

THE WOODCHESTER WORD

Issue 67 - Summer 2019

Rooksmoor Mills development finally underway



Work has now started on the Rooksmoor Mills development, with the first stage being the demolition of the existing buildings. Demolition work is due to be completed around 07 June. The lane closure on the A46 which started on 20 May was due to last only a few days, and was to allow the removal of the four old gas supply pipes to the site.

The next stage will be the replacement of the two old culverts, which are in a poor state of repair, with two new 64 meter pre-cast concrete culverts. This will start around the beginning of June and is expected to take 8 weeks to complete. The piling for Block F will start around 26 July, and as 'driven piles' have to be used on this site, there will be some noise during this part of the development work, which will take two weeks.

In September, the foundation for Block F will be laid, with Block B building work expected to start in mid-December and due for completion in October 2020. During this part of the development, a lane closure on the A46 will require traffic lights for a period of up to 18 weeks, and a further lane closure of 13 weeks when work on Block C commences.
(Continued on page two)

Wild swimming still a problem at Woodchester Park

The lakes at Woodchester Park are fast losing their character as a quiet and special place as they become a venue for parties, and drug and alcohol abuse. That was the opinion of local residents, Parish Councillors, Stroud fishing club, tenant farmers and National Trust staff who met in April to discuss how to best manage the large numbers of people who have been visiting the Lakes.

Reference to the lakes on a Wild Swimming website during the hot summer of 2018 led to a huge increase in the number of people visiting the Lakes. As many as 200 people at a time have been observed in and around the water during the warmest weekends. Not just swimming but using canoes, rafts, air beds and on one day, a giant inflatable swan! This has led to a significant increase in litter including BBQ debris, discarded clothing, bottles and cans. Local wildlife has been disturbed, the herons in particular being scared away from their hatchery. There have been occasional sightings of nude swimmers.

(continued on page three)

Is 20 plenty in Woodchester?

Following a detailed traffic survey the Parish Council adopted a Woodchester Road Safety Initiative in 2018. Amongst the five key issues included in the Initiative were the speed of vehicles within the village (particularly on Selsley Road) and on the A46 and the Council agreed to consider a reduction in the speed limit within the village to 20mph and on the A46 through Woodchester to 30mph.

However, the cost of the Traffic Regulation Order required to implement reduced speed limits (a minimum of £15,000) was prohibitive and beyond the resources of the Parish Council.

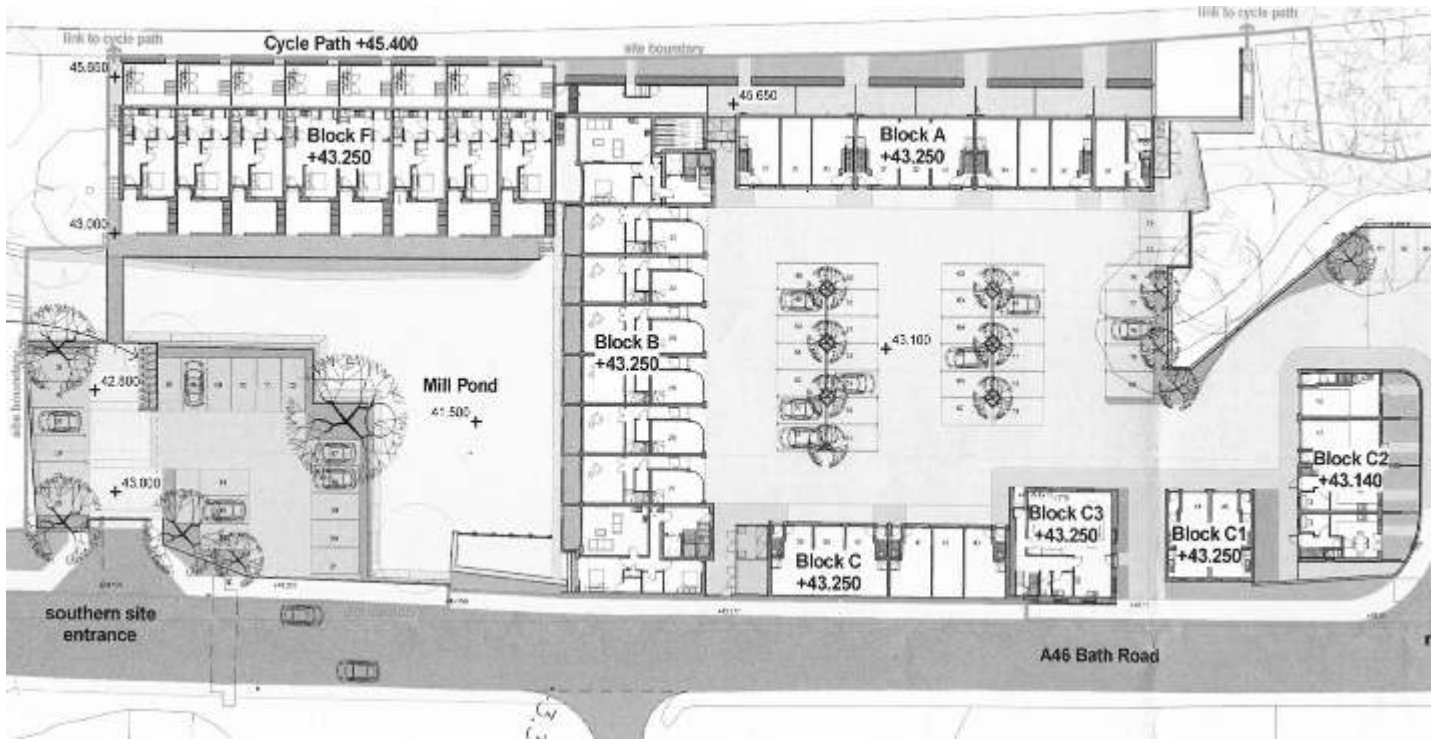
(Continued on page five)

Rooksmoor Mills *(continued from page 1)*

Please keep an eye on the Woodchester website and Parish notice boards for further details as the project progresses.

Concerns were raised at the Annual Parish Meeting about pollution from the site, especially during the process of 'crushing' which will be carried out to create hardcore for the site. Tony Cooper has assured the Parish Council that the contractors will be adhering to Health and Safety regulations in this respect, will minimise any dust created and ensure none is allowed to get into the river. The issue of working hours was also raised. These are not specific in the planning approval, but the agreement with the contractors specifies 08:00 to 18:00 Monday to Friday and 08:00 till 16:00 on Saturday.

