

An update from the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme

After such a long, dry summer, the more recent rains may have turned people's attention to the risk of floods again. The Environment Agency has advice about how to prepare and general information can be viewed here: <https://floodsdestroy.campaign.gov.uk/>

Our proposed flood scheme for Oxford is designed to reduce flood risk from all flooding up to the size of a flood which has not been seen in Oxford since 1947.

Our planning application for the scheme is still being considered by Oxfordshire County Council, and we are currently collating some additional information that has been requested by their planners. They will then carry out consultation on this information for the statutory period of 30 days. We are hoping for a final planning decision in January 2019.

We've now also started the formal process for issuing Compulsory Purchase Order notices. A Compulsory Purchase Order is a legal process that allows land, property and rights of access to be obtained from a landowner when there is a compelling case that the land is needed in the public interest. We are working hard to reach voluntary agreements with landowners where at all possible, but it is normal practice when planning a scheme of this scale to run a Compulsory Purchase Order alongside

these negotiations. This ensures all land and access to land essential to the working of the scheme can be acquired, even if agreement is not reached. However we continue to listen to and engage with landowners directly, as our aim is always to reach agreement rather than to have to enforce a Compulsory Purchase Order.

Working with the Oxford Flood Alliance

It's been a busy past couple of months ensuring that some of the myths that have been circulating about the scheme are corrected within communities. We're grateful for all the support from our partner the Oxford Flood Alliance, who have been a great help in getting facts and information out about the scheme. The Oxford Flood Alliance have a page on their website that is worth a read: <https://oxfordfloodalliance.org.uk/2018/09/28/ofas-clarifications-and-explanations/>

One of the suggestions we hear a lot is that the Environment Agency should be dredging all the rivers around Oxford, and that if this was done then such a large new flood scheme would not be needed. However, dredging on its own would never be enough to protect Oxford from large floods. Even if we dredged all the watercourses in Oxford it would not provide the extra capacity needed in a major flood.

Rivers deposit silt again after dredging, making it inefficient and needing constant repetition. Each repetition causes further environmental damage without ever allowing full recovery.

The Environment Agency currently has two maintenance teams covering Oxford who do a great job in keeping main rivers clear and maintaining culverts and other structures such as weirs and locks. Their work includes weed clearance, limited localised de-silting, and blockage removal. While this reduces flood risk in Oxford from smaller, more regular floods, it could never save Oxford from the size of major flood that the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme is designed for.

To help future-proof the city as best as possible, we need to reduce flood risk from major floods which are likely to increase with climate change. The scheme design that we're taking forward has been shown to be the most effective and best value for money to achieve this.

We continue to listen to and talk with all interested residents and groups about the scheme, and are passionate that the scheme we've designed is the best option to protect Oxford from the devastation floods will cause in the long term.

Forward look

We will continue to update the South Hinksey community about the scheme's progress. If you would like to sign up to our newsletters please email oxfordscheme@environment-agency.gov.uk, or follow us on Twitter <https://twitter.com/OxfordFAS> or Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/oxfordscheme/>

Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme



Parking Tickets

There can be few experiences as disheartening and utterly deflating as floating back to your car after some marvellously therapeutic shopping trip, laden with parcels and shopping bags, to find a black and yellow parking notification attached to your windscreen, like some enormous striped stinging hornet - and certainly having a stinging effect on your feelings too.

It could spoil anyone's day - but don't let it! Don't panic, don't curse and don't waste any time before getting to grips with the problem.

The Citizens Advice website has a useful section which you should consult: <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/parking-tickets/>

If you think the ticket was justified (and let's face it, some of them are), one option

is to pay the fine right away, thus getting a substantial discount:

- 50% if you pay a Penalty Charge Notice or Excess Charge Notice within 14 days
- 40-60% if you pay a Parking Charge Notice within 14 days

If you think that you were parked correctly and within the rules, or there were mitigating circumstances, you can try an

appeal (but don't pay a ticket issued by a parking company that isn't a member of the Accredited Trade Association - they can't force you to pay or take you to court).

