

Wheatley Newsletter

Published by the Parish Council

February - March 2017



The views expressed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Parish Council.

WHEATLEY NEWSLETTER

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Distributed by a team of volunteers to all addresses in Wheatley and Holton.

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Ask for details.

Cover picture: *Our outgoing Clerk, Gareth Morris. If anyone has photos of the village or events (past or present) we would love to put them on the front cover!*

The Wheatley Newsletter welcomes contributions and advertisements 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 – the Editor reserves the right not to print items and to edit items submitted for publication.

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

The deadline for the February - March edition is **Saturday 11th March 2017**.

Contributions (max. 250 words) to the Parish Office, preferably by email with a Word attachment to newsletter@wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

ADVERTISING

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CHAIR'S COLUMN

Anne Davies

I hope everybody had a good Christmas. The Christmas Fayre organised by the shopkeepers around the tree lighting was a lovely idea to kick off the season in the centre of the village and a great success, to be repeated!

As you will see from the back cover of this newsletter, the High Street Improvements Advisory Group have been busy preparing for their exhibition of ideas to be held in the Merry Bells on February 18th. All are encouraged to come along had have their say. With the Post Office opening in the former Barclays Bank building and all the decoration and improvements that have been made to the Merry Bells over the past couple of years, it is an excellent time to review the other side of the street and continue to make the village centre attractive and welcoming to visitors.

Speaking of the village centre, there is now a bicycle rack behind the Merry Bells, just outside the Library for all you 'low emission' shoppers!

For your information, check out the inside back cover of the Newsletter where there is a very useful list of local contacts.

Planning continues to consume a good deal of time. You will have seen that the development on the London Road is underway.

There have been concerns about the plans for the Railway pub site. The site is being considered by a property developer who would build homes for the elderly. The company have agreed to meet with representatives from the village to discuss their plans.

Also, Brookes University have invited members of the Council and the Neighbourhood Plan group to an update meeting in February. Updates about these developments will be posted on the Neighbourhood Plan website.

Gareth's last day as our Parish Clerk was January 31st. We wish him well in his future outside of the Parish Office. Sadly, another long-timer (just five months short of Gareth's tenure!) Councillor Jim Reilly, has resigned. This leaves a vacancy on the Council which will be posted in due course.

Dates for your Diary - all meetings start at 7.30pm

Wed 8th February	Planning Committee	Parish Office
Mon 20th February	F&GP Committee	Merry Bells Coffee Room
Mon 6th March	Parish Council	Merry Bells Hall
Wed 8th March	Planning Committee	Parish Office
Mon 20th March	F&GP Committee	Merry Bells Coffee Room



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EX-CLERK'S COLUMN

Gareth Morris

The editor has asked me to relate a few 'funny' moments from my time as the Parish Clerk. You would have thought that in 11 years and 10 months there should be some but I seem to have expunged them from my memory or perhaps there just weren't any!!!

Anyway, here goes:

- Being rung up and asked by a parent if we could give her son employment looking after the flower beds on our traffic islands
- During the Gulf war, a resident asking if I could stop the Chinook helicopters flying over the village because they made her windows rattle and stopped her working. I was dying to reply "Don't you know there's a war on?"
- I had the occasion to ring the chairman of an adjacent parish council. His wife answered and said she would put her husband on. To my dying day, I will believe he was in the bath!

"So long and thanks for all the fish" (Douglas Adams)



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A VERY BIG THANK YOU TO GARETH!

From a few of the many well-wishers

Gareth makes a tremendous contribution to the life of our village. He is always the man behind the scenes in our dramatic productions, then on the stage and often the director as well. One of the best Wheatley days each year could not happen without his contribution - dance coaching, performing in the band and leading the dancing. Yes - May Day! He has done the same job at ceilidhs by the score and figured large in the great days of our famous Wheatley festivals.

He has been Mr. Indispensable! Let's hope his resignation as Parish Clerk gives him even more time to make our community a vibrant centre of enjoyable culture.
- Jack Turner

I started as the Newsletter Editor at about the same time that Gareth was appointed as Clerk in early 2005. My first edition was March 2005 and my last edition was Feb-March 2015 – so I was closely involved with Gareth for 10 years. In all that time, I had a good working relationship with Gareth and we got along very well indeed – no doubt helped by the fact that we are both Lancastrians! - Jim Watson

Year in year out, with Jack Turner, Gareth has organised the Mayday celebrations in Crown Square and Church Road Rec. Every year, he used to coach the Morris boys, now he coaches the Maypole dancers at the primary school to add to the celebration. Thank you for all you do. - Caroline Dalton

I've really enjoyed working with Gareth in the Parish Office, I've learnt a lot and there's never been a dull moment. Now he'll have the time to take all those scenic train journeys without worrying about getting back to the office! - Annette Richards

I've known Gareth ever since he joined the Morris in the late 1970s. He's been alongside me in Morris, Ceilidhs and Community Dramas and, when I lived in Wheatley, we got involved in a great many things socially. I'm sure he will be missed by the village as Clerk. - Mick Jones

Gareth is a very talented caller for country dancing as was demonstrated at Her Majesty's 90th birthday celebrations in the High Street last year. Each May Day Gareth leads the dancing on Church Road recreation ground, particularly "Uncle Gareth's Swiss Roll"!

During the eighties and early nineties Gareth ran the Wheatley Festival that included a Tug-of-War competition, a street ceilidh, pram race and other activities. He was the leading light in running the Wheatley Morris Men, a traditional dance group that gave much pleasure and entertainment.

His involvement with Wheatley Productions is major. He has stage managed or directed many productions including community plays, musicals and pantomime and has made many appearances on stage. Bravo! - Clive Hallett

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THE WHEATLEY NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN SUMMARY REPORT

John Fox, Chairman

Full version on wheatleyneighbourhoodplan.co.uk

1. **WNP Drafting Workshops.** The Project Team welcomed representatives from Holton to three workshops. We discussed the community feedback on nine main themes, from housing and land use to traffic and employment opportunities. We worked out from this, the community's own 'vision', a list of objectives, or targets for each theme. For instance, the community want a *wide range of housing and housing tenures*, so we worked out what would be included in a housing *wide range*. In January, three more workshops will shape the material into policies which are the sharp-edged principles of the Neighbourhood Plan. SODC will help us word the policies professionally, but the substance behind them remains ours.

