

THE WOODCHESTER WORD

Issue 77, Summer 2022



THE JUBILEE WEEKEND

The Jubilee weekend (Thursday June 2nd to Sunday June 5th) here in Woodchester was a fun filled weekend with something for everyone.

Firstly a special mention to the Bunting Team for organising the collection of fabric, weekly making and teaching sessions in the Village Hall (supported by Villagers as well as the Woodchester Brownies and Guides) and kindly decorating the village on every spare wall and railing, helping everyone feel part of the celebrations.

From the Thursday onwards, everyone could get involved and follow the “Jubilee Trail” of wonderful Jubilee Artwork created by the Woodchester school pupils depicting key aspects of the 1953 Coronation and as you wandered around the village questions such as “have you seen the Corgi?” or “where is the Palace?” could be heard - not something you would normally hear! A special thank you to Mrs Pennington, the Head, for her enthusiasm as whilst she already had a busy Jubilee programme in place, the school also fully

supported the Village Foodbank Collection, provided the tables and chairs for the Street Party and organised the Village Trail Artwork.

On the Friday, “An Afternoon Tea for the Jubilee” was held in the Church for almost 80 guests and helpers – thank you to the “Lunch with Friends Committee” for adapting the regular monthly lunch to a Jubilee Tea Party. The Church looked so inviting, with each table beautifully decorated with linen tablecloths, vintage china and flower posies. The cooks surpassed themselves with the daintiest sandwiches, full cream teas, and an array of sumptuous cakes decorated with edible crowns all washed down the endless pots of tea and prosecco – it was lovely. A joyful rendition of “God Save the Queen” was sung and a toast was raised and a great time was had by everyone.

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The Jubilee Weekend continued.

Sunday was the “Woodchester Street Party”, and despite a slightly chilly start all 300 seats were filled and the sound of glasses being clinked as we “raised a toast” and laughter filled the air. Anyone who popped into the Village Hall may have enjoyed something delicious provided by the WI and had a look around the Jubilee Village Exhibition, which included souvenir programmes, tapestries and photographs from the Silver, Gold and Diamond jubilee events – thank you to everyone who helped make sure we could include these elements.

The Street party was followed by the Village Games – one of the many highlights of the weekend. We are indebted to the Mumford’s for so kindly sharing their garden with the entire village! And a huge thank you to Stuart Mitchell who very generously donated all of the decorations for Oakley House garden, which looked fabulous well done to

Graham and Caroline Denny for co-ordinating the races (with compere Councillor Paul Baynham-Honri) and making sure as many people could join in and have some fun.

A huge and heartfelt thank you to everyone who supported the Woodchester Village Jubilee events – it was a lot of work but the results speak for themselves and we are very grateful for the time so generously given to make the events happen. We look forward to organising more events in the future so please look out for a planning event we will be running in October and help us decide what we want to do village wide in 2023.

George Brooks and Caroline Noon



Village shop and post office

It's been good to welcome many new customers to the shop and to make many new friends.



You may have noticed our new freezers which provide us with more space enabling us to increase the variety of items on offer and to take delivery of a new order from Lodge Farm Foods ready meals.

Woodchester Meat Co continue to supply us with ham, bacon and sausages that are just right now that BBQ weather is here.

As this is the Autumn edition you won't be surprised to hear that we are already beginning to plan for Christmas and to order appropriate stock.

In the Post Office there has been a noticeably increased demand for banking services as local banks have closed, this is likely to increase even further with the reported future closure of Stroud Halifax in November.

The return of foreign travel has also resulted in an increased demand for currency (don't forget Euros are held in stock, other currencies can be obtained using a next day service).

Royal Mail recently introduced bar coded postage stamps, much larger than existing stamps but will have relevance to Royal Mail in future.

Home shopping returns continue in large numbers and have not reduced since lockdown. Does this signal a change in our shopping habits?

As always we are grateful for your continued support. Don't forget-use us or lose us!

Girlguiding Woodchester

Despite a few cancelled meetings, due to illness and members having other commitments, Woodchester Brownies and Guides had a fun-filled, interesting summer term.

It started with both Brownies and Guides being made very welcome by the Diamond Jubilee Bunting making group, as we joined them, industriously cutting out the flags to be made into the bunting that decorated the village over the Jubilee bank holiday weekend.

As well as playing games, learning new skills, trying new activities and working towards badges, girls also had opportunities to enjoy the out of doors. The Brownies took part in an incident walk: we walked around the village and at various points we stopped, the leaders described an incident (such as a member of the party was injured and unable to continue walking) and the girls had to work together, using anything they had with them or could see, to find a solution. The Guides, meanwhile, explored parts of Woodchester some of them were not familiar with, when they went on a penny hike. This involves not following a planned route, but tossing a coin at each junction – heads, turn left, tails turn right. The Brownies also enjoyed a sports evening, involving races and trying out some sports they hadn't played before.

