

VillageView

WATERMEAD'S FREE QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

Spring 2023 Vol.30 Issue 1



**Neighbourhood Plan
Consultation**
Saturday 4th March

**Annual Parish
Meeting**
Thursday 18th May

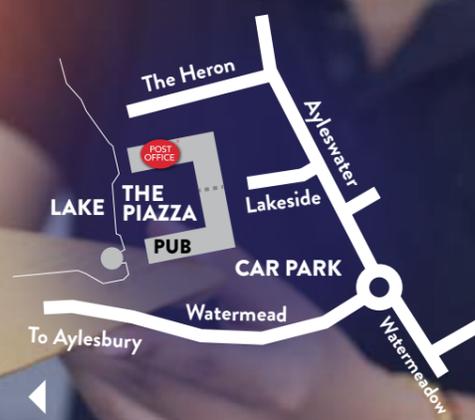
Larks by the Lake
Sunday 28th May



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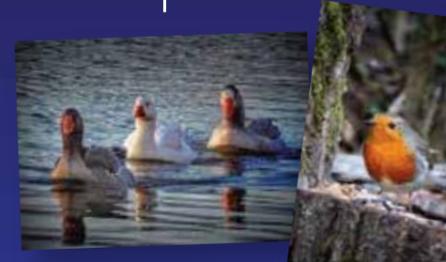
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Parish Chairman's News

Watermead enjoyed its usual Christmas festivities despite extreme cold and the carol concert, in particular, competing with England playing the World Cup (little did we think, nor could we have planned, for that!). The children who attended had a lovely time, listening to the nativity story from Reverend Ian Ogilvie who kindly stepped in to lead our service while we wait for a new Priest in charge to be appointed at St James the Great, Bierton. Father Christmas arrived on time and distributed chocolate gifts to the children - much enjoyed! Mary Singleton, Susan McCabe, Jim Chignell and Phil Toler made sure the evening was a success with plenty of hot mulled wine to keep out the cold along with mince pies and sausage rolls.

It was great to be able to hold our traditional **Christmas Craft Fair** once more. We have missed it during the pandemic and both stallholders and visitors were very cheerful and enjoyed the day. We are very grateful to Dot Toler for the delicious catering, as usual, and to Graham Severn and Noreen Shardlow for organising the day and Mary Singleton

for running her 'name the bear' competition which always raises funds for our charity. The two events raised a total of £231.75 which has been donated to Roman Park Trust.

The **Christmas lights** were amazing, once more, with some very worthy winners. It was impossible for Cllr Schwab to choose a single winner so a number of displays were chosen. Well done everyone - please continue to join in - the lit houses give much pleasure and add to the spirit of the season.

Since Christmas the weather has been truly terrible with snow, ice, high winds and endless rain. It can be very depressing but we have a very exciting year to look forward to and hopefully the weather will be better soon. As we look forward to spring we are busy preparing the next sections for consultation of the **Neighbourhood Plan** - please make sure you come along to consultation events at the Village Hall and/or Watermead Inn. This is your plan, and we need your input. We are determined to have a draft ready for consultation as soon as we can. Cllr Mick Morgan has been joined by councillors and volunteers. Peter Dean has worked

with Noreen Shardlow to undertake the considerable research and analysis which was consulted during our consultation day in January. Stuart Mackay has been surveying local businesses and continues to seek their views. Mick has written elsewhere on progress.

The next major national event is, of course, the **coronation of HM King Charles III**. It seems scarcely believable that only this time last year we were looking forward to her Late Majesty's platinum jubilee. This year our wonderful events committee will be running Larks by the Lake which has been very much missed during the pandemic. The date and information about the event will follow but if you would like to volunteer for the events committee, or to help before or on the day, I know that the committee would love to hear from you. Please just email noreen.shardlow@watermead-pc.gov.uk to let her know and she'll add you to the list. Every offer of help is much appreciated. It's a major event to organise and run and we are very lucky that our community includes those who will work to produce events for everyone to enjoy.

Our **land has been under stress** from high

[more on page 04](#)



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(Call weekdays 10am to 2pm)
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water levels and is not yet looking its best but we hope that things will improve as soon as the weather does the same. The **new walkway** has proved a real asset and helps a great deal. The need for a crossing at the other end of the footpath has been underlined by recent weather and flooded path. We remain confident that once the Environment Agency are able to advise on a suitable design, approve our plans, or tell us what needs to change, we will be able to apply for further grant funding and get this second area done. It is such a shame that the EA were unable to review and approve plans earlier, at the same time the cost of everything increased so much that it was unaffordable in phase 1.



Next year we will **continue to manage and look after the verges** and cutting the verge grass on behalf of Buckinghamshire Council. The work undertaken by our contractors is invaluable and helps Watermead to look its best. It would be most helpful if individual households, who are able, could clear the edge of the road outside their homes – if weeds are removed earlier drains are less liable to become

blocked. Highways do very little of this 'siding out' work and everything helps.

Our **front garden competition** will run this summer with judging during early July. Perhaps a patriotic theme with some plants to encourage insects, bees and birds? I did some research on How to create a mini pond | Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust (bbowt.org.uk) and have decided to include one in our very small front garden to see what we can do.

Last Spring I created a **wildflower garden** next to the public footpath and it was successful, if somewhat hit or miss to begin with, and lots of work, but very worthwhile. Historic Royal Palaces sent their members a packet of seeds from the Tower of London wildflower garden which was so beautiful last year – await results as I, once again, attempt to sow more seeds and increase the area. The PC is frequently asked whether we can leave verges or create wildflower areas instead of cutting the verges. Unfortunately this is not permitted by Highways who manage devolved services. I think if we all tried to find somewhere for wildflowers in our own gardens it would make a big difference. We're lucky to live somewhere with such diverse habitats, wonderful wildlife and birds and so many natural areas. I particularly love the idea of creating a very small pond. In case you don't use the internet the instructions are below. We will also be opening our gardens in aid of Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity during June – last year's open garden event was a bit late and many of us had to dash to the nursery to replenish stocks of flowering plants! Please join in if you can - it's very informal - just let Noreen Shardlow have your address and it will be included on the map. You will just need to tie some Florence Nightingale balloons outside your back

gate and people come and have a look. It's great fun and you meet some really lovely people who visit the gardens and raise funds for this wonderful charity.

Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity will be returning to Watermead with their **Walk of Life** later this year. They plan to organise a 5-mile walk starting around 4pm and finishing at sunset. We look forward to welcoming them and joining in the walk.

The **planning application for an industrial development** on the site at the entrance to Watermead has been withdrawn and we have no further information at the time of writing about plans for the land.

There is no further news on the **application for flats in the Piazza car park** which the Parish Council strongly opposes.

Graffiti has been very marked in recent months and I am sure we are all heartily sick of 'Oliver' who is scrawling his name, in very hard to remove spray paint, absolutely everywhere. What a shame he and his friends have nothing better to do. The cost of removal is high, to say nothing of the annoyance mindless vandalism causes. He doesn't restrict his activity to Watermead - he's everywhere including in Oving, Whitchurch, Waddesdon, Berryfields to name a few. Frustrating.

Our **Parish Precept** (council tax payable to Watermead Parish Council) has been set this year at £85,000 an increase of £4,000 on last year's Precept. The cost for an average Band D property will be £89.56 per year, or £1.72 per week. We have made every effort to preserve the services we offer while taking a prudent view on expenditure. Once again, we must also thank Mr Dave Lang and other volunteers who carry out litter picking which would otherwise cost a lot of money. The editorial team of the Village View must also be congratulated on their hard work, the result of which

is enjoyed by many, including visitors to our website where it can be read online, representing excellent value to advertisers and returning a surplus thanks to those advertising with us. Full details of the budget and expenditure are in the Parish Council's minutes on the website. If any parishioner would like to view the accounts or discuss the budget they are very welcome to contact Noreen Shardlow who will arrange an appropriate time.

