

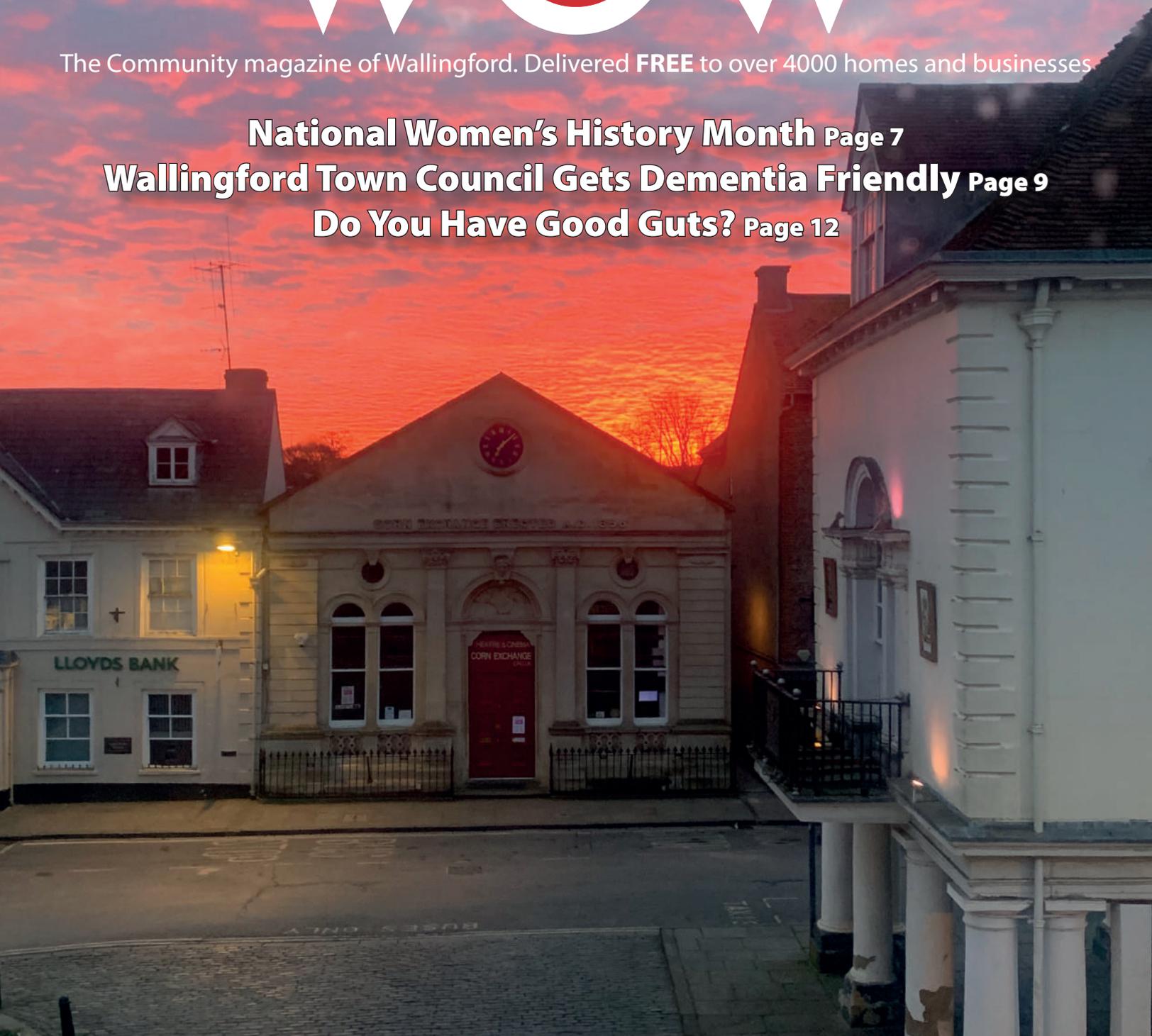


The Community magazine of Wallingford. Delivered **FREE** to over 4000 homes and businesses

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Deadline date to submit: 7th March 2021

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Adverts will continue to run unless cancelled.

Cover Photo: Chris Wright



Can you find Walli in this months magazine?

Welcome!

March 2021 is here, who would have believed this time last year what was going to happen in the next 12 months.

Covid, First Lockdown and I was diagnosed with breast cancer and told to self-isolate.

To be frank – it has been a hell of a year, which has affected 1000s of us in many different and similar ways.

Hope I think needs to be the word of the month. At the time of writing this over 16 million people have had their vaccines, and this number will hopefully continue to grow with speed. The lockdown seems to be bringing the numbers down and combined with the vaccine there is **hope** we will be back to some sort of normality soon. What ever that will look like.

And Spring, with snowdrops, daffodils, tulips, nature doing what it does at this time of year, fills one with great **hope** for the season to come.

So, my mantra this month is **Hope, hope, hope**.

I hope you can help me with something else too. My Mum is 86 and lives in her own apartment within an assisted living complex. She suffers from macular degeneration and her eyesight is deteriorating rapidly. However, she is adamant to stay as self-reliant for as long as she possibly can. Go Mum!!

We found a fabulous lady called Joan, who is not a carer although a very caring person, she is what can only be described as a "Friendly Helper". She helps Mum keep her independence by going shopping to the supermarket with her. Not doing her shopping for her. She helps Mum read her mail, sort not too technical computer issues out. Helps Mum with the dials on the washing machine and dryers. Takes her to doctor and hospital appointments and sits and has a cup of tea and a chat. **See Joan's advert on page 14**

Mum would be lost without Joan and so would my sisters and me. Joan has been invaluable to us during these difficult times, she is kind, considerate, discreet and has a great sense of humour.

Why am I telling you all this? Well Joan now has some spare time and is looking to take on another couple of people like my Mum. So, if you know someone who would benefit from a "Friendly Helper" please give Joan a call for a chat about it. Clearly, I cannot recommend her highly enough.

