

# NETTLEBED VILLAGE NEWS



In this autumn issue.....

Ready for winter?

Check out the Nettlebed Oil Buying Group - details on page 5

Keep Secure this winter - Neighbourhood Watch report on page 2

Do you qualify for a winter flu jab? - details on this page

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*and more.....*

## School & Community Shared use of the Car Park

As most of you will know the car park is busy during the school day but exceptionally busy at school peak times: drop-off (8.30-9.30am) & pick-up (3.00-4.30pm). In order to minimise congestion the Parish Council has agreed with the School that the time has come to remind users of the car park that Oxfordshire County Council owns most of the car park and the school has *priority* use of the spaces to the west and south from 8.30am to 5.30pm during the school day.

The spaces around the Post Office, Village Shop, the Field Kitchen cafe and the Life shop are owned by Mr Robert Laycock and are for customers' use. Signs will shortly be put up asking for considerate parking by parents and customers. We are aware that there is inevitably an overlap when parents taking or collecting children need to also use the businesses.

We in Nettlebed, as well as members of the wider community, are thankful that we still have our Post Office and Village Shop and we are conscious that the postal collections coincide with the busiest school times.

We therefore ask please for your consideration and patience when using the car park. It is a valuable resource for our village – for both school and community – and we believe that, by working together, we can keep everyone happy. *Thank you for your help. Barbara Lewis*

## Seasonal Flu Vaccinations At Nettlebed Surgery

It is the Department of Health's recommendation that all people aged 65 years or over should have a flu vaccination. It is also recommended that the flu vaccination be administered at any age if you have any of the following:

1. *Asthma and chronic respiratory diseases*
2. *Chronic heart disease*
3. *Chronic renal disease*
4. *Chronic neurological disease*
5. *Diabetes*
6. *Suppression of the immune system, eg asplenia*
7. *Chronic liver disease*
8. *Anyone who is the main carer of an elderly or disabled person whose welfare may be at risk if the carer falls ill.*

It is also recommended that people aged 65 and over, or those falling into the above categories, are immunised to help protect them against Pneumococcal infection which can cause diseases such as pneumonia, septicaemia and meningitis. Most people only need to have this vaccination once.

Nettlebed surgery will be starting FLU VACCINATION CLINICS for our patients from late September. All appointments will be pre-bookable. If you require further information, or to book an appointment, please ring the surgery on **01491 641204** and speak to the receptionist.

## Nettlebed Neighbourhood Watch Scheme

Keep secure during the winter months

With the dark nights coming make sure that when you leave your property unoccupied there are lights left on in the house to deter intruders. Random on/off bulbs are a good idea. There have been some daytime burglaries in the village in recent weeks. If you see a strange vehicle please do report its description and number to the Police **immediately** at any time. (Number below)



Theft from vehicles parked by walkers in the local woods is always a problem. Don't leave anything of value on display in the car.

Collisions with deer in our beautiful wooded area are always a hazard but particularly in the rutting season between now and January. The A4130 Henley to Nettlebed road is a high risk area especially near to the bend coming from Bix; also the B481 Nettlebed to Sonning Common road by the Nettlebed saw mill. Do take care at night driving in the locality as deer often freeze in the glare of car headlights and don't get out of the way. We have had serious crashes on these roads over the years.



To contact the Police ring **0845 8 505 505**-keep this number by you.

Malcolm Lewis - Nettlebed Neighbourhood Watch Village Co-ordinator 01491 641648

### POLICE MEETINGS

Don't forget that our local police hold regular "Have Your Say" meetings in the village. Dates and times are notified through the NHW scheme.



**Bonfires -  
Gardeners please be considerate!!!**

**To find out what is going on in the village visit our website at  
[www.nettlebed.org.uk](http://www.nettlebed.org.uk)**

## Nettlebed School & Community Centre (NSCC) & Floodlit All-Weather Pitch *'Meeting the Needs of our Community'*

The community facilities, both indoors and out (including the car park\*) at the Nettlebed School & Community Centre are available for hire outside school hours *ie* evenings, weekends & Bank Holidays in term-time and daily during the school holidays.

(\*Please see the note on page 1 about the car park)

The indoor premises for hire are the Community Hall, School Hall or Combined Halls with toilets and a mini-production kitchen. The All-Weather Sports Pitch (AWSP) is marked out for tennis, 5-a-side football, netball, basketball and hockey. With the added advantage of floodlights the pitch is available for hire up to 9.30pm - *at no extra charge*.

