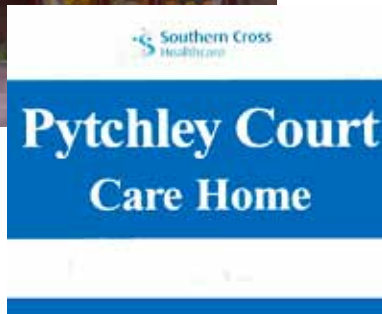


Care home emerges from turmoil



Pytchley Court Care Home is hoping for a brighter future after battling through the upheavals caused by the bankruptcy of its former owner, Southern Cross Healthcare.

Southern Cross, which operated the 40-room care home in Northampton Road, ceased trading in mid-July after running into well-publicised financial difficulties. After three months in limbo, the running of Pytchley Court Care Home, passed to a newly set-up company, HC-One, at the beginning of November. Two other former Southern Cross care homes in Northamptonshire, Glenmoor House in Corby and Lucas Court in Moulton, were also transferred to HC-One at the same time.



HC-One was set up by the landlord company NHP, which already owned the houses when they were run by Southern Cross, and the health and social care experts Court Cavendish. The company runs 241 homes with just over 10,600 residents - around a third of the homes previously run by Southern Cross. Some 14,400 former Southern Cross employees have also transferred to HC-One, including all the staff working in the affected homes.

It is now hoped that the transfer in ownership will bring investment, which is much-needed by some homes. HC-One's new chairman, Chai Patel, said: "We are committed to improving the quality of services and properties, retaining and developing the kindest and best staff, and improving the occupancy in our homes. Those are our goals and that is our promise."

He added: "I want to thank residents and their families for their patience, and staff for their commitment and hard work during the recent difficult period."

The company says it is planning "significant investment" in learning and development, properties and IT infrastructure.

HC-One says it is committed to quality and has put in place twice as many quality assurance managers as the previous management to ensure the homes are run to proper standards. It has also employed independent service quality inspectors and dedicated turnaround managers, as well as an independent whistleblowing telephone services, to catch and remedy any shortfalls in care.

Meanwhile Patel, who recently starred in Channel 4's Secret Millionaire, reiterated his passion for supporting charities that help vulnerable people achieve their potential.

- cfw

Do you know a deserving cause?

It's been a hard year for many of us, and with the global economy in the state that it is, things will stay tough for a while yet. The signs are all around: Brixworth Country Park had to become self-financing, which is why it has raised its parking fees and introduced charges to park at the causeway carpark. The library needs to maximise its income, which means it might need to find ways of making an income from the exhibition space on the upper floor. Council support for local artists, for example through the Open Studios initiative, had to be cut.

Despite all of this, the *Brixworth Bulletin* is in the happy situation to be able to give one or more deserving causes in or around the village a helping hand. Over the past year we've had some terrific support from advertisers old and new. Coupled with careful management of our costs that means we've managed to bank a small but noticeable surplus.

Since the *Bulletin* is run entirely by unpaid volunteers, we are looking for people, groups or causes to whom this money would make a real difference. The question is, what or who?

This is where we need your help. If you have any suggestions - be it a local charity, a community project or a person in or around Brixworth in genuine need - then we'd like to hear from you.

Please email editor@brixworthbulletin.com or write to Brixworth Bulletin, 13 Station Road, Brixworth NN6 4BP.

All suitable suggestions received will be profiled in the next issue of the Bulletin and will then be put to the vote by you, our readers. Let's support the community, and let the community decide how we shall support it.

On that note: Have a very Merry Christmas everybody. And a Happy New Year to all our readers!



Maudia Flavell-White

The Brixworth Bulletin Team are:

Claudia Flavell-While, editor
882567; editor@brixworthbulletin.com

Silvana Cook, advertising
881835; ad.manager@brixworthbulletin.com

George Hammerschmidt, art and design
880212; art.editor@brixworthbulletin.com

Jane Neill, distribution
880618; dist.manager@brixworthbulletin.com

Sheila Jenner, treasurer
881173; treasurer@brixworthbulletin.com

Regular correspondents

Jennifer Fitzgerald

Louise Jensen

Mike Philpott

Kate Calnan

Brian Webster

For further information and an archive of every single *Brixworth Bulletin* to date, visit www.brixworthbulletin.com. And while you're online, why not follow @BrixBulletin on Twitter?

The *Brixworth Bulletin* is published quarterly in March, June, September and December. The deadline for contributions and advertising for the March issue is 25 January 2012.

The Bulletin Team would like to wish everybody a very Merry Christmas, and a peaceful and prosperous New Year.

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1. Mark each envelope clearly with the destination house number and street name.

2. Place all of your envelopes in a larger envelope or bag, which has your name and contact details on it and includes payment for all the envelopes inside.

Payment can be cash or cheque, cheques to be made payable to 'Brixworth & Scaldwell Scout Group'. Any additional charitable donation to the Scout Group would be most welcome.

3. Take your Christmas Post to the Library/Community Centre foyer on the 10th December 2011 between 9am and 12pm.

4. Scouts will frank each envelope with their unique design, sort the mail and deliver it anywhere within the Brixworth Village boundary.

5. Delivery will take place during the morning of the 17th December.

6. Please remember - NO royal mail stamps are required

Please remember that delivery is only permissible to destinations within Brixworth.

All mail will be tracked from the sender, to sorter, to deliverer, to destination with special collections from care homes within the village.

All the young people, leaders and executive committee of the Brixworth & Scaldwell Scout Group wish you a 'post stress'-free Christmas holiday – Merry Christmas everyone.

-Shaun Macken



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Buckton Fields gets go-ahead

In a surprise U-turn by Daventry District Council's planning committee, the Buckton Fields housing development has received planning permission by Daventry District Council, clearing the way for over 1,000 houses to be built on the northern edge of Northampton.

The development, around the half the size of Brixworth, will extend the northern border of Northampton between the A5199 (Welford Road) and the A508, with the edge of the new development adjoining Boughton village. It also includes plans for shops, a primary school, a doctor's surgery, a care home and business units.

The planning committee had rejected a very similar application barely three months earlier over traffic concerns. But it changed its mind after its chairman, Councillor Frank Wiig, warned that continuing to reject the proposal for traffic reasons could be deemed unsustainable and might leave DDC facing a six-figure legal bill should a refusal be successfully challenged on appeal.

The decision caused outrage amongst residents in Boughton, Moulton and Kingsthorpe, who are very worried about the effect this decision will have on traffic on the already very busy A508. Replying to a residents association's announcement on Facebook, Northampton-based Sarah Milton said: "I hope that the residents of Brixworth

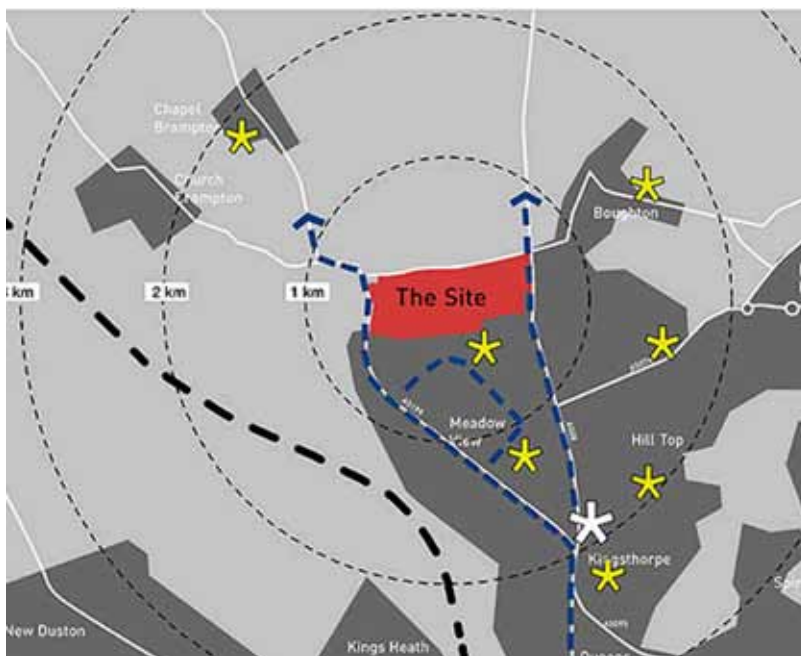
will complain, as they will never get into town again!"

To ease the traffic, the developers have pledged to pay almost £3 million towards the construction of a bypass road and over £1 million towards improving the roads in Kingsthorpe.

However, the Kingsthorpe portion of the money is already earmarked against the recent redevelopment of the Cock Hotel junction, and the rest of the money is likely to take years to materialise as it is phased to coincide with ongoing development: 10% on the 200th occupation, 10% 12 months later and 20% per annum thereafter. At any rate, this would only pay for a fraction of any bypass - according to government figures, a bypass costs around £10 million per mile.

Responding to residents, who called the planning committee's meeting a "kangaroo court", Wiig said that planning authorities could not refuse an application just because of local opposition.

Meanwhile, County Councillor Judith



Shephard (representing Moulton) called the decision a "travesty" that would be to the detriment of people who live in the area for years to come.

She added that even with the extra £3 million, the costs of building a bypass were so prohibitive that it was unlikely to become reality in her lifetime. "From Harlestone where the recent improvements (also dubbed the 'road to nowhere') currently end, the NW bypass would have to traverse the railway line and the river, at prohibitive cost, before finishing at Brampton Lane. The building costs are beyond the developers' and the County Council's pocket and I am sure the Highways Agency wouldn't be rushing at it either."
-cfw

From Brixworth schoolboy to Young Apprentice

Love him or hate him, Brixworth resident Harry Maxwell has found his fifteen minutes of fame - or possibly even more? - on TV's Young Apprentice.

Harry was one of 12 young hopefuls to join Lord Sugar in a quest to test their business acumen on a mission to secure a £25,000 prize. Harry, who attended Spratton Hall and is currently studying for his A-Levels at Rugby School, quickly demonstrated sound business sense and a knack for great salesmanship. But his forceful personality and determination to get his views across didn't make him the best-liked among his team mates, who brought Harry to the boardroom to face Sir Alan's music - and risk being sent packing - in both the second and third week of the show.

Filmed earlier this year, the series started to air on 24 October on BBC1 and is set to run until 12 December. Until Harry's fate is revealed in the show, not even his mother is allowed to know whether Harry ultimately won - or if not, at which stage he was fired.

At *Bulletin* press time Harry was still going strong, much to the annoyance of his fellow contestants and to the delight of the viewers.

Alas, until his victory or demise has been played out on TV, even the *Bulletin* cannot get an interview with Brixworth's latest celebrity. But we have been promised that, once it's all over, we'll get a chance to interview Harry for the *Brixworth Bulletin*. So here's your chance:

If you've got a question to put to Harry M, please email us (info@brixworthbulletin.com) or tweet us @BrixBulletin..

-cfw



Planning update

DA/2011/0465 Brixworth Library, Spratton Road Non illuminated front sign to replace existing 3 window vinyls of individual letters	28.6.11 PC No objection 3.8.11 DDC Approved
DA/2011/0476 17 St David's Close Enlargement of existing single garage with addition of pitch roof. Erection of gates piers and pedestrian gate.	18.7.11 PC No objection 3.8.11 DDC Approved
DA/2011/0541 20 Tantree Way Conversion of part of garage to playroom/study	26.7.11 PC No objection 30.8.11 DDC Approved
DA/2011/0490 Cherrybank, Brixworth Hall Park House alterations and proposed new garage	20.7.11 PC No objection 17.8.11 DDC Approved
DA/2011/0622 30 Burrows Vale Conversion of garage to habitable room	23.8.11 PC no objection 21.9.11 DDC Approved
DA/2011/0534 Brixworth Nursery Farm Ltd, Holcot Road Extension to existing building to form administration, reception and secure garage with extension to car park.	26.7.11 PC No objection 6.10.11 DDC Approved

What's on at the Library

Rhyme Time

Free Rhyme Times on Friday mornings – now we have three sessions every Friday morning. Session 1 from 9:50 to 10:25am and Session 2 from 10:30-11am are open to all under-5s and their parents or carers. Session 3 from 11:00 to 11:30am is for 18 months and under only.

Homework Club

Since mid-November we've also been running a Homework Club for children looking for help with their homework. Just visit the library from 3.30-5pm on Wednesdays.

Scrapbooking Crafts Club

We have a Scrapbooking Crafts Club that meets one Saturday a month from 10am to 12 noon – if you are interested in joining, phone Brixworth Library on 882153 for the next date.

