

The Sprout

The Newsletter for North Hinksey & Botley
Issue 179 July 2023

The Sprout

The Newsletter for North Hinksey & Botley

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The Sprout

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From the Editor

Welcome to a *Sprout* packed for summer reading. Looking forward, the Medical Practice has options to consider (p29), Sustainable Botley offers help with getting your house ready for winter (p21), the 4th Scouts are looking for a new site (p31) and Botley Bridges brings us up to date on page 34. The results of Botley in Bloom are on page 5, and you are invited to share the charms of your garden shed on page 20. Botley Girls football team are wearing their new, *Sprout* sponsored shirts (p 23 and cover), and there's an interview with a local author ahead of a Q&A session in the library in July (p17), plus an interview with a pig on page 26 – a first for the *Sprout**. Also in July, the *Sprout* AGM will be up at the Pavilion on Sunday 23rd. Anyone can have a share in the *Sprout*. Just pay £1 at the AGM. But even without joining, you can still have a say in what we publish – email your ideas to editor@thesprout.co.uk and we'll take it from there. Or come to the AGM and tell us what you'd like to see. Finally, following the hotly contested elections in May, we thought it might be timely to set out an account of what the parish council actually does (p11). With six new councillors, a job-share for the new Clerk and Finance Officer, and a new groundsman up on the playing fields, the future looks hopeful.

Ag MacKeith

*although we did once interview a dog



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Letters to the Editor

Botley in Bloom

Just wanted to agree wholeheartedly with your correspondent in the June issue who made a useful and appreciated suggestion about the BOTLEY IN BLOOM's categories, suggesting one that featured paved front gardens. This would illustrate the familiar adage of *making a virtue out of reality*, enabling many more entrants to participate. In fact, there was a category several years ago of something similar, like Best Front Drive [*aka 'Best Car Bower' – Ed.*].

I hasten to add that this is no criticism of BOTLEY in BLOOM, which has always been a welcome event, with some stunning and imaginative entries over the years ... just a positive suggestion. **Ruth Cameron**

Recycling tinfoil (a tip for Sprout readers)

Contaminated foil and plastic containers must go in the black bins, but foil will take 100 years to dissolve. Instead, use your dishwasher to clean foil and plastic containers, also foil wrapping sheets folded in half over plate racks (really useful tip). Everything will come out clean for reuse or recycling. **Briony Newport**

Botley Medical Centre – always good!

On Monday morning I called the Centre, later that morning was a telephone consultation with a Centre doctor. At 10am on Wednesday the prescribed medicine arrived by post. An example of the first-rate service I've always received. **Adam Hardiman, MA**

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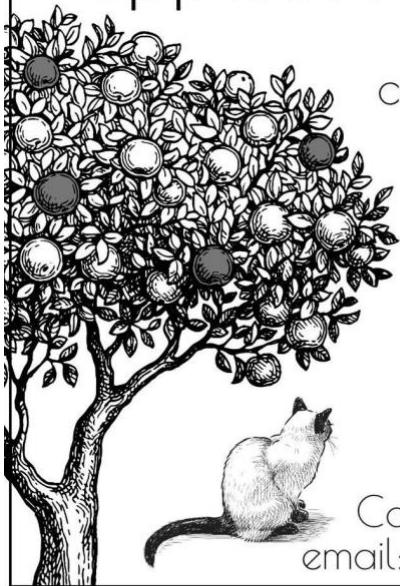
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Botley in Bloom Front Garden Competition 2023

THE RESULTS ARE IN!

Many thanks to all those who participated in this year's Botley in Bloom Front Garden Competition. We have had the good fortune to see some diverse gardens this year making for interesting and careful judging. A place to park the car(s) is an essential consideration for most of us but our imaginative local gardeners have come up with some lovely ways to distract the eye, as well as trying to protect our environment and welcoming wildlife into their gardens.

What a close-run competition this year! On totting up our score sheets we found that two of the categories had a tie for first place. I am delighted to announce the winners in each of the three categories as follows:

BEST OVERALL FRONT GARDEN

Joint 1st prize - 4 Seacourt Road, Lucy and Ed Saddington. Lovely planting including roses and foxgloves, and we particularly liked the way part of the lawn was left unmown (see photo).

Joint 1st prize – 94 North Hinksey Lane, Phil Bloomer. The beautiful tapestry of seed heads in this garden is simply captivating.

2nd prize – 13 Maple Close, Andrea Flear's colourful and creative garden left us impressed by how much she manages to cram into a small space.

Highly Commended – 5 Cumnor Rise Road, Rinaldo Caprotti. The largest of the gardens in this category and we liked the way Rinaldo used colourful planting.

BEST CULTIVATED-WILDLIFE FRONT GARDEN

Joint 1st prize – 94 North Hinksey Lane. Phil Bloomer's garden is particularly good for wildlife and we could hear the sparrows and bees making the most of the indigenous planting (see photo on next page).





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Joint 1st prize – 36 North Hinksey Village. Chris and Elaine Sugden take good advantage of the natural stream running alongside their property with its wildlife corridors. Their native planting helps support local wildlife.

