

VillageView

WATERMEAD'S *FREE* QUARTERLY MAGAZINE

Winter 2020 Vol.27 Issue 4

Photography Competition Results

See page 30

Cover shot is one of our
competition entries
taken by Jo Ludlam

Watermead boy sails into the record books

See page 27

Virtual Craft Fair 2020

See page 28

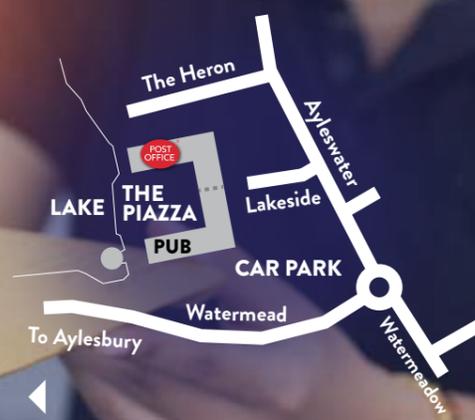


News from Watermead Parish Council & more!
watermead-pc.gov.uk / [@watermead pc](https://twitter.com/watermeadpc)



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Parish Chairman's News

This has been an extraordinarily frightening and difficult year worldwide, not least in Watermead. As I write, the second period of lockdown has just started in an attempt to slow the spread of Covid-19.

The pandemic has been challenging for everyone, but for those living alone, self-isolating, the elderly and those in need or living in fear of domestic violence, it has been devastating. Many have lost friends and loved ones. They are in our thoughts and prayers.

Words cannot express the depth of difficulty faced by families whose members are in hospital alone and those whose elderly relatives live in care homes where visiting is not allowed. Several Watermead residents became grandparents during lockdown and were unable to meet the new additions to their families until very recently. Many of us have family living in other areas and have not seen our children for a long time. The sacrifice in following the rules is worthwhile, but difficult.

Throughout this period our wonderful NHS staff, teachers, retail teams, council workers, carers and everyone who just

carried on providing essential services have been amazing. We are so grateful. Watermead enthusiastically joined in the weekly clap for carers. Your continuing work is much appreciated. My own family has received fantastic medical treatment during lockdown. Thank you.

Watermead's Volunteer Army

A positive outcome of the crisis has been the formation of Watermead's Volunteer Army, recently awarded, as was The Watermead Inn, the Proud of Bucks Awards. All its members are proud to belong to such a dedicated and committed team of volunteers who continue to collect and deliver food, branching out more recently by becoming a charity, Roman Park Community Trust, joining with others in the locality to increase its reach and services. More about this later.

Challenging time

Watermead was severely challenged during summer by the number of visitors, not all of whom came here to simply enjoy the wonderful environment and wildlife. By far the majority came to enjoy our open space.

Some, however, abused Watermead's unique environment. When the earliest residents of Watermead bought the land, later gifting it to the Parish Council, it was decided to allow open access to all areas from dawn to dusk. The land is owned by the parish, bought by people living here at the time, and we take it very personally when it is abused. We hope and trust that this will not be repeated. The cost to the parish of additional litter removal, vandalism repair, and generally trying to maintain standards has been great, not least in time and effort required by Noreen Shardlow, councillors and others who have worked even harder during lockdown than normal. We had hoped to have some financial assistance from Buckinghamshire Council but it was, sadly, refused. This was despite Cllrs Netta Glover and Ashley Bond doing their best to support our case.

We are very lucky to have volunteers who litter picked each day. Without Dave Lang, Eric and Libby Rose, Mary Singleton and others we would have been knee deep in litter. Thank you all so much and to everyone else,



Chairman:
Cllr Sue Severn
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(Call weekdays 10am to 2pm)
noreen.shardlow@watermead-pc.gov.uk



Assistant Parish Clerk:
Michelle Jackson
T: 481554
michelle.jackson@watermead-pc.gov.uk

including Aylesbury Wombles who joined in the effort, together with our contractors who have all continued to work throughout.

During October the Vale Countryside Volunteers turned out to clear and create a woodland path up to the river on land near to the allotments. This has made a really big difference and we are very grateful for the work they do.

Councillors

During the summer Phil Toler (one of our new grandparents in Watermead) resigned from the Council. We appreciated his service and enjoyed working with Phil very much. He continues to manage advertising for Village View and is now working with the Volunteers on a project to renovate laptops and tablets for use by school children, many of whom do not have access to IT equipment meaning they cannot properly do homework. They also become socially isolated. We work with local schools who are delighted to nominate

children to receive our help. If you have a laptop or tablet you no longer need please let us know at help@romanparktrust.org.uk and we will collect it from you.

The PC has co-opted a new member to fill its casual vacancy, Cllr Mick Morgan (who also became a grandfather during lockdown). Mick has quickly become part of the team and is working with the Trust as well as becoming involved in planning matters. Stuart Mackay has also joined our number to work on projects. We are delighted to welcome them both.

Christmas festivities

This year we will not have our usual Christmas craft fair or carol concert. I am trying to get hold of Father Christmas to see if he could just put in an appearance, but he is also stuck with the rules on social distancing at work and production is consequently down, although I did see his letter on Facebook recently reassuring children that he would be able to visit on Christmas

Eve, so all is not lost for our younger residents!

Bucks CC

Following Buckinghamshire Council's formation there is confusion about who does what. Buckinghamshire Council replaces the District Councils and the new Unitary arrangement means, in theory, that everything is in one place. The Parish Council is responsible for managing its land and assets for the benefit of parishioners. We do not have any Power over Highways (including potholes), waste services, street lighting in Watermead, fly tipping on the highway, parking restrictions and enforcement, traffic calming and so on. Our office is very happy to help by reporting street lights not working and other issues. We do not monitor Facebook for issues and you can report them direct at www.fixmystreet.com for the quickest response. Alternatively contact the Parish Clerk at noreen.shardlow@watermead-pc.gov.uk or 01296 395211 / 792137 during office hours.

The PC manages verge cutting, hedges, footpaths, overgrown trees on private property, fly posting and other services through its Devolved Services Agreement with Buckinghamshire Council. If you would like to know more, please get in touch.

Finally, an update on Roman Park Community Trust, which has quickly become a real "Pride of Watermead":

Following the end of lockdown in July, the Watermead Inn re-opened, and we moved the food store we had there to Berryfields where a Community Larder has been set up by the Parish Council and Berryfields Neighbourhood Volunteers.

Food donations, that have been left outside residents' houses, are collected each Saturday morning at 10am in Watermead and taken to our store at Roman Park where our volunteers sort the food. They are added to donations collected from Tesco, Greggs and Sainsbury's Berryfields.

Each week we update our client list and parcels are prepared for delivery each Thursday. Every family in need receives food for the week, including fresh meat, dairy products, eggs, fruit and vegetables. We buy fresh food from money that has been donated. Many letters have been received thanking you for your extraordinary continued generosity and for remembering those who need help. We continue to operate on Kelvin's original basis, asking only "how can we help?" If we can help you, or anyone you know, please let us know.

We have encountered extensive need for both physical and moral support. Working with local schools we are now able to help where most needed. Volunteers regard it as a privilege that our clients are accepting our help. It is never easy to ask. We understand. Please, if you, or anyone you know, is in need of food, advice, counselling or any other assistance, just call us 01296 331816 or email help@romanparktrust.org.uk.

This Christmas we are giving 120 children a Christmas present and stocking and their families a turkey with all the trimmings, which will be delivered during Christmas week. The presents will be given to parents to give to their children themselves. Each present will be personalised, age and sex appropriate, for each family member. We will also give presents to the elderly and hope to include some treats for the parents too. The main Christmas project has been funded by a generous donor through Heart of Bucks who will be paying for the Christmas dinners and for 10 weeks of food deliveries for 30 families. St James the Great Berton's Box of Blessings project is funding additional children to be added to our list, as well as finding more volunteers to help with wrapping and delivery. The Consortium of developers at Berryfields, together with their Project Manager, have bought us a huge chest freezer which means we will

be able to take advantage of special food offers and store a supply of food which we can deliver in emergencies.

If you would like to donate a gift for the stockings we would love to receive pyjamas, hair scrunchies, gloves/mittens, socks, colouring pencils, the usual small gifts for both boys and girls. For the parents and grandparents perhaps some pampering treats. You can also donate at Gofundme - Roman Park Community Trust. Every single donation and every single penny directly helps.

Our advice panel of professionals offers free, confidential and practical advice on benefits, housing, financial, employment and getting back to work, landlord and tenant, as well as mental health issues and signposting to relevant services needed. We offer CV writing and mock interviews and are able to buy suitable clothes for interviews where

needed. The loneliness project being undertaken by Berryfields allows people to make new friends, reducing isolation and making life more interesting starting with 'happy to talk' benches, an initiative suggested by Cllr Peter Dean. It's all about people!

Thanks to everyone for their contributions to our community including our neighbouring parishes, Reverend Dan and everyone at our Parish Church of St James the Great, Berton who warmly welcome everyone.

Let's hope that the pandemic eases and we can start to live more normally during 2021. Whatever happens, on behalf of the Parish Council, we send our best wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Healthy and Happy New Year, whatever it brings.

Cllr Sue Severn, Chairman



Two new recruits on the Parish Council

I started work with Bucks County Council in 1977 and held various roles in the Commercial, Finance and Education Departments before leaving to take up a senior management role with a world-leading, international foodservice, hospitality and facilities company. I have now run my own management consultancy business for the last 8 years. My wife, Alison, and I became residents of Watermead in 2007, having lived in Aylesbury and other parts of Buckinghamshire previously. We initially rented a house here, fell in love with the area and were fortunate enough to have an opportunity to buy a lakeside property. A decision we never regret!



