

THE ORACLE

SPRING 2024
ISSUE 118

ORAC NEWS
WHATS ON

A POSTCARD FROM...

LUCY'S NEWS

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN
UPDATE



Issue 118 of The Oracle was compiled and edited by:

Gill Chapman

Would you like to be part of the editorial team? No experience required, just basic IT skills and the ability to work to a deadline as part of a friendly, collaborative team.

Please get in touch via email: oracle@occold.com

The Oracle is a quarterly magazine published in March (Spring), June (Summer), September (Autumn) and December (Winter). Deadlines for each edition are usually around the 14th of the preceding month.

To Advertise in the Oracle please contact Gill at orac.treasurer@occold.com with your advert. Prices remain the same for another year:

4 issues	Full page	£54	1 issue	Full Page	£15
4 Issues	Half Page	£30	1 Issue	Half Page	£8
4 issues	¼ page	£15	1 issue	¼ page	£4

Revenue from advertising in The Oracle goes to ORAC, helping to fund the production of the magazine and the maintenance and development of the Village Hall, playing field, playground and village green. Our thanks go to **Occold Primary school** who are involved in printing the magazine.

All submissions for publication should be emailed to oracle@occold.com

Use these settings in Word:

Font: Calibri 14

Narrow margins

Paragraphs: no spacing

No headers or footers

Submit a word, small pdf or jpg file

Guidance is on the village website www.occold.onesuffolk.net

Many thanks to everyone who has contributed to this edition.

If you have an interesting hobby or have visited somewhere of interest and feel you could write an article for the magazine, your input would be much appreciated.

Village Hall Bookings: villagehall@occold.com or 01379 678198

ORAC News

It was quite a busy time for the Village Hall over the Christmas period. Things started off with the Xmas fair at the end of November. At least 15 stalls filled the hall with a wide variety of items for sale and the event was well supported. Thanks to everyone who came.

The annual ORAC Christmas meal was held on Saturday 10th December with over 60 people attending. Member of the committee and a small team of helpers cooked the 3 course meal that was enjoyed by all.

In January we welcomed The Dove Players to the village hall with their performance of their pantomime 'Puss in Boots'. What an amazing performance with many of the leading roles being played by young people, full of corny jokes and traditional pantomime heroes and villains. A good time was had by all – Oh yes it was!!

Our regular events continue as we move into 2024 (see below) with more events planned. We have been successful in applying for a couple of small grants from MSDC, one of which is being used to support the Coffee mornings, Soup Lunches and Craft Clubs sessions through the Living Well in Winter funding. Please come along to the Village Hall to share a warm space with good company at these time. Dates listed below.

We are planning a working weekend for the Mayday bank holiday (4th & 5th May) to tackle some of the maintenance required in the playground and spread new bark chippings. If you can come and give a hand from 10am on those days your help will be most appreciated.

We are aiming to hold a Quiz Night on Saturday 1st June including a light supper, more to follow.

We are bringing the ORAC AGM forward this year to 23rd May. It was moved to August during Covid and now needs to be returned it original time. One member of the committee will be standing down and Ted is passing on his role as Vice Chair so we will need a new Chairperson. Carol and Gill are continuing as Secretary and Treasurer but many hands make light work so please think about joining us on the committee if you feel you could spare a bit of time. We meet monthly at the village hall. Minutes of meetings are available at occold.onesuffolk.net

ORAC Committee 2023:

Ted Hampson	Vice Chair	email: orac.chairman@occold.com
Gill Chapman	Treasurer	email: orac.treasurer@occold.com
Carol Peters	Secretary	email: orac.secretary@occold.com

Nigel Woodhouse, Dan Hull, Russell Grange, John Davis, Gordon Erhorn, Johanna Matta

Editor's Note:

I would like to thank everyone who has contributed to this Issue of the Orqcle. There are articles and information from many village groups and organisations, and items that I hope you find interesting and entertaining. Thanks to those who advertise as this helps towards the printing costs, and to the team of people who help to deliver the magazine. It is a bumper issue this month!

What's on in the Village Hall:

Coffee Mornings

1st Monday of the month:
4th March, 1st April, 6th May, 3rd June

Soup Lunches

Last Friday in the month:
22nd March – WI, 26th April - Jubilee Baptist Church, 31st May - ORAC

Craft Club

3rd Wednesday of the month:
20th March 2024, 17th April, 15th May

Table Tennis

every Monday 6 – 7.30pm - New Players always welcome, no need to book. £3 per person, £2 for other household members.

Bellicise

every Thursday morning 10 - 11am

Yoga Classes with Abie

Monday evenings 8 - 9pm

Transformational Yoga

Tuesday evenings 6.30 – 7.45pm & Friday mornings 10.00 – 11.15am – see posters for dates.

WI meetings

1st Wednesday of the month – 6th March, 3rd April, 1st May

Orac meetings

28th March, 25th April 7.30pm (may be subject to change - please contact secretary if you wish to attend)

23rd May AGM 7.30pm

Parish Council meetings

4th March, 8th April, 13th May 8pm. Please check dates with Clerk if you wish to attend

Book Sale

St Michael's Church Saturday 6th April 10.00am



*Postcard
from...
Salisbury*

We went to Salisbury for Christmas and to celebrate a big family birthday with friends and family from around the country. It was a fairly central place and somewhere we have not visited before. Also it is close to Stonehenge and our visit coincided with the Winter Solstice, so why not try and incorporate that into our plans?

Salisbury is an ancient medieval city in Wiltshire, renowned for its beautiful cathedral famously painted by John Constable in the 1820's/30's. The Cathedral that is known today dates back to 1220 when it was moved from its original site at Old Sarum where there was a Cathedral and Royal Castle built following the Norman Conquest. Following disputes between the priests and soldiers in the castle the then Pope agreed to moving to a new site 2 miles away in the river valley below. As the new Cathedral was built the city of Salisbury grew.

The Cathedral foundations are only 4 foot (1.2m) deep so it is amazing to know that it has the tallest spire in Britain, built between 1310 – 1330, that towers 123m above the ground and weighs 6500 tons. There are tower tours but the 332 steps to the base of the tower would require a decent level of fitness!

The Cathedral is home to the world's oldest working mechanical clock, built in 1386 and contains the best maintained copy of the Magna Carta, one of only 4 surviving original copies. This document dates from 1215 and was an agreement between King John and the Norman Barons and church leaders on the brink of civil war, who were protesting against the high taxes the king was demanding from the people to pay for his wars against France. The Magna Carta (Great Charter) is one of the most important legal documents in our history and has influenced the development of many modern legal and constitutional principles both in this country and across the world.