Art Exhibitions

Have you visited our exhibition area upstairs in the library? Most months there is an art exhibition of some kind – in December, we will host an exhibition by Claudia Guiraldes.

Looking for Work?

For help with job searching, job applications, interview techniques, career paths etc, book a free half-hour appointment with our Options 2 and Next Step advisors, who are in the library between 4 and 6pm on Thursdays. To book, phone us on 882153. *-Jill Barber*

Brixworth new estates: The wait continues

Daventry District Council planners still cannot say when the application submitted by Carter Jonas for 150 houses on land to the west of Northampton Road will go before the Planning Committee. It seems likely to be on the evening of Wednesday 14 December but this is not certain at the time of writing due to an apparent need for further information from the developer or consultees.

It seems that Barratts are also well on the way to preparing an application for a development on the opposite side of Northampton Road of at least another 150 houses. Pre-application public consultation is expected to take place fairly soon.

Now that approval has been given for 1,050 houses at Buckton Fields, how could the A508 possibly be expected to cope with even more traffic from another 300 houses in Brixworth? How could Brixworth with its overburdened infrastructure cope with it?

There is always the possibility too that this is only the beginning. The developers may seek to use the remainder of the land as far down as the roundabout at the end of the bypass on one side and nearly down to Merry Tom lane on the other.

With over 800 objections recorded at Daventry against the Carter Jonas proposal and the BRANE petition signed by over 3300 people we should soon see if Localism is what it says on the packet!

Happy Christmas and New Year to everyone and many thanks to those of you who have supported BRANE in its efforts to prevent Brixworth becoming an unplanned urban sprawl. *-Bob Chattaway*

Want to be a journalist?

If you always liked the idea of being a journalist – or if you enjoy writing, and are interested in what's going on around you – then have you considered joining the Bulletin's team of reporters?

Every month there are lots of things happening in and around Brixworth, and we don't always manage to follow up as many leads as we'd like to. If you're able to join our team of reporters, or if you're involved in a community activity and would like to share regular updates, then call the editor, Claudia Flavell-While, on 882567 (evenings or weekends, please).

We don't mind if you're 16 or 60, just as long as you have curiosity and enthusiasm.

PS: if you are considering a career in journalism, bear in mind that having experience can make a huge difference to your application!

No rescue for dog home

Hopes to save the Jerry Green Dog Rescue Centre on Creaton Road have been dashed after campaigners failed to raise the £300,000 the site's owners were looking for – despite 3,000 people signing a petition in support. The dog sanctuary is already being wound down and will close for good by the end of the year.

David Foulds, chief executive of Jerry Green Dog Rescue said that the charity needs to raise some £3 million to modernise its kennels, which made the closure of two of its seven dog rescue centres unavoidable. *-cfw*



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Daventry uses petition to fight inefficient windfarms

As you may already be aware, Daventry District Council has been inundated with windfarm proposals despite the fact that we are geographically situated in a low wind speed area.

The Council is a great supporter of renewable energy but strongly believes that renewable energy facilities should be situated in the most appropriate location, e.g. windfarms where there is plenty of wind, biomass in agricultural areas. We have lobbied Government proposing that "energy efficiency" becomes a material planning consideration when considering renewable energy planning applications (i.e. applications can be refused for that reason) which would encourage developers to find the right solution in the most appropriate area.

The Chairman of Daventry District Council's Planning Committee, Cllr Frank Wiig, has set up a petition on the Government's website to further that cause. The petition "Inefficiency of onshore windfarms compared to other forms of renewable energy" states:

"It is a proven fact that on shore Wind Farms are one of the most inefficient methods of generating renewable energy.

The vast majority of on shore wind farms are situated in areas of beauty yet contribute little to the targets set by Government. They receive significant subsidies although their contribution is small. I ask the Government to 1) Seek alternative methods of renewable energy such as off shore windfarms, tidal power, biomass which are proven to be far more efficient; 2) Stop subsidies to on shore wind farms that are less than 30% efficient and with the savings increase funding grants to house holders that wish to install zero carbon systems; and 3) Allow Local Planning Authorities to determine applications for on shore wind farms on efficiency, noise and other factors that are detrimental to local residents."

If you agree, and want to stop subsidizing inefficient solutions through ever-increasing fuel bills, sign the e-petition at <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/2897>

The Direct Government website will send you an automated email. Don't forget your signature will only be added to the e-petition when you confirm your email address by clicking on a link in this email. The automated email will come from: 'no-reply-epetitions@direct.gov.uk'.
- Cllr Chris Millar



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Police Report

Vehicle noise nuisance

As reported in the previous Bulletin, it was agreed at the July meeting of the Community Panel to retain anti-social behaviour linked to vehicle nuisance as the locally identified priority. Action taken before the meeting seemed to have solved the problem, but recently there seems to have been an increase in 50cc mopeds roaming the area, many fitted with illegal exhausts as in the picture below. These systems emit a lot more noise than an original exhaust.

Any replacement exhaust on any vehicle, which emits greater noise than the original, is not legal. I appeal to parents whose youngsters have got a moped to examine the exhaust system and if it looks anything like the one below it is not likely to be legal. If you would like us to examine one, please call us as we would rather these bikes be put right with consent than have to prosecute.



Metal thefts

Across this rural area metal theft continues to be one of our highest crime types. Recently local churches have been hit again with lead stripped from the roof, lightening conductors and lead guttering taken. The male I mentioned in the last article, who was due to appear in court on 18th August for stealing farm equipment and selling it as scrap, did appear. His case was adjourned to 25th Oct so I will hopefully be able to report on the result in the next issue.

If you do see anyone scouting for scrap, please call us on 101 as it is always useful for us to check such incidents out.



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New non-emergency number 101

The non-emergency contact number for police has changed to 101. This number will eventually work nationwide and will automatically direct you to the correct force area depending on where you are calling from (mobile or landline). This system went live in Northants on 17th October 2011 and will roll out across the rest of the country throughout 2011 into 2012. The old 03000 111 222 number will still work for a while but it is hoped the new number will catch on quickly as it is much easier to remember.

Recent crime

Over the last quarter there has been a marked increase in reported crime across all crime types. Despite this, Brixworth and the villages covered by this Bulletin remain below last year's comparable figures, with a 24% decrease from 106 to 84. The trend towards car key burglaries continues, and two more have been reported in Brixworth. In each case, properties were entered in order to take car keys and then steal a car on the drive. The car types targeted are usually from a prestige range which are then disguised and sold on through Auto Trader at bargain prices. Both vehicles have since been recovered from innocent purchasers who are £1000s out of pocket with little chance of recovering their money. The usual advice applies – do not leave car keys in sight of any windows, in particular the front door, and garage your prestige motor if you can. When purchasing a car always carry out a HPI check, insist on a log book in the seller's name (ask for proof of ID), check all chassis numbers against the documents and log book, check with the dealer that service records and mileage are true, buy at the seller's home and be suspicious if elsewhere is suggested. Finally if the price is too good to be true, it probably is.

As always should you have any concerns please call us, speak to one of my team or visit our website www.northants.police.uk where you can enter your thoughts which may well influence our local priority in future.

- PS 923 Mike Grady

Community panel meeting

At the Community Panel Meeting on Thursday October 27th, residents voiced their concern about the impact of the recent decision to switch off a significant number of street lights around the village, some feel is a safety threat. Other issues raised were parking on footpaths and dog fouling, which may attract a fixed penalty in future. There was some discussion on the use and selling of drugs, and it was agreed that any sightings should be reported to the police immediately.

It's good to note that the refit at the Co-op appears to have curbed shoplifting and the sale of alcohol to minors. We were pleased to hear that crime in Brixworth had fallen by 24% during the last five months – even more so than the 10% cut across Northants – and residents agreed that they'd noticed the reduction.

For the next quarter, we've suggested that police look at parking as a priority, with a particular focus on "hotspots" [such as??] and obstruction of pathways. Police will also keep an eye on parking issues in the outlying villages.

Finally, I have now retired as Chairman and handed over to Cllr Colin Bament. Please come join us at the Panel's next meeting on Thursday January 12th 2012. The more residents take part, the more effective the meeting is! - David Hymas

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Lampport and Hanging Houghton

I moved home at the end of September, although I have only moved about 200 yards to the end of the Croft it was none the less quite stressful. The main reason for the move was to downsize both the house and garden, which I am sure we will both appreciate once we have settled in!

Judith and Colin have moved into my old address – Stile House – and I wish them a warm welcome.

At the other end of Hanging Houghton, Lesley Mathias has moved out of the Manor Walk and now resides in Arthingworth. Neil and Gail have moved into her old home, again I am sure we all wish them a warm welcome to the village.

Over 30 villagers took part in the village picnic at the end of August. The weather was rather changeable and we needed our umbrellas from time to time. However it did not dampen our spirits and a good time was had by all.

The Parish Council has written to Lampport Estate to ask if the hedges to the west of the A508 near Hanging Houghton can be left to grow taller and that the gaps in the hedge can be re-planted to help reduce the increasing traffic noise from this road.

– Mike Philpott

What's your vision for Brixworth?



How do you want to see Brixworth develop? What problems do you think Brixworth has at the moment? What improvements would you like to see?

The Brixworth Neighbourhood Plan Working Group would like to hear from you!

As predicted, the Localism Bill has just made its way through Parliament and is expected to receive Royal Assent shortly. This means that in future, communities such as ours will be expected to take responsibility for saying where future development should take place. The Parish Council has therefore set up a working group to consult with the community and propose a draft plan. Its members include some Parish Councillors and people who have taken a lead in reviewing local planning matters in the past, or who have expressed an interest in this.

The working group is keen to protect the existing character of the village and to maintain its existing boundaries, ensuring the green spaces around Brixworth are preserved.

We recognise, however, that the current infrastructure we have is at breaking point in many regards. We are therefore asking for views and input from as broad a section of the community as possible, particularly

regarding the following matters:

- The village environment
- Transport
- Education service
- Health and medical resources
- Communications (telephony, broadband)
- Leisure and community facilities
- Facilities for the elderly
- Facilities for pre-school children
- Economic activity and employment
- Housing
- Community engagement (e.g. Parish Council, District Council, local authorities)
- Other matters which you regard as important to the wellbeing of our community.

You may find one of us is coming along to talk with one of the community groups you are involved with. However, if you are not a member of a group that is approached, we would still like to include you in our discussion.

Please write to the working group and tell us what you think. You can reach us c/o Jane Macken, clerk@brixworthpc.org.uk. -jf



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Something to smile about

Jennifer Fitzgerald drills into the background of the Village Dental Practice

I have often been grateful for the warm and reassuring manner of Matthew Nuttall and his colleagues at the Village Dental Practice. Still, it made a pleasant change to be able to go to and see him for the Bulletin without a familiar feeling of tight nervousness in my stomach.

What were the origins of the dental practice?

It was started by Martin Hamilton in 1981-2. He already had a practice in Daventry and because he lived in Brixworth he opened a practice here to help out his friends. I joined with a colleague in 1986 and together we ran three practices including one in Long Buckby. I bought the Brixworth practice in 1992.

At first the building still belonged to the Council but now I rent it from QMP next door. The building has seen a few renovations and I've added a room for the hygienist.

What is your relationship to Brixworth?

I'm a local lad as I grew up in Boughton and now live in Cottesbrooke. I went to dental school at Bristol University and worked in Hull for a short spell after I qualified. It was when I was on a visit home to my parents that my father heard about this local job.

Why did you choose dentistry?

My father was a GP and my grandfather was also a doctor. I suppose it was because of them that I wanted to go into a caring profession, but I was put off from becoming a doctor because of the long hours I saw my father had to work. Dentistry seemed a good way of doing something similar during normal working hours.

What changes have you seen over the years?

We have got a lot better as a population at looking after and keeping our teeth, and we have less need for dental treatment. There has been a big shift towards preventative care and the message is slowly getting across.

We decided to provide NHS treatment only for children about five years ago. This was because in 2006 the NHS created a new payment system. I decided we couldn't provide the services I wanted to within the NHS.

Yes, the recession has affected us somewhat. People are choosing not to come as often and are watching the treatments they are having, for example, choosing to patch up a tooth rather than have it crowned. It's a bit quieter all round.



Who else is involved in the practice?

Maxine is our receptionist. We also have Lynda, our hygienist, who has been on maternity leave, and Edna and Lorraine our dental nurses.

