

# **OLD STRATFORD PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL NEWSLETTER**

## **Chairman's Report**

I would like to thank everyone who contributed to our village plan by completing the questionnaire and returning it. If you have not done so already there is still time whilst we go through the next stage. We are starting to record and analyse the information that you returned to us. As you will appreciate there is a lot of it and it will take some time!

There have not, yet, been any new major planning applications that will effect us. However, Developers seem to be making more applications Nationally in anticipation of the new National Planning Policy Framework coming into force.

We are still short of a couple of councillors. If you think that you may be interested why not come along to one of our meetings (on the second Tuesday every month) and see if you are interested. Why not come along anyway?

I will end with my usual plea to invite you to come along to our monthly meetings held on the second Tuesday in the month at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall to participate in our meetings.

Your Annual Open Meeting is on Tuesday 16th April commencing at 7.30pm (The Agenda is on the back page)

Richard Whittaker  
Chairman

**APRIL 2013**

## **Old Stratford Neighbourhood Watch**

Good News to report. The people who did the robbery at our Local shop, have been arrested and awaiting trial. They came from Milton Keynes so it was a joint effort between Thames Valley and Northants Police. The crime figures for the last 9 months are down on the same time last year, the only figures that were slightly up are for Theft from Motor Vehicles. Regarding this the Police have asked me to point out that there seems to be an increase in theft of catalytic converters, so if you have a garage park your car in it or park it to make it difficult to get at the catalytic converter. Should you see any suspect vehicles especially panel vans in the area please phone the description and number plate to 101 as soon as possible. We put a lot of effort into protecting our homes but sometimes we become a bit relaxed so here are a few reminders.

1. Keep house, shed and garage doors locked all the time
2. Never leave spare keys outside the house
3. Keep car locked at all times
4. Keep keys out of sight from windows and doors
5. If you are not sure don't open the door.

### **Useful numbers**

Police (non emergency) 101

Crimestoppers 0800 555 111 (you can phone and remain anonymous)

Neighbourhood Watch Jacki Ibell 01908 562677

If you see a suspicious incident or someone acting suspiciously, but don't consider it worth telling the police, then phone me 01908 562677, if I cannot deal with it myself then I'll know a man who can!

Please don't sit back and do nothing as this is how criminals get away so easily. Let's do our bit to keep Old Stratford and Passenham safe

### **Make Your Car a Phone Free Zone.**

Jacki Ibell Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator 01908 562677.

### **Old Stratford Craft Club**

Meets on Mondays 2—4.30pm in the Memorial Hall, Deanshanger Road. Everyone is welcomed

Old Stratford Craft Club will also be holding a **Bazaar on Saturday 20th of April at the Memorial Hall, from 11 till 4,**

The hall will be open for preparation from 10am and In addition to the usual things there will be a table top sale.  
Hiring of space will be £5.

Helpers on the day more than welcome

If interested please contact us, at 01908 265008,  
oldstratford@hotmail.com.

### **TADD (Towcester Area Door to Door)**

#### **Volunteer Drivers Wanted**

We are urgently looking for volunteer drivers prepared to give a few hours per week to help the local community by driving people to medical appointments.

Drivers are reimbursed 40p per mile to medical appointments.

Andy Thorpe

TADD: TEL. 01327 810300

Office Hours 9.00am to 1.00pm Monday to Friday

### **News from Old Stratford Primary School March 2013**

Life at Old Stratford Primary School is always very busy, but this year has, so far, proved to be busier than most. In September, our Harvest Festival celebrations coincided with our coffee morning in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support. We decided to support this charity as cancer has touched the lives of staff and parents of our school, as well as friends and neighbours of the school this year. Not only did we raise more than £700, we also welcomed many members of our local community for tea and cakes in the school hall.

Many former members of staff and some ex-pupils gathered for a special celebration lunch at school in October to bid a fond farewell to Margaret Jobling, who has worked at Old Stratford Primary School as a teaching assistant for 24 years. As a leaving present to the school, Margaret contributed to the purchase of a new set of class cups. A cup is awarded each term to a child in the class who stands out in terms of commitment to their learning, or who has been a loyal friend or positive role model for the rest of the class. Cups are awarded in a special assembly, attended by proud parents and family members.