If you appeal, you should explain that you didn't break any rules, and, if possible, send evidence to prove it.

Citizens Advice is frequently consulted about parking tickets. If you get one and aren't sure how to proceed, it's comforting to know that there are sympathetic people you can talk to.

Funerals

If you have to organise a funeral for someone and there are no clear instructions in the will, bear in mind that you can organise the procedure without using the services of a funeral director. The Cemeteries and Crematorium Department of your local authority can offer help and guidance, and there are many sources of help online, for instance the Natural Death Centre at www.naturaldeath.org.uk. At the current time, when the high prices charged by funeral companies are under government investigation, an alternative funeral can also cost much less. If you're on certain benefits you might be able to get help paying for the funeral.

Citizens Advice has guidance for people planning a funeral for themselves or their near ones:

- Shop around and get quotes from local funeral directors. These quotes can vary surprisingly, sometimes by as much as £2,000. Also, try asking for a "basic funeral" and get the costs itemised so you can see what you are paying for.
- Choose "direct burial" – that way, there is no need to pay for embalming or visiting rights.
- Purchase a biodegradable cardboard or cloth-covered coffin, or a wicker basket.
- A woodland or "natural" burial site is an option. There are 200 of them around Britain and several in Oxfordshire.

Hate Crime

Citizens Advice offers haven for "hate crime" victims.

Victims and witnesses of hate crime in south Oxfordshire who are unwilling to talk directly to the police now have a place to go to report incidents.

Since July 2018, Citizens Advice Oxfordshire South and Vale has become a "hate crime reporting centre", providing a safe environment where you can tell specially trained staff what happened to you. Citizens Advice staff and volunteers can then act on your behalf, contacting the police if you want this, and referring you to "Victims First", a service which will provide the support you need to recover from your experience.

Hate incidents or crimes are acts of violence or hostility directed at people because of their personal characteristics or because of what other people think those characteristics are. For example, you might be verbally abused in the street because you are disabled or gay, or because somebody thinks you are.

Hate incidents are commonly sparked off by people's prejudices over disability, race, religion or sexual orientation. These incidents take many forms, including threats and harassment, verbal abuse, intimidation, physical attacks, hate mail or online abuse, or damage to your home or car. You can report a hate incident or hate crime even if it wasn't directed at you personally.

Contact Citizens Advice in person during opening hours or on the telephone (Adviceline 03 444 111444). For locations of offices and opening hours see www.citizensadvice.org.uk/local/oxfordshire-south-vale

Village Hall

Since the last Echo report, the Village Hall Committee have been busy.

The hall looks very inviting since the interior was redecorated earlier this year. We have a regular maintenance programme to keep it that way. Over the summer the curtains and some chairs have been cleaned and the floor polished. Finances are good and, after a year of heavy expenditure on maintenance we are nearly back to our target reserve amount.

As for social events, **The Mock Pub** continues to thrive, meeting about once a month in the hall. Details of dates are circulated on Shinfo, but in case you are wondering it is usually once a month except in the holiday months of August and December.

The Arts and Crafts weekend was a new event which proved to be very popular. We hope to repeat it.

The fete was, as usual, popular. We were able to send a donation of £277 to Parkinson's UK and there is a further £162 to be sent to St Laurence Church Fabric Fund.

Halloween and **Christmas** are still to come. Look out for more details on Shinfo.

Linda Slater, for the Village Hall Management Committee (Peter Rawcliffe, Maggie Rawcliffe, Ann Allsworth, Linda Slater, Louisa Nahhas)

Village Fete



It is hard to find a novel way of writing about this year's fete, because it is so like all the

ones that have gone before it – but then that is part of the appeal of the event. It was started in 2009 with the intention of being a traditional village fete, and that is exactly what it has remained. Of course it has evolved over the years but most of the key ingredients are still there: the bar, the teas, the children's races and games such as egg-throwing and the leaky bucket race involving the whole community. This year the much-loved Splat the Rat was missing - the equipment had simply worn out- but there were other amusements to take its place.

