



# *The Breeze*

## *Upper Rissington's Newsletter*

### **Spring 2024**

*Inside this issue:*

URSC News p2-3

Parish Council p4

Local History group p6

Pioneers p6

Church News p7

Local organisations p8-9

Local walks p10-12

Rotary News p14

Gardening on a Hill  
p18-20

Useful Contacts p24

Walking around Upper Rissington the other day it was great to see the daffodils that were planted a couple of years ago all coming into flower, a reminder that (hopefully!) Spring is on the way. So welcome to the Spring issue of *The Breeze* - let's hope it brings some sunshine with it!

This quarter, we have several special treats - including a welcome guest visit from 'Gardening on a Hill' (see p18-20), focusing on the allotments, many thanks to Polly. I have to say, the pictures of the allotments look really good, so well done to all the gardeners. It's good to hear some smaller allotments may be available for those who can't manage a whole one; there is also information about a Rotary Community Allotment on p15, so lots of opportunities to be involved.

We also feature another 'Local walk' (p10-12; thank you David), so why not get some friends or family together and give it a go? - although you may need your wellies unless things dry up a bit! For those fancying something less energetic, there are plenty of groups with regular meetings you might enjoy. And this quarter we say 'Happy Birthday' to one of them, as Soup and Roll celebrates it's first anniversary (p3) - how quickly a year seems to go!

As always, please do let us know (URNEWS@btinternet.com) if you have any comments or suggestions about *The Breeze* or if you would like to be involved in its production or distribution in any way. We're still looking for someone to take on the role of editor, so why not contact us to arrange an informal (no obligations!) chat? It's easier than it maybe looks!

Stay warm and enjoy the signs of Spring,

Sue Handy (editor)

# Village News

## SOCIAL COMMITTEE UPDATE



### Last Event - The Panto

There's nothing better than a little local entertainment to help fill the gap between the Christmas excitement for the children and the New Year excitement for the adults. This year's local entertainment was again supplied by the enormously talented three-man group from Chaplins. They arrive on the day, set up the stage, lighting and sound and then get round to playing all the parts between the three of them. They do it all so well.



We were limited in our choices of dates to hold the Panto this year and the choice of the day before New Year's Eve probably accounts for the reduced numbers in the audience. It didn't affect the enjoyment of those that did turn up though as the performance made for another special day in a week filled with special days.

We were generously supported by the Parish Council for this event with a grant of £500. We always aim to make ticket prices affordable for all in our community, particularly at a time of such heavy cost and particularly for families with children. This means that, even if we sold out, we wouldn't be able to match our income to our costs for this event so the generous grant really helped. After the grant was taken into account we only had to draw a little over £100 from our reserves. Cheap for such a great time for so many, oh yes it was.

### Next Event - The Annual Easter Egg Hunt.

On Saturday 30th March we again hold the Easter Egg Hunt. This is always frantic and tremendous fun as the children go into hyperdrive to find the tokens scattered over the field. There are a few golden tokens and each of these wins a special egg for the finder. All the children have the opportunity to get their customary three egg reward for their hard work as well as a snack bag. All of this for a £1 entry fee as the event is heavily subsidised by the Social Committee and supported by our local Coop and Tesco.



The event kicks off with an explanation of this year's rules at 11.00am. Please arrive well in time to buy your 'Eggschange' cards for the children. The cards are £1 and will enable the children to exchange tokens for eggs and receive their snack at the end of their hunt. To ensure that each child has their fair share of the booty there is a strict limit of one Eggschange card per child and the hunt is open to children of Primary school age and under. We always set up a separate area for the very little ones so that they don't get trampled by the enthusiasm of some of the older children.

Look out for posters nearer the event and check our pages on Facebook; they contain a QR code that links directly to us so that you can advise us if your child needs dairy-free eggs. We only carry a stock of the dairy-free eggs for those that we know of so please let us know in plenty of time if your child needs these and certainly let us know before the 23rd March.

The colouring competition is included again this year. It's always so popular and gives a chance for children to earn a larger egg as a prize for winners in the age categories. The pages to colour in are on our Facebook pages and if you need paper copies we hope to have them available from the school and we'll certainly place a stock in the Village Hall where you can collect from the table just next to the kitchen.



The Easter Bonnet competition is growing in popularity so get your best crafting skills to work and help the children design and create another amazing display for our judges again this year. Bonnets and coloured-in posters should be dropped off by 11.30am so the judges have time to deliberate and decide the winners.

