

Purton. Magazine

April 2021



This spring sees the lockdown restrictions being eased, the home straight for the Church Renewal Project, and the arrival of new additions on our local farms — lots to keep Purton people positive. See pages 31, 32, 56, & 58.

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Purton Contacts

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Dental Surgery	Church Street	770532
Junior Church	Mary Hodges	770505
Library	Librarians	770870
<i>(Mondays 2-5pm; Tuesdays 2-7pm; Wednesdays 10am-5pm; Fridays 2-5pm)</i>		
Luncheon Club	Pat Suddaby	771331
<i>(Tuesdays and Thursdays, 12 noon, Silver Threads Hall)</i>		
Museum	Curator: Beth Farnham, bethaney23@icloud.com	
Police/Fire/Ambulance	Emergencies	999
Police	Non-emergency	101
Age Concern Minibus	Hazel Woodbridge	770862
Purton Parish Council	Deborah Lawrence	771066
Purton Silver Threads	Lindsey Hall	771890
Recycling Centre, Mopes Lane, (10am-4pm: Mon, Thurs, Fri, Sat, Sun)		
Veterinary Surgery	Purton Vets	771869
Pips Community Café	Duty volunteers	07498 526872
<i>(Tuesday-Friday 9am-4.30pm, Saturdays 10am-2pm) www.facebook.com/purtoncommunitycafe/</i>		

Schools & Playgroups

Bradon Forest School	Secretary	770570
Pear Drops at Playclose	Sarah Grigg	950159
Pear Drops Pre-School (formerly Under 5s')	Sarah Grigg	978536
St Mary's Primary School	Secretary	770239

Church of England - Parish Church of St Mary www.stmaryspurton.org.uk

For information about services, see the diary pages in the centre of the magazine.

Vicar: Revd Ian Tweedie-Smith email: vicarage@stmaryspurton.org.uk
Tel: 770077 (773031 emergencies only)
Curate: Revd Judith Wells email: judithwells36@googlemail.com
Tel: 770627

Wardens Sandra Horsnall: Jane Smith:
770157 772422

Administrator: Rosie Harris administrator@stmaryspurton.org.uk Tel: 773035

Methodist Churches *For information about services in Purton, see the diary pages in the centre of the magazine. Braydon: Sundays 6.00pm Evening Worship*

Minister: Revd David Perkins Tel: 853197, 1 Garraways, Woodshaw,
Royal Wootton Bassett SN4 8LT

Catholic Church - Church of the Sacred Heart, High St, Royal Wootton Bassett

www.thesacredheartparish.co.uk

Priest: Revd Father Lucas Tel: 852366

Rodrigues

Services: Holy Mass Sunday 11.00am. Mon, Tues, Wed 9.30am. Fri 7.00pm

Catholic Church - St Mary's Church, High St, Cricklade

Priest: Father Michael Robertson Tel: 01285 712586 St Mary's Church

Services: Holy Days 7.00pm, Sundays 9.30am Mass.

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Welcome to the thirteenth edition of *Purton Magazine* to be published during Covid-19 restrictions. Visit www.purtonmagazine.co.uk

Purton. Magazine

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From the Editors

So now we have a 'road map' for coming out of the latest lockdown – although it simply looks like a timetable. At least local businesses can now prepare for re-opening with a little more confidence and ever-lengthening 'hopeless' hair (for example) can soon be tamed and tidied.

In your magazine this month readers will find several articles about the future of the Village Centre in general and the Red House club in particular including references about how the facility was purchased and established. Also looking back is an article on page 40 from a reader who used some of the lockdown to re-read the Purton 2000 village diary called "a year in the life of the village told by Purton people." Early in 2000 there was a flu-like virus going around the village that seemed to take several weeks before sufferers were able to shake off the associated hacking cough.

It seems that many things have stayed the same, although today's readers will be able to judge whether the most important activity is still to drink tea at every opportunity! Even further back to April 100 years ago, there was a poem competition that was run by Gardner's for their Lardies – see page 38. The famous product from their bakery in the village seemingly had a wide regional distribution with many satisfied consumers. Perhaps that's why drinking tea has become such an important pastime in Purton.

Looking forward, the exciting renewal project at St. Mary's church is nearing completion. More details are on page 31 and include information about the completion of the new inside toilets, the new kitchen/servery and the raised dais. Photographs of all the changes so far can be seen on www.stmaryspurton.org.uk/RenewalPhotos While the inside is being finished off, the opportunity to have the church floodlit – and a mention in this magazine – is restarting on 1st April; further details on page 29.

The RWB Environmental Group article has interesting information on page 42 about three initiatives. One is a project to plant "Trees for Tom" – the late Captain Sir Tom Moore of recent NHS fundraising fame – plus Bee Saving Kits from Friends of the Earth and a project about searching for one of the rarest specimens of bats in the UK – the barbastelle.

Finally with Spring clearly on its way, this month's 'remembered book' is *The Secret Garden* by Frances Hodgson Burnett on page 60 and is very appropriate.

18

Working Guide Dogs for the blind have been co-sponsored by Purton – see page 19

578

'RunVembrians', including several from Purton, supported homeless people – see page 61

<2,500

Patients and their families supported by the Prospect Trust in 2020 – see page 64



Volunteer Awards Scheme

A huge thank you to those who nominated members of our community for their dedication and strength during difficult times. The Parish Council has made their decision and will be announcing the winners shortly. Watch this space!

DONATIONS AVAILABLE

Calling all Community Groups... Do you have a new project that needs financial support? If your group is of benefit to the people of Purton and financial support is required to start a project, please contact our offices or complete an application form available on our website. Please do not hesitate to contact the Clerk direct for more information. Applications required by Monday 7th June 2021 to be considered on 21st June 2021. www.purtonparishcouncil.gov.uk/Financial-Details.aspx

Council Meetings

All meetings will continue to be held virtually until we are advised that we can return to face to face safely. If anyone wishes to attend, please contact the Clerk via email or phone and a link will be sent.

Monday 12th April	Annual Parish Meeting
Monday 19th April	Full Council meeting
Monday 26th April	Village Centre Charity Meeting

Elections

Town and Parish Council elections will be going ahead. For more information, please visit www.wiltshire.gov.uk/article/1283/Town-and-parish-elections.

Approved Planning Applications

- 20/11031/LBC 20 High Street, Purton. SN5 4AE. Internal alterations, external render; windows replacement and new boiler with flue.
- 20/08074/FUL 38 Stone Lane, Lydiard Millicent. SN5 3LD. Retrospective alterations to garage.
- 20/10614/FUL 12 Vasterne Close, Purton. SN5 4EY. Demolition of the garage and erection of a single storey side and rear extension.
- 20/11052/FUL 39 Restrop View, Purton. SN5 4DG. Proposed single storey rear extension.
- 19/11753/FUL 10 Cricklade Road. Purton. SN5 4HX. COU outbuilding to residential ancillary accommodation, including external alterations to the elevation.
- 20/10967/FUL 2 College Road, Purton. SN5 4AR. Single storey rear extension.
- 20/11414/FUL Upper Pavenhill Farm, The Old Dairy. Upper Pavenhill, Purton. SN5 4DQ. 1.5 Storey infill extension and 2 new ground floor windows.

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Purton Magazine is available online!

Each issue is uploaded around the middle of the month, and all previous editions of the magazine are available. So wherever you are in the world, keep up to date with all the village news!

www.purtonmagazine.co.uk



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20/11036/FUL 4 Cricklade Road, Purton. SN5 4HS. Single storey rear extension to enlarge kitchen.

20/11015/FUL The Barn, New Road. Purton SN5 4HF. Proposed alterations, extension, and associated works (Resubmission of 20/07698/FUL)

Purton Cricket Club

The Cricket Ground has a public footpath that runs along the Purton House edge of the field. Please can we request that dogs are kept on leads and you do not detour from the footpath. Discarded sticks, dog waste all adds to the issues faced by the cricketers and the maintenance team. Thank you for your cooperation and support of the club and its users.

The Future of The Red House Club, Purton

To clarify a few points raised on social media:

The 'Red House' will reopen as soon as we are able to do so and we are looking forward to welcoming old faces back and to welcome new ones. We are also working with the staff on the changes to ensure they are treated correctly.

The charity is managed by the trustees, not the parish council, so council tax is not relevant to these changes however the council is able to make small cash grants to aid local charity and non-commercial projects. Recent recipients have been Pips Café, Purton Football Club, St Mary's Church, Purton Patient Participation Group to name but a few over the years.

There will be a management team in place to run the day-to-day operation, but we welcome support of volunteers to help out! Volunteers have been important and will continue to be so helping with larger events and quizzes.

The charity and maintaining the facilities within the village centre are at the heart of our decisions making. There are no development plans for flats, houses nor plans to install anything else, such as the council, into the Red House building.

The short-term plan is to get it open, for all. The longer term is adding the fit for purpose outside space, compliant disabled access, longer opening hours and developing a facility for all.

The Red House committee have done a great job over the years but change to the setup is required to ensure future growth and success.

As previously communicated, this will all run under the arm of the charity so will be legal, transparent and there for you all to enjoy. All profits will be put back into the village centre charity.

Changes at the Village Centre

Following the formal press release we have thought it best to update you as to what we are planning and why we are doing so, this will hopefully reassure, that our intentions are honourable and that the long-term future of the charity itself is front and centre of our decision-making process.

Having seen the commentary on social media and following conversations with other trustees who have been approached directly, this is a very emotive subject. To dispel the rumours – there is no ‘developer in waiting’ with a grand plan to remove ‘a gift that was given to the village for all to use’. Some of the interactions have been rude and somewhat intimidating towards individual trustees. This will not be tolerated, and it should be noted that all trustees are volunteers that are held to scrutiny by the Charity Commission.

Running a charity is complex and rightly held to scrutiny. Everything needs to be legally correct and compliant with the laws that govern charities with trustees having the best interest of the charity at the forefront. Information on the village centre charity, its aims and objectives can be found here <https://register-of-charities.charitycommission.gov.uk/charity-search/-/charity-details/305562/charity-overview>. With regard to transparency, you can view the audited accounts and chairman’s commentary going back several years, there has never been doubt, to my knowledge, that the running of the charity has been in question.

Like many things there is lots of history and it is maybe helpful for me to outline some of it. The construct of how the facility known as the Red House club (I’ll use RHC to keep the word count down) operates is complex...

Over 20 years ago, to allow a private members club to operate within a charity, it needed to be separated as its own entity as it was not permitted to run such a facility as part of the charity. This was setup by the trustees at the time to ensure everything was above board under charity law. The building was let to the RHC committee under a commercial maintained lease, the ‘legalese’ here to enable this was making the building ‘surplus to requirements of the charitable aims’.

Every lease/licence granted by the charity is set to a valuation given by the government’s district valuer to ensure transparency and fair market rents – there are no ‘deals’ to be done from a charity perspective. The lease covers in detail what the RHC can do, the space they rent and excludes activity such as subletting to other 3rd parties. Simply put, the RHC is a 3rd party company leasing a building from a charity that is ‘surplus to the requirements’ to the charitable aims of that charity, in this case a private members club run by a committee as a business.

The RHC has for many years been a concern to the charity. The committee have engaged with trustees over recent years regarding their longer-term plans including the use of outside space (known as the putting green), using the building in the daytime for external hires (e.g. yoga and corporate first aid training for local businesses).

It was made clear that without more flexibility to create such income streams their model was untenable for the longer term and they would struggle financially to build capital as there is little profit in wet sales alone. As a charity the outside space would need to be charged at full market rent (back to that district valuer again) and the ability to allow 3rd party businesses a location to operate putting them in

direct competition with the charity itself (the Millennium Hall). Likewise, the charity, protecting its interest as owner of the building, needed to ensure the RHC complied with its contractual agreements.

This was explained several times, yet the feedback was that 'it was down to us as trustees to find a way to make things work for RHC' and that 'our charity business model was outdated'. In reality, as trustees, our obligation was ensuring we gained the rent and the lease was adhered to as the building was surplus to requirements to the aims of the charity thus leased to a 3rd party, the Red House Club.

I'll say now that the RHC committee have done a very good job in making the best of what they were able to, especially in recent times under new members. This complex legal setup itself is the very thing preventing them from creating enough revenue to operate in the long term but on both sides, we needed to play with the cards we have been dealt.

Roll forward to March 2020 when the 5 year lease expired, the world was in the midst of a global pandemic. It was agreed that rather than a 5 year renewal a 1 year renewal at reduced rates – March to Sep £1 / month, then 50% until renewal rental with a 1 month termination either side.

