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Coldharbour News

Special Covid 19 issue

The Coldharbour Parish Council Newsletter

September 2020



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- *A message from your Chairman*
- *Coronavirus update for Fairford Leys*
- *News from the Church and School*

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If you have any interesting or informative articles you would like to include or are promoting charity events etc., please send them to sally@buskrigg.co.uk

Front cover picture by Terry Pattinson

A Message from the Editor

As some of you will have noticed, we were unable to bring you a June edition of Coldharbour News this year. This was because the Covid-19 virus caused the closing of Fairford Leys Centre, the Church on Fairford Leys together with the temporary closure of most of the shops and businesses. Our sincere thanks to those who managed to stay open under extremely difficult circumstances; in particular the Co-op and Mak Wines who managed to keep us supplied with food and beverages with smiles on their faces. Also to the Fairford Leys Pharmacy who stayed open to deal with our everyday ailments and dispense our prescriptions.

The result of this together with the unavoidable postponement of virtually all social activity groups left very little to say.

In addition, we sadly had to cancel the Fair in the Square and later Music in the Square mainly because it was impossible to maintain social distancing.

The Good News

We have put this special edition to bring you news of how the various organisations in the village are hoping to breathe life back into our community. On the following pages, you will find reports from the Fairford Leys Centre, the Parish Council the Church and St Mary's School telling you their plans for the future and how we can all come together to support the community of Fairford Leys. We hope that you will find this interesting and informative.

Advertising

As from this edition of Coldharbour News we will no longer be including advertising. This is because we have found that an increasing number of businesses are now using social media and on line advertising to reach a larger number of people.

Andrew Barnett and I would like to thank everyone who has supported the parish council by advertising in this newsletter and wish you all every success in the future.

I will still be looking for interesting and newsworthy local articles and details of charitable events so please send them to sally@buskrigg.co.uk or telephone 01296 331822.

Cllr Sally Pattinson Editor

News from the Clerk

Aylesbury Wombles

The parish council appreciates the support from the Aylesbury Wombles in helping to keep Fairford Leys looking nice and free from rubbish. This is a mammoth task and we could have people picking litter up every day, sadly. There are a number of residents who carry out litter picks as part of their daily tasks and walks around the community so we wish to say a big "Thank You" to them also. As Cllr Sarah James encourages us in her article on weed clearing and general tidying up on page 10, it really makes a difference to the whole community when we tidy up outside our own front doors and keep the pavements near our homes free of weeds and litter.

Allotments

The Fairford Leys Allotments continue to look good and well-done to all the allotment tenants who have worked to make their plots look good and produce an amazing amount of food. We have a waiting list which is managed by Andrew Barnett, Community Centre Manager. If you need details please contact either Andrew or the Parish Clerk on 01296 422800.



Transfer of Land

The Clerk to the parish council is still pushing for the final transfer of the land within Fairford Leys so that the parish council can be totally responsible for all open spaces and land maintenance, including the trees and hedging where appropriate. Covid-19 has delayed this further with solicitors now working from home and back-logs of work to deal with. We are at the final stages so please bear with us as we continue to push for this to happen. We also have to deal with the Land Registry and other stakeholders which takes some considerable time. We are just as frustrated with the delays as many other people are. We continue to do what we can, where we can.

r Parish Council News

New Bike Racks & Cycling Tracks

Aylesbury Garden Town project has purchased some new bike racks for Fairford Leys and we will be installing them at the side of the co-op. We have also moved some racks to the front of the community centre. A project is underway to refurbish the cycle tracks in and around Aylesbury and Fairford Leys is included in that proposal.

Maintenance Team

A very big "Thank You" to the parish council maintenance team for their continued work during the pandemic. They have continued to carry out their duties with care and attention and Fairford Leys has continued to look good and well maintained over these last few difficult months. We can't please everyone, but we try! Thank you too for the wonderful hanging baskets and planters around the village. They bring a welcome splash of colour to our surroundings. Did you know that the team plant every one of them by hand? Congratulations on a job well done.

