

The Sprout



At last! The bus stop is back!

The Newsletter for North Hinksey & Botley

Issue 164 February 2022

The Sprout

The Newsletter for North Hinksey & Botley

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Issue 164, February 2022

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From the Editor

Welcome to the first issue of 2022. There's lots happening in Botley as per usual. Cumnor Choral is planning a Spring concert (p7), the parish hub, aka Seacourt Hall, is back in business (p21), the Community Land Trust is on the point of building the nine affordable flats it has long been planning, at the back of Pinnocks Way (p35). We have a new food column (p17) – thank you, Emma Burnett, for taking this on. Looking backwards, there's a story on a newspaper cutting about Botley from 1955 (p25), and, in the here and now, we have an account of the thrills and near misses of riding the new Voi scooters (p14). Looking forwards, there will be an Energy Day in Seacourt Hall on 12th March for people worried about climate change and energy bills (p3). And later in the year, we'll be celebrating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee by lighting the beacon at the top of the hill (p37). Sincere thanks to Bhee and Robin who, having run the *Sprout* deliveries for the last ten years, have decided to call it a day, and also to Jan and Isabelle, who have taken over the job. We could do with a few more people to do the actual deliveries – only about half an hour once a month. Please get in touch with Isabelle (number on inside front cover) if you can help. If you wondered why we'd gone for such a dull photo on the front, you have never waited in the rain for the bus opposite the Co-op. We were beginning to think it would never happen – but the new bus stop is in place at last!

Ag MacKeith



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Time to talk about energy....

And in Botley we are planning to do just that. Our new Sustainable Botley group is planning a special event on energy in our homes at Seacourt Hall, on **Saturday 12th March** from 2-5pm. All are welcome.

The event will be an opportunity to:

- talk to Botley residents who have made home energy improvements, small or large
- learn what support is available in the form of advice, grants and loans
- make connections in our local community so we can find ways of taking action together. There will also be tea and cakes.



The background to this event is a global supply crunch in natural gas, which has boosted prices. A 50% jump in household gas and electricity costs is being predicted for April 2022. The crisis may have taken some electricity suppliers by surprise, but it should not be news to anyone that

fossil fuels are finite. We would have to stop burning them, even if we weren't also facing a climate crunch.

Politicians are talking about measures to protect households from the price hike, like cutting the VAT on fuel or levying a windfall tax on producers. Meanwhile headline messages from the Government's Net Zero Strategy published last year include a 100% green electricity supply by 2035 and an "ambition" that no new gas boilers will be sold from that year. Hydrogen-fired boilers are being held out as a possibility, but the expectation is that most homes should eventually use heat pumps. While green energy supplies are part of the way forward, the most important thing we can do

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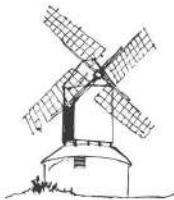
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is to insulate our homes so that we stay warm with less energy. Heat pumps are very efficient but they are best for providing continual warmth in a well-insulated house with an EPC* rating of C or above. Most of our homes in Botley were built with little attention to energy efficiency.

*An EPC or Energy Performance Certificate is required when you sell or let a home. There's lots of information about them on the Internet, for instance at energysavingtrust.org.uk

At our energy event, we'll showcase measures we can take from draught-proofing and getting a smart meter, to topping up loft insulation, getting wall cavities filled, installing high efficiency double or triple glazing, floor insulation and more. We'll talk about how we can prioritise different measures, how to steer clear of pitfalls, and where to get advice and support including finding good installers.

Please do get in touch if you'd like to help in some way, and especially if you have a home energy improvement story that you're willing to share. You can contact me at laurie@livingwitness.org.uk.

And do come along on 12th March.

Laurie Michaelis

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Cumnor Choral Society

Our pre-Christmas concert, the first for two years, was a performance of Handel's *Messiah*, at the church of Saint Peter and Saint Paul on the 27th November 2021.



More than 40 of us sang, supported by four excellent professional soloists and the Hurst Symphonica orchestra, all led by our musical director, Peter Foster. The concert was well attended, and enjoyed by all, despite the rather Spartan conditions resulting from COVID precautions. It was great fun, particularly "All we like sheep", and of course "Hallelujah".

The choir will start rehearsing for the new term at Cumnor Old School on Friday 14th of January at 7:45pm till 9pm. The hall will be open from 7pm so that we can socialise, in masks, before the rehearsal.

For our spring concert, we shall be singing Mendelssohn's *Hear my Prayer* (Novello Edition) and Fauré's *Requiem* (OUP edition). The performance will take place on Saturday 26th March

New singers are very welcome. We do not ask you to take a singing test, merely that you enjoy singing with a sociable group of people. For more info contact me on johnmay@btinternet.com

John May



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What a pharmacy offers

The December PPG meeting was addressed by Dan Towler, the manager of Woodlands Pharmacy, Botley Road, who told us what help we can expect from a pharmacy.

Minor ailments, colds, flu, minor injuries, cuts and bruises which do not need a doctor's attention or prescription. In the next two years more pharmacies will become **independent prescribers**.

Flu vaccinations are available at pharmacies – this takes pressure off surgeries and can be accessed quickly. Covid boosters are available at some pharmacies but not at Woodlands for reasons of space.

Medication Use Review. A pharmacist has more training on the action and effect of medications than a doctor. If you have questions about your medication or want a consultation/review please go to your pharmacist first.

New Medication Service. Doctors will ask people to report back on how the medication is going. The first follow up is after seven days, the second after fourteen. This discussion can be held with a pharmacist as an alternative.

Some services at pharmacies have been curtailed due to Covid. At Woodlands Pharmacy this has affected Diabetes and Blood Pressure Tests, and vaccinations for travel.

Woodlands Pharmacy, along with other pharmacists, offers a **free delivery service** for prescriptions. They will deliver up as far as Cumnor, and out to Wolvercote, Headington, Cowley and Kennington. They make between 100 and 200 deliveries a day, often well into the evening. A £1 delivery charge is made to cover purchased items, but this does not apply if purchases are delivered with a prescription. To find out the delivery policy and range of other pharmacies, contact them directly.