This was at the time received positively from the RHC committee as the trading conditions were rather unknown. As it stands we as trustees were in a grey area offering a reduced rate instead of full market rent however our mitigation (if challenged) was that some money over the year was better than an empty building that would become our responsibility with no income from it – the RHC rental revenue accounts for almost half the income to the charity. We also needed to negotiate with all the other tenants of the facility who we knew would be in a similar situation due to Covid-19. At this stage there was a risk that the RHC could enact the break clause of 1 month at their convenience.

Towards the end of 2020 a small group of us were contemplating the future as the lease was due to be renewed for another 5 years in March 2021, fully aware of the requests outlined by the RHC committee prior to the 1 year extension for them to be a success. There would be legal costs to the RHC for the creation of this lease (all legal costs are paid by the tenants), we knew that the district valuer would revalue at a higher rate, that the additional outside space would come at a significant cost and there were many maintenance elements of the contract that had not been adhered to. Would it be correct and appropriate for us to enter into a new 5 year agreement as trustees?

We as trustees broadly agreed with the vision (the business plan) of the RHC committee when it was shared with us late 2019, the view that it should be 'the hub / centre of the village' resonated well. The question we asked ourselves was how that vision can be delivered giving benefit to the village AND safeguarding the charity.

We did what trustees do all the time – we took legal advice to find a mechanism. It should be noted that we as trustees are not legal experts and never confess to be. For many years, the charity has engaged the service of a nationally recognised legal firm with a specialist in charity law. With their guidance we have found a way to enable a facility, with outside space and, if so desired, yoga at lunchtime in the function room...

A 'trading arm' of the charity has been set up and as a charity run facility is more able to make use of charity land and is less constrained as the profit flows back into the charity. The short term plan is to get the place up and running and welcome customers back when able to do so, notice I say 'customers' and back to the statement earlier 'a gift that was given to the village for all to use' – it will be open to all with no membership. Our short-term aim is that there will be the same faces behind and in front of the bar, the same skittles, darts and other teams frequenting and using it as their base, no longer the Red House Club but the 'Purton Red House' therefore opening it up to a wider customer base.

The longer term is to work to deliver that vision of outside space, a kitchen for food and daytime opening. As all accounts are externally audited and passed to the charity commission for scrutiny the charity itself is better able to apply for grants and donations to other bodies or even apply for loans to improve the facility – The hub of the village, importantly, open to all with no membership structure where ALL profits are ploughed back into the charity itself, longevity being paramount.

This week and next we progress the legal consultations with the staff to ensure continuity of employment ensuring that they are properly looked after. We are working with surveyors on the dilapidations and electricians on the required certification to ensure the building is fit, ready and safe for opening. This process is transparent, and I will ensure communications are issued on how these elements progress.

On a personal note, Tony Price who was the 'father' of much that we have in our village, including the village centre, was the reason I put myself forward to join the Parish Council and, unknown to me at the time, become a trustee of the charities in the village. Tony gave chapter and verse on 'why' the village centre exists and what it stands for and I am mindful of this in every decision I make. I truly believe in my heart what we are doing, both with the changes at the village centre, and the longer-term plans of merging all 3 charities is the right thing to ensure they are there for future generations. Change is never simple or easy but having the courage to make that change is the first step, to quote Mahatma Gandhi 'the future depends on what you do today'. I, like yourselves, live here, benefit from the hard work of our forefathers and want that legacy to remain for future generations – I am, as part of the trustee board, empowered to safeguard that future.

Thanks for taking the time to read this explanation.

Neil Hooper, Vice Chair of Charities

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Telephone number 01793 771066, email address: deborah.lawrence@purtonparishcouncil.gov.uk

We also hold Facebook and Twitter accounts

On our website you can join up to receive regular updates which will keep you informed of matters happening in and around the village such as planning information and road closures etc. Please have a look at the site www.purtonparishcouncil.gov.uk and sign up today.

Public announcement

Dear Members, Villagers and fellow users of the Red House Club

Before reading the full text below, the 2021 Red House committee wish to respond to the recent Press Release 02 03 2021, made by the Parish Council (trustee's).

We start with an apology, as the Press Release may have come as a bit of a shock to many of you, us included. We had no sight of the text or opportunity to respond before its release. This was very disappointing but sadly typical of the past years of interaction with the Council.

First and foremost, I would like to clarify that at no time was there any danger of the Red House Club not being able to open once the current lockdown was over. We were ready and able to open for business as usual, looking forward to welcoming all our old and hopefully new customers back inside once more.

We feel very let down, frustrated and annoyed, with the way the past two or three years have gone in relation to the trustees and the future of the Red House.

It is clear that something had to change as although the Red House was profitable and paid the entire required lease to the trust, it left little room for updating and expansion.

The council have just continued to increase the fees for the user groups Tennis, Bowls, Football and hall hire and have shown no ingenuity on how to adjust that worn out business model.

The Village Centre is financed primarily by the users and this must change.

We approached the Trust to open discussions in the fourth of the five year lease, now over two years ago. We were asked to develop a business plan, so we did just that and then, so much silence, months of nothing, finally we were informed that none of our options were possible but not informed why. We asked to meet with their solicitor to understand how we could adjust but no response again.

We asked to see their business plan but they didn't have one.

Covid has of course been an issue in regards to communications but it is inexcusable just to take advantage of the 2021 committee in this way. The rise of the use of video calls (i.e. Zoom) is so commonplace and we were willing to participate.

The Council gave us a new short term agreement as we all dealt with the difficulties of the past year; this was done as they said the long term agreement was not ready. It took a massive amount of pressure to get a reduction in the cost of that lease but we eventually got there.

But it is our feeling that all the time we were being used just to keep it going and get through difficult times, many of you will have seen the enormous amount of work that has been done (complete redecoration from floor to ceiling) and they just sat back and allowed us to deliver that, whilst in our opinion never intending to offer a new long term lease.

Along the way, we were told that they had a plan for the site and it would not impact in any way on our delivery. We were told that the council had no intent of ever running a bar themselves.

Well, we suggest that was their plan from a long way out, once again we feel used and let down by the leadership within the Council.

We upgraded, opened, invested a huge amount of time to deliver a COVID safe service, whilst balancing the books and in our opinion the Council just sat and waited and said nothing.

We need to set clear with you all, the reference in the Council's letter regarding the 12 month short term lease. Once it was clear at an online meeting that we were not going to be offered a long term lease, or indeed were not going to be involved in any way in the future running of the club, they asked us to sign a short term lease. This however turned out to mean that they wanted us to open and run the club until they felt confident to take over; this may have been two or three weeks or months but never 12 and you can imagine how that made the 2021 committee feel, simply being taken advantage of.

We are now working hard to transition the business over to the Council in a safe and professional process in spite of the way we have been treated, but you would expect nothing less from your committee.

The Council needs to reflect on how it's dealt with this matter; they are there to lead, inspire and facilitate change but must take the community with them.

They have royally failed in this approach.

It's "not what they have chosen to do", it's "the way they have done it".

2021 committee

Red House Club and Village Centre

I've been one of the lucky ones to have seen the Red House bought to be a living memorial to the men who gave their lives during the 1939/45 war. The man behind it all was John Scott – you can read how it was purchased in my notes in past magazines (June and July 2020 available at www.purtonmagazine.co.uk) – and the residents and ratepayers of Purton collected the rest.

First of all we had the football pitch which was cleared by volunteers and levelled off by Hills. They levelled one corner for cycle speedway and what a following they had – with a coach to take supporters to away matches. Then that finished and all we had was a slide collected for by Mrs. Sheppard. Eventually this had to be removed because of health and safety.

The tennis courts changed when the road layout was changed and, since then, the Tennis Club have built their own pavilion and put in flood lights. The Bowls Club did a clearance job on their area as it had been a walled garden and then they developed their green and surroundings themselves. The play area was the last to be done on ordinary land with no rent being paid for its use. Most of the development at the Village Centre has been done by the involvement of local people. In fact the Red House Club itself has just been decorated right through again by the committee and volunteers who again have worked tirelessly and at their own expense to make the Red House Club such a welcoming place.

I would like to say to all the residents of Purton that the idea of having a separate charity is no good because, had it not been for the present charities, we would not have a centre today with all its facilities. We see in each month's magazine that the Parish Council are looking for new members. How can the Council contemplate running the Red House Club when they are short of members themselves? There seems to be no interest in what's happening in the Parish – we wanted to put a commemorative stone at the Centre in memory of those who gave their lives during the 1939-45 war but it was turned down. Does the Parish Council have any appreciation of all the work that has been done there by volunteers?

Tony Price

Having been involved with The Red House Village Centre for many years in various ways I care passionately about The Centre and it's future.

I have carefully read press releases from both the Parish Council, the Red House Committee and the many comments. Nowhere have I been able to see any intention on the part of the Parish Council to demolish the building and sell the land for building. In fact I found their plans for the future very exciting!

We are so lucky here in Purton to have such a Centre and in an amazing setting. Visiting teams always make glowing comments about it.

The success of The Centre has to be down to the support given by the Parish Council and to the enormous amount of hard work and planning by the Committee and their volunteers.

Being aware that both groups care very strongly about the future of the Centre, is it not possible to combine their ideas and strengths to ensure the best way forward?

Edna Bunce

06/21

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White Ribbons

The awful news of the abduction and death of Sarah Everard still reverberates around this country, especially with the clash on Clapham Common between the Police and those wanting a vigil to remember her.

Violence by men against women and girls is sadly not a new problem. The White Ribbon campaign (WRC) was formed 30 years ago in Ontario, Canada in response to what became known as the Montreal massacre of female students two years previously at the École Polytechnique by Marc Lépine. The campaign was intended to raise awareness about the prevalence of male violence against women with the white ribbon symbolising “the idea of men giving up their arms.”

Apparently the movement is still active in over 60 countries and seeks to promote gender equality through a compassionate vision of masculinity. Men and boys are encouraged to wear white ribbons as a symbol of their opposition to violence against women and especially during White Ribbon week that starts on 25th November, which is the UN Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women.

It seems that the original campaign has been diluted a little by a Voice For Men campaign, launched in 2014 that simply seeks to “Stop Violence Against Everyone” – surely something that all of us can support.

Guide Dogs for the Blind Purton Support Group

It is with mixed feelings that I write this final magazine entry. With the help of advancing years and medical constraints, we have decided that after over forty years of service it is time to put it to bed.

We have lots of memories, stalls at Carnival Fetes, skittle competitions etc in the Working Mens Club, Jumble Sales etcetera in the Village and Silver Threads Halls. In the era of the 'Country Shows', stalls at Cricklade, Brinkworth, Bowood and the likes. Various bands did concerts for us, which culminated in the amazing 'Cricklade Band' giving us an annual concert with all the proceeds going to Guide Dogs.

I estimate that we have co-sponsored some eighteen working guide dogs, plus we raised the funds to name two puppies at £5000 each.

Purton people we thank you for fuelling our enthusiasm from the start.

Our thanks, from the retiring Committee Members.

Brian Davies, Doreen Freegard and Jenny Barnes.

Visit www.purtonmagazine.co.uk for previous issues of Purton Magazine, and our advertisers' database for local businesses. We welcome submissions for publication in the May issue. Our copy deadline is the 10th April, please email mail@purtonmagazine.co.uk

Is there light at the end of the tunnel?

Most of us in Age Concern are waiting for our second jab as I write these notes and welcome the drop in infections we are beginning to see. It is still too early to get excited about some sort of return to normal, but it is moving in the right direction.

We don't think that we will be able to run any of our outings, or evenings this year, but we never know what the future will bring, and perhaps we might just sneak one in before Christmas! That sounds awful I know, but we have to face facts.

There will be things to do in April and you might consider bowls or tennis which can be enjoyed in the village, both will be open for use. Go and watch the cricket and you might even get a pint (or two) in the Red House, or one of the pubs, by then.

Somehow, the things that we took for granted have become very special during lockdown and could now herald a whole new meaning to us as they return. It's important to make the most of what we have available to us in the future, it will almost appear new and more exciting.

Mix that with lovely weather for the summer and... sorry I've overdosed on imagination, I must go and sit down for a while!

Age Concern will endeavour to continue with all of the 'normal' activities we plan every year, ensuring that next year's calendar is as full as it's ever been, until then we must be positive and try to look beyond this period.

Keep well and safe and get the vaccine as soon as it is available to you.