The NSCC holds a Premises Entertainment Licence.

*Our current evening regulars (both indoors and out) are:*

- Monday:* Nettlebed W.I. (3<sup>rd</sup> Monday every month)  
Netball Club (AWSP) 7.30 - 8.30pm
- Tuesday:* Rotherfield Raptors *under 10* football (AWSP)
- Wednesday:* Rotherfield Hornets *under 11* football (AWSP)
- Thursday:* 1<sup>st</sup> Nettlebed Brownies 6.00 - 7.30pm  
Adult 5-a-side football 8.00 - 9.00pm (AWSP)

For hire details please go to our Parish Council website [www.nettlebed.org.uk](http://www.nettlebed.org.uk) or contact the Bookings Secretary: Mrs. Barbara Lewis on 01491 641 648 for further information.

*Looking forward to hearing from you !*

## South Oxfordshire Village Quiz League

A reminder to all in Nettlebed of the South Oxon Village Quiz League which Nettlebed takes part in. The games are played in village halls in eleven South Oxon villages over the Winter months. The format is similar to University Challenge but fortunately the questions are much easier. If you are interested please contact Susan Byers. **01491 641138**

## Tree Felling

Many have noticed fir trees being felled on the common by the B481 towards Park Corner and have been asking about it. This timber is being felled on behalf of the landowners under a Forestry Commission woodland management scheme. Re-planting with broad leaf species will take place in due course.

## Nettlebed Commons and the Chilterns Conservation Board

### By Rachel Sanderson

#### Nettlebed Common Ponds

The long history of clay extraction for the brick and tile-making industry at Nettlebed has made the common we have today unique among Chiltern commons for its complex of about 100 ponds. A few of the ponds were originally a source of water for residents of nearby properties, but most have developed in holes created by quarrying.



#### What's special about the ponds?

Several factors combine to make the ponds on Nettlebed Common unique. Firstly, the sheer number of ponds is extremely unusual. Water is a scarce resource at the top of the Chilterns and it is the presence of clay around our village which helps retain water in the former quarry pits creating the ponds we see today.

Geologically, most of Oxfordshire is dominated by neutral or calcareous substrate. The acidic nature of the clay means that the water in the ponds on Nettlebed Common is naturally fairly nutrient poor. This means the ponds support some species which are otherwise rare or uncommon elsewhere in the county.

Another distinctive feature is the nature of the ponds. We all know that the ponds vary in size and depth, and some of them dry out when there's no rain. This means there is a diversity of pond habitats across the entire complex of ponds making Nettlebed Common a good site for wildlife.

#### What makes a pond good for wildlife?

All ponds can be good for wildlife, no matter how small or large, permanent or temporary, shallow or deep, shady or sunny they are. Even the traditional village duck pond can support wildlife, but it is non-standard ponds (including newly created ponds, or ponds which are full of silt and leaves) that are more likely to support the rare, unusual or specialist species.

Ponds vary considerably but there are four main factors that make ponds good for wildlife. These are

- Clean (ie unpolluted) water - the volume and regularity of supply is less critical.
- Good (ie wildlife friendly) surroundings which can provide both supporting or complementary habitats in their own right as well as buffering the pond from any damaging external influences
- Variety of structure or habitat within the pond, produced by different plants, variations in the shape and depth of the pond, variations in the density of shade or light levels etc
- The proximity of one pond to others which allows species to move between ponds to their optimum habitat, colonising or re-colonising ponds when conditions are right.

Ecological research has shown that features in ponds which would in the past have been condemned such as fallen trees or trees in ponds are good for wildlife, as are areas that dry out. These different habitats can support different or specialist species increasing the overall diversity of wildlife in a pond.

#### Taking care of the ponds

The best time of year for pond management work is the autumn/winter when species are dormant or hibernating and before the spring when frogs, toads and newts (ie amphibians) migrate to ponds to breed.

Over the next few years the Nettlebed & District Commons Conservators will be working with the Chilterns Conservation Board's new Commons Project to restore some of the ponds on Nettlebed Common. Work will be carried out as sensitively as possible to minimise the disturbance to ponds and their surroundings. The Conservators will give updates on planned work nearer the time.

