

Village Life

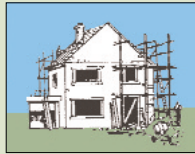
The community magazine
for Aston Clinton, Buckland
and Drayton Beauchamp
No.74 April / May 2024

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Published by

St Michael & All Angels PCC

23 New Road, Aston Clinton

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Published every even month and over 2,700 copies distributed free to addresses in Aston Clinton, Buckland and Drayton Beauchamp.

Contributors and advertisers

PLEASE NOTE

Copy deadline for next issue
3 May 24

Editorial contributions are welcomed subject to availability of space and Editor's decision on suitability for publication. The publishers take no responsibility for statements made by contributors or advertisers.

ADVERTISING RATES FOR ONE YEAR

Whole page	£395
Half page	£210
Quarter page	£105
One-Tenth page	£50

Front cover. Starling murmuration at Tringford reservoir, photo by Richard Vincent. See story on page 16

Printed by Buxton Press, Palace Road,
Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 6AE

**The Editor is always pleased
to receive local news of people,
clubs and events.**

Village Life

The bi-monthly community news magazine for
Aston Clinton, Buckland and Drayton Beauchamp

This issue of Village Life marks one year since I took over the role of editor. Much has changed in that time, although some things have stayed worryingly the same.

In March 2023, it wasn't clear that Village Life would survive for another year; a combination of reduced income from advertising and the lack of backup for the editorial role threatened the long-term sustainability of the magazine. Two things have improved the situation: we received a grant from Aston Clinton Parish Council, which will help us to break even over the current financial year; and my able co-editor, Fiona Skeggs, has joined the team, bringing a welcome breath of youth - and the tech savvy that comes with it. However, despite our best efforts, advertising revenue continues to decline and the second co-editor recruited last summer to complete our team of three was unfortunately unable to continue in the role.

I believe that, despite the constant availability of digital information, Village Life continues to play an important role in the community; so we press on, hoping that the community will provide the support we need to continue. On page 27, we are advertising once again for another co-editor and we continue to seek out local businesses who might want to advertise in Village Life and benefit from the exposure to 2,700 households that each issue provides. On page 24 we also have a new feature, "Village Business", designed to give our advertisers an opportunity for greater exposure and make advertising in Village Life an even more attractive prospect.

As I've been editing this issue, I've been struck by how many of our contributors are giving advance notice of summer events and urging you to 'save the date'. I have a vision of teams in all three villages busily planning your summer entertainment. I applaud their efforts and hope you will support them as the dates come around.

However, as spring unfolds, I also urge you to pause for a moment in the present. This precious time of year is one to cherish, as trees burst into blossom, birds burst into song and life renews. Stop, look, and breathe it in and, perhaps, for that moment, feel your cares slip away.

Enjoy it while you can... Barbara Muston

Aston Clinton Baptist Church

God the Gardener – John 15.1



In the grounds of the church, we have chosen to create a prayer garden, available to all at any time. I thought readers might be interested to learn how they might experience the garden and have copied the words of welcome below.

My prayer is that this may be a liminal place for those who visit. *Rev'd Nick Harris*

Welcome to the Prayer Garden.

Here is a place of welcome and encounter where you can bring yourself more fully into the presence of God.

From the gate, follow the circular pattern of the stone steps; they will lead you into the centre of the Garden. You are invited to walk on these to the heart of your relationship with the Creator, who loves and cares for you and awaits your reaching out to him.

As you begin your journey to the centre, invite Jesus to walk with you, let each stone represent a thanksgiving for blessings received or a cry for blows endured by you or a loved one.

At the centre is the ancient symbol of the Holy Spirit, a dove, who brings the peace, presence, power and protection of God; you may wish to rest here and invite him to bring to you that which you need most.

As you retrace your steps, you may choose to continue to carry some or all of the burdens that led you to prayer, or you may choose to commit them into God's hands and walk a little lighter in heart, mind and soul.

Hear now the promise of Jesus:

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."

REGULAR EVENTS AT THE BAPTIST CHURCH

All services are live-streamed and available for viewing via catch up on the church YouTube channel. Follow the links on the website:
www.astonclintonbaptist.org

Sunday morning worship (including children's church and crèche) 10.45am – noon

Lunch is served in the hall every Wednesday 12.45pm – 1.30pm.

The Craft Club runs on alternate Wednesday mornings 10.30am – 12.30pm.

Noah's Ark Baby & Tots runs Tuesdays during term time 9.30am – 11.00am.

The Foodbank prepares parcels on Friday mornings and delivers them on Saturday mornings.

Men's Full English Breakfast every first Saturday of the month from 9am – 10am
*Numbers are currently limited to 20.
Booking is required.*

A bereavement group meets alternate Wednesday mornings from 11.30am – 12.30pm.

Youth group meeting two Fridays per month at 7pm.

The hall is available for private hire.
Please see website or call for more details

www.astonclintonbaptist.org
01296 631824 or 07972 770361

For a digital version of Village Life
please visit our website.

acvillagelife.co.uk

St Michael and All Angels Aston Clinton, All Saints' Buckland and St Mary's Drayton Beauchamp

On this page you will find the regular church services and community events that happen within our three churches.



REGULAR CHURCH SERVICES

St Michael's, Aston Clinton	9.15am, Family Eucharist, every Sunday. 6pm, Evensong, every Sunday.
All Saints', Buckland	10am, Midweek Communion, every Wednesday. 8am, Holy Communion, every Sunday. 11am, Messy Sunday, every 2nd Sunday. 11am, Sung Eucharist, every 3rd Sunday.
St Mary's, Drayton Beauchamp	<i>Please see separate list on page 33.</i>

FORTHCOMING SERVICES

Sunday, 7 April	1pm	Service for Deaf Community
Sunday, 5 May	11am	Holy Communion at St Mary's

WEDDINGS & BAPTISMS

You can hold your wedding at any of our wonderful churches. Baptisms every 3rd Sunday 11.30am at St Michael's church, 1.30pm at All Saints' church and time tbc at St Mary's church. Please contact *Natalie Fieldhouse*.

OPENING TIMES

St Michael's and All Saints' are open daily 9am to 5pm and St Mary's is open every Saturday and Sunday 10am to 4pm for private prayer.

CONTACT DETAILS

Rev Sally Bottomer 01296 632488,

Rev Jane Nash 07562 672481

*Natalie Fieldhouse, Benefice Administrator
01296 632488 email all on: Benefice3@gmail.com*

Facebook: *Aston Clinton Benefice with
Buckland and Drayton Beauchamp*

Website: www.achurchnearyou.com search for:
St Michael's, Aston Clinton, All Saints' or St Mary's

Benefice Website: www.ac-buck-db-churches.org

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Rhubarb Café at St Michael's
Monday 2 – 4pm (*Closed Bank Holidays*)

Repair Café at St Michael's
bring along your broken items on the
2nd Saturday every month 9 – 12 noon

**Coffee & Produce Stall
at All Saints'**
homemade cakes, bacon rolls &
preloved books on the
1st Saturday every month 10am – 11.45am



**Berkshire
Buckinghamshire
& Oxfordshire**
Wildlife Trust

News from your local nature reserves



As I write this, I am enjoying a few continuous days without rain, periods of sun and a garden full of bird song. Could it be that the deluge has finally ended and we have the true start of spring? Even our nature reserves high up in the chalk hills have suffered from the excessively wet January and February – the wettest February since 1836! Extremely muddy conditions have interfered with woodland management work, fencing repairs and signage maintenance, but we should now catch up ready for visitors to enjoy the spring flowers and butterflies.

At Dancersend you will find some changes. New interpretation signs explain the history of the reserve and the connection with the Rothschild family, and our management for wildlife, especially on the precious chalk grassland, which is home to many regionally important flowers and animals. On the reserve's

extension fields, which stretch up from the original nature reserve in the valley to the summit of the road on Aston Hill, you will see some new excavations exposing the raw chalk. These are part of a project being carried out with the national charity Plantlife to reintroduce juniper to the valley, after it was lost post WWII when grassy clearings were allowed to scrub over and become woodland. Seed collected from our reserve at Bacombe Hill, on the other side of Wendover will be used for this.

Aston Clinton Ragpits has had winter grazing by the Trust's Hebridean sheep and scrub control to create optimal conditions for the annual spectacle of wild orchids, for which the reserve is renowned. BBOWT's flagship reserve at College Lake has had several path and access improvements over the winter and there has been a revamp of the visitor centre to make both the café and the shop even more welcoming.

Our programme of monthly illustrated talks, organised by the BBOWT Chilterns Group, is just drawing to a close, but will be replaced by a programme of guided walks to help you discover our nature reserves and learn more about them. This will begin with walks at Dancersend on Saturday, 20 April and Aston Clinton Ragpits on Saturday, 25 May. All details and booking arrangements will be posted shortly on our website at www.bbowl.org.uk/events.

Please do visit the local BBOWT reserves this year – a band of keen local volunteers maintains them for very special, and some very rare, wildlife ... and also for your enjoyment and wellbeing.

Mick Jones MBE

Chair of BBOWT Chilterns Group



Events at College Lake

Ranger Sessions

For children who love nature and wildlife and want to get involved at our fantastic nature reserve. Sessions are fully supervised by trained staff, without the need for parental supervision.