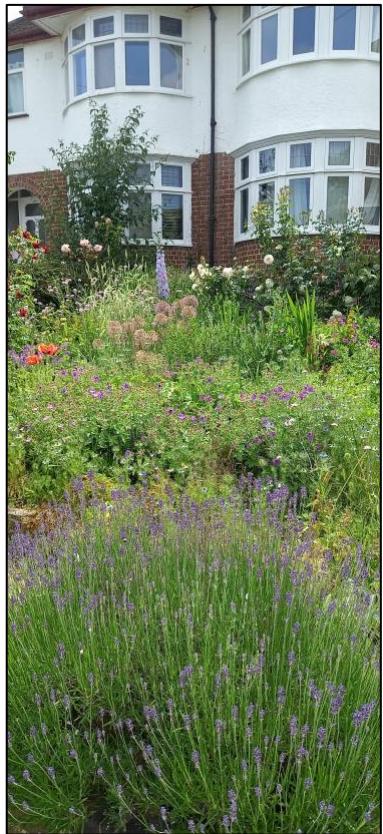
2nd prize – 50 St Pauls Crescent, Caroline Cockman. This corner plot has many pretty pots and scored full marks for bird/insect boxes.

Highly Commended – 13 Maple Close, Andrea Flear. Again, Andrea's lovely planting and creativity scored highly.

BEST USE OF VEGETABLES

1st prize – 13 Maple Close, Andrea Flear (*see photo below*). A beautiful small garden with an inspiring variety of fruit and vegetables including tomatoes, strawberries, broad beans, peas, blackcurrants, plus many herbs, all jostling with colourful flowers. A worthy winner.

2nd prize – 17 Finmore Road, Bob Blackburn. A couple of good raised beds showed some great vegetable planting. Bob also scored well for supporting wildlife (a necessary score for all categories).



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Highly Commended – 36 North Hinksey Village. Chris and Elaine Sugden's pretty front garden contains a raised bed for growing a few healthy-looking vegetables.

A recent letter to *The Sprout* suggested a category around the idea of Best Low Cost or Limited Space. This is a good thought and we wondered if a regular piece on cost-saving tips would be welcome? Spending a lot of money does not necessarily make a good garden. For instance, growing tomatoes, pumpkins, or butternut squash from seeds garnered from shop-bought veg can produce great results. In reply to the concern expressed about pollution, of course you can grow vegetables in your front garden – simply wash or peel as you would supermarket veg.

A great deal of thought goes into deciding the different categories and it should be remembered that when judging we need to be able to tick off various criteria (as itemised in March edition of *The Sprout*). Beauty is very subjective which is why we use our scoring guidelines.

My fellow judge Jan Bartlam and I wish to thank everyone who entered the competition, as well as Botley/North Hinksey Parish Council for sponsoring the prizes. Vouchers will find their way to all first and second prize winners. Many congratulations!

Viv Smith

Botley Youth Club



Botley Youth Club flung open its doors and welcomed 50 children and young people to its first session on 7 June.

The Youth Club values are about inclusion, getting together, having your own time, trying new things and having fun in a supportive space.

Children and young people aged 10–16 are welcome to come along every Wednesday 7pm–9pm during term time. It's £1 entry on the door at Louie Memorial Pavilion. There is a tuck shop too!

If you would like to know more, please do contact Botley Youth Club by email: botleyyouthclub@gmail.com. We look forward to welcoming your children to Botley Youth Club!

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What Does the Parish Council Do?

Following the excitements of the recent, hotly contested elections, we may find ourselves asking each other what the new parish council will actually do. Here is a simple account of how things work round here.

The highest tier of government locally is Oxfordshire County Council. It is responsible for roads, public health, children's services, and adult social care, and it channels funding to the police.

The second tier is the District Council, responsible for housing, leisure and recreation, environmental health, waste collection, planning applications and local taxation collections. Our local District Council is the Vale of White Horse, based in Abingdon, but it has combined with South Oxfordshire as South & Vale to run some things jointly.

The third and lowest tier is the Parish Council, which is responsible for Allotments and Playing Fields (and other green spaces) and for feeding grassroots information back to the District Council. So, for instance, local planning applications are all vetted by the Parish Council's Planning Committee, which sends recommendations back to the District Council. (The District Council may choose to ignore these if there are wider issues involved.) In the context of planning, all Parish Councils were asked to write Neighbourhood Plans describing their areas and setting out criteria for future development. These are taken into account when Planning decisions are made. North Hinksey Neighbourhood Plan is on the Council website, via the Planning Committee page.

You may be wondering how all this is funded – and the answer is very complicated. Much too complicated to delve into here – though if you really want to know, there is good information on <https://www.newlocal.org.uk/articles/council-finance-explained>.

How does the parish council actually work? Numbers vary, but ours is composed of 14 volunteers – your elected parish councillors – aided by the parish clerk, a paid post. The clerk is often also the finance officer, but current arrangements have divided the job into two part-time posts, and, following recent interviews, new staff should be in place very soon. Meetings are held monthly (apart from August) and this year's chair is Cllr Lorna Berrett. The vice chair is David Kay. Council operates with several committees, including: Planning (chair, Adam Rankin); Recreation and Amenities (chair, Jamie Spooner); Finance and General Purposes (consists of the chairs of all the committees, plus two other councillors with wide knowledge of the parish, sets and reviews the budgets);

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Communications (chair, David Kay); and Remembrance Day (chair, Adam Rankin) which exists to organize the Remembrance Day Service at the Commonwealth War Graves in Botley Cemetery. Given the very limited scope of the parish council's responsibilities, you may be surprised to learn that there is no Allotments Committee. It was disbanded in 2022, and responsibility has devolved back to full council, who run them with a very light touch indeed.