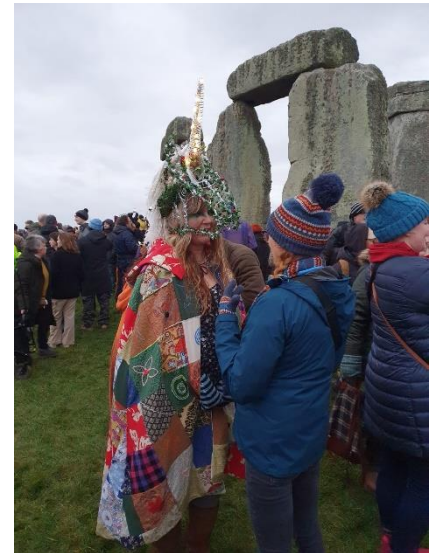
We stayed in a large house within walking distance of the city, spending time strolling round the Cathedral grounds, seeing some of the sight and visiting some of the old pubs - of which there are many. One in particular was quite an experience; a tiny establishment and one of the oldest in the city – The Haunch of Venison. Six of us squeezed into a tiny room beside the bar at the very front of the pub known as ‘The Horse Box’. However, we soon found out that this was the modern ‘polite’ name for the room as in years gone by it was the place where the ladies of the night would gather to make themselves available – the then red light area! Further back another small room held an interesting artefact that the locals were keen to tell us about. When the pub was being renovated some years before the mummified remains of a severed hand was found behind a wall. The story goes that someone was cheating at card ... and paid the ultimate price! The cards were still clutched under the fingers.



Our Solstice trip to Stonehenge was a trip to remember. Public access up to the stones is now only allowed twice a year on the mornings of the Winter and Summer Solstices. 3 car loads of us left the house at 5.30am for the sunrise due at 7.38am. Unfortunately we didn’t take the most direct route and ended up sitting in queues on the A303 for a few hours, creeping slowly forward as time ticked by. A few of us, needing a call of nature, got out and decided to try to get



over to the Stones. In the dark they legged it over the fields and down the mile long road between the visitor's centre and the stones. The rest of us stayed in the cars and were turned away when the car parks were closed. We saw the sunrise on the way back to Salisbury and a welcome cup of tea. The 3 who made it got involved with the crowds celebrating and dancing as the sun rose over the famous monument.



We discovered that Salisbury also has a secret wartime past. During World War II the building of Spitfires was moved to secret factories in rural cities, small towns and villages after the production factories in Southampton were destroyed in bombing raids. Salisbury became one of the most important producers with factories hidden in garages, bus depots and even sheds, reaching over 10% of the total number of planes ever built. To commemorate this there is now a memorial and a series of plaques around the city placed on the buildings that were requisitioned for Spitfire production.



Salisbury and the surrounding area is an interesting, varied and lovely place to visit. Unfortunately due to Christmas and the birthday celebrations we did not have the chance to see all that is available there, but we decided that it is somewhere we will definitely revisit in the future.

Gill Chapman

MID SUFFOLK

Refuse and Recycling Collection Schedule 2024



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- REFUSE (general rubbish) collection week
- RECYCLING collection week
- Refer to the MID SUFFOLK Christmas and New Year Waste Collection Schedule 2023-24
- Collections following a bank holiday will be a day later than usual for the rest of the week



Please put your bin out by 6.30am

To check for delays and report a missed collection, please visit www.midsuffolk.gov.uk
Alternatively, phone 0300 1234 000 (option 4)

Lucy's news – update from Mid Suffolk District Council

Flood Resilience Grant: Following the terrible flooding in the District this winter, the second grant for flooded homes is now being rolled out by Suffolk County Council. Homes that flooded during Storm Babet may be eligible for up to £5,000 to help reduce the risk and impact of future flooding.

For details see: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/property-flood-resilience-grant>

Flood Working Group: Together with members of the Parish Council and residents of the village, we are working to see where we can reduce flood risk in the village. We are also working on an emergency flood plan for Occold. If you would like to get involved, please get in touch with me or a member of the Parish Council. As part of these efforts, we are talking with Suffolk County Highways to discuss known problem areas (such as by the village hall/school entrance), to find out what can be done.

‘Cosy Homes’ – help to keep warm and reduce bills: Mid Suffolk District Council wants to help many more people in the District to insulate their homes. Improving home insulation can cut energy bills, as well as reducing CO2 emissions.

- You may be able to get a grant of up to £3,500 to pay for insulation measures such as loft, floor or wall insulation. To qualify you'll need to have an income of under £60,000 and less than £16,000 in savings.
- Find out more at <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/mid-suffolk-cosy-homes> or call 0300 1234000

Are energy bills a worry?

- Contact <https://www.warmhomessuffolk.org/> or call 03456 037 686. They may be able to help you insulate your home if you are on a lower income and don't have mains gas heating. They can also advise on support with bills.
- Citizens Advice also provide advice on cost of living – see box for contact details

Greener Mid Suffolk

Sites for trees: Mid Suffolk District Council is now working with the Woodland Trust to support landowners, Parish Councils and community groups to plant more trees, including woodland or community orchards. We'd love to speak with you if you have an idea for a project. For details see: <https://www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/web/mid-suffolk/w/tree-planting>

Looking after our rivers: In Eye, we are setting up Love the Dove, a community effort to monitor water quality along the River Dove and to look after the river. If you'd like to get involved, please do let me know.

Greener transport: There are now 8 EV charging points in Eye's car parks (4 in Cross Street and 4 in Buckshorn Lane.) For local cyclists: an electric bike charging point and a bike maintenance stand are being installed at the Cross Street building (near the Library.)