Mick Morgan

Since we became residents we have always been interested in getting involved in matters that affect our community and have supported WPC on many occasions to ensure the 'voice' of Watermead residents is heard. We have 3 'grown up' children, one of whom also lives in Watermead, and we have recently become proud grandparents of twin granddaughters. I have always loved my sport, having played rugby, football, golf and many other sports and doing my best to stay reasonably fit as I get nearer to semi-retirement. And with that, I now have some time to be able to support the Parish Council and our community more directly and hope my Commercial and Management skills and enable me to effectively do so

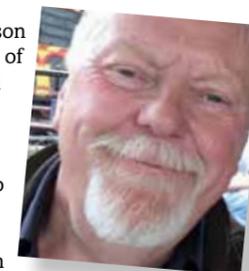
My wife, Lorraine, and I came to Watermead in 1989 and moved into a small apartment at Lakeside overlooking the Piazza. Watermead was then just a small collection of houses, and the Watermead Inn was still a concrete shell.

As Watermead started to grow, the Watermead Residents Association was formed and both Lorraine and I became active members. We held many events in the village hall such as Race Nights, Fancy Dress Parties, Quiz Nights, and Casino Nights to name but a few. We also held Bonfire Night Parties, Car Treasure Hunts and Carols at Christmas.

As time went on Lorraine and I became Editors of "Bluster", the forerunner of today's excellent Village View. A few years later we both became Directors of Lakeside Central Area Management (LCAM) which looked after the maintenance of the Lakeside Area.

When our son was born in 1998 we needed to move, but there was no thought of moving to anywhere but Watermead. Where else would we want our son to be brought up but in this wonderful village of ours? Our family loves Watermead and I still get a buzz after 31 years when driving down the spine road into our village.

I am currently a member of the Village View editorial committee and look forward to joining the Parish Council where I will do my best to serve the community in any way that I can. 07521 725231 srmackay@hotmail.com



Stuart Mackay

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Recipes using Butternut Squash

Butternut squash soup with chilli and crème fraîche

Ingredients

- 1 butternut squash, about 1kg, peeled and deseeded
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 tbsp butter
- 2 onions, diced
- 1 garlic clove, thinly sliced
- 2 mild red chillies, deseeded and finely chopped
- 850ml hot vegetable stock
- 4 tbsp crème fraîche, plus more to serve

Method

1. Heat oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6.
2. Cut 1 peeled and deseeded butternut squash into large cubes, about 4cm/1½in across, then toss in a large roasting tin with 1 tbsp of the olive oil.
3. Roast for 30 mins, turning once during cooking, until golden and soft.
4. While the butternut squash cooks, melt 1 tbsp butter with the remaining 1 tbsp olive oil in a large saucepan, then add 2 diced onions, 1 thinly sliced garlic clove and ¾ of the 2 deseeded and finely chopped red chillies.
5. Cover and cook on a very low heat for 15-20 mins until the onions are completely soft.
6. Tip the butternut squash into the pan, add 850ml hot vegetable stock and 4 tbsp crème fraîche, then whizz with a stick blender until smooth. For a really silky soup, put the soup into a liquidiser and blitz it in batches.
7. Return to the pan, gently reheat, then season to taste.
8. Serve the soup in bowls with swirls of crème fraîche and a scattering of the remaining chopped chilli.

Tip - Save time and effort by placing all your

ingredients in a soup maker and whizzing up a delicious soup in no time. This soup goes well with courgette and mushroom bread.

Courgette & mushroom bread

Ingredients

- 3 medium courgettes, grated
- 2 tsp salt
- 2 tbsp olive oil
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 2 garlic cloves, crushed
- 100g chestnut mushroom, chopped
- 350g strong plain flour
- 7g sachet easy-blend dried yeast
- 2 tbsp chopped fresh basil
- ½ tsp coarse sea salt, to sprinkle

Method

1. Put the grated courgettes in a colander and sprinkle with 1 tsp of the salt. Leave to stand for 20 mins, then, using your hands, squeeze out as much of the moisture as possible. Rinse the courgettes thoroughly, then squeeze again.
2. Heat 1 tbsp of the olive oil in a frying pan and cook the onion and garlic for 4 mins until softened. Add the mushrooms and cook for a further 4 mins until softened and browned, then add the courgettes and cook for another 2 mins. Strain well and set aside to cool; discard the liquid.
3. Heat oven to 220C/fan 200C/gas 7. Place the flour in a large mixing bowl, stir in the yeast, the remaining oil and salt, the basil and the courgette mixture. Mix well to combine. Make a well in the centre and add 125ml hand-hot water. Mix well to form a slightly sticky dough. Knead on a floured surface for about 10 mins, then shape into a ball and place on a greased baking sheet.
4. Flatten the ball of dough very slightly with the palm of your hand and loosely cover

with oiled cling film. Leave to rise in a warm place for 25-30 mins until doubled in size. Brush the top of the dough with a little water, then sprinkle with the sea salt and bake for 40 mins until golden. Leave to cool on a wire rack before serving.

Recipe from Good Food Vegetarian Christmas, December 2006

Oregano chicken & squash traybake

Ingredients

- 180g pack grilled artichokes
- 1½ tbsp olive oil
- 1 tsp dried oregano
- 2 tsp cumin seeds
- 8 chicken drumsticks
- 1 butternut squash, cut into chunks (leave the skin on – it adds flavour)
- 150g mixed olives of your choice, roughly chopped
- large handful rocket

Method

1. Heat oven to 220C/200C fan/gas 6. Measure out 1½ tbsp of oil from the grilled artichoke pack. Mix this with the olive oil, oregano and cumin. Put the chicken drumsticks and squash in a large roasting tin, toss in the flavoured oil and some seasoning.
2. Roast in the oven for 45 mins until tender and golden, then tip the artichokes and olives into the pan. Give everything a good mix, then return to the oven for 5 mins to warm through. Stir through the rocket and serve.

This gluten free recipe is from Good Food magazine, September 2017. All the above recipes and many more can be found at www.bbcgoodfood.com/recipes

www.bbc.co.uk/food/recipe

What is Butternut Squash?

Butternut squash is a type of winter squash that grows on a vine. It has a sweet, nutty taste similar to that of a pumpkin. It has tan-yellow skin and orange fleshy pulp with a compartment of seeds in the blossom end. When ripe, it turns increasingly deep orange, and becomes sweeter and richer. It is a good source of fibre, vitamin C, magnesium, and potassium; and it is a source of vitamin A.

Although botanically a fruit, butternut squash is used culinarily as a vegetable that can be roasted, sautéed, toasted, puréed for soups or mashed to be used in casseroles, breads, muffins, and pies. The squash is also used as an alternative diet for Monarch butterfly caterpillars alongside cucumbers.

These butternut squash, pictured, were grown by Sheena Hudson on her allotment.

The second image is of a Patty Pan Squash which was grown by Tanya Wheatcroft in her garden. It is 11 inches (28cm) in diameter. Tanya used to live in Watermead and helps Sheena on her allotment.



What's on ...around Watermead

The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020 ("the 2020 Regulations") came into effect on 4th April 2020. The 2020 Regulations enable local councils to hold remote meetings (for a specified period) to attend the Watermead Parish Council meeting via video conferencing on the third Thursday of the month commencing at 7:30pm for the purpose of transacting the following business. Members of the public who wish to join/attend the meeting will need to request a link from the Parish Clerk. Please email noreen.shardlow@watermead-pc.gov.uk or call 01296 395211 / 792137. In the event you wish to ask a question we will ask for a copy in advance to ensure inclusion.

There are no events planned at the time of writing for 2021.

Our regulars in the Village Hall...

Parish Council
3rd Thursday of the month (excluding August & December)
Public meeting - 7.30pm
Council meeting - 8.00pm

Footsteps Pre-School
Monday - Friday 7.30am to 2pm
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Scrapbooking/ Card Making Any Craft Of Your Choice Crafty Chicks
4th Friday of the month from 6.30pm
Contact Daphne 393131

Watermead & Weedon Women's Institute
First Thursday of the month (2nd Thursday in May and August)
7.30 - 9.30pm
Parish Clerk - Noreen Shardlow
noreen.shardlow@watermead-pc.gov.uk

Soul Space
Every Sunday evening,
£5 a session, Pre-booking advised
Holly Miller 07845 435619

Aylesbury & District Philatelic Society
Second Wednesday of the month
7.30 - 10.00pm
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

Drawing for Fun - Art Classes
Every Wednesday 2.30-5.30pm
Contact Judith Muston
01296 395211

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

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 2021

SPRING 6th March

SUMMER 5th June

AUTUMN 4th September

Winter 27th November

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Watermead couple to sell Christmas trees

Andy and Ruth Dale have been Watermead residents for nearly 20 years. They are embarking on a new venture this winter by selling Christmas trees and will be based near Aylesbury. Andy is a painter and decorator (Avocet Decorating) and Ruth is a Corporate Event Manager (Avocet Event Management Ltd). No prizes for guessing which Watermead road they live in!!!

The idea came to them when they realised that a lot of trees sold are of a lesser quality, looking a bit threadbare with gaps and odd shapes. All of the trees being sold this year will be of the highest grade available which have been sourced from an established UK grower. Their Premium Nordmann Fir non-drop trees will have lush dense foliage and maintain an attractive

cone shape and will be sold at a very competitive price.

The environmentally conscious couple have carefully selected "oxo-biodegradable" netting that you'll take your tree home in, which is more environmentally friendly than the cheaper "degradable" netting.

They are offering free delivery of trees to Watermead residents, if your vehicle isn't large enough! Visit them, select your tree and they'll deliver it to you that evening. If you're unable to visit, they'll happily select one for you and deliver.



Opening date will be Friday 27th November, 7 days per week until they've sold out!
 Monday – Friday: 10am - 6pm, Saturday: 9:30am - 6pm
 Sunday: 9:30am - 4pm

Feel free to contact Ruth 07810 805940 or Andy 07980 684919 if you have any questions.

