

WOODSTOCK TOWN COUNCIL NEWSLETTER Spring 2016



From the Town Mayor, Elizabeth Poskitt

We have a busy Spring ahead. The Annual Town Meeting on March 15th is the annual meeting for residents to hear about activities around the town. It is an opportunity to listen, to express your views and to take part in valuable discussions between residents.

Woodstock Town Council is elected every four years. 2016 is a year in which this happens. Do think about standing for Council yourself or encourage others to do so. We need a wide range of candidates to achieve a representative Council.

The Neighbourhood Planning Working Group has been developing a draft vision for Woodstock. Such an item must have the input of residents. With this Newsletter is a resumé of the Vision. The full item is available from www.woodstock-tc.gov.uk. Please read the full item as well as the resumé if you are able to access it and send us your comments.

Plans for celebrating Her Majesty the Queen's official 90th birthday over the weekend of the 11th -12th June are at an early stage in Woodstock. We hope to have a celebratory tea party in Market Place and the Museum garden on the Sunday afternoon. A celebratory cake baking competition has been suggested. If it happens, it would be judged prior to the tea so the entries could be consumed at teatime!

We plan to display items relating to the 90 years of Her Majesty and to the last 90 years in Woodstock. Do you have photos or objects showing interesting aspects of the Queen's life or of Woodstock since 1926? If so, please let the Town Hall know.

For all these events we need volunteers. All offers of help welcome (Info@woodstock-tc.gov.uk or 01993 811216)

Annual Town Meeting Tuesday March 15th 2016 Community Centre, New Road 7.30pm

This is your meeting. Come and hear what is going on in the town. Receive reports from various town groups. Hear from the Wychwood Project about possible futures for our water meadows. Give your views on the latest Woodstock SE preliminary proposal. Iain Nicholson who has been working with Wake up to Woodstock will give an outsider's view of the town as a sustainable commercial community.

Parish Council Elections on May 5th 2016

All twelve Woodstock Town Councillors' positions are up for election in May. Several, some long serving, Town Councillors have indicated they will not be standing again thus creating plenty of opportunities for new Councillors. Would you be interested in standing? Do you know someone who you think might make a good Councillor? The Council's work is very varied and Lorraine, the Town Clerk, would be delighted to have a chat about what is involved with anyone who is interested in standing. WODC guidance for candidates will soon be available on the web site www.westoxon.gov.uk/elections by following the link to the 'future elections page'. Nomination papers will be available from the Elections Office, WODC, Woodgreen, Witney OX28 1NB and Woodstock Town Hall in early March. Nomination papers MUST be delivered by hand to the Woodgreen, Witney, West Oxfordshire office before **4pm on Thursday April 7th**. One District Councillor for Woodstock, Bladon and Blenheim ward and the Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner are also being elected on May 5th.

OCC – Oxfordshire County Council.
WODC – West Oxfordshire District Council
WTC – Woodstock Town Council

Local Bus Services

At the time of writing it is not entirely clear what the impact of the recent budget decisions at OCC will have on local bus services but several are still going to be cancelled or remain under threat of closure or reduced services. Services most likely to be affected in the Woodstock area are those linking Kidlington/WaterEaton, Bladon, Glympton, Wootton and Tackley. The first service to Witney in the morning could also be withdrawn. For that particular journey there are said to be no regular users from Woodstock. All these threatened services are subsidised by OCC. The S3 bus linking Woodstock with Oxford, Charlbury, Chipping Norton and the other 233 services linking Woodstock, Witney and Burford are operated by Stagecoach without subsidy and will be immune to these changes.

WTC views these probable developments with concern. Although sparsely used, the services most likely to be affected provide a lifeline for people from outlying villages coming into Woodstock for shopping, health appointments and social reasons. WTC has expressed its views to OCC on these cuts and will do all within its powers to avert this potential disaster.