Got a question, concern or idea? I'd love to hear from you! Contact me on:

email lucy.elkin@midsuffolk.gov.uk | phone 07928 512590 | www.facebook.com/CllrLucy/

Best wishes, Lucy

Useful numbers

- Citizens Advice – for advice on benefits, debts, heating bills and lots more, call 01449 676060 / 01449 676 280 – or pop in to see Citizen's Advice in Eye Library on Friday mornings (no appointment needed)
- Report flooding in your property: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/report-a-flood-in-suffolk>
- Report other types of flooding: <https://www.suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/report-a-flood-in-suffolk>
- To report a power cut, call [105](tel:105). You can also [search, track and report power cuts online: https://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/](https://www.ukpowernetworks.co.uk/)
- Damaged power lines – please stay away and call [105](tel:105). If there is an immediate risk to safety, please also call [999](tel:999)
- Fallen or overhanging trees – if there is an immediate danger, please call Suffolk Highways on [0345 606 6171](tel:03456066171). If not, you can report fallen trees or debris on the road at highwaysreporting.suffolk.gov.uk
 - For updates on the Orwell Bridge, please go to www.trafficengland.com or www.twitter.com/highwayseast
- Report a blocked drain to Suffolk County Council: <https://suffolk.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/flooding-and-drainage/highway-drainage/report-a-blocked-drain>
- If your water supply has been affected, please call Essex & Suffolk Water on [0345 782 0999](tel:03457820999).
- If your property has been affected by sewage flooding or there is a sewerage issue, please [report to Anglian Water](#) or call their 24-hour emergency number: [03457 145 145](tel:03457145145)
- Floodline Telephone: [0345 988 1188](tel:03459881188) or visit [GOV.UK flood alerts](https://gov.uk/flood-alerts) for more information
- Dangerous structures please contact customer services on [0300 1234 000](tel:03001234000) (Option 5) or out of hours call [0808 168 7794](tel:08081687794)



**Mid Suffolk
COSY
Homes**

Make your home a little cosier this winter!

Need to upgrade your draft proofing, loft or cavity wall insulation?
Apply for a FREE Mid Suffolk Cosy Homes installation.

If your home... has a below C EPC rating in Council Tax bands A-D?	And you have... annual household income below £60k & less than £16k in savings!
---	--

All you have to do is apply now at:



www.midsuffolk.gov.uk/w/mid-suffolk-cosy-homes
Save energy, money and reduce your carbon footprint



Suffolk Mobile Library Route 5

The mobile library visits Occold every 4 weeks on a Friday stopping in **The Street, 15.10 – 15.25**

Forthcoming dates for 2024 are:

15th March, 12th April, 10th May, 7th June,
 5th July, 30th August, 27th September,
 25th October, 22nd November,
 20th December.

We have a lift which can be used to help anyone with mobility difficulties access the bus.

For more information please visit our website: www.suffolklibraries.co.uk or call our customer service on 10473 283838.

It is free to get a library card.

You can reserve books online and collect from the mobile library.

Optimal Heating

Father & Son Team
 with over 30 years experience

Specialist Heating Engineers
 Oil, Natural Gas & LPG Servicing and Repairs

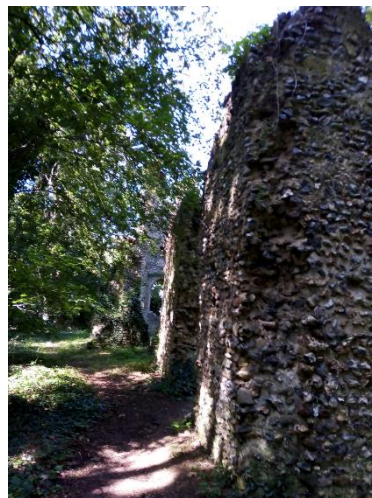


Tel: 01728 628687
Mobile: 07806 660399



On August 31st 2023 Carol Peters and I set off on an adventure, we boarded a bus in Diss and travelled towards Norwich, having firstly spoken to the very obliging bus driver. Our destination was a little way out of Tasburgh where a footpath crosses the A140, and the bus stopped exactly in the right spot, the driver having made sure it was safe to do so.

Then we were on our footpath, the path being the Boudicca Way, which was fairly well signposted and maintained. We headed towards the outskirts of Saxlingham Nethergate and came across a ruined church in a wood, St Mary's which is marked on the Norwich Explorer OS Map 237. The church is an ancient heritage site and the ruins of the church are still in use for public worship.



The path then joined a rural road heading towards Saxlingham Hall, having passed the hall we came up to very interesting telephone box. Lot of telephone boxes these days are used as book deposits or for defibrillator machines but I've never seen one that is dedicated to a long-distance footpath, well not till I came across this one for the Boudicca Way.



Once again on footpaths and 2.5 miles later, well a little more as we missed our path and took a longer detour to get to Shotesham. A very pretty village with a big church on a hill where we met a family of four who had taken the correct route. After discussing the walk, they were taking and other good walks in the area we set off down the road in the right direction. We were surprised to come across a sign

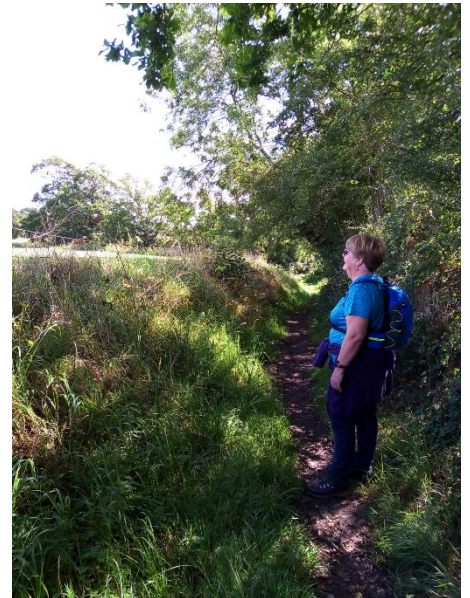


at the side on a narrow lane that was titled The Shotesham Rocket, it made interesting reading being a piece of war history. On October the 6th 1944 at 9.25 am a German V2 ballistic missile exploded barely missing the village church and school.

More country road and footpaths and we were in Upper Stoke not far from Poringland, from here the Boudicca way has two routes, a road that goes to VENTA ICENORUM a roman town just outside Caister St Edmund, and on from there. We decided to take the footpaths heading straight over fields to Trowse and Norwich, straight not quite the right word.

I would never call Norfolk hilly but we certainly found ourselves climbing hilly fields with the hot sun shining on us which made the last 7 miles hard work although still interesting. We skirted a very large quarry and some weird old trees on what appeared to be an ancient green lane. Once we had taken the road over the A47 it was mainly busy roads we were walking till we got to Norwich railway station and our train back to Diss.

We now only have the other half of the Boudicca way to do, it was on the calendar, but the weather conditions did not permit and then winter got in the way so now we are aiming for a spring walk.



ANTHONY ROY MILLER (TONY)

05.09.47 – 22.12.23

Caroline and family would like to say Thank You to everyone who has supported them by attending Tony's funeral at Winston Church taken by Veda Berriman on 31st January 2024.