Playing fields and green spaces are the responsibility of the parish council, which explains why the main projects in hand at the moment are both situated on the Louie Memorial Playing Field in Arnold's Way. These are the enhancement of outdoor provision for teenagers, aka the Botley Bowl Skatepark, and the replacement Pavilion. Also of interest (though with no active changes envisaged) are the Copse and Fen in the lower playing field, along with the play area for younger children, and the North Hinksey Lane Nature Reserve, which includes the Community Orchard, the Minns Memorial Garden, a wildflower meadow and a pond. All these elements are in the remit of the Recreation and Amenities Committee. (Raleigh Park, although within the parish, belongs to Oxford City Council.)

Various short-term working groups advise the Council and committees but have no decision-making powers. They usually also involve local people who are not councillors. For example, the public arts working group manages the public arts programme in the new shopping precinct and is starting to discuss art for the Turner Drive area. The Environment Working Group was set up to advise on the Local Climate Action Plan.

The above are responsibilities that Parish Councils have to take care of, but they can also choose to do more to support the community, such as the Jubilee and Coronation events this past year, grants to local volunteer groups, and representing parishioners on the West Way developer's liaison group.

Ag MacKeith

Shout out from the Library

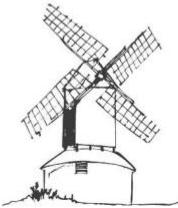
Botley Library has a team of volunteers happy to drop books off to people who find it hard to get out, and with time to stay for a chat if wanted. So, if this would suit you, phone them on 01865 810259 (NB Last month's phone number was out of date, this is the right one.)

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2nd Botley Brownies

We are now in the last term of our Brownie year before the summer holidays and as such we continue with the official programme for this year, but also include outdoor activities as well. Before the last meeting of the term in July, for instance, we will spend the evening at Beanwood, playing outdoor games, having a traditional campfire and toasting marshmallows to create s'mores. These are a toasted marshmallow between two chocolate digestive biscuits – thus named as once you've had one you will find you want some more!

As you can see from the photo, we created a gift and card for Father's Day. The Brownies were given a blank puzzle which they first bordered and then wrote a message to create a unique puzzle for each dad.

If you have enjoyed reading about our year of activities, and you are a girl aged between seven and ten years of age who wants to have fun, make friends and try new things, then please do make contact with 2nd Botley Brownies via Girlguiding's website and come and join us in September. "Don't be shy, come and give us a try". West Oxford District Girlguiding Pop-Up Café and Fete will be held in the Louie Memorial Field on the afternoon of Sunday 9th July.

Brown Owl



PLANNING APPLICATIONS

<u>P23/V1121/HH</u>	48 Yarnells Hill. Rear 1st floor extension; front porch; conversion of garage to living accommodation.	11 May TDD: 6 July
<u>P23/V1042/HH</u>	21 Hazel Rd. Double storey extension to rear.	15 May TDD: 10 July
<u>P23/V1043/HH</u>	23 Hazel Rd. Double storey & single extension at rear & double storey extension at side. Cantilever porch x 2.	15 May <i>Target Decision Date: 10 July</i>
<u>P23/V1118/HH</u>	27 Yarnells Hill. Erect rear single storey extension + front porch.	15 May TDD: 10 July
<u>P23/V1159/HH</u>	190 Westminster Way. Erect rear & side ground floor extension.	24 May TDD: 19 July
<u>P23/V1258/LDP</u>	11 Montagu Rd. Replace garage with single storey side extension.	1 June TDD: 27 July

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There's no way of knowing what startling crimes might be brewing behind closed doors. People move to Botley for the tranquillity of its streets, yet one apparently innocent door in Botley is sheltering murder most gruesome. Murder in the décor, murder for dinner. Our murdersome hostess is novelist Olivia Kiernan, who has just published her fifth novel, *The End of Us*, a stand-alone thriller.

Prior to this, Olivia wrote a series of four crime novels featuring Detective Inspector Frankie Sheehan, the feisty daughter of a retired policeman, whose tough demeanour and effective practice belie her submerged fragility. Frankie's engaging persona remains to haunt the reader long after the final – invariably surprising – last page is turned. The Sheehan books' appeal is far-reaching: they have been published in multiple countries, including Japan (bibliography appended).

Olivia is relatively new to the published page, although she's been writing since the age of seven. Born and raised in a rural hamlet near the Irish town of Navan, Olivia says that her creative outlet has always manifested itself in words and in writing, which she views in a visceral context. She did a degree in Ireland in Anatomy & Physiology, ultimately deciding to become a chiropractor rather than a physiologist because the work involved directly using her hands.

Olivia came to the UK in 1999, living first in Wales and then Oxford, where she's been now for 20 years, the last four here in Botley. She continued practising as a chiropractor for some 12 years, while simultaneously writing in her spare time, making serious attempts at getting published. During this period, she did an MA in Creative Writing. "I wrote three novels which elicited endless rejections," she says self-deprecatingly. "They now exist unpublished, in a drawer, *from which they will never emerge.*"

As is the way of fate, she had just about given up on her dream when suddenly she began getting positive feedback from publishers, and the first in the Sheehan series appeared in 2018. Clearly talented and with a



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growing following, Kiernan has produced a book virtually every year since. Currently, she is trying her hand at short stories in a genre other than crime, and a second stand-alone novel is still in progress, though with no publication date yet.