Our next meeting is on Tuesday February 8th at 6pm by Zoom. Contact me at csugden@ocrpl.org if you would like to take part.

Chris Sugden, Secretary



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## News from Hill End

We write with our latest news on a stunningly, crisp and sunny winter day. The young people visiting Hill End today have been warming up with plenty of running around, campfires and hot chocolate – energetic proof that outdoor learning happens in every season!

We are looking forward hopefully to a more ‘normal’ 2022, after the huge challenges that the last two years have brought to our small charity. If schools close, or are short-staffed, this hugely impacts not just the children’s education, but also their opportunity to take part in the outdoor activities that are so very important for learning, social skills, health and wellbeing.

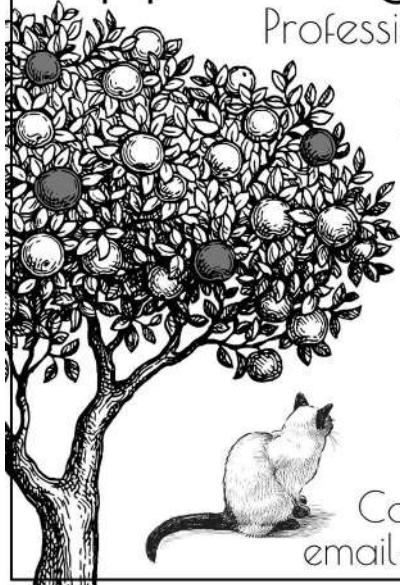
In the winter season we use quieter days to tidy and maintain the site, and get ready for the busier times ahead. Our wonderful ‘Friends of Hill End’ volunteer group have been invaluable in helping to manage our 67-acres of woods and grasslands, with all the constant cutting back, coppicing and repair work that is needed to keep everything up to scratch. Our Green Flag award this year was a fantastic recognition of all their hard work! If you are available on Wednesdays and are interested in volunteering, meeting new people, learning new skills and getting outdoors, please do get in touch.

We’re also very much looking forward to hosting more family days over the next half term school holiday – on **Wednesday 23 and Thursday 24 February**. Booking is essential (see the news and events page of our website for details). Our October and Christmas family days were a great success and booked up very quickly, so don’t miss out!

As well as events for schools and colleges, we try and run as many other events open to the public as we can. We’ve already welcomed back our Forest Tots for pre-schoolers, and our afterschool sessions restart in March. Our new adult bush craft courses on Saturdays are a great way to meet like-minded people and learn outdoor skills in nature. For



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more on all our activities and events and please visit our website.

Did you visit us last summer for our ffennell festival? The Friends of Hill End will be hosting this event again on Sat 11 June (event restrictions allowing). This hugely popular fun day is named after the ffennell family who gifted Hill End to the local children of Oxfordshire. It's a fantastic opportunity for us to open up to our local community, and also to give those who visited as a child a chance to come back and take a trip down memory lane (or hill?).



We're also looking for new people to help out this year – so if you are able to volunteer any of your time in any capacity, or offer an activity for adults and children, the Friends would love to hear from you. Please do just get in touch – thank you!

### **Can you help Hill End?**

The Hill End Charitable Trust is asking for support from funders and individuals who value what we do. If you are able to help, volunteer or donate we would love to hear from you. Please visit our website at: [www.hill-end.org/help-us/](http://www.hill-end.org/help-us/). You can now also support the Friends of Hill End and many other deserving causes when you play the brand new White Horse Community Lottery, supporting local charities and with the chance to win a top prize of £25,000.

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## Voi-age of discovery

I've been wondering about the new Voi scooters that have arrived next to Macdonalds, and recently decided to give them a go. So, having downloaded the app and supplied the required selfie and the photo of my driving licence, I was registered and approved on the system and ready for my first Voi-age.

The scooter park by Mackie-Dee is on the outer limits of the range for the scheme, but I had assumed that so long as the scooter was returned to the zone by the end of the ride, I could make an exploratory trip to Botley library and back again. After a few false starts I worked out that the scooter needed a little push to make it go, and the electric assist exhilaratingly zoomed me onto the street. Sadly, I'd scarcely reached the Seacourt Tower, when it mysteriously powered down again. It turns out that one cannot leave the approved zone, and so my first foray had to be abandoned, in favour of good, old-fashioned, reliable feet.

A number of weeks passed, before I found an excuse to try again. My destination – the new Ethiopian Restaurant called Lula's on Frideswide Square – has a Voi dock right outside. App in place, I casually strolled up to the dock, released the scooter by scanning the QR code, and whooshed down the Botley Road.

My usual mode of transport is by bike, and as I effortlessly zipped along, I couldn't help but compare the experience. It felt right that one should be using the bicycle lane, but although I've never noticed this on the bike, on the scooter the brand new cycle lane is a bit of a bumpy affair. It was much smoother to stick to the bus lane. Once comfortably cruising in the bus lane, I felt relatively safe and stable, and found that, just like a bike, one actually steers it mostly by leaning one's weight this way or that. At the train station roundabout I needed to turn right, which is when I found a bit of a design flaw: THERE ARE NO INDICATORS.



When you turn right on a bike, you position yourself towards the middle of the road and indicate with your right arm before turning. But on the scooter this meant taking my right hand off the thumb throttle, suddenly slowing me right down in front of a line of cars all moving forwards. I snatched back my hand and made the turn, risking being mown down from behind and worried that no one had noticed the brief signal.

I arrived unscathed 6½ minutes after I started. It cost me £2.20, £1 to unlock the scooter and 20p per minute thereafter. £4.40 for the round trip. So the bus is cheaper, and my usual mode would have been completely free. There is a day pass for £10, or £7 if there is a promotion on, or you can subscribe for £35 a month, and get 300 minutes of scooting.

The following day I decided to try a slightly longer journey: Botley to Jericho, potentially a two-bus trip, or one bus and a walk. Perhaps this is the type of Voi journey that makes it a fast and cost-effective option. By now I was feeling pretty blasé and had not left myself very much time to get out of the house and to my appointment. That's pretty standard on a bike, as you know can make up for it by cycling a little bit faster. But the scooter only goes so fast, and no faster, and in fact slows down in designated go-slow zones. There was no way I could make up the time and my competitive spirit was somewhat irked when a cyclist overtook me and there was nothing I could do about it. Not only that, but by the time I arrived I was absolutely freezing. On a bike you start off chilly but arrive invigorated and warm, albeit perhaps a bit sweaty, but on the Voi I started off chilly and arrived numb.