Unfortunately, at time of going to press, they're having to relocate at short notice, so are unable to confirm their final location. Please visit their Facebook page for latest updates and location details.

Find and like them on Facebook – Avocet Christmas Trees

Andy and Ruth Dale

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Tea Break Quiz



1. Winston Churchill invented which one-piece outfit similar to the modern onesie?
2. Which part of your body do you move when you nictitate?
3. Ray Davies was the front man of which iconic 60s band?
4. What are the five colours of the Olympic rings?
5. Gouda is a popular cheese originating from which country?
6. Which US state was Donald Trump born in?
7. What do the French call the English Channel?
8. Which Stephen King novel takes place mostly in the fictional Overlook Hotel?
9. Where is the smallest bone in the human body located?
10. Which Frankie Goes To Hollywood song was banned by the BBC?
11. Which year did the EU first introduce the Euro as currency?
12. What colour are the seats in the House of Commons?
13. In which state was former US President Barack Obama born?
14. What year did the Titanic sink in the Atlantic on 15th April on its maiden voyage?
15. What famous TV chef started cooking at the age of 9 in his parents' pub 'The Cricketers'in Clavering, Sussex?
16. Who invented Cat's Eyes in 1934 to improve road safety?
17. Which artist created 'Campbell's soup Cans' in 1962?
18. Which country was the first ever winner of the Eurovision song contest?
19. Where were the Bee Gees born?
20. What has the chemical symbol Zn?

Answers on page 19

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For more information go to the Home Page of our website www.bucksfwi.org.uk and click on our Speaking Out image:




Local businesses affected by coronavirus

I don't want you to think I have been wasting my time. I carried out a recent survey and it is with great sadness that I have to mention the loss of a few local businesses around our area.

The bra manufacturer has gone bust, the specialist in submersibles has gone under, the manufacturer of food blenders has gone into liquidation, a dog kennel has had to call in the retrievers, the suppliers of paper for origami enthusiasts has folded and the Heinz factory has been canned as they couldn't ketchup with orders.

In a second wave, the tarmac laying company has reached the end of the road, the bread company has run out of dough, the clock manufacturer has had to wind down and gone cuckoo, the Chinese has been taken away, the shoe shop has given his staff the boot and finally the laundrette has been taken to the cleaners!

Book review

The English Patient: Michael Ondaatje

In 2018, 9,000 people voted for this as the best of the Booker Prize-winning novels in the award's fifty years. Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children had previously been hailed as the best of 25 and then 40 years. I'm a huge admirer of Anthony Minghella's 1996 movie of *The English Patient*, but I'd missed reading the novel until now. It's only 320 pages, but I found it a tough read. Stylistically it's very dense, skipping between present and past tenses with frequent viewpoint switches. The story is fragmentary, and it certainly helps to have seen the movie which had a more linear timeframe.

It's 1945 and Italy has been liberated by the Allies. Hana, a young Canadian nurse, is looking after a hideously burnt man in a ruined villa in Tuscany. She is joined by a fellow Canadian, Caravaggio, who seems to be AWOL, and a Sikh bomb-disposal sapper, Kip, with whom she falls in love. The English patient (who is not actually English) tells the other three of his time before the war exploring Egyptian ruins in the Sahara and of his affair with the new young wife of one of the archaeologists' backers.

As in the movie, the relationship between Almásy and Katharine has a kind of cold intensity. Almásy's trek across the desert to fetch medical aid for Katharine, left injured in the Cave of Swimmers after the plane crash, is epic, but I wasn't moved by it as much as by the tenderness between the nurse and the sapper.

The desert scenes and Tuscan landscapes are as vivid on the page as in Minghella's visual feast of a movie. A sequence when Kip defuses a bomb is very cinematic. *The English Patient* is clearly a masterpiece of English writing, but I could only read a few pages at a time. There's a lyrical quality to Ondaatje's prose which requires re-reading as you go. Occasionally I felt I was getting echoes of T.S. Eliot. The only comparable novels I can think of are Lawrence Durrell's *Alexandria Quartet*, which I hugely admired in my twenties but would perhaps find a bit 'indigestible' today.

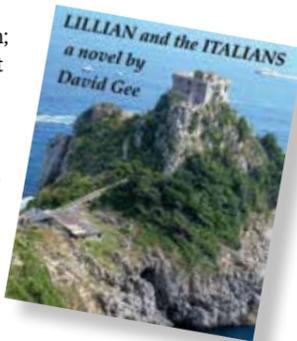
Wikipedia will remind you of all the Booker shortlisted novels and winners through its 50-plus years. My personal favourite, not a winner but shortlisted in 1980, is Anthony Burgess's *Earthly Powers*, a deeply powerful novel on the theme of Faith and Human Frailty. Looking for books that have given me the most pleasure rather than mere admiration, I'm going to plump for *The Carpetbaggers* and *The Adventurers*, both by Harold Robbins, two novels from the 1960s which thrillingly explored the world of Hollywood and Jet-Set celebrity. Do I need to hide my head in embarrassment?



Ralph Fiennes and Kristin Scott Thomas as Almásy and Katharine. David Gee

Venice, Amalfi - secrets and danger

Book reviewer, David Gee, tells us about his new novel, published in January. In the summer of 1966 Lillian Rutherford, a 50 year old widow from Hastings, goes to Italy in search of her wayward son. In Venice she meets Carlo and Adriana Marini, who have shared the last four years of Andrew's life; their disclosures reveal a side of her son that she never knew or suspected. Going on to Amalfi, Lillian meets the charismatic Prince Massimo Monfalcone whose playboy son has disappeared with Andrew. Massimo's first wife was murdered in a Sicilian blood-feud with their four children; his second wife killed herself. As they wait for news of their missing sons, a bond grows between Lillian and the Prince ...



Lillian's story begins in the 1970s, when my mother was not looking forward to turning 65. I promised her I would write a novel in which a widow in her sixties finds Romance and Adventure in Italy (Mum loved Italy). In 1975 I made the first of several trips to Venice. The early chapters were written on church steps and in cafes. By the following summer I had found the clifftop castle in Amalfi where Lillian meets her handsome, dangerous prince.

But that year (1976) my bread-and-butter job in telecoms took me to the Persian Gulf. The concrete and sand-dunes of Bahrain and Qatar did not evoke Amalfi and Sicily, so the novel stalled as I took up a parallel "moonlighting" career in journalism for regional English newspapers. Not until 1992, after revisiting Amalfi and climbing Mont Ste Victoire in Provence, did I complete the first draft of *Lillian and the Italians* and send the book out to seek its fortune. One leading literary agent said the novel was "blessedly different", but a 65 year old heroine would put publishers off. Hopefully, books and movies in the last two or three decades have demonstrated that older women are no longer excluded from romance and intrigue. Approaching 50 myself by this time, I had women friends in their forties who worried that their lives would "flatline" after their children (and/or their husbands) left home. I rewrote the novel with Lillian aged 50 and Prince Massimo 64. This, several revisions later, is the book emerging into print (and e-format) this winter from The Conrad Press in Canterbury.

Fate did not bring my dear old ma a Sicilian prince. Alzheimer's took her down a very different road. Lillian's girlhood and her miscarriage are taken from my mother's life story, although she was widowed much younger than Lillian. The novel represents the life I wished for her in place of the life she had, although - God bless her - there were many things that brought her happiness into and beyond middle age.

Lillian and the Italians is dedicated to my parents and a cherished writer friend - and to all those who nurse the dream that one day their Prince will come.

David Gee

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Let go...move on...

Apology

The Editor apologises to the runner up of the best front garden competition. It was the lovely, neat garden of 3 Brambling which was runner up and not 3 Avocet as stated in our autumn issue.

Time to remember and reflect on a difficult year

Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity have joined together with Bucks Healthcare Trust to offer a virtual Time to Reflect service this December to support those who have faced the loss of a loved one this year. From 5pm on Sunday 6th December until the end of the year, the virtual Time to Reflect service will be available to view on the Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity website. The service will have input from both the Hospice and Bucks Healthcare Trust staff who will share their thoughts, experiences and the realities of Covid-19 this year. There will also be readings and music with time to light a candle to take a moment of reflection and remembrance.

“We recognise Christmas can be a very emotional occasion, a time when we particularly think of loved ones who are no longer with us” says Ann Kenny, the Bereavement Support Team Lead at the Hospice. “This year has had enormous challenges for everybody and, sadly, many people have faced the loss of a loved one with little outlet to express their feelings properly. Whilst we cannot meet in person as usual at our traditional Tree of Light events, here at Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity we felt it was incredibly important to still offer a safe space and time for reflection.”

The Charity has also set up an online Tree of Light remembrance page where you can dedicate a memory to someone special. To sponsor a dedication or to access the virtual Time to Reflect service go to fnhospice.org.uk/tree-of-light, or call 01296 429975 for more information.