Useful Contacts

If you have a problem or need to speak to anyone about prescriptions, food shopping or any other topic then the contact numbers you should use, after you have talked to your street warden, are Peter Berry from Age Concern on 778119, Heather Ponting-Bather from Purton Outreach on 772954 or Debbie Lawrence, Clerk of the Parish Council, on 771066. Remember that Purton is a very special village and there is always somebody that can help and will help.

If you need it!

Bobby Van - If you need the Bobby Van for replacement batteries or if the smoke alarms are not working properly then call them on 01380 861155. Please be aware that there might be restrictions in place at this time. If you are self-isolating and letting nobody enter your home then you will need to replace your smoke alarm yourself as they won't leave one on the doorway. If they are called to replace one, then they have to do it. Please be aware.

Pheonix - Each month we will mention Pheonix, previously known as Bradies, as they will continue to cover the Purton area. This is a free transport service on your bus pass. You need to ring 01249 890794 to book with them. Remember if we don't use it, we lose it!

Website - Visit our dedicated website www.purtonageconcern.com to find all the details you need about our contacts, events, news and links to other websites in the area. We also have a Facebook and Twitter account which can be found at Facebook: [purtonageconcern](#) and Twitter: [@Purton_AC](#) Please visit our social media sites and let us know what you think.

We still have a couple of wheelchairs and some walkers, also crutches and walking sticks, so if you think you might need any of these at any time then ring me on 778119.

Peter Berry

Remembering my Mum, Cecilia Mary Blake 1925-2021

My mum, Cecilia, lived in Purton for most of her life. Born in Swindon, mum was just a young girl when the Harris family moved from Morley St., Swindon, to The Peak.



She was the fourth of five sisters – Dorothy, Marjorie, Irene, Cecilia and Jane. One of the girls named my mum ‘Wis’ and that is how she was known to her friends and family. It must have been a very noisy household as the Harris sisters were all chatterboxes!

After her primary school education at St Mary’s my mum attended the Commonweal School in Swindon. She often told me she would run all the way from the Peak to catch the train to school. She would chat endlessly and with great fondness of her time there. The importance of education was instilled in her at an early age by my grandfather, Alfred G. Harris, and it was from him that she developed her interest in books and knowledge that she was to retain all her life.

On leaving school mum was employed as a wages clerk at the GWR Works. She had a great love of sport and joined the works hockey team. Edna Bunce also worked in the railway offices and it was on the hockey pitch that she met my mum. They would travel to Swindon on the train and walk to Shrivensham Rd. to play their matches. Later,

Joyce Belt and Sue Matthews joined the team and they all became lifelong friends.

Mum was also a member of Purton Tennis Club. It was the era of tennis greats – Basil Marchant, Harry Bunce, Lance Canning, Mr and Mrs Stump are names I

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remember. I would happily play around the Red House grounds while they played their tournaments.

I think my Dad, Leslie, first set eyes on mum when she was on the tennis club float at the annual carnival parade! My mum would say couples went courting in those days. Romance blossomed between them and, in the fullness of time, they married at St. Mary's Church.

They began married life living in a house on Station Road. Two children followed, Claudia and me. When I was just a few weeks old my parents were allocated a house on The Peak close to my grandparents house. Life happily revolved around family, church, sport, village life and gardening! Dad grew a great variety of produce and took inspiration from Percy Thrower who was the country's best known gardener in the 50's and 60's. I remember big sweetie jars of salted runner beans, onions on strings, pickled onions, beetroot and chutneys, homemade wine, jams, horseradish sauce, apples wrapped in paper and stored in boxes under the beds. As children we loved walks across the fields, picking blackberries and mushrooms and enjoying country life.

Mum was remarkably active. As well as playing hockey and tennis she led the Sunday School class and was a member of M.U. and W.I. When Claudia and I were at school she worked part time in Harold Durnford's shop on the Upper Square.

Dad was employed at RAF Lyneham until in the late 1960s he was transferred to Northern Ireland.

The family upped sticks and settled to a new life taking in the tourist trails, countryside and coast roads. Mum took up badminton and we all enjoyed 'wild camping' in Donegal long before it became the fashionable thing to do!

Unfortunately, my Dad suffered a heart attack whilst in Ireland and after several years he was transferred to Worcestershire and given a lighter job. Sadly, his health deteriorated and he died in 1975 at the age of 50.

After this mum decided to move back to her beloved village of Purton to help care for her ageing father. She rejoined village life, buying a lovely bungalow in Glevum Close with the added bonus of kind and helpful neighbours. She enjoyed gardening, cycling, reading and her numerous church activities.

Mum returned to W.I., the Purton Historical Society (of which my grandfather was one of the founder members), helped out on the M.U. bookstall at their bazaars, helped with Lent lunches and was also an M.U. volunteer taking her turn at sweeping the church.

She became great friends with Rene Ricks who lived in Willowbrook and most afternoons they met for tea and to pit their wits against the experts on Countdown. My mum's mental arithmetic was a match for Carol Vorderman but that's about all they had in common!

Mum lived happily in Purton for 26 years, she was now in her late 70s and had

developed rheumatoid arthritis and subsequently had a knee replacement. Life was getting more difficult for her and she decided it was time to move to an apartment close to my sister in Cheshire. She lived there for 10 years, still avidly keeping up with Purton news as Sue Matthews would send the parish magazine every month.

In 2014, at the age of 88, Mum moved to full time care. My sister was ill and sadly died in 2016. It was an upsetting time for all the family and my mum showed great stoicism, as she had done throughout her life.

During her time in Southfield Care Home, and at the age of 90, mum was given two knee replacements. She spent her days in her room happy in her own company. If she couldn't go outside she would take the Purton walks 'in her head'.

Her passion for sport was undiminished and she would watch all types on TV. Her favourite though was always the tennis, the Wimbledon fortnight being the highlight of the year. When Andy Murray made history by taking the Wimbledon title, an uncharacteristic lapse meant that my mum slept through his whole winning performance. She was annoyed with herself!

She was a beloved mum, grandmother to five children and a great grandmother to nine. A country woman at heart, she couldn't believe that she had lived to the grand old age of 95 years. The family intend to have mum's ashes interred in the family grave in Purton cemetery in due course.

Mary Conn



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A very Happy Easter to everyone from Purton Churches

We live in an internet connected world and anyone, anywhere has the potential to take centre stage. We receive messages from people we have never heard of and we are prompted to make celebrities of people we will never wish to meet. So how are we to determine who our role models are going to be? Young people especially, are being bombarded with potential candidates for allegiance. So who are the people whose lives and values we would want ourselves, or our families to imitate? The publicity machines offer up so many potential candidates for allegiance it's hard to choose. We do need to use discernment as John puts it in his third letter (verse 11) "... Do not imitate what is bad, but imitate what is good." At the end of the day, for the Christian, we know that there is only one role model, one example upon which to model our lives... imitate me says Paul in 1 Corinthians (chapter 11 verse 1 – The Bible) but only as I "IMITATE CHRIST".

Why imitate Jesus Christ? For me that question is answered by Easter. For the best role model, choose a man who left everything to walk where you walk. Who, would give up his life so that you could live yours in a better way. Who has all the power imaginable at his disposal and chose not to use it for himself so that in weakness and suffering you could know that he understands what you go through. Imitate a man who is beyond all earthly kings yet has stooped to call you his friend. A man who is so accepting of you, that with him, you don't have to pretend to be anyone else. At the end of the day, Easter is God's moment to show you that in His Son, Jesus, God is willing to go to extraordinary lengths to help you love the you that He loves. Now that's a life, that's a man I would want to follow.

Take Care, Happy Easter and God Bless - Revd David Perkins (Methodist Minister)

The services listed overleaf are our special Easter Services, Our reduced Sunday pattern during Covid is as follows:

<https://zoom.us/j/549593510> Passcode 928294

9.45am Family Church (Including Messy Church and United Junior Church) Every School Term Time Week except 1st Sundays of the month.

10.30am Family Service (1st Sunday) or Informal Service (3rd Sunday)
Act of Celebration of Communion (2nd, 4th & 5th Sundays) With Purton Methodist Church.

10.30am Service at the Methodist Church Aiming to open on 1st Sunday from May. Space limited - phone or email to book your place.

Also each Sunday on the Upper Thames Methodist Church YouTube Channel
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Maundy Thursday 1st April 2021

7.30pm An Act of Celebration of Holy Communion Live on Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/549593510> Passcode 928294

Good Friday 2nd April (and for Easter Day)

A Seasonal Reflective Walk Around Purton (any time when exercising). Collect a Guide from outside St Mary's Church or from the Co-op or One Stop or download from the website

Good Friday 2nd April

2.00pm Hour at the Cross. A time to reflect on what Christ did for us - with Bible Readings, Prayer, Music and Quiet. Live on Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/549593510> Passcode 928294

Easter Day - Sunday 4th April

10.30am Easter United Family. Act of Celebration of Communion. Live on Zoom <https://zoom.us/j/549593510> Passcode 928294.

For Methodist Circuit Services see:

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCYZpw6oX_Ief-68tycPGT3Q

If you or any of your family or friends need our prayers please contact: Revd Ian Tweedie-Smith 01793 770077 email: vicarage@stmaryspurton.org.uk or Revd Judith Wells 01793 770627 for St Mary's Church. Or Revd David Perkins 01793 853197 for Purton Methodist Church

Prayer for Purton

This month the churches in Purton are praying for everyone who lives or works in: *Dogridge, Orchard Gardens, Waterfield, Ringsbury Close, Restrop View, (and from Ridgeway Farm) Dewpont Close, The Farm and Moses Mead.*

So we shall be setting up lots of activities focussing on the number 75. Can you think of some fundraising ideas that might fit the bill? 75 cakes? 75 plants? 75 mile walk? Do you know anyone in Purton who was born in 1946 who is 75 this year... If so please do get in touch and let us know.

There will be lots more about Christian Aid Week in the May Magazine. Meanwhile please do come and help us raise money for people desperately in need. Libbie 771018

Trail of Cake Tables around the village

Last year, when the pandemic hit us, we were unable to hold our traditional Cake Sale up at the Top Shops, during Christian Aid Week.

So instead we set up tables all around the village and people had to walk from table to table to buy their cakes! ... Social distancing and exercising at the same time!

As we are still being encouraged to socially distance as much as possible we have decided to do the same thing again this year and the Cake Trail will hopefully be held on Saturday May 15th near the end of Christian Aid Week.

People will be given guidance as to where the cakes will be for sale, using the usual methods of communication i.e. chat, email and social media! ... and we would love you to donate a cake, or biscuits... anything edible... and then come and buy as well!

It is Christian Aid's 75th anniversary so it would be wonderful to try and have 75 cakes for sale, or 75 scones or 75 Bakewell tarts!!! Do you reckon that would be possible?

Please put the date in your diary now! ... And hope for a sunny day! Offers of help very welcome.

Libbie 771018, Mary 770505 and the Christian Aid team

Church Floodlighting

St. Mary's Church will, we hope, be floodlit in time for Easter Day on Sunday April 4.



Hallelujah everyone: Christ is risen. This is exciting news for us all!

The other exciting news is that St Mary's Renewal work is nearing completion.

We rejoice that our Church is nearly ready to welcome everyone in again and we are delighted to say that, once again, people can book floodlighting if they wish, from April 1st.

Contact Libbie if you would like the church floodlit and a tribute written in the magazine. At least one month's notice is needed. The cost will be £20 per evening: and the lights are usually on from dusk to 11pm. Please contact Libbie for further details. 771018.

Exciting News

The PPG is launching a 200 club in the autumn. Each member will pay £15 a year with a prize draw every month and £100 first prize. Monies raised will be shared between participants and the surgery, the latter to be used to buy items for patients that the NHS does not provide. If you are interested in joining then please put your name on the waiting list in the surgery.

Next PPG purchase

Our next purchase will be a 24-hour EGG Monitor. This can be used by the GPs to make a recording of heart activity in some patients over a 24-hour period as an aid to diagnosis and possible referral to cardiology services at the hospital.

Donations for the PPG

We would like to thank those who have donated to our PPG funds – if you would like to make a donation please make cheques payable to ‘Purton Patient Participation Group’, with the cheque being taken into the surgery. Please label your envelope ‘For the attention of Kai Howard’.

Thank you

All surgery staff have been working under very different and stressful circumstances over what has been an extremely busy period. We’re sure you will all join us in thanking everyone for all they have done and continue to do. We do appreciate it.

