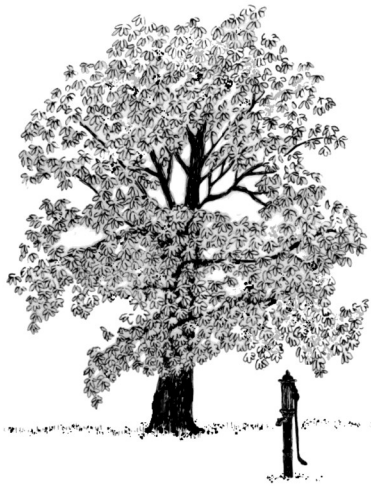




Cuddington Village Voice

April 2021

Council Election

CUDDINGTON
PARISH COUNCIL
cuddingtonvillage.com

Local Elections - Thursday 6th May 2021

MAKE A CHANGE
BECOME A PARISH COUNCILLOR
and help shape Cuddington village



ARE you interested in the life of your village, your parish, your local environment, recreational facilities, local transport, planning and housing issues?

These are just a few of the areas where we

get involved as a Parish Council to help make a difference to our community.

Why not consider becoming a Councillor?

Cuddington Parish Council is 7 members of the Public. All 7 members have to be elected, whether, or not, they have been a Councillor before. It is a completely level playing field. Elections will be held on **Thursday 6th May 2021**. To apply, or to find out more, please contact Venetia Davies, Parish Clerk:

Email: cuddingtonpc@gmail.com

Website: www.cuddingtonvillage.com - Elections 2021

Any person over the age of 18 who is a citizen of the United Kingdom, The European Community, or the Commonwealth can be a Councillor if they are an elector in, work in, live in or live within three miles of the area of the local Council. Applications must be submitted to Bucks Council by 4pm on **Thursday 8th April 2021**, by the Parish Clerk or by the candidate if they so wish.



Christian Aid Week in Cuddington 9th-15th May

The start of 2021 has been a challenging time for everybody, but more especially those in the most dangerous, isolated and poorest places in the world. Here in Cuddington we are proud of our level of giving to long term sustainable aid projects, such as rolling out vaccination clinics, which can make such a big difference. This year the focus of the week is on the impact of Climate Change which is already affecting crops and food security on several continents. This gives you an idea of the issues; <https://www.christianaid.org.uk/appeals/key-appeals/christian-aid-week#>:

Over the years, as a village, we have consistently raised about £2,000 for this Charity through a variety of sociable activities. 2020 was no exception and, as well as our popular plant sales, the children undertook a climbing challenge on their stairs... Everest was conquered!

This year we are still going to be facing restrictions and so once again we will be open to some different fund-raising ideas. The Sandersons have kindly offered to run a plant stall in their front garden in Spurt Street; ideal as it is so easily accessible to all. It is now the time to divide perennials, pot up plants grown on from last year and sow seeds for this year.

We would appreciate as many donations as possible during the week. There will be a Christian Aid family service, a village quiz and various other fund raising activities.

If you would be able to help in any way at all, it would be much appreciated.

Caroline Stonham caroline@holymans.co.uk

New trees for Cuddington

Readers may remember that the Parish Council agreed that a substantial new tree would be planted to take the place of the elderly horse chestnut on the Upper Green that was felled last year. Since then, Cuddington has acquired a team of enthusiastic tree wardens; these are volunteer residents who are interested in the village's diverse collection of trees and who are willing to spend some time raising awareness of how these trees enhance our environment and helping to look after them.

As one of those tree wardens, I was offered the opportunity to select a suitable tree for the Upper Green and, with helpful advice and suggestions from a number of people in the village as well as tree growers and others, I proposed that we plant a hornbeam.



(Continued on page 3)

Thought for the month...



April is a time of looking forward. We traditionally consider the month as springtime as we are blessed with blossom on the trees and flowers in the verges and our gardens starting to show new life.

At the time of writing, we are also hoping for a further easing of 'lockdown' to occur in April. Last year we barely hit spring before we were all shut in for what felt like a very long winter with a very brief reprieve at the end of the

summer before everything closed down again, including our church services.

This spring, things look much more positive, thanks to the roll out of vaccines which give hope that we will soon be able to mix with family, friends and neighbours without recourse to masks and social distancing. It won't happen immediately, but the outlook is good, and we really look forward to that day!