If you have any concerns at any stage during the development, please contact the Parish clerk at woodchesterparish@gmail.com.



The cows are back!

Our commons are Sites of Special Scientific Interest, and Rodborough Common has been given additional European protection as a Special Area of Conservation because of its rare flora and fauna. More than a hundred species of grasses and wildflowers have been recorded, including bee orchids and the very rare pasque flower, and over 30 species of butterfly, from the striking green hairstreak to the marbled white, the small blue and brown argus, and one of the largest populations of the rare Duke of Burgundy butterfly in the country. Cattle are a vital part of the management of these valuable habitats - cattle grazing helps to create swards of different lengths and controls scrub, and the cycle of fertilising is also vital. Without the cattle, these valuable habitats would not survive.



Did you know:

- There are over 300 properties with ancient grazing rights on Minchinhampton common, but not many of them are farmers these days. Some who do farm are concerned about dangers from traffic and prefer to keep their cattle safely contained within their fields, so there are currently only 11 active graziers.
- Sheep are not grazed on the common because they have to be brought in every night, which isn't practical.
- According to the ancient rules of the Common, the only time grazing is not allowed is between April 5th and May 13th. But as the grass quality is not good enough to fatten the cattle during the winter (and the danger of road accidents increases as the evenings get darker), most farmers only graze their cattle on the Commons between May and October.

Wild Swimming *(cont'd from page 1)*

Residents of Park Lane reported that they are frequently disturbed by large groups of people using the lakes well into the night, often under the influence of drink and drugs. Irresponsible parking along St Marys Hill and Convent Lane has created access problems for residents, and the car park at the Church of the Annunciation is frequently full of swimmer's cars, leaving no space for the church congregation.



“National Trust By-laws prohibit swimming in the lakes, but in practice it is difficult to enforce this. In addition to the damage being done to the natural environment, we have the problem that the lakes are not really safe to swim in”, said Max Dancer, National Trust ranger for Woodchester. “The water depth is variable and in some locations there are thick weeds and other hazards under the surface of the water. There is a very poor or non-existent phone signal, and access to the lower end of the valley is only possible by foot. In the event of an accident it would be very difficult for emergency services to provide help.”

A representative from Gloucestershire Police advised that due to very limited staff resources, they are unable to deal with anything except 999 calls for genuine emergencies, especially at weekends. Agreed actions for managing visitor numbers included:

- A concentrated publicity campaign asking people not to swim in the Lakes, explaining the impact swimming is having on the natural environment, and to clear up after themselves if visiting the Park.
- Encouraging visitors to Woodchester Park to use the National Trust Car Park at the top end of the valley, near Nympsfield. The postcode for the park in National Trust publicity has been changed.
- Better signage to deter parking on the narrow roads and private driveways in South Woodchester.
- A locked gate will be erected at the entrance to the car park at the Church of the Annunciation.

Following a meeting with Local Highways Manager, Paul Helbrow, it has been agreed Gloucestershire Highways paint advisory 'H' markings on St. Mary's Hill to deter parking in certain areas and residents erect 'No Parking' signs on the boundary of the highway.

The National Trust have advised residents to report all problems and occurrences of anti-social behaviour to: Cotswolds@nationaltrust.org.uk where they will be logged on the Trusts Internal Incident reporting system. This is a difficult situation to manage. Realistically, only a cold wet summer will deter people from swimming in the lakes.

(K McNealey)

REFLECTIONS – a year in the life of a wildlife pond.

As the weather has got warmer grandad bought home water plants. We put them in baskets, lined with hessian sacks, with special heavy soil, which keeps the nutrients in and stops it floating to the surface. We then topped them with gravel and we waded into the water to put them in place on the different levels. They are now flowering. The water hawthorn has unusual flowers, they have 2 white petals down the sides, like a feather, with a black line in the middle that makes them look a bit like a vanilla flower. They smell really nice.

From the window we watch blackbirds, robins, pheasants and mistlethrush having baths in the waterfall.

Newts come up for breath and I caught one with an orange belly. Toads have been spotted which grandma is very happy about as they eat slugs that are on her vegetables. We've seen deer walking past.

Our naughty cat scared the ducks away so sadly I don't think we'll see them again. When my friends come to visit on a hot day we go swimming or dangling our feet in.

(Daisy Koos, reporting for the WW)



Neighbourhood Watch

On the 6th June, Mr. Phil Sullivan and Mr. Adrian Weaver were welcomed to a well-attended Parish Council Meeting. Both gentlemen have had long involvement with the Neighbourhood Watch scheme and are very familiar with the benefits membership can bring.

Mr. Sullivan made it clear that the key objective in signing up to the scheme is to bring communities together and to build communities. It is a small group of people with a common purpose of looking after one another. Communities joining the scheme is also beneficial to The Police at a time when they are in need of support more than ever.

Through his role as Chair of both the Stroud and Gloucestershire Neighbourhood Watch Associations, it has become evident that schemes only last if they begin from the bottom up and local people have the drive to make it work. Benefits of membership are an abundance of advice in terms of improving home safety and online community alerts from the Police, which raise awareness of recent crime in the area.

Mr. Adrian Weaver has been the coordinator of the scheme in Lawns Park for some time and was thanked by residents for his work. One resident who had recently moved to Lawns Park felt the scheme had enabled him to feel part of a community from the outset.

If you are interested in finding out more about starting up a scheme close to you, please contact the clerk in the first instance who will put you in touch with someone who can help (woodchesterparish@gmail.com Tel:01453 873456). Alternatively, details can be found on the Neighbourhood Watch website: <https://www.ourwatch.org.uk/>.

Spitfires crash over Woodchester

A Woodchester Word reader recollects the day in August 1941 when three Spitfires collided in mid-air over Woodchester. One glided over her house and landed on the railway line, minus its propeller which was later found in Evans field. Another aircraft, whose pilot lived in Watledge, managed to land in Newman Henders sports field. The other aircraft crashed on Scotland Bank near the road to Woodchester Park, killing the pilot.

Does anyone else have any details? The Ministry of Defence apparently has no record of the incident!