Young Rangers

For children aged 8 -11 years.

Saturday, 13 April, 10.30am - 12.30pm

Teen Rangers

For children aged 11-17 years.

Saturday, 13 April, 1.30pm - 3.30pm

Nature Tots, April - July term

Join us at College Lake for a nature discovery class for parents/caregivers and toddlers (walking up to 4 years). Sessions run once a month on a Tuesday and Thursday, 10.15am.

Tuesdays, 16 April to 9 July

Thursdays, 18 April to 11 July.

Pond Explorers (Age 7+)

Become a pond explorer and fall in love with the wonderful creatures who live in our pond.

Wednesday, 3 and 10 April, 2pm - 3pm.

Nature Explorers Day Camp

Wildlife Day Camp for 7 - 12-year-olds.

Sessions are fully supervised by trained staff, without the need for parental supervision.

Tuesday, 2 April and Thursday, 11 April. Drop off between 9.45am and 10am. Pick up at 3pm.

Family events – visit us with the whole family

‘Signs of Spring’

Find out what are the many signs of spring that we spot here at College Lake.

Wednesday, 3 April, 10.30am - 12 noon.

‘Under the Surface’

Find out what’s happening under the surface of the water and the land here at College Lake.

Wednesday, 10 April, 10.30am - 12 noon.

To book any of these events and for more information, go to www.bbowl.org.uk/events.



Spring events 2024

Botanical Mono Printing

Saturday, 6 April 10am to 1.15pm
Captain's Wood, Chesham

£10.50 special price thanks to funding from the River Chess Smarter Water Catchment.

This nature craft workshop allows you to enjoy a few hours of creative escapism.

Begin by venturing to our nature site, Captain's Wood, to learn about the types of trees, foraging for leaves as you go. Using the array of leaves collected, you will learn the skill of mono-printing to create a beautiful piece to take home with you. Led by the brilliant Lisa from Growing Bright who prides herself on using local foliage from our beautiful Chiltern landscape and ensures activities are accessible to all. All materials, tuition and refreshments provided.

Forest Bathing in Captain's Wood

Saturday, 13 April or Sunday, 19 May
3pm to 5.30 pm. Captain's Wood, Chesham
£27.50 pp

We are delighted to invite you to join us on a calming Forest Bathing session at our beautiful Captain's Wood site.

Forest Bathing, also known in Japan as Shinrin-yoku, is an enjoyable and restorative nature-based wellbeing practice. Together with other participants you will be guided on a two-hour slow, sensory woodland walk designed to calm your body and mind.

Forest Bathing can help you quiet your mind, relax deeply, boost your body's natural defences, sleep better and much more. The session is a naturally therapeutic experience with potentially profound relaxation and time to enjoy the beauty and positive effects of being in nature. In this session you will also learn about the latest science and research for nature-based healing and nature connection.

The guided session will be about a one mile walk and will be both on and off the paths. It will include some gentle inclines, so please do bring sturdy footwear.

Adults 18+



Bat Walk

Thursday, 2 May 8pm to 9.30pm
Whiteleaf Hill, Princes Risborough.

£7.50 pp.

Join bat enthusiast Veritie from North Bucks Bat group on a fully immersive bat walk using handheld detectors to take a glimpse into the lives of the only true flying mammal. Learn more about these amazing creatures and the nighttime world they inhabit. All welcome-children under 16 must be accompanied by an adult.

To book go to: chilternsociety.org.uk/events/category/events/ or scan the QR code.



The WI

Our meetings take place on the first Wednesday of every month in the Anthony Hall at 7.45pm.

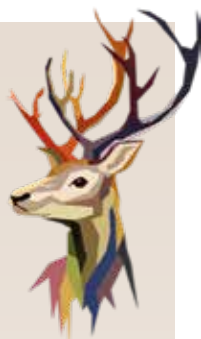
On 3 April, Andy Harding will entertain us with his presentation entitled '*Spring in Bulgaria*', while on 1 May, we will vote on the resolution to be debated at the National Annual Meeting in The Royal Albert Hall. On 5 June, we will welcome Mike Dewey and his talk on '*The Lesser-Known Houses of South Bucks*'.

In addition to our monthly meetings, we arrange theatre trips and have several thriving groups including a walking group, lunch club and craft club.

We look forward to welcoming new members at any of our meetings – come along and try us – you will be most welcome. Or for more information please contact me by email b.d.ac.wi@gmail.com

Lin Mitchell, Secretary

Buck Pub 2024



We are delighted to confirm that this year's Buck Pub will run from Friday, May 31 to Sunday, June 2 at the village hall in Buckland.

All details are on the website: www.thebuckpub.co.uk

This is our annual village community event that's been running for almost 30 years. We provide a pop-up pub, food and entertainment for one weekend only.

As with every year, for Buck to be a success, we need a range of volunteers to serve behind the bar, provide food (on Friday and Saturday) and help in the kitchen. We are also looking for local musical talent to contribute to the music festival on Sunday afternoon – almost any genre is welcome. In addition, we are considering a 'family afternoon' in the village hall garden on Saturday, June 1.

If you have great ideas and feel motivated to organise this then do please contact us.

All surplus funds generated over the weekend will be donated to local charities. Last year our support included Rennie Grove Peace Hospice and Youth Concern in Aylesbury.

We look forward to seeing you.

Nigel Kippax and the Buck Pub organising team. nigel@kippax.org.uk

Local stories
by local people



Aston Clinton School

Head Teacher.: Mrs Carol Macdonald



Since the pandemic, mental health has become more important than ever. As a school, we have always known that children must be mentally healthy to learn, which is why it has been a core thread of the school's ethos for a number of years.

Mental health affects how you think, feel and act. It refers to your emotional, psychological and social well-being. Following the pandemic, we used the work of Barry Carpenter to help shape our recovery curriculum and implemented 'zones of regulation' as a whole school strategy to ensure that children were and are able to 'check in' and discuss how they are feeling. In addition, we utilised mindfulness within our 'Healthy Minds, Healthy Body' curriculum and adopted yoga as part of the PE curriculum.



Research shows that people who are more connected with nature are usually happier in life and more likely to report feelings of



happiness. Having time, space and permission to play outside is essential for mental health, physical strength and creating the friendships that will support children for life.

Children who play outdoors move more, sleep more, eat better and care about the planet more. They are more active, resilient, and creative. They make deeper friendships, concentrate and behave better during lessons. They have less time off sick and are even less likely to need glasses! Finally, most importantly, they are happier, mentally healthy individuals.

I'm sure you can recount numerous fond memories of your childhood: building dens, climbing trees, and playing games on the streets until you were called in for tea or dinner. Today with busy lives, busy schools, busy roads and busy neighbourhoods, most children don't get nearly enough time to play outside. We are therefore excited to extend our curriculum by introducing the OPAL project (Outdoor Play And Learning). This scheme has been developed over the last 20 years by Michael Follett, previously a teacher, playworker and school advisor, and we believe it will allow us to truly transform the way our children play and interact with the environment.



The programme helps schools to plan for and invest in play in the same way as they plan for English and maths.

As part of the programme, we will introduce:

- more space to play
- more stuff to play with
- a risk-benefit approach so children are safe to take the risks they need
- training for the staff that look after children's play.

ACSA, our wonderful PTA, has started to fundraise for the scheme and we are also extremely grateful to Laxton Properties who have very generously match-funded the amount ACSA raises so that we can speed up the implementation.

We are delighted to have appointed two staff to lead the project and their training has already begun. We have also started collecting resources for our mud kitchen (pots and pans), dens (old fabric and pegs), science laboratories, old car tyres, old suitcases, small world figures.

If you have a clear out and have any of the above that you can donate to the school, please get in touch via email along with a photo of your donation (office@astonclinton.bucks.sch.uk).

Our top tips for outdoor play at home.

- Explore the outdoor places near home.
- Let the children decide how they play and be there to support them when needed.
- Check the weather. There is no such thing as bad weather, just the wrong clothes!
- Introduce stuff to play with to build/make/create. If they build a den or structure, can they leave it up for a while?
- Let them take some risks and make mistakes!
- As soon as you think you can trust them, leave them to it ... and enjoy some well-deserved time to yourself.
- Children love physical play with friends and you. Tickling, wrestling, play fights, chase and horseplay build bonds and emotional intelligence.

Carol Macdonald, Headteacher

St Michael and All Angels Summer Fête

St Michael and All Angels' summer fête will take place on Saturday, July 6 from 2pm to 5pm.

Come and join us. In addition to the usual selection of stalls including produce, plants and books, refreshments and Rev'd Sally's dog show, for the first time, we plan to have a 60/40 stall - eBay without the internet.

If you are a local trader or crafter and would like a stall in our church or you want to know more about the 60/40 stall, please email [Louise at maa_fete@yahoo.com](mailto:Louise@maa_fete@yahoo.com) for more details.

Aston Clinton School Association

We've hit the ground running in 2024, and there's no slowing us down! We are so proud of our achievements so far, and are looking forward to what's yet to come. The money we raise through our fundraising efforts is purely to enhance the learning experience of our children, through provision of equipment and resources to programmes and trips, that wouldn't usually be available to the children through the school budget. So we're incredibly grateful to everyone who attends, volunteers at or supports our events; it means the world to us and makes an enormous difference to the children.

