

Tidmarsh with Sulham Parish Magazine

WINTER 2021

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Welcome to the first issue of the magazine in 2021. We have just heard that we will go into a full lockdown (to be reviewed on the 15th February) so this new year has not got off to the best of starts. However, I think most of us expected this to happen and if everyone abides by the rules and once the vaccine is rolled out, we can hopefully expect an improvement on the uncertainty and restrictions of 2020. No doubt we all know somebody who has been lost directly or indirectly due to COVID and that makes looking back on 2020 even harder. On the positive side, I have loved the Coronavirus WhatsApp group which really has brought so many people together and I hope it continues eventually perhaps renamed as 'Neighbours Support Group'? Gillian Alderton has looked back over the various 'chats' on the Group and has listed them as a reminder – see page 6.

Over the new year, Pangbourne meadow was flooded as were parts of Purley. Given what we have experienced in previous years after heavy rainfall – Sulham & Tidmarsh seem to weather this well which I am sure is partly due to the clearing of the weed from the streams, ditches and stretches of the river Pang by a group from The Mill and Shelton Farm. Recently, I have encountered representatives of the Environment Agency taking samples from the ditches and Pang and they also stressed how important it is to keep these free of weed and plants. We will certainly be tackling our ditches again once the weather warms up a bit and the ground is not so soft.

We have managed to keep this magazine going for another year despite not much happening to write about in the village in the way of events. No Quiz nights or lunches or coffee mornings but I have seen more people and met a number of new residents because I have been out and about more on walks and of course, when delivering the magazine. For the magazine to be an interesting read, I do rely on contributions so please have a think if you are able to write a piece for inclusion, however short (or long). Many of you have lived in the villages for a number of years and I am sure you have some history you can share. And, whilst you are out on your walks, look out for a great photo opportunity which could be used for the front cover – most of the photographs feature in the magazine are taken on a 'phone camera.

Talking of walks, I have been alerted to a series of local walks beginning and ending in Whitchurch on Thames. Do visit whitchurchonthames.com and click on 'local walks' to download and enjoy.

By the time the Spring issue rolls around I hope we will have all had the vaccine and life, as we used to know it, will be back to 'more normal'.

Finally, can I wish Dorothy Pickering (who coordinates the local information and emails us all to keep us up to date) a very speedy recovery and return home.

A very happy and COVID free 2021 to you all!

Jenny Cope, Editor (jenny@candcsystems.co.uk, Tel: 0774 777 5900)



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The Parish Council is pleased to welcome Solvej Biddle to the Parish Council. Solvej was co-opted at the Council's November meeting and she lives in Tidmarsh. The Council were also pleased to be able to offer Karen Fountaine an honorary role which enables Karen to take part in Council meetings without the ability to vote on matters. This role has previously been held by two of the current Councillors.

New gates to replace stiles

The Parish Council have commissioned contractors to install new metal gates in three locations on the recreational walking route around Sulham. The gates will replace stiles near St Nicholas Church on footpath Sulham/12/1 as it joins the bridleway, at the northern end of Sulham/5/1 as you leave the road and further south on Sulham/5/1 at the field boundary alongside Moor Copse.

This project has been funded by money the Parish Council holds from recent building developments in the area (known as section 106 or more recently CIL funds). The Council is always open to suggestions on projects that would benefit from funding. There are a number of criteria but if you have an idea please contact the Parish Clerk.

Monthly meetings

The next Full Council meeting will be held on 13th January 2021 at 8pm via Zoom. The Council has recently decided to hold monthly meetings, throughout 2021 these will be held on the second Wednesday of the month.

The public are always welcome to attend Council meetings. Please contact the Parish Clerk or visit www.tidmarshwithsulham.co.uk/pc.htm for details of how to join the meeting.

Contacting the Parish Council

Residents are welcome to contact the Parish Clerk (details below) or to directly approach a Councillor.

Jonathan Pearson (chairman): chairman@tidmarshwithsulham.co.uk

Steven Webb (vice chairman): s.webb@tidmarshwithsulham.co.uk

Solvej Biddle: s.biddle@tidmarshwithsulham.co.uk

Jon Chishick: j.chishick@tidmarshwithsulham.co.uk

Sima Elliot: s.elliott@tidmarshwithsulham.co.uk

Andrew Madden: a.madden@tidmarshwithsulham.co.uk

Parish Clerk, Jennie Currie, clerk@tidmarshwithsulham.co.uk, 01635 580190

CORONAVIRUS WHATSAPP GROUP

SOME CORONAVIRUS SUPPORT WHATSAPP GROUP HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2020

Recommendations/advice requests:

- Decorator
- Boiler
- Logs
- Recycling
- Carpet fitter
- Gialclear
- Manure
- Carpet cleaner
- Rubbish collection
- Plumber
- Tree surgeon

Neighbourly offers:

Greyhound takeaways. Use of tennis court, delivery of manure, plant sharing, bread making, sour dough starter sharing, flour delivery, shopping. Prescription collections, video clips to make us smile, church zoom services, plus many, many more!