April also brings to our church a new Rector for the benefice who will be the vicar of St. Nicholas Church Cuddington. The Revd. Cassa Messervy will be moving to the new Rectory in Haddenham early in April together with her husband and three daughters and will be licensed on the evening of the 22nd of April.

The pandemic has affected everyone, whether through the loss of loved ones, the loss of jobs, the frustration of cancelled weddings and holidays, enduring loneliness and in many other ways. It has been, to put it mildly, a difficult and frustrating time. But we continue to hope! And why do we hope? Because we know that Easter Day is coming!

Easter, the day that we remember that our Lord Jesus Christ rose from the dead! In conquering death, Christ gave us hope in his promise, for as the Bible says in John 3.16: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life." May the coming of spring bring you new hope, hope for both a better life and eternal one! God bless you.

Jonathan

Cuddington Gardening



Our March Zoom talk focused on flowering plants from May to midsummer. As usual we received a lively talk from George Lockwood, full of hints and tips with beautiful photos.

We'll continue along similar lines for our talk on April 12th, this time flowering plants from midsummer onwards.

Again, I would like to encourage non members from near and far to join us free of charge.

If you'd like to send me your email I can forward the link. Meanwhile, let's hope for some good weather for gardening. Hopefully, we'll be able to achieve an oasis of loveliness where we can welcome friends and family.....at last.

Jobs for April

- 1 Keep weeds under control
- 2 Protect fruit blossom from late frosts
- 3 Tie in climbing and rambling roses
- 4 Sow hardy annuals, herbs and wildflower seed outdoors
- 5 Start to feed citrus plants
- 6 Increase the water given to houseplants
7. Feed hungry shrubs and roses
8. Sow new lawns or repair bare patches
9. Divide bamboos and waterlilies
10. Prune fig trees

Carol

carolhayward24@gmail.com

Speedwatch activity in the village has been patchy since the various Covid restrictions have come, gone and come in again. However Speedwatch is only one part of our efforts to address traffic issues in the village.

The Traffic Action Group has been working away in the background supporting local activity to address HGV issues through the Haddenham & Waddesdon Freight Strategy and various other Community Board initiatives. TAG has prepared a paper to assist the Parish Council to address a broad range of traffic problems as reported in last month's Village Voice.

Turning back to Speedwatch, the lull in activity has allowed a complete rethink and reorganisation at the centre of Community Speedwatch, CSW. Community Speedwatch is now to be driven from the office of the Police & Crime Commissioner at Thames Valley Police. There is a dedicated police officer in charge of the programme, PC Lee Turnham an experienced former traffic officer, based at Amersham. Here in Cuddington we are about to get under way again immediately after Easter. We shall be using Sentinel as before, but we continue to look at ways we can enhance the operational experience of our volunteers and expand the breadth of our activities. Watch this space. So keep a look out for our volunteers and give us a wave, whilst observing the speed limit of course!

Steve Wright, Cuddington Community

Speedwatch Co-ordinator stepnwright@googlemail.com

Peter Spence, Leader TAG prspence@btinternet.com



TAG 2020
Cuddington
Traffic Action Group

Village Voice is published by the Cuddington Parochial Church Council as a service to the community.

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Cuddington Bellringers;

New Ropes

As many of you have noticed our bells have stood silent like they did during the war. We stand in a circle where the ropes fall, directly under each wheel, less than 2m apart and in a fairly enclosed space.

Twenty years ago, when the bells were rehung for the Millennium, we had a set of new ropes. They have lasted well but as they had started to wear and fray we ordered a new set and received a most generous donation from Haddenham Beer festival. The tight machine twists rarely become unravelled but occasionally ropes break unexpectedly and we wanted to avoid this happening during a special piece of ringing or for a wedding.

At the beginning of March our new 8 bellropes arrived from Ellis ropes in Loughborough. They are each 50 foot long with the lower section made of hemp which is kind to the hands and a traditional red, white and blue wool 'Sally' to catch. Above the sally pre-stretched polyester is machine spliced to the hemp.

This is less stretchy than 100% hemp ropes and longer lasting as the ropes run over the pulleys and onto each wheel.

During the last week, James and I have been untying the old ropes and hanging the new ones to let them straighten out.



