

The Loop

October
2020

£1.00

The Loop - normal service resumed (in part)

October marks the resumption of home deliveries by volunteers. There are still some restrictions and delays in the system so please bear with us.

The change to email distribution in May (for people where St James's had an email address and permission to use it) was rather sudden and I know that some subscribers have had problems accessing their copies of The Loop. If you have missed us then please check your spam folder.

From October we will continue to send copies by email to people who have told us that they prefer this. We will deliver hard copies to everyone else.

If you receive a hard copy and would prefer email please let me know on loopeditor@gmail.com.

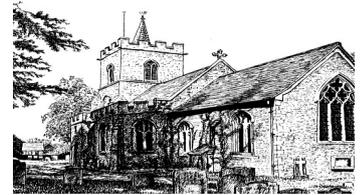
Jean Gambold



This Great Crested Newt juvenile made an appearance at this year's socially distanced (more accurately, socially isolated) pond dipping. See page 7 for more details.

Services at St James's

Services will be held at St James's on Sundays 4th and 18th October at 9.30am, assuming there are no further rule changes.



'Dine With Us' - call for volunteers

Have you got a few hours to spare, especially on Tuesdays or Thursdays? 'Dine With Us Community Larder' needs help sorting and selling food bank donations and fresh food from supermarkets. They are in Greyfriars.

Check out their Facebook page or phone Liz Watson 01234 345028 for more info.

Liz Watson

Biddenham Show

Normally this edition of The Loop would be full of stories and pictures from the Show. It would have been another glorious September day out but Covid-19 put paid to it.

The committee very much regret not being able to put on the Show this year and hope to be back in 2021.



Please take your clothes out of your wardrobe regularly, air them and allow them to stand in sunlight.

Recent studies have shown that clothes kept in wardrobes during lockdown will shrink.

If this has happened to your winter coats please save them for 'Wrap Up Biddenham', coming soon. See page 5.

'The Loop' is published by the Parish Church of St James as a service to the communities of Biddenham and Great Denham
The editor welcomes contributions from residents and friends via email to loopeditor@gmail.com

Letter from the Vicar



Dear All

The Anthem of the Covid-19 Pandemic has to be the song that was used by Vodaphone in its lockdown advertising campaign, 'Come Together' by the Beatles. Ironically, it was presented in a way that demonstrated how utterly isolated we were from one another. Every individual and every instrument was recorded in isolation according to distancing regulations, and then mixed electronically so that it sounded like a truly united performance; 'Come together right now, over me'.

Quite who the 'over me' was about, is unclear, though the Beatles were commissioned in 1969 to write it as a campaign song for the American Psychedelic politician Timothy Leary. The campaign came to an abrupt end when Leary was arrested and imprisoned for drug possession. John Lennon tried and tried to write coherent lyrics, but described what was eventually written as 'gobbledygook.'

'He wear no shoeshine
He got toe jam football
He got monkey finger
He shoot Coca-Cola
He say I know you, you know me
One thing I can tell you is
You got to be free
Come together, right now, over me.'

Despite the nonsense lyrics, this song has been covered by a number of performers including Michael Jackson, Tina Turner and Aerosmith. To me, what makes the song chilling are whispered lyrics that John Lennon used to accompany the iconic guitar and base riff at the start, 'Shoot me.' One wonders if those words had a subliminal impact on John Chapman, who put a bullet in John Lennon on the 8th December 1980 just a stone's throw away from the place you find the 'Imagine' memorial in New York central park.

Lennon was undoubtedly a talented and gifted songwriter and performer and it cannot be argued that his music has not had a profound impact on our culture. In the

same way, it would be impossible to calculate how many people have come together over him. It is alleged, however, that he had once said that he was more popular than Jesus, and this provoked a significant amount of protest by many religious groups. What Lennon actually said was;

'Christianity will go. It will vanish and shrink. I needn't argue about that; I'm right and I'll be proved right. We're more popular than Jesus now; I don't know which will go first - rock 'n' roll or Christianity. Jesus was all right but his disciples were thick and ordinary. It's them twisting it that ruins it for me.' (Evening Standard production; 'How a Beatle Lives,' 1966.)

Clearly Lennon's less than measured criticism was aimed at Christian believers with only a veiled acknowledgment of Jesus himself. 'Thick and ordinary,' however, is an unfair criticism. Jesus spoke to the hearts of the great and the small, and the Gospel teaches us the power of God's love being made perfect on the cross. Dying as a consequence of celebrity obsession is tragic but a very different thing, because Jesus died for the thick and the ordinary as well as the gifted and the talented. Yes Mr Lennon, he even died for you.

It seems that although Covid-19 clearly is not going to go away that quickly, the Churches are slowly beginning to come together again, and the reason they are coming together is over him, Jesus Christ. This is the time for the Church to awake, and return to its worship. For many of us it has been a longer winter of faith but although we are facing a physical Autumn, for our Churches here comes the sun. (I believe that is another song by the Beatles.)

For the foreseeable future, we are continuing our virtual online services. Please come together with us on our 11.00am online services, and physical church is also now an option.

God bless.

Eric

Don't forget the Foodbank IN THESE DIFFICULT TIMES THE NEED IS URGENT

You can find the latest list of items needed by Bedford food bank and details of how to make a financial donation at <https://bedford.foodbank.org.uk/give-help/donate-food/>

CORONAVIRUS SUPPORT NETWORK

Need local help? Ring 01234 815393 or email help@biddenham.org.uk.

