and for 14 years and over. Please wear suitable clothing and bring a bottle of water. Facebook: Naomi Czuba's Zumba Massive
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Odeon Journeys in London Colney

Anna Reynolds, Odeon Journey



Thanks to the generosity of the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Odeon Journey project are collecting memories of the former Odeon cinema in St Albans. We've twice visited the London Colney Community Centre's Luncheon Club and Over 60s Club to film and sound record memories, and have collected some lovely stories - some sad, some saucy - so many back row stories, and some from usherettes and other former workers. If you've got an Odeon story and you'd like us to hear it, then email us at

info@odeonjourney.org.uk or have a look at our website,

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Cricket Colts Relaunch and Climb to Raise Funds

Ian Prior

London Colney Cricket Club is looking to re launch their colts section in 2012. Former colts organiser Ian Prior has been asked to start up the youth section again following several fallow years. The club is no different from any other and needs new players if the club is to flourish in future years. Ian is hoping to start with boys who will be U10 (Year 5) or U9 (year 4) for 2012 and to take the group through to U15 cricket – in fact a 6 year plan that will hopefully lead to several of these youngsters playing in the senior teams by maybe 2015. If all goes well a new group of players will form a squad every year, so that hopefully London Colney CC can enter teams into the Hertfordshire Club competition every year. Ian is in the process of forming a small team of coaches to run winter/spring

training sessions and then to run summer teams. Ian played for the club for 30 years and now works as a free lance cricket coach. He works mainly at Choice Cricket Centre, Redbourn, as well as being the present North Hertfordshire Area Head Coach. He was a Hertfordshire County coach at various age groups 2003-2009 and is qualified to Level 3 status. A taster session (free of charge) has been arranged for Saturday 10th December 1.30-4pm so that a squad of 16 boys can be formed at 2012 U10 (year 5). Year 4 boys are of course also welcome. We would be looking to get the boys playing hard ball cricket as soon as possible. So if you are interested in cricket or maybe just sporty and would like to give it a try please contact Ian by e-mail on ian.prior2@ntlworld.com

or phone 07762353819 London Colney CC are investing money into this project and will make all new boys and their parents welcome at their lovely ground in Shenley, Green Street. Please feel free to contact Ian if you have any questions or enquiries. More info on the club website www.londoncolneycchitscricket.com I look forward to hearing from you.

KILIMANJARO FUNDRAISING FOR LONDON COLNEY CC AND CANCER RESEARCH UK

Rising 19,340 feet above sea level, Kilimanjaro is the tallest mountain in Africa and the highest free-standing mountain in the world. It is a World Heritage Site and consists of 3 volcanoes. Climbing to the peak has certain dangers, some caused by the weather but mainly by the altitude. Climbers have lost their lives as a result of altitude sickness but thankfully this is rare though it is estimated only 60 to 70% of people make it to the top.

The biggest challenge is the day (or more accurately the night) on which the summit is attempted. Typically you leave your tent at about midnight, when the temperature can be around -20 degrees or colder, for the steep ascent to Uhuru Peak - the true top of the mountain. The plan is to get there in time to see the sun rise over East Africa.

A member of the London Colney Cricket Club, John Gibbons, will be attempting the climb from January 2nd – 10th 2012 to raise funds for the Junior Cricket Programme at the Club and for Cancer Research UK. John's mother was a keen supporter of cricket at every level but sadly died from cancer in January this year and the climb is timed to commemorate her death.

The Junior Cricket Programme has been created with the specific aim of providing a safe and fun environment in which children of all ages and abilities can learn to play. The funds raised will be used to provide top quality coaching, equipment and facilities for many years to come. You can make donations online at www.cancerresearchuk.org

World Wildlife

Dave Ansell

The small, compact Blue Tit occupies a variety of habitats and can be seen in woodland, parks and, of course, our gardens throughout the year.

The Blue Tit has an olive green back, pale yellow underparts and bright blue wings, tail and crown.

They can be observed feeding on insects in summer. When insects are dormant in the winter months, Blue Tits take seeds and nuts and will visit bird tables for broken biscuits, nuts, seeds and fat. These agile little birds seem able to feed at the most awkward angles and enjoy feeding from hanging feeders.

Always make sure that birds have fresh water if you want them to visit your garden feeders.



Why I'm joining St Albans Credit Union

Jacob Quagliozi



To my shame six months ago my knowledge of credit unions was limited to say the least, and I wasn't alone, research by the University of Hertfordshire indicates that around 70 % of people in the St Albans area do not know what a credit union is. It's a strange phenomenon that in the Britain few of us are members of credit unions, whereas in the United States over 90 million Americans are. Yet credit Union's have been around for generations in this country. Their history stretches back to the industrial revolution. After hearing local residents sing the praises of our local credit union I took some time over the summer to find out a little more about it. I spent some time with the volunteers and left feeling very humbled and very grateful for the incredible work they do.

St Albans Credit Union offers much the same services as a bank; checking, savings, personal loans and business loans. What makes a credit union stand out is that they are non for profit organisations. They are not beholden to shareholders, so when they make a profit that money does not go to shareholders, instead credit unions return their profit to members in the form of lower fees and better service. What's more they are run and owned by local people in the community. With modern banking the loss of the Captain Mainwaring style bank manager, has lessened accountability, when was the last time you saw your bank manager? And would you recognise them if you bumped into them in Tesco's?. The volunteers at St Albans credit union offer a modern version of that tried and tested model; face to face financial advice in your local area. In London Colney they work out of the London Colney Community Centre

on a Tuesday.

A good proportion of the work that the credit union does goes to providing loans for deposits for private rented accomadation, though they will listen to loan applications for a varied array of reasons. What it isn't, is a source of free money. Loans have to be re-paid and there is a rate of interest, although this is far less than high street lenders or pay day loan companies. It is also a great way to encourage saving, with a kids saving club and a good rate of interest on adult savings accounts.

For these reasons, I decided I would join the credit union. Like most twenty something males I don't save enough and the credit union gives me an opportunity to do this and to help other local people. To find out more about St Albans visit <https://stadcu.org/index.html> . Information, including membership forms are also available from the Caledon Community Centre.

Keep Calm and Carry On!

Ken Peak, London Colney History Society

This was a slogan of Wartime Britain as we struggled to survive during dangerous and frightening times for Europe. While fighting raged all over the world, the people of every town and hamlet were affected in some way. Each year we recall the sacrifice made by The Fallen at our Remembrance Day parade beside the War Memorial and in church services or with private tears. Yet it was the fortitude of those who served on The Home Front (in or out of uniform) who made the real difference by keeping the faith and boosting morale as they supported the troops.