We have not been told when we can start ringing our bells again on Friday evenings to practice or on Sundays before the morning service, but we hope that it will not be too much longer.

If you have learnt to ring in the past, perhaps as a teenager, we would love to hear from you. If you would be interested in learning this ancient skill, we will be having introductory sessions later this year.

More details to follow.

Caroline Stonham (Tower Captain) caroline@holymans.co.uk

(continued from page 1)

This is a native species that is resistant to the sorts of diseases and pests that affect trees. It grows into an elegant wine-glass shape – some of you may know the striking avenue of hornbeams on the Oxford Ring Road between the Banbury Road and the Woodstock Road, as featured in Philip Pullman's *His Dark Materials*.



It then emerged that Rectory Homes were keen to contribute to the improvement of the village environment, and they have made a generous offer that has not only enabled us to buy a hornbeam, but also to buy another tree that is native to this area, a walnut which replaces the ornamental cherry on the corner of Bernard Close and Dadbrook, which died recently. On 24 March the team from Majestic Trees arrived with the trees and digging equipment and, over the space of about five hours, planted these two trees for us.

We had a lot of positive comments from neighbours and passers by, including some younger residents who were perhaps more interested in the JCB digger than in the trees themselves.

The hornbeam is a fine specimen, about 7 metres high and already about 25 years old; the walnut is a more modest affair, but a good size and a welcome addition to that grassy corner.

Thanks are due not only to the Majestic team (William and Dean) and to Simon and Edd at Rectory Homes, but also to Ken Birkby who supported the initiative by checking the planting sites, supplying coffee and biscuits, and to neighbours Brian and Will who kindly provided an initial supply of water for each of the new trees.

On the subject of water, these trees will need a lot of watering in their first year in their new home.

Twice a week, someone will need to spend ten minutes directing a hose at the hornbeam, and five minutes for the walnut. We will be investigating the possibility of splashing out (sorry, I couldn't resist) on a tank trailer, which could also be useful for watering the new saplings on the playing fields, but at this stage we are looking for volunteers to help with a watering rota.

If you might be able to help with this from time to time, please contact Paul Ridout (ridout359@btinternet.com).



PC meetings continue to be held virtually, using Zoom.

However, the legislation enabling this is due to expire on 6th May, after which face-to-face meetings can recommence.

Some organisations are lobbying for 'virtual' meetings to be allowed to continue.

One of the casualties of the current situation has been The Annual Village Meeting, which did not take place last April and will not take place in April this year. In its usual, and very successful format, it would not be safe to hold such a meeting until all restrictions are lifted. The PC will be discussing various options.

You will know that elections are taking place on Thursday 6th May, for Buckinghamshire Councillors, Police and Crime Commissioner and Parish Council. Please see the flier on the front page of this edition and consider standing for the PC, because it would be great to get a wide selection of candidates for whom we can vote. Please get out and use your vote. (take a pen or pencil with you)

The newly elected PC will be meeting for the first time shortly after the election. It will have a wide range of projects to try and progress, as noted in the Neighbourhood Plan, in which everyone was able to have an input.

One issue that has been a problem for many years is safety in the vicinity of the cross-roads at the centre of the village.

We will have to do something, as increasing volumes of traffic create even more problems. From previous research, any measures towards an improvement are likely to be expensive! It was agreed that we should increase the Precept but, in recognition of the economic situation, restrict the increase to 5% for this year. (£37,800 for 2021/2 against £36,000 for 2020/1). It was a little surprising to see the Council Tax bills quoting Cuddington as increasing by 8.8%. This was queried with Bucks Council and the response from David Wise, Account Manager, was, "the Tax Base was impacted by a more generous Council Tax Reduction scheme as well as a slightly reduced recovery rate."

In simple terms, this apparently means that because there is less money coming in, or being recovered, the percentage increase is higher to achieve the cash amount required.

There is also a debate about how a 25% increase in the Adult Social Care budget can be shown as 2.0% on our bills.

For anyone who wants to be totally confused, go to Haddenham.net/newsroom/council-tax-explained to see an answer from Matt Strevens, Head of Corporate Finance at Bucks Council!

Notwithstanding the above, the Cuddington element of the total Council Tax bill is relatively small and the actual increase in it amounts to £10.78 pa for a Band D property.