Many of us were very sorry to see that the **willow tree outside Guillemot Court** on the lakeside had been so severely pollarded. This work was carried out, at the request of a resident, by the managing agents on behalf of the freeholder of the land by the lake, the footpath and the green area in front of the flats. The Parish Council made representations but the work had



been ordered. We believe that more trees in that area are to be cut in the near future.

Finally, I will be reporting on the activities of the Parish Council over the past year at our **Annual Parish Meeting** which will take place at 7pm in the Village Hall on Thursday 18 May 2023. All residents of Watermead are welcome.

Let's hope that we are able to enjoy a lovely spring and look forward to the summer events and exciting national celebrations at the beginning of May.

With very best wishes from us all at the Parish Council.

Cllr Sue Severn, Chairman

The Annual Parish Meeting of Watermead Parish Council will take place in the Village Hall (in the Piazza) at 7pm on Thursday 18th May 2023

You are invited to hear reports from the Chairman and District Councillor and you will have the opportunity to ask questions and express your opinions on what the council is doing. No votes taken at this meeting are binding on the Parish Council, however they should be considered at the next meeting of the Parish Council. Only members on the electoral roll can vote on an issue. Other members of the public can attend but cannot vote.

The Annual Meeting of the Parish Council will follow at 7.30pm and this is where the Chairman and Vice Chairman are elected. They may make other annual appointments and review insurance, risk management, policies, etc.

How to build a mini wildlife pond



You will need:

- a watertight container
- old bricks, rocks and pebbles
- pond plants
- spade

* Is there anything that you can upcycle? It could be an old washing-up bowl, sink or even a plant pot. Aim for 20-30cm deep.

- Choose a spot. Your pond will need light, but not full sunlight all day. You can dig a hole and sink your container, or just have it sitting on top.
- If the container isn't watertight, e.g. an old plant pot, then add a piece of pond liner.
- Add a layer of gravel and rocks.
- Fill your pond with rainwater (tap water contains chemicals).
- Start planting... you only need two or three plants.
- Now watch and wait! Wildlife will come to your pond of its own accord.

Use logs or stones to create a range of depths and a slope for creatures to climb in and out.

One vertical growing plant that reaches out of the water e.g. flowering rush.

One submerged plant e.g. hornwort or spiked water milfoil.

Don't introduce frogs, fish or even water from another pond as this can spread disease.



This lovely photo was taken by Graham Severn in 2022. We plan to have hanging baskets placed on the main road into Watermead again this year.

FRONT GARDENS COMPETITION

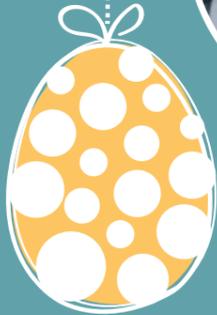
Due to the success of our Front Gardens Competition in past years, we will be running this again in 2023. Our judges will be out and about in Watermead looking for lovely front gardens during the coming months and expect to announce a winner before the end of July. Our Parish Chairman has suggested a patriotic theme due to the Coronation of King Charles III taking place; she has also suggested we grow more plants to encourage insects, bees and birds into our gardens.

If you would like to nominate a front garden, either your own or someone else's, please send an email with the number and road name of your nomination to noreen.shardlow@watermead.pc.gov.uk who will pass them on to the judges for their consideration.

CHILDREN'S DRAWING Competition

We invite children to draw a picture of "Watermead Wildlife" on A4 sized paper. This could be a selection of the various forms of wildlife you might see in Watermead or of just one type.

You should bring your picture to the Village Hall on Saturday 4th March 2023 between 12 and 4pm and every entrant will receive a small Easter egg. Judging will take place at the end of the Neighbourhood Plan Open Day and a prize of this gorgeous, cuddly Easter Bunny will be awarded to the child who has submitted the best picture. A selection of pictures will also appear in the relevant section of the Neighbourhood Plan document and in the Summer edition of Village View (with parent's permission).



Neighbourhood Plan Update

The Neighbourhood Plan team are very pleased to be able to provide an update on progress on our work up to December 2022 and also report on the Open Day which was held for residents, businesses and other stakeholders on 14th January 2023.

Draft Plan

Our retained Consultant has provided a useful summary progress and prioritised the Sections which require focus of effort in order to enable further engagement. This can be viewed on the Watermead Parish Council website www.watermead-pc.gov.uk or at any of the Open Day events - next date 15th February, 6pm onwards - refreshments provided.

1. Forward/Intro/Process/Policy - details provided by Team - draft Work In Progress (WIP) by Consultant by end February.
2. Parish Info/Overview - draft completed
3. Vision Statement - draft completed

Key Sections of Plan

1. Built Environment - Design Code draft complete
2. Natural Environment - draft WIP end February.
3. Housing - draft WIP end February.
4. Traffic and Transport - draft WIP end February.
5. Community Facilities - draft complete
6. Recreation and Green Space - draft complete
7. Local Business - draft WIP end March
8. Community Aspirations and WPC Actions - draft WIP feedback required
9. Monitor, Implementation and Review - Next Step
10. Mapping - complete

The Open Day held 14th January 2023

This event provided the NP Team with the opportunity to present where we are in terms of process and progress and set out the all important 'land assessment survey' for residents, business owners and stakeholders to review, ask questions and provide the essential feedback we need to 'validate' the Plan. Thank you to all those who attended and provided us with fantastic feedback, which we will now look to build into the Plan.

I would like to remind you that the Neighbourhood Plan refers to OUR community and therefore the more feedback and involvement we have from all key stakeholders the better, in order that we can shape OUR 'vision' of OUR future for OUR community...

Please look out for the Open Day events which will be posted on the PC website, social media and locally. Future dates for your calendars are Wednesday 15th February in the evening from 6pm and Saturday 4th March from 12 to 4pm. Both presentations will be in the Village Hall.

If you run a business on Watermead and want to understand more about this, please don't hesitate to contact our Parish Clerk, Noreen Shardlow, (see page 3 for details) who will get one of the Team to contact you

So, in summary, the Plan is progressing really well. But we would love to have more feedback from the people of Watermead as this is key to the success of the Plan and our community's future. We look forward to seeing you at our forthcoming Neighbourhood Plan events.

Mick Morgan



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The original Odeon Cinema, Aylesbury

One of the original Oscar Deutsch built Odeon theatres, the Odeon Aylesbury opened on 21st June 1937 with Shirley Temple in "Dimples" and Claire Trevor in "Star for Tonight". The exterior had four vertical fins over the entrance with three narrow glazed windows between them. Inside the auditorium there were troughs across the ceiling which contained concealed lighting. Seating was provided for 954 in the stalls and 497 in the circle.

The Odeon was tripled from 26th August 1973 when it re-opened with "The Sword in the Stone" in the former circle screen which seated 497, "Lady Caroline Lamb" and "That'll be the Day" in the two mini screens

in the former rear stalls which seated 99 and 108. The Odeon was re-furbished in 1984.

In late 1999, with ABC Cinemas about to open a new 6-screen multiplex in the town (now operated by Odeon), the Odeon was closed on 30th October 1999. The building was purchased by the Sainsbury supermarket chain, to enable a new store and car park to be built on the site. Demolition began in March 2017.

A block of flats named Oscar Lodge was also built on the site.



Thanks to Shirley Dorset of Whinchat for providing us with a Christmas card she had received which gave this information.



Charity Darts Night

A Charity Darts Night will be held in the Watermead Inn on Saturday 25th February with 3 times World BDO champion Martin "Wolfie" Adams in aid of the Prostate Cancer charity.

Doors open at 6pm and the entrance fee is £5 which includes entry into a draw to play a game of darts with Martin. You can also make a donation of £100 which would enable you (or you may like to give this as a present to a fellow darts enthusiast) to play a game of darts with the champion.