2. **Road Map.** We will rough-draft the WNP towards the end of January. In February, our new (already impressive) SODC advisers will check that it complies with national and local policies. They will also help word our policies. For six weeks (Feb-March) we will consult again with the community then submit the draft NP plus final consultation comments to an independent examiner. After that, hopefully, it is allowed through to a formal local Referendum for it to be 'made' a statutory document. We hope to be there by June.

3. **A White Paper** is due this month. Expect Green Belt and prefab homes to feature.

4. **SODC is the regional setting for WNP.** From August, we had no NP adviser. Contact was poor, but we quizzed planners in full at the WNP Committee and put our concerns face to face with the SODC Chairman. Two new advisers joined us at the same table. It is now possible to make direct contact with district advisers, crucial to a healthy NP.

5. **Oxford Brookes Site.** After the SODC consultation last July, the district-wide response to major site proposals overwhelmed SODC. They will not publish the analysis until March alongside a *second* 'Preferred Sites' paper for more consultation. Helpfully, a skilled volunteer has offered to work on the 'Brookes and Wheatley' part of last July's consultation so we can add it to our evidence pool.

6. **OBU Town Planning students (third year)** are turning the Brookes site proposal into a degree project. First results are promising. Local parish councils and WNP reps will gather at Brookes in February for the latest on the sale and the Environmental Impact Assessment announced in November.

7. After March, we hope that our WNP will be submitted for examination. NPs are increasingly being allowed a legal voice *at that early stage*. Thank you to so many in this community for the support, trust (and humour) you give us all to get this far, just 12 months after we started.

I served as a Parish Councillor in the 1970s with Gareth Morris, our retiring Clerk. He is a natural community man (as well as a brass band man and a Mancunian). I add WNP Committee's appreciation of his help to us in his last year as Clerk, and our wishes for a fulfilling retirement.

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THE 2016 POPPY APPEAL

Roger Bell, Honorary Poppy Appeal Organiser

£14,100. This was the final total raised in the Wheatley and District area last November by our team of volunteers, including many members of the Royal British Legion branch. This is just a few pounds less than last year which was the highest over the past 13 years. So well done everybody. This year both Asda and Welcome Break came up trumps. The day at Tesco's at the Cowley Retail Park coincided with our Armistice Day ceremony on Friday 11th November so we only had half a day there. David Wright from Horspath also collected there and in his village receiving a further £4,108 for the area covered by the Branch.

Our core collection was, as ever, at Asda, where we received £4,408, our local shops and other outlets including the Remembrance Day church collection bringing in £1,969. The motorway service area however gave us £5,354 and our half day at Tesco's produced a further £276. We again had over 75 helpers during the two weeks, including those who still do house to house in Great Milton, Tiddington and Waterstock. The amounts collected there were up at £1,645.

The commemorations concerning the Battle of the Somme in 1916 from July to November and the earlier Gallipoli Campaign back in April kept the profile of our armed forces in the public domain. It is pleasing to note, however, that during 2016 no member of our armed forces was killed on active service, the first time this has happened since 1968. The work of the Royal British Legion in caring for those who have suffered injury or bereavement in past wars and conflicts still goes on. The money collected through the Poppy Appeal is essential to enable this to happen.

Thanks again to all those who helped and to those who gave so generously. In this connection, we were even more successful this year in getting those who gave notes to sign Gift Aid forms which should bring the Legion a useful additional amount. If anyone would like a complete breakdown of the amounts raised, please contact me at roger_bell@tiscali.co.uk.

CHARITY CAR WASH

Mike Baker

Firefighters will be swapping their hose reels for buckets and sponges to take part in a charity car wash. Crews from Wheatley Fire Station, on Old London Road, will give cars a wash and brush up between **10am and 4pm on Saturday 11th March**, in return for a donation to the national Firefighters Charity.

The Firefighters Charity is the leading provider of services that enhance quality of life for serving and retired fire service staff and their families. The charity also provides rehabilitation services to assist in an accelerated return to work, following injuries sustained during work related activities.

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Wheatley Parish Council is looking for a highly motivated individual with an interest in the local community to become its next Parish Clerk and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO).

This role includes administration, agenda preparation and minute-taking at meetings, advising Parish Councillors on procedural and legal matters, and supervision of the Council's three part-time workers.

Experience of local government or parish council work is an advantage (but not essential), as is experience of dealing with the public, working as a team and managing efficient administrative practices. Good computer skills are essential (MS Word and Excel) and experience of Sage financial package would be advantage.

The job will be based at the Parish Office at The Merry Bells, 89 High Street, Wheatley OX33 1XP, and will require some evening and occasional weekend working.

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An application pack and supporting information can be obtained on application by emailing chair@wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk. The closing date for applications is **5 February 2017**. Interviews will be held week commencing 6 February 2017.

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HIGH STREET IMPROVEMENTS EXHIBITION

Tim Davies, Parish Councillor and Chair of the High Street Improvements Advisory Group

The High Street Advisory Group has been meeting every 3 weeks in preparation for an Exhibition scheduled for 11am on Saturday 18th February at the Merry Bells. At this meeting, plans will be put forward to the community for comment and the reasoning behind them will be explained.

It is hoped the exhibition will be well attended - a notice is on the back page of this newsletter. (Please note that this Group is working closely with the Neighbourhood Plan team).

