

# **The Mouthpiece**

## ***Culham's Newsletter No 293***

### ***Village Diary for February 2008***

- 8<sup>th</sup> Mobile Library - The Glebe, 2.15 pm – 2.25 pm***
- 10<sup>th</sup> Family Communion - St. Paul's Church, 10 am***
- 11<sup>th</sup> Parish Council Meeting - The School, 7.30 pm***
- 15<sup>th</sup> Deadline for March's Mouthpiece***
- 17<sup>th</sup> Evening Prayer – St. Paul's Church, 6 pm***
- 22<sup>nd</sup> Mobile Library - The Glebe, 2.15 pm – 2.25 pm***

**Services of Worship  
2008**

**February**

<b>DATE</b>	<b>TIME</b>	<b>PLACE</b>	<b>SERVICE</b>
<b>SERVICES AT CULHAM</b>			
<b>Sunday 10<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>10 am</b>	<b>Culham</b>	<b>Family Communion</b>
<b>Sunday 17<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>6 pm</b>	<b>Culham</b>	<b>Evening Prayer</b>
<i>Join us for coffee and a chat after morning services at Culham Church! All welcome.</i>			
<i>Come along for informal prayers with Revd Anne Ilesley at Culham Church on Thursday mornings, 8.15 - 9.00am.</i>			
<b>SERVICES AT CLIFTON HAMPDEN, THE WITTENHAMS &amp; DORCHESTER</b>			
<b>Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	<b>8 am</b>	<b>Clifton Hampden</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	8 am	Dorchester	Holy Communion
	<b>10 am</b>	<b>Long Wittenham</b>	<b>Family Service</b>
	10.15 am	Dorchester	Morning Prayer
<b>Ash Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>8 pm</b>	<b>Long Wittenham</b>	<b>Team Communion</b>
<b>Sunday 10<sup>th</sup></b>	<b>8.30 am</b>	<b>Little Wittenham</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	8 am	Dorchester	Holy Communion
	<b>10 am</b>	<b>Clifton Hampden</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	10.15 am	Dorchester	Sung Eucharist
<b>Sunday 17<sup>th</sup></b>	8 am	Dorchester	Holy Communion
	<b>10 am</b>	<b>Long Wittenham</b>	<b>Holy Communion</b>
	10.15 am	Dorchester	Family Service
	6 pm	Dorchester	Evensong
<b>Thursday 21<sup>st</sup></b>	<b>2 pm</b>	<b>Long Wittenham</b>	<b>Pram Service</b>
<b>Sunday 24<sup>th</sup></b>	8 am	Dorchester	Holy Communion
	<b>10 am</b>	<b>Clifton Hampden</b>	<b>Family Communion</b>
	10.15 am	Dorchester	Sung Eucharist
	<b>6 pm</b>	<b>Long Wittenham</b>	<b>Evening Prayer</b>

**From our Vicar**

**Anne Ilesley**

Some of you may have heard that a wall leapt up and hit me. It was the evening of Remembrance Sunday, and paying too little attention, I went out to the garage in the dark unaware that my path was blocked, I fell hard and cracked my head open. The bruising was impressive and I made sufficient noise to alert my neighbour to come round enquiring what the matter was. I was stitched up in remarkably quick time and soon I was running the gauntlet of various quips suggesting I was fond of my drink.

No I wasn't drunk and Charles didn't hit me! A small thing, so quickly done. I was lucky that the hard part of my head took the blow and not my eye. I was lucky not to be knocked out cold! Soon I was busily in to the Christmas celebrations and we enjoyed seeing many of you in the Bridge churches, at the various school events and church services. Perhaps I should say blessed, rather than lucky? It is certainly good to live in a community where our neighbours do think that it's their business to check up that I'm ok.

Christmas, New Year, and a short break for Charles and me in Cairo came and went and now, by the time you read this, we will all be looking forward to Pancake Day which is on February 5<sup>th</sup>. The following day, Ash Wednesday, marks the beginning of Lent, the time in the church year, when we prepare for the festival of Easter.

On Ash Wednesday, we have a special Holy Communion service when what is called 'The Imposition of Ashes' is offered to everyone there. The sign of the cross is made on the forehead, using the ashes from palm crosses from previous years Palm Sunday crosses. We remind ourselves that like those people who welcomed Jesus with such joy on the 1<sup>st</sup> Palm Sunday, only to betray him on Good Friday, we too are subject to welcoming the Good News of Jesus Christ into our lives and later forgetting our commitment to follow him.

