

# VillageView

WATERMEAD'S FREE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

Autumn 2023 Vol.30 Issue 3

**Larks by the Lake**  
Pages 18-21

**A Night at  
the Movies**  
Back cover

**Remembrance Day**  
Saturday 11th November

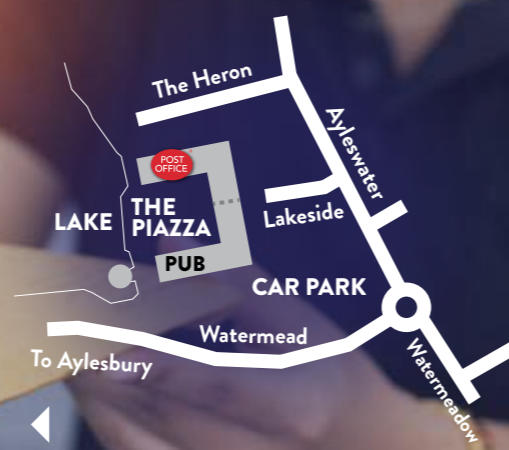


News from Watermead Parish Council & more!  
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# Parish Chairman's News

**W**elcome to our September edition of Village View. While summer has not yet lived up to its early sunny promise, let's hope things improve. I am writing this looking out at the rain which has been constant for weeks. So disappointing at the start of the summer holidays. Nonetheless our thoughts are with those affected by the recent heatwaves and fires in Europe. We have enjoyed some community events in recent months, starting with the very welcome return of **Larks by the Lake** with its fun dog show, wonderful selection of craft stalls, stage entertainment, fairground rides, and great food and drink offers. Everyone who took part enjoyed it very much and we managed to raise £4,500 for our charities which was fantastic. Thank you to the organising committee, traders and dogs and owners as well as the wonderful bakers who took part in our Watermead Bake Off; there was fierce competition, but worthy winners in all classes.

Following Larks, we hosted the **Florence Nightingale Hospice Walk of Light** with many walkers, taking either the 5K or 10K route, raising money and remembering loved ones.

The walk was followed by a gathering in the balloon field of walkers and families who remembered their loved ones with lit lanterns which made an effective and heartwarming display in the field. A very moving and, we hope, profitable day for the charity.

**Our next events are the Film Night on 16th September, our annual Craft Fair on Saturday 2nd December in the Village Hall, and our Carol Concert and Father Christmas visit on Saturday 9th December.** All much anticipated, raising funds for our charities and giving our community a chance to get together in various ways.

Our **Neighbourhood Plan** is nearing completion with our final consultation event in July. We hope that we are nearing the draft version for everyone to see and comment on after which we'll make relevant amendments and submit to the local planning authority. It's been a long road, with much work completed by our brilliant volunteers and councillors, but the end of the plan work is in sight and the shared vision for the future of Watermead. We are grateful to Cllrs Mick Morgan, Dan Forder and others as well as Noreen Shardlow, Peter Dean and

Stuart Mackay who have worked on the drafts and technical work packages. We are now due to hand over to Sally Chapman, our Planning Consultant for the next stage.

The weather has not been fit for many visitors to enjoy our land and lakes. Most are very welcome, but some have caused problems by tipping bins upside down, throwing a bin into the lake which had to be retrieved with difficulty and generally spoiling everyone's enjoyment.

There have been reports of anti-social behaviour, discourteous cyclists riding on pavements, not giving way to pedestrians, electric scooters being used on the highway and other public land (illegal), and the hired yellow electric scooters being ridden off the road (also illegal); there have also been some thefts and other crimes. A small number of parishioners raised concerns about potential crime and a meeting was arranged with our **Neighbourhood Policing Team**. All concerns were raised and the Police have responded with increased patrols (some in plain clothes) of the lakes and village roads, and a more visible presence. They have asked us to reiterate that



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Cllr Sue Severn  
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Front cover image courtesy of Noreen Shardlow

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Michelle Jackson  
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michelle.jackson@watermead-pc.gov.uk



it is absolutely essential if you see a crime happening to call 999; or if you want to report any concerns or crimes call 101 to report. Without reports the Police don't know what's happening in an area. We need to make sure everything is reported, however trivial it seems. The Police have pointed out that they don't monitor Facebook reports, which can be counterproductive as it could prejudice a case. Please help the Police to help us.

We had a visit from Andrew Kingdom of South Central Ambulance Charity who has kindly offered to arrange classes in using the **defibrillator and resuscitation techniques** which are very valuable skills for all. If you would like to attend a session, please let Noreen Shardlow know at noreen.shardlow@watermead-pc.gov.uk and she will put your name down.

I had the great pleasure of spending an evening at our allotments judging the **best allotment**. The work undertaken by so many allotmenters is impressive. Some, it's fair to say, are possibly at the start of their cultivation journey but the winning allotment plots belonging to Tina Nunes and Diane Lee have been designed and cultivated taking account of bio-diversity, wildlife and environmental considerations with effective water collection and management, compost production, places for hedgehogs, birds, bees and worms to call home. I particularly enjoyed the variety of vegetables, flowers and planting.

Each plot has its own character, design and areas of interest. The plot belonging to Mr Ray Howse, who has hand dug his vegetable plot (no easy task in clay soil), producing a really traditional allotment garden particularly caught my eye winning a Highly Commended award. Our allotments remain a significant community asset, enjoyed by those fortunate enough to have one as well as by their families. Oh, did I mention, I love runner beans!!

I would also like to thank Mary Singleton and her team for producing our much-loved Village View and to Adrian and Irina Schwab for their legal advice on connection with land, freeholds and much more that comes up from time to time. Cllrs Diana Blamires and Ashley Bond are always happy to help in connection with Buckinghamshire Council matters. They have recently sought to get our **MVAS speed** devices replaced and also to have our broken and decapitated streetlight columns and bollards replaced without delay. The loss of these is important. It is many months since the accidents which caused them to be removed and we need to have the areas lit before winter to ensure we keep everyone safe. Our **Sentinel speed camera** is available should any parishioners who are concerned about speeding like to be trained and operate the camera.

I hope that you have a good autumn and look forward to seeing you at the next events in September and December.

Cllr Sue Severn, Chairman



Thanks to Watermead resident, Jim Chignell, we are now able to see our 'Welcome to Watermead' sign at the entrance to our lovely village. He has also planted some Forget-me-Nots in our memorial garden.

## Walkway update

**The Parish Council was unable to find a way to provide a bridge/walkway over the dip by Robin's bench on the large lake walk since the Environment Agency (EA) would not approve our plans. This, in turn, meant that we could not obtain grant funding.** To try a new approach we have enlisted another company, Maydencroft, who specialise in providing complete structures to provide crossings over water. Their advice is that it can be done but we need to apply to the EA for approval. To do this we need to pay an application fee and for technical drawings as well as other information the total cost of which is circa £5,000. The process could take several months and experience in other areas has shown that permission is frequently refused, despite best efforts in design and submission. If this were to be the case we would need to re-apply for permission at a similar cost.

The Parish Council does not feel it should risk these costs without consulting our parishioners. We would like to know whether you would be prepared to pay an increased precept to cover these costs next year. The cost would be around £10 per household, depending on council tax band. It is not possible to get grant funding for these costs.

We will add a poll on our website <https://www.watermead-pc.gov.uk> and we just need you to answer Yes or No to the question 'should the parish council commit up to £10,000 to cover potential costs of obtaining planning permission to build a crossing over the dip?'

With planning permission in place it is hoped that the project can be grant funded.

Cllr Sue Severn, Chairman

## Neighbourhood Plan update

**An Open Day was held on Saturday 22nd July 2023 at the Village Hall. The purpose of this final date was for the Green Spaces assessment to be presented along with a general update on where we are with the plan.**

The next stage will then be the Regulation 14 which requires the draft Neighbourhood Plan proposal to be the subject of a pre-submission consultation before it is submitted to the local authority for independent examination. The consultation for this should last at least 6 weeks.

The Neighbourhood Planning Team will now be making plans to see how to make the plan and the work undertaken more visible to people on a regular basis. Plans are being made to include it on the website and a number of copies to be distributed around local businesses. QR codes were also discussed.

Once all these plans are confirmed after our meeting with Sally Chapman, our retained planning consultant, an announcement will be made by The Neighbourhood Planning Team.

Noreen Shardlow CiLCA, Parish Clerk



**Summer Term has been jam-packed with activities. So if you are sitting comfortably, join us on a journey through the vibrant world of Footsteps Watermead!**

**People who help us:** Recently, one of our lovely mums, who is a Paediatric nurse, paid a visit to Footsteps Watermead. The children were absolutely captivated as she showcased her essential equipment. Firefighters also made an appearance and, with the help of squirty bottles, the kids battled imaginary blazes resulting in an epic water fight! We didn't stop there; we explored the roles of postmen/ladies and police, teaching our young ones about the valuable services in our community.

**The magical metamorphosis:** We have enjoyed talking about the lifecycles of all sorts of creatures. The children experienced a real-life fairytale as they witnessed the transformation of caterpillars into breathtaking butterflies. Their eyes widened with wonder as our children released these delicate creatures into the world, celebrating life's incredible journey.

**A royal connection:** Footsteps Watermead's hearts overflowed with pride and joy when we received a very special royal card and letter from King Charles thanking the children for their heartfelt coronation card. It has taken pride of place in our displays featuring all their hard work and creativity this term.