Although neither Brownies or Guides have had an opportunity to participate in a residential event this year, one of Guides joined Nailsworth Guides at the County organised, Bubbs Hill Bash Challenge. This is a whole day event where teams of Guides and Rangers compete against each other in a

series of Girlguiding and camping challenges. Also, despite not being able to go away, both Brownies and Guides worked towards their Camp badge, by learning camping skills: the Brownies learnt about sensible packing, safety on campsite and enjoyed cooking on a barbecue. The Guides used drama to think about jobs that need doing when camping, had a very practical session on how to keep their bedding dry (involving throwing buckets of water over it to check!), learnt how to make gadgets, devices and other accessories (including games and jewellery) using wood and string (and other natural objects) and of course, cooked over a campfire.

Brownies have been very lucky this term to have had plenty of leaders and helpers: the two long-standing, experienced leaders have been given a huge amount of support by one of the Guides, in the role of Brownie Helper, and by a Duke of Edinburgh Award volunteer. Their skills and enthusiasm is much appreciated by the leaders and by the Brownies.

We have plenty of space to accept new members and girls aged between 7 and 9 (Brownies) and 10 and 13 (Guides) are very welcome to join us. We'd also be happy to hear from any adults who may be interested in helping. Please email: woodchesterbrowniesandguides@gmail.com or 'phone Jackie on 01453 821258.

Look forward to seeing you all at the produce show!

Christmas Craft Fayre - Saturday 19 November 2022

Once again the Made in Woodchester group of local crafters will be holding a Christmas Craft Fayre.

By kind permission of the Headmistress, it will take place at Woodchester Endowed School on Saturday 19 November from 10.30 to 15.00 in the School Hall. It is anticipated that Woodchester WI will have a dedicated area providing hot drinks and mouth watering home made cakes.

As in previous years, this will provide a great opportunity to shop for some unique Christmas gifts - not available on the High Street or on line! There will be an eclectic mix of expertly made crafts on sale at prices to suit all pockets. There will also be some new crafters present this year.

If have been before, please come along again - if you haven't been, then do give it a try.

If there is anyone in the village who would like to be involved with a craft stall, but has not yet been contacted, then please get in touch with the organiser - Mike Barnard – Email: m.barnard.123@btinternet.com or Mob: 07527 504493.

County Councillors' Article

St Mary's Hill and Valley Road

Residents living in this area have expressed considerable concern with regard to drivers parking inconsiderately. This has been caused by people accessing the lakes in Woodchester Park to partake in wild water swimming which has become more popular over recent years. I have been working with the Parish Council to have double yellow lines installed in these areas. A Traffic Regulation Order will be required and this takes time to obtain with all the consultation and legalities. Hopefully this will be in place for next summer and it will need to be enforced.

Cycle Track

Improvements continue to be made along this valuable asset. The 'Newman Henders' bridge has taken longer to place than anticipated and has been an expensive but necessary replacement funded jointly by SDC and GCC.

Ash Die-back continues to be a problem along the track and short-term closures may be needed while work is taking place.

Weight Limit Sign

The sign on the bridge on Selsley Road will be moved closer to the A46, hopefully preventing large over-weight vehicles having to turn around just before the bridge.

Major Road Works

Work on the flood alleviation and mini-roundabout in the centre of Nailsworth is due to start in mid-September. This will include some road closures in George Street and night time closures on the A46 in the centre of the town. These are much needed improvements which will be of benefit to all.

If residents have any concerns, please contact me.

Cllr Steve Robinson
steve.robinson@gloucestershire.gov.uk
01453 834270

Play Area update

The Parish Council is still planning to go ahead with the proposed Play Area next to the cycle path at Rooksmoor but plans to start work on the site have been delayed by fund raising, issues relating to the lease of the land from Gloucestershire County Council, and ash dieback in some of the trees on the site.

We now have the funds in place to proceed with the plans approved by the Parish Council at their June meeting, and it is hoped that issues relating to the lease of the land will soon be resolved so that work can start on the site.

There will be a full update at the September meeting of the Parish Council.



Road safety – Parish Council acquiring a VAS system

Following discussions about road safety at the recent Parish Council meeting, the Council has agreed to purchase its own Vehicle Activated Road Sign.