The sun shone, as it usually does, and the Donkey House Band played- as they always do. The afternoon wouldn't be the same without them and we are really grateful to them.

We are very grateful to those of you who gave your time and energy to make the fete a success. It has been good this year to see some new people taking over stalls or helping out. We look forward to welcoming even more volunteers next year. You are all very welcome to take part.

The main aim has never been to make money, but we never make a loss. It has become traditional for the proceeds of the bar and barbecue to go to a chosen charity Other profits are shared between a second, local, cause and the village hall funds. This year we sent £227 to Parkinson's UK and £108. 18 will be donated to the St Laurence Church Fabric Fund.

Linda Slater

Saving Oxford's Wetland Wildlife



26 November 2018. 6:30pm – 8pm
in the Village Hall.

Free talk “The Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme: Maximising the benefits for people and freshwater wildlife”

by Jeremy Biggs of Freshwater Habitats Trust and Penny Burt from the Environment Agency.

The talk will introduce Freshwater Habitats Trust's new project 'Saving Oxford's Wetland Wildlife' which is working in partnership with the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme to protect and enhance Oxford's freshwater biodiversity. Come along to find out what they're doing and how you can get involved.

'Saving Oxford's Wetland Wildlife' is funded by Thames Water and supported by TOE with funding from Grndon Waste Management Ltd through the Landfill Communities Fund.

Project Officer: Francesca Dunn,
fdunn@freshwaterhabitats.org.uk

SOUTH HINKSEY INAUGURAL ART & CRAFT EXHIBITION

Friday 5 October 2018

Not the usual Mock Pub this evening. The Village Hall had become a Gallery, the Cotswold Ensemble played, and Prosecco and beer were on tap – almost.

About a year ago, during a Village Hall Management Committee meeting, it emerged that we all knew people who potted, painted, photographed, played or crafted - a wealth of creative talent in South Hinksey - and the idea for a South Hinksey Art & Craft Festival bubbled up. A group was formed to put it all together - Louisa Nahhas, Pat Jones, Linda Bloch and myself, and a date was set for opening night at the Village Hall. This is exciting stuff!

Offers to contribute rolled in. A deadline for submitting contributions was set. Linda Bloch bravely volunteered herself to receive, and her guest bedroom to store, the articles. Some contributors needed persuading, cajoling, and as the deadline approached a little dragooning may even have occurred.

Planning the means to display the exhibits was a challenge, especially as the Hall committee are pretty fierce about not sticking stuff to the walls! Linda Bloch procured display boards, easels were lent, and plinths, wine boxes, step ladders, even a clothes horse, were put to use. Hilary Briffett wrote the exhibitors' names in her beautiful calligraphy.

An amazing variety of artefacts were displayed - among them paintings, drawings and clay modelling by children, ceramic art and functional pottery, photography, gold and silver work, embroidery, a hand-made psalter, tapestry and sculpture.

A big thanks to Emmeline Bryant and the Cotswold Ensemble* (<https://www.cotswold-ensemble.co.uk/>) who created a great opening night ambiance. They played classical favourites



including Pachelbel's 'Canon' and then moved on to play tangos, including a favourite, Libertango'.

Thanks too to everyone who helped with setting up and dismantling the exhibition, with design skills and with muscle.

Finally, the biggest thank you of all is to the generous contributors, children and adults alike, without whom this could not have happened.

Maggie Rawcliffe, for the VH Committee and Steering Group.

* the Cotswold Ensemble has just recorded 'Troubled Planet', a video about global warming, with footage from Greenpeace. You can hear that on

<https://youtu.be/leXJPqsA0Ck>

Parish Council

The parish council is back at full strength after co-opting Patricia Jones to fill the vacancy left by Maggie Rawcliffe – and it needs to be, because fate has conspired to put several major challenges in front of the parish at once.