So, thank you for my self-indulgent ramblings this month.

As ever we have some fantastic editorial for you to read in the Magazine. National Women's History Month, Book Review, Dining out with a takeaway, all about Bees and much more.

If you have any spare time and would like to become the WoW Distribution Manager, please let me know. It is only a few hours a month. You can find out what is involved by contacting me or visiting **www.windowonwallingford.co.uk** where you can also read all our magazine in digital format.

Do not forget to Spring your clocks forward on Sunday 28th of March.

So here is a great March 2021 filled with, love, courage, compassion and above all **Hope**.

Have fun and stay safe.

Naomi x

Find out who this is on page 15





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One Month is Not Enough

FORGET ME NOT... In case you were unaware, March is National Women's History Month, but why should they get a whole month to themselves? Why isn't it, "National People's History Month", surely all of history matters? Remember Greenpeace campaigning to "save the whales" in the 1970's, well they didn't tell us to boil up the rest of fish-kind in a big steaming stew did they? NWHM isn't about gender inspired superiority, but more to do with historical context, as women have contributed greatly to society and humankind. They have however, often been obstructed or had their achievements side-lined by a predominantly patriarchal recording of history. Therefore, we shouldn't overlook the reforms women have inspired, from the suffragettes and early female thinkers, to the activists and trailblazers of the modern era. Now before I am accused of virtue signalling, or grovelling after last month's feeble attempt at valentine inspired romance. Let's take a moment to celebrate the women of our community.

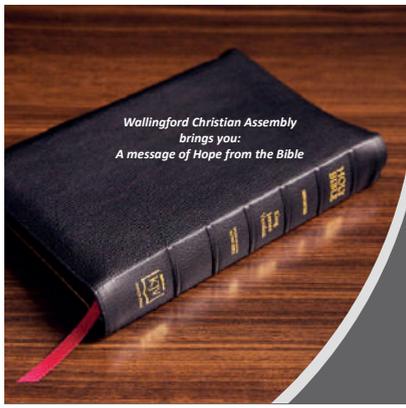
IT'S NO MYSTERY... Well you don't have to be Hercule Poirot, or Mrs Marple to know that the renowned author Agatha Christie, spent a large portion of her life in nearby Chelsey. Unlike many of the female authors of her time, she never felt the need to adopt a masculine pen name to succeed in a male dominated industry. The literature aficionados amongst you, might also be surprised to know of another prolific author from Wallingford, who perhaps doesn't get the acclaim she deserves. Gladys Bronwyn Stern was born in London, but moved to Wallingford and ended her days here in 1973, she wrote over 40 novels, several plays, short stories and non-fiction. She was probably best known for her Rakonitz chronicles, a series of novels based on her own family, her first published work was in 1915. Quite by coincidence, the same year that the Women's Institute was first formed.

EDUCATION AND INSPIRATION... Speaking of which, we couldn't celebrate women's history month, without giving the WI a mention, and Wallingford's branch is currently celebrating its tenth anniversary. Devotees of a certain locally filmed TV series, might mistakenly liken them to the tweed clad ladies of Midsomer County, baking cakes and judging village shows. As well as, occasionally being stabbed with ornate antique daggers or clubbed by vintage silver candlesticks. Television shows aside though, I am referring to the organisation that was founded in 1915, as women strove to revitalise rural communities. Many had suffered, from both men and women being drafted into service during World War One. Expansion in membership and vision, has provided opportunities to acquire education and new skills. Associates participate in a variety of activities, and campaign on issues affecting them and their communities. Their experience, knowledge and skills, have been passed down throughout the WI's history, with continual updates reflecting society's changes.



HISTORY IN THE MAKING... So what about the overlooked women of our community, you'll notice I haven't dared to use the term ordinary! I mean the ones that are unlikely to be singled out for personal acclaim in the annals of history. The doctors and nurses ensuring our health and wellbeing (especially now), or the teachers educating and preparing our children for their place in society. CEO's of companies creating community wealth and employment, and Councillors managing community affairs. What about female firefighters (yes, we do have such a thing in wally town), and police? Don't forget Editors of awesome community magazines either! My own partner manages a business, runs a home, looks after three kids and puts up with me, the last part is probably worthy of a sainthood alone! Although the vast majority of them won't be individually recognised, they are the characters playing the leading roles in writing the history of tomorrow.

I'M EVERY WOMAN... Chaka Khan summed it up in this song, she wasn't just speaking for herself though, she was celebrating womankind. The mums, the aunties, the sisters, the grannies and the friends. The women of our lives that support, inspire and nurture us from childhood to infinity. Hardworking, stoical and often unrecognised, they patch our wounds and massage our egos, listen, guide and protect us. So the least we can do is give them the recognition they so richly deserve. I think you'll agree with me, one month is probably barely enough really?



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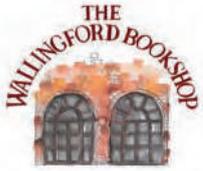
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Wallingford Town Council gets Dementia Friendly

Wallingford Town Council in South Oxfordshire recently welcomed representatives from local care home Waterside Court to the public participation section of their Full Council in order to learn how to become official Dementia Friends.

A live stream session took place on the 16th January, where some Councillors received information on what it's like to live with dementia. Home Services Advisor, Victoria Nemar, a Dementia Champion, ran the information session to teach the group about the small ways we all can help those living with dementia.