The main focus of the work has covered the following:

- **Development of a Village Square** to be a welcoming, relaxing centre and a focal point for activities such as the Christmas Fayre. Ideas include plantings to hide garage area and to create a welcoming atmosphere, a community wall with mosaics including designs from the Primary School, seating area, and a 'green wall'
- **Support for the shops and restaurant:** how best can we help the businesses to succeed as without them we wouldn't have a centre to attract residents
- **Parking:** how can we more efficiently use what parking we have to help residents and the shops? A survey of usage is about to be carried out by the Neighbourhood Plan group which will show who uses parking during the day, residents, shop employees, commuters or others/shoppers.
- **Campaign "Wake Up to Wheatley"**: both Thame and Woodstock have organised successful campaigns to develop awareness of the village centre, what's there, how to access it by footpath and where to park.

LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU AT THE EXHIBITION IN THE MERRY BELLS ON SATURDAY 18th FEBRUARY AT 11AM

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HOWE CLOSE - A BIG thank you and a BIG complaint from a resident Leigh Guyatt

I feel so lucky that the footpath at the end of Howe Close has been opened, it allows us to get into the countryside in seconds. Thank you to all of those who maintain the stiles, footpaths, gates and benches nearby. My family really enjoys the feeling of openness on our doorstep and we love the unusual sheep.

However, we don't enjoy finding dog poo on the pavement at the end of our garden and having to clear it up before someone treads in it (the lighting in the Close is poor so it's very easy to tread in the poo especially at night) and I especially didn't enjoy cleaning dog poo off the wheelie bin wheels after the dustmen had wheeled it through the offending pile the other week.

PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE if you are going to walk your dog up Howe Close don't leave your dog's mess behind for the residents to deal with!!

WHEATLEY VILLAGE ARCHIVES Stephanie Cox

Wheatley Village Archives are looking for a volunteer to digitise about 15 audio cassettes onto CDs and 6 video tapes to be digitised onto DVDs.

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THE HISTORY FILE: THE RAILWAY

John Fox

Wheatley Station closed to passengers in 1963. GWR/BR Trains had ambled direct to Paddington for a century, or changed at Risborough for an LNER/BR express to Marylebone. T.A. sappers blew up Ladder Hill Bridge in 1971. Now, *The Railway Hotel* of around 1868 has gone. Trains brought commercial travellers, ramblers and cyclists. They took away timber, commuters and emigrants. Wheatley promoted tourism. Holidaymakers leased saddle horses and pony-drawn 'dog carts' from *The Railway*. At *The Bridge*, canoes, skiffs, tennis and chalets were available. *The Railway* was a licensed 'commercial' house, not a seaside resort 'family hotel', but it was gas-lit, clean and smart, away from High St noise and smells. Lady Ottoline Morrell's carriage met her house-guests there, and she parked her bike there when visiting London. The hotel outclassed coaching inns (*Crown, Crown Tap, King's Arms*) on roads (*Church and London*) which were de-turnpiked in the face of railway competition. Later, *The Bridge Motoring Hotel* eclipsed *The Railway*.

No *Railway* guest book survives. Prime Minister Asquith, Captain Sassoon, the anti-War poet, and D.H. Lawrence of *Lady Chatterley* fame, waited there for Ottoline's carriage. Her husband commuted to The Commons and Bishops of Oxford to The Lords from Wheatley. Insurance and Benefit societies moved meetings to the Railway. 'Whitsuntiders' (ramblers), Deanery clergy and a Property Protection Society (gentry) followed, dividing village pubs as always by class and party. The 1920s Depression sapped railways and hotels. In 1947 elderly villagers barely remembered lodgers at *The Railway*. The 1960s saw a *Railway* dance hall, the 1990s a landmark vision of flowers and railwayana. A century and a half was a good innings.



The Railway, 1970s. Courtesy, Wheatley Archives

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WHEATLEY WI www.wheatleywi.com

Joyce Coveley

The autumn programme for Wheatley W.I. continued in November, when Pam Nixon spoke of writing her first novel. Pam admitted that she was a late starter, only beginning to write seriously once she had retired. Her novel was loosely based on her own experiences during her time as a boarder at a Cathedral Grammar School; she let her imagination run riot and felt sure that all the characters were fictional. A conviction which came back to bite her once the book was eventually published!

Pam resorted to self-publishing after realising the difficulties of interesting an established publisher. She was fortunate to have a launch party at Blackwells and was even on their best sellers' shelf for 24 hours, thanks to family & friends who were at the party.

On 13th December members gathered in a festive setting for the Christmas Party. After a short business meeting the fun began, with a wonderful buffet organised by the committee. The Christmas Hat competition was won by Lucy and Hilary and the raffle by Moira, Christine and Anne A. The Bring & Buy stall of Christmas gifts was well supported and raised £44.64 for the ongoing Denman Appeal; while the Guess the Number of Smarties competition was won by Pam H. The money from this, £22.50, was also donated to Denman.

The New Year started with Sara Fletcher talking about the Harwell Research Complex, then on a more frivolous note, February sees the return of the "Pudding Club". Can you be tempted?

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THE HOWE TRUST

Malcolm Benson, Chair

Despite its prominent position in the village, many residents are not aware that 'the Howe' (or hill) is a publicly owned asset. The 30 acres of land north of Windmill Lane and extending from Ladder Hill to Littleworth Park (mobile home site) was given to the village in about 1820 with grazing rights.

It is now a registered charity managed on behalf of the village by the trustees. It has 3 main remits.

- 1) To provide land for allotments. Currently there are approximately 100 with superb views across Otmoor.
- 2) Where funds permit, to provide financial help in cases of specific need.
- 3) To create an area of biodiversity accessible to the local population.

In respect of the latter, over the past 5 years improved access and a number of footpaths have been created. Some 500 trees have been planted with support from the Woodland Trust and a wildflower meadow is planned.

A current project is to restore an ancient hedge and copse both of which have been neglected for the past 50 years. Professional help in felling and coppicing the larger trees is being partly funded by a grant from the Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment (TOE2) supported financially by Grundon Waste Management Ltd. In addition, the Woodland Trust is donating another 200 trees for planting in early March. We are very grateful for the support of both these organisations.

