

# SIBFORD SCENE

February 2021

No 430





## ED'S THOUGHTS

### THE SIBFORD SCENE NEEDS YOU!!!

In 2020 our printing costs increased by 25% as we published an extra summer issue due to demand from so many people working from home and also extra pages in some issues. All editorial and distribution tasks are willingly done by many volunteers in our villages, so we are very efficiently run.

But, our bank account is depleted and we need your support if we are to continue publishing the Scene.

We would prefer donations to be paid directly into the SIBFORD SCENE NatWest bank account 60 01 35, 52612236. Or donations can be submitted in an envelope to the village shop, to the Editor or to the Treasurer. Any donations however small would be very much appreciated. Thank You!

### PHOTOS AND PICTURES

You'll see this issue has a new-style cover. Photo courtesy of Fiona Steane. I am asking you all for photos and pictures for future front covers, so please feel free to send them to me (Format: Portrait, JPEG)

Thought for the month....

"Can't find my way home....."

Steve Winwood



## LETTERS AND NOTICES

**ROYAL BRITISH LEGION:** The poppy appeal raised a total of £854. This was a great achievement considering that there was no door-to-door collection this year. Many thanks to all those who had collection boxes on their premises and to everyone who contributed so generously to this very worthwhile cause.

Peter Abbott

### THANKYOU

Some lovely person left a mixed box of beers in our shed with no name or address.

To whom it may concern, a Huge Thank you.

Mary and Norman.

Hope you are all well as are we.

M xx

Mary Nash



## LETTERS AND NOTICES

### Millennium Field closure

In order to retain "permissive path" status on the paths around the Millennium Field it will be closed for 24 hours only on Wednesday 10th February. The closure will not affect the use of the public path at the top of the field.

Peter Morgan, Secretary, The Town Estate Charity Sibford Gower and Burdrop

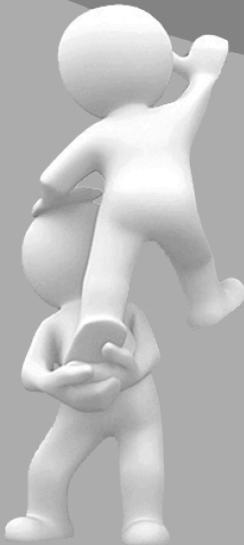
### The Blaze Inn Saddles Planning Application

For any comments on this application, please follow this link: <https://planningregister.cherwell.gov.uk/Planning/Display/20/03347/F>

To look at the SGPC's response, please go to the website for the latest council minutes

The deadline for any comments is the 4th February 2021

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## VILLAGE HALL NEWS

### CHANGE OF TRUSTEES

At the November meeting of the Sibford Village Hall CIO, some members had to step down.

Terms of office change in rotation and we had to say goodbye to Joan Broady and Keith Hicks

.Many thanks to Joan for her years of strong leadership and enthusiasm , and to Keith –a man of many talents and the only one who knows how to put up a marquee properly!

David Allen is also stepping down and we thank him for working hard on resourcing and obtaining grants for the Hall.

Joan is looking to form "The Friends of Sibford Village Hall" group which will include volunteers who can help with certain events /functions in the future.

### CURRENT TRUSTEES

Charlotte Davis [Chair] , Ginny Bennett [Booking Secretary] , Peter Conway [Treasurer] , Joanne Connor [Secretary],

Chris Cullen , Kat Davison , Juliette Glazebrook [Lottery] , Sally Hopkyns , Diana Hughes , Mavis Lamb , Clive and Jan Warner.

Isobel George will liase between the Trustees and the Friends of SVH ..

The Trustees are a group of local villagers of all ages and backgrounds, working together for the Village. We want to welcome any new volunteers who wish to be involved , either as a "Friend" or as a Trustee in the future. The message is come and join us!

### VILLAGE HALL LOTTERY

GREAT NEWS !!

A Village Hall Lottery is coming to the Sibfords!!

There will be a monthly draw, with funds raised to be split evenly between the Prize payout and Village Hall funds.

There will be three prizes ranging in value each month with a special bonus prize draw at Christmas and at the Summer Fair [or Summer event].

You can opt to pay £48 a year – that's just £4 a month! (less than a Costa Coffee!) or pay 6 monthly, or even monthly if you wish.

