



# EPWELL ECHO

August/September 2024 | Issue 230



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## Editors' letter

You have to ask the question "Where is our summer weather?" In fact it has been the wettest spring since 1986 and apparently more rain on the way.

There was a good turn out in Epwell for the General Election. Hopefully our potholes will be first on the "to do" list for the new government!

In this edition of the Epwell Echo we have an excellent local walk feature from Chris Hurst, which in itself is a good read. We also have an article on Marie's alternative to cosmetic chemicals and Suzanne Kaye's history of the Epwell Trust.

Another plant sale in aid of the Playing Field and Village Hall will have taken place on the 20th July and hopefully will have been a success (unlike the final of the Euros against Spain, which Epwell football supporters gathered in the Village Hall to watch).

We said a very sad goodbye to our lovely friend and neighbour Linda Nunneley, who peacefully passed away on the 26th June. A big thank you to Shipston Home Nursing for all their care.

Marie and Caroline would like to thank everyone who has contributed towards this edition of the Epwell Echo.

Enjoy the Summer Holidays and fingers crossed for some sun.

Please continue to send your own articles and photos to Marie and Caroline -

[epwellecho@gmail.com](mailto:epwellecho@gmail.com), for sharing in our next issue of the Epwell Echo. Many thanks to Conway Freeman, whose pictures are on the front cover and in the wildlife feature, and thank you to Suzanne Kaye who identified the mystery bird in the last edition of the Echo as being a male sparrow hawk!

Best wishes

Marie and Caroline

## Polly and her People

Thanks to all those who kindly contribute to these people in Banbury, Polly's eyes always light up when I take a cake and the contributions that are kindly left in the Blue Box in the Village Hall. It helps greatly to keep some stability in these people's lives that Polly cares enough to be there each day to listen as well as provide a bite to eat. Few people would or could give so much for so long.

At present there are an unusual group of people living on the streets, it is not an easy life but they just cannot settle. Instead it is a small tent and a duvet and a small backpack during the day, a very fragile existence. I deliver some time each week so that all you give gets to Polly promptly. The food, snacks and toiletries are invaluable. Thank you again for your continued and thoughtful support.

### **LOOKING AHEAD...**

There is planning going ahead for an Autumn Event at the Village Hall. If anyone needs Jam Jars to make **Chutney** or other **Preserves** please let me know as I have plenty to spare. I am not sure what sort of harvest there will be of fruit such as plums or apples but it would be great to share and use such bounty to raise funds through the sale of such delicious local home made produce.

**Allison Pollard** [allisonpollard15@gmail.com](mailto:allisonpollard15@gmail.com) [788529]

# Epwell Parish Council Meeting – 8th July 2024

These are notes only. For full details, please see EPC board and village website.

No members of the public were present.

## **Election of Officers:**

Chair: Mathew Platt was elected as Chair of the Parish Council.

EPC would like to thank Gavin Lloyd Thomas for his sterling work as Chair over the past few years.

**Co-option of new councillor:** Toby Brook was co-opted to EPC.

**Apologies:** Chris Brant, our new councillor sent apologies; he hopes to attend a meeting in the near future.

**Public participation:** Alasdair Lowe sent an email concerning the long-term water leak down by the Green. Hopefully this is something the new HET will be able to look into and solve. See below.

**Highways Engagement Team:** There was a meeting with the HET in June. Notes of this are as follows:

- 1) The village drainage system is full of mud and is ineffective. The village drains will be jet blasted to clear them.
- 2) Over 200 potholes have been filled, thanks to Nadira's hard work registering them on fixmystreet.com. However, she cannot work outside the village boundary, so EPC will look to set up a working party to map and report these potholes.
- 3) In the past contractors were sent out to fix the one pothole that had been reported; they are now able to find and fix others within a certain distance. The holes must be a minimum of 40mm deep and 150mm wide, (1.5 x 6")
- 4) The deep edges along the Sugarswell road will be filled in, eventually.
- 5) A salt bin will be put at the top of the hill between Quarry Farm and Radway riding school.
- 6) The flood outside Sibford Heath Farm will be alleviated by draining the water off into the woods. The landowner's permission is to be sought first.
- 7) It should be noted that the Engagement team are working in all local villages. They do respond to reports on fixmystreet.com, so we need to keep reporting on that. Make some noise!

