

# WHEATLEY NEWS

Published by Wheatley Parish Council



Castle Hill Farm

**WPC Volunteer Awards - Page 5**  
**Join the Fire Fighters - Page 58**  
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## Contributions

The Wheatley Newsletter welcomes contributions and adverts from everyone in the two parishes and from businesses and organisations serving Wheatley and District. News and reports from village organisations are particularly welcome but contentious issues or articles promoting personal causes should be avoided. Submissions should be made by **14th March** for the next issue.

The Editor reserves the right not to print items and to edit items submitted for publication.

Head to [bit.ly/wnl-info](http://bit.ly/wnl-info) for further details and to download a booking form.

## Meetings & Dates

### Full Parish Council

Merry Bells, 19:30

5th February

4th March

### Planning Cmte.

Parish Office, 19:30

14th February

13th March

### Finance Cmte.

Parish Office, 19:30

19th February

### Open Spaces Cmte.

Parish Office, 19:30

18th March

### Parish Surgery

Parish Office

09:30 - 11:30

Every Wed & Sat

### District Cllr Surgery

Parish Office 10:30

2nd Saturday in each month

## WHEATLEY NEWS

### Publisher & Billing Enquiries

Wheatley Parish Council

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The Merry Bells

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### Distributor

This newsletter is kindly distributed to all addresses in Wheatley and Holton by a team of volunteers, organised by the Parish Office.

### Disclaimer

The views expressed in the Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Parish Council or the Editor, and no liability can be accepted for any errors or omissions, although we will publish corrections where necessary.

## Happy New Year!

As I write my Chairman's Report, I am looking out at my waterlogged garden and the thought briefly enters my head that perhaps I should consider building an Ark. If all these days of rain isn't a sign of some kind of change to the climate, I don't know what is.

I'm sure I am not alone in thinking about what needs to be done in 2024. Your Parish Council also have things to do with an active agenda to deliver for our village. I have summarised a few (not all) here.

- 1) Littleworth Field – we are edging closer to taking on a lease for the field adjacent to the school. Our aim over the new couple of years is to bring the field back into use as a community park for all villagers to enjoy.
- 2) The empty Cadet Hut on Littleworth Road – we are working on taking on the lease for this site. It is owned by OCC and leased by the MoD. They wish to give up the building and we would be happy to take it on for our Youth Club. Sadly, there are some outstanding issues that need to be dealt with first.
- 3) Holton Park (Oxford Brookes Site) - We continue to work with Holton Parish Council and the developers to ensure that what's built there is the best it can be. Brookes are due to leave in

late summer 2024 so we'll see if events are kept on schedule.

- 4) Miss Tombs Field – The field has now been purchased by a local developer and we are keen to build a good relationship with them as we have with Crest Nicholson.

There are more things we are working on, and the list never seems to get any shorter, but we will update what we can when we can through the usual channels.

Just before Christmas WPC with the Emma Wilson Trust held an awards ceremony to celebrate volunteers in the village. There were several categories, and all were worthy winners for what they do/have done for our village. If you haven't, please consider voting next year, it means so much for the recipients. WPC is incredibly grateful for the work that they do.

Finally, WPC is committed to delivering good things for our village, but we need help to do it. We currently have 11 serving councillors, but we should have 15. If you would like to get involved and understand the role and commitment required, please feel free to contact me. I am happy to have an initial chat about what we do and what sits with us at parish level.

**Alison Sercombe**

## Welcome to 2024!

After the festive break, council business is back in operation with our regular meetings. Don't forget all our committee meetings are held in public and we welcome you to come along and hear the discussions taking place. At each full council meeting (first Monday of each month) we also offer a session for public participation, where you can raise an issue or ask a question of the council. At other times please contact the council via the usual ways.

## Council budget and precept 2024-2025

At our meeting in December the council considered its budget and precept request for 2024-25.

The precept is a small percentage of your Council Tax that residents of Wheatley pay towards the parish council to help it maintain its facilities and services. Mindful of its projects to deliver new facilities in the village and current financial pressures being faced by residents and the parish council, councillors held a healthy debate before finally agreeing on raising the precept by 7.5%. This equates to an increase of £5.49 per Band D property.

We have provided a breakdown on our income and expenditure on page 6.

## Making a Difference – become a parish councillor

If your new years' resolution is to become more involved in village life, becoming a parish councillor could not be more rewarding. You can make a positive impact within your community whilst developing your own skills and ensuring that your parish council delivers all its statutory functions. Wheatley Parish Council has delivered much

in the last few years and has more exciting projects in the pipeline (new open spaces and community facilities) and needs more councillors to be involved. Please step up and play your part.

As a councillor, you are never alone, with support from your fellow councillors and officers, as well as local and national networks, training, and guidance, which can be accessed at times to suit you.

You may also like to watch the 'Make a Change, become a councillor' videos available through National Association of Local Council's (NALC) YouTube channel.

Further information is available from our website, or if you would like to hear first-hand, please speak to any of the current councillors, or contact the parish office.

## Some dates for your diaries:

### Local Produce Market – Saturday 20th April 2024, 10-2pm

Please save the date for this exciting free community event, with around 12 local producers selling their locally produced or sustainable products in and around the Merry Bells. More details are on the back cover of this newsletter. If you would like to be involved, please contact the parish office.

### Play & Activity Day 2024 is back on Saturday 13th July 2024

A fabulous free day for the whole family, with lots of activities and entertainment and a great opportunity for local organisations to be involved. Want to be involved? Please contact the parish office for details.

**Michelle Legg**

WHEATLEY PARISH COUNCIL

**CELEBRATING VOLUNTEERS AWARDS 2023**

# **CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL NOMINEES & CATEGORY WINNERS**

## **Emma Wilson Parish Awards**

Isabel & Grace Collinson, Henry Tully, Keyla Helsby

## **Community Award (individual)**

David Harverson, Jennifer Newton, Val Farmer

## **Community Award (organisation)**

Wheatley First Responders, Wheatley Society,  
Wheatley 1st Brownies, URC/Good Neighbour Scheme,  
Sustainable Wheatley,

## **Environmental Volunteer**

Wendy Stanton

## **Neighbour of the year**

Deb Bale & Good Neighbour Scheme, Alison Sercombe

Thank you for all that you do and it was lovely to meet so many at the awards ceremony on Saturday 16th December



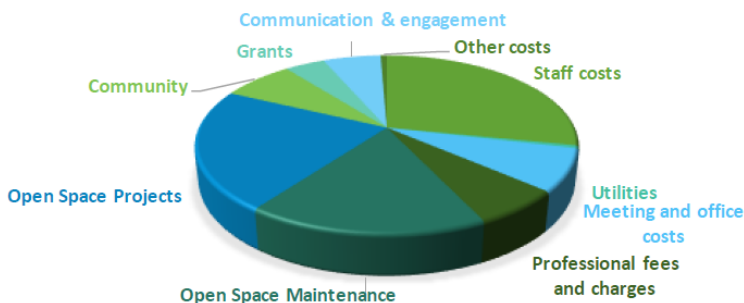
## Background

For the financial year 2024-25 Wheatley Parish Council has set the precept for a Band D property at £89.21 (an increase of £5.49). The increase of 7.5% will generate a total precept of £160,963 that the council will use to manage and maintain its facilities and to expand the services it offers to the community.

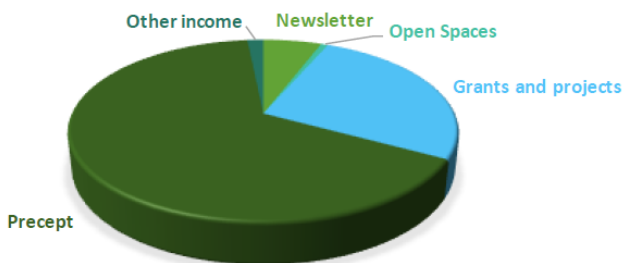
Unlike our District and County Council's Wheatley Parish Council do not receive any funding from central government or business rates, we are only able to carry out the work we do through the precept, paid by households in Wheatley.