That said, it was still so easy! And I did genuinely enjoy scooting about the place. All the same, I could not help feeling guilty about consuming electricity, when if I had gone by bike I would not have been. On the Voi website they claim that their service has been climate-neutral since January 2020 and that they "champion a transition away from car centric mobility". This suggests that I'm not the target audience: they're looking at people who drive into town. So if you are thinking of taking the car into town on a solo trip, then I would certainly recommend this as an efficient, easy and fun way to do it, that is both climate neutral and also skips the traffic even more effectively than if you went by bus.

Personally, now that I have the app installed, I can see that the next time I'm about to jump on my bike only to find that the tyre is flat, instead of madly trying to do a puncture repair job in my nice clean work clothes, I'll probably just opt for the Voi.

**Emma Gordon**



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## Seasonal Treats

This is a great time of year to start talking about food and seasonality. We're past the best of the fruit, but solidly into winter comfort foods, all the roastables, souppables, and mashables.

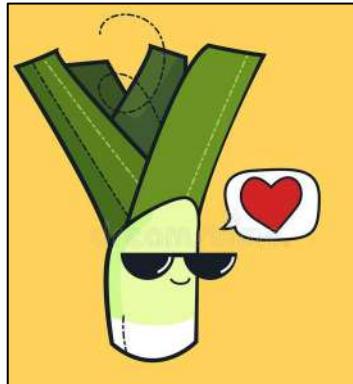
I have a particular interest in locality and seasonality. I previously worked on a farm, am currently a food systems researcher, and am a keen local food eater! There's a lot that goes on around food in Oxford(shire), including primary and secondary production, farmers and community markets, cooperatives, and food aid. Plus, some truly fabulous cafes and restaurants. If you're not already embedded in the food scene, I thought maybe you might like to know more! And I'll include a seasonal recipe in these columns.

Let's start by talking leeks. It's one of the winter staples, along with potatoes and cabbage, and one of my all-time faves.

Leek seeds are planted in early spring. If they're not where you want them to be, you can transplant them pretty easily to a new location in late spring or early summer where they'll have enough space to do leeky things (so, for instance, you can start them off in modules or in a greenhouse or polytunnel where it's a bit warmer). If you ridge up the soil around the base, they'll end up with a longer white bulb.

Leeks are in the allium family, related to onions, shallots, and garlic, but have a milder flavour than the others. They originated in Central Asia: texts show that leeks were consumed in ancient Egypt and Rome, and were a favourite of Emperor Nero. They were brought to Europe in the Middle Ages, and are actually a national emblem in Wales, a battlefield symbol worn in combat to identify allies.

You may not think that local leeks are something you need to chase down – a leek is a leek, right? But fresh winter leeks are incredible! They are crisp, flavourful, and a real treat in the depths of the dark days. Plus, the soil on the top leaves gives you a bit of insight into what the soil on the farm is like. You can pick up great, locally-grown leeks at Sandy Lane Farm, Blacklands Organics, or at one of the many farmers' and community markets, like the one here in Botley on a Saturday morning.



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## **Buttery leeks**

These are great as a side dish alongside potatoes, on top of a slice of bread, or just on a fork by themselves!

### **What you need**

- 1kg leeks, trimmed
- 50g butter, plus extra for serving
- Pinch of salt
- Thyme leaves for garnish

### **What to do**

Day before (if you can): rinse your leeks and cut off the roots and the very tops. Then slice them thinly on a diagonal and pop them into a plastic bag or covered bowl and leave them in the fridge overnight to crisp them up.

To cook: melt the butter in a large pan on a medium heat. Then add the leeks, salt, and a bit of thyme. Stir to coat in butter.

Turn the heat down to low, cover the pan, and cook the leeks gently for 15-20 minutes, stirring occasionally. They're ready when they're tender to the bite. Serve with extra butter and the rest of your thyme leaves.

**Emma Burnett**

---

## **Time to Clean Up**

The big Oxford Clean-up will take place over two weekends in **March: Friday 18th – Sunday 20th and Friday 25th – Sunday 27th**. OxClean grows year on year and in 2021 despite COVID, there were 100 groups and 60 independent individuals litter-picking across the City. The City and its beautiful environs always look splendid afterwards and that is a tribute to you all.

This year, we are asking groups if they can accommodate extra volunteers. There are always many individuals litter-picking on their own who might welcome company and support, and it would be greatly appreciated if your group could indicate on the registration form if you are willing to accept additional volunteers.

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## A Commendation for our Community Hub

Back in May last year I received an invitation to submit Seacourt Hall for the 2021 Oxford Preservation Trust awards. The OPT's work in Oxford stretches far beyond the preservation of older buildings and we were invited to submit to the new buildings category. While the building may not be a stand-out piece of design, I discovered the award is not just about the architecture, it's about how a building serves and adds to the community. Of course Seacourt Hall is only part of the building so I coordinated with the Baptist Church and the Library, Mace and Savills to submit our entry.



As a community facility the building has great potential but that has stalled, along with much of the West Way Centre, due to the COVID pandemic. The Seacourt Hall launch in January 2020 was the culmination of years of hard work and negotiations by many people to secure a new facility at the heart of our growing community. To have to close it in March 2020 for the Covid lockdown was a major setback before the hall had time to get established. However it quickly became the lockdown home to the Botley Community Fridge and the location of essential food parcel distribution to people isolated and in need. This use formed part of our submission for the OPT awards, highlighting how the hall, together with the library and church, served the community in mind, body and soul!

After stages of partial opening the hall has been fully open for some months now, and is thriving, with many new and established users and facilities growing with the community. We also have the library and church open, offering more facilities. Along with the weekly Farmers Market, the Missing Bean coffee shop, and Pappo, Dosa Park and more opening soon, the West Way Centre is filling up. When the OPT judges came to view the building last summer they noted the potential for the whole centre.