Anyone can do this by contacting either Kelvin at the Watermead Inn or Bob Manser on 07801 756462.

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What's on ...around Watermead

March

4th Neighbourhood Plan Open Day Village Hall, 2-4pm
 15th Watermead Pub Lunch The Watermead Inn, 12.30pm
 16th Watermead Parish Council Meeting Village Hall, 7:30pm

April

7th Good Friday
 9th Easter Sunday The Watermead Inn, 12.30pm
 19th Watermead Pub Lunch Village Hall, 7:30pm
 20th Watermead Parish Council Meeting

May

1st Bank Holiday
 6th King Charles' Coronation
 8th Bank Holiday The Watermead Inn, 12.30pm
 17th Watermead Pub Lunch Village Hall, 7:30pm
 18th Annual Parish Meeting of Watermead Parish Council
 18th Annual Meeting of Watermead Parish Council Village Hall, 7:30pm
 28th Bank Holiday Larks by the Lake Balloon Meadow, 12.30pm

June

15th Watermead Parish Council Meeting Village Hall, 7:30pm
 21st Watermead Pub Lunch The Watermead Inn, 12.30pm
 28th Florence Nightingale Hospice Walk of Life (Details TBC)

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
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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



January provides the opportunity to get ready for the year ahead, and this is no different in Parliament. I've already had several opportunities to speak with Government ministers about pressing local and national issues that need action in 2023, including improving traffic, getting better access to GPs, and growing our local economy. As I wrote in my last

article, as a nation we continue to face many serious challenges. The rise in the cost of living is understandably uppermost in many people's minds, and I'm pleased that Government help is available to those who need it. Details can be found online.

HS2 continues to cause massive disruption in the local area, with residents and businesses suffering as a result. I met senior staff from HS2 Ltd in Parliament and told them bluntly that there hasn't been enough consideration of local people and that this must change immediately. I will continue to hold HS2 to account and always put my constituents' interests first.

I was extremely disappointed that Aylesbury didn't succeed in its applications for levelling up funding despite two excellent bids prepared by Buckinghamshire Council. In Parliament I underlined to the Levelling Up minister that while our town is already a great place to live and work, we do have areas of deprivation that need government support.

As usual, I've been visiting many Buckinghamshire organisations in recent weeks; highlights have included Aylesbury

fire station, the newly-reopened Bledlow Household Recycling Centre and Aylesbury Life Skills Centre. I've also been knocking on doors around the constituency to hear people's views about the issues that matter most; this really helps me ensure I can raise the appropriate topics in Parliament – whether on the floor of the House of Commons, in committees, or face to face with ministers.

If you would like to raise any issues with me, you can contact me at rob.butler.mp@parliament.uk

Robert Butler MP

Have you been to Waddesdon Manor before? Fancy meeting up and making new Scouting friends?

Come and enjoy some sampling of 8 wines in the cellars of Waddesdon.

Who could think of a better way to raise money for 12th Aylesbury Scouts?

To book go to www.eventbrite.co.uk. The number of tickets are limited.

Hope to see you there - 25th March 6.30pm £35 per ticket.

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

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PUBLICATION DATES
 2023/24

SUMMER
 3rd June

AUTUMN
 2nd September

WINTER
 25th November

SPRING
 9th March

Tea Break Quiz



- Which Roman governor of Judea ordered the death of Jesus?
- How is the Sunday before Easter known? It celebrates Jesus entering Jerusalem on a donkey.
- How did Judas indicate Jesus to the Roman soldiers?
- Which Jewish feast was being celebrated in the week of the crucifixion?
- According to Mark's gospel, what crime had the two men crucified with Jesus committed?
- In which garden at the foot of the Mount of Olives was Jesus arrested?
- Who was the first person to see Jesus after the Resurrection?
- Which apostle was absent when Jesus appeared to the group and doubted the Resurrection?
- When is Easter celebrated?
- What is the significance of the Easter bunny?
- Why do we celebrate Easter with eggs?
- What is the name of the traditional Easter Sunday fruitcake made with marzipan and crowned with a circle of eggs?
- Which St Petersburg jewellery house is famous for its valuable designer eggs?
- Which European country eats the most chocolate per capita in the world?
- In which country are Pashka (a dessert) and Kulich (a bread) traditionally eaten at Easter?
- Maundy Thursday is known as Gründonnerstag in Germany and it is traditional to eat food of which colour?
- What effect does theobromine, a chemical found in chocolate, have on dogs?
- In the Beatles song, what is the line before "I am the Walrus"?
- What is the title of Mel Gibson's 2004 take on the Easter story?
- Robert Powell, Laurence Olivier and Ian McShane starred in which 1973 movie about the life of Christ?

Answers on page 15

New year, new challenge

Florence Nightingale Hospice are looking for people to take on a challenge and help them be there for more patients this year. Whether you are looking to test your physical limits or set a personal goal, take on an exhilarating experience or journey across the world on a once-in-a-lifetime trip. The charity is there to support you to make the most of the challenge.

"There's only one feeling better than that of completing a challenge. And that's completing a challenge for charity and raising much-needed funds for a local charity who supports people you know and love." says Bill Richards, Fundraising Officer at the charity. "We have some really exciting challenges planned over the next year for people to join; or we can help you design your own challenge and support you with your fundraising."

With a growing and ageing population, the charity know that the number of patients across Buckinghamshire and its borders who could benefit from specialist care is going to increase rapidly; they are determined to be there to support everyone who needs them.

Helen, a Day Hospice patient says, "Until I needed palliative care, I hadn't realised how much Florence Nightingale Hospice relied on charitable funding. I am incredibly thankful for those who donate and undertake fundraising activities."

The charity has events coming up to take part in an adrenaline filled skydive or train for a once-in-a-lifetime experience by trekking across the Saharan Desert next year. Some supporters prefer to take on their own challenges - in previous years these have included head shaves, pub crawls, and egg and spoon races!

Sisters Paula and Fiona are taking on The Conqueror's Lord of the Rings virtual challenge in aid of Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity - they are aiming to walk over 1800 miles with their much-loved dogs Buzz and Zoe. Already, just a few days into the New Year, they have clocked up 25 miles! Paula tells us, "We like to do

a challenge each year for Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity which has always been close to our hearts. We have had a number of friends who have been looked after by the amazing team. We are so fortunate to have such an excellent facility locally, but like all charities they rely on donations to survive. We are pleased to be able to help in some small way".

Visit www.fnhospice.org.uk/challenge to start planning your next adventure. Alternatively you can email fundraising@fnhospice.org.uk or call 01296 429975

Whatever you chose to do, Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity will be very grateful for your support in 2023 and beyond.



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30 years of the Village View

From almost the time when the first houses were built in Watermead, and excited resident moved in, there has been some form of written newsletter circulating around the village. It started out with a single page, then it got bigger as more people arrived and the first real village magazine was born, and it was called Bluster, which was followed by Blusterette. This was a black and white booklet which featured local events and trivia, and was put together by hand, with typed and photocopied pages stapled together on the kitchen table. It was very basic.

However, as Watermead grew, so the quantity and quality of booklets improved and eventually a more professional publication was required. So, the Village View came into being. It was professionally produced and printed, first in black and white, and then later in colour. It went on to win National 'Best Newsletter' of the year in 2003.

For over 30 years the Village View has been serving Watermead, bringing information to the residents along with a myriad of other local news, stories and topics. Every three months volunteers hand deliver the magazine to over one 1200 homes here in Watermead with copies also available at various outlets around the village.

Regular features are The Parish Chairmans View, What's On, A View from Westminster (from our local MP), A Tea Break Quiz, The Book Review, Easy Recipes, new places to eat, our beautiful wildlife, Sally's (the dog) Blog, and news from Watermead Piscatorials, Footsteps Pre-School, Watermead Lunch Club, and Watermead Garden Society.