Who are your patients?



People who live in Brixworth and the surrounding villages. Some people who move out will come back, even from as far as France and Spain. But they usually can't keep this up.

Describe your typical day

No day is typical because a day's appointments are always different. On Mondays and Fridays we open and finish earlier (from 0830 to 1630) and on Tuesdays and Thursdays we work later (1000 to 1830) and on Wednesdays we're only open in the morning. It's rare for

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somebody to call in the evening - if they do it's usually just for advice. At weekends and Bank Holidays I work on a rota.

How do you cope with patients feeling so tense and nervous?

Our strategy is for everyone who works here to be as warm and friendly as possible. We are all used to it being part of our job. We are in a strange position – a greengrocer doesn't have to cope with providing his best fruit and veg to people who tell him all the time they hate coming to see him!

I do appreciate how people feel as I used to be anxious myself about going to the dentist, and was scared of having injections until some time ago. Many people tell me after the treatment that it wasn't as bad as they had imagined, so I think that the anxiety is probably learned behaviour passed on from parents.



Matthew Nuttall in his practice, with receptionist Maxine Lewis

What do you think about healthcare becoming more and more of a business?

Healthcare has to be funded somehow these days as we are exceeding available resources. It's about finding the right formula to make it work, so it's about pushing the preventative side. It's like asking people to give up smoking – this prevents healthcare costs being occurred later on. The business side of things has been forced upon healthcare professionals, and some are better at it than others.

What is the funniest or strangest thing that has happened to you?

We don't usually like to be light-hearted about what we do. However, I do remember that a family were here once and a child said, "Mummy, next time I lose a tooth, can I take it to my friend's house?" He had worked out that his friend got more money from the tooth fairy than he did!

As for the strangest, some years ago, a delivery from a dental lab was foolhardily left outside our door. We noticed that a crown we had ordered was missing but didn't realise it had been stolen. Years later, the police found it when they were searching somebody's property!

What are your top three challenges?

- One - Making all my patients as dentally healthy as possible – I regard it as "teamwork" between us and them.
- Two - Spreading the message about dental health further afield – that you can keep your teeth for life as long as you put some input into their care yourself.
- Three - Serving more and more people in the local community, although I know some people will prefer a NHS service.

What message do you have for your customers?

Teeth are important – not only to be able to enjoy your food but to have a good smile.



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A history forged in iron

The Brixworth, Scaldwell and Lamport Ironstone Exhibition at the library during July and August attracted a steady stream of visitors. It was a collection of photographs, plans, copies of notices to workers, information and instructions on the care of machinery, safe working practices and the outputs from the pits.

Most of the surviving workers and their families came to the opening. Reminiscences flowed and tales were told. More details were added to the captions of the photographs and some of the workers, previously not identified, named.

The photos and plans in the exhibition showed the progression of workings from Brixworth to Lamport and how the methods changed over the period. A feature of the early period was the aerial ropeway/cableway built just before the First World War to carry the iron ore from the workings down to the LNWR sidings in the valley. German-designed and engineered, this was replaced by a railway constructed by Italian prisoners of war during the Second World War, whilst Brixworth Sidings were enlarged with another calcining bank to reduce the water content of the stone.

As in many quarries, whilst the majority of the machines, draylanes, feedshovels, bulldozers, steam locomotives and tipping wagons were 'standard', some pieces of kit were unique, designed - maybe no more than sketched - and built on site. Some worked better than others, and it was not always the locally built ones that gave the greatest problems.

There were memories too of who came from where to work in the system. A house was brought from Pitsford in 1941 to Scaldwell for the undermanager and his family. They moved in the Stavely Iron and Coal Company system to Loddington. The 'Tin Hut', as it was widely known, stood close to the church, photographed from the air in August 1965 and was demolished in 1970.



A locomotive crossing the Scaldwell-Brixworth road with loaded tippers. Photo by Tony Heighton

It is hoped that the exhibition has triggered more memories. There may be more photos in drawers. Unlike other quarry systems there are few photos of the men at work in the pits and of the aerial ropeway at ground level. We would also very much like to hear from the women who worked in the site offices, the mess rooms and from men who worked on the ropeway or the sinter

bank and loading block. Memories of relatives are also welcome.

Has anyone one of the tools used in the ironstone workings, one of the ore-loading forks, a rake used to level ground or a pickaxe with company branding in their shed? Newspaper cuttings can be copied and returned, but would help create an archive for an industry many of the visitors did not know existed.

If you have anything that could be of interest, please contact Greg Evans, 132 Station Road, Burton Latimer NN15 5NU or Bob Payne, 31 Newton Road, Geddington NN14 1AU. - David Cooper

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Country Eye *Down at the Reservoir*

For all save the oldest among us it is hard to imagine a time when Pitsford Water did not exist. Yet it was only in the 1950s that the Queen Mother performed the opening ceremony when the reservoir was only about a third full.

In the ensuing decades, right down to the present day, plants and animals have come and gone as the developing habitat temporarily became suitable for them. I was able to see all this at first hand, from the bare banks of the early days, through the near-catastrophe in human terms of the notorious drought year of 1976, to the heavily vegetated banks of today. For part of that time I was able to note down the wildlife on a daily basis during my work as a fishing warden.

My diaries reveal major changes in the bird life. On an occasion in April strong winds had held up the spring arrival of bird migrants, trapping them on the near continent. When the winds eventually relented they came pouring through, anxious to get to their breeding grounds to the north. A grass field adjacent to the causeway on the Brixworth bank was alive with yellow wagtails. I counted over 350 of them and many more must have been hidden in the folds in the ground. Every now and then a couple would erupt briefly in the air in a flurry of bright grass green and golden feathers as the males argued amongst themselves. Nowadays there are not more than a handful of pairs in the whole of the county. Changes in farming practices have led to them becoming a rare species.

On the credit side, on a biting cold grey spring morning not long after first light, a flock of 150 common terns appeared over the dam, heading low over the water, with purposeful wing-beats. I expected them to come to rest for awhile, but as I watched through my binoculars they kept going until they became the merest specks in the distant sky and finally disappeared, still set on their migratory course. In the past two decades they have become established as a regular breeding species at Pitsford, aided by the specially designed rafts made for them, and tethered out in the water away from foxes and other predators.

I once saw a cuckoo perched on a fence post, trying to mind its own business, when it was persistently and violently mobbed by a nesting pair of common terns. It seems they may have mistaken it for a hawk, and were intent on protecting their young. The cuckoo is another once familiar summer visitor that has become decidedly uncommon around here. In this case it is not easy to work out what has gone wrong, but I suspect it may be linked to a scarcity of its favourite food – hairy caterpillars.

While the plantations of trees around the banks were in their early stages of growth they were full of singing grasshopper warblers, chiffchaffs and willow warblers, whitethroats and lesser whitethroats, all of them migrants that are much reduced in numbers today. The taller conifers attracted lesser redpolls, a tiny finch about the size of a blue tit, and flocks of them would erupt from the treetops singing their buzzing little ditties. I spent hours trying to prove that they were breeding, and when I finally was able to glimpse the nest and eggs my patience was amply rewarded. The tiny closely woven nest was a mere three inches across and contained five minute eggs, white with just a hint of blue, and freckled with brown. Just two weeks later five young lesser redpolls left to take on the world.

In the bays towards Walgrave and Scaldwell, long before the heavy reed, sallow and willow growth of today, the marshy rough grassland supported breeding pairs of two more birds that today occur only as visitors, the redshank and the whinchat. The redshank is a wader, mainly earth-brown in colour with distinctive long red legs. I used to listen for its wild yodelling trill of a song in the early morning. The sight of it, regarding me warily through black as jet shoe-button eyes, sitting



on its four pear-shaped eggs hidden deep in a tuft of rushes, will be with me always.

The whinchat is another bird that has disappeared from much of the English lowlands, but at least three pairs used to nest at Pitsford. Not unduly afraid, the black, white and chestnut males would cling to a thistle stem scolding me with calls that sounded like knocking two pebbles together.

May I take this opportunity to thank everybody who came to the Country Eye/Red Lion fun and craft day. The weather wasn't very kind to us but we hope that you enjoyed the day. *-Brian Webster*



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Health takes centre stage at library open day

Brixworth Library was turned into a hive of activity on Thursday 22 September for its annual open day. This year there was a health and well-being theme. Organiser Jill Barber explains that she felt it important that the community was aware of the local services available on the topic, along with promoting the library facilities.

With today's hectic lives it's important to take control of our mental and physical health. It was fantastic to see so many resources in one room that can both be used to address current conditions and help prevent future problems.

There was a great turn out from the village with a variety of information stands from local contributors as well as organisations which were further afield.

Representatives from Brixworth Parish Nurses, Brixworth Country Park, Surestart, Brixworth based Complementary Therapists Balancing Health, the National Association for the Blind, Arthritis Care, East Midlands Ambulance Services, Age UK, Jane Simons Fitness, Rowan Holistics and Changing Minds, all spoke passionately about their area of expertise.

Fancy volunteering? A fantastic cause is Brixworth First Responders who attend 999 scenes ahead of ambulances. A four day training course is provided. The only prerequisite is you need to be over 18, fit and healthy with a valid driving licence. To find out more call 0796 4162918.

Matt, the ranger at the Country Park, is also after helpers for a pocket park scheme. This is a great opportunity to get out into the fresh air, make some new friends and get some exercise. The next event is on Saturday 3rd December and is a trees day at Brampton Valley Way. For further details call 883920.

Parish nurse Margaret Lawes has worked tirelessly for the community since retiring, along with Elaine Musgrove. These two lovely ladies give invaluable support to Brixworth and the surrounding areas offering an array of services including cancer and bereavement support, armchair exercises and help understanding doctor's advice and medication. You can contact the parish nurses on 07832 104405 but please be aware they are volunteers and will get back to you as soon as they can.

Complementary therapy taster sessions were available and proved very popular from Balancing Health Holistic Therapies who are based in the village. Louise Jensen told us: "I passionately believe that, with a little education and support, people can manage and maintain their own health." Louise offers a variety of therapies and workshops and can be contacted via her website www.balancinghealth.co.uk or on 07812 108913.

Jane Simons was giving demonstrations of Balletic Stretching, conditioning and toning exercises using ballet movements on a chair. This core strengthening programme is great for young and old alike and ideal to practice anywhere you have a chair once you are taught the movements. For details of Jane's classes call 07910 124716.

Due to the positive feedback following this event a huge well done to the library staff for undertaking the arrangements. We look forward to their next open day in the spring. -lj

Draughton News

This quarter has seen yet more flurries of activity from our tiny community! The Jumble Sale raised over £400 and we were delighted by the support. The Jams and Chutneys (The Jamboree of the title) were hugely popular – but maybe we will have to rebrand as one couple turned up expecting a more literal evocation of the word 'Jamboree'.

The Harvest Festival was well attended and the after service bidding for produce was its usual rumbustious affair!

The Harvest Supper was a super event – great food and great chat – a lovely way to welcome new folk to the village – and even to welcome back recent leavers, namely The Sharmans and The Goddards.

At the end of October we stepped out of our usual zone and hosted a concert which we called 'An Evening of Country Matters' at Maidwell Hall – very kindly loaned to us by the Headmaster. We



Left to right: Paul Shelley, Rachel Major, Paula Stockbridge and Henry Parkes

were privileged to have the stunning young soprano Rachel Major and her superb accompanist Henry Parkes, and the wonderful dramatic talents of Paul Shelley and his wife Paula Stockbridge. From Shakespeare to Stoppard and Arne to Ayckbourn – English words and music flowed from four wonderful artists and the audience were enchanted.

All of this fund raising means we now have a warm church to greet the coming winter – and thanks to all who have organised, cooked for or supported us. As I write we are preparing for the next Draughton Christmas Fayre on December 3rd, Loder Hall, Maidwell, after which, Draughton should be slipping into gentle hibernation until the Spring.

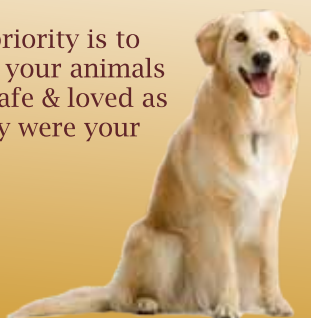
Happy Christmas!

