

The Sprout



Very subdued bonfire night coming up – but keep your pets inside!

The Newsletter for North Hinksey & Botley

Issue 152 November 2020

The Sprout

Issue 152, November 2020

Contents

3 Better Botley, Better Planet	25 About the Library
11 Our Not-So-Silent Cinema	27 Street Tag
15 New Head for Botley School	29 Memory Club Re-opens
20 Pull-out COVID-help poster	31 More About Sewage
22 Remembrance Day notice	37 Randoms
23 Summer into Autumn	39 Local organizations

SINCE GOING TO PRESS, A SECOND LOCKDOWN HAS BEEN DECLARED, MAKING MOST OF WHAT'S HERE LIKELY TO BE CANCELLED. DECEMBER SPROUT WILL BE ONLINE ONLY.

From the Editor

Despite the sad weather, and the clocks going back, the November *Sprout* brings good news. The Library is reopening at last, and this is marked by a brief account of some of its history (p.25). If anyone would like to fill in the gaps, please send ideas to editor@thesprout.org.uk. Botley School's got a new Head, who introduces herself on page 15. Welcome to Botley, Mrs Jo Reid! The Parish Council is rolling up its sleeves ready to join the fight to save the planet (p.3). There's also reassuring news for those of us looking for a safe night out at the pictures (p.11), and Kennington Memory Club is back in action, extending a hand to people suffering from dementia (p.29). The County Council has come up with a fun way to get out and about with the kids (p.27) and Mace have seen sense and removed the evening parking fees at the shopping centre (p.37). Then there's a hefty article about sewage for us to get our teeth into (p.31)! It may not be our first choice for bedside reading, but we need to get informed if we want our once-sparkling rivers back in good shape. The cover reminds us of Bonfire Nights past. They will be back – with a bang – but not this year! The Remembrance Day service at the Commonwealth War Graves in Botley Cemetery will be for invitees only this year, but there will be the Last Post and two minutes' silence in the new shopping centre at 11am on 11th November.

Ag MacKeith

Better Botley – better planet: what can we really do?

On October 15th North Hinksey Parish Council agreed on a 'Climate and Nature Emergency Action Plan'. This sets out how we will deliver on the commitments we made last year to work to protect and improve local green spaces, and take action on climate change in line with our Climate Emergency Policy. We want to help make our community carbon-neutral by 2030.

It's easy to say 'what impact can a parish council really have on global environmental issues?'. It's certainly easier to say that than it is to actually do something. It's true that we are a small organisation with limited powers (as we acknowledge in the plan). That makes it even more important that we use the power we have wisely. The new plan commits us to act in three ways for our climate and nature, on:

- The Council's own activities
- The Council's responsibilities
- Encouraging and enabling community and individuals to act.

You can find the Parish Council's Climate Action Plan at the top of this web page: <https://northhinksey-pc.gov.uk/committees/environment-well-being-committee/>

Nature and green spaces

We have responsibility for various green spaces including the allotments, nature reserve, etc. We will review these to see how they can best be managed to enhance nature. This may involve actions as simple as changing when we mow. As a first step we will hold a discussion between the Parish Environment & Wellbeing, Allotments, and Recreation & Amenities committees. We will invite local experts and relevant organisations to feed in ideas and suggestions for actions.

We will also be looking at other green spaces around the parish. Can these be better looked after so as to benefit wildlife. Are there places we could plant more trees? Is there space for more food growing? *How do you think we can improve our natural environment?*

Land is, of course, in high demand in Botley, with new developments proposed every month. Our powers to influence planning proposals are limited (and may be cut even further by proposed law changes) but we will require that all new developments demonstrate a 'net biodiversity gain'; in plain English that means new green spaces, more trees planted

than those cut down, and proper maintenance of those new spaces. We will also be asking that the Vale District Council, as the planning authority, seeks the highest standards in new buildings.



There are other actions we can take. We will look at how our own lands are managed, and support the ambition to double tree cover across Oxfordshire by 2045. We are already talking with Thames Water and the Environment Agency about ending sewage pollution in the Seacourt Stream.

We certainly cannot do all this on our own. We will be encouraging action by community groups and individuals – the tree planting (see below) planned for December will be a first step in this direction. We'll produce a guide to what you can do and how you can get involved in making our parish an even better place to live.

Action on the climate emergency

The health emergency of Covid-19 may have distracted our attention from the climate emergency, but that doesn't mean it's gone away. Urgent action is needed at every level – from the United Nations, governments and big business right down to street level. As a council we have committed to help our community become carbon-neutral by 2030. We are producing some guidance and information how everyone can play a part, and we will follow up the 2020 Green Day last February with a meeting on 'Climate Action'. We will be looking to reduce our

own 'climate footprint' as a Council (just as District and County Councils are doing) – this will include saving energy. We are looking forward to implementing the new Guidance for Parish Councils when it is published. To the fullest of our limited powers, we will ensure that all new developments are sustainable, and take account of the climate implications of our own decisions. We will promote 'zero carbon homes' as a target and support the Oxfordshire Zero Carbon Homes initiative.