Irish actress Victoria Smurfit has optioned the TV rights to the Frankie Sheehan series, and hopes to approach networks soon. Watch this space! Any other aims still in the future? "I would love to write a screenplay," she replies without hesitation. And she will.

Botley Library has a treat in store for us all: Olivia will be appearing there for an informal Q&A on Saturday July 15 at 2pm. Entrance is by free ticket obtainable either at the Library, or by phoning 07922 849680.

Ruth Cameron

Bibliography:

Play Dead for Me [Aka Too Close To Breathe] (2018)

The Killer in Me (2019)

The Murder Box (2021)

If Looks Could Kill (2020)

The End of Us (2023)



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The Beauty of Botley Sheds...

... and Outbuildings. Are you proud of the shed or other outbuilding in your back garden? Members of the Sprout editorial team have spotted several handsome and intriguing constructions which deserve to be celebrated. Could yours join the list? Please send two photos by 15th July to grantn00@outlook.com, together with any brief explanation you'd like to appear alongside. A name and address would be appreciated, but will not appear in print.

Here's a shining example from St Paul's crescent to get us started.



Cumnor Choral Society needs new singers

“He who sings scares away his woes” Miguel de Cervantes.

Our next concert will be in St Peter and St Paul Church at 19.30 on Saturday 2nd December. Term starts on **September 14th**, rehearsals between 19.30 and 21.30, at St. Andrew's Church, Orchard Road.

The concert will be dedicated to the memory of Rosemary Smith, a much-loved member of the choir who joined in the early days when she was a young girl. Rosie sadly died in May and will be much missed by all of us.

Following Peter Foster's departure, we now have a new Musical Director, Ben Goodall. Ben has put together a lovely programme to mark Advent, including works by Vaughan Williams, Mendelssohn and Haydn.

We are a well-established friendly choir. We welcome new singers, especially tenors and basses! There is no voice test, and although the ability to read music certainly helps, it is not essential. Please do come along to our first rehearsal if you would like to see what it's like.

Our website is www.cumnorchoralsociety.wordpress.com; we are in the process of updating it. Contact Caroline Cockman for more information on either Cockman.caroline@gmail.com or 07961 900670.

Is your home ready for winter?

Forecasters expect an El Niño this year – a surface warming of the tropical Pacific Ocean that shapes weather around the globe. In the UK it makes for warmer summers and colder winters. Meanwhile we don't expect a return to low gas prices, and every kilowatt-hour you use contributes to the climate crisis, so home energy remains a hot topic.

If you're thinking about whether your home is ready for next winter, Sustainable Botley is here to help! Our report on energy saving in typical Botley homes is online at www.sustainablebotley.uk. Some of the main messages are:

- Most of our lofts and cavity walls in Botley are insulated. If yours still haven't been done, it's time to get on with it. Adding mineral wool between the joists in an uninsulated loft can save 30% of your home energy; insulating cavity walls can save 20%. These measures will easily pay for themselves, and there are grants if your household is on a low income or includes vulnerable members.
- Otherwise, some of the biggest energy savings come from insulating solid walls with external or internal cladding. In many of our homes this could cut energy use by as much as 40%, but it is expensive and internal wall insulation is disruptive. We are expecting grants to be available from a new government scheme via energy suppliers later in the year.



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- Replacing gas-fired central heating with a heat pump can reduce carbon emissions by about two thirds, but may not cut running costs as electricity is three times as expensive as gas. There are a lot of myths about heat pumps which are covered in our report. In a nutshell, a heat pump can work in just about any home, but it's best to insulate first and the whole system needs to be carefully designed for the building.

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Other measures make a difference too. If you're replacing doors or windows, it makes sense to get energy efficient ones, not just standard double glazing. Insulating a suspended timber floor cuts draughts and saves energy. And if you have open fireplaces, it's best to get them sealed up – you can do this temporarily with a chimney balloon.

A well-insulated house is likely to be quieter, less prone to damp and mould, and cooler in summer as well as more comfortable in winter.

The best action to take depends on your circumstances. Sustainable Botley offers home visits and we can advise on small and large measures. We are also now able to issue Energy Performance Certificates which are needed to access some grants. If you are interested, please get in touch by email to laurie@livingwitness.org.uk.

Laurie Michaelis

Girls' Football, sponsored by *The Sprout*

The Botley Boys and Girls FC Mums vs Girls match is a new addition to the area's sporting calendar but one which has gripped our imaginations. On June 10, the game was played for its second time, at the club's presentation day at Fogwell Road. The girls came out as 2-1 winners in a game that the 9-11-year-old age group frankly never looked like losing. From the moment Annabelle White slotted the ball past her mum, Lottie in goal, the game slipped away from the ladies. The second goal, a repeat, sealed it.

It was a suitable end to a terrific year for the girls who joined a group at Botley Boys and Girls Football Club set up in 2019, with money from the Weetabix Wildcats scheme. The programme now supported by *The Sprout* (as can be glimpsed from their sponsored shirts) was set up to create a non-competitive environment for girls between the age of 5 and 11.