The Village View also covers current affairs that affect Watermead, stories from our residents, local history and, in fact, anything that makes interesting and inspiring reading, and contributions are always welcome from residents.

The magazine is supported by advertising from both local and national companies and in the past has won awards for its presentation and content.

The Village View is the voice of Watermead and is now in its 30th year of production.

Stuart Mackay



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01296 437777
www.aylesburywomensaid.org.uk

Aylesbury Women's Aid is affiliated to Women's Aid Federation (England)

It might be nothing, but it could mean everything

When you find out someone is experiencing domestic abuse, it can be hard to know what to say. @safelives have worked with survivors and researchers to help you know what to say if you're in this situation.

For more guidance go to www.safelives.org. Between 1st June and 30th September 2022, 30% of our arrests were related to domestic abuse.

Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of gender, age, ethnicity, sexuality or background.

Answers to Tea Break Quiz on page 11

1. Pontius Pilate, 2. Palm Sunday, 3. He kissed him, 4. Passover, 5. Robbery, 6. Gethsemane, 7. Mary Magdalene, 8. Thomas, 9. Easter is on different dates each year, between 21 March and 25 April, depending on when there's a full moon in Spring, 10. The story of the Easter Bunny is thought to have become common in the 19th Century. Rabbits usually give birth to a big litter of babies (called kittens), so they became a symbol of new life, 11. The Easter egg symbolism represents the rebirth and fertility that takes place in spring, 12. Simnel Cake, 13. Fabergé, 14. Switzerland, 15. Russia (except other former soviet states such as Ukraine), 16. Green, 17. It is poisonous to them!, 18. "I am the resurrection", 19. The Passion of the Christ, 20. Jesus of Nazareth.



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

As you all know from the previous newsletters, the 12th Aylesbury 1st Buckingham Park Cubs now meet at the Watermead Village Hall every Tuesday evening between 6:30 and 8:00 pm. We have chosen "The Jungle Book" by Rudyard Kipling as our theme for the year. All our scouting sessions, activities and games will be based on the book. The Cubs will learn about forest life both flora and fauna, conservation of the environment, building shelters, staying safe outdoors, outdoor cooking and much much more. They played mountains and valleys, a trust-based teamwork building game, learnt some essential knots for shelter building and tried their hands at building a walking stick they will use for a night walk around the lake.

The Jungle Book is important to cubs especially as our founder Lord Baden-Powell was a friend of Rudyard Kipling. He thought the story of The Jungle Book fitted with his idea for creating Cub scouts in 1916. Our cubs are called packs, our leader is called Akela and heads the Grand Howl (Council) just as in The Jungle Book. The wolf pack have their jungle law (The strength of the pack is the wolf and the strength of the wolf is the pack) and so do the cubs have their law (Cubs scouts always do their best, think of others before

themselves and do a good turn everyday).

So if you hear loud marching around the lake and the words "Hup, two, three, four, Keep it up, two, three, four" just know that Watermead is not being raided by the elephants (Hathi in Hindi, an Indian language) but it's just our Cubs marching spiritedly to the Colonel Hathi's march from the movie.

We are always on the hunt for more adults to volunteer to help us run our activities. This could be coming along

one evening to share something you do for work or as a hobby with the cubs, or regular help at our Tuesday evening meetings. Volunteering can be as little or as much as you like, but it is always very rewarding. Currently we have a waiting list for cubs, but please do get in touch about volunteering or for joining the waiting list.

Akela and the Cub Leader Team
12th Aylesbury (1st Buckingham Park Cubs)
buckpark.cubs@12thaylesbury-scouts.org.uk



Christmas events

CRAFT FAIR

Thanks to Graham Severn for the first Craft Fair to be arranged in the Village Hall since 2019. There was a good range of stalls including home-made cards, chocolate cakes, jams and chutneys, candles, dolls clothes, Christmas decorations, jigsaws and books. Graham also arranged for the hall to be decorated the day before with assistance from Noreen.

There was also a "Name the Bear" competition which raised £58 for Roman Park Community Trust Food Bank. The winning name was 'Bobo' and the bear was won by Peter Dawson and his wife who live in Partridge Way.

Many thanks to Dot for the "pop-up" café in the Village Hall. Her toasted sandwiches are the best I've ever tasted! She raised £30 from the sale of teas, coffees, mince pies and, of course, sandwiches.

Thank you to everyone who came along to support this event.

CAROL CONCERT

We were pleased to be able to have a Carol Concert on 10th December in the Piazza. It was a very cold evening and this may have been the reason that fewer people than

usual attended.

The Piazza had been decorated with lights and a large Christmas tree. The Great Horwood Silver Band produced some lovely Christmas music and accompaniment for the carols being sung.

After the children came to the front to sing 'Away in a Manger', the Reverend Ian Ogilvie engaged them by asking them questions about the birth of Jesus. The children responded well and they were rewarded with chocolates!

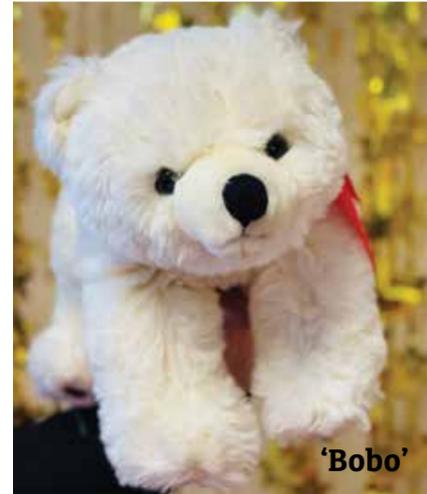
Father Christmas was able to join us and he was grateful to have the help of one of his elves, Dominic Schwab. They were kept busy distributing presents to the children who had come along while the grown-ups carried on singing.

Many thanks to Dot Toler for making the mulled wine and to Susan McCabe for serving it along with mince pies and sausage rolls. A total of £48.75 was raised from the generous donations for the Roman Park Community Trust.

Thanks also to Phil Toler for setting up the sound system and various electricals required for the event. Finally, many thanks to Noreen Shardlow and Sue Severn who also helped to make the evening a success.

A total of £231.75 was raised at the two events which is being sent to Roman Park Community Trust Food Bank.

Two dates for your diaries: We are already planning a Christmas Craft Fair on Saturday 2nd December 2023 in the Village Hall and Carol Concert on Saturday 9th December 2023 at 6pm in the Piazza.



'Bobo'

Christmas quiz at the Watermead Inn

We would like to thank everyone who took part in our Annual Christmas Quiz held on 21 December 2022. What a fabulous evening we had! Thanks to Kelvin and Nikki of the Watermead Inn who organised the quiz. Thanks also to all those people and businesses who donated prizes for the raffle - you have raised £650 for the Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity. Thanks also to Graham Howse for collecting the entrance money and organising the raffle. Huge thank you to our very own Dave Lucas who hosted the quiz. He also put in a word to Santa who arrived and gave out sweets to the children.

Watch out on Facebook for information about our inaugural Summer Quiz!"

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Time to get walking again!

With Spring on its way we start to think about getting out to walk in the beautiful English countryside again; but where to find new and interesting walks?

Walking in Bucks www.walkinginengland.co.uk/bucks has loads of walks to download and print, free. It also gives information on books of walks, details of all the walking groups in the county and much more. Whether you want to walk on your own or with a group all the information is there in one place.

John Harris, who maintains the website, said: "There is so much walking information on the web but it is difficult to find. Walking in Bucks (part of the Walking in England website) has brought it together in one place. So whether you are walking from home, or away on holiday, you will be able to find a walk suitable for you".

With walks from half a mile to twelve miles plus long, and a note of suitability for pushchairs and wheelchairs, everyone can find a walk to enjoy. So, home or away, check out the websites and get walking!