We will also speak up for climate action. Decisions on major new developments are largely made by local authorities, the Growth Board, or by national government. Too many of these decisions will needlessly increase carbon emissions. We will use our voice wherever we can and work with others as appropriate to oppose environmentally damaging developments, and encourage sustainable alternatives instead. We will actively support plans for renewable energy unless there are very clear reasons not to. We recognise that the UK needs to rapidly increase the amount of renewable energy it generates.

We will encourage safe accessible walking and cycle routes, along with safe cycle parking spaces, in all significant planning proposals for our area. Parts of our parish are badly affected by air pollution (some of the worst problems in south-east England) from the A34. We will work with relevant agencies to tackle this problem and support local activities that minimise the impact, especially around the local primary schools.

There's more in the Plan – you can read it on the NHPC website (<https://northhinksey-pc.gov.uk>). But the thousands of people who live in North Hinksey and Botley can together have a much greater impact than the parish council. We recognise that people can often be uncertain about what they can do to reduce their own carbon footprint. So we will work with other local bodies to produce an impartial guide that provides information on practical action and lists accredited local businesses that offer energy and clean transport services, eco-friendly



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retailers, green builders and landscape companies, etc. So, *watch this space* and look out for our on-line meeting on local action. *There are two ways in which you can get involved right away!*

Investing in a greener home

The costs of energy saving measures, such as installing solar panels or other new equipment, like heat pumps, can be much lower if people co-operate and material is bought in bulk. Now is a good time to be planning improvements – the government's 'Green Grant Scheme' (<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-the-green-homes-grant-scheme>) offers homeowners cash support. If you are thinking about investing to cut your fuel bills, send us an email. North Hinksey Parish Council are exploring ways to help make this happen on a bigger scale. This is still in its early stages, and there will be no obligation to be part of any purchase if it happens. We are simply keen to know if there is interest in a scheme like this. Contact us on **environment@northhinksey-pc.gov.uk**

National Tree Week – come along and plant some trees!

We are pleased to announce that there will be two community tree planting days in North Hinksey and Botley during Tree Week, which runs from November 26–December 6. Local planting will take place over the weekend of 5th and 6th December, at Oxford Rugby Club (out beyond the Fishes pub in North Hinksey Village) and at Wytham View, Tilbury Fields. *Exact times are still being finalised – look for local publicity or check the Parish Council website or next month's Sprout.*



Everyone is welcome – we'll aim to plant around 500 trees. These will be small 'whips' – young trees about 1m tall. If you've not done this before, it's easy and satisfying and we'll give full guidance. Covid-19 issues mean we must make sure that planting is done in a 'socially distanced' and safe manner, so bring along your own spades and gloves. We are grateful to the Rugby Club for their support. If you've got ideas for other land where tree planting could take place, please do get in touch via the parish council email (**environment@northhinksey-pc.gov.uk**)

Chris Church, Chair, NHPC Environment and Wellbeing Committee

Our Not-so-Silent Cinema

Jinxed, or what? Just as I sat down to write about local independent cinema, The Phoenix Picturehouse in town announced its temporary but indefinite closure. All is not lost, however. The Ultimate Picture Palace, towards the Plain end of the Cowley Road, continues to function, albeit in reduced format. The Ultimate – established in 1911 and Grade II listed since 1994 – is one of Oxford's own national treasures. As its declared ethos is prioritising independent releases, foreign-language



films and classics, the Ultimate is less affected by the more commercial factors (e.g., blockbuster films) that are having such a drastic effect on other cinemas.

So can we as film lovers feel safe there, in the current climate? Can we sit back and enjoy the show? Here's what the UPP Management say: "We've set up an allocated seating system which allows for social distancing, we've installed hand-sanitiser stations and Perspex screens throughout the venue, we've altered the bathrooms to accommodate a one-in-one-out policy, and our cleaning regimes include sanitisation of the auditorium between screenings. We also have an air flow system which pumps fresh air throughout screenings and provides extra ventilation. We are a small and adaptable team, so while it took a lot of work and effort to put the new safety measures into place, the whole team has taken to the new system with relative ease."

We went along to see for ourselves a few weeks ago, and were reassured. Pre-booking is advised, and you are allocated specific seats ... no wandering in and choosing once inside. The cinema, capacity about 100, under Covid is restricting capacity to 25; viewers sit only with their own partner or small group, and every second row is kept empty. As viewers, we felt slightly weird ... all that space around us ... but very relaxed and comfortable.

So, the obvious question: How can it be economic to continue? The Management again: "With some of our audience perhaps cautious about returning to the cinema during evenings and weekends when screenings usually are busier, we wanted to provide a chance for people to attend screenings which would have smaller audience numbers. So we are scheduling extra screenings in the daytime."

Because of the extra daytime showings, the UPP advertised for volunteer ushers, and was heartened by the response. As one volunteer put it, "Everyone there is there because they want to help, and keep the cinema open for everyone to come and enjoy themselves."