So this year our Committee opted to recall THE HOME FRONT, as it became known, and put on our annual show at the Caledon Centre Hall, by kind arrangement with the Parish Council and the help of our active members. We missed the leadership of Wally Vernon, who was 'hors de combat' for a while, but managed to bring plenty of relevant material for a display of photos and memorabilia to remember those days before Affluence ended the selfless spirit

of those days. Among those perusing the pictures of Victory Party street scenes of kids at trestle-tables ("isn't that me?") and studying books on 'Making ends Meet' and so on, we noticed a visitor with a special claim to fame - Philip Madoc, our resident actor, famous for appearing in a "DAD'S ARMY" TV scene as the U-Boat captain who asked the name of a hapless volunteer soldier - with a resultant comical reply. The Deputy Mayor and entourage also appeared briefly, as we battled with minor hitches in the arrangements, but the call "Don't Panic!" helped... The presence of so many who were personally involved in various duties, and of younger persons who had not realised just what life was like then, made us all feel the effort of presenting a free Exhibition over a couple of days in early October was well worthwhile. The older generation has a lot to be proud of, having endured such privation and loss for so long.

If you missed the chance to take part in our glimpse of history this time, why not join our society and add your own

memories to our stock of paper or pictorial records, which are now evolving into a modern digital archive. Please ask our Membership Secretary, Heather Todd, (01727) for info.



NEW YEAR with



THE PUSH

LIVE AT LONDON COLNEY COMMUNITY CENTRE
NEW YEARS EVE 8.00pm 'til LATE
Tickets £12.50 from Parish Council Office

The Push

Richard Gannon

The Push are back at the Community Centre once again, this time to ring in the New Year. Never a disappointment and always able to provide a great evening's entertainment we were lucky enough to get them on the hottest booking of the year for a second year running. For anyone who's been to one of their gigs before, they need no introduction. For those that have never heard of them, I can only assume you're new here and here's a quick introduction.

Stacey, Helen, Tom and Bryan are easily the busiest musicians in the area. They play an eclectic mixture of classics ranging from Elvis and The Beatles to Adele and The Black Eyed Peas. Their backing tracks are recorded by them personally in their own recording studio and feature

live drum and bass recordings by The Legendary Steve Rodford, The Super Tight Rocker Darren Smith and Def Sheperds brilliant Dave Lewis bass players such as Sav Gatta also contribute along with the sublime Irish Musician John Devine. Add this to their own list of talents and accolades too many to mention here along with the most loyal fanbase of any band you're likely to come across and you've got The Push.

The Push are no strangers to the Community Centre or any of the local music venues around the area, it's no secret that we've had them more than a few times this year alone and this is not due to lack of other bands on the music scene. It's really due to their amazing ability to transcend the title of 'covers band' by bringing their own special something to each of their songs that makes them more reminiscent of a production by Mark Ronson or the early Rolling Stones albums. This little extra

that they add to all their performances enables them to perform head and shoulders above the competition and makes them well worth the trip down to see them.

The Parish Council has also gone all out with the Community Centre Bar area as you may have seen. Gone is the 60's styling having been replaced with brand new furniture and seating. I would say that you wouldn't recognise it - that's not entirely true, we haven't turned it into some trendy Soho vodka bar but it has had some much needed tender loving care and now I'm glad to say we've now got a Community Centre we can be proud of.

So if you're reading this in that awkward week between Christmas and the New Year when you're wondering whether to go back to work or not and you're trying to think of something to do for New Year's eve, come and see ThePush.

Book Week and CommuniTea at St Bernadette Catholic Primary School

Lisa Barton



Pupils came dressed as their favourite toy during Book Week.

Throughout Book Week, we took part in many different activities. This included inviting an author to spend the day with us and much more. Our special guest was author Sue Hampton. The author spent time with each class throughout the day and all of the pupils took away some valuable knowledge from her workshops. Luke, 10 said "Sue Hampton has inspired me to be a writer".

As a whole school we focused on a book called "Clown" by Quentin Blake. The book had no words so it would be enjoyable for the younger children yet a challenge for the older pupils. Year Six made a book to read to the reception children which they found amusing. To make reading exciting, we came up with the idea of ringing a bell at different times of the day. This indicated that everyone must stop what they were doing and read together. Finally, on Friday as book week was drawing to an end, we had a very exciting day. All of the children and teachers at St Bernadette came to school dressed as their favourite toy. Darcie, 10 came dressed as a remote control cat. Martin, 10 came dressed as a devil. Later on we gathered together one last time to show all of the outstanding work each year group had produced throughout the week. Overall it was a busy but fun week! Isabel, 10 said "I really enjoyed seeing every one's costumes".

Written by pupils Darcie O'Meara and Martin Sexton



Pupils play the recorder to entertain visitors at the CommuniTea

We also hosted a "Harvest Communita" where members of our local community were invited to attend an afternoon tea party. The children entertained the guests and then our Year Six pupils served afternoon tea. As our invited guests left they were presented with a Harvest Gift, kindly donated by our generous pupils and their families. It was a wonderful afternoon and was thoroughly enjoyed by our guests and our school community. Our guests were full of praise and admiration for our wonderful pupils. Such was the generosity of our families, we were also able to take parcels to those who were infirm and unable to attend and also offer the surplus gifts to Open Door.



DAWN TO DUSK

Are You a Carer?

Join us at 'Dawn to Dusk'

All new and past carers welcome to join us at Charles Morris Hall, Tyttenhanger Lane, St Albans. Every Thursday 11.30am - 1.30pm Relax every Thursday with others for 2 hours.

Contact: Jo t: 01727 568552 or Rosemary t: 01727 873385

£4/week to cover costs. This group recently lost its Herts County Council funding but we have decided to set up on their own.

A flower arranging course starts in January 2012

Mummy Whisperer Wins Award

Lisa Pearson



I've just been named best 'Small Business blog' for my 'Mummy Whisperer Blog' in the MADs, a national Mums and Dads blogging competition.

...record memories... make people laugh or cry...

Blogs started out like online diaries, but have quickly become much more, with Mums in particular using them to record their memories, share experiences, meet other Mums, share tips, make people laugh/cry, or learn about new things. There were 50,000 nominations and votes this year for the MADs, showing what a thriving community it has become.

...all my family are so proud.

I am so chuffed and amazed to have won this award. I started writing a blog in 2009, to record my life as a Mum, and to help me work through the daily challenges. But it has also been a way to reach more Mums than I can I to I and help them as well. I ended up loving writing so much that I've written a book called 'Six Steps To A Sparkling You And Enjoying Being a Mum' which will have been published to the Kindle by the time you read this. Being an award winner means the world to me, and all my family are so proud.

...listening to your own innate motherly wisdom.

Check out my blog at <http://MummyWhispererBlog.com> for tips on becoming more contented and listening to your own innate motherly wisdom, rather than parenting gurus/experts.