So what happened? Well sadly we didn't win the new building award, but we did receive a letter of commendation as follows:

"The judges are delighted to recognise the role and commitment of the management committee which had been required to ensure that these much-needed facilities for the local community could be achieved. They were delighted to learn how well the facility was being used and hoped that in due course the potential for using the roof terrace, working with the

adjoining users, might be achieved."

Mace also received a letter of commendation in the public realm category.



It's great to see Botley making its mark in this way. Thank you to everybody who has helped to make the new building a success so far, and all those who are still working to increase its potential for the whole community. When the centre is complete and the public art, designed with community input, is in place, we should definitely submit an entry again and keep putting Botley on the map.

Meanwhile the top floor above the library is still not occupied. You'll see the sign offering it as office space to rent, so if you have suggestions for that space,

do contact the number on the banner. Perhaps we can fill the whole building and even make use of the roof space too! There's lots of potential for our community hub Let's make the most of it.

**Lorna Berrett**, Chair, Seacourt Hall Management Committee

---

### **Calling the curious, the interested, the pilgrim after God**

Have you ever wondered what Christianity is all about? Would you like to find out more in an informal environment with no strings attached?

Come along to the church of St Peter and St Paul on **Thursday 24th February** at 7.30pm for the first gathering.

Please contact Revd Clare Sykes to register interest or for more information on 01865 242345 or [revclare@btinternet.com](mailto:revclare@btinternet.com).

## LOCAL PLANNING APPLICATIONS

|                           |                                                                                                                         |                                               |
|---------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|
| <u>P21/V3182/F<br/>UL</u> | 190 Westminster Way. 2-storey side & rear extensions, single storey rear extension, loft conversion & 4 parking spaces. | <b>10 Nov</b> Target Decision Date:<br>16 Jan |
| <u>P21/V3169/<br/>HH</u>  | 3 Toynbee Close. Single storey rear extension + garage extension.                                                       | <b>11 November</b><br>TDD: 6 Jan              |
| <u>P21/V3213/<br/>HH</u>  | 72 Westminster Way. Demolish garage & single storey, erect single storey rear & side extension.                         | <b>15 November</b><br>TDD: 10 Jan             |
| <u>P21/V3216/F<br/>UL</u> | 176 Westminster Way. Change of use from 6-person to 7-bed HMO with single-storey rear extension.                        | <b>15 November</b><br>TDD: 20 Jan             |
| <u>P21/V3277/<br/>HH</u>  | Stanton House, Stanton Road. Build a garage.                                                                            | <b>25 November</b><br>TDD: 20 Jan             |
| <u>P21/V3327/<br/>HH</u>  | 44 Hutchcomb Rd. Demolish rear chimney stack & replace dormer to rear elevation.                                        | <b>25 November</b><br>TDD: 20 Jan             |
| <u>P21/V3370/<br/>HH</u>  | 74A Westminster Way. Single storey extension to rear of property.                                                       | <b>1 December</b><br>TDD: 26 Jan              |
| <u>P21/V3380/L<br/>B</u>  | Ferry Cottage 7 North Hinksey Ln. Remove C20th extension, add new extension. Grade II listed.                           | <b>1 December</b><br>TDD: 26 Jan              |
| <u>P21/V3430/F<br/>UL</u> | Oxford Lawn Tennis Club North Hinksey Ln. Install 3 Padel tennis courts with lighting.                                  | <b>9 December</b><br>TDD: 3 Feb               |
| <u>P21/V3448/L<br/>DP</u> | 95 Turner Drive. Loft conversion with flat roof dormer to rear & velux window to the front.                             | <b>13 December</b><br>TDD: 7 Feb              |
| <u>P21/V3523/<br/>HH</u>  | 28 Laburnum Rd. Single storey rear extension.                                                                           | <b>21 December</b><br>TDD: 15 Feb             |
| <u>P21/V3536/<br/>HH</u>  | 6 Hazel Rd. Single storey rear extension & detached annex.                                                              | <b>21 December</b><br>TDD: 15 Feb             |
| <u>P22/V0013/F<br/>UL</u> | 2 Seacourt Rd. side extension to first floor; dormer roof extension.                                                    | <b>4 January</b><br>TDD: 1 March              |
| <u>P22/V0014/<br/>HH</u>  | 7 Finmore Rd. 2-storey side extension, ground floor rear extension, loft conversion, parking.                           | <b>4 January</b><br>TDD: 1 March              |
| <u>P21/V3511/F<br/>UL</u> | Ardmore, Stanton Rd. Rebuild, part reusing existing footprint & flanking walls. Change of hardstands & landscaping.     | <b>7 January</b><br>TDD: 5 March              |

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## Missing Streams

A page of the *Oxford Mail* from February 1955 has been shown to *The Sprout*. In it, the writer deplores the ugly scars of new building, which disfigure the verdant fields above North Hinksey with a rash of red brick as new houses go up.

He interviews local worthies, including Eddie Howse of Seacourt Farm, brother of Raymond Howse, the architect of Elms Parade, remembered in the clock. Farmer Howse is proud of his prizewinning Shorthorns and Guernseys. They are pastured in the fields towards Wytham over the site of the historic village of Seacourt. He has heard of the proposed extension of the Southern Bypass to Wolvercote. He is philosophical, but not happy. It would be a crime, he feels, to lose this good grazing to a road. "My father," he said, "made a packet when the western by pass came through Elms Farm, and I look like losing a packet when it comes through Seacourt... It'll cut my land clean in half, and I can't see my milk cows crossing the road four times a day."

There was much more to this article, which has been passed to Malcolm Graham, former County Historian, to make what he will of it. For now I'll just note the writer's passing comment that the hillside was riddled with small streams. ("There are underground streams all over the place, and enough water under Cumnor Hill to keep all Oxford supplied for all time.")

This has long been the suspicion of local people, but now the houses of Elms Rise cover the fields, it is hard to know just where the streams were. The Parish Council, in putting together the Neighbourhood Plan, commissioned a hydro-geological survey of the area, hoping to pinpoint places where building work might fall foul of rising springs. But short of pointing out what we already knew – that streams run down the valleys of Raleigh Park and Hutchcomb copse – it didn't help us much.