**Cheers to Dads!** We celebrated fathers in style with our first-ever Father's Day stay and play. Dads joined their children for a morning of creativity with junk modelling, brought their nurturing skills to life in our make-believe hospital, and had a

blast exploring sports equipment in the garden.

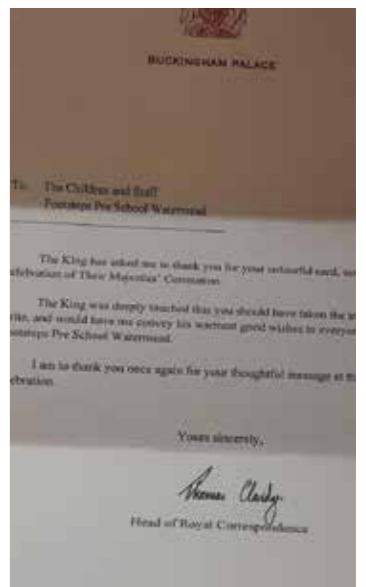
**Unforgettable celebrations:** Together, we have marked birthdays of both children and staff, ensuring everyone felt the warmth of friendship and celebration. We love to acknowledge these special personal celebrations as well as those that recognise different religions, traditions and culture.

**Off to big school:** Graduation day brought mixed emotions as we bid farewell to our school leavers of the Class of 2023. Many of them had been with us since our early days, becoming cherished members of our Footsteps family. Proud as can be, our staff watched them flourish, having joined us amidst the challenges of the pandemic.

**End of term extravaganza:** As the term came to a close, we threw an unforgettable party filled with laughter and joy. Embracing the sunny weather, our outdoor space became a hub of excitement, with a plethora of fun activities for children and parents to enjoy. And of course, no party is complete without delicious treats to savour!

**Spaces for September:** We're excited to announce that Footsteps Watermead still has a few spaces available for September. If you're looking for a nurturing environment where your child can flourish, learn, and grow, look no further! Join our big-hearted community and be a part of the magical journey at Footsteps Watermead.

Karen Braithwaite





# Steve's surprise 99th birthday party - shush it's a secret

The idea of Steve's party was born on 1st July 2022 on his 98th birthday when Steve found that the Village Hall was not available for a party. He was sad! But an idea emerged and the seed was sown to plan a birthday party for his 99th birthday and it would be done as a surprise. Unfortunately, Steve's daughter was going to be away, so his lovely grandchildren kindly took over the responsibility of keeping the secret and making sure he arrived on time. But who to invite? Obviously, his doggy walking friends but who else? How do you contact people and let them know? It was decided to put out a message headed "shush it's a secret" on Facebook, All About Watermead.

What a fantastic reaction we received - Watermead people are wonderful; they gave donations of food and money so we could make the party for Steve one to remember. On the Friday evening we filled the village hall with bunting, balloons and other ceiling decorations and we dressed the tables with lovely table cloths, serviettes and odd china crockery. Thanks to all those who helped especially Noreen.

On the day, food arrived - cakes and sandwiches and gifts and birthday cards. Friends used three tier cake stands and loads of unusual teapots for each table and worked throughout the event - special thanks to Barbara and Pam. Evelyn had made a huge special birthday cake. These three ladies do not live in Watermead and they had not met Steve until that day.

There were around 70 people in the hall to say "Surprise" to Steve when he arrived. Thank goodness we over catered! With Stevie Wonder's "Happy Birthday" playing in the background, Steve walked around thanking everyone. He was overwhelmed but the King himself couldn't have done a better job. A special card was read out by Joe - thank you so much.



OUR NATION WOULD NOT BE WHAT IT IS TODAY WITHOUT OUR VETERANS. THEIR GIFT OF COURAGE & SACRIFICE HAVE PROTECTED THE FREEDOMS & VALUES OUR NATION HOLDS DEARLY THROUGH THEIR ENDLESS EFFORTS & COMMITMENTS. MEN LIKE YOU HAVE BUILT UP OUR NATIONAL REPUTATION. YOU SERVE AN EXAMPLE TO US ALL. WITH PROFOUND GRATITUDE FOR YOUR SERVICE. THANK YOU STEVE TO YOU & YOUR FELLOW SOLDIERS

Steve is a Chevalier de Légion d'honneur in recognition of his service to France during the D-Day Landings. Last year he was awarded the Freedom of Watermead which gives Freedom of the Village Hall.

As 30 and 40s music filled the bunting-decorated room (thanks to Dave), the wonderful birthday cake was brought in with 99 candles on it. Steve cried - he is such a special man.

The day was amazing. Everyone made Steve's day so special.

I am so proud to have been part of this special day. It's great to do something to bring so much happiness. Thanks so much to all who helped including Maria, Daphne and Mo! Special thanks to Damon Mitchell for the wonderful photos.

So, the seed was sown and it grew. The only problem is what happens next year?



Marcia Lang

06 Photos courtesy of Damon Mitchell



Saturday 2nd December 2023  
Village Hall, The Piazza 11am - 5pm

To book a table at this year's fair please contact Graham for further information

01296 336575  
graham.severn@aol.com

and don't forget:  
**WATERMEAD CAROL CONCERT**  
Saturday 9th December from 6pm

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# Watermead Front Garden Competition



WINNER - 51 Lark Vale



Whinchat Flats



WINNER - 51 Lark Vale

**This year's front garden competition winner is 51 Lark Vale (Christine Blakeman). She wins a garden voucher.** A first-time winner, this front garden is always well maintained, not only during summer months, but also in spring and autumn. The owner's hard work and attention to detail gives amazing results. Nothing is left to chance; the combination of colours and types of flowers is just right. Christine knows how to use the limited green space to its full potential. Nevertheless, the flowers look different year after year. There is a clever recycling of perennials and replacement of temporary plants. Big congratulations for maintaining such a beautiful garden, regardless of the weather.

We did not miss the few gardens lined up along the waterfront. **9 Osprey Walk** is one of our previous winners, and this garden looked its best in the few sunny days we had this early summer.

The roses maintained by the owners of **15 Kestrel Way**, caught our attention this year once again. The mature rose bushes, photographed on 25th June, offered a lovely show of colour.

A mention will also be made for the efforts of Shirley Dorset, **Whinchat Flats**, who, for the first time, has made a delightful sitting area surrounded by colourful planting outside her windows.

From my observations, Watermead's most popular summer flowers this year are Hydrangeas, Lavender, Petunias, Roses, tender Fuchsias, biennial Foxgloves and border Scabious. Predominant colours: Pink and light purple

Thank you everyone who spent time planting and maintaining their front gardens to offer those who passed a show of wonderful colour and a general feeling of well being

Congratulations to all who took part!

Irina Schwab



9 Osprey



15 Kestrel Way

# Watermead Open Gardens

Several Watermead residents opened up their gardens in the afternoon of Sunday 9th July as part of Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity (FNHC) annual floral fundraiser. Maps showing the location of the gardens open to visitors were sold at WM News and the Watermead Inn at £6 for individuals and £10 for couples/a family. Various advertising materials were provided by FNHC including large material posters. Pink and green balloons were also provided to garden

exhibitors to display outside their houses. There was a steady stream of visitors from not only Watermead but also other areas of Aylesbury, all very interested in discussing the various plants and flowers that were being grown. There were also discussions about plants that we had lost during the winter due to the very cold spells of weather we experienced. Money raised was £146.49 for FNHC during the afternoon.

Cllr Mary Singleton



Kingfisher



These flowers formed part of the border at 19 Curlew



Above - Kestrel Way. Below - Redwing



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# What's on

...around Watermead

## August

16th Watermead Pub Lunch The Watermead Inn. 12.30pm  
28th Bank Holiday

## September

16th Florence Fest Roman Park Hall, Aylesbury, from 12pm  
16th Watermead Events Committee Film Night Balloon Meadow, 5pm  
20th Watermead Pub Lunch The Watermead Inn. 12.30pm  
21st Watermead Parish Council Meeting Village Hall, 7:30pm

## October

18th Watermead Pub Lunch The Watermead Inn. 12.30pm  
19th Watermead Parish Council Meeting Village Hall, 7:30pm

## November

11th Remembrance Day Service Memorial Garden, 10.45am  
15th Watermead Pub Lunch The Watermead Inn. 12.30pm  
16th Watermead Parish Council Meeting Village Hall, 7:30pm

## Our regulars in the Village Hall...

**Parish Council**  
3rd Thursday of the month (excluding August & December)  
Public meeting - 7.30pm  
Council meeting - 8pm

**Footsteps Pre-School**  
Monday - Friday 7.30am to 2pm  
Closes 12.30pm Tuesdays  
07743 871369  
watermead@footsteps-nursery.co.uk

**Crafty Chicks**  
Scrapbooking/card making any craft of your choice  
4th Friday of the month from 6.30pm  
Contact Kate 07952 477702  
kate@boltweb.net

**Aylesbury & District Philatelic Society**  
Second Wednesday of the month  
7.30 - 10pm  
Peter Barnes 612913

**Kumon Maths**  
Monday & Thursday  
2.30 - 6pm  
Susan Jones 747469

**Jo Jingles**  
Tuesdays - Music & Movement  
1.30 - 2.15pm 18 months upwards  
2.30 - 3.05pm 6 months to walking (approx 18 months)  
Debbie Bird 625599

**Castielli Dance School (for children)** Monday 6-7.30pm  
Janet Castielli 433956  
www.luv2dance.co.uk

**Bring Your Own Crafts Afternoon**  
Every Wednesday 2.30-5.30pm  
Judith Muston  
Noreen 01296 395211

**Inkstampshare Paper Craft Class**  
07952 477702  
kate@boltweb.net  
Inkstampshare.ink

**12th Aylesbury (1st Buckingham Park Cubs)**  
Tuesdays 6.30pm - 8pm (term times only)  
12thaylesbury-scouts.org.uk  
George Leaver  
buckpark.cubs@12thaylesbury-scouts.org.uk

# View from Westminster



As the Chilterns take on the warm autumnal canopy of orange, red and brown, many of us are keen to explore the beauty of our natural surroundings, and there are more and more ways we can do so. Over the recess from Parliament, I was pleased to join Buckinghamshire Council's Cabinet Member for Transport, Steve Broadbent to discuss plans to promote active travel, including the brand-new

e-bike trials. The bikes are in bays around the town, enabling anyone to rent one with their phone. I tried them out for myself - they are a perfect way to see our area, and the electric boost helps with any hills!