**Footpaths:** EPC would like to remind anyone who has a footpath across their land that it is their responsibility to keep the paths clear and useable. Gateways should also be kept clear. When the grass is long and wet it flops over, making the paths hard to walk. When it dries up, a quick strim should help.

**Playing Field:** The RoSPA inspection of the field will take place this month.

**Village Tubs:** EPC will replace the current ones which are starting to fall apart.

**PROVISIONAL DATE OF NEXT EPC MEETING: Monday 16<sup>th</sup> September 8pm.**

## Epwell Village Assistance - EVA

Set up to help out where needed. If you need help, please contact any member of the parish council. If you would like to offer help, please contact:

**Gavin Lloyd Thomas** gavinlthomas.glt@googlemail.com 01295 788771

Please also contact Gavin if you can help with grass cutting (common areas)

### Epwell Village Hall update.

At the recent EVH AGM, all the team agreed to stay on in their current roles.

Financially, we made a small profit in the last year, July '23 – June'24, but we will always need to hold events to raise funds for the general running costs of the hall. The events organised by Team EVH have been well supported, for which we would like to thank everyone in Epwell. We currently have three regular users of the hall: yoga, monthly coffee mornings and Whist. It is also used by EPC and the Trust for their meetings. If anyone would like to run a club – film club, knitting, model making, or just run an event, please get in touch. We had 8 bookings from the village and two outside bookings. People who use the hall have all said what a nice feeling it has, including the two July election officers! The hall capacity is 80 standing and 60 seated, so if you are planning an event and need space, do bear us in mind.

We continue to carry out maintenance on the hall as and where it is needed and we would welcome any help. For example, mending the holes in the floor and improving the patio at the back. Or if anyone can recommend people to carry this out that would be helpful.

There was a good turnout for the plant sale and bacon butty breakfast in May. The £600.00 raised was split between EVH and ERA. It was so successful, that another one will have taken place at the end of July.

### Date For Your Diaries:

To commemorate the 60<sup>th</sup> Birthday of the building becoming the Village Hall,  
we will be holding an event on Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> September.

Archive display.

BBQ, bar, stalls

Look Out For More Information Coming Your Way Soon!

### Team EVH:

Chair	Nadira Thain	<a href="mailto:nadirathain@outlook.com">nadirathain@outlook.com</a>
Vice Chair	Alex Tait	<a href="mailto:Alextait164@hotmail.com">Alextait164@hotmail.com</a>
Treasurer	Vic Tofts	<a href="mailto:victofts@bopenworld.com">victofts@bopenworld.com</a>
Secretary	Nicola Rudge	<a href="mailto:nicola.rudge@icloud.com">nicola.rudge@icloud.com</a>
Bookings	as above	<a href="mailto:nicola.rudge@icloud.com">nicola.rudge@icloud.com</a>

Julie Bruggenwirth, Suzanne Kaye, Bernadette Jeavons, Lottie Gibson, Donna Boyles

### Epwell Parish Councillors:

Matthew Platt (Chair)	<a href="mailto:matthew@workshopheaven.com">matthew@workshopheaven.com</a> (T. 780942)
Nicola Rudge	<a href="mailto:cllr.nicolarudge@epwell.com">cllr.nicolarudge@epwell.com</a> (T. 780508)
Norman White	<a href="mailto:cllr.normanwhite@epwell.com">cllr.normanwhite@epwell.com</a> (T. 788155 M. 07743 841471)
Peter Gibson	<a href="mailto:cllr.petergibson@epwell.com">cllr.petergibson@epwell.com</a> (M. 07811 164583)
Christine Coles (Clerk)	<a href="mailto:epwellparishclerk@epwell.com">epwellparishclerk@epwell.com</a>