We hope to hold the first draw on March 1st 2021

For more details and to register your interest please contact Juliette Glazebrook

[juliette53@btinternet.com](mailto:juliette53@btinternet.com)



## VILLAGE HALL NEWS

(Cont'd)

### **FUTURE PROGRAMME of EVENTS**

As we are still in difficult times with the Pandemic, it is hard to fill the diary with the fun things that we would like. We do plan to hold the following events if restrictions permit:

Easter Egg Trail April 2nd , Good Friday

Car Boot Sale May 2nd

Jazz Picnic June 12th

Annual Quiz November

More details next month.

### **VILLAGE HALL WEBSITE**

Research is being done with a view to designing a dedicated VH Website.

This will bring us more up to date and can enable us to have an online booking system , and more easily follow what is going on and find information.

Ginny Bennett

## SIBFORD VILLAGE HALL - CHAIRMANS REPORT 2020

Well what a year!

it started like any other with our usual hiring's and the Quiz in January. Then towards the end of March we were forced to close due to Covid 19.

The big change this year was the resurfacing of the car park, this was due to the hard work of Chris Cullen finding the right contractors and overseeing the work, what a difference it has made to the appearance of the hall and no more pot holes. We also need to thank David Allen who has a great ability in acquiring grant money

We owe thanks to both Parish Councils and the Town Estates Charity for their support and generous donations which make a huge difference to improving the facilities of the hall. Also a big thank you to Cherwell District Council for their donation of £10,000 which has kept our finances at a healthy level and enabled us to keep paying our cleaners who are a great asset to the hall.

## CHAIRMANS REPORT 2020 - Cont'd

It is always dangerous to mention specific people when giving a report because the success of this hall is due to the enthusiasm and work of **ALL** the Trustees, however in this strange year both Keith Hicks and Ginny Bennett have spent many hours reading, interpreting and implementing the Government Guidelines for opening the hall. Without this commitment we would not have been able to open and the community owe them a huge thank you.

As this is my last Chairman's report please bear with me as I would like to mention the changes I have seen to this hall since joining the committee. I am going to list them so that it goes on record. Before I do this it is important to single out perhaps the most important item which is the hiring charges.

In 2012 income from hire charges (£4619) was 48.53% of the running costs (£9499). This meant that we had to find £4880 by running other events (the Fayre, Quiz Night and a lottery) just to cover running costs, and more for any improvements.

In 2019 income from hire charges (£10956) was 124% of running costs (£8838) leaving a surplus to go into reserves and together with profits from events going towards improvements.

Re writing the constitution and management structure; Refurbishment of the car park

Renovation of the large hall; New lighting in the large hall

New windows in the large hall; New hall curtains

New hall blind; New stage curtains

New stage lighting; Decoration of the large hall

Insulation and painting of the stage roof; New sound system and hearing loop

New projector and screen installation; New lighting in the small hall

Decoration of the small hall; New crockery and glass

Decoration of the Large hall lavatories; New flood lights over the car park

New outside power for front lawn area ; New motion-controlled lighting outside the small hall

Wi-Fi throughout the whole building

All of these changes help to make this hall a such great venue for a variety of events.

Finally I would like to thank all those who have helped make these improvements for their enthusiasm and commitment to this hall, we also had few laughs along the way

Joan Broady; November 17<sup>th</sup>. 2020



WELCOME

WELCOME TO SIBFORD

If you are new to the Sibfords and would like a 'Welcome to Sibford' booklet, providing details of village services and activities, please call Ivor Hopkyns on T: 788367 (Gower & Burdrop) or Nic Durrant T: 788865 (Ferris). And don't forget that we are lucky enough to have a really great village website too at: [thesibfords.org.uk](http://thesibfords.org.uk)

### **Rooms to Hire Sibford Gower**

Are you looking for a space to hire for a one off event or a regular booking? The Meeting House at Sibford Gower might answer your needs. The Meeting House has a large meeting room, a fully fitted modern kitchen with crockery, cutlery etc and a well equipped children's room.

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### **Holiday Cottage in Cornwall**

On the beautiful north coast in Poldark country, character cottage set in a large south-facing enclosed garden, is available for holiday lets. It is situated on the outskirts of the vibrant and friendly village of St Agnes.

**Scrumbles Hollow** sleeps six in three double bedrooms, one with ensuite shower room, plus a family bathroom. Full central heating.

The spacious cottage has an open fire place in a cosy sitting room, while the dining room boasts a log burner. New, fully equipped kitchen and separate utility room for sorting out sportswear after a day on the beach or walking the breathtaking countryside.

Lots of good local pubs and restaurants, shops and galleries. Excellent public transport connections, including Newquay airport (half an hour by car).