As well as e-bikes, there have been numerous upgrades to local cycle paths, and an extension of the towpath along the canal. This is all designed to help make our town more accessible for walkers, runners and cyclists in keeping with Aylesbury's garden town ambitions.

Many constituents have been angry about overcrowding on Chiltern Railways, especially on peak services, so I was pleased to join other Buckinghamshire MPs at a meeting with the Transport Secretary Mark Harper to secure extra capacity for the company to improve journeys for residents across Bucks.

I also spoke to Chiltern Railways' Chief Executive, Richard Allan, in the House of Commons to explain firsthand the frustrations of passengers and their concerns about plans to close ticket offices.

As always, I will continue to provide a strong voice for my

constituents both in Buckinghamshire and in Parliament. If you need any assistance, please do not hesitate to contact my office by email at [rob.butler.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:rob.butler.mp@parliament.uk).

Robert Butler MP

## Watermead Workshop (Repairs & Restoration)

Peter and I are both practical and keen to use our skills to mend rather than throw away broken or damaged treasures or household items eg furniture, electrical goods, toys, garden equipment and soft furnishings. You will only be charged for the materials required to complete the repair and then ask that the payment of labour be a donation amount of your choice to the Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity through us.

All work is subject to being economically repairable or beyond restoration.

For more information, please contact Peter Allen: Email: [lammacot@hotmail.com](mailto:lammacot@hotmail.com) | Telephone: 07974933967

Sally Stocker and Peter Allen

Are you looking for a venue? Watermead Village Hall is the ideal venue for young children's birthday parties, meetings and christenings, etc. Or are you an organisation looking for a regular venue? If so, to book the Village Hall or the Bandstand please contact Noreen Shardlow on 01296 395211 / 792137

## Advertise in the Village View 50% discount for Watermead residents

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Non-resident Rates - 1/4 page - £50, 1/2 page - £100, full page - £200  
Colour is extra - £30 - 1/4, £60 - 1/2, £120 - full page.

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PUBLICATION DATES  
2023/2024

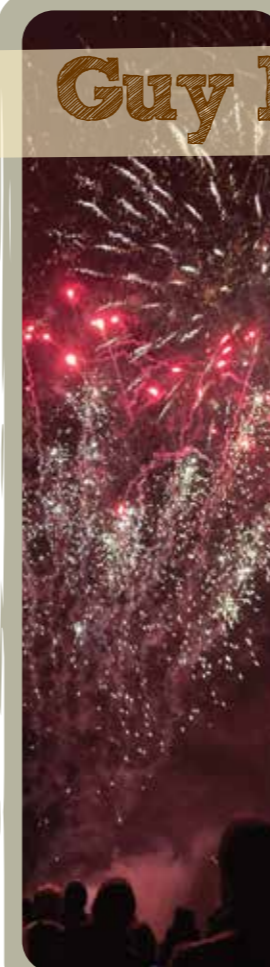
WINTER  
25th November

SPRING  
9th March

SUMMER  
8th June

AUTUMN  
7th September

## Guy Fawkes & Halloween Quiz



1. In which year did Guy Fawkes try to blow up parliament?
2. How was the gunpowder plot foiled?
3. How many barrels of gunpowder was Fawkes found guarding?
4. What punishment did the gunpowder plot members face?
5. How many members of the gunpowder plot were there?
6. Part of the plot was to kidnap Princess Elizabeth - true or false?
7. Part of the plot was to kidnap Princes Henry and Charles - true or false?
8. Which begging tradition has almost disappeared?
9. In which country did fireworks originate?
10. What is the technical word for making and displaying fireworks?
11. Which fruit would you bob for at traditional Halloween parties?
12. What is a Jack-o-Lantern made from?
13. Which 1973 song featured the lyric "It was a graveyard smash"?
14. If you see a ghost, "Who you gonna call"?
15. Real vampire bats live in Transylvania - true or false?
16. What creature might one turn into during a full moon?
17. Where were the most notorious witch trials held?
18. What is a group of witches called?
19. What is Halloween an abbreviation of?
20. Which vegetable is said to repel a vampire?

Answers on page 26



# Watermead Garden Society



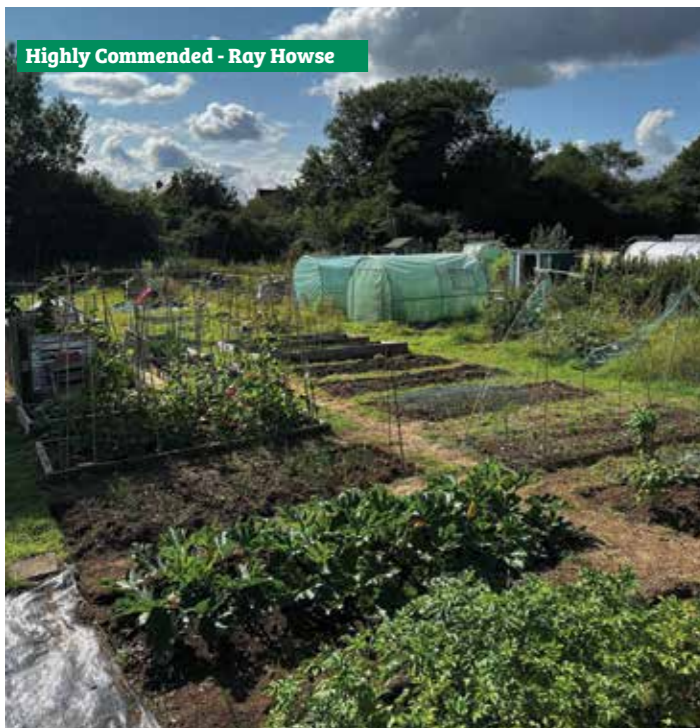
**It is not about the winning but the taking part.** This year, more than any years, we have had such a tremendous effort made by so many. Tina and Di as usual are gurus when it comes to allotments; they work extremely hard and definitely reap the benefits. But we mustn't forget the new Allotmenters too. Whilst Tina and Dianne set such a high standard, we have others who also earn merit for their hard work:



- Carmel who, only having her plot just under two years, has transformed it with innovation and flair.
- Brendon, who has worked like a Trojan and transformed Rubys old plot.
- Lucia – it is amazing what she has managed to do to her plot.



**Winner - Diane Lee and Tina Nunes**



**Highly Commended - Ray Howse**

- Our newest Allotmenters Amy and Dan, well amazing what been achieved in so few weeks.

We still have the biggest sunflower and most amazing squash/pumpkin competition to come which we will report on in the next edition of Village View.

**Cllr Sue Severn had the great pleasure of spending an evening at our allotments judging the best allotment and reported as follows:**

“The work undertaken by so many allotmenters is impressive. Some, it's fair to say, are possibly at the start of their cultivation journey, but the winning allotment plots belonging to Diane Lee and Tina Nunes have been designed and cultivated taking account of bio-diversity,

wildlife and environmental considerations with effective water collection and management, compost production, places for hedgehogs, birds, bees and worms to call home. I particularly enjoyed the variety of vegetables, flowers and planting.

Each plot has its own character, design and areas of interest. The plot belonging to Mr Ray Howse, who has hand dug his vegetable plots (no easy task in clay soil) producing a really traditional allotment garden particularly caught my eye winning a Highly Commended award. Our allotments remain a significant community asset, enjoyed by those fortunate enough to have one as well as by their families. Oh, did I mention, I love runner beans!!”

*Alison May*



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# Watermead Piscatorials

**Well, this year has certainly seen some very changeable weather and the hottest June and the wettest July on record!** And a good variety of fish, with Bream, Carp and Tench along with smaller silver fish which is good; there has also been some Pike, again a good selection as shown in the photos. However, not an easy fishery, but that's all part of the challenge of course.

This year we will be installing a couple of “disabled swims” for easier access and safer fishing for anyone in a wheelchair. One is going to be situated opposite the play area and the other one next to the small bridge. You may remember that there was a disabled swim near to the road, however this had to be removed due to its poor condition.

Other work planned will be securing the islands and trying to remove the fallen trees. We will also be keeping the bushes and trees cut back.