Moments in time:

- NHS clap – coach horn tunes by the Tidmarsh Tootler and the Old School Bell Ringer.
- Stolen car chase in Tidmarsh
- Motorbikes in the woods
- Barefoot runner ‘man in pants’ in Sulham Woods
- New Kitty at North Riding
- New puppy at Step Up
- Bare chested tree swinger in Sulham woods
- Deer chasing men on bikes
- Patrick’s drone footage of our beautiful valley.
- Parish magazine – thank you Jenny.
- Neighbourhood watch – thank you Dorothy.
- VE day celebrations
- Outdoor book club in a tent and round a camp fire.
- Camper van man!
- Water meadow campers
- Power cut

Compiled by Gillian Alderton

Sadly St Nicholas Church remains closed for the foreseeable future but the community remains strong. Churchyard tidy took place in October with a small team clearing leaves and sharing tea and cake afterwards.

A lovely lit Christmas tree was in place throughout December with beautiful posters telling the Christmas story adorning the gate by Mark Littledale.

If you would like to join in with Zoom services from St James please contact: office.ptschurches@gmail.com

Gillian Alderton



*Volunteers for the
St Nicholas Church tidy up*

A.B.

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In 2020 Book Club has carried on remotely with a couple of socially distanced meetings and in members gardens.

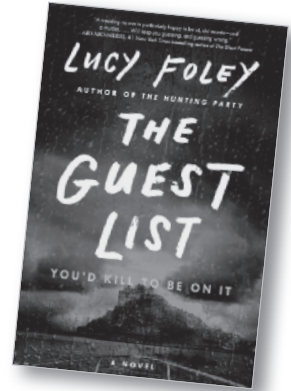
Review of THE GUEST LIST By Lucy Foley

On an island off the windswept Irish coast, guests gather for the wedding of the year – the marriage of Jules Keegan and Will Slater.

The wedding cake has barely been cut when one of the guests is found dead. And as a storm unleashes its fury on the island, everyone is trapped.

All have a secret. All have a motive. One guest won't leave this wedding alive . . .

Everyone in book club enjoyed this easy but gripping read. If you like an Agatha Christie novel you'll love this!



Next read – HAMNET by Maggie O'Farrell

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SOWING THE SEEDS FOR A FLOURISHING FUTURE

What a joy to have school feeling relatively normal again! All our pupils and staff returned from the summer break re-invigorated and keen to get back to learning and we have been fortunate to keep the whole school open for the entire term. Our 18 new children in Mrs Sheppard's Foundation Stage class have started their school careers brilliantly; they come in full of smiles and settle quickly to activities.



Unfortunately our new way of working means that we can welcome very few people into school. We were however lucky to be able to welcome Mr Richard Benyon to our outside classroom where he met with the Year 5/6 class to find out what their ideas were for making our world a healthier place for all. Many ideas came from the restrictions put on people through the lockdown period, for example limiting air travel. Mr Benyon explained how laws were made and how long it takes for changes to environmental laws to start having an impact. He also gave some suggestions about how the pupils could pass their ideas onto the Government.

Year 5/6 also held an 'evacuation day' to start their World War II topic. Pupils came dressed up in suitable clothing, made identity cards and evacuee tags, carried gas mark boxes. At one point they were all lined up outside the hall building and 'chosen' by staff who pretended to be local residents. The children loved the day and it made the whole experience feel very real for them.



Year 6 pupils had two days of Bikeability training with a coach from West Berkshire Council. They learned how to ride their bikes safely and confidently on the road; this means that when they move to secondary school they may be able to travel there independently.

Sadly, we couldn't hold our usual Harvest Festival in church but we did team up with the congregation from St Mark's to collect donations for CIRDIC. We still aren't able to have whole school assemblies so we continue to have daily acts of worship online . . . some of our House Captains are now helping Mrs Latimer to prepare these.

Year 1 and 2 visited Englefield's 5 a Day Market Garden. They learned how to look after our world



in some very simple ways: they made bird feeders, wormeries and learned what is in compost by playing a worm game.