It didn't say, for example, where the little stream that runs past North Hinksey Business Park and disappears under Wallbrook Court, rises, although the speed with which this can fill right up after a heavy shower suggests it drains a sizeable chunk of Elms Rise.

Then there's that little stream that runs under the A34 and comes out alongside the 'stream end' of the parish allotments. You can hear it gushing beneath you where it crosses North Hinksey Lane just north of the service road, but where does it come from?

We know about the stream that flows from the 17th Century Conduit House, under the A34 and past the end of North Hinksey village, because of Chris Sugden's valiant efforts to get it flowing again after it

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had been blocked for years. It brought clean water to the city centre from the sparkling springs of North Hinksey for more than three centuries.

There are rumours of other streams as well.

For instance, Andrew Burk, of Cope Close, reports a family legend about the stream that rises in his back garden. Here's how he described it: "When the Howse family built Elms Rise Estate, before and leading up to World War II, there was a panic that the bombing may affect the supply of water for the family farm. So they kept a plot (possibly plots) of land on the estate that had natural water springs.

As I believe, a piped drainage system was created for the springs to run down to the farm, in case the water supply was bombed and cut off. Where these pipes come out, I don't know, but I have the start of one on my plot of land. Are there others on the estate?"

Well, Elms Farm was much where the offices are currently being demolished at the eastern end of the new shopping centre, so if any pipes turn up, please tell *The Sprout*!

Another missing stream is the one which Colin Cambrey (or was it Arthur Howse?) remembered as running along the front of Elms Parade.

## DO YOU NEED HOME HELP/COMPANION?

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Blossom Trinder, who famously drove a steam roller, would stop his mighty machine there to suck out water to fill his boiler. I have been on the lookout for this stream ever since the new building started, but no one has seen any sign of it. It seems to have vanished – and yet, there is the Seacourt Bridge pub, opposite, which must have been called that for a reason.

But what was the reason? Can anyone tell us? *The Sprout* is always interested in local history, so if you can add to the discussion do please get in touch with [editor@thesprout.org.uk](mailto:editor@thesprout.org.uk)

**Ag MacKeith**



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## Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme Update

We are approaching a major milestone for people living at risk of flooding in Oxford. We will submit our planning application for the scheme shortly. This will be checked by the local planning authority, Oxfordshire County Council, before they hold a public consultation on the matter, which will be available on Oxfordshire County Council's planning portal. In the meantime we would like to take this opportunity to remind you of the design updates shared in May 2021.

The Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme will create a new stream with wetland wildlife corridor to the west of Oxford to allow more flood water to move through fields rather than built up areas, and so reduce flood risk in the city and surrounding areas.

More details here: <https://consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/thames/oxfordscheme/>



If you have any further questions that aren't covered on our webpage or frequently asked questions, please email us at [oxfordscheme@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:oxfordscheme@environment-agency.gov.uk).

You can sign up for newsletter updates by emailing us, and follow us on social media on **Facebook**, **Twitter** and **Instagram**.

**Ross Lewis**, Community Support Officer, Environment Agency

*Note: the six partners in this scheme have used the delay while work is done on the railway bridge under the A423 to expand the website. Many local concerns have been addressed, and the FAQs now include reassurance on many areas – for instance, that the MG4 grassland in Hinksey Meadow (see photo) will be no drier than it is already, and that there is no plan to compulsorily purchase the North Hinksey Lane allotments. The website claims that the revised planning application will be submitted 'this winter', but there is still no date. Consultation will start once the application has been submitted. The Sprout is on the case. Ed.*



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# Kennington Memory Club

Living well with dementia

## **Omicron, begone!**

Wouldn't we all just love to wave a magic wand with the invocation 'Omicron, begone!' and have our wish granted! We can all hope that this will be the case sooner rather than later.

Kennington Memory Club took the precaution, in the light of rapidly rising Omicron variant Covid cases, of closing down from December 23rd. Numbers of cases at the beginning of January weren't any more encouraging so the closure was continued. At the time of writing this, the target date for re-opening is January 20th, but it will all depend on the data. We are all hoping we will be back in business again for February. We do our level best to ensure that the Club is as Covid-safe as possible with our cleaning and sterilization procedures, visor or mask

wearing for all staff and volunteers, and testing for them before attending the club on each occasion.

Please direct any enquiries about a possible place at the Club for yourself or a loved one to Helen, the Organiser, on 07852 883496. The same number applies for anyone interested in volunteering for the Club. There's more here: [www.kenningtonmemoryclub.org.uk](http://www.kenningtonmemoryclub.org.uk)

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## **Guesswork (1)**

*Can you guess the name of this well-known local figure?*

"Timeless Oxford College (5, 6)"

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## **Wise Students Exhibition**

Botley Arts is pleased to be hosting the *Wise Students Exhibition*, representing artwork by students in five different mixed ability Oxfordshire Adult Learning classes at various local centres. All these classes are taught by Tatiana Wise, under the aegis of Abingdon & Witney College. Some of the exhibitors have been in these classes since their introduction, in 2009. Tatiana, who has been teaching them since then, is a native Russian who settled in England twenty years ago when she came here to marry an English doctor she met on her frequent trips to England with her Russian art students.

Students work in a wide range of media and a varied range of subjects, in an informal atmosphere of mutual learning and sharing, underpinned by Tatiana's knowledge and encouragement.

The current exhibition consists predominantly of flower compositions, images of birds, and landscapes. This imagery has been chosen to reflect a belief that art should take the viewer into an imaginary state where beauty can be experienced. Also featured is work done at the increasingly popular Museum Drawing classes at the Ashmolean. Work inspired by the Ashmolean's Collections is a subject in itself.

Tatiana says, "It has been a very interesting experience for all of us, putting together the exhibition to try and show our best pieces. We have all had our confidence boosted as artists by this. It will stimulate us to keep improving our skills as we start to work on new challenges."

Abingdon & Witney College welcomes art students at all levels, at different sites throughout Oxfordshire. Previous drawing and painting experience is not necessary, and the tutors find that expressing yourself through art is particularly satisfying in these current troubled times. For more information, see [www.abingdon-witney.ac.uk](http://www.abingdon-witney.ac.uk) (part-time courses).