John Harris, www.walkinginengland.co.uk



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A GUIDE TO CHILTERN BUTTERFLIES

Pictured: Chalk Hill Blue Butterfly



The open chalk downlands of the Chiltern Hills are a marvellous place to see butterflies. If you've ever seen a kaleidoscope of butterflies making the most the wildflowers in bloom on a sunny day, you will know that it is truly a remarkable sight.

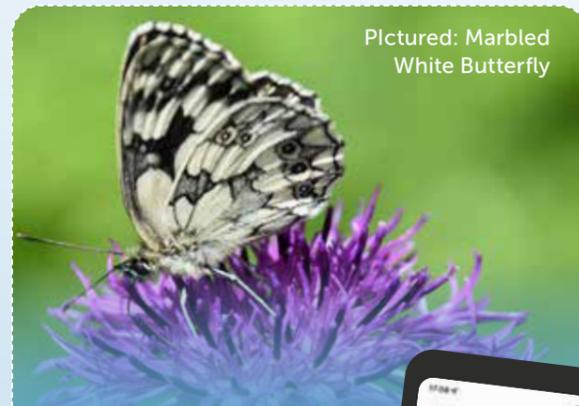
There are plenty of other places that you can spot butterflies too; in your garden, in the park, or on a countryside walk. Every species of butterfly has its own habitat, which provides it with food, shelter and place to breed and lay eggs. Spotting butterflies is not only a beautiful sight, but also an important sign that the environment and other wildlife is thriving too.

HOW TO SPOT BUTTERFLIES

It may sound silly but spotting butterflies can be trickier than it sounds. Some are shy, so you need to approach them with caution and be patient, perhaps sit and wait for them to come to you and never try to touch or pick them up.

Spotting butterflies is an enjoyable pastime, but it is also very important. Recording the butterflies you see can help reveal the impact of climate change and other environmental pressures on our butterfly populations. The charity Butterfly Conservation has a free app that will guide you through the identification of any butterfly that you see, anywhere in the UK, and allow you to add your sighting to millions of other valuable records. Simply by recording some basic information about the butterflies that you enjoy watching, even if just from your garden, you can make a real contribution to their conservation.

Find out about other ways you can get involved on the Butterfly Conservation website: www.butterfly-conservation.org/how-you-can-help/get-involved



Pictured: Marbled White Butterfly



Time is running out to save some of the UK's best loved butterflies! Download the iRecord Butterflies App from iTunes or the Google Store today and provide the essential foundation for much-needed conservation work to help the UK's declining butterflies.

If you are passionate about protecting wildlife and want to improve your knowledge of local birds, plants and butterflies, then our "Tracking the Impact" volunteering programme could be for you! You can learn new skills and benefit from a wide range of free online and in-person training before taking on your own 1km square, to monitor and record. To find out more visit: www.chilternsaonb.org/tracking-the-impact

BUTTERFLY GUIDE

Did you know, 39 species of butterfly have been recored in the Chilterns?! We have compiled a selection that can be found throughout the Chilterns, including where and when you are likely to see them.

Common widespread whites



GREEN WEINED WHITE Damp, lush areas. Similar to other whites but has streaked, greeny-grey lines on underside. Can be spotted from Apr – Sept.



LARGE WHITE Largest black marks at wing tips, continuing along the outer edge. in an unbroken, L shape. Can be spotted from Apr – Sept.



SMALL WHITE Grey/black marks/smudges at the wing tips, don't extend along outer edge. Can be spotted from Apr – Aug.



BRIMSTONE Buttery or greeny-yellow colour. Pointy wing-tips. No black. Female is paler. Can be spotted from Apr – Sept.

Grasslands



ADONIS BLUE Iridescent blue. Black 'spokes' in white border. Female is brown, not blue. Can be spotted from May – Sept.



COMMON BLUE Blue, clear white border. Often near its foodplant. Female is brown, not blue. Can be spotted from May – Sept.



CLOUDED YELLOW Uncommon migrant. Looks golden in flight with black wing tips. Can be spotted from Apr – Sept.



MARBLED WHITE Large. Black and white chequerboard pattern. Can be spotted from May – Aug.



BROWN ARGUS Small Brown with strong orange 'lozenges' on all wing edges. Can be spotted from May – Sept.



MEADOW BROWN Medium. Dusty brown with orange 1 white dot in black circle. Can be spotted June – Sept.



CHALK HILL BLUE Light, sky blue. Thick black wing edges. Female is brown, not blue. Can be spotted July – Sept.



DARK GREEN FRITILLARY Large, orange and black, white dots on underside, On chalk grass with scrub Can be spotted June – Aug.



Rough, scrubby or sheltered grassland or glades



SMALL SKIPPER Tiny, orange, triangular. Very similar to Essex Skipper. Underside of antennae tips is orange. Can be spotted May – Sept.



DUKE OF BURGUNDY Very Rare. Netted wing pattern. On scrubby chalk grass with Primula. Can be spotted April – May.



SPECKLED WOOD In sun-speckled wooded clearings with grasses. Can be spotted May – Sept.

Scrub hedgerows and gardens



HOLLY BLUE Pale blue. In gardens, parks, churchyards. No orange on underside. Can be spotted from May – Sept.



COMMA Our only butterfly with a wavy edge. On scrub woodland edges. Can be spotted from May – Sept.



PAINTED LADY Migrant. Big, orange w/black and white tips. Grey-ish underside. Can be spotted from May – Sept.



PEACOCK Migrant. Big, orange w/black and white tips. Grey-ish underside can be spotted from May – Sept.



SMALL TORTOISESHELL Migrant. Big, orange with black and white tips. Grey-ish underside can be spotted from May – Sept.



RED ADMIRAL Anywhere with nectar. Rich orange and black markings. Plus blue dots. Can be spotted from May – Sept.

Trees woodlands, glades and rides



WHITE ADMIRAL Big. On woodland and clearing edges. Can be spotted from June – Aug.



SILVER-WASHED FRITILLARY Large and orange. Usually in sunny oak woods and rides. Glides in flight. Can be spotted from June – Sept.



PURPLE HAIRSTREAK Small, grey triangle at top of sunny oaks. Can be spotted from June – Aug.

Easy Spring recipes

SPANISH TOMATO BREAD WITH JAMÓN SERRANO

These tasty tapas snacks are ready in just 5 minutes, the perfect accompaniment for a drinks party. Serves 10-12 with other dishes.

Ingredients:

4 ripe tomatoes, chopped,
1 garlic clove, finely chopped,
3 tbsp olive oil,
salt,
pepper,
20 slices of baguette,
5-6 slices Serrano ham.

Method:

1. Mix together the chopped tomatoes, garlic clove, olive oil, salt and pepper. Keep in the fridge until needed.
2. To serve, toast 20 slices of baguette. Spoon a little tomato topping on to each piece of toast. Tear 5-6 slices of jamón Serrano into pieces and put one piece on each slice of bread.

SIMPLE PERSIAN-STYLE LAMB STEW

Total time 1 hour and 15 minutes. Serves 4.

This Persian-inspired lamb stew is really simple and makes for a delicious, warming midweek meal for the family. The pomegranate seeds and mint give it a lovely, fresh flavour. If there are only two of you, freeze the rest.

Ingredients

750g lamb leg steaks or neck fillet, cut into chunks,
2 onions, chopped,
2 tsp cinnamon,
1 tsp ground cumin,
from 3 pods cardamom seeds, crushed,
1 tsp paprika,
500ml chicken stock,
1 tbsp tomato purée,
100g dates, quartered,
to serve cooked basmati rice or couscous,
to serve pomegranate seeds,
to serve mint leaves.

Method

1. Brown the lamb all over in a little oil, then add the onions and cook until golden and soft.
2. Stir in all the spices and cook for a minute, then add the stock, purée, and dates. Cover and simmer gently for 1 hour, or until the meat is tender.
3. Serve with basmati rice, and scatter over the pomegranate seeds and mint leaves.