Budget 2024-25	Expenditure	Income
Staffing	£69,300	
Utilities	£1,253	
Office & meeting costs	£18,850	
Professional fees & charges	£16,118	
Open spaces	£96,300	£1,664
Community	£18,000	
Grants	£10,000	£65,000
Communication & engagement	£14,400	£14,257
Other expenses	£1562	
Precept		£160,962
Other income		£3,900
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£245,783</b>	<b>£245,783</b>

## EXPENDITURE 2024-25



## INCOME 2024-25



## Facilities and services provided by Wheatley Parish Council

- The Parish Office and staff
- Church Road Recreation Ground
- Cullum Road Recreation Ground
- Farm Close Road Recreation Ground
- Wheatley Playing Fields and Pavilions
- Memorial Garden
- Littleworth Allotments
- Village Greens
- Trees and shrubs in public spaces
- Dog bins throughout the village
- Bus shelters in the village
- Christmas tree
- Community events
- Community grants

## Projects for 2023-24

We are working to deliver some new projects in the coming year:

- Provide a new outdoor space in the west of the village.
- Provide a new community space in the west of the village.
- Fundraising for a new pavilion at Wheatley Playing Fields
- Regular produce markets/community events

# Become a Parish Councillor

We have 4 vacancies,

Please consider standing for your community





# JOIN THE CONVERSATION!

Take a look at proposals and draft policies for our new Joint Local Plan to address local challenges and unlock future opportunities, including:



Climate



Housing  
and jobs



Environment



Community  
facilities



And more!

View the documents, find out more information on local events and complete the survey before 11.59pm on 21 February 2024:

[www.southandvale.gov.uk/JLP](http://www.southandvale.gov.uk/JLP)



You can also access printed documents at your local library, the district council offices, the Beacon in Wantage, Cornerstone in Didcot, or the Great Western Park District Community Centre in Didcot.

## Drop-in events:

Sandford-on-Thames: 20 Jan

Wallingford: 25 Jan

Thame: 30 Jan

Abingdon: 3 Feb

Faringdon: 6 Feb

Shippon: 24 Jan

Henley-on-Thames: 27 Jan

Wantage: 31 Jan

Crowmarsh Gifford: 5 Feb

Didcot: 10 Feb



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# Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan



On 23 November 2023 the Wheatley Neighbourhood Plan Review was put to public Referendum Vote by the Examiner, after 8.5 years work by the Committee.

The Neighbourhood Planning Process has certainly been long, but it was carried out by a well-informed and widely representative Committee.

When we started, we worked within the framework of the anticipated Local Plan. Political changes in the county, however, prevented the Plan's adoption, so we were advised to remove the Enhancement elements of our Plan (involving the release of Greenbelt land) in order to gain approval for other parts of the Plan.

Once the Local Plan LP 2035 was finally adopted, we by way of a Neighbourhood Plan Review, reintroduced the Enhancements and submitted our Review for Examination. When the Examiner was satisfied and WPC had given its approval, we submitted the Neighbourhood Plan Review to a Referendum.

The Plan received 514 votes for and 72 votes against.

From now on, The Parish and District Councils can comment on and control Planning Applications on the basis of our Neighbourhood Plan which was created on behalf of this community.

Thanks from WNP Committee to local community members for their often publicly open encouragement to 'keep going', and to the 20+ WNP Committee members for that mix of tolerance, humour, gritty wisdom, and appreciation which brings home how valuable community meetings really are. My personal thanks to Roy Gordon, Vice-Chairman, for his support and company over these years.

**John Fox | WNP Chairman**

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We have a function room which can be used for many occasions including; weddings, birthdays, christenings, baby showers and any other occasion you wish to celebrate. Please pop in or call us (01865 873530) to discuss this further or for more information.

**SOCIAL MEDIA:** Twitter (@wheatleynewclub), Instagram (@wheatleynewclub) and Facebook (The New Club Wheatley). In addition, keep an eye out on our website [www.thenewclubwheatley.com](http://www.thenewclubwheatley.com).

#### COMING UP:

Fri 15th March – Cheltenham Gold Cup (big screens, bookmaker, food) open from 12pm

Sat 30th March – Ice Cold Bears (free entry, all welcome)

Sat 13th April – The Grand National (big screens, bookmaker, food) open from 12pm

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Enhanced access hours are offered outside these times, please speak to  
one of the reception team on 01865 872448 for more information.

When the surgery is closed, please contact the Out of Hours service by  
phoning 111.

**The surgery's in-house dispensary closed permanently on Friday  
29 September 2023 WHEATLEY PHARMACY REMAINS OPEN**

There is no change to the process of ordering your repeat prescription. If  
you already collect your medication from Wheatley Pharmacy, then you  
need not do anything.

**If you have not yet nominated a pharmacy to pick up your  
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Check or alter your nomination via your NHS login - NHS ([www.nhs.uk](http://www.nhs.uk))  
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your medical records - see <https://tinyurl.com/3879mz6p>

## Our Lady of Lourdes

01865 762433 | corpuschristi.oxford@rcaob.org.uk

### Our Diamond Jubilee Year

2024 marks our Diamond Anniversary. The Church of Our Lady Lourdes arose through years of hope and prayer, achieved by the vision, hard-work, and determination of the Catholic Community in Wheatley. Today, that same commitment is evident in our Anglican friends of St Mary the Virgin, who are sharing our Church whilst their own is being refurbished, as they create their own exciting vision of a Church and community hub.

From 1922, Catholics met to celebrate Mass in a several different locations – first in the Old House in Kiln Lane, then in the grounds of the army hospital in Holton, followed by a small hall in Farm Close and a room in the Merry Bells. But in 1962 a Tithe Barn with adjoining cottage in Crown Road, originally belonging to Rectory Farm, was bought by the Parish for £6000 – how times change!

Two great barn doors, which had been used for winnowing and for loading wagons, became the entrance porch and the Lady Chapel, and lancet windows were installed to complement the architecture of Rectory House. The restoration and building work was undertaken almost entirely by parishioners, including cleaning and stripping the great beams which form the roof; the team included John Garry, Des Coveley and John McCarthy.

The work was completed in 1964 when the first Mass was celebrated by the then Parish Priest, Fr Denis Egan. Then, as now, ecumenical relationships in the Village were strong and the first readings at Mass were by representatives of the Anglican and URC churches.

The Church of Our Lady of Lourdes now has a strong, regular worshipping community of over 40 parishioners – and it is not unusual, at our 6pm Saturday Mass, for us to welcome people from other parts of the country, and from overseas, visiting friends and relatives in the area.

We owe a great deal to the vision of those Wheatley parishioners of the 1960s.

**John Guy**

## St Mary's Church

01865 872224 | vicar.wheatley@

### From the Vicar

Christmas seems but a few days ago and already we are launching into Lent with Ash Wednesday this year falling on 14th February, St Valentine's Day. It seems very fitting to me that Lent begins on this day. On Valentine's Day many cards are sent, often anonymously, sealed with a kiss, an 'x'. The 'x' is a sign of the love that the sender has for the recipient. Hopefully the anonymous card is the start and the sender will find the courage to declare their love more openly. As the saying goes: "Faint heart never won fair lady."

On Ash Wednesday, in many churches, worshipers are marked on their foreheads with a cross, '+', in ash. The mark of the cross proclaims Christ's love for us. As a parent might kiss their child on the forehead when tucking them up in bed, so the mark of Christ's love is made on our foreheads. We are precious and beloved children of God.

The cross also indicates Christ's dying on the cross – the ultimate act of love for you and for me. On the cross, Jesus took all the hurt of sin

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that should be ours and transformed it to the stuff of joy at his resurrection on Easter Day. When we receive the mark of the cross on Ash Wednesday, we acknowledge his great love for us and declare it to the world.

But, just as a love affair which starts with an 'x' on a card must develop further if it is to endure, so must our relationship with Christ. Lovers delight in learning more about one another and delight in pleasing one another with gifts and compliments. Lovers find themselves to only be truly complete when they are together. In the same way, those who want to accept the love of Christ, declared by the cross, must strive to know him better. Three of the best ways of getting to know Christ better are to spend time with him in prayer, to read about him in the Bible and to come to church and join others who are seeking to learn more about him.