Steve, the bailiff, has tried to organize some fishing competitions this year but so far without success, however there's still time to have some!

One thing that we are aware of is that our Facebook page needs updating and one of our members has volunteered to help with this.

Membership will be closing soon for this year and there will be a waiting list for new members, but guest tickets are available for fishing the lake. Please Contact Steve, our bailiff, on 07843 787918.

For any information about events, you can find us on Facebook 'Watermead Piscatorials' and for Membership to contact our Secretary Don Smith [don.smith33@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:don.smith33@hotmail.co.uk)

*Martin Mynott (Chairman)*



A beautiful 25lb mirror carp caught from the sports lake by Dean Westbury.



# A trip to Istanbul

In the first of what we hope will be a regular feature, we thought we would share some insights on cities which make great destinations for both a weekend visit and a longer break. We're starting with Istanbul, which is a wonderfully welcoming, vibrant and mystical city. We arrived late in the afternoon and having freshened up in our room headed for the hotel's open air rooftop bar where we arrived just before sunset. As we settled down with our drinks the haunting call to prayer arose from first one minaret, then another and another. We grew used to this as you hear it five times every day, but it was no less beautiful with repeated hearing. We also grew used to sunset drinks in rooftop bars – Istanbul has so many that we chose a different one every night!

The heart of the city is the Galata Bridge across the Golden Horn. It's a two-deck bridge, with traffic and trams running across the top, and restaurants on both sides on the lower deck. The Golden Horn is constantly busy with boats and ferries, while the bridge is busy day and night with people fishing, strolling, eating, drinking, smoking hookahs and enjoying the view. Many of the restaurants serve a fish sandwich, a delicious local speciality with fresh grilled mackerel, and the views up the Golden Horn at sunset are magical. We found ourselves crossing the bridge most days, laughing off the entreats from restaurant owners with "maybe tomorrow". They have good memories, as they often replied with "you said that yesterday!"

There were so many sights to see that we couldn't cover everything in a week, but our highlights were the Topkapi Palace, The Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia, the Sulemanye Mosque Complex, the atmospheric Basilica Cistern and a trip up the Bosphorus river. Much as we enjoyed the Grand Bazaar and the Spice Bazaar they seemed very tourist-orientated; there was much more atmosphere in the stalls and shops in the tangle of lanes behind the Grand Bazaar.

For food lovers Istanbul is a slice of heaven, with a wonderful range of food, including delicious mezze, pide (Turkish pizzas), savoury pies, a huge variety of breads, and kebabs presented in all manner of ways. The Turks are alleged to have no less than 100 ways of cooking aubergines; look out for "Imam Bayeldi", translated as "the Imam fainted", because, according to legend, the priest fainted with joy on tasting this dish. Those with a sweet tooth will enjoy the pastries such as Baklava, and the inevitable Turkish delight.

Don't Miss...Dinner in the Maiden's Tower Restaurant (Kiz Kulesi) in the middle of the Bosphorus, which is only accessible by private boat and is a truly romantic destination. Once you've finished dinner on the terrace you can head to the bar at the top of the tower for spectacular views. You can book in advance online.

Watch Out For...While all the Turks we met were friendly and welcoming, it's sensible for women to dress modestly because, while Turkey is still a secular country, short skirts and low-cut tops are frowned upon. Ladies need to cover their heads and shoulders while visiting mosques and neither men nor women should wear shorts while doing so.

Practical Points...It's a four-hour flight to Istanbul and Turkey is 2 hours ahead of the UK, so be prepared to lose quite a lot of time travelling – if you're making it a weekend trip it really needs to be a long weekend. Getting around the city is easy; the centre is quite compact and a lot of it is accessible on foot, but we did make use of the cheap, modern and efficient tram network, and the funicular from the Golden Horn ferry terminal to Galata, as it saved a hike up the hill. The ferries are also worth using for rides out to nearby islands, across and up the Bosphorus.

Istanbul is well worth a visit, full of so many different sights, smells and sounds – it's a thorough assault on the senses. If you have a week you won't find it difficult to find things to do; as a destination it could easily fill an itinerary for a fortnight. However, if you only have a long weekend it would still make a wonderful trip.



Above: Kiz Kulesi - Maiden's Tower, the perfect dinner venue in the middle of the Bosphorus.

Bottom left: The beautifully lit underground Basilica Cistern.

Bottom right: A lamp shop in the lanes outside the Grand Bazaar.

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# FlorenceFest - coming soon!

Get ready to mark your calendars because the first ever FlorenceFest is on Saturday September 16th 2023. Being held at Roman Park Hall, Aylesbury (HP18 0YT), FlorenceFest promises a day filled with live music, street food and drink, creating a fun day (and night) out for family or with your friends.



The festivities kick off at noon and continue until midnight, ensuring twelve hours of great fun. The highlight of FlorenceFest is undoubtedly the incredible lineup of tribute bands that will take the stage, covering some of the UK's favourite bands and artists. During the event, there will also be a great range of food trucks that will satisfy everyone. Our fully stocked bars will also quench your thirst throughout the day.

In the first half of the event there will be an array of family-friendly activities to keep the little ones entertained. Kids can indulge in the excitement of face painting or bounce to their heart's content on the bouncy castle.

FlorenceFest has been organised and is run by Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity raising funds for the local hospice and their patient care across Buckinghamshire.

So, gather your loved ones, support your community and join us at FlorenceFest on September 16th for a day of music, food, and fun.

Secure your tickets before 15th August for the early bird prices – £12 Adults, £8 under 16's, under 4's free. [www.fnhospice.org.uk/florencefest](http://www.fnhospice.org.uk/florencefest)



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## Book review

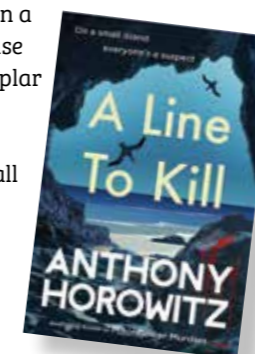
### Anthony Horowitz: A Line to Kill

**T**his is the third of Anthony Horowitz's Hawthorne series in which he appears himself as scribe and assistant to ex-cop turned investigator Daniel Hawthorne, rather like Watson to Sherlock Holmes or Colonel Hastings to Hercule Poirot.

A literary festival on the tranquil island of Alderney (actually murder-free since its brutal occupation by the Nazis in WW2) turns into a crime-fest when the event's millionaire host is stabbed to death, a man with many enemies. There are plenty of suspects including the visiting authors, more than one of whom is not who they pretend to be. There is – right on cue – a second murder.

Mr Horowitz has scripted episodes of Poirot and Midsomer Murders (as well as several series of Foyle's War, which he created), so he is a past master at serving up false leads and red herrings. He has an unpretentious prose style and a keen sense of pacing. I doubt if many readers will second-guess the big reveal. I prefer my crime stories to be more lurid and even a bit gothic but for fans of the "country house murder mystery" A Line to Kill is an exemplar of everything a whodunit should be.

Horowitz has also written three contributions to the James Bond legend, all splendidly close in theme and style to Ian Fleming's original stories. I very much hope he holds on to the franchise.



David Gee

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# Larks by the Lake



**We were blessed with wonderful weather this year for Larks by the Lake which was possibly our busiest ever.**

We are still chasing a few payments but the final figure for proceeds should be around £4,500. This will be split between five charities chosen by the committee:

- Aylesbury Wombles
- Florence Nightingale Hospice Trust
- Wheelpower
- SMILES
- Turkey and Syria Earthquake disaster fund

We had a record number of sponsors this year and we are extremely grateful to all (please see poster to see who sponsored). We would not be able to put on this event without them.

Huge thanks also to Radley Windows and Doors for the use of their stage and PA system, all free of charge.

Another huge thanks to Les Shardlow for organising the fly past - he had to do an awful lot of form filling to make this happen. Thank you also to the RAF's Battle of Britain Memorial Flight pilot for providing such a spectacular display.

We would also like to thank Sue Severn for organising and running the fun dog show - always a popular and very competitive event.

Thank you to the whole committee for their hard work as ever and anyone who volunteered on the day or during set up but special thanks to Noreen Shardlow for all the paperwork, booking essentials and collating figures

and banking, Graham Howse for organising sponsors and the Bake off.

The raffle from start to finish was organised so expertly by Verity Hook and Dom Ryan. Thank you both for all your hard work. The book and DVD stall run by Stuart McKay and Dave Turberville, thank you for selling these all day. Thank you to Dave Lucas for all his essential groundwork before and after the event.

Finally, a huge thank you to those who came and supported us, baked cakes, donated books and items for the tombola, etc. We hope you had a fabulous time. Thanks also to anyone I've forgotten to thank! Save the date for next year, Sunday 26th May.

Karen Collett



The tug of war events were children v children, men v men, women v women, and then 10 men v all the children - the children easily won! Great fun!



## Supermarine Spitfire Mk Vb AB910 – Service History

- July 1941** Built by Supermarine at the Castle Bromwich factory, Birmingham. Construction No. CBAF1061.
- August 1941** 222 Squadron, a WWII fighter unit, RAF North Weald.
- October 1941** 130 Squadron, flew 12 missions, damaged in combat, RAF Perranporth.
- June 1942** 133 Squadron, flew 29 missions including four aerial battles in the Dieppe Raid, RAF Biggin Hill.
- September 1942** 242 Squadron, flew defensive coastal patrols, Turnhouse, Scotland.
- July 1943** 416 Squadron (RCAF), RAF Tangmere.
- January 1944** 402 Squadron (RCAF), flew cover

# LARKS BY THE LAKE

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\* Fly past subject to weather conditions.