We were delighted to be invited to sing at the Village Christmas Dinner held at the Community Centre in early December. About 40 children came along to perform extracts from this year's Theatre Club production of Peter Pan. Any of you who have been lucky enough to attend a Theatre Club performance at school cannot help but be amazed by the quality of the acting, singing, costumes and scenery. Peter Pan was certainly one of the very best and I am delighted to say that Tinkerbell managed to survive all three performances because, of course, we DO believe in fairies. In January we took a choir of nearly 60 pupils from Years 5 and 6, together with many of their parents, to a very special Young Voices concert at the O2 Arena in London. A real highlight of the event was to join with the Africa Children's Choir in singing the special

song they recorded with Gary Barlow to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee last summer; a life affirming moment for everyone who was there.

In January we also launched the school's Be The Best You Can Be Programme, which aims to use the legacy of last summer's Olympic and Paralympic Games in London to inspire, engage and empower our pupils to pursue and fulfil their dreams. We were delighted to welcome World Champion and Olympic Medallist Gail Emms to the school to launch the programme and she will be coming back to present every child with their medal at the end of this term.

Unfortunately the wet and snowy weather has curtailed some of our sports events this winter. We take every opportunity we can to compete against other schools in a range of sports including Football and Rugby, but we are still looking forward to taking part in Netball and Cross-Country events later this term. Who says that there is no competitive sport in primary schools? Despite the bad weather, we did manage to be one of the very few schools to stay open in the snow at the end of January. It was great to see the children pulling packed lunches and bookbags up the road in their sledges, but we were badly let down by the county's gritting policy, which left Mounthill Avenue and Willow Grove resembling an ice rink for 4 days. Unfortunately, our heating caused problems after the February holiday, necessitating the closure of the school for two days.

This month, we are delighted to have been invited to showcase the excellent art work taking place in the school with an exhibition, Images of India, at Milton Keynes Gallery. Year 4 and 5 pupils have worked with our in-house artist Nichola Clarke to look in detail at the patterns, textures and vibrant colours that permeate Indian culture, exploring traditional textiles and the imagery and themes in Indian art.

At the moment we are getting ready for the major internal re-furbishment of the school, which is starting at the beginning of

April. Work is due to continue throughout the summer, with completion at the beginning of September. Major faults have been detected in the building's original construction, which has left the school with leaking roofs and poor drainage. This will all be repaired, and at the same time, we will be having new ceilings, lighting, re-furbished toilets and complete internal re-decoration-to all intent and purposes a new school! We are not, however, changing the overall layout of the building or increasing its capacity. Once the repairs have been completed, we will be holding an open day for parents and local residents to come and see the improvements made to the educational environment of our school.

We are also working hard to ensure that our school grounds encourage children to become more aware of their environment and how to care for it. We are very lucky to have our school field with mixed native hedging, mature trees and spring bulbs-the snowdrops are looking really beautiful at the moment. The school is currently working towards its Eco-Schools Green Flag Award and we have recently planted an orchard, installed a potting shed and made a woodland walk. This term we are working with the Royal Horticultural Society to make further improvements. Our Early Years outdoor area has a small allotment, where we grow vegetables with the children. If any keen gardeners might be willing to volunteer a couple of hours a week to help the children develop their gardening skills, please do contact the school.

We try hard to be good neighbours, but a school site such as ours in the middle of a residential area can sometimes cause problems,

especially with parking. Please do not hesitate to contact the school if you have any concerns.

Gill Tween  
Headteacher  
Old Stratford Primary School

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### **Old Stratford Pre-School.**

For anyone new to Old Stratford, the Pre-School is a community pre-school run by a parental committee. The pre-school meets each day at Old Stratford Community Hall on Deanshanger Road. It accepts children aged 2 years until school entry.

The pre-school offers sessions 5 days a week and these can be full or half days.