Encouraged by the safe and secure experience we had, we've booked to see some more films at The Ultimate. It's refreshing to get out of the house and enjoy an alternative to YouTube and the television, particularly when we're all feeling cornered by this miserable virus. Here's a final message from the Ultimate Staff themselves: "We think that one upside of this pandemic will be that people will realise how important arts and cultural venues – especially independent ones – are and how much they need support to continue." You can book your seats at www.uppcinema.com

Ruth Cameron

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## A new head for Botley School

This is my first term leading Botley School and I have had a wonderful welcome from all the staff, pupils and parents. It really is such a vibrant and positive school community to work in and become a part of. I have particularly enjoyed meeting and welcoming our families at the gates, greeting everyone in the morning and getting to know our families. I am also looking forward to a time when I can get to introduce myself to our wider community as well and invite back our regular army of brilliant Botley volunteers who help our school to thrive.


Every school year we look forward to the exciting challenges ahead, and this year the sense of newness and challenge is definitely a fixture as we try to ensure our school is Covid19-safe and our pupils are accessing a broad and exciting curriculum.

Whilst we work in our class 'bubbles', the main challenge is in how we bring our school community together. We have been working hard on utilising our new Microsoft Technology to hold assemblies, join other classes for story times and find ways to come together. As well as general school events, so far this term we have helped to raise funds for Macmillan Cancer charity by holding a virtual coffee morning. We all

stopped at 11:00 and had a piece of cake whilst talking to each other using Teams. It was such fun to see everyone all together again!

To mark the harvest season, we collected for Asylum Welcome once again, and each class created a video or presentation based on harvest around the world; once again using the brilliant TEAMS technology to share our assembly contributions with the rest of the school.

The newest members of our school community, our Reception children, have settled well into Botley School and are thoroughly enjoying exploring their new classroom and making lots of





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friends. This term their topic has been focussing on 'Superheroes' where they started by discussing what they know about superheroes. In PE they took on the role of a superhero and responded to different pieces of music in various ways – always ending in a superhero pose! They also had a visit from Mr Freeze who had frozen some of their toys so they had to work together to release them. They described the various ways they could release them and how heat could help to melt the ice. They were overjoyed when their toys were released. *(There are the toys in a tray of ice!)*



The topic then focussed on real-life superheroes and the children learnt there are so many heroes around us. They started to learn about doctors and nurses and have been learning about their bodies and how to look after themselves through eating healthy foods, brushing their teeth and leading a healthy lifestyle. They set up a doctor role-play area which has been great fun. Luckily, we now have plenty of doctors and nurses when we are feeling a little poorly or have broken a bone *(Seen at work in the photo!)*



Our Reception children are also helping us to put together a virtual tour of their learning environment so that we can show families of children due to start in Reception in September 2021 what our wonderful provision is like. We will also be using new technology to organise two open events after half term, including a presentation by our Early Years Lead, Mrs Jones, and a chance to ask questions. Adverts will be going out shortly and we will be setting up a special page on our website for the 2021

September new starters, so please keep your eyes peeled for further information.

As I write this, we head towards the half term in October, we are waiting to find out whether restrictions will become stricter for the country and our local area. Whatever happens, Botley School is dedicated to ensuring the best possible provision for our families over the next few challenging months. In the meantime, I wish all our families and the community well and look forward to working with you all again as soon as possible.

**Mrs Jo Reid**, Headteacher, Botley School.



## Remembrance Day Service

This year's service at the Commonwealth War Graves on Sunday 8th November is unfortunately limited to just 30 invited guests due to COVID restrictions. The whole cemetery will be closed with gates locked (by the City Council) between 10am and 12:30pm on the day.

The service can be followed live on Radio Cherwell. We also plan to film and live stream the service online, check the Parish Council website for details:  
<https://northhinksey-pc.gov.uk>

In Botley Square in the new West Way Centre we will remember the end of the First World War as the Last Post is sounded at 11am on Wednesday 11th November, followed by a two-minute silence. All are welcome to attend, following current rules on social distancing, etc.

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## Summer into Autumn

*Dan Ferrett has lived in North Hinksey since 2003. He has been a coppersmith, a cleaner, a careers information officer, a university lecturer, an early years practitioner and has moved books around the Bodleian. He sent this poem inspired by the changing seasons.*

Light shining through trees, broken by branches,  
Rainbow colours upon a spider's thread,  
Blackberries plump, as kids go back to school  
Freshly fallen acorns carpet the earth.

Big raindrops puncture the green canopy  
Two people running, one stops to catch breath  
Traversing rough ground, sodden by rainfall.  
Sloppy muddy puddles, watery bogs,  
Otto takes a dive and falls on his face.

Golf course greens like sponges, saturated –  
The live forest does not stop for lockdown –  
Then home for nursery rhymes and hot tea.