Tony's ex business partner, Bernard kindly printed the Service Sheets, Elly and Judith helped with the flowers.

A delicious spread was provided by members of Occold WI and other very good friend in Occold's Jubilee Hall.

Once again we say Thank You so much to all our friend and neighbour for giving Tony such a good send off and all your ongoing support.

Caroline

Orac Coffee Mornings

First Monday in the month 9.30 – 12.00

Next dates: 4th March, 2024

1st April

6th May

3rd June

Come and enjoy home-made cakes, tea, coffee and good company



St Michael's Church Occold, Flower Guild.

Hello Flower Guild Members,

The meeting on March 20th will be the AGM followed by a Quiz by Caroline.

Refreshments afterwards.

See you there.

Your new programmes will be given out shortly.

Best wishes Judith Rivett. ♡ ♡





Join the...

Crafty Crafters

Every third Wednesday in the month in
Occold Village Hall, 1 - 3 pm

Wednesday 20th March, 17th April,
and 15th May

Bring a craft activity to do or share or
just come to socialise and have a chat.

Tea, coffee & biscuits
available.

£2.50 per person

No charge in March
or April



50th Anniversary
SEASON



Eye Bach Choir
Founded in 1974, Conductor: Leslie Olive

Eye Bach Choir

JS BACH B MINOR MASS

SATURDAY MAY 25TH
7.30PM, EYE PARISH CHURCH

Tickets: adult £20 or two for £36*
under 16s £7

**offer valid until April 15th*

Bookings: www.eyebachchoir.co.uk/book-tickets
or from The Handyman Store, Eye
Email: tickets@eyebachchoir.co.uk

Eye Bach Choir is a registered charity. No: 1114948

CUPPA, CAKE AND CHAT



**JUBILEE
BAPTIST
CHURCH**

All welcome every 3rd Monday afternoon
anytime from 2-4pm
at Jubilee Baptist Church.

Drinks and cakes provided.

15th May
19th June
17th July
21st August

18th September
16th October
20th November
18th December

www.jubileebaptist.co.uk





Redlingfield & Occold WI



At our AGM in November our President Carol Peters stepped down after 4 years in office. We are very grateful to her for guiding us through the last 4 years especially during the difficult times of Covid, and thank her for the time and effort she has given to our WI. We are pleased that she will be remaining on the Committee. After some thought, committee member Sara Hampson kindly stepped up to fill the position and we are very pleased to welcome her to her new role of President. Our other officers and committee members remained the same for another year. We enjoyed a social evening together in December for our Christmas meal.

In January one of our members gave a presentation entitled 'What's that Bird?' aimed at supporting members with the identification of our common garden birds ready for the annual RSPB Big Garden Bird Watch held at the end of January. We also welcomed 2 of the 3 Girls (One Climb) who shared with us an account of their epic climb of Mt Kilimanjaro in October. What an amazing experience they had. It was good to hear some of their stories: the difficulties of climbing at altitude, the comradery with their local guides, food and eating, toilet experiences on a mountainside and much more. Their photos were stunning. Certainly an experience never to be forgotten – what is next for them we wondered?

In February we welcomed our local Health & Safety expert – Andy Davidson from Mini First Aid Norfolk, based in Redlingfield Road, who delivers First Aid training to groups across the county. He gave a very useful and informative talk on the use of the village defibrillator. This is a life-saving piece of equipment and it was very helpful to know how to access it and how easy it is to use. If ever in the stressful situation of dealing with a cardiac arrest it will be very helpful to recall this knowledge. We felt that training of this sort should be available to all people in their communities.

Our March meeting will be a craft evening led by our members and in April we welcome Jenni Kerr a local author, to talk about her writing experiences.

We usually meet every month on the first Wednesday of the month in Occold Village Hall at 7.30pm. If you would like more information about our activities please contact Sara Hampson (President) on 01379 678868, or just come along to a meeting. We look forward to welcoming you.

The Occold Defibrillator

An Automated External Defibrillator (AED) is a medical device designed to analyse the heart rhythm and deliver an electric shock to restore the heart rhythm to normal in the event of a cardiac arrest. Using a defibrillator within 5-8 minutes of a cardiac emergency can significantly increase survival rates.

A Cardiac Arrest is where the heart stops and the person stops breathing, as opposed to a Heart Attack which is a blockage or narrowing of the cardiac arteries and has a number of symptoms particularly chest pain. A heart attack can lead to cardiac arrest. Both are emergency situations and you should call 999 straight away.

In Occold the Parish Council installed a Defibrillator about 10 years ago and it is located on the wall of the Village Hall. Our next closest one is at the Village Store in Thorndon.

In the event of an emergency that may require it's use you need to call 999. The service holds a database of AEDs across the country. If you call from a land line the service will detect where you are and give the closest device to your location. This is not the case if you are using a mobile phone and you will need to say the place where you will need to access the AED from.

'What 3 Words' is a useful App to have for this type of situation and the 3 words for the village hall location are:

vouch.consoled.commented.

The emergency service will then give you an access code to key into the handle to open the box and access the AED.

The AED itself is like a small first aid kit box and contains all the equipment you will need. When you press the 'on' button a voice recording will tell you all the instructions you will need to administer the electric current. It is very clear and takes you through the whole process, step by step. You may have to cut away items of clothing as the pads require direct contact with the skin and it clearly shows where the pads should be placed. It is a very safe piece of equipment and will not deliver the current if it detects a normal rhythm. There is also a 'help' button that talks you through the process of delivering CPR.

The Parish Council are responsible for the maintenance of our AED. The Clerks contact number is 07943279946 if you need to contact her or report any issues with the AED. We hope that some village training in it's use will be arranged in the future.





DR DAN POULTER MP

Member of Parliament for Central Suffolk and North Ipswich

Feb 2024

As an NHS hospital doctor who has worked in some of the biggest and best London Hospitals throughout my medical career, I am only too familiar with the signs and symptoms of Measles. Measles is an illness with unpleasant and sometimes life-threatening complications; a virus that Britain had hoped to eradicate through a vaccination programme delivering herd immunity, but unfortunately, parents failing to vaccinate their children has resulted in a loss of herd immunity and a recent surge in Measles cases.

Until recently, herd immunity had meant that cases of Measles had been isolated to small outbreaks in London and the big cities. However, the loss of herd immunity means that we are now seeing a surge of cases throughout the United Kingdom.