Nick Sleep
Proprietor

N.A.Sleep Plumbing & Heating

7 Ison Close
Biddenham,
Beds MK40 4BH

Tel: 01234 959472

Mob: 07990 598154

Email: nicksleep@live.co.uk



The Parish Church of St James, serving Biddenham & Great Denham

Vicar	Rev Eric Lomax rev.ejlomax@gmail.com	Tel: 328452
Readers	Christopher Dawe Paul Fricker	Tel 363890 Tel 342843
Churchwardens	Laurie Hurn Hilary Hurn	Tel 364251 Tel 364251
Verger	Hilary Hurn	Tel 364251
Secretary	Jacqui Piper	Tel 356993
Treasurer	Michael Hurford	Tel 271746
Organist/Choirmaster	Graham Weeks	Tel 07552 052840
www.stjamesbiddenham.com		

Ivy Bees & Red Admirals

If you left your ivy to bloom, and didn't cut it all back, the lovely warm weather which we experienced in mid-September will have opened the flowers and enticed the Ivy Mining Bee (*Colletes hederæ*) to visit this rich nectar source.

These bees are often confused with wasps as they have black and yellow striped abdomens. The thorax, however, is bright ginger and very hairy and a good way to identify them. They are solitary, ground nesting bees. The first ones were found in Dorset in 2001 and they have been spreading slowly north since then and taken residence in Biddenham.



Another visitor to ivy flowers, as well as the buddleias, is the Red Admiral butterfly (*Vanessa atalanta*); (Val's drawing is above). Although some have become resident, they are mostly migrants that arrive in May or June and lay their eggs in nettles. They also appreciate rotten fruit – so it's a good excuse for not picking up all those fallen apples.

Val Fitzhugh

Peter's Picturehouse update

Thank you to all who responded to our request for feedback in last month's Loop.

We have decided that we need to wait to reopen Peter's Picturehouse in the Village Hall until Government restrictions have been eased. We continue to monitor the guidelines and look forward to showing our next film when we feel safe to be in a room full of people.

Rose Houghton

To The Children's Society Box Holders

Unfortunately, as a result of the Coronavirus outbreak there will be no October box collection this year. However, please continue your support and hopefully next year the boxes will be emptied!

In the mean time if any box holder wishes to make a donation for this year, this can be done by sending a cheque to the following address: The Children's Society, Supporter Care Team, 50 Banner Street, London, EC1Y 8ST.

Thank you very much.

Eloise Carter

R J GASCOYNE THE PLUMBING, HEATING AND GAS COMPANY

Boiler changes, system upgrades, bathrooms, fault finding, servicing, maintenance, gas safety & landlord certificates, repairs, all heating, plumbing, drainage and gas work undertaken.

All from a friendly, reliable, trustworthy and professional engineer.

Contact Ryan on
TEL: 07980 209587
or EMAIL



A L & G ABBOTT Funeral Directors

~ Established 1832 ~

WITH YOU WHEN IT MATTERS MOST

A small and independently owned funeral directors who are proud to have served the local community for over 180 years and will continue to do so with the highest standards of care, respect and dignity. We now offer a Bereavement Listening service to our families.

A L & G Abbott is run with family values at the very heart of the business.

- 24 Hour Personal Service
- Private Chapels of Rest
- Funeral Plans
- Home Arrangements



T: 01234 843222

150 Bedford Road, Kempston, Bedfordshire, MK42 8BH
www.abbott-funerals.co.uk support@abbott-funerals.co.uk

BEDFORDSHIRE *Virtual* Christmas Fair 2020

www.bedfordshirechristmasfair.org

Supporting
 **BritishRedCross**

Join our virtual shopping event between 14th and 28th November

Gifts, homewares, food, accessories and lots more!

Every purchase you make will support the Red Cross in its vital work. Please join us at:

www.bedfordshirechristmasfair.org

The British Red Cross is a charity registered in England and Wales (220949), Scotland (SC037738) and the Isle of Man (0752).



Cowslip Meadow update

The meadow has been cut, windrowed and baled by the contractor, with bales cleared on 18th September.

This is good news as we seek to manage this extensive meadow for wildlife. Removal of grass cover either via the stomachs of bovines or in our case by cutting and clearing, helps to reduce fertility and combats the spread of the more dominant grass species at the expense of more delicate herb and flower species.

The meadow is also a haven for small invertebrates such as grasshoppers and crickets of which there is a good population.

We are hoping to place a seat in a suitable spot. This has been mowed in a square so you can see where we are thinking to place it. So, watch out for an opportunity to contribute.

The meadow continues to prove popular with walkers and paths are cut for that purpose but users are free to walk in all parts.

Chris Haydn Jones



A wild flower walk in 2017

Andrew Charles

HAIRDRESSING LTD

In the heart of Bedford

Andrew Charles offers a high level of hair expertise and creativity.

Apart from our cutting expertise, the salon enjoys a long standing, strong reputation for colouring, which is something we are proud of.

Why not drop in and give yourself a boost, a different cut or a new colour.

**105A HIGH STREET, BEDFORD
TEL: 01234 325938**



**Annual General Meeting
Thursday 5th November 2020
8pm**

**Biddenham Village Hall
www.biddenhamvillagehall.org.uk**

The AGM will be taking place as normal in the Village Hall. Attendees will need to wear masks inside the Hall and all appropriate Covid measures will be in place. We welcome members of the public to the AGM and up to 18 spaces are available. We look forward to seeing you on 5th November.