Finally, we will have tea, coffee, and cakes available for sale so there's something for everyone.

### **Future Events - The Village Fete**

12 midday on Saturday the 6th July is this year's date for our Annual Village Fete. Look out for the posters detailing the full package of attractions. We will have our fun dog show, dancing and singing, bouncy obstacle course, games and challenges, stalls, cafe, bar, BBQ and so much more. Put the date in your diary now as it's such a fun way to catch up with old and new friends and neighbours.



### **Committee News**

Come along to the Village Hall for the Annual Parish Meeting. It's on the 18th March at 7pm. We'll be updating the community on last year's activities and next year's plans. It's an opportunity to meet with some of the team and to chat informally about how you may want to be involved, either as an event helper or serving as a committee member. It's also your chance to share your ideas or thoughts on how we can improve and to provide us with feedback on things you think work particularly well.

## **Soup and Roll**

We recently celebrated a whole year of running Soup and Roll. We are there on alternate Wednesdays in the Village Hall, 12-2pm. We offer a choice of two homemade soups with a roll. Soup is served until 1pm, after which time we may have limited supplies! It is followed by homemade cake and tea or coffee.

This was set up as a joint venture between the Church in Upper Rissington & Pioneers. Everyone is warmly invited. There is no charge, but people are welcome to make a donation. During the past year we have been overwhelmed by people's generosity. After meeting all of our expenses, we have been delighted to be able to donate £270 to the North Cotswold Foodbank from our surplus.



Future dates are: March 6<sup>th</sup> & 20<sup>th</sup>; April 3<sup>rd</sup> & 17<sup>th</sup>; May 1<sup>st</sup>, 15<sup>th</sup> & 29<sup>th</sup>; June 12<sup>th</sup> & 26<sup>th</sup>

# PARISH COUNCIL NEWS



It's a brand new year and the first issue of *The Breeze* for 2024!

Over the last few months the Parish Council (PC) has been busy making changes and progressing the actions started in 2023. One recent change is in the Councillors on the Council, and we have sadly had to say goodbye and thank you to Nick Maxey for all his hard work on behalf of the community while acting as a Councillor and Chairman of the Upper Rissington PC; and we welcome Jonathan Truslow as the new Chairman of the PC and wish him luck in the new role.

Another significant change for the Council is the completion of the POS transfer, which we can now say has been signed and should be finalised within the coming months. Repairs and snagging continue to be worked and completed, with the aim for the PC to commence all maintenance for Upper Rissington within the next few months once the snagging is finished. Residents will see that improvements continue to be made with new hoggin paths installed around the Village Hall and further works are planned to commence later this year.

On another sad note, vandalism still continues to be an issue across the village with signs being ripped down and broken glass bottles around the play parks/skating park. All these issues continue to be reported to police and we ask that all residents highlight any issues to the police and the Clerk ([clerk@upperrissington-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@upperrissington-pc.gov.uk)) as soon as possible so we can continue to monitor the situation. Other important updates to note include:

- Tree works are now commencing, and a further survey will be completed to ensure all trees within the Parish are included for any necessary future work.
- Improvements continue to be made to the allotments, which are being fully used now and have a waiting list, this includes the new manure pen.
- From a wider community perspective, the second Defibrillator fitted to the Dragon Vets building (the old Co-Op) will soon be in place and operational.
- The fence to the Bowling Green is soon to be installed, and we will then be opening this for public use shortly after, ready for summer games.
- The tennis courts will hopefully be opening early on March 1st as the weather is cooperating and starting to get warmer as we head into spring.
- The Emergency Plan has passed approval from the District Council and training is underway to help progress the plan. More volunteers are needed to implement actions from this Plan.
- Over the next year improvements in the Village Hall will continue to be made, with work having already started on the windows and doors.

The most exciting news we have to announce is ... Did you know that on the 1st of April 2000 the Parish of Little Rissington split, and the Old Air Base (ex RAF Housing) became the Parish of Upper Rissington? Next year we will celebrate 25 years of being Upper Rissington and a lot has happened in those years. The old hangers were removed and over 400 new houses were built along with a primary school, new Village Hall, shops and a gym. We have tennis courts and soon the bowling green will be in use. We've finally taken over the open spaces - a long journey - but a good ending.

So with that in mind ... we'd like to invite all groups and organisations to join us for our Annual Village Meeting! This will take place at 7pm on Monday 18th March at the Village Hall. It's an opportunity to inform others what your group is about and what has been achieved over the years. It's a chance for people to ask questions and learn what the community has to offer. The PC will be providing FREE refreshments. We look forward to seeing you there!