For more information, please contact Linda on 01295 780 242 or 07973 226 032 or [llindalaneyolo@gmail.com](mailto:llindalaneyolo@gmail.com)



The new variant of Covid-19 means that we have not had the start to the New Year we had all hoped for here at Sibford Gower Endowed Primary School. However, we had all of our contingency plans for a move to remote learning in place, just in case, and so were ready to make the switch when the latest national lockdown was announced.

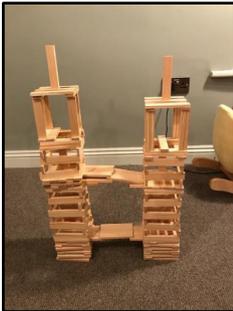
We have a number of parents who are critical workers, including 'front line' NHS staff, and nearly a third of our children still attending school and happily working in their bubbles. The rest of our children are learning at home and the feedback from parents of those children is that this is working well, with school staff on hand to support with any issues or concerns they may have.

Despite the inevitable challenges and stress of this time, staff are coping well and our parents have been wonderfully supportive. This is a very challenging time for all of the adults in school and the messages of encouragement and thanks from our parents have made all the difference. Even though our school community is currently spread across a number of local villages, there is still a strong sense of that community.

We are still organising much of the learning through topics, Bright Lights, Big City (with a focus on London) for our younger children and Traders & Raiders (The Anglo Saxons) for our older children.

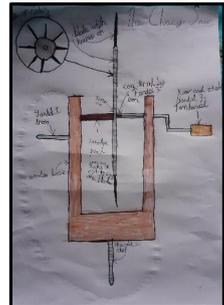
Families have been sending in some amazing photos of topic work they have completed at home, including a wonderful model of Tower Bridge by Eleanor.

The older children have been collating Anglo-Saxon timelines and fact files, designing and making their own Anglo-Saxon weapons and then writing an advert (persuasive text) in an attempt to sell their weapon to another Anglo-Saxon.



**Tower Bridge by Eleanor**

**A seax by Jacob**



**A design for a very scary weapon by Amelia**

The older children have also been conducting science experiments including ...can you build a boat which can float with a 2lb bag of sugar as cargo? (yes we can!) and ..... can you create an indoor volcano?

To find out more about our wonderful village school please take a look at our website at

<http://www.sibford-gower.oxon.sch.uk/>



**Indoor volcano, created by Henry**

## Virtual open events

Due to current Covid-19 restrictions, Sibford School is unable to run face to face open events as originally planned. The school has created a series of videos to enable those interested in Sibford to see the school in action, meet key members of staff and learn more about what Sibford offers to pupils aged 3- 18.

If you are interested in accessing these virtual open events, visit [sibfordschool.co.uk/events](http://sibfordschool.co.uk/events) and simply fill out the contact form to learn more about Sibford.

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## Sibford staff and pupils embrace virtual learning

Under government guidance, the Sibford School buildings once more shut again in early January, with staff and pupils reverting back to virtual learning.

The first week of home learning saw a variety of exciting lessons and creative activities for pupils aged 3- 18.

As part of their new topic on 'frozen worlds', Junior School pupils packed for an expedition to the Antarctic, made their own polar goggles and created Antarctic research stations.

A Year 8 class have started to plan a class production of 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' ready for a summer term showcase. They are busy casting, planning, and designing the set and costumes- all from home! There was even a live biology practical demo on the chromatography of chlorophyll.





## NEWS FROM THE SIDECAR GUYS

### THE ARMCHAIR FESTIVAL

We started the festival in April as a direct response to the Covid 19 situation. It was the world's first ever virtual adventure festival and was hosted by Reece and I. We were live for over 18 hours over the weekend of 24<sup>th</sup> -26<sup>th</sup> April and we held virtual talks, interviews and panel discussions with some of the world's top adventurers – including Charley Boorman and Claudio von Planta of Long Way Round fame. The event was a resounding success and we had over 20,000 people view the event in a total of 95 countries around the world raising over £8,000 for the NHS Charities Together Fund. There was interest in us doing more with the festival so we are! We will be holding the second festival this winter which will be more of the same for another good cause and up until then we will be holding monthly film nights. The first film night will take place on the 28<sup>th</sup> of this month and then on the last Sunday of every month thereafter. We have a brilliant film lined up called Dugout which was made by two British guys who went to the Amazon and 'dug out' a canoe from a tree before taking it on an adventure down the local river. There will be a live Q&A with the film makers after and anybody can watch for free. You just have to go to [www.armchairadventurefestival.com](http://www.armchairadventurefestival.com) and follow instructions to sign up.