Sessions are Breakfast club 8.00 till 8.30am, Morning session 8.30 till 11.30am, Lunch Club 11.30 till 12.00pm, Afternoon session 12.00 – 3.00pm, Full day 8.30 till 3.00pm. Each child must enrol for a minimum of two sessions per week although further sessions, lunch clubs or breakfast clubs can be arranged as availability allows.

Please visit our website for further details at  
**[www.oldstratford.preschool.co.uk](http://www.oldstratford.preschool.co.uk)** or  
**phone Dawn 01908 260 664**

So please support our pre-school – we are a charity and all funds raised all go towards improving the preschool.

**Our open day this year will be held on Saturday 22nd June 2013 at the Community Centre Old Stratford from 9am - 11am.**

### The Countryman

There have been many changes in the weather over the last twelve months with extreme wet conditions during the summer and autumn months and then snow over the past winter. The cold weather has also been prolonged and has been particularly hard on our small birds and wild life. A lot of the usual garden visitors have not been seen for some time; this may have been due to several factors. The long wet conditions during the previous breeding season may have caused some reduction in numbers, the long cold winter and an increase in raptors such as sparrow hawks may have influenced these small bird numbers. Another possibility could be the increase in magpies that have appeared to have moved into the village surroundings. Magpies are partial to small bird chicks especially when they have chicks to feed.

I was out walking along the banks of the river Great Ouse, just a few weeks ago, when I spotted a white egret walking along the bank of the water's edge. It has been a couple of years since I have seen or heard one of our most colourful birds in Britain, the Kingfisher, in days gone by I have fished the Ouse when sitting quietly a kingfisher has landed on my rod and checked out the fishing, he caught more than me. I actually caught sight of a kingfisher fly along the river and under the bridge around the river meadows. I have also noticed that there is a pair of cormorants on the nature reserve lakes, this is a sign that there are fish in the reserve lakes. It is also the time of the year when the migratory birds start to return to our area, the common terns are back on the reserve along with some of the little plovers and a few red shanks. It is a little early yet for another visitor to arrive and this is a strange visitor as its name suggests it is surprising that it can find the food it is named after, the oystercatcher; over the last four years five or six pairs of oystercatchers have been seen about the sand bars in the centre of the reserve lake and down at the sports ground in Stony Stratford, unusual to see this bird so far in land. It would suggest that there is the right type of food in this area for these birds to keep returning to breed as they are only here from May to

early August. I have not seen over the last few years any mink in the river and there does not seem to be much evidence of them about, as in the past. The small water bird population has increased as I have seen moorhens and the odd little grebe swimming about on the river; not seen in the past as these used to be tasty morsels for the mink, also they were partial to the odd young duck. I have actually seen a mink take a half grown duck from the water into the rushes at the water's edge and kill and eat it. Fortunately the mink appears to have declined, possibly due to trapping or hunting. This can only be good, as this is a creature not native to this country and only got introduced through animal activists releasing captive animals. It is good to see that the common buzzard population is still healthy and increasing each year, unfortunately I have not seen the red kite recently.

Well time to close and continue my walks in the countryside and watch for animals and birds that can be seen in this area, each season has its own stories to tell.

The Countryman

**WHALLEY'S APPRENTICING CHARITY**  
(Stony Stratford, Cosgrove & Old Stratford)

Applicants of 16 years and over, can claim up to a maximum of £100 towards Books and Equipment required for their chosen profession.

For more information or application form:  
please contact

Derek Everett the Parish Clerk on 01908 569053

### **Old Stratford Community Hall News.**

We would like to extend a big thank you to everyone who attended our Fireworks Display and Senior Citizens' Christmas Lunch last year, especially to those people who gave up their time to man stalls at the Fireworks Display and their Saturday afternoon to help with the Christmas Lunch. Thank you also to the Parish Council who help us each year with their very generous donation, without which we would struggle to hold these two events.