The club runs sessions with between 20–30 girls, in three different age groups, led by six male and female coaches with around ten years of coaching experience between them and all the right qualifications. The aim is to treat football as a skill that's fun to master and a great game that everyone can enjoy. To know more email botleywildcats@gmail.com



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The year so far with the 15th Oxford Scouts

January – Visits from our four-legged friends as we welcomed two Guide Dogs and their humans for a chat about the work assistance dogs do. The Cubs loved it so much that we then had a visit from Pluto & Sirius, two Guinea Pigs! Their human/our helper Hannah, taught the Cubs how to care for them, learn about animal husbandry & their diet. The Cubs really loved feeding them lettuce treats!

February – We welcomed five new starters and three Cubs moved up to Scouts, as our numbers continued to swell in a trend that would later see us awarded Growth Champions 2023 by our County Commissioner.

March – A team of four Scouts took part in a Ready Steady Cook style competition and came a fantastic 4th out 12, producing a 3-course meal from a supplied list of ingredients on a single gas stove. Also time to get creative, as over a couple of weeks our Scouts were super focused on designing and then painting their Warhammer models ready for battle.

April – The first camp of the year, with 33 Cubs and Scouts joining us over the weekend to spend a night under canvas. The Scouts started the weekend off with a night time expedition, putting into practice their navigation and orienteering skills. The following day saw them try out archery and axe throwing (not at the same time!) to round off a whirlwind 24 hours. Meanwhile back at camp the Cubs had arrived, many of whom were on their first night away, and got straight to work practising fire lighting. Lots of torch games were to follow before some bedtime hot chocolate. The following day saw map work in the woods to work off an eggy bread breakfast, followed by a visit to the Living Rainforest to learn about some rare and exotic animals and plants.



May & June – Invited to use our BBQ skills to feed hundreds of you from the community at the King's Coronation beacon lighting, and then by Botley Boys and Girls FC for trophy presentation day. Always great to meet loads of you, spread the word about the fantastic things we're doing through Scouting, and hopefully encourage you to take part yourself, as a new young member or adult volunteer, to help us become Growth Champions 2024.

Tom Freeman

Meet... George

Hi, nice to meet you. I'm George the seven-month-old piglet. I am pink with black spots and my brother Hamish is pure black. Unfortunately, our owner is very ill, and we need a new home soon. Many people have come to see us, yet no one has taken us home.

Ouch! What's happening and why are we in a dog cage? I think we're travelling to someplace new. Is this our new home? I wonder. Now we're living in a large rabbit hutch and pen.



When I woke up this morning, Hamish was missing. He'd been rushed to the vets... And he's not come home... It's lonesome without him. There's no one to snort at about food or which side we are sleeping on. My new owner, Scarlett, has given me a teddy, but teddy doesn't snort back. I've been alone for eight weeks, but all six of my owner's dogs come to visit me. I've had to have injections into my bottom to keep me healthy too.

What's that wretched noise!? It's coming from the end of the garden. Scarlett tells me that her old playhouse that she's grown out of will soon by my new sty, once it's renovated.

Now it's the day that I am going to move in. When I walked down, the sty was like a five-trotter mansion! It has a bed of thick straw, two new automatic feeders and my water comes from a butt that keeps my trough filled. I effortlessly fell asleep that night.

I woke up this morning and there were these two fluffy, black balls curled up beside me. I snorted a "Good morning" and got a sleepy "Miaow" back. It's Zig and Zag, the cats from three gardens along. They are awfully nice and visit me regularly for a sleep-over.

One morning there was no Zig and Zag. They had heard some big news but they wouldn't tell me what it was. Later that morning Scarlett and her parents brought down a familiar dog cage. Inside was another pig. This pig looked like Hamish, he smelt like Hamish, he acted like Hamish. Can it be true! It *is* Hamish! He's back! I am overwhelmed with happiness to have my brother home again.

Now Hamish and I feast on leftover food from Scarlett's school, we play in the paddling pool by blowing bubbles with our snouts – very funny

floating sticks in the pool – and we also chase the water from the lawn-sprinkler. A storm came overnight, and it blew down our favourite apple tree. Lots of apples fell into our pool and we spent hours apple-bobbing. More fun!

Often, I wake up because of Hamish's snoring. He's also the chattiest. Cheerio for now, it's time for supper and bed. By the way my owner, Scarlett, is a ten-year-old girl and ALL of this story is true!

Riki Therivel



Kennington Memory Club

Living well with dementia

Summer is with us, and with it the chance of hot, sunny weather. We are frequently reminded to keep hydrated in hot weather. We need to have a drink more often than usual. For someone whose memory plays tricks on them, this is an action which often gets forgotten. Please remember to drink plenty on hot days and remind and encourage those who might not remember themselves to do the same. Let's all enjoy the good weather and keep safe and well at the same time.

Kennington Memory Club celebrated the Coronation in fine style with tea parties and dancing. There has recently been a Cream Tea and associated Sale at St Swithun's Church Hall. We are awaiting Ladderthon 2023 on August 26th with bated breath. Stalwart volunteers are going to carry a long ladder from Headington to Kennington. Let's support them and make it a bumper fund-raiser for Kennington Memory Club, Headway and MacIntyre's, three charities all based in Kennington.