We've also been continuing to work on our book and film and have made some great progress. The book, written by me and entitled "Our Ridiculous World (Trip)" will be released in the last weekend of August. It's the story of our around the world journey by scooter and sidecar with a focus on the people we met on the way and the issue of modern slavery which we researched as we travelled. It would be fantastic if you could publicise it in the Scene. I could even send you a copy for review if you like! Pre-orders will be available to buy on the Armchair Adventure Festival website at the film night and thereafter.



## NATURE NOTES

Following my last nature notes it was good to get some feedback from Paul Clayson who reported that they had three hatchings of Blackbirds during the Summer in their relatively small garden in Burdrop, including 2 successive broods out of one nest. 12 birds fledged and they it appears along with plenty of others are still about. He also commented that they do feed them and they also provide a water bath which the birds regularly use, sometimes queuing up to drink and bathe. Water is often overlooked by people.

I have certainly noticed an increase in the number of birds in the garden especially during the recent cold spell. A flock of Goldfinches seems to be permanently on the bird feeders from dawn till dusk and it is lovely to hear the Robin singing before it gets light in the morning. Most surprisingly a Pied Wagtail was seen in the garden pecking around on the ground under the bird feeders on 8th January and then again on the following few days. They are quite common in the area but tend to be seen on large open areas like the school playing fields and car parks. It is the first one I have ever seen in our garden.

Alice Pennell found and photographed a Brimstone butterfly hibernating amongst the Ivy she was collecting for Christmas decorations. These are one of the longer lived of the British butterflies emerging in the late summer, hibernating over winter and then appearing again in Spring when the weather warms up.

As always any contributions for the next nature notes would be most welcome.  
Email to [ajnewbold88@gmail.com](mailto:ajnewbold88@gmail.com) Andy and Gill Newbold



Would anyone like to guess who this is?

(From Eveline Boughton)

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NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

## NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

I know times are pretty depressing, wearing and a bit scary, However, we may be in lockdown, but the thieving community is not. Among the many attempts to get their hands on your money the following are particularly nasty.

1. Dyfed Powys Police Cyber Crime Unit are investigating attempts via email, text and cold calling to lure people into applying for the Covid-19 vaccine. The FAKE NHS website states: "We have identified that you are eligible to apply for your vaccine" - and guess what, they need your personal details for payment to be made!! As usual the website is fairly convincing but please don't be tempted to engage with these horrible people. There are no short cuts to getting the vaccine. Thank you to our local member and resident for this info.
2. The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) have warned that fraudsters are using online adverts to scam pension savers on an "industrial scale". These investment scams vary, but usually involve promises of huge, inflation beating returns which are often claimed to be "guaranteed". Households are also warned to be wary of a free "pension review" which could be "the first step of a process which will lead someone to investing in something which is too good to be true". Again, always check the provenance of these offers, however tempting. (info. The Daily Telegraph 7.1.21).

And finally, the Sibfords website has a coronavirus scams page which is regularly updated by Tim Huckvale.

With best wishes to you all for 2021.

Peter Hine

Watch co-ordinator

788830



## **Scammers target residents with promise of coronavirus vaccine**

**Read the story on the Oxfordshire County Council website below:**

Residents are urged to be on their guard against scammers using the promise of a coronavirus vaccine to con them out of money.

Criminals across the country are contacting people out of the blue with offers of a coronavirus vaccination. These approaches have been made by text or from a recorded voice message on the telephone.

In each case the recipient is required to respond by clicking a link in the text message or by pressing 1 when receiving the call. They are then asked to give personal information, as well as financial details to book their vaccination. However, these are scams, with criminals exploiting the pandemic to attempt to steal personal details and people's money.

The NHS is currently offering the COVID-19 vaccine free of charge to people most at risk from coronavirus. These people will be contacted by the NHS.

**Jody Kerman, Oxfordshire County Council's head of trading standards, said:** "Unfortunately, scammers will use any high-profile situation to try to commit their crimes and the coronavirus pandemic has given them a new opportunity. Scammers will often use fear tactics, or claims of big rewards or access to restricted goods and services – trying to rush their victims and taking away their time to think."

### **Other warning signs to watch out for include:**

Scammers who try to get you to pay them money for 'early access' to the vaccine.

Scammers who ask for private information such as bank account details or your NHS number.