Woodstock Good Neighbours Scheme

Woodstock's Good Neighbours scheme befriends the elderly and housebound and/or takes them to appointments – surgery, dentist, hospital, visits or shopping. New volunteers would be very welcome. The organisers, Volunteer Link Up (VLU) in Witney, are always pleased to hear of those who might like occasional friendly visits or transport (planned well in advance). Cuts in bus services may increase the demand for transport but a volunteer can choose whether to do a trip or not. Clients pay 45p/mile for distances from the driver's home. Volunteer involvement can be as limited or as busy as the volunteer wishes. To learn more phone 01993 776 277 (Mon-Fri: 9am to 1pm) or email office@vlu.org.uk.



Pre-Spring clearance at the water meadows.....do visit

Harry Pearson, Chevalier, Légion d'Honneur

Harry Pearson, a Woodstock resident, will receive the order of Chevalier, Légion d'Honneur from the Honorary Consul for France, Robert F Mille, at Oxford Town Hall on March 1st.



Harry in 1944



Chevalier Harry

The French government is awarding Chevalier, Légion d'Honneur to D-Day veterans as a way of honouring and thanking those who fought and risked their lives to secure France's liberation during the Second World War. Harry was in the reinforcements following the first line of troops onto Gold beach on D-Day. The award may have been a long time coming but many congratulations to Harry on this award and for the bravery and courage of all who took part in the 1944 landings and in the critical battles which led to the end of WW Two.

Clean for the Queen

Anniversary Litter Pick Saturday 5th March

Thirty years of Annual Woodstock Litter Picks.

Black bags, bright waistcoats, litter tongs and instructions at Brook Hill lay-by below Spencer Court. The hot spots (eg Green Lane, Shipton Road out towards Perdiswell Farm, A44) are shared out to teams. Free coffee to all litter pickers at the Fairtrade Coffee Morning in the Town Hall. Residents unavailable on Saturday 5th are welcome to phone Dr Robert Edwards on 811616 for alternative assignments.

The weekend of 4th to 6th of March is national **Clean for the Queen** weekend. Although you may read this after the March Litter Pick please pick up any litter that you see and put it in one of the many litter bins around town. Let's get our town looking superb for the summer and for the Queen – even if HRH is not visiting to review our efforts! The untidy frontage to some homes and shops is another concern. Bins and noticeboards can litter our streets. Do they have to be there? Please avoid overfilling your bins and move them as soon as practical after emptying.

PROFILE : JEAN HOLLIS



We are delighted that Jean's many years of work for the Royal British Legion (RBL) have been recognised with the High Sheriff's award for voluntary activity. Although Jean is not Woodstock born she has spent most of her life here. Her mother died when Jean was two and, as her father (who came from Leafield) was in the Army and often abroad, she moved here to live with an aunt. From the Old Woodstock school (now a private home) she moved to Woodstock Primary School, passed the 'Eleven Plus' exam and proceeded to Chipping Norton Grammar School. After school and a secretarial course, Jean was with Buckell & Ballard's accountancy office in Oxford for three years and then in the Civil Defence Office situated in Woodstock Town Hall. For a 21st birthday present her husband, Gordon, gave her a typewriter so she was splendidly set up for homeworking (useful with two young children) and freelance secretarial work. One of her very rewarding roles was working with the Cambodia Trust. The Trust organised limb prostheses for landmine victims. Helping the Trust became a Hollis family affair. Gordon and his brother collected old prostheses from local hospitals. Jean arranged for these to be shipped to needy amputees in Cambodia. As well as sending off the prostheses she organised transfer of a Landrover with a winch attached, something vital for travelling over Cambodia's appalling roads and uncertain terrain. Jean went to Cambodia several times to oversee the Trust's work there. She and Gordon visited remote villages up-country where the local people were invariably fascinated to meet them and very friendly.