Kennington Memory Club Day Centre provides days of fun, activities, laughter and quizzes for those with memory problems caused by dementia, as well as respite for their carers. Currently there are places available, and we would love to welcome new members, so, if interested, please contact the club Organiser, Helen, on 07852 883496 or see memoryclub1@outlook.com for more information. You can visit the Club website by scanning the QR code or going to kenningtonmemoryclub.org.uk





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Two practices bidding for Botley and Kennington Surgeries

The Berkshire, Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire Integrated Care Board issued the following statement on May 25 about the future of the Botley and Kennington Medical Practice:

Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board has brought together key stakeholders this week to carry out due diligence on plans submitted by a number of Oxfordshire GP practices to take over primary care services at Botley Medical Centre and Kennington Health Centre from September 2023.

The panel, which included the Patient Participation Group and independent patient watchdog Healthwatch Oxfordshire, considered proposals from two practices to provide GP care to most patients in Botley and Kennington. A very small number of patients in the outlying parts of the Botley/Kennington catchment area may be offered the chance to register with other practices closer to home.

Both interested practices have committed to providing services from the existing premises – one from each site – and all practice support staff currently working in Kennington and Botley will be offered the opportunity to transfer to the new providers if they want to.

The next step of the process is for the senior management team at the ICB to consider the submissions and approve the new providers. We expect to be able to share the outcomes and give full details to all patients and key stakeholders in early July.

The two current surgeries will become branches of the two practices; both are understood to be Oxford City Practices in different Primary Care Networks. Both have a 'good' CQC rating and are training practices. The clinical directors of both Primary Care Networks are doctors in each of the Practices. The names of the practices will not be released until the decision about awarding the contracts is made, expected to be by the end of June.

The practice bidding for Botley has 13 GPs with 54 sessions a week. The practice bidding for Kennington has 16 GPs with 68 sessions. Botley Medical Centre has two partners, a salaried doctor and a locum doctor.

The bidding practices are already advertising for more doctors and clinicians to take on the extra patients.

Once the contracts are awarded the Botley and Kennington PPG will divide its membership between the two practices and will be assimilated into the existing practices' PPGs.

John Ashton the PPG chairman, told the recent PPG meeting that the situation is looking positive and that both surgeries would remain open full time.

Chris Sugden

Energy Saving Homes during Oxford Open Doors, 9th and 10th September

Could you make *your* home warmer in winter, cooler in summer, a healthier place to live and maybe even cheaper to run? Energy Saving Homes is back in partnership with Oxford Preservation Trust for the Oxford Open Doors weekend on 9/10 September 2023. For homeowners, landlords and tenants interested in adopting energy saving measures, visiting an Energy Saving Home provides an ideal opportunity not only to see what a home fit for the future is like, but also to speak directly to the people who live in it and ask your questions.

If you're one of the many in Botley who have made home improvements, and if you might be willing to welcome visitors, we'd love to hear from you. We are keen to showcase all sorts of measures, from small to large, to suit a range of budgets. You might be an owner-occupier, a tenant or a landlord. You might have solar panels, a heat pump or double/triple glazing; maybe you've got extra insulation, or done some good draught proofing in your home. To find out more please get in touch with Karen Starr via karen.starr@energysavinghomes.org.

Energy Saving Homes is organised by Communities for Zero Carbon Oxford, a collective of community groups in Oxford including Sustainable Botley. This year's events are funded by the Low Carbon Hub. Details will be available nearer the time at www.oxfordpreservation.org.uk and www.icon.org.uk/communities-for-zero-carbon-oxford.

A Home for the 4th Oxford Scout Group

We are currently looking for a site to build a new scout hut for the 4th Oxford Scout Group and would love your help to find an appropriate location.

The new hut will enable us to carry out in full our current and planned activities and will provide for many future generations of young people. With 165 young people meeting five nights a week and running many other activities at other times too, we are the largest scouting group in the wider Oxford area.



An awful lot of volunteer work goes on behind the scenes to make these activities happen. We also need large amounts of storage accessible from within our hall, and space to dry many large tents after camps.

At the moment we meet at Oxford Rugby Club, and we are incredibly grateful for their very generous support, but the club has a busy schedule of its own training, fixtures and events and the arrangement was only ever a short-term one. Equally we have a wide range of quite specific storage and activity requirements and need to make full provision for our current and future needs.



There is no existing (or planned) building in the area that can provide what we need, and the existing scout hut is not available to us. So, we find ourselves in the daunting position of needing to build a replacement hut in a new location.

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rugby club, but there are a number of reasons why it is not a perfect solution for us: it is two miles from the centre of our catchment area, it is in the flood plain, in the green belt, it has no water/electricity/sewage and there are issues with access. If we could build a scout hut there it would be an exciting project, but the hurdles that might stop the project are many and we need to look at all other options before we commit to that future.

So, here is our request for help, please. We are looking for a building, or a plot of land on which we could build a scout hut, next to open space where we can do outdoor activities. We would like easy access for families, and easy access for young people into the nearby countryside. Is there anywhere you can think of where we might be able to build a hut?

Do you know of an unused building or plot of land in the area? Do you know anyone who owns a plot of land whom we could approach? Do you know anywhere we could store some of our kit? We would be really grateful for any suggestions or ideas you might have, so we can consider all possibilities before committing to what will be a major project. Please contact chair@thefourth.org.uk with any information.

Thank you.

Trustees of 4th Oxford Scout Group, Reg Charity 267799.

PS, the pictures show us kayaking and our recent expedition camp.