As always, your support for our work to both inform and support patients is much appreciated. If you know of anyone who would like to be included in our email list (all sent bcc) then please ask them to contact via groupforpatients@gmail.com

*Serving patients in Purton, Cricklade & surrounding communities
Sheila Fowler, Secretary, Purton PPG*

Calling All Bingo Players!

Tired of the lockdown? – Come and join us when the Jenner Hall in Cricklade reopens.

We hope the Jenner Hall in Cricklade will reopen soon and we are looking for lots of new people to come and join our friendly group of players every Wednesday afternoon. I know some of our regulars can’t wait to come back but we have to wait until Matt Hancock announces when halls can re-open.

The Hall opens for Bingo at 1.30 p.m. every Wednesday afternoon and we finish around 3.30-3.45 p.m. Tea and biscuits are served half way through the afternoon and for birthdays we usually have cake as a treat.

If you want to check when we are starting again or have any questions please feel free to check with me on 07801 952027.

Vicky McIntosh, Treasurer

St Mary's Church Renewal project – Nearly there!



It looks possible, though not certain(!), that by the time this is published the contractor (EG Carter) will have handed possession of the Church building back to St Mary's. Since starting back to work after the Christmas break the contractor has worked really hard to complete the remaining tasks and to recover some slippage that occurred earlier due to the cold weather.

At the time of writing the new toilets, kitchen/servery and raised dais have all been completed. The timber floor in the Nave has been sanded and stained and new carpets laid in other areas. And the final stages of installing the glazed screens to the ringing chamber and Lady Chapel are in progress. Photographs illustrating the work at various stages throughout the contract can be found at www.stmaryspurton.org.uk/RenewalPhotos

When we have possession of the Church again there is quite a bit of work to do to get it ready for services. And, of course, there is the uncertainty over Covid restrictions so our normal services will continue to be on Zoom for a few weeks yet (see details on www.stmaryspurton.org.uk/Home) – all are very welcome.

Many thanks to all who continue to support the Renewal through fundraising – this has been, and continues to be, vital for the work. If you shop at the Co-op you can select St Mary's Church Purton as your local community project to support on the Co-op website (<https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes>). And to sponsor a chair either email David on renewal@stmaryspurton.org.uk or phone 770171.

We look forward to welcoming you all at the renewed Church sometime soon. Opening dates and times will be posted on our website and Facebook page as soon as they are available.

Paul Dempsey, Deputy Churchwarden

Outreach Purton

The latest update from the Wiltshire Together team

From Monday 8 March, you can exercise or meet outdoors with your household or one other person. From Mon 29 March, up to two households or a group of up to six people will be able to meet outdoors. See full guidelines below. You must still only mix with your own household indoors.

Secondary school students have been asked to pack face coverings in their bags for their classes. The government is recommending students wear face coverings in classrooms and school communal areas and corridors. Face coverings

do not need to be worn by pupils and students when outdoors on the premises. Pupils in Year 7 and above have been asked to take twice weekly tests with the first three happening under supervision at school, and students will carry out the fourth test themselves using a home test kit. Pupils will then continue taking twice-weekly tests using a home test kit provided by the school.

Around one in three people with COVID-19 do not have symptoms but can still pass it on to others. Regular testing of people without symptoms (asymptomatic testing) is important to help stop the virus spreading.

Rapid symptom-free testing is available for those who work for small businesses, staff at private non-maintained early years settings, childminders and for students who need a lateral flow test before they go back to university.

There are test centres in Devizes, Salisbury and Chippenham, and one in Trowbridge opening soon. More info: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/public-health-coronavirus-testing

If you have a COVID-19 lateral flow test and the result is negative, you may still be incubating the virus. Please continue to:

- wash your hands regularly
- wear a face covering where required to do so
- make space



Events organisers should think carefully before planning events

Alongside partners, Wiltshire Council are advising event organisers to think carefully about making plans while there is uncertainty over data and what the future holds. More details: www.wiltshire.gov.uk/news/event-organisers-urged-to-think-carefully-before-planning-events-while-future-is-uncertain.

From Monday, 29 March you will be able to:

- meet in groups of 6 people outside, including in a private garden
- meet in groups of 2 households.
- Outdoor sports places will open up again, like tennis or basketball courts, and open air swimming pools.
- You should still stay at home as much as you can.
- You should work from home if you can.
- You won't be able to travel abroad.
- You should still keep 2 metres away from people.

If things go well, step 2 will start on Monday, 12 April.

Shops will open, including:

- hairdressers and nail salons
- libraries and community centres
- zoos and theme parks
- drive-in cinemas
- campsites and holiday cottages.
- Indoor gyms will open up - but you have to go on your own or with people in your household.
- Restaurants, cafés and pubs will be able to serve people sitting at a table outside. You should keep to your household group or bubble.
- You can have up to 30 people at a funeral and up to 15 people at a wedding, or an event to remember someone.
- You should still keep 2 metres away from people.

If things go well, step 3 will start on Monday, 17 May.

From Monday, 17 May:

- you can meet who you like outdoors
- but you can't meet people in a group of over 30 people.
- We will look at whether it is OK to be closer to people.
- We will look at whether it is OK to hug people.
- Restaurants, cafés and pubs will be able to serve people sitting at a table inside.
- Other indoor places will also open, like cinemas, children's play areas, hotels and bed and breakfast places.
- Some larger outdoor sports and shows will be able to have people watching.
- Up to 30 people will be able to go to weddings, funerals and events to remember someone.

If all goes well, step 4 will start on Monday, 21 June.

We hope to remove all the remaining rules that are stopping people from getting together. Nightclubs will open and large events will be able to take place.



Staying safe

We won't be able to get rid of COVID-19 altogether. We will have to continue:

- washing our hands often
- giving people extra space
- getting tested
- being careful not to touch our face
- letting fresh air in
- getting the vaccine when we can.

*Heather Ponting-Bather, Outreach Purton & Wiltshire Together Community Champion
helpline 772954, (Mon-Fri 9am-5pm, at other times in an emergency)*

Purton Magazine's New Website

Our shiny new website (www.purtonmagazine.co.uk) is now six months old. The main purpose of this initiative was to maintain and increase our faithful group of local advertisers by giving them and their businesses additional exposure on the internet. We are delighted with what the new website has achieved for the magazine and would like to share some of the details with our readers.

These days there are all sorts of measurements that can be tracked and we are grateful to our developers, Pink Fish Associates, for much of the following information.

Each month the website has about 120 people visiting which we think is really rather impressive for a little local magazine. On average it seems that people look at nearly 2½ pages during each visit. We learn that 45% of our users visit from



a desktop computer and 44% visit from a mobile phone. The remaining 11% visit through their tablet.

Next, we know how people visited. 42% were direct visitors who simply typed in our address (www.purtonmagazine.co.uk) obviously knowing exactly where they wanted to go. Then 30% reached our website through a search engine (such as Google) and 25% arrived from social media channels, mainly Facebook. The remaining 3% came from other websites.

Having reached our website we know that the pages most often visited after the homepage are, in order of frequency, the Latest Edition, Advertisers and Contact. There have been lots of hits on many different pages of the advertising directory showing that it is being well used and a clear added benefit to our important advertisers.

Anecdotally we know that many visitors have been redirected from local social media sites where people have responded to questions about 'where can I find someone to do this job for me' by suggesting they visit the new Purton Magazine website. Indeed we have received quite a few thank you messages after new visitors have found helpful answers to their enquiries.

These days, Purton Magazine is also developing an audience beyond the parish boundaries and even internationally. Friends of villagers living away are increasingly being directed to the website, often to an individual article in a specific issue that is known to be of particular interest. For example, we know that a few people living overseas who are missing the English language say that they search for the "Book I Will Always Remember" series to get ideas about new books to read or even order over the internet.

All in all we feel rather chuffed with what we have achieved and remain grateful to our Parish and County Councils for their grants, without which we would not have been able even to start this idea.

Purton Magazine Treasurer

Purton Village Diary - April 2021

- 1 Th 7.30pm St Mary's Church Maundy Thursday Communion
- 2 F Good Friday Walk of Witness - A Seasonal Reflective Walk around the village (at any time when exercising) - see St Mary's Church website for details or collect your guided walk from either the Co-op, One Stop or from outside St Mary's Church on Good Friday
- 2.00pm Hour at the cross
- 4 Su 10.30am St Mary's Church Easter Sunday family Communion on Zoom
- 11 Su 10.30am St Mary's Church Communion on Zoom
- 18 Su 10.30am St Mary's Church morning service on Zoom
- 23 F St George's Day
- 25 Su 10.30am St Mary's Church Communion on Zoom

The St Mary's online 10.30am church services will continue weekly using Zoom until further notice.

How to join in the 10.30am Services

To Join the Zoom Meeting – please use this link:

<https://zoom.us/j/549593510> (This will be the same link each week)

Meeting ID: 549 593 510 Passcode: 928294

You can use your mobile or landline

EITHER 0203 481 5237 United Kingdom

OR 0203 481 5240 United Kingdom

Then you will be prompted to enter the Meeting ID: 549 593 510

followed by # Passcode: 928294 followed by #. Please note that call charges may apply.

Alternatively, click on the link on the church website: www.stmaryspurton.org.uk

DISCLAIMER

Contributions to Purton Magazine are welcome for consideration, the contributor's name and address must be supplied (but may be withheld on request). Copyright must be agreed for publication in this magazine - especially those recognisable in photographs. Opinions expressed in the Magazine are solely those of the respective contributors. Contributions are to be written concisely and we reserve the right to edit contributions and advertisements. Submissions received after the copy deadline will only be included at the editors' discretion and if space allows. Articles and information relating to the Parish of Purton and relevant to its residents, will be given priority. Advertising is accepted in good faith and does not imply the Magazine's endorsement of the product or service.

Purton Village Diary - when life returns to normal

Every week

- M 7.00pm to 8.00pm Purton Village Voices choir practice at the Red House Skittle Alley (term time)
- Tu 9.00am to 11am Purton Toddler Group at the Village Hall (term time)
12 noon Luncheon Club at Silver Threads Hall for over 60s
7.30pm Bridge Club at the Red House
- W 10.00am to 12 noon Coffee and chat at Silver Threads Hall
2.00pm to 5.00pm Purton Museum open, free of charge (Apr-Nov)
6.15pm Purton Youth Club for school years 4-7 at Purton Village Hall
- Th 12 noon Luncheon Club at Silver Threads Hall for over 60s
2.00pm to 3pm Age Concern T'ai Chi at Millennium Hall (term time)
2.20pm Pram Service for pre-school children at Purton Methodist Church (term time)
- F 10.00am to 11.30am Tea, coffee and cake at The Cedars
- Sa 10.00am to 12.30pm Purton Museum open, free of charge (Apr-Nov)

Every month

- 1st Wednesday 10.00am Story Time at Purton Library for pre-school children
- 2nd Wednesday (except Aug) 2.30pm Methodist Women's Fellowship at Purton Methodist Church
- 2nd & 4th Tuesday 10.00am Purton Probus meet in the Red House lounge
- 2nd & 4th Tuesday Purton Silver Threads meet at the Silver Threads Hall, suspended until further notice
- 3rd Monday St Mary's Fellowship of Women at Purton Methodist Church
- 3rd Tuesday Royal British Legion meet at the Red House
- 3rd Wednesday 2.15pm Rhyme Time at Purton Library for babies, toddlers and their carers
- 7.30pm Purton Evening WI meet at the Silver Threads Hall
- 4th Thursday (September to May) Purton Historical Society meet at 7.30pm in Purton Village Hall.

If your Club or Organisation's events are not included in the Diary pages, contact Purton Magazine c/o In Touch Design & Print, 2 College Road, Purton, Tel: 772954 or email: mail@purtonmagazine.co.uk



Purton Magazine is available to buy at; One Stop, Purton Farm Shop, Dora's Dairy, Shear Success and the Co-op. We deliver to over 800 homes each month through our network of volunteers. To become a distributor, or a Magazine subscriber, contact Sandra Horsnall, tel: 01793 770157 or email: distribution@purtonmagazine.co.uk

Gardner's Lardies

My Great Grandfather, Christopher Wheeler (1876-1933, Purton born and bred) was believed to be, at one time, a baker at Gardner's and this poem was taken from an old newspaper cutting. Unfortunately the cut-out poem has no date on it, but I've done a bit of archive research and have found the following in the Wiltshire Times, 2nd April 1921. From this, it would appear that Gardner's ran a competition to advertise their lardies.

I think this was written by my Great Grandfather and although I can't find the archive copy, I guess it would have been around the same time.