Additional help is always welcome. Volunteers help to maintain the site by undertaking tasks such as tree planting, bramble clearing and fence repairing. Most of the helpers are retired and it would be great if some of the younger generation were involved. In addition to the tree planting we are creating a 'den building' area and making nesting boxes. At last count, there were 30 bird species identified. You can also donate a tree 'in memoriam'.

For further information or offers of help you can contact me by e-mail mkb@doctors.org.uk or phone 01865 873843.



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WHEATLEY LIBRARY

Wendy Stanton, Library Manager

The Friends of Wheatley Library had a very successful sale of books, crafts and cakes in December and we look forward to making an annual event of it. The money raised will go to support the library with running events and buying books to add to our stock. A big well done and thank you to all involved!

Oxfordshire library service is very fortunate that our libraries are all still open and have staff members but we couldn't do it without the involvement of our volunteers from the community. Another big thank you to everyone who gives up their free time to support the wonderful service the library provides.

The stock in the library is in a constant state of movement from one library to another so the books on our shelves are never the same from week to week. Also, if you have specific suggestions for books to get, we are always happy to hear them.

Our local studies section is a terrific source of information about Wheatley and the surrounding areas ranging from anecdotes by locals to walks in the region to car manufacturing in Cowley. It is well worth taking the time to browse.

We consistently have craft and colourings for children (of all ages). Our adult activities also continue as usual: craft sessions weekly, coffee mornings monthly, computer buddy sessions fortnightly and author talks every 3 months.

For more information about any of the above come to the library during open hours or call us on 01865 875267. Library opening hours: Tues 14.00-19.00, Wed 9.30-13.00 & 14.00-17.00, Thurs 14.00-17.00, Fri 9.30-13.00 & 14.00-18.00, Sat 9.30-13.00.

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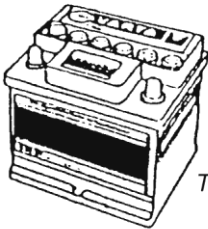
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WHEATLEY PARK SCHOOL NEWS

Tim Martin, Headteacher

I feel immensely privileged to have this opportunity to serve the local community by taking over as headteacher of Wheatley Park School. From the moment that I first set foot on the campus, it was evident that I was entering a very special place, not least because of its unique and historic setting.

The core value of 'Everyone Learning' will remain at the heart of all that we do at Wheatley Park as we build further upon the fantastic platform already established by Ms Curtis and her committed team. Equally, the school rightly takes pride in providing a very caring environment. In my introductory assemblies, I have been setting the students a twofold challenge: firstly, to develop into powerful learners who will succeed both in their formal examinations and in the lifetime of learning that awaits them; secondly, to develop into caring citizens who will make a positive difference to society.

An important factor in the school's ongoing success will be working in strong partnership with the local community and so I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible in the near future. In the meantime, I would like to thank all members of the school community for making me feel so warmly welcomed already.



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WHEATLEY FILM CLUB

Graeme Freeman

A new film every month on our big screen at the fire station.

Dates for the diary as follows, all films are shown at the fire station starting at 7.30pm:

- **23rd Feb: 12 Years a Slave**
- **23rd March: Minority Report**

New members welcome! www.wheatleyfilmclub.org



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ADVANCED SESSION
9.00pm – 10.00pm

SUNDAY

FAMILY SESSION
10.00am – 12.00pm

ADVANCED SESSION
12.00pm – 1.00pm

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THE WIZ AT WHEATLEY PARK SCHOOL

Joanna Botha

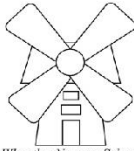
Students at Wheatley Park are working hard on their forthcoming performances of *The Wiz*, a musical version of The Wizard of Oz which sees Dorothy's adventures in the Land of Oz set to music in a dazzling, lively mixture of rock, gospel and soul. The plot and characters essentially remain faithful to the original story, but with an upbeat Motown vibe.

The story begins on a tumbledown farm in Kansas where one day a tornado carries Dorothy and Toto off to a New York City-like Oz. After celebrating the demise of the Wicked Witch of the East with the Munchkins, Dorothy departs for the Emerald City. She encounters a hip Scarecrow who wants to join her because he has a feeling he isn't going anywhere, an uptight Tin Man who needs her help to hang loose again, and a mama's-boy Lion who has lost faith in the psychiatric help he's been getting. Together they will seek help from the Great Man in the flashy city.

Following the huge successes of previous Wheatley Park productions, everyone is looking forward to a series of highly entertaining evenings - please join us! Tickets are available from Main Reception at Wheatley Park School.

There are four shows this year: Wed 1st, Thurs 2nd, Fri 3rd Feb at 7pm and Sat 4th Feb at 6pm (note the earlier time). Seat numbers will be allocated at the time of purchase so prompt purchase is advisable. Tickets for Thurs to Sat are £7 with concession tickets (children, students up to and including 6th formers, pensioners and WPS staff) at £5. A family ticket for either 2 x adults and 2 x children or 1 x adult and 3 x children is £20. Wednesday evening tickets are discounted to £5 with concessions £3.50. Payment is by cash or cheque with cheques to be made payable to Wheatley Park School. We look forward to welcoming you!





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THE MERRY BELLS COFFEE ROOM CHRISTMAS PARTY

The Coffee Room Christmas Party was held at the Merry Bells on the morning of Wednesday 21st December 2016. The Coffee Room was fit to burst with tables laden with sandwiches, savouries, cakes and biscuits for over 30 people who assembled to celebrate Christmas.

Angie, the Community Champion from Asda, arrived during the festivities to announce that **Anne Ledwith** who co-ordinates the coffee mornings and the volunteers had been awarded the title of “**Local Community Hero**” this year. Anne was presented with a lovely plant arrangement basket in recognition of all the work she has done over the year (and more) for the people in the community who come for coffee and a chat each Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday every week. Angie also presented a large box of biscuits for the Coffee Room coffee mornings.



A very well-deserved award, Anne. Thank you from everyone involved. Everyone is welcome on Tuesday-Friday 10am till noon. Do come along!