Whatever the projects the village embarks upon, the PC has, and will continue, to seek other funding streams to reduce to cost to the village. Good recent examples are; the road build-out on Aylesbury Road, the impending improvements to the Children's Playground, the enhanced AV system in the Picture House and very recently, the new trees in the village, kindly donated by Rectory Homes.

Ken Birkby

Memories of Betty Blake

20th October 1933 - 2nd February 2021

Betty Blake was a very faithful member of the Methodist Church in Cuddington and she was loved and respected as a Local Preacher. Three years ago, she was unable to lead services due to failing health, but would love to read a lesson or take part in special services especially Christmas.

Many years ago, when she was much younger, she jointly led a Womens Meeting once a week in the Chapel. Ladies from the village came from all 3 Churches (including the Baptist which was still in existence then). Speakers came from the local area and ended with tea and cake.

Although living in Haddenham she was a member of C.A.T.S. and took part in several of their productions.

Some readers may remember those days and been part of the dramatic group.

Betty had a lovely singing voice too but her one regret in recent years was that she was unable to sing the hymns or be part of any choral event. Despite this she would volunteer to be part of any event that we held and would be an asset to its success..

She loved the Village Fete and whatever the theme for that year she would dress up appropriately and loved it all.

She had to watch the Fancy dress procession. This was a must. We knew that she would disappear with her 'Rollator' which would take her around the stalls later on in the afternoon. If you were on the stall selling second hand books you would have helped her fill her bag with bargains, plus anything else that caught her eye on her travels.

She had been a Primary School Teacher both in Aylesbury before her marriage to Bryan and then in Haddenham at the first school. She loved children and they loved her.

We will remember her for her love for God who she served and the way she was so generous with her time, money, hospitality and love. (She made some very good cakes too) She could be serious but also had a sense of fun and laughter.

She longed to go to Israel and see the places of the Bible come to life and walk where Jesus walked.

In 2003 she and Bryan travelled to Israel with a group from the Church and it was the fulfillment of a dream.

Betty so loved the Jewish people and on her return was part of a group that prayed for the land and its' people. We will miss you, Betty. We are the poorer for the loss of such a lovely friend and sister but Heaven is the richer.

A funeral was held on Monday 22nd February and many tributes were given by her son and Rev Keith Edwards led the service. This was attended by the immediate family, but was streamed, so that friends and other family members could be part of the celebration of her life.

Greener Cuddington



Take an interest in our footpath network!

Springtime is particularly welcome this year for a number of reasons, and it's been tough having our movements restricted while the countryside has been so soggy – that Buckinghamshire mud really clings! Some issues remain on footpaths, particularly the flooded Ridgebarn track, footpath 3 where the spring is stronger than normal and horses are now walked on it and the footpath 1 junction at the bottom of the enclosed section. Unless you want wet feet, wellies are in order, although it is to be hoped that action can be taken to keep them in a better state, particularly while they are being walked on more than normal. Cuddington has an ad-hoc **Footpaths Group** who will meet later this month to work out what can be done with the cooperation of the landowners regarding these and other issues. If you enjoy our footpath network and would like to contribute to keeping them in a good state, do join us: send me an email (address below).



Cuddington's Annual Bird Watch

This will be the 10th year of our Cuddington Vertebrate Watch (it's mostly birds) and I hope that we will have participants from all parts of the village, so please do get in touch if you might be interested. We take an audit of birds, mammals and amphibians in our garden or any selected area during the 2nd weekend in May and I collate the results and produce a report which you can find on the Cuddington website.

I am particularly keen to get a good insight in our bird population this year as there is some evidence that things are changing. We would also all like to know if there are any hedgehogs in the village. Help is available for identification, if needed, through the RSPB web site.

Doug Kennedy doug@doug-kennedy.com

Mothering Sunday 2021

Although I am now a Grand Mother, a delightful surprise came to break the tedium of lockdown at Larden in Spicketts Lane on Mothering Sunday, which brought me such joy and reminded me that I am, of course, still a Mother!

Emma and her Mother came to bring me one of the beautiful posies made by the children from St. Nicholas Church (see photograph) for all the church Mums. I would very much like to thank the children for giving me and all the other Mums such joy during the difficult and rather sad days of Covid.