A Clerk's job is rather routine but there are times when the Councillors' job can be quite eventful. As a parish, South Hinksey is facing – not entirely of its own choice, of course – implications for the parish of major projects like the Flood Alleviation Scheme, the Oxford to Cambridge Expressway and rail electrification (which would force the replacement of the Hinksey Lakes Footbridge) but also purely local problems such as the proposal to redevelop the Westwood Hotel site at the top of Hinksey Hill as a 60-bed care home.

Another summer has passed without work starting on the proposed path across the burial ground and the churchyard, but there is a real possibility of work happening soon to reduce Hinksey Hill to a 30mph limit, which may be timely if other projects (including the North

Abingdon housing development) may be about to increase substantially the volume of traffic up and down the Hill.

During the next few months you should notice a couple of small additions come about: a noticeboard for the burial ground and the planting of a sapling to commemorate the centenary of the 1918 armistice (donated by the County Council).

It is good to see there are usually some people taking the opportunity to come to the Council's meetings, which are all open to the public, and I'm continually surprised by the number of parishioners who seem to read the Council material on the parish website (which David Rawcliffe kindly still maintains).

A remarkable number of parishioners took the trouble to write of how the temporary closure of the Hinksey Lakes footbridge affected them and their families, and Patricia Jones is currently seeking views about the Expressway (on which the Council has not yet taken a position).

You can always contact the Clerk or one of the five councillors if you have concerns or want to give your views.

Geoffrey Ferres, Parish Clerk

News From St Laurence Church

As some of you will know Fr James Wilkinson our parish priest at St Laurence and at St John's over the bridge in New Hinksey, has bid us farewell. He has moved to London to be Chaplain to the Bishop of Fulham, and Parish priest of St Dunstan-in-the-west, Fleet Street. Fr James will be licensed at Evensong on 21st of

November at St Dunstan's, Fleet Street at 7pm: all are welcome. If you would like to join other parishioners in the bus going from the parish, please ring (245244) or email me on benjamin.drury@gmail.com.

The time when there is no Vicar as priest in charge of a parish is called an interregnum - so while we wait for a new priest to be appointed to the parish, the Churchwardens are in charge of the parish. On a day to day basis, and for pastoral needs, I am continuing as assistant curate: so please do be in touch with me when you need a priest as you would have been with Fr James. I look forward to seeing you over the coming months, particularly at Remembrance, when we will be commemorating our own loved ones, as well as all those who gave their lives in war; and at our usual Christmas services - everyone is always welcome. God Bless, best wishes and prayers from Fr Ben.

Sunday Services for the whole parish are held at St John's at 10.30am every Sunday except, at St Laurence our pattern is usually the first and third Sundays of the month:

6 monthly Calendar - November 2018 to April 2019

Sun 4th Nov 4th before Advent
Eucharist at 9.15am

**Sun 11th Nov Remembrance
Service & Sprinkling at
2.00pm**

(At 5pm at St John's is a talk and book launch about those from our parish commemorated on the War Memorial in St John's.)

Sun 18th Nov 2nd before Advent
Eucharist at 9.15am

Sun 2nd Dec Advent 1
Eucharist at 9.15am

Sun 16th Dec Advent 3
Carols at 4.00pm

Mon 24th Dec (Crib Service- Christmas
Eve- St John's- at 6pm)

Mon 24th Dec (Midnight Mass- 10pm
at St John's)

**Tue 25th Dec Christmas Day
Eucharist at 10.00am**

Sun 6th Jan Epiphany
Eucharist at 9.15am

Sun 20th Jan Epiphany 2
Eucharist at 9.15am

Sun 3rd Feb 5th before Lent
Eucharist at 9.15am

Sun 17th Feb 3rd before Lent
Eucharist at 9.15am

Sun 3rd March Next before Lent
Eucharist at 9.15am

Sun 17th March Lent 2
Eucharist at 9.15am

Sun 7th April Lent 5
Eucharist at 9.15am

**Sun 21st April Easter Day
Eucharist at 9.15am**

Father Ben