Snippets of wildlife on Watermead

Shot by Eric Rose

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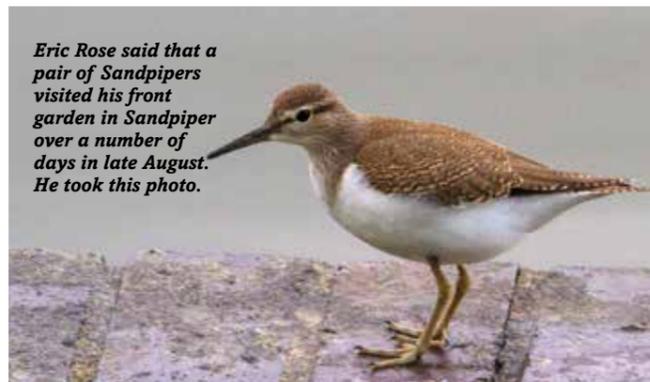
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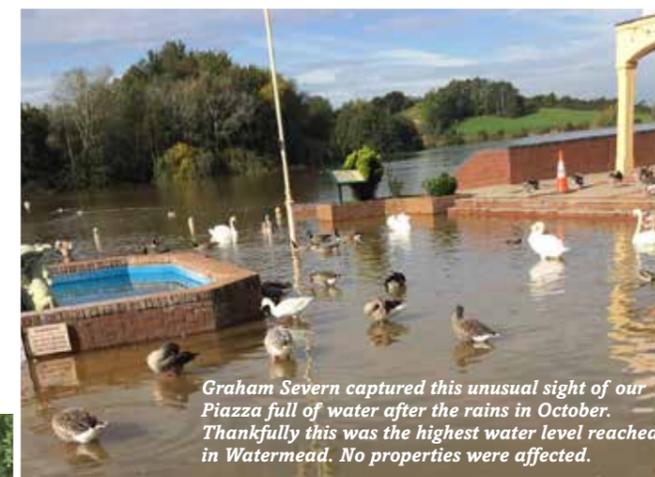
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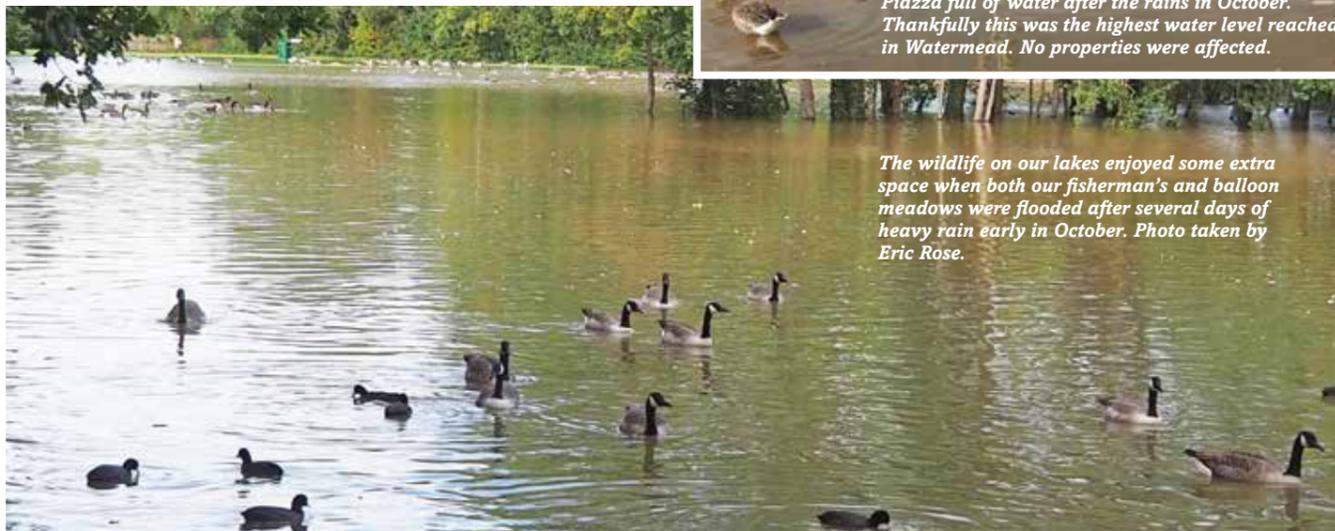
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Eric Rose said that a pair of Sandpipers visited his front garden in Sandpiper over a number of days in late August. He took this photo.



Graham Severn captured this unusual sight of our Piazza full of water after the rains in October. Thankfully this was the highest water level reached in Watermead. No properties were affected.



The wildlife on our lakes enjoyed some extra space when both our fisherman's and balloon meadows were flooded after several days of heavy rain early in October. Photo taken by Eric Rose.



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6 ways to make the most of your allotment during winter

I do enjoy the onset of winter. I love the seasonal change, the cosy evenings in front of the wood burner, and the chance to put my feet up and forget the allotment for a while. You might not want to rest for too long though, as there is still plenty to do (when is there not!). Here are 6 ways to get the most out of your plot during winter:

Manure early

The organised amongst us allotmenters will get their plots put to bed as soon as the growing season is finished. There are good reasons for this, but none more so than maximising the time that manure has to work its magic on the soil. If you leave the manure on the surface of the bed, it also works to protect the precious soil below from the harsh weather. I'm semi-organised on the plot and tend to get my muck on before Christmas, but the earlier I can do it the better.

For double protection, try laying cardboard down in between the soil and manure. The cardboard will rot down with the manure, ready to be dug in later on in the year.

Make a runner bean trench

Runner beans like very rich soil that is full of nutrients and creating the perfect environment for the plants will help provide a cracking summer harvest.

Fill your trench with kitchen scraps, compost, manure, or any old plants you're done with. This stuff will rot down and make sure the runner bean plants get all the nutrients and trace elements, as well as help to keep moisture around the roots.

Overwinter onions, garlic, and broad beans

I was recently converted to overwintering after realising it's such a good use of otherwise empty space. Winter sees little on the allotment, so it's a real morale booster to see things growing despite the weather. And by the time you need the space in Spring, the overwintered veg will be finished and ready to pull up.

Onions, garlic, and broad beans are three veg that overwinter well and can be put in the ground as late as November.

Harvest effectively

Getting to know your winter crops is vital as they all have different properties. Kale is cut and will come again so needs regular harvesting so that it can keep regenerating, whilst leeks will happily sit in the ground until you require them. Frost can also sweeten some crops.

Look after your winter crops

Winter veg are tough and hardy, right? That's why they exist in the winter!

During autumn and winter, it's easy to concentrate on clearing and preparing soil rather than tending to your crop, but there are a few tricks I've picked up to help your winter crops through the tough times.

Plant Fruit

Now is a good time to plant bare-root fruit bushes such as gooseberries, but they can be planted at any point during the dormant season of November to the end of March.

If you're thinking of planting some fruit on your plot, there are some beginner tips for buying bushes, and a few more for planting them out and much more information at www.realmensow.co.uk.

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More pets of Watermead



Molly is a 10 year old Bishon Frise /Lhasa Apso cross. Most people think she's a puppy when they meet her. Molly is asking to come up for a cuddle!



Alfie, 6, helped with my study while off work for two months with a broken foot! When Dad's away he sleeps on his gym bag and waits on the landing for him!



Copper, 4, lives with Marcia in Puffin Way. He thinks he owns the fields and can be very vocal about. He loves kids but not keen on the postman and cats!



Jake from Willow Herb is a 9 year old rescue Labrador. He loves playing with his friends, swimming in the lake and helping to rip open parcels!



Reu is a 5 year old King Charles Cavalier and loves to play ball in the garden. He doesn't like birds and will be sure to tell them so every morning!



This is Reu's uncle, Beau, he is 10 years old and also a King Charles Cavalier. He loves to throw the cushions off the sofa and jump up onto the chair!



Dougie is 2 and was trained to chase after birds but didn't like doing this or the sound of guns so came to live in Stonechat. I now get lots of walks in long grass!



Ronnie (tabby/white) and Reggie (black/white) are 9 months old. They live up to their names - they're mischievous and love to sit on the window ledge.



Wilf (left) is a complete mix of breeds and Presley (right) is a Persian blue. They live with James and Georgina in Guillemot Way.



This is Riley who is 16 months, a crossbreed and is one of Dave Lucas' pups. He is a frequent visitor to the pub and loves a swim in the lake. Elaine Ward.



Nellie lives with Laura and she's 4 years old. Her two favourite pastimes are barking at the postman and sleeping upside down.



Max, age 7, lives in Ayleswater with Jim. He is a cavapoo cross - Cavalier King Charles Spaniel and Miniature poodle. He had just been to the groomer and sporting a dickie bowl!

Have a pet safe Christmas

We all love Christmas! But, whilst we're busy getting wrapped up in the festive fun, we may forget to think about the effect Christmas can have on our pets and other animals too. There are presents, fantastic food and we get to spend time with family and friends. But, did you know that Christmas can be hazardous and stressful for your pets?

Christmas food

Festive food is delicious to us but to our pets much of it is highly toxic and dangerous. Take a look at the list below to ensure you're not giving treats that can make your pet unwell:

- Chocolate,
- Mince pies,
- Christmas pudding,
- Onion gravy,
- Alcohol,
- Bones from carcasses are a dangerous choking hazard.

What Christmas food can pets eat?

Skinless and boneless white meat such as turkey is okay for dogs and cats, but be careful that it's not covered in fat, salt or gravy. It's best to keep to your pets eating their appropriate food.

If you want to treat your pet to some festive bites, you can find some easy-to-make cat and dog treats on the RSPCA website, but be sure to feed treats in moderation as extra weight can lead to health problems.

Christmas trees and other decorations

Festive food isn't the only hazard to consider around Christmas time. Some household items can also be dangerous. Some plants and flowers including poinsettias, holly, ivy, mistletoe and lilies can be toxic, so avoid these if you have pets.

Tinsel and wrapping paper might be tempting for your pet to play with but make sure they don't eat it!

It is best to only allow pets around the Christmas tree when they can be supervised, as:

- hanging edible decorations, like chocolate, are poisonous to dogs and can cause severe damage to their health
- cats and dogs might be tempted to chew or play with hanging tree decorations

Help your pet cope with Christmas Chaos

Christmas is often busy and chaotic. Help your pet cope with the chaos by keeping to their normal routine, as much as possible.