Back in Woodstock in the early 1990s, Gordon, a long standing member of the RBL suggested Jean re-start the Women's Section of Woodstock RBL. For Jean this became more than just running the branch and producing the newsletter.....and 1992 marked Jean's first RBL Poppy Day Appeal collection. Skills for tin rattling and, as importantly, organisation came to the fore when (inevitably?) she found herself the main Appeal organiser. She continued this role until retiring at the end of 2015. Of course, being Jean, over time she took on more and more as the branch absorbed some North Leigh branch roles particularly

collecting at the Cherwell Valley Service station. Under Jean's organisation the record of the Woodstock branch has been fantastic. Since 1992 the Women's Section in Woodstock has raised £36,000. Some members of Jean's original team still collect for the Appeal. Annual takings for the local RBL have been over £20,000 with a total of £283,929.79 since Jean began to lead. Amazing!

Jean is a natural organiser. Her broad RBL 'hat' led to arranging, with Gordon, trips to the Normandy beaches for RBL members and local veterans. These were so successful that she and Gordon found themselves arranging trips to Germany, France and anywhere which would fill a coach with customers. In other roles she was one of the ladies who used to make the costumes for the Woodstock Carnivals. 'If you want something done, give the job to a busy person' is certainly applicable to Jean.

Jean and Gordon are well known in Woodstock but their first family home was in Bladon. When they bought that house, it was stuffed full of furniture and the larder was full of food - salted runner beans, home-made wine brewing materials etc. - a useful house purchase for newly-weds! Moving back to Woodstock later was to a town very different from the town of their childhood. Then Old Woodstock had butchers, bakers, the Rose and Crown pub and much else. Where Brookside flats now stand, was 'Teacup Alley' so called because the cottage residents spent so much time going in and out of one another's houses for cups of tea.

Jean has had several RBL awards for long service collecting for the Appeal. This High Sheriff's Award demonstrates a wider recognition of her enormous, totally voluntary, contribution to our community. Very well done!

Is organising Poppy Day Appeals and helping prepare for Remembrance Sunday something you could do? You would be performing a very worthwhile service and meeting a great variety of people. If you would like to hear more about what is involved as Poppy Appeal organiser, please contact jean.hollis21@btinternet.com or ask for her details at the Town Hall (01993 811 216).





Looking for a local venue for a meeting or celebratory event?

WOODSTOCK TOWN HALL

← *The historic **TOWN HALL**, in the centre of Woodstock, offers opportunities for weddings, naming ceremonies and other celebrations in the beautiful Mayor's Parlour or upstairs (stairlift available) in the Assembly Room, as well as providing facilities for post-event receptions.*



Looking for a central venue for small groups, business meetings or classes?

*The **TOWN HALL** is an ideal venue.*

Facilities:

- ← *Versatile room set up*
- Kitchen*
- Disabled access*



And there's also:

WOODSTOCK COMMUNITY CENTRE

Suitable for small or large events this light, versatile, space is ideal for

- ← *activity classes, private functions, group meetings, clubs, birthday parties, receptions.*

Facilities: AV equipment, Kitchen, Flexible staging and Disabled access.

TOWN EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY

Friday March 4th – Sunday March 6th

CLEAN FOR THE QUEEN Woodstock Annual Litter Pick on **Saturday March 5th**. Meet at Brook Hill layby at 10am to be assigned a task. Anyone taking part is entitled to free coffee and biscuit at **the Fairtrade Coffee Morning**

Saturday March 5th



FAIRTRADE and St MARY MAGDALENE CHURCH COFFEE MORNING. Mayor's Parlour, Town Hall 10am – 12.30.

Tea, coffee, biscuits, cake and various Fairtrade goods for sale.

Tuesday March 15th

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING. 7.30pm Community Centre, New Road. Come and hear about activities in the town; possible futures for the water meadows; the preliminary Woodstock South East development proposal. This is your meeting.

Thursday May 5th

ELECTIONS FOR TOWN COUNCILLORS, WODC DISTRICT COUNCILLOR AND POLICE AND CRIME COMMISSIONER. Polling stations at Town Hall and Ryegrass open 7am-10pm.

Saturday June 11th / Sunday June 12th

NATIONAL CELEBRATIONS OF 90TH BIRTHDAY OF HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II. Watch out for notices about Woodstock's own celebrations.

Thursday June 23rd

EU REFERENDUM

Polling stations at Town Hall and Ryegrass open 7am-10pm.

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