Here's a recap of what has happened so far, and what's yet to come.

ASCA events this term

Silent Disco – it may have been silent, but the afternoon was a boogie wonderland filled with laughter, music and lots of dancing... by both the adults and the children: raised £840.



Willy Wonka Chocolate Event – what a lip-smacking, scrumdiddlyumptious and choctastic fundraising opportunity in honour of World Book Day, sponsored by Laxton Properties, SignFirm.com and The Print Lab: raised £1,250.

ACSA events coming up

Donut Day - Friday, 26 April.

You'd be glazy not to attend this special occasion as it's such a wholesome event with all the profits going towards our wonderful school. Donut miss it!

Bingo - Friday, 10 May

If Bingo is your thingo, then make sure you join us for a night of fun!

First Aid Baby & Child class

- Tuesday, 30 April

A specially designed, CPD accredited Baby and Child First Aid course to give you the essential tools and advice on how to deal with an injury or emergency. Book your two hour space today for only £25 at acsatickets.sumupstore.com/category/tickets or contact us.

Car Boot Sale - Saturday, 25 May

From toys to teacups, cushions to clothes, make sure you come along to our soon to be legendary car-boot sale for all the best hand-me-downs at the best affordable prices. More details to come about how to book a space to sell your wares.

ASCA School Lottery:

Our school lottery not only supports our school but allows others, like the teachers, our community and parents, to win weekly prizes! It's a win-win in our book.

So far, the school lottery has raised over £150 for the school, and given £100 to the winners. To start supporting and getting your name in the winning mix, visit: www.yourschoollottery.co.uk and search for: Aston Clinton.

Will Fundraiser:

Having a will is so important, especially if you have children, but where do you start? We've been lucky enough to be offered a wonderful opportunity where you can get a will, which usually costs around £200, for the price of a donation to the school, which can be any amount you choose. It's for a limited time only and with a limited number of consultation spots available, don't miss out on this worthwhile deal. Go to nationalwillwriters.co.uk/schools/ and scroll to the bottom of the page to book your consultation. **This offer lasts until 15 April.** Please make your donation at: pay.sumup.com/b2c/QC3HF6E2 or contact us.

Textile Bank:

Just a reminder of our clothing bank on the KS1 driveway. *Astra Recycling only accepts the following items placed in bags:*

- All men's, ladies' and children's clothing including school uniform

- Paired shoes
- Handbags, bags, ties and belts
- Bed clothes, towels, soft toys

Opal Funding

Our school asked ACSA to fund their new school programme - OPAL (Outdoor Play And Learn). This wonderful project is likely to cost £20,000, and ACSA has already spent £5,000 on the OPAL training day, and so far raised £4,000. We're so happy to announce that Laxton properties have agreed to match anything we raise up to £10,000 this year, which is wonderfully generous, so let's keep going and make it to £10,000 in order to reach our £20,000 goal. *Thank you so much, Laxton properties!*

Stay updated with what's happening:

facebook.com/astonclintonschoolassociation
instagram.com/aston_clinton_pta
astonclintonschoolassociation@gmail.com

FUNDRAISER FOR YOUR SCHOOL



In return for a voluntary donation from Parents or Teachers to your school we will provide a Professional Will writing service that includes a consultation with one of our legal experts who will discuss wishes before drafting a fully insured legally binding Will.

Limited Availability



Did you know....

- * Over 70% of Parents with young children don't have a Will.
- * A Will is the only place you can name guardians.
- * Without a Will Social Services will deal with children.
- * Loved ones are not guaranteed to receive anything without a Will.



SCAN TO GET STARTED OR GO TO
NATIONALWILLWRITERS.CO.UK/SCHOOLS



Aston Clinton Parish Council

Looking back to the end of 2023, it was a busy time for the Parish Council, not only with the day-to-day council business and budget planning for 2024, but also with our end of year events which included the annual Remembrance service, Christmas tree lighting at the Red Kite Pavilion (RKP) with students from Aston Clinton school singing carols to the gathered crowd, and, of course, the annual outing for Santa's Float.

These events are only made possible with support from volunteers, and sincere thanks go to Dayla Drinks who kindly supported Santa again in 2023, by providing transport for the float and Spencer, our lovely driver. Also, thanks to the collectors who gave up their time to walk with the float, particularly the Scouts who walked the long routes with great enthusiasm. Our residents are also due applause, having donated a record sum of £1,678, which has been split equally between Aston Clinton Scouts, Rennie Grove Hospice and the Chilterns Neuro Centre. Thank you so much! Thanks too go to Nick, Phil, Chaz and the team at the Red Kite Pavilion who supported our events in 2023; we look forward to sharing more projects in 2024.

As we look forward to better (and drier) spring weather, we'd like to mention that the excessive amount of rain experienced over recent weeks has had a significant detrimental effect on all areas of the park, and we ask that all visitors please take care to avoid those that are particularly muddy by restricting walking to the edges and other areas that are not so wet, to help the damaged areas recover as quickly as possible. In addition, a reminder regarding roads/pavements and footpath safety, that a variety of problems, such as potholes, pavement issues, fly tipping, street lights on main roads, and more can easily be reported directly via



the Buckinghamshire Council Fix my Street website: fixmystreet.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/.

Our battle against speeding drivers through the village continues, with our Community Speedwatch programme in conjunction with Thames Valley Police, and our MVAS (mobile vehicle activated sign). A number of speeding vehicles have already been successfully reported to TVP. Any resident can become part of the Speedwatch team; if you have a couple of hours

per month to spare, please email assistantclerk@astonclinton.org or call 01296 631269.

There have been several delays to the start of the proposed traffic calming measures by Bucks Council, but the works will now start at the beginning of April. Up to date details can be found on the Parish Council website, and also on the Bucks Council website under the following link: buckinghamshire.gov.uk/parking-roads-and-transport/view-road-projects-in-development/traffic-calming-london-road-aston-clinton/. Further meetings with Bucks Council are proposed for 2024 to discuss the short and longer term strategy for the village highways and footways along with updates on both the capital projects and the local area teams.

As 2024 progresses, various projects will get under way - the proposed renovations to the Trim Trail in the park, AC Neighbourhood Plan review, participation in the allotments Grow to Give initiative supporting Aylesbury Vineyard foodbank, the official opening of the Halton canal path in June, and planning for the *AC Family Festival in the park on Saturday, 8 June*.

The festival will follow the format of the two previous popular community events and will run from 12 noon - 6pm in the park, with fairground rides, attractions, Zorbs, Punch and Judy and magic shows, vintage cars, dog show, food concessions, community group and craft stalls, along with musical entertainment from the Red Kite Pavilion balcony. Don't miss this free fun community event.



All details will be published on our website, Facebook page, and our noticeboards.

Residents are more than welcome to come along to our regular council and committee meetings, to see us in action and raise any issues. Our Annual Parish meeting this year will be held at the Red Kite Pavilion on Thursday, 23 May at 6pm, and is an opportunity to hear from local community groups and chat with councillors. Meeting agendas and minutes are published on our website www.astonclinton.org.uk. Grants to local groups and organisations for funding from the 2024-25 budget are available from April 2024, for details and an application form, please see our website.

Finally, there is still a vacancy for a councillor to join our active Council, so if you have some time to spare and wish to get involved with your local community, please do get in touch.

Please mention Village Life when responding to our advertisers.

acvillagelife.co.uk

Starling spectacular

Every autumn, thousands of starlings from northern Europe come to Great Britain searching for better weather. Here they join their British cousins to form large flocks. If we are very lucky, they form a murmuration – and that is exactly what happened at Tringford reservoir this winter.

Most evenings, around dusk, small groups of starlings come to the area and start to join others to form larger and larger groups, containing many thousands of birds.

No-one is entirely sure why they do this but it seems to be based on the principle of safety in numbers. There are plenty of predators that would like to catch a starling, but it is far more difficult to pick out one individual in a huge swirling mass.

The murmuration flies round and round above a roosting site and each bird tries to find its way to the centre of the group to keep away from predators. They are very proficient fliers and always avoid the birds around them, manoeuvring at around 30 mph. As the birds dive and swoop, the murmuration creates spectacular changing shapes, making one of nature's most breathtaking displays.

The aerial dance lasts for around 20-30 minutes, or sometimes more. The end comes very suddenly, when all the birds drop down into the roost and settle on their perches. The crowding of thousands of little bodies helps to keep everyone warm through the long winter night.

The murmurations normally end in about March as the weather warms. The continental birds go back to their breeding grounds and the locals look to start their own new families

The groups do not always return to the same area every year, but Tringford has been used on many occasions. This year some of the murmurations coincided with beautiful sunsets and spectators were able to take some memorable photos. *Richard Vincent*



Drayton Beauchamp Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting will take place on Thursday May 16 in St Mary's Church at 7.30pm. All parishioners are welcome to attend and to stay for a drink and a chat after the meeting.

For information, contact the Clerk at merylnodes2018@gmail.com or phone 01296 630396.

Calling all photographers!

How would you like to see one of your pictures on the cover of Village Life?