Herd immunity is where the spread of an infectious disease within a population is prevented by the pre-existing immunity of a high proportion of people within that population. In Britain, herd immunity against Measles had, in the past, been conveyed by an effective vaccination program – which in recent years meant a two-dose course of the MMR (Measles, Mumps and Rubella) triple vaccine administered before a child's 5th birthday.

The MMR vaccine is routinely offered by health visitors and GPs. Herd immunity against Measles is achieved when 95% or more of the population have gained immunity. But in parts of London and Birmingham, less than 70% of the population have completed the MMR vaccination course by their 5th birthday. In Suffolk, the picture is better, with 89.1% of children being fully vaccinated by their 5th birthday but this is insufficient to convey herd immunity, and means that over 1 in 10 children in our county are not fully protected against the Measles Virus.

Measles is not an illness to be dismissed lightly. It is highly contagious with an R rate (or reproduction rate) of between 15 and 16. When compared to the R rate of the first strain of COVID-19 of between 2 and 3, it is clear that Measles spreads easily and quickly in the unvaccinated. The school classroom is particularly fertile territory for the Measles virus to spread.

The reason why vaccination against Measles is so important is because it can result in serious and life-threatening complications including pneumonia, meningitis, blindness and seizures. In pregnancy, Measles can cause miscarriage, still birth and premature labour.

The task now is to restore herd immunity against Measles. If you or your child or grandchild has not completed the MMR vaccination course, then please book an appointment with your GP. It may just save a child's life.

Dr Dan Poulter is the MP for Central Suffolk and North Ipswich and a practising NHS Doctor.

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At Occold Village Hall :

Badminton

Thursdays from 5pm - 9pm or check availability through the website.

Hourly slots available

£10 per hour

Book your slot through di.noller@btinternet.com

or through the online booking system at:

occold.onesuffolk.net/services/village-hall

Bookings for under 18's must have adult supervision



Come and play Table Tennis

Monday evenings 6 – 7.30pm

At the Village Hall

New members welcome

£3 per person, £2 for 2nd household member

No booking required

Contact Gill on 01378 678446 for more information

[illegible][illegible]

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nd was full of social history of
and only scored 5.9/10.

'show & tell' where we each read a book over the week period. There was a wide range of genres, historical romance and contemporary fiction to try.

Small Thing' by Arundhati Roy,
Perfume Collector' by Kathleen

the month at The Beaky.

Soup Lunch

Occold Village Hall

(Last Friday of every Month,
March date brought forward due to Easter)

12-1pm

Homemade Soup & Roll £5



All Welcome

Tea, Coffee & Cake also available

These events are supported by MSDC through
Living Well in Winter funding

22nd March 2024 in aid of The WI

26th April in aid of Jubilee Baptist Church

31st May in aid of ORAC

EYE & DISTRICT VOLUNTEER CENTRE Charity No 1156968

Do you have difficulty arranging transport?

Eye Volunteer Centre have a team of Volunteer Drivers to take you, wait and then bring you home. There is a charge of 45p per mile, ie Ipswich hospital from Eye costs £23 return approx..

If you require our assistance please telephone Gill at Eye Volunteer Centre

Telephone No: 01379 871200

Neighbourhood Plan Update

Heidi Stone

In early January, every household in Occold received a copy of the Neighbourhood Plan survey through their letterbox. The survey was live for just over two weeks until 22nd January and could be completed online or returned via hard copy. The survey pack also promoted the community drop in event and included a free prize draw for residents.

Community drop in event

On Friday 19th January a community drop-in event was held for anyone would like more information on what a neighbourhood plan is for, how Occold's plan would be compiled, or some help completing the survey. The event was spread across the afternoon into evening, to make it as inclusive as possible for those who worked.

As well as promoting on social media, a reminder for the event and the survey close date was dropped through letter boxes w/c 15th January with the aim of making sure all residents were aware of the plan.

Our expert consultant, Ian Poole from People 4 Places, provided a small exhibition and some sample plans to thumb through. We also had some very old photographs, some aerial photographs taken in the 1970s and then in the 1980s, as well as ordnance survey maps showing the evolution of the village over the years.

The Parish Council also took the opportunity to give out hi viz jackets at the event to help keep residents safe during our darker mornings and evenings. There was a very good uptake for this initiative and if anyone missed out, do get in touch as there are still a few left.

The event was a great opportunity to chat over refreshments and it was lovely to meet new people, to hear stories of Occold and its residents over the years and to see old acquaintances reconnecting. We had a great turnout on the day and lots of positive feedback. Thank you to everyone who came along and supported the occasion.

As a result, we had 110 survey responses returned and these have now all be analysed and the next step will be for the working group to review the responses and feed residents' view into the draft plan, with the help of Ian Poole.

Prize draw

The prize draw was determined through a random number generator and well done to our winners who were notified during February. The nomination for the 1st prize charity donation of £150 went to Christians Against Poverty who provide free professional debt help to those in financial difficulty across the UK.

Design codes and landscape appraisal

Through Locality's support programme, AECOM has been commissioned to provide a Design Code document, which will provide urban design guidance, design principles and codes for Occold. These can then be applied to any future development or referenced when determining planning applications.

A Landscape Architect has also been appointed to carry out a landscape appraisal. This appraisal will explore the character of the existing landscape, identify what matters to the community. It will also set out how the landscape is valued and provide recommendations for the protection and enhancement of positive attributes and the improvement of negative elements.

Dan from AECOM and Jane, the Landscape Architect, both visited Occold on Sunday 7th January and spent some time walking around the village and talking to some of the residents. It was fascinating to learn more about the village and both documents will be included within the draft plan that will be circulated to residents in due course.

Finally, during these conversations AECOM has identified that a Housing Needs Analysis would be useful to support compilation of the plan as housing is an important issue for residents. The assessment helps to determine how many and/or what type of homes Occold needs to plan for in the future and is primarily a desktop exercise based on information compiled through census and other similar data sources.

My thanks to everyone who has been involved in these activities, both fellow helpers and also those who showed up on the community day. It's been genuinely heart-warming to see how much our residents care about the village and each other and brings to life why 'community' and 'friendly' were frequently used to describe Occold in the survey responses!