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VILLAGE PRODUCE ASSOCIATION

Aaron Savage

February is always the month that starts the growing season. The ground may be frozen but the extra light makes such a difference. The big change happens around 21st February when we have 10 hours of light per day. Greenhouses can sustain onion sets and leeks. Onion varieties such as Stuttgarter Giant and Red Baron have proved successful at our show in previous years and continue to be a favourite with growers. A bit of warmth is needed for other crops, particularly chillies. Some start to think about their brassicas as well to get an early crop for the Spring table. All around the village South facing windowsills start to see little pots appear on them. It is a sure sign that Spring is on the way and that is a lovely thought to carry us through.

It is time to get your seed order in. Our monthly meeting for February features a genuine gardening celebrity with Mick Poultney, Fellow of the National Vegetable Society, joining us. Mick will discuss growing in raised beds. He is an award-winning gardener and has been recognized many times for his expertise in growing. At his own allotment site, he has developed techniques with his raised beds for people with disabilities and those of us who are not as mobile as we once were. Please mark 7:30pm on 14th February in your diary at the Merry Bells and bring your Valentine with you. We welcome new members, so come and listen to Mick's talk.

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FROM THE VICAR
Revd. Nigel Hawkes

The beginning of February sees the end of the Christmas Season with the Feast of Candlemas, or the Presentation of Christ in the Temple, recalling the day when the infant Christ was brought to the Temple by Mary and Joseph and was blessed by the prophet Simeon who recognised him as the Messiah. Simeon had been promised that he would not die until he had seen the Messiah and so he was filled with joy at the fulfilment of God's promise. For Simeon, Jesus offered a shining hope for the Jewish people and for the whole world, and Christians today still proclaim that hope.

The world today feels a rather dangerous, uncertain and threatening place – or is it that we are exposed to 'too much' information by the news media? When times look bad or the unexpected crashes into our lives we can still hold on to the hope that Simeon saw in the infant Jesus. Another prophet of the faith, Dame Julian of Norwich, was given the words: "All shall be well, and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well." This has been a great comfort to me, and to many others in times of trial and difficulty and perhaps we should hold fast to this hope as the world strides on into the future.

Before I finish, some Churchyard news. The Diocese of Oxford has produced some new Regulations for churchyards, governing the installation of monuments and grave ornaments. Copies are available in church or from the Vicarage.



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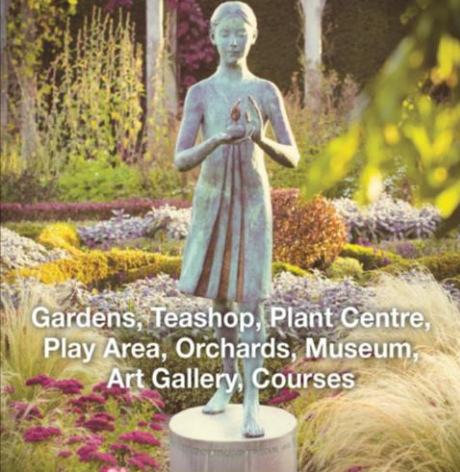
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Mothers Day
Sunday 26th March

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NEWS FROM WHEATLEY UNITED REFORMED CHURCH

Zena Knight

The Women's World Day of Prayer this year has been organised by the women of the Philippines and the service will be in the chapel on Friday, 4 March at 2.00pm. All are welcome and refreshments will follow.

Prior to that during Fairtrade Fortnight, we will be hosting a Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, 25 February. All are welcome – keep an eye open for the exact time to come. It won't be too early!

We have our usual Afternoon Tea on the first Sunday in the month, 5 February and 5 March, Coffee Mornings on the first Thursday, 2 February and 2 March (see the diary for times).

THE COFFEE ROOM

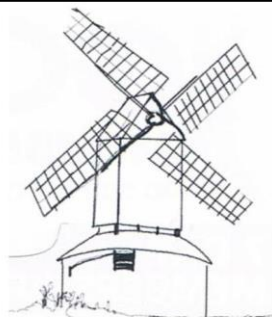
Anne Ledwith

On the 9th December 2016, 23 members of the Coffee Room went to the King's Arms for a Christmas lunch. We had a lovely meal and our thanks go to the staff for their excellent service. While we were there we held our weekly meat draw supplied by our local butcher – Jason. Many thanks to him for all the lovely joints of meat we have had over the year.

We held our Christmas Party in the Coffee Room on 21st December and this was very well attended with lots of food, a little wine and plenty of laughter. Angie from Asda came in that morning with some biscuits for us and returned in the New Year with coffee, tea, sugar and chocolates for which we thank her very much.

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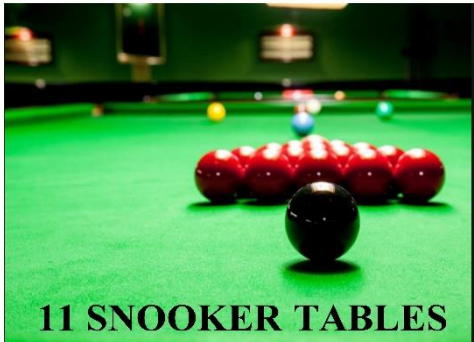
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WHEATLEY SOCIETY

Mary Hall, Chair

Our last event of 2016, the ever-popular Clever Clogs Quiz in November was a highly entertaining evening. Quizmaster John Duffelin challenged us all to recall long lost knowledge.

Time has flown by, Christmas and all its festivities have come and gone and the events of 2017 kicked off in January with Kevin Heritage's informative talk on "The Secrets of Holton Park".

On Feb 3rd, the Annual General Meeting takes place after which there will be a guest speaker.

Into March and on the 3rd there will be a Welsh evening to celebrate the culture of the Welsh contingent in Wheatley. If you would like to participate or can contribute with music, poetry or stories please get in touch with me - maryelizabethhall@hotmail.com

On March 23rd, the event "Are your affairs in order?" is a panel presentation and discussion covering different health, legal and financial issues we all need to address.