May you have a blessed Lent and Easter.

**Revd Nigel Hawkes**

## Wheatley United Reformed Church

01865 873859 | [secretary@wheatleyurc.org.uk](mailto:secretary@wheatleyurc.org.uk)

### World Day of Prayer

One of the activities with which Wheatley URC has long been involved is the annual World Day of Prayer, a global, ecumenical event in which the women of a different nation each year lead a service where they tell us of their lives and experiences and encourage us to support them in prayer. The origin of each year's service is decided well in advance, with a seven-year programme ahead as far as Jamaica 2031, so it seems particularly poignant that last year's service was from potential geopolitical hotspot Taiwan and this year's will be presented by the women of Palestine.

There are a remarkable 50,000 Christians living in the West Bank while about 3,000 live in Gaza. The focus of each year's service is determined by women from Catholic, Protestant and Orthodox traditions. The Palestinian women who compose the service for 2024 have worked for several years on the programme and have chosen the theme "'I Beg You... Bear With One Another in Love,'" from the Letter to the Ephesians, generally thought to be written by St Paul when he was in prison.

Illustrating the experiences of Palestinian women from three generations it will use the olive tree, an ancient symbol of peace, throughout the service. As well as peace, justice and freedom of both belief and movement, the service will cover our responsibility for climate change. While there is a belief around the world that the women of the Middle East are passive, silent, and non-influential, the team behind this year's service tell us that historically and today they are steadfast, strong, and courageous.

The World Day of Prayer has proved moving and informative over the last few years. People of any gender and any faith or none are warmly invited to the URC for the service at 2pm on Friday March 1st, with refreshments served afterwards. Please give this remarkable event a try.

**Mike Matejtschuk**



## REVIVAL at St Mary's

### Building Works!

Builders are busy, diggers are digging, the old wooden floor is a memory. Insulation is slotting in and work is up to schedule.



For the last three months St Mary's Church has been a building site – the work will continue until July, transforming the place to a warm and welcoming venue, for regular services, meetings and much more.

Funding for the Revival Project continues to trickle in. Generous grants from the Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust and the Oxfordshire Building Trust – along with recent donations from villagers - means that we are within touching distance of meeting our funding goal. Can you help us to cross the line?

Meanwhile, a small committee is looking at future uses of the Church. Meetings, classes, concerts and plays will soon take place in the largest indoor space in the village. Clubs, Societies and groups are now invited to contact us, to discuss any possible use of the space from this September onwards.\*

We aim to make St Mary's a more-welcoming place of worship and refurbish the building to meet the wider needs of the community.

\*For information on the use of St Mary's, contact [peterafanning@gmail.com](mailto:peterafanning@gmail.com).

**The Revival Team**

## WHEATLEY REFUGEE SUPPORT GROUP

At the Wheatley Christmas Fair our Ukraine guests provided an exciting range of traditional soups, nibbles, and cakes as well as a range of art and craft materials. Many people stopped to talk and were delighted our Ukraine guests participate in these events.

As the atrocities continue in Ukraine, and elsewhere, we were reminded of the goodwill and friendliness of our Wheatley residents supporting refugees trying to cope with disruption in their lives.

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How do you like your scone?  
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Jam protects the cream from melting on warm scone	Cream first is said to be the original way a cream scone was served.
	
Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II was said to prefer this way.	Dairy first is more typical of an English sandwich.

In early December, our Ukraine guests and community supporters enjoyed a traditional Cream Tea at the Merry Bells. The organisers provided Christmas balloons, crackers, and cakes.

**“An opportunity to research a particularly British dilemma.”**

During January and February, we are organising a regular informal conversation / discussion group. This will cover a number of topics and provide an opportunity for Ukrainians to hear about and discuss aspects of British culture as well as how to cope with day-to-day practical issues such as renting accommodation or arranging additional classes for children.

We have decided to delay the next Global Aid Network (GaiN) collection until late September. Many thanks for the very generous donations received during 2023.

We will continue to keep our supporters informed on campaigns and other activities supporting refugees from Ukraine and welcome any offers of hospitality for invitations for occasional meals or walks to help our Ukraine guests.

If you'd like to be added to our circulation list or want more information, please contact us on: [wheatleyrefugeegroup@gmail.com](mailto:wheatleyrefugeegroup@gmail.com).

**Cyril Newton**

## WHEATLEY CARE SCHEME IS IN NEED OF MORE VOLUNTEER DRIVERS

Wheatley Care relies on the kind cooperation of its Volunteer Drivers to allow it to continue to provide a vital service to the residents of Wheatley, Holton & Littleworth.

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# YOUR Wheatley Village Archive

In 2024 WVA is publishing, through the village newsletter, a series about trades in Wheatley over the centuries. More information can be found on our website, do check out [www.wheatleyarchive.org.uk](http://www.wheatleyarchive.org.uk) We start the year with the many butchers in the village.

The Rose family acquired the property at the west end of Church Road and High Street in 1751. There was a slaughterhouse on the site from 1809 to 1938, and cattle were pastured on the, now, greatly diminished village green awaiting slaughter. Ernest Alden took over the business in 1911 and it closed in 1938.

Ernest (1863-1950), the great-grandson of Isaac Alden (1764-1832), also owned a butcher's shop on Bear Lane, Oxford, in 1793. In the 19th century the business was expanded and moved to Eastwyke Farm near the city centre. By the start of the 20th century, Isaac's grandson, another Isaac, with two of Isaac's cousins and his two sons, Ernest and Cyril, were all five trading as butchers, in Oxford's Covered Market. This family also owned Alden's Farm, now known as Wheatley Bridge Farm opposite the farm buildings which are now converted to offices etc. In 1910, another member of the family, Frederick Alden, was a tenant in Parkhill in a house owned by Mrs Smith, built in the grounds of The Mount in Parkhill. Today Alden's business is based in Osney Mead, Oxford, a family business of over 230 years, still supplying colleges, restaurants, and also the Palace of Westminster, with a history partly developed in Wheatley.

In the same year (1911) that Alden's acquired the Rose butchery business, the Premier Meat Company opened a shop at 50 High Street, Wheatley. This, however, closed during or soon after the Great War. West Brothers took over the premises in the 1920s/1930s with Samuels trading there from 1936 until 2000. Ted West moved his business to 2 Station Road in 1936 until the late 1950s, then John West took it over until 1960/61.

There were other butchers at Chillingworth House, 64 High Street run by Mr Bathard until the early 1920s, and Charles Shorter's business at Sunnyside in London Road in the 1930s.

White's butchers traded at 82, High Street in the 1930s. Maurice Crick worked for White and married White's daughter, Valerie, in 1958. In 1973 they set up their own butcher's shop, Crick's, in Wheatley, shown here in 1977.

After Maurice died in 2011, the business was taken over by Mark Surman and Colin Ware, and since March 2014, by Jason Robinson and his wife selling excellent meat.



Wheatley was certainly well served in the past by various meat outlets! In the meantime, vegetarianism has affected the meat trade, but Wheatley is still lucky to retain one butcher shop.

---

# Wheatley Village Produce Association

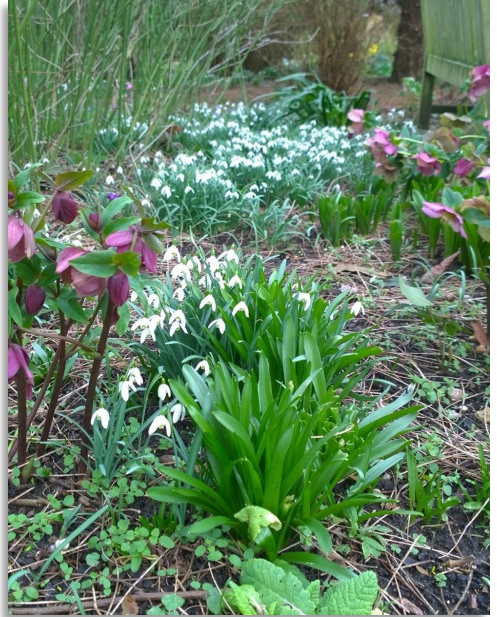
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## Our local garden club

In a change from our usual format, I enclose a message from our President:

“Village Produce Associations (VPA) were introduced throughout the country in 1939 by the government to reduce reliance on imported food as part of the “Dig for Victory” campaign. Wheatley’s VPA was formed in 1940 shortly after headmaster Ernest Knowles was evacuated from London to the village. Many parts of Wheatley were used to grow food, including what is now the Merry Bells car park.