In the spring before any work starts, the pond concerned will be surveyed to record the species in and around the pond. This will inform recommendations for work which will improve the pond for wildlife. This took place earlier this year at Stradwell Pond (at the end of Chapel Lane) and this will be the first pond to benefit from restoration work.



The type of work undertaken at each pond will vary but include the following options:-

#### *Restoring water quality*

Most of the ponds on Nettlebed Common are filled with direct rainwater and local surface run off from the surrounding area. It is therefore important that this water is not polluted. The most usual form of pollution comes from piles of garden rubbish or compost heaps which are high in nutrients. Where present, these will be removed.

Where appropriate, silt may be removed from some ponds to improve the quality of the water.

#### *Reducing shade*

Some of the ponds are surrounded by trees which cast a dense shade. Some trees will be felled to let more light into the pond. These will often be trees on the southern bank of ponds to fit in with the movement of the sun. A mix of sunlight and shade benefits pond invertebrates and cold-blooded amphibians.

#### *Creating open water*

To increase the amount of permanent open water, some trees which have fallen into ponds will be removed. Some sprawling willows (which are very thirsty trees) will also be removed where this is appropriate.

#### *Animals and plants*

The work will allow seeds of some plants to germinate and others will colonise in time. There will be no new planting and the Conservators ask the help of local residents to ensure that plants not present elsewhere on the common (such as non-native species like water lilies or the invasive New Zealand Pigmy-weed) are not introduced.

Similarly, animals will colonise naturally. While fish are a natural part of large ponds, they can damage small ponds as they eat insect larvae as well as the eggs and tadpoles amphibians, stir up the silt and excrete nutrients. Did you know that the movement of any fish needs to be licensed and approved by the Environment Agency?

#### Monitoring

It will be important to monitor the effect of all restoration work to gauge its success. Repeat surveys of the plants, insects and amphibians will be carried out. If you would like to get involved with this important work, please contact Elizabeth Smeeton, Clerk to the Conservators.

If you have any questions about the restoration of ponds on Nettlebed Common, please contact either Elizabeth Smeeton, Clerk to the Conservators or Rachel Sanderson, Commons Project Officer at the Chilterns Conservation Board on 01844 355525.

Local pond expert, Rod d'Ayala, knows the ponds on Nettlebed Common extremely well and is providing the Conservators with advice.

More information about ponds can be found on Pond Conservation's website - [www.pondconservation.org.uk](http://www.pondconservation.org.uk)



*Rachel Sanderson is the Commons Project Officer at the Chilterns Conservation Board*

## Nettlebed Bellringers

On Wednesday 21st September we rang a quarter peal of Plain Bob Minor as birthday compliments to Mark and Susan.

- 1 Mark Castle
- 2 Julie Champion
- 3 Jeremy Simon
- 4 James Champion
- 5 Ralph Elmes
- 6 Susan Byers (conductor)



Also congratulations to Elinor Bailey aged 10 who can now ring unaided in rounds and set a bell.

*Learners of any age welcome -  
Practice nights - Wednesdays at 8.00pm*

## Transport Report

I would like to warn all parishioners that the 139 bus service, hourly from Wallingford to Henley and return is under review. Hopefully such a useful service will be left as it is, but there is no guarantee of this. It is quick, reliable, and links conveniently with the Oxford service from Reading via Wallingford. When planning a trip think to yourself "Can I use the bus?". More use makes it's survival more likely - M. Gibson

## Allotments

As the season draws to a close, most allotmenters seem fairly satisfied with their results. After a cold, dry Spring which caused many complaints, the cool damp summer seems to have suited most native crops. **There are still some allotments available.** Why not take or share one and "Grow your own"? A bargain at £10 per year. Contact Pat Sparrowhawk on 01491 641621 or email pat@nettlebed.net - NG

## Sports Association Fund Raising

A table top sale is planned for **Saturday 12th November.**

For information contact Ann Allaway.  
Watch out for posters.

### Village Hall and Club

For Hall hire and all enquiries please contact the club steward on **01491 641617.**

The Village Club has a website - [www.nettlebedclub.co.uk](http://www.nettlebedclub.co.uk)

## The Art Society Village Sign

In the last issue we reported on the ideas for a Village Sign to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the **Nettlebed Art Society** and the **Queen's Jubilee** in 2012. After a lot of thought and consultation it was decided to do up the old bus shelter on the village green and create memorial plaques on either end. The first stage has now been completed with new seating and other repairs. Thanks also to Ted Clarke who made a wonderful job on the surrounding grass and paving. Designs for the plaques are now being worked on and should be in place during 2012.