Thank you all so much.

With love to you all, Jennifer



A blight on the countryside

Driving along the roads of the country, one becomes aware of the unnecessary dumping and fly tipping of rubbish into the verges and ditches. This has become very obvious as more of us cycle and walk for exercise and recreation.

Cuddington is not immune from this phenomenon. With the short grass of winter, the state of verges and ditches around Cuddington is a total disgrace.

Whilst clearing this is technically the responsibility of Bucks Council, it is easy to understand why we could be waiting a long time for it to happen.

The extent of the problem is illustrated by the volume of rubbish collected a few weeks ago from the bottom of Dadbrook to Kings Cross, by three volunteers.

There were 15 heavy bags, three of which had been fly tipped in a field entrance. On request, they were promptly taken away by Bucks Council.

In these times, it is inappropriate and probably illegal to

organise a mass litter pick inside and outside the village, but now is the time to take action and we can all do **something** to reduce the problem. (No - it is not a culling of the morons who dump litter!). If anyone wants to go out independently, or with a person from their bubble, and would like to borrow litter pickers, rubbish bags and Hi viz jackets (essential wear beside the roads), please contact Ken on 292921.



Empire Jack

In the November issue of the Village Voice reference was made to the centenary of the British Legion. The forerunner of this was the Comrades of the Great War, a non political association whose aims were to care for dependents of the fallen and veterans suffering hardship. The driving force in its creation was Major John Norton Griffiths, "Empire Jack" engineer, MP, millionaire entrepreneur and a man with past military experience

The war was going badly; enemy troops were mining beneath the Allies' trenches and blowing them up with comparative ease. Norton Griffiths had offered his services in 1914 but had been ignored. In 1915 using family connections, he met directly with Kitchener, (Minister for War) with his proposal to form a company comprising of men experienced in digging through clay similar to the terrain of Bethune and Givenchy where the troops were in the greatest danger. He was given the rank of Major RE and carte blanche to proceed.

One of his engineering contracts at that time was with the Manchester Corporation working on drainage systems, a euphemism for sewers. His "moles" as he called the tunnellers, using a specially designed shovel were experts in "clay-kicking" an efficient and silent method of cutting through the dense subsoil.

He arrived in Manchester on Thursday February 17 1915; personally selected 18 men in 3 teams of 6, each with a foreman, to form the 170 Company of Tunnellers RE. They left for France accompanied by Norton -Griffiths on 19th; departed "Bologne" (his spelling in his daily diary entry) at 1.0am by rail, direct to Bethune arriving at 3.0pm on 20th February. Under the command of second lieutenant L.A Barclay and Captain Preedy on February 21st. the first shift of moles were put to work grafting not through Mancunian, but Flemish clay

Norton- Griffiths returned to England on 23rd to recruit more men. Within months 17 regiments had been formed. Empire Jack with indefatigable energy, toured the lines "", initially by motorbike, but as rumour has it, later in his Rolls Royce, purloining equipment, bypassing the military command, to support the work of his moles. An entry in his diary April 1 1915 reads "delivered Easter Eggs to the men. Bombs."

From the archives is a graphic description of the danger faced by these men On 22 June 2016. an explosion occurred in the Shaftesbury Shaft killing both German and British miners; five men were entombed but still alive. Rescue parties reached them on 24th and managed to get three of them out.

One of them, (Thomas Collins) had broken ribs -could not crawl through the very small hole so the other survivor (William Hackett) offered to stay with him until the hole could be made bigger. For two days, despite further rock falls, rescue attempts were continued day and night. On June 27th, after not hearing anything from the men for 24 hrs. all hope was abandoned Hackett's letters to his wife had been written for him by Sapper Evans. The week after his death Sapper Evans contacted the widow informing her that £63 had been raised for her by William's comrades. A further £100.6s 8d was forwarded by the the company to the Union Jack Company in London "for the erection of a panel to his memory"

The Comrades of the Great War was up and running.

Sapper William Hackett was posthumously awarded the VC. Twelve of the 18 original men of the 170th, survived; 5 of them were awarded the Silver War Badge on being honourably discharged as a result of their injuries. This was a lapel badge to be worn in civilian street to avoid being shown the White Feather of cowardice.

Three were awarded the DCM, one of whom was Frederick James Carrington, my grandfather.