Further information can be found at [www.spitfireab910.com/about](http://www.spitfireab910.com/about)



# Larks by the Lake - Fun Dog Show

The weather couldn't have been more perfect for Larks by the Lake with sunshine broken up by a few clouds and a cool breeze. A ring of hay bales had been placed on the Fisherman's Meadow for spectators to sit and watch the 'fun dog show'. Enthusiastic dog owners arrived to register their dogs for the various classes from midday.

The dog show started at 1.30 pm with the "best puppy under 12 months". There were 12 entrants and our judge, Rick Freedman, had a very difficult time choosing a winner as all entrants were adorable. Finally he chose Koda, a chocolate Labrador aged 14 weeks who belongs to Maddy James. The runner up was Loki, a 4-month old Golden Retriever belonging to Anthony Cruikshank. Third place went to Maeva, a 5-month-old Pug owned by Lois Day.

The next class was "best rescue/hybrid/crossbreed". There were 14 entrants for this class and once again there was a lot of competition for being the best! Our judge eventually chose a 2-year-old Sharpei/Staffordshire Terrier named Zeus belonging to Heather. The runner up was Penny, a 2-year-old Cavachon owned by Ciara Whittome. Third place went to one-year-old Rossi, a Golden Doodle belonging to Alice Saunders.

Best Junior Dog Handler came next and they had to demonstrate walk to heel, sit and lie down. There were 5 entries who all

gave a great performance. Janine Carter's Willow, a Jack Russell/Chihuahua aged 10 came third; Penny, a 2-year-old Cavachon handled by 10 year-old Molly Whittome was runner up; and the winner was Callie Artis with Kimber, a 3 year-old Labrador.

After a short interval when the Spitfire flew overhead, we had a little fun with Fancy Dress, Dog and Owner. There was only one entry which was very impressive and involved Callie Artis dressed as Cruella de Vil, her sister Lydia dressed as a Dalmatian, and four Dalmatians - Remi, Dylan, Rainie and Reya.

There were 13 dogs who thought they were the fastest bonio eater in Watermead but none of them stood a chance against Barney, the 10-year-old Golden Retriever/Labrador cross belonging to John Mitchell. Ben, the 6-year-old Cocker Spaniel owned by Ann Gambie nearly matched him. The third fastest was Remi, a 5-year-old Dalmatian handled by Lydia Artis.

We then had a massive 20 entries for Best Pedigree Dog which proved to be very difficult for our judge. However, a decision had to be made and after much deliberation 14-month-old, Juno, an Irish Setter owned by Wendy Day was chosen as the winner. Second place went to Eevee, a Long-Haired Dachshund who is only 9 months old and owned by Cameron James. Third place went to Nala, a 4-month-old Chow Chow whose owner is Heather.

All the 1st place winners were put forward to Best in Show. The overall winner was Koda, the young chocolate Labrador owned by Maddy James. The Irish Setter owned by Wendy Day took Reserve.

All winners and runners up received a rosette and dog treats.

Many thanks to Sue Severn for organising the competition and to Rick for being our fabulous judge. He is a Town Councillor in Berkhamsted and also at Dacorum Council. He is a lover of all dogs of every shape and size! He was really impressed with the dogs, especially the talented young dog handlers!

Mary Singleton



# Watermead Bake-Off Competition



**Junior winner**  
**LILYANNA KNIGHT**  
Chocolate Horse 'look at the work that's gone into this!' and 'incredible - it tastes great and looks amazing'.  
Special Mention

**Adult winner**  
**ALISON SELWYN**  
Carrot cake 'best carrot cake ever tasted' and 'wow that topping is superb'. Alison was chuffed to win the Bake Off Competition with her delicious and beautifully decorated carrot cake.

To all the other bakers- you did a great job especially as it was so hot on the day and the icing started to melt. Thank you so much your fabulous creations. It contributed £77 towards our charities

Graham Howse

Sponsored by Howse Electrical

Judges: Daniel McIntyre and Graham Howse



Top left: Callie Artis - Best junior dog handler. Middle: Lydia Artis - Cruella de Vil with 5 Dalmatians including Callie! Top right: John Mitchell - Fastest Bonio eater, Barney. Bottom left: Maddy James - Best puppy U12 months, and Best in Show, Koda. Bottom right: Wendy Day - Best Pedigree, Irish Setter, Juno.

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## A fun afternoon!

There was a happy, carnivalesque atmosphere with many making a day of it with picnics as there was so much to do.

For many, one of the highlights was a fly past by a World War II Spitfire. As a unitary councillor for Wing ward, which includes Watermead, I go to a fair number of summer fetes but it's the first time there's been a fly past. It seemed very fitting with us celebrating the King's Coronation this year.

There were a huge number of stalls at the free event and, as well as the usual ones, my teenage son liked the henna tattoo stall - allowed over half term! The dog show drew a huge crowd of onlookers and dog handlers including children as well as adults.

Although there were stalls like Hook A Frog for tots, older children were looked after too with a mini fun fair, zorbing and trampolining. The Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Wildlife Trust stall attracted both young and old green enthusiasts.

Cookery lovers, both adults and children, were catered for with a fun Bake Off competition. For those who wanted to sit down and be entertained there was a great dance show by Carrie May School of Performing Arts.

As there were burgers, hotdogs and an ice cream van we, like many, decided to stay for lunch. My husband was pleased to be able to have a beer from the Miya/Watermead Inn bar with his hotdog!

There was a DJ to keep the mood lighthearted and to remind us when to go to look up for the flypast.

All in all this was a really well-organised, fun afternoon which my family and I thoroughly enjoyed. Well done to all who organised it. We'll definitely be back next year!

Cllr Diana Blamires



Noreen Shardlow with Dave Lucas and Cllr Diana Blamires

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# Portuguese recipes

## PERI-PERI CHICKEN

Preparation time:  
less than 30 mins  
Cooking time: 10 to 30 mins  
Serves 4

### Ingredients:

8 skinless and boneless chicken thigh fillets,  
75ml/2½fl oz medium-hot peri peri sauce,  
½ tsp hot smoked paprika,  
sea salt and freshly ground black pepper

### For the dirty rice:

1 tsp olive oil,  
1 red onion, finely chopped,  
1 red pepper, halved, cored, seeds removed and finely chopped  
1 green pepper, halved, cored, seeds removed and finely chopped,  
2 garlic cloves, finely chopped,  
1 tsp paprika,  
1 tsp ground cumin,  
large pinch saffron strands.  
200ml/7fl oz chicken stock,  
1 chicken stock cube, crumbled,  
500g/1lb 2oz cooked brown rice (freshly cooked and drained or 2 pouches)

### For the coleslaw:

250g/9oz red and/or white cabbage, finely shredded,  
1 carrot, grated (about 100g/3½oz prepared weight),  
2 tbsp fat-free Greek-style yoghurt,  
2 tbsp white wine vinegar,  
3 tbsp light mayonnaise,  
salt and freshly ground black pepper

### Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 240C/220C Fan/Gas 9. Line a baking tray with an ovenproof silicone mat or baking paper.
2. Slash the chicken thighs with a sharp knife and put in a bowl. Add 50ml/2fl oz of the peri-peri sauce, the smoked paprika and a little sea salt and pepper. Turn the chicken to coat well in the sauce then lay on the baking tray and cook for 20–25 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, to make the dirty rice. Heat the oil in a sauté pan over a high heat. Add the onion and cook for 4–5 minutes until starting to brown. Add the peppers and



garlic and cook for 2 minutes. Add the paprika and cumin and cook for 1 minute. Grind the saffron with a pestle and mortar and add to the pan with the stock and stock cube. Simmer for 2–3 minutes, stirring, until the stock cube has dissolved. Add the rice and warm through for 5 minutes.

4. To make the coleslaw, mix all the ingredients together in a bowl and season with salt and pepper.
5. Remove the chicken from the oven, tip the juices from the tray into the rice and stir through. Cook the rice for a further 2 minutes. Wave a cook's blowtorch over the surface of the chicken thighs to lightly char, then brush with the remaining peri-peri sauce.
6. Serve the chicken with the rice and coleslaw on the side.

From Lose Weight and Get Fit with Tom Kerridge - BBC Food @ bbc.co.uk

## PORTUGUESE BAKED FISH

Serves 1

### Ingredients:

1 thick fillet of white fish (cod, hake, haddock, etc) weighing 6–8oz (175–225g),  
1 small onion, finely chopped,  
½ small green pepper (2oz, 50g) chopped,  
1 clove of garlic, crushed,  
3 ripe tomatoes, peeled, and chopped or 3 heaped dessertspoons of Italian chopped tomatoes  
2 tbsl white wine or dry cider,

1 dessertspoon olive oil,  
1 tablespoon lemon juice,  
2 or 3 black olives, roughly chopped,  
Salt and freshly milled black pepper.