Village Life is unique, being the only publication that focuses on events and people living in our three villages. We love to illustrate our stories with pictures and are always looking for striking photographs that we can use for the cover. Now we want to give more people the opportunity to showcase their photography skills to the wider audience of Village Life readers and are inviting submissions for potential future cover shots.

Your photo must:

- Be in portrait format.
- Have an area in one corner, top or bottom, where we can print the title of the magazine without spoiling the overall effect.
- Show any event or scene from anywhere in Aston Clinton, Buckland or Drayton Beauchamp, or the immediate surrounding areas.

A scene from any time of the year will be considered. Please bear in mind that if the picture includes people, we will need their permission before it can be published.

If you have a great shot that you'd like us to consider, please send a high-resolution version to editor@acvillagelife.co.uk.

By entering your photograph, you will be giving your permission for us to publish it, although we will contact you before it actually appears and the photographer will be credited in the magazine.

Aston Clinton Wine Club

Originally formed in 1996 by a small group of friends who wanted to explore the wonderful world of wine, we now have around 80 members, all of whom enjoy a good night out with the added bonus of learning more about wines from as far afield as Brazil, Lebanon, Australia, France, Italy and, increasingly, from England.

We meet in Buckland Village Hall on the third Friday of each month. During the evening we taste eight wines and enjoy a light supper. Our presenters are qualified wine educators or other wine professionals.

Each year we try to hold two special events, one during the summer months and of course a gala Christmas event.

This year we have a visit to Brightwell Vineyard, Wallingford planned for Saturday, 8 June. This will include coach travel to and a tour of the vineyard plus a ploughman's lunch with a glass of wine.

Our presenters for the next few meetings are:

19 April *Guy Boursot* of Boursot Wines, Calais, who will present a selection of French wines.

17 May *Neil Phillips* – The Wine Tipster, who will present Biodynamic/organic wines.

21 June *Mimi Avery*, Avery Wines, who will present Avery Cellar Picks.

19 July *Jamie Smith*, who will present Australian wines.

Please take a look at our website www.astonwineclub.co.uk for more information or to make contact with our Club.

Aston Clinton Scouts



In January, 1st Aston Clinton Scout group held its eighth Christmas tree recycling day.

We were blessed with dry weather for the first time in a few years and the event saw over 300 bookings with a total tree collection that surpassed that number.

Our thanks go to all of the young people, the adult volunteers, the van and trailer drivers, Alison and Darren (the leaflet printers) and Greg O'Callaghan and his son for making this such a successful event.

This year we are delighted to report that we raised over £2,600. The charities that we donate to are chosen by our young members and by Greg and they are typically local organisations. Greg decided to support Helen and Douglas House Hospice, while the Cubs, inspired by a recent visit from Aylesbury Foodbank, chose to back them as well.

Claire Walker

For a digital version of Village Life please visit our website.

acvillagelife.co.uk

Buckland and Aston Clinton Cricket Club

2024 promises to be another busy season at the cricket club, with a full fixture list being compiled for Senior and Junior teams. After a slightly surprising exodus of leading clubs from the Four Counties Cricket League (mainly to the Northants League), the competition will look very different this year. With only three of last season's Division 1 clubs remaining in the league, our First XI should be well placed to challenge towards the top - with veteran skipper Mike Parsonage again in charge. The Second XI have been placed in Division 4 and with the bonus of no away games being much beyond Milton Keynes, we hope that will help consistency of availability. Kris Greig will lead the team again in between weddings and honeymoons! We have entered the Village T20 League again after our first ever visit to Finals Day in 2023, and hope to go one better this time after eventually losing to a strong Tring Park side in the final. At time of press, we don't yet have details of who we will be facing in the group section this year. We will also be attempting to progress in the National Village Cup, but face a tough away match at Westbury (North Bucks) in early May.



The Junior section will be a hive of activity again. Friday evening training will be supplemented by Aylesbury & District Midweek League fixtures at Under-11, Under-13 and Under-15 level. And following the success of our inaugural All Stars sessions (for 5 to 8 year olds) in 2023, Activator Mark and his helpers are back for more in 2024, aiming to enthuse the next generation of potential players. We also hope to see some of older Colts step up into Senior cricket, whether that be via FCCL matches or a few Sunday friendlies. A pleasing number have done so in recent years, and we would love nothing more than to keep that trend going.

Our ground at the end of Church Lane is a lovely place to come and while a few hours away, watching or supporting our players. With the bar also open for most training sessions and matches there are a lot worse places to be on a sunny (hopefully!) summer afternoon or evening. As a small village club we remain permanently on the lookout for new players at all levels, and anyone interested in umpiring or scoring would also be very welcome to come and have a chat with us too. The Chairman's contact details are in the Clubs directory of Village Life or you can contact us via our play-cricket website: bacc.play-cricket.com and Facebook too www.facebook.com/bucklandastonclintoncc. *Phil Samuels*

AC Colts Summer tournament - save the date

The Colts events committee is busy preparing for the annual summer tournament, which this year takes place on the weekend of Saturday, 29 and Sunday, 30 June. This is one of the most popular football tournaments in the area, with 128 teams taking part over the two days and over 2,500 players and spectators attending.



As well as the football matches, there will be something for everyone in the family: a barbecue, various stalls, penalty shootout, inflatables and, of course, the guys and gals in the café. Whether you're a member of the club or not, we welcome everyone, so please put the date in your diary now.

Every year we try to improve ways of managing the traffic queues and parking. Last year we did away with queueing at the entrance for the programme and included the school for extra parking.

This year we will be doing the same and we have extra parking on the meadow at the park. Inevitably, there will always be some who park where they shouldn't but we will try our best to keep any disruption to a minimum.

You don't need to be a member to volunteer to help with the weekend and if this is something you would like to get involved with, even just for an hour or two, please contact us at committee@accolts.com.

Unfortunately the Colts have not played many matches recently because of poor weather and pitch conditions, but with spring around the corner, hopefully they will be back doing what they love. In the meantime, they're looking forward to their end of season awards and barbecue on Saturday, 18 May and also taking part in the Parish Council event in June.

The Colts Committee

Aston Clinton u3a



u3a book group enjoying afternoon tea at Chiltern Forest Golf Club.

As usual, your local u3a has been busy with post-Christmas celebrations, trips and events. The coach trip to Coventry in February was much enjoyed, with members visiting cathedrals both old and new, the museum, and having a peek at the Lady Godiva statue.

The Science and Technology group meets every last Wednesday of the month through the winter and has many outings planned for the spring / summer when hopefully the weather will be a little kinder. The talk in January by the CEO of Crowd Helix was fascinating; the company provides a type of 'online dating' for researchers working around the globe on cutting edge medical and other research programmes, aiming to help them collaborate and innovate more effectively. The talk in February from local firm Desoutter Medical was equally interesting with a range of medical saws, drills and other instruments on display.

Three book groups meet monthly and have tackled some challenging and interesting volumes, e.g. *Girl, Woman, Other* by Bernadine Evaristo, *Abroad in Japan* by Chris Board and *Lessons in Chemistry* by Mary Ellen Taylor.

Please see the list below for a selection of activities and trips planned over the next few months:

Future Events

April

Tuesday, 16. Main meeting talk by the 'unofficial Poet Laureate of Milton Keynes'.

Sunday, 21. St George's day lunch at Chiltern Forest Golf Club.

Monday, 22. Wildlife walk on Chinnor Hill.

Tuesday, 23. History group visit: Great Kimble church.

Wednesday, 24. Science and Technology visit: Aston Martin Museum.

Tuesday, 30. Coach trip to Covent Garden including a behind the scenes tour of the Royal Opera House.

May

Monday, 6 – Friday, 10. Science and Technology residential trip to Somerset.

Thursday, 16. Coffee morning at the Five Bells, Weston Turville.

Tuesday, 21. Main meeting talk on 'Hearing Dogs for the deaf'.

Tuesday, 28. History group talk on the Belgian Royal family.

June

Thursday, 6. Garden visiting group visit to Glebe Farm.

Tuesday, 11. Digital photography visit to West Wycombe house.

Please note some of these events and trips are already fully booked. However many of our special interest groups such as line dancing, music for all, table tennis, walking netball etc. meet regularly every week, fortnight or month and have availability. See the website for further details: u3asites.org.uk/aston-clinton.

We welcome applications from local people no longer in full-time employment. Membership is £17 per annum. If you are interested in joining, please contact the membership secretary through the link on the website or email acu3amembership@gmail.com. We look forward to welcoming you to our friendly group.

Aston Clinton Ladies Group 2024 Programme

Aston Clinton Ladies Group was originally set up in 1956, as The Mothers' Union. The first recorded AGM was on October 17 of that year and, as you will see from the photograph, it was a very short meeting. The Chair at the time was Mrs June Lewis, wife of the Reverend Terry Lewis. June, who is now 99 years of age and still an amazing lady, cannot remember when the name changed to Aston Clinton Church Ladies Group.

Our group meets every third Wednesday of the month, usually at the Guide Hall opposite the petrol station unless otherwise stated in our programme. We have a varied programme and after a speaker or a quiz or other activity, we have a raffle with our tea and biscuits.

We also have two church services a year: the Lenten service followed by tea and hot cross buns and an Advent service followed by tea and mince pies. Services are held at St Michael and All Angels church in the village. The Ladies Group also runs the tombola at St Michael's Christmas Bazaar and at the flower festival.