We are pleased to say that some limited activities have restarted and Covid measures have been put in place. The Committee is open to hearing ideas about ways to improve the Hall. The Village Hall "belongs" to you, the residents of Biddenham, and the short AGM gives you a chance to hear about the management of the Hall and give your views. Please come along. If you can't make the meeting but have some bright ideas please contact any of the Committee or leave a message on the website.

The opportunity has arisen for someone to join the committee in the key role of Bookings Officer. If you are interested in joining us and would like to know more please get in touch via the website. We hope to hear from you.

Biddenham Village Hall Management Committee

Your spare winter coats required for 'Wrap Up Biddenham' - coming soon

As the seasons change and you're thinking of getting a new warm winter coat, please hold on to your old ones until next month. I am setting up a collection of winter coats for the homeless, and for women's shelters. Men's, women's and children's coats will all be welcome.

This idea has been running very successfully in London for 9 years. The campaign is launched during the first half of November with the aim of collecting, sorting and distributing the coats by mid-December.

They say, 'For people facing crisis, the impact of receiving a coat can go further than just keeping warm. The coats collected by Wrap Up London offer a real opportunity for positive change. When a person at risk makes contact with a charity to collect a coat they receive practical help from that organisation and have the opportunity to accept ongoing support to change their situation long-term.'

Coats donated to Wrap Up Biddenham will be distributed locally and recipient organisations are under strict conditions that no coats are subsequently sold; all have to be given to someone in need.

There will be more details next month but in the meantime please hold on to any warm coats you have no more use for.

Kirsty Lister

Café B...



As the current guidelines do not allow gatherings of more than 6 people, sadly Café B will have to remain closed for the time being.

We miss you all and as soon as things change we will be raring to go!



LOGS

est. 1981

Well Seasoned Hardwood
Quality Split Firewood
Delivered by the Load

Mob: 07929 793361

Tel: 01234 721086

Sourced from
sustainable woodland



Garden Care and Home Maintenance

All aspects of garden and home maintenance catered for, including:

Lawn maintenance, Hedge/Shrub trimming/pruning, Fencing, Paving and Patio Maintenance, Planting, Pond Maintenance.

Internal and external decorating. Flat Pack Assembly.

Local and reliable individual

No Job too small. Full Liability Insurance. Free Estimates.

Personal care for your Garden and Home

Tel: 01234 300683 Mob: 07790 493801

Email: mjp_gardenandhomecare@yahoo.com

SIMPLY TREE SERVICES



ALL ASPECTS OF TREE MAINTENANCE

TREE REMOVAL

ALL HEDGE WORK UNDERTAKEN

GARDEN CLEARANCE / MAINTENANCE

For a free estimate please call to arrange a visit

Call 01234 330796 / 07866 554673

email info@simplytreeservices.co.uk



Fully NPTC qualified staff and all work is covered by comprehensive public liability insurance



www.simplytreeservices.co.uk



OVAL LAW

Your local legal advisory firm

A new law firm run by Paul Hillier, a very experienced and responsive solicitor now working from his home office in Biddenham, offering a personal service for individuals and businesses on any legal issues.

Call 01234 860856

or email: info@ovallaw.co.uk

Authorised and Regulated by the Solicitors Regulation Authority No. 613473

www.ovallaw.co.uk

This month in the garden

I am writing this much earlier than usual, on the August Bank Holiday Monday, as I shall be away when the Loop deadline falls due. This allows me to round off my comments last month about the extremes of weather during August by noting that, for some parts of the country, this is likely to be the coldest August Bank Holiday on record. I hope things will have warmed up for my holiday.

Many of the jobs for this month will be done in preparation for next year. If you grow sweet peas this is a good time for sowing them to get early flowers and a long season. You do need to be able to grow them under glass but heating is not needed. Nicking the seed and soaking it overnight before sowing used to be recommended but the latest advice is that this is not necessary. Sweet peas do need a long root run so it is best to sow seeds individually in long containers; root trainers obtainable online or from garden centres are good and reusable but you can also use empty toilet rolls or tubes made from newspaper. When three or four pairs of leaves are growing well, nip out the top of the stem to encourage strong growth.

You will probably have harvested most vegetables by now so you can clear empty beds. If you are a fan of digging it's good to get the winter digging done before soil gets too wet but this year I have found that my first no-dig regime worked very well. It's difficult to know if this was the lack of digging or the generous layer of garden compost and a scattering of chicken pellets, or the weather, but in many cases I have never had such superb vegetables. Potatoes cropped generously and the savoy cabbages were huge, although the slugs are obviously enjoying them too. Even many of the onion sets which started off badly grew to a good size. The main disappointment was the French

beans and runner beans which went tough and developed beans very early; this was probably due to the very hot August weather.

Summer annual bedding will have done its job by now and can be replaced by winter bedding which will be available at nurseries and garden centres; winter pansies are a good choice and begonias are an alternative to disease-prone busy lizzies. Don't forget the nurseries which are often better value than garden centres and are often small, local businesses which it is good to support. You can still plant bulbs for spring and you may pick up bargains as the bulb season nears its end.