VPAs were very successful, many continuing after the war, although most have now ceased to exist. Wheatley VPA, however, continued to provide support and inspiration to generations of gardeners and expanded to hold events for eleven months of the year including monthly lectures, not all related to gardening, an annual horticultural show, visits to gardens of note, an annual dinner and a 5-day holiday visiting gardens and places of interest. We now concentrate on recreational gardening and general enjoyment. That Wheatley VPA has survived where others have failed and still attracts a good response to all events at a very modest cost, indicates that the membership fully support the Association. Despite this support, we have not been able to attract sufficient officers to continue after 2024. We are looking for a small number of people in the community to assist the committee to carry the Association forward into 2025 and



beyond. The roles are not arduous with only around six committee meetings spread throughout the year, each usually lasting only an hour. Experience in horticulture is not necessary. If you think you could help and wish to find out more, please contact the VPA via email: [wheatleyvpa@gmail.com](mailto:wheatleyvpa@gmail.com).”

**John Allmond**

### Coming up:

**Tuesday 13 February**, Geoff Stevens on Littleworth Nature Reserve

**Tuesday 12 March**, Peter Preece on Hide & Seek

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**Geraldine Surman**

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# ASDA Wheatley Community Update

The last three months of the year are one of the busiest in our community calendar helping to support the Poppy Appeal, Children in Need, Tickled Pink Breast Cancer charities plus our Christmas outreach activities including various local community groups.

For Children in Need, we have again partnered with a number of local schools in Oxfordshire including Wheatley Primary School to help raise money to support projects and charities across the UK. In total our six visits with Pudsey raised **£1284.14**, which included non-uniform days, cake sales, guess the name of the teddy and colouring money boxes.

As part of these school visits, we held a 'Design a T Shirt' competition, with all entries being collected by our Store and one winner from each school was chosen to receive a small prize from our Store Manager Michael. We would like to thank all children who entered.

We have worked with a couple of local schools, to help us with our Christmas card activity, sending cards to The Triangle Care Home, as well as us providing a small chocolate hamper and we are sure they were delighted to receive this and especially for the children to have thought of them.

Overall, with regards to fundraising, we have supported groups with space donations to enable them to raise almost £16,500 amongst 31 groups. We also had a further seven awareness sessions for causes to promote their not-for-profit groups.

Our Tickled Pink fundraising this year, raised the most monies since I have been in this role, running a number of activities throughout the year, for both colleagues and customers. In total, **£3,575** was raised over the year and we are looking to run another two bingo nights this year, one for Tickled Pink, and another for Children in Need.

Last year, there were 17 successful Grant applications with funding from the ASDA Foundation, which totalled over £9,250. In addition, we donated £1,555 which included any community activity such as visits to schools to help promote healthy eating, oral health sessions, or waste and recycling as a few examples.

In terms of outreach for the year, we have supported almost 200 activities, with over 450 hours spent in the community, which includes anything from litter picks to help transform spaces; to helping out at open days; fundraisers and local food banks/larders. There hasn't been a week during the year, when I have spent the whole week in our Store!

You may have seen me at the Wheatley Fair at the end of November and delighted that a couple of families said they really look forward to my crafting activities, with fond memories of previous years.

One of our first activities during 2024, is to work with the Salvation Army to encourage customers to donate their old clothes to help fund breast cancer treatments. We will be running The Big Clothing Clear Out from 12th January - 2nd February. There will be a trolley instore, with donation bins at the back of our car park or via the George Take Back Scheme. Plus, our support for the Community Emergency Food Bank and the Hygiene bank is ongoing during this time.

We are planning for another bumper year to continue to build on existing and new community networks, and relationships to make a difference locally.

Please do get in touch with us to discuss all community aspects. Our email address remains the same :

[community\\_wheatley@asda.co.uk](mailto:community_wheatley@asda.co.uk)

**Linda Blackmore**

# Notices | Clubs | Events



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Wheatley Village  
Produce Association

Tue 13 February  
Littleworth Nature  
Reserve  
Geoff Stevens  
7.30pm, Merry  
Bells

[wheatleyvpa@gmail.com](mailto:wheatleyvpa@gmail.com)

Wheatley Village  
Produce Association

Tue 12 March  
Hide & Seek  
(Photography)  
Peter Preece  
7.30pm, Merry  
Bells

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## Community Larder

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## Art Club

Every Monday  
afternoon 4-6 pm  
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## NOT SO YOUNG CLUB

**Every other Monday**  
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refreshments

## Wheatley Society

Tue 27th Feb  
Merry Bells  
7.45 for 8.00

**Introduction to  
bellringing  
Katie Lane**

## Wheatley Society

Fri 15th March  
Merry Bells  
7.30 - 8.00

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HOLTON & WHEATLEY  
CRICKET CLUB

## Holton and Wheatley Cricket Club

welcomes new  
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## St Mary's Ladies Guild

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**Wheatley  
Wine Circle  
Merry Bells  
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19:30**

## Wheatley Village Archive is now in the library

(available during  
opening hours)

A volunteer will be there  
to help you  
on Thursday afternoons  
14:00-16:30  
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# Day by Day

## MONDAY

**Wheatley Oaks FC** | Holton Playing Fields | 19:00-20:00 | Women 30+ | [hello@coachemma.co.uk](mailto:hello@coachemma.co.uk)

**Art Club** | Library | 1st & 3rd in month | 16:00-18:00 | £1 donation | [tina\\_everett@btinternet.com](mailto:tina_everett@btinternet.com)

**Mindfulness Sitting Group** | URC | 08:50-09:40 | 01865 876288 | [jmarkgwilliams@gmail.com](mailto:jmarkgwilliams@gmail.com)

**Not So Young Club** | URC Hall | Fortnightly exc. B/H | 14:00-16:00 | [albarjoiner@btinternet.com](mailto:albarjoiner@btinternet.com)

**Friends of Wheatley Library Fibre Group** | 1st & 3rd in month | 14:00-16:00

**Friends of Wheatley Library Knit & Natter Group** | 2nd & 4th in month | 14:00-16:00

**Friends of Wheatley Library Art Group** | 16:30-18:30

**Beaver Scouts** | Scout Hut Holloway Rd. | Term time 18:00-19:00 | 01865 874997

**Messy Mondays** | Maple Tree Centre | 10:00-11:30

**Wheatley Bridge Club** | Holton Village Hall | 19:00 | 01865 874017

**Badminton Club** | Park Sports Centre | 20:00-22:00 | 07769 827335

**Zumba** | Wheatley Primary | 19:00-20:00 | Maz: 07773 651154 [mmccann36b@hotmail.com](mailto:mmccann36b@hotmail.com)

## TUESDAY

**Wheatley Library** | Open 14:00-19:00

**Rugby Club Seniors Training** | Wheatley Playing Field | 19:00 | To book 07768 300314

**Wheatley Women's Institute** | Merry Bells | 3rd in month | 19:15 | 01865 558167

**Wheatley Singers** | URC Hall | 19:15-21:00 | 07769 037110 | All welcome

**Wheatley Village Produce Association** | Merry Bells | 2nd in month | 19:30

**Flow Fitness Pilates** | Merry Bells | 10:00-11:00 | [info@flowfitness.org.uk](mailto:info@flowfitness.org.uk)

**Story and Rhyme Time** | Maple Tree Centre | 10:00-11:30

**Merry Bells Coffee Room** | 10:00-12:00 | 01865 873996 | All welcome

**St Mary's Ladies Guild** | URC Hall | 3rd in month | 14:15 | 01865 872909 | All welcome

## WEDNESDAY

**Parish Surgery** | Parish Office, High Street | 09:30-11:30

**Maple Babies** | Maple Tree Centre | 10:00 & 13:00, one hour each

**Acorns Theatre Music** | Merry Bells | 09:30-10:30

**Wheatley Library** | Open 09:30-13:00 & 14:00-17:00

**Pop-up Pilates** | Merry Bells | 18:30 & 19:30, 1 hour | [info@pop-up-pilates.com](mailto:info@pop-up-pilates.com) | 07731 321991