'Tis interesting week by week to read of Purton's fame
And how that noted Lardy Cake of Gardner got its name.
For you may search the country o'er: you'll never, never find
Another Lardy of the same – to equal Gardner's kind.

Their fame is known both near and far, by means of journeys long,
That's why we see most every week the Lardies' laughing song.
To Melksham Market, Trowbridge Town, Swindon and Stroud as well,
The Lardies spread their name abroad and folks their praises tell.
At Witney, Oxford, Wantage too, Wootton Bassett and Cricklade near,
Are but few of the places where these noted cakes appear.
'Tis hoped they'll go much farther yet, before the summer's o'er
For rumour says, both loud and long, they'll grace a seaside shore.

When in July the trippers take their journeys to the sea,
At Weston-super-Mare's Arcade – on sale there they will be.
'Twas Wiltshire folks who once did take Excise-men in when they did rake;
So legend says, and critics tease us Wiltshire folk about the cheese,
But never can they ever say, when country tales do come this way,
That Wiltshire people couldn't make a first-class Purton Lardy cake.

On sale next week, price 1s and 2s each

Here's another I found:

An Easter egg is very nice, A Lardy Cake is nicer,
When once you buy at such a price, You'll surely be a twicer.
One Shilling is the sum I ask, And Gardner is my name,
For it is not an easy task, To beat Fat Lardie's fame."

No idea if Fat Lardie is a person – a rival baker maybe?

Leigh Crumbie

Editor: We welcome information and memories of Gardner's Bakery, thought later to become Godwin's on Church Street (thank you Shirley Lawrence!)

An update from the Maharajah

I would like to extend my thanks to all customers who have continued to support The Maharajah during the difficult times we have experienced over the last year with Lockdown, with so many continuing to use our takeaway collection and delivery service. It's a pleasure for me to confirm that these services will continue alongside my involvement in local fundraising events.

We will be open six days a week from Tuesday to Sunday. Opening hours are 5pm - 10:30pm, with deliveries available from 5:30pm - 9:30pm.

However, with a heavy heart, I must now let you all know that the sit down restaurant service will no longer continue, even after hospitality venues are permitted to open. It has been a difficult decision, but one that had to be made in these uncertain times.

I want to let you all know how grateful I am for all your support over the last 27 years. My staff and I have enjoyed serving you all and really have appreciated your custom. Long may this continue, with hopefully a more positive outlook across the horizon. As a resident of the village my family feel part of this wonderful and caring community.

Best Wishes, Khaliq Ali, The Maharajah Ltd

High Days & Holidays

Did you know that despite lockdown, Cricklade Revealed books are still readily available? Based on twenty years of collected memories from hundreds of people, they reveal how, before modern distractions such as TV and foreign holidays, people found numerous ways to entertain themselves and brighten up their everyday lives.

Find their stories of entertainment and fun, leisure and sport in:

Part Two, Chapter. 2, Chapel Anniversaries.

Part Three, Chapter. 1, Children's haunts and play, Chapter. 2, Sport and other entertainment, & Chapter. 3, Highdays and holidays.

Part Six, Chapter. 4, Keeping up morale.

Part Eight, Chapter. 4, Leisure Pursuits twenty years on, & Chapter. 6, Blakehill children's memories.

Cricklade Revealed books are £3.60 each or only £3.00 each if six or more are bought together. Profits from all sales are donated to Cricklade Open Door. Contact Marion Parsons (details below) if you'd like to purchase a copy.

VE Day & VJ Day Souvenir Booklet

Now is the last chance to buy this popular booklet that celebrates the memories of these two events by local people. Published last year during lockdown (at £3 each) this is a limited edition of 260 copies of which only 10 are currently left.

*Contact Marion Parsons on 01793 750542, or email: mfp@btinternet.com
Profits from all sales are donated to local charities.*

The Purton 2000 Village Diary – 'A year in the life of the village told by Purton people'

During the January/February lockdown I decided to read the millennium diary from cover to cover (actually for the first time!) 365* days, written by local people about their given day. (* it was a leap year – but 2nd April, Mothering Sunday, was missed out for some reason).

After 21 years it was very interesting reading indeed. The first thing that struck me was that early in the year a 'flu like virus was going round the village and people were struggling to shake off the hacking cough for several weeks afterwards.

Some things have stayed the same – dogs are walked, cats are fed, lottery tickets bought; children are taken to school, people go off to work, attend church or chapel and most importantly – drink tea at every opportunity! Obviously with the passage of time, children have grown up, some people have retired or moved away and some have sadly died.

It seems that lots of people listened to the various BBC radio stations throughout the day. Local Radio, Radio 4 (The Archers) and Radio 2 (Terry Wogan) seemed to be the favourites. On the television, Countdown at 4.30 p.m. was a tradition for many, but in the evenings, very often, there was 'nothing on the box' apart from Sunday evenings when Songs of Praise and the Antiques Roadshow were a Sunday night institution. As for books – the Harry Potter books were very popular.

Early in the year, there was huge flooding in Mozambique and who can forget the terrible pictures from France in July when the Concord caught fire and crashed, killing everyone on board.

Nearly everyone said what time they got up (some really early), what they had for breakfast and of course, what the weather was like. The year 2000 seemed to be a very soggy one indeed. The average price of a 2 bedroom house in Purton was £80,000 and the old children's home, Red Gables was going to be pulled down and the land re-developed, whereas the Millennium Hall was waiting to be officially opened. In April, some members of the Twinning Association travelled to Héric in France to attend the official Twinning ceremony, the return visit was held at Purton in July. Other clubs mentioned on a regular basis were PROBUS, W.I., PADS, football, cricket, tennis and bowls. Brian Fessey was the vicar at St Mary's and Caroline McLean the editor of the Purton Magazine.

We still had The Bell at Purton Stoke, The Royal George, The Angel, The Club and The Red House; but also The Foresters at Common Platt, The Butchers Arms at Greatfield, The New Greyhound and The Ghost Train – all of which seemed to be very busy. At that time you could still smoke in the pubs, likewise smoking was allowed at work and in other public buildings.

Amongst the businesses in Purton, we had the Post Office, the Dentist, The Maharajah

and the Paper Shop on the High Street; Pavenhill News run by Bert Hicks, Just Hair and the Butchers shop run by John Harris at the top of the village with The Spa at the bottom square, run by Terry. The Pear Tree was open as a hotel at that time and run by the Young family. The sub branch of Lloyds Bank was sorely missed, as was Godwin's Bakery, both of which had recently closed their doors.

A few things that made me smile included the regular use of cheques and the fact that many people were trying to get the hang of the new computer – either at home or at work. These computers seem to crash on a regular basis and of course it was the old dial-up system (remember the tune?) and it was cheaper to use after 6 p.m.!

On the wider stage, Tiger Woods and Alan Shearer were having successes and in the summer the Euro 2000 Football competition took place. In September, the Olympic Games were taking place in Sydney. It seems that Britain did well in both. The Millennium Dome and the London Eye were new attractions on the London sky line whereas in Swindon, the Princess Margaret Hospital was still standing and in use.

The Village Diary was a very interesting read with a majority of people stating that they feel lucky living in or around Purton. The countryside, gardens, flowers, birds, animals and pets, community feel, friends and neighbours, and of course, family, are all things that are important to people.

In that way, things haven't changed very much at all.

Janet Saunders

Ten Years Ago...

The exciting events in Purton in 2011 concerned not what went on above ground but underneath. In a word, worms! In Britain alone there are 26 different types, all with their own individual way of life. They can re-grow a cut-off tail but not a cut-off head. So moles eat their heads first and leave the rest until later. Though, even if worms are not immune to moles, they are immune to arsenic. Yet without worms there would be no Purton.

Something that didn't happen in Purton but in the imagination of a pupil at St. Mary's School was the sequel to the story of Little Red Riding Hood. She was making another visit to her Granny when the wolf saw her on the way. He (the males always get cast as the baddies) beat her to the house and again disguised himself as Granny. As soon as L.R.R.H. arrived, she shot him!



Was there a Great Fire of Purton? They were fashionable in London in 1666 and, according to the A-Z of Purton, the High Street was laid out around 1673. Had there been a fire, destroying much of the village just before? One thing that has intrigued me is that the church is separate from the village. Why? Did the village originally grow around it and move in the 17th century? (Though the only historical document I can find suggests not.)

Being the month for the letter H, Hoggs Lane was also included. In April 2011 my birthday fell on Easter Sunday, the only day it would do so in my lifetime. I have vivid memories of a grand party I was given in Hoggs Lane – if only I could remember what I have just gone into the kitchen for...

Finally, I don't know where the editor finds his unattributed jokes, but this one I loved. "In geography we learned that countries with sea round them are islands and ones without sea are incontinents."

Royal Wootton Bassett Environmental Group

Lockdown through winter has been hard for everyone and it's difficult keeping clubs and groups going when everything has to be done on Zoom! But many people have been working hard to do just that and the RWB Environment and other local wildlife groups are no exception. So if you're looking for ways to get involved, here are some ideas, even if you can't get out!

Trees for Tom

The family of the late Captain Sir Tom Moore have extended an invitation to grow a legacy forest in his honour, uniting people in the UK and worldwide with a vision to create a brighter, greener future.

In tribute to his life and his influence, Sir Tom's daughter Lucy Teixeira and her family are inviting people to come together to plant trees and grow a living legacy forest in his name. Trees for Tom is a collaboration between ourselves and TreeSisters: women seeding change, and will allow people to plant trees both locally in the UK and in eight other countries around the world.

What a fitting way to celebrate the life of someone as inspirational as Captain Sir Tom Moore, by creating woods and planting trees as a lasting legacy. We are hoping to raise enough money to fulfil the family's wishes of planting a memorial woodland in Yorkshire in his memory.

To donate to plant a tree in memory of Captain Sir Tom Moore, visit: www.woodlandtrust.org.uk or Phone 0330 333 3300.

Bee Saver Kits

From Friends of the Earth in return for a donation (minimum £5)



The kits contain:

1. Wildflower seeds to grow bee food so your neighbourhood bees don't go hungry
2. Garden planner - to help create a bee-friendly garden all year round
3. Bee spotter guide - so you can identify your new garden visitors
4. Step by step guide - full of useful hints and tips for saving bees
5. A Bee postcard - to send to your loved ones

Available from <https://friendsoftheearth.uk/bees> or phone 0800 581051



And if you get your magazine early and you do on-line, you might just be in time to register for this interesting talk about Bats with a chance to do some science later in the year! Wed, 31 March 2021, 19:30 - 21:00:

Searching for the barbastelle: a citizen science project with Kieran O'Malley (PhD student).

The barbastelle is one of the UK's rarest bat species, yet we still have much to learn about the causes underlying their current distribution. Why do colonies favour some woodlands over other seemingly ideal ones? How does the wider landscape influence woodland choice? This year, with a network of volunteers, I will be conducting a large-scale survey of woodlands across Norfolk, West Sussex, Herefordshire, and Wiltshire using an array of acoustic detectors. In this talk, I will explain how acoustics may provide an insight into determining colony presence, how you can become a volunteer, and what the project will involve.

This event is presented by Kieran O'Malley, PhD student with Professor Fiona Mathews at the University of Sussex. Kieran helped the bat group with barbastelle radio tracking in the Savernake Forest in 2019 and is now incorporating South Wiltshire into his research. Kieran is inviting Wiltshire Bat Group members & friends to participate in his research in 2021.



This event is free to attend (because we are hoping to recruit some citizen scientists to assist Kieran) but you'll need to book your place by going to <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/139729983141>

You can find out more about RWB Environment Group through our Facebook page, or if you don't use computers, you can join their monthly Zoom meetings using your phone. Please get in touch with me if you'd like to join the next meeting or if you need any more information about the groups or businesses I write about.

Kate Robinson, email: purtonfarmshop@gmail.com
Tel. 01793 772930

Red House Social Club

The Red House Social Club has sat in the middle of our village for many decades and forms part of the Village Centre. It was of course first created by our forefathers for the benefit of the returning soldiers to the village.

It shares the ground with other wonderful assets, such as Tennis, Bowls and Football Clubs along with the Millennium Hall and play areas.

The Red House Social Club has been run by volunteers and committees for all of its very long existence and very successfully along the way. There have of course been many challenges over these years and our volunteers have dealt with them with tremendous professionalism. It seems too little just to say thanks to them all. As the current 2021 committee can testify, the workload is very high.

In the past four years the club has gone through a complete revitalisation of spirit, drive and enthusiasm. I am sure you will agree when visiting in the future, the feel of the offering at the Red House is much more welcoming and is really moving in the right direction. This of course is most visible in the complete redecoration of the bar, all completed during the Covid times and by our volunteers but it goes much deeper than that.