We held two Open Days for prospective new parents; these were carried out in a Covid-secure manner in our school hall. We were delighted to welcome these parents to our school and hope we were able to show them enough to reassure them that our school is the right choice for them.

Our Year 5 pupils were due to spend three days at Rushall Farm to develop their self-confidence, their leadership skills and to strengthen their support for each other. Sadly this had to be postponed until January but we hope we will then be able to enjoy some crisp, winter days in the woods.

One thing we have noticed is that we are all feeling a little jaded as we don't have the usual things to look forward to. For this reason, we are making sure we plan in some fun activities to keep us all going. One of these events was Children in Need Day. Everyone came into school in 'Wacky wear' and we sold Pudsey merchandise which was very popular; all of the children either made or decorated a spotty biscuit or cake. Our House Captains organised pupils finally meeting the House Captains and the rest of their House group.



We are now nearing the end of term and have some special activities planned for the pupils. Sadly the parents won't be able to be involved this year but we will be sending home videos of carol-singing and the Key Stage One Nativity for them to enjoy at home. We have a fun Christmas Fayre to look forward to followed by class parties and an online pantomime; these events combined with our Christmas lunch and Christmas jumper day should make it a Christmas to remember.

We feel it is important that our pupils understand the value of giving so we have been collecting food, gifts and clothing for the New Beginnings charity and the Reading Food Bank. Thank you to everyone who contributed.

Hilary Latimer, Head Teacher





Moor Copse is a BBOWT managed nature reserve that forms part of the Sulham and Tidmarsh Woods and Meadows Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI). Fringing the beautiful River Pang,

this ancient woodland is a place of character, variety and great beauty. The wetter parts of the woodland are dominated by alder and willows, with the drier parts of the site, traditionally managed as coppice woodland, are comprised of hazel understorey with ash and oak standards. At Moor Copse, and more generally throughout Berkshire, we have seen a rapid advance in the spread of ash dieback (*Chalara*) with many of our nature reserves now having trees with quite advanced stages of the fungal disease.

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Ash dieback was first noted in Berkshire in 2012 and since then has spread rapidly across the country. The fungal disease is spread over 10's of miles by windblown spores and so there has been no way in halting its spread.

The disease causes dieback in the crown of the tree and is usually fatal. The early signs of dieback in the crown of the tree, means it is unable to put on the late hardwood growth which is essential to maintain its structural integrity. This means that trees with ash dieback have a high level of weakness in the canopy which in turn means that they are very susceptible to shedding large limbs. The disease also makes trees more prone to attack from secondary pathogens such as honey fungus which rots the core wood and roots of the tree and makes them extremely unstable.

This winter at Moor Copse, BBOWT will be starting a programme of removing disease infected trees that have been highlighted as requiring work by our annual tree safety inspection. Only trees that pose a threat to users of the nature reserve and adjacent roads are being assessed for the disease. Many trees in areas where there is no risk to the public, will be left to die naturally and provide important habitat for wildlife. Where possible, we have opted to close a number of permissive footpaths that run through copses with especially high numbers of ash suffering from the disease.



Due to the high amount of affected ash at Moor Copse, we will be carrying out works in a phased approach over a number of years, with this winter works being focused along the boundary with the A340, and the high-risk trees along the footpath network. There will be some disruption to sites users whilst we are undertaking works, including temporary access restrictions to parts of the site. We appreciate your patience whilst undertaking these works.

Whilst some of the works to be undertaken may seem extreme, the loss of ash will provide an opportunity to improve the woodland structure, creating open space and diversify tree species composition, as well as there being a short term increase in dead wood resource, an important habitat for groups such as fungi and invertebrates. There will also be an increase in scrub as areas under ash regenerate and this should benefit species such as dormice and woodland birds.

If you would like to find out more please visit our website <https://www.bbowt.org.uk/nature-reserves/moor-copse> or contact Tom Hayward on tomhayward@bbowt.org.uk.

In these areas there will be a profusion of woodland specialist flora such as bluebells, primroses and wood anemone. An extensive network of rides will also help to provide sunlit strips within the heart of the woodland, so promoting the growth of woodland flowers. Supported by the abundance of flora within both the rides and coppice areas, Moor Copse will have a diverse butterfly population including woodland specialists such as the silver washed fritillary. The woodland areas will also support a range of woodland birds such as song thrush and great and green woodpecker.

Tom Hayward



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- Think about purchasing a Video Doorbell Camera – this will send the footage of anyone approaching your home, to your mobile phone.
- Keep valuables out of sight from doors and windows.
- Remember to mark your valuables using a UV pen and register them on the national property register at www.immobilise.com.