- Kate Calnan

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Putting the Shine on All Saints

There was a fantastic turnout for the Northamptonshire County Council's Shine event at All Saints' Church, Brixworth on Saturday 17th September. Hundreds of people flocked to see the illuminations in and outside the church as well as to listen to the Brixworth Primary School choir and the choir of All Saints' Church. In addition, there were various audio-visual displays and a specially created wedding dress brought to life with photos of couples married at All Saints' (*bottom, right*). At the front and in the Heritage Centre there were various examples of local children's artwork, including models of the church (*above, right*). Altogether, it was a most successful night and an amazing experience for the people of Brixworth.

— Jane Neill



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Christmas?

Christmas is nearly upon us and preparations are in full swing. Shops full, adverts at their peak and the first Christmas trees appearing in the village. Have you ever asked why? What is Christmas really about? It seems that this celebration has moved a long way from its original roots. There are so many good things about Christmas – families together, children's delight as they open presents, good food, and what is often called the sheer magic of Christmas. But is that all that it means?

Two thousand years ago a baby was born – announced by angels to shepherds and born in lowly circumstances - the Son of God came to earth. God choosing to be with us – but why would He? The Bible helps us understand this in the gospel of John where he says "for God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son that whoever believes in Him will not perish but have everlasting life". The birth of Jesus was the start of something amazing that would ultimately lead to His death on a cross as a sacrifice for our sin.

There are many opportunities over the Christmas period for us to remind ourselves of what the root of the Christmas festival is – we would love to see you at any of our Services including the outdoor Nativity, details of which are set out below.

May I take this opportunity of wishing you all a very Happy Christmas and a New Year blessed by God.

Every blessing

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Phil".

Phil Walter (Revd)

Contact: Phil on 882040

Christmas Celebration – Outdoor Nativity

Come and join us for the great Family Event!

4 p.m. on Sunday 18th December and at 4.45p.m. have hot drinks and mince pies together in the Centre.

For the past ten years or so BCF has produced a Nativity scene interspersed with carols and other things in the area outside the Library & Community Centre. With the use of multimedia, live donkeys (thanks to David Hamson) children dressed as shepherds and angels and kings, and amazing effects it is not to be missed.

Come and join us for the great Family Event!



Christianity EXPLORED



Operation Christmas Child Shoebbox Appeal



By the time you receive this Bulletin it is likely that nearly 2000 shoeboxes would have been sent to Kyrgyzstan. We will give you final numbers in the next Bulletin but want to thank you for all the efforts you put in to make such a difference to so many children who would receive nothing for Christmas if it wasn't for your generosity.

One life.
What's it all about?

Would you like to explore the Christian faith in a relaxed atmosphere? Start with a meal and then using very helpful material learn and discuss the true meaning of life. This is a great way of finding out more. If you are interested then contact Mark on 01604 403839 or email markp.bcfcommunityworker@virginmedia.com for more details

Messy Church has arrived!



We have been so encouraged by the response families have made in coming to Messy Church – a real family event of fun, laughter, food, stories, prayer and much more. Why not join us – the next dates are: **27th November 2011, 22nd January & March 18th 2012.**

Christmas Services & Activities!

- Wednesday 14th December Pensioners Christmas Lunch at the Olive Branch (you need to book)
- Sunday 18th December 4 p.m. – Outdoor Carol Service at the Library & Community Centre
- Sunday 25th December 10.30 a.m. – Family Christmas Morning Service at the School

We also take Carol Services at Pytchley Court Nursing Home, Boniface House and Saxon House – if you want to join us please contact Phil who will give you the details.

BCF Weekly events

- Sunday:** 09:45 – 10:30 Informal gathering
11:15 – 12:30 Main Service of Worship (including Junior Church and Creche)
- Monday:** 20:00 – 21:30 Prayer Meeting in the Olive Branch
- Tuesday:** 19:30 – 21:00 TNT – for Teenagers*
- Wednesday:** 20:00 – 21:30 Home study Groups
- Thursday:** 10:00 – 11:30 Olive Shoots – a Mums & Tots group*
- Friday:** 17:00 – 18:00 Dynamites Children's Club – age 5-7 years*
18:15 – 19:15 Dynamites Children's Club – age 8-11*
(*held at the Library & Community Centre)

Well that's a bit about us. If you would like to know more about anything in this leaflet or to know more about the Christian faith, then phone Phil on 882040 or go online at www.bcfchurch.co.uk

The Olive Branch

COFFEE SHOP

More than just a Coffee Shop, The Olive Branch is the place to meet, be kept informed of Village life and receive a warm welcome.

Pensioners lunch on a Wednesday at 12 noon (need to book on 889030 or in person)

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For more information phone The Olive Branch on 889030

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Churchwardens: Mrs S. Woodhead, 8
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Mr M. Lewis,
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Close

FROM THE VICAR

Dear People of Brixworth,

A recent exhibition at the British Museum, entitled 'Treasures of Heaven', was largely concerned with Christian relics of the past or, more precisely, the containers or 'reliquaries' which housed the relics. Many of these reliquaries are very beautiful (despite having often lost their precious jewels) and their costliness and glitter emphasized the spiritual value of their contents which, on the whole, were not very beautiful to behold! To the mediaeval mind and for many Christians today the relics of Saints (especially body parts) and a few relating to Christ and His Mother were regarded as beyond price. This shouldn't be surprising to us when we consider them to have survived from an age of faith, very different from our own. Furthermore, I doubt whether there are many adults in Brixworth who do not treasure possessions, photographs, videos and even body parts that belonged to close relatives and friends now deceased.

The relics emanated spiritual power to believers when close to them and supported them in their pilgrimage of faith through this world. Some very special relics related to Christ Himself such as His Cross, Crown of Thorns and even His Cradle but a few related to His earthly body such as His foreskin (removed at His circumcision) and, very intriguingly to me, his umbilical cord. Although this particular relic (whatever it actually was) met destruction by a bishop in the early eighteenth century, the reliquary still survives – a very beautiful statuette of the Blessed Virgin Mary holding the Christ child (on loan from a Paris museum).

Some of you may well be tempted to scoff about the existence of Christ's umbilical cord and the more Protestant-minded among you might shudder with horror and contempt BUT please don't miss the significance of the object to mediaeval Christians and to present-day believers in Christ. Although we believe Him to have been "BORN OF THE VIRGIN MARY" (through the agency of the Holy Spirit of God) we believe that as a thoroughly human being, Christ experienced all the normal stages of human birth including the attachment to His earthly mother through an umbilical cord. We may be rather sceptical about even a small piece of Christ's umbilical cord still existing in the eighteenth century after His birth but the importance of the Christian belief that God became man in Christ must never be underestimated. It is fundamental to the belief that Jesus Christ is not only the Light of the world but also its Saviour and source of eternal life.

There have been plenty of heretics through the ages who have not believed that God became man and there are plenty today who profess to be Christians and even regular churchgoers who don't believe in God's incarnation. They believe He was a good man and said some good things but they don't believe He was divine. Yet these sorts of belief make nonsense of the Christian faith no matter how much Professor Dawkins and many others accuse us of believing in fairy tales and thus deceiving others.

Unfortunately, too many today want the Christian religion 'a la carte', picking and choosing to believe only those bits that appeal to them, ignoring the rest and watering down the faith of the Church so that it becomes a vague philosophy of life rather than a vehicle of salvation through belief in God's revelation of Himself in Christ and our relation with Him through baptism and the work of the Holy Spirit in us. Christ's umbilical cord (there must have been one unless Christ was a phantom) and His subsequent 'bloody' circumcision as a member of the Jewish race are vital pointers to His humanity but also reminders of God's great love and humility in coming among us and bothering with us, as we are regularly reminded in the Christian celebration of Christmas.

With my prayers & good wishes,
Yours sincerely,

Anthony J. Watkins

P.S. How many of you know about Brixworth's Relic, reputed to be a bone of St Boniface and its mediaeval stone reliquary?

N.B. Is anyone interested in acquiring an upright piano that formerly belonged to Maidwell Prep. School? I don't want anything for it but there may be some expense in moving it from here. Viewing can be arranged for anyone genuinely interested in acquiring it.



*The Circumcision of the Christ Child by G. Bellini
National Gallery, London*

Sundays

7.45 a.m. Holy Eucharist (first Sunday of the month)
10.15 a.m. Sung Eucharist & Address
6.00 p.m. Evensong

Services

Weekdays

Tuesdays 9.30 a.m. Holy Eucharist
Fridays 7.45 a.m. Holy Eucharist
For other days, see weekly sheet in Church

ALL SAINTS' CALENDAR Dec. 2011, Jan. & Feb. 2012

DECEMBER	4	Sunday	Advent II	Services at 7.45 a.m. & 10.15 a.m. & 6.00 p.m.
	8	Thursday	Immaculate Conception of the B. V. Mary	
	11	Sunday	Advent III	Services at 10.15 a.m. & 6.00 p.m.
	15	Thursday	School Christingle Service	10.00 a.m.
	18	Sunday	Advent IV	Services at 10.15 a.m. & 6.00 p.m.
	22	Thursday	Brixworth Village Carol Service	7.30 p.m.
	24	Saturday Christmas Eve	9.00 a.m. Holy Eucharist; 2.00 p.m. Crib Service for the young - all ages welcome 5.00 Carol Service at Holcot followed by Vigil Eucharist (First Mass of the Nativity) 11.30 p.m. Blessing of the Crib & Midnight Mass	
	25	Sunday	Christmas Day 7.45 Mass of the Dawn; 9.00 a.m. Mass of the Day N.B. Please check Christmas Day times nearer the time	
	26	Monday	St Stephen - the first martyr	Service at 10.30 a.m.
	27	Tuesday	St John the Evangelist	Service at 10.30 a.m.
	28	Wednesday	The Holy Innocents	Service at 10.30 a.m.
JANUARY	1	Sunday	Circumcision & Naming of Christ New Year's Day	10.15 a.m. Sung Eucharist & Address No early service nor evensong this Sunday
	8	Sunday	Epiphany of Christ	Services at 7.45 a.m. & 10.15 a.m. & 6.00 p.m.
	15	Sunday	Baptism of Christ	Services at 10.15 a.m. & 6.00 p.m.
	18-25	Annual week of prayer for Christian Unity		
	22	Sunday	Epiphany III	Services at 10.15 a.m. & 6.00 p.m.
FEBRUARY	29	Sunday	Presentation of Christ (Candlemas)	Services at 10.15 a.m. & 6.00 p.m.
	2	Thursday	10.00 a.m. Brixworth School Service for Candlemas	
	5	Sunday	called Septuagesima	Services at 10.15 a.m. & 6.00 p.m.
	12	Sunday	called Sexagesima	Services at 10.15 a.m. & 6.00 p.m.
	19	Sunday	called Quinquagesima	Services at 10.15 a.m. & 6.00 p.m.
	22	Wednesday	Ash Wednesday	Holy Eucharist at 10.00 a.m. & 7.30 p.m.
26	Sunday	Lent I	Services at 10.15 a.m. & 6.00 p.m.	

FROM THE REGISTERS

HOLY BAPTISM	Sunday	14 August	Ruby Jane Myles Isla Elizabeth Caple	34 Grass Slade 2 Pytchley Way
	Sunday	28 August	Louie Nicholas Horne	9 Dairy Close
	Sunday	9 October	Charlotte Abigail Reeves	2 Burrows Vale
HOLY MATRIMONY	Saturday	17 Sept.	Peter James Knight & Sheryl Ann Jones	Uxbridge, Middlesex
HOLY BURIAL OR CREMATION	Monday	25 July	Florence Rosalie Clements	18 Saxon House
	Tuesday	23 August	Harry "Dick" Faulkner	65 Brampton Way
	Friday	2 September	Thomas Walter Philpot	3 Far Brook
	Thursday	8 September	Eva Pack (stillborn)	60 Shelleycotes Road
	Friday	16 September	Lucy Margaret Reeves	7 Chiltern Ave, Duston
	Thursday	29 September	John Cockerill	13 Ardington Rd., Northampton
	Saturday	8 October	Kathleen Nancy Bounds	1 Brampton Way
	Saturday	8 October	Henry Dennett	28 Saxon House
Weds.	12 October	Terence Mabbutt	Stoneleigh, Saneco Lane	

SERVICES

Sundays		Weekdays		
7.45 a.m.	Holy Eucharist (first Sunday of the month)	Tuesdays	9.30 a.m.	Holy Eucharist
10.15 a.m.	Sung Eucharist & Address	Fridays	7.45 a.m.	Holy Eucharist
6.00 p.m.	Evensong	For other days, see weekly sheet in Church		

Brixworth Parish Council
13th Edition, Winter 2012



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Newsletter

A Word from the Chair



Hello and welcome to my second attempt to write something of interest regarding the work of the Brixworth Parish Council. Since my last effort there has been much going on and, no doubt it will continue. In the last few days the proposed development of Mabbutt's Wood Yard on Station Road, was finally rejected on appeal – much to the relief of many councillors who held grave concern about additional traffic through the "old" village. But Outline Planning Permission for 15 houses in an extension of Eaglehurst was approved, even though the Parish Council and many residents local to the proposed development voiced objection.