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Venice to the Outer Hebrides

Skin Deep – The surface of the sea

Photographs by Carmen Caldera and Gordon Stokes – Botley Arts Exhibition, 10 July to 1 September, at St Peter and St Paul Church

Carmen says:

I was born in Spain, and my house was opposite the Art School, so my street was always full of artists with paintings under their arms. At my father's wishes, I studied to become a lawyer, but I always kept my creative soul, and all my life I have painted, composed, and been in love with Art in general.

I was a lawyer in Spain for 17 years, then moved to the UK in 2014. When mobile phones were born, my passion for photography developed, and I saw myself taking pictures all the time with my phone. Then my Canon camera came into my life, and the rest is history. Over time, my passion continued to increase, and one day I found myself taking pictures at a wedding, with no experience. The couple were delighted...Then came more and more events, and more and more photos.

I have always been self-taught. My photography reflects the beautiful side of life: beauty, colour, feelings, passion...

Since lockdown, my camera has accompanied me on all my trips: Jerusalem, Spain, Venice...I love taking pictures; there is something magical about immortalising a moment that will not be repeated, that will be frozen in time.

For my exhibition with Botley Arts, I am showing photos recently taken in Venice, one of my favourite places in the world.

Gordon says:

Every year we overfish, dump rubbish, overheat and otherwise pollute the sea – its skin-deep beauty will outlive us all, but we are wrecking the oceans and it has to stop.

The exhibition shows photographs of the sea along the western coasts of Britain, including the Isles of Scilly with its tranquillity, the far west of Cornwall with its big waves and surfers, and the Outer Hebrides with its wildness.

These places all have a special light, being surrounded by sea, with damp air that deflects light, making shadows softer. The shallow seas, clarity of water and white sand beaches make for colours in the sea that are sometimes almost unbelievable. The photos concentrate on the water and the sky.



I visit West Cornwall regularly and I've loved the Isles of Scilly since I first went there in the 1980s, especially the smaller islands of Bryher, Tresco, St Martins and Samson. Visits to the Outer Hebrides, and Coll and Tiree have been less frequent but their beauty is just as great.

My photography is fairly minimalist, simple in terms of composition, and my influences are from abstract painting and printmaking rather than conventional photography. The aim is to please, relax and quietly uplift rather than to challenge. I hope that they convey a sense of the places they were taken and how precious the natural environment is – for the world and for our spirit.

I started printing photographs aged 13, and have used monochrome, colour print and slide film. All is now digital and is mainly seascapes, alongside some landscapes of Oxfordshire.

I regularly take part in Artweeks at the Edith Road Studios off Abingdon Road in Oxford. I have also exhibited in Reading, West Ox Arts in Bampton, and more locally at the John Radcliffe, Churchill and Warneford Hospitals. For the last 30 years I have lived and worked in the Oxford area. My photography has been combined with a career in research, including working for the Countryside Agency. A geographer by training, I am also a Visiting Research Associate in the University of Oxford.

More about my work can be seen at www.gordonstokes.co.uk

Gordon's photos are a magical blend of colours, which have to be seen to be appreciated. The Sprout can't hope to do justice to them. But above, as a taster, is a view of the sea off Cornwall.

Botley Bridges Update

It's been a while since Botley Bridges last appeared in The Sprout, so we felt it was time to share news about what the charity has been up to.

If you've not come across us before, Botley Bridges provides support for families with young children in Botley, North Hinksey, Cumnor and beyond!

Over the last year, we've supported over 300 local families. Our face-to-face sessions are now back in full swing – the regular weekly **Stay and Play** group at Botley School and **Baby Group** at Seacourt Hall are an opportunity for young children to connect with each other, and for new parents to forge friendships and find a support network. We also continue to offer courses in a wide range of topics, such as Baby Massage, paediatric First Aid and Family Links.

The Botley Bridges Co-ordinator, Hayley Hayle, was awarded a BEM for the **Online Baby Group** that she set up during Covid, in recognition of the support that was offered to isolated families. This popular group continues every Wednesday, as new parents have told us how helpful they are, particularly in those sometimes tricky first few months.

In June we launched a brand new initiative, **Acorns and Oaks**, an intergenerational playgroup that brings together little ones and their parents with the residents of Chawley Grove! The group meets fortnightly, on Wednesdays from 2–3pm.

We're also busy preparing our summer programme of family-friendly activities in the local community – last year we ran "At The Beach", "Dinosaurs" and "Pirates" sessions (to name a few!) across several local parks. Keep an eye on our website and follow us on Facebook to find out what's going on.

As a charity, Botley Bridges relies on grants and donations to continue our work to help local families thrive. We're about to launch a new fundraising campaign which aims to raise £3000 to support our summer holidays activity programme. If you're interested in finding out more about how you can help improve family life in our community, please visit: botleybridges.org or scan here:

Amy Walters



Fond Farewells at Botley Library

It was a sad day on Tuesday 30th May in Botley Library as we said a fond farewell to Lyn Moody, who retired after an impressive 37 years! Lyn has obviously seen many changes over the years, especially the move from the old library in Elms Court to the brand new building in West Way Square. There have been several managerial and staff changes over the years – she has worked alongside six managers in that time!

Lyn has always gone about her work diligently, professionally and is unflappable! Most of all she has been a wonderful friend and colleague to many and she will be most sorely missed. We had a small celebration in the library with plenty of tea and cake. She was presented with flowers, gifts from colleagues and customers too. So a big thank you to Lyn from both staff and customers alike. We wish Lyn a happy retirement, no doubt enjoying more time with her garden and animals.