Keith Gray – Clerk to Coldharbour Parish Council



Picture by Gemma Cope



Chairman Report

As we come to an unusual September edition of Coldharbour News it is an opportunity to reflect upon a rather tumultuous 2020. To those that have lost loved ones and close friends, please accept our deepest condolences.

Like almost all of us, plans had to change, adjustments made and trying to understand the new normal was a daily exercise in tolerance. As you will be aware, we needed to cancel our community events such as Fair in the Square and Music in the Square. We still have our remembrance service ahead and Christmas in the Square, but these are also at risk of running in different forms or not happening at all depending upon government guidance at the time.

The Fairford Leys Community Centre was forced to close during the peak of the pandemic but is successfully relaunching under the careful guidance of the Centre Manager, Andrew Barnett. We also had to temporarily furlough our amazing grounds team whilst we reorganised to social distancing. But we were able to get them back working at a social distance relatively quickly and we have all seen the fruits of their labours, from regular grass cutting to the amazing floral display in the square.

The parish council has met via Zoom during this pandemic following government guidelines to ensure that council business continues as close to normal as possible. We hope to be able to meet in person soon. As a parish we still have the oncoming disruption that will be caused by the commencement of the building works of HS2. As a parish council we have fought this from the start to no avail as it seems to be an unstoppable juggernaut. We have met virtually with HS2 contractors to try and understand the potential disruption that will be caused but we are still struggling to find out the overall effects on our community more due to HS2's lack of organisation and difficult governance structure than our understanding. Please remember that when work does begin on HS2, if you have issues you need to contact HS2 directly on their helpline.

Continued on page 4

Chairman's Report continued

The pandemic and subsequent lockdown forced more of us to explore our locality; one of our families particular delights was walking around Fairford Leys and exploring the paths and local wildlife, fauna and flora.

There have been changes on a local government level as well. The planned elections for the new Buckinghamshire Council were postponed for a year but the new council formed in April 2020 and has been staffed by merging all councilors from the regional councils. Cllr Andrew Cole goes into more detail at the bottom of this page.

I was re-elected at a council meeting in April to serve as Chairman for another year. During the course of this year we aim to get back to as normal as possible, both as a council and in terms of community activities. I would like to personally thank our clerk, Keith Gray, for keeping us on top of changes at a local and national level, our amazing grounds team and community centre staff and my fellow councilors for keeping things running during these difficult times.

Cllr Adam Poland - Chairman of Goldharbour Parish Council

Meet Your New Councillor – Sarah Collins

I have lived in Aylesbury for most of my life, having recently moved to Fairford Leys just over a year ago from Steeple Claydon.

The community atmosphere here in the village is fantastic and I have loved being part of it, the highlight was being able to help out on the coconut shy stall at Fair in the Square last summer, and also when the Bernwode Community Bus came to Fairford Leys to connect food donations for the needy.

I am a proud mother to two wonderful young men my eldest now lives in Sweden and my youngest still lives with me.

I have worked at a local secondary school for the past 14 years and for the last 3 years been the school's Examinations Manager which is a rewarding job.

My passion is baking and like making cakes for family and friends, I also enjoy walking up mountains and have recently climbed Snowdon and Ben Nevis.

Cllr Sarah Collins



A New Council for Buckinghamshire

From 1st April 2020, the five District and County Councils serving Buckinghamshire residents have been replaced by the new Buckinghamshire Council.

Buckinghamshire Council will replace the existing local Councils – Aylesbury Vale District Council, Buckinghamshire County Council, Chiltern District Council, South Bucks District Council and Wycombe District Council

Elections for the new Buckinghamshire Council were due to be held on 7th May 2020. However, due to the Government's announcement postponing the 2020 elections due to the COVID-19 outbreak, the first elections for Buckinghamshire Council will now take place on 6th May 2021. This has meant that all serving councilors on all 5 councils are now serving on the new Unitary Council. The Council has continued to hold meetings including scrutiny, planning and a full council

meeting via video calls and continues to carry out business as close to normal as is possible.