## **ST. ANNE'S CHURCH NOTES**

### **Epwell and Wykeham Benefice services for August and September 2024**

#### **August**

Sunday 4th	10.30am	Benefice Eucharist at <b>Shutford</b>
Sunday 11th	10.30am	Family service (lay led)
Sunday 18th	9.45am	Holy Communion (John Tattersall)
Sunday 25th	9.45am	Holy Communion (Brian Fairbank)

#### **September**

Sunday 1st	10.30am	Benefice Eucharist at <b>Epwell</b>
Sunday 8th	10.30am	Family service (lay led)
Sunday 15th	9.45am	Holy Communion (David Pym)
Sunday 22nd	9.45am	Holy Communion (Glyn Evans)
Sunday 29th	9.45am	Holy Communion

#### **October**

Sunday 6th	10.30am	Benefice Eucharist
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In addition to Sunday services, Morning prayers take place on Mondays 9 - 10.30am and a Holy Communion service takes place at 10.00 am on Wednesday mornings in the beautiful side chapel. Please check in the weekly pewsheet in the church, or on the notice board at the church gate, for up to date news on all services.

The Reverend Emily Robottom-Scott will be installed as our new Rector on Tuesday 27th August at 7.30pm in Broughton Church. After settling into the Vicarage, she will be busy getting to know the people and villages of her new Parish. Her first two services are in Epwell, Holy Communion on Wednesday 28th August at 10.00am and the Benefice Eucharist service on Sunday 1st September at 10.30am. Refreshments will be provided after the service, so please come along and help us to welcome her to the village.

On Saturday 31st August at 3.30pm we are planning a thank you service in honour of Dawn Castle who has done so much for the church in Epwell, not least being a Church Warden for 33 years. Everyone from the village is invited to join us and stay for a sparkling tea party following the service.

The Village Website <https://epwell.com/>

The village website has been completely revised, with a home page for news plus a feed from the Village Facebook page, later sections on village organisations and activities, a diary of local events, a section on parish council matters, useful information on services and businesses, an on line version of the Epwell Echo and a history of the village.

Do have a look and if you wish send comments and suggestions by email to [editor@epwell.com](mailto:editor@epwell.com)

#### **EPWELL WALKING GROUP**

Walks each month on the last Monday 10.30-12-30 round local area and according to the time those who come along can spare. Hope to see some other Epwellians and we are dog friendly, if your dog is friendly.

No Walk in August as Bank Holiday. Next walk Monday 25 September.

[allisonpollard15@gmail.com](mailto:allisonpollard15@gmail.com)



## Epwell Village Hall Hire Charges

Category	Per Hour		1/2 day or Evening		Full Day	
	NR	ER	NR	ER	NR	ER
<b>ER - Epwell Residents. NR - Non Residents</b>						
<b>Main Hall - Use of other Facilities</b>						
Private Individual	£8.00	£6.00	£25.00	£20.00	£50.00	£40.00
Celebrations, Parties, Weddings or Funerals	£10.00	£8.00	£30.00	£25.00	£60.00	£50.00
Business Hire	£12.00	£10.00	£40.00	£30.00	£80.00	£60.00
<b>Main Hall - No other Facilities</b>						
Standard - Regular Users	£7.00	£5.00	£22.50	£17.50	£45.00	£35.00
Private Individual	£7.50	£6.00	£25.00	£20.00	£50.00	£40.00
<b>Meeting Rooms - Use of other Facilities</b>						
Meeting Rooms - No other Facilities	£5.00	£4.00	£20.00	£16.00	£40.00	£30.00
<p>Long term regular hiring terms can be agreed</p> <p>Access to Hall for Preparation and just use of Toilets can be agreed</p> <p>Special terms can be agreed for Charitable Event use of the Hall</p> <p>Any damage to Hall, Fixtures, Fittings or Equipment must be paid for</p>						
<b>Visiting Shows, Exhibitions etc</b>						
Amateur	£10.00		£40.00		£64.00	
Professional	£20.00		£75.00		£120.00	
Loan of Hall Equipment - Strictly Epwell Residents Only. No charge - but a donation to Hall funds is requested						