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Elected Representatives

Parish Council

North West Ward

Maria Aguado	369 High Street	823528	maria.aguado@dsl.pipex.com
Jane Hobday	14 Telford Road	769784	janeantonia@gmail.com
Mike Hobday	14 Telford Road	07853 292 307	mike.hobday@ntlworld.com

South West Ward

Jacob Quagliozi	5 Morris Way	07807 096824	cllr.j.quagliozi@stalbans.gov.uk
Norman Mahony	36 St Annes Road	767348	ncmahony@ntlworld.com
Ian Orton (Chairman)	8 Jubilee Avenue	825169	ianorton@btinternet.com

East Ward

Laurel Blyth	30A St Annes Road	769530	laurelblyth@hotmail.co.uk
Katherine Gardener	47 Thamesdale	07765137453	auxin@hotmail.co.uk
Tony Smith	2 Summers Way	821314	tony@happylife.co.uk

St Albans District Council

Jacob Quagliozi	5 Morris Way	07807 096824	cllr.j.quagliozi@stalbans.gov.uk
Irene Willcocks	76 St Annes Road	821753	cllr.i.willcocks@stalbans.gov.uk
Dave Winstone	7 St Annes Road	822310	cllr.d.winstone@stalbans.gov.uk

Hertfordshire County Council

Chris Brazier	The Cottage, 3, Park Lane, Colney Heath, AL4 0NR	823586 07836 738853	chris.brazier@hertscc.gov.uk
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Member of Parliament

Anne Main	House of Commons, Westminster, London	0207 219 8270	maina@parliament.uk
	Constituency Office	01727 825100	

Members of the European Parliament

There are 7 MEPs for the Eastern Region. Contact them at these numbers...

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Labour: 01223 240202,

Liberal: 01223 566700,

UKIP: 01245 266466



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WE LOOK FORWARD TO WELCOMING YOU

Parish Council Meetings

are held on the first Friday of each month except in August. The next meeting will be on Friday 2nd December at 7pm in The Pavillion at Morris Way Playing Fields. Members of the public are welcome to attend.

Early in each meeting Police Community Support Officers give a report of the previous month's crime in the village followed by a Public Question time if you wish to ask questions of the PCSOs or the Councillors.

The dates for the forthcoming meetings are:

December 2nd, 2011

January 6th 2012

February 3rd 2012

Anaerobic Digester - Do we want one on our doorstep?

Maria Aguado, London Colney Parish Councillor

Agrivert, the firm who run the composting plant at Redwell Wood Farm, expect to submit a full planning application to Herts County Council in December to build an anaerobic digester on Coursers Farm.

Why here?

Agrivert have secured a 20 year contract from Herts County Council for the disposal of food and green waste. They consider the Coursers Farm site suitable because it is near major routes and it is surrounded by farmland that can be fertilised using the slurry produced by the plant. Local soils are free draining and short of organic material so can take a great deal of this material.

How big?

The site will occupy 5 acres, and consist of 8 digester tanks which will deal with 45,000 tons of food waste per year.

What goes in?

Digesters can use any organic material so long as it isn't woody; woody materials need fungus to break them down so aren't suitable for anaerobic digestion which is done by bacteria. This brings me to another reason for siting the digester on Coursers Farm; it will be near to the composting plant at Redwell Wood Farm. Household green waste is collected by district councils. It costs the councils more to sort refuse so they will be keen to continue with the current 'mixed green waste' system of collection. The new plant would like to separate food waste from woody material and Agrivert are keen to solve the problems they've had with their stinky composter by feeding it with woody waste only. It will then smell less and the food waste can be dealt with by the digester. Since the fire at Redwell Wood in May this year, Agrivert have reduced the volume taken in to the composter by 30% and sent the food waste to Cassington to cut down on the smells. This is costing them money while the smells were losing them friends locally.

Economic benefits to the company..

We asked about the economic benefits to the company; two thirds come from energy production and one third from



There are only 4 similar digesters in the UK. Parish Councillors Laurel Blyth, Katherine Gardner and I visited the one at Cassington, near Oxford to see what we could find out about anaerobic digesters and their possible impact on the locality.

Seen here beside a digester vessel at Cassington with Harry Waters of Agrivert.

the gate fee for waste. The digestate produced at the end (slurry) costs as much to distribute as it gathers in revenue.

Benefits to the rest of us...

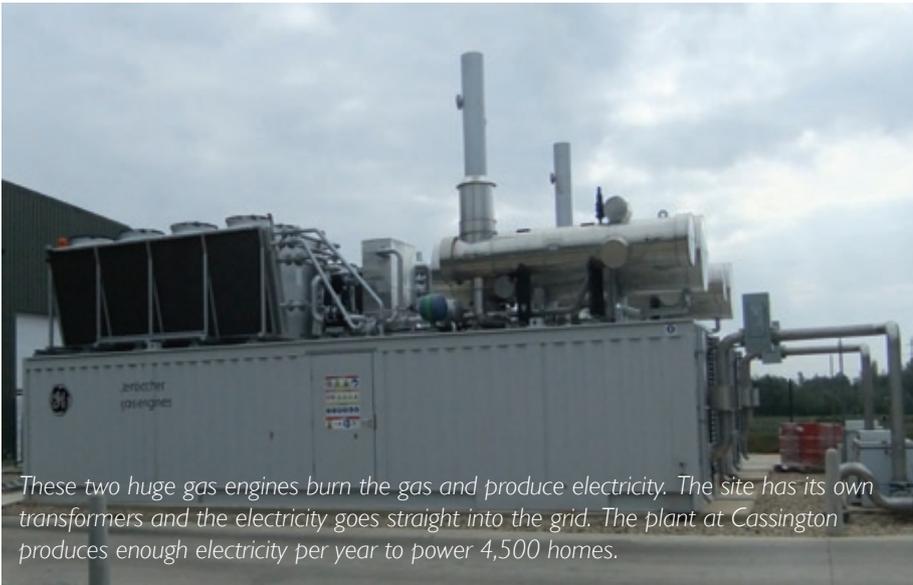
What about the benefits to the rest of us? The benefits to the wider community are reduced landfill, reduced liquid organic matter going into drains from industrial food processing, less carbon dioxide and methane to the atmosphere from landfill, energy from methane produced in the plant, replacement of fertiliser produced from oil by organic slurry. The net green house gas benefit of the plant is equivalent of taking 70,000 cars off the road annually.

Benefits to the local community...

The benefits to the local community are few; the plant, once complete, can be run by 3 – 4 qualified people. In addition, they estimate that it will provide some employment for a further 10 who will be trained by the company to maintain and repair the plant and will work as contractors. No free or reduced electricity for local homes.

Costs to the area...