Early frosts are probably less likely now but are possible at any time in October. Tender plants which have been outside during the summer should be brought under cover. Common plants that this applies to are pelargonium (geraniums), fuschias (non-hardy ones) and chrysanthemums and many more exotic plants. We have a calamondin orange and a bouganvillea which have enjoyed a spell outside but which I hope we will have brought into the conservatory before the end of September. Incidentally, both of these plants had been in their containers for several years and were beginning to show signs of stress. We managed to get both out of their containers and repotted them in larger containers with John Innes No 3 compost and they have responded magnificently. We have high hopes of more home-made marmalade next year.

Apples and pears, probably due to heat and high winds,



have been dropping very early this year so there may not be much to be picked at the usual time of October. My fruit have suffered a lot from rot but clean-looking fruit should still be all right for storage. Put in a cool dark place either on racks, not touching each other, or in fruit boxes wrapped in newspaper. Check frequently for signs of rot and remove affected fruit.

If you have a pond this will need attention. Clear out as much dead vegetation and fallen leaves as possible, cut back taller plants and put a net over the pond to stop more leaves falling in. Leave a space somewhere for wild life to get in and out. Rake fallen leaves off lawns and store them in black plastic sacks to use as leaf-mould. If the leaves are dry add some water and stab the sack fairly generously with a garden fork to allow air. Put the sacks away out of sight for two or three years to break down to a fine crumbly compost.

Jeremy Arthern

THE FRIENDS OF ST JAMES,
BIDDENHAM
A registered charity raising funds for the fabric of St James church and barn

ZOOM QUIZ NIGHT

An online quiz to suit the whole
family
*All you need is a little general
knowledge, some inspired guesswork,
and a little bit of luck!*

*Saturday 24th
October*  *7:30 to 9 p.m.*

Free entry - but donations welcome to *The Friends of St James* by GoFundMe: www.bit.ly/StJamesQuiz
To register and for participation details, contact John Barkas at stjamesquiz@mail.com

CLEANING LADY

Already employed by several families in Biddenham and Great Denham, is available for more work.

(No pets)

References can be provided

Telephone 07463 519119



We mentioned last month that we were considering the best way to deal with the reeds encroaching into the pond reducing the area of clear water. We have now engaged with The Conservation Volunteers who will be arriving with a team of six people to clear approximately a third of the reeds, which will be done by hand. This work will take place over two days – Monday 26th and Thursday 29th October. The footpath will remain open from Gold Lane to the Church, but the reeds pulled from the water will be laid on the bank to allow them to dry and any creatures to make their way back to the water, before they are moved. There will be a considerable pile, so please bear with us while this very necessary work is undertaken. If this is successful, we will look to move a further third of reeds next year.

Although we have not been able to hold a family Pond Dip this summer, our expert, Chris Jones, who has been dipping the pond since 1986 has carried out the annual dip, to record the life sustained by our pond. What is remarkable is that, given a few animals like pond scorpions that turn up now and again, the overall results over the years are very consistent. The photographs are courtesy of Rev Eric Lomax.

The most numerous species recorded this year, is that of great crested newts, *Tritus Cristatus* in Latin sounding like a proud Roman! Chris's diary records them as being present in variable numbers every summer and 2020 is no exception and in fact it seems to be a bumper year for them.



Next are the water boatman rowing their way over the surface catching what they can grab to eat in the way of smaller invertebrates such as the pond skaters found on the surface.

Crawling around in the mud at the bottom mud were the usual dragon and damselfly larvae. This year they were all very small so maybe the larger ones have already been eaten by the many newts. Chris also found water hog lice and a few mayfly larvae.

The grazers of the pond should not be ignored and this year there were more ramshorn snails both greater and lesser varieties. The lesser when placed carefully and only for a short while under a microscope will exhibit a beating single heart chamber.

Chris was very pleased to find freshwater shrimps. There were only a few but they usually indicate reasonable purity and oxygen levels, which is a very good sign for the pond.

One new find for this year were many water beetles – these are carnivores feeding on the smaller invertebrates.

Thankfully, most pond inhabitants need only a shallow area of water in which to breed given that with drier conditions and less water run-off, the pond seems to be constantly teetering on the brink of drying up completely in the



summer months. Even a small amount of water ensures that the beating heart of our pond continues and ensures the survival of our local fauna year after year.

If you would like a full list of creatures that Chris caught, please email him at the address below, and he hopes to be back with family pond dipping next year.

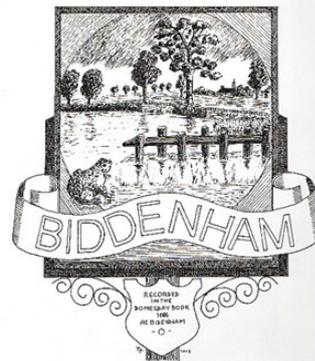
The Pond Team

Contact Details

Chris Jones	chrishj49@gmail.com
Paul Godden	pgodden@btinternet.com
Jane Knight	jane@80kLtd.co.uk
Cathy Eckett-Brown	ceckett@gmail.com
Sophie Applewhite-Rees	dansop1@googlemail.com

www.biddenhamvillagepond.wordpress.com
www.facebook.com/biddenhamvillagepond

The Biddenham Society



56th Annual Lunch and AGM SUNDAY 1st NOVEMBER 2020 12.30 pm in the Village Hall

In view of the current uncertainty regarding holding large gatherings in confined spaces in the immediate future, it has been decided to CANCEL the 2020 Annual Lunch and AGM.

Instead, the society will publish a short 12 month report on planning applications received, identify objections made, and give the decisions of the planning authority. Residents will be able to raise questions on any issue by e-mail. The review will be published in the November issue of 'The Loop', and posted on parish council noticeboards.