This will be used in various locations around the village to remind drivers to keep within the speed limit, and to gather data on vehicle numbers and speeds which can be used to inform future road safety policy in the parish. The system does not collect vehicle data (such as registration number) so all data is completely anonymous. We hope to have the sign in use by the beginning of September. If there is a location in the village where you think vehicles are travelling too fast, and you would like to have the VA sign implemented in that location, please contact Cllr Iain Dunbar at iain@woodchesterparish.org.uk.



Safety on the Woodchester Mountain Bike Trail

Woodchester Mountain Bike Trail has proved very popular since it was built by the Parish Council in 2016. Located next to the Stroud to Nailsworth cycle path at Rooksmoor, it is a mountain bike trail with typical trail features. The track is unsupervised, and riders use the trail at their own risk.

In the interests of safety for all users, we ask that basic safety rules are followed:

- Be respectful of other riders and keep to the tracks.
- Use a suitable bike for mountain bike trails.
- Always wear the correct riding gear. A suitable well-fitting helmet is essential. Gloves, appropriate shoes (never open toed) and other protective clothing are advised.
- Don't use the trail in adverse weather condition, such as heavy rain or high wind.
- Always ride within your skill level and always stay in control of your bike.
- Never cycle too close to a bike in front of you to avoid collisions.
- Get to know the trail and slow down for corners.
- Walkers and children should never walk on the trails
- The pond is seasonal, but as with any standing water, represents a risk to young children, who should not be allowed on the track.

If you have any comments or questions about the WMBT or would like to join the volunteer team that looks after the trail, please contact Cllr Iain Dunbar at iain@woodchesterparish.org.uk.



Introducing our new Wilder Champions

WilderGlos recap

WilderGlos is all about actions! Actions carried out by individuals and communities to help nature and wildlife thrive around our neighbourhoods. Whether it's reducing your carbon footprint, lobbying your MP, creating wild spaces in your community, or supporting businesses that have green credentials - any action large or small will have a positive effect for the wildlife that we share this county with. As an individual you can join the WilderGlos platform for free and start earning green points and prizes on top of contributing to your local team. Or, if you're looking for a challenge you might try your hand at forming or joining a community group to improve your neighbourhood for nature. If so, check out our Community Resource page and WilderGlos Family Map page to find a group near you. Links to these and more can be found on the GWT website.

Introducing Wilder Champions

In order to help spread the message and information needed to help nature's recovery we have gathered the support of passionate people from around the county. These Wilder Champions are fully trained GWT volunteers who visit countywide and local events and provide talks to share incredible ways in which we can all help wildlife thrive within Gloucestershire. They share stories and advice on helping wildlife and can share resources for you to do the same.

So far, we have 7 dedicated Wilder Champions to introduce all with a diverse array of experience and stories to tell! We have Dede from the Forest of Dean, Cressida, Connor and Deborah who are all based in Cheltenham. Marcus and Nigel can be found in Bishops Cleeve and cover the North of the county. Lastly, we have Linda who can be found promoting WilderGlos at Westbury Court Gardens.



Please do get in touch at events@gloucestershirowildlifetrust.co.uk if you would like one of our lovely Champions to visit you and give a talk or host a stall at an event.

Also, we're still looking for champions that live near Stroud or in the Forest of Deans so if you have the passion to shout about nature to the public we would love to hear from you, please head to the Wilder Champion page on the GWT website to sign up today.

Take action today for a wilder tomorrow.

By Steve Dawson (Community Action Officer at GWT)



Events in the Parish

Annual Parish Meeting.

The Annual Parish Meeting is a legacy from the Middle Ages. At that time Parish Councils did not exist, and all local decision making was carried out by meetings of the whole community. These meetings normally took place in the church vestry, ours this year was in Woodchester School Hall. All electors have the right to attend the Parish Meeting and can speak on any matters of local interest. (In fact Woodchester Parish Council have a set time at the start of every Council meeting when electors can raise matters of concern to them, however that would not usually be the case.) These days, in practice, the Parish Meeting is an opportunity for groups and societies in the Village to report on their years activities and their future plans, these are in written format and are available from the Clerk, along with the Chairman's Report. This year there were also presentations on the planned play area and the Jubilee celebrations as well as Parish Council priorities until the next election. Refreshments were provided courtesy of Woodchester Wines. All presentations and reports as well as the minutes are available on our website.



Litter pick

Several residents borrow litter picking equipment on an ongoing basis from the Parish Council and work hard to reduce the amount of litter in and around the village. In early April a number of volunteers also came along to the annual Village litter pick and worked together to remove several sacks of litter as well as an old motorbike from the banks of the stream, a broken chair, a road sign and some old guttering. Thank you to everyone involved in keeping our village tidy and a bit safer for wildlife.