If you are leaving the house, you can deter burglars by making your home appear occupied:

- Double check that you have locked your windows and doors before leaving.
- Light up your living room using a timer switch. A TV simulator can also be used to make give the appearance of a TV screen being used.
- Invite a neighbour to park on your drive while you are away.

You can find more information on how to reduce the risk of becoming a victim of burglary by downloading your FREE Home Security Guide from the Thames Valley Police website: <https://www.thamesvalley.police.uk/police-forces/thames-valley-police/areas/advice/home-security-guide/>.

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These photographs were taken by John and Jane Butler while walking along the footpath in Tidmarsh Lane that links up to Bere Court Road.

The photos are of work taking place to cut back all the trees and hedging along the path, something that walkers, joggers and dog walkers have been hoping to have been done for some time now.

This footpath is a very well used village asset and the result of this work has cleared the area and opened up the light and made access along it a great improvement.

Gardening Jobs in January

- Prune Wisteria, cutting back summer side-shoots to two or three buds.
- Prune rose bushes to just above an outward-facing bud, remove crossing or dead branches.
- Clip old foliage from ornamental grasses to within a few centimetres of the ground.
- Cut down old stems of perennial plants like Sedum but be careful of any new growth.
- Remove old Hellebore leaves to make the emerging blooms more visible in early spring.
- Start chitting (sprouting) early potatoes – place in a bright cool frost-free place in egg box.
- Begin pruning your apple trees and pear trees, blackcurrant bushes, gooseberries and redcurrants but avoid very frosty periods.
- Leave plums, cherries and apricots unpruned until the summer as pruning now will make them prone to silver leaf infections.
- Avoid walking on your lawn when it is blanketed by heavy frost or snow, as this will damage it.
- Check Dahlia tubers in storage, remove any that are showing signs of rotting.

Gardening Jobs in February

- Prune overwintered fuchsias back to one or two buds on each shoot.
- On Winter Flowering Jasmine cut back previous years growth to 5cm from the old wood.
- Prune winter flowering shrubs such as Mahonia and Viburnum x bodnantense after flowering.
- Lift and divide snowdrops whilst still 'in the green' if you want to move propagate them.
- Plant Lilies and Allium bulbs. Sow vegetable seeds eg leeks, onions and celeriac under cover.
- Prepare vegetable seed beds by removing all weeds and forking in plenty of compost. Cover prepared soil with sheets of black plastic to keep it drier and warmer for spring planting.
- Cut autumn-fruiting raspberry canes to the ground to stimulate new canes. Trim summerfruiting raspberry canes that have grown beyond the top of their supports; cut just above a bud.
- Mulch fruit trees with well rotted manure or garden compost – avoid the trunk.
- Soak sweet pea seeds in tepid water overnight before planting them, to speed up germination.



Gardening Jobs in March

- Whatever you do in your garden, you must prepare the ground. It has to be reasonably drained, so if it is waterlogged dig in organic material and grit or sharp sand to improve drainage. Dig in a 5cm (or more) layer of compost or well rotted manure into your beds and a general purpose fertiliser such as chicken manure or fish, blood and bone. Most plants do not like poorly drained soil.
- Feed trees, shrubs and hedges with a slow-release fertiliser by lightly forking it into the soil surface. Identify whether your shrub is ericaceous (acid-loving) and get special fertiliser and compost e.g. blueberry.
- Plant summer-flowering bulbs such as Gladiolus, Lilies and Alliums. Lift and divide established perennial plants to improve their vigour and create new plants. Put plant supports in now so the plants grow up through them. Pot up begonia tubers that have new leaves.
- Deadhead daffodils as the flowers finish and let the foliage die back naturally.
- Towards the end of March plant your chitted early potatoes outside in the ground.
- Start sowing winter brassicas in a seed trays in a cold greenhouse.

Alan looks after gardens in the RG8 area

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Ecclesiastical

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Rector of Pangbourne with Tidmarsh and Sulham

Awaiting appointment

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rector@pangbournechurches.info

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Vanessa Saunders
Church office open
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Church Wardens for St James, Pangbourne; St Laurence, Tidmarsh; St Nicholas, Sulham

Jill Palfrey 0118 984 2698
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Government

MP for Reading West

Alok Sharma (Conservative) 0118 945 4881

Councillor for the Pangbourne Ward

Gareth Hurley (Conservative) 07891 508906

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Please email any items, including photographs, for the next edition of magazine to jenny@candcsystems.co.uk by 1 March 2021 at the latest.

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