Celebrating and preserving Biddenham's beauty and heritage



FARM SHOP
Manor Farm, High Street, Stagsden, Beds
(01234) 822330
www.brownsfstagsden.co.uk

HOME REARED & LOCALLY PRODUCED
MEAT, POULTRY, GAME, SEASONAL VEGETABLES, EGGS & MILK.
HOMEMADE PREMIUM QUALITY BURGERS & SAUSAGES
REGIONAL CHEESES, HAM, PIES, JAMS, SAUCES, OILS & MORE
Tuesday - Thursday 9am – 5pm, Fri 9am – 6pm and Sat 9am -4pm

Biddenham Parish Council

The most recent Parish Council Meeting was held on Wednesday 9th September 2020 using the Zoom conferencing facility. Present were Parish Councillors Graham Bates, Stewart Briggs, Peter Chase (Chairman), Harry Fowler, Chris Gee, Alan Jacobs, Francia Slade and Joe Warren. Apologies were received from Councillor Krys Osuch. Borough Councillors Jon Gambold and Roger Rigby, Clerk Karen Cotton, three members of the public and "Great Denham action group" chair Brian Cox were also present.



Our New Clerk

We were pleased to welcome to the meeting Mrs Karen Cotton, who has been appointed as our Parish Clerk and "Responsible Financial Officer" as of 1st September. Karen lives in the village and has varied experience from both business and voluntary roles. She has already got her teeth into things by helping to progress re-opening of the children's play areas at the Pavilion, and she and I are now almost there with our annual audit process too.

Public Open Session

Following a summer in which trees, bushes and weeds seem to have grown more energetically than ever, a number of trees have been singled out for pruning to ensure people can still walk under them along footpaths. We were grateful to an attending member of the public who drew our attention to the cherry tree on Deep Spinney, near the junction with Gold Lane, next to the small electricity substation. The branches are now hanging down into the substation, as well as too low over the pavement, and the Clerk was asked to get this specimen pruned back as a priority.

Other trees in Darlow Drive, Main Road at Kings Corner and near the hospital will also be cut back.

Mr Glasper, who has helped procure and manage SID, our Speed Indication Device in Gold Lane, updated the meeting. He and others are also now an official speedwatch group. Borough recently refused them permission to monitor drivers on Bromham Road, so they have turned their attention to Biddenham Turn. After a fair amount of discussion, it was agreed we should also move SID to that road, and be ready to commission the Borough Council to carry out an official speed survey. Reports of speeding on Biddenham Turn suggest we will need to collect some hard evidence and then engage with the police to carry out enforcement activity. Watch this space!

Golf Course Action Group

Brian Cox, a resident of Great Denham, attended the meeting at our invitation to update us on the activities of the recently formed action group (of which he is chair) seeking to save the golf course. The sad fact is that golfing will definitely cease in its current form from mid-October, and the land repurposed by its owner, the Old Ford End Trust (aka Wingfields). Brian told us how residents, particularly in Great Denham, feel their properties are being devalued by this change, and many residents of both parishes are deeply concerned about the possibility of house-building ultimately taking place.

The action group is appealing to the landowner to reconsider their decision. In common with both Parish Councils, the group considers the idea that repurposing the clubhouse and the greenkeeper's compound will increase revenues from the land is highly doubtful. Is this simply a smokescreen for allowing the land to become "disused" and therefore easier to argue that it be used for housing? Brian explained the action group is suggesting retaining golfing as the land's purpose, with local volunteers offering to form a new not-for-profit golf club which would pay the landowner a reasonable, reliable rent.

I followed up Brian's comments with my own news about a call with the landowner's agents on 4th September

organised by our local MP, and which Mayor Dave Hodgson also attended. On that call, the agents agreed to regular monthly meetings with the two Parish Councils. We agreed that it is best for these to be separate from any communication between the agents and the action group, as we will want to adopt different tactics for influencing them. However, we will continue to communicate and coordinate with each other. The first such call is now scheduled for 2nd October.

If any Biddenham residents would like to help the action group, please email Brian at coxbrian0@googlemail.com.

COVID-19

At each meeting since April we have reviewed whether or not to step down our provision of Coronavirus support across the village. Sadly, the latest news is hardly allowing us to move in that direction. Parish Council meetings will continue to take place over Zoom, the helpline and email address will remain in place, and appeals for a new Covid health champion for Biddenham have gone out on the WhatsApp street groups (and someone has now volunteered for this role).

One piece of good news, however, is that we decided we could re-open the play areas at the Pavilion. A new inspection regime has been organised, and a formal risk assessment carried out. Obviously, people will use these areas at their own risk, and there are special guidelines on notices that have now been installed. The Borough Council are continually reviewing their own play area advice, and it was agreed that we will follow it.

Careful Driver Signs

Some of you may have spotted new "Biddenham welcomes careful drivers" signs near the edge of the village. We asked for these and they have been paid for by Bedford Borough Council. We are not entirely happy with where some of them have been put and may get them moved. But overall, these signs will "nudge" drivers to drive sensibly and help confirm Biddenham's identity as a separate place within the crowded Bedford urban sprawl.

You may also be interested to know that Bromham Bridge (which is two-thirds in Biddenham) is to become a 20mph zone. New signs, including a speed sensitive light up one, for this speed limit are to be installed imminently.

Finally, on traffic, watch out for the night closures of the A421 happening from now until 6th October. This will cause some disruption and long detours for traffic via our village.