### Coffee Mornings in VH each month on the 2nd Wednesday.

This friendly group who meet each month are always so pleased to see new faces, or occasional faces which is just so lovely. If you work from home or have a young baby it would be lovely if you could drop in for a few minutes as a small break in your day and change of scene. Quite often we do get people who are staying locally in a B&B and they brighten our day and we share info and recommend ideas of walks and visits around our area.

Donations are voluntary to a collection and the last two months, firstly in June we gave £45.04 to The Sunshine Centre in Banbury where help is needed for Families who struggle.

There has been interesting national publicity given to how the Two Child Cap has caused more children to fall into poverty. This must cause such difficult choices for any parent on such a tight budget. Children are now not growing as tall when they arrive at school as families have to make difficult choices and may cut back on quality and variety of food to produce this measurable outcome. We are pleased to support work undertaken at this centre.

In July we sent £55.10 to Shipston Home Nursing who support families free of charge for help caring for people at home as a Hospice at Home. This is such a valuable facility and much appreciated by those who need their experience and care.

Thanks to all those who come along and make such a congenial event and to our bakers.

For your diary, next dates 9 August & 13 September 10.30-12.00.

Allison Pollard.

Any enquiries about either the Epwell Walking Group or Coffee Mornings, please contact Allison Pollard on 01295 788529 or by email [allisonpollard15@gmail.com](mailto:allisonpollard15@gmail.com)

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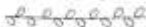
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## **In Memory of Linda Nunneley.**

It is with enormous sadness to announce that after a long courageous battle from multi system atrophy our wonderful friend and neighbour passed away peacefully on the 26th June surrounded by her loving family. Linda was an extraordinary lady who played a big part in sport with Shennington School, was a veterinary nurse, supported her children who played hockey and rugby and a Vice President of Banbury Hockey Club. Linda was a devoted wife, mother and granny and always ready to lend a hand and help in anyway she could.

Many of you will have seen Rob with Linda on their daily walks around the village, Rob has been an



amazing husband and stoic throughout Linda's illness. All the family played their part of the constant care and love which surrounded Linda. In fact at one point 12 members of her family sat in her bedroom eating ice creams, chatting and reading bedtime stories. Shipston Home Nursing were the Angels that helped Rob and the family to manage towards the end. They made such a difference by supporting not only Linda but the family as well. If you would like to donate in Linda's memory please send to - [lindanunneley.muchloved.com](http://lindanunneley.muchloved.com)

## **Epwell Trust**

The Epwell Trust administers 11.4 acres of land which is rented out in two agricultural tenancies. The rental from the tenancies provides monies to be used, should help be necessary for Epwell and its residents.

If anyone knows of a situation where help for a resident may be needed, then please contact any member of the Trust listed below. All conversations will be held in the strictest confidence.

<u>The Trustees are: -</u>	<u>Telephone Numbers</u>
Stephen Rutledge – Chairman	07919 693401
Suzanne Kaye – Clerk	
Nigel Prickett – Vice Chairman	07967 688926
Conway Freeman	07831 484541
Norman White	01295 788155
Liz Baker	
Matthew Platt	01295 780942
Brian Tustian	

Wildlife in our village .....Pictures from Conway Freeman



## Marie's Alternatives to Cosmetic Chemicals

I thought this may be a good time to share my natural home made beauty products which I make at home. Everyone's skin is different and so all the face, body and hair products have to be tailored to your own likes, taste and skin type. Just look at the ingredients in bought beauty products especially the parabens, preservatives and just think what we place on our skins are absorbed into our bloodstream and disrupt the endocrine system and hormones.