### Method:

1. Preheat oven to gas mark 5, 375F, 190C
2. Begin by making the sauce which, if you make it in a frying pan, will reduce and thicken very quickly. Heat the oil in the pan and in it fry the onion and pepper together for 6–8 minutes until they're softened and golden.
3. Then add the garlic and after a minute or so pour in the tomatoes and white wine (or cider). Season, give it a good stir, then simmer the sauce gently for about 10 minutes until it has reduced and become quite thick.
4. Next, place the fish in a gratin dish, season with salt and pepper, and sprinkle with the lemon juice. Cover it with the sauce, sprinkle the chopped olives on top, then cover the dish loosely with a piece of foil.



5. Bake on a high shelf in the oven for 20 minutes. Then remove the foil and give it another 5 minutes. This just needs some boiled new potatoes (if the season is right).

From 'One is Fun' by Delia Smith.

## PASTEL DE NATA

### Ingredients:

½ cup of water,  
1 cup of milk,  
1 cup of sugar – to taste,  
8 egg yolks,  
1 lemon peel,  
2 cinnamon sticks,  
Several pieces of rolled puff pastry.

### Method:

1. Bring the sugar, cinnamon, lemon peel and water to the boil in a small saucepan and cook until thermometer reads 76 degrees C.
2. Remove the cinnamon sticks then pour the sugar syrup when cold into a mixture of the milk and eggs yolks, whisking briskly until it thickens. Stir for a minute. Strain the mixture into a bowl.
3. Shape pastry with wet hands and put into tins.
4. Fill each cup with the mixture.
5. Place the cups in the oven at 230 degrees C or until the edges of the dough are frilled and brown.

Or, if time is short, pop to your local Lidl, Tesco or M&S store !!

Recipe - courtesy of Douro Splendour



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## Burglary advice

There has been a recent spate of burglaries across the area and we wanted to take this opportunity to offer residents some security advice:

- Ensure all windows and doors are secure and keys are taken out of the locks.
- Mark all valuable items with your post code using a UV pen or permanent marker. This makes it easier for us to return items to you should we recover them. It also makes them less desirable to thieves.
- Take photographs of valuable items such as jewellery. This will help us to identify them if they are taken.
- Consider installing a safe and have this secured to the floor or wall.
- Make a note of any serial numbers on electrical items or power tools.
- If you have a house alarm, ensure it is set when you leave your home.
- Consider installing CCTV around your property. This may act as a deterrent and could also help us to identify the offenders.
- Install 'passive infrared detector' lights outside your home. This will alert you and/or your neighbours if someone was on your property during the hours of darkness.

Please report anything suspicious to the Police by calling 999. Even if you feel it is a small piece of information, this may be the missing piece that we are looking for. If it is not an incident in progress, you can report any information by calling 101 or via our online reporting system on the Thames Valley Police website [www.thamesvalley.police.uk](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk)

## What do ducks eat?

**Can you feed ducks bread?** There are actually a few reasons why you should avoid feeding ducks bread. For starters, bread is not very nutritional for ducks. Can you imagine the health implications if you only ate bread as your diet?

Not only is it not nutritious, bread will attract many other birds and cause overcrowding, which in turn results in an increase in droppings. This can cause further disruption, such as slippery surfaces and possible damage to habitats and waterways.

**So what can you feed ducks?** We've put together a list of six different foods that you can use as duck feed instead of bread:

**Sweetcorn** - It turns out that ducks are quite partial to sweetcorn. Tinned, frozen or fresh. Obviously, remove them from the tin first!

**Lettuce** - As a nation we're guilty of throwing away a vast amount of lettuce, especially the bagged variety. Instead of consigning it to the bin, rip it into pieces and treat your local ducks. Rocket, kale and iceberg are all great choices.

**Frozen peas** - There's no need to cook them but make sure you defrost them first.

**Oats** - Flapjacks, rolled oats and even instant porridge oats will be a huge hit with ducks.

**Seeds** - Whether you buy bird seed or just seeds from the fruit and nut aisle in the supermarket, the ducks will be very grateful for these nutritious nibbles.

**Rice** - Ducks will appreciate a handful of leftover rice if you've cooked too much for your dinner. You can also use uncooked rice, both are fine.

**There are a few foods you should AVOID feeding ducks in addition to bread:**

**Crisps** - Not just crisps, don't feed ducks any 'junk food'.

**Popcorn hulls and kernels** are difficult for ducks to digest and they can become lodged in their throat and decay over time.

**Cornflakes** and other cereals provide very little nutritional value to ducks and are high in sugar and other additives.

**Avoid citrus fruits** like oranges, lemons, and limes, as well as other high-acid fruits like mango and pineapple, which can induce digestive issues.

**Onions and spinach** - Spinach can induce egg binding issues in ducks by interfering with calcium production. Onions and related vegetables can cause diarrhoea and vomiting, as well as hemolytic anaemia, which can lead to respiratory illness.

**Avocados** are a healthy snack for humans, but they are poisonous to birds, particularly ducks, and can induce heart failure.

### More tips for feeding ducks:

If you are looking to feed the ducks, do it on a rare occasion. A few trips here and there are preferable to frequent visits. If you feed them on a regular basis, they are likely to eat too much. Other tips include:

- Ducks do not chew their food. Make sure they are in bite-sized portions so the ducks can eat them easily.
- If ducks show no interest or leave the food uneaten, stop feeding them. Food that has been left out can soon deteriorate and attract bugs.
- Be cautious of larger waterfowl like swans and geese, they can become violent.
- Birds and the environment are both harmed by litter; carefully dispose of any rubbish, including bags, twist ties, plastic clips, and other inappropriate or mouldy pieces.
- Allowing pets or children to chase or disturb ducks, especially young birds or families, is prohibited. It may lead the birds to get stressed or injured (to you and the birds).
- If other guests are already feeding the ducks, don't feed them. Too much food might result in health issues as well as uneaten leftovers.

Courtesy of Canal and River Trust

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# Our beautiful wildlife



Al Kat Hanson Williams took this photo of a Canada Goose and her eggs which was taken on 10th April.



A family of swans stop the traffic whilst crossing the junction into Watermead. This shot was taken by Kerry-Lee of Watermead.



John Foster caught this photo of a Grebe (above) with its chicks hitching a ride!

We apologise to Damon Mitchell for failing to give credit to him for the stunning photo of the duck on the front cover of our Spring 2023 edition of Village View. Here it is again (above right).



On our walk around the lake today (26 July) never have I seen such gorgeous vegetation and the lake walk was filled with so many butterflies, not just the normal "Admirals". There is also an abundance of Purple Loosestrife and Thistles. We even found an area filled with Forget-Me-Nots. Noreen Shardlow

## Answers to Quiz on page 11

1. 1605, 2. Anonymous letter, 3. 36,
4. Hung, drawn and quartered, 5. 13,
6. True, 7. False, 8. Penny for the Guy,
9. China, 10. Pyrotechnics, 11. Apples,
12. Pumpkin, 13. Monster Mash, 14. The Ghostbusters, 15. False - they are found in Mexico, Central America and South America,
16. Werewolf, 17. Salem, 18. A Coven,
19. All Hallows Eve, 20. Garlic.

# Update from the Cubs of 12th Aylesbury (1st Buckingham Park)

**The 12th Aylesbury 1st Buckingham Park Cubs meet at the Watermead Village Hall every Tuesday evening between 6:30 and 8:00 pm.** In May we utilized the glorious weather we had and had a lovely walk around our very own Watermead lake. The cubs absolutely loved spotting all kinds of flora and fauna, especially the ducklings. The next session at the hall we learned different ways to use paracord. We ended the half term by treating us and parents with dishes and desserts from different parts of the world. They also made their very own tropical fruit salad handling tough fruits like mango, watermelon and pineapples honing their knife skills.

We started the second term of summer with some bike maintenance and safety when riding a bike. The next session we went on a bike ride along the Buckingham Park - Berryfields greenway taking in the spectacular views of the bright red poppies mixed with stunning cornflowers lining the path, not to mention the curious chatty sheep in the fields which were full of daisies. We also saw a glorious sunset.

We followed this with a session in the hall where we learnt how to be financially competent, to plan and save for our future. If you need tips on how to invest and buy

shares our cubs could give you a few useful and sound suggestions now.

We took the cubs to an overnight camp at Conkers, and they had a blast with a variety of activities organized by County. But the most favourite activity for the cubs naturally is chatting with their fellow cubs after lights off from inside their sleeping bags and pretending to sleep when a leader walks by. This activity hasn't lost its charm since I was a little girl guide in India.

Another sunny Tuesday evening we went on Aylesbury town's walk following a brilliantly designed quiz by one of our leaders. If you would like a copy of this thrilling and equally whimsical quiz to get to know our town, please contact us and we will be happy to share it with you.

We celebrated American Independence Day in American style by devouring donuts hanging by a string and learning the history of the civil war. We had our next session at the quaint pub with lots of character and charm, "The Library" in town, run by our leader Sam who set it all up for a magical Harry Potter themed evening. Making potions surrounded by those tall, magnificent walls is something else - do check it out for yourself sometime.

We ended the 2022-23 academic year with a canal walk combined with litter

picking. Though the cubs had to compete to pick litter, we are glad to report that we were pleasantly surprised at how little litter was there to pick, which only means that we live in a beautiful community of model citizens.

As always, we are grateful for the adults who volunteer helping the cubs appreciate and enjoy various activities and cultures. Currently we have a waiting list for cubs, but please do get in touch if you want to volunteer or for joining the waiting list.