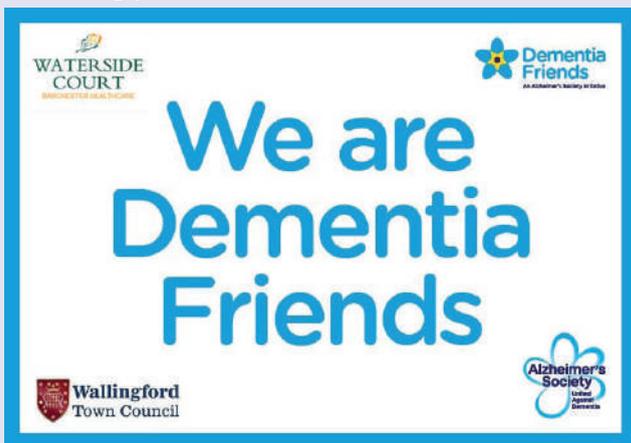
Dementia Friends Information Sessions are run by volunteer Dementia Friends Champions, who are trained and supported by Alzheimer's Society. The Dementia Friends programme is the biggest ever initiative in the UK that aims to change people's perceptions and understanding of dementia.

Victoria said, "It was fantastic to see the Councillors engaging so readily on such an important matter. Waterside Court are keen to make Wallingford a Dementia Friendly Community and to have the Council's support will really help us achieve this goal. We're really looking forward to making more Dementia Friends in our local community. The condition itself can be quite lonely and frightening, and the more understanding we have the better, especially given the current climate. Our team here at Waterside Court are always available to provide support and advice about care to anyone who needs it."



Waterside Court care home is part of Barchester Healthcare, one of the UK's largest care providers, which is committed to delivering personalised residential, dementia and respite care. The home will have a dedicated Memory Lane community

which is specially designed to provide the best sensory environment for those living with dementia. Memory Lane facilities include a life-skills kitchen to help maintain a level of independence in carrying out daily activities, such as setting the table and helping to prepare food. There is also a 'Magic Table', an interactive, multi-sensory projector that offers opportunities to play games in order to increase physical and social interactions, and most of all, to have a bit of fun.



For more information please contact Roxana Moldovan, General Manager at Waterside Court Care Home on 01491 455 212 or email: roxana.moldovan@barchester.com roxana.moldovan@barchester.com

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citizens advice

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We are a local charity providing the Citizens Advice service in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse. We advise 12,000 people each year and help four in every five to resolve their problems. We are members of National Citizens Advice. Our funding comes from District, Town and Parish Councils and local charities.

Treasurer: We are looking for an experienced Treasurer with a relevant financial qualification or experience. Knowledge of charity finance is preferred but not essential. Your main role will be to guide the board on the financial implications of budgets and plans; and work with staff to prepare a budget, monitor our finances and present management accounts.

Trustee: We are looking for a new Trustee to contribute to the work of the Board as it navigates the uncertainties of a post-Covid world. Each Trustee oversees a particular aspect of the charity's work.

There are seven Trustee board meetings each year, held in the evening of the third Tuesday of every other month

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We welcome applications from all sections of the community so that we have a diverse board that reflects our clients and communities.

If you would like to discuss this opportunity, please contact Jane Richardson (Chair) jane.richardson@osavcab.org.uk or Jon Bright (Chief Officer) jon.bright@osavcab.org.uk



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Community Recognition Award for 2020

Nominations are sought for Community Recognition Award for 2020: High Steward of Wallingford's Award for Community Service

The individual or organisation must be able to demonstrate that they have made an outstanding contribution which benefits residents and the community of Wallingford. They need not themselves live or be based in Wallingford, but the benefit from their work should be shown for a sustained period in the town. Nominations should describe how the nominee has addressed values such as (but not exclusively); helping the disadvantaged, promoting inclusivity and participation in community life, and supporting Wallingford as a town which encourages vibrant community activities. Nominations should, as far as possible, be from a member of the public independent of the person/organisation being nominated, but where this is not practicable, the person making the nomination must make clear their relationship to the nominee. Self-nominations are not allowed. A nomination statement should be no longer 500 words and may contain referees. Where referees are included, it is the responsibility of the person making the nomination to ensure that permission has been obtained from the referees for them to be contacted by the High Steward.

Closing date 31st March 2021

Current High Steward Mr Ken Lester appointed in 2015. Previous recipients of the High Steward's award: 2018 Wallingford Volunteer Centre - 2019 TWAS and Wallingford Museum

Nominations should be posted to the Town Council at 9 St Martins Street, Wallingford, OX10 9AL, or sent by email to senioradmin@wallingfordtowncouncil.gov.uk. In both cases they should be clearly marked "For the Attention of the High Steward".



Phones 4 Bees

As the world's most intense users of the smartphone, in the UK there are many lying in draws, cupboards and handbags, unused, that could seriously improve the life chances of rural Africans. Phones4Bees is simply a campaign that makes so much sense.

Why does Africa need your phone?

Less than half the population of Africa owns a smartphone, and for rural communities it is a very low percentage yet we own thousands of second phones that are of little value to us.

What will they be used for?

Selling honey is the main "cash crop" for a lot of rural African communities and by improving their bee keeping skills and access to markets, our old smart phones will reduce poverty.

Initially the phones you donate will be used to deliver training and educate beekeepers to achieve the Africa Apiculture Vocational Qualification (AAVQ). This includes keeping Apiary records, monitoring pesticide use, managing the collection of Swarms and most importantly the creating the real time regional big data, on which strategies to develop the industry will be based.

What is Api-Trace?

Api-Trace is a food traceability system based on Bee.Watch applications, developed by uWatch Ltd in the UK. The trial system is already available in Swahili.

The main challenge to rural industries is getting quality products to market and Api-Trace will include locally based honey processing plants where AAVQ beekeepers can sell their honey at a guaranteed price.

This honey is then transported in bulk to wholesalers where it is quality screened for contaminants and can be available for export in a matter of days.

Using the Api-Trace system honey can be traced right back to the individual hive that produced it using QR codes on hives and RFID devices on bulk honey barrels.

See advert on page 18

Mother's Day - Q1 Care

What a year we have had!

Last year the news broke about Coronavirus and from 23 March 2020, we faced "lockdown", we were uncertain how long it would go on.

Q1Care carried on providing excellent services to our existing and new clients.