The new council means that you have one point of contact for all council led services from refuse collection to potholes, Adult and Children services to School Transport.

More information about the new council can be found at <https://www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/>

Cllr Andrew Cole



Aylesbury Garden Town - Masterplan approved

A major milestone was achieved on July 15 when the Aylesbury Garden Town (AGT) Masterplan, the aspirational plan to transform Aylesbury, was formally approved by Buckinghamshire Council. A new governance structure was also approved to reflect the new Unitary Authority and the important role of Town and Parish Councils in delivering services and the newly created Community Boards. Town and Parish Councils are represented and our local Parish Clerk, Keith Gray is a board member and our Chairman, Cllr Adam Poland-Goodyer is also representing Fairford Leys. The Aylesbury Community Board, are now members of the newly constituted AGT Strategic Oversight Board supporting the next stage of the Programme, as it moves into the delivery phase. Representatives from the Aylesbury Parish Councils have also been invited onto the Board.

The global pandemic has brought into focus the importance of delivering the projects as set out in the Masterplan, helping to make Aylesbury a healthier, greener, more sustainable place. Several exciting and innovative projects are in the pipeline for AGT, with investment in the town centre recognised as a priority, together with the Gardenway, an 18km orbital park of connected green spaces and wildlife corridors that will encircle Aylesbury, together with ways to support active travel that will improve air quality and provide an alternative healthy, and more sustainable, way to make a journey.

With our partners we are building on the positives that have emerged from these extraordinary times and will work with our communities to help secure Aylesbury's recovery and future resilience.

Visit www.aylesburygardentown.co.uk. For more information

Aylesbury Community Board

A new way to tackle issues that matter most

Issues that matter to our community can also, as well as through the Parish Council, be tackled through the new Aylesbury Community Board which looks to connect local people, organisations and groups with Buckinghamshire Council to improve local areas. In July the board held an introductory meeting to start this conversation, and over the next few weeks organisers will be getting people, groups and organisations involved and helping to identify key themes and issues ahead of an official launch in September. Everyone is welcome – read on to find out more.



What is a Community Board?

One of 16 across the county, Aylesbury's board (which includes Fairford Leys) will represent the voices of local people, capturing thoughts and ideas in new ways. The board will enable local conversations to identify the biggest themes, issues and areas of interest, and then find creative solutions together. It will influence how decisions are made and services delivered.

How does it work?

The new Aylesbury Community Board is up and running and Buckinghamshire Council Officer, Amy Jenner, is the coordinator, who will make sure local people, groups and organisations feel connected with the board and the council, information is shared and views are heard.

With no need to attend everything the board does, you can participate in issues that you feel passionate about; join meetings or take part in a working group. The core meetings will decide priorities, allocate funding and report action plan progress. Alongside, the working groups will focus on specific issues/projects. Agendas and minutes will be online, and you will be able to complete surveys, take part in polls or share your views.

If you'd like to get involved, email localities@buckinghamshire.gov.uk or visit www.buckinghamshire.gov.uk/community-boards

Keith Gray - Clerk to Coldharbour Parish Council



Village News an

VILLAGE UPDATE

The past 6 months have been very difficult for everyone and Fairford Leys has been no exception. Now that Lockdown has been eased, I wanted to bring you an update as to what various sections of the community are doing, or planning to do. Apologies if I have missed anybody out and some people did not respond to my request for information. Of course things may have changed by the time you read this!

Health and Beauty

Destiny Hair Design

Destiny is one of the oldest businesses on Fairford Leys, and has been keeping many residents hair looking good since 2004. They have now reopened and are working by appointment only within Government Guidelines. Telephone 01296 337555 to make an appointment.

Eastgate Dental

The dental department are still only able to carry out emergency treatment by appointment only, until government restrictions are lifted: telephone 01296 433222 in an emergency.