My mother said they had always had a framed copy of his citation over the mantel shelf but it was destroyed in the blitz of Manchester 22-23 December 1940. His medals survived and have been passed down the male line of the family. She also recalled that her father always wore a flat cap, even in the house, his explanation being that he had lost all his hair as a result of 'being gassed in the war'.

Within the family we could never understand why he had volunteered at the age of 42yrs. Research through the archives has provided the explanation. Empire Jack knew the psychological effect of underground warfare. He was looking for older, wiser, steadier and trained professional clay kickers. On his arrival in Manchester in February 1915, he fired all the men working on the M/C Corporation contract. The next day he offered them employment to be moles in this clandestine operation at the front. The pay would be 6/- a day for the face workers, which was more than they earned in a week. With a wife and a two year old daughter to support, in modern parlance, it was a "no brainer."

Carole Frodsham

Sources :-

National Archives

The Tunnellers War. Barnton, Doyle, Vandewalle 2004

Battle of the Somme. Vanessa Barford BBC News Magazine 01/07/2016

Carrington Family Genealogy John Carr



How does your garden grow?

Would you like to be part of a fantastic & floral new fundraising initiative for Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity? Being confined to our homes for much of the last year, we know that lots of you have turned to your gardens as a lockdown project or haven of peace and safety away from Covid-19. **With restrictions relaxing would you be willing to share and show off your hard work and help raise funds for the Hospice in our season of Open Gardens?**

We are looking for individuals, streets and communities to open their gardens for a day or two between May and August this summer. So whether your garden is small or large, urban or rural, traditional or modern, please get in touch to find out more at fundraising@fnhospice.org.uk or call Claire on 01296 429975.

We will support you to ensure that all Open Gardens are Covid-19 secure and comply with any government restrictions in place at the time

Dates for your Diary



'The great gift of Easter is hope.'
Basil Hume

Please note – all the following events – except the Parish Council meeting – have now been cancelled, postponed, or are online. Please check on the village website or the village's Facebook page.

April

Friday 2 nd	Good Friday
Sunday 4 th	Easter
Monday 5 th	Bank Holiday
Wednesday 7 th , 8.00pm	Book Club at Playing Fields Clubhouse
Monday 12 th , 2.00pm	Sunshine Club Tea, Playing Fields Clubhouse
Tuesday 13 th , 2.30pm	Tuesday Group, Playing Fields Clubhouse
Monday 26 th , 2.00pm	Sunshine Club Tea, Playing Fields Clubhouse
Monday 29 th 7.30pm	Parish Council Meeting, Bernard Hall (via video conference);

please contact Parish Clerk (cuddingtonpc@gmail.com) for ID number and password

May

Monday 3 rd	Bank Holiday
Wednesday 5 th , 8.00pm	Book Club at Playing Fields Clubhouse
Tuesday 11 th , 2.30pm	Tuesday Group, Playing Fields Clubhouse
Monday 24 th , 2.00pm	Sunshine Club Tea, Playing Fields Clubhouse
Monday 31 st	Bank Holiday
Monday 31 st 7.30pm	Parish Council Meeting, Bernard Hall (via video conference);

please contact Parish Clerk (cuddingtonpc@gmail.com) for ID number and password

Do you love our countryside and would you be interested in loving it a bit more?

Here's a couple of ideas:

- * Cuddington has a great footpath network and a group that acts to look after it: might you be able to contribute?
 - We check the status of wildlife in and around the village each May: would you like to know more?

If these stir your interest, please send an email to doug@doug-kennedy.com

THE VILLAGE PICTURE HOUSE NEWS CUDDINGTON

With the Government's promised relaxation of the Covid-19 restrictions after May 17th for indoor activities in cinemas, theatres and leisure facilities, we are planning for the return of the Village Picture House in the Bernard Hall.

Initially, we are planning for four screenings on a fortnightly basis starting on Thursday 3rd, then June 17th, July 1st and July 15th. There will be a break across the summer holiday period. Then fingers-crossed, if the vaccination programme has worked, and we can get back to some kind of normal life, we plan to have weekly screenings on Thursdays across the autumn. By then we hope that the National Theatre will be up and running with some exciting new live productions.

Full details of our summer programme will be announced in the May edition of Village Voice, and on the Village website.

