

HALTON VILLAGE NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2019



The Garden at Lower Farm in Spring

HALTON VILLAGE NEWSLETTER EDITORIAL

In this issue of the Halton Village Newsletter we have an update on where we are with the proposed closure of RAF Halton and a request for parishioners to consider joining the Parish Council.

We are holding our Open Gardens again this year so please read the article about preparing your garden for the event if you would like to take part. There are also reviews of a couple of events that have been held in the village over the past three months which seem to have been much enjoyed by those who attended.

There are items by both our church wardens. Brian Thompson explains how work has continued in the churchyard on various trees and hedges and Don Knight has written a piece on the dambuster whose gravestone can be found in the churchyard.

Finally, as this issue extends to the end of April, we would like to wish everyone a 'Happy Easter' and successful Easter egg hunting.

THE PARISH OFFICE

The Parish Office is situated above the Village Hall in Old School Close. There is a supply of stamps in the office and a small letter scale. Parishioners can use the photocopier, 5p for an A4 black and white copy and 10p for colour. A3 is 10p for black and white and 20p for colour. The Parish Office is manned between 9.30am and 12.30pm Mon-Thurs. If there is a faulty street lamp please report it to the clerk, providing an exact location and the number on the lamppost if possible. Mrs Fiona Lippmann, Clerk to the Council can be contacted on 01296 626073 or clerk@haltonpc.org.uk

The Village Hall is available to hire. It can seat 80 people and there is a smaller meeting room for up to 10 people seated. There is free wi-fi and a well equipped kitchen. Please contact Mike Jimson on 01296 622702 or haltonvhall@aol.com for bookings.

YOUR CHANCE TO HELP SHAPE THE FUTURE OF HALTON

What do you enjoy about living in Halton?

- The peace and quiet?
- The safe and friendly environment?
- The lovely walks right on your doorstep?
- The open countryside?
- The mix of properties, old and not so old?
- The relative good condition of the open spaces and footpaths?

Or perhaps the question for you is what don't you enjoy?!

- The busy roads?
- The lack of public transport?
- The lack of well maintained cycle paths?
- The fear of the unknown and what the RAF closure will bring?
- The lack of shops?

I suspect that for most of us it's a mixture of the two sets of answers!

We are certainly at a crossroads in the development of our village which has remained fairly undisturbed for the last 100 years, since Alfred Rothschild, the Lord of the Manor, sold his estate to the MOD.

Within the next few years many of the questions we have asked above may well result in very different answers as the RAF land is sold off again.

How can you be involved?

You do have an opportunity to help shape our future by becoming involved with the **Halton Parish Council**. Parish Councils are the grass roots level of local

government responsible for street lighting, dog bins, aesthetic aspects of our village and the village hall. We are dependant on Aylesbury Vale **District Council** for planning, refuse collection, local footpaths and social housing, and to Bucks **County Council** for roads, schools and policing. These second two tiers are to be replaced within the next year by one authority – **Bucks County Council** – they will then be responsible for most of our amenities.

Probably the two most important areas which will move under one Council will be **planning and roads**, both of which are very dear to the hearts of Halton Parish Councillors with the fast approaching closure of the RAF site.

In the last two years, since the closure was announced, we have been constantly engaged with the government through the ‘Department for Infrastructure Organisation’ (DIO), with the MOD through the Station Commander and his team, with AVDC, Bucks County Council, our MP, the Rothschild family and many other organisations who have a say in what our rural surroundings look like. We have made visits to the Houses of Parliament, our MP’s office, Waddesdon, AVDC offices and Halton House to lobby those who work there. All with some notable successes.

At present we have 5 Councillors who work as a team doing their best to influence what happens after the RAF closure.

But we really do need another two or three villagers to join us in our privileged position to help ensure that what we do reflects the hopes and aspirations of residents, and to encourage the authorities above us to make decisions which are in the best interests of those who live in the village as it is now and those who will be living in the new properties around us. You may well have skills and knowledge that could add significantly to the work we are doing.