National Trust Guided walk

Following two previous popular walks, the National Trust kindly offered to run a further guided walk around Boundary Court for the residents of Woodchester. This was held early in July and was very well attended. The sun shone and residents were able to learn about the work the NT are doing to restore natural grassland to the area as part of their Stroud Landscape Project.

Don't forget to come along to Woodchester Village Show on Saturday 10th September. The Parish Council will have a stall on the village green from 2-4pm.

This is an opportunity to meet with Councillors, ask questions about the village and make suggestions for future village events.

You asked we did:

You asked we did:

- There have been extensive repairs to the bus shelter at the bottom of St Marys Hill including a new roof.
- Following the resurfacing of Selsley Road, the Parish Council requested 'Slow' signs to be added to the Selsley Road on the tight bend near Church Road and near the entrance to Boundary Court.
- The Parish Council contractor has cleared the long grasses growing on High Street South Woodchester as well as other areas with overgrowth of nettles etc. He has also removed litter from the stream that was out of reach of normal litter pickers.
- SDC have agreed to the replacement of the bin outside the village hall with a new lidded one.
- In response to residents' concerns the Parish Council has purchased a mobile VAS machine (more about this elsewhere)
- There are soon to be two new benches in Woodchester to add to the areas available for rest and reflection.
- The Parish Council continues to pursue the plan to provide a play area alongside the MTB track and are looking into opening a recreation field for residents (more about this elsewhere).

Parish Council Meetings are generally held on the first Thursday of every other month. The next scheduled meetings are 1st Sept and 3rd November at 7pm in the Village Hall. All Welcome.

Our Neighbourhood Warden

Every Parish in Stroud District has an allocated neighbourhood warden. Ours is Carol Novoth she can be contacted on 07970250343 carol.novoth@stroud.gov.uk. Carol has 14 years of experience as a neighborhood warden and has been the warden for Woodchester for around two years.

Neighborhood Wardens are the first point of contact to help with a wide variety of neighborhood issues, such as antisocial behaviour, abandoned vehicles, bogus callers, littering and fly-tipping etc. They are also available to support vulnerable people and connect them with agencies to help. Carol is keen to build upon her connections in Woodchester and you may see her at local events over coming months.

Chairman's notes

Your Parish Councillors have as usual been working very hard on several projects, as reported in our Parish Council section.



Sadly, our Parish Clerk Sylvia May, will be leaving us in September. We will miss her very much and are grateful for her excellent work. We now need to find a new clerk with the knowledge and enthusiasm to ensure our Council works within Local Authority regulations and ensure we keep a proper order in our meetings and projects.

We received notification from the Chairman of Woodchester Football Club that, due to there being no football team, he decided to resign and hand back the lease of the football field to Caroline and Jeremy Hill. However, from this has sprung the opportunity for the Parish to use the area as a playing field!

The Parish Council and Mr and Mrs Hill have, in principle, agreed the terms of a lease for our Parishioners and friends to access the field for recreation. This is in addition to the play area by the cycle track. A draft lease is being prepared and costings ascertained for two new gates, one to replace the kissing gate from Selsley Road, the other a pedestrian gate into the football field, with both being suitable for wheelchair and pushchair access. When the new gates are hung, the

field will be open for our use.

There will be conditions to this agreement, being that the use will not be abused by inappropriate behaviour and that litter and debris are not left there. If this were to occur, then the PC will hand back the recreation area to Mr and Mrs Hill for it to be incorporated into the grazing field.

Of course, we hope this would never happen and for us all to be able to enjoy the field. I would ask that when we take possession, we all take responsibility for this space and ensure that it is safe to be used by all ages. Finally, there will be nothing but grass here. No play equipment - that will be found on the play area by the Bike Trail.

Further good news is that the PC has purchased two magnificent benches. One is sited at the top of Berrymore, replacing the old rotted bench and the other waiting to go on the Church Green.

I hope you have all enjoyed your summer and look forward to meeting some of you at our next PC meeting in September.

Cheers, Peter Lead



With the hot, sunny days we have had recently, we might forget the wet and windy winter we had. This is a picture of the tree uprooted by gales on the path between South and North Woodchester during the storm Eunice in February.

Woodchester WI – Food and Fun Together

We are delighted to report that our Woodchester WI banner, started pre-pandemic, is at last complete and now takes pride of place at each of our meetings. It's a testament to the range of skills of WI members with panels from seventeen members in embroidery, appliqué and photography to represent individual members and important places in our village.