Eastgate Eyes

The opticians are now open during their regular hours, see details on line. They are able to carry out all regular eye tests and supply glasses, whilst conforming to all Government Guidelines. Telephone 01296484311 for an appointment.

Fairford Leys Smile Centre

The centre re opened its doors in June and is running a normal service; Telephone 01296 398180 for an appointment.

Fairford Leys Pharmacy

The friendly team at our local pharmacy have stayed open all the way through the lockdown period to dispense prescriptions and give advice on everyday medical matters. They also stock a good supply of toiletries, medicines etc. Telephone 01296 485050.

Fairford Leys Veterinary Surgery

The local branch of the vet's remains closed, at least until October, they will notify on social media when they are able to reopen; telephone Hampden Veterinary Hospital for advice and for further information. 01296 423666.

Restaurants and Takeaways

China Brasserie

The China Brasserie is another business which has been open in Fairford Leys since early days. They have been open for takeaways during the Coronavirus restrictions and are now also open for meals in the restaurant; booking not essential at quiet times. To order a takeaway or to book a table telephone 01296 397802 or 01296 422859.

Rebeno's

This popular takeaway in the Square has now fully reopened from Monday to Saturday from 4pm to 9pm. Manager Ramo said "we are hoping to expand our service to deliveries very soon" Order on line or telephone 01296 710085.

Salt and Vinegar Fish and Chips

Good to see this popular restaurant open again for takeaways only. Monday to Saturday 5pm to 9:30pm and 12 noon to 2pm on Fridays.

The Honey Bee

Our village pub is open again with a limited menu and their popular pizzas, social distancing is being observed. No need to book except at busy times. Telephone 01296 708363.

Utopia

Many of you will be familiar with Utopia Gifts and Coffee. Almeera Khan and her daughter took over the café in 2017, since when it has become the ideal place to meet for coffee and cake or a light lunch. The good news is that it has now fully reopened from 10am to 4pm for both inside and outside seating, and don't forget to look at their interesting array of gifts. Almeera said "Things are picking up nicely and we are hoping to open from 9am to 5pm in September. Bookings not necessary for 4 or less people" Telephone 02296 339000.

Knit & Natter



We would like to let you all know that Knit & Natter will return as soon as we are allowed to have gatherings inside which we hope will be soon. We all hope that everyone who has joined us at our meetings have kept well and safe during these last few trying months

Whilst in lockdown though a lot of our Knit & Natter friends have still played an active part in the community by supporting good causes, such as making hearts for Florence Nightingale hospice & hospitals, knitted cuffs for Alzheimer's teddies for the emergency services, blankets for special care and a garden display for Freemantle Court Alzheimer's clients.

Sylvia Barnard Fairford Leys Resident Telephone 07709799311



COVID Update

Escape to Escape

Under new ownership

Lillian & Karen brought the business in March 2020 – just before lockdown kicked in and what a kick in the teeth that was!

Being a Fairford leys resident for 10 years Lillian is keen to bring some tranquillity to the residents of the village. Lockdown has given Lillian the time to spend to refurbish the internal and external shop front giving it some kerb appeal, and with a brand new sign and logo it was finished off nicely, just in time for reopening. Internally, the 3 treatment rooms and reception area have been refreshed and restocked with all your favourite products.

Hopefully you will see and feel the difference as they have managed to make the place feel more spacious and airy making your visit more relaxing. Lillian & Karen are committed to keep investing in the business to ensure that clients are given the best possible experience when they visit and a friendly

team await you with a warm welcome and refreshments for you to enjoy.

Manicures, massages, and waxing are all available and the team are qualified to carry out IPL hair removal as well. With effect from 1st August all facial treatments will also be able to take place.

You may have recently received a flyer detailing treatments along with a loyalty card giving you a lovely incentive to treat yourself a little more often and gift vouchers are available for specific treatments or value allowing greater flexibility for the recipient; A great present for all occasions.

The team consists of: Lillian, Karen, Hollie and Alice – all fully qualified & experienced beauty therapists.