Next, will be the Carter Jonas Outline Planning application; that will be heard at Daventry in the near future.

Meanwhile, changes to the Planning Legislation that the Government has put in motion draw ever closer. The Parish Council established a Working Group to assess this new legislation, engage the people of Brixworth for their advice and prepare a draft Neighbourhood Plan. The goal is to take advantage of this legislation to establish local control over future growth and we would like your views about how you think the village can be developed for the future; be it planning for infrastructure or housing.

I would like to remind you that the Parish Council is, and has been, two councillors short for some time. So, if you think you might like to contribute to the future of Brixworth; even between now and next May's Election, I would urge you to apply to the Parish Council Clerk.

Until the next time...
Mike Lacey

More Dog Fouling Controls thanks to Brixworth Young People

Dog fouling continues to be an issue that bothers many Brixworth residents. However, Brixworth Youth Club has proved that local voices can count. They researched how extensive this problem had become in local recreation areas and in November last year made an impressive presentation to the Parish Council and Daventry District Council's Environmental Manager. Following this, Daventry District Council has announced a formal consultation on introducing new Dog Control Orders. These would make it an offence to fail to remove dog faeces, not to have a dog on a lead when directed to do so by an authorised officer, and to permit a dog to enter a playground where dogs are excluded. These strengthen existing dog laws that require all dogs in public places to wear a tag with their owner's name and address.

Improving St David's Playing Fields

If you are fed up of the tatty state of facilities in St David's playing fields—so are we! The Council has set up a working group to plan improvements to this important recreation ground for the village. The group has been tasked with regenerating the tennis court and the children's play area, and to search for funding. Local residents and the sports clubs have been invited to give their views. The first meeting took place on 18th October.



Meet your Parish Councillors

The Parish Council will hold a surgery in the DDC office at the Community Centre on

3 December 10 am - 12 noon

Come along and chat to your Councillors about any matters you would like to bring to our attention.

New Councillors

Richard Vizor and Kevin Parker have recently become Parish Councillors.

Richard is 41 and lives in Lesson Road. He moved to Brixworth with his wife in 2000, and they have since had three children. He originally comes from another hilltop town—Malmesbury in Wiltshire. His wife grew up in Brixworth. They are both members of Brixworth Christian Fellowship and are actively involved in youth work at BCF. Richard works as a Marketing Executive at Bluewater Marketing on Ferro Fields Industrial Estate. He joined the PC so that he could give back to the local community and he looks forward to the challenges Brixworth offers.

Kevin has lived in Brixworth for 26 years and is married with two daughters. He is a Business Director of a European chemical company. He joined the Council because he felt he wanted to put something back into the community, using his skills. He believes firmly in keeping Brixworth a village and in supporting the local businesses and amenities, and is concerned about any further expansion of the village.



A Plan for Brixworth

In anticipation of the Localism Bill becoming law next year, the Council has set up a Working Group to develop a draft Neighbourhood Plan. This will represent the views of the village about how you would like to see Brixworth develop in future. The Group meets every fortnight and is currently consulting with a wide range of different community groups. Please get in touch if you would like to join this discussion.

Could You be a Parish Councillor?

You should consider becoming a Parish Councillor if

- You want to do something positive for your community
- You want to spend your time productively
- You can think, listen and act locally.

In **May 2012** the current Parish Council comes to the end of its period of office. It may seem a long way off, but the Council is already thinking about the next election.

As at every election, some people will stand down and, given sufficient people willing to stand, some may not be re-elected. We would encourage everyone reading this to consider offering themselves as candidates and take the opportunity to influence the way amenities in our community are managed. It is becoming increasingly important that we are able to draw upon the best skills in our community as the Localism Bill, currently working its way through Parliament, is expected to give local communities unprecedented powers to shape their future development.

Parish Councillors are unpaid and the minimum commitment is to attend usually two meetings a month – one committee meeting and one meeting of the full council – and to be available to take a councillor's surgery on a Saturday morning approximately twice a year. Look out for the display in the Library/Community Centre foyer in mid January 2012.

Disappointing Response Rate from Survey

During the Summer, we asked you to rate us on how well we look after amenities in the village. For the first time, we posted an online survey on our website as well as distributing it through the Bulletin. However, we only received 123 responses! As this does not give us a representative view of the population, we shall consider alternative ways of consulting with you in future.

The responses we did receive gave us a good "thumbs up" - satisfaction was higher for the amenities the Parish Council manages, such as the recreation fields, than for things we can only influence, such as parking.

Higher levels of satisfaction with crime and anti-social behaviour, as well as with grass cutting, appeared to justify the Council's decisions to invest in these areas. The main areas identified for improvement were dog fouling, speeding and parking on grass verges.

Parish Council Meetings

Members of the public are welcome to attend any Parish Council meeting. These are held in the Community Centre. Agendas are displayed at least four days before the meeting.

Highways & Environment	Tuesday, 6 December	7.30pm
Planning	Monday, 19 December	7.30pm
Full Council	Tuesday, 20 December	7.15pm
Planning	Monday, 9 January	7.30pm
Recreation & Amenity	Tuesday, 17 January	7.30pm
Planning	Monday, 30 January	7.30pm
Full Council	Tuesday, 31 January	7.15pm
Highways & Environment	Tuesday, 7 February	7.30pm
Planning	Monday, 20 February	7.30pm
Full Council	Tuesday, 28 February	7.15pm



For more information or to contact your Parish Councillors go to our website at

www.brixworthpc.org.uk

Or contact Parish Clerk Jane Macken on **01604 881243**

Grey clouds over Open Studios

Brixworth Library often has an arts exhibition upstairs - but once a year, the library gets transformed into a makeshift studio as part of the annual Open Studios project.

This year, over 450 people came to visit and view paintings and photos by four local artists: painter Belinda Collett, landscape photographer Cath Evans (both Brixworth residents) along with Alison Bull, who lives in Boughton, and East Hunsbury-based Liz Sharpe. Between them, the put on display a fantastic spread of over 100 paintings and photographs, covering a hugely diverse array of topics and styles.

The idea behind Open Studios is simple: For a fortnight in September, artists across the region open up their studios to welcome in visitors. For art-lovers across the county, this is a fantastic opportunity to see the masters quite literally at work, to explore the artistic talent of the region, and to discover new artists. For the artists, it's not only an opportunity to showcase their art and make a name for themselves, but also to directly interact with all those who appreciate fine art. Many of those make a day of it and travel from one artist to another, mixing the beauty of their work with the Northamptonshire countryside they drive through.

However, not every artist is lucky enough to have their own studio. That's where Brixworth library comes in. For three years now, local artists without the benefit of suitable studio space of their own have gotten together and taken over the upper floor in the library for the Open Studios fortnight and till the rest of the month.

"It would be great if I had the space at home, but unfortunately that's not feasible," explains Evans. However, the project is facing uncertain times: with council budgets overstretched, arts projects such as this have suffered funding cutbacks. Visitor numbers are also fickle. "We have had noticeably fewer visitors this year than last year," says Alison. Obviously it didn't help that due to a clerical error, the *Brixworth Bulletin* neglected to include an announcement in the September issue, for which we can only apologise. Another factor may be that people are keeping a tighter grip on the purse strings at the moment, and feel uncomfortable visiting an art exhibition when they've got no intention of buying. "It would be a shame if people were put off for that reason - it's about appreciating art, not just about sales," says Cath.



In Brixworth, there's an added complication because the library has to develop additional sources of income and so Daventry District Council is considering alternative uses for the space. While no decision has been made as yet, the artists are worried they may have to find a different space for their makeshift studio next year. While there may still be a wall to hang a few paintings and photos, the artists expect that in future they won't have anything like the amount of space they had in the past.

In addition, the Open Studios project no longer receives funding from Northamptonshire Council to cover the cost of advertising, producing brochures etc. Organisers will have to rely on donations and support from local businesses to fund the event in 2012.

"What we really could use is a donor with a love for art, who can support us," says Alison. "Or someone with a good sized empty room we could use - it doesn't have to be a studio. A barn would be perfect, for example." Cath adds: "Though of course we wouldn't say no if the likes of the National Trust or English Heritage could throw open the doors and let us use a room in one of their properties!"

Needless to say, if you live anywhere in or around the area and have got an empty studio, barn, or simply a large room that you think could be suitable - please don't hesitate to get in touch. Contact the artists directly, or get in touch with the *Bulletin* and we'll gladly pass on your details. -cfw

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Introducing...

Chris Heaton-Harris, MP



Through a fortunate accident of geography coinciding with the internet age, it is much easier to reach our local MP than ever before. You might bump into Chris Heaton-Harris at the Fish Bar, or at Brixworth Stores where he collects his papers, because he, his wife and two daughters all live in Pitsford. He is chairman of BRANE (the Brixworth campaign against new estates)

and holds a surgery every three months at the Community Centre.

Our MP is also tech savvy. Did you know you can track his expenses online? He also writes a blog where he posts his views on the most common enquiries he receives. And his Twitter account allows constituents to follow his diary on an almost daily basis. (In the week I wrote this article, as well as listening to speeches by the Governors of the Bank of England and the European Central Bank, he appeared to have been taking jive lessons from the Mayor of Northampton!)

Chris Heaton-Harris has been the Conservative MP for the Daventry constituency since May 2010. Before becoming our MP he represented us at the European Parliament and lived in Overstone.

Perhaps he is a born politician as he is a football referee in his spare time ("a brilliant one", he adds!) He says he has "always" been attracted to politics, and remembers watching the election results when Margaret Thatcher came to power when he was 12. He thinks his interest in current affairs started when he was helping his father's fruit and vegetable business in New Covent Garden as he was growing up (he was born in London) and got annoyed at the food inspectors telling them to throw away perfectly good stock at the end of the day.

Chris says you either love or hate politics and he is clearly addicted. He says he is fascinated by all the different kinds of people he meets in his job and enjoys finding out what can and cannot be achieved. This can be either wonderful or frustrating.

The highlights of the past eighteen months for him have naturally included making his Maiden Speech in the House of Commons. He says he felt under immense pressure, heightened when the Whip pointed out to him that both Churchill and Disraeli had made their Maiden Speeches only seats away from where he was sitting.

Chris is proud that he is generally able to keep on top of his constituency correspondence and is pleased with the quality of research his team undertakes into enquiries they receive. This has even included sorting out the customer service problems a gentleman had with various household appliances! Obviously, Chris would prefer to hear from his constituents about where he can help when government services fall down. The vast majority of cases he deals with concern the Child Support Agency.

The main challenges that have been preoccupying him recently include Daventry's successful bid for a Technical College. All the local schools have backed this initiative and Chris has been liaising

with local employers. Windfarm and planning applications also keep him busy. While the constituency generally enjoys a low level of unemployment, he does not feel complacent about the current economic climate and has been taking foreign investors, such as Air India, around the area. He has also been getting to know local banking executives in case he needs to press them about their lending levels to businesses.

In the House of Commons, Chris is an advocate of the Special Olympic Movement for children and adults with intellectual disabilities. He is also pushing to improve the services offered to parents of stillborn children, as a result of some friends of his having suffered such a tragedy.

On the particular threats facing Brixworth from planning applications, Chris says he is advising all villages in his constituency to maintain their village envelope but remain open to development within it. He is a strong advocate of Localism and of communities taking more powers into their own hands as he was a co-signatory to a Conservative paper "Direct Democracy" in 2004-5.

I asked him what message he would like to give his Brixworth constituents and he replied, "I'm very easy to contact". So, there really is no excuse for not making our views heard at the highest levels in the land!

You can reach Chris at www.heatonharris.com
His blog is at <http://daventrycalling.livejournal.com>
His tweets at @chhcalling – including some pretty awful jokes! -jf

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U3A report

Membership of U3A in Brixworth is continuing to rise steadily as people hear from us by word of mouth, or find our website at www.u3asites.org.uk/brixworth. In December we're looking forward to a festive meeting followed by Music and Memories of a Fifties Childhood in January and a presentation on Rockingham Castle in February.