We are really enjoying holding our Senior Citizens' Monthly Afternoon Teas. For those of you who are yet to attend, we run this event on the last Friday of every month (except December), between 2pm and 4pm in the Memorial Hall. We serve hot drinks with savoury and sweet treats and it's a lovely way to keep in touch with your friends. If you have a friend/carer who is not a resident in the village, they are very welcome to come along and join you. Thank you to everyone who helps us with making cakes and sandwiches and serving the teas. Notices with dates are posted around the village and at the Community Hall. We would love to see more of you so why not come along for an hour or two, we're sure you will enjoy it!

For those of you with younger children, the new Mums and Toddlers group started in February – Tuesday mornings between 9.30am and 11.30am. This is open to anyone with newborns up to pre-school age and is a great way for children to socialise before moving on to pre-school and for parents, carers or child-minders to meet up with other adults. Please come along and support this new group.

And finally, before Christmas two virtually new bikes were left in the bushes at the Community Hall. These will be kept at the Hall until the end of March before we hand them over to the police, but if you or someone you know has had their bike lost/stolen, please ring Lesley on 01908 307461 and if you can give a suitable

description, the bikes are yours!

Don't forget the Hall is available for hiring for special occasions and discounted rates are given to village residents! We look forward to seeing you all soon,

Contact Leslie Peach on 01908 307461 for bookings and details  
[oldstratfordcommunityhall@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:oldstratfordcommunityhall@hotmail.co.uk)

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### **Old Stratford Young People helping poor areas of Malaysia**

2 young people from Old Stratford families are planning to go to Malaysia as part of the World challenge to support less well-off communities.

Jasmine Holloway and Emma York attend Elizabeth Woodville School at Deanshanger and have been given the opportunity to take part in the summer 2014 World Challenge. They will visit a poorer area of the country and help build part of their community and teach them new skills.

By doing this the young people will also gain new skills and the experience will help them in life experience and support their progress for going onto university. To take part in this project each person is required to raise £2000 for travel and accommodation.

The Parish Council and Parish Charity are supporting this and organised events will be held at the Community Centre to raise funds. A number of local businesses and organisation have also offered to help. If you would like to sponsor these young people or donate raffle prizes or have suggestions on how to raise funds please contact the parish council or Jasmine on 07766771673  
E-mail address: [j.holloway98@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:j.holloway98@hotmail.co.uk)

Please look out for posters advertising events

For more information go to [www.worldchallenge.co.uk](http://www.worldchallenge.co.uk)

**OLD STRATFORD RAINFALL**  
(Compiled by Syd Sharpe - resident)

The last time I wrote I believe I said DROUGHT, DROUGHT, DROUGHT, based on the fact that Old Stratford had no recorded rain from the first day of September 2009 until the 5th of October 2009. The drought in fact continued until April 2010 with just 0.35 of an inch during that period.

The year 2011 was also disappointing to those working the land (who'd be a gardener?) with only 19.95 inches for the whole year.

The year 2012 kept up the dry spell until April, then came what the BBC said was the wettest year for 100 years with a total of 36.80 inches in Old Stratford.

The previous highest rainfall being 35.55 inches in 2007. But with no national figures, it is hard to compare with the rest of the country, but it does seem we have been very fortunate compared with others.

The year 2012 we had:

|          |               |           |               |
|----------|---------------|-----------|---------------|
| January  | - 1.45 inches | July      | - 4.00 inches |
| February | - 0.65 inches | August    | - 2.55 inches |
| March    | - 0.75 inches | September | - 1.65 inches |
| April    | - 5.60 inches | October   | - 4.15 inches |
| May      | - 2.95 inches | November  | - 3.75 inches |
| June     | - 5.15 inches | December  | - 4.15 inches |

TOTAL = 36.80 inches

The total is the highest total in Old Stratford since 1991, when we first started to take records

### Highways issues

A reminder that **highway defects** such as pot holes, blocked drains and other highway defects can be reported to Street Doctor 0300 126 1000 (Option 4) or via the Northants County Council website ([www.northamptonshire.gov.uk](http://www.northamptonshire.gov.uk)).