**Cub Scouts** | Scout Hut Holloway Rd. | 18:45-20:15 | 01865 874284 | Boys & Girls Age 8-10½

**Guides & Rangers** | URC | Term time 19:00-20:30 | Age 10+ | [wheatley.guides@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:wheatley.guides@yahoo.co.uk)

**Brownies** | URC | Term time 17:30-19:00 | Age 7-9 | [1stwheatleybrownies@gmail.com](mailto:1stwheatleybrownies@gmail.com)

**Merry Bells Coffee Room** | 10:00-12:00 | 01865 873996 | All welcome

**Baby Music Group** | URC | Via Zoom | 10:00 | Term time only | Rachel 07505 131124

**Football Fitness** | Tiger's Retreat, Garsington | 19:00-20:00 | [yohannadam@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:yohannadam@yahoo.co.uk) | Age 30+

**St Mary's Church** | 01865 872224 | [vicar.wheatley@gmail.com](mailto:vicar.wheatley@gmail.com)

- Holy Communion | 12:00 | Must pre-book

## THURSDAY

**Mindfulness Sitting Group** | URC | 08:50-09:40 | 01865 876288 | [jmarkgwilliams@gmail.com](mailto:jmarkgwilliams@gmail.com)

**Wheatley Walks** | Car park behind 6th Form Centre | 10:00-11:00 | 01865 873430

**Prayer and Reflection** (+ coffee) | URC | 10:00 | 1st in month | [albarjoiner@btinternet.com](mailto:albarjoiner@btinternet.com)

**Memory Cafe** | URC Hall | 10:00-12:30 | 2nd in month | [laurencelalanne99@gmail.com](mailto:laurencelalanne99@gmail.com)

**Wheatley Library** | Open 14:00-17:00

**Community Larder** | Wheatley URC | 14:30-15:30

**Wheatley Wine Circle** | Merry Bells | 1st Thursday in month | 19:30

**Little Explorers** | Maple Tree Centre | 10:00-11:30

**Twinnies!** | Stay & Play for twins | Maple Tree Centre | 14:00-15:30

**Maple Tree at Forest Hill** | Forest Hill Village Hall | 11:00-12:00 | [laura@mapletree.org.uk](mailto:laura@mapletree.org.uk)

**Wheatley Village Archive** | Wheatley Library | 14:00-16:30 | 01865 425909

- From September 23 by appt only | please email [info@wheatleyarchive.org.uk](mailto:info@wheatleyarchive.org.uk)

**Rugby Club Seniors** | Wheatley Playing Field | 19:00 | To book 07768 300314

**Explorer Scouts** | Scout Hut Holloway Rd. | 19:00-21:00 | 07745 285938 | Age 14½-18

**Pilates** | Merry Bells | 09:45-10:45

# Day by Day

## FRIDAY

**Wheatley Library** | Open 09:30-13:00 & 14:00-18:00

**Table Tennis** | URC Hall | 10:00 | All abilities catered for | [val\\_farmer40@hotmail.com](mailto:val_farmer40@hotmail.com)

**Horspath Hub Coffee Morning** | 10:00-12:00 | 07591 933964

**Coffee Morning w/ Wheatley Primary Sch.** | Maple Tree Centre | 08:45-09:45 | Drop-in

**Social Butterflies** | Maple Tree Centre | 10:00-11:30 | Drop-in

**Scouts** | Scout Hut Holloway Rd. | 19:00-21:00 | 07745 285938 | Boys & girls age 10½-14

**St. Mary's Bell Tower Practice** | St. Mary's Church | 19:30-21:00 | 01865 872250

**Merry Bells Coffee Room** | 10:00-12:00 | 01865 873996 | All welcome

**Martial Arts** | Primary School Hall | 07731 512682 | Ages 3-7+ | [mrsfox@mattfiddes.com](mailto:mrsfox@mattfiddes.com)

## SATURDAY

**Parish Surgery** | Parish Office, High Street | 09:30-11:30

**Wheatley Library** | Open 09:30-13:00

**Family Fun** | Maple Tree Centre | 3rd in month | 10:00-11:30

**Scrabble Club** | Location varies | 1st in month | 19:30 | 01865 872628

**Our Lady of Lourdes RC Church** | 01865 762433 | [corpuschristi.oxford@rcaob.org.uk](mailto:corpuschristi.oxford@rcaob.org.uk)

- Vigil Mass | Our Lady of Lourdes, Crown Rd. | 18:00

## SUNDAY

**Wheatley Minis Football** | Holton Rugby Club | 09:00-10:00 | Ages 4-7 | 07756 608744

**Family Board Games Café** | URC Hall | 2nd in month | 14:30-17:00 | [kevin@kbetts.com](mailto:kevin@kbetts.com)

**St Mary's Church** | 01865 872224 | [vicar.wheatley@gmail.com](mailto:vicar.wheatley@gmail.com)

- Holy Communion | 08:00
- Parish Praise | 1st Sunday in month | 10:00
- Sung Eucharist | 2nd, 3rd & 4th Sunday in month | 10:00
- Food Bank Sunday | 4th Sunday in month | 10:00

**United Reformed Church** | 01865 873859 | [secretary@wheatleyurc.org.uk](mailto:secretary@wheatleyurc.org.uk)

- Morning Worship with Holy Communion | 1st Sunday in month | 10:00-11:00
- Pulse Wheatley Youth Group | Every week term time | 19:00-20:30
- Afternoon Tea | 1st in Month | 14:30-16:00

**Wheatley Community Church** | [office@wheatleycommunitychurch.org](mailto:office@wheatleycommunitychurch.org)

- Wheatley Primary School | 10:30





# THE WHEATLEY SOCIETY

Parish Newsletter  
February / March 2024

## A warm welcome to 2024

The “*Annual Clever Clogs Quiz*” on December 1st was our farewell event for 2023. Our Quizmaster, John Duffelen, challenged us all with his questions and it was a close-run and exciting event - congratulations to the winning team. The quiz is always a good way to start the Xmas season with friends and nibbles and drink – with an added touch of competitiveness.

“*An Evening with Jane Austen,*” courtesy of Elizabeth Hess and Keith Phillips on January 26th, was our introduction to 2024. Elizabeth and Keith joined forces and provided information, illustrations, and taster examples of some of the food mentioned in her books. This included a fashionable white soup from *Pride and Prejudice*, a “hedgehog” dessert and a welcome negus which is a type of punch.

On **Tuesday February 27th** Katie Lane will let us into the art of bellringing with the help of a model bell. All you potential campanologists out there should come along and find out if bellringing is to become your new hobby in 2024.

The Annual General Meeting comes around again on **Friday 15th March**. The offer of a glass of wine seems to encourage a good turnout. and a guest speaker with an interesting local story to tell should make it a memorable evening.

We will also present the basis of a programme we have put together for this year. Current and new members are always welcome to events, and we hope you will play an active part in the completion of the programme and its implementation.

At the risk of blowing our own trumpet the Wheatley Society won an award in 2023 for being a community support organisation. As we enter our 50th year we not only want to celebrate what we have done but to adapt to what we can do in the future.