Scammers knocking on your door claiming they can get you early access to the COVID-19 vaccine.

Vaccine-themed phishing campaigns from suspicious email addresses with hyperlinks that contain misspelled domain names.

Highly emotive language designed to manipulate you; do not supply login credentials or personal information in response to an email.



Cont'd

**People are urged to:**

Monitor key financial accounts regularly.

Keep software and apps updated.

If you get a suspicious text asking you to click on a link this could be a scam. Donot click on the link.

If you receive a recorded voice message on your phone and are asked to press a number, this could be a scam.

Do not press any buttons and do not call the number back.

Report all scams to us via Citizens Advice Consumer Service on 0808 223 1133.

There has been a surge worldwide of vaccine-related 'phishing' email scams, and this is expected to increase in these in the coming days. Previous phishing emails have contained malicious files that installed malware, or links to bogus websites to obtain the victim's information.

Scams cost the UK economy £5-£10 billion a year and there is a scam out there for everybody. Before clicking on a link or providing your personal details, stop and 'take five'. Never be afraid to delete the text, put the phone down or close the door.

To find out more about how scams work, the harm they cause and how you can help to protect people in your community, consider becoming a Friend Against Scams at [www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk](http://www.friendsagainstscams.org.uk)

For more details on the 'Take 5' campaign, go to <https://takefive-stopfraud.org.uk/>

## LOCAL MARKETS

Banbury - Every Thursday & Saturday. Farmers Market - 1st Friday of the month

Deddington Farmers - 4th Saturday of the month (click & collect)

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## In Your Garden - February

Garden makers are never totally satisfied. There is always more to be done, more ideas to try out. Now is a great time to take a look, and notice that there are dull patches behind the shed – and that nothing likes to grow by the garden gates, and what is that awful straggly plant that someone kindly gave you three years ago, and it hasn't flowered yet. We don't seem to be allowed to travel more than a few miles in the present lockdown, but if it lifts before the month is over, there are some spectacular gardens not far away, who will be open. My favourite is Cerney House, where a snowdrop trail goes all through the woodland, and there are a great collection of hellebores too. The marvellous William Kent garden at Rousham is open as well, and a bit further away Colesbourne Park, with the National Collection of snowdrops, and a brilliant blue lake, is staggering beautiful. But check the lockdown rules, and check the opening times on line before you venture out. Any of these lovely gardens will inspire you.

When you want to get outside, pull your gloves on, and get down and dirty, here are a few jobs:-

- 1 Cut the leaves away from the hellebore flowers. If the leaves have black spots on don,t put them in the compost.
- 2 Divide and replant the snowdrops as soon as they have finished flowering.
3. Winter flowering shrubs can be pruned back when they have finished flowering.
4. Time to get out the ladders! Prune the wisteria; be brutal, and cut back to two buds. Cut off the long straggly shoots that try to climb under the gutters. Be careful – please don,t fall off.
- 5 Towards the end of the month you can plant lilies. They are particularly nice to have in pots, so that you can move them around to where you like to sit, and enjoy the amazing scent.
- 6 You may have already started planting your sweet peas, but be warned – last year mine were little green shoots, and the next day they had vanished. A naughty mouse was in the greenhouse, and had enjoyed nibbling them, so you might like to put a mousetrap near them.
7. Pansies and violas in pots will need deadheading, and a drink of liquid plant food will make them flourish again.
8. Evergreen hedges should be pruned before the birds start nesting.
9. If you have a nice warm windowsill, or a greenhouse, you can start sowing seeds of flowering annuals, and start chitting new potatoes.
10. Clear the beds of weeds, and you can still divide and re-plant herbaceous plants.

Jupe Hitching



## FUN CORNER

### University of Oxford Recognition of distinction.

In assessing candidates for this exercise faculty boards are asked please to note that God is not eligible for consideration to hold the title of professor for the following reasons:-

He has only one major publication

It is in obscure languages

It has no references

It is not published in a referred journal

Some even doubt he wrote it himself

It may be true he created the universe, but what has he done since then?

The scientific community has had a hard time replicating his results

He never applied to the Ethics Committee for permission to use human subjects

When an experiment went wrong, he tried to cover up by drowning the subjects

### Laughs from Ivor:

Those who jump off a bridge in Paris are in Seine.

A man's home is his castle, in a manor of speaking. '

Dijon vu - the same mustard as before.

A man needs a mistress just to break the monogamy.

A hangover is the wrath of grapes.

Does the name Pavlov ring a bell?

A bicycle can't stand on its own because it is two tired.