The salon is thoroughly cleaned after every client visit and they have taken measures to ensure that you will not



be in close contact with anybody other than your therapist.

Rest assured Lillian & the team look forward to welcoming you into their new safe environment and giving you time to escape!

Maintenance Update

In these difficult times we've managed to keep it business as usual around the village, the grass is up to date, all parks strimmed and any items flagged up by ROSPA completed, the weed spraying of all tarmac road areas will continue when weather permits.

Hanging baskets were planted and put up earlier in the summer, we think that the displays are beautiful and are very proud of how they look, and we hope that they are cheering the residents up as we begin to go out and about around the village; watering of the baskets will continue throughout the summer.

We've had a few issues arising from fallen trees or limbs from trees, these were dealt with swiftly.

Sadly we've recently had 2 benches vandalised in the village, both beyond repair! If you see any anti-social behaviour please report to 101 and also let the parish council know, we may be able to monitor these areas more to stop these antisocial acts from happening.



If you see anything that you are concerned about, or just want to pass on your comments, please call the Fairford Leys Centre on 01296 422800 and leave a message.

Stay safe and enjoy your beautiful village.

Steve Webb – Grounds Maintenance Manager

Fairford Leys Centre News Update

Well we are certainly in unprecedented times and very few of us have avoided impact from the current pandemic. It has been no different for the community centre since the end of March none of our regular classes have been able to go ahead; however we have tried to use the time wisely.

Some of the time was used to repaint walls, doors and woodwork, polish floors and to generally tidy up the centre in anticipation of when we would be able to re-open in some capacity. We have been inundated with guidance about moving towards safely re-opening the centre and have had to try to incorporate guidelines covering the variety of groups and activities that use the building.

In order to ensure that the building is COVID-19 secure we now have in place hand sanitization stations, one-way systems, mitigations in place where we cannot achieve 2 metre social distancing and vastly reduced maximum capacity for each of our halls. Rooms that previously catered for 60 and 100 people can now be used by 9 and 15 people respectively. Only one person or household can use the toilets at any one time and our foyer can have 3 people or household groups.

This is likely to be the new normal for quite some time and we



have been working closely with a lot of our existing hirers to facilitate the provision of classes under the new rules. Sadly one or two classes will not be returning and we are sorry to see them go, but we are hopeful that by the middle to end of September we will have around 2/3rds of our classes back albeit in a different format to previously. For more detailed information please call the centre on 01296 422800.

It is of course possible that by the time you read this things may well have changed and all I can say is that we will be doing our best to keep up to date and to ensure everyone's safety.

Andy Barnett - Fairford Leys Centre Manager

A Message from the Church on Fairford Leys

At the start of the UK lockdown period, I was told about a short video which was made by a former submarine captain. He listed a number of things which the Navy had determined were important during extended periods of isolation.

One of these was communication. We have all been through a stressful period, and it will have affected people in a variety of ways. It's important to keep the channels of communication open, to talk about things which are troubling us, and allow people to raise their concerns even if we do not share the same feelings. Thankfully we live in an age where communication

technology is plentiful. We can talk, message and video call in a multitude of private and group settings. This does not replace face to face contact, but it has helped to lessen our feelings of isolation.

At the church we have used this to good effect. Our weekly online services, streamed via Facebook and YouTube, are watched by many local households. In addition, we have gained several virtual members around the country and a few internationally, through family links and people looking for new worship experiences. Rather than constraining our activities, this period has allowed us to explore and widen our means of communication. This is something we will continue to develop; we are looking at ways to ensure streaming can be provided in future from inside the church building.

Like many churches, we are now looking at how we might accommodate people once the building is in use again. We are treading very carefully, working through the guidance from both Government and church authorities. We do not yet have a date for re-opening. Whatever we decide,

the online services will continue, so that no-one feels they will miss out. It will be important that people can continue to stay safely at home, and still be part of whatever is happening in the church building.