Is 20 plenty? *(continued from page 1)*

Stroud District Road Safety Group is now offering Town and Parish Councils in the Stroud District the opportunity to join together to submit a Rural Multi-Site Traffic Regulation Order. The project has the support of Gloucestershire County Council Highways Department, and will allow smaller councils to progress speed reductions on roads where speed limits are currently considered inappropriate, at significantly reduced cost.

Woodchester Parish Council will be working with Stroud District Road Safety Group to progress both these speed reductions, but the Traffic Regulation Order specifically requires community support for the project and so we need your opinions on the issue.

20mph in the village

The first proposal is to reduce the speed limit through the village to 20mph. Concerns about speeding, and a possible reduction of the speed limit within the village to 20mph, have been highlighted in the Woodchester Parish Plan in 2005 and 2012. Whilst the Traffic Survey suggests that only a small number of drivers are exceeding the mandatory 30mph speed limit through the village, there is still a clear risk to pedestrians from vehicles travelling at this speed, particularly on the narrow roads through the village, for parents and children accessing the schools, and for the large number of both young and elderly people crossing Selsley Road to access the village shop and Post Office.



An evaluation of 20mph zones in the UK was carried out in 1996. It found that injury accidents were reduced by 60% and child injury accidents by 67%. A 2007 review of 20mph zones in London found that they had reduced injury accidents by 42% and fatal or serious injury accidents by 53%. Several English Authorities have implemented 20mph as the default limit for residential streets, including Oxford and Bristol. Although study results vary, it is generally suggested that traffic volumes decrease following implementation of a 20mph limit. The RoSPA *Road Safety Fact Sheet: 20mph zones and speed limits* states that 20mph speed limits can also improve air quality and reduce noise pollution and RoSPA "strongly supports the use of 20mph zones, which are very effective in protecting our most vulnerable road users, including children, pedestrians and cyclists".

The high pedestrian crossing flow on Selsley Road in the area of the Post Office makes this a high risk area for pedestrians. Data from our speed survey shows that 85% of vehicles on lower Selsley Road are already travelling at below the 24mph speed suggested in the Road Traffic Act as making this area suitable for a speed limit of 20mph.

The Parish Council believes that a mandatory 20mph speed limit in the area of this very busy crossing point would reduce the risk to pedestrians and make it easier for people to cross the road at this point.

30 mph on the A46

There has been an increase in traffic volume using the A46 through Woodchester over the last 6 years of over 20%. At peak times one vehicle every three seconds now passes any given point on the road, making it extremely difficult for vehicles to join the A46 from feeder roads within the village. This volume of traffic is likely to increase by virtue of the developments at Rooksmoor Mills and Bath Road trading estate. Our surveys show that 97.1% of traffic is observing the current 40mph speed limit during daylight hours and that fewer vehicles are exceeding the speed limit now than 6 years ago, probably because of a combination of increased traffic volume and the recent introduction of speed awareness and enforcement measures on nearby stretches of the A46.

Russell Cook, father of Scott, who was killed on the A46 in 2005, wrote to the Parish Council suggesting that the 30mph speed limit on the Rodborough stretch of the A46 is extended south through Woodchester to include the proposed Rooksmoor development and the Woodchester feeder roads. He also suggested that the Parish Council should adopt "positive speed enforcement" similar to that which Rodborough PC has done at sites on the A46, encouraging drivers to obey the speed limits and protect pedestrians.

An extension of the 30mph speed limit south from its current position through Woodchester Parish may have a number of benefits, including improving ease of vehicular access to the A46 from village feeder roads, reducing the likelihood of additional fatalities in the event of a serious pedestrian/vehicle accident, making it safer for adults and school children crossing the A46 at Selsley Road, Station Road and Frogmarsh to access southbound bus stops, and reducing noise and emission pollution for residents along the A46.

What do YOU think?

If you have an opinion, either for or against these proposals, please let the Parish Clerk know by the 30 June, by emailing woodchesterparish@gmail.com or completing a form available at the Village Shop.

News from the Parish Council

Defibrillators

Following the successful installation of a defibrillator for use in cardiac emergencies in the old telephone box in North Woodchester, a request has been received to install a similar machine in the old telephone box in South Woodchester. The purchase of the machine and installation costs have been generously covered by local residents, Peter and Anita Brown.

The Parish Council would again like to thank Nigel Brooke-Smith for all his work to set-up up the installation of machines in both telephone boxes. Recent work to renovate the South Woodchester telephone box has been very thoroughly and very kindly carried out by Loz Rawlings-Johnson of South Woodchester. The Parish Council are very grateful for this work.

Although the defibrillators are designed not to require training in order to use them, a training session will be provided in due course.

Neighbourhood Warden

Following the departure of Dominic Everiss, Woodchester has a new Neighbourhood Warden, Chris James. He is responsible for a broad area, covering Nailsworth, Minchinhampton, Rodborough, King's Stanley, Leonard Stanley and Horsley, as well as Woodchester! The Parish Clerk met with Chris earlier in the month to give a tour of the village and to highlight key issues. Details of the role of the Neighbourhood Warden can be found on Stroud District Council's website at www.stroud.gov.uk under 'Community and Living'.

Contact details for Chris James (also on the village notice boards): telephone: 01453 754512, mobile: 07753725185, email: chris.james@stroud.gov.uk

Woodchester Bike Trails

The Bike Trails have now been open for two years and remain very popular. The Parish Council would like to thank the team of volunteers (Iain Dunbar, Pete Hayns, Liam Tunney and Tobi Bijkerk) who carry out weekly checks on the trails to ensure bins are emptied and the trails are safe for use. An annual safety check was recently carried out by RoSPA which reported no issues of concern, but suggested a number of minor improvements. These have since been considered by the team and addressed where appropriate. If you have any concerns or questions relating to the Bike Trails, please contact the clerk at woodchesterparish@gmail.com or telephone 01453 873456.

Verges and Gutters

With Gloucestershire Highways less able to carry out maintenance in the village due to limited resources, the Parish Council have again enlisted the help of Leyhill Prison to clear gulleys and carry out work on the cycle path. They have recently cleared the section from Paul's Rise to Station Road. The Parish Council maintenance budget has been increased to enable more work to be carried out in the future by our maintenance contractor.