The costs to the area are increased traffic. A maximum 75 lorry movements/day. Lorries are counted as they go in and as they come out so that's 37 and a half lorries per day. This is based on the smallest size of lorry; deliverers usually bulk up so this is the greatest number possible. Agrivert's experience in Oxfordshire is that this could be half this number. Most deliveries take place between 11am and 3pm. Then there are the smells. The plant was quiet when we were there, the only smelly place was the hall where the waste is delivered. A certain amount of air purification goes on but any more would be uneconomic. The strongest smell came from the silage stored on site; just like an ordinary farm odour. The slurry is spread using a tanker with cutting blades ahead of each slurry nozzle, this means that the slurry is almost injected into the ground instead of lying on top. Cassington village lies close to the Oxford plant. They seem reasonably happy with the digester though they were very much against the slurry lagoon at first.* And the visual impact... The 8 digester



These two huge gas engines burn the gas and produce electricity. The site has its own transformers and the electricity goes straight into the grid. The plant at Cassington produces enough electricity per year to power 4,500 homes.

vessels are huge but at 11.5M high at the shoulder with a domed top, they are smaller than the existing barns at Coursers Farm. They will therefore be partly concealed looking from the farm but will be in plain view as you drive along Coursers Road towards Colney Heath. There are anxieties about spills contaminating groundwater and gas leaks. The Agrivert representative assured us that the site will be surrounded by a bund or a wall. That the concrete digester vessels have been built to last 75 years in full use and would only be likely to fail in a unlikely event such as an earthquake. They do not leak if small cracks appear as concrete tends to 'self seal'. They are placed on a waterproof membrane and the space between the membrane and the digester shell is sampled regularly to ensure that there are no leaks. The entire site is covered by methane monitors which are set at a very low threshold. Hydrogen sulphide is also monitored.

We also asked - how does it work?

Anaerobic means 'without oxygen'. The digestive process is similar to an animal's

digestion. A variety of 'foods' go in, are chewed up, subjected to bacterial attack and gas and waste are produced. The anaerobic digester plant just operates on a much larger scale.

Large, regular meals...

Every day 50 tonnes of liquid food waste, mostly from the brewing and dairy industry, arrives at the plant. Stored in an underground tank, it is then mixed with 150 tonnes of solid food waste; that's everything from out of date veg and food from supermarkets, through restaurant and factory waste to food waste from council bin collections. The solid waste goes through a macerator which pulps it and removes the plastic bags. It is then stirred so that grit and broken glass can be removed from the bottom (100 tonnes/year).

...pasteurised to remove pathogens...

The resulting sludge is pasteurised at 70°C for an hour to remove pathogens like E coli then it is added to the first pair of digester tanks. The digesters are warmed to 40°C by energy produced on site and stirred continuously to produce the best

conditions for digestion.

...upset tummies...

Just like digestion in a living creature, things can go wrong! The slurry is tested every day to make sure that the acidity, Nitrogen and volatile fatty acid levels are just right. If the digestion is getting out of balance then silage is added to calm the system down and return it to equilibrium. A bit like dry toast when you've had a stomach upset. (you couldn't make it up!) Only 2% of the total volume in the tanks is added each day in case a sudden change of diet causes an upset.

The slurry stays in the first pair of digesters for 50 days, moves on to a second pair for another 25 days and then on again for the last 25 days. At each move it is macerated again to reduce the particle size. This lets the bacteria get at all of the material so that it can be broken down as much as possible. The last tanks are holding tanks – more about these later:

What's the point?

The point of all this is to produce methane gas. The methane collects above the slurry in the digesters under a sort of floating dome like a gas holder and goes from there to a pair of enormous gas engines that burn the gas to produce electricity.

*The slurry and the holding tanks...

Muck or slurry can only be spread on land between mid January and the end of October. During the winter months the soil is saturated or frozen so the slurry applied at these times would cause both compaction to the soil and nitrogen run off which is damaging for rivers and streams. There are also regulations which state that the digestate cannot be used until it has been stored for 6 months.

The plant therefore has to have places to store large amounts of slurry and this is where the last tanks come in handy. The Cassington site has a slurry lagoon but this has not been popular locally so the proposed site at Coursers Farm will have enclosed holding tanks.

Helpful?

I hope this has been helpful. The plant at Coursers Farm would be situated in Hertsmere but the Parish Council and individuals can comment on the planning application if they wish.

The Cassington plant under construction. Photo (left) shows the concrete digester vessels before they are clad with insulation.



Gardening

Anne Kitchener



Our garden is full of plants which have been gathered from many different places since we moved here. Some of these plants are long living and have been here for many years or were already here when we arrived; others are replacements of shorter living specimens or those that have perished in adverse weather conditions. Gradually over the years, I have increased the stock of plants by various means. I have bought from garden centres or nurseries, taken cuttings, which also act as insurance over winter against lower than usual temperatures or just left seed heads to spread their seeds around the garden. I have also lifted clumps of perennials which have become too big, dividing them up into smaller plants which can be used to fill a space elsewhere.

One way of increasing the plant stock is by exchanging plants, and over the years I have been given many plants from the gardens of friends, family and neighbours. Plants from this garden have been given in return. As I look around the garden these gifts remind me of the person who gave them to me and the garden they came from. Some have in turn been divided and spread around the garden becoming major features here.

When I was first developing the garden after moving here I was given a small specimen of rudbekia, this has grown and multiplied in size many times and there are now clumps all round the garden putting on a beautiful show of their bright yellow daisy-like blooms from early august right into the winter. At the same time I was given some 'lamb's ears', their pale grey/green furry stems looking majestic against other foliage in various places in early summer as they come into flower. Another favourite given by a friend is a white Japanese anemone which was slow to develop at first, unlike its pink coloured counterpart which is rather invasive, but has now formed into a beautiful drift which is in full flower in late summer into autumn, looking especially bright in the fading light of late summer evenings. Years ago, inspired after a trip to the Chelsea Flower Show with the same friend, I grew some white sweet rocket from seed and

gave her some of the seedlings. They failed to survive for long here, but in her garden they thrived, becoming a bit of a nuisance, and she insisted earlier this year that I have some of the offspring for my new flower bed – so far it is doing well but I know where to go if this too fails to survive.

A memorable feature of my childhood garden was a long row of deep orange geums, and when I moved here, Mum gave me a sample. This has been very slow to establish and I have moved it several times hoping to find a site which would suit it more. At last it is happy in the gravel garden flowering on and off all summer and is now becoming a substantial clump. Mum also gave me an off-cut from her kerria japonica which has grown into a sizable bush, and a cutting of penstemon 'Garnet', its deep magenta flowers now forming several clumps around the garden. Another gift from her garden is a delicate looking alpine pink which has a mass of small soft pink flowers in early summer and a bed of grey/green needle shaped leaves for the rest of the summer in the gravel garden. I've recently been given some penstemons of differing colours which will sit in the cold frame for protection over winter and will then be planted out to add to the colourful show next summer and hopefully for many summers to come.

Over the last 12 months we have made several major changes to the garden which has taken quite a bit of work, and although we have enjoyed planning and making all these changes, I think over the next year or so we will spend more time just sitting and enjoying the fruits of all our labours.



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Telling It Like It Is...

Ken Peak, Village Concern

There are many reasons why people like living in this village, even if it has its share of problems. We can count our blessings and celebrate our history, and enjoy numerous social facilities in a pleasant manner. There is relatively little crime or disorder, and although there is a multicultural mix here now, we seem to work well together in our lives. The physical constraints of the area - our environment - could define our future, as well as the present time. This village has main roads on all sides, plus a main railway line along one edge: it has a small river running through it, with several lovely lakes, for it lies in a valley which is rich in sand and gravel. Together these features make a unique setting to this vicinity, and give us our character as people who know each other and have a common bond which means we care for our village...