So to avoid these beauty chemicals here are my beauty products.

### **Leave in Hair Conditioner**

Olive oil, aloe Vera and filtered water. I adjust the amount to suit my hair.

Mix all ingredients and put in a spray bottle. I spray on my hair after washing and when needed.

### **AHA Peel**

Take honey, coconut sugar, half a lemon and mix all ingredients.

I gently apply to my skin but not near the eyes leave for 10 mins then rinse off. I use this once a month.

### **Under Eye Liquid**

Just cucumber - it tightens skin so I often rub it all over my face - I chop a cucumber in very thin slices and then gently wipe it all of my face but especially the eye area - I make sure only new bits of cucumber are applied to my eye area.

### **Eye Whitener**

I relax with used breakfast tea bags on my eyes - but not with milk added and I make sure they are cold.

### **Face Powder**

I use cacao, cinnamon and ginger powder (the ginger needs to be sieved though a tea strainer. Colour gained by using more of one powder.

I put in a pot and I dust it on just like normal power.

### **Night Cream**

Shea butter, Cacao butter, coconut butter/oil, beeswax - I use one of these or all of these or some of these as the base. Olive oil, sweet almond oil, avocado oil, honey, essential oil, again I mix and match according to my skin type. Put all solid butter in a bowl over a saucepan of hot water and let it melt. Add liquid oil and honey. Mix and put in the fridge to set.

### **Day Cream**

All the same as above but less butters - no beeswax or honey - then I add cacao powder and cinnamon to add colour, then raspberry oil, carrot oil and zinc oxide for sunscreen.

### **Bath Scrub**

I use pink salt and coconut oil mixed and then rubbed all over my body but not neck or face.

### **Hand Cream and Body Cream**

I use the same as night cream ratio but no honey or beeswax. I experiment with what ever is in the herb patch and garden, adding rosemary, blueberry, strawberry, apples, mint, lemon balm, lavender or coriander to any of the creams. Just squeeze the berries though a muslin or chop and brush the herbs and use the juice.

### Just between Us by Adele Parks



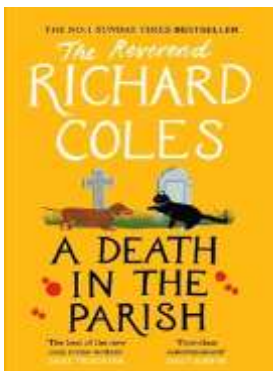
Kylie Gillingham is successfully leading two distinctly different lives when she suddenly goes missing from both. How, and why, she managed to be married to the rich and handsome Daan, whilst still maintaining her marriage to Mark and her role as mother to his two teenage sons, is just one of the mysteries that unfolds as the book progresses. Both her husbands insist she was their everything, until she vanished. Now both are suspects in the case, especially Daan who dashes home to the Netherlands to fight for his innocence. But then Mark is very quickly sleeping with Kylie's best friend. DC Clements knows love is a shiver away from hate and either can make people do the cruellest things. The twist at the end will keep you reading to the very last page!

### Fourth Wing by Rebecca Yarros



This is a novel for those who like House of the Dragon and Game of Thrones with a little Hunger Games thrown in. The action is on the island of Navarre, where Violet must fulfil the destiny her family name has bestowed on her, despite being physically and mentally unsuited to being a dragon rider. A dragon rider is tough and able to maintain emotional detachment. Violet is slightly built, and her tendons have trouble keeping her joints in place, which means that all physical challenges should be beyond her. Luckily, she can think and reason and therefore she can see a way where there should be none. The novel is breathless action throughout and despite thinking a few quiet moments would improve the readability, I still wanted to know how things turned out!