One story relates to a lovely lady we helped get home for Mother's Day in March 2020. Her story demonstrates what can be done in times of crisis – she was in hospital following a suspected stroke, when she got stronger and her health improved, she was ready for discharge – she needed a tailor-made care package to come home with. Her daughter contacted Q1Care for advice, so we made a detailed home assessment and created a professional care plan sensitive to build up her confidence and independence in time for Mothering Sunday. Working closely with her, her family and a multidisciplinary team of community health professionals we pulled it off. Seeing the warmth and joy is the driving force behind the work we do every day in Q1Care.

We helped her gain confidence by safely assisting and encouraging her. A week after discharge she was able to celebrate Mothering Sunday with her daughter.

Q1Care were in place to support and care for this lady. We were the only people she saw. We talk with her and her daughter regularly to make sure things are going well, we have given practical help to both mother and daughter with shopping/pharmacy collections/GP appointments and keeping connections to the outside world and to have tea and a chat!

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Do you have good guts?

Until quite recently I didn't really give my guts a lot of thought. I am an active 50 something and have always thought I made good food choices, OK I admit I enjoyed a glass or 2 of wine quite regularly and drank a lot of tea (an average of 10 cups a day), and definitely didn't drink enough water. I found losing weight challenging. I was aware that my ability to cope with everyday stresses could leave me anxious and on edge, the quality of my sleep was pretty rubbish and my blood pressure was definitely borderline to probably needing medication.

That was life before I discovered how the health of my gut could affect my whole being from my circulation, hormones, mental wellness, digestion, energy levels, happiness and just so much more.

My name is Helen Warner, and I would like to share my journey into discovering my MICROBIOME, (which is an intricate balance of good and bad bacteria that live in your guts and your entire body) and hopefully inspire you to do the same. The rewards are definitely there to be had.

It was my partner who introduced me to the 21 Day Nutritional Kickstart Program. To be fair I was a bit sceptical, because I believed I was doing all the right things anyway, how could this make any real difference to me? I was totally committed to doing the program and following the guidelines, which involved making some changes to my choices of food and drink, alongside taking some quality supplements which support the gut and body whilst resetting your gut health. Yes, the obvious were cut out, alcohol, sugar, gluten, processed foods and dairy but then you find you can eat loads of fruit and veg, eggs, white meat (chicken, turkey), oily fish, nuts, seeds and much more.

It's a 3 week plan, only 21 days, and the results were quite amazing. For me the big wins were massively improved quality of sleep – I can't remember sleeping so deeply for years – and then my blood pressure came down to a more normal reading – and has stayed there. Plus I lost 7lbs which I didn't expect. I have found my energy levels have increased, and my concentration levels have improved.

I have continued with those supplements that have helped to reach these goals and continued with making better food choices because I have now made the **GOOD GUT HEALTH** connection to my health.

Now I am super passionate about helping other to discover the benefits of caring for your **MICROBIOME**. The 21 day plan is a gut reset and an opportunity to start your journey towards elite health.

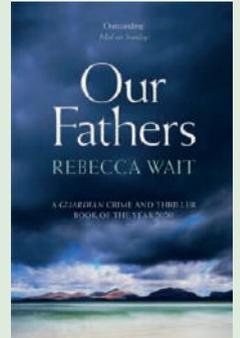
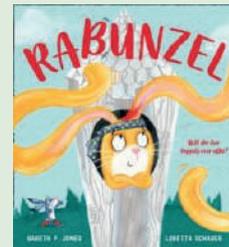
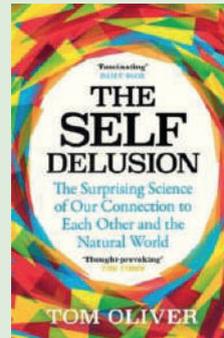
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Spring is coming and so are new books...

We're still open for 'click and collect' at **The Wallingford Bookshop** and new books are arriving all the time! Local academic and author Tom Oliver's new book **The Self Delusion (pb £9.99)** is making us think about or connections to nature and the world around us just as nature is starting to awaken around us. There are lots of fantastic fiction paperbacks coming out over the next month, including *Grown Ups* by Marian Keyes, *American Dirt* by Jeanine Cummins, *Exciting Times* by Naoise Dolan and *A Thousand Moons* by Sebastian Barry. Rebecca Wait is one of our favourite young authors and our tip to win a major prize! Her beautiful book, **Our Fathers**, is also a new release. Set in the Hebrides, it explores a son's attempt to find out why his father killed his family when he was a boy and the fractured relationships of the island community.

There are also lots of brilliant new children's books! My favourite new picture books are **Rabunzel**, about a rabbit with very long ears, and *I Used to Be a Fish* about evolution. I am a big fan of dragons so I'm very excited that *Darwin's Dragons* by Lindsay Galvin, *The Dragon and her Boy* by Penny Chimes and *A Vanishing of Griffins* (the sequel to *A Darkness of Dragons*) by S A Patrick are all out and full of fire!

We are working with schools to get **World Book Day** books to all local children, but we do have them at the shop if you get tokens! Hopefully we can see you all soon, browsing and chatting but in the meantime, we can take orders by phone and email, we can even do zoom appointments so you can see the books! All the details are on our website www.wallingfordbookshop.co.uk



- 1) The name for the personified Mother Earth in Greek mythology
- 2) Who was the mother of John the Baptist?
- 3) In which month is Mother's Day celebrated in the United States?
- 4) Which Beatles song was inspired by Paul's mum Mary?
- 5) Who was the last Empress of India?
- 6) Which flower traditionally symbolises Mother's Day?
- 7) Who was the mother of Queen Elizabeth I?
- 8) Which artist painted a famous portrait of his mother?
- 9) In the pantomime, who is Aladdin's mother?
- 10) What do Tibetans refer to as 'The goddess mother'?