**The Wheatley Society Committee**

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- Preparing & cooking hot meals
- Anything not listed, please do not hesitate to contact us, details below:

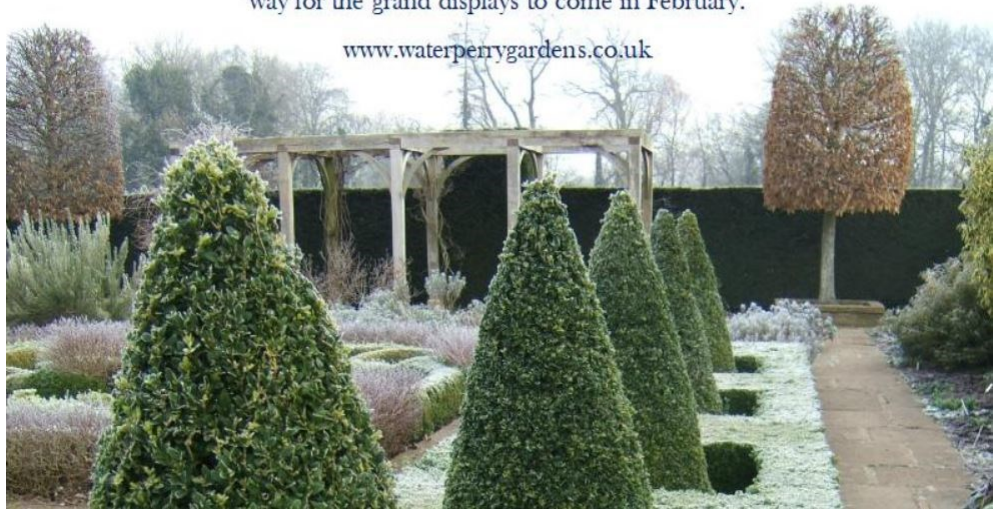
**Linda McMahon on 07715 600524 or email [lindalizzymac@outlook.com](mailto:lindalizzymac@outlook.com)**

**Moira McMahon on 07715 609968 or email [moiramaccr@outlook.com](mailto:moiramaccr@outlook.com)**

## Waterperry Gardens In Winter

Come and enjoy the gardens for a brisk walk, wrap up well. Crisp underfoot with lovely blue skies. First signs of snowdrops making their way for the grand displays to come in February.

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# The Merry Bells Village Hall

## Looking back on 2023 and looking forward to the next fifty years

Last month at the beginning of January, we had our monthly meeting to discuss our preliminary management accounts for 2023 and we feel confident that in our first full year of not having a 'Covid effect', we are well on our way for a successful year looking after the Merry Bells on behalf of the village. We will of course have a final set of audited financial accounts ready to present at our AGM in June 2024, when everyone will see and hear about our solid progress. While continuing to invest in our village hall, we will have managed to add to our cash reserves for any new projects along with the ever-increasing maintenance costs and being prepared for any emergencies, and exceptional expenditure.

Getting back to 'normal' has seen all of our offices let and the hiring of the venue increase by 10% year on year in the number of bookings. This means there is good use of the excellent facilities for classes, meetings, and private events and

celebrations but this increase still leaves plenty of capacity available.

Speaking of celebrations, we celebrated in January the 50th Anniversary of our regular Coffee Mornings at the Merry Bells. The event was held on Friday 26th January between 10.00 am until 12.00 mid-day and was open to everyone irrespective of age and circumstances. Unfortunately, we had to submit this piece before the event took place but perhaps the most important point is, we feel sure it will have reflected on the regular Coffee Mornings taking place every week, when a wide range of different age groups represented in the village take the opportunity to meet, chat, and 'gossip'.

The Merry Bells is a true reflection on the different members of our community enjoying this opportunity to get together and socialise, and our Coffee Mornings help that happen.

Why not give it a try, as everybody is welcome and to our 'regulars', we thank you for your past, present and future support. Here's to the next 50 years!

**The Merry Bells Trustees**

## WHEATLEY CARE

Wheatley Care has an important position that we need help filling:

### SECRETARY

- Take and distribute minutes for 1-2 hour meetings four times a year.
- Communicate with drivers and deal with all other correspondence.

Please contact: **Kath Lamont—01865 876609**



## **Retirement of Malcolm Benson**

After more than 15 years of involvement on The Howe, our previous chair Malcolm Benson is stepping down as a trustee. We send our thanks for the huge contribution he has made but while we will miss his guidance and wisdom at our meetings, we're glad to know he'll continue to have a keen interest in our work.

## **Volunteer Working Party Dates for Your Diary**

Enjoy nature and the outdoors? Why not come along and join in? Working with our friendly team you'll help us complete larger projects on The Howe. Come for the whole day, or just a few hours. All ages welcome. No experience required. Volunteer perks include FREE hot drinks and homemade biscuits!

Sunday February 18th 10am to 4pm – Hedge and Tree Planting

Sunday March 24th 10am to 4pm – More Planting, Weeding & Mulching!

## **Corporate Volunteer Days**

Does your employer run an Employer-Supported Volunteering (ESV) scheme? On November 24th we ran our first Corporate Volunteer Day, which was a great success! We welcome interest from other local companies or organisations who'd like to enjoy a team-building day on The Howe. It's fun and a great way to spend time with colleagues with the satisfaction of knowing that you're all doing something positive for nature!



## **Got any Spare Garden Tools?**

With a growing team of volunteers, we desperately need more equipment. Do you have any unwanted garden rakes, forks or spades? We're also interested in any spare loppers, hedge shears, secateurs - and gardening gloves of all sizes.

## **Christmas Hamper Campaign**

Lastly, we'd like to say thank you. This year our campaign helped a total of 107 financially vulnerable families in our community. But we couldn't have done it without you! Thanks to the generosity of many individual villagers and local organisations - and a large contribution from Wheatley Parish Council - we raised over £3,000. The funding balance was met by The Howe Trust. We'd like to send a special thanks Jayne and Alan Clark for their practical and organisational support and also to the 30 volunteer drivers who made it all possible by giving their time to make the hamper deliveries on 23rd December.

## **How to Get in Touch**

You can get more information on any of these topics on our website [howetrust.org.uk](http://howetrust.org.uk) or our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/howetrust](http://www.facebook.com/howetrust).

Alternatively email [maggiiefyffe@gmail.com](mailto:maggiiefyffe@gmail.com) or call, text or WhatsApp me on 07889 639986.





# Wheatley Playing Field Trust

The Trust has a number of planned works and events taking place this year. Major tree works will be undertaken during the February half term. Please be aware of this and keep away from any work being undertaken.

At Easter, much needed pitch improvement is being carried out. This includes verti-draining to decompact the grass surfaces followed by fertilising.

Last year, extra floodlights were put up on the tarmac area. This has, for the first time, allowed women's league netball matches to take place.

Recently, additional grants have been obtained to purchase mobile floodlights. This will allow training to take place at night on other areas of the playing field. The floodlit pitch is heavily used at present and is deteriorating rapidly.

This summer two major events are taking place on the playing field. The first, on June 22nd, is a fundraising event organised by the Oxford Downs Syndrome Group. ODG held their first, highly successful event in June 2018 and

the Trust is hoping this event will be equally well supported.

The second one, on July 13th, is that most popular annual family event, the Wheatley Play Day.

As mentioned in above, the very wet weather this winter has left the pitches in not the best of conditions. There should be no unauthorised use and the pitches can only be used through booking by a registered user. Also, if all pitches have been fully booked then this means that there is no availability for use. Misuse of the booking system spoils it for the bona fide clubs.

In addition, if there is anyone in the community who is thinking about playing netball, football or rugby or just wants to improve their fitness, please contact the clubs directly or use the Trust contact details below.

Do get in touch at:

[enquiries@wheatleyplayingfieldtrust.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@wheatleyplayingfieldtrust.co.uk)

[www.wheatleyplayingfieldtrust.co.uk](http://www.wheatleyplayingfieldtrust.co.uk)

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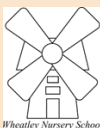
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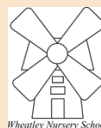
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Our curriculum is planned carefully to provide a wide range of exciting play opportunities and to develop basic skills and the knowledge necessary for a smooth transition into school.

15/30 hours Government Funded spaces available.