These are exciting times – why not consider becoming involved!?

If you would like to know more about becoming a Parish Councillor please talk to one of the Councillors or to the Parish Clerk. Or just come along to our next meeting on 20th February at 7.30pm.

Councillors: *Brian Thompson, Ann Jimson, Caroline Waddams, Harold Pearce, Paul Czaplinski*

Parish Clerk: *Fiona Lippmann clerk@haltonpc.org.uk Tel 626073*

RAF CLOSURE UPDATE

I have said before that in looking at and addressing the handling of the RAF Halton closure it is not a sprint but more of a marathon. It seems to me that it could be a double marathon. There are a lot of things happening which impact the closure but they shed little clarity on just what is happening and how it may impact us. Here is a summary of the various items we know about.

Announced on 9th November 2016 the complete closure of the camp was stated to be by 2022. The delay was due to the need to build infrastructure at RAF Cranwell to take the training units. Now if you believe the gossip it will be closer to 2025! Some people may think that we should welcome the delay and enjoy the present environment for longer. More pertinently it means the uncertainty we are all living with will continue longer than it should.

Another major variable is the Local Plan. Aylesbury Vale District Council published it for consultation between 2nd November and 14th December 2017. It included the closure of RAF Halton and indicated that 1000 houses would be built on the designated area for housing identified by them. This was only a portion of the land being disposed of. Now this level of development is acceptable because if you can live with it today then why not tomorrow, The 1000 houses represented the existing footprint of building on the site. The issue was that it treated the development at Halton as a residential suburb of Wendover requiring minimum infrastructure investment, no retail units or employment opportunities identified and a proposal to build on the sports grounds and the listed Halton House gardens. In fact reading the plan you would have thought RAF Halton was in Wendover Parish. In simple terms it was a fudge to provide housing without investing in the necessary infrastructure.

We objected and our response can be seen on the Parish Council website. In July 2018 we appeared before the inspector along with several developers who were arguing that the 1000 houses should be built on their developments. The Inspector accepted that the Local Plan needed to be updated for a few things including the Halton section to protect both sports facilities and heritage assets. The updated plan is expected in the first quarter of 2019 and will then hopefully be accepted.

The other major change that will impact us is that the whole of Buckinghamshire is moving to a unitary council – goodbye AVDC, Chiltern DC, Wycombe DC, South Bucks DC and BCC; and welcome one council. While this will drive efficiency savings it means the Planning Authority will move from AVDC to this new body. They will have to adhere to the accepted local plan (at least initially). Given how difficult it was to communicate with AVDC the unanswerable question is how much better or worse will it be with this new body?

What we need to see is the master planning for the whole development. It is very easy to accept that doing it in phases is the simplest way to go. From a build and

process point of view that may be right but from a strategic point of view you need to see the totality of what is proposed so the location and size of community assets can be correctly planned.

We are faced with a huge cataclysmic event (for us), therefore the more the Parish Council can do to prepare the community and to pick up the reins and help guide us going forward the better. By this I mean simple things such as managing the allotments which we hope to acquire. That is before the RAF finally vacates Halton, the Parish Council takes them over and manages them for the benefit of local residents and the RAF. In this way we would not fall off a cliff when the RAF leaves.

We will continue to keep you posted on the developments as they arise and we get more clarity.

Brian Thompson (Chairman Halton PC)

RAF POLICE WARNING

We are receiving a number of reports of attempted burglaries and thefts in not only the Halton area but also surrounding villages of Aston Clinton and Tring.

Please ensure that you take a little extra time to be sure you have secured your doors and windows, locked your sheds, garages and outbuildings and made your property appear a less attractive target to thieves by removing items in plain sight.

Although there is no reason to be alarmed, we ask that if you see anything suspicious, report it immediately so the police can respond promptly. Phone numbers 01296 656503 or 01296 656211.