### A Date for Your Diary Jubilee Celebration

Following on from the very successful village party for the Royal Wedding in April there will be a **Hog Roast Party and Barbecue at the Village Club** on **Sunday 3rd June 2012**

## Nettlebed Oil Buying Group

Why pay more than you need to for heating oil? You can save money on your oil orders by joining the village oil buying group.

Here's how it works.....

When you need oil, send an email to [oil@nettlebed.net](mailto:oil@nettlebed.net) (or telephone 641609 if you do not have email). Jim McWhirter will then contact all members of the group. After receiving replies and working out the size of the group order, he rings around the suppliers and places an order on behalf of the group. This is usually the cheapest price available but also takes account of quality of service (this became an important issue during the snow last year). This process takes between two and three weeks to complete so the group cannot deal with urgent orders.

- Members are notified of the price (ex VAT), supplier and timing of delivery in advance.
- Following that, any issues relating to that delivery should be dealt with by contacting the supplier directly
- Each customer is individually billed after delivery but may be contacted in advance if they have not dealt with that supplier in the past.

The power of a buying group gives significant savings for members.....

There is no cost to members and there is no obligation to use the group - members are free to place independent orders if they wish to do so. Jim is keen to hear of any problems members have and to know if anyone feels they can get a better price (he is not aware that this has ever happened!). Jim does not gain any financial or other personal benefit from this scheme.

## Nettlebed Sports Association

### The New Pavilion

As many of you will know we now have a very attractive new pavilion on the Recreation Ground. Thanks to the liaison between the Nettlebed and Henley Cricket Clubs and with the co-operation of the Commons Conservators and help from the Parish Council we now have a well cared-for ground and work is going on over the winter to improve the square and maintain the outfield. Plans are also afoot to install cricket nets at one end of the ground. So as well as giving the cricketers a practice facility we will be able to offer coaching to young players.

We also hope to see a re-birth of Nettlebed Football Club next autumn.

The whole village has been wonderfully supportive of the scheme and practically everyone has contributed either financially, physically, or by supporting events (or all of these!)

Although we have achieved our goal, the Sports Association needs to continue to raise funds to build up a small reserve so that we can maintain and service the building and develop and support sporting activities on the ground. Another of the Sports Association's rôles has been to support the Brownies, the pre-school organisation and the W.I in their provision of the over-60's Christmas Luncheon. We are happy to hear from any other village organisation that feels they need support from us.

As well as sporting activities the pavilion is available to hire for day-time parties, classes and meetings. Please refer to the box on this page for booking information.

**Parish Council Meetings**  
**Are open to all - watch out for details on the Village notice boards and the website**  
***Engage with your community!!***

We will continue to hold fundraising functions but less frequently than before and of course we will continue to run the Village Fête. Heather Goodall, who masterminded the resurrection of the fête this summer, will welcome any volunteers who would like to help either with the organisation or on the day, Saturday 7th July.

The Sports Association is a registered charity so anyone wishing to contribute to our funds can send donations to Peter Ashby, Cedarwood, The Green, Nettlebed, RG9 5AX. Cheques should be payable to Nettlebed Sports Association and if you are a UK tax payer you can gift-aid all donations that you make. I can supply you with the necessary form.



Thank you everyone for your support. I hope that you will all benefit from the new pavilion and hope that you will continue to support the Sports Association in it's work - *Peter Ashby.*

**Pavilion Hire**  
 The new pavilion on the recreation ground is available for hire for children's parties and other daytime activities (weekend cricket fixtures permitting).  
 For details contact Jane on 01491 641777

To contribute to further editions of this newsletter please contact the clerk or email your article or ideas to [editor@nettlebed.org.uk](mailto:editor@nettlebed.org.uk)  
 Reports from activity groups welcome  
 Many thanks to our contributors

Nettlebed Village News edited by Jeremy Simon

### Your Parish Council

- Barbara Lewis - chairman
- Norman Gibson - vice chairman
- Michael Atkins
- David Butler
- Bob Collier
- Peter Leigh
- Jeremy Simon
- Doreen Elms - clerk **01491 641856**

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