Join us for the  
**UPPER RISSINGTON**  
**ANNUAL PARISH**  
**MEETING**

**FREE  
ENTRY**

**FACILITIES, COMMUNITY GROUPS AND VISION FOR FUTURE**

**MARCH 18TH @7PM**  
**AT THE VILLAGE HALL**

Wellington Rd, Upper Rissington, GL54 2QW

**FREE REFRESHMENTS**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION  
PLEASE CONTACT**

**01451 810839**



# PIONEERS

Pioneers meet in the Village Hall on alternate Wednesdays, 11.00am–1.00pm. We have coffee, tea, cake & chats. There is also a book swap table.

If you are new to the village (or have been here for a long time) and would like to meet others, then do come along. We ask for a £2 donation to cover our costs, although your first visit is always free. We look forward to meeting you.

## Dates of our next meetings:

March 13th & 27th

April 10th & 24th

May 8th & 22nd

For more information, about our meetings or outings,  
email: [urpioneers@gmail.com](mailto:urpioneers@gmail.com)



## Rissingtons Local History Society

In **December** we had a talk by John Putley on “**A Gloucestershire Christmas**”. Members enjoyed seasonal refreshments afterwards which were well received.

“**Take a walk through the Societies Archives**”, a talk by our Archivist Don Bowie in **January**, proved very popular and we had an excellent turnout. Don has digitalised most of our Archives – a fantastic achievement – and highlighted some of them.

In **February**, we will have had a talk by Richard Wheeler on “**The Georgian Visitor – a vignette of garden visiting in 18C**”. Richard was the National Trust’s garden historian for many years.

### Forthcoming events:

#### **Friday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024 @ 7.30pm. “Mary Queen of Scots”**

- a talk by Gillian White. Mary was Queen at 6 days old, and by 25 had lost 3 Kingdoms, 3 husbands and never saw her only child again.

**Venue** Village Hall, Upper Rissington GL54 2QW

#### **Friday 19<sup>th</sup> April 2024. A visit to Coughton Hall**

- a Tudor House and home of the Throckmorton Family for 600yrs filled with Catholic treasures  
... further details to follow.

#### **Friday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2024 @ 7.30pm. “Stonehenge, Avebury & the Ceremonial Centres of Neolithic Britain”**

- a talk by Professor Tim Darvill on the origins, variety and development of Henges and why people came to visit them from near and far.

**Venue** Village Hall, Upper Rissington GL54 2QW

**Visitors Welcome** £3.50 to include refreshments.

For enquiries, contact

[information.RLHS@gmail.com](mailto:information.RLHS@gmail.com)

or Kate O’Brien 07815 606770



# The Church in Upper Rissington: Valuing Everyone

With our new monthly gatherings at Upper Rissington Village Hall "Third Sunday @ 4" (the third Sunday of every month at 4pm) we seek to offer a gentle space for all generations to come together for reflections and activities based on a Christian theme. There is always time for conversation and we finish with afternoon tea. Next dates: March 17<sup>th</sup>, April 21<sup>st</sup>, May 19<sup>th</sup>.

Do come along and see what we get up to and who we are – a friendly welcome is guaranteed!  
Revd Nina

The Church in Upper Rissington (CUR:ve)

## **"Third Sunday @ 4"**

**Meeting on the Third Sunday of Every Month**

**Upper Rissington Village Hall**

Reflections and Activities for  
All *plus* Afternoon Tea



Everyone warmly welcome.

More details from Revd Nina

01451 810309 [revd.nina@gmail.com](mailto:revd.nina@gmail.com)

The Vicarage, 6 De Havilland Road

*We have recently included articles about the Home Start baby group in Bourton. They are now planning a new group in Moreton so do get in touch with them if you are interested*



## **New baby? Come to Baby and Me!**

Our free, weekly postnatal support group, 'Baby and Me', starts in Moreton in April! The group, which is for parents with babies aged up to 6 months, is a great opportunity to build your confidence as a parent, share experiences and learn more about your baby's development. Each week we cover a different topic (such as feeding and sleep), in a friendly and supportive environment.

