

**OLD STRATFORD
PARISH COUNCIL
ANNUAL NEWSLETTER**

SAVE THE SWAN

photo

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APRIL 2015

Welcome to this edition of our Newsletter.

The allotments are on their way! However, there seems to be the Anglian Water project which has to be finished before the Black Horse field development begins. We have also negotiated an access to the school from the new development during school term.. We still hope that we will be able encourage an allotment management committee to establish itself with a view to manage them on behalf of the village. It is early days yet! But we would still like to hear from you if you are interested.

Both Mary Clarke and Allen Walker have tried to be supportive to the village and I offer our thanks to them. Mary Clarkes Saturday surgeries have been a great success.

The draft a village plan that we have produced, will be presented to you for formal adoption at the Annual Open Meeting. This will give us (the village) more involvement with planning issues in the future. (It is already on the village website)

I would also remind you that it is so important to the future of Old Stratford and Passenham that we are able to articulate your views to both SNC and NCC so we do need a strong council to do this and it is your council!

Finally I would like to offer my thanks on behalf of the village for the work that the councillors have done on your behalf and all the tireless help and support that our parish clerk, Derek Everett, has given us

I will end with my usual plea; I would like to ask you all to come along to our monthly meetings held on the second Tuesday in the month at 7.30pm in the Memorial Hall to participate, or just look and see what the Parish Council does on your behalf.

.
Richard Whittaker. Chairman

Old Stratford Craft Club

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

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

HELP US TO SAVE THE SWAN !

As many of you will know, Punch Taverns, the owners of The Swan pub in Old Stratford have put it up for sale. The Parish Council has secured a six-month reprieve, which prevents Punch from selling it during that time.

A newly-formed Swan Action Group, working together with the new Landlady and Landlord, Athena and Gary, is busy improving the pub's appearance inside and outside.

The Group is also looking at ways of securing financial backing for running The Swan as a Community Pub and Hub for the village. We would ask people living in Old Stratford to support us in trying to keep the pub open as a centre for Community activities and events.

If you wish, you can email us on : the-swan@outlook.com

A new website for the pub is being set up and will be launched soon. So we look forward to meeting you in The Swan and hearing your views and comments.

The Action Group is planning to offer Community Shares in The Swan to raise money towards buying the pub for the Community of Old Stratford - the village will then own The Swan.

A Proposal for this Share Offer will be presented at a village Public Meeting on 14th May - details to follow nearer the time.

Please feel free to ring any of the three Action Group members below if you wish to talk to us about the above.

Ray Smith - 01908 564815
Karen Morris - 07532161875
Alan Holloway - 01908 562761

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News from Old Stratford Primary School March 2015

You may have heard that I will be retiring from my post as head teacher of your wonderful village school on 31st August 2015 after 10 years at the helm.

It has been a joy and privilege to come to work every single day. Old Stratford children are bright, eager to learn, excited to take on new challenges and truly care for each other. Parents want to give their children the very best start in life, and work in partnership with the school to make this happen. Governors have played an integral part in school improvement by supporting the leadership team to make our shared strategic vision a reality.

Staff are truly committed to providing every child at your school with the very best education; their dedication to their profession and the children in their care is exemplary. The support they have given to the school and me personally during the last ten years is something that will stay with me always. I know I am biased, but Old Stratford Primary is very definitely a jewel in your village crown!

I have been lucky enough to travel extensively during the last ten years and seen the impact of education, or lack of it, on the lives of children and adults, especially in Africa and South East Asia. It has been my hope that one day I might be able to use my skills and experience to support improvements in education in the developing world.

With my 60th birthday in March of this year, it's now or never! I have decided to retire from my job at Old Stratford in August so that I can volunteer for an international organisation to provide educational management support in an economically developing country. With the support of staff, parents, governors and our local community, the school has gone from strength to strength during the last ten years, and will continue to do so in the future.