Cooking skills were enjoyed in our May meeting when we shared puddings supplied by WI cooks. The meeting began with the serious business, exploring the national WI's resolution for the year – a campaign to highlight and address the underdiagnosis of autism and ADHD in women and girls which leads to mental health issues. Once the important work was done, we sampled the delights of food and took time for friendly chat. At the July meeting we ate together again, on this occasion enjoying a fish and chip supper, an annual treat for members and another chance for social time.

When we haven't been eating, we have enjoyed two speakers. Kirstie Bingham from the John Moore Museum at Tewkesbury, returned to give us a second of her talks, entitled *Midwife, Herbalist, Witch*. She explored the roles filled by women whose lives were much restricted by social expectations, looking at the many ways they found to use their talents and contribute to their communities – and the risks they ran too. In June, we were joined by Will North from the Long Table whose lively talk filled in the gaps for a lot of us about this Community Interest Company. He shared their founding principles – ensuring that everyone has access to good food and someone to eat it with – and their

mission to tackle food waste and to offer training. We hope to follow up his visit with a walk along the towpath, finishing with coffee and cake at the Long Table

Our book group, craft group (2-4 the first Thursday of each month at the village hall) and walking groups remain popular with small groups of followers. The newest sub-group, a lunch club, met for the first time in July and members plan to meet regularly at a variety of local pubs and cafes. Walks offered by the Gloucester Federation also remain popular, offering a selection of walks from a local village, followed by a home-made lunch – and all for a very modest cost. Gloucester WI also offer a range of craft opportunities, occasional days out (a trip to the Black Country Museum in September), holidays and taster sessions for croquet and bowls.

We have been delighted to attract some new members this year and will offer a friendly welcome to any local ladies who would like to see what the WI is about. Contact the Secretary, Sally Bull, on 873003 if you would like more information. You can try us out for up to three sessions before you commit to memberships. We meet on the third Thursday of most months at 7.30 in Woodchester Village Hall.

theWI

INSPIRING WOMEN



Photo by Taylor Kiser on Unsplash



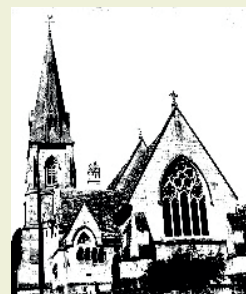
**Remember someone special
with our Daisy Appeal**



www.longfield.org.uk/daisy-appeal

A word from St Mary's Church

With the restrictions of the last 2 years hopefully permanently behind us, St Mary's is now back, firing on all cylinders. Here's an update on church services and the community activities available for church-goers and non-church-goers alike:



What's on...

The mother and toddler group **Little Stars** meets every Monday morning from 9.30 till 11.30 and is a chance for pre-school children to play while their parents or carers chat and relax over coffee and home-made cake. There's plenty of space to play, indoors and outside – weather permitting. Contact Elaine Penny (07974 208714) or Sue Pouncey (07866 487911)

Messy Church will reconvene for all children up to Year 6 as soon as school restarts in September. With up to 90 children plus their carers it is a very busy, vibrant and active session. Meeting from 3.20 to 4.45 one Wednesday afternoon per month in term time Messy Church offers wide range of indoor and outdoor activities combined with cakes, drinks and stories. There's no need to book, just turn up. Dates on www.stmaryswoodchester.org.uk and information cards at the back of church.

Lasers Youth Group for 11-14 year olds meets once a month for lively games and much cake. Check out the church web site and/or contact Nick Ardagh-Walter (791056)

Welcoming mothers and grandmothers of all ages, with or without babies and toddlers **Monday Mums** meets at 12.30 every Monday for Bible study and chat with friends over a simple but tasty lunch. Contact Sue Pouncey (07866 487911)

Starting at 9.00 am every Monday in St Mary's **café morning prayer** is a short and informal service with friends and good coffee – A great way to start the week. Contact Rev'd Sarah Haslam (07870 126048)

Running one Sunday afternoon each month except August **Wild Worship** gives families a chance to explore God's work in creation with activities, refreshments and wonderings outside. Suitable for children of all ages, each adventure takes about 45 minutes. Contact Helen or Gail c.ground101@gmail.com

Giving senior members of our community a chance to meet up with friends old and new, **Lunch-with-Friends** meets at noon inside church on the third Friday of every month. We serve a two course meal of delicious homemade food with tea or coffee and can accommodate various special diets. Lifts can also be provided in some cases. With a warm welcome for all, Lunch-with-Friends is one of the happiest times of the month for guests and helpers alike. Contact Liz Cole (07974 911016) or Christina Lewis (07968 159779).

