

Cholsey Village Voice May 2019

The monthly newsletter from the Parish Council. Available free in most shops and pubs, The Pavilion foyer, the library and The Great Hall. CVV can also be read on the Parish Council website in the News and Events section. If you have any short, topical articles that we could publish, please forward them to clerk.cpc@outlook.com

Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish Meeting which is NOT a Parish Council Meeting but a meeting for all electors of the Parish is to be held on Wednesday 1st May at The Pavilion. Whilst a report of the activities of the Parish Council over the past year and plans for the future will be given this is the opportunity for residents to have their say.

Local Elections

On Thursday 2 May, those over 18 who are registered to vote will be able to cast their ballot in district council elections to elect councillors who will represent their local area and help make decisions on issues such as recycling collections, planning, housing, parking and leisure

Margaret Reed, Returning Officer for SODC, said: "It's almost time to choose who represents you on local issues. If you are intending to vote on 2 May please make sure you check where you need to go on polling day and who you can vote for.

"If you are postal voter make sure your voting pack is in the post by Monday at the latest to ensure it reaches us in time.

"Please encourage your friends and family to check their own voting details and cast their vote on 2 May – we don't want anyone to miss out on the chance to have their say."

Polling stations and candidates

Polls are open between 7am and 10pm on 2 May. People can find out who they can vote for and where they need to go to cast their ballot by entering their postcode at

southoxon.gov.uk/candidates

Voting by post

Those who signed up to vote by post should have received their postal voting pack – to cast their ballot they should follow the instructions carefully then put their completed pack in the nearest post box.

Voters are encouraged to return postal ballots immediately – votes will only count if they are received by 10pm on Thursday 2 May.

Anyone who expected to receive a postal voting pack but didn't receive it should call 01235 422528 or email elections@southandvale.gov.uk immediately to request a replacement.

Can't make it to the polling station?

If, due to an emergency, you are not able to make it to the polling station on election day, you can apply to allow someone to vote on your behalf. This is known as an emergency proxy vote.

To apply for an emergency proxy vote you must submit a completed application form before 5pm on Thursday 2 May.

For more details on proxy voting please visit southoxon.gov.uk/votebyproxy or call 01235 422528.

Uncontested Parishes

In Cholsey the number of candidates standing did not exceed the number of seats to be contested. Therefore, all candidates were automatically elected to the parish and no votes will be cast.

All voters will still be able to vote in the district council elections.

Cholsey's Butterflies need your help

It is well-known locally that Agatha Christie is buried in St. Mary's Cholsey. It is an idyllic spot, located on the edge of the village and surrounded by gently rolling fields. What is less well known, but equally worthy of note, is that St. Mary's Cholsey regularly tops the species diversity list in the Upper Thames churchyard butterfly survey, which covers Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire. In 2015 21 species were observed; in 2018 this number was 17.

Burial grounds can be incredibly rich in biodiversity, supporting a fantastic array of different plant and insect species. However, across the south east of England, burial grounds have become small islands of lightly managed habitat surrounded by agricultural intensification, housing developments, pollution and the everyday use of chemicals that have collectively and inexorably reduced our biodiversity elsewhere. The turf of old burial grounds is the flowery, meadow turf of the past; it has never been ploughed up and re-seeded

with rye-grass nor laid with turf from elsewhere. Historically, this area of open grassland was managed as a hay crop with the hay making up part of the vicar's stipend. Following the hay cut, sheep or a pony would have grazed it down. St. Mary's churchyard is beautifully cared for by Cholsey PC who pays contractors with mechanical mowers to keep it that way. Regular mowing makes for a tidy churchyard but it does reduce the flowers available as a pollen and nectar resource and eliminates long grass. Ideally a mosaic of habitat should be sought with some tidy areas and some wilder areas. Eight years ago, Cholsey PC took the progressive step to remove 2 areas from the contractors' plan and allow Ben Hobbs to manage them for wildlife. A passionate butterfly enthusiast, he generously and tirelessly volunteered his time to create a haven for butterflies, knowing that other species such as birds, bees and small mammals would also benefit.

Creating a haven for butterflies isn't all about providing flowers for nectar. Most butterflies lay their eggs on plants which will be eaten by the caterpillars when they hatch; each species of caterpillar prefers only certain kinds of leaves. A lot of them use native meadow grasses, including skippers, marbled whites, meadow brown and gatekeeper. Among the best grasses are some of the bents (agrostis), cocksfoot, false brome and fescues and meadow grasses. If an area of these grasses is left to grow long the meadow brown butterflies should breed in it. Similarly, many common garden butterflies, such as the red admiral, comma and small tortoiseshell, lay eggs on stinging nettles. I am sure he won't mind me saying that Ben is approaching is 80th birthday and would really appreciate some help, particularly with strimming and mowing and the raking up. If you can spare a few hours of your time please contact Ben (torgitta2@ntlworld.com) or the Estate Manager

(estatemanager.cpc@outlook.com)

It's not worth the risk

Do you know that 95% of collisions are due to human error? Distraction, speeding, not wearing a seatbelt and driving under the influence of drink or drugs are the big fatal four on our county's roads.

Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service have put together top tips to help you avoid the fatal four 365alive.co.uk/fatalfour.

Allotment Payments

Liz, the Parish Council's Estates Manager, is undertaking the mammoth annual task of collecting payments for our 300 plus allotments. If you have not paid, or want to give up, can you please do so ASAP and then we can get on with allocating them for others to enjoy at the start of the season.

Wednesday Drop-in

If you, or someone you know, have mental health issues, feel isolated or lonely, why not come along to our Wednesday morning drop-in. We do some gentle exercise, usually a walk, an activity and then cook lunch together. For info contact Poppy on 07751 099680.

May What's Ons

Saturdays - The Pavilion Community Tea Shop – 10:00 – 12:00pm

Wednesdays 10am – 1pm – The Pavilion Community Support Drop-In for adults with mental health conditions, includes lunch, activities and space to talk. Costs £4

Thursdays 12 – 12.45pm The Pavilion 'Time to Breathe' Gentle Exercise, Mindfulness and Meditation.

Weds 1st May 7.30pm The Pavilion Annual Parish Meeting

Thurs 2nd May 7am-10pm The Pavilion/The Great Hall Local Elections

Tues 7th May 11am-12.30pm Day Centre COPA Brunch Club £4. Bookings Jennie Kent 652100

Weds 15th 7.30pm The Pavilion Annual Meeting of the Parish Council

Sat 18th 11am-1.45pm The Pavilion Repair Cafe

Tues 21st 12.45 Cholsey Day Centre - COPA Film Club £3 inc tea/cake. No need to book.

Thurs 23rd Library 10-12 noon COPA Chat

Tues 28th Red Lion COPA Lunch Group. Bookings via Jennie Kent 652100

Opening Times

Parish Office – Wednesday 10am-12pm, at other times call us for appointment. Phone 652255

Library Monday to Friday 2- 4.30pm, Friday 6 – 7.30pm and Saturday 9.30am – 12.30pm

Day Centre Monday, Wednesday and Friday 10am – 4pm. Phone 652970

Happy Hub Mon – Wed and Friday 9.15-11.30am, Thurs 9.45-11.15 at the Great Hall, Sat 10-11.30am. Activities and fun for under 5s.

Baby Group Wed 12.30-2.20pm at the Happy Hub.