ANSWERS ON PAGE 21

Sugar and The Lowdown

Food is massively important for the body and we really do benefit from eating well. This means everything in moderation. Not too much of this and that but a little bit of what you fancy as well. Why is it when we have one biscuit we want more? The need to satisfy that craving is overwhelming. It can be hard, we can be crippled sometimes by a packet of biscuits or a whole cake! It is so bad for us to eat all that type of food.

Too much sugar is bad for us; fact. So how can we enjoy it without having too much? Educate yourself on it. I researched sugar around five years ago. It became a way of life for me and I detoxed off it for the summer of 2015. It was a massive learning curve.

We are always looking for the nearest fix and we always have to give ourselves permission. In fact, the detox lasted eight weeks and after week three and four my mood had lowered. It was hard to deal with. But week four and five it all changed. My body was free of so much. It was a great thing to feel.

Sugar like many things can make us into fiends therefore it needs to be used wisely. Make the choices for you. Make them with informed choices in mind. Do your research and if you are putting something into your body know what it is.

By making a few changes we can feel better and not be so reliant on sugar. Change your sugar product, if you think it isn't working for you. Try xylitol instead of normal sucrose. It tastes just the same. Try coconut sugar as it is nutty and like the fruit has some real benefits. Use rice malt syrup, it has no fructose compared to maple, honey and other syrups. Any other syrups don't even bother.

As for grains, try brown rice if you are used to other kinds. White rice doesn't have many nutrients and has the husk stripped for longer shelf life. Brown rice takes longer to cook but only a few minutes and it really helps your digestion and slows down your blood sugar.

Try other grains to have instead of the usual ones. Try millet, rye, buckwheat groats, quinoa, barley and whole-meal pasta over the white kind. White pasta like white rice has little nutritious value. Similarly, white bread isn't as nutritious as brown. Sourdough is wonderfully good. And beneficial to our digestion.

Too much sugar or refined carbs can cause inflammation in our system. We need to eat more real food than processed. Processed food can be very sugary and by looking at the ingredients we know this. If sugar is second or third on the list then we have a sugar overload problem.



Be kind to yourself make sure you eat as well as possible. By cooking our own food most of the time we are in a great position to feel better physically and this leads us to feel better emotionally and mentally. Food feeds all parts of our body. Try to ease up on sugar and try new real foods. Think before you have anything brown in colour that is processed or covered in icing sugar. We need to eat well. We benefit from eating well and our immune systems will improve.



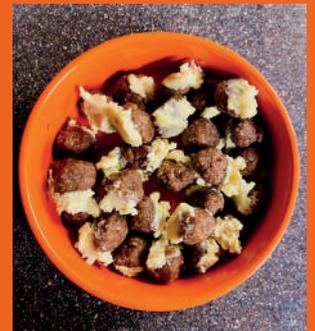
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Recipe for Chocolate Marzipan with White Chocolate

These are sweet but also rich so a little go a long way! Please share....

Ingredients

160 grams ground almonds
1 egg
3 tbsp icing sugar
1 tbsp cocoa powder
50 grams white chocolate



Method

For the marzipan, and best to make in advance (night before or few hours), place the ground almonds into a bowl, add the icing sugar and cocoa powder and mix well. Crack in the egg and mix until it becomes a thick paste. Form into a ball, cover in cling film and leave in fridge over night or for at least few hours.

Remove from fridge and roll out small balls onto some parchment paper and a tray or board. Place back in fridge for at least an hour again.

Melt the white chocolate and when melted, dip the marzipan balls into it, either just a section or the whole thing. White chocolate is very hard to work with unlike dark chocolate but you can use what you like. Place back in fridge for a couple more hours and then they will be ready.

Enjoy! Yum!



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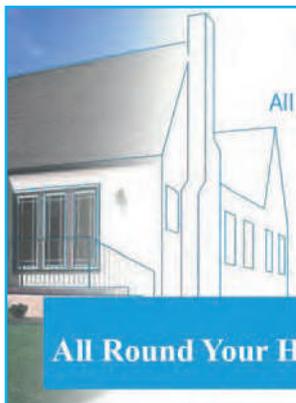
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Covid Cannot Stop Wallingford Talking Newspaper

Many people will already have heard of the Talking Newspaper. In Wallingford and district we have been producing a weekly edition, with news drawn mainly from the Wallingford Herald and the Henley Standard, for over 30 years and have kept going all through the Covid lockdown.

The talking newspaper is normally associated with people with visual impairments, but we would like to publicise the fact that the Wallingford & District Talking Newspaper (WDTN) is also available to a wider range of people who, for any reason, have difficulty reading a newspaper but are not eligible for the free postage that blind and partially sighted people enjoy. The weekly talking newspaper can be listened to on the WDTN website (wdtna.org.uk) simply by a click of the mouse. People can also listen to back numbers of the talking newspaper and the monthly magazines editions online, but will need an access code to do so. **Please get in touch by email: wdtninfo@gmail.com or by calling 07976 302136 for more information.**

We also produce a monthly edition containing a digest of articles from village and parish magazines in the local area. These include the Window on Wallingford, Crowmarsh News, Benson Bulletin, The Bridge (Clifton Hampden), The Forty (Cholsey), The Villager (Brightwell cum Sotwell), Ewelme News, and Dorchester News. Using makeshift "recording studios" at home, we have been able to continually record the Wallingford & District Talking Newspaper (WDTN) from several of our homes throughout the pandemic and have not missed one edition (yet!).

The WDTN is able to send out the weekly and monthly recordings on memory sticks to visually impaired listeners, using the free postage that is nationally available when sending "articles for the blind". We are always pleased to hear from anyone who is visually impaired and who would like to receive the talking newspaper by post. We provide, free of charge, a player for the memory sticks that is designed to be easy for people with poor sight to use.

But remember, you do not have to need a special player or a memory stick to listen. People who are not necessarily blind or partially sighted, but who would find it easier to listen to rather than read the local newspaper, can get to hear the local news online via our website.