CITRUS PUDDING

Serves 4

Ingredients:

50g butter, softened plus extra for greasing,
150g caster sugar,
Zest of 2 lemons or 2 limes or 1 grapefruit,
100 ml lemon, lime or grapefruit juice, or a mixture,
3 eggs, separated,
50g plain flour,
250ml milk,
Icing sugar.

Method:

1. Heat oven 180c/160c fan/gas
4. Grease a medium-sized oval baking dish with butter.
2. Whiz butter, caster sugar and zest in a food processor until mixture is pale. Add juice, egg yolks, flour and milk, and mix well.
3. In a separate bowl whisk egg whites until firm but not stiff, then gently fold into zesty mixture.
4. Scrape into baking dish and put dish in a roasting tin half-filled with boiled water. Bake for 35 to 40 minutes until top is lightly brown and set but the pudding is softish underneath.
5. Dust with icing sugar.

Places to Eat

KUZZU TURKISH BAR AND GRILL

56 Kingsbury, Aylesbury Hp20 2JE
Tel: 01296 820684 Email: kuzzu@kuzzu.co.uk

Kuzzu is a family run Turkish restaurant. We offer a variety of Mediterranean dishes such as mezze and charcoal grilled meat, as well as an open bar offering specialist cocktails, and a variety of alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages. They offer a 10% discount on their takeaways which have received rave reviews. They also offer a 3-course meal to someone with a birthday (subject to conditions).

OPUZ

Unit 9, The Exchange, Aylesbury HP20 1UR
Tel: 01296926683 Email: Hello@opuzaylesbury.com

New to Aylesbury, Opuz Kitchen is a family-run, modern Turkish restaurant and bar situated opposite the Odeon Cinema. Opuz Kitchen offers relaxed, sophisticated all-day dining from midday to midnight (11pm on Sundays).

BALTHAZAR RESTAURANT

4-6 Russell Street, London WC2B 5HZ
Tel: 020 3301 1155 Website: balthazarlondon.com

If you are heading into London and are meeting friends for lunch or pre-theatre meal, this restaurant has been recommended for its extraordinary food and ambience. An elegant evocation of a traditional French brasserie, with an authentic Parisian feel, Balthazar offers informal all-day dining from its home in Covent Garden's historic Flower Cellars building next door to the Opera House. Classic cuisine, impressive wine and an irresistible bonhomie combine to make every meal at Balthazar an occasion. A reasonably priced menu of 2 or 3 courses is available between 11:30 and 19:00 hours, Monday to Friday.



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Watermead Piscatorials

Now that we're into the winter months the fishing has slowed down but there are always good days for fishing! And there has been better fishing since the netting between the lakes was removed; there have been a lot more smaller fish. Traditionally Pike are the winter fish as they're more active. We certainly had a great day at the last working party, with thanks to everyone who helped out, especially Dave Lucas, "Chainsaw Man", who gave his time and equipment to help out with the tree cutting, and of course Steve, our bailiff, with our new boat as seen in the pictures. It's certainly helped to remove any line caught up in the fallen trees.

We're looking forward to Spring and the new challenges ahead with more work on the swims and hopefully sorting out any fallen trees. The Parish Council are very supportive of any major works around the lake. We have waited for the water levels to rise again and we are thankful for the rain.

Guest tickets are available for fishing the lake. They are only available to individuals to fish with a member of Piscatorials present. Please contact Steve (Bailiff) on 07843 787918.

For any information about events you can find us on Facebook Watermead Piscatorials. For Membership contact our Secretary Don Smith don.smith33@hotmail.co.uk.

Martin Mynott (Work Party Officer)



Professional 'people' photographers on Watermead

My name is Emily and I'm a local photographer based here in Watermead. Along with my partner Ian, we started our business, H&W Photography back in 2019. I had worked for a local photography company for six years and decided the time had come to branch out and be my own boss.

We cater for all types of photography from Weddings, Engagements, Parties, Corporate, Pets, Maternity, Cake Smash and my favourite Newborns.

We have a small studio in our home but I needed a larger space for some upcoming Christmas family shoots.

I discovered Watermead Village Hall right on my doorstep and could not have

been happier. The facilities were excellent with just the space I needed to build a Winter Wonderland.

I was able to set up a large backdrop with fairy lights, mini Christmas trees, a sled and plenty of snow (ok, fake snow!).

It looked really cold but we were all nice and warm inside the hall. It's safe to say the children loved it and the mums and dads couldn't resist but hop in for a couple of shots too!

Tel: 07988 083511
info@handwphotography.co.uk
www.handwphotography.co.uk/

Emily Harrison



Watermead Christmas Lights Competition 2022

As usual our residents got into the Christmas mood at the end of November when we started to see their houses being decorated with lights well ahead of the Christmas holidays. And some remained sparkling well into the New Year. As always, we saw an amazing array of different light arrangements and lit-up garden trees and ornaments such as candy canes, snowmen and Santas. There were also Christmas related animals such as deer and robins; some not necessarily Christmas related such as rabbits, a giraffe and polar bear.

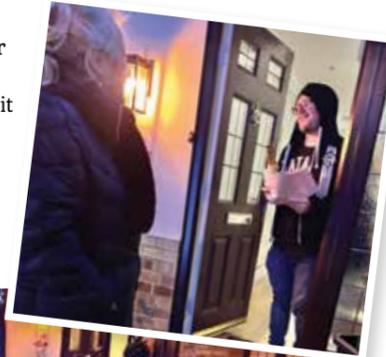
Kestrel Way once again excelled and Mallard Close was also exceptional. Here are pictures of our winners for 2022 who all received a bottle of champagne delivered personally by our Parish Chairman, Sue Severn.

Well done, everyone. Thank you for brightening up our Christmas and New Year and for making our village look beautiful.

1. The overall winner was 16 Kestrel Way! We loved the robins on the street sign and we were told that the children had planned the layout and instructed their mother, Lucinda, on where everything should go..... well done them!

2. 22 Kingfisher - delighted everyone with so many new lights and we were told by very many passers-by how much they liked them.
3. 16 Mallard Close
4. 2 Sandpiper - lots of spectacular lights
5. 2 The Heron - lots of lights and lit ornaments in a very small front garden.

Irina Schwab



THE FIVE ELMS PUB
WEEDON

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Our beautiful wildlife

The extended periods of freezing weather this winter have given our wildlife a tough time trying to keep warm and find food; it's been clear when out on my walks that there have been far fewer birds around, many having moved further south to escape the deep freeze, so it's been a bit harder than previous winters to dig out the rarities. But, as usual, Watermead still delivered, by providing a refuge to those birds which have travelled here from further afield, from the north of the UK, from Scandinavia and even from eastern Russia and the Mediterranean! Here are a few highlights from this winter.

GREAT WHITE EGRET (below)

The star of the show this winter has definitely been the GREAT WHITE EGRET, the much larger cousin of the more regular Little Egrets we get here. First visiting Watermead at the end of November, it has returned to the small lake most days, at times taking up residence for a week or so – it was only seen to leave Watermead when chased away by the Grey Heron, but did disappear completely each time the lakes froze due to prey not being accessible. Normally Great White Egrets would winter in the Mediterranean, but they are colonising the UK quite quickly so expect to see more in the future.



SIBERIAN CHIFFCHAFF (right)

The rarest bird in Watermead this winter was a SIBERIAN CHIFFCHAFF feeding with three wintering Common Chiffchaffs seen on 23rd November, and also very briefly a few days later. This rare relative of our Common Chiffchaffs breeds in Russia, from the Ural Mountains eastwards, and usually winters in India, though a few individuals stray west on autumn migration with only about 100 per year reaching the UK. I've managed to find Siberian Chiffchaffs in Watermead three winters in a row now, making it an inland UK hotspot - this will be due to the perfect wintering habitat for these lovely birds.