The theft of fuel from the airfield has also been reported.

NEW WEBSITE

At last Halton has an up to date, new website www.haltonvillagenews.co.uk.

This has been quite a learning curve for us and we have had to learn how to upload and change text and pictures, so please be patient if it appears 'wrong', but we are getting there. If you see any glaring errors, please let us know. We promise not to be offended!

And, if there are any items or events that you think should be added, please forward the details to the clerk@haltonpc.co.uk and we shall endeavour to load it up as soon as we have a moment.

In the meantime, enjoy the photos and news about your beautiful village.

THE CHURCHYARD UPDATE

2018 was an eventful year in the churchyard.

Firstly a couple of willing volunteers to help cut the grass and maintain the churchyard was a significant boost in trying to keep the churchyard looking as good as it does. Our thanks go to Paul and Ken for their great contribution.

During the year the Commonwealth War Graves Commission (CWGC) took over the maintenance of all service graves (in addition to the war graves they already had responsibility for). This was an improvement as the contractors that the MOD was using were not nearly as good as the CWGC. The real difference came through when they decided to bring the service graves up to the same standard as the war graves. This involved two slices of work. Firstly a team came in to correct the alignment of the service graves – so all the gravestones were exactly vertical and precisely aligned to each other. A second team arrived later to turf the grass around the service graves and replant the flowers. The results look very good – just raising the bar for the rest of the churchyard.

Now in all this work a supplier to the CWGC reversed his lorry down the church drive and knocked down the lamp post. There was no issue with the supplier accepting liability and their insurance company quickly settled the claim. However the lead time for a cast iron lamp post, which is a made to order item is 10-12 weeks, which is why it looks as if nothing is happening. Hopefully by February the lamppost will be restored.

It was proposed earlier in the year that a variety of tree work was required in the churchyard. This included the following works

- Removal of the tree by the vestry door to avoid damage to the foundations
- Reducing the height of the 3 Yew trees to assist maintenance.
- Removing the scrub trees between the old and new churchyard
- Essential maintenance of dead branches on the large limes in the churchyard.

As the churchyard is in the Halton conservation area approval was sought to carry out this work. Once it had been consulted on, it was approved and work has started. The tree next to the vestry door has been removed and 2 of the 3 Yew trees have been reduced in height. In addition a large proportion of the scrub trees between the old and new churchyard have been removed. Opening up the churchyard has I think made a vast improvement. Obviously there is some tidying up to do but I am confident the final result will be very good.

In November as a mark of respect to the Polish war dead buried in the churchyard the Polish flag was flown on All Saints day. The Remembrance Day service in the churchyard was supported by RAF Halton and it was nice to see a good turnout of locals at the service. A collection was taken afterwards and £92 was collected on behalf of SSAFA – the services charity.

Finally the 9 Lessons and Carols service was very popular and with the help of the Halton Singers, the choir and organist, the music was excellent. Not least the singing of the congregation.

Brian Thompson—Church Warden

IVAN WHITTAKER—A CHURCHYARD RESIDENT

On a bright moonlit night on the 16th May 1943 Ivan Whittaker scrambled aboard his Lancaster bomber along with his crew for a mission over Germany. For weeks they had practised low level flying and navigating while studying routes and photographs of their target...the Mohne and Eder dams. The legendary 'bouncing bombs' had to be used as the Germans had strung torpedo nets across the dams and the bomb had to skip over them. It had to be released at 200mph and 60 feet, the margin for error was 25 yards either side of the optimum point, and 25 yards at 200mph isn't much.

The flight over the North Sea, Holland and Germany was to be at very low level to get under the German radar. At times they were as low as 50 feet, about half way up St Michael's tower. Two aircraft flew into high-tension wires and exploded. Another actually brushed the sea and wiped off the bomb which was suspended in a frame as it was too big to fit in the bomb bay.