### A Death in the Parish by Richard Coles



More of an amble through church lore and litany than a true detective novel, the narrative revolves around the clash in the outward manifestations of beliefs between the new evangelical vicar at Lower Badsaddle and Daniel the incumbent canon. The difficulties in the relationship cause anguish for Daniel and upset in the local peagee. But the discovery of yet another body in the parish, so soon after the last, really brings the parish together in trying to find out why such a thing could happen in peaceful Champton, and in sympathy for the bereaved family. The meetings between the police Inspector friend of Daniel's lose some of their calm contentment and there is a fire in the vicarage, but all is resolved in the end.

## Plant Sale / Coffee Morning

On Saturday 25th May we held a wonderful plant sale / coffee morning at the Village Hall. The sun was shining and we had a good turnout of villagers and around 30 cyclists from Banbury Star came and supported the event.

The Plant sale / coffee morning all together raised over £650, the plant sale alone made over £250. The money raised is going towards the Park and the Village Hall which is absolutely fantastic.

A big thank you to everyone who came and donated plants, helped out, baked cakes and a special thank you to Allison Pollard who organised the plant sale. It's all very much appreciated.

Thank you, Donna



## Sibford Gower School Report – July 2024 -

I can't quite believe that we are at the end of another academic year. 'They' say time goes by so fast but this year seems to have gone particularly fast.

Since last report, Holly Rutledge has had more sporting success by reaching the finals of the North Oxfordshire School competition in QuadKids. This event involves a 50m sprint, throwing, long jump and 400m. Well done Holly!

At the time of going to print there are just 2.5 weeks left until school breaks up. They are busy weeks with school trips, sports day, a school play and the excitement of simply finishing school for 6 weeks.

As with all my end of year reports we have to say goodbye to students who are moving onto the next stage of their education at secondary school. This year we say goodbye to Henry Boyles; we wish him all the very best at his new school when he starts in September.

Have a wonderful summer everyone. Andrea

## EPWELL TRUST - Contribution from Suzanne Kaye

Over many years the Trustees have published various articles in the Epwell Echo - some giving historical facts and others information regarding the support the Trust has given to the community.

We realise that some new residents in the village may be unaware of the existence of the Trust and its function.

Epwell Trust was originally established - with a slightly different title in 1871 to support any villager in times of need. Over the years it has moved with the times but the Trustees continue this ethos and have extended their support to village projects where it is felt appropriate whilst managing the small income it receives from the rental of some 11 acres of land. The Chairman of Trustees gives a verbal and written report at the Annual Parish Meeting including details of village projects it has contributed to. Any support given to individuals is strictly confidential.

The Trustees purchased and planted seeds which created a beautiful display of wild flowers in the area by the playing field - designated as the future overflow churchyard. The feedback received not only from villagers but also from visitors were most positive.

As mentioned, the Trust has long supported village schemes/projects which are beneficial or enhancing to our lives. These have included a sound system and some lighting for the village hall in the early days of theatrical productions and events. Something quite different was covering the cost of a digger when members of the village volunteered to create "grips" to aid drainage on our village roads. The Trust also recently purchased a Salt Spreader for village use in adverse weather conditions.

Have you noticed the unique wooden gates leading out of the churchyard into the Tchure?

This commemorates Timothy Wimbush who served as Rector from 1976 to 2011. The Trust was a major influence in not only supporting this tribute financially but also sourcing both the wood and the manufacturer. We are particularly proud that one of our Trustees created the unique design which reflects Timothy's great love of cricket - being a player and later an Umpire.

Near to the gates is a bench in memory of Caroline Long who was a long serving member of the Epwell community and St Anne's Church where she was organist for many years. This was created jointly by Epwell Trust and the Parochial Church Council.

Over the years the Trust has diversified with a broader spectrum of support for the village and its residents. Support was given in the early days establishing the playing field and equipment for the children. Together with the PCC and Parish Council, the Trust was involved in adding the marble plaque in the entrance to St. Anne's Church commemorating those of the village who lost their lives in the Second World War and more recently the Tommy Soldier silhouette.

The Trust also contributed to the cost of the Defibrillator and the provision of fireproof cabinets to store our precious village Archives.