60 years of Citizens Advice in Stroud

We would like to let you know about Council Tax Discount for those people living alone, or with someone else in the property, who has a severe mental impairment. If your condition is considered to cause 'severe mental impairment' - which is likely if someone has a diagnosis of Dementia - it could mean that they are disregarded for Council Tax liability. In order to qualify for Council Tax Discount on these grounds a person must meet the following criteria: have a severe impairment of intelligence and social functioning which appears to be permanent; have a certificate from a registered medical practitioner confirming the diagnosis; is entitled to a qualifying benefit such as Attendance Allowance or Personal Independence Payments. Please do contact us on freephone 0808 800 0510 if you would like more information on this matter.

We continue to seek new standing order donors to our charity - to celebrate our 60 years in Stroud with our '60 for 60 Campaign'. The great news is that we now have 14 new donors! Please help us achieve our goal by the end of the year in order to maintain this free, confidential and independent advice service to our community. We ask that you consider making an annual pledge in the form of a standing order - as little as £5 a month is a valuable contribution, especially if you are able allow us to collect Gift Aid on your donation. Please phone us on Freephone 0808 800 0510 and ask us to send the necessary forms.

Woodchester Priory The Church of the Annunciation

The end of an era. After many years of faithful service as Sacristan Josie Heffernan, or Jo Heff as she is otherwise known, has handed over her role to Gordon and Annie Norris and their team at 11am. Chris and Eileen Jay plus the Marshall twins are responsible for the 5pm Mass. Jo had also been our representative on other organisations in Nailsworth, plus using her skills in needlework and liturgical embroidery by making new vestments for our church, and being a very talented flower arranger. She is surely enjoying her well-earned rest now.



Those using St. Mary's Hill will have noticed the demise of the large conifers behind the churchyard wall which have caused extensive damage to the boundary walls necessitating costly repairs. A timely reminder that even small trees should never be planted near walls, a mature tree's roots extend out as far as the canopy. Problems are still occurring with the unauthorised use of our car park by visitors to Woodchester Mansion, unfortunate given that William Leigh built both this and our church 50 years before the advent of motor vehicles. Problems continue with visitors to the Mansion using our car park, despite the large 'Private' notice, they also park both sides of the hill.

At long last we have a small area for native wild flowers, to be left uncut so they seed: pasque flower, viper's bugloss, bird's foot trefoil and red campion are amongst those included. Being in close proximity to unimproved pasture and the commons there are so many bee and butterfly food plants which thrive in 'Living Churchyards' with all their associated wild life, providing the grass is not close mown like a bowling green.

Woodchester WI

In addition to our own programme of events, we combine with three local WIs for two more meetings a year and in early May we enjoyed song and history from Robin Burton of Stroud Wassail who is passionate about the tunes we have inherited and determined that we should keep alive and enjoy our heritage of song. We hope to meet in Box Village Hall for a second combined session in October with a speaker (and tasting session) on the seasonal topic of pickling and running a pickling business.



At our own meetings there has been varied entertainment. In March we heard from an inspiring speaker from Longfield Hospice who spoke about the hospice movement, about the vital support services provided and about the huge importance of their shops in contributing to the fundraising effort. We were a little puzzled about a strange array of items on the speaker's table (an unusual raffle perhaps?) but all became clear as she explained what can and cannot be sold in their shops. Most members were unaware that their shops want our unwearable and worn-out clean clothes (in bags clearly marked "rags") and can make money from them, reducing what is sent to landfill too. The focus was entirely different in April as Lorraine Parsloe delivered a lively and entertaining talk on women artistes in music hall, with opportunities to join in with some of the better known songs. In May we enjoyed a meeting of two halves: a discussion and vote on the national resolutions to be adopted for next year followed by a four round quiz.

After some deliberation and discussion, we hope to be underway with our own centenary project to celebrate one hundred years of the WI in the county – a wall hanging to which every member is invited to contribute. We hope to preserve a record of the present membership (or at least where they live) on a map of the area with each member contributing craftwork to represent their house or important landmark. We also plan to undertake two trips, one in July to Longfield where we will follow up our speaker's visit with a tour and tea, and one in August to Kate's Cutting Patch, a chance to enjoy her cut flower meadows. We are also looking forward to the WI Centenary Fair at Cirencester Park in July. Our informal craft group which is open to all (meetings are the first Thursday of each month between 2 and 4 in the Village Hall) and the book group continue to flourish.

We are always delighted to welcome prospective members. If you think you might like to join us, look out for little WI posters on local noticeboards, look for copies of our programme in the village shop, come along to a monthly craft session or contact Gail, our President on 873692 or Sally, our Secretary, on 873003. We meet on the third Thursday of the month at 7.30 in our lovely village hall. We encourage you to come along to a session or two as a visitor before committing to join us.

Village Shop and Post Office

The shop was able to prove it's worth on Friday 1st February when the village awoke to several inches of snow. Fortunately, volunteers rostered for that day all lived very locally and so the shop was able to open at the normal time. Deliveries were received of both bread and milk although unfortunately the newspapers did not arrive. Business was brisk throughout the day and we were pleased to welcome a number of new faces many of whom had not previously appreciated the range of items stocked. For instance did you know that we sell twelve different teas? We look forward to seeing those customers again in the near future and hopefully they will continue to support us and help ensure that we are able to maintain this valuable resource for any future emergencies. On the day we received much positive feedback particularly concerning the range of local produce and gluten free products that we sell. Our extensive range of Noel Tatt greetings cards were also singled out for positive comment as were our Lodge Farm Food ready meals (Herefordshire Beef, Chicken, local veg and no additives).

The year moved on and a silence fell over the village as we experienced the closure of Selsley Road for much of March. Some inconvenience was felt by our suppliers who had to re-route our deliveries and we did notice a small drop in sales particularly bread and newspapers. Easter brought the opportunity for us to provide a wide range of Easter Cards which sold really well and of course Easter Eggs including Dairy Free.

More recently with newcomers to the village and various construction projects underway in the vicinity we have been able to welcome many new customers. All of whom are encouraged to look around the shop and invited to request stocking of any items they would regularly buy from us.

Fathers Day this year falls on Sunday 16th June and we have a range of gift ideas and cards to suit the occasion. Looking further ahead with the end of the academic year approaching we have a range of cards suitable for both thanking teachers and recognising student achievements.

Our free raffles proved very popular with customers so look out for more coming up to include Clipper Tea Caddies, Ecover products and some beautiful Pukka China Mugs.

SUPPORT YOUR NEW-LOOK VILLAGE SHOP AND POST OFFICE!