Ivan was navigator/bomb aimer on the third Lancaster in on the Mohne dam. Navigating at 250mph at such a low level kept him busy but he managed to do it. Guy Gibson, who was in charge of the operation, did a dummy run and then a bombing run. His bomb bounced over the nets but exploded short of the dam. Flt. Lt. Hopgood was next. His aircraft was hit and the bomb bounced over the wall. It exploded directly under the Lancaster which crashed in flames. Ivan's aircraft was next, flown by Flt. Lt. Martin. By now Ivan would have moved from his navigator's table and be lying in the bubble in the nose of the aircraft so he would have a perfect view of the flak coming their way! They were hit in the wing which made the machine slew to one side so the bomb missed. The fourth run was by Flt. Lt. Maltby and the dam was breached.

On each run Gibson flew alongside each attacking aircraft to draw the flak, even switching on his navigation lights to make himself more conspicuous. He then flew on to the Eder and Sorpe dams to oversee the attacks. For his gallantry he was awarded the VC. Though Gibson survived neither he nor any of his crew survived the war.

Ivan did survive and stayed in the RAF, reaching the rank of Group Captain. He lived in Wendover for some years. His grave is on the left hand side of the Churchyard towards the back. He is not among the commonwealth graves and he had retired by the time he died. If anyone feels like 'adopting' Ivan's grave give me a call on 01296 622603 or 01296 622401.

Don Knight – Church Warden.

CHRISTMAS LUNCH 2018

From early December when we started to think of Christmas, the pensioners of the village had more to look forward to than the crowds at Tesco and the queues at the Post Office – the Christmas Lunch!

Our grateful thanks go out to the younger members of the village for producing a delicious meal, perfectly cooked and efficiently served with all the trimmings, and a visit from Father Christmas. Not to mention giving us the chance to greet people we perhaps hadn't seen for a while, and to experience large helpings of the Goodwill to Men that is the essence of the Festive Season.

Barbara Whittaker



THE COMPUTER'S SWALLOWED GRANDMA

The computer's swallowed Grandma
Yes, honestly, it's true,
She pressed 'Control' and 'Enter',
And disappeared from view.

I've scanned every type of bin,
And files of every kind,
I've even used the Internet,
But nothing did I find.

It devoured her completely,
The thought just makes me squirm
Maybe she caught a 'virus',
Or been eaten by a 'worm'.

In desperation I asked Jeeves
My researches to refine,
The reply from him was negative,
Not a thing was found 'on line'.

So if inside your 'In Box'
My Grandma you should see,
Please 'sign', 'scan', 'copy' and 'paste' her
In an email back to me!

'The Computer swallowed Grandma', by Valerie White
(Supplied by our oldest resident Mrs Ena Stanton, pictured in centre above)
Many Thanks!

OPEN GARDENS

Stand by for the biennial extravaganza that is the Halton Open Gardens. It will take place on the afternoon of **Sunday 21 July 2019**. We hope to have 10-12 gardens open with a planned route around the heart of the village.

The event has been going for over 15 years and over that time we have seen village gardens develop and new ones have opened up. It is always a rewarding afternoon with visitors from far afield keen to see plants in a variety of settings. Teas will be served in one of the gardens.

If your green fingers are itching to get growing we'd love to hear from you! Whether you have opened your garden before, whether it is large, or a smaller space, visitors will enjoy browsing and maybe 'borrowing' some of your ideas!!

Why not have a chat with one of us or drop us an email to register interest.

Nicola 623500 : a-n.hart@virgin.net

Jane 622601 : janealexandrahill@gmail.com

Ann 622702 : annjimson@aol.com

WANTED BELL RINGERS

You may have noticed that the church bells were not rung very often during 2018. We have four regular ringers and four bells so if one of our ringers can't make a practice session we don't ring. Often we have to import ringers from elsewhere if we are required to ring at a wedding.