The money we raise every year is donated to local good causes. At our AGM in November, we decided to give the Florence Nightingale Hospice and the Rennie Grove Hospice £250 each and the raffle money from the evening went to the Guide Hall towards their running costs.

Our subs are £15 per year, payable at the AGM. For new members, the first meeting is free and if they wish to join, we ask £1 per meeting until the next AGM.

Our events for April and May are:

April 17, 8pm

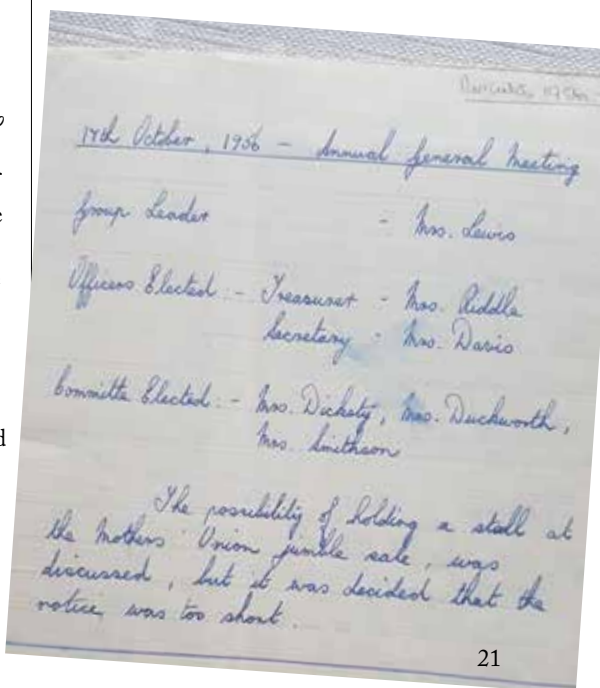
Val Truby: Spring Flower Arranging, on behalf of Florence Nightingale Hospice

May 15, 8pm

Talk from Colin Oakes "Plumbing The Depths"

We are a friendly bunch of local ladies and always make a point of welcoming newcomers personally.

For more information, call Sue Sanders 01296 630740 or Janet Watson 01296 631014.





Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity Brings Back the Midnight Walk for 2024



Back by popular demand and to celebrate Florence Nightingale Hospice's 35th anniversary, Aylesbury will see the return of our Midnight Walk on Saturday, 22 June.

The Midnight Walk, which was last held in 2022, was a mainstay of the Aylesbury and surrounding areas' calendar. It was designed to be an opportunity to remember and celebrate loved ones, while also showing support and thanks for the work of the Hospice. This year's return event will be no different.

What makes for an exciting evolution of the *Midnight Walk* is the two sister events that form part of the weekend: the *Mini Walk* and *'Not the Midnight Walk'*.

The Mini Walk will take place earlier in the evening on 22 June and is purposely designed to include families with younger children and those wishing to walk with their dogs. It will be a shorter route than the Midnight Walk.

Advertise your business
and reach 2700 homes from
£50 for a whole year.

'Not the Midnight Walk' is for people who cannot attend on the night of 22 June and it is being held on Sunday, 23 June. It is a virtual event that can take place anywhere the participant wishes; all we ask is that you walk five or ten miles at some point on the day of 23 June. As it is a virtual event, we recommend that participants use public footpaths and we encourage people to stay safe.

The Midnight Walk will have five and ten-mile routes to give people a choice. Light-up bear ear headbands will be given to each walker which will result in a fantastic sea of bright, flashing rainbow lights coursing through the town. Of course, bright clothes and more flashing lights are encouraged.

We are very excited to be bringing this event back and see so many people support the Hospice. It will be a night to remember.

Midnight Walk is currently in its early bird phase which is the best time to get your tickets as they are at the cheapest rate.

For tickets and more information, please visit www.fnhospice/midnightwalk.

Royal British Legion

Lest We Forget



On Thursday, 6 June, there will be two events to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of the D Day landings.

Both will be free of charge and open to all. Places are limited though, so please apply early to avoid disappointment.

There will be a lunchtime and an evening event as follows:

12.30pm for 1pm at Chiltern View Garden Centre; and 6.30pm for 7pm at Weston Turville Village Hall.

Both events will have the same programme, which will allow those working during the day to attend the commemoration. Our thanks to Chiltern View Nursery and the Weston Turville Parish council for sponsoring the day's events.

The event programme will be as follows:

A brief act of remembrance, followed by Lt Col Derek Plews (retired) Irish Regiment talking about the contribution made by Buckinghamshire military personnel on D Day. The event will continue with news footage of the D Day landings and the Normandy Campaign which was the beginning of the end of Nazism and World War II.

Light refreshments will then be served, accompanied by music of the 40's. Colonel Pews, Chairman of the Buckinghamshire Military Archive, will be displaying interesting memorabilia from the Archive.

We expect that many who attend the day's events will be descendants of those who served on D Day. During the buffet there will be an opportunity to mingle and share stories of family members who landed on Sword Beach and took part in the Normandy landings.

To reserve tickets, email office@westonturville-pc.gov.uk stating your name, email address, contact telephone number and the number of places you would like to reserve at which event. If you have any questions do not hesitate to contact me. *Cllr. Mike Collins*
mike.collins@buckscc.gov.uk

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Sudoku

All you have to do is fill in the squares so that each row, column and the nine small 3 x 3 squares contains the numbers 1-9.

(SOLUTION ON PAGE 33)

Village Business

This is a new series about the businesses that operate locally and which advertise in Village Life: what they do, what services they provide and the people behind the business names.

Justine Chapman is the Managing Director of Roy Chapman Ltd.



Q. How long has Roy Chapman Ltd been doing business in the area?

A. We are celebrating our 50th year in business in 2024.

Q. What services do you provide?

A. We offer car service, repairs and MOT for all makes and models.

Q. Who are the people behind Roy Chapman Ltd?

A. I'm the Managing Director, and Tony Hooper and Ted Bowerman are our service advisors who liaise with all the customers. Tony is a trained technician and worked for the RAC for many years. In the workshop, Gavin Smith, Vicky Kempton, Will Furzer and Paul Craig have a wealth of knowledge and experience when dealing with the

technical issues of your vehicle and last, but by no means least, Mike Sims washes and vacuums your car before it is returned to you.

Q. How did you get into the car servicing business?

A. I've worked in the business since 1983, when I left school. Roy Chapman, my father, started his career as a motor mechanic for Frank E Dell's in Chalfont St Peter, where he later became the General Manager. He and my mother, Anne, decided to open their own business, selling and servicing cars, and moved to the site in Berkhamsted in 1974, then we moved to Tring in 2015.



Celebrating
50 years
in business

“

Q. What gives you the most satisfaction and why?

A. Satisfied customers. We like looking after people and doing a good job.

Q. What's the best piece of advice you can give to car owners about maintaining their vehicles?

A. Check your car regularly; the tyres, oil level, etc. If you are not sure what to look for, we offer a number of free checks and would be happy to help you. Get it serviced once a year; even if you're on a budget, an oil and filter change is a must for making sure your car runs efficiently. Most garages will also carry out a free visual inspection during the service so you know if anything needs looking at urgently.

Q. There are new developments in car design all the time, how do you keep on top?

A. The main change in recent years has been hybrid and electric technology. All our technicians have been trained in Hybrid and Electric Vehicle Awareness and Safety, allowing them to carry out general maintenance and servicing on these vehicles.

Q. What are your hobbies, what do you do for fun?

A. These days, I love a good book and just spending time with my husband and my dog travelling around the UK when we get the chance. I enjoy anything by John Grisham, David Baldacci or Ken Follett. And I love a thriller or crime series on TV or a good comedy like Gavin and Stacey or Ted Lasso.

Q. What's your favourite music?

A. I have quite an eclectic taste in music. My Spotify playlist ranges from Andy Williams and The Beastie Boys to ACDC and Nat King Cole.

If you advertise in Village Life and would like to be featured in this new column, please contact the editor at Editor@acvillagelife.co.uk.

*We will still be running the **Village People** column from time to time and if you would like to recommend anyone whose contribution to village life you believe should be featured in a forthcoming issue of Village Life, please send details to the editor at the address above.*

*Interview **Barbara Muston***

Aston Clinton Society



Spring is well and truly in the air around Aston Clinton, and we're pleased to report that the spring bulbs we planted last autumn are currently in full bloom and have created a lovely, colourful display along London Road between Dennis Close and Spring Brook.

Similarly, the Rising Sun wildflower area has awoken from its winter slumber and although it's still early days as we write, we are beginning to see signs of growth, including ox-eye chamomile, spotted knapweed, common corncockle, noble yarrow, cow parsley and cornflower, while winter aconite have already flowered. We've just completed a light thinning of chickweed which was threatening to overgrow the meadow but there's still plenty left to attract seed-eating birds. We've also put up a couple of nesting boxes so we're looking forward to seeing if they get any lodgers this spring!

We held our first litter-pick and tidy-up of 2024 at the start of February – once again we were graced with fine weather and a good turnout of volunteers who collected 34 bags of rubbish in two hours. Having conducted regular litter-picks for the past two years now, it's evident there are several hotspots around the village where rubbish is repeatedly dropped from passing vehicles. In a bid to try and shame the worst offenders, we are applying for funding so we can erect no littering signs around the village. Hopefully, it won't be too long before these start to appear. In the meantime, if you spot anyone littering in or around the village, please let us know the details (vehicle registration) so we can pass them on to the relevant authorities for action.