Or so we would like to think. Then why do some treat it so casually, as if the place is just a 'crash-pad' not worthy of any consideration, or any civil respect for others? Surely bad behaviour spoils the ambience of peaceful co-existence, just as careless dropping of litter blights a road or pathway? It is rude (and risky) to drive a vehicle at high speed on local roads - yet many drivers do it. Dog-fouling of footways annoys people, and bad language causes offence to many. Even when visiting our riverside Conservation Area, there are those who will not act sensibly, nor leave the place as (presumably) they would wish to find it - without rubbish and glass everywhere, with the trees and turf undamaged! At least we have been able to clear the stream-bed of debris and bottles during the recent dry period which has provoked so much comment. But perhaps it is wiser not to throw 'empties' into the water anyway? So use the nearby litter bins; return the trays to the pubs; and don't park on the paths. There is still so much to do here to improve the quality of life locally plus latent threats of rising traffic loads from the RFI rail/road links. We must begin by not making it any worse - or we cannot achieve our aims.

Courtesy counts: if our actions insult or inconvenience other people, we are guilty of disrespect, if not some legal offence. 'Obstruction of the highway'

covers several parking sins, but especially on forbidden zones where visibility is hindered or disabled folk have priority. In any case, we are not entitled to ignore what others think, nor to intimidate those who dare to comment. The law is there to protect us from the unruly, or the few who believe it does not apply to them.

"Manners maketh the Man" it was once claimed, and that is still true today if stress is not to be the ruin of modern life. Cooperation is the key, and our personal conduct will ensure general respect, a safe environment and lasting friendships.

It is really up to each of us now. But what do YOU think?

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One Lost Present

It was the night before Christmas and as dark as Doomsday when I was trapped in the diminutive box, wrapped in premier wrapping paper with appealing bows stuck to it.

I plummeted down at top speed, 'AH Ah Ah!' I bellowed in tremendous fear ... BASH! My box was demolished and I tumbled out, I scanned the area. I looked up, a colossal amount of snow piled on top of me. I ambled to a gargantuan door with a whopping flap. I went through. I heard another present moving about and we shared a box. The next day it was Christmas and presents were opened. Very briefly I was in the arms of a mild boy.

'This is the most splendiferous gift I could ever have!' and he gave me a big hug.

Oluwatobi Ewuosho Age 10

Christmas Story

Once upon a time there was a family called the Smiths. They weren't an ordinary family, they were a family who lived for Christmas. They prepared for months for this special day. The Smiths were a very large family, ten people and that's without the aunts and uncles who all came to visit at this special time of year. Uncle Dan made the most delicious Christmas pudding and

Auntie Cass made the best Irish Stew. As you may gather, everybody brings their own special dish, their table will be full and there will be lots to eat for everyone.

Katrina Marie Sexton Age 9

I Saw a Smile in Me at Christmas

My life saw a smile in me, my Lord sent down his glory, the night was mine, my heart was brighter than ever, the grass was greener than green. The snow was flourished all over, the twinkle made my arm (hairs) raise.

I thought I saw Santa's elves but no this was just my eyes telling lies again. I clambered downstairs and peered under the Christmas tree. It was a magnificent sight, I couldn't believe my eyes - so many presents for me!

Is this a dream? If it is, it is a dream of all dreams. Dreams start high on hilltops.

Rachel Costello-Dunn Age 10

The Annoying Turkey

Not very long ago a family of four were celebrating Christmas by having a splendid Christmas whilst watching TV. While the dinner was warming up the family was elegantly lighting up the candles as they went. Meanwhile, in the decorated kitchen, something unusual was happening. A marinated

turkey started to blabber on and on! Oh no! It was the Annoying Turkey. 'Hey mashed potato, where are you?' repeated the annoying turkey without taking a breath. As the family approached the kitchen their eyes glistened as they saw the turkey. They got the knife out - ready to cut...

Mathusa Karunaharan

The Christmas Tree

Once there was a Christmas tree called Bauble. He was the greenest tree in town and he had wonderful baubles, candy canes and little bells but best of all, he had a magnificent star right at the top. Also everything was just beautiful. Bauble was loved by his family - the Bowens.

One day the Bowens came in with some boxes and started to take off the decorations. They started to take Bauble down! He tried to tell them but they did not listen. This is the end of Bauble's life! If only he'd known...

Leah Rowson

The Cool Snowman

Once upon a time there lived a snowman. He thought he was the coolest snowman. He had an orange juicy carrot (nose) and the fluffiest snow that was made, the best coke bottle arms in the word and a very beautiful stripy



hat. Meanwhile he didn't recognize he was melting. One evening the snowman was shrinking. He tried to stay cool but he could not - the sun melted him away.
Anon

The Secret Life of Tinsel

One day there was a piece of tinsel. Every Christmas it was stuck at the bottom of the tree. One year he fell; he got stuck in the floorboards! He lay and watched the children open their presents and wished he could be with them. One day the family were gone! Timmy, the new little boy, saw something glittery, he tugged it and discovered it was tinsel! That year Timmy's mother put it at the very top of the tree. The tinsel had finally found a home. He can still be found chatting contentedly to the Christmas Fairy.
Jessica Wood

The Mystery Christmas Tree

It was a cold misty Christmas eve as we slowly made our long wintry walk to get our Christmas tree. Then suddenly in the snow I saw the tree to have. It was standing in the middle of the ring of trees. It had fine needles, beautiful lovely green appearance. We decorated it and it looked

amazing. As I closed the door, I thought I heard a giggle. When I came down to open my presents, I didn't see what I wanted to see. The decorations, presents, all ripped open and broken. pine needles were trailing out of the room through the smashed window!
Jack Blakie Age 10

Unwrapped

I'm Roxanne and I am here to tell you a Christmas Story about a rag doll - that's me. It started in London. I was sitting on a dusty shelf, being a lifeless, loveless doll, when I was dropped into a plastic bag. Soon after, I was sat on some wrapping paper and tightly bound inside it. I was then tucked under a glimmering Christmas tree overnight. I was awoken by a rough shake. It was excruciatingly painful. I was immediately ripped open. My button eyes winced in the dazzling light. Suddenly, I found myself being given a hug by a girl. The little girl had filled me with love forever.

Claudia Martighetti Age 10

Christmas Dream

One winter's night I snuggled down in bed feeling nice and warm. Suddenly the bedroom was full of light, at the bottom of my bed stood a

figure. I was frightened at first then I saw who the figure was. It was Father Christmas.

I asked him why he was here and he answered that as I had been a very good boy during the year, I was entitled to a visit from him. He asked me what present I would like from him? I told him I would like a Thomas the Tank Engine Train Set. Suddenly I woke up and there at the bottom of my bed was the train set. Had I been dreaming or did I really have a visit from Father Christmas.
Alex Bryant Age 7

Weird Santa

Once upon a time there was a boy called Tom. He was so happy because it was Christmas. But every time it was Christmas, Santa gave him the wrong thing. Tom once wrote to Santa but he didn't know how to spell trampoline so so he said 'Give me something jumpy.' So Santa gave Tom a pogo stick. But this Christmas Tom wanted something snowy then the next day Tom woke up. Tom opened his present. It was a penguin. Tom spent his whole life with the penguin but one day the penguin wanted to go to see the other penguins so Tom took him back.