What's the definition of a will? (It's a dead give away.)

She was engaged to a boyfriend with a wooden leg but broke it off.

A chicken crossing the road is poultry in motion.

If you don't pay your exorcist, you get repossessed

With her marriage, she got a new name and a dress..



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## Wykham Arms Takeaway Menu.

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Real Ale Battered fresh Fish  
Chunky chips, Tartar sauce  
£12.50

Persian Style Baharat chicken flat bread.  
mint yoghurt, humous, gherkins, tomato, red onion.  
£13.00.

Chicken or vegetable Madras.  
basmati rice, veggie pakora.  
£14.50.

Grilled House Burger & Chips.  
(Meat or Plant based) £9.00  
Add Cheddar, Stilton, Brie £1.00 or back bacon £1.50.

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# SUNEDAY SMALLHOLDING

## Suneday Self sufficiency

Four and a half months of self-sufficient living has been accomplished. My aim to reach August 31<sup>st</sup>.

Last night thanks to my son, I was barbequing strips of venison over a smouldering bonfire. Supplies of lamb, chicken and sausages are holding up. I also get protein from eggs and milk so all is well. Fresh vegetables at the moment are leeks, parsnips, turnips, spinach, swede purple, sprouting broccoli, in store the potatoes, carrots and beetroot are keeping exceptionally well. In my freezer I have plenty of vegetable soup made in the autumn. I am getting through the various jams at an alarming rate and still have a few bottles of pears, elderflower cordial and rosehip syrup. Sour dough bread making happens every other weekend. I don't miss tea and coffee, the cider has turned out to be palatable and a recent gift of elderflower champagne (thanks Tracy) has warmed up the long evenings. If I miss anything, it is cheddar cheese...roll on September!

Christmas plans changed at the last minute as I stayed at home rather than visiting my mother. My rules were relaxed, as in I did have a few treats but hardly compares to the feast I missed.

Esme has weaned her piglets, two of which have found a lovely new home with Milo and his brother in Oxhill. The remaining piglet will stay with Esme until the autumn. The plan is to get her back 'in pig' as soon as possible. She can have a litter in the summer and then have a rest until the following spring. I have decided that winter farrowing is to be avoided. I will once again try AI-ing her and if that fails, try to get Ginger back.

The chickens are fed up. Being enclosed due to the legal requirement to keep domestic poultry separate from wild birds due to Avian Influenza. A couple of times I have been working in the chicken run and have let them out for an hour or two. Their behaviour changes from being miserable, silent and sulky to lots of wing stretching, interested, chatty, busy and active.

Rosie Red Collar has returned from her visit to the billy goat and is hopefully pregnant. She is due to give birth in May. Sofie is continuing to give me over 2 litres of milk each day.

My attention will soon turn towards seed planting... I look forward to my first lettuce!



# HORTI SOCIETY

Dear friends, here is the Horti Programme for 2021.

Wednesday 10 March. Joffy Elphic talk on 'Crayfish on the Lawn', which will be delivered by zoom

Wednesday 14 April. Victoria Logue. 'Practical propagation - seeds, cuttings and beyond' delivered by zoom or in person

Saturday 8 May Plant Sale at Carter's Yard

Saturday 22 May Spring Show

Wednesday 9 June. All day outing to Ashwood Nurseries

Wednesday 14 July Evening visit, Rousham Gardens

Saturday 28 August summer Show

Wednesday 13 October Martin Gascoigne-Pees on 'Sibford local butterflies and how we can attract them to our gardens'

Wednesday 10 November Timothy Walker. From Diaz to Diamonds.

The first two fixtures of the year can be accessed by a zoom link, to be published in March on the Sibford Website. We will have to follow Govt. Covid guidelines for the remainder of the programme.

One of our members has designed a beautiful strong but simple metal plant support, ideal for tomatoes, dwarf beans, clematis and other climbers growing in pots. Horti members are being offered a discount of 12.5% So visit [spiraclimb.co.uk](http://spiraclimb.co.uk) and apply the code SIBHORT010 at the online checkout.

Best wishes,

Diana

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The advertisement is a graphic for '4 PAWS Dog Walking Service'. It features a central text area with a bone-shaped logo at the top. The text describes the service, including solo dog walking, group walks, and home visits. It also lists contact information for Teresa. Four paw print icons are arranged around the central text, each containing a specific service feature: 'DOG FIRST AID', 'FULLY INSURED', 'EXPERIENCED', and 'DBS CHECKED'. At the bottom, there are logos for 'Dog First Aid' and Facebook.