Still on the subject of litter, Twitchell Lane has traditionally been one of the worst areas in the village for litter, so we are pleased to report



that our request to install a litter bin outside the school gates has now been approved by Aston Clinton Parish Council and it should be in place very soon. We have also put in a similar request to Buckland Parish Council for a litter bin on Tring Hill. *Ann Webber*

Thames Valley Police

Local scams and fraud calls – be fraud aware!
Scammers usually attempt to call elderly and vulnerable people in the community, and they don't care who gets hurt along the way.

The call will often involve a scammer pretending to be a police officer, even quoting a shoulder number of a current serving officer.

Scammers will call, claiming to be a police officer and explain there is a problem with your bank account. They may say that the staff at your bank are corrupt and cannot be trusted, or that your bank details have been cloned and they now require your assistance with their investigation.

They will tell you to transfer money into a secure account allegedly in your name, and they may also ask you to provide cash, vouchers or valuable items to a courier. In reality, this bank account will belong to the scammers and a victim will end up transferring money straight into their pockets!

If you receive a call like this, **HANG UP** – a police officer or even a bank fraud team will never ask you to transfer money to a 'safe account'. You may also receive calls pretending to be from your bank, HMRC or other government organisations.

For any suspicious phone call that involves your money, bank or personal details, you can 'take five' and verify via a range of trusted methods, please visit here for more information: www.takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/

Always report suspected scams to Action Fraud, either online at www.actionfraud.police.uk or by telephone on **0300 123 2040**, alternatively you can report via **101**.

Protect your bicycle

With the weather improving as we move towards the spring months, please see below a few hints and tips on keeping your bicycle safe and secure when you go out and about.

- Fit a good bike lock, such as one with a Sold Secure rating, and attach your bike to something secure.
- Always lock your bicycle, even if you are leaving it for a couple of minutes.
- If you have quick-release wheels or parts that are easy to remove, lock them up as well or take them with you.
- Have your bike's frame security-marked or etched.
- Keep your bike in a secure garage or shed when at home.
- Register your bike with schemes such as Immobilise.

If your bike has been stolen, report it to the police on **101** or use the online reporting tool. www.thamesvalley.police.uk/ro/report/ocr/af/how-to-report-a-crime/

New co-editor needed for Village Life magazine

We unexpectedly have a vacancy in our production team for another volunteer co-editor. As one of three editors, you'll be responsible for editing two issues of the magazine each year on a rota basis. The co-editors work with the editor and the rest of the friendly Village Life team to create the lively magazine that you're reading now.

Your role will primarily involve collaboration with our regular contributors to bring together an interesting variety of articles and illustrative photographs for each of your issues, but if you're keen to write, there are opportunities to submit your own articles as well.

Fiona Skeggs, who recently joined the team as the other co-editor really enjoyed producing the February/March issue,

"I like that Village Life is more than a directory of ads," she said. "It's a local magazine with a lot of heart, and it was a joy to interact with all the contributors and edit the articles. It's also really satisfying to see the finished magazine and know that it helps keep people up to date with goings on in the villages."

If Village Life is to have a sustainable future, it's essential that we find a third member for the editorial team as soon as possible.

So, if you have a bit of spare time and would enjoy the opportunity to bring your ideas to this vital source of local news, or to find out more about what's involved, please get in touch with me, **Barbara Muston**, at editor@acvillagelife.co.uk or on **07970 642992**.



Your Parish Church

Did you know?

Every square yard of England is part of a Parish. The Church of England Parish Church has always been at the heart of the community, serving its parishioners whether they attend regular Sunday worship or not. It was Archbishop William Temple who said, "The Church is the only institution that exists primarily for the benefit of those who are not its members." And this could not be truer than here in our Benefice. This Benefice is made up of three beautiful 13th century parish churches in three separate villages, all within a mile of each other: St Michael and All Angels, Aston Clinton; All Saints', Buckland; and St Mary the Virgin, Drayton Beauchamp.

Parish churches have been serving the communities in which they are set for hundreds of years and have invariably been at the heart of creating and supporting community. Parish church buildings are important meeting places for all sorts of community activities and special occasions and can also be a place of peace and sanctuary in our busy world.

When you live within a parish you have the legal right to have your children baptised, to get married and to have your loved one's funeral in your local Church of England Parish Church.

Baptism: previously better known as a Christening, is a free gift from God and can be celebrated in any of our three churches in the Benefice regardless of the village in which you live. We baptise both children and adults in our Parish churches and the services are usually held on the third Sunday of every month. The number of Godparents required has now changed to a minimum of two per baptism applicant, but in order to be able to be a Godparent they must themselves be baptised. If they are not, they can still take part in the service and be a 'sponsor' for the applicant.

Weddings: despite the national decline in church weddings, here in this benefice we are very fortunate to have a good number of couples wishing to be married in our Parish churches; in fact we have eight awesome weddings this year. In the past, in order to be able to marry in your Parish church you had to reside in the parish but nowadays there are more qualifying connections which will allow you to marry there even if you are no longer a resident. These range from your parents/grandparents having lived/living in the parish to the wedding couple committing themselves to six months of habitual worship before their marriage ceremony. The good news is that you can choose any of our three churches for your special day.

Funerals: if you live in the Parish (or die in the Parish) you are entitled to have a funeral service in one of our three churches. There is no requirement to be 'religious' or have a regular Sunday worship attendance record. We have so many residents who say to us, "but we aren't churchgoers so it wouldn't be right to have the funeral in church...". The Parish church is at the heart of the community, it's a community building to be used by everyone in the community – what better place for the community to come together to celebrate the life of a dear member of that community? Nowadays, we appreciate how families have connections to a Parish church, with family members past and present being baptised and/or married in that particular church, even though they may no longer live there themselves, so we try to respect their wishes as far as we are able.

The occasional offices, baptism, marriage and funeral are just some of the amazing events that go on in our Parish churches. What we believe we do best is offer the warmest of welcomes to each and every person who comes through our doors, a hospitality like no other! So, if you would like any more information on the above or just simply fancy a chat, then please do contact me, *Rev'd Sally Bottomer* or *Natalie Fieldhouse*, our Benefice Administrator and Rhubarb Café Manager at the Rectory, **01296 632488**.

Rev'd Sally Bottomer

Buckland Parish Council

Parish Councillors

Cllr Susan Gillingham has retired from Buckland Parish Council (BPC) after many years of service. She has been a valuable member of the team helping with many of the issues in Lower Buckland. BPC would like to thank her for all her hard work over the years.

We now have vacancies for Parish Councillors. If you are interested in helping your local community, please do get in touch. Council meetings are held on the second Monday of each month in the evening. Parish Councillors represent the views and concerns of the residents of the parish to the parish council itself and, through it, to the local authority; they report back to residents on issues affecting the parish. The role is very varied and interesting and is a good way to find out what is happening within Buckland. If you would like any more information please do get in touch with our clerk, *Jane Lewis* on **01296 630962** or email clerk@buckland-pc.gov.uk.

Thames Water Booster Station

BPC has been continuing to put pressure on Thames Water to move the location of the proposed booster station away from Hope Cottages and nearer to the A41 bypass. Bucks Councillor Mike Collins and Cllr Carole Paternoster met with representatives from Thames Water to discuss the issue. Cllr Nigel Hayward and Clerk Jane Lewis held a meeting with Rob Butler MP on site, to explain residents' concerns. Rob Butler then invited two Thames Water Representatives to discuss the plans. Both meetings have resulted in Thames Water agreeing to review BPC's proposals. At the time of writing the Parish Council is also organising a petition for

residents to sign; this will be presented in the House of Commons to the Business Secretary, Penny Mordaunt MP.

Lower Buckland

BPC has been made aware of large lorries using the bridleway between Puttenham and Buckland. There are bollards with padlocks preventing vehicles from using the bridleway, but these are constantly being removed. BPC is working with Bucks Council to stop this.

Community Orchard

BPC has received a donation from Aston Clinton, Buckland and Drayton Beauchamp Horticultural Society for trees for the Community Orchard. The council thanks the Horticultural Society for their generous donation which will be used to plant native trees from the approved list: *alnus glutinosa* (alder), *prunus padus* (bird cherry), *carpinus betulus* (hornbeam), *acer campestre* (field maple), *sorbus aucuparia* (rowan), *ilex* (holly), *malus sylvestris* (crab apple), and *prunus spinosa* (blackthorn). These trees will be planted during the next planting season at the end of this year.

Speeding Drivers

BPC continues to pursue ways to slow down speeding drivers. It has held meetings with local residents to discuss solutions to slow traffic at Buckland Wharf and has been in contact with Bucks Council regarding this issue. However, Bucks Council's response is that there is not enough data to show that accidents are a regular occurrence on Tring Hill or at Buckland Wharf. If you have been involved in an accident (however small), please get in touch with us to let us know the details so we can add them to our database.