Cats and dogs

- Try to keep food, exercise, bed and toilet break routines the same as consistency can help pets feel more secure.
- If you have guests coming over, let your dog or cat meet people at their own pace.
- Give them somewhere cosy and quiet to retreat to, away from all the excitement, where they won't be disturbed by anyone. Leave toys there to help them associate the area with positive experiences.
- For cats, you can also give some hidey-holes to retreat to in case they feel unsure. Try on top of wardrobes or under furniture - even cardboard boxes can make good hiding places.
- Although Christmas is a busy time and there's a lot to do and people to see, be careful about leaving your pet alone for any period which might cause them distress.
- If you're spending Christmas day with friends or family and your dog is coming with you, take something which smells familiar, like their bed, to help them feel secure. Take some of their favourite toys and chews to help keep them entertained.

Small furrries

- Make sure nocturnal animals such as hamsters are kept somewhere they aren't going to be disturbed during the day.
- Keep visitor's animals away from small furrries as they could frighten them!
- Small animals are very sensitive to high frequency sounds which we can't hear so keep them away from televisions and stereos. Consider gently and carefully moving cages into quieter parts of

the house if you're having a party.

- Don't put tinsel around cages and keep fairy lights and electrical cables out of reach to prevent them nibbling objects that could cause medical issues.

Outdoor animals

- Outdoor animals such as rabbits will need extra bedding in the cold weather. Keep their enclosures clean as wet bedding will freeze on cold nights, which could lead to illness.
- Ensure outdoor pets always have fresh clean water to drink and check at least twice a day that it isn't frozen.

Advice for all

- Keep a number of an emergency vet on hand in case of accidents or if your pet eats something they shouldn't.
- If your pet is on medication, stock up before the holidays so you don't get caught out.
- If you're going away over Christmas, be sure to make plans for your pets - whether they're coming with you or not.

You can find gift ideas for animals and animal lovers, further information about how to ensure your pets remain safe and calm and you'll even discover how to make reindeer food that's safe for wildlife at www.rspca.org.uk/adviceandwelfare/seasonal/christmas

Answers to Tea Break Quiz on page 11

1. Siren suit,
2. Eyelid (Blinking),
3. The Kinks,
4. Blue. Yellow. Black. Green. Red,
5. The Netherlands,
6. New York,
7. La Manche,
8. The Shining,
- 9 Ear,
10. Relax,
11. 1999,
12. Green,
13. Hawaii,
14. 1912,
15. Jamie Oliver,
16. Percy Shaw,
17. Andy Warhol,
18. Switzerland,
19. Isle of Man,
20. Zinc

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Random Person - Jim Chignell's career as a Fire Fighter

Jim moved to Watermead from Ruislip in August 2019 in order to be closer to his daughter who lives in Stewkley. He had been caring for his wife who had developed early onset dementia but sadly her condition worsened and she now resides in a care home. Jim joined the London Fire Brigade at his first opportunity at the age of 18. He left school at the age of 16 and worked for the GPO (General Post Office) as a telephone accountant. However, to be a fire fighter had been his dream from a young age. He wanted to help people and believed that it would be full of adventure and he was not wrong!



On 19 December 1966 he reported to the London Fire Brigade's Training Centre in Finchley where he would spend the next four months. His training involved health and safety, first aid, climbing different types of ladders, carrying out risk assessment, putting out fires, etc. It was done very much on military lines and also involved discipline and marching on parade in the square. He was also taught how to descend the pole that many fire stations have – some are 2 or even 3 stories high! He explained that one has to 'embrace' the pole and interlock your legs. Jim's first posting was to Edgware Road Fire Station in Paddington. He had been disappointed that at this station there was no pole to go down when there was a "shout".

As a young person he found this new experience exciting but many of his colleagues were much older than him - men who had fought in World War II who had a lot of experience of dealing with difficult situations and with death. He said he was daunted by them.

When asked about one of his first call outs, he recalled an incident on one of his first night shifts. They were just about to sit down for their supper at 8pm and the bell

went. The call was for a block of offices in Manchester Square where a young man was poised to jump from the top of the building. The police were also called to attend but it was the Fire Station Officer, an ex Sergeant Major, who went to try and coax the young man down. Unlike the approach that might be used today, he was very forthright which rather shocked Jim but it worked. The young man was obviously in distress but he came away from the edge and apologised.

In those days there was no "political correctness" and no counselling available. Jim said that the station manager's approach was too abrasive and certainly would not be acceptable today. However, there was a positive outcome in this case.

Jim said that he was called to more suicide attempts during his 3 years at Paddington than anywhere else during his career in the fire service. There were more fires then, many caused by smoking – there was less awareness of the dangers especially with people smoking sometimes dropping the cigarette when falling asleep. There were also lots of chip pan fires. Houses these days are built with fire alarms already in them and there is also a lot of publicity about the causes and danger of fire, so people are more aware.

There were a lot of derelict buildings in the Paddington/North Kensington area which would be inhabited by homeless people who would drink alcohol and take drugs. Fires often occurred and then a fire axe may be used to gain access to the building in order to put out the fires. On one occasion Jim fell through the floor which had rotted - fortunately he did not sustain too much injury.

The shift patterns at that time were a day shift from 9am to 6pm and night shift from 6pm to 9am. They worked 2 days, 2 nights and then had 2 days off. During the day shift, when not on a call out to an incident, they would practice drills eg climbing up and down different types of ladder, testing hydrants, learning how to carry out risk assessment – this was before the Health & Safety Act was brought in in 1974. After that many changes were made in the way the work was done.

One example was the use of hook ladders which were 13 feet long. These were so-called because of the curved bill at the top which clipped over window sills and enabled them to hang flush with the sides of buildings. They were, apparently, little used elsewhere but in London they proved invaluable in narrow alleyways and closed courtyards. By using two hook ladders and continually passing them above your head, one after the other, and the height you could reach was limitless. The hook on the ladder was used to smash windows to gain entry. The introduction of health and safety legislation would outlaw the use both of hook ladders and of real-life scenarios in practice drills.

There were few animal rescues that Jim attended apart from the occasional cat stuck up a tree. On those occasions a risk

assessment had to be made and correct type of ladder selected.

Jim transferred to Northolt in 1970 where he spent the next 14 years. This station was more convenient for him and did have a 'pole'! Over the years he did experience some dreadful scenes but also saved many lives.

In 1985 he transferred to the regional Headquarters in Wembley where he worked in the staff offices. His job also involved going into schools, offices and factories to make presentations to raise awareness of the dangers of fire.

Providing firemen had completed 30 years' service they could retire at the age of 50 but the normal retirement age was 55. At the end of 1966 the expected lifespan of a retired fireman was just 6 years. The problem they faced was smoke inhalation – they would have to fight fires lying on floors as smoke rises and there could be asbestos in the buildings. Proto breathing apparatus was provided to firemen which they had to service when they returned to the station. They took about an hour to recharge. Nowadays, with new developments in safety and technology life expectancy of a fire fighter has improved enormously. Jim is living proof of that!

After 30 years' service Jim decided to continue for another 3 years and he transferred to the London Fire Brigade HQ in Lambeth and worked with the Deputy Chief Fire Officer.

He retired after 33 years' service as a Leading Fireman and was presented with the items shown in the photographs - a fire axe, a fire mark and a statue of a fireman with proto breathing apparatus.

When asked what he would tell a young person who was thinking about working as a fire fighter, Jim said that, if he had his time again, he would still join the Fire Service as he found it deeply rewarding and he enjoyed the camaraderie of his colleagues.

You may see him walking around Watermead with his little dog, Max.

Mary Singleton



Call for more Bucks residents to volunteer to help COVID-19 efforts

The Buckinghamshire Volunteer Matching Service is calling for Bucks residents to sign-up as volunteers to help support local people and communities during the COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic.

The Volunteer Matching Service, which is run by Community Impact Bucks in partnership with Buckinghamshire Council and The Clare Foundation, matches registered volunteers to roles where they are most needed in the county. It is looking for volunteers from across the county but in particular for volunteers from the High Wycombe, Missendens and Chesham areas.

In Spring 2020, more than 1,800 people from Buckinghamshire signed up to volunteer via the Buckinghamshire Council's website to support local communities during the height of the coronavirus pandemic, the recovery period and any local outbreaks that may arise. Many of this initial cohort of volunteers have now been matched with charities and voluntary organisations, while others are now no longer available. As a result, we are looking for new volunteers to step forward to support COVID-19 response activities.

"It has been amazing to see so many people offer their time and skills to help others during the pandemic, and it was great to see this incredible voluntary effort recognised in the Queen's Birthday Honours where nearly three quarters of recipients were awarded for their

work in their community, including several Bucks residents," commented Katie Higginson, Chief Executive of Community Impact Bucks. "Building on this, we now need more volunteers to be available to fill key roles – from adhoc, one-off tasks such as PPE delivery to longer term positions like regular supermarket collections, mentoring young people and providing ongoing support for vulnerable people. If you are 18 or over, and have some time or specific skills to offer, we would love to hear from you."

Gareth Williams, Cabinet Member for Communities and Public Health, said: "We have a strong tradition of volunteering in Buckinghamshire and we know people find it a very rewarding experience. People who were able to give their time to support vulnerable residents during the lockdown earlier in the year found new skills and ways to fill their days in very fulfilling ways. We are seeing a steep increase in the rates of coronavirus currently and want to be prepared if we need to again step up to support our most vulnerable residents. Please do consider whether you could give any of your time."

Frances was matched with the Wycombe Food Hub and currently volunteers two days a week there. "The whole Food Hub is run by volunteers and we make a huge difference to our customers, some of whom have literally nothing to put on the table. There's no

bureaucracy, no barriers, no discrimination – the Food Hub is open to anyone who needs to find food. I love volunteering there - I go in feeling great and come away feeling even better."

To find out more about the Volunteer Matching Service, people can visit the Volunteer Matching Service information page and can easily register as a volunteer via the Volunteer Matching Service registration form. www.communityimpactbucks.org.uk/buckinghamshire-volunteer-matching-service/

To read about the experiences of several Volunteer Matching Service volunteers including Frances, go to our case studies webpage and watch our video.