In more recent years a contribution was made towards the cost of Christmas tree lights which are something for us all to enjoy.

The Epwell Trust has provided 2 benches in the playing field.

One in 2020 to commemorate the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE & VJ Day.

The other bench is in memory of Oliver Boyles who sadly passed away all too young.

The Trust also made a contribution along with the Parish Council and Village Hall Committee towards the TV system located in the Village Hall which is a great asset for our community.

Apart from all the above, the Trust has supported many residents who have suffered from illness and bereavement. The Trust also celebrates newborns with gifts to replace the previous giving of children's bonds.



## Epwell to Swalcliffe and back - contributed by Chris Hurst

**Just over 2 hours, around 5 miles for main route**

Starts in The Square. From the Village Hall head towards the church and take the path up through the churchyard. Go through the gate at the top (known as the Timothy Wimbush gate, in memory of a Rector who was keen on cricket), turn left and take the track across the field to the back of the Chandlers Arms. Turn left round the car park, down the Sibford Rd and almost immediately right alongside the grassy triangle. Keep right, go through the wooden farm gate and follow path keeping to the left of the pond/woodland.

Though next gate and go straight on, keeping the hedge close on your left. Good views towards Epwell Mill and beyond in that direction. At the end of the field go through the gate which veers to the left and keep to the left as the path descends through a field of saplings. Another gate then down the narrow track with hedges either side. Eventually you end up at a stream with a plank crossing. Go carefully over the stream (bridge can be slippery), though the metal gate and head to the right, keeping close to the trees etc on your right. (The OS map official path takes you to the centre of this field and then turns right. Temporary fencing, a pond and often some inquisitive horses keep you to the right.) Keep going. It might well be boggy but is the best way at present.

The path becomes drier, opens out to a track and heads gently upwards. Keep to the left of a large tree, ignoring a turn to the right which leads round a pond to the farm. So, onwards and upwards. The path becomes shaded by bushes and small trees. You are on the line of what is known as the Roman Road but I bet it's an earlier track. Likely to have been a Salt Way, running from Droitwich across country, passing Compton Wynyates and Broughton Castle, towards a river crossing at Twyford, just south of Banbury. Remains of Roman buildings have been found near Swalcliffe Lea and Broughton, ahead of you.

The path is dry and straight and the terrain agreeably undulating. You come to a road and cross straight over. Take care! Keep going and enjoy the open view. You see the tower of Swalcliffe church to the right in front of you.

On the left there is Madmarston Hill, an Iron Age fort. Pre second world war aerial photos show ramparts. See the photos in the Ashmolean Museum.

On the Roman Road you meet a gate just before coming alongside Madmarston Hill. An unmissable gate across the track. Almost immediately after the gate turn right and head south towards Swalcliffe. You cross a stream and in about 100m there is straight on – up to Swalcliffe - and at 90 degrees on your right a track alongside a hedge. The main route of this walk is to turn right and follow this track, towards Brakelands Farm.

*(You could extend the walk by going straight up the hill into Swalcliffe rather than turning right. Past the village hall, turn right the road, go past church and tithe barn, and, on the hill out of the village, pick up a path to the right in woodland).*

Back to the main route. Follow the track alongside the hedge to a finger post sign. Straight on is to Brakelands Farm and is Private. To the right (ish) the finger post points along our route, a bridleway towards Epwell. Follow this (narrow) path which can be a bit slippery on a wet day. Keep going over a bridge, farm and horses are on your left, and carry on up the hill. There is usually a clear path even when the crops are high. This is splendid open country. There's a hedge on the near horizon. The path should lead you to a gate in this hedge onto the road. Almost opposite is the rather grand driveway of Blenheim Farm. Take this driveway towards the farm.

Follow the road round to the left and skirt the farm. Note the lovely pond with the duck house on it. On a bit and there are some handsome farm cottages on the right. Note the coat of arms on the building. New College, Oxford.