Skittle Alley, Function Room, flat roof repairs, corridors, glass wash, storage and the outside areas have all had an enormous amount of work delivered by the committee and their supporters and on your behalf I would like to thank them.

We of course have supported and hosted some magnificent events over the period and are very proud to be the location of choice for so many village clubs and events. Darts, skittles, football, crib, local bands and choirs to name only a few, whilst not forgetting the W.I. and of course the British Legion, all regularly use the Club.

We are particularly proud of our live music nights. It is becoming more difficult for bands to perform and who can forget the Red Fest day, with live music, food and fun, along with the biggest crowd seen in the village for many a year.

We have for the past two years been talking directly with the Trust about the future possibilities for the Village Centre and the plans we had developed for the Red House. We are very proud of our business plan, developed by the committee and looked forward to having the backing of the Trust in its delivery. We had secured funding for much of this and more to have followed.

Our plan included a kitchen / cafe, new toilets, disabled access, development of the outside garden and many more income streams such as corporate hire. We also planned to host pre and post school clubs. We, as a very active group of volunteers, were willing to deliver this whilst of course working with the trustees and together we would have increased the profits and underpinned the wider Trust.

The Trust after much consideration haven't been able to find a way to harness the existing group of volunteers in the future of the Red House and Village Centre and

so it's with a heavy heart, we will be disbanding the current arrangements as we are not being offered a new five year lease by the Trust.

We have been reassured that the new trading arm of the Trust, set up to deliver the business plan, is the safest vehicle to underpin the Village Centre's future.

We are confident that as the Red House re-opens after the very difficult times of the pandemic, the clubs and the wider village will come back and show their support. It is vital this support is there as without it growth will be more challenging.

We of course wish nothing but success for the new venture and hope to see the growth of enjoyment there for many years to come.

On closing I wish to say that it has been a pleasure to work with the current and past committees, management and staff. We wish the new team well in their quest to move the Red House forwards. We will of course see you around the village and hopefully at the Red House very soon.

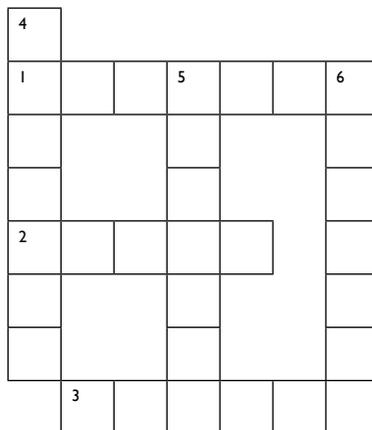
2021 Committee

Mini crossword

Here is the sixth in our little series of mini crosswords that are only designed to be a bit of fun during these days of lockdown. Again there are no prizes but the answers to March's puzzle are 1) methodist 2) deliver 3) sauce (or saucy) 4) welding 5) olives 6) scratch. This month's clues are

1. (across) electronic see through (7)
2. (across) sweet and savoury (5)
3. (across) scheme (6)
4. (down) tornado (7)
5. (down) endodontic specialist (7)
6. (down) out of your ground (7)

Answers in the May issue and if any reader would like to create their own mini crossword we would be delighted to include it in a future publication. Just to keep things consistent for the moment there should only be three words across and three down, each with a maximum of 9 letters. As before we have taken many of the words from recent Purton Magazines and especially from the advertisements but, of course, dictionaries provide many more options. We aim for the clues to have a spread of difficulty to attract readers initially with the easier clues.



Shapes of empty boxes within an 11 x 11 box square, perhaps as a table in Word or in Excel software – or simply hand drawn and we will do the rest – contact details are on page 4 and on our website www.purtonmagazine.co.uk

Purton & District Gardeners' Guild



In last month's magazine report I bemoaned the wetness of our allotment preventing any activity there. Not so this month as drier days and warmer temperatures have drawn us back, providing us with a sense of purpose during this long drawn out lockdown.

To date two thirds of our plot has been dug over and is ready for spring planting.

We are not alone. A general flurry of activity has invaded the site, as like-minded plot holders have set forth, cleaning greenhouses, erecting new sheds and poly-tunnels, and generally preparing for the growing season to come.

A wave here, a cheery shout there, a short conversation observing social distancing, and before long a general air of optimism and well being pervades our little community.

We're all aware now of the role that gardening plays in both preventing and alleviating mental health issues whilst the physical benefits of regular spells of gardening help us to keep fit. Apparently it can also help maintain 'good gait and balance in older gardeners' and help with cognitive decline.

The social contact offered by gardening in an allotment environment also helps to combat loneliness, which apparently has the equivalent risk to health of smoking 15 cigarettes daily and is twice as harmful as obesity. Spending as little as 15 minutes a day in the summer sunshine can bolster our vitamin D levels.

In a survey of National Allotment Society members, nearly every person said their love of allotment gardening comes from the fresh air, home grown produce, healthy lifestyle and like-minded people that this activity offers.

Let's not forget the crops in all this. An average allotment can produce enough food to supplement a family's weekly shop, with fresh fruit and vegetables over the year and by choosing to garden organically thus avoiding ingesting chemicals that are likely to be present on shop bought produce.

So our daily workouts on the soil continue apace! Anything to help maintain my good gait!!

What follows is a potted 'History of Allotments'.

Apparently there is evidence to support that they were in existence as far back as Anglo-Saxon times, although the system we recognise today has its roots in the Nineteenth Century when land was given over to the labouring poor for the provision of food growing, a much needed measure thanks to rapid industrialisation of the country and the lack of a welfare state.

In 1908 the Small Holdings and Allotments Act came into force, placing a duty on local authorities to provide sufficient allotments, according to demand.

However, at the end of the First World War, land was made available to all, instead of just the labouring poor, with the initiation of the Land Settlement Act 1919. This

was seen as a way of assisting returning service men.

The rights of allotment holders in England and Wales were strengthened through the Allotments Acts 1922 but the most important change came with the Allotments Act 1925. This established statutory allotments which local authorities could not sell off or convert without Ministerial consent.

As allotments are leased from landlords, allotment holders are required to pay rent. This is used to cover water rates and general maintenance bills.

Not so on our allotment site, where rainfall is our only source of water, hence the abundance of structures and water butts on view.

Rent can be anything from a peppercorn amount, with most agreements stating that it should be a 'reasonable amount' which the 'tenant would expect to pay'.

Allotment holders are obliged to sign a tenancy agreement which outlines what is expected of them by the landlord. These agreements cover the rent due, the kind of activities which can take place on the land, the buildings and sheds, subletting issues, as well as the general behaviour of the plot holder.

A Tenancy Agreement dating back to 1846, serving the Parish of Husbands Bosworth, states that "Every occupier is expected to attend divine service on Sundays; and any occupier who digs potatoes or otherwise works on his land on Sunday shall immediately forfeit the same."

How times have changed in the last 150 years as Sundays are now one of the most popular gardening days of the year. Happy gardening.

Margaret Goodall (Secretary 770906)

We Record ...

Funeral Service at St Bartholomew's Church Wootton Bassett and Burial in Purton Cemetery

3 March 2021 Derek Bryant

In memoriam

Dom Tovey, on your 10th Anniversary on 29th March.

Those we love don't go away: they walk beside us every day.

Unseen, unheard but always near; still loved, still missed and held so dear.

Love always Mum, Dad and Leah.

In memory of our dearly beloved **Norma Charlesworth**, dear wife to John and precious mother of Samantha, who sadly passed from us 1 year ago, on April 27. You are missed enormously every single day and you will remain in our hearts and thoughts forever more. Love to you eternally, John & Samantha.



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04/21

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Tony and Sheila Price



05/21



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02/22



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**For further details without any obligation simply ring:
Chris or Justyn on 01793 814888**

05/21



Future Programme – All meetings on Zoom

Thursday 25th March 2021 at 7.30pm

Society AGM followed by St Mary's Church Renewal Project at 8.00pm

David Nettleton/Paul Dempsey – visitors very welcome at 8.00pm for the talk

Thursday 22nd April 2021 at 7.30pm

St Helena and its Airport – Howard Smith

Some of you may have seen the Royal Mail Ship “St Helena” sailing in or out of Weymouth harbour in the past but how many wondered where it was going to and why such a ship was still in service? On Thursday April 22nd Howard Smith will answer these questions when he will talk on “St Helena and its airport”. Yes the RMS St Helena was a vital lifeline to the British Overseas Territory of St Helena because, until 2017, this volcanic island had no airport. Howard – a chartered civil engineer – had been involved in the airport project for 10 years until his retirement, will give a quick overview of the island and describe the construction of the airport and the challenges it posed for all involved.

Thursday 27th May 2021

Lochs and Legends – Jacky Parker with illustrations by Dawn Bannister

Of Lochs and Legends is a travel book that chronicles the tale of how two elderly ladies explored the Highlands of Scotland starting from Innerleithen and extending north into Sutherland at Cape Wrath. The areas travelled were from Stirling north to Loch Etive, Rannoch Moor, Glencoe, Argyll, the Great Glen Way, Cairngorms, Wester Ross, Ardnamurchan, Morvern, Moidart, the road to the Isles, Skye, Mull, Iona, the Small Isles and a final acknowledgement to Scotland's legacy.

The delightful scenery is encapsulated in original artwork, while history and legends are uncovered through stories and verse as each area is unlocked and magically unfolds its setting and folklore.

Museum News

Due to Covid restrictions the opening of the Museum has been rearranged to take place on Saturday 22nd May 2021 from 10.00 a.m. – 12.30 p.m. The Purton Cricket Club bi-centenary exhibition, organised by Joe Gardner, will continue to be on show. The opening will be in accordance with relevant Government guidance.

If you are interested in joining the Zoom Meetings, please email Jim Mosley on j.mosley1@btinternet.com Visitors and new members are always welcome.

Janet and Tony Neate, Secretary, email: tjneate57@mail.com Tel: 01793 770117

www.purtonmuseumandhistoricalsociety.com

PHS Coleshill talk, 25 February

On Thursday 25th February, 33 members of the Purton Historical Society enjoyed a Zoom lecture by Liza Dibble of the National Trust on the subject of Coleshill

House, near Buscot, Oxfordshire. This was a real treat as the house had been badly damaged by fire in 1952 and eventually was demolished in 1958 – so no one at the talk had seen the house.

Originally owned & built by Sir Roger Platt in 1660 it was said to be the best the architect, Inigo Jones had designed – “the best in England”

It is now owned, with the surrounding village, by the National Trust. Before it was demolished, detailed maps & photos were taken of the surrounding village, grounds and house interior, which made fascinating viewing. Beautiful elaborate plaster ceiling decorations up the two main staircases & in the hall and main rooms.

As well as intricate wood carvings in the main salon, all sadly lost in the demolition. We were also shown aerial photos of the original house, surrounding grounds and village all carefully measured and documented. However, during World War II before the fire, the house had been requisitioned to be the Secret HQ of British Resistance in the event of German invasion. After the war it was bought by Ernest Cook (of holiday tours fame) and it was while it was being renovated in 1952 that the fateful fire happened.

It was later gifted to the National Trust & today only the Four Famous Gate Piers remain of the house. What a History! And what a fascinating talk. (But I do miss the tea and chat afterwards!)

Jill Watts, Purton History Society

Purton Annual Flower Arts Craft & Produce Show

The Show is Cancelled!

As I write this, the schools have just started to go back, and everyone is looking forward to the gradual ease of Lockdown, over the next few months. I'm sure we all hope this will be the start of some normality returning to our lives.

I know that the growing season is upon us, with a little blip this week on the weather front. I'm sure there are already lots of seeds planted in greenhouses or on windowsills waiting to germinate.

I am aware that some of the committee have already been asked about this year's schedule. However we all feel that it will not be possible for this year's show to go ahead. With some restrictions still likely to be in place throughout the summer, trying to arrange everything around these would be too challenging for us.

Regrettable though it is, we will have to take a 2 year break. However it will mean that we are all fully re-charged to put on an even better show in the summer of 2022.

We all look forward to welcoming you then, with our best wishes to you all.

Lorna Robinson-Wardle. Show Secretary 01793 778013 or 3rwardles@gmail.com

Purton Tennis Club

Monday 29th March is a day that we are all looking forward to. At the time of writing it is still over 3 weeks away, but hopefully by then, all outdoor sporting facilities, including tennis will be open again.