Speedwatch Volunteers

With the approach of better weather, Buckland Speedwatch will be in action again to deter speeding on roads within our Parish. The group was set up last autumn and has been successful both in moderating speeds and in passing details of drivers exceeding safe limits

to Thames Valley Police. We are looking for further volunteers to join our Speedwatch Group. For information, please contact our group coordinator, Jane Lewis, at clerk@buckland-pc.gov.uk. No experience is necessary and full training will be given.

Discover Bucks Museum

This spring, enjoy art and get creative at Discover Bucks Museum

We've started 2024 with a slight change to our opening times. We're now closed on Mondays and Tuesdays but open on Sunday afternoons, 12pm - 4pm, to allow more time over the weekend to visit. The Roald Dahl Children's Gallery is also open Sunday afternoons, as well as Saturdays with more days to visit in Bucks school holidays.



Painting from 'This Fractured Land' by Caroline Thomson

Opening on Saturday, 30 March and running through to 7 July, This Fractured Land is a fascinating exhibition of paintings, prints, photography, film and sculpture, where five visual artists explore our changing landscape drawing inspiration from the museum's collections and the hills and woodlands of the Chilterns.

Over the Easter holidays there will be lots of activities for families to enjoy, starting with Easter Eggstravaganza! on Saturday, 30 March, followed by art and craft activities each day Monday to Friday, 1 - 5 April and 8 - 12 April.

In April, we are delighted to have the 2024 Muir Trust Artist in Residence who this year is portrait artist Cara Gordon. Meet them in their Open Studio and watch them work. Check the website for dates.

Sign up to our emails on our website and keep up to date with what's on including our popular under 5s Duckling sessions, talks, afternoon teas and special interest days.

Please check times, charges and booking information at discoverbucksmuseum.org.

Discover Bucks Museum, Church Street,
Aylesbury, Bucks, HP20 2QP
www.discoverbucksmuseum.org

A record-breaking Pop-Up Art Weekend for the Chilterns Neuro Centre

The Chilterns Neuro Centre's Pop-Up Art Weekend in Wendover, over the first weekend in March, wrapped up its most successful year yet with over a thousand art enthusiasts venturing into a realm of creativity, as the usually clinical space was transformed into an art gallery for the weekend with record-breaking sales.



The exhibition, held in partnership with the Clare Foundation, featured over 80 extremely talented local artists covering a wide range of artistic styles including paintings, sculptures, glasswork, ceramic and jewellery.

At the heart of the exhibition, amidst the kaleidoscope of stunning artworks, was an incredible display of cakes that could only be described as edible masterpieces. The sale of these cakes not only added an extra layer of joy to the event but also contributed significantly to the fundraising efforts.

In total, the charity raised over £21,000 which will be used to support its work enabling people affected by MS, Parkinson's and strokes to live life to the full.

"The fabulous success of our Pop-Up Art Weekend is a testament to the power of community and creativity coming together for a great cause," said Danielle Medd, Fundraising Manager at the Chilterns Neuro Centre. "I am deeply thankful to our incredible artists for their generosity, and a heartfelt shoutout to our amazing volunteers—this event simply wouldn't happen without their commitment."

The Chilterns Neuro Centre provides treatments and services to people affected by MS, Parkinson's and strokes, empowering them to live healthier and happier lives.



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live life to the full.





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www.chilternsneurocentre.org

"The Centre gives you a sense of belonging, community and support."
Steve - Centre Member

Registered Charity No. 800853






News from Bucks Council – Planning

Aylesbury - Eastern Link Road South (ELRs) update

The delivery of the ELRs will connect the ELR north (Bellingham Way) A418 to Aston Clinton Road A41 as part of a long-term strategy to deliver an orbital traffic route around Aylesbury. Some of this is already in place and has been many years in the planning and making. The Woodlands Development achieved planning consent in the latter part of 2023 and the current strategy to deliver the ELRs will be developer-led as part of the Woodlands site, with the SLR (Southern Link Road) being delivered by December 2025 as part of the Hampden Fields development.

Buckinghamshire Council will begin the process of procuring a developer for the Woodlands site within the next few months. The council is committed to the delivery of the ELRs and local councillors, alongside Rob Butler MP, have been working hard for several years to ensure a successful outcome. Timescales for delivery will be dependent on the procurement process.

Please contact *Cllr Mike Collins* at mikecollins@buckscc.gov.uk if you have any questions.

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7	9	3	4	5	6	2	8	1
6	2	8	9	7	1	3	4	5
5	4	1	2	8	3	6	9	7

St Mary's Church, Drayton Beauchamp



St Mary's in Drayton Beauchamp is open every Saturday and Sunday from 10am to 4pm for private prayer.

There is a Sunday Service once a month at either 11am or 4.30pm.

FORTHCOMING SERVICES 2024

5 May	11am	Holy Communion
2 June	11am	Holy Communion
7 July	4.30pm	Hymns and Pimms
4 Aug	11am	Blessed Virgin Mary Holy Communion
1 Sept	11am	Holy Communion
6 Oct	4.30pm	Harvest Evensong
10 Nov	4.30pm	Remembrance Sunday
15 Dec	4.30pm	Celebration of Christmas
25 Dec	11am	Christmas Day Holy Communion

For more details, please see our website www.ac-buck-db-churches.org or phone the Benefice Office on 01296 632488.

Rector Rev'd Sally Bottomer
Assistant Priest Rev'd Jane Nash

Horticultural Society

All the snowdrops have now disappeared and our daffodils, tulips and other spring bulbs will be in full bloom. The Society had a lovely outing to Touchwood in Great Missenden to see Katharine Hersee's wonderful two-acre garden filled with drifts of snowdrops, including a few unusual ones. Our visit started with a short illustrated talk by Katharine about snowdrop varieties before we explored the snowdrops lining a shrubbery path, woodland path and rockery.



How to keep garden pests under control, the natural way

It's always good to see the snowdrops and spring flowers coming out, a sure sign that spring and warmer weather is not too far away. However, as well as the plants and flowers, the common garden pests will also emerge and can obliterate your cherished plants, vegetables and fruits if you're not careful!

Here are a few things you can do in your garden to try and keep the pests at bay without using chemicals...

Handpicking pests – Regularly inspect your plants and remove any pests you see, such as caterpillars, aphids, or snails.

Encouraging Biodiversity – One effective natural pest control method is to encourage biodiversity in your garden by planting a variety of different plant species. This helps create a balanced ecosystem that can naturally control pest populations.

Encourage Natural Predators – Ladybirds, birds, frogs are natural enemies of many garden pests. By attracting these beneficial creatures to your garden, you can help maintain a balance in your ecosystem.

Companion Planting – Utilising companion planting techniques, like planting marigolds among your vegetables, can help deter pests. Marigolds emit a scent that repels many common garden pests.



Midges may seem like insignificant insects but they can cause major issues with fruit in the garden. Below is an article written by one of our members, Katy Todd, about the dreaded Pear Midge.

More than just annoying

Five years ago we planted an orchard in the bare garden of our new house. We chose semi-mature trees for faster impact. Bramley seedling and Melrose apple, Victoria and Regina Claudia plum and a Gieser Wildman pear. While the other trees produced increasing and delicious crops, though by no way perfect, the pear has yielded nothing but disappointment. When it arrived in August 2018 Gieser Wildman was decked with two of the most beautiful speckled yellowy fruits. We were given strict instructions NOT to eat these as the tree had been sprayed. We only had to be patient and there would be pears.

Every spring when the Chanticleer ornamental pear in neighbouring gardens were in flower, our Gieser Wildman also flowered, leading to high hopes. Hope heightened when clusters of pearlets formed. But all hopes were dashed when every potential pear dropped off. On close examination they were all filled with tiny grubs.

Google anything and you shall find. And so it was that I discovered a pear-midge that rises from hibernation to lay its eggs in the flower buds. We could spray, but that wouldn't be good for wildlife. Frequent sightings of ladybirds on the tree confirmed it was right not to use poison. We could cover the ground beneath to prevent the midge from getting through but here grow my prized lily-of-the-valley. One bizarre suggestion was to Hoover the midges when they appeared in the evenings! We could pick off all the affected pearlets. And pick them off we did, every one, every spring. Anything to eradicate the midge. I consulted blogs and advice and after weighing up the various options I decided to remove all the buds well before even a hint of blossom occurred.

And so it was one warmish February afternoon this year our little grandson arrived and on being asked what I was doing up a ladder, I explained the cycle from hibernating midge, to grub, leading to no fruit. *"That's so annoying,"* he said. He was right. I cut off every promising bud in the hope that one day there might be big juicy pears.

I'm not sure what the ultimate decision will be if this doesn't work. Do nothing and just enjoy the beautiful blossom in years to come, or replace the tree? Any suggestions will be taken very seriously. Please email info@astonclintonhorticulturalsociety.co.uk and we'll pass on your ideas to Katy.

Meetings at the Anthony Hall for late spring/early summer 2024

By the time you read this, we will have held our second quiz with fish and chips supper in the Anthony Hall, which attracted a full house of 72 participants. Our annual Spring Show is nearly upon us on 6 April. If you have read this magazine as soon as it dropped through your door, there should still be time to enter by 4 April. There are lots of classes for budding photographers, cooks, handcrafters, floral art specialists and spring flower enthusiasts; not forgetting the children's sections for all children up to the age of 14. We will also have our usual stalls of plants, books, raffle in aid of BucksVision, face painting and hopefully a few new stalls.