## 400 years on

A personal note from Hugh Pidgeon, Chairman of the Gower Parish Council

I was fascinated to read the account in the wonderfully engaging and just recently re-issued account of life in the Sibfords 'From the Romans to Rock-n-Roll', of the dispute that broke out in 1891, some 25 years after the village school had been re-built on the same site as the original 1625 site of its foundation.

It seems it came to a head between the then vicar of Sibford, the ubiquitous Rev. Stevens - who insisted that the school was a church foundation - and a motley grouping of dissenters who held a meeting in a barn adjoining the then Bishop Blaize and put their signatures to a resolution of protest to the Charity Commissioners of the time. "The battle waged hotly", but the schools origins in the entirely non-sectarian Town Estates Charity were finally upheld.

Listed among the dissenters was "an array of long-established Sibford names" [see p.17], many of them well known in the village to this day, and most with a long-standing farming history stretching back to the time when the Charity was established over 400 years ago.

Tim Huckvale, thank you so much for reviving this! It is a fascinating read. It was published originally in 1960 by the then Sibford & District Local History Committee for the Village Hall Committee of the time: see <[thesibfords.uk](http://thesibfords.uk)> [scroll down to 'Search'].

It reminded me again of how deep-rooted and resilient a community we are privileged to live in. And it was this that prompted me to respond recently to an enquiry of someone who had just moved into the Ferris and was asking on the local 'NextDoor' website whether anyone had any recommendations for a good local primary school.

I wrote a reply hoping she would consider our own village primary school - which I feel strongly is still at the very heart of our community, 400 years on - and is its future. I was greatly heartened by the rush of supportive responses that followed.

Against the odds, I see that the Horti society is planning their meeting on Practical Propagation on the 14<sup>th</sup> April "on line if still necessary", but in hope of it being in the Village Hall. The newly established Village Hall Committee themselves are weighing up the odds. I do so hope as you are reading this at the beginning of February we are at least edging our way to that being a possibility. And that all those activities of the community that have been held in abeyance for so long might once again flourish for all to see!

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## SIBFORDS WALKING GROUP

### Walking dates:

1 February; 15 February; 1 March; 15 March; 29 March

We shall start on foot from the Village Hall most times. At the moment since we are in the lowest tier for Covid we are going in groups of 5 with a leader with a further group and leader 100 yards behind. Please get in touch with me by phone or email to book your place before each walk and let me know if in the end you aren't able to join us so I can organise the groups. Should the Covid rules change, I will endeavour to adapt our arrangements.

Best Wishes, Sue Bannister 01295 780365 [sebannister@gmail.com](mailto:sebannister@gmail.com)

Ian Sharp, [ian@iansharp.net](mailto:ian@iansharp.net), Lamb's Croft, Back Lane, Sibford Ferris, OX15 5RE. Tel. 01295 780790, is the footpaths warden and anyone who has a problem or complaint should contact him.

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Fridays

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## SIBFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Although , sadly, it will be impossible for many months to have a normal programme with speakers and excursions , we are planning a Zoom talk with Liz Woolley, on the day we would have held the AGM, March 18<sup>th</sup>.

The talk - 'Local History; how to do it!' will start at 8 pm, and the details on how to join will be given out nearer the time. Liz, a tutor in history and local history at Oxford University Department for Continuing Education , is already very popular with the Sibfords History Society.

She says, "Being a local historian is rather like being a detective - great fun- but hopefully without the risk of being kidnapped , shot or arrested! The talk aims to inspire and inform, giving lots of ideas about where to start, what sources of information are available, and what to do with the results of all your hard work."

Tim will add the Zoom details to the event notice on the website a week before the meeting. Until then, happy hunkering down!

## Sibford Photography Club

Recently formed, Sibford Photography Club is an informal group with a shared interest in photography that began holding monthly meetings (currently online) just a few months ago. Activities include instructive presentations and regular photo topics with the resulting images presented and discussed at meetings (face to face or virtual). For example this month our topic was "Movement", as shown in these photos. In the future, we hope to arrange photoshoots and possibly exhibitions. We would like to welcome more members to the club, so if you are interested in joining, please contact Colin Lamb at [colinlamb.cl@gmail.com](mailto:colinlamb.cl@gmail.com) or phone 01295 780357.