Keith Tibbs: Wallingford District Talking Newspaper

Contact us for more information

 07976 302136

 wdtninfo@gmail.com

Did you see "Wabbit of the West" on Pancake Day?...raising money for the wonderful Corn Exchange.

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Don't despair! Citizens Advice can help you with debt



When bills start piling up and multiplying, vague fears can turn into a paralysing panic for people experiencing money troubles.

Turn to Citizens Advice, which has eighty years of experience in pulling people back from precipices. Your burden might seem overwhelming and impossible to resolve but in reality there is a lot you can do to turn things around.

Start by assembling your bills and make an overall list, with relevant details like dates when payment is due. Sort the bills into priority debts (rent and mortgage arrears, Council Tax, gas and electricity, tax and National Insurance – and see <https://www.citizensadvice.org/debt-and-money-for-a-complete-list>) and non-priority debts (water rates – your supplier can't cut you off – credit card debts, unsecured loans, hire purchases etc).

Take the priority debts first and contact your creditors. Don't be afraid of this step. Many companies will be expecting you to get in touch, saying on the bill itself "We know that paying a bill can be difficult" or "Affected by Covid-19?" - and providing a telephone number or web link. Approach them with a constructive attitude, tell them you are actively tackling your debts, and perhaps ask them to suspend interest charges while you do so. They also might be amenable to letting you defer payment or pay smaller amounts over a longer time period. Ask about any special reductions – for example, the Warm Home Discount Scheme for electricity supplies (see www.gov.uk for more information).

If you need to compose a letter or email to a creditor, you don't have to start from scratch: you could copy or adapt a template letter from the Citizens Advice website. One especially useful letter asks creditors to give you more time.

If your circumstances have changed you might be able to claim benefits, or extra benefits. Citizens Advice runs a Help to Claim programme (call 0800 144 8444) and can guide you through all the stages. The Turn2us website at <https://www.turn2us.org.uk> will tell you what benefits you might be able to claim, and has details of grants available to those on low incomes.

If you have an overdraft, talk to your bank. In the coronavirus age many banks are making concessions and charging no interest on overdrafts up to a certain amount. Contact your district council about a possible Council Tax reduction. And think creatively about ways of increasing your income. Could you rent out a spare room in your house, for instance?

Talk to a volunteer at Citizens Advice (call Adviceline free on 0808 278 7907, Monday to Friday 9 am to 5 pm) or through webchat ("chat with us online about debt") Monday to Friday 8 am to 7 pm. Appointments in person are not available at present.

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WINTER WILDLIFE TIPS

Winter flowering shrubs such as viburnums, lonicera and mahonia provide vital nourishment for bumble bees and other pollinators. Hollow stalks like sage, dead nettle, allium, fennel (above), golden rod will be home to insect eggs and larvae during the winter so don't tidy them out of your garden. Wood piles are important habitats for beetles and other insects that are the bottom of the food chain and scrubby areas of the garden provide refuge for small mammals and amphibians who need shelter from predators (especially cats). When buying bulbs for the spring see below for the importance of using suppliers who don't treat their bulbs with pesticides which will harm pollinators along with the other insects they are designed to kill.

In general, if you maximise the biodiversity of your garden, you will have a healthy predator/prey web which means that the critters you don't want around (eg aphids) will be taken care of by their natural predators (eg parasitic wasps). If you use chemicals to kill aphids, the wasps will be killed too.

Looking ahead to the spring, your lawn doesn't need to be carpet-perfect (unless you are a bowling or golf club!).

If you leave the moss it will keep the moisture in your lawn so you don't have to water it so often and if you don't cut it so short and allow clover, daisies and dandelions to flourish you will be providing welcome food for pollinators.

This is a tricky topic as everyone who buys flowers to feed bees and other pollinators that visit their garden will be gutted to realise that those flowers (often marketed as 'bee-friendly') will be a poisoned chalice if they contain pesticides. Designed to kill aphids and sap-sucking insects, pesticides are also very harmful to our precious pollinators. Recent research suggests that the distribution of bee and hoverfly species has declined by an average of 25% across Britain since 1980, particularly among specialist species (Powney et al., 2019).

Farmers do need to protect their crops from insects. But researchers like Professor David Goulson from the University of Sussex believe that less harmful chemicals will not be developed as long as growers are allowed to use pesticides like neonicotinoids in an emergency and the big pharma companies that make them, like Bayer and Syngenta, continue to take powerful legal action against the bans on neonicotinoids.

In 2018 Goulson and Friends of the Earth launched the Great British Bee Count and there was much media coverage of the issue of neonicotinoids. David also analysed the pesticide levels in plants on sale in garden centres and shops that revealed many plants being marketed as 'bee-friendly' were in fact laced with pesticides harmful to bees.

In response to media coverage, B&Q and other retailers announced that they were prohibiting their suppliers from using neonicotinoids. But other pesticides that are very harmful to pollinators are still legal. So the problem still exists.

HOW TO AVOID BRINGING PESTICIDES INTO YOUR GARDEN

Be careful who you buy from. There are plenty of organic bulb and plant suppliers to choose from. The initial investment might be a little bit more expensive, but you could save money by swapping plants with friends, propagating cuttings from plants like cranesbill geraniums and lungwort, lavender and rosemary or growing from seed. In 2018, UK bulb retailer Peter Nyssen decided to source all their spring-flowering bulbs from growers who don't use from neonics so that their customer's spring flowers will be genuinely bee friendly.

Also make sure that everything has been grown in peat-free compost because peat acts as a carbon store, it's a great habitat for wildlife, it has a role in water management, and preserves things well for archaeology.

PET FLEA TREATMENT ENDANGERS WATER INSECTS

It is also now being recognised that the nerve agent in pet flea treatment called fiprinol exists at very harmful levels in our rivers, threatening water insects and the birds and fish higher up the food chain that depend on them.