Please check out our website for all the details www.astonclintonhorticulturalsociety.co.uk.

Programme of events:

Thursday, 4 April, 6pm – 7.45pm
Spring Show Entry Night, Anthony Hall

Saturday, 6 April, 2pm Spring Show and Plant Sale, Aston Clinton School

Wednesday, 10 April, 8pm
Talk: Sowing vegetable seeds late spring/early summer, Paolo Arrigo, Franchi Seeds, Anthony Hall.

Wednesday, 8 May, 8pm Talk:
Flowering Shrubs, September/October, George Lockwood, Anthony Hall

Saturday, 11 May, 10am – 1pm
Plant Sale, Aston Clinton Park

Do come along to our very popular annual plant sale on Saturday, 11 May in the car park by the Red Kite Pavilion, by kind permission of the Parish Council. We always have lots of plants including young vegetable plants and produce to buy.

The Horticultural Society meetings and events are open to all. Meetings are free for members, £2 for non-members and members receive discounts on garden visits and other events. Membership is £5 per year, per person.

Please get in touch by email to join info@astonclintonhorticulturalsociety.co.uk.

Looking forward to meeting you all in 2024.

The Horticultural Committee

Buckland Open Gardens - Save the date

Put it in your diary now!

Buckland Open Gardens will this year be on Sunday, **30 June from 1pm to 5pm**. So far, there are six gardens opening. There will be refreshments and home-made cakes in All Saints' church, and a plant, produce and book stall in the grounds of the Old Rectory in aid of the Horticultural Society. More details of the day will follow in the next issue of Village Life.

Any enquiries to [Kate Eckett - 01296 630461](mailto:Kate.Eckett@astonclintonhorticulturalsociety.co.uk).

Mentmore Arts Festival 2024

The 14th Mentmore Arts Festival will take place from Saturday, May 25 to Bank Holiday Monday, May 27.

We now showcase over 60 artists, twice the number from our opening year. There will be work from painters, ceramicists, glassworkers, textile artists and jewellers; many artists return year after year, but we are delighted to welcome new exhibitors again in 2024.

Last year we donated £14,000 between Mind UK, Leighton Buzzard Mencap and St Mary's Church in Mentmore, taking our total raised since the festival began to over £110,000. This year we will be supporting Guide Dogs for the Blind and MK:Act - a domestic abuse intervention service.

The weekend is an opportunity to have a family day with refreshments, including light lunches, tea, coffee and cakes. There will be a bar selling local beer and Pimms. We also have a raffle with some great prizes. Do come and see us and help to support local charities whilst having a great day out.

Wendover Canal Trust Friday, 28 June 10am – 3pm Save the date

The hugely popular upgrade of the towpath between Wendover and Halton, reported on in the last issue of Village Life, will be formally opened via a celebratory walk, with associated entertainment and refreshments on Friday, 28 June. This has been chosen as it is the final day of John Colet School's 'Focus Week' of extracurricular activities, and the school will play a major part in the organisation of the event. Wendover News, Wendover and Halton

Parish Councils, EKFB and Wendover Canal Trust are also organising the celebration, in which local primary schools will participate.

Our Patron, Robbie Cumming, of Canal Boat Diaries is to 'cut the ribbon' on the day and a wide range of organisations will be attending. So please save the date!

More details to follow in our next issue.

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Our nine week Wellbeing and Nature Course uses seasonal nature based activities, including conservation, crafts and arts, to help people to build resilience and improve their wellbeing. This course is designed for adults aged 18+ who are experiencing mild to moderate depression, low mood, anxiety, struggling to return to work or looking to boost their confidence.

Our next course will run every Wednesday 9.30am - 12.30pm from 3 April to 29 May. Group size is a maximum of six people. Cost per session is £28. Fully-funded places are available.

You can apply for a place and find more information about our wellbeing programmes at www.lindengate.org.uk/wellbeing-programmes

Emergency

HEALTH

Aston Clinton Surgery	01296 630241	www.westongrove.com
Aston Clinton Dental Clinic	01296 323090	www.astonclintondentalclinic.co.uk
Amersham Hospital	01494 434411	www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk
John Radcliffe Hospital	01865 741166	www.ouh.nhs.uk/hospitals/jr/
Stoke Mandeville Hospital	01296 315000	www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk
Wycombe Hospital	01494 526161	www.buckshealthcare.nhs.uk
NHS Direct	111	111.nhs.uk
Samaritans	116123	jo@samaritans.org

ENERGY SUPPLIERS

Electricity Emergency	0800 7838 838	
Gas Emergency	0800 111 999	
Water Emergency	0800 3169 800	

CRIME

Police Emergency	999	
Police non-emergency and Neighbourhood watch	101	www.thamesvalley.police.uk
Childline	0800 111	

Organisations *Any error or omission in this list should be notified to the Editor.*

EDUCATION

Aston Clinton School	01296 630276	www.astonclintonschool.co.uk
Aston Clinton Pre School	07928 309321	pre-school.acpsmanagement@gmail.com
Totspot (AC Baptist Church)	01296 631824	www.astonclintonbaptist.org

SPORT AND LEISURE

Aston Clinton Badminton Club	07958 479690	
Aston Clinton Bowls Club	01296 630403	www.astonclintonbowlsclub.org
Aston Clinton Colts Junior F.C.	07786 908219	clubsecretary@accolts.com
Aston Clinton F.C.	07930 925840	www.astonclintonfc.co.uk
Aston Park Tennis Club	01296 630826	www.astonparktennis.co.uk
Aston Wine Club	01296 630531	www.astonwineclub.co.uk
Aylesbury Green Park Sub Aqua Club	07092 075004	www.aylesburydivers.org.uk
Back to Netball	07545 033986	weststandmolly@aol.com
Buckland & Aston Clinton Cricket Club	01296 631788	www.baccc.play-cricket.com
Buckland Book Group	01296 630531	brfletcher@hotmail.co.uk
Buckland Bridge Club	01296 630552	Buckland.bridge@gmail.com
Colts Kickers	Liam Hickey	07585 119066
Dolphin Swim School	07966 450458	dolphinswimschool2017@gmail.com
Swimezee	01296 730742	www.swimezee.co.uk

YOUTH GROUPS

Aston Clinton Guides, Brownies and Rainbows		www.girlguiding.org.uk
Aston Clinton Scouts	01296 708158	ac.scouts@Yahoo.com
Aston Clinton Cubs	01296 708158	ac.cubs@Yahoo.co.uk
Aston Clinton Beavers	01296 708158	ac.beavers@yahoo.co.uk
Aston Clinton Youth Club		astonclintonyouthclub@yahoo.com

CHURCHES

St Michael and All Angels, Aston Clinton	01296 632488	www.ac-buck-db-churches.org
All Saints, Buckland	01296 632488	www.ac-buck-db-churches.org
St Mary the Virgin, Drayton Beauchamp	01296 632488	www.ac-buck-db-churches.org
Aston Clinton Baptist Church	01296 631824	www.astonclintonbaptist.org
Our Lady of Lourdes RC Church	01296 290545	www.ourladyoflourdes.uk

HALLS FOR HIRE

Anthony Hall	07443 976639	hallbookingonline.com/anthonyhall/
Baptist Church	07834 772937	lettings@astonclintonbaptist.org
Buckland Village Hall	01296 630310	
Churchill Hall		astonclintonyouthclub@yahoo.com
Red Kite Pavilion	01296 630270	nick@yourcafeinthepark.co.uk

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Aston Clinton Parish Council	01296 631269	clerk@astonclinton.org www.astonclinton.org.uk
Buckland Parish Council	01296 630962	clerk@buckland-pc.gov.uk www.buckland-pc.gov.uk
Drayton Beauchamp. Parish Meeting	01296 630396	
Buckinghamshire Council	0300 131 6000	www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk
BC Councillors	Bill Chapple OBE	Bill.Chapple@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
	Mike Collins	Mike.Collins@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
	Julie Ward	Julie.ward@buckinghamshire.gov.uk
Environmental Health (fly tipping)	01296 585605	
Highways	01296 486630	www.buckscc.go.uk
M.P. for Aylesbury	Rob Butler	rob.butler.mp@parliament.uk

MISCELLANEOUS

All Saints Friends, Buckland	01296 630454	peter.elwin@elwins.net
Aston Clinton Ladies Group	01296 630740	
Aston Clinton U3A	01296 436403	www.u3asites.org.uk/aston-clinton/home
Horticultural Society	01296 633376	www.astonclintonhorticulturalsociety.co.uk
Royal British Legion	01296 632039	
SSAFA Forces Help	01296 631030	
Churchill Lunch Club	07921 172642	
Turpins Charity	01296 630162	www.turpinscharity.org.uk
Wendover Heights Veterinary Centre	01296 623439	www.whvc.co.uk
Women's Institute	01296 706908	b.d.ac.wi@gmail.com

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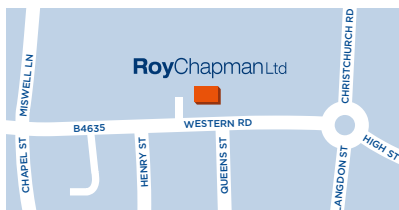
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