**Dan Ferrett**

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LOCAL PLANNING APPLICATIONS

P20/V2298/FUL	Land at Yarnells Hill. Erect 3 detached dwellings, including access and landscaping.	7 September TDD: 2 Nov
P20/V2326/FUL	15 Raleigh Park Rd. Single storey side & rear extension and to create one 1- bed dwelling.	9 September TDD: 4 Nov
P20/V1546/PDH Renewal of prior approval P16/V2150/PDH	13 Crabtree Rd. Rear extension. Addition to existing extension to total depth of 6 metres from main house all single-storey flat roof with a parapet.	14 September Target Decision Date: 26 October

About the library

Good news! By the time you read this, we should have our Library back again. I thought you might be interested in some of its back story.

What is possibly the first record was unearthed by Liz Peretz in the 1924 Annual Report of Barnett House (in Wellington Square). It recorded a payment of £1.5s from Old Botley to the Barnett House Rural Scheme (where villages picked up boxes of books from Barnett House library at intervals and lent them out – usually supervised by the schoolmistress or the clergy). The scheme, which was started in 1922, was made possible by substantial grants from the Carnegie United Kingdom Trust and the Plunkett Trust. It was subsequently adopted by the County Council in 1926 and formed the basis of the County Library system. So it looks as though our first library was in this very primitive form – usually about 60 books in a box – renewed weekly or monthly and with some help from the Barnett House librarian – in 1924.

Once the Howse family had moved out of Elms Farmhouse (on the site of soon-to be-demolished Elms Court), the Library took up residence there. Jim Chatting, long term resident and former parish councillor, remembered it like this:

“As far as I remember the farmhouse that housed the library back in the 1950s faced a gravel drive that formed a neat circle round some grass. You entered the site between the big elm trees that were there at the time. The library was on the bottom floor on the right as you entered and the books were on shelves around the room. Being an old farm house the ceiling was quite low which gave it a rather gloomy appearance. I can’t remember the name of the librarian (though my lady wife says that it was Smith). Rather a stern sort of lady, she allowed no noise in it. I think that some of the children that used the library at that time were a little afraid of her. I seem to recall that we used that room for Parish Council meetings in the days when I first joined the Parish council which was in 1958.”

A long gap follows. During the Sixties a new shopping centre was built behind Elms Parade, and the library installed in Elms Court. For some reason now unclear, the Library was obliged to pay business rates, and this led to problems in the 1990s when the County Council thought to save money by closing down a swathe of local libraries. Botley united behind a vigorous campaign to keep our library open. One of the reasons our own library had been targetted was the high cost of running

the building. The campaign was successful, and we breathed again. But not for long.

Barely ten years later there was another attack from the county council. A second campaign to Save Botley Library leapt to its defence. A petition with 3,750 signatures was presented to the County Council pleading for our Library to stay open. No fewer than 223 letters were sent from across the spectrum of Botley's community, questioning the legality of closing libraries under the 1964 Libraries Act and pointing out the hardship for our old and disabled citizens of travelling to the city centre to borrow books and read the paper. Everybody joined



in, including our MP Nicola Blackwood, our County Councillor Janet Godden, the public, the schools. Here is a Valentine's Day photo from 2012 showing Botley School children in the old library:

Our efforts were rewarded in 2012, when we were told that ours would be one of the 22 libraries in the core group that would be kept as they were (the rest would have to manage with some input from volunteers).

So welcome back, Botley Library, to your place in a community that fully appreciates the priceless service you offer... If anyone else would like to share memories about the library we'll be happy to print them.

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A fun, free, smartphone app that offers rewards for exercise.

The County Council has come up with a cunning plan to get families with primary-school-age children outside and active. It's called "Street Tag" and you can sign up and gain points via your smart phone. What it does is to covert running, walking and cycling into a game that gets you Street Tag points. The app runs in the background and lets you know when you are within 40m of a checkpoint, where you can log your progress. You can build up points whenever you are outside and active – parking not too close to school, for instance, and walking the rest of the way will get you points.



Points are entered onto a leaderboard, and tallied up. Every 12 weeks the winners are announced, and they can earn £50 worth of kit for their school, as well as other goodies. The winners of the first two twelve-week sessions will be entered for the Street Tag Oxon School Games Finals in the third session.

In short:

- Download the Street Tag app from the Play Store or App Store. You can add up to two children to your app
- Scan the QR code at your primary school
- Earn points for your school from physical activities indoor and outdoor – walking, running, cycling – by scanning virtual tags and converting your steps into Street Tag Points
- Top the leaderboard to get rewards and the chance to win prizes from Street Tag, such as Amazon vouchers, gift cards, sports equipment and lots more

If your school hasn't signed up, get them to fill in the online form. They'll

find it at the address below.

There's more to it than this – details are on the County Council website.
For all you need to know about how to play, head over to
www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/streettag

Kennington Memory Club, sadly, had to close its doors in the early stages of the Covid 19 pandemic to protect its members, their carers, staff and volunteers. Members lost their chance to enjoy time spent at the Day Centre held at Kennington Methodist Church, and their Carers were denied much-needed respite from their responsibilities. The staff were furloughed and volunteers stood down.