**However**, the best course of action is to contact the Parish Clerk Derek Everett on 01908 569053 or via the website [www.oldstratford.org.uk](http://www.oldstratford.org.uk) who will do it for you and can keep tabs on repairs or works required on behalf of the Parish Council. This also applies to any **street lighting** defects.

**Dog Fouling Continues** to be a messy issue, especially on pavements and verges. The football field and areas around play areas are already designated 'poop-a-scoop' areas attracting heavier fixed penalty fines. As a dog owner myself I would like to think that everyone picks up after their dog (even on public rights of way across fields) but, I'm not that naive. In Oxfield Park can we at least keep it off the mown edges to the paths because children play there. Falcon Drive open space has now becoming a serious issue.

The Parish Council have new dog bins installed. You can also use the Litter bins (normally with a bin liner so if double wrapped there should be no excuse)

**Litter** The thorny issue of litter around the shop and the route to Kingsbrook School and other areas continues to attract adverse comments, even where we have installed new litter bins. With national campaigns to 'Keep Britain Tidy' a kindly word or thought could help, or show by example and make Old Stratford a more attractive place to live.

Derek M Everett MILCM  
Clerk

**Did you know your Community Hall offered  
all these clubs and activities?**

**Pre-school sessions - Every week day (term time)**

**Karate - Monday and Wednesday**

**Mums & Toddlers group - Tuesday**

**Pilates - Tuesday**

**Zumba - Tuesday**

**Taekwondo - Tuesday**

**Tumble Tots - Thursday**

**Badminton - Thursday**

**Short Mat Bowls - Tuesday and Thursday**

**Football - Various**

**Slimming World & Weight Watchers - Wednesday and Thursday**

**For more information on timings, please pick up a leaflet in the  
foyer**

**or ring Lesley Peach on 01908 307461.**

**Don't forget, you can also hire the hall for special occasions too.  
(special rates for Old Stratford**

## OLD STRATFORD PARISH COUNCIL

**Chairman:**

**Richard Whittaker**    **Rectory Cottage, Passenham**                    **567895**

**Vice Chairman:**

**Tony Pateman**                    **32 Mounthill Avenue**                    **567907**

**Council:**

**Ian Baxter**                    **6 Wharf Close**                    **260694**

**Bruce Clayton**                    **54 Chapmans Drive**                    **562778**

**Donald MacDonald**                    **61 Deanshanger Road**                    **562035**

**David Meadowcroft**                    **75 Deanshanger Road**                    **07793516875**

**Karen Morris**                    **89 Deanshanger Road**                    **07532161875**

**George Rogers**                    **26 Fegans Court, Stony Stratford**                    **262919**

**Susan Tait**                    **9 Willow Grove**                    **563182**

**Vacancy**

**Vacancy**

**Clerk:**

**Derek Everett**                    **10 Deanshanger Road**                    **569053**  
**(de@mk196aw.fsnet.co.uk)**

**District Councillor:**

**Mary Clarke**                    **12 Station Road, Blisworth**                    **07747 757524**  
**(mclarke@cognisco.com)**

**County Councillor:**

**Allen Walker**                    **17 Porters Close, Deanshanger**                    **260302**  
**(awalker@northamptonshire.go.uk)**

Old Stratford Council website : [www.oldstratford.org.uk](http://www.oldstratford.org.uk)

**OLD STRATFORD ANNUAL OPEN MEETING**  
**to be held in the Memorial Hall**  
**TUESDAY 16th APRIL 2013 AT 7.30PM**

**This is your chance to quiz Councillors on  
matters affecting Old Stratford**

**AGENDA**

- 1 Apologies**
- 2 Minutes of the 2012 AOM (previously displayed nb)**
- 3 Any Outstanding Matters (includes Development Issues & Allotments update)**
- 4 Petitions or Questions from Electors  
(required in writing to the clerk by 12 noon 16th April)**
- 5 Adoption of Accounts**
- 6 Report from Northamptonshire Police**
- 7. Report from NCC Highways**
- 8 Report from District Councillor**
- 9 Report from County Councillor**
- 10 Any Other Business**