Aruna Jayaraman (Akela), 12th Aylesbury 1st Buckingham Park Cubs buckpark. cubs@12thaylesbury-scouts.org.uk



## WATERMEAD REMEMBRANCE DAY 2023

Saturday 11th November at 10.45am

Join members of our community to remember the fallen from all conflicts, from all countries. Meet at the Memorial Garden to observe the two minutes' silence together in quiet contemplation.

If you need any assistance with mobility issues or need to drive on to the field we will be pleased to help. Contact Noreen Shardlow 01296 395211 or email noreen.shardlow@watermead-pc.gov.uk





# Waddesdon Wedding Cake

**W**edding Cake is a 12-metre-high sculptural pavilion in the form of a three-tiered wedding cake, clad entirely in ceramic tiles. It is a major new work by celebrated Portuguese artist Joana Vasconcelos opened in June 2023. Almost five years in the making, Wedding Cake was commissioned for Waddesdon Manor, prompted by the long-standing relationship between Lord Rothschild and Vasconcelos.

Tickets for a 1-hour tour of the Dairy, Wedding Cake and other Vasconcelos sculptures are available on the Waddesdon Manor website [www.waddesdon.org.uk](http://www.waddesdon.org.uk).



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# Sally's Blog



**H**ello everyone, I have been looking forward to talking to you again. I've been out and about and getting pretty wet over the last few months. I won't wear my now infamous yellow AA coat any more, so I just get wet. This results in my having to be wrapped in a big piece of material (called a towel apparently) and rubbed, very hard, all over. I don't like my paws being pulled about and dried and I definitely don't like it when my head is covered up – honestly, if humans had to endure this sort of treatment, they'd be on to the RSPCA in a flash, I'm sure!

Anyway, I am not going to talk about the weather - don't want to sound like a human. I had a lovely time at Ronnie's birthday party with our friend Max. We even had special dog party biscuits and cake – it was very good. We made lots of noise and

ran round the garden. I've included a photograph of us woofing happy birthday, or something very like it, to Ronnie.

My best thing was at one point Ronnie was stuck indoors and decided to try to get through the cat flap – he did look funny, but didn't appreciate it very much.

After Ronnie's party we had Watermead Open Gardens which is in aid of Florence Nightingale Hospice. Not as many people came as before but my humans were madly gardening to make sure there was some 'colour' in the garden, as well as the planting for biodiversity, hedgehogs, etc. I honestly don't know what it all means but I do like being in the garden with people and I felt I looked my best beside the hydrangea.

The important thing was to raise some money for the charity and for everyone to have a nice time, which I think they did. It was very hot then and not raining, so that was good.

On the subject of events I suppose I won't be allowed to go to the film night, in case I get bored and start talking too much. I do enjoy the Craft Fair but I know I won't be at the Carol Concert, so please do say hello if you see me out and about. I love talking to all my friends. Please don't offer me

biscuits, I've given them up and apparently I feel better for it, although I'm not convinced.

Anyway, 'bye for now and I hope you enjoy the rest of the holidays.

*Love from Sally!*



## VOLUNTEERS WANTED

Watermead Wilderness Working Group Day  
Date to be confirmed

### Volunteer Information – Managing Watermead's Wild Side

Vale Countryside Volunteers is a working party set up to care for and protect the wildlife and countryside of Aylesbury Vale. We are pleased to announce that this organization has agreed to have another working day at Watermead. They will bring tools and a core of skilled members but we also need some local volunteers to help them.

To register your interest please contact  
[noreen.shardlow@watermead-pc.gov.uk](mailto:noreen.shardlow@watermead-pc.gov.uk)

For further information please contact  
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*Please don't bin me I'm worth more than that!...*



# No need to be spooked this Halloween and Guy Fawkes Night

To help keep everyone safe this Halloween and Guy Fawkes night, your Neighbourhood Team will be carrying out patrols in the evenings to make sure people who are trick or treating or enjoying the fireworks are doing so in a friendly manner and not causing a nuisance. Please feel free to cut out the attached poster which will stop you from being disturbed during the Halloween and bonfire celebrations.

Thames Valley Police will not tolerate Anti-social Behaviour (ASB) at any time of the year. If you have any information regarding ASB in your neighbourhood, please report it via our website at [www.thamesvalley.police.uk](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk), call the non-emergency number 101 or in an emergency call 999.



# NO TRICK OR TREAT

please enjoy your night without disturbing ours



Please cut this out and stick in your window/door

## Tree planting request

**H**ello everyone. My name is Miya, and I went to St. Louis Catholic Primary school and am now a pupil at Sir Henry Floyd Grammar School. Last year 14 trees were planted on our school field in honour of the late Queen's Jubilee. I would like to continue planting trees because that would help to offset the CO2 that we produce.

An average human contributes 12.7 tons of CO2 emission per year and, in order to just reduce that one person's CO2 footprint, 600 trees would need to be planted. My family and I are going to start planting trees to play our part in helping our planet have a better future. So far, we have permission to plant trees around St. Mary's Infant School in Haddenham and at Stoke Mandeville Stadium and I would love to plant some tree's where I live, ie in Watermead.

Miya Wong

Watermead Parish Council voted to accept Miya's offer to plant trees on their land at their meeting on 16th March 2023. Miya's dad, Kelvin Wong, attended our Neighbourhood Plan Open Days and spoke to members of the team about possible locations for planting the trees as follows:

- Both areas running alongside the new walkway where the ground and vegetation has been significantly disturbed by the recent construction.
- The cutting area near the small bridge around the large lake which has been cleared during the recent path work.
- Any suitable area around the large lake where infill planting would help existing trees and vegetation.
- The small area of land behind the gatehouse which was planted with wildflowers.
- Any area of the Crown land that is expected to be transferred to the Parish and would benefit from planting to support existing flora and fauna and potentially help with prevention of flooding.
- Support additional planting in front of the crematorium.

## Don't go with a bang this bonfire night

Thames Valley Police and the Fire and Rescue Services across Thames Valley are urging people to take extra care at Bonfire Night parties.

Having your own fireworks party or celebrating with family and friends can be great fun. But by far the safest way to enjoy these seasonal activities is to attend a professionally organised event.

We want everyone to enjoy a safe and trouble-free Bonfire Night and are working closely with Trading Standards to ensure fireworks aren't sold to those who are under 18.

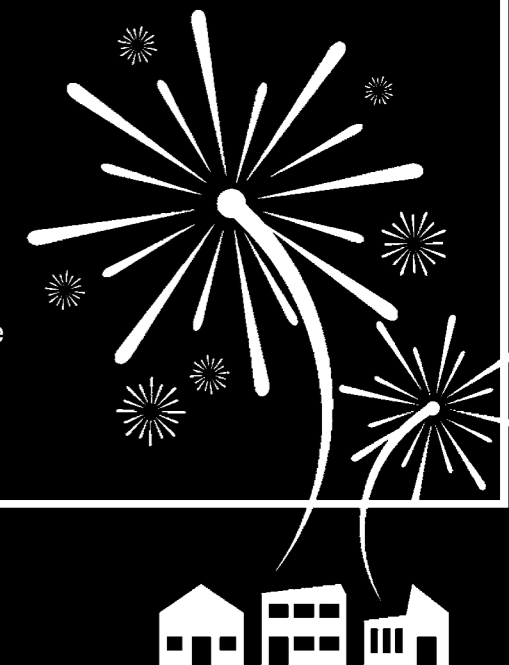
Please think of others and remember that fireworks shouldn't be let off between 11pm and 7am.

If you are holding your own fireworks party please don't put your family or friends at risk, follow the safety advice below for a safe home display.

### Always remember to follow the fireworks code

- Only buy fireworks marked BS 7114
- Don't drink alcohol if setting off fireworks
- Keep fireworks in a closed box
- Follow the instructions on each firework
- Light them at arm's length, using a taper
- Stand well back
- Never go near a firework that has been lit
- Even if it hasn't gone off, it could still explode
- Never put fireworks in your pocket or throw them
- Always supervise children around fireworks
- Light sparklers one at a time and wear gloves
- Never give sparklers to a child under five
- Keep pets indoors

More information can be found on the Thames Valley Police website [www.thamesvalley.police.uk](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk)





# Delights of the Douro

Recently Mary Singleton and I were fortunate enough to join with other fellow travellers on the MS Douro Splendour during an eight-day cruise to glide our way along the river Douro in Portugal. After a short flight, delayed somewhat by a thunderstorm at Heathrow Airport, we joined our ship in Oporto near to the double-decked, metal-arched Dom Luis Bridge. The Splendour is a small vessel compared to the large ocean going ships that are available nowadays. There were only around a hundred or so passengers on board with a friendly crew of about 30, so there was always a place to sit on the sun deck and plenty of room to dine in the elegant restaurant.

Our cabins were roomy and well equipped, but we were hardly ever in them as there were so many interesting included excursions planned for our entertainment and enjoyment.

From the small town of Peso da Regua, we visited the 18th Century Baroque Mateus Palace and gardens and, of course, we enjoyed a glass of Mateus Rosé whilst we were there. We next had an opportunity to try white port at a special evening dinner at the Quinta da Pacheca, an impressive 18th century property and former convent.