The Trustees of Kennington Memory Club and Helen, the organiser, (*pictured*) have been working hard for some time to address all the measures required to allow a re-opening of the Club. A risk assessment is now in place, discussions with the Church have been held, and the procedures necessary to re-open the Club safely are well understood.

In the light of recent increases in Covid 19 cases, regulations on numbers of people allowed indoors together have been strengthened. These must be observed, so the Club will be running on lower numbers to be able to maintain social distancing and ensure the safety of the members and staff. Now we are eager and all geared up to get going again, with relevant procedures and protection all in place.

We are pleased to announce that the Club will be re-opening on Thursday November 12th at 10.00am.

The club will run on Thursdays only for the time being. If new restrictions are imposed locally, those involved will be contacted personally and news will be posted on our website and on Kennington Connected Facebook group. We are looking forward very much to resuming the Club sessions and the enjoyable activities that the members love, and carers will be thankful for their window of freedom.

There will be some spaces for new members, and if there is enough demand, Monday sessions will resume as well. If you would like to know more about the Club for yourself or anyone else, or to put someone's name on the waiting list, please visit the website (www.kenningtonmemoryclub.org.uk) and contact Helen on 07852 883496.

Can't wait to see you all again!

Isobel Birse

More About Sewage

As everybody knows, Botley lies in the Flood Plain. Between Botley and Oxford there are five watercourses, including the Thames itself. Another generally acknowledged fact is that over the last ten years or so, Botley has been a bit of a building site. One development after another has gone up – from Lime Road to Tilbury Lane, from North Hinksey Lane to the West Way Centre itself. There is a reason for this.

There had been pressure to develop parts of Botley for many years, but the existing sewerage system was so inadequate that 'Grampian Conditions' had to be imposed. These required that the system must be upgraded before any new development could take place. A date was set: 31st December 2012.

So during 2012 the local sewers were thoroughly explored, investigated, analysed and refashioned. Particularly problematic were the complex arrangements at the junction of West Way and Westminster Way, and the place near North Hinksey School where the pipe had been widened and flattened to travel under a gas main. 39 tonnes of silt were removed, 1.7km of new, fatter pipe were installed from Old Botley to the far end of North Hinksey Village, and a huge holding tank was installed under the fields at the end of North Hinksey Lane. Once this was completed, all those latent planning permissions were enacted and Botley started to expand.

In their comprehensive account of the work that had taken place, the contractor sounded a word of warning. Understanding the network had enabled weaknesses to be identified. In particular, the complex junction at the start of Westminster Way would need regular maintenance. Its absence would 'result in premature spilling from the CSO' there.

A word about CSOs

A CSO is a Combined Sewer Outfall. There are two in Botley, one by Westminster Way and one in North Hinksey Lane. They are an escape valve for when a heavy downpour flushes huge quantities of rainwater into the system threatening to overwhelm it. On Elms Rise, as in most other places, wastewater from baths and washing machines, etc, flows away through the foul sewer. So does rainwater from roads and gutters. As a result the heavy showers that have become almost normal over the past decade do have the potential to overwhelm the sewers. When this happens, the CSO valve opens and the mixture of sewage and water is flushed into the Seacourt Stream.

Spills OK

The Environment Agency responded to the Parish Council's complaint about sewage floating in the Stream with a long letter that was intended to be reassuring. There weren't really a lot of spills, they said – 'only' 17 spills in 2019 (70 hours' worth of discharge) from the West Way CSO, and 'only' 12 from North Hinksey lane (84 hours!) – so 154 hours' worth altogether. But refer back to the 25-page document referenced by the EA, to find out what constitutes 'a spill' and you will learn that the term covers as many as may happen in a 12-hour period. They count together as one 'spill', but if the last one continues into the next 12-hour period that counts as two spills.

Another worrying aspect to emerge from this document was the way our watercourses were rated for 'amenity value'. This ranged from 'High' to 'None'. High was a watercourse running through a public park, used for water sports like canoeing, etc, that might involve falling in. 'Moderate' were rivers with well-used footpaths, passing though a city centre, etc; 'Low' were rivers and streams in the country-side, passing under rural road bridges, etc; and 'None' were rivers and streams in places seldom or never used by people. But rivers are more than an 'amenity' to us humans. They are important in themselves as home to all kinds of water dwellers, and it is our job to look after them. Or at least, not to wreck them.

Spills not OK

This was certainly the opinion of the many respondents who, like me, had googled 'Combined Sewer Overflows' and found it explained on the Environment Agency's website. The explanation had been prompted by a July article in the *Guardian* claiming that untreated human waste had been released into rivers for a total of 1.5 million hours during 2019. The Environment Agency protested that they were monitoring what was going on, and prosecuting where there were flagrant breaches of the law – four prosecutions during 2019 had resulted in fines totalling nearly £1,300,000. But it is clear that the system is inadequate, and the water companies are paying themselves and their shareholders before making sure the system is fit for purpose. The *Sprout* over the years has published many tales of children learning to swim and fishing in the Seacourt Stream, and there are those who remember when the Windrush and the Evenlode were as pretty as their names. One thing that emerged from the EA document was that they really notice complaints. A high level of complaints does provoke a response, so it is worth making a fuss.