Lent is a special time for Christians to give time to their faith. It's associated with 'giving things up', but I rather like to recommend 'taking something on'. To this end, there are a number of Lent groups being run in the parishes of The Dorchester Team, to which all are welcome. This year's theme is The Life of Christ and there are groups at different times, to give everyone the chance of joining a group for 4 or 5 weeks. There is even a daytime group, where small children are welcome! You may also like to come to one or all of the Lent Lunches being held on Wednesdays in various venues in The Bridge Parishes. These will be sociable times when we have simple fare and give money to charity for the benefit of those less well off than ourselves.

I haven't yet thought if I should be giving something up during Lent. Although not too 'fond' of my drink, it has been on my list to give up in the past, along with my favourite, chocolate! But perhaps I'll just stick to taking things up!

### **Culham Lent Group**

Like the other 'Bridge' parishes, we plan to have a set of four meetings here in Culham, looking at The Life of Christ. Led by Anne Ilsley or Marcus Braybrooke, these will be held at 7.30pm on Monday evenings on 11th & 25th February, and 3rd & 10th of March.

The first meeting will be at 25 High Street (Janet & Brian Bracher) and the rest at 'Fairacres', Henley Road (Ingrid & Charles Reichardt), or 25 High Street.

Everyone is very welcome to join us but please let us know (Tel 525885 or 520534) in advance if you want to come.

## **Village News**

### **The Lion public house**

You may have seen in the Parish Council notes that at least one application is being made to convert The Lion to a residential dwelling. Parish Council would like to see the property remain as a pub for the village but would also like to obtain the villagers views. If you feel you wish to contribute to the debate, please let any Parish Councillor know your views or contact the Parish Clerk. Contact details and addresses and the Clerk's email details are at the back of the Mouthpiece.

### **Parish Council**

The likely options are to retain it as a pub, convert to other commercial use or convert to residential, either single or multiple occupancy.

**Who pays for the Church?****Rob Kennedy & Brian Bracher**

Many of us like the Church to be there for the three great events in life – the baptism of our children, the joy of marriage and the chance to say “farewell” at a funeral. We may even enjoy special occasions such as the Annual Carol Service. But who pays to keep the Church running and repaired? We, personally, used to think it was the Church of England. Sadly this is not the case: each parish not only pays the Church of England to provide a priest (and for other professional services), but must also pay to keep the building itself in good repair.

Every five years an architect inspects our church and gives us a list of repairs. Generally, these works cost some £6000 - £7000. We have just had our 5-year inspection and are waiting for estimates for the 40+ items listed. We must then get ‘planning permission’ from the Diocese to carry them out, but – more importantly – start raising the money. Sometimes we can obtain grants but most of the money for repairs is raised by the **Friends of St Paul’s**. (The Parochial Church Council pays for running costs, insurance and the cost of our vicar.)

The Friends are asking their existing members for renewal of their membership, and would really like to have more members so that our Parish Church can be kept in good repair. We have a beautiful church in our village, and it is one of the few places where we can still get together and meet each other. If you want to help in any way, please contact one of us:

Rob Kennedy, Tel **536079**, email [krobert107@aol.com](mailto:krobert107@aol.com)

Brian Bracher, Tel **525885**, email [brian@thebrachers.com](mailto:brian@thebrachers.com)

**Grants for short term community projects****South Oxfordshire District Council**

If you are involved in a short-term community activity or project, you may be eligible for a grant from the council of up to £1000. We still have funding available from this year’s budget, to allocate before 31 March 2008. For more information visit the council website at [www.southoxon.gov.uk/grants](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/grants), call 01491 823311 or email [jeff.duncalf@southoxon.gov.uk](mailto:jeff.duncalf@southoxon.gov.uk)

**Rising to the Climate Challenge in Your Community****South Oxfordshire District Council**

Oxfordshire ClimateXchange is offering to fund and support local residents in hosting climate change initiatives. You could organise a public screening of the top climate change film ‘An Inconvenient Truth’, host a talk or question and answer session, or run a climate change pub quiz. ClimateXchange can offer you the resources to do this free of charge. Whatever you would like to see happening, ClimateXchange can help you put it into action.