The Douro River now has five dams. These are: Carrapatelo (1964-1971), Bagauste, (1967-1973), Valeira (1971-1976) and Pocinho (1978-1983) and finally, the fifth and last dam to be built, Crestuma-Lever (1978-1985). Originally constructed to generate hydroelectric power and to encourage commercial traffic on the river, these dams with their navigation locks now allow cruises between the mouth of the river and the Spanish border. Such an amazing opportunity for visitors to experience a memorable trip from Porto all the way to the Spanish border near Barca d'Alva and it really is a lovely way to see

amazing Portuguese landscapes.

Salamanca in Spain was one of our all-day excursions and there we visited the oldest existing university in the world, enjoyed a guided city walking tour and watched a traditional flamenco show during our lunch at a local hostelry.

Port wine was ever present during this cruise and we learnt about and tasted the different types of this Portuguese beverage; we enjoyed trying white, ruby and tawny port during our cruise. Lamego made a change in tasting experience as at this destination we drank Portuguese sparkling wine instead. To try and negate some of the intake of calories during the cruise, we descended the 686 steps from the beautiful hilltop Sanctuary of Our Lady of Remedies church, admiring the attractive azulejos, the country's characteristic painted ceramic tiles.

We finished the cruise with a special Captain's five course dinner and were entertained by a local folk group singing fado songs. We were sad to leave the sights and stunning scenery of the Douro valley and say goodbye to our travelling companions and beautiful boat but there's always another journey, another river and another cruise.

Susan McCabe

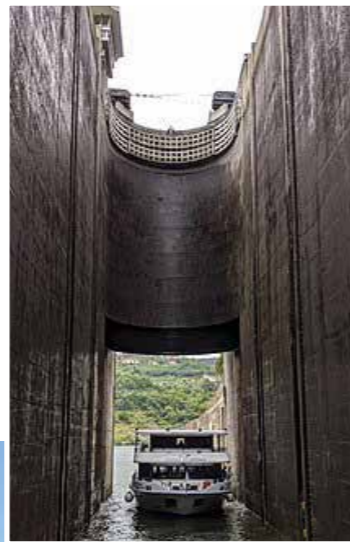
Right: Inside the lock of Carrapatelo Dam



Mary and Susan enjoying a glass of Mateus rose



Mateus Palace



Mary on the way down 686 steps at the Sanctuary to Our Lady of Remedies



Douro River

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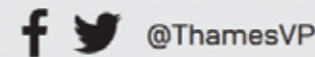
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## Reporting crime

By working together we can increase vigilance in the area to support the prevention, disruption and detection of crime. If you see or hear anything suspicious or unusual, please let us know.

Keep up to date via social media:



## Useful contacts:

Anti-Terrorist Hotline (24-hours, 365 days a year)  
Confidentially report suspicious activity on:

**0800 789 321**

Crimestoppers:

You can contact the independent charity anonymously on:

[www.crimestoppers-uk.org](http://www.crimestoppers-uk.org)

**0800 555 111**

Crime Prevention:

You can take a number of simple steps to reduce the risk of becoming a victim of crime. We have lots of advice on our website ranging from personal safety through to vehicle security.



Find out more at  
[www.thamesvalley.police.uk/advice](http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/advice)





# Watermead wildlife



**Summer tends to be the quietest season for our birds as they are busy feeding their young whilst being discrete about their nest locations, trying not to attract the attention of the predators that need to do the same, but it is also the best time of year to enjoy our interesting insect life.** We are very lucky at Watermead to have maintained a variety of habitats that support an ecologically beneficial array of insect life, both pollinators and predators, alongside our own homes and businesses, and it's these many thousands of smaller creatures that help maintain a balance, and therefore the natural landscape, of our unique suburban environment. The most notable insect pollinators at Watermead are the many beautiful species of Butterfly and Moth, and as for beneficial insect predators, we have some of the greatest diversity of Dragonfly and Damselfly species in Aylesbury Vale.

## PEACOCK BUTTERFLY (above right)

During the warmer days in the second week of June there was a notable emergence of Peacock Butterflies at Watermead. Although the Peacock is one of our more common butterflies it is undeniably one of the most beautiful and should be appreciated for its unique beauty, being the only British butterfly species to have two sets of large and convincing 'eyes', one on the forewings and another on the hind wings. These 'eyes' have evolved as a form of defence that work in two ways - the first is to scare predators away, with wings open the butterfly has a resemblance to a larger predator's face, such as that of an owl, the second is to act as a failsafe, so that if a predator such as a

bird attacks, who's instinct is often to go for the eyes of prey, the bird will grab or peck at these false eyes and that section of the butterfly's wing will simply tear off, letting the butterfly fly away freely.

## ESSEX SKIPPER BUTTERFLY (second right)

The Skipper family of butterflies can easily be overlooked, in particular the two smaller species, the Small Skipper and the Essex Skipper. Both species are very small, with a wingspan around only 25mm, with brownish-orange, stubby, pointed wings giving the impression of a moth rather than a butterfly. The Small skipper is fairly common in rough grassland but the Essex Skipper is much scarcer. The differences in these two species are only very subtle, with the only feature of the Essex Skipper 100% reliable in providing a positive ID being the colour of the underside of the tip of the antennae! - orange on the Small Skipper but Black on the Essex Skipper. With the second half of July being peak flight season for both species I went in search of the scarcer Essex Skipper in suitable habitat at Watermead and was very pleased to find that about a third of the smaller skippers on the wing were actually Essex Skipper.

## SCARLET TIGER MOTH (above)

With the Skipper butterflies looking more like moths on one hand, on the other we have the Scarlet Tiger Moth, which undoubtable appears more like a butterfly, particularly in flight. June is the best time to see these stunning moths at Watermead, attracted to porch lights and lit patios at night, but also during the day where they are often on the wing in afternoon



sunshine. Having a top floor balcony on Guillemot Way I have often found these iridescent blue-green and scarlet beauties in my lounge, attracted by the light, when keeping the doors open on stuffy nights.

## OYSTERCATCHER (left bottom)

On a few occasions during early summer an Oystercatcher visited Watermead, usually only briefly but it's presence often given away by its loud and rather shouty piping calls. Although we do get visits from one or two Oystercatchers at Watermead each year it is always a highlight of mine seeing this big, bold, black and white wader with it's bright orange bill and pink legs. The closest place to Watermead that Oystercatchers breed is College Lake, between Pitstone and Tring.



## COMMON REDSHANK (above)

On 8th June as I was strolling through the woodland on the north side of the large lake I heard the call of a Common Redshank - although common by name the Redshank is by no means common at Watermead, the only previous records being single birds heard calling as they passed overhead on two nights during autumn migration last year. Not knowing if the bird I'd heard was just flying over or not I thought I'd check out the most likely spot at Watermead for a wader to be found on a busy summer day, based on the habitat and minimal disturbance - the shallow banks of the small hidden bay, just off the new boardwalk near Kestrel Way. To my delight my hunch paid off! As I quietly and slowly approached the shoreline, keeping low and hidden by the undergrowth I came across the Redshank feeding in the shallows, hunting for aquatic invertebrates and insects caught in the surface film. I then sat deadly still just back from the bank and with patience the bird gained confidence, wandering close enough for me to take some decent photos and record the first Common Redshank at Watermead to actually be seen and on the deck rather than just a flying over. Like the Oystercatcher, the closest place to Watermead that Redshanks breed is also College Lake.

## COOT (right bottom)

Coots have had another successful breeding season at Watermead, with multiple pairs raising young to a stage of independence. It's always a joy to watch the unconventionally cute and charismatic baby Coots begging their parents to be fed, with their yellow and orange 'feather boa' and bald red head tilting side-to-side as they continually emit their noisy squeal.



## HOUSE MARTINS and BARN SWALLOWS (left)

A few Watermead residents have asked me where all of the House Martins and Swallows are this year having not seen so many over the lakes - well, in fact they were here all along, right above our heads! At the beginning of Summer when the numbers of Martins and Swallows are really at their peak we usually see many busily hunting for insects low over the large lake during those greyer days of low pressure before summer really kicks in, that's because in these conditions the insects that they feed on are generally flying closer to the ground or water's surface. This year we had some surprising warm and sunny weather due to high pressure over that period which meant most insects were flying much higher up, taken even more so by the rising warm air - this is where all the Martins and Swallows were, hunting those high-flying protein packages, most so high they were only visible when scanning with binoculars. As we are now seeing some low pressure and associated overcast skies these birds will return to hunting low over the large lake more regularly, also joined by their offspring. Very occasionally both species can be seen close-to perched on exposed branches on the west bank of the lake at times when inclement weather threatens.



## EGYPTIAN GESE (above middle)

By the second half of July early autumn visitors had already started to arrive at Watermead in the form of Egyptian Geese. A pair of these non-native but naturalized waterfowl, actually a large species of duck, quickly took up residence on the jetty, spending most of their time snoozing. On the morning of 24th July they were briefly joined by a third bird - all three birds flew a few laps of the large lake together before the visitor continued north on its travels

and the resident two quickly returned to resume their lay-in.

If you'd like to hear about sightings of interesting wildlife or rare species at Watermead as I see them you can follow me on Twitter @DanFWildlife. Also, feel free to contact me if you have any wildlife related queries or if you'd like help identifying something - I'll get back to you asap.

Dan Forder



# WATERMEAD

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