Shuramie

St Peter's Church

Rev'd. Lynne Fawns



Christmas is one of my favourite times of the year. I love a good celebration and Christmas seems to have it all, as it's an occasion that seems to assault all of our senses. There are the Christmas trees,

fairy lights, carols, cards, good food, parties and so on. For Christians our celebrations take on even more intensity as festivities overflow from the utter joy in our hearts that God loved us so much that he

came down to earth in the form of a simple baby - Jesus Christ. So, although Christians still thoroughly enjoy the usual trappings associated with Christmas, it is the vision of that manger scene which really fills and fuels our hearts and celebrations with joy.

Having said that I do realise that many find Christmas a difficult time of the year, perhaps because of illness, relationship problems, general or financial worries, bereavement and so on. With the present difficult economic conditions, the worry about our livelihoods, and with shopping and utility bills soaring on a daily basis.....this Christmas will for many be very difficult. Yet, that does not mean that we should let Christmas pass us by because when we cut through presents, lights, parties, etc. there is at the heart of Christmas a message for each one us – whatever our situation.

That message lies in the realities of the Nativity Scene. Make no mistake about it; there is a stark and indeed harsh reality within that manger scene which is so easily overlooked if we're not careful. I sometimes feel that we have allowed this vision of the Holy Family in the Nativity to become just another lovely warm decoration, which sits beside the Christmas tree, holly and tinsel. We have sentimentalised this scene so much in the effort to make it look cosy that we have masked its true and wondrous and power, so can I urge you to look at it afresh. Because, in that well known and loved Nativity Scene we actually see a couple immersed in the harsh realities of life. We have Joseph who is supporting a woman who has just given birth to a child, which isn't biologically his. There is Mary who because she is having a baby out of wedlock has to bear the rejection of family and society as women did 2000 years ago. In that scene we are confronted by a couple who obviously haven't any finances and are travelling in poor circumstances. They are homeless, have not prepared for the baby and have no family around them and I could go on.

These are the realities present in that lovely Nativity scene sitting cosily in our homes and to ignore them means we are missing the true power of it. The power

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*Lights will be switched off on New Years Day.



lies in the fact that God, our heavenly Father and creator chose to come down to earth, not as a King, but amongst us, in the harsh realities of life. He came as a vulnerable baby and throughout his life shared in all the human emotions and sorrows we experience joys, fears, sadness, desperation's, bereavements, and hardships. In other words through Jesus Christ we now have a God who knows and has experienced what it is to be human.....the joys and the sorrows. Through that first Christmas, we know we have a God who continues today to understand and empathise with what is going on in our own lives. Importantly, through that first Christmas we now have a God who is there for us today, ready to embrace you with his loving guidance, His comfort, His peace and hope. May I take this opportunity to offer

you all St Peter's warmest greetings this Christmas and indeed may we offer you a warm invitation to come to any of our services – however you feel. You will be made very welcome! We hope you all have a very peaceful and hopefully a happy Christmas and that your celebrations are truly blessed and filled with joy. But can I urge you to just take a few minutes out this Christmas time to take time to look afresh at that Nativity Scene whether it's situated in the shops, sitting beside your Christmas Tree, on a Christmas card or in St Peter's Church. Can I urge you to just spend a few moments looking even more closely at it, to see the harsh realities underpinning it, to reflect upon it and truly see the reason why we are celebrating this wonderful event? I pray that everyone - especially those who are going through a difficult

time - will experience afresh in that Nativity Scene ... God's love, God's hope, God's peace and relevance for their own lives.

A very peaceful and joyous Christmas to you all!

Lynne and the family of St Peters

Christmas Services at St Peter's Church
Sunday 18th Dec
11.30am Lights of Love switched on
5pm Carols by Candlelight followed by juice/ wine and mince pies
Christmas Eve
4pm Crib and Christingle Service
11.30pm Midnight Mass
Christmas Day
10am Eucharist

Christmas picture by Deborah - Thanks!

Alexander Church - 50th Carol Service

Pastor Keith Simpson



This picture was taken in front of the old wooden hall around 1954, before the current Church was built. It's hard to remember that Sunday School was ever this popular! Do you recognise any of these faces? Let the Editor know if you do.

Fifty years ago on 10 December 1961, Alexander Church held its official opening for the new church building. Prior to this the church met in a wooden hall, known as Alexander Hall. Many in London Colney will have memories of coming to Sunday School, Bible Class or Covenanters at that time.

To mark these fifty years we have been holding a number of special events, the final one being our carol service

on 11th December. No matter how special this occasion is for us, it pales into insignificance compared to the anniversary of another special event that took place 2000 years ago. God entered world history, in the form of Jesus Christ, born in Bethlehem in a stable.

Our carol service will be celebrating 50 years in our church building but more especially, celebrating the birth of a Saviour

The birth of Christ was announced to a group of shepherds and to wise kings, astronomers, from the East, Two extremes of society, the shepherds were very poor and uneducated, whereas the kings were rich, educated and were entertained by the rulers of the day. The message that they received, however, was the same, "good news of great joy that will be for all people. Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord". Both the shepherds and the kings responded alike, they knelt before a little baby and worshipped him as God. At Alexander Church we regard all as equal irrespective of background or position, believing that God came to this world in the form of Jesus Christ, to reconcile man with God through the forgiveness of sin.

After 50 years we still worship Jesus as The Son of God and we are still proclaiming the same message, that no matter how good or bad, God's love extends to all.

All visitors will be warmly welcomed at our carol service, especially if you have in the past had some association with our Church. The service will be on 11 December at 6.00pm at Alexander Church, Alexander Road.

London Colney Baptist Church

Adrian Wood

Three years ago, we moved to St Albans from Croydon. We quickly forgot the amount of energy and effort that moving house involved. The move to London Colney brought it all back! The strange thing is, whether one moves 70 miles around the M25 or a couple miles from the city centre to a nearby village, the energy and effort required remains the same!

I am not a complete stranger to village

life as I grew up in a much smaller village in the heart of Sussex. Neither am I new to London Colney, as I knew Peter, the previous minister at the Baptist Church and took a few services on previous occasions. Life for me begun in a village, and after a gap of 15 years, I have returned to it.

Origins and beginnings are important - where we come from and who we are matters. Hollywood spends millions

every year making new or re-creating films that explain the origins of something or someone. For example, films about superheroes such as Thor or Green Lantern. People enjoy this type of story, especially if it is told well. But sometimes the story is lost in-between the special effects, glitz and glamour. As a Star Wars fan I have to admit the prequels are a prime example of this!

Winter is normally very busy within church communities. I have begun my role as Pastor at the Baptist Church having to consider, remember and/or celebrate various festivals. The origins of these festivals are important and the reason why they are observed matters but in some cases they have lost their meanings due to the equivalent of effects, glitz and glamour.