With fingers crossed, we have entered the Swindon and District Summer League; fielding teams in the men's mixed and ladies events. We really hope we will be able to enjoy some competitive games throughout the summer in the lovely surroundings at the Red House.

Jon Bastin and Richard Watkins are looking forward to coaching again – both with adults and juniors, and of course social tennis will be a fantastic way to get fit, meet up with friends again, but at the same time, be able to socially distance.

Another piece of good news is that Peter Smirles, who played tennis at Purton for many years, recently married Jean Robson. They were married at The Cedars in Purton and even the television crews turned up to record the event! We send them our congratulations.

If you are interested in joining the Tennis Club, or perhaps would like to take advantage of our Club Spark pay and play scheme, please take a look at our website for all the details, www.purtontennisclub.com or contact me directly.

Janet Saunders (secretary) janetcsaunders@gmail.com

Website for Wiltshire Walks

Are you fed-up with doing the same old walks?

Walking in Wiltshire www.walkinginengland.co.uk/wiltshire is the website for you!

With hundreds of walks to download and print, free, it also has books of walks, contact details for all the walking groups in the county and much more. Whether you want to walk on your own or with a group all the information is there in one place.

There is so much walking information on the web but it is difficult to find. Walking in Wiltshire (part of the Walking in England suite of websites (www.walkinginengland.co.uk) – one for each county in England) has brought it together in one place so whether you are walking from home, or away on holiday, you will be able to find a walk suitable for you.

With walks from half a mile to twelve miles plus long, and a note of suitability for pushchairs and wheelchairs, everyone can find a walk to enjoy.

So home or away, check out the websites and get walking!

John Harris, www.walkinginengland.co.uk, email: john@walkinginengland.co.uk

Lockdown nuptials at The Cedars

On 23rd February 85-year-old Cedars resident Peter Smirles married his 91-year-old sweetheart Jean Robson after a registrar was given special powers to make it happen.

Peter and Jean's nuptials kept being postponed because of the pandemic.

Peter's health began to deteriorate just after Christmas and his doctor advised the ceremony should happen sooner rather than later. It finally took place at The Cedars and a licence had to be granted by the county's superintendent registrar.

Peter, known to many in Purton as a former dentist and active member of the cricket and tennis clubs, has been dating Jean for 26 years.

Peter said: "What can I say but I love her?"

The new Mrs Smirles said: "Peter actually first proposed to me about 25 years ago but I said, 'Why rush?' "And then it never seemed to happen."

Risk assessments took place to ensure the wedding could be carried out in a Covid-secure environment.

Jean's daughters witnessed the marriage and Peter's daughter and granddaughter watched by video call from their home in Norway.

Care home manager Amy Thorne says they were even able to get Peter's bubble together and have a stag do in the home the night before. All visitors to the home had to take a lateral flow test and wear full personal protective equipment (PPE) at all times.

Reported by BBC local news

Purton Football Club

Just prior to writing this article for the magazine it was announced by the Wilts FA that our 2020/2021 season has been curtailed.

It is being discussed whether to run a small cup competition to give clubs some games but this is still to be finalised. Some clubs have either said they would prefer not to take part and others have not got their pitches available, because their grounds are shared with cricket pitches as well, and some players are unavailable due to the cricket season starting early April.

I will try to keep supporters informed of discussions in next month's magazine as none of the matches can start until April 3rd anyway.

In the meantime many thanks to you who have continued to support PFC with the pontoon etc. during this period of inactivity and it much appreciated and let's hope the 2021/2022 season is more prolonged than the last two seasons.

Terry Crumbie, Chairman and Treasurer of Purton FC



National Census 2021

On 21 March, a census was carried out in England, Wales and Northern Ireland and aims to provide a snapshot of life in 2021, which can be used by the Government and organisations to assess the services they provide. The 2021 census will also help us understand how coronavirus has affected everything from our health to our finances. In Scotland the census will take place in 2021.

A census is a count of all people and households in an area and has been carried out in the UK since 1801. Censuses have been carried out across the world since ancient times in order to count the population. On one day every 10 years, households are asked to fill in a questionnaire about every person living at the property, including their age, race, occupation and relationship status.

The information gathered provides a snapshot of the population, including its size and the age of people and can be used by charities and services (such as hospitals, schools, universities and job centres) to help plan and budget for services including transport, education and healthcare.

Traditionally the census takes place in March or April so that field officers have enough daylight to work, but more recently, people are less likely to be on holiday.

In order to complete the census every householder must either answer the questions for everyone living there, or make sure each person answers their own.

This year, people were asked to fill the census out online using an access code sent in the post. This could be done on a computer, mobile phone or tablet and submitted on Sunday 21 March, or as soon as possible afterwards.

By law, you must complete or be accounted for in the census, failure to do so can land you with a £1,000 fine, the same applies if you supply false information.

For the first time, there will be voluntary questions on gender identity and on sexual orientation for over-16s. In the UK, there are no official figures for those who identify their gender as different from the sex registered at birth. Gathering this information will help develop policy, provide services and improve equality, the Office of National Statistics says.

Prof Sir Ian Diamond, the UK's National Statistician, has suggested the 2021 census could be the last one, as he is looking into cheaper and more up-to-date alternatives.

His team will work out whether accurate information could be obtained from other sources such as the Ordnance Survey, GP lists, council tax records and driving licence details.

While information gathered in censuses is anonymous for service providers to use, the full census isn't made available to the public for 100 years. The information contained in a census has proved valuable to those researching their family history and the 1921 census will be published in early 2022.

Purton Post Bag



The editors reserve the right not to publish letters received where space and content dictate. No correspondence can be accepted for publication without the proper name and address of the correspondent being supplied. However, these details may be withheld from publication if requested.

Jean & Peter say 'I do' at The Cedars

When Peter and I decided to get married we thought that it would be difficult as Peter now lives at The Cedars Care Home. We could not have been more wrong! On 23rd February The Home really 'pushed the boat out' to give us an amazing day. Peter's daughter Catherine and her family, who live in Norway, were 'zoomed' in to watch the ceremony. Everything was perfect. I am still finding confetti in my clothing! So this letter is from us both to say a huge thank you to The Cedars (particularly Amy) for giving us such a beautiful day to remember.

Peter and Jean Smirles (née Robson)

Norbury Court bins

There are a couple of Purton residents who seem to think it is acceptable to bring their bags of rubbish into Norbury Court and use our bins. Well, we'd like to inform them that it isn't! If they have so much rubbish that their bins are overflowing then maybe they need to make some lifestyle changes. We wonder how they would feel if we brought all our rubbish along to their properties. We don't think they'd think kindly about it.

What we can't understand is why anyone would carry a bag of rubbish from their own properties just to use our bins, surely their own bins are closer? We are aware of the name of one gentleman who does it, but not the lady. We won't embarrass him this time and hope this serves as a warning. Can they please just put their rubbish in their own bins and not ours, otherwise they may wake up one morning and find we have paid them a visit!!

The residents of Norbury Court

Local flytipping



This is the rubbish we collected along the lane after the recycling centre. In fact this is the second sack. What a disgrace to throw plastic in the hedge where snowdrops and daffodils are growing.

Margaret Revere

Editor: Fly Tipping is a problem that's been growing not only in Purton, but in all areas of rural North Wiltshire. During the recent sunny weather I cycled to Cricklade and the ditches were filled with all manner of rubble and building waste along with domestic rubbish. This is a problem I've also seen in the lanes from Royal Wootton Bassett out

towards the Somerfords, I even spotted an armchair thrown over a gate into a field. Council run tips have been open throughout lockdown so it begs the question; why make the effort to drive into the countryside to dump your rubbish, when it's so easy to make an appointment at the local tip to dispose of your rubbish responsibly?

St Marys Primary School

It was with great excitement, all children returned to school on Monday 8th March. There were wide smiles and plenty of chatter as everyone returned to school and caught up with friends and school staff. We are very much looking forward to (hopefully) returning to a more normal lifestyle over the coming months. All the children have settled back into the routines of school remarkably.

The better weather has helped us in our return to school and we must say a big thank you to Mrs Howse, for bringing some cheerfulness to the entrance path by planting some bright plant pots with spring flowers.



Virtual World Book Day 2021

Our Virtual World Book Day was a great success. Thanks to all the children and adults who joined in celebrating the enjoyment of books and reading. There are lots of wonderful photos from the day on our Twitter page @StMaryPriPurton. Please do take a look!

Thank you for 'Shining Brightly'

We would like to say a massive 'Thank You' to all our families for working so hard during Lockdown. We have been so tremendously proud of the way our school community has shown remarkable resilience throughout the time the school was closed. St Mary's families were, as always, 'Shining Brightly'!

Fundraising at St Mary's CE Primary School

During March, lots of our staff are walking at least 10,000 steps a day throughout the month to help beat cancer. Cancer has affected many of us at St Mary's and we have members of staff who have battled with this disease in the past and some who are still battling currently. Please help us to raise the awareness of this devastating disease. We hope to raise as much money as possible to help fund life-saving research. If you are able, please support us by donating to our fundraising page here: <https://fundraise.cancerresearchuk.org/page/st-marys-primary-schools-walk-all-over-cancer-fundraising-page> Wishing you all a Happy Easter and stay safe everyone!



Naomi Clarke, Head teacher

Beneath the Wool

It's official, we have started lambing, admittedly it's only the early two but we've started. As I'm writing this the main bunch of ewes are only two weeks away from being due. The first set of lambs were born on the 18th February and they are now outside causing mayhem as normal. The second pair were born on 3rd March, both sets consisted of a Ram lamb and a Ewe lamb. The second pair are both pedigree and the letter for the year this year is K and she's been named Katrina.

Grenville has been a bad boy this month, he's managed to jump out of pretty much everywhere he's been put, I don't really know what's wrong with him at the moment. In the end he had to go in the shed with hurdles doubled up on each other just to keep him contained. Some of last year's lambs have obviously been reading the same book as they wandered off into someone's garden having a nice little munch on their lawn.

The gate posts by the shed have been replaced this month as they were very wonky after a tractor accident a few years ago, so now the gate opens and shuts perfectly all ready for lambing. While I was doing the gate posts I caught Tommy having a little nap, obviously the lambs were keeping him up at night as he was in the next pen.

Jane, one of the pedigree lambs from last year has worked out she can get the left over bits of sheep feed out of the bucket when I go and fill the water up in the evenings. Now every night you have to put the bucket on the floor for her preferably with a bit of feed left in it or she will stalk you round the field until you finally give in to her. She certainly is becoming quite a character and God only knows what she's going to be like when she's fully grown!

On the 27th February it was vaccination day, just not for me but for the ewes. The ewes got vaccinated for nine common illnesses in sheep, this injection is an annual booster and needs to be given 4-6 weeks before the start of lambing. On the subject of vaccines, I read one of our farm vets newsletters and that was about



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12/21

vaccines. In this they explained why different vaccines have to be kept at different temperatures which I found quite interesting and very fitting for this moment for ourselves at the moment with the Covid-19 vaccine. The reason vaccines need to be stored at cold temperatures is to stop the proteins in them becoming less effective as they start to degrade over a certain temperature, hence why different vaccines have different storage temperatures.

By this time next month we should have plenty of lambing news and we should be well into the swing of it and have plenty of lambs out in the fields for everyone to see.

Michael Woodward, Rogers Farm, Purton



The other side of the gate

Early March is the start of our spring calving and so far we've not been disappointed. Coco produced the smallest calf I've ever had – Candy weights about 15kg. Her front legs are as round as my thumb and she's a firecracker. She looks like a fawn and is already giving her mum the runaround at less than a week old! Vanessa gave us another Fleckvieh Jersey cross called Violet and Waffle produced a small Jersey called Willow. Waffle is clearly not mother material, so Coco has adopted Willow and now she has two babies to give her the runaround!

Another gadget arrived this month and this time the cows were happy. We've wanted one for years, but always thought they were too expensive. The benefit mentally to the cows is so great and I don't think we had appreciated how much! Seeing them playing with it can be very therapeutic for us too and I've spent a good few hours just watching them enjoy it. The gadget I speak of is an electric brush. It rotates as soon as they give it a nudge. It must be like having an itch for months and then finding your own personal scratch slave to really get underneath it. Their faces are ones of pure delight. In the morning, they all have quiffs where their hair has been combed!