Oxfordshire ClimateXchange is a government funded project led by Oxford University’s Environmental Change Institute and is working with South Oxfordshire District Council. For more information contact Jo Hamilton, ClimateXchange Co-ordinator, on 01865 275856, email [info@climatex.org](mailto:info@climatex.org), or visit website [www.climatex.org](http://www.climatex.org)

**Bags 2 School****Culham School**

If anyone has any unwanted clothes, shoes, bedding or soft toys why not donate them to the school to help raise funds? The next collection will be on **Friday 8th February 9.30am**. Free bags can be collected from school or normal black bin bags will be suitable.

**'The Bulb Man'****Culham School**

Another great way to help raise funds for Culham School. Buy summer and winter bulbs from 'The Bulb Man' catalogue and the school will get a percentage for their funds. Please contact the school for a free catalogue or for more information. Orders to be sent into school by end January for summer bulb orders. Contact Cathy Gray on 521766.

**Wanted – Church Organist****Culham Church**

For some time we have enjoyed Peter Kirby’s organ playing at Sunday morning services. Unfortunately, Peter has had to stop playing because of a wrist injury. We would like to thank him for his help and wish him a speedy recovery. Meanwhile, we will have to rely on a CD player, so we are looking for an organist who can play at the 10 am service every second Sunday each month.

If you can help, please contact the Churchwarden, Brian Bracher on 01235 525885, the Revd Anne Ilsley on 01865 407605 or any member of the PCC (see “Who’s Who” on back page). Access to the church for practice sessions can easily be arranged.

**Church Attendance****Culham Church**

Every year the Oxford Diocese asks us how many people attended services in each parish, together with the numbers of baptisms, weddings, funerals, etc. Contrary to impressions given by the national Press, attendance at St Paul's Church rose once more in 2007 with a 15% increase compared with 2006. We were pleased to see so many at the Carol Service on 16th December, and we'd like to thank everyone for their support, especially those who read the lessons.

**New Advertisement****Culham Mouthpiece**

We are pleased to welcome a new advertiser this month. **Greenplant Ltd** stock a wide range of equipment for hire for a variety of DIY projects for building, garden construction, etc. See page A4 for details.

**The Waiting Game  
Ltd****FamilyPlacement.com**

Tim is waiting for a new home. Tim, age 11, has been with short-term foster carers for over a year. After it became clear that he could not return to live with his parents and that his Nan was too ill to care for him, the search began to find him a long term – permanent foster home. Tim needs someone to come forward who could foster him until he can live independently. Ideally Tim will be the only or youngest child in the household. Some months have now passed since the search began but sadly no-one has come forward.

Emma has been living with foster carers for 3 months. She originally went to live with them on an emergency basis. After just a few days of going to live with her emergency foster carers, it became apparent that the problems at home would take a while to fix and that Emma would need to remain in foster care for some months. Emma has settled quite well with her current foster carers but is not happy to have been placed so far from her home. She finds this makes it difficult to see her family, and friends and she positively hates the 20-mile each way journey to school each day. She is hoping that her social worker will move her to foster carers who live nearer to home but each time her social worker visits the news is sadly the same, "Sorry, but there is no-one available".

Local independent fostering agency, familyplacement.com, is working to help Tim and Emma and other children like them. The agency seeks to do this by recruiting foster carers for children in or near to their home area and by encouraging people to consider fostering as an alternative to work outside of the home. As agency director, Andy Clipson says, "Our foster carers are paid a professional fee in addition to a child maintenance allowance. This allows some people to give up work to start a new career in fostering. Proper rewards do not stop foster carers from loving the kids". "All of the agency's foster carers are also provided with high level support and ongoing training to help them to develop their parenting skills to a higher level."

If you think you might be able to help please call 01993 201514, email [info@familyplacement.com](mailto:info@familyplacement.com) or visit our website [www.familyplacement.com](http://www.familyplacement.com)

**Parish Council Notes****December & January****December 2007**

A prospective buyer of The Lion public house attended the meeting to consult with the council over his plans. His intention is to convert the pub to a single dwelling and he will soon apply for a change of use to SODC, with supporting information as regards the likely viability of the building continuing as a pub. The Council put forward the view that the pub is an amenity for the village and would like to see it remain as a public house.