It would be really good to have more members. Initially I learnt to ring as a way of getting to know villagers when we first moved to the village and it proved to be very effective in that regard. So, if you're new to the area or you find you now have time on your hands do please consider bell ringing. Although we are unqualified to teach beginners, we are able to take recruits to other towers such as Weston Turville or Wendover and once they have learnt the rudiments we can develop their skills on our own bells. Obviously if you have already rung bells please don't hide your light under a bushel, but let us know.

I think it's very worthwhile helping to retain traditional skills and with bells having been rung throughout Britain since at least the 10th century, you can't get more traditional than that. Our bells were given a thorough service several years ago and so we really should be using them more to justify this expense.

If you would like to give it a go please contact me for a chat.

Caroline Waddams – Tower Captain 01296 624458

ROCK GIG REVIEW



The world had John, Paul, George and Ringo, Halton Village has Jon, Stuart, Dave and Steve who make up the band SoundProof. The band came together at the RAF Halton Music Club and after only a few months of practice, they were ready to unleash their music at their first live gig at the RAFA Club in November.

Around twenty five residents turned out for the evening, with drinks in hand and the lights turned low the show began. In their first set they tested the appetite of the audience and, encouraged by the genuine and vocal appreciation, they hammered through successive sets. It was an impressive performance and hard to believe that it was their first live public gig. They delivered an eclectic mix of challenging rock classics with true musical ability and panache. I suspect that the RAFA Club doesn't often ring to the community singing of Iggy Pop! To echo the chorus of one of their punk numbers, they left the audience wanting More More More!!!!

And Good News - SoundProof will be playing at the RAFA Club again on March 21 and hopefully the third Thursday of subsequent months when the RAFA Club is open to non-members. Get down there for a brilliant evening of live music by our local talent.

Jane MacKinnon

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Clerk to the Parish Council – Fiona Lippmann	01296 626073
Village Hall Booking Clerk	01296 622702
Guard Room – Main Point	01296 656211/656503
Wendover Police Office (Wendover Library) Tues & Fri 10am-12pm)	01296 621916
Police Non-Emergency Number	101
Crimestoppers	0800 555 111
Electricity Emergency	0800 316 3105
Fly Tipping Hotline	0845 330 1856
Potholes notification	08452 380882
Wendover Health Centre	01296 623452
WHC Friends Desk	01296 622565
Halton Community Combined School-Halton	01296 622264
John Hampden Infant School-Wendover	01296 622629
Wendover CE Junior School	01296 669822
John Colet Secondary School	01296 623348
Halton Singers-Kevin Towler	01296 622390
Church Warden-Don Knight	01296 622603

NEXT ISSUE

If you have anything for inclusion in the next Halton Village Newsletter please email it to newsletter.halton@gmail.com or ring 01296 624458. The deadline for the next edition is 19th April 2019.

The views expressed by contributors are their own and not necessarily the views of The Halton Village Newsletter.

VILLAGE DIARY

February

6	Coffee Morning	Village Hall	10.30am
20	Parish Council Meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm

March

6	Coffee morning	Village Hall	10.30am
21	SoundProof Live	RAFA Club	7.30pm
27	Parish Council meeting	Village Hall	7.30pm
31	Mothering Sunday		

April

3	Coffee Morning	Village Hall	10.30am
21	Easter Sunday Evensong	St Michaels	6pm

VILLAGE RECYCLING					
February	Wednesday	6	13	20	27
Garden Waste					
Blue Bin & Food Waste					
Green Bin & Food Waste					
March	Wednesday	6	13	20	27
Garden Waste					
Blue Bin & Food Waste					
Green Bin & Food Waste					
April	Wednesday	3	10	17	24
Garden Waste					
Blue Bin & Food Waste					
Green Bin & Food Waste					
Please note that Residents on the Wendover side of Perch Bridge have different collection days and dates , one day later, Thursday each week					