A mum who came to a recent group said: 'I felt like we got so much from this group, from baby massage to car seat safety, ways to play with our babies for development and how to keep them safe as well as things for me like getting my tummy muscles checked and understanding my pelvic floor. It was way more than I hoped for and I feel really lucky myself and my baby got to attend. Also, just having some time each week to have a cup of tea and a snack and chat to other mums, whilst also learning valuable skills. It's a very special group.'



'Baby and Me' will be held at The Redesdale Hall, High St, Moreton-in-Marsh GL56 0AX on Thursdays, 1.30-3pm, from 11th April to 13th June. To reserve your place, please call us on 01285 885391 or email [groups@home-start-cotswolds.org.uk](mailto:groups@home-start-cotswolds.org.uk)



Time to spare?  
Looking for new friends?  
Seeking a new challenge?

**Why not try your local u3a?**

The u3a is open to all retired and semi-retired people. With a growing number of special interest groups (currently 33), there is something of interest for everyone. Group activities are spread throughout the week between our local communities in Bourton, Stow, Moreton, and The Rissingtons etc. We also meet monthly throughout the year on a Wednesday morning, from 10am to 12 noon in

**the Royal British Legion Hall in Bourton on the Water.**

This gives us the opportunity to have an interesting speaker and provides an ideal opportunity for prospective new members to sound us out. Our forthcoming monthly meetings are:

**Wednesday 27th March 2024, Wall Paintings by John McCormick**  
**Wednesday 24th April 2024, A Century of Popular Song by Richard Churchley**  
**Wednesday 22 May 2024, our AGM (no speaker)**  
**Wednesday 26th June 2024, The Most Dissolute Man in London by Dr Gillian White**

Please come along, enjoy a tea/coffee, and see what we have to offer.  
We will be very pleased to see you.

**Or look us up on: [u3asites.org.uk/bourton](http://u3asites.org.uk/bourton)**



# Spring into Action: Join our Community Activities!



Cotswold Friends has a whole host of Activities aimed at older and vulnerable people for you to get involved with this Spring.

As the weather begins to improve this month (hopefully!) you might feel like getting out and about a bit more. At Cotswold Friends we have an abundance of Community Activities running throughout each month from Lunch Clubs to Singing, Walking Football to our four Men in Sheds projects across the North Cotswolds. We hope there is something for everyone and we'd love you to join us, either as an attendee or as a volunteer.

It's with particular excitement that we have our beautiful Community Garden at Stow-on-the-Wold Surgery re-opening at the end of March. The garden is a space to be enjoyed by everyone, you don't have to be a gardener! The garden has been constructed to allow disabled access both to the site and the planting beds so everyone is welcome and can get involved. It also includes a Memorial Rose Garden which we hope can become a peaceful place to retreat to when dealing with grief - a quiet place to visit, reflect and remember. If you would like to donate and plant a rose in memory of a loved one, please contact Cotswold Friends.



We are also starting a new Walk and Talk group in Moreton-in-Marsh this Spring. This will be an opportunity to have a gentle stroll, whilst enjoying the company of others.

You can view our 2024 Calendar which lists all our activities on offer at our website: [www.cotswoldfriends.org](http://www.cotswoldfriends.org) or you can call our friendly activities team on 01608 692811 to find out more. We hope to see you soon!

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## Come try out the Rissingtons WI!

Exciting talks, craft demos and activities every month. We have an active book club, a country walking group and we're looking at new sports groups for 2024. New craft classes including silk painting, jewellery and candle-making classes.

Come as a guest to any meeting for just £4 or join for a yearly subscription. We meet on the 1st Wednesday of every month at Upper Rissington Village Hall. 7:30pm start time. The next meeting will be Wednesday 3rd April.

For more information email [rissingtonwi@gmail.com](mailto:rissingtonwi@gmail.com)



# Local Walks – Great Rissington circular

**Distance:** 3 miles + 1.6 miles (Picardy Copse extension)

**Estimated Time:** 1hr 30mins + 50mins (Picardy Copse extension)

**Terrain:** moderate

## Summary

An off-road, quiet walk with the chance of spotting lots of wildlife and some good views. It can be very muddy in places and even slightly flooded in wetter months. You can extend the walk across to the Sherborne Water Meadow and through Picardy Copse, on some National Trust permissive paths, but this can flood and wellies (or higher!) may be needed. The route is good in either direction and you might find yourself stopping to watch wildlife, take pictures or just enjoy the views.

## Parking

Down near (but not at) the church in Great Rissington, or the overflow car park (rough ground) near the Rissington Club for a slightly longer walk, but mind the road if starting from here.