Harvest, All Hallows Day and Christmas have their roots in or have been adopted to tell something of the Christian story. Behind the commercialism that seems to have overwhelmed these festivals, the stories speak about remembering God's provision, helping the poor and those who have lived out their faith in different times. The year ends with Christmas, the birth of Jesus bringing the good news that he is Immanuel, God with us.

London Colney Baptist Church is not the only place where people can hear the re-telling of these stories. The way they are told may differ, but the meaning will be the same at St Peter's, Alexander Free Church, the Roman Catholic Church or even the Pastoral Centre.

Anyone visiting us at the Baptist Church in King's Road will be welcome at any time of the year and especially during one of the festivals (dates for our Christmas services are below). The stories are worth hearing again and we offer a smile and refreshments as all part of the experience.

Service times: Every Sunday at 10.30am
On the 18th December the 10.30am service includes communion



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'Good With Outstanding Features'

Lisa Valla

For some time now, the school has been looking forward to the return of the OFSTED Inspectors! I'm aware that this is an unusual statement to hear from a Head Teacher, but the whole of the school community has worked so hard over the past few years that we felt that it was time that our achievements were formally recognised.

However, when the phone call arrived just 4 days into the school year, we had no time for a calm and smooth return to school after 6 weeks off! The resulting grades and the written report have made that quick dash into action completely worthwhile.

'...attainment is rising year on year.'

The school achieved an overall grade of Good and the report clearly states that the school is continually improving. In the report, the Inspector writes that, 'The school has worked hard to drive up standards and its determination is paying off because attainment is rising year on year.'

'Pupils enjoy learning and concentrate well...'

The success of this rise in attainment can be attributed, in part, to the excellent attitude and behaviour of the pupils. We are extremely proud of our children and OFSTED recognised this in their report, saying, 'Pupils enjoy learning and concentrate well... They have an excellent understanding of right and wrong, play harmoniously together and are very tolerant of each others beliefs and cultures.'

'My child has become more confident since attending this school'

Parents also contributed well to the inspection and their comments reflected the excellent relationship that the school has with them. One parent wrote, 'My child has become more confident since attending this school' and another stated that they felt, 'The Head Teacher and the teachers are running the school very well. I am very happy with my children's progress and the children are happy too.'

'Caring for each other, succeeding together'

Outstanding grades were achieved in 3 areas of the inspection. The school was particularly proud of its Outstanding grade in 'Care, guidance and support of pupils.' The school's motto, 'Caring for each other, succeeding together' is built around the understanding that all children need to feel happy and cared for, before you can get the best out of them academically. So, we were delighted that this was recognised as a strength in the school by OFSTED.

'...we still have high ambitions for the school and its pupils ...'

I think the tone of this article will lead you to understand that we are all a little bit proud of ourselves at the moment! However, we still have high ambitions for the school and its pupils and this drive will enable us to continue to improve further. If you would like to read the full report for yourself, you can find a copy on our school website or the OFSTED website. Thumbs up for a great OFSTED!

Have You Walked this Way?

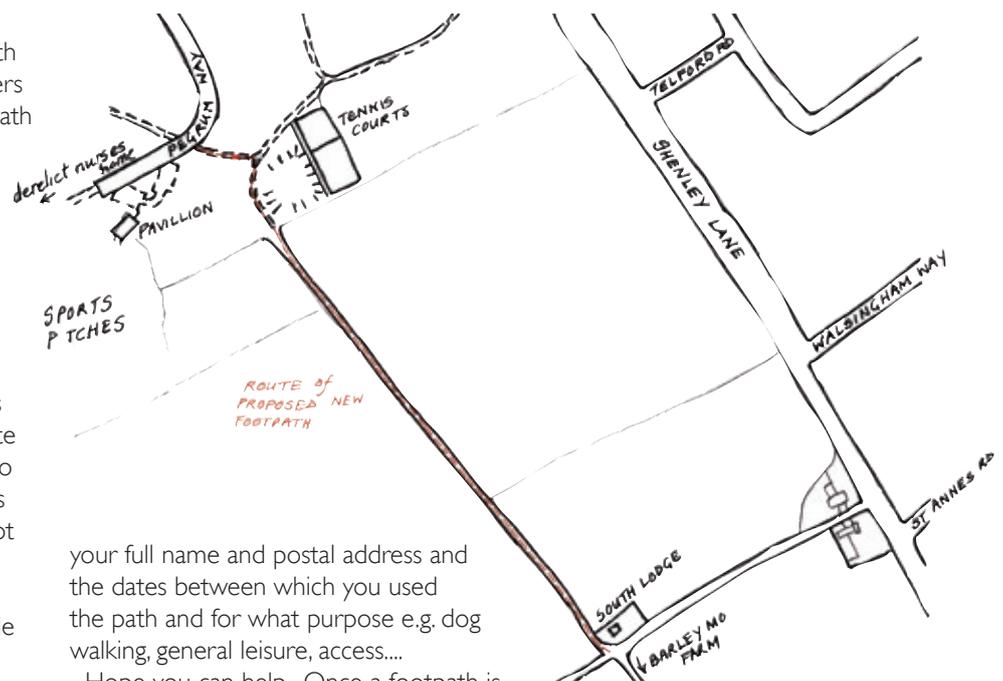
Maria Aguado, London Colney Parish Council

This farm track and the informal path that joins it to Pegrum Way to the south of Napsbury Park is well used by walkers and cyclists. The land over which the path runs is mostly owned by the County and District Councils.

I have approached both Councils and a number of other landowners who have interests in the land to ask if they are prepared to dedicate a public footpath shown on the map as red dotted line. So far the response has been positive but I am advised that it is very unusual for landowners to dedicate footpaths voluntarily. The usual route to dedication is to prove that the path has been in continuous use for 20 years, not necessarily by the same individuals!

Therefore, I wish to collect evidence of public use and hope that local people reading this article can provide such evidence. Have you walked or cycled over this path? Please contact me on t: 01727 823528 (eves) or

e: maria.aguado@dsl.pipex.com giving



your full name and postal address and the dates between which you used the path and for what purpose e.g. dog walking, general leisure, access...

Hope you can help. Once a footpath is added to the definitive map it guarantees access in perpetuity, it cannot be built over or diverted without very good reason.

St Albans Wood Recycling – Recycled Timber for your Garden and Home

Peter Ryan

St Albans Wood Recycling is a not-for-profit social enterprise with a simple ethos: 'We want to prevent waste wood from going to landfill by selling it back to the local community and at the same time provide jobs and back to work training and experience for disadvantaged members of our community' says Geoff Deans, director of SAWRP. He explains that they do this by collecting waste wood from building sites and sorting it into usable and unusable groups. The unusable wood is sent for wood chip which is used as a biomass fuel, an ever increasing source of renewable energy. Usable wood is de-nailed and tidied and stored for sale. SAWRP also make and can do to your own designs simple house and garden furniture. Geoff adds that this uncomplicated and efficient process means that none of the wood they collect ends up in landfill. To date they have prevented 632 tonnes from going to landfill, created one part-time and 3 full time and jobs and have provided 2200 hours of work experience and voluntary attendance.