It's not been all good on the cow front this past month though. Daphne, one of our Fleckvieh heifers, aborted a month before calving – another Jersey heifer calf. No idea why, just one of those things, and we also lost Estelle. Luke found Estelle by the feeder in the field on her side, weak, cold and unable to stand. We sat her up and she clearly felt better being upright and put a cow coat on her. We got warm water and glucose and I pumped 30 litres of water into her belly. I gave her some pain relief and some glucose directly into her bloodstream. I'd covered all the basics that I thought could be the cause: shortage of calcium, low energy, pain. Her temperature was very low though. Too low to read according to my thermometer, so we knew she was very ill. Ella the vet came a bit later as she hadn't rallied enough for me to



think she'd come better. After a thorough investigation nothing obvious came to light. Ella thought it might be a twisted gut, but that's very hard to diagnose without opening her up. We gave her more glucose, phosphorus and buscopan (to stop any stomach cramps) and took bloods to run. With such a low temperature at less than 32°C (normal temperature is 38.6°C), we were not looking at good odds. I think the saddest part was seeing her twin calves just stood next to her. That was tough so we brought them back to the sheds to be warm. They just stood at the gate mooing towards the field where their mum was.

I was checking Estelle regularly. We built a bale wall around her to protect from the wind and fenced the other cows away from her. I checked on her at 1.30am. The calves were still calling but she was very tired and drifting off. Her breathing was laboured and I wasn't sure if she was sleeping or dying. It was the latter. I noticed the calves had stopped mooing about 2am I can only guess that's when she went. The calves didn't go back to the gate after that.

They're subdued but happy being part of the herd. I did spot one the other day 'stealing' some milk from another cow so I'm not worried about them coping. They are four months old so can survive without milk.

Jonathan Cook



Have you read a book that you will always remember, either recently or many years ago, serious or funny, fact or fiction? Each month we are publishing a review of a book that has meant a lot to a particular reader, especially the reason why it was so memorable. Purton Magazine readers are encouraged to send in a personal review of their favourite book; it need not be very long. As usual,

A Book I will Always Remember
the copy deadline is the 10th of the preceding month and our contact details are on Page 4.

The Secret Garden by Frances Hodgson Burnett, illustrated by Charles Robinson

Frances Hodgson Burnett was a British American writer and playwright. She was born in Manchester in 1849. The family emigrated to America when she was a child. From the age of 18 she contributed to the family income with her writing and was a prolific writer all her life. She died in 1924 in America. Her best-known books are *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, *The Little Princess* and *The Secret Garden*.

Charles Robinson was a prolific illustrator in a golden age of illustrators and printers. He came from a family of illustrators and printers and his brother was the well-known illustrator William Heath Robinson. He was born in London in 1870 and died in 1937.

The Secret Garden

Mary Lennox comes from India during winter to the cold grey north of England to live with her uncle who is her guardian. Her mother and father have died of cholera. Starved of affection and raised by a series of Ayahs, she is a self-absorbed child and considered plain and ill-tempered. Having been waited on hand and foot she is unable even to dress herself.

On her first day in her new home Mary is sent out into the gardens by herself. She hears and sees a robin and he becomes her first friend. The robin sings to her from a mysterious walled garden. There is no way into the garden. She comes across one of the gardeners, Ben Weatherstaff. He is a gruff old man and ill-tempered rather like herself. The robin is their point of contact.

One night Mary hears someone crying somewhere far away in the house. She gets up and finds where and who it comes from. She is not the only child in the house. There is Colin, her cousin. He is confined to his bed. Another child starved of affection. He has convinced himself that he is deformed and will never walk.

Together with Dickon, a boy from the moors with a menagerie of wild animals who he has tamed, the children find a door into the secret garden. They begin to nurture it and clear the weeds and brambles from around the plants and flowers while watching spring unfolding into summer. In restoring the garden, the garden itself

restores the two children, bringing them strength and healing. There is the sound of laughter and joy in the garden.

The secret of why the garden was sealed is revealed and a sort of spell is broken, bringing new life and hope to Mary's uncle and guardian as well as herself.

I love this story because the awakening of the garden to the eyes of the children is an act of recreation and renaissance. Giving them companionship and for Colin, life.

Looking back, my love for the book was influenced by the illustrations by Charles Robinson. My father gave me the book and read it to me. A generation later I read it to my daughters and then to my granddaughters. I believe in the magic of the awakening of a garden after the winter and how it lifts our souls. It is essential for our wellbeing. It shows how nature heals and restores itself and ourselves. It teaches us that we must respect and enjoy our environment. Although I know that this is a children's book, its message is one that we all should take notice of.

Tina Kennedy

RunVember... Yes I know it's April!

I know now is the time for the Mad March Hare fundraising activities, with people running each day, for Breast Cancer funds.

But back in November last year several people in the village jogged, walked or cycled every day of the month, to raise awareness of Runvember, supporting homeless people and rough sleepers in Swindon. Many Purtonians saw us going out in the cold damp November evenings and asked what we were doing... and many people offered to support us.

By the end of the month I had been given quantities of food, hygiene kits for washing, shaving etc, plus money... which was all handed over to the man who came up with the original idea of Runvember.

Alan Butler (known as HRH) is a legend in his own lifetime and has raised huge sums of money over the years for the cause. He started by going out running just with a couple of mates. More and more others joined them each year so that this time there were 578 Runvembrians!

And how did we get on this time? The grand total was three tonnes of supplies... tins, dried foods, etc... and £14,000 collected!!!

Quote from Alan... "Runvember seemed to tick a lot of boxes this time... lockdown, people's focus on mental health and the need to want to give to those who really do require our help."

Thank you Purton for all your support. For more information please do check out www.runvember.co.uk or send a message to runvember@outlook.com

Libbie Sheppard, on behalf of Purton RunVembrians

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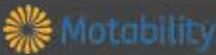
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Groundhog Day

The accepted meaning of this term is 'a situation in which events are or appear to be continually repeated.' Well, I don't know about you, but I think that describes how I've felt this last year. I have all my fingers, toes, and everything else crossed in the hope that this year doesn't continue in the same vein. However, I am writing from Cedars and some of our residents are living with varying forms of dementia. Sadly, this can mean that for some of them it can seem like it's always 'Groundhog Day'. As one of the activity coordinators, it's my job to initiate new and stimulating activities to help that sense of Groundhog Day disappear for a while. Consequently, as life outside our home continues to become less restricted, so too will our activities. Meaning that we will be able to bring back more joys to engage our residents. We have been able to continue various activities in bubbles throughout the home, but it hasn't been the same. Although it feels like time stood still, we now are looking forward to some exciting and stimulating days ahead.

Time waits for no man

The expression time waits for no man means that some things are inevitable, such as birth, death, the sun rising in the morning, and the passage of time. We have had it all at Cedars in the last year. From staff on maternity leave, residents passing and as you may have seen in the press recently, we've even had a wedding! So in amongst the sadness of losing loved ones both personally and professionally our care and administration staff have all made huge efforts to keep our residents safe and well. We have appreciated any excuse to decorate our home and enjoyed celebrations whenever we can. Recently we've had a resident celebrate their 100th birthday and a few celebrating their 90th birthdays. It's been challenging but also fun times to cherish.

New times coming

The government announced that one person can soon visit their relative or friend in a care home and hold hands! Of course, we had lots of excited people wanting to know when. Please be patient with us, we have a lot of administration and new guidelines to sieve through, so we can implement this safely. However, once we are clear, named friends and relatives will be contacted directly on what the new visiting programme will entail.

So, with that in mind, I'll leave you with one final quote...

Family is not about blood. It's about who is willing to hold your hand when you need it most. (from www.dailylovequotes.co.uk)

Now, as we go forward with cautious hope, please stay safe and well. And with my fingers still crossed I invite anyone who would like to help keep Groundhog Day at bay with ideas for or help with activities to please let us know. Email: j.pitcher@osjct.co.uk

Thank you and best wishes, Cedars Activities team

Prospect Hospice

In 2020, the hospice supported almost 2,500 patients and their families and this support was made possible thanks to the charity's 250 staff and 850 volunteers who dedicate their time to support the hospice in a number of ways including raising funds and delivering care.

Help Prospect Hospice raise £1m to care for those at the end of their life

For the last 40 years, the local community has been there for Prospect Hospice so that they can be there for those who need their help at the end of their life. For that, the hospice wants to say 'thanks a million'.

From the very first day of Prospect Hospice, the care they've been able to give local patients is only possible thanks to the generous donations of local people, groups and businesses. For those who have held bake sales, run marathons, jumped out of planes and raised money in all manner of ways, Prospect Hospice is saying, 'thanks a million'.

Covid-19 has had a huge impact on the hospice. While services to patients and their families have continued throughout the pandemic, hospice income dried up almost overnight back in March 2020. With its 18 charity shops closed as well as events and traditional fundraising activities cancelled, Prospect Hospice has had to look at new ways of fundraising, taking activity online. Local supporters have continued to give in any way they can too and, for that, Prospect Hospice wants to say, 'thanks a million'. But the truth is, this last year, the hospice's income hasn't matched its outgoings. To make sure the hospice can continue to offer the same standard of care to all of those that need it in the local area, they need to raise £1m over the next few months, until traditional fundraising can resume.

Over 25 and 26 April, Prospect Hospice will be launching a 36 hour online fundraiser to raise as much money as possible and all you need to do is let Prospect Hospice set up an online fundraising page for you, sit back and wait for the page link, then share it with friends and family during the live campaign.

Just go to www.prospect-hospice.net and search 'thanks a million' to find out more and to sign up.



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We welcome submissions for publication in the next edition of *Purton Magazine* from the local community and from readers further afield. Copy deadline is the 10th of each month. Please email mail@purtonmagazine.co.uk

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Celebrating 14 years of the Mad March Hare

The final push is here, at time of writing, the Mad March Hare team are still busy organising the 14th Mad March Hare that went live on 1st March. This year's event is 100% virtual and participants can complete either a 5k or 10k throughout the month of March.

The event is in aid of Breast Cancer NOW and organisers are calling participants to take advantage of the opportunity to complete the event any day throughout March.



The team are always looking for new ways to encourage participation in the event and are thrilled to have the support from local group 'Days Out For Kids Swindon'. You can download a trail map to follow from the Mad March Hare website for a donation of just £1. You can then send in pictures of you and your family out on the trail to the Days Out For Kids Swindon Facebook group to be entered into a free prize draw. Prizes have kindly been donated by Mamas Sweet Treats. So in addition to the virtual 5km or 10km event you can also enjoy the Easter Trail for children and families and help raise a little extra for the charity in these difficult times.

We also welcome a new sponsor, Purple Bricks Swindon. Their generous donation will go a long way to cover the cost of medal ribbons and postage. Event team member Esther Newman praised the support by saying 'support like this from local companies and business has kept the Mad March Hare going for the past 14 years and is how we have managed to raise over £123,000 over those years. We would like to thank each and every one of our many sponsors for coming back to support us every year. Local donations mean we can ensure 100% of the fees still go directly to Breast Cancer Now.

The event usually sees around 500 entrants, welcoming people of all ages and abilities (and even four legged friends) to get out and enjoy taking exercise. This past year has been difficult for many charities and events like ours have been cancelled. We hope that by offering the virtual event and linking with Days out For Kids we can encourage even more to take part.

To register for the event please log on to www.madmarchhare.org.uk and if you'd like to contact us please email info@madmarchhare.org.uk or call 0845 6808064.

Follow us on Twitter (@MadMarchHareSWN) or Facebook (www.facebook.com/madmarchhareswindonbreakthroughbreastcancer)

Awdry Bailey & Douglas launch their new Swindon office

Awdry Bailey & Douglas, one of Wiltshire's leading law firms has recently announced the opening of their new Swindon office.

The newly built office is conveniently located on North Latham Road, directly opposite the David Lloyd Health Club in North Swindon. The addition of the Swindon office expands the firm's range of offices in Chippenham, Devizes, Marlborough and Royal Wootton Bassett and will help meet an increased demand for ABD's services during the course of the last eighteen months.

The Resident Partner of the Swindon office is Tim Hotchkiss, who is also a member of ABD's Management board. The new office provides a full range of legal services, including Agricultural Property, Conveyancing, Commercial, Employment, Family Law, Land and Development, Litigation and Private Client services to the local community and the surrounding areas

Tim Hotchkiss said that "the launch of our new office in Swindon is a natural progression in our evolution as one of Wiltshire's leading law firms. We already offer our services remotely; through video calls, over the telephone and via email. However we do understand that being able to access your lawyer in person, in an easily accessible, COVID-19 secure environment, is still highly valued by our clients. Currently we do ask that all meetings are strictly by appointment only until the appropriate juncture in the Government's roadmap to easing restrictions."

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