## The Route

As this walk goes right by the River Windrush (and if you choose to do the Picardy Copse extension, right over the river), keep an eye on young children.

1. Head away from the church along the Cotswold Meadows private road and bear right when the road splits.
2. Through the gate and straight on between the high hedges.
3. As the view opens out, bear left/SW across the field, which can be very muddy, especially as you get to the bottom of the slope.
4. Through the hedge at the bottom and turn right/west along field edge.
5. There is a waymark (can be easily missed) which sends you south diagonally across the field, heading for a large oak tree in the hedge-line on the other side. Then follow the edge of the field to the corner and tall trees beyond.
6. Through the hedge, then turning left/south, follow the path through the tall trees.



The River Windrush will become more noticeable as you follow this path; you will soon be next to the river before it meanders off into the trees.

7. Follow the path to a gate, which is a little hidden by bushes, and then across a small ditch.

8. You now have bushes on either side of you making a tunnel, so you may need to duck. This tunnel ends on the edge of a field, the view opens out. Go straight across, you are still heading south.

9. Reaching the hedge-line, go straight across the next field ending up next to the hedge-line on the far side of the field.

10. You've now reached a junction of paths. Straight on(ish)/south, the farm track heads for Windrush; right/west into the trees is the extension route to Picardy Copse over Sherborne Water Meadows; and left/east on the farm track uphill, which is our route. So uphill unless you've decided on the extension route.

11. There's a lone tree in the field, which shows signs of a lightning strike, with a long scar on its trunk. Maps show the path goes right past this tree but everyone uses the much easier farm track and waymarks also point you up the farm track.

12. Follow the track uphill, through the hedge-gap, and continue on the track.

13. As you reach a group of trees, there is a path to the left heading NE across the field which cuts off the corner of the route, but for this route, go straight on/east through the trees. You will get views south over to Windrush.



14. On reaching a junction of paths/tracks, turning right/south will send you off to the



Barringtons (coming out by the NE corner of the deer park) but we are turning left/north, heading for Great Rissington.

15. Now just follow this track/path as it dips up and down, staying on the track all the way to Great Rissington. You'll go through one gate and pass the path that cut the corner off at point 13) as you clear some trees and the track starts to dip down to a barn. Good views to the west.

16. As you nearly reach the houses of Great Rissington, you get a good view left/west down to the church and the start point. On reaching the village road, turn left/west down to the church and the start point – unless you parked in the overflow car park or fancy a drink at the pub, in which case turn right/east.

***That's it, I hope you enjoyed the route.***

*(see next page for optional Picardy Copse extension)*

## Picardy Copse extension

- A. At point (10) turn right/west down through the trees. This is a rough path to start with, and please note, this route can be flooded during wet months and might not be passable.



- B. Going down the path through the trees, you will see cut stone and channels. Looks like there used to be some water-management system here. You pass over several channels but you may not notice them.
- C. Go through the gate at the bridge and over the River Windrush; you are now entering the NT Sherborne Estate. This is where the flooding can be at its worst, as you follow the track next to a ditch between two fields.

- D. As you reach the ends of the fields, there is a choice of routes. The route to your right/north, along the side of a ditch, is our return route. We want straight on, heading west. At the time of writing, the NT suggest you go straight on through a gate, keeping the hedge on your right, (you may find livestock in the fields), as the correct path on the other side of this same hedge

(no gates or live stock), has a few deep animal holes at one point.

- E. On reaching the woods (via either side of the hedge), turn north/right to head into Picardy Copse along the obvious track. The track uphill straight on/west, takes you to Northfield barn, or turning left/south sends you to the village of Sherborne.
- F. Follow the track through the woods, looking out for deer or other wildlife, until you reach a junction on the track. We are turning right/east heading out of the woods onto Sherborne Water Meadow again. (Turning left/west uphill will send you through Arnold's Spring and onto Northfield Copse.)
- G. You will pass a couple of rough benches to sit on if you fancy a rest or to enjoy the view. Go straight on as you come out of the wood passing the first bench. The path turns right/south as you reach a ditch, the second bench soon appears, by some old water-management sluice gates.
- H. Follow the path by the ditch, which will get you back to point (D), where you turn left/east to go back over ground you have already walked, heading back to point (A)/(10).





# THE JOY OF BEING USEFUL

...and fit! \*

Join our  
doughty  
band of  
volunteers,  
keep fit and  
help keep  
**Upper Rissington**  
pristine... and  
our seas too!



WEEKLY EXERCISE  
COMBINED WITH  
COMMUNITY  
SERVICE.  
I LOVE IT!!

Allow me to introduce you.  
**EMAIL JOY@EDEN.ENTERPRISES**

\* ONCE A WEEK, TAKE A GRABBER & BAG ON YOUR WALK







# Rotary Quiz Night

Saturday 27 January was **Upper Rissington Quiz Night** in the Village Hall. This is the second year that Rotary in the Rissingtons has run this event and again it was judged by all to be a great success raising £400 for our charity, Home-Start.

Now utilising the new audio-visual system installed by the Parish Council, the creative skills of Cheryl Elliot transformed the main hall into a cinema atmosphere. Nine tables of combatants were glued to the screen as eight rounds of questions covering topics such as Movies, TV Themes, Beat the Intro and General Knowledge flashed before them.

Throughout, beer and wine sustained the teams whilst at the break large platters of ham, olives, and pate revitalised tired brains.



At the conclusion there was no doubt about the winning team; Robert Barber, as team leader, stepping forward to take the prize. Andrew, the Chair of RitR, thanked the team for putting on such an excellent evening to raise funds for Home-Start and also the folk who had supported the event. We hope you had a good time. We will return in 2025.

**Home-Start** is a local community network of trained volunteers and expert support helping families with young children through their challenging times. They are there

for parents when they need them most because childhood cannot wait.  
(See article on p8 for further Home Start news)

# Community Wellness Allotment a Rotary in the Rissingtons project



Plants and people have the power to create lasting change. That's why we are passionate about creating a community growing project for Upper Rissington. Creating new social connections through gardening can transform our wellbeing and environment for the better.

Would you like:

- ❖ To have some space to grow your own produce?
- ❖ To enjoy the outdoors and nature?
- ❖ To boost your well-being?
- ❖ To share experience of growing, learning & having fun?

Our community allotment plot will be wheelchair friendly and at no cost.

**Contact Atsu:** [RitR.allotment@gmail.com](mailto:RitR.allotment@gmail.com)

**or Andrew:** **07918 163960**





# EASTER EGG HUNT

Saturday 30th March 2024

Event starts at 11 am at Upper Rissington Village Hall  
Please arrive promptly to guarantee a place.

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Buy your child an 'Eggschange card' for £1 on arrival.  
'Eggschange card' includes refreshments.

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Easter Poster and Easter Bonnet Competition  
Please bring your completed posters and bonnets to  
the Village Hall by 11.30 to be judged by midday.

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Primary school age and under.  
One Eggschange card per child.

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URSC



Upper Rissington  
Social Committee

Tea, coffee and cakes for sale

email : [ursc@btinternet.com](mailto:ursc@btinternet.com)



# CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS!



## Our thriving village social committee is looking for volunteers to help us

- to organise events, plant stall, raffle prizes, dog show
- to help set up for events, set up stalls and gazebos
- on event days support stall holders, help with social committee stalls and services
- to help clear up after events, taking down stalls and gazebos and clearing village hall

Or, if you have time to participate as a committee member helping us plan our 4 annual events at monthly meetings, we would welcome you getting in touch to find out more

Contact us via Facebook or email us at  
[ursc@btinternet.com](mailto:ursc@btinternet.com)



# Gardening On a Hill

## Allotments

I wanted to write about the allotments and tell everyone about the achievements made by the plot holders in the first year on the site.

As you may well know, allotments are areas of land that you rent with the idea of getting out in the fresh air and growing your own food from scratch. Some of us also grow herbs and flowers too, which can add another experience and also attract the local wildlife and pollinators to our gardens.

The benefit of growing and eating your own food is outstanding on its own, but having access to a small green space also has great health benefits. Our allotments have offered that opportunity to our local community and we must all try to work together to protect them into the future. Apart from getting you outside in the fresh air and getting some exercise. It also helps with your well-being in more ways than we know. If you find yourself having a bad day it can be a place to escape to and grab a moment to think things over. Hopefully we will get some seating areas on site very soon to take in the view and have a rest before the trek back up the allotment track.

Most of the plots have been active this year and plot holders have been very busy creating their very own growing space. Most of us achieved more in the first year than we thought possible. The work involved to just clear your plot and get a crop in the ground was time consuming and hard work at times. The weather didn't help much, but it's been amazing what has been achieved in the time scale. Some plots holders went above and beyond to achieve their goals and we now have a diverse and working set of allotments. All credit to those hard working plot holders.



Last Summer was our first harvest and I remember hearing an allotment holder when she had just picked her first cauliflower and was so proud of her achievement in growing her first crop she couldn't contain her excitement. That's what gardening and growing your own food can do for you.



Although the plots on our allotment are half the size of an average allotment plot, the size and work involved has proved to be a bit of a challenge for some. With that in mind the council are thinking of letting out some smaller plots to encourage more of the community to get involved. This will be more inclusive as some people don't have much time to spare and

have found it difficult to achieve their goals on the larger plots.



I encourage you to contact the council if you want to give it a go and we on the allotments will help where we can to get you started on your growing experience. Just ask if you need a little help.

### **Visiting Wildlife**

February is the perfect time to enjoy the wildlife that visits our outdoor spaces before the busy seed sowing and growing season gets going. Remember, there are lots of ways to encourage visitors in the form of bug houses, bee hotels, habitat piles, rot holes (cavities in logs), etc. You could even pop in a bat or bird box. Our gardens and allotments are a shared space to enjoy with all its visitors.

I only feed the birds during the winter months as I prefer them to eat caterpillars and aphids through the growing season. They are brilliant natural predators. But in winter, it's important to supplement their diet when these food sources are sparse on the ground. I have a large supply of sunflower seeds from the plants I grew on my allotment last summer and it's a fantastic way to make your own mixes rather than buying in. Not only did I enjoy a huge display of colour last year, but I also collected all the organic seeds in the autumn and now enjoy the birds devouring them with huge enthusiasm. However I have also fed a family of mice that over-wintered in my garden shed. I will have to find a better way to store my seeds for the birds next year!

It's also a good idea to put out water for the wildlife; it can be hard to come by if temperatures drop below zero. However that's not a problem at the moment while we seem to be having a very mild winter with plenty of water around.

February is the start of seed-sowing indoors for an early crop later on. You can also start "chitting" those potatoes. Potatoes are grown from specially prepared 'seed potatoes' (small tubers), usually planted in spring. They are a traditional veg plot staple, easy and fun to grow, producing a plentiful crop in summer or early autumn. Most varieties are classified as either earlies (new potatoes) or maincrops, depending on when they're ready to harvest. Earlies are further divided into first or second earlies.



Potatoes are usually easy and reliable croppers, but they can be affected by several diseases, the most notorious being the fungal disease "Blight". However, this is less likely to affect early varieties and is less prevalent in dry summers. Tomatoes (which are the same family as potatoes) can also be affected. All affected plant material should be removed from the plant ASAP and then removed from site.



Another problem that can effect late crops of potatoes can be slug damage due to the time spent in the ground. Something to think about as our climate gets wetter.

*(Continued on next page ...)*

*(Gardening on the Hill - continued from previous page)*

### **Events this year**

National Allotments Week will take place from **Monday 12th to Sunday 18th August 2024.**

For over two decades, The National Allotment Society has encouraged allotment-holders to throw open their gates and show off their sites, to highlight the wonders and benefits of UK allotment.

The theme, together with more details, will be announced in March. A dedicated website page will be updated with the latest information and resources: So just keep an eye on the National Allotment Society website. Hopefully we can all come together and show off our produce as well as our community allotments.

**Seed-sharing** season has begun and in this month's Organic Matters you can find a list of UK seed swaps - and learn how to grow more unusual veg, including lentils.

I wish everyone a happy new year on the allotments.

*Polly*



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Bourton on the Water



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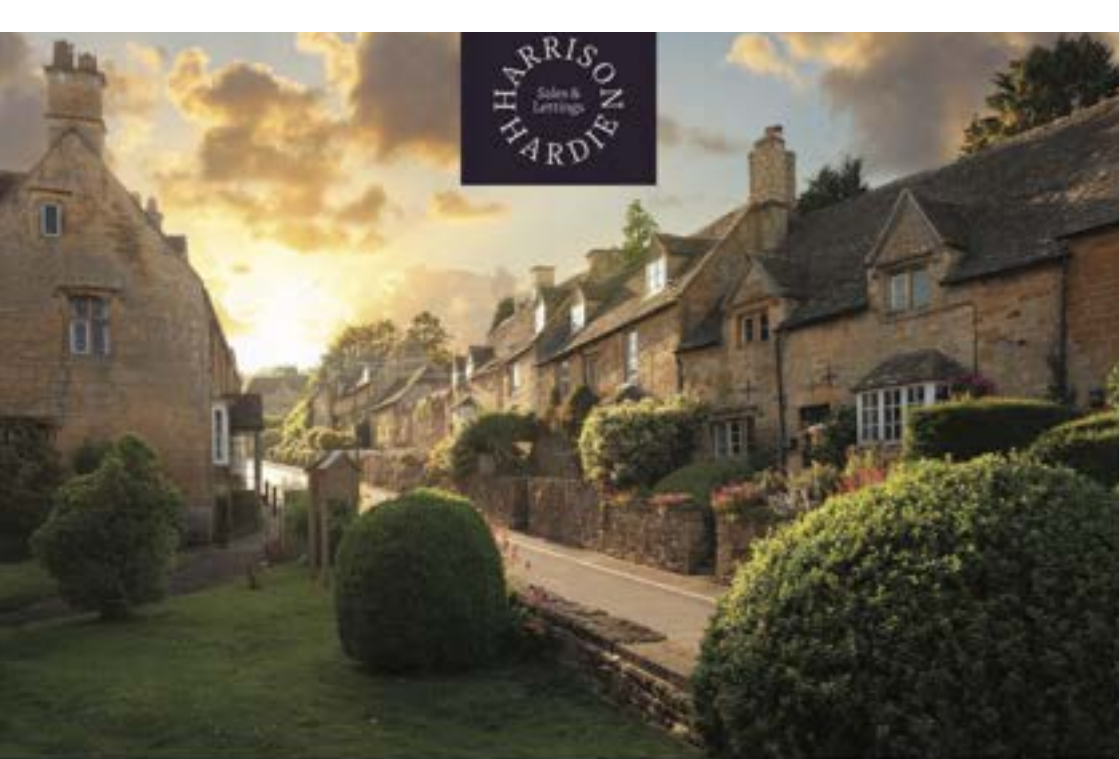
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# Useful Contacts In Upper Rissington

This is a list of people and organisations in Upper Rissington who provide goods or services in the village. Inclusion in this list is not a recommendation. If you would like your business included the cost will be £5 towards the printing costs of 'The Breeze'. Contact [URNEWS@btinternet.com](mailto:URNEWS@btinternet.com) or call 07592 533596 for more details.

Other useful sources of information about the village include the facebook page and the Parish Council website [www.upperrissington-pc.gov.uk](http://www.upperrissington-pc.gov.uk). Please note that any opinions expressed on these sites are personal to the contributors and are not promoted by 'The Breeze'.

Name	Service	Web/email	Phone
Police	Non-Emergency Number		101
Albion Water	Water Service Emergency		0800 917 5819 03300 242020
Parish Council	Clerk	<a href="mailto:clerk@upperrissington-pc.gov.uk">clerk@upperrissington-pc.gov.uk</a>	01451 810839
Little Hurricanes	Baby and Toddler Group	<a href="mailto:littlehurricanes@hotmail.com">littlehurricanes@hotmail.com</a>	
Social Committee	Community Events	<a href="mailto:URSC@btinternet.com">URSC@btinternet.com</a>	
Village Hall		Parish Clerk (as above) or PC website <a href="http://www.upperrissington-pc.gov.uk/village-hall">www.upperrissington-pc.gov.uk/village-hall</a>	
The Breeze	Newsletter	<a href="mailto:URNEWS@btinternet.com">URNEWS@btinternet.com</a>	
Pioneers		<a href="mailto:urpioneers@gmail.com">urpioneers@gmail.com</a>	
Revd Nina Summerfield	Church in Upper Rissington	<a href="mailto:revd.nina@gmail.com">revd.nina@gmail.com</a>	01451 810309
John Surch	Great Rissington Cricket Club - Seniors	<a href="mailto:surch@gotadsl.co.uk">surch@gotadsl.co.uk</a>	01451 820567 07808 307364
Pete Garrett	Great Rissington Cricket Club - Juniors	<a href="mailto:Petegarratt117@gmail.com">Petegarratt117@gmail.com</a>	07788 896496

The next issue of *The Breeze* is due to be published at the beginning of June 2024. Please contact us at [URNEWS@btinternet.com](mailto:URNEWS@btinternet.com) if you would like to contribute articles or news items.

The deadline for contributions is Friday 17th May 2024.

For advertising enquiries you can also email Keelin McLeman ([keelinbracken@gmail.com](mailto:keelinbracken@gmail.com))



*Long Shadows (Farman Crescent)  
Photo courtesy of David Harrison*