The *Wise Students Exhibition* can be seen at St Peter & St Paul's Church, West Way, from February 7th through 4th March. Opening hours are 10-4pm, Monday to Saturday, and 12 noon-4pm on Sunday.



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# Oxfordshire Community Land Trust making good progress in Dean Court



We are continuing to make good progress at our Dean Court site. Staff and members at Vale of White Horse have been working their socks off to get things in place before the end of March, against a tight timetable. OCLT is pleased to say we are almost there with that now and expect funding agreements to be signed very soon. There are just a few more details to sort out before a start date can be agreed. We will let you know more in the next issue of *The Sprout*.

One of the big hurdles we had to jump to get funding was to acquire Registered Provider Status, which we finally achieved in October 2021. RPS allows us to draw down the funding awarded last March for eight affordable apartments in Dean Court. *Sprout* readers may remember the site was acquired in April 2019 and planning consent obtained in April 2020 to build five 1-bed flats and three 2-bed flats, to be managed co-operatively by the tenants themselves. The intention is to keep these dwellings available for affordable rent in perpetuity.

The flats will provide much needed homes for people on the Vale of White Horse District Council's Housing Register. Preference will be given to people with a connection to the local area: Dean Court and adjacent parishes. You can apply for a flat via White Horse Home-choice, but you will need to be on the Housing Register first.

OCLT is run by volunteers and depends on the generosity of grant funders and donors to pursue various exciting projects in the city and beyond. We create community-owned, genuinely affordable housing. If you would like to join us in this innovative and sustainable approach to housing, you can become a member of OCLT for only £1 (<https://www.oclt.org.uk/join/>). A monthly donation will help us to grow further (<https://www.oclt.org.uk/support-us/>). OCLT are also always interested in off-market purchase of land and housing for the ultimate provision of permanently affordable homes. If you would like to see your home or land help provide affordable housing for generations to come, please contact: [info@oclt.org.uk](mailto:info@oclt.org.uk).

Fran Ryan

# The Flower Shop



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## Randoms

### Botley WI

We will have a mystery speaker at our next meeting on Tuesday 1st February, 7:30pm, whose talk promises to be full of interest for observant attendees. Visitors are always welcome! The hall extension is nearing completion and we look forward to having an entrance lobby and facilities soon that will be accessible to everybody.

Our Walking, Reading, "Greenish Fingers," Music and Craft subgroups will continue to take hikes round the Oxford area; read and discuss fascinating books; plan gardening activities for spring; and listen to exciting music from world-class players. Our Craft group is busily preparing for our Faberdashery Sale on **Saturday 26th March**, 10-3pm; we shall have lots of super items of fabric and needlework accessories from the Women's Institute former national college at Denman Hall.

For more information ring Alison on 07598 251161, or to book the hall call Val on 01865 245273. "

### Queen's Platinum Jubilee

North Hinksey Parish Council is discussing the best way to celebrate this once-in-a-lifetime event, the Queen's last jubilee celebration. So far it has been agreed to light the beacon at 9.45pm on 2nd June, as part of the national beacon chain, and to explore joint celebrations with Cumnor Parish Council. The Jubilee weekend will stretch from 2nd to 6th June, and the suggestion so far is to have a street party in the shopping precinct, with exhibitions of local history and future visions for Botley. Then there's the *Crabtree Challenge*... And maybe Botley in Bloom could join in. Once a working group has been set up, ideas will start to flow. Here's a link to what's already in train <https://unboxed2022.uk/> and this is the official website: <https://platinumjubilee.gov.uk/>. More info to come.

### Draughtproofing

Sustainable Botley is offering to help homeowners apply draughtproofing strip and reduce energy costs. First three applicants free. Here's the email address: [sustainablebotley+noreply@googlegroups.com](mailto:sustainablebotley+noreply@googlegroups.com)

### A Botley Bible Book Club?

The Bible is a collection of 66 books, split into Hebrew scriptures and Christian scriptures – there is Gospel, history, apocalyptic, poetry,

prophecy, letters – many different types of writing. Would anyone out there be interested in a Botley Bible Book Club where we read these scriptures together and discuss them, in much the same way as any other book club works – accompanied by a glass of wine or cup of good coffee? If you would be interested in this, please be in touch with me: Revd Clare Sykes, Rector of the Church of England churches in Botley and North Hinksey. 01865 242345 or [revclare@btinternet.com](mailto:revclare@btinternet.com)

## Solar farm

In the light of the planning application for a solar farm in the field next to the beacon, the Parish Council has organized a trip to Westmill Community Energy Solar Park, near Watchfield, to inform themselves as to what is involved. Some members of Sustainable Botley have seized the chance to join in and learn more about solar farms, as well some members of Cumnor PC. There will be a report in next month's *Sprout*.

## Carol Singing

The carol singers from Wesley Memorial Methodist Church send thanks to all the households on Cedar Rd, Beech Rd and Laburnum Rd who supported the house-to-house carol singing just before Christmas. We were delighted to sing again after missing it last year, and it's always lovely to hear appreciative comments and to take requests. We raised an excellent £232.04 for Christian Aid's Christmas appeal. We particularly enjoyed the enthusiastic reception on Beech Road so thank you! See you next year!



## Guess work (2)

*Here's another local figure for you to exercise your brains on.*

"Magic Kate, puts on hat, loves sprouts." (2, 8)