Keep going steadily upwards and ignore the track on your left to Redland Barn, a barn conversion out on its own. Head up the slope, probably between two cultivated areas but is not always very clear, and at the top meet the hedge and turn right. Keep close to the hedge. A gate appears on your left. Often muddy. Go through it and up the slope, past the pond to the top gate. After the top gate pass between the old farm house on the left and the new barn conversions on your right. A very fine wrought iron gate on your right is worth a stop.

Follow the track onwards, and just after it veers to the left there's a gate on your right. Go through the gate and follow the path, which turns left quite sharply. This should be familiar territory; you came this way. Straight on, with horses on the left.

Onwards and through the next gate. You are now back in Epwell Parish. Walk between the hedge on your right and the pond on your left, to the wooden gate. Meet the road and cross it, and head up the tchure (pathway) just to the left of Rugby House. At the top of the path turn right and go round the edge of the field (called The Leys). You are on a track described as a Cartway in the 1773 Enclosure Act document

At the gate into the churchyard turn right and notice the fine bench on your left, put there in memory of Caroline Long. Caroline lived at Epwell Mill for many years until their move to Sibford, and was the organist at the church. She was a keen musician and loved to be involved in local music making.

The church is medieval and worth a look, now or at a later date. It is dedicated to St Anne, the mother of the blessed Virgin Mary. There are only about 100 churches with this dedication in the Church of England.

Until 1905 the church was a chapelry in the large parish of Swalcliffe. It then became part of the Sibford and Epwell benefice, and in 1975 was made a separate ecclesiastical parish within the group of parishes which make up the present day Wykeham Benefice. The building was first mentioned in 1360, and there was at that time a chaplain at Epwell appointed by the Rector of Swalcliffe.

Leave the churchyard by the bottom gate and you are back where you started.

\*\*\*\*\*  
\*  
\*  
**Midsummer recipe from Matthew Platt**  
\*  
\*

\* Absolutely delicious with roast lamb, barbecued chicken, fish or grilled veggies, this vibrant \*  
\* Mediterranean accompaniment brings a big cheerful hit of flavour and colour. \*

\* Finely chop together generous handfuls \*  
\* of mint, parsley and coriander. Add a \*  
\* clove or two of chopped garlic and some \*  
\* sea salt crystals then smash it all together \*  
\* with the side of your knife. \*  
\* Finally stir in balsamic vinegar, lemon \*  
\* zest and Dijon mustard and let the \*  
\* flavours infuse together for a good hour \*  
\* before serving. \*



\* The Romans would have made this kind \*  
\* of thing in a mortarium, a shallow bowl \*  
\* with grit embedded into the glaze inside \*  
\* it. I'm thinking of commissioning Mr Gill \*  
\* the potter to make me one. If anyone \*  
\* else is interested in having one too please \*  
\* let me know. \*

\*\*\*\*\*



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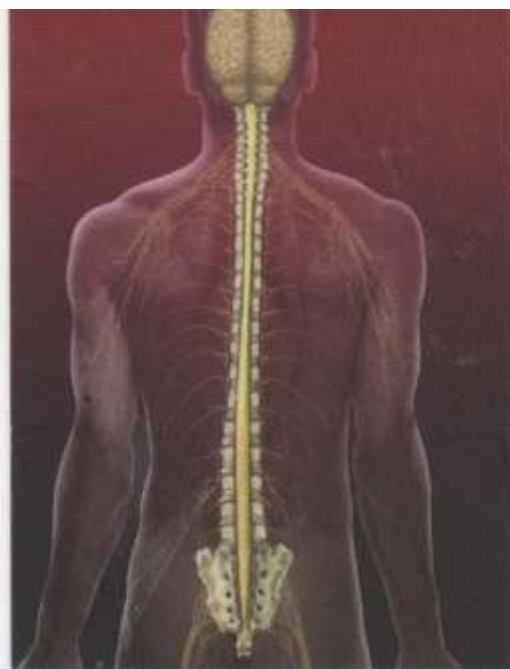
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