The school's governing body is in the process of appointing a new head teacher, and I know that my successor could not be head of a better school. This year has already been a very busy one for our school. We all work very hard to secure the very best academic achievement for all our pupils, with a special focus on Maths and Writing this year. We are also continuing the school tradition of providing high quality sports opportunities, and will have provided expert coaching in Soccer, Rugby, Ballroom Dancing, Cycling, Outdoor Education and Tennis this year. All 200 of our pupils took part in a house cross-country competition last week. Despite what you may have heard in the media, competitive sport is alive and well at Old Stratford Primary School! We also promote visual and performing arts at our school. In January all pupils in Years 5 and 6 sang in a concert at the O2 in London and our Year 4s currently have their Art Exhibition-A Walk Along The River-showing at Milton Keynes Gallery. Do go along to see it if you can.

We are always very happy to welcome visitors who would like to know more about their village school. Please contact me by phone or email if you would like to arrange a visit.

01908 267700

head@oldstratford.northants-ecl.gov.uk

You might also be interested to visit our school website:

www.oldstratfordschool.org.uk

Kind regards

Gill Tween

Headteacher

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** 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 6th June 2015 at the Community Centre Old Stratford from 9am - 11am.

The Countryman

Well here we are nearly at spring; winter has been reasonably kind, not only to us humans but also to our wild life also. Out and about I have seen the usual winter visitors such as the North American Redwing and few fieldfares. The geese have also been flying in their formations; but I do believe their numbers are down on other years, less Canada geese, I have seen a few more Greylag than normal. Greylag geese are less noisy in flight, they only honk very occasionally, alternately Canada geese honk throughout their flight.

After dark one evening I was standing in my back garden when this whistling noise started, it sounded like small chirpy whistles, I had difficulty in seeing the birds making the noise but I eventually sighted them they were widgeon flying over, not usually seen in built up areas. Then just after this the geese came over, most times ducks and geese will fly together, the ducks are normally just in front or just behind the geese.

The other Sunday morning I was visiting a neighbour and on his back lawn we both watched a green woodpecker it was piercing his lawn with its long beak and inserting its long tongue to search for ants. The bird carried on its probing for at least fifteen minutes; it must have to acquire a lot of ants to provide a lot of nourishment. Eventually the woodpecker was mobbed by a flock of jackdaws and woodpecker disappeared out over the hedge and across the fields, the woodpecker has been back since there must be a good few ants in that lawn. During the night, a couple of weeks ago, I was listening to two tawny owls and I am not sure if it was one or two little owls, there definitely was two tawny owls as they were doing their normal twit to woo this is when one owl calls to the other if there was only one owl the sound is more twit with no to woo.

The little owls screech at each other like little frightened children; In both cases the calls went on for some time, great to know that our owl population is still going strong.

Another creature of the night is the fox, foxes have become more humanised over the last 40 years, since villages and towns have expanded. The fox has adapted to urban life better than most, he finds food much easier and a safe place to live are easier to come by. When you are out and about, and you don't have to be out very late at night, you can readily see the local fox walking around Mounthill Avenue, he does not even have to search rubbish bags as people put out food for them. During November you can hear the dog foxes calling the vixens as the mating season starts and then at the end of February beginning of March you can hear the vixen calling the cubs, all these barks sound like little jack Russell terriers yapping, these sounds can all be heard out in the fields behind Mounthill Avenue, it will be interesting to see what happens to the foxes when the houses are built on the Blackhorse field.

Finally the last creature of the night for this time is the bat, normally can be seen flitting between the houses but this year I have not seen so many. Bats let you know that they are there with a single sharp pip type whistle. I think the bat comes out to feed when it is not too cold to hunt.

That's all for now.

The Countryman

Neighbourhood Watch Report

It looks like Summer is almost here so there are a few things I should remind you about, as most of us will be enjoying the Garden.

Sheds and Garages.

Sheds are easy targets. To secure the doors and windows invest in strong locks and key operated bolts. Garages Never leave a garage unlocked especially if it is connected to the house.

Garden

Store all ladders out of sight and lock all garden tools in the shed or garage. Don't make it easy for anybody to break in. Make sure your ladders are padlocked to a wall. Consider keeping hedged shrubbery below one metre high to maximise visibility from anyone Passing by. Installing PIR lights wherever there is access to doors and windows at the front and back of property is also a good idea.

Holidays

When a property is going to be empty for a night or more, speak to a trustworthy neighbour. Tell them how long you will be away and ask them to remove all mail from the letter box and if possible to park their car there for a few nights.