We are hoping to commence with the fabulous West End production of 42nd Street that was recorded just before the first lockdown.

We can't wait to welcome you back— rest assured that we will be complying with any safety protocols and guidelines that are still in place.

John Cooper

The Pace The BIG Walk

Step up and make a difference

NEW ROUTE FOR 2021 - 24TH April

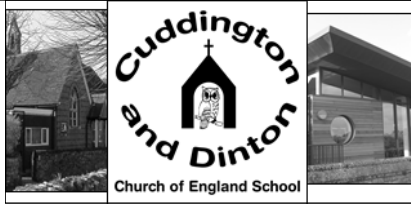
Walk for Pace and make a huge difference to our inspirational children who face mobility issues every single day

Three routes: 18, 12 and 6 mile routes taking in the infamous Ridgeway

Sign up today at thepacecentre.org/thebigwalk

Charity No. 101133

Twitter Facebook YouTube Instagram



There is a feel of change in the air- lighter mornings, bird song, spring flowers and a return to school for everyone! The excitement in the children and staff prior to the 8th March was palpable! We really couldn't wait to have a full bustling school again.

There were lots of exciting activities for book week being zoomed to the children during 'World Book Day Week'. All the staff thoroughly enjoyed seeing so many children popping into their story reading zoom sessions. Hopefully children have managed to take part in the reading challenge. The story telling in the afternoons was open to all children in the school. It was a great way for a child getting to see adults they may not be familiar with reading about a topic that they are passionate about!

F4CADs are delighted to announce that they will be running an Easter trail in Cuddington with the support of the villagers and church. The trail will run from 1st April - 18th April and will be much like the Advent Trail with window displays and clues to find. This will be a fun activity for all ages over the Easter period.

The red noses sale has been a great success. By selling them at £2.00 we made £760 and dressing as what you want to be when you grow up raised £136 (great idea House Captains!).

I have never seen so many vets, ballerinas and footballers! We also had some very interesting choices by staff too - Astronaut, zookeeper and explorer!



See photo of the Foundation Class.

It is hard to believe that a year ago this week we went into our first lockdown. The Junior children have spent some time reflecting on the COVID-19 pandemic and could recognise positives around the peace and quiet and time with their families. They showed great empathy for those people who had lost family members and friends.

We are very proud of their mature responses.

Kim Price, Headteacher

Village Parking & Traffic

Many in the village will probably have noticed a considerable increase in traffic and activity within the village in recent weeks. Much of this is very much related to the nature of the village with its shop, post office, school, pub and many other features but the implications of Covid-19, the lockdown and associated restrictions and limitations have also had their impact. Unfortunately along with this does come a certain amount of lack of consideration and poor parking.

The school is acutely aware of the impact of both staff and parents' cars. Over the years the school has consistently asked parents and carers to park considerately and if at all possible, to park on the playing field car park and walk down to the school – indeed the latest school Newsletter states:

"We have had a few polite requests from residents in Cuddington to remind parents that they can park at the Playing fields and walk down to the school. Residents and staff have noticed that there are fewer empty parking spaces around the village, so please be considerate in where you park."

Covid-19 has raised other factors which appear to be putting additional pressure on space in the village.

Many residents are now working from home which inevitably means fewer cars being taken out of the village during the working day.

Cuddington has always been a popular walking area and the lockdown appears to have attracted significantly more walkers with and without dogs into the village.

It has also been noticed that many people who just stop off near the shop for whatever reason park their vehicles incredibly badly – blocking entrances and occupying a space suitable for two cars.

Fewer parents are making use of the school bus and are driving their children into school and linked to this there is probably less sharing of cars taking place. All of which adds to the parking pressures and general congestion.

We can only ask residents to be patient and tolerant of the difficulties and be assured that the school is doing all it can to ease the situation. As we are sure everyone is aware it is best to avoid driving in the village during the main school run periods but if it is unavoidable to try to go round the village "loop" in a clockwise direction and hopefully avoid going past the school/Bernard Hall area.

Sadly much of the bad parking is simply down to poor human behaviour and lack of consideration – nothing to do with being either a parent, shopper, walker or whatever!

Chris Blumer, Associate Governor



THE CROWN is opening for outside dinning only from 12th April!

Booking is advisable.