## DID YOU KNOW?

At the Banbury end of Main Street in Sibford Ferris stands a stone, rubble and thatched cottage known as Little London. Many villages in England have the first or last cottage, depending on whether you are entering or leaving the village, named 'Little London'. This is because this particular house is the nearest residence to the capital city.

In 1998 Little London in Sibford Ferris was bought by Graham Piercey. In a very poor state, he bought it with a view to restoring it using traditional building methods, materials and tools. He spent over five years on his restoration project sensitively restoring the building to its former glory. He found that it had originally been two separate cottages of different ages which had been joined together with an infill. The newer part was some 100-200 years younger than the older cottage which was dated to the mid-1500's and was the one nearer to the village.



He uncovered a deep inglenook fireplace and bread oven in the newer part. The timbers which were still sound were thought to be original and made from elm and it is thought that there had been an elm wood behind the cottage hundreds of years ago. The window openings were also thought to be original but were in a very poor state with layers of paint holding together the powdered wooden frames. The living room in the older cottage was in a very poor state – the window lintel had failed and when the walls, which had been boarded and bonded with cement and covered in wallpaper were removed, the whole of the end corner of the cottage fell out leaving the rafters suspended in the open air!

The floor throughout the ground floor had been cemented and investigation in the living area in the newer part of cottage revealed slabs of Hornton stone so permission was sought and given, to replace the whole of the ground floor with Hornton stone flagstones. Whilst repairing the steeper of the two staircases Graham found a blackened coin and a simple flagon shaped glass bottle. When cleaned, the coin turned out to be an Elizabethan silver sixpence, dated 1575. It is thought that someone building a dwelling at that time would place a coin of the realm somewhere in the house to bring good luck and prosperity to those who lived there. This coin has helped to date the property to the 16<sup>th</sup> century. A further coin, dated 1739, was found set into the inglenook fireplace in the newer cottage.



On the beams he found many huge nails which would have been used to hang items over the centuries. There were also many deliberately carved notches which may have been part of a counting or tally system in the past. There was also a metal hook which would have been used to hang a fish-oil lamp – popular in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as a cheap form of lighting as an alternative to the more expensive tallow candles. On the door lintel and on the timber above there were some very simply carved human figures which may have been ritual marks in connection with magic or witchcraft.



## DID YOU KNOW?

cont'd



On the beams he found many huge nails which would have been used to hang items over the centuries. There were also many deliberately carved notches which may have been part of a counting or tally system in the past. There was also a metal hook which would have been used to hang a fish-oil lamp – popular in the 18<sup>th</sup> century as a cheap form of lighting as an alternative to the more expensive tallow candles. On the door lintel and on the timber above there were some simply carved huma, which may have been ritual marks in connection

with magic or witchcraft. Upstairs the roof timbers are original and included many simple poles in addition to the major timbers. Every part of the tree was used including fibrous stands which tied the thatch into the roof timbers. Elm floor-boarding was found under later Victorian pine floorboards and were also thought to be original. The damaged ones were restored or replaced with new elm boards. Graham spent three years looking for a good source of elm. He eventually found, and bought a section of a felled elm, had it planked and brought to Sibford Ferris from Grantham. Originally the whole of the upstairs of each separate cottage may have been one single sleeping area for a whole family of adults and children. When the cottages were joined the infill area may have formed additional bedroom space between the two existing sleeping areas.

Graham decided to turn this infill area into a bathroom – something that would not have featured in earlier times. Bathing would have been a tin bath in front of the fire and a privy in the garden would have served toilet needs and provided night soil for the garden. He found that the roof timbers in this section of the building had failed – it had been packed with straw and boarded over. Once the bathroom was installed, the kitchen refurbished and a central heating system installed, Graham's makeover of these two old cottages was complete.

Personal circumstances required Graham to sell his home to a new custodian who also carried out further sympathetic improvements and an extension to the house known as Little London.

Maureen Hicks

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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

## FEBRUARY

1st - Sibford Waling Group - Village Hall

10th - Millenium Field closed

13th - Vaalai's Sri Lankan Food - Village Hall - 530pm

15th - Sibford Waling Group - Village Hall

27th - Vaalai's Sri Lankan Food - Village Hall - 530pm

**Why don't Polar Bears eat Penguins?**

Their paws are too big to take the wrappers off.

**What do you call an animal with no body and no nose?**

Nobody knows.

(Ouch!) Andy Newbold

## FEBRUARY BIN COLLECTIONS

Green Tuesday: 2nd; 16th

Blue/Brown Tuesday: 9th; 23rd

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Bill's frosty sheep - photo by  
Sue Sabin