'Tommy' and Remembrance

You may be wondering where Tommy went, just as we head towards November and Remembrance. Sadly, Tommy was vandalised and snapped off at the base. But our ever-resourceful Borough Councillor, Jon Gambold, knows someone who is even now repairing him and making him stronger than before. So, fear not, Tommy will return very soon.

Our next meeting – Important information

The Parish Council meets every second Wednesday of most months. We very much welcome hearing from residents, there being a public "open session" near the start for anyone wanting to say something. Please call in and let us know anything concerning you about our village, or just listen. The date for the next full meeting is **Wednesday 14th October at 7.30pm**.

To participate, please use a computer or tablet by accessing the Internet and carefully entering <https://zoom.us/j/524544164>

Alternatively, use a phone to ring **0208 080 6592** and then use its keypad to enter the code **524 544 164** followed by the # key. Calls are national rate, I'm afraid.

This information is provided on the village website at biddenham.org.uk.

Peter Chase
Chairman

Biddenham History Society

The Greens and the Three Tuns

When looking through some old photographs recently, I found one that a lady, Pat Burrell, gave me seven years ago. She had come over from Columbus, Ohio to stay with her relatives in Bedford and we met for lunch at the Three Tuns. The photo that she gave me is of her uncle, Bert Green, and her aunt, Alice, behind the bar at the Three Tuns when he was the landlord.



Mrs Green was the sister of Pat's father and she often stayed with the Greens when she was about ten years old as Pat was one of five children. She moved a lot as her father was in the army and the Greens had no children. A stay with the Greens gave her lots of attention, which she enjoyed. One year, she stayed for 8 weeks and went to the village school. She thought that Mrs Cork, Headmistress from May 1934 to 1951 was a very good teacher. She also had memories of playing marbles with the boy who lived next to the pub. She could recall the room she slept in and her aunt's lovely china cabinet.

Herbert (Bert) Green had an interesting life. His father, Dennis Green, had been landlord of the Three Tuns from 1920 to 1931. Herbert was one of three sons who all served in the First World War. His brother, Frank, was in the 150th Siege Battery, Royal Garrison Artillery and his brother, Arthur, was in the Royal Engineers.

Herbert came from a long standing Biddenham family with plenty of relatives. His grandfather, Sam Green, had been Parish Clerk for 50 years. Herbert was born in Biddenham and had his early education at the village school. He left school when he was 11, like many of his contemporaries. His first job was as a farm worker and he was paid 2s 6d a week. He then became a regular soldier in the Royal Garrison Artillery. During the First World War he fought in France and Salonika. When his father died in 1931, he returned to Biddenham and succeeded his father as the landlord of the Three Tuns.

Before he died in March 1953, he talked to members of the Women's Institute who wrote about him in the 1956 Scrapbook. He remembered when the beer was 2d a pint and the village gravel diggers consumed 10 gallons of beer between them every day. When the gravel works closed, it must have been a serious loss of business for the Three Tuns. Bert was a keen sportsman when younger: he played soccer and cricket and gained 2 county caps for hockey.

During the 1930s, there was a darts club at the Three Tuns and there was support for the cricket club. By the 1950s, the Three Tuns was selling not just beer but also mineral waters, biscuits, cigarettes and matches. The days of lunches and dinners and family visits to the pub were yet to come!

Kathy Fricker

GreenThumb
LAWN TREATMENT SERVICE



Want the
best lawn ever?

Prices from
£15*
per treatment

What we do:

As lawn care experts we apply bespoke, seasonal treatments to keep your lawn continually nourished and weed free. Whatever the size or condition, we ensure that every lawn receives the love and attention it deserves

Find out more and visit
greenthumb.co.uk/treatments



For a FREE lawn analysis
call 01234 709 345 or email bedford@greenthumb.co.uk

*Based on a lawn size up to 40m²

greenthumb.co.uk



W&H PEACOCK
AUCTIONEERS & VALUERS



Weekly Auctions

Visit the Bedford Auction Centre to enjoy
the excitement of a live auction.

Antique & Modern Furniture • Clocks • Books
Ceramics & Glassware • Pictures & Prints
Bicycles • Jewellery & Watches • Collectables
Garage Tools & Equipment • Household Electrical Items
Office Furniture & Equipment • Retail Products & Stock
Vehicles • Horticultural & Commercial Equipment
Building Materials • Garden Furniture & Effects

Eastcotts Park, Wallis Way, Bedford MK42 0PE
01234 266 366 peacockauction.co.uk

Not Amazing but quite Surprising

I keep bumping into the Reverend John Newton. Most recently when venturing into part of the graveyard of Olney Parish Church we hadn't entered before. There stood out amongst the memorials, even though placed at the back against the stone boundary wall, a simple monument of pale grey granite which demanded further investigation.

Drawing nearer we saw this was John and Mary Newton's monument. Not surprising, we thought, as John was curate here from 1764 to 1779, creating with William Cowper the celebrated hymnal, *Olney Hymns*, including *Amazing Grace* penned by John in 1772.