We may find that the services need to be different as well; the time of day, length of stay, and allowable activities are all things to be considered. Most importantly, we will find that the crisis has highlighted areas where the church is able to offer comfort and support. This might need to happen in new ways. The church tradition of which we are part has a motto which goes back to Saint Augustine in the 4th Century: "The church must always be reformed." We will be glad to return to meeting together in a common space, but I don't think we should regard it as a return to business as usual. This is an opportunity to create a new normal, building on what we have discovered in these past few months, and to keep that communication open, providing support for our community through a variety of channels.

**Revd Anthony Howells
The Church on Fairford Leys**



St Mary's CE School

When I first started at St Mary's CE School, in January, the whole school and wider community welcomed me with open arms and such warmth that I will never forget. Who would have thought 11 weeks into the job we would all enter into, possibly, one of the strangest situations anyone could have imagined

Throughout the pandemic I have seen a community of strong, resourceful pupils, parents/carers, staff and members of the Fairford Leys Community, successfully navigate their way through an ever-changing landscape. Of course, we have and there will still be some moments that catch us off guard and we see a chink in our own and each other's armour, revealing our true emotions (we wouldn't be human if that didn't happen). However, I know as a community that, at these times, we all have and will pull together to support each other.

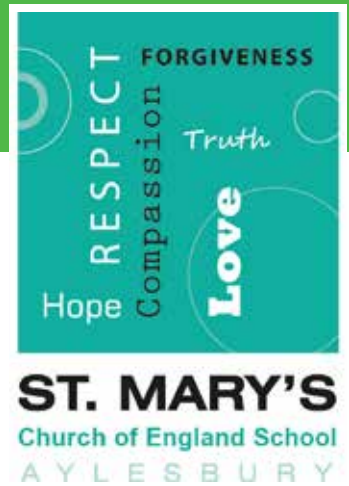
It has been a real delight to work and get to know all the members of the St Mary's CE School community. It has been a tremendous privilege to get to know the Year 6s before they embark on their new adventures at their new school, the youngest members of our school in the Nursery

as well as all the pupils in between. I have also attended a Parish Council meeting where the Chair of Governors and I discussed how St Mary's would like to work with the wider community and provide opportunities for the pupils to be active within Fairford Leys. We also discussed how we can work together to manage how parents travel to school to reduce congestion. I am very much looking forward to working with the parish council in the future.

Of course it goes without saying that behind every Headteacher there is a team of staff working diligently behind the scenes. I feel so lucky to have such a committed and supportive staff team who are dedicated to ensure that all pupils shine as lights of the world.

Take care and stay safe

David Liddle – Headteacher St Mary's CE School



St Mary's School Pupil Wins Stoke Mandeville Spinal Research Design a Wheelchair with the WOW Factor Competition

Eight-year-old Amy Beesley, a pupil of St Mary's C of E School, Fairford Leys, stole judges' hearts with her NHS-inspired Design a Wheelchair with the WOW Factor competition creation organised by Stoke Mandeville Spinal Research (SMSR), and has been announced as the Primary School category winner.

The competition, open to both Primary and Secondary school pupils, saw a variety of entries from young children across Buckinghamshire. Commenting on her winning wheelchair design, Amy said: "My inspiration for my design was the NHS. I have designed all the pictures on my wheelchair myself and included a brake, handles, arm rest and papier mache wheels. I hope you like it."

SMSR's Charlotte Minoprio commented: "We simply fell in love with this design and the effort that had clearly gone into it. On behalf of everyone involved with Stoke Mandeville Spinal Research, I would like to say a big thank you to all those children who entered the competition and their schools. There were some incredible entries which truly showed off what amazing young talent there is out there. A big thank you also to George David Estate Agents, for kindly sponsoring our competition prizes and helping with the difficult task of judging!"

The two competition winners from the Primary and Secondary school categories receive a £50 voucher for WHSmith. In addition, each winner's school will be offered



a free interactive disability awareness assembly with an SMSR Ambassador.

All competition entries are now available to view via the Charity's Facebook page @lifeafterpara.