**Forest school is running for children between the ages 2-11 years.**

**All Stars After School Club Hours 7:30-9.00am and Monday-Friday 3.00-5.30pm**

The aim of the club is to provide a wide and varied programme of After School entertainment for children, extracurricular activities as well as offering childcare. Every day we aim to provide a choice of activities in an attempt to cater for the differing wants and needs of children at the Nursery and neighbouring primary School.

**Please contact us on 01865 876750 or email us at [staff@horspathnursery.org.uk](mailto:staff@horspathnursery.org.uk)**

**Visit our website for more information [www.horspathnursery.org.uk](http://www.horspathnursery.org.uk)**

**Ofsted April 2022 Rating: Good**

“Staff focus successfully on seeking the views of individual children to plan ongoing activities. Staff support children’s play and have a consistent approach and use good quality teaching strategies to extend children’s learning.”



## Acorns Nursery



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Our nursery is led by passionate Early Years Practitioners, specialising in Early Years education. Our curriculum is planned alongside our Early Years Lead and qualified Reception teacher.

We are education providers for children from the age of 2 to 5 and are proud to be part of the Wheatley Primary School family, working closely together to build firm foundations for future learning for all children along with access to the vast playing field and forest space on site.



Wrap around breakfast and after school club is available on site through Cool Kids. Opening from 7.30—5.30pm Monday to Friday and also offering a holiday club during half term.

**Nursery is open 8.50—3pm Monday to Friday**

**Visit [www.wheatley.oxon.sch.uk](http://www.wheatley.oxon.sch.uk) and click on the Acorns tab for more information or call 01865 872366 and ask for Sue**

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# Wheatley Library | 01865 875267

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## Happy New Year!

In the spirit of the new year, there are a few new initiatives occurring in the library over the next few months.

We have a new Digital Helper session on alternate Thursday afternoons 2:30-3:30p.m. for anyone who needs help with a specific computer or online query. Please contact us to book a Digital Helper session or speak to a member of staff in the library for further details.

A new Storytime session will begin soon on alternate Saturday mornings for children ages 4 – 7, so keep an eye out for specific dates and times that will be posted in the library and on our website at [bit.ly/WheatleyLibrary](http://bit.ly/WheatleyLibrary).

Here's a reminder of our regular events:

- Rhymetime: free & every Friday, 10:30 a.m. for kids up to 5 yrs old
- Digital Helper: free & alternate Thursdays, 2:30 – 3:30p.m.
- Jigsaw Puzzle Swap: first Saturday of each month, 9:30 – 12:30 p.m.
- Art Group: 1st & 3rd Monday afternoon, 4 – 6 p.m.
- Fibre Group: 1st & 3rd Monday afternoon, 2 – 4 p.m.

For news and event updates, follow the 'Friends of Wheatley Library' Facebook page. Our Wheatley Friends Group would benefit from additional members so if you'd like to join, please visit [wheatleylibrary.org](http://wheatleylibrary.org) or send a Facebook message.

We recently recruited several fantastic new volunteers to work in the library so please keep your eye out for those new faces, who we are very happy to have on board!

For library queries, please email [wheatley.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:wheatley.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk), or call 01865 875267.

Hope to see you soon!

**Sophie Silverstone Grant | Library Manager**

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## WALKS PROGRAMME

### FEBRUARY

**Thursday 1st:** Meet at Ewelme (Cow Common car park) for an undulating 5½ mile walk via Swyncombe Church and Swyncombe Downs.

**Wednesday 7th:** Meet at Watlington, Recreation Ground car park, for a 6½ mile walk up Shirburn Hill and back down Pyrton Hill, with good views.

**Tuesday 13th:** Meet at Watlington, Recreation Ground car park, for a gentle social 2½ mile walk around the town, stopping for coffee at the Spire and Spoke.

**Thursday 22nd:** Meet at Holton, lay-by junction A40 and B4027, for a 5½ mile walk via Forest Hill.

**Sunday 25th:** Meet at Watlington (Town car park on Hill Road) for an undulating 7 mile walk via the medieval villages of Cookley Green and Swyncombe.

### MARCH

**Thursday 7th:** Meet at Maidensgrove Common for an undulating 5½ mile walk through woods and commons to Warburg Nature Reserve and Bix Bottom.

**Sunday 10th:** Meet at Warborough (south side of the Green) for a 7½ mile circular walk to Shillingford, then on to Little Wittenham and Dorchester.

**Tuesday 12th:** Meet in Headington, Bury Knowle Park gate, for a leisurely, gentle social 2½ mile walk downhill to St. Clements. Walk starts at 11am, but meet for coffee first in Headington at 10:30.

**Thursday 14th:** Meet in Bledlow for an undulating 5½ mile figure-of-eight walk via Hempton Wainhill and Lodge Hill. Good views.

**Saturday 16th 10:30am:** Meet at the Lane End car park for a 4½ mile walk via Frieth. Maybe rare orchids at Moorend. Open fields, beech woods and views.

**Wednesday 20th:** Meet at Watlington (Town car park on Hill Road) for an 8 mile walk visiting historic villages at the foot of the Chilterns escarpment.

**Saturday 23rd:** Meet at Waterperry Garden Centre for a 6½ mile walk via Waterstock, Worminghall and Ickford. Optional lunch in café at finish.

All walks are circular and start at 10am unless otherwise stated.

Please check the website to find additions to the programme and to confirm walks details as they are subject to change:

[www.ramblers-oxon.org.uk/thame-wheatley/walking.html](http://www.ramblers-oxon.org.uk/thame-wheatley/walking.html)

*or phone 01844 213608*

Leaders' contact details and suitability of walks for dogs can also be found on the website.

In November we held our annual member's show which was very well supported. The classes included craft items and flower arrangements as well as cakes and cookies. Our thanks go to Geoff Coleman of the Cornfield Bakery for once again judging our baking entries. The other classes were voted for by members who enjoyed being able to see how gifted some of us are and choosing the items they liked the best.

The Christmas post box topper was presented to the meeting and I'm sure this will be admired and appreciated by villagers as they pass by the post office.

The show was followed by scones, jam and cream, a lovely accompaniment to enjoy with our cup of tea.

Our Christmas meeting this year was very different but just as enjoyable. After enjoying a cup of tea and mince pies our wonderful committee gave us an evening of pure fun beginning with a Christmas version of Ten Green Bottles, written by our vice chairman and enacted by members of the committee. This was followed by a game of Pass the Parcel which proved rather chaotic due to the large number of parcels going around at the same time. The grand finale was a rather (un)tuneful rendering of some favourite carols played on plastic whistles with hilarious results. Who needs professional entertainers – certainly not Wheatley W.I.

## HISTORY SNIPPETS 1924

The beginning of 1924 was a fairly quiet time for the Institute after all the hard work organising the village Christmas party. There were speakers and demonstrations on a variety of topics as well as the monthly competitions, one of which was homemade toffee, not very good for the teeth I would have thought. The meetings also included piano recitals, singing and poetry readings. A grand exhibition in Oxford was being planned for May and Wheatley's entries were decided:

- 1) Co-operative needlework, a tablecloth to be used at meetings.
- 2) Best dressed stall.
- 3) A twenty-minute scene from Shakespeare. Wheatley Institute was also providing teas and were hoping that Marston W.I. could be persuaded to help them.

At our next meeting on 20th February we will be sampling various starter dishes. Hopefully we will find new recipes for those special occasions. Our A.G.M. is being held on 19th March.

Visitors are always welcome to our meetings which are held in The Merry Bells on the third Tuesday of each month, beginning at 7.15 pm.

A donation of £4 is suggested.

**Stephanie Brooklyn**





Our New Year is well under way and by the time you read this, we will all be used to writing 2024! All sessions are drop-in, except our popular Maple Chefs which is bookable via Eventbrite. We have a few changes to our programme this time at The Maple Tree.