The monument was inscribed on all four sides. One recorded it had been erected by a large number of subscribers *who revere the memory and value the works of this eminent servant of God*. The epitaph inscribed on the rear read:

JOHN NEWTON CLERK
ONCE AN INFIDEL AND LIBERTINE
A SERVANT OF SLAVES IN AFRICA WAS
BY THE RICH MERCY OF OUR
LORD AND SAVIOUR JESUS CHRIST
PRESERVED RESTORED PARDONED
AND APPOINTED TO PREACH THE FAITH HE
HAD LONG LABOURED TO DESTROY
NEAR 16 YEARS AS CURATE OF THIS PARISH
AND 28 YEARS AS RECTOR OF St MARY
WOOLNOTH

Surprising though was that the couple hadn't always rested in the Olney churchyard, a third inscription revealing that their remains had been removed from the church of St Mary Woolnoth in the City of London and reinterred in Olney on 25 January 1893.

Which begged the question why were the couple's remains, after first being interred in London, brought to Olney some 85 years after John's death?

The present St Mary Woolnoth, with one of the more unusual towers of the City churches, situated on the corner of Lombard Street and King William Street, was designed by Nicholas Hawksmoor and opened in 1727.



This 1838 print shows the tower higher than the surrounding buildings, which isn't the case today. The large clock to the left is still a feature of the church and both are found in the poem *The Waste Land* by T S Eliot, who worked in the City and would have been familiar with City workers who, making their way to

work, were reminded by the clock of the time they should be at their desks:

*And each man fixed his eyes before his feet.
Flowed up the hill and down King William Street,
To where Saint Mary Woolnoth kept the hours,
With a dead sound on the final stroke of nine.*

The site has been used for worship for at least 2,000 years, and the present building is at least the third church on the site. The name Woolnoth could have come from benefactors from the 11th and 12th centuries, a Wulnoth or a Wulfnoth, or as others have suggested from links with the wool trade and a nearby wool mart.

The church contains a memorial to John Newton including a note that *The above Epitaph was written by the Deceased who directed it to be inscribed on a plain Marble Tablet*. The first eight lines on the rear of the Olney monument, which is Grade II listed, are taken from that epitaph.

William Wilberforce worshipped at the church and sought advice from John during the crisis of his evangelical conversion. John counselled him to use political means to do God's work, from which emerged the campaign for abolition.



The church had been threatened with demolition a number of times but was always saved. It was under threat again when the City & South London Railway was given permission in 1893 to demolish it to build Bank underground station on the site. But, after public protest, the company changed its plans to build only in the church's crypt. This ensured the church would survive but without its crypt. But were the Newtons moved because of the underground railway, as some accounts suggest?

A few years earlier the church had to be closed because of the state of the crypt: *At times there would be no smell in the church, at others an intolerable odour came up in whiffs and gusts. It is computed that the remains of between seven and eight thousand bodies are massed together within a few feet of the floor.*

A local newspaper report of the Newtons' reinterment in Olney in January 1893 noted: *For sanitary reasons an order in Council was recently issued, directing the removal of the bodies, some 3,000 in number, from the crypt of St Mary Woolnoth to Ilford Cemetery*. Other reports similarly noted the sanitary progress and public health concerns leading to the Order in August 1892 to remove all the bodies, one reporting the number to be about 1,000. Whatever the actual number, it was big. Through the exertions of interested parties a special Order was obtained to reinter John and his wife Mary in Olney, *the town with which his name is chiefly associated*.

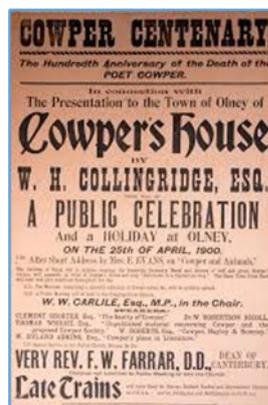
Their remains were found immediately under the chancel, their wood coffins almost entirely gone, and new oak coffins were made to encase the leaden shells. In Olney a bricked grave, first prepared in 1777 to receive the remains of George Catlett, the father of John's childhood sweetheart and then wife, Mary, was reopened and prepared for their reinterment.

A large concourse of people attended the reinterment and the one hymn sung was John's *How sweet the name of Jesus sounds*. It was a year later in January 1894 that the 10 ton Aberdeen granite monument was put in place over their remains. George Catlett's small monument is close by.

The reinterment project was led in Olney by publisher William Hill Collingridge, who was born there in Cowper's former home, had a collection of Cowper and Newton relics, and who in 1900, the centenary of Cowper's death, presented the house to the town, where it was opened later that year as the Cowper and Newton Museum.

And so it was that John and Mary Newton returned to rest in Olney.

Peter Applewhite



Biddenham Gardeners Association

Exploring traditional wild flower names

On Tuesday 8th September we were joined by Dr Twigs Way, well known garden historian. Again, this was a Zoom meeting and we were pleased to welcome 33 members and visitors to this session.

Twigs imparted a wealth of information on the origins of wildflower names and those taking part were able to add comments or ask questions through the chat facility. Traditional wild flower names have evolved through generations by people who had a reason to use that name. People have always needed to communicate with each other about plants which could be used to feed livestock or for their own food, for those which could be used as medicines, or for dyes or simply to let others know which plants to avoid. Pre literate or non literate people would not have used Latin or "book" names which would have had little meaning for them. Hence a variety of names abounded and one plant could have as many as ten different names, some of which could be quite lewd. Twigs gave as an example *Arum maculatum* which is commonly called lords and ladies, snakeshead, cuckoo-pint, naked boys, starch root, jack in the pulpit amongst others. There was also variation in plant names according to geographical location.