To find out more about the work of Stoke Mandeville Spinal Research, please visit www.lifeafterparalysis.com

Sam Heggie on behalf of Stoke Mandeville Spinal Research.

Let's Keep Fairford Leys Looking Good

Maintaining the various property boundaries and Mews areas around Fairford Leys.

Lockdown has certainly been an interesting and, for many people, a difficult time.

One of the things I have noticed is how many people ensure that the weeds and overgrown parts of their properties and boundary lines are kept neat and tidy and it is lovely to see this. Unfortunately, not everyone is doing this and it would be great if everyone could just spend some time pulling out the weeds near their properties and where they park their cars, especially in side areas and mews areas. It really does give some great "kerb appeal" to our homes and makes the streets look well kept.

The parish council maintenance team do a fantastic job but they cannot clear private property areas and don't have the time to go into the mews areas,

which are the responsibility of the cluster of homes in that particular area. Check your house deeds to see what joint responsibilities you have for the mews areas you live in.

During this time, I have been working, but the kids & I have taken to walking and litter picking to keep where we live tidy, safe and inviting. I have been amazed at the amount of litter we have collected on our rounds through the village and the riverine corridor. The top 3 have to be cans, plastic bags and filled up dog poo bags. We are saddened that some people still throw their filled-up poo bags in the bushes or tie them to trees. There are plenty of bins around to use. We have also found a Mattress, flip flops, trainers and cat collars (returned to owners!) on our travels, as well as drug paraphernalia



which has been reported to the police.

It's great that the Aylesbury Wombles have been onto Fairford Leys to clear litter up. It would be fantastic if we could help them by clearing up the areas near our own properties.

If anyone has any difficulties or would like some help to do this, please do let me know and I would be delighted to support.

Cllr Sarah James

748 Bags of Rubbish and Counting

Aylesbury Wombles are making a difference in Aylesbury

It all started as an idea when 15 years old Abigail Walker, who had been studying the environment at school and how we could help, decided to get some bin bags and go on a litter pick and it snowballed from there.

The idea was for it to be a bit like parkrun, where people meet up every week and walk together whilst collecting litter and making Aylesbury a cleaner and nicer place to live and work.

Dad Richard, the Head Womble, contacted Aylesbury Town Council and asked for help by getting the message out to people so they could join, providing bin bags and some equipment. From the first meeting on, the Council was on board and regularly provided the group with the Council's Community Litter Pick kit.

What started out with a few people a few months ago is now a large group of regular volunteers known as the Aylesbury Wombles. They meet every weekend in various locations across

Aylesbury and clean up litter in the area. The Community Litter Pick which the Council lent the Wombles for the picks is no longer sufficient, so Aylesbury Town Council decided to provide the group with their own permanent litter pick equipment, such as litter pickers, high viz jackets and bin bag hoops plus more bin bags and to support the group in every way it can.

Aylesbury Town Mayor, Cllr Mike Smith recently met up with the Wombles in Bedgrove to officially hand over the new equipment and to lend a helping hand at the litter pick along Ambleside. He says "Having been out 'wombing' a number of times now, it's fantastic to see how grateful our local communities have been for the improvement in their environment that comes out of a visit from this fantastic group of volunteers. The Town Council are delighted to provide this extra equipment and continue supporting their work".

Head Womble, Richard said: "It's not



our rubbish but it is our town. We are very grateful to Aylesbury Town Council for all their support and advice since we started. This equipment will make logistics of holding "Wombles" in various locations at the same time a lot easier and ensures that all of the volunteers have the right and safe equipment to work with".

Judith Priest

**Senior Communities Officer
Aylesbury Town Council**

Editor's Note. You may have seen the wombles out and about round Fairford Leys recently.

Working together to make Fairford Leys a hedgehog friendly village?