All events take place at the Merry Bells at 8pm with refreshments beforehand from 7.45. Events are open to all – come beforehand for a cup of tea or coffee and to catch up with friends and acquaintances. More details are on posters around the village. We hope to see you at some of these events.

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Liz Roberts

If Father Christmas brought you a new gadget, but you're still not sure who can help you to get the most from it, think Soha Housing! Their programme of free, public Get Online sessions comes monthly to St Mary's Close, Wheatley, on 21st Feb and 21st March 10am - 12 noon. If you want to 'go digital' for the first time or progress the computer skills you already have, email Adela on digital@soha.co.uk or call her on 01235 515 900 (or 0800 0141545 free even from most mobile providers) to book a session to learn to use computer devices – including smartphones – to their full potential.



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Wheatley resident Geraldine writes:

After a year of worry-sickness and fear from being in debt for the first time in my life, I found Christians Against Poverty. I had withdrawn from family and social contact out of shame. Then at a visit to my doctor I found a leaflet about CAP. Shortly after contacting the charity two very nice local ladies came to visit me in my home. Together we looked at the extent of my debt and the details of my income. Their explanation of priority debt etc. made so much sense to me. I did not feel embarrassed or ashamed because of the very kind but firm way everything was dealt with. Jill, the CAP debt coach, went above and beyond her duties to support and encourage me during the whole process.

With CAP's help and support I managed to stick to my budget and now thanks to CAP I am debt free. I feel proud of what I achieved and a big weight is off my shoulders.

The Oxford CAP Debt Centre is a collaboration between several churches in the city and award-winning national charity Christians Against Poverty. The Debt Centre team visit every client in their home. Meanwhile, CAP's head office negotiates debt reductions and sets up a repayment plan, with local volunteers offering support until clients become debt free. If you know your finances are out of control, ring us on 0800 3280006.

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IN THE PALM OF NATURE'S HAND

Stuart Mabbutt

It's been tough thinking creatively, or to even start to write this particular wildlife gardening article.

Why, well, my mother passed away on Dec 29th, and wow, how life has changed! But the one steadying factor is nature; all around if we are able notice it. I've been savouring each moment out in the garden or at the local woods and lakes.

Time and thoughts move in really strange ways and to their own timetable at times like these. Nature, gives us a structure and reliability just when we need it. Getting on with it and adapting as it does. I've been taking a camera out there with me, trying to keep my mind active and diverted from a downward spiral of thoughts.

Blue skies, offering reflections in water. Bird song, bringing a melody and a soundtrack to the moment in hand, with its feelings and emotions. The smells of crisp winter mornings, as I feel destiny leading me by the hand. The taste of the winter root vegetables, reminding me of warming childhood dinners my mother use to make.

Just look over your shoulder, and your loved ones are keeping an eye on you. Don't worry about them as Mother Nature is keeping an eye on them in turn. Keeping them safe in the palm of her hand. Nature is there for us all. Happy Wildlife Gardening. www.wildmaninspires.co.uk 01865 747243.

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If you don't knit, we challenge you to spread the word! You could do this by telling family and friends, or send an email to someone you think could help us. Whichever way you choose to help will be much appreciated.



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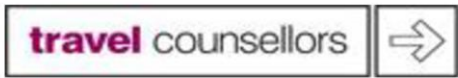
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At this time of year, you may be looking to plan your next holiday. There are still holidays available whether that's a UK or city break, a Christmas market, ski, sun or cruise holiday.

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WHEATLEY DAY BY DAY

Full details of local organisations can be found in the **Wheatley Information Booklet**. Copies available from the Parish Council office or www.wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

<p>WEEKLY</p>	<p>Merry Bells Coffee Room open 10 am to noon, Tues to Fri. All welcome.</p> <p>Wheatley Nursery School Every weekday from 8 am to 3 pm next to the Primary School in Littleworth Road Contact 01865 452725.</p> <p>Wheatley Pre-School. Behind the Primary School car park. Littleworth Road. Sessions Mon - Fri 9.00 to 11.45 am and 1.00 to 3.30 pm Call 01865 873687 to visit, to register, or for information.</p> <p>Sharecare Community Club Age UK Oxfordshire 9.30am - 2pm Mondays, Wednesdays & Fridays at Holton Village Hall. An opportunity for older people to meet with others. Contact Jackie Capper, Holton@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk or 07827 235 425.</p>
<p>SUNDAY</p>	<p>St Mary the Virgin: Every Sunday 8 am Holy Communion. 1st Sunday 10 am Parish Praise. 2nd, 3rd & 4th Sundays, 10am Sung Eucharist with King's Club for Children. 4th Sunday 10am service is Food Bank Sunday. Please bring a donation for the Food Bank. Kings Club for children runs every week apart from the 1st Sunday of the month alongside the 10am service.</p> <p>URC: Services at 10am. Holy Communion on 1st & 3rd Sundays. 1st Sunday is Food Bank Sunday. Afternoon tea on 1st Sunday, 2.30-4.30pm.</p> <p>Wheatley Community Church: Every Sunday 10.30am, Merry Bells.</p> <p>Our Lady of Lourdes: Vigil Mass now on Saturday at 6pm.</p> <p>Wheatley Rugby Club Minis & Juniors Training (6-16yrs) 10am - noon, Wheatley Playing Field. Contact: Peter_Ramsdale@btinternet.com</p>
<p>MONDAY</p>	<p>SODC Collections: (except Bank Holidays). Food refuse weekly; wheelie bins for general waste, recycling waste and garden waste on alternate Mondays, see p69 for calendar.</p> <p>Sharecare Community Club, Holton Village Hall, 9.30am-2pm</p> <p>Carers and Toddlers. Every Monday in school term at URC Hall, Crown Square 9.30 to 11.30 am. Everyone welcome. Age 0 - 3 with adult. Details: Enid (08165) 872403.</p> <p>Friends of Wheatley Library Craft Group. Every Monday in the Library, 10am - 12noon in school term time. Also 2nd Mon in the month 7-9pm in school term time.</p> <p>Not-So-Young Club, URC Hall. 2-4pm. Every 2 wks - see diary.</p> <p>Beaver Scouts, boys and girls aged 6-8, during term time, 5.30-6.30pm, at the Scout Hut, Holloway Rd (Tel: 01865 874997)</p> <p>Brownies meet in the URC Hall 5.30 to 7pm in term time.</p>