TUFTED DUCKS (left)

A firm Watermead favourite for many – this winter has been quite good for seeing Tufted Ducks on both lakes, with eleven being present at times.



WATER RAIL (below)

WATER RAILS returned to Watermead again this winter, usually seen from the small wooden bridge in the wood. They are much easier to see when the wet ground and river are mostly frozen as they will stick to a spot that isn't iced over in order to feed. One foggy frozen afternoon I saw it looking particularly grumpy, huddled up at the edge of the stream, looking well and truly fed-up for over a week with only having a metre or so of freezing water to feed from.



GOLDEN PLOVER (below)

On 15th December, whilst watching the ducks on the only piece of water not frozen, I was taken by surprise when a GOLDEN PLOVER flew straight towards me from across the large lake and landed on the bank only a few metres away – although a brief encounter and looking into the sun, I just about managed to get a photo of this gold-spangled beauty both in flight and on the deck. Usually these waders, a relative of the Lapwing, are found in the UK in large flocks on arable fields in the winter, so it was very unusual to see one actually at Watermead Lake, on its own at such close range.



COMMON SNIPE (left)

Just as soon as the Golden Plover had come and gone, a COMMON SNIPE then flew in and immediately started feeding on the bank of the large lake. Although these can fairly regularly be found around Watermead in winter, they are usually very hard to find, using their cryptic plumage as camouflage in waterside reeds and wet grassland, so it was great to get a view of one and its impressively long bill out in the open.



TEAL (above)

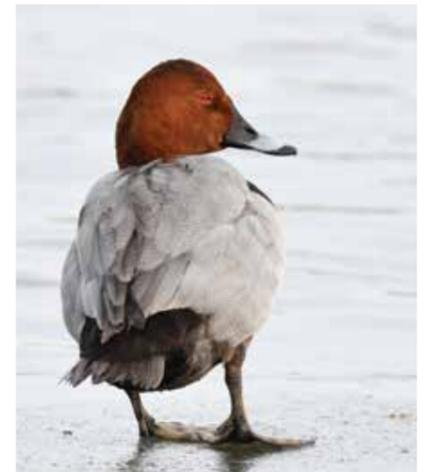
On 16th December, the thick ice on both lakes gave a rare opportunity to see TEAL at closer range than usual as three were resting on the ice beside the small patch of water that hadn't frozen – usually they are far out across the large lake along the edge of the wooded islands. This gave a good opportunity to get a photo showing how tiny they are, in a side-by-side shot with a pair of Mallards.

GREAT WHITE EGRET



POCHARDS (below)

There have been up to five male POCHARDS on the large lake at times this winter, adding a splash of warm colour to the cold water with their rusty red heads. One of the birds has a bit of a limp and can be seen resting on the bank of the large lake at times when tired of swimming – despite this I've kept an eye on him all winter and he seems to be doing just fine and is otherwise very healthy.



If you'd like to hear about sightings of interesting wildlife or rare species in 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 Wildlife Wordsearch

- Great White Egret
- Scandinavia
- Migration
- Stream
- Frozen
- Mediterranean
- Water Rail
- Snowdrops
- Chiffchaff
- Urals
- Golden Plover
- Tufted Duck
- Pochard
- Snipe
- Wader
- Lake
- Ice
- Teal

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 T Q V D R S C G U E N N E C C O G K V E E S D Z
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Otter spotted in Watermead Lake

"While looking for a perched Kingfisher from the stepping stones today (November 2022) I was amazed to see this otter swimming under the bridge between the lakes. I had seen a splash on the other side which I thought was the Kingfisher diving but no Kingfisher flew up. I realised it must have been the tail splash of the otter diving as I then saw it swimming towards me! Not a great photo I'm afraid as it is quite shaded under the bridge." Bill Dennis.

Dan Forder responded: *"Nice spot and great pic Bill. That is an Otter. The giveaway from this angle is the squarish head and protruding snout. Mink on the other hand have a more rounded head and conical face."*

Unfortunately the photo was not good enough to reproduce but can be seen on "All About Watermead" Facebook page.

Celebrate and remember loved ones with Forever Forget-Me-Nots at Waddesdon Manor

Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity has partnered with the magnificent Waddesdon Manor to launch a very special Forever Flowers event to celebrate and remember loved ones this spring. A

stunning, temporary display of 1,000 bespoke metal Forget-Me-Not flowers will be installed in the Aviary Gardens at Waddesdon Manor, near Aylesbury in April. Each flower will represent the life, love and memories of a loved one.

The charity is offering you the opportunity to be a part of this event by dedicating one of these limited Forever Forget-Me-Nots, which also includes an invitation to a private viewing of the display on Monday 17th April whilst the grounds are closed to the public. The Forever Forget-Me-Nots installation will then remain on display to the public for two weeks. Once the installation is removed, those who have dedicated a flower will be able to take it home to display as a forever keepsake.

By dedicating a Forever Forget-Me-Not you will be helping the charity to provide excellent local hospice care and be there for more patients and families across Buckinghamshire and its borders.

To dedicate a Forever Forget-Me-Not visit <https://www.fnhospice.org.uk/foreverflowers> or call 01296 429975 for more information.



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Sally's Blog



Hello everyone and Happy New Year to all my friends and their humans!

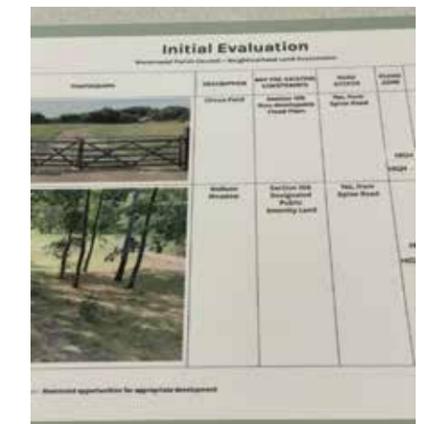
Christmas is over now, although we had lots of fun and thoroughly enjoyed seeing quite a few of my human and dog friends. It was great and I had to share with you the cover shot taken by my lovely groomer just before Christmas.... It's not particularly seasonal although while I dictate this, I'm told we're expecting more snow next week!

I am thoroughly fed up with the rain. I'm often made to wear my coat which I don't like. I have a lot to say on the subject and sometimes my humans give up the struggle – I can wriggle very hard and bark very loudly, as you know, and then I can go out in the rain and get jolly wet. (I have a horrible feeling I am, as humans say, 'cutting off my nose to spite my face' but like

many things it seems worth it, at the time! I did go to the latest Neighbourhood Plan open day in the Village Hall and very much enjoyed talking to neighbours and friends, and finding out about the plan and what was happening. In fact, I had so much to say I was put in the kitchen eventually. Honestly! They ask you along to give your views and then they shut you away.... Watermead is dog friendly but I

think it could be improved for dogs. For a start, I think it should be compulsory to let me enter the fun dog show (if there is one) at Larks by the Lake and to go to the Christmas Carol Concert. I went to the Christmas Fair, had a little bit of hot dog and then got taken home again. Honestly, I do love people, being out and about, and meeting people, it was really good fun. I do hope to see you all soon.

All the best, love Sally



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*Based on 'Sizing up the situation' report (Housing LIN, 2014) and our Service Charge data. †On selected developments.

Art and artists of Buckinghamshire

Buckinghamshire is lucky enough to have a great many successful artists, potters, sculptors and engravers, past and present. Some were born in the County, others settled here from elsewhere. Sir Stanley Spencer (1891-1959) was born and lived much of his life in Cookham. He referred to it as "a village in heaven". Perhaps one of his most notable works is "Cookham from Englefield". In 2012 the painting, reckoned to be worth over £1,000,000, was stolen from the Stanley Spencer art gallery in the High Street. It was not recovered until 2017 and returned to the gallery and its private owner who had been devastated by its loss. The thief was arrested and sentenced to 8 years 8 months. He was involved in the drug trade and the police found £450,000 worth of drugs at his house as well as £30,000 in cash.