What can we do?

Well, we could think of ways of catching the rainwater that falls off our roofs, collecting it in rainwater butts, or tanks for re-use. We should also remember that wet-wipes are responsible for a whacking 90% of sewer blockages, and make sure that we don't add to these. Building regs now require new developments to show they have ways of dealing with the rain off their roofs that doesn't involve the sewerage system, so hopefully we aren't adding fresh burdens every time we put up a house. It would be so much better if the building regs were revised to ensure that water used by a household was rerouted from baths and washing machines to toilets before it was flushed away – hopefully that will come before too long.

Waterblitz and wild swimming

Then there is the annual EarthWatch Waterblitz. The data from this year's citizens' survey, which took place at the end of September, suggests that most waterways in the Thames catchment have medium or high nutrient concentrations, with just a few low measurements between Oxford and London. 432 local samples were taken by 276 people. Just 22% of all the sites visited this year had been monitored before. As it is, of that 22%, nitrate status had changed in 44% and phosphate status had changed in 62% of sites. I think we can safely assume the levels had gone up, not down! We need data gathered year on year to build up a picture of the problems and work out how to deal with them. The survey takes place once a year, and is easy and fun to do. Any one can do it. Info on <https://earthwatch.org.uk/waterblitz>.

The Covid lockdown, when the weather was so lovely, led to a lot of wild swimming, which in turn led to a better understanding of the parlous state of Oxfordshire's rivers. A campaign has been started to get a stretch of the Thames designated safe for bathing (currently no UK rivers have this status). The City Council has welcomed it, the Environment Agency has welcomed it, and so has Defra. We have yet to hear from Thames Water. Of course the effect would be far reaching on all the little rivers and streams that flow into the Thames, of which the Seacourt is one, so it's a campaign worth supporting for all sorts of reasons, not just swimming in Port Meadow and Tumbling Bay.

Ag MacKeith

P.S. If you would like references for any of the documents referred to in this article, just email editor@thesprout.org.uk.

Randoms

Looking at loneliness

As part of some research at the University of Oxford, we are looking for some participants aged 80 years and over to take part in a 1--2 hour telephone call to complete some questionnaires. These will include questions about social relationships, mood, and physical health. To take part, you must be 80 years old or over, read and speak English, and have an Oxfordshire postcode. We are interested both in people who experience loneliness *and also in those who do not*.

Please contact me to find out more, either by phone on 07340 201452 or by email: jessica.hilton@hmc.ox.ac.uk

Police Updates

For those who are wondering what has happened to the Police Updates, perhaps we should explain that they now come from Abingdon, and are almost entirely concerned with what is happening there. When there is something about Botley, we put it in, otherwise, not. We do note, however, from their latest reports, that in Abingdon at least, their patrols are often out and about, checking up on reports of dangerous parking, of signs of drug dealing and bad behaviour around schools and in quieter places. So if we have problems in this regard, we know who to call. There are no face-to-face Have Your Say meetings at the moment, but you can contact them by any of the following methods: Phone: **101** Email AbingdonNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk Twitter: [@tvpsouthandvale](https://twitter.com/tvpsouthandvale) Facebook: www.facebook.com/tvpsouthandvale (Always phone 999 in an emergency)

Good news about West Way parking

I'm very pleased to be able to bring some good news today! Henceforward, parking will be free between 6pm and midnight from Monday to Sunday. This is great news for Seacourt Hall. It means that our users in the evening will get free parking! It's will also help the centre's evening economy when we finally get some restaurants in West Way Square.

Pete the Plumber

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No Job too Small



Organizations: If your organization is not listed here, please send details to editor@thesprout.org.uk or telephone 724452 for inclusion.