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Highly recommended staycations

Regrettably a resolution to the pandemic may not arrive until the latter part of 2021, if then. So for those unsure where to start amongst the multitude of possibilities for a 'staycation' next year, and to give our readers the benefit of Watermead residents' direct experiences, here are a few holiday destinations recommended based on their recent experiences.

Little Dinham Woodland Caravan Park, near Wadebridge, Cornwall. An excellent well equipped static caravan site and a friendly family run business. Beautiful countryside location with magnificent views down Dinham Creek to the River Camel where it is possible to walk at low tide. Dogs are allowed. Interesting places to visit include Padstow, Tintagel, Port Isaac (Doc Martin), St. Nectan's Glen Waterfalls and many more, including some great walks, especially along the coast. littledinham.co.uk

Dreamcatcher's Cottage, Hindolveston, North Norfolk. Beautifully restored and maintained 1860's farm-worker's cottage in a sleepy village at the heart of the North Norfolk countryside. Dogs allowed. Ideal base for North Norfolk and coast. Interesting places to visit inland and along the coast including Holkham (recently voted UK's best beach!), Blakeney and Cley, as well as many magnificent stately homes, parks and tourist attractions. dreamcatcherscottage.co.uk

Malham, North Yorkshire. A small village based on the southern area of the Pennines and surrounded by dry stone walls and rolling countryside. There are many places to visit and all within a short distance of one another:

Malham Cove is a huge amphitheatre made of limestone rock. Over the years the rain has seeped through creating an unusual formation and wildlife haven at the top. It has been the inspiration of many books, TV shows and films - most famously Harry Potter and the Deathly Hallows. There are amazing views at the top and well worth the walk.

Gordale Scar is a huge gorge created in the ice age with a waterfall at the end of it.

Janet's Foss is a small but magical waterfall and ancient woodlands.

Malham Tarn - a glacial lake and nature reserve near the village of Malham and run by the National Trust. Its geology, flora and fauna have led to it being listed under a number of conservation designations.

Gapping Gill is a short drive away. It is the largest cave chamber in Britain - a 98-metre pothole with a stream flowing into it.

The cavern is big enough to get St Paul's Cathedral inside. I was fortunate enough to be winched down inside - an experience I will never forget! www.atlasobscura.com/places/gapping-gill

There are plenty of places to stay and camp in Malham itself or in the villages nearby including Settle and the local town of Skipton. There are also an array of pubs serving great pub food wherever you go.

If you are a rock climber or a cyclist, love caving or just want a walking holiday, this a great area to explore and get away from it all. www.malhamdale.com

Riverview Studio, Lympstone, Devon.

A well-equipped and beautifully laid out property. Fabulous double doors looking out to the estuary. A great shower, a small kitchen and a comfy wall bed. Plenty of places to visit for a beer or something to eat: The Swan Inn just around the corner, the Globe next door and the Redwing just up the road. The Central Store convenience shop opposite the Swan is well stocked and useful. There is a station at Lympstone which runs around the estuary for days out in Exeter, Tynemouth or any other stops along the way. Three-mile walks to Exmouth or Topsham on a mainly flat wooden cycle track and further walks up to 26 miles. A very restful holiday with plenty of things to do.

Booked with Airbnb. www.airbnb.co.uk/rooms/12553524?source_impression_id=p3_1604231298_I4Tacl3leHGhM49o



Little Dinham, Cornwall



Lympstone, Devon



View from the top of Malham Cove, North Yorkshire



Malham Cove, North Yorkshire

Macmillan cake sale

On the 13th September, a blazing hot Sunday afternoon, Sue and Graham Severn ably assisted by Mary Singleton, found a little shade outside Avanti Hairdressing Salon in the Piazza to set up some tables in order to sell homemade cakes in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support.

Many Watermead "bakers" had been busy making the most delicious cakes eg fairy cakes, lemon drizzle, coffee and walnut, flapjack, fruit cake, scones. There were also plates of scones, cream and jam for sale.

It was not long before a socially-distanced queue developed and the cakes were disappearing fast.

In addition, there was a "Colin the

Caterpillar" competition. Entrants had to guess the number of "hundreds and thousands" used in the decoration. The answer was provided! The prize was the said "Colin the Caterpillar" cake which was won by a lady visiting her sister in Watermead and she was delighted as it was to be her granddaughter's birthday the following week.

Also on sale were some of the remaining limited-edition prints of the fly past in Watermead on the 50th Anniversary of VE day on 8th May 1995.

People were extremely generous and a total £743 was collected for Macmillan. Well done Watermead!



View from Westminster

Since my last update, Parliament has been sitting for more than a month, and I am taking every opportunity to represent you at Westminster. I have been pressing the government on crucial topics including restrictions during the coronavirus pandemic, the recent flooding in parts of the constituency and proposals for changes to planning laws. I have continued to make Covid-secure visits to local businesses and other organisations across the constituency, speaking to owners and staff about how they have been managing as new measures have been put in place, and relaying their concerns to ministers.

In Watermead, I remain concerned by littering in and around the lake, which is such an icon for the village and the wider local area. I would like to thank all the volunteers who continue to work tirelessly to collect litter. I am committed to doing all I can to help clamp down on antisocial behaviour.

Sadly, coronavirus is far from being extinguished, resulting in the introduction of further measures to protect public health. I know that many constituents have been concerned about the impact on the economy and our freedoms as a result. I raised these issues in a debate on Covid-19 on Monday 28 September (the video can be

seen on my website). I believe we must tread a very fragile line to strike the right balance between the well-being of constituents, the businesses and services that we all rely upon in our day-to-day lives, our liberties and our democracy.

Despite the challenges, I have regularly seen that constituents have continued to work extremely hard in the face of this crisis, through dogged resilience, compassion and imagination, with Watermead being no exception. The overwhelming majority in the community have kept in mind that we all have a role to play in the battle against Covid, especially remembering the mantra of hands - face - space, so that we can speed progress to suppressing the virus and look forward to happier days here in the Aylesbury constituency.

As ever, I am here to help my constituents, so please email me at rob.butler.mp@parliament.uk if you feel I may be able to help you.

Robert Butler MP



Our local Vicar

Christmas this year is going to feel very different for many people. Some people will be welcoming it as a great seasonal celebration and trying to find some joy in a very difficult year. Others will find celebrating Christmas very difficult, as it is seen as a time of joy and celebration, and this year for many with its affects will be seen as far from that. This was the case for my family when my dad died suddenly. We decided that Christmas was going to be too painful to spend it at home without him - my dad was Mr Christmas. We went on holiday to a very hot and sunny Tenerife; it was very different. Back then I didn't believe that there was a God, in fact it took me another twenty years to believe that God existed. After this I realised that Christmas isn't something that we should run away from in times of trouble but something that we should be running to.

Christmas is a time of great hope when we are in a time of despair and sadness, no matter how that has come about. Christmas is a story about restoration; it is the story of the way that God has

brought us back into relationship with himself, showing himself to be a God who cares about us and not a distant uncaring God. There is more to the Christmas story though. Everyone who plays a part in it shows us something from Mary and Joseph to the Magi and the Shepherds. They all show us in different ways that our God is a God of hope and restoration, love and compassion.

Christmas is nice, don't get me wrong. I love that Christmas feeling but Christmas is more than that and if this year you are dreading Christmas, then don't. Read the Christmas story for what it truly is; a story of hope in a time of despair.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Many blessings, Revd. Dan Beesley
www.stjamesbiertonandhulcott.com
Interim Priest-in-Charge of Berton and Hulcott
Christian YouTuber @ bit.ly/2I43bpi

Healthcare charities launch Nightingale's Rainbow Appeal

Buckinghamshire Healthcare NHS Trust Charitable Fund and Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity have teamed up to launch Nightingale's Rainbow Appeal to raise money for healthcare in Buckinghamshire. With fundraising opportunities limited and an increase in the demand for services and equipment this year, the money raised by Nightingale's Rainbow Appeal will make an amazing difference for both charities and their patients. "Our fundraising income has been severely impacted this year and demand for our services is expected to increase this winter. Nightingale's Rainbow Appeal gives our community the opportunity to support healthcare in their area," says Jo Turner, CEO of Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity.

A new structural installation at Stoke Mandeville hospital funded by local organisations will be the focal point of the campaign. Nightingale's Rainbow will consist of an arch covered with thousands of tiles in rainbow colours reflecting the symbol which has become synonymous with the public recognition for the tireless work of healthcare staff during the crisis.

Trust Chief Executive Neil Macdonald said: "It will be an honour to have Nightingale's Rainbow installed at Stoke Mandeville Hospital. This has been the toughest year in the history of the NHS and the installation will be a tribute to the hard work and sacrifices made by those working in health and social care across Buckinghamshire."

Members of the public can sponsor coloured tiles on the Rainbow for a donation of £20 a tile and the proceeds will be shared between the two charities. You can donate online at fnhospice.org.uk/nightingales-rainbow.

The framework and installation of the Rainbow is being funded by local organisations which includes

acar2go, Aylesbury Town Council, Buckinghamshire Freemasons, Dell Motors, Human Engine, McCormick Ltd, QMP Ltd and Sodexo.

The project has also been supported by pro bono work from Michael Jones Architects, Lancaster Designs and Rosecroft Consultants Ltd.

The proceeds from the sale of Rainbow Tiles will be shared between the two charities. Florence Nightingale Hospice is located at Stoke Mandeville Hospital and provides first class specialist palliative care which is accessible and free of charge to those with a life-limiting illness in Buckinghamshire. The Hospice also provides other services such as their new FNH@Home services, providing end-of-life care for patients in their homes, Florrie's Children's Team respite care for families, the Day Hospice and Bereavement Support. Florence Nightingale Hospice Charity commits to raise over £1,000,000 annually to ensure the continued funding of local in-patient and at-home palliative care services.