Have a lovely Summer.

PHONE SCAM ALERT.

There are several scams around where people have lost thousands of pounds. The Police and Banks will NEVER ask you for banking details or PIN number on the phone or on the doorstep, similarly they would never send a 'Courier' to collect bank cards or money. Any such occurrences should be reported by phoning 101. ***Please be aware of this.***

Jacki Ibell
Neighbourhood Watch 01908 562677

Passenham United Charities

Passenham United Charities exists to give small grants to local people who live in, or have connections with the parishes of Passenham, Deanshanger, Old Stratford and Puxley.

Grants can be given to any in need; they are most frequently given in the event of a funeral and to voluntary groups. The Trustees will also give grants to parents of schoolchildren for school trips and other expenses. This would normally be arranged through the School.

The Charities' income is quite small and so grants will normally be in the region of £50 though the Trustees will consider requests for higher amounts. The Charity is unable to assist in cases requiring on going support.

Anyone who thinks that they may qualify for a grant and wishes to apply should contact the following in complete confidence:

Rev Christopher Murray 01908 262371
Clerk to the Charity 01908 562035

Old Stratford Community Hall News.

Another year has passed and we are again extending our thanks to everyone who volunteered to help at our Fireworks Display and Senior Citizens' Christmas Party last year. We really do appreciate how much time you give up to help us at these two events. If anyone is interested in helping this year please let Lesley Peach know by calling the Hall on 01908 307461. Here's the dates for this year: Fireworks Display – Saturday 7th November and the Senior Citizens' Christmas Party – Saturday 12th December. More details to follow later in the year.

A huge thank you also to the Parish Council who have helped us again with their very generous yearly donation. Without this donation we would really struggle to hold these two events, so we are extremely grateful that they continue to support us.

Following our appeal last year for new members on our committee, in November we welcomed four new faces. Thank you for coming along and we hope to see you again at future meetings. If you are interested in joining us, please contact Lesley Peach for more details.

Our monthly Senior Citizen Afternoon Teas are still very popular and it's lovely to see everyone each month. Just a reminder, we meet on the last Friday of every month (except December) in the Memorial Hall on Deanshanger Road. You don't have to be a resident of Old Stratford, everyone is welcome – the more the merrier! There are lots of clubs and group activities available at the Hall so have a look in the foyer or on our page of the Parish Council website to see what we offer. And don't forget, the Hall is available for hire and discounted rates are given to village residents!

The Old Stratford Community Hall Committee

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).

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 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 again..

The Parish Council have dog bins installed and 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 Elizabeth Woodford 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
Parish 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

Pilates - Tuesday

Zumba - Tuesday

Taekwondo - Tuesday

Badminton - Thursday

Short Mat Bowls - Tuesday and Thursday

Slimming World - Wednesday

Weight Watchers - Thursday

Football -Various

**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:

Bruce Clayton **(Via the clerk)**
Alan Holloway **45 Willow Grove** **562761**
Jacki Ibell **9 Cosgrove Road** **562677**
Nicky Lawrence **11 Chapmans Drive** **07967756988**
Donald MacDonald **61 Deanshanger Road** **562035**
Karen Morris **95 Deanshanger Road** **07532161875**
Ray Smith **18 Deanshanger Road** **564815**
Vacancy **{ both vacancies to be filled after**
Vacancy **{ the May elections**

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.gov.uk)

Old Stratford Council website : www.oldstratford.org.uk

**OLD STRATFORD ANNUAL OPEN MEETING
to be held in the Memorial Hall
TUESDAY 21st APRIL 2015 AT 7.30PM**

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

AGENDA

- 1. Apologies**
- 2. Minutes of the 2014 AOM (previously displayed nb)**
- 3. Any Outstanding Matters**
(The Swan, Bridge Stores, Blackhorse Field housing
and other development updates)
- 4. Petitions or Questions from Electors**
(required in writing to the clerk by 12 noon 21st April)
- 5. Presentation of Parish Plan**
- 6. Adoption of Accounts**
- 7. Report from Northamptonshire Police**
- 8. Report from NCC Highways**
- 9. Report from District Councillor**
- 10. Report from County Councillor**
- 11 Any Other Business**