1st Botley Brownies Girls aged 7–10	Dean Court Community Centre Thur 6–7.30 Jean Metson, firstbotleybrownies@gmail.com
2nd Botley Brownies Girls aged 7–10	Rosary Room, Yarnells Hill. Tues 6:15-7:45 Alison Griffin 2ndbotleybrownies@outlook.com
4th Oxford Scout Group Beavers, Cub Scouts, Scouts	Scout Hall, Arnolds Way; mail@thefourth.org.uk Website: http://www.thefourth.org.uk/
15th Oxford Scout Group Boys and girls welcome	Fridays, Cubs 6.30-8, Scouts 8-9.30, 1 Church Way, Botley Amy Cusden (Cubs) 07887 654386, Tom Freeman (Scouts) 07837 623768 xvoxfordscouts@yahoo.co.uk
Baby & Toddler Group	Tues/Thurs 9.15–11, SS Peter & Paul Church Hall
Badminton Club	Thurs 7-8pm at Matthew Arnold Sports Hall. Garry Clark 0777 3559 314 garryclark13@gmail.com
BikeSafe. B4044 community path campaign	Wants to connect Botley to Eynsham. Meets every 6-8 weeks. Contact via website B4044path.org
Books on Wheels R.V.S.	Free Library Service for housebound Ox. 248142
Botley Boys & Girls F.C. Football teams from ages 8-16	Jason Barley Ox. 242926 jbarley1@sky.com or Brendan Byrne 792531 brendan.byrne999@gmail.com
Botley Community Larder	Thursdays, 3.30 to 5.30 at St P&P Church Hall, West Way, contact us via Facebook or email botleylarder@gmail.com
Botley Health Walks	Wednesday 9.30am. Contact Briony on Ox 246497
Botley Library	01865 248142. Open till 7 on Friday and 1pm on Sat, otherwise 9.30 to 5.30 (closed Wednesdays).
Botley Seniors Lunch Club	Every other Thursday. Seacourt Hall. Viv Smith 01865 241539 or Jackie Warner 01865 721386
Botley Singers	Thur 7.30, St Andrew's Church, Dean Court. Angela Astley-Penny Ox.242189 angastpen@aol.com
Cumnor Choral Society	Rehearsals Friday 7.45 to 9.45 pm John May 07795 054142 or www.cumnorchoralsociety.wordpress.com
Cumnor Chess Club	Thurs 7–9pm Cumnor Old School. Steven Bennett 862788 www.cumnorchessclub.co.uk
Cumnor & District Historical Society	Last Monday of the month 7.30-9.00 Cumnor Old School. 01865 724808
Cumnor Gardening Club	http://cumnorgardens.org.uk/ or phone 01865 721026
Harmony InSpires, Ladies' Acappella Singing Group	Wed 7.30 at Appleton village hall. C. Casson 01235 831352 or harmonyinspires@hotmail.co.uk
Hill End Volunteer Team	Contact: David Millin on david.millin@hill-end.org , call 863510 or visit www.hillend-oec.co.uk
Let's Sing! – singing group	Weds 2pm, WOCC, Emily 07969 522368 or email emformusic@outlook.com
Morris Dancing – Cry Havoc	Barbara Brett 249599 or bag@cryhavoc.org.uk

North Hinksey Preschool and Childcare clubs	Mon–Fri 7.45am–6.00 pm. Tel 794287 or email nhps.manager1@gmail.com
N Hinksey Art Group	Weds 10 – 12.00 W.I. Hall Tel: Christina 07931 707997
N Hinksey Bellringers	Contact: Ray Rook 01865 241451
N Hinksey Conservation Volunteers	Meets at weekends Contact Voirrey Carr 07798743121 voirreyc@aol.com
N Hinksey, Friends of	Annual Cricket Match & Walk. Douglas Bond 791213.
N Hinksey Parish Council	Sharon Henley, clerk@northhinksey-pc.gov.uk
N Hinksey Youth Club	Weds at LM pavilion, Daz on 07791 212866 or see F'book
Oxford Flood Alliance	R Thurston 01865 723663 or 07973 292035
Oxford Flower Arranging Club	4th Thursday Cumnor. Dympna Walker: 01865 865259
Oxford Harmony Men's Acapella singing group	Meets Wednesdays 7.45 pm at Seacourt Hall, Contact pro@oxfordharmony.co.uk
Oxford Otters	Swimming for people with disabilities. Sundays, twice monthly. Contact: Alan Cusden 723420
Oxford Rugby Club	Boys and girls from 5, kevin.honner@ntlworld.com Seniors, training etc jbrodley@chandlings.org.uk .
Oxford Sports Lawn Tennis Club, N Hinksey	Family club: Melanie Riste 848658 melanie_riste@hotmail.com
Raleigh Park, Friends of	raleighpark@raleighpark.org.uk
Saturdads at Botley Bridges	Fun activities and trips for Dads and under 5's 10 am–noon 1st Sat of month. Tel: 243955
Seacourt Hall Management Committee	Michael Cockman 07766 317691 michael.cockman@gmail.com .
Shotokan Karate Club	6+ WOCC twice weekly Martyn King 07836 646450
Walking for Health	2nd & 4th Saturdays 9.50 Louie Memorial Field car park, Arnolds Way. Alan 07941 610913
West Oxford Bowls Club	Contact details on www.westoxfordbowlsclub.co.uk
West Oxford Taekwon Do Club	Mon, Thurs 6.30-8pm, MA gym, contact Chris Hall 01865 570291 www.wotkd.co.uk
West Oxford U3A	(Uni of the 3rd Age) http://westoxfordu3a.org.uk/
West Way Day Centre	Mon & Fri 10–3pm, Field House, 07740 611971. oxfordshirehub@royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk
Women's Institute (Botley)	Liz Manson, 244175 or liz.manson@virginmedia.com
Weight Watchers	Thursdays 6pm at SS Peter & Paul Church Hall Banso tel: 07779 253899 bansob@aol.com

The Sprout

The Newsletter for North Hinksey & Botley

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Copy Date: Copy by 15th of month preceding publication. Earlier submission is welcome. Later contributions may have to be held over to the next issue.