Many flowers were named after animals and birds, hence cranesbill, stork's bill, dove's feet, lark's foot, coltsfoot, calf's foot, ox eye daisy, cow mumble, cow parsley, bear's garlic. We went on to learn that the term "dog" meant common or inferior or poisonous. The dog rose has no scent, the dog violet has no scent and dog mercury is poisonous. Some boys' names were commonly used for plants - herb robert, ragged robin, jack by the hedge, sweet william.

Twigs spoke about the Doctrine of Signatures whereby it was thought that plants resembling various parts of the body could be used by herbalists to treat ailments of those body parts. For example lungwort was used for pulmonary infections, as its leaves were shaped like lungs. Wort is a middle English name for a plant which is used in cooking or medicine and the name dates back to the 1100 - 1500s. Fleawort, barrenwort, setterwort and woundwort are all examples. Plants with names ending in bane were sometimes used for their hallucinogenic properties. For example, henbane was used by witches to give the sensation of flying. Flea bane was used for killing fleas and wolfsbane (monkshood) and leopard's bane were extremely poisonous and could cause serious illness.

Where plants grow sometimes has a bearing on their names: corn flowers, corn poppies growing in the fields. The corn flower was also known as hurt sickle as it could blunt the reaping sickles used for harvesting. Twigs touched on Shakespeare and referred to "A Midsummer

Night's Dream". In this play mention is made of the purple pansy also known as three faces under a hood, heart's delight or love in idleness - "idleness" in this case meaning "unrequited" as Titania finds out after the juice of the heartsease is squeezed into her eyes and her subsequent infatuation for Bottom whose head had been transformed into that of a donkey. Twigs concluded her talk by referring to the many flower names which have a reference to the Virgin Mary. Mary's gold (marigolds), Lady's bedstraw, Lady's mantle, Our Lady's tresses, Our Ladies shoes.

Thank you Twigs for transporting us to a world where people were much closer to nature, to a world which is largely passed and gone. Hopefully your talk will inspire us to look more closely at the wildflowers which survive.

On Tuesday 20th October Rob Brett, Curator at RHS Garden Hyde Hall will join us on Zoom to give a presentation entitled "Yours and my need for Plants". Details can be found on our website. As usual this meeting will be open to all members and visitors.

Linda Truscott

New members and visitors are always welcome. For more information contact: Linda Truscott on 01234 270747

www.biddenhamgardenersassociation.org.uk



CHILD IN YEAR 6?

CHOOSING THEIR SECONDARY SCHOOL THIS YEAR?

Find out more about Biddenham through our information and events programme on our website.

Running throughout September and October.

All our students are given their own laptop on entry into the school.



OPENING MINDS - TRANSFORMING LIVES



Biddenham
INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL AND SPORTS COLLEGE

www.biddenham.beds.sch.uk

01234 342521 Find us on: @BiddenhamIntSch

What's On?

11.00am Sundays: St James's church is continuing to hold services via Zoom so keep an eye on your email for details.

October

Sun 4th October Service at St James's 9.30am,
Sun 11th October Service at All Saints, 9.30am
Wed 14th October Biddenham Parish Council meeting via Zoom 7.30pm Details of how to join the meeting are on page 8
Sun 18th October Service at St James's 9.30am
Tue 20th October Biddenham Gardeners Association Zoom meeting, see page 11
Sat 24th October 7.30pm Friends of St James Zoom Quiz Night, see page 6
Sun 25th October Service at All Saints, 9.30am

November

Thu 5th November Village Hall AGM, Biddenham Village Hall, 8.00pm, see page 4
14th-28th November Red Cross Virtual Christmas Fair, see page 4

Some classes have restarted at Biddenham Village Hall, see the website <https://biddenhamvillagehall.org.uk/>

Biddenham Pavilion is open for bookings.



Thanks to Heather Eyears' daughter Nicola who took this photograph of a spectacular rainbow from the bottom of Heather's garden on Bromham Road at the end of August.

Hall Booking Details

Biddenham Village Hall

From the Village Hall website you can check availability on the diary, look at the facilities and fill in a booking form. Contact details for regular events are also there. www.biddenhamvillagehall.org.uk

Church Barn

Contact the Booking Officer, Jan Burns on 344019 or janburns@gmx.com if you would like to hire the barn. Smaller than the Village Hall, it is ideal for a small party or meeting.

Pavilion

The hall is available for children's parties, anniversary lunches, christening receptions, meetings etc. We can also hire the small upstairs meeting room which has tea and coffee making facilities.

Booking enquiries to biddenhampavilion@hotmail.co.uk or Debs Slade on 07808 579330.

Great Denham Community Hall

www.greatdenhamcommunityhall.co.uk



The Friends of St James

- the charity which helps conserve the church, churchyard and barn for future generations

Membership
Treasurer

Peter Leverkus
Paul Fricker

Tel: 353662
Tel: 342843

**Welcome Packs for
New Biddenham Residents**
Contact Richard Church Tel: 214805

The Loop

Editor	Jean Gambold	Tel 349849
Proof Reader	Jacqui Piper	Tel 356993
Church correspondent	Peta Martin	Tel 348718
Advertising	Clare Sugars	Tel 355262
Subscriptions	Richard Harris	Tel 210434
Distribution	Richard Church	Tel 214805

All **November** articles, preferably by e-mail in Word format, to loopeditor@gmail.com or to 22 Day's Lane and adverts to 3 Queen's Close (cj.sugars@talktalk.net) by

Wednesday 21st October please.



The views expressed in 'The Loop' by various community groups do not necessarily represent the views of St James's Church or the Parochial Church Council.