Fresh local bread and cakes, milk and cheese, ham, bacon, sausages, eggs and honey all from local suppliers. Ready meals and freezer food. Cordials, beer, wine and chocolates. Lots of organic and environmentally-positive products. Groceries, home essentials, stationery, greetings cards, magazines and of course your daily paper!



③ **Post Office Services** include all your postage requirements as well as banking, bill payments, currency, home shopping returns, National Lottery payouts and Health Lottery.

Shop opening hours:

Monday-Friday 0730-1730. Saturday 0830-1230.

Post Office opening hours:

Monday-Friday 0900-1730. Saturday 0900-1230.

Financially, we continue to look healthy and have managed to repay all the Bonds due to mature in January that we sold to support our recent refurbishment. The remaining Bonds are due to mature and be repaid on 30th June 2021.

The Post Office continues to be available for all your post and banking needs. Surprisingly there are still people who are unaware that they can both withdraw and deposit cash as well as pay in cheques to their bank account. The Post Office can also accept Home Shopping Returns that are postage paid Royal Mail.

Holidays are for some just around the corner and we are already experiencing an increased demand for currency and Travel Money Cards (a safer way to spend abroad).

We look forward to the continued support of the village and welcoming new customers to our lovely little shop.

The best things in life are free

It's important never to lose sight of that.
So look around you every day. Wherever
you see friendship, loyalty, laughter,
love.....there is your treasure.

News from St Mary's Church

As I write this, we have recently had one of our busiest weeks as a church community opening its doors to the wider world. It started on May 11th with a Saturday morning walk, followed by picnic, from Horsley into the surrounding countryside; we then had our monthly Messy Church on the Wednesday, our monthly Lunch-with-Friends on the Friday, and then our "Big Breakfast" for Christian Aid on the Saturday morning, on the church green (with "Full English" available). Thanks to all donations (and to the Woodchester Village Shop sponsoring us for the cost of top-quality bacon and sausages supplied by Woodchester Meat Co), we raised £604 at the Big Breakfast which has gone to support Christian Aid's work to improve medical facilities in the poorest parts of west Africa. This very sociable event is now a regular spot in our calendar for May, replacing the former door-to-door collections: do venture out to join us there in the future.

If you have looked inside St Mary's church recently you will have seen the plywood hoarding surrounding our "building site", where the new kitchen is taken shape. Work is going to plan and we expect that the new kitchen will be in action before the end of June. Drop in for our monthly coffee morning on Saturday July 6th (from 10.30-noon) and you can see it action! We remain very grateful to all those who have contributed to the funding of the new kitchen and we hope to proceed with work on the next stage of our project in a very few months' time. In the meantime, don't miss two events coming along soon. A concert of songs for mid-summer "with a geographical twist", given by the Cappella Singers, on Saturday June 29th. And then (back by popular request) a Barn Dance to the music of the Downfielders band, in Woodchester House Barn, on Saturday July 13th. Look out for the posters – tickets will be available at Woodchester Village shop for both events.

Please note a couple of changes in our church leadership: we will be saying goodbye to our curate Rev Deborah Curram at the end of June, and we will greatly miss her wisdom, smiles and encouragement. She is moving to take up new responsibilities at a church in Hayling Island, Sussex. But we welcome back Pauline Setterfield, who spent time with us last year and re-joins us while training for ordination (and who also provides wisdom, smiles and encouragement!) If you want more news from St Mary's, our monthly magazine Common Ground is now well-established and proving very popular (on paper or by email – pick up a copy in church). And if you want any matured compost, we have a large heap behind the church that can be mined free of charge! (*Andrew Pemberton*)

A setting "charged with the grandeur of God"

The idea of a weekend spent in the company of Christians in a Christian community might fill some with horror or dismay. Lee Abbey, near Lynton on the Exmoor, Devon, coast is a Christian community, offering believers and non-believers a time of refreshment and renewal. In this busy and demanding world, it offers an opportunity to escape from pressures, to stop and think and to spend time with others in an inspirational setting. There is freedom to engage with as much (or as little) of the worship, discussion and teaching as you wish. The enthusiasm of those in the church community who had been before to Lee Abbey was infectious and it wasn't until I had committed myself to joining in with this year's visit that I started to have some doubts and anxieties about what to expect – and what might be expected of me!

As we approached the complex through the extraordinary Valley of the Rocks, glimpsed the cliffs above a sliver of grey sea to our right and saw the many daffodils dancing bravely in the wind, I knew that I had come somewhere very special. The welcome was warm as we were taken individually to our rooms and it was an introduction to the sense of community the members work so hard to create. From my bedroom window I was delighted to see the fields sweeping down to the sea. Mealtimes build on that sense of community as visitors at each large round table are served by community members with food prepared by community members. And the food is superb and served in generous portions. In a world which seems increasingly intolerant of racial diversity, it was a delight to hear grace delivered in the language of community members who come from all corners of the globe to this special place. The Saturday evening entertainment celebrated that rich diversity with music and lively presentations on the home countries of some of our host team.

The theme for the weekend – Discipleship and Living like Jesus – was both challenging and inspiring. It is all too easy to listen attentively and to have forgotten what was said within twenty-four hours but the challenge to "live your life as Jesus would live it if he were you" is firmly embedded in my memory and reflections. The Octagonal room with its many magnificent views is a unique setting for worship. It was very special to be able to share the experience both with so many members of our own church community and with other Christians.

It was a privilege to stay in such a setting and to be able to clamber, paddle, wander and wonder with friends or on your own. Worship and a sense of awe at the wonders of creation come very naturally in such a setting. It was quite a wrench to get into the car and rejoin the busy world outside but I did so refreshed and reinvigorated. It is good to know that a booking for a weekend in March 2021 has already been made. (*Sally Bull*)

The End of the Great War - Centenary of Peace Day

Although November 1918 had marked the end of fighting on the Western Front, negotiations would continue at the Paris Peace Conference until 1920, with the 'high and tremendous task of settling the peace terms'. The Treaty of Versailles was signed in June 1919 and to celebrate and mark the end of the Great War, a Bank Holiday was declared in Britain. Saturday 19 July, was to be observed as a Bank Holiday and as a Public Holiday throughout the United Kingdom.