William Newland and Margaret Hine were talented potters who lived in Prestwood. William originated from New Zealand and I had the privilege of meeting him many years ago. He studied painting at the Chelsea School of Art and also learned pottery there. In 1949 he began his teaching career at the Institute of Education where he met Margaret Hine. They were married in 1950. In 1949 they visited Malaga where they saw tin-glazed pottery. Their first exhibition led to commissions to decorate several coffee bars.

Margaret Hine was best known for her animal figures and she produced painted dishes and ceramic pottery. A relative of mine had a large, square plate of hers decorated with an enormous cockerel over his fireplace. It was an extremely striking piece.

At one time their pottery shared a shelf with some of Picasso's pottery at the V&A.

Their daughter, Sally, also lives in Prestwood. She is an artist too, perhaps best known for her cheeky paintings. I own one of a field of cows which I bought at Waddesdon. I love the expressions on their faces.

Graham Jefford lives in Wendover. His favoured medium is oils. I remember his brilliant painting of a fellow U3A member done for the man's 80th birthday. Not only was it a good likeness, but it captured something of the character of the man. However, he prefers to paint landscapes. He exhibited his work at last year's Woburn Festival.

Rodney Johnson (1920-2016), who was born in Sunderland, originally painted dockland scenes but just before his death he told the Press he planned to paint Buckinghamshire scenes, which he did. He and his wife Christine had moved to Marsworth to give their daughter a better life. Mr Johnson was multi-talented - a wonderful musician, sculptor and woodcarver. Two of his paintings were bought by the Queen Mother who gave one to Princess Margaret. Christine was also an artist specialising in woodcuts and engravings. Both have had work exhibited at the Royal Academy.

Art in Aylesbury

The statue of John Hampden which stands in the Market Square was created by C H Fehr in 1843. Hampden was born in London in 1594/1595 and he studied law before becoming an MP in 1621, originally for Grampound and later for Aylesbury. He lost his life in 1643 at the battle of Chalgrove Field (Thame) fighting for the Parliament.

Fehr also created the statue of Disraeli, unveiled in 1923, which also stands in the Square. Disraeli owned the Manor House at Hughenden and is reputed to be Queen Victoria's favourite Prime Minister.

After the death of David Bowie in January 2016 Andrew Sinclair created a statue of Bowie. Sue and David Stopps raised £200,000 to pay for it. It is entitled 'Earthly Messenger'.

A statue of the great Ronnie Barker can be seen seated outside the Waterside Theatre. It was created by Martin Jennings whose many sculptures can be seen throughout the UK including one of the Queen Mother in St. Paul's Cathedral.

Of course, there are many more artists and art installations in our County, both amateur and professional. These are just some I have come across. They brighten our lives especially in these difficult times and one can only marvel at their talent.

Val Edwards



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We have had a great start to 2023 as we strive to create an environment of fun, learning, and community and the children have settled back beautifully. At Footsteps we love to take a theme for our learning and see just how many ways we can incorporate it into our huge range of activities. As ever, our amazing team of staff have come up with a whole host of ways to excite, amaze and engage our children. We love to help our children explore the world around them and it has been lovely to watch language and friendships develop as we baked, played, jumped, imagined, painted, coloured, created, counted, read, sang, measured and climbed.

They have thrown themselves into all the activities on offer and there has been plenty going on this month. Our focus area has been inspired by their interests so we have been learning all about transport – culminating in a huge wall display of all that we have learnt. From mountain bikes to scooters, fire engines to mega-block cars, planes to boats. We were even lucky enough to get a tour of an ambulance from some wonderful paramedics.

We have enjoyed looking at national celebrations such as Chinese New Year. This is always a wonderful opportunity to explore colour, food and traditions. The children made some beautiful lanterns and enjoyed their prawn crackers at snack time!

We have certainly seen some chilly weather so far this January,

but that has not stopped us from getting outside in our beautiful garden. We have enjoyed using scooters, our vehicle chute, hoops, balancing beams and running around to burn off lots of energy. We have a free flow approach to our play and we love to get plenty of fresh air no matter the weather.

We are as ever, totally in awe of our children's imaginations. We have seen some gorgeous artwork and also enjoyed lots of looking at books, building with blocks and storytelling. We loved celebrating National Storytelling Week with some classic tales and we were especially lucky to have our families come in and share their favourite stories with us too – mums, dads and grandparents all joined us to read to the children.

We are busy planning for the next few months of this term. We will be looking at families and people we love in February for Valentine's Day, as well as taking part in Children's Mental Health week as we look at recognising and managing our emotions. There are lots of special days to celebrate such as Mother's Day and Comic Relief as we continue to learn and grow from all the experiences on offer.

We have just a couple of spaces available. If you would like to be in touch to see if Footsteps Watermead is perfect for your family, then please get in touch at 07865 945297 or email us at Watermead@footsteps-nursery.co.uk *Natasha Hamer*

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Watermead Pub Lunch Club

Our Christmas lunch in December was well attended and we enjoyed either a traditional turkey or vegetarian meal or the seabass alternative. It was decided to delay our January lunch to the third Wednesday due to the first one being so close to the New Year. Further to that change it was decided to move the regular lunch club to take place on the third Wednesday of the month in future.

Kelvin provides us with a varied menu with a choice of three main courses including one vegetarian, and a choice of delicious desserts, or you can have a tea or coffee. The cost of the lunch is £12.

The Club is aimed at anyone within our community especially those who may have been missing out on regular social contact. We now have a group of over 60 members and everyone appears to enjoy the food and the company.

If you would like to join us the Pub Lunch is held on the third Wednesday of the month at 12:30pm in the restaurant of the Watermead Inn. If you know someone who might benefit from getting out and about a bit more, then please do get in touch. All you have to do is book at least a week in advance by calling **Mary Singleton on 07986 582903** or call or text her on that number (providing your email address if you have one) and she will provide you with all the information you need.

This is a Community Impact Bucks initiative and bookings can only be made through the local organiser whose contact details are given above.



Book review

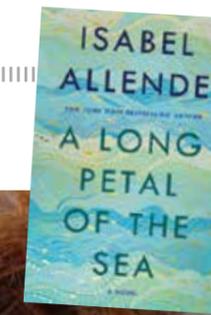
Isabel Allende: A Long Petal of the Sea

Spain 1938. Victor Dalmau, a trainee doctor, flees the civil war that is tearing his country apart. He escapes over the mountains with Roser, a gifted pianist pregnant by his brother who is one of the thousands of victims of Franco's remorseless tyranny. From France the pair are evacuated to a new life in Chile. A deep platonic love – and Roser's son – binds them, although they both have passionate affairs with other people. Chile, like Spain, goes through turbulent times. The Marxist Salvador Allende (a cousin of the author) wins the presidency of Chile for only a few years before a CIA-supported military coup installs the brutal Pinochet regime, forcing Victor and Roser to seek exile again, this time in Venezuela.

In middle age their love for each other finds a new passion and a new depth. They return to Chile to live out their lives happily, despite the rigours of life under Pinochet. Better years lie ahead for Chile.

Isabel Allende writes beautifully, although in this book I felt her new translators did not quite serve her as majestically as their predecessors. A Long Petal of the Sea (the title is taken from a poem by Pablo Neruda, who appears as a character in the novel) is one of her greatest stories, up there with House of the Spirits and Daughter of Fortune (my two favourites): an epic story of love and loss played out against the changing tides of history. At her best – and she is at her best here – Allende is one of the greatest living writers. This is a romance both 'of its time' and timeless

David Gee



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