	<p>Wheatley Bridge Club. Holton Village Hall. 7pm. Community Choir URC Hall, 7.30 to 9 pm in term time.</p>
TUESDAY	<p>Merry Bells Coffee Room open 10am to noon Yoga for the over 60s Holton Village Hall 10-11am Wheatley Library open 2-7pm St Mary's Guild meets every 4th Tuesday in the URC Hall, 2.15 pm. New members always welcome See Diary for details. Wheatley Rugby Club Seniors Training, 7pm, Wheatley Playing Field. Contact: Peter_Ramsdale@btinternet.com Wheatley Women's Institute www.wheatleywi.com Meets on the 3rd Tues of each month in the Merry Bells at 7.15pm (except no meeting in August and the December meeting is held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month). New members and visitors are welcome at our talks and outings. Contact Jenny 07803 937936 Wheatley Singers in the URC Hall 7.15 – 9pm, all welcome. Contact Celia Pagel 01865 872250 St Mary's Church open for prayer and reflection 7.30 to 9pm</p>
WEDNESDAY	<p>Merry Bells Coffee Room open 10am to noon Wheatley Library open 9.30am-1pm & 2-5pm, coffee morning in the library every 1st Wed of the month 10am- noon. Parish Office Public Opening. 9.30-11.30am Details: 875615 Sharecare Community Club, Holton Village Hall, 9.30am-2pm St Mary the Virgin 12 noon, Holy Communion. Cub Scouts. Boys and girls aged 8-10 ½, 6.45 - 8.15 pm, at the Scout Hut, Holloway Road. Contact 01865 874284 Guides meet in the URC Hall, 7 to 8.30 pm, in term time. Holton Table Tennis Club 7- 9pm at Holton Village Hall Everyone from 10 years of age upwards, all abilities. Great Milton & District Local History Society. Meetings 4th Wednesday of month, Great Milton School 7.30 pm. Non-members welcome. Details: (01844) 279567 Wheatley Walkers, Jalkers and Joggers. 7.30-8.30pm, The Park Sports Centre, Contact Helen Coombes on 01865 872551 or 07979 538557</p>
THURSDAY	<p>Merry Bells Coffee Room open 10am to noon United Reformed Church coffee morning on the first Thursday of each month from 10 am - noon. All welcome. Wheatley Walks. 10-11am. Meet at the Park Sports Centre - details from Anne on 872628 or Jean on 873430. Senior Circuits 10-11am, Holton Village Hall Age UK Information Drop-in, free info & advice. 2nd in month, Merry Bells 10.30 - 11.30am. Contact: Ruth 07827 235417. Wheatley Library open 2-5pm Wheatley Archive Room. The Merry Bells 2-5 pm.</p>

	<p>Xstream. An after-school club for primary children, 3.15 to 4.30 pm at the Primary School.</p> <p>Wheatley Rugby Club Seniors & Juniors Training, 7pm, Wheatley Playing Field. Contact: Peter_Ramsdale@btinternet.com</p> <p>Explorer Scouts. Boys and girls aged 14-18, 7-9pm at the Scout Hut, Holloway Road (07745 285938)</p>
FRIDAY	<p>Merry Bells Coffee Room open 10am to noon</p> <p>Wheatley Library open 9.30am-1pm & 2-6pm</p> <p>Sharecare Community Club, Holton Village Hall, 9.30am-2pm</p> <p>Horspath Hub Coffee Morning 10.30am to noon</p> <p>Scouts. Boys and girls aged 10 ½ to 14, 7 to 9pm, at the Scout Hut, Holloway Rd. Contact 07745 285938</p> <p>St. Mary's Belltower Practice. Experienced ringers and beginners welcome. St Mary's Church 7.30-9pm. 01865 872250</p>
SATURDAY	<p>Parish Office Public Opening 9.30-11.30am</p> <p>Wheatley Library open 9.30am-1pm</p> <p>Our Lady of Lourdes, Crown Rd. Vigil Mass 6pm. Parish Priest; The Rev. Canon Mervyn Tower. The Presbytery, Wharton Road, Headington OX3 8AJ. Tel: 01865 672433.</p> <p>County & District Councillors' Surgery, 2nd in month. Parish Office, 10.30am</p> <p>Scrabble Club. 1st in month. Details of venue: T.872628</p>

FEBRUARY DIARY

Wednesday	1	Coffee Morning, Wheatley Library, 10am-12pm 'The Wiz', Wheatley Park School, 7pm
Thursday	2	Coffee morning, URC Hall, 10am-12pm 'The Wiz', Wheatley Park School, 7pm Wine Circle, Merry Bells, 8pm
Friday	3	Holton Village Hall Film Night, 6.45pm 'The Wiz', Wheatley Park School, 7pm Wheatley Society AGM, Merry Bells, 8pm
Saturday	4	'The Wiz', Wheatley Park School, 6pm
Sunday	5	Closing date for the Parish Clerk vacancy Tea, Cake & Chat, URC Hall, 2.30-4.30pm
Monday	6	Not so Young Club, URC Hall, 2-4pm
Wednesday	8	Planning Committee, Parish Office, 7.30pm
Thursday	9	Age UK Information Drop-in, Merry Bells, 10.30-11.30am
Friday	10	School Term 3 ends (Half Term week 13-17 Feb)
Saturday	11	County & District Councillors Surgery, Parish Office, 10.30am
Tuesday	14	Village Produce Association, Merry Bells 7.30pm
Wednesday	15	Age UK Info Fair, Merry Bells 10.30 - 12.30
Saturday	18	High Street Improvements Exhibition, Merry Bells, 11am