The Stroud Journal of 25 July 1919 recounts Woodchester's celebration of Peace Day. *'The church bells rang merry peals after which there was a general assembly in the Park field, kindly loaned by Mr ELA Fawkes. Here marquees were erected and preparations for sports were made'*. The proceedings commenced with short appropriate addresses from the Rev Father Darley (RC) and Mr F Everett Thomas of the Baptist Church. Medals for the children, the gifts of Mr Henry Workman were presented by Miss Workman and there was a display of Maypole dancing.



Victory parade in Whitehall on Peace Day 19th July 1919

Unfortunately, although the start was promising, this was an outdoor event in the British summer and it did not continue to go well. *'Rain commenced to fall heavily and the committee were perplexed as to the best course to pursue'*. Run for cover perhaps? A few more races took place and then with heavy rain the sports were abandoned. The children were assembled in the marquee for tea and the ex soldiers of the parish were formed into a group and photographed. *'The Lightpill orchestra was in attendance but could not render any music on account of the rain'*. The adults next assembled for tea and a good spread was provided for all.

After tea all efforts in the field were abandoned and it was announced that the sports would take place at a future date. The band and a number of young people repaired to the Endowed School, where dancing, etc., occupied the remainder of the evening.

The people of Woodchester did not give up. The postponed sports took place on Saturday 9 August and the weather was glorious! The maypole dancing, having been so well received was repeated and the Rector gave a short speech. Kings Stanley Brass Band supplied the music. Enlarged portraits of a soldiers' group were presented to the men portrayed (presumably the photograph taken in July).

Then in the Stroud Journal's account, there is a reminder of the horror of the war. *'It is worthy of record that all discharged soldiers who won prizes handed them over to be sent to Charlie Boulton, a young discharged soldier who has been bedridden for many months owing to being 'gassed' in France'*.

If anyone has a copy of the Peace Day photograph in their family archive, please share it. Note this is not the 1919 reunion photograph taken at the Ram Inn with Mr and Mrs Allen in the middle – I have that! *(Barbara Warnes)*

Girlguiding Woodchester

It was very exciting at the end of last term to be able to award some of the girls, both Brownies and Guides, one of the new Skill Builders badges, available under the new Girlguiding programme. Two Brownies have also been working on the new interest badges and the baking badge and grow your own badge have been presented. The Brownies went for a nature bingo walk and the Guides experimented with different pizza toppings. This term both units are working towards another skill builders badge as well as the other usual Girlguiding activities. The Brownies hope to have a sports evening and a teddy bears picnic, while the Guides plan to go tracking and trailing, hold a barbecue and have a campfire. Anyone who would like to get involved in Girlguiding, either as a Brownie, Guide or Leader should contact Jackie on 01453 821258 or through www.girlguiding.org.uk

Woodchester Endowed Church of England Primary School

During the spring term, the school community came together to revisit the school's vision. We sought the views of children, governors, parents, staff, the parish and local community. As a Church of England school, it is very important to consider what it means to be 'distinctly Christian' and to try to articulate what is special about our school, its context, and what we want to achieve. Our vision will reflect the value our stakeholders place on providing rich, engaging learning experiences, nurturing strong relationships, and sharing our talents for the benefit of all.

Collective Worship is central to the daily life of the school and our Easter Service at St Mary's Church was well attended. The children shared the Easter message of hope and forgiveness, through Jesus' journey from the cross to resurrection, with confidence, clear voices, assured singing and playing. Juniper Class also led Collective Worship recently. It was a super assembly, beautifully presented, the children sharing their learning and reflections on Creativity with confidence and enthusiasm. During Lent, we used the 'Shapes of Living' resource produced by the Diocese that focused on the themes of relating, praying, working, playing and growing as a community together. During this, we learned more about the community of monks who lived in Gloucester Cathedral many years ago.



At the beginning of March, we had a Maths focus week, each class applying their maths skills in fun and creative way. Art became a focus for maths, creating pattern, shape and symmetry in interesting ways. Maths skills supported geographical understanding, scientific understanding, problem solving and reasoning. Following a visit to school from the Welsh Bird of Prey Centre, Juniper Class measured the wingspan of birds, drew them out and displayed them. It was extraordinary to stand under these representations – a moment to reflect on the beauty and wonder of creation and the natural world.

The Spring term ended in a very enjoyable way with the whole school entertained by children performing in the final of the 'Woodchester's Got Talent' competition. We had a wonderful afternoon organised by Mrs Witts and the School Council. Mr Harris, Mrs Wilkins and two representatives from the School Council had the extremely difficult task of judging the competition and selecting the winner. All our contestants were amazing, showing courage as they performed to a large audience. Every single one of our acts performed with confidence and skill and each of them deserve our congratulations and thanks for putting themselves forward and sharing their talents. A huge thank you is also due to all the children who did not reach the final this time but who prepared a performance and entertained their class. We are very lucky to have so many talented and enthusiastic children at Woodchester Endowed Primary School!



Woodchester Village Hall

2018/2019 continued to be a busy year. Many improvements have been made to the premises, especially in the form of lighting and heating. Ceiling fans have been installed and when fully functioning will allow warm air to be circulated back down to ground level. Likewise, in the event of a very hot summer cool air can be generated. Hall users will be advised when the fans are able to be operated. A new heating programmer and some rewiring has enabled us to pre-heat the hall before people arrive. Most light fittings are now LED and more cost effective, for any of you passing the hall in the dark and see a green glow through the windows, don't panic, it is the updated emergency lighting. More improvements are on a "to do" list when time and funding allows.

Our regular classes/courses and their leaders' details can be found on the village notice boards and Woodchester Parish website; a wide selection of interests for all ages is on offer. On average the hall is used for 29 hours each week. At the time of writing we can only offer regular slots on a Friday. The hall is run by volunteers and we would gladly welcome anyone to come and join our committee, we aim to meet three or four times a year. Regular hall classes can nominate a member of their group to join our committee as a User Trustee. Those currently represented are The Parish Council, WI, Table Tennis and Tuesday Art Class. All booking enquiries to Kath Gay on 01453 873348 or wvh888@btinternet.com.

(Alan Boulton, Chairman)

What improvements would you like to see in the village?

The Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) allows local authorities in England and Wales to raise funds from developers undertaking new building projects in their area.

The levy applies to planning applications for all new dwellings/annexes, extensions where there is a gross new build floor space of 100m² or more, and the conversion of buildings that have not been in use.