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News from the Debenham (Dementia) Project

January is the traditional month for reviewing the past year and looking forward to the new. So, it is also with The Debenham Project, and why the trustees and the leaders of our groups, activities and services get together to hear about and discuss the whole breadth of the Project – What we do, how many we support, what it costs, the benefits, and what we could do better this year. During the year we tend to concentrate on our individual bits of the Project as volunteers and participants and rarely think about the spectrum of support we offer and whether we would like to know more about one or many of the other bits. So here they all are:

Carers Club/Info Café; Fit Club; Lunch Clubs; TLC (Talking, Listening, Caring) Group; Post Diagnosis Support; Songs for Sharing; On-line Support Package; Events; Website; Information and Advice; Transport; Publicity and Promotion; Project Management; Funding and finance.

All of it is based upon the very real needs of local carers and those they care for. The amazing generosity our community, and often (sadly) by donations made in the memory of those loved ones and friends who have passed away. Please do let anyone you know who might be struggling to care for a partner, mum, dad, relative, friend or neighbour about The Debenham Project, or if you would like to become a volunteer with us, to call me on 01728 862003.

With all my thanks and best wishes, Lynden Jackson

www.the-debenham-project.org.uk ; 01728 862003



Peter & Leigh extend a warm welcome to you at the Beaconsfield Arms.

Come and enjoy Sunday Lunch- served from 12.00 – 3pm
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A variety of Paninis and Toasted Sandwiches now being served at
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**A reminder that dogs are not allowed on
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It is used daily by the children of our school and
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toxic and unpleasant.

Please clean up after your dog wherever you
exercise it. There are dog poo bins at various
locations around the village. Thank you

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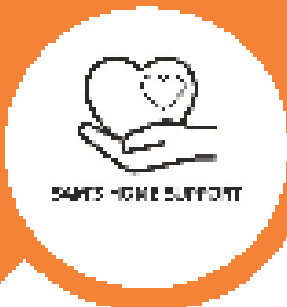
LAI BY OUR HENS AT
CHURCH FARM,
OCCOLD

Spring into Easter.

Crocuses showing in the morning sun,
February here, only just begun,
Daffodil bulbs, shooting up all week,
Wonderful yellow, we all will meet.

The buds on the trees, forsythia out,
Primroses yellow, Easter eggs about,
Spicy Hot cross buns, and the Simnel cake,
The Easter bonnets, that we all can make.

Judith Rivett Spring 2024



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At the heart of learning in our community

Occold Primary School News

office@occoldprimary.org.uk

Facebook: Occold Primary School

Ready, Steady, STEM!

This half term at Occold Primary, we've had lots of computing, maths and science enrichment going on in school. The children (and staff!) have loved rolling up their sleeves and getting stuck into a wide variety of hands-on learning.

STEM Day 1 – Computing

The children thoroughly enjoyed having a whole day of computing! They had the opportunity to program a Micro:bit (a mini computer) and complete lots of coding challenges. During the afternoon, the younger children had a go at using Bee-Bots, whilst the older children enjoyed designing their own Apps. In

preparation for our science day, we ended the afternoon watching a live Science show!

Day 2 – Science

During the morning of our science day, the children took part in three different activities. The first involved learning all about the digestive system and having a go at making poo! The second involved exploring all things bubbles. The third was a big hit as it included using chocolate to explore the changes of state. In the afternoon, the whole school gathered in the village hall to complete a team activity which involved each group making a structure out of cardboard which could hold the weight of all members of the group!

Day 3 – Maths!

On the final day of our 3 Days of STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths), we participated in NSPCC Number Day. The whole school arrived wearing a number and made their own maths picture books, which they shared with other children before lunch. To mark the end of the week, we held a STEM Fair and invited families and friends to come in and see what the children had been up to, whilst also giving them the chance to have a go at some STEM activities.

Financial Education

This half term, we have been learning about money and finances in an age-appropriate way during our weekly PSHE lessons. These sessions have ranged from learning about how to pay for things in shops and online, to what insurance is and why it is so important!

Parent maths sessions

We loved welcoming in parents, guardians, and grandparents to our classrooms for our maths parental engagement sessions. Parents got the chance to see each class's daily 'Maths Meetings', followed by some of the work the children have been learning about recently.



Flake, Fruit and Nut Cake

A really easy fruit cake, Serves 12. Cooking time 2 hours,

3 Cadbury's Flake
225g butter or margarine
225g caster sugar
275g self-raising flour
25g cocoa powder
4 eggs
150g hazelnuts, roughly chopped
200g Cadbury's Bournville chocolate chopped
225g raisins
Cocoa powder or icing sugar for dusting

Method

Grease and line a 8" round or 7" square cake tin.

Cut all the flakes into 3/4 pieces

Cream together the butter or margarine and sugar

Add the flour, cocoa powder and eggs to the bowl and beat until smooth.

Reserve half the pieces of Flake and 2oz of the hazelnuts and plain chocolate.

Fold the remainder into the cake mixture with the raisins.

Place mixture into prepared tin and scatter with the reserved nuts and Chocolate

Bake in a preheated oven at 150C for about 2 hrs or until a skewer inserted comes out clean.

Leave to cool in the tin.

Serve lightly dusted with icing sugar and cocoa powder.

Enjoy. Elly

Occold Village Hall is available to book for various events including parties, celebrations, sales etc

£10 per hour

Please check the booking calendar for availability at:

occold.onesuffolk.net/services/village-hall and complete the online booking form - or ring Di on 01379 678198

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Essex & Suffolk Water

Water Emergencies

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Local Doctors Surgeries

Eye Health Centre

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Debenham Health Centre

01728 860248

Police Non urgent messages

101

Crimestoppers

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Action Fraud Frauds & Scams

0300 1232040 (or Police on 101)

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Helpline

01449 778678

Recycling

0300 1234000

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Emergencies

0345 6066171

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West Suffolk (Bury St Edmunds)

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IN THE GARDEN WITH CAROLINE

Spring is on it's way, there's still time to plant bare rooted shrubs, roses and fruit trees. Firm any plants, shrubs or trees lifted by the frost and loosen any ties which have become too tight.

Coppice dog woods (Cornus) and willows (Salix) to encourage fresh, colourful stems for next winter.

This year the hazels (Corylus) are making a spectacular display in the hedgerows with their beautiful golden catkins. Cut out wood over 2 yrs old and use as pea and bean ticks or supports for tall herbaceous plants in your borders, really long straight ones with a forked top make very useful clothes props for those of you who still use an outdoor washing line.

Hazels are very easy to propagate by planting the nuts 2" deep outdoors in October or by layering or removing rooted suckers in autumn.

Later in the month prune hydrangeas by cutting the dead flower heads back to a strong pair of buds.

Finish cutting back summer flowering clematis.

Lightly trim back heathers with shears after flowering.