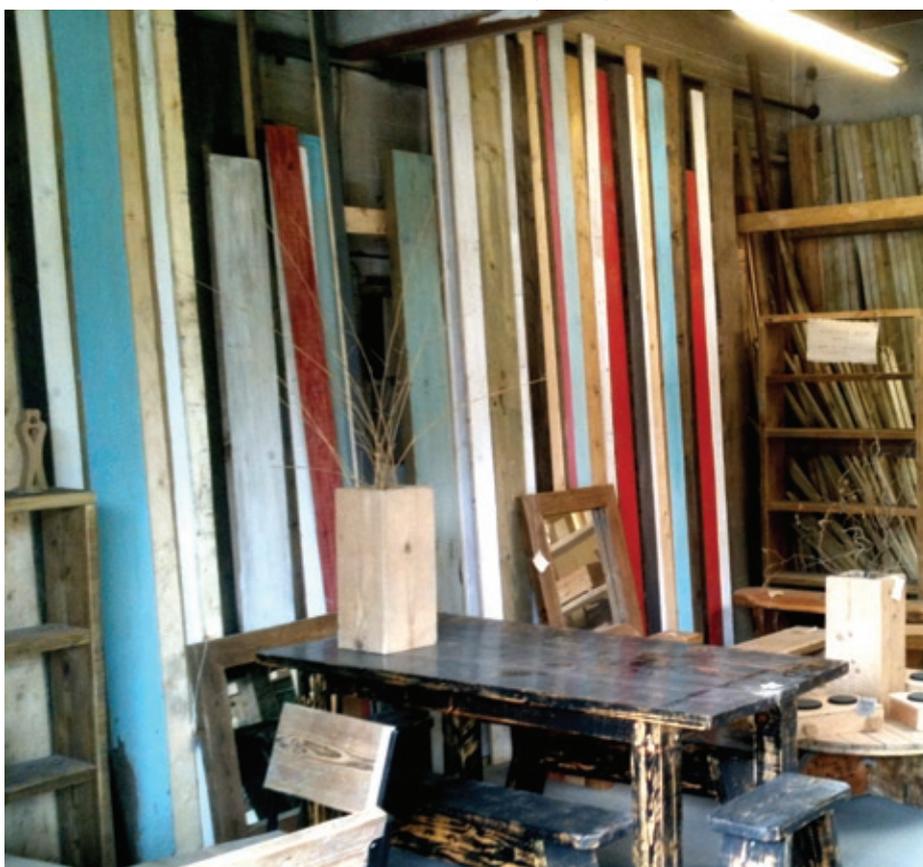


SAWRP has a small warehouse in Fleetville, St Albans and is open from 0830 – 1700 weekdays. Geoff is keen for his organisation to become more locally recognised and is eager to

supply affordable wood for more local environmental projects having lost count of the number of raised beds and planters his team have sold and delivered over the two years of the organisation's existence. 'I am always delighted when a customer is able to start or continue growing their own vegetables with the help of our recycled wood products, I think it gives the vegetables an even better taste!!' says Geoff although he adds he rarely gets to see the fruits of his customer's labour! Recently local schools have been provided with timber to make raised beds in the school grounds and Geoff's team have made sorting benches from recycled scaffold boards and components for a charity that recycles clothing.

Geoff is confident about the future 'We think that recycling can only become a larger part of our lives and we are ideally suited to be able to satisfy the demand in our particular area, recycled wood at affordable prices!'

Geoff and his team can be contacted at 11a Pickford Road, off Sutton Road, St Albans AL1 5JH 01727 568202 or visit their website: www.stalbanswoodrecycling.org.uk



Prepare for Rising Prices

Gordon Glass, Sustainable Energy



The message isn't new, but it has more urgency. The Prime Minister met the Big Six energy suppliers and they agreed to write to 4 million households inviting them to Check, Switch and Insulate to Save.

The concern is over rising energy prices. According to the Financial Times, the average dual fuel customer now spends 6% of income on energy bills compared to 3% in 2004. If the trend persists the average household faces fuel poverty by 2015.

The trend is upwards, so how do we counter it? Here are two tips.

1) Insulate Your Home

Take the frost check. If the frost thaws faster on your roof than your neighbour's, heat is escaping. Top up your loft insulation to 270mm (10.5") to prevent this. Council grants reduce the cost and it could be free if you are aged 70 or over.

2) Switch Energy Supplier

With 400 tariffs available, a comparison site can help. If you prefer not to switch, review your payment method - direct debit is cheaper. Ofgem has said it will simplify standard tariffs so like-for-like comparison will get easier.

For more information, visit www.cocoonyourhome.co.uk or phone 0800 8048 777.

Cocoon Your Home compares prices for insulation, solar and energy. The service is impartial, independent and run by United Sustainable Energy Agency, a not-for-profit organisation.

Topping up your loft stops heat escaping



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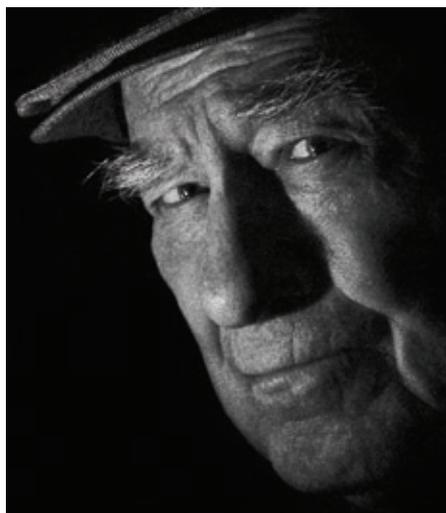
Park Street Camera Club

Rosemary Wenzelul

We are a small and extremely friendly Club, we welcome new members (both beginners and advanced photographers) and you will always be given a warm welcome on arrival. If you would like to come along one evening as a visitor, you will be more than welcome (there is no pressure to join) we meet at 7.45pm for 8pm start, each Thursday at St. Stephen Parish Centre, Station Road, Bricket Wood.

*Visit our website to view our programme, photo galleries, competition winning photographs and much more.

Please contact Rosemary Wenzelul, Publicity Officer, on 01923 677111 for further information or see our website at www.parkstreetcameraclub.com
Wishing you all a very Happy New Year.



©Photograph 'Dad' by Club Member Jeremy Fraser-Mitchell

Grants 2012-2013

Ian Orton, Chairman, LCPC

The Parish Council awards small grants to individuals and groups resident or based in the village who will carry out activities that will help improve the quality of life for people within the village.

During 2011 - 2012, the Parish Council gave £15,000 in grants to local groups and individuals. Grants can consist of free or reduced charges for use of council facilities or a financial contribution to an activity. If you wish to apply for a grant please contact the Parish Clerk at 01727 821314 or email parishclerk@londoncolney-pc.gov.uk. Applications need to be returned by 31st January 2012 and decisions will be made at the March meeting of the Parish Council.



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