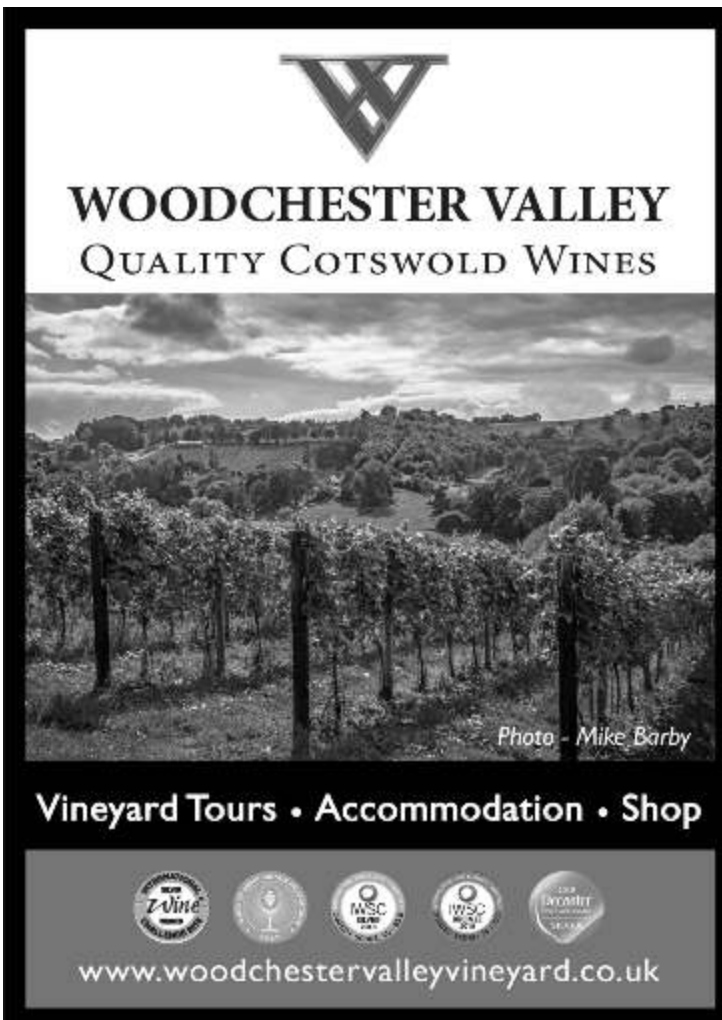
Woodchester Parish Council will receive 15% of CIL collected for their area. As the CIL Collecting Authority, Stroud District Council can retain 5% of CIL collected to help towards the administrative costs of CIL. The remaining amount and majority of CIL will be used towards supporting the provision of large scale strategic infrastructure.

SDC make the Neighbourhood portion of CIL receipts available to be drawn down on a six monthly basis, in April and October of each year.

CIL legislation dictates that each financial year, Town/Parish Councils must produce an annual report of all CIL receipts with an explanation of how the money has been spent. Funds must be spent within five years. In the first half of 2019/20 Woodchester Parish Council received £732 from CIL.

Any spending on projects must fit within the usual Town/Parish Council powers of competence but CIL funds can be used for a variety of project works the Parish Council feels best addresses priorities expressed by local residents.

Therefore if there is an improvement you would like to see in the village which might be possible if funding were available, please contact the clerk with the details. All suggestions will then be considered by the Parish Council and a list of priorities drawn up. You can contact the Parish Clerk at woodchesterparish@gmail.com



The advertisement features a large, stylized 'W' logo at the top. Below it, the text 'WOODCHESTER VALLEY' is written in a bold, serif font, followed by 'QUALITY COTSWOLD WINES' in a smaller, similar font. The central image is a black and white photograph of a vineyard with rows of grapevines stretching into the distance under a cloudy sky. In the bottom right corner of the photo, it says 'Photo - Mike Barby'. Below the photo, the text 'Vineyard Tours • Accommodation • Shop' is displayed. At the very bottom, there are five circular logos for various wine-related organizations: 'WINE ZONE', 'WINE SOCIETY', 'WINE & SPIRITS', 'WINE & SPIRITS', and 'WINE & SPIRITS'. Below these logos is the website address 'www.woodchestervalleyvineyard.co.uk'.

Live theatre at Woodchester Mansion

Bastard Blood, a tale of tainted Monarchs. Exciting participative theatre around the Mansion, based during the War of the Roses. June 7th and 8th at 7pm and 9pm

Much Ado about Nothing by the Festival Players. Outdoor Shakespeare by this amazing travelling troupe, set against the backdrop of Woodchester Mansion Thursday August 22nd 7.30pm

WOODCHESTER MOT CENTRE

MOT's, tyres,
repairs and
servicing. Friendly
service and
competitive prices.

Call Tony for
information or to
book an
appointment.

Unit B, Woodchester
Industrial Estate,
Station Road,
Woodchester,
GL5 5EQ.

01453 873355
07778 334611



LEOPARDPRESS.com

Re-opened in Nailsworth town centre
Tel: 01453 832259

- Large & short print runs
- Full colour printing
- Glossy Leaflets
- Design
- Folders
- Wire binding
- Posters & Banners
- NCR Forms, Invoices
- Stationery - Letterheads, **Bus Cards**
- Pens, mugs etc
- Brochures, Reports
- Magazines, Periodicals
- Laminating



Chicken Shack
Boundary Court
Selsley Common
Glos. GL5 5PL
Tel 01453 872123
stroud@leopardpress.com



ALL HANDYMAN WORK UNDERTAKEN

ALSO PAINTING | ROOFING

FENCING | PATIOS | RESTORATIONS

Contact us to arrange a visit or quote

Call: 07904058866

Email: sales@myvillagehandymanstroud.com

Web: www.myvillagehandymanstroud.com

Turnkey Construction

Trusted and established local building contractor. We cover all aspects of building works including: extensions, major restoration, refurbishment, new builds, structural repairs and groundworks, plumbing and heating, electrical, roofing, plastering.

We also have our own 'in house' joinery workshop for bespoke windows, doors, wardrobes etc.

Call us to arrange a free no obligation appointment to discuss your project in further detail.