The removal of the fencing around the play area in the field will be pursued after agreeing a price for its removal.

A second letter will be sent to Abingdon Town Council and the Chamber of Commerce regarding

the effect of the ABITS scheme on Culham as no reply has been received. Council will write directly to named officials.

The Council's lawn mower will be serviced and ready for next season and this will be paid for with funds from CCRC.

A letter is to be sent to OCC regarding the possible change of use of the Causeway to a dual cycleway/footpath expressing Council's concerns over the change and that the causeway is a listed monument.

### **January 2008**

Joanne Clegg, Chief Planning Officer of OCC, gave a presentation on the ABITS scheme. The scheme was devised by a combination of Abingdon Town Council, Abingdon Chamber of Commerce and Vale of White Horse District Council with a view to make Abingdon a more attractive place for people to shop and live. The scheme is not yet complete and work will continue on the Marcham Road, after April 08.

The traffic light at the south side of Abingdon bridge will be moved to a point closer to the junction of Bridge Street and High Street 'this financial year', i.e. before April 5th 2008. The most likely position will be outside the Crown and Thistle pub. The consultants Halcrow will be undertaking a complete independent review of the scheme and are expected to 'consult widely' and take measurements of traffic flows, queue lengths etc.

Several members of the public questioned Joanne in particular why Culham should have to suffer the increased traffic volumes and long queues in order to make Abingdon a more pleasant place for its residents. Other points included the query as to why it now takes far longer than previously to drive through Abingdon, particularly in the morning and evening rush hours, and whether parking permits could be issued to allow free use of Rye Farm car park to prevent the need of some to drive into Abingdon at all. Joanne said that further visits by OCC planning officers could be made to future Parish Council meetings to continue the feedback of information.

The recent bus review has indicated an increase in demand for buses going to Didcot and it is possible this route may become commercially viable and will therefore allow the removal of the present subsidy.

John agreed to ask the Traffic Engineer to look at the positioning of speed signs on both the A415 and Tollgate Road with a view to the Parish Council installing them.

The play area fencing has been removed and the new play equipment will be available soon.

**Date of next meeting: Monday February 11th 2008.**

<b>Culham Parochial School</b>	<b>Cathy Gray</b>
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The school welcomed three new pupils into the Foundation Stage at the beginning of this term and a new member of staff. Mrs Kate Holliday has joined us as a part time teaching assistant and will be working in school every afternoon.

The children in both key stages have begun new topics; the infants are investigating and learning about journeys and the juniors will be researching Ancient Egypt. Several visits connected with these topics are being arranged for later in the term.

Following our carol singing outside Tesco's at Christmas, the total amount the children have raised for our charity of the year, WaterAid, has now reached £166. The School Council intend to arrange a "Fun Afternoon" just before the Spring holiday which we hope will be well supported. Please look out for details in next month's Mouthpiece.

Thank you for your donations of Tesco Sports Vouchers. We are at present choosing items from the catalogue and will be sending off our order soon.

<b>Newington Nurseries Magic</b>	<b>Garden</b>
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How do plants get their names? Sometimes it's obvious. The plant takes its name from the discoverer, the first person to bring it to the attention of (western) science. Or its name evolves as a descriptor used by people for whom it had a value or meaning. And sometimes the stories that surround the naming of a plant become overlain with others and the actual origins become misty with time.

So it is with witch hazel (*Hamamelis*). Some say that witch hazel was named as such by early settlers in North America who recognised healing qualities in the plant. They may also have used it for divining water. Both activities that have in the past been associated with the 'black arts'. Another view is that 'witch' may come from the middle English '*wiche*', meaning pliable, but who really knows? What matters is that you can achieve a little of your own magic and trick the eye of the neighbours and the rest of the family into thinking that spring has come, in your garden at least. Flower-filled branches and wonderful, heady scents will draw footsteps into the garden that would otherwise stay firmly indoors.

Getting back to plant names, it's easy to see where breeders are coming from when they give new varieties names. Take *Hamamelis x intermedia* 'Sunburst'. This variety produces large, pale yellow flowers in mid-late winter, just when they're most welcome. *Hamamelis x intermedia* 'Pallida' produces flowers in clusters at the same time, as does 'Vesna'. Generally, yellow flowers are most fragrant in witch hazel, but *Hamamelis x intermedia* 'Diane' is unlikely to disappoint on this or any other point. 'Diane', as well as producing intense red blooms which contrast fabulously with the bare branches of the plant, also delivers stunning autumn colour as the hazel-like leaves turn orange and purple.