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

|                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                        |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>1st Botley Brownies</b><br>Girls aged 7–10                        | Dean Court Community Centre Thur 6–7.30 Jean Metson, <a href="mailto:firstbotleybrownies@gmail.com">firstbotleybrownies@gmail.com</a>                                                                  |
| <b>2nd Botley Brownies</b><br>Girls aged 7–10                        | Rosary Room, Yarnells Hill. Tues 6:15–7:45 Alison Griffin <a href="mailto:2ndbotleybrownies@outlook.com">2ndbotleybrownies@outlook.com</a>                                                             |
| <b>4th Oxford Scout Group</b><br>Beavers, Cub Scouts, Scouts         | <a href="mailto:mail@thefourth.org.uk">mail@thefourth.org.uk</a> Website:<br><a href="http://www.thefourth.org.uk/">http://www.thefourth.org.uk/</a>                                                   |
| <b>15th Oxford Scout Group</b><br>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 <a href="mailto:xvoxfordscouts@yahoo.co.uk">xvoxfordscouts@yahoo.co.uk</a> |
| <b>Baby &amp; Toddler Group</b>                                      | Tues/Thurs 9.15–11, SS Peter & Paul Church Hall                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>BikeSafe. B4044 community path campaign</b>                       | Wants to connect Botley to Eynsham. Meets every 6–8 weeks. Contact via website <a href="http://B4044path.org">B4044path.org</a>                                                                        |
| <b>Books on Wheels</b> R.V.S.                                        | Free Library Service for housebound Ox. 248142                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Botley Boys &amp; Girls F.C.</b><br>Football teams from ages 8–16 | Brendan Byrne 792531 <a href="mailto:brendan.byrne999@gmail.com">brendan.byrne999@gmail.com</a>                                                                                                        |
| <b>Botley Community Larder</b>                                       | Thursdays, 3–5pm at St P&P Church Hall, West Way, Facebook or email <a href="mailto:botleylarder@gmail.com">botleylarder@gmail.com</a>                                                                 |
| <b>Botley and Kennington Patients Participation Group</b>            | Second Tuesday in the Month, early evening. Contact <a href="mailto:csugden@ocrpl.org">csugden@ocrpl.org</a>                                                                                           |
| <b>Botley Library</b>                                                | 07922 849680. Open till 7 on Friday and 1pm on Sat, otherwise 9.30 to 5.30 (closed Wednesdays).                                                                                                        |
| <b>Botley Seniors Lunch Club</b>                                     | Alternate Thursdays. Seacourt Hall. Jackie Warner Ox.721386                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Cumnor Choral Society</b>                                         | Rehearsals Friday 7.45 to 9.45 pm John May 07795 054142 or <a href="http://www.cumnorchoralsociety.wordpress.com">www.cumnorchoralsociety.wordpress.com</a>                                            |
| <b>Cumnor Chess Club</b>                                             | Thurs 7–9pm Cumnor Old School. Steven Bennett 01993 684494 <a href="http://www.cumnorchessclub.co.uk">www.cumnorchessclub.co.uk</a>                                                                    |
| <b>Cumnor &amp; District Historical Society</b>                      | Last Monday of the month 7.30–9.00 Cumnor Old School. 01865 724808                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>Cumnor Gardening Club</b>                                         | <a href="http://cumnorgardens.org.uk/">http://cumnorgardens.org.uk/</a> or phone 01865 721026                                                                                                          |
| <b>Harmony InSpires, Ladies' Acappella Singing Group</b>             | Wed 7.30 at Appleton Village Hall. C. Casson 01235 831352 or <a href="mailto:harmonyinspires@hotmail.co.uk">harmonyinspires@hotmail.co.uk</a>                                                          |
| <b>Hill End Volunteer Team</b>                                       | Contact: David Millin on <a href="mailto:david.millin@hill-end.org">david.millin@hill-end.org</a> , call 863510 or visit <a href="http://www.hillend-oec.co.uk">www.hillend-oec.co.uk</a>              |
| <b>Lawn Tennis Club, N Hinksey</b>                                   | Family club Email: <a href="mailto:Tennis@OxfordSportsLTC.org">Tennis@OxfordSportsLTC.org</a>                                                                                                          |
| <b>West Oxford Singing Circle</b>                                    | Weds 2–3pm, WOCC, Emily 07969 522368 or see <a href="http://www.emilyschoirs.co.uk">www.emilyschoirs.co.uk</a>                                                                                         |
| <b>Morris Dancing – Cry Havoc</b>                                    | Barbara Brett 249599 or <a href="mailto:bag@cryhavoc.org.uk">bag@cryhavoc.org.uk</a>                                                                                                                   |

|                                                    |                                                                                                                                                                                                       |
|----------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>North Hinksey Preschool and Childcare clubs</b> | Mon–Fri 7.45am–6.00 pm. Tel 794287 or email <a href="mailto:nhps.manager1@gmail.com">nhps.manager1@gmail.com</a>                                                                                      |
| <b>N Hinksey Art Group</b>                         | Weds 10–12.00 W.I. Hall Christina 07931 707997                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>N Hinksey Bellringers</b>                       | Contact: Ray Rook 01865 241451                                                                                                                                                                        |
| <b>N Hinksey Conservation Volunteers</b>           | Meets at weekends Contact Voirrey Carr 07798743121 <a href="mailto:voirreyc@aol.com">voirreyc@aol.com</a>                                                                                             |
| <b>N Hinksey, Friends of</b>                       | Annual Cricket Match/ Walk. Douglas Bond 791213.                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>N Hinksey Parish Council</b>                    | <a href="mailto:clerk@northhinksey-pc.gov.uk">clerk@northhinksey-pc.gov.uk</a>                                                                                                                        |
| <b>N Hinksey Youth Club</b>                        | Weds at LM pavilion, Daz: 07791 212866 or F'book                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Oxford Flood Alliance</b>                       | R Thurston 01865 723663 or 07973 292035                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Oxford Flower Arranging Club</b>                | 4th Thursday Cumnor. Dympna Walker: Ox 865259                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Oxford Harmony</b>                              | Wednesdays 7.30 – 9.30 pm at Seacourt Hall, Contact <a href="mailto:pro@oxfordharmony.co.uk">pro@oxfordharmony.co.uk</a>                                                                              |
| <b>Oxford Otters</b>                               | Swimming for people with disabilities. Sundays, twice monthly. Contact: Alan Cusden 723420                                                                                                            |
| <b>Oxford Rugby Club</b>                           | Boys and girls from 5, <a href="mailto:kevin.honner@ntlworld.com">kevin.honner@ntlworld.com</a><br>Seniors, training etc <a href="mailto:jbrodley@chandlings.org.uk">jbrodley@chandlings.org.uk</a> . |
| <b>Raleigh Park, Friends of</b>                    | <a href="mailto:raleighpark@raleighpark.org.uk">raleighpark@raleighpark.org.uk</a>                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Seacourt Hall Management Committee</b>          | Contact Lottie White, 07452 960100, or see <a href="https://www.seacourthall.org.uk">https://www.seacourthall.org.uk</a>                                                                              |
| <b>Shotokan Karate Club</b>                        | 6+ WOCC twice weekly Martyn King 07836 646450                                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Stagecoach Botley</b>                           | Seacourt Hall, Saturdays 9:00am–3pm <i>Performing Arts for 4-16 yr-olds</i> Oxf 590510 or 01235 390810                                                                                                |
| <b>Walking for Health</b>                          | 2nd & 4th Saturdays 9.50 Louie Memorial Field car park, Arnolds Way. Alan 07941 610913                                                                                                                |
| <b>West Oxford Bowls Club</b>                      | Contact details on <a href="http://www.westoxfordbowlsclub.co.uk">www.westoxfordbowlsclub.co.uk</a>                                                                                                   |
| <b>West Oxford Taekwon Do Club</b>                 | Mon, Thurs 6.30-8pm, MA gym, contact Chris Hall 01865 570291 <a href="http://www.wotkd.co.uk">www.wotkd.co.uk</a>                                                                                     |
| <b>West Oxford U3A</b>                             | (Uni of the 3rd Age) <a href="http://westoxfordu3a.org.uk/">http://westoxfordu3a.org.uk/</a>                                                                                                          |
| <b>West Way Day Centre</b>                         | Mon & Fri 10–3pm, Field House, 07740 611971. <a href="mailto:oxfordshirehub@royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk">oxfordshirehub@royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk</a>                                             |
| <b>Women's Institute (Botley)</b>                  | Alison Jenner 07598 251161<br><a href="mailto:alisonjenner@yahoo.com">alisonjenner@yahoo.com</a>                                                                                                      |
| <b>Weight Watchers</b>                             | Thursdays 6pm at SS Peter & Paul Church Hall Banso tel: 07779 253899 <a href="mailto:bansob@aol.com">bansob@aol.com</a>                                                                               |

