

Informal Notes – Community Updates

Monthly Lunch Group Update

- The group continues to be very successful and well attended, with 16–20 people coming each month.
- Many attendees are widows or people living alone, and the monthly roast lunch gives them something to look forward to — often the only proper roast meal they get.
- It's clear the group is much enjoyed: people only ever miss it if they're away visiting family or genuinely unable to attend.
- There's always a fun, friendly atmosphere — full of laughter and good company.
- Alistair and Sally organize the meal each month, and we try to make each one a little different.
 - Scheduling is flexible — the lunch happens on our terms depending on availability. For example, it was moved from last weekend to this one because we were away.
- We do have some wonderful helpers:
 - Claire assists with potatoes and vegetables
 - Sally Robinson always does the linen — and we hope she'll keep at it, otherwise it's back to paper napkins!

“Honestly, I just think it's a great success. People really enjoy it.”

Brownies Update

- The Brownies group remains very successful, currently hosting about 22 girls, with a cap at 24 due to volunteer ratios.
- Recently returned from a Pack Holiday which included a trip to Whipsnade Zoo – a big hit with the girls!
- The group is run by just Sarah and myself, supported by some Young Leaders – all of whom are former Brownies. They're working towards their Duke of Edinburgh Awards or similar programs.
- It's heartening that so many want to return to help – a real testament to the strength of the group.
- Some sadness coming in July when a few long-time members "age out" at 10 years old, having been part of the group for 3 years. Naturally, you build strong bonds over that time.
- Sarah is fantastic – highly organized and committed.
- A note on the changing nature of Guiding: there is now a great deal of paperwork, which has made it harder to recruit helpers.

“They wonder why they don’t get helpers – it’s all paperwork now!”

- Despite the admin, the group leader proudly received a medal for 40 years of service to Guiding – well deserved!
- While not all members are from the village itself, quite a few attend the local school, and it’s important to keep the group open and available to the community.

“We do have fun. It’s successful. We just don’t want it to close.”

Book Club (Brief Mention)

- A small group (3 members present) who meet regularly.
- They choose 10 books per year to read and discuss together.
- Informal, friendly format.

All Saints Church (PCC)

- No formal report submitted, but an update was shared:
 - Church survives largely thanks to the Brickhill Choir, as regular attendance is very low (except at Christmas).
 - The Romanian Orthodox Church also uses the building and helps with church upkeep.
 - Their first Easter service caused some logistical issues, but this year went smoothly, with stewards managing traffic at the bottom of the hill.
 - Their overnight Easter service (approx. 8 p.m. to 1 a.m.) drew some curious local visitors.
 - Thanks to their use, regular volunteers no longer have to handle flowers, as the Romanian congregation decorates the church beautifully.

Village Fair

- The **Village Fair** is coming up in **three weeks' time**, and it’s shaping up to be a lovely event — **weather permitting!**
- Grateful to have the **WI’s support**, which is a huge help in pulling things together.
- **Planned attractions** include:
 - A couple of **bouncy castles**
 - **Craft stalls**
 - **Bar service by Horns**, who are kindly providing again

- A **dog show** and **horticultural displays**, with proceeds from those going to the **National Animal Welfare Trust**
- A wine tasting evening was held recently to help raise funds for the fair — a fun evening that also helped cover the increasing costs involved in running the event.

“On paper, Paula and I organise it — in reality, Paula does most of it, and full credit to her for that. She works really hard and just genuinely enjoys organising.”

- All funds raised are reinvested back into the events, and it's important to note that none of the organisers take any money for themselves.

“It’s not for personal gain — it’s just about bringing the village together.”

- Looking ahead, the team is considering a games night later in the year, followed by the popular Quiz & Curry Night returning again.

Here’s hoping for good weather and a great turnout!