Witch hazel is as versatile as it is beautiful. Put it at the back of a wide border to add height, as well as winter and autumn colour from flowers and foliage. It's great as a specimen plant, or planted in groups. They're fully hardy and tolerate a range of typically encountered garden soils. They're happy over chalk if the soil is deep. Full sun or partial shade is fine, provided there is some protection from winds. Maintenance is minimal; just a tidy up with the pruners in late winter to keep the shape you want.

*For further inspiration and advice, visit us at Newington Nurseries on the A329 near Stadhampton.*

*Newington Nurseries Ltd, Newington, Wallingford, Oxon. OX10 7AW. Tel: 01865 890283.*

[www.newington-nurseries.co.uk](http://www.newington-nurseries.co.uk)

<b>Out &amp; About</b>
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**Home-Start Antique Roadshow**

**19 March 10.00 am–1.00 pm, Didcot Civic Hall**

Dig out your treasures and bring them along for valuation by the experts on Wednesday 19th March at Didcot Civic Hall, Didcot between 10.00a.m. and 1.00 p.m. Bonhams, who have been auctioneers and valuers since 1793, will be using their expert skills to value your household wonders, all in aid of Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire, a local charity helping local families with small children. The cost of valuing 2 items is £5.00 and £1.00 per subsequent item. .

So come along and bring your treasures, ceramics, books, toys, silver, pictures etc. You never know what might be in your attic! All proceeds to go to Home-start's First Babies Group in Didcot. If you think you would like to be a Home-Start volunteer offering regular support, friendship and practical help to young families in the area, we would be delighted to hear from you. We are starting a Volunteers' Preparation Course starting in the near future and if you would like any further information about the course or Home-Start, please contact Hilary Mundy on 01235 511152 or at [Homestartso@btconnect.com](mailto:Homestartso@btconnect.com).

**Public meeting arranged by CPRE****February 28th 7.30pm**

The Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE) will host a talk by Dr Chris West entitled 'Dealing with the impacts of climate change' at Wallingford Town Hall, 7.30 pm. All welcome.

**Abingdon Model Railway Show****Saturday 1 March 10am – 5.00pm**

The biggest exhibition in Oxfordshire with over 25 layouts plus trade stands, demonstrations, displays and refreshments at White Horse Leisure & Tennis Centre, Audlett Drive, Abingdon, Oxon OX14 3PJ. For further information contact the exhibition manager; Trevor Slaughter on 01865 820120.

**Rutherford Appleton Laboratory - Talking Science Programme February & March****'Biometrics' Learning from Nature****Friday 8 February 10.30am/1.30pm/7pm**

Nature has always been a source of wonder, with plants and animals seemingly perfectly adapted for their way of life. So, are there other lessons that we can learn from biology? Can we learn from geckos, which hang from the smoothest surface by one toe? Dr. Jonathan Wood, editor of Materials Today and Nano Today, will give demonstrations and examples of how we can copy nature to come up with new materials and technologies for our own users.

**Audience: 13+****The Big Bang Machine–The Large Hadron Collider Friday 21 March 10.30am/1.30pm/7pm**

Dr. Brian Cox, Manchester University explains the Large Hadron Collider at CERN will turn on in 2008. It will recreate the conditions that were present in the Universe less than a billionth of a second after the Big Bang. High on the list of mysteries to be solved is the origin of mass in the Universe. More speculatively, a deeper understanding of gravity might be awaiting us, which may in turn bring a long sought-after theory of everything within reach. The truly exciting thing, as with all exploration at the frontier, is that we just don't know what we'll see when we finally throw the switch on this giant machine.

**Audience: 14+****Sutton Courtenay Women's Institute****19<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30pm**

We are having a special craft evening in the village hall when Phil Madge will be showing us his butchery skills in the 'Presentation and Preparation of Meat'. Visitors are welcome.

<b>Endpiece</b>
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*Please note that any opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the editors.*

**Contributions to the March Mouthpiece by February 15th please, to:**

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**Advertisements to:**

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