The washing of pets was already known to flush fipronil into sewers and then rivers, while dogs swimming in rivers causes direct contamination. "It has to be the flea treatments causing the pollution," Goulson said. "Really, there's no other conceivable source."

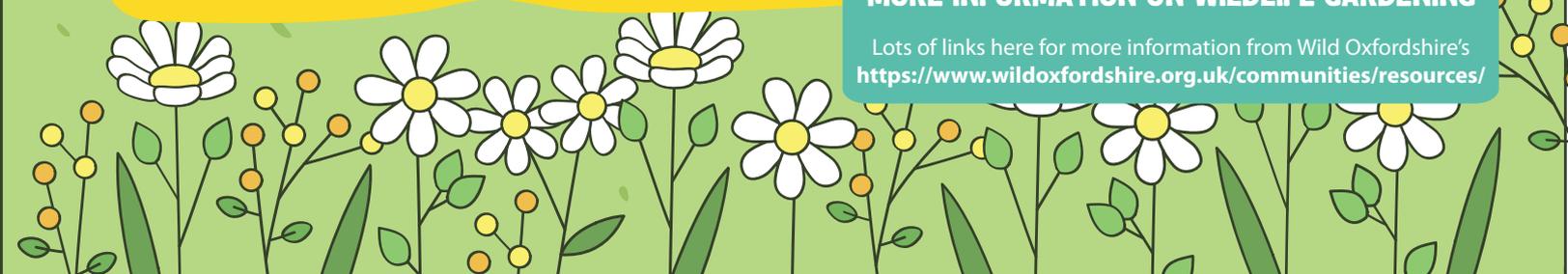
There are many veterinary products containing fipronil and imidacloprid in the UK, many of which are sold without prescriptions. Many pets are treated monthly, whether they have fleas or not.

One of the worst cases is from Dec 2018 – Jan 2019 when half a million bees in Brazil were killed by fipronil that was used to control ants and termites on soy crops.

So please talk to your vet about limiting flea treatment of your pets.

MORE INFORMATION ON WILDLIFE GARDENING

Lots of links here for more information from Wild Oxfordshire's <https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/communities/resources/>



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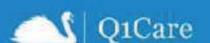
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View from the Council Feb/March

In the midst of this cold snap there are signs of spring appearing, with sprouting bulbs starting to show in garden beds. During March the birds will be looking for their breeding mates and nest sites. Hence the activity that has been going on for the past few weeks on the Bull Croft, where the first stage of the regeneration of the park will be the demolition of the old Recreation Rooms, which has to be completed soon so as not to disturb nesting birds. This is the culmination of two years' work by the council. The Rec Rooms were built during the 1940s to provide a temporary canteen for H. M. Forces, and for the townspeople after the war. The fully equipped rooms, built at a cost of £2000 were a gift from a local cattle breeder, and later Dolcis Shoes owner, Mr J. R. Upson. According to local historian Lisa Haynes, after the Second World War the building was used by Wallingford Grammar School pupils and then as the St. Nicholas Nursery School, until they relocated in the 1960s to the new School site on St. Nicholas Road. The Bridge Club used the hut for many years, as did the Wallingford Hand Bell Ringers. More recent inhabitants have included the Citizens Advice Bureau and the Emergency Food Bank. The Rainbow Pre-school moved from what is now Centre 70 to the hut in 1974. This was their much-loved home until the increasing dilapidation of the rooms, which their age rendered unrepairable, forced their closure for health and safety reasons in 2019. Fortunately, the various groups who were tenants there have all been found suitable alternatives. Demolition of the Rooms was required, but is a far from straightforward process. They stand on a Scheduled Monument, so everything has to be done with the approval of Historic England to exacting standards. Various surveys had to be carried out. All the services – gas, electricity and water – have had to be disconnected one by one, and all that after planning permission for the demolition was applied for and granted, and the various reports obtained. An archaeologist will be on site during the demolition, because the Rooms sit on top of part of the medieval Wallingford Priory. **The councillors would like to say a huge thank you to all the office staff who have worked on this very complex project for almost two years.**

Another landmark project is coming to completion. The **Wallingford Neighbourhood Development Plan** has been through its Examination and is now back with SODC, which will make the final decision on a local referendum by the end of February. Producing a Neighbourhood Plan is not something that can be achieved at speed. It requires months and years of painstaking and arduous consultation and research, followed by writing the vision and the policies through which it will be achieved in the required format. The Examiner's report contains a number of tributes to the dedication and skill of the steering group that has produced the Plan. We shall have more on this next month.

Speaking of landmarks, we would like to remind residents whose properties border the ditches round the Kinecroft and Bull Croft that they must not throw garden waste or any other rubbish into the ditches, or park their refuse bins there, or extend their gardens there. These ditches are part of the Scheduled Monuments known as the Saxon ramparts ('town walls') and ditches. As such, they have the highest legal protection and it is an offence to deface or interfere with them in any way. A number of problems have been pointed out to us recently, reinforced by the experience of the hardy band of volunteers who do litter picking around the town. Let's show our pride in Wallingford's extraordinary heritage and respect the monuments, which include the whole of the Kinecroft and Bull Croft parks. We can show our thanks to the litter pickers by making sure they do not have much to do!

The final vote of thanks goes to the wonderful team at Wallingford Medical Practice who are working at full steam rolling out the Covid-19 vaccination programme. NHS Heroes one and all!

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Obviously in these uncertain times it is difficult to be absolutely certain but the Directors of BunkFest would like you to know it is our intention to hold BunkFest this year as planned on the **3rd, 4th and 5th September 2021** provided Government guidelines allow us to put on a full festival.

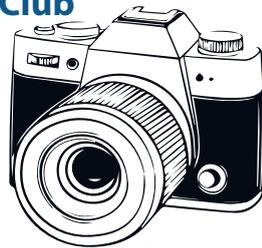
If this proves not to be the case, rest assured that BunkFest has the reserves to be able to resume as soon as it is possible.