Jan Shirley

FREE SWIMMING FOR UNDER 17s at Leys, Barton, Ferry and New Hinksey swimming pools for kids living in OX1, OX2, OX3 and OX4. To register bring proof of age and of address when you come to swim the first time.

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Randoms

SPROUT AGM

Sun 23rd July, 3pm, at the pavilion pop-up café on the Louie Memorial playing fields, Arnold's Way. Everybody welcome.

WI June Report

As I write, I have been just finishing off dressing my straw hat, ready for our race night on 17th June. Hopefully, we will have several to parade, sporting flowers, feathers and anything to catch the eye. Our speaker this month was Janine Kilroe, who has worked as a tutor in our local prisons. Next month we will find out about the connection between Oxford and Penicillin – such contrasting talks, but always interesting to our members.

In July, our craft stall will be available at the West Oxford Fun Day on 8th July hence it will not be at the Seacourt Market in July. Please come and find us at this community event. Our next WI event will be a bingo evening with pudding to be held on 9th September at 7pm. It would be lovely to welcome some new faces.

Bess Harris

Under New Management
LOOMSBURY Ice Cream
Cafe Come and try our new menu!

Breakfast - Avocado on sourdough, English breakfast, Waffles & bacon

Lunch - Panini, Ciabatta, Salads, Sausage rolls, Samosas & Flans

Desserts - Tart, Brownie or Waffles & Ice cream

Coffee - With homemade Cakes, Brownies, Flapjacks & Muffins

Organic Leaf tea - In a pot with Scones & Tea cakes

Milk shakes, Bubble tea, Fresh juices & Soft drinks

Children's sizes of Breakfast, Milkshakes, Waffles & Hot chocolate

Open 8am-6pm every day (except Sundays & Bank Holidays 10am-4pm)

Wheelchair Accessible - Parking free for first 2 hours & 6pm - midnight

11 West Way Square, Botley, Oxford OX2 9TJ

Botley Arts

Helen Ward, current exhibitor at St Peter & St Paul's Church, will be demonstrating her talents in situ on Saturday and Sunday, July 1 and 2, from 2–4pm. All welcome.

Update on the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS)

The Environment Agency's proposed flood alleviation scheme needs to go through both a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) process with the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA), and a planning application process with Oxfordshire County Council.

CPO: The Environment Agency sent out CPOs in February for the land it wants to acquire, and landowners had a chance to either sell their land or object. Several landowners objected, so DEFRA will be holding an inquiry. The inquiry will allow the Environment Agency to explain why it needs that land, and landowners to explain why the land should not be taken from them. The inquiry date has not yet been decided.

Planning application: The Environment Agency put in a planning application for the scheme in March, and the public had until April to comment on this. The county planning department has now also received comments from key government bodies. The County can now ask for further information from the Environment Agency, or recommend that the scheme be accepted (possibly with conditions) or refused. The final planning decision will be made by the county council planning committee. No committee date has yet been set, but it is likely to not be until the autumn.

Craft Group in the Library



Craft Group meets in the library on a Thursday afternoon at 2pm. Members bring their own projects to work on, knitting, crochet, tapestry etc. The photo shows some knitted dolls. The Library supplies cups of tea, and there is plenty of chat! Currently some of us are making blankets for the homeless from donated knitted squares. Please come and join us!

Other Library Events

Botley Library dates for your diary:

Author Event on Saturday July 15th at 2.00pm.

Please join us in conversation with Olivia Kiernan, writer of the Frankie Sheehan series! Free tickets available from the library. Please ring on 07922 849680 or email **Botley.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk** to book your free ticket.

Science Oxford's fun, interactive family show for Ages 4 to 8 is coming to Botley Library on Monday 7th August from 2.00pm to 3.00pm. Tickets are free. To secure your space please ring on 07922 849680 or email **Botley.library@oxfordshire.gov.uk**.

Crofts Court

This community-owned, permanently affordable, development of eight one- and two-bedroomed flats is now open and fully tenanted. Thursday 29th June saw a celebration of this successful endeavour by Oxford Community Land Trust, when a glass was raised to the new tenants and to those public-spirited investors who had made the project possible.

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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	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, Pavilion, Fogwell Rd. 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
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	Terri Matthews: clubsecretarybbgfc@gmail.com
Botley Bridges (for under 5s)	Mondays, 9–11, Stay & Play Botley School, and Fridays 10–12, Baby Group at Seacourt Hall botleybridges.org
Botley Community Larder	Thursdays, 3.30 to 5.30 at St P&P Church Hall, West Way, Facebook or email botleylarder@gmail.com
Botley and Kennington Patients Participation Group	Second Tuesday in the Month, early evening. Contact csugden@ocrpl.org
Botley Health Walks	2nd & 4th Sats 9.50 Louie Memorial Field car park, or Tues 11 am Library botleyhealthroutes@gmail.com
Botley Library	07922 849680. Open till 7 on Friday and 1pm on Sat, otherwise 9.30 to 5.30 (closed Wednesdays).
Botley Memory Lane Café	Thursdays 10–12 Seacourt Hall Lounge, Diccon James 07740 611971
Botley Seniors Lunch Club	Alternate Thursdays. Seacourt Hall. Jackie Warner Ox. 721386
Botley Youth Club