Monday	20	School Term 4 starts Not so Young Club, URC Hall, 2-4pm F & GP Committee, Merry Bells Coffee Room, 7.30pm
Tuesday	21	Get Online at Soha, St Marys Close 10am - 12 noon WI, Merry Bells, 7.15pm
Thursday	23	Wheatley Film Club, Fire Station, 7.30pm
Friday	24	MacMillan Quiz, Merry Bells, 7pm
Saturday	25	Fairtrade Fortnight Pancake Breakfast, URC Hall, time tba
Tuesday	28	St Mary's Guild, URC Hall, 2.15pm

MARCH DIARY

Wednesday	1	Coffee Morning, Wheatley Library, 10am-12pm
Thursday	2	Coffee morning, URC Hall, 10am-12pm Wine Circle, Merry Bells, 8pm
Friday	3	Wheatley Society, Merry Bells, 8pm
Sunday	5	Tea, Cake & Chat, URC Hall, 2.30-4.30pm
Monday	6	Not so Young Club, URC Hall, 2-4pm Parish Council, Merry Bells, 7.30pm
Wednesday	8	Planning Committee, Parish Office, 7.30pm
Thursday	9	Age UK Information Drop-in, Merry Bells 10.30-11.30am
Saturday	11	County & District Councillors Surgery, Parish Office, 10.30am Charity Car Wash, Wheatley Fire Station, 10am-4pm
Tuesday	14	Village Produce Association, Merry Bells 7.30pm
Monday	20	Not so Young Club, URC Hall, 2-4pm F & GP Committee, Merry Bells Coffee Room, 7.30pm
Tuesday	21	Get Online at Soha, St Marys Close 10am - 12 noon WI, Merry Bells, 7.15pm
Thursday	23	Wheatley Film Club, Fire Station, 7.30pm Wheatley Society, Merry Bells, 8pm
Sunday	26	Mother's Day Charity Vintage Tea, Cornfield Bakery
Tuesday	28	St Mary's Guild, URC Hall, 2.15pm

SODC WASTE COLLECTION FEBRUARY / MARCH 2017

Collection day is Monday	Which bin?
6 February	Grey, food & small electrical items
13 February	Green, brown, food & textiles
20 February	Grey, food & small electrical items
27 February	Green, brown, food & textiles
6 March	Grey, food & small electrical items
13 March	Green, brown, food & textiles
20 March	Grey, food & small electrical items
27 March	Green, brown, food & textiles

KEY CONTACTS

Local Governance:

To report potholes, fly-tipping, broken paving, vandalism on-line	-	www.fixmystreet.com
Oxfordshire CC	01865 792422	www.oxfordshire.gov.uk
OCC Family Information Service	08452 262636	fis.enquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk
OCC Highways	0845 310 1111	highway.enquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Street light fault line	0800 317802	
County Councillor Anne Purse	01865 351404	anne.purse@oxfordshire.gov.uk
South Oxfordshire DC	01235 422422	www.southoxon.gov.uk
Missed Bin Collection	03000 610610	admin.southoxford@biffa.co.uk
Bulky Household Waste	01235 422406	waste.team@southandvale.gov.uk
SODC Housing	01235 422422	housing@southandvale.gov.uk
SODC Planning Applications	01235 422600	planning@southoxon.gov.uk
District Councillor Toby Newman	01865 872239	toby.newman@southoxon.gov.uk
Wheatley Parish Council	01865 875615	clerk@wheatleyparishcouncil.gov.uk

Local information:

AGE UK contact Janet Carr	01865 875126	
Citizens Advice Oxfordshire	03444 111 444	caox.org.uk
The Maple Tree Children's Centre	01865 873916	mapletreec@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Merry Bells Village Hall	01865 872073	merrybells.org.uk
St Mary's Church	01865 872224	vicar.wheatley@gmail.com
Wheatley Care Scheme (transport to hospital or GP surgery)	07505 543750	
Wheatley Library	01865 875267	wheatley.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk
Wheatley Park Sports Centre	01865 872128	better.org.uk/venues/park
Wheatley Park School	01865 872441	www.wheatleypark.org
Wheatley CE Primary School	01865 872366	www.wheatley.oxon.sch.uk

Services:

Emergency - Police, Fire, Ambulance	999	
Police non-emergency	101	www.thamesvalley.police.uk
GP Surgery, Morland House	01865 872448	www.morland-house.co.uk
NHS 111 - non-emergency	111	www.nhs.uk
Gas Emergency	0800 111 999	http://www2.nationalgrid.com/uk/safety/
Electricity Emergency	0800 072 7282	www.sse.co.uk
Burst pipe or leak	0800 714 614	www.thameswater.co.uk
Floodline	0345 988 1188	www.gov.uk/check-flood-risk

Transport:

Comet - for people without access to suitable public transport	01865 323201	www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/comet
Arriva (280) Bus	0344 800 4411	arrivabus.co.uk
Oxford Bus Co. (U1 & London)	01865 785400	brookesbus.oxfordbus.co.uk
Oxford Tube (Buses to London)	01865 772250	www.oxfordtube.com
Park & Ride	-	www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/public-site/park-and-ride
National Rail Enquiries	03457 484950	nationalrail.co.uk

SATURDAY 18th FEBRUARY 2017
11.00 am AT THE MERRY BELLS

EXHIBITION

SUGGESTIONS TO TIDY UP THE CENTRE OF WHEATLEY

IDEAS WILL INCLUDE:

Removing the existing eyesore of “Toilet Square”

- from this:
- to this



- creating a “Village Square” with trees, plantings, seating, a community wall

Improving Parking Options:

- signage to use what we have more efficiently,
- removal of bollards to create extra spaces
- incorporating 2 spaces into Village Square concept

Wake Up To Wheatley campaign to drive awareness of village shops, facilities and history

Consider installing public convenience:

- SODC Car Park,
- use Merry Bells facilities between set times

COME AND FIND OUT - HAVE YOUR SAY