Advertisements: If you have print-ready advertisements in the correct format the last day for booking advertising is the 10th of the month preceding publication; in all other circumstances more advance notice will be needed. For details about exact sizes, quality requirements, advice on text and help with production, please contact the Advertising Manager.

Advertising rates:

½ page: 1 issue £56; 3 issues £135; 5 issues £182; 10 issues; £308
¼ page: 1 issue £28; 3 issues £67.50; 5 issues £91; 10 issues; £154
1/8 page: 1 issue £14; 3 issues £33.75; 5 issues £45.50; 10 issues; £77

Subscriptions: If you live outside North Hinksey Parish you can still receive The Sprout on a regular basis. Just take out a postal subscription – only £12 per annum, delivered to your door. Contact: Carol Kramer 01865 243002.

Whilst every effort is made to ensure the accuracy of information printed in this newsletter, mistakes may happen. The Editor and Team apologize unreservedly for any errors that may occur and will do their best to correct them. This publication is not a vehicle of the parish council, and parish councillors working with the Sprout do so in a personal capacity. Opinions expressed are the opinions of the individual contributors.

All concerned in the production and delivery of The Sprout are unpaid volunteers.

The Sprout is printed by Dataprint Ltd, and published by North Hinksey Parish Publications Ltd, (a company limited by guarantee) Registration No. 05609535.

It can also be found online at BotleyHinksey.org.uk

Halls for Hire

Botley Baptist Hall West Way Place	Contact: Rev Kalyan Das Tel. 07841 867967
The Rosary Room Yarnells Hill, Elms Rise	Contact Maria Brown, Tel: 01865 247986.
SS Peter & Paul Church Hall, West Way, Botley	Contact: 07946 463741 or osneybenefice@outlook.com.
Women's Institute Hall, North Hinksey Lane	Contact: Val Warner Tel. 01865 245273
Seacourt Hall, West Way Place, Botley	Contact: Lottie White on 07452 960100, or email admin@seacourthall.org.uk
Pavilion, Arnold's Way, Elms Rise, Botley	Contact: Darren Blase 241254 louiememorialpavilion@gmail.com
Oxford Rugby Club, North Hinksey Village	Contact: Mary Bagnall mary.bagnall1@btinternet.com.

North Hinksey & Botley Churches Times of Services (once resumed) and Contacts

St. Lawrence, Church of England, North Hinksey Lane

1st, 3rd Sunday, Holy Communion 11.30 a.m.
 2nd, 4th Sunday, Morning Prayer (BCP) 11.30 a.m.
 Thursdays, Morning Prayer 9.00 a.m.

St. Peter and St. Paul, Church of England, West Way

Sundays, Holy Communion 9.30 a.m.
 Wednesdays, Holy Communion 10.30 a.m.
 Fridays, Morning Prayer 9.00 a.m.

(Rev'd Clare Sykes is on sabbatical; any queries to the office

07946 463741, **osneybenefice@outlook.com**

Our Lady of the Rosary Church, Roman Catholic, Yarnells Hill

Saturday 6.30 pm. Mass
 Sunday 9.15 am Mass
 Fr Daniel Lloyd. 07584 323915 **dlloyd@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk.**

Botley Baptist Church, West Way Place

Sunday Service 10.30 am.
 Mid Week House Group 8.00 p.m.
 Family Worship Service 5-6pm on Saturday
 Rev Kalyan Das 07841 867967 **www.botleybaptistchurch.org**

Calvary Chapel

Sunday services held at Botley School 10.30–12 noon
 Pastor Philip Vickery 01865 864498
calvarychapeloxford@yahoo.co.uk; **www.calvarychapeloxford.org.uk**

Sprout October 2020

**Still too few public gatherings for a diary,
but don't forget the Last Post will be sounded at 11am
on Wednesday 11th November in West Way Square, followed by a
two-minute silence in honour of
those who have died in wars.**

Some useful phone numbers

See North Hinksey Parish Council website for a comprehensive list of all the local support groups currently in operation, as well as advice on asking for help and looking to volunteer. It's at <https://northhinksey-pc.gov.uk/covid-19-community-hub/> If you have something to add, please email the website manager Councillor Lorna Berrett on iberrett.nhpc@gmail.com. All your local parish councillors' contact details are on the website too, so if you need help, you can ask any of them and they will rally round.

Church contact details are on the inside back cover.

**Oxford Hub's email is: hello@oxfordtogether.org
Phone: 07957 105129 (9-5pm Mon-Fri)**

Citizens Advice Adviceline on 0300 3309 042

Woodlands Pharmacy: 01865 242649

Lloyds Pharmacy: 01865 247023

Age UK Oxfordshire offers a new telephone support line for older people. You leave a message on 01865 411288 and they will call you back.

Nextdoor North Hinksey is a local chatroom full of help and advice. Anyone already on it can invite you to join, or contact the *Sprout*.

**Finally, two handy Facebook pages:
The Botley Notice Board (OXON)
and Oxford Covid-19 Mutual Aid group**