Five Valleys Choir is a 50-strong community choir that practices in St Mary's on Monday evenings from March to June and September to December. Led by Lottie Roberts (the world's most patient maestro!) and supported by a wonderful pianist, we sing an eclectic mix of old and new music preparing for concerts in June and December. Welcoming enthusiastic beginners and experienced singers - contact Lottie Roberts via FaceBook on @fivevalleysvoices or email fivevalleysvoices@gmail.com

Weekly **Prayer and Bible** study groups are held on Wednesday and Thursday evenings respectively throughout the year, except during the school Summer holidays. For more information contact Gail (07875 028671) or Andrew (07973 187923).

St Mary's main Sunday service is at 11.00 each week with communion, morning worship and family formats all included on a monthly rota basis. A creche is available throughout the year with separate children's activities during term time – either in the undercroft or outside weather permitting.

If you've ever fancied campanology (!) St Mary's can offer plenty of **bell ringing** – both the church bells in our tower and hand bells. Contact John Hale (tower captain –765022) or Diana (827320) for hand bells.

Sometimes all of us need time and quiet place to think or pray. **Did you know** your church is open every day from 10.00 till 4.00. Come in whenever you want and let the peace of this beautiful space soak in.

Building works – Next steps...

We've been busy improving the interior of St Mary's over the last few years, making it a more welcoming and practical hub for the whole village. Additions like the new kitchen, improved draught-proofing and new disabled toilet facilities mean the building can now be used extensively by the school and for the kind of activities listed above. Next steps are to introduce a new projector and motorised screen replacing the present temporary projection arrangements, and complete some interior stonework repairs.

Earlier this year we received the five-yearly report on the fabric of the church building from our Surveyor, and there is a list of priority works required for repair of the stonework of the spire, the roof, the gutters and some of the windows – the common factor is to prevent ingress of water and stop any further decay occurring. These works present us with another financial challenge and of course we will welcome donations towards their cost from anyone in the community who appreciates North Woodchester's "signature" building. Pick up a leaflet in church or contact Andrew (07973 187923) for further information.

Woodchester Endowed Church of England Primary School

All connected with our school community have been delighted to see end of year celebrations return to normal with parents welcomed once again to Sports Day, the Summer Fair, the KS2 musical production and our Leavers' Service.

A mixture of joy, pride and tears was evident at the Leavers' Service in July as we said goodbye to our Year 6 class, wishing them every blessing as they move on to the next big step in their lives. They processed proudly up the aisle behind the school banner, accompanied by school dog Peggy Pennington, before sharing memories with their peers, teachers and parents and leading the younger ones in familiar worship songs. Farewell gifts of books were presented, courtesy of the St Loes, Seys and Bridges Foundation and St Mary's Church. It was also an opportunity to say farewells to our Deputy Head, Mr Smith, and to our Clerk to the Governors, Mrs Carol Rosser. Preparations for the new year have already begun with visits from our new Reception children and their parents. We look forward to welcoming them in September.

It is a huge relief that normal end of year activities have been possible once more. Year 6 had the chance to star in the groan-making musical, Pirates of the Curry Bean in front of appreciative family and friends. Courtesy of the PTA, the whole school embarked on a trip to Bristol's Wild Place and there were trips to Woodchester Mansion and Westonbirt.

So much has been achieved this year that it is impossible to do more than pick out a few of the many highlights. The completed building work has provided

much needed spaces for support work, more important than ever after the disruption of the last two years. Months of hard work and planning were rewarded when the school was awarded the Primary Science Quality Mark this term. The pupils have enjoyed lots of challenging activities in this term's Science and Maths focus weeks. A new reading club has been available for KS2 pupils and work is well underway to revamp and restock the school library. Our children have been involved in a range of sporting activities, including most recently the school sports day, Quad Kids, a Dodgeball Festival, the District Sports track events and a Rounders Picnic Tea. A few Year 5 pupils visited Frocester Cricket Club to train as young ambassadors for the Commonwealth Games. Our talented musicians took part in the Young Voices Festival. The children made a huge contribution to Platinum Jubilee Celebrations with their illustrated trail through the village and handcrafted bunting.

Our lively and innovative PTA committee members have worked hard throughout the year, raising substantial sums which are essential for ongoing curriculum development, improvements to the building and for extra-curricular opportunities.. Bags2Schools, The Lion Hunt, Boozy Bingo, Curry and Quiz Night and Summer Fair have been well supported by parents and villagers, the school hall and playground a happy hub of activity.

The Cake Bar, a new monthly opportunity for parents and children to enjoy tea and cake in St Mary's at the end of the school day, has been a success. Support from parents and PTA has been generous with donations of cake helping to make the event a social and financial success. It has been exciting to hear the church alive with the sound of young voices and to see parents enjoying an opportunity to relax and chat. Many of the children also attend our St Mary's Messy Church sessions where they enjoy a range of craft activities linked to a Bible theme.