|                                                              |                                                                                                                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Baptist Hall<br/>1 Church Way</b>                         | Contact: Diane Melchert 01865 243664<br><a href="mailto:botleybaptistchurch@gmail.com">botleybaptistchurch@gmail.com</a>    |
| <b>The Rosary Room<br/>Yarnells Hill, Elms Rise</b>          | Contact Maria Brown,<br>Tel: 01865 247986.                                                                                  |
| <b>SS Peter &amp; Paul Church<br/>Hall, West Way, Botley</b> | Contact: 01865 242057 or<br><a href="mailto:osneybenefice@outlook.com">osneybenefice@outlook.com</a> .                      |
| <b>Women's Institute Hall,<br/>North Hinksey Lane</b>        | Contact: Val Warner<br>Tel. 01865 245273                                                                                    |
| <b>Seacourt Hall,<br/>3 Church Way</b>                       | Contact: Lottie White on 07452 960100,<br>or email <a href="mailto:admin@seacourthall.org.uk">admin@seacourthall.org.uk</a> |
| <b>Pavilion, Arnold's Way,<br/>Elms Rise, Botley</b>         | Contact: Darren Blase 241254<br><a href="mailto:louiememorialpavilion@gmail.com">louiememorialpavilion@gmail.com</a>        |
| <b>Oxford Rugby Club,<br/>North Hinksey Village</b>          | Contact:.. Mary Bagnall<br><a href="mailto:mary.bagnall1@btinternet.com">mary.bagnall1@btinternet.com</a> .                 |

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

**St. Lawrence, Church of England**, North Hinksey Lane  
 1st, 2nd, 4th Sunday, Sung Eucharist            11.30 a.m.  
 3rd Sunday, Matins                                    11.30 am

**St. Peter and St. Paul, Church of England**, West Way  
 2nd Saturday each Month, 4–6pm Messy Church for children and their carers  
 1st Sunday of the Month, 9.30am               All Age service of Holy Communion  
 All other Sundays, 9.30am               Holy Communion with activities for children  
 Every Wednesday, 10.30am               Holy Communion at Field House  
 Rev Clare Sykes, Tel. 01865 242345 or        [revclare@btinternet.com](mailto:revclare@btinternet.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](mailto:dlloyd@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk).

**Botley Baptist Church**, 1 Church Way  
 Sunday Service                                            11 am.  
 Wednesday Zoom Bible Study    7.30 p.m.  
 Choir practice      Thursday                            2p.m.  
 Diane Melchert, **07742 662668**. [www.botleybaptistchurch.org](http://www.botleybaptistchurch.org)

**Calvary Chapel**  
 Sunday services held at Botley School 10.30–12 noon  
 Pastor Philip Vickery 01865 864498  
[calvarychapeloxford@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:calvarychapeloxford@yahoo.co.uk);  
[www.calvarychapeloxford.org.uk](http://www.calvarychapeloxford.org.uk)

# **What's On**

## **February**

- Mon 7th** daily till 4th March, in Ss P&P Church, Wise Students expo from Botley Arts
- Tues 8th** 6pm by Zoom, Patients group meeting
- Thur 10th** 12 for 12.30, Seacourt Hall Botley Seniors Lunch Club
- Mon 14th** 2.30, Dean Court Community Centre, U3A talk: Eugene Matthias on 'The Ugly Duckling and the Magic Wand'
- Tues 15th** Pappo's new restaurant opening at last in precinct
- Wed 23rd** Hill End, two days of half-term activities, booking req'd
- Thur 24th** 12 for 12.30, Seacourt Hall Botley Seniors Lunch Club
- Thur 24th** 7.30, Seacourt Hall, Parish Council meeting?
- Thur 24th** 7.30, SsP&P Church, What is Christianity All About?
- Mon 28th** 2.30, Dean Court Community Centre, U3A talk: Mervyn Edwards, on his book 'Walking the Beat to Nirvana'

## **March**

- Sat 12th** 2-5pm, Seacourt Hall, Energy in our Homes
- Fri 19th** and Fri 25th, two weekends of litter picking with Oxclean
- Sat 26th** 10-3pm, Botley W.I. Hall, Faberdashery Sale
- Sat 26th** Cumnor Choral Spring Concert