Cut back and clear debris from pampas grasses, DON'T SET FIRE to them as this will destroy all the sheltering ladybird and any other beneficial insect.

Red & white currants and gooseberries should be cut back by now.

Lift and divide summer flowering herbaceous perennials such as geums, geraniums, persicarias and phlox.

Mulching is best done in the spring when the soil has warmed up. Dig over established beds removing perennial weeds as you go. Mulch with well-rotted organic compost of finely chipped bark.

Thin out aconites by digging up small clumps with roots and plant elsewhere whilst still in active growth.

Divide and replant snowdrops when flowering is over.

Sow tomatoes, pepper and cucumber indoors or in a frost free greenhouse. When the soil begins to warm up sow broad beans, early carrots, parsnips, leeks, peas and lettuces directly into the garden.

Continue planting shallots and onions.

Low maturing bedding plants ie African marigolds, antirrhinums, lobelia and petunias can be sown under glass.

Ventilate the greenhouse on warm days.

Keep an eye out for aphids and slugs.

Rake out moss, dead leaves & grass etc from lawns, if the weather is mild towards the end of the month mow with the blades raised.

Traditionally birds are said to pair up on St Valentine's day or hopefully you've already provided them with ready-made homes in sheltered locations approx. 2m off the ground out of full sun.

Recommended reading: "The Jewel Garden" by Monty & Sarah Don. An inspiring story of their lives from fashion jewellery to a gem of a garden.



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June 6th this year will commemorate the 80th anniversary of D Day, a significant event during World War Two. Many of us over 70 would have grown up with parents, grandparents and other relatives that served in some way during World War Two. Remaining vets left from that conflict are few such as the former Spitfire pilot aged 104 recently interviewed during BBC Breakfast.

Although Occold history is well documented, readers of the ORACLE may wish to share their story by submitting an article relating to their ancestors around that time. Here is part of mine!

My father left school for work aged 14 in 1939. He applied to act as a Town Hall messenger under the ARP/Civil Defence umbrella. Equipped with steel helmet and gas mask he would attend and report on properties damaged by the enemy and assist residents displaced. Another branch of my family were bombed out, my father being first on scene to assist moved them in to his parents house until other accommodation was available.



As age allowed my father joined the Home Guard in Essex. I still have some of his notes from training. Still being quite young photographs of him in uniform during that era remind me of the sitcom Dads Army, particularly 'Pike'. (Sadly Ian Lavender the actor who played 'Pike' recently passed being the last surviving member of that cast.)

Aged 18 my father initially joined the Merchant Navy. His ship HMS Latimer was seconded by the Royal Navy for Operation PLUTO. Pipe lines were laid across the English Channel to France so that fuel could be pumped across and then transported to the front line. He was demobbed in 1946 age 21 later serving as a fourth generation fire fighter in Essex and London.

My paternal Grandfather born 1899 served on HM Trawlers towards the end of World War One (locating mines not fish). As World War Two approached being a retained fireman with his two brothers at Romford he was appointed as a full time District Officer at Chelmsford Division. During the height of the Blitz he led a column of Fire Engines from Essex into London to fight the fires.



My maternal Grandfather born 1897 joined the army during World War One. I still have more to learn about his involvement during that period although he went back into the army for World War Two as a Royal Engineer attaining the rank of Captain. He is pictured here in Athens.

The **emergencySMS** service has been developed by RNID, BT, Cable & Wireless, the Department of Communities and Local Government, OFCOM, the UK emergency services and all mobile network operators.

For more information, visit:

www.emergencysms.org.uk

www.rnid.org.uk/esms



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Since September 2009, the emergencySMS service has successfully handled hundreds of real emergency calls. Thanks to this service criminals have been arrested, lives have been saved and babies have been born safely.

What is an emergency?

Please do not send test or non-emergency texts – only use emergencySMS for real emergencies.

For example, if:

- someone's life is at risk
- a crime is happening now
- someone is injured or threatened
- there is a fire or people are trapped
- you need an ambulance urgently
- someone is in trouble on the cliffs, on the shoreline or is missing at sea.

This service works throughout the UK on all mobile networks, it cannot be used from abroad.

How do I use emergencySMS?

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You will only be able to use this service if you have registered with emergencySMS first.

Register now; don't wait for an emergency.

To register, **text 'register' to 999**. You will get a reply – then follow the instructions you are sent.

In an emergency

> Text 999

We need to know:

> Who?

Police, Ambulance, Fire and Rescue or Coastguard.

> What?

Briefly, what is the problem.

> Where?

Exactly where the problem is happening – give the name of the road, house number, postcode or nearby landmark, if possible.

What happens next?

The emergency service will either ask for more information or will tell you that help is on the way.

Don't assume that your message has been received until the emergency service sends a message back.

It will usually take about two minutes before you get a reply. If you don't get a reply within three minutes, please try again or find other ways of getting help.

OCCOLD PARISH COUNCIL

The current list of Councillors and their responsibilities is:

Cllr Colin Cripps - Chair and Planning

Cllr Kevin Chittock - Vice Chair/Personnel/Planning

Cllr Stephen Hubner - Planning

Cllr Andrew Duggett - Personnel/SID

Cllr Heidi Stone - Personnel/Neighbourhood Plan lead

Cllr Tim Weller

Cllr Angela Hall

There are still 2 vacancies

Clerk & Financial Officer Libby Alexander 07943279946

For more information please contact [occoldparishcouncil t@gmail.com](mailto:occoldparishcouncilt@gmail.com)

Occold Flood Working Group.

Andrew Duggett

The after effects of Storm Babet, where at least five houses in the village were flooded, resulted in the creation of the Occold Flood Group . The Flood Group consists of Mid-Suffolk Councillor Lucy Elkin, Angela Hodge and Andrew Duggett from the Parish Council, and volunteers whose homes were affected by the storm. The group is meeting monthly and is liaising closely with Andrew Stringer, County Councillor, and Suffolk highways to determine what mitigating action can be taken to manage flooding and water volumes. The Group is working with the Parish Council to purchase some portable flood defenses, suitable for deployment to help houses at risk from rising water levels or the wash created by vehicles driving through flooded roads.

The first meeting took place in December with the key action point of beginning to map the drains and ditches around the village. The surface water drainage system in Occold has evolved over many centuries and is far from intuitive. One of the benefits from having a definitive map will be understanding which landowner or property owner has responsibility for lengths of ditch and culvert and from that work to determine whether help is required to maintain or help clear overgrown areas where necessary. The mapping is likely to take several months.