The Governing Body has been fortunate recently to recruit new volunteers but would still be pleased to hear from anyone with finance and business experience who is willing to serve as an associate member for one year or more. The full governor role is a time-consuming four-year commitment and we are hugely grateful to those who are willing and able to donate their time and expertise to support the Headteacher and staff. It is, above all, a role that brings huge rewards and the privilege of belonging to our happy school family as we all Live, Learn and Flourish Together.

Sally Bull
Chair of Governors

The photo, (opposite,) of the bridge under the Dudbridge Nailsworth Railway (now of course the cycle track/ walking path) was taken before demolition took place in the 1960s. Residents of Woodchester may remember this bridge. It led from the A46 to gain access to the Old Priory. The site of the bridge can be recognised today by the big dip in the cycle track that occurs as you cycle or walk towards Dudbridge. Thanks to Alan Brackenbrough for providing this fascinating photo enabling us to look back in the history of our village. If any other readers have photos of old Woodchester that would be of interest, please let the editor know.



Letters to the editor

Dear Sir

Thank you for Ian Dunbar's informative article Selsley Road Traffic in Woodchester Word. Like many residents I am concerned about the traffic that we encounter in the village. I often feel that I am 'taking my life in my hands' by walking through the village – particularly on Selsley Road and Southfield Road.

I am sure that a 20mph limit, speed bumps, chicanes, etc would not really help. In my view the problem is a lack of respect by individuals for others on the road. We all want to get to wherever we want to go and to hell with anyone else! This doesn't apply just to our village, but this is the only area that we may be able to make into a more respectful environment.

I believe that most speed limits are simply a target speed for the majority of drivers. Most seem to think that anyone driving without obvious cause at a speed below the speed limit should be 'chivvied along'. Usually this means driving right up to their bumper. Exceptions to this are 20mph and 70mph limits where many seem to set their target speed 10mph higher than the limit. I would not, of course, advocate removing the 30 limit from our village, but I do agree that a 20 limit would not solve anything. It would irritate some drivers and further reduce the level of respect for other road users. You may be interested in the village of Leighterton (south of us, off the A46) which has no sign-posted speed limit. I know some locals there want a 30 limit through their village, but my experience is that most vehicles there seem to travel at no more than 30mph. Drivers respect that it is a village and slow down – maybe still not enough for some, but the 30 limit is not necessary.

Speed bumps and chicanes are noisy, cause more pollution and soon have potholes as people brake and accelerate. I am sure that those living on Cirencester Road, Minchinhampton will have adverse comments about them.

So, my suggestion for trying to engender respect for other road users in Woodchester is to erect a set of signs carefully placed through our village. They should have messages such as:

Elderly pedestrians
Children
Narrow pavements
Narrow road
Oncoming traffic
People live and walk here
Slow
Pedestrians crossing
Respect other road users
Respect
and so on...

I know some of the suggestions are comedic, but is that a bad thing? It may make someone smile but will still get the message across. Maybe we could even get the village school children to put forward some ideas for the wording of the signs! That may help them to be more respectful than previous generations when they become drivers.

Yours faithfully
Jenkyn Kennedy
24 Pauls Rise, North Woodchester, Stroud, Glos GL5 5PN