Let's get prickly

Scarily, the British hedgehog population is decreasing at a phenomenal rate and they need our help. It is thought, that since the millennium we've lost 1/3 of all our hedgehogs. Hedgehogs were once a wood-edge species and suffered when country hedges were ripped out. Suburban gardens are and can be a perfect substitute. These cute prickly mammals love gardens and are widely recognised as a potent ally for gardeners, eating all sorts of creepy crawlies like caterpillars, beetles, worms, bugs and slugs.

There are around half a million hectares of garden in the UK, hedgehogs need access to lots of gardens to survive – can we work together to help make Fairford Leys a hedgehog friendly village and follow examples from other areas?

Any garden can be hedgehog friendly with a few simple tips:

1) Create hedgehog highways

Hedgehogs travel around 1-2 miles every night in their quest to find enough food and a mate. Therefore no one garden is enough - hedgehogs need neighbourhoods of linked-up gardens to survive. We can make their life a little easier by creating access into and between gardens, for example by making holes in or under garden fences and walls (a hole/gap the size of a CD case is big enough).

2) Check before strimming and mowing

Hedgehogs often rest/sleep in areas of high grass and will not move away because of the noise. They are often left with horrible (and unfortunately fatal) injuries which can easily be avoided by checking the area to be strimmed/cut beforehand.

3) Check bonfires before setting them alight

Hedgehogs find bonfires very tempting as a home. So before you light a bonfire, check underneath it carefully.

4) Avoid toxic slug pellets and pesticides

Toxic slug pellets do not only kill any slugs or snails but they also harm and damage their food chain like hedgehogs, birds or frogs who feed on them. Please use organic methods instead.

5) Create a wild corner in your garden

Keep a corner of your garden wild to offer shelter, protection and natural food sources for hedgehogs and other wildlife. For example, leave some grassy areas longer (you may soon see some wildflowers appear too), wood or leaf piles in a corner at the bottom of the garden and low level shrubs and vegetation are great to rustle through for food but provide cover too.

6) Add a ramp to your pond

Hedgehogs are really good swimmers but can easily become trapped in ponds or pools which have steep sides. Please try and have a gently sloping edge if possible or place half submerged rocks in the water as an escape for them (and other small wildlife).

7) Leave some water

Provide a shallow dish of fresh water for hedgehogs especially in the summer. If you do want to feed visiting hedgehogs, have a small bowl of meaty, tinned cat or dog food or dry cat biscuits (please do not feed mealworms, milk or bread which is really bad for them and mealworms can actually kill them).



For further information check out the British Hedgehog Preservation Society webpage www.britishhedgehogs.org.uk or their campaign Hedgehog Street www.hedgehogstreet.org.

Or join the Facebook group "Fairford Leys hedgehog friends" – Let's make a difference together!

Gudrun Heidenbauer – Fairford Leys Resident

Where was this?



3 Great Meadow Way (corner of Woodmans Croft)
4 Hickman Street looking towards the school
5 Swallow Lane looking towards the Farm / Rectory

2 Hickman Street looking towards the village centre
1 About where the bridge is in the main play area

Answers



The Bernwode Community Bus comes to Fairford Leys

On a very warm and sunny day in May Bernie the Bernwode Bus paid Fairford Leys a visit, the bus usually provides reliable, flexible and affordable transport to any voluntary, caring and charitable group or individual throughout the Waddesdon local area and the surrounding villages. But due to lockdown it has become a collection point travelling around Aylesbury's villages playing music with volunteers in fancy dress collecting food donations for the local food banks. We were also collecting money to help fund the charity that runs Bernie.



Unfortunately due to the heat it was decided not to dress up the volunteers but we still certainly had lots of fun, waving at cars and those isolating indoors as well as handing out sweets which were kindly donated by The Vineyard. It was a hot day but well worth it and thanks to the generosity of Fairford Leys Residents we collected 15 crates worth of food and £200 in donations.

My thanks go to Cllr. Collins who joined me on the 2 hour route march around the village as well as Michelle Parker and the team at Bernwode Bus for organising the visit and not forgetting Bernie the Conductor.

A big thank you to all of you who donated, waved or beeped your horns, stay safe.

Cllr Andrew Cole