**Mondays:** Messy Monday at 10:00-11:30am and Twinnies at 2:00-4:00pm

**Tuesdays:** Once Upon a Rhyme-Time at 10:00-11:30am

**Wednesdays:** Little Explorers at 10:00-11:30am and Maple Chefs at 1:00-3:00pm

**Thursdays:** Baby and Bump Cafe at 9:30-11:30am and The Maple Tree at Forest Hill Village Hall at 11:00am-12:00pm.

**Fridays:** Little Chatterboxes at 10:00-11:30am

Family Fun at 10:00-11:30am, **3rd Saturday** every month

Check out our Website and Facebook page for more details and

look out for our next Paediatric First Aid training, coming in February.

Did you know that it costs nearly £100,000 to keep The Maple tree running for a year? Please do get in touch if you would like to help with the fundraising. Our next big event is Daffodil Day at Shotover House on Sunday 17th March. We need volunteers to direct traffic and pedestrians, collect tickets, serve teas, coffees, and cakes, and to bake goodies in advance, if you are unavailable on the day.

Have you thought about becoming a Friend of the Maple Tree offering monthly financial support or volunteering at one of the sessions above? These are two other ways that you can support our lovely charity. (Charity number:1174117)

We are here to help, if you need advice or support:

01865 236700 or 07849 466249

[info@mapletree.org.uk](mailto:info@mapletree.org.uk)

[www.mapletree.org.uk](http://www.mapletree.org.uk)

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**Laura Spencer | Centre Manager**



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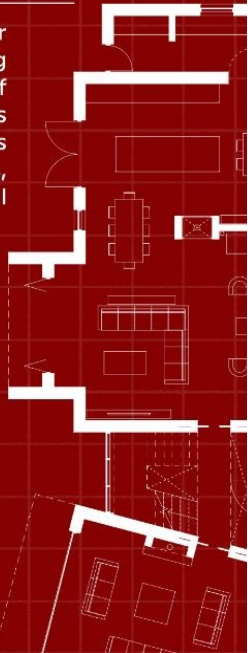


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Any questions? Contact Deb at [wheatleydailyinfo@gmail.com](mailto:wheatleydailyinfo@gmail.com).

## SAVE THE DATE – 13 July 2024 for Wheatley & Holton Play & Activity Day at playing fields opposite Wheatley Park School

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# POPPY APPEAL

## 2023 Poppy Appeal Report

It's a pleasure to report that, provisionally, the amount raised by the Wheatley RBL Branch in 2023 Poppy Appeal exceeded the amount raised in 2022, which itself was a record. Official figure will not be known for a few months.

Thanks must go to all those volunteers who sat at the tables at ASDA and the Welcome Break Service Station for the period of the Appeal and to the management of those two organisations for giving permission. Thanks, too, to Moira, Helen, and Janet for counting many thousands of pounds worth of notes and coins from the buckets and tins. Also, thanks to the retail outlets etc that gave space on their counter tops for the collecting tins.

Finally, many thanks to all residents that gave so generously to the appeal.

The Remembrance weekend itself went off very well. There was a brief service at the War Memorial on Saturday 11th November where a small group from

Wheatley Primary School plus Headteacher read the poem "In Flanders Field" by John McCrae.

The Remembrance Sunday service, which was held this year in the Primary School Hall, was extremely well attended. This marked the last Remembrance Service to be conducted by the Reverend Nigel Hawkes.

The rain held off long enough for people to get to the Memorial Gardens for the service where the Two Minute Silence was observed, the names of the Wheatley Service Men who died in the two world wars were read out and the wreaths laid.

Annual General Meeting – the branch AGM was held in late November. Unfortunately, it was not able to elect a new Chairman. This vacancy will have consequences for the Branch's status, and I would ask that if anyone is willing to take on this role, please contact me.

[garethmorris@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:garethmorris@hotmail.co.uk)

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**Gareth Morris | Branch Secretary | Poppy Appeal Organiser**



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# Wheatley Christmas Fair 2023

In its seventh year the 2023 Wheatley Christmas Fair was another fantastic community event. With the most stalls so far, the community supported independent small businesses who were selling their handmade craft items, food, and drink. The Fire Brigade once again supported Santa for the extremely popular Santa’s Grotto.



Previously founded by the High Street Traders this was the first year it was managed by Wheatley Parish Council.

We knew it was important to keep the focus of supporting local small businesses and charities and so money was allocated to support the event and staff allocated to plan and make the event happen.



As well as thanking the community for coming to the event we would like to give special thanks to:

- **Howe Trust (Wheatley)** for a grant towards the event
- **Wheatley Local & Wheatley Estates** for power
- **That Event Company** for lighting and power solutions
- **Gorman Civil Engineering and Groundworks** for traffic management solutions
- **The Merry Bells Committee** for use of The Merry Bells
- **Wheatley Park School Soul Band, Wheatley Adult Choir and Children’s Choir,** and the **City of Oxford Silver Band,** for their festive entertainment

**SAVE THE DATE: FRIDAY 29TH NOVEMBER 2024 2PM - 8PM**

Wheatley Parish Council | [clerk@wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk)

## SODC Waste Collections — February & March 2024

Collection day Monday unless *changed	Which bins and other items?
Feb 5th & 19th   Mar 4th & 18th	Green, brown, food & oil waste, textiles
Feb 12th & 26th   Mar 11th & 25th	Grey, food & oil waste, small electricals

## Key Contacts

### Local Governance:

Oxfordshire County Council | 01865 792422 | [oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://oxfordshire.gov.uk)

County Councillor Tim Bearder | 07789 754727 | [tim.bearder@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:tim.bearder@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

District Councillor Alexandrine Kantor | 07581 745221 | [alexandrine.kantor@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:alexandrine.kantor@southoxon.gov.uk)

South Oxfordshire DC | 01235 422422 | [southoxon.gov.uk](http://southoxon.gov.uk)

Planning Applications | 01235 422600 | [planning@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:planning@southoxon.gov.uk)

Wheatley Parish Council | 01865 875615 | [clerk@wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk)

### Local information:

Wheatley Post Office | 0845 722 3344 | Open Mon-Fri 09:00-17:30, Sat 09:00-13:00

The Maple Tree (Children's Centre) | 01865 236700 | [laura@mapletree.org.uk](mailto:laura@mapletree.org.uk)

The Merry Bells Village Hall | 01865 872073 | [merrybells.org.uk](http://merrybells.org.uk)

The Howe Trust | Chair | Maggie Fyffe | 07889 639986 | [howetrust.org.uk](http://howetrust.org.uk)

Wheatley Library | 01865 875267 | [wheatley.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:wheatley.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Wheatley Park Sports Centre | 01865 872128 | [better.org.uk/venues/park](http://better.org.uk/venues/park)

Wheatley Park School | 01865 872441 | [wheatleypark.org](http://wheatleypark.org)

Wheatley Primary School | 01865 872366 | [wheatley.oxon.sch.uk](http://wheatley.oxon.sch.uk)

Wheatley Good Neighbour Scheme | 07907 104856 | [wheatleygns@gmail.com](mailto:wheatleygns@gmail.com)

### Services:

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OCC Highways | 0845 310 1111 | [highway.enquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:highway.enquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

Missed Bin Collection | 03000 610610 | [admin.southoxford@biffa.co.uk](mailto:admin.southoxford@biffa.co.uk)

Bulky Household Waste Collection | 01235 422406 | [waste.team@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:waste.team@southandvale.gov.uk)

Housing | 01235 422422 | [housing@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:housing@southandvale.gov.uk)

GP Surgery, Morland House | 01865 872448 | [morland-house.co.uk](http://morland-house.co.uk)

NHS Out of Hours Service | 111 | [111.nhs.uk](http://111.nhs.uk)

Gas Emergency | 0800 111 999 | [nationalgrid.com/group/safety-and-emergencies](http://nationalgrid.com/group/safety-and-emergencies)

National Power Cut Helpline | 105 | [ssen.co.uk](http://ssen.co.uk)

Burst pipe or leak | 0800 714 614 | [thameswater.co.uk](http://thameswater.co.uk)

Floodline | 0345 988 1188 | [gov.uk/check-flood-risk](http://gov.uk/check-flood-risk)

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