In the meantime stay safe, keep dancing and let's keep socially close but physically distanced.

#Wallingfordbunkfest #stayjammy #Wallingford

Wallingford Photographic Club

WPC continues to meet virtually, but we are offering a full programme of speakers, competitions, and other events to help you improve your photography and meet like-minded people. The club meets via Zoom



every Thursday. Evenings start at 7.30pm and run until around 9.30 or 10pm, with Zoom access from 7.15pm.

We will have a competition on the theme of "time" on 4th March. This will be followed by a members evening on the 11th, featuring 4 members speaking about a topic of their choice for around 20 minutes each.

On the **18th March, Paul Sanders will give a talk called "My Time as a Picture Editor of the Times"** and on the 25th, Andy Small will give a talk on "Macro Photography especially Plants and Flowers".

Please visit **www.wallingfordphoto.club** to learn more about the club and find out how to get involved.

Town Council Meeting - Zoom

Our March Full Council is on **29 March**. Requests for a link to attend should be sent to **townclerk@wallingfordtowncouncil.gov.uk**



STEVE GOZDZ
GG Wildlife Walks
07702 968508
www.goringgapwildlifewalks.co.uk






I know a number of you are aware how lucky we are in The Chilterns, having several Owl types here on our doorstep; most commonly heard being the Tawny with sightings, then we also have both Little Owl and Barn Owl quite regularly seen, and then the lesser seen Short-Eared Owl too.

We can help encourage their nesting and breeding success by providing safe environments for them.

If you think your garden or area might have a suitable space, why not consider an Owl Box?

Happy to do a free visit if local (or a small charge if much further afield just to cover travel expense), and advise on your site, where may be suitable, etc and for what type.

The boxes you can see below - each one is handmade so may differ slightly but all are designed to suit the owl in question in terms of layout, materials... and built to last.

£150 for the Barn Owl Box

£170 for the Little Owl Box

£195 for the Tawny Owl Box

The most expensive part is the material as the boxes are quite sizeable to make a deep nest box for the birds as they have clutches of several chicks. They are all made from outdoor durable wood so can be for in a barn or in a tree (barn owls nest in boxes indoors and outdoors if a suitable nest box is provided).

I offer free local delivery and can then get a quote for delivery for further afield.

Drop me an email if interested!
info@goringgapwildlifewalks.co.uk

Wallingford & District Art Club

'On the evening of **Tuesday March 16th**, Wallingford & District art club will be hosting an online demonstration by professional artist Keirran Styles. He will be painting a 'Landscape in Oils'. So, if you always wondered how to use oil paints, need some inspiration to further your own art or just want to spend a pleasant evening watching magic happen on canvas contact **admin@wallingfordartclub.org.uk** or visit the club website **www.wallingfordartclub.org.uk**



ANSWERS
 (1) Gaia (2) Elizabeth (3) May (4) Let it be
 (5) The Queen Mother (6) White carnation (7) Ann Boleyn
 (8) James Whistler (9) Widow Twanky (10) Mount Everest



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A Takeaway Experience

Are you fed up with having to cook night after night during lockdown?

Are you missing going out to a restaurant just once in a while?

Well, if like me, you can answer yes to both questions, I suggest you do what my husband and I did last week, and order a takeaway dinner from the Red Lion in Brightwell-cum-Sotwell. It was so easy – we emailed through our order a few days beforehand, then turned up at the appointed time, with our own plates and insulated bag, and left with a delicious meal wrapped in foil ready for us to sit down and eat as soon as we got home. We ordered two different main courses – stuffed pork tenderloin, and salmon in a seafood sauce of prawns and mussels, both served with green vegetables and dauphinoise potatoes. For dessert we had a slice of cheesecake and some lemon roulade, both made by Corinne at the Red Lion. It was a lovely meal and what a joy it was for me to have an evening free of cooking!

Corinne and her partner Mouse (aka Steve) took over the Red Lion in January 2020, exactly two months prior to the first lockdown. Corinne has worked in the pub industry since she was seventeen, including managing golf clubs, but this was the first time she and Mouse had worked for themselves. As soon as the lockdown started they introduced a Friday evening takeaway menu, but soon they had to increase this to four nights a week as they were getting so much demand from the village community and people from further afield in Cholsey, Wallingford, Didcot & surrounding villages. When the pub was able to reopen on 4th July they continued with the takeaway as it was so popular, and this carried on during the 'open then closed' sequence of events in the autumn. On one night in November they served seventy two takeaway meals for a special Thanksgiving and Early Christmas Dinner and had to disappoint many people as they had reached capacity in the kitchen.



They serve their takeaway menu from Wednesday to Saturday, and usually from 6pm until 8.15pm for collection in five minute intervals to ensure social distancing. All the food is cooked fresh on the day by their amazing chef and they use local produce whenever possible. The selection of dishes changes every week but includes Slow Cooked Lamb Shanks served with Mash Potato, Braised Red Cabbage, Greens & Mint and Redcurrant Gravy (£14) Coq-au-Vin (£13) Beer Battered Fish, Chips & Mushy Peas (£10) with a selection of Vegetarian and Gluten Free dishes as well. Corinne makes a selection of homemade desserts every day including the popular Treacle Tart, and the aforementioned Cheesecake and Lemon Roulade (£3 - £5) which were both delicious, by the way, and highly recommended!



They now have a mailing list of more than 600 regular diners, as well as using Facebook and Instagram and the Brightwell-cum-Sotwell village website. Every Sunday Corinne will email or post the next week's menus online which she updates during the week as the time slots get taken. I personally hope they continue the takeaway menu when they can finally reopen the pub again as it is a wonderfully convenient service with splendid food. If you would like to be added to the mailing list, please e-mail the pub on info@theredlionbrightwell.co.uk and request to be added or follow their Facebook or Instagram page.

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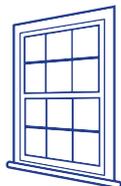
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