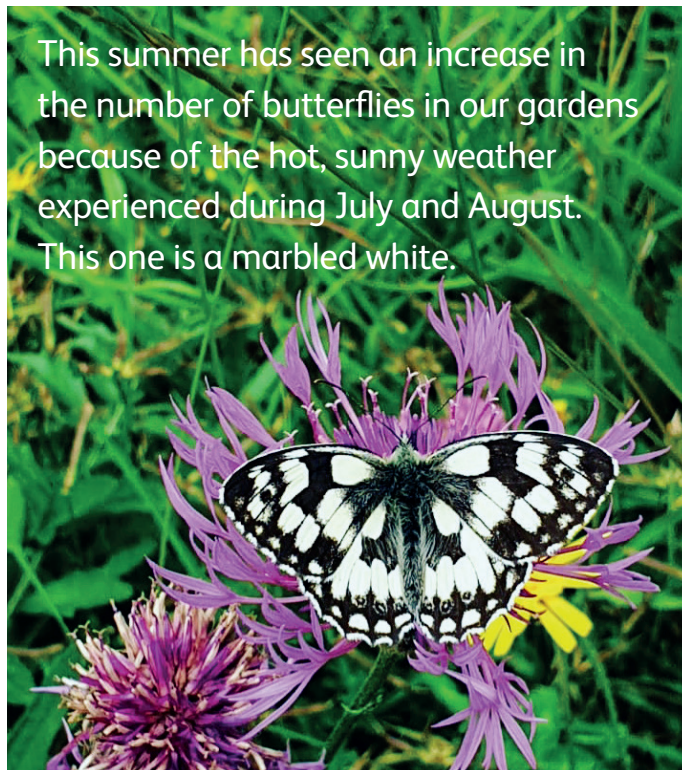
Dear Sir,

As a resident of south Woodchester I have during the past six months started using the footpath to exercise my small dog when not using local walks and commons in the area. I would assume that this pathway was originally for pedestrians and subsequent increase in cyclists has now deemed it a priority pathway for cyclists....pedestrians seem to have taken backward positions...I have no problems with cyclists, having been one myself during my younger years....However. Walking along this route has become quite intimidating... Large numbers of cyclists treat this route as a speedway, travelling at excessive speeds and showing little respect for pedestrians, with or without a dog...on several occasions I have been clipped by said cyclists having been totally unaware of their presence as they approach from behind... The use of a bell to warn anyone seems to be an exception rather than the ruleany protest at their speed and silent approach is generally ignored. Only last Friday as I was approaching station Rd along the pathway, a cyclist hurtled past me and failed to stop at the junction of pathway and station Road..A white BMW was coming down station Rd at that time..The cyclists, ignorant of its approach was forced to brake, hurtled over his handlebars and smashed bodily into the vehicle...he got up from the ground, mounted his cycle, murmured a quick 'sorry' and rode off leaving the car owner shaken.....cases like this and near misses are quite common.....I as a dog walker I am expected to keep my dog on a lead otherwise face a fine.....Why have I not seen any signs limiting speeds for cyclists or any warning signs about using bells to warn pedestrians of their approach. It is only a matter of time before someone is seriously hurt.

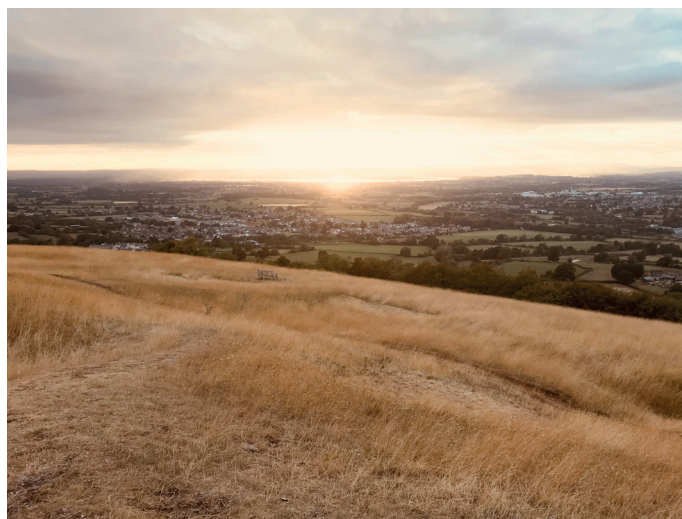
Thank you for the chance to make my feelings known

Alun Mock
Received by email, address supplied.

Send your letters or emails to the
Editor of the Woodchester Word,
to woodchesterword@gmail.com



This summer has seen an increase in the number of butterflies in our gardens because of the hot, sunny weather experienced during July and August. This one is a marbled white.



We often take for granted the views from Selsley Common but you would have to travel a long way to equal a view to match that of the Vale of Berkeley, the Black Mountains, Brecon Beacons and the Malvern Hills, together with the Cleve Hills in the far distance!



The Royal Oak sits within the group of listed houses and cottages in the old part of North Woodchester

Useful Village Contacts

PCSO:

Steven Phillipson
T: 101
or visit www.gloucestershire.police.uk

Neighbourhood Warden:

Chris James,
T: 01453 754512, 07753 725185
E: chris.james@stroud.gov.uk

County Councillor:

Steve Robinson,
T: 01453 834270
E: steve.robinson@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Village Hall:

Mrs. Kath Gay,
T: 01453 873348
E: wvh888@btinternet.com

Bookings: Rod Harris
T: 01453 872317/07775 652379
E: WVH2021@gmail.com

Parish Council:

Sylvia May, Clerk to Woodchester Parish Council
T: 07863 098710
E: Clerk@woodchesterparish.org.uk

Gloucestershire Highways:

www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/transport/
T: 08000 514514
E: gcchighways@amey.co.uk

Woodchester Post Office and Village Shop:

Shop: 01453 873218
Post Office: 01453 872581

St Mary's Church:

Rev Peter Francis,
T: 01453 759680

Church of the Annunciation:

T: 01453 832120

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