For more information, visit www.fnhospice.org.uk



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The Aylesbury Dairy Company

Twenty years ago I noticed in a book by Bernard Watney a picture of a champagne tap with 'Aylesbury Dairy Company' engraved on the handle. When Mr Watney died his collection of corkscrews and champagne taps was sold at Christies and I was able to buy this most unusual tap. Ever since then I have been asking the good people of Aylesbury where the Aylesbury Dairy Company used to be and nobody has been able to tell me.

No wonder. It is in Swindon! In Aylesbury Street!

In Victorian times the quality of milk in London was very poor due to lax standards of hygiene. After a devastating plague in 1865 an enterprising farmer from Quainton, Mr George Mander Allender, formed the Aylesbury Dairy Company to provide Londoners with milk of the highest quality from the healthy and well-managed farms of Buckinghamshire.

In 1870 the company expanded into new premises in St Petersburg Place, Bayswater, London. The company was so successful that new purpose-built premises were constructed in Swindon in 1876 near the railway station so that milk and other dairy products could be delivered quickly into West London.

Eventually the company purchased a farm and dairy in Sussex and the building in Aylesbury Street became redundant. It was used by the Paragon Steam Laundry until 2005 and it is now used as a garage. The only evidence of the Aylesbury Dairy Company in St Petersburg Place are the plaster cows' heads built into the corner walls above the windows but the building in Aylesbury Street, Swindon, which is grade 2 listed, is still very clear to see.

But why The Aylesbury Dairy Company Champagne Tap?

A champagne tap is a device that was developed in Victorian and Edwardian times to allow a glass of champagne to be released from a

bottle without having to remove the cork thus retaining the fizz over a period of many days. Champagne was thought to have medicinal qualities and a glass a day was prescribed by doctors for their patients.

Champagne taps were also used to dispense the very fashionable Koumiss which was described as "a spirituous liquor made by Tartars from fermented mare's milk"! It was expensive and an alternative made from cow's milk was developed and made by the Aylesbury Dairy Company. It was known as Galazyene. So the champagne tap was used to dispense a type of Koumiss!

And what of the enterprising Buckinghamshire farmer Mr George Mander Allender from Quainton? He was born in Quainton in 1831, was married in London in 1860 and was murdered in Monte Carlo in 1893, but that is another story!

Richard Stevenson, Member of Aylesbury Vale u3a



Sally's Blog



to Watermead, particularly Barney a new working Spaniel puppy who arrived all the way from Scotland from my breeder. (They moved to South Ayrshire a while ago and I haven't seen Debbie and Alan for a long time – I used to like staying with them and my Wilanorah Spaniel family). Anyway, Barney has settled in well and is suitably cheeky. Welcome. Some of my Watermead doggie friends have, sadly, passed away over recent months and I am so sorry for this. I hope that your humans are able to remember your best bits and still smile when thinking about you.

Firework night was a bit of a trial to us. Some people continued to let off fireworks quite late. Weren't the bangs loud? I don't mind them but I know that many dogs do. If you are going to let off fireworks, please let your neighbours know in advance then they can help their dogs to get through it. They honestly are terrified, it's so frightening for them.

While on the topic of scared, please watch it if you are cycling on pavements. Once again I have been told by others and have seen myself that some cyclists are not giving way to pedestrians. Those with dogs,

buggies etc, and elderly people can't jump out of the way. You must, please, give way and just wait for pedestrians to pass.

I am not sure what's happening this Christmas. In common with most families ours is waiting to hear what will be allowed. I hope you all get a vaccination soon and life can return to nearer normal. The important thing though is to keep safe. Please do, as us dogs need you so much!

Happy Christmas from Sally and her pals.



Relaxing with nothing else to do

This year is very difficult for dogs. We can't say we've actually been anywhere very exciting.

The longest trip I've been on was to Waddesdon where we walked all the way up to the Manor, walked back via the Stables where my humans had a sandwich and then walked back to the car park. Exciting? No! Watermead dogs have been well behaved. We have maintained our distance in order to keep our humans safe and not too near one another. We have reminded them to pick up after us and tried our very best to be amusing and keep them happy. There is no doubt, apparently, that having a dog is good for you, but I would say that, wouldn't I?

We have welcomed some new residents

Watermead schoolboy sails into the record books

Watermead resident, 15-year-old Timothy Long, has become the youngest person to sail solo around Britain. He returned to a triumphant welcome in Hamble, Southampton, on 1st October, 11 weeks after setting off on his 1,600 nautical mile voyage. Timothy sailed alone on "Alchemy" his 28ft Hunter Impala, covering an average of 50 miles per day, but with several much longer passages of up to 100 miles, often sailing through the night and sleeping for no more than 15 minutes at a time. We caught up with him when he returned home to find out more about his epic adventure.

What does it feel like to be back on dry land?

Well, it's not very dry around Watermead at the moment, that's for sure! I miss being on Alchemy but hope to be back on the water soon.

What inspired you to take on this Round Britain challenge?

The main driver was my love for sailing, which began when I was 9 years old. My first experience was in a dinghy on a freezing lake in the middle of a thunderstorm. It didn't put me off, though! I went onto larger boats and since then, my love of the sport has grown more and more. A couple of years ago, I decided I wanted a challenge and adventure that would push me to find new limits... and that's how I decided to go around Britain. I was also inspired by Ellen MacArthur's account of her trip around Britain 25 years ago, which started her sailing career.

What was the most difficult part of the trip?

Firstly, getting to start it at all! My boat had been due to go into the water the day after lockdown, and then I missed out on the training I had planned through April, May and June. Once the restrictions were lifted, it was a mad rush to get the boat ready for my trip, with a new mainsail, electronics, safety equipment and wind turbines that needed to be fitted. In the end I only had 7 days' sailing practice on her before I set off on 16th July, so it was a vertical learning curve!

During the trip itself, the most testing passages were down the West Coast. We were held up a lot because of all the storms in August and September, and the weather was very unpredictable. On the leg from Troon to Stranraer we set off with a forecast for a steady force 5, which quickly rose to a force 6-7, with gusts of over 30 knots. I couldn't turn back into the wind so had to carry on in those conditions for 10 hours. It was a big learning experience, to say the least! Later on, I had a long passage across the Bristol Channel from Milford Haven in South Wales to Padstow in Cornwall, all in thick fog. I set off at midnight and had expected the fog to lift in the morning, but it stuck around for the whole day. I couldn't see more than a couple of boat lengths ahead for

17 hours, which was really testing.

And what about the high points?

Oh, there were so many! Those rare moments when the boat was going in the right direction at the right speed, with an incredible sunrise or sunset thrown in. It was just me and the boat and nothing else around. I also saw some spectacular scenery, and beautiful wildlife. I was frequently accompanied by pods of dolphins, as well as seeing seals, puffins and other birds, and even a pilot whale. That really lifts you when you are out there alone.

Another real highlight of the trip was the amazing people I met along the way. People all around Britain were so kind and welcoming, there were those who made me cakes or invited me to eat with them, marina and harbour staff who were really helpful, and fellow sailors who shared their local knowledge and offered me advice – including the legendary David Scott-Cowper who has sailed around the world six times!

Who has been your biggest inspiration in sailing?

Dame Ellen MacArthur has always been a huge inspiration to me. I read her books when I was 11 years old, and was amazed at what she achieved – coming second in the Vendee Globe (a non-stop round the world yacht race) at the age of 25, then breaking the world record for the fastest solo circumnavigation of the globe, all before she was 30!

Why did you choose to fundraise for the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust?

I found out about the Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust (EMCT) charity from reading her books. They do amazing work with young people of a similar age to me (8-24) to rebuild their confidence after cancer treatment, through sailing and outdoor adventure. The experience of being together on a boat can be a real turning point for people who have been through the worst of times. Being away from home in a different environment enables them to do things they would never have dreamed of and make friends with others who have had similar experiences, so they stop feeling like the 'only one'.

When I was 12, I decided I wanted to help with the EMCT in any way I could, cleaning the boats, whatever. I eventually plucked up the courage to write to Dame Ellen to ask if I could volunteer with them but, unfortunately, I was too young. However, I was taken aback when shortly afterwards, out of the blue, I received a copy of her book 'Full Circle' and an Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust baseball cap, both signed by Ellen with the words "Go for it!"

So, when I set up my Round Britain 2020 project, EMCT was the obvious choice of charity to support. So far, we've raised over £11,000, and there's still time to donate!

So, what are your plans for the future?

Well, firstly, I have to do my GCSEs next summer! After that, who knows? An Atlantic crossing looks fun, and ultimately, I'd like to make a career in sailing, so this is just the start.

Dame Ellen herself came to meet Timothy when he stopped in the Isle of Wight on the day before the finish of his Round Britain 2020 challenge. Ellen said: "It is an incredible achievement for anyone to sail single-handed around Britain, but to do it at 15 really is something else. While Timothy will always have the personal satisfaction of that achievement, the legacy of what he's done will be even more far-reaching in terms of helping to change the lives of young people in recovery from cancer. I send Timothy my warmest congratulations and thank him on behalf of every young person the Trust supports."

To support Timothy go to www.justgiving.com/fundraising/roundbritain2020 You can read more about Timothy's trip on his Facebook page @roundbritain2020



Above: Ellen MacArthur Cancer Trust



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Autumn Adventures

Footsteps Pre-School Watermead

With the fall of leaves, cooler days and change in season comes an amazing array of colour, imagination, activity and opportunity to learn, play and explore! We have been really enjoying exploring all the themes of Autumn at Footsteps Watermead, and have been busy filling our days with incredible activities that our amazing team have all helped put so much time and thought into.