01453-834450
turnkey-construction.co.uk

Unit 6 Merretts Mill Industrial
Estate, Woodchester, Gloucestershire GL5 5EX

COMPLETE TIMBER SPECIALISTS

Denis Brown & Son Ltd

Broadmead Timber Yard, Woodchester, Stroud, Glos GL5 5EG



Tel: 01453 873516 Fax: 01453 873333

www.timber-yard.co.uk • email: enquiries@timber-yard.co.uk



Stroud Chiropractor

Dr Andrew Charles Evans

MTECH (Chiro)

Doctor of Chiropractic

GCC Reg. No. 02724

Back Pain? Neck Pain? Stresses and Strains? Joints and Muscles?

Call Now 07470 224214/01453763755

For 12 Years we have been putting backs right.

"Amazing, very helpful, and brilliant treatment" Sue I.

"Very helpful and caring. Seemed to want to help, and actually listened."

Carol S.

"Easy to find and nice surroundings. Very nice chiropractor."

Carol E.

I would love to help you too.

Quote this code for a discount. Instead of £60 you pay £40 for the initial visit which includes an consultation, examination and report of findings. **Discount Code: CHIR02**

andrew.evans@stroudchiropractor.co.uk

www.StroudChiropractor.co.uk

53 Cainscross Road, Stroud, GL5 4EX.



5 reasons to choose a coach holiday this year!

Let us take the strain out of getting there, we do all the driving for you and Rover European will even pick you up from home.

You can relax from the very first moment of your holiday. Sit back and take time to really enjoy the views.

No need to find out about day trips out whilst you are away the best are already organised for you.

With Rover European you are looked after from the moment you leave home to the moment you get back.

And...just in case you get bored of talking to your husband or wife there will be plenty more people to chat to!

We guarantee you will want to book another holiday as soon as you are home!

**Call Today for your
FREE Holiday Brochure
01453 832121**

www.rovereuropean.co.uk



Coach Hire needed for a special occasion?

We can help with that too. For all your coach hire needs, **Call us today for a no obligation quotation!**

N. Scotford Ltd.



Your local garage for services and all classes of vehicle MOTs. A personal and caring service.

**Station Road
South Woodchester
Tel 01453 873787**



WOODCHESTER Village Show

Saturday 14th September 2019

Woodchester Endowed School and Church Green

An annual opportunity to show your talents, meet your neighbours, have some fun and relax while you enjoy cake and music.



- **Produce Show including fruit, vegetables, baking, flowers and crafts, and children's classes.** (Class details and entry forms available soon!)
- **Dog show and activities on the Green start at 2pm**
- **Games on the Green**
- **Tea and cakes**
- **Fun dog show**
- **Music from Rodborough Folk Orchestra**
- **Concert at 3pm**
- **Produce show entries taken 9-11am**
- **Prize giving and auction of produce 4pm**



Further info from kathinwoodchester@gmail.com

What's on in Woodchester

Dates for your diary

June 7th and 8th: Bastard Blood live theatre at Woodchester Mansion

Saturday June 8th: Capriol Chamber Orchestra Concert at St Mary's Church

Friday June 14th: Woodchester Endowed Primary School Summer Fair

Saturday June 29th: Cappella Singers Concert at St Mary's Church

Saturday July 13th: Village barn dance and barbecue in aid of St Mary's Church

Thursday August 22nd: Much ado about nothing at Woodchester Mansion

Saturday 14th September: Village Show

Useful Village Contacts

PCSO: Steven Phillipson

Tel: 101 or visit www.gloucestershire.police.uk

Neighbourhood Warden:

Chris James: 01453 754512, 07753725185

email: chris.james@stroud.gov.uk

District Councillor: Philip McAsey

Email: Cllr.philip.mcasy@stroud.gov.uk

Telephone: 01453 873329

County Councillor: Steve Robinson

Email: steve.robinson@gloucestershire.gov.uk

Telephone: 01453 834270

Village Hall: Mrs. Kath Gay

Email: wvh888@btinternet.com

Telephone: 01453 873348

Parish Council: Ann Bijkerk

Email: woodchesterparish@gmail.com

Telephone: 01453 873456

Gloucestershire Highways

Website: www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/transport/

Telephone: 08000 514514

Email: gcchighways@amey.co.uk

Woodchester Post Office and Village Shop:

Pauline Woolam, 01453 872581

St Mary's Church: Rev Peter Francis, 01453 759680

Church of the Annunciation: 01453 832120

Woodchester Village Hall

Monday Circle Dancing: 11.00 – 13.00 Weekly, (Chrissie Grice: 07814 011980)

Circle Dancing: 14.00 – 16.00 Fortnightly

Table Tennis: 19.15 – 23.00

Sept – March

(John Bunn: 07702 058754)

Tuesday Art Group: 10.00 – 12.00

(Vera Naumann: 01453 873689)

Dru Yoga 13.30 – 14.45

(Elisabeth Noblet: 07973 877029)

Table Tennis: 19.15 – 23.00

Sept. – March

Weds Calligraphy: 10.00 – 16.00

Fortnightly

(Josie Brown: 01452 387768)

Creative Sewing: 10.00 – 17.00

Monthly

(Catherine Kingzett)

FMC Dance Academy: 17.00–19.45

Subject to Sewing

(Fay Cottrell: 07931 253116)

Ballet: 20.15 – 21.15

(Sophie Makosch. 07887 671956)

Thursday Senior Health & Fitness:

10.00–12.00

(Dorothy Turner: 01285 885766)

FMC Dance Academy: 16.30–20.30

Subject to PC & WI

Parish Council: 19.00 – 21.00

1st in alternate months

WI: 19.30 – 21.30

3rd in month

(Gail Birch: 07875 028671)

Friday Circle Dancing: 14.00 – 16.00

Monthly

Private booking 17.00 – 18.30

Weekends Available for Private functions

All Village Hall sessions are subject to change and are guidelines only.

For bookings/late availability contact: Kath Gay: 01453 873348 or wvh888@btinternet.com.

Woodchester Endowed School

Thursday Dancercise: 7-8 pm Weekly
Tricia Dunbar (07400 433536)

*Letters, articles and items for publication should be sent to the editor, Rod Harris, at woodchesterword@gmail.com
Production: Iain Dunbar. Advertising: Ann Bijkerk. Printed by Leopard Press. The Woodchester Word is an independent publication and is funded by advertisers. Please mention the Woodchester Word when replying to the adverts in this edition. The views expressed in this publication are those of the editorial team. We reserve the right to edit or omit any material submitted for publication. No liability is accepted for loss or damage arising from any omission of copy or advertising. **Copy deadline for next issue:** 30 August 2019*