Whilst the group gains some traction it would be worth visiting <https://suffolkprepared.co.uk/get-prepared/prepare-yourself/> for further guidance and

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/personal-flood-plan> which has further details about preparing for flooding.

It is worth noting that Occold is not in a flood area. We do not have a river or other body of water nearby which could cause major flooding.



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Dove Players Bring Panto to Occold!

On a cold damp weekend in the middle of January, Occold Village Hall hosted it's first ever external theatrical performance when the Eye based Dove Players brought it's annual pantomime to the village, oh yes it did! We all had a great time and were made to feel very welcome by Gill and Russell and the Hall committee. We had 3 sell out performances with great feedback and we hope everyone who saw the shows enjoyed them. I thought I'd tell you a little bit about Dove Players and how we teamed up with the Village Hall.

Dove Players were formed around 2006 and apart from the COVID break, we have put on a pantomime every year since. Our approach has always been very inclusive with a spine of seasoned performers mixed with youngsters and first timers taking their first baby steps on stage. We've also been very lucky to have a band to provide live music which definitely adds a lot to the atmosphere. It's a very friendly and supportive atmosphere and we've always been well supported by the community who come out every year to fill the seats. Saturday matinee always see the front 2 rows full of noisy Beavers who are invited as a group to cheer and boo generally create mayhem.

For many years we have performed at the Eye Community Centre but with that no longer an option this year, we were looking for a new home. I moved to the village whilst the new hall was being built and my son Tom went to pre-school in the old hall. I've always thought it would be a great place to have a show of the type and size of a local panto, but early issues with noise isolation and a neighbouring resident meant that was never an option. The extension has added another dimension to provide plenty of changing and backstage space. So, when the Dove committee asked for suggestions, I suggested Occold Village Hall.

Myself, Nicola and Isobel (our fabulous Director and Producer respectively) met with Gill and Russell in The Beaky for a cooked breakfast one Saturday morning back in July and had a good look around the hall.

Russell was a wealth of knowledge on sound and lighting and together we concluded that it was very feasible to stage the panto for an audience of about 100. In discussing how things might work with sound lighting and the band, Russell identified that there were a few things that could do with updating on the lighting boom and wiring. By the time the



performance came around that had all been done and, with the addition of a “wiring snake” from Dove Players to link to the band, everything was ready to go. Huge thanks go to Russell, Gill and the Hall Committee for the effort and expense of getting that in place. Hopefully it will pay dividends with further bookings.

Show day came and manning the car park entrance with my high vis jacket, it was lovely to see lots of families heading towards the Hall, taking me back to the days of Proms in the Park and other big events that brought locals together. The shows went well and I think people left happy. The whole experience from Dove Players perspective was great. There was no drama with accessing or using the hall (and there nearly always is when you get drama people involved 😊). Gill and Russell were always flexible and helpful when approached, we hope it worked well from the Hall’s perspective.

So, all round we had a great time, can we come back next year? We’re hoping the answer is “Oh yes you can !!”.

Dave Griffiths

News from St Michael and All Angels

A little belated, but we all hope 2024 has started well for you. There are a series of events at the church coming up and hopefully you will receive this issue of Oracle before they start.

First we have the Annual meeting to elect churchwardens and members of the PCC. This will take place in the church from 10:00 am on 16 March. It is open to all.

Then, after the service on Easter Day (31 March this year) we will hold our second Book Sale, on Saturday 6 April, again starting at 10:00 am. Come along and see what you can find from many hundreds of books and a collection of jigsaws. There will also be refreshments to keep you going as you look...

We also hope that the floor in the church might be partially repaired by Easter. We have seen that the floor is sinking near the altar and this is to be checked and remedied by specialist contractors. Of course that costs money and so we do need to sell a lot of books!

We will be aiming to keep the churchyard and the extension across the road trimmed, but leave areas for the huge selection of wild flowers and plants that have been identified to flourish. If you are passing do look out for the snowdrops, then the primroses at this time of year. We are very grateful to those who volunteer to assist - please look out for notices about communal events.

Very best wishes to all

Stephen Hubner (01379 678360) and Gill Richardson (01728 627916), Churchwardens

A Tribute to Peggy Frost 1933 – 2023

Margaret “Peggy” Frost passed away on 18th December, 2023, just 11 days after her 90th birthday.

Peggy was born, raised and lived in Occold for much of her life.

There were 4 different places in Occold where Peggy made her home. First, her family lived in the Causeway behind the chapel. Then, when she married in 1955 Peggy moved to Mill Road to a semi-detached property named Greystones which no longer stands (this can be seen on the aerial photograph of Occold before Rectory Gardens, which was shown at the recent NDP event and is probably on the village website). Peggy’s family increased by 3 during this time with the arrival of two daughters and a son, Bridget, Gill and Greg. Grandchildren and great-grand children would follow in due course.

The family moved to Grove Farm in the early 1970s. Peggy’s final destination in Occold from the early 2000s was Holly Grove Lodge, the bungalow situated on the approach to Grove Farm. In 2012 Peggy moved once more to Fressingfield to be closer to her family. It was here her funeral took place at Fressingfield Baptist Church on Monday 8th January, 2024.

Peggy opened up her home to us as a church on many occasions at both Grove Farm and Holly Grove Lodge for regular worship times. We have many happy memories of meeting in living rooms and kitchens over the years!

If you asked me to sum up her life, I would simply say Peggy loved Jesus. This was seen in her devotion to her family, church and friends. She experienced difficult trials in her life but never lost her faith in God and never lost her love for the church and people in Occold.

In 1955 she was baptised and joined the Baptist Church in Occold, then under the oversight of Pastor Hedley Goshawk. Her membership would last an astonishing 68 years, which may well be a record!

Peggy was a faithful worshipper, a prayer warrior, a godly encourager. For many years she was involved in the Friends and Neighbours ministry for women in the village, again often opening up her home to hold ladies’ meetings.

Peggy’s race is run, she’s crossed the finishing line, received the well done good and faithful servant and entered into the joy of her Lord. Much more alive now and free forever from the pain she suffered in her final years.

We will miss her and we thank God for a life well lived.

Greg Noller, Jubilee Baptist Church.

MARCH 7TH 2024 10:00 - 14:00

Come along to **Hartismere Health and care** @ the Michael Burke Wellbeing Centre, Castleton Way, Eye, Suffolk, IP23 7BL



You will find us at the Michael Burke Wellbeing Centre by Hartismere Hospital



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