Not only a huge thanks to our incredible staff but our parents too. We were overwhelmed with all the amazing harvest donations of food and toiletries from our families and we took these to the Vineyard church in Aylesbury to be distributed to those that need them via the local food banks.

We have been making the most of the season and enjoying some beautiful walks, jumping in piles of leaves, collecting conkers, sticks and leaves of gold, brown and green. Our children have created the most beautiful Autumn displays and even learnt some Autumn songs that the children performed for us.

We looked at Autumn vegetables – how they felt, and then practised our chef skills as we cut them up before cooking. The children were able to try butternut squash, carrot and sweet potato. The children's favourite cooking activity was our Autumn bread hedgehogs – these were lots of fun and tasty too!

With October also came the opportunity for lots of spooky themed fun. It is great time to develop activities around lots of wonderful books like Room on the Broom and explore characters all the children love. With pumpkins a plenty we are able to talk about weight and size, explore our senses, as well as do some frighteningly creative carvings!

As the nights draw in and we enter November, we are looking forward to exploring our light and dark topic, creating some bright and colourful firework themed artwork, as well as talking about keeping safe. We think it is now also safe to mention the C word! We are so excited about all our plans to bring some festive spirit to Footsteps this Christmas.

And whilst things may look a little different in terms of an audience – the Nativity show must and will go on!

For more information or to apply for a place:

www.footsteps-nursery.com/watermead

E: watermead@footsteps-nursery.co.uk T: 07743 871369



A message from Santa

Hi Boys and Girls!

I believe some of you are worried that I might not make it to your home this Christmas Eve due to the Covid virus. Please don't worry. I have clearance from every country and all my Reindeer and me are fit and well. Due to all the restrictions in the workplace some of my elves have not been able to help in my workshop. We also cannot get all the materials to produce all the toys you have asked for. We are working as hard as we can but some toys will not be ready.

If you do not get everything you asked for it is not because you have not been very good, in fact you have all behaved brilliantly during these tough times. It is because, unfortunately, I cannot have them ready by Christmas. Some of you may get what you asked for but, if your brother, sister or friend does not, please be kind to them as I know they will be disappointed. Everyone will get presents and, if it's not exactly what you asked for, I hope you understand.

So, stay safe, keep up the good work and I will see you all on Christmas Eve but you will be asleep so you won't see me.

Tell your mums and dads to share this with their friends so that every child knows I will be at their home for Christmas.

Love and best wishes, Santa Claus, North Pole

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Watermead Virtual Craft Fair 2020

Sadly, due to the Covid-19 situation, we will be unable to hold our traditional Christmas Fair this year. But we can offer local crafters, small business owners or charities who wish to advertise their winter/seasonal, handmade products the opportunity to do so via our Virtual Craft Fair.

Please send your photographs and a short description of your products along with your email/website address, so we can place a link for shoppers to contact you direct.

The Parish Council will feature your crafts on their website www.watermead-pc.gov.uk.

Please send your information including your website/email address and photographs to noreen.shardlow@watermead-pc.gov.uk



Watermead photography competition



Events & People Category, Dan Forder - Winner



Events & People Category, Phil Toler - Commended



30 Open Category, John Mitchell - Commended

Early in 2018, as a keen amateur photographer myself, I was impressed by the quality of the photos being posted on the "All about Watermead" Facebook page. So, I suggested to my colleagues on the Parish Council that we might organise a photo competition for prints with an exhibition of the entries to be held in the Autumn in the Parish Hall. I am pleased that this was agreed and it turned out to be a great success with so many entries that we ran out of wall space to display them.

Last year, having had the Village Hall walls replastered and painted, we invested in some high-quality display boards to show off prints to the best advantage and were all set for the Third Exhibition in October of this year when Covid 19 intervened. As the summer wore on it became increasingly clear that with an expected resurgence of the virus and the restrictions on social contact it would not be safe to hold an exhibition in the hall. So, at rather short notice we switched to a digital exhibition to be displayed online on the Parish council website.

The response from our community was again enthusiastic with nearly 80 entries. The judge for the competition for the second time was Ron Adams, a veteran local amateur photographer who, although he doesn't live in Watermead, can often be seen around the lakes with his camera.

The judging was "blind" with the names of the photographers being withheld until the verdict was delivered. Ron's first comment was that he found the quality of the entries "quite mind blowing" and had to do a lot of mulling before making his decision.

The most popular subjects on the Facebook page are those displaying our beautiful Watermead landscape and wildlife. This year we combined the two in a single 'Beautiful Watermead' category. The winner was **James Bates** with his photo of a swan rearing up which Ron commented was "a quality exposure capturing a good moment with humour". James was also overall winner in 2018 with another great shot of a swan taken on his phone. **Ness Gaeta** was 'Commended' also with a photo of swans on a misty morning which Ron commented showed "beautiful light and bags of atmosphere". Also 'Commended' entry was **Harps Chana** with her photo taken across the lake which Ron said showed "superb clarity and a wonderful skyscape".

This year we introduced a new category of 'Watermead People and Events'. Unfortunately, Covid prevented the events which were planned and so the entries in this group were fewer than hoped for. **Dan Forder** was the winner with his photo of the Sunday morning model sailors. Judge's comments were "good to concentrate focus on the yachts and great colours". **Phil Toler** was 'Commended' for his drone picture of the fair which Ron said was "an unusual shot



Winner of 'Open Category' & 'Overall Winner' - Dan Forder



'Open Category', Robert Fearnley - Commended

where you can wander round the photo with plenty to see".

'The Open Category' allows entries of any subject of the photographer's choosing. **John Mitchell's** black and white shot of his dog possibly taken in the Lake District was 'Commended' with the judge deeming it "a beautiful shot which shows that you don't always need colour". By contrast the other 'Commended' photo in this group was a full colour photo of a Great Crested Grebe and chicks "a lovely full on shot of the family" by **Robert Fearnley**. The winner of the Open Category was **Dan Forder's** photo of lightning over Watermead which was also judged to be the overall winner of the competition. Ron Adams commented "the photographer certainly knows his stuff and has captured a great moment in time".

Dan is a relative newcomer to Watermead and a keen observer of wildlife who can sometimes be seen around the lake with his large Digital SLR and an enormous camouflaged lens so I was astounded to learn that his winning photograph was in fact taken on his phone.

The Photography Competition and Exhibition is now an annual fixture in our calendar so I would encourage everyone to get snapping now for next year.

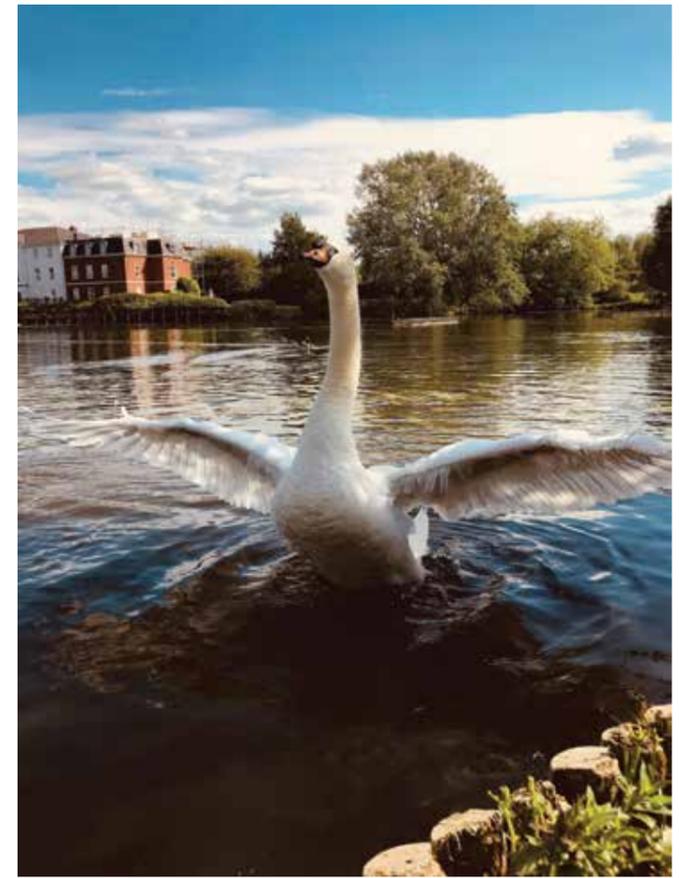
My thanks to all of the entrants, to the Parish council for supporting the event, and especially to Noreen Shardlow our Parish Clerk without whose tireless help I couldn't have managed. And lastly, of course, thanks to our judge Ron Adams for his work and comments.



'Beautiful Watermead Category', Vanessa Gaeta - Commended



'Beautiful Watermead Category', Harps Chana - Commended



'Beautiful Watermead Category', James Bates - Winner

Best Christmas

DECORATED HOUSE 2020

As Christmas approaches we hope that Watermead residents will join us in spreading the message of hope, peace and joy by decorating their houses and/or front gardens with decorations and lights.

Following on from previous years' success, we would like Watermead to be lit up like a Christmas tree and make us all feel the spirit of Christmas.

Our spirits too need to be lifted at the end of a very difficult year for many people.

For over a hundred years it has been the tradition to decorate our homes at Christmas time and this has extended to decorate the exteriors too. This includes gardens which some people fill with Christmassy and wintry scenes.

The Rules: Every home within Watermead will be eligible. You may nominate your favourite decorated house by sending an email to our Parish Clerk, at Noreen.shardlow@watermead-pc.gov.uk or posting a letter through the door of the village hall which is located in the Piazza between Avanti Hairdresser and the dentist. These nominations will be taken into consideration by the judges.

Judging will take place between Christmas and New Year. The winner will be announced on the Parish notice boards and on our website.

Prize: Bottle of Champagne.

A photo of the winner's decorated house and those of the runners up (subject to their permission) will be published in the Spring edition of the Village View along with their tips for success (if they have any!).