Group activities continue to expand: the Rambling Group now has a small Strollers section which visits the same area but enjoys a shorter walk than the main group. There was a record turnout of thirty-six for the October walk and support promises to be strong in November at Brigstock. There is no walk in December but in January we will head to the Bramptons. The Theatre Group enjoyed visits to The Royal to see Basket Case in September and Blood Brothers at the Derngate in November and the Bridge Group for beginners is going strong.

Christmas lunch this year is to be held at The Three Swans in Market Harborough on Thursday 8th December and we're expecting another good turnout. The Badminton Club



is now in full swing at Old Village Hall and the Table Tennis group now plays two tables at Pitsford Village Hall twice a month.

– Gerry Dobson

Join the University of the Third Age

U3A is a national organisation for the over-50s with 750 clubs and 240,000 members and growing.

Its aim is to provide a meeting ground for friendship, fellowship, amusement and the opportunity of further education. To this end, U3A holds monthly meetings with speakers, social events and regular 'interest groups'. At national level, U3A holds day and residential courses and offers internet learning and educational programmes.

The interest groups offer many opportunities to socialise and cover topics such as French conversation, rambling, cooking, genealogy, theatre, away days, art, gardening, scrabble, poetry, table tennis, bridge, badminton, table games, armchair travel, craft, and others.

Brixworth and District U3A meet at 1.30 for 2-4pm on the first Wednesday of the month in Brixworth Village Hall. Enjoy a cup of tea or coffee and a biscuit, listen to the speaker, and meet, mingle and talk with other members before you register on your chosen interest group.

To find out more, contact membership secretary Peter Davies on 880401. –gd

History Society explores Brussels

The History Society has returned from a five-day visit to Brussels which proved to be an exciting and fascinating city, especially the chocolate shops for the ladies and the beers for the men! Some of us even managed to visit the official palace of the king of Belgium which happened to be open, and free to enter. There was also a visit to the Diamond Museum in Antwerp.



However the highlight of the trip was going to Waterloo and actually seeing the site of the famous battle. The Wellington Museum, located in the inn that became his headquarters, was interesting as the guides were very knowledgeable. Most ventured to climb the Lion Mound, some 226 steps, which gave a panorama over the site. On the way home we spent some time in Bruges, the 'Venice of the North'. Again the weather was good and everyone enjoyed themselves.

Next year we plan a visit to Holland, staying in The Hague, with visits to The Mauritshuis to see the 'Girl with the Pearl Earring' by Vermeer; Delft and Amsterdam for the Van Gogh Museum or Anne Frank's house. For more details, contact Pauline Kirton on 880033.

– Pauline Kirton

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Brixworth & Scaldwell Scouts

The Scout Group came back in for the autumn term raring to go. During the summer, some of the Scouts took part in a week's camp at Beaudesert near Cannock Chase. They all had a great time and took part in a variety of activities such as go-carting, mountain biking and much more. The leaders said the camp was most memorable for the laughter of the young people who took part.

beavers and cubs

The Beaver Colony have a jam packed Autumn term that included some science for all those Brainiacs we have, as well as a looking at diverse religions, and world trade. They didn't miss out on the traditional bonfire and fireworks – albeit it was a little smoky indoors after they had gone home! They will all be looking forward to the Christmas party.

Cubs have been putting on their creative thinking caps to design and build bridges and build a Guy for the bonfire. Getting 'spooky' for Halloween they went on a Bat Walk, and all dressed up for their Halloween Party. They have worked hard on filling shoeboxes for Operation Christmas Child and deserve their Christmas party.

Dragon's Den

The Scouts have been in the Dragons Den this term. They have been taking part in the

Country Eye craft day raises cash for charity

Despite heavy rain in the morning, our charity craft and fun day raised £750 for the Jennifer Trust for Spinal Muscular Atrophy. This was especially in memory of Alessia who died earlier this year, aged just seven months. Alessia's parents, who attended, were very moved by the efforts of all who helped make the day a success.

Country Eye would especially like to thank Linda and James Newman, Jackie Bird and Chris, Graham Reed, Ben Walas, also the Webster family and friends Clive, Michelle, Emilie and Sophie. Raffle or Competition prizes were generously donated by Allison's Beauty, Blason's Garage, Daisy Roots, Earls Barton Post Office, Earls Barton Posties, Earls Barton Sports, Little India (Earls Barton), Lovell's Hardware, Northampton Town FC, and Richard and Maureen Turney.

Thanks also to Garry and his staff at the Red Lion Inn. In the early morning downpour he opened up the entire ground floor of the inn so the crafters could set up their stalls indoors. And finally to the crafters and all those who attended for helping to make the occasion a success.
– Brian Webster

Entrepreneur Challenge Badge and had to present their business ideas to the 'Dragons'. If you see Scouts selling their wares or offering their services please support them in their business ventures in the build up to Christmas. Proceeds will be going toward future Scouting activities within the group. They also successfully took part in the district Star Trek event, and are looking forward to discovering more about photography.

Explorers were also involved in the Star Trek event and have been finding out more about country pursuits – they skinned and gutted some rabbits and then cooked them on an open fire – Bear Gryls beware!

tackling the waiting list

We have made inroads into our waiting lists and have welcomed many new young people into the group this term. However we have also added more to our lists. A big help has been the new leaders that have joined us – I would like to say a big welcome and many thanks to them all. Many hands make light work as they say and we would welcome anyone who has some time to offer to help us out, whether on section evening nights or with the executive. Please look out for your name on the parent helper rotas.

The executive has started to get to work. At the last meeting the Admissions and

Subscription Policies were reviewed in light of current Scout guidelines.

The main points of the Admission Policy were the admission criteria once the young person reaches the appropriate age, which in order of precedence are:

1. Already a member (i.e. transferred from another section when moving up or from another group when moving into the village)
2. Parent becomes a uniformed leader (irrespective of section). At the discretion of the Executive this may be applied in the case of a parent who commits to being a permanent helper.
3. Parent becomes the Chair, Secretary or Treasurer on the Executive Committee.
4. Sibling already in the group
5. Time on waiting list

The main points of the subscriptions policy were the bi-annual billing of the subscriptions and the eligibility of leaders to a discounted subscription for one child who participates in Scouts.

To find out more about Scouts in general please visit <http://scouts.org.uk/>. To find out more about Brixworth and Scaldwell Scout Group Kim Phillips, Group Scout Leader on 07815 070878 or info@armarketing.co.uk
–Kim Phillips

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Love film? Join the UK Film School

Do you know a young person who is interested in film and would love to spend their Saturday mornings exploring a real film set?

UK Film School gives students aged 11-16 an opportunity to produce and star in their own film over a period of 12 Saturday mornings. The students will be involved in every stage of the films development from script writing, casting and location scouting through to the film shoot and editing. No previous experience is necessary, just a passion for film and creative ideas.

UK Film School enables their students to gain firsthand experience of being part of a professional film crew. A team of professional film makers helps the students and teaches them the tricks of the trade. Students will not only experience making their own film but also get to show off their work to their friends and family at a Cineworld cinema.

The course was created by actor and director Gary Halliday who wanted to give young film makers a taste of the exciting world of film and TV. Gary has worked in the industry for over 20 years and has appeared in feature films, theatre and popular television soaps including The Bill and Eastenders.

The course will be held during the spring term at Moulton School. Fees total £318 per term. For a chance to win a free place in the spring term at Moulton, send the UK Film School either a clip of something you filmed, an idea you have for a film (in no more than 50 words) or explain, in 50 words or less, why the Film School should have you in their crew. Entries should be submitted to info@ukfilmschool.org.uk; the closing date is 9 January 2012.

For more information, visit www.ukfilmschool.org.uk

Brixworth Village Hall needs you!

Have you ever thought about joining the Village Hall committee? The committee is desperately seeking enthusiastic people to join our dwindling numbers. The Village Hall is a fantastic facility which many villages would be jealous of but it needs a committee of interested people to keep it running. As a charity, the Village Hall is required by law to have a committee and if numbers do not increase, this could result in the loss of this valuable village resource.

Many groups use the hall on a regular basis. Little Acorns offer a first class pre-school education for children aged between two and school age. Brixworth Drama Group stages two to three productions every year and also rehearses at the hall – watch out for the panto in January. There are plenty of opportunities to get fit; circuit training on Mondays 7-9pm, streetdance classes for children aged 5 -16 on Tuesdays from 4.30pm, zumba on Wednesdays 5.30pm and Fridays 6.30pm, dancetime for adults on Wednesdays 6.30pm and Tai Chi on Saturdays 11am. New for January 2012 is hoop dance. Every last Sunday in the month there is an antique fair. Other groups who use the hall include; the Women's Institute, the History Society, U3A

and blood donors. The hall is also available to hire for private functions such as wedding receptions and parties. It boasts a large hall, stage area and a brand new kitchen.

Hayley, the administrator, runs the hall on a day-to-day basis. She does a brilliant job but desperately needs the support of an active committee.

So what does being on the committee involve? The committee makes decisions concerning the upkeep of the hall, supports Hayley, and raises funds to help pay for general maintenance. It meets about four times a year, the meetings only last about an hour and they are very informal. Any other communication is done by email.

Please, consider joining the Village Hall committee, it is not time consuming and you really will make a difference. The more people who are on the committee the easier it will be to ensure the Village Hall remains open and continues to be a valuable asset for the village. Check out the website at www.brixworthvillagehall.co.uk

If you are interested please contact: administrator@brixworthvillagehall.co.uk or call Hayley on 07531 873471 - Sue l'Anson

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Letters to the Editor

Dear Team Members,

I picked up your *Brixworth Bulletin* in a health centre waiting room. Loved reading it and now I am wondering if you could possibly help me contact someone who I worked with during the war.

Her name was Chris and I have only spoken to her once in Waitrose shopping centre. The second time I saw Chris was again in Waitrose, but unfortunately I was kept talking with someone who had just lost her husband. Chris stood waiting very patiently for ages, but this lady was crying and I was unable to get away. By the time I did, Chris had gone.

It has plagued me for years that Chris might have thought that I didn't want to be bothered to talk to her, but I would sincerely love to tell her what was happening.

I know from our meeting that she married and lived in Brixworth. I think at the time she had a son or daughter who was going to university. Chris came from Sunderland - a lovely softly-soken Geordie. She would be in her 80s now and would remember me as Grace Richards (though my maiden name was Ward). If there is any chance you or one of your readers could put me in touch, I would be so very very grateful.

Grace Richards

(If you can help, please write to, phone or email the Bulletin and we'll pass the information on)

Dear Editor

I would like to know if there is anyone interested in reforming the Brixworth Camera Club, which seems to have gone into a terminal decline, I spoke with one of the previous members who said that the club had been inactive for a number of years.

In a village of 6,000 inhabitants, not to mention the surrounding villages, I think that there should be enough people in our catchment area who are sufficiently interested in photography to start up again and maintain a healthy and active membership.

If anyone is sufficiently interested in this, please email me at ian@tophams.net to arrange an inaugural meeting.

Ian Topham

Live @ the Youth Club

On a cold rainy September Sunday night, reminiscent of many Glastonbury festivals, a couple of local bands played at the Brixworth Youth Club.

Support was supplied by the band 'Tape', who were first on, and optimistically set up their equipment outside the doors of the club, but the weather soon forced them to retreat indoors.

The main band, 'Gladstone' (pictured below), play music and wear fashion from the Steampunk genre. Sadly, the weather forced some to make an early exit. Gladstone do have other gigs planned, so look out for further announcements. -Ian Topham



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Fifth birthday for Quercus

Quercus, Brixworth's unusually-named florist services, recently celebrated its fifth birthday. The company was started in October 2006 by Claire Lockwood.

Claire obtained her floristry qualification at Moulton Agricultural College and spent three years working in a local florist shop but found that having had two children, the logistics of combining working in a shop with doing the school run were difficult to work out. "Our idea was to provide the same service that you would get in a florist shop but in a flexible way, to fit in with family commitments," Claire tells the Bulletin. "By working from home, I can prep for my orders at 10pm when the children are in bed, if necessary."

Quercus consists of Claire and her friend and business partner, Abington-based Tara Adams, who also trained at Moulton College. At particularly busy times of year such as Christmas they employ more local people to help them out.

"We provide a full floristry service, gift bouquets, locally and nationwide, sympathy tributes, bridal flowers, and giftware," Claire says. "Our busiest time of year is undoubtedly Christmas, when we make our fresh holly wreaths, using local holly, ivy and other foliage. We sell these all around Northamptonshire, to personal customers, but also supply local businesses with them too, such as Mr Troop the Greengrocer."

Many of business' customers are from Brixworth and Abington. In addition there are customers from all over the country and even overseas who have found the company over the internet and want to send flowers to people in Northampton.

As for the name, Claire says that a lot of thought went into that. "Quercus is Latin for Oak. We like the fact that it is a bit unusual, people do tend to remember it."

Over the years the company has taken plenty of unusual requests. "Our favourite was a soldier serving in Afghanistan, who called us recently to order some flowers for his mum's birthday the following day. We were delighted that we were able to help him!" -cfw

New home care provider for the village

Care-at-home provider Bluebird Care is about to start offering its services to people in Brixworth and other West Northamptonshire towns and villages including Spratton, East and West Haddon, Kilsby, the Bramptons, Holdenby and Harlestone.

From the recently-opened office in Daventry, office owners and operators Rozina and Amirali Sayani together with their care manager Linda Jones plan to offer 'good old-fashioned service' and personalised care for all their customers and their family. By the end of the year, Bluebird expects to have created at least 20 jobs in the region.

Rozina and Amirali Sayani hope to enable their customers to achieve a fulfilling life with independence and dignity. Rozina said: "Our aim at Bluebird Care is to make life for our customers and their families more of a pleasure instead of a struggle. There are many people in the Northampton and Daventry area who are devoting much of their time to caring for a family member or friend giving them little time for themselves. We aim to help them get their life back; enabling them to spend more quality time with their family and friends knowing their loved one is receiving the best quality care".

Bluebird Care provides visits from 15 minutes (most care providers will only allow visits from 30 minutes), right up to comprehensive live-in care. Customers decide for themselves what services they need and draw up a care plan with the help of a care supervisor. Services provided range from help getting up and going to bed to additional services such as shopping, sitting services or days out.

If you're interested to join the team of carers, contact Linda on 01604 212476 or 01327 227084

Full-on dance

Ever heard of Natalie Murdoch? Not yet, but the chances are you will. Natalie is touted as one of the UK's finest up and coming choreographers. Natalie has recently choreographed 'The Prodigals', a brand new musical which received a four star review from The Times and a five star from What's on Stage during its launch at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Natalie has also extensively toured the UK and Europe, no mean feat for a 28-year-old.

Natalie is now teaching street dance in Brixworth Village Hall, every Tuesday during term time. Classes are 4.30-5.30 for 5-7 year olds, 5.45-6.45 for 8-11s, 7-8 for 12-16 year olds. The cost is £5 a class (payable on the door, though booking is recommended).

Natalie has proved very popular with the students she currently teaches. From January, she is planning to start running adult classes too – "a fantastic way to meet new people and to shape up after any Christmas over-indulgence," she says.

Natalie can be contacted on 07712159077 or email: info@fullondance.co.uk; her website is www.fullondance.co.uk

-lj



Christmas Fairs at Brixworth Village Hall

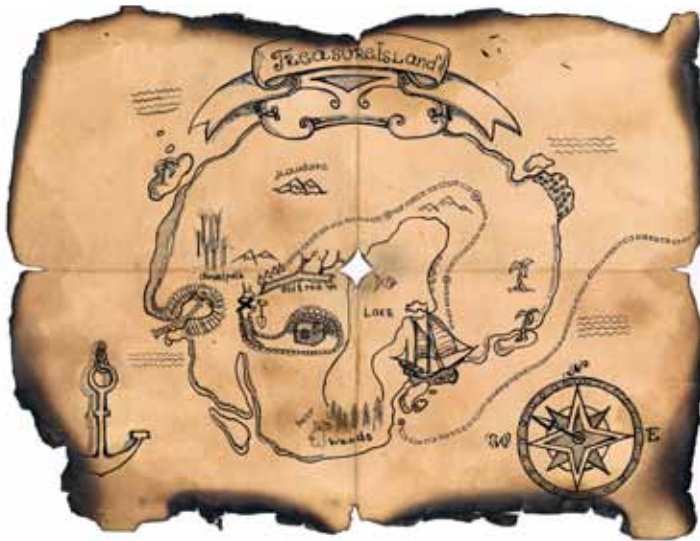


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A visit to Treasure Island



Brixworth Drama Group bring you a traditional winter pantomime, Treasure Island, in January 2012 at Brixworth Village Hall.

Treasure Island is based on the story by Robert Louis Stevenson. It tells of young Jim Hawkins who discovers a treasure map and is determined to seek Captain Flint's treasure. Unfortunately, his ship is taken over by the villainous Long John Silver and his compatriots who want the treasure for themselves. A thrilling and hilarious adventure follows which includes plenty of opportunities for cheering and booing;

traditional songs and buckets of corny jokes, in true Brixworth Drama Group style.

Director Sue l'Anson said: "Treasure Island is a traditional panto in every sense. There's something for everyone, from the young in age to the young at heart. Join in the fun and wear your pirate finery. Each show will include a fancy dress competition."

Performances are on Friday 20 and Friday

27 January 2012 at 7.30pm, and on Saturday 21 and 28 January at 2.30 and 7.30pm in the Village Hall. As usual, there will be a licensed bar for pre-performance and interval drinks.

Tickets are £5 for adults and £4 for concessions; family tickets (2 adults and two children) are £15 or (2 adults and 3 children) £18 and will be available from Lovell's Hardware and from Libby on 880672. For the latest visit <http://brixworthdrama.priort.com> or the Drama Group's Facebook page.

- Jon Mackley

Review: I'll be back before Midnight

In the last couple of years the Drama Group has used the September production to show darker and more challenging productions, demanding more of performers, production and audience alike.

I'll be back before Midnight, a thriller by Canadian playwright Peter Colley, illustrates this perfectly. The play is challenging for the actors because three of them have to play parts with a dual personality – Jan, recovering from a nervous breakdown: is she really in recovery, or a near basket case? Her partner Greg: is he trying to rehabilitate Jan or destroy her, and why? George, the affable farmer: is he friendly and helpful, some kind of mad monster, or something inbetween? Only Greg's sister Laura, played by newcomer Jo Runiewicz, has an almost straightforward role – she only has to hint at an irregular relationship with her brother. The others have to get subtle undertones across in this dark and slightly melodramatic thriller, which could mutate by mistake into unintentional comedy.

The cast is given a great environment with a professional set put together by technical director Mark Sharman and his crew, complete with exploding stove and a range of other special effects. The stove that could have been heard in Spratton!

The action proceeds. Jan (played by Janet Buchanan) and partner Greg (played by Jon Mackley) arrive at an isolated farmhouse for rest and recuperation, with only the sinister but affable farmer George, played by Tony Farrow, living nearby. Tony got into the farmer role and got some nice lines, relating to his prodigious alcohol consumption. Greg is hard to fathom, at one moment all consideration for Jan, then off jogging, despite knowing that Jan is terrified of being left alone. Then Jan finds out that Greg's sister Laura is coming to visit, something that could've been specifically thought out to destabilise her. Duly destabilised, Jan shoots Laura with a shotgun conveniently hanging on the wall. From there the plot gets more complicated, and Jan has to be stable and unstable by turns, while Jon Mackley playing Greg has to be sympathetic while scheming. They manage this as well as the plotting itself allows, but on occasions some hesitations dissipated the building tensions. Aspects of the plot strained the credibility, with the diversions about geology best forgotten.

This was a good attempt at a difficult play in a difficult genre, where perhaps the attractions of doing set-piece special effects detracted from the effort needed on the dialogue and action. It was enjoyed by an attentive audience, who probably haven't seen a body suspended from a rope in Brixworth Village Hall before!

- Robin Pool

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Stagecoach confirms bus cuts

As expected, Stagecoach Midlands has cut most of the services of the Number 62 bus service, from Scaldwell to Brixworth, Moulton and Northampton.

The company's chairman Steve Burd told us: "Stagecoach Midlands has retained the two peak morning Service 62 departures between Brixworth and Northampton, although these two journeys now operate as X7.

"Unfortunately with the exception of these two part journeys, my company has not been able to justify operating any other parts of Service 62 on a commercial basis." He added that the service saw so little use that it has now been replaced with a weekly service, which operates on Wednesdays only. - cfw

Love food hate waste

Northamptonshire's acclaimed food writer Vanessa Kimbell has joined forces with the County Council in the fight against good food going bad.

Did you know that the average family throws out up to £50 a month in uneaten food? Thirty-six percent of black bin waste in Northamptonshire is food waste, and that's a huge amount of good quality food going straight in the bin.

Vanessa has written four new recipes with leftovers in mind to help you cut down on food waste:

- Use your Fruit Slice
- Spiced Orange Bread Pudding
- Leftover Chicken and Lemon Rice Soup
- Caraway and Lemon Chicken Pasties



You can get the recipes, use the perfect portion calculator, download a weekly meal planner, and find lots of useful kitchen tips on the campaign website, www.ilovefoodnorthants.co.uk.

Take our Food Lover's quiz and you could win dinner, bed, and breakfast at Staverton Park, donated by De Vere Venues, or 1 of 10 signed copies of Vanessa's first cookbook, 'Prepped! Gorgeous food without the slog - a multi-tasking masterpiece for the time short foodie'.

www.ilovefoodnorthants.co.uk

Meet the new... landlords at The George



Gary and Wendy Graham took over the lease at the George at the beginning of the Summer. They have moved here from Rugby and it is their first experience of running a pub! They have introduced a new menu of home-made traditional "pub grub" and a regular entertainment programme with bands playing all kinds of different music. Business appears to be doing well.

The Bulletin will be running a series of interviews with Brixworth's pubs and restaurants in 2012. -jf



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Brix and Mortar

Spending money? Spend it wisely

Over the next few issues of the Brixworth Bulletin I want to try and tackle some important topics relevant to buying, selling and renting. The subjects I will be focusing on will be 'The common pitfalls when trying to sell a house', 'Things to watch out for when buying a house', 'The lettings market' and finally 'The legal process'. My first article, however, will be on the subject that I get asked the most and that is 'What should you spend time and money on when improving your property?'

Before you do anything to your home you should ask yourself whether you are doing the work for your benefit or for resale. Try and cover both scenarios and make changes that you can enjoy whilst improving the value and saleability. I suggest the five main points that you need to look at are; kitchen, bathrooms, decoration, windows and curb appeal.

Kitchen

The kitchen is often the most saleable room of a home. There are some fantastic styles of kitchen unit and some weird and wonderful appliances available. I would recommend that if you are not selling within a few years you go for a very traditional and robust kitchen that does not date.

In the 20 years I have been in the Estate Agency industry styles of kitchens must have changed at least five or six times. In fact the only style that has remained constant has been the wood fronted base and wall style units. Appliance wise you need to think about building in as much as possible. The modern day buyer will expect a kitchen to have an oven, hob, fridge/freezer and dishwasher built in.

Bathrooms

On the subject of bathrooms I have again seen some wonderful colours over the years. Colours are OUT! There is only one type of bathroom that you should install, and that is a white suite with chrome fittings. If you are thinking resale, do not remove a bath and replace it with a shower if it is the only bath in the house.

Windows

Sealed unit windows are now part of building regulation so again double glazing has become a MUST. Wood is as popular as UPVC, but only if the wooden windows have been maintained and are in perfect working order. Wooden windows last for decades if you keep on top of them.

Decoration

The simple rule on decoration is that unless you are very competent on the art of interior design, keep it neutral. Houses never fail to sell with magnolia walls and white ceilings. Light colours will also give a house a much more airy feel. Carpets are still as popular as both wooden and laminate flooring, but if you are going for carpets keep

them neutral and try to run the same colour throughout the property.

Curb Appeal

In so many instances I have been and valued a house where internally it is absolutely immaculate. No good if the outside is tatty. Curb appeal is about first impressions and that means the landscaping needs to be trimmed and the lawn needs to be mowed regularly. Windows need to be up to scratch and front doors, if wooden, need to be painted.

As a final thought, remember home improvements don't need to be expensive. It is not the amount of money you put into your home that counts, it is the amount of thought!
- Stuart Little

Cheryl Harris, Registered Osteopath at the Newlands Practice, Brixworth



Cheryl Harris has been offering osteopathic treatment in Brixworth for more than six years and is now working from her new location in Newlands (opposite The George Inn). At the Newlands practice you can enjoy the highest level of care and dedication to your family's health in a friendly, professional environment.

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Cheryl also offers Cranial Osteopathy, a very gentle treatment suitable for newborns with settling issues such as colic and irritability and for women during pregnancy. Initial consultation £40 (one hour). Follow-on session £35. 10% discount on your first visit to the Newlands Practice with this advertisement. Cheryl Harris is registered with all major private health insurers.

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Tel: 01604 949490

Web: www.cherylharrisosteopathy.co.uk



What's on?

Until 10 Dec	Town & County Art Society	N'pton Museum & Art Gallery
Until 3 Jan	Punjabi Fusion Exhibition	N'pton Museum & Art Gallery
26 Nov	Strictly Northampton	Royal & Derngate
27 Nov	RPO: English Classics with Julian Lloyd Webber	Royal & Derngate
29 Nov	Alabama 3	The Roadmender
29 Nov - 4 Dec	One Snowy Night	Corby Cube
30 Nov - 8 Jan	Alice in Wonderland	Royal & Derngate
30 Nov - 8 Jan	Christmas with the Ratpack	Royal & Derngate
3 Dec	Draughton Village Christmas	Loder Hall, Maidwell
3 Dec	That'll be the Day	Royal & Derngate
3 Dec	Costume Store Tour	N'pton Museum & Art Gallery
3-4 Dec	Santa Special Train Service	Northampton & Lamport Railway
5 Dec	Rockin Roadrunner	The Roadmender
6 Dec - 8 Jan	Down the Rabbit Hole	Royal & Derngate Underground
7 Dec	Bonhams Valuation Day	Kelmarsh Hall
7 Dec	Children's Xmas Crafts (8 - 12 y)	Brixworth Library, 10.30-11.30 am
7-11 Dec	Potted Panto	Corby Cube
8 Dec	Making a Christmas Door Wreath	Lampport Hall
8 Dec	Lampport Society Christmas Party	Lampport Hall
9 Dec	Charity Christmas Shopping	Kelmarsh Hall
9 Dec - 8 Jan	Aladdin	Royal & Derngate
10 Dec	The Moons	The Roadmender
10 - 11 Dec	Christmas at Kelmarsh	Kelmarsh Hall
10-11 Dec	Santa Special Train Service	Northampton & Lamport Railway

13 Dec	Making Christmas Table Decorations	Kelmarsh Hall
16 Dec	Bury Tomorrow	The Roadmender
10-11 Dec	Santa Special Train Service	Northampton & Lamport Railway
13 Dec	Making Christmas Table Decorations	Kelmarsh Hall
16 Dec	Bury Tomorrow	The Roadmender
17-18 Dec	Santa Special Train Service	Northampton & Lamport Railway
19 Dec	Children's Xmas Crafts (4 - 12 y)	Brixworth Library, 11-12 am
21-22 Dec	Jack and the Bean Stalk	N'pton Museum & Art Gallery
24 Dec	Santa Special Train Service	Northampton & Lamport Railway
29 Dec	Dick Whittington	Corby Cube
12 Jan	Johann Strauss Gala	Derngate
13 Jan	Cara Dillon	Derngate
14 Jan	Jeremy Hardy	Corby Cube
14 Jan	The Burlesque Show	Derngate
15 Jan	Black Dahlia Murder	The Roadmender
16-18 Jan	Moscow State Circus	Derngate
16-21 Jan	The Gondoliers	Royal
19 Jan	The Johnny Cash Roadshow	Corby Cube
19 Jan	History Society AGM	Brixworth Village Hall, 7.45 pm
19 - 20 Jan	Anton & Erin	Derngate
22 Jan	Grimethorpe Colliery Band	Derngate
23 Jan	Alfie Boe	Derngate
27 Jan	Jeremy Hardy	Derngate
3 Feb	The ELO Experience	Corby Cube
5 Feb	Chris and Pui	Corby Cube
5 Feb	RPO: Spanish Fiesta	Derngate
5 Feb - 15 April	Journeys by Claire Abbott	N'pton Museum & Art Gallery
7-11 Feb	The King and I	Derngate

11 Feb	Jimmy Carr	Corby Cube
14-19 Feb	Moscow City Ballet	Derngate
16 Feb	History Society: Milestones	Brixworth Village Hall
17-18 Feb	The Elves and the Shoemaker	Corby Cube
22 Feb	Omid Djalili	Derngate
23 Feb	Chris Addison	Derngate
24 Feb	Beyond the Barricade	Derngate
25 Feb	Rumours of Fleetwood Mac	Derngate
27 Feb - 3 Mar	Stomp	Derngate
1 Mar	Rich Hall	Corby Cube
4 Mar	Hayley Westenra	Derngate
10 Mar	The Owl and the Pussycat	Corby Cube
14 Mar	Circus of Horrors	Derngate
15 Mar	History Society: Shopping in the 18th Century	Brixworth Village Hall
15 Mar	Chimaira	The Roadmender
18 Mar	The Australian Pink Floyd	Derngate
22 Mar	Classic Cut	Corby Cube
27 Mar	Bootleg Beatles	Derngate
31 Mar	An Evening with Pam Ayres	Derngate
31 March - 23 Sep	Stories of the World: The World at your Feet	Northampton Museum & Art Gallery
19 Apr	History Society: Street Furniture	Brixworth Village Hall
20 Apr	Mark Steel	Corby Cube
21 Apr - 27 May	Sarah Udall and 5 years of stone lithography	Northampton Museum & Art Gallery
22 Apr	RPO: Freddy Kempf's Beethoven Piano Series Part 2	Derngate
27 Apr	The Osmonds	Derngate
28 Apr	Jimmy Carr	Derngate
2 Jun	RPO: Nigel Kennedy plays Brahms	Derngate

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Stick with it

Introducing Brixworth Mixed Hockey Club

Brixworth MHC was founded in the mid 1970's by a group of hockey enthusiasts living in the village. The team initially played at Duston Upper School, on a gravel pitch, with no goal nets and precious little in the way of kit. From early accounts it seems that the goal keeper was particularly vulnerable, with only a pair of old cricket pads to protect him.

However, as time went on, things improved and in Sept 1977 the team entered the Mixed Hockey league in Northants for the first time. Since then the club has enjoyed entering in all of the competitions that NMHA host, and on occasion it does pretty well for it's members' efforts. We have also entered many of the festivals and tournaments held across the country during the summer including Worthing, Wakefield and Loughborough. During the late 1990's and early 2000's the club was able to field two teams each week although this has now reduced to a single team.

To take advantage of the increased interest in hockey due to the London 2012 Olympics, we are currently on a recruitment drive, particularly for female players. With this in mind we took an active role in the stall the league had at the Northampton Balloon Festival. We were there for all three days, running and taking part in the various games



and skills sessions that were being put on to showcase the sport. We were encouraged by the amount of interest and enjoyment shown by people, some of whom had never played before and others who had fond, and not so fond memories of hockey from school.

This year we have added a new website, twitter feed and monthly newsletter to our existing facebook page and our efforts have yielded several new players who have already made their mark in the squad. We are always keen to recruit new members and as long as you are at least thirteen years old there's no reason why you shouldn't take part.

So far we have experienced a mixed start to this winter season. We narrowly lost the

opening two games whilst our newer players settled in, but we then comfortably won the next two games against clubs that on paper had great potential. Sadly we then lost the other two against very strong teams. We do however have another thirteen games to play, plus the semi final and hopefully final of the plate competition, so there are plenty more points up for grabs.

In addition for competing for honours in the league and cup competitions we also try to do our bit for charity when the opportunity arises and recently this took the form of a "play it pink" game. We asked our players to wear a pink ribbon during the game, and our goalkeeper went one stage further sporting a pink t-shirt and straw hat combination. The money raised from this was given to the Crazy Hats charity.

We currently train every Tuesday 7.30pm – 8.30pm at Wellingborough School, Irthlingborough Road, Wellingborough, Northamptonshire, NN8 2BX. Training started on 6th September 2011, but will be suspended from 29th November to 7th February and will then continue until 17th April 2012. Training is free for club members or £1.00 per session for non-members.

If you would like any further details please contact us by email BrixworthMHC@gmail.com, facebook: Brixworth Mixed Hockey Club, twitter: BrixworthMHC or on the website: brixworthmhc.onsport.com

-Jon Davies

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Sports Page

Brixworth All Saints Football Club

The football club's first team have gone through a drastic transition this season, bringing back people mainly with Brixworth roots into player and management roles. This has generated a great atmosphere around the club. They are currently sitting about mid-table in an open league, though sadly they have already been eliminated from both cup competitions.

The reserves have had a great start to the campaign, and are presently close to the top of the table, which is bound to put them into contention by the end of the season. They are still going well in both cup competitions.

The veterans have lost one and drew the following game so far this season. We would like to thank Ray Bell for sponsoring a new kit for the team.

Centenary celebration

The centenary celebratory evening saw former players of all ages travelling from across the country to join us. Memorabilia, speeches, catching up with old teammates, and a very fine buffet made the evening a triumphant occasion, topped by the oldest attending ex-player Tom Smith at the ripe old age of 94 cutting the cake (pictured, right). Even at his age he was still there come the end of the night. We would like to thank everybody involved for all of their hard work in organising this excellent event.

Can you help?

We are always looking for recruits to assist in duties such as match-day nets, line-marking, linesmen, fundraising and general



support for next season. Contact Nigel Eldred on 07812609095 or neldred@hotmail.co.uk and Ian Bandey on 07847395660 or i-bandey_28@tiscali.co.uk, and visit www.brixworthfc.co.uk - Nigel Eldred

Brixworth Cricket 2011 review

Another successful season drew to a close in mid September, with confirmation that the 1st XI had secured fourth place in the Northants Premier League - the team's highest finish for over a decade, equalling the club reaching the top division in the first season. Colin Sibley once again led from the front with his excellent bowling and the team was bolstered by several newcomers, including Ross McLean and Callum Berryl who made match winning contributions with ball and bat respectively. They thoroughly deserved their end-of-season awards. We are now a major force in Northants league cricket and look forward to building on this by maximising the impact of our home-grown players and attracting new talent.

The 2nd team will bounce back from a disappointing season and be much stronger next year. Every top club needs a strong 2nd XI and this will be a major focus next season. Serious injuries and some unforeseen departures, albeit temporary, robbed us of key players and whilst the youngsters who came in gained invaluable experience we were never quite strong enough to achieve consistent results. Fraser Bennett stood in admirably when captain Richard Foster had to pull out through injury early in the season.

Congratulations to the 3rd XI and to their indomitable skipper Martyn Cowley for gaining promotion up to Division 13. The team's mix of experience and youth helped them to win the vast majority of their games and provided the opportunity for many youngsters to make the transition from junior to senior, league cricket. Their increasing maturity was demonstrated by the likes of Ali Duncan with the bat and Steve Bradnam and Alex Valentine with the ball. Steve's bowling figures of eight wickets for two runs earned him a special award at the end of season presentation evening - fittingly handed over by ex-England and Kent fast bowler, Dean Headley.

Brixworth junior cricket goes from strength to strength - with four competitive teams, over 70 registered players and an ever increasing number of qualified coached and volunteers. We have some magnificent talent - congratulations to all prize winners at the two separate presentation evening that took place in September and November. Giving out some of the awards, Club President Devon Malcolm said how impressed he was with the Club's progress and the junior section in particular. Many thanks to all the coaches for their time and effort, in particular to Simeon Tinant and his team of coaches, volunteers and parents who have built up the u11/u9 section over the past couple of seasons into a vibrant and enthusiastic group.

Planning for next season has already started with our AGM in November and junior nets begin at Moulton Sports Centre in early January. As ever, for any information on the club, please contact any club officials whose details are shown on our website, to be found at www.brixworthcc.co.uk.

- Chris Timm

Top 10 finish for Streetdance group

The dance crew Alpha, featuring 12 year old Brixworth talent Bethany Alexander, impressed with a top ten finish at the IDO World Hip Hop championships which took place in Austria in October.

Alpha came in ninth place out of 50 participating dance groups, who had travelled from 35 different countries including South Africa, Japan, Canada, Moldova, Sweden, Germany, and Austria.

"Some of the countries involved at this standard obtained government funding (which is not available at present in the UK), which makes Alpha's achievement even greater," said Bethany's mother, Julia Alexander.

Alpha are still looking for local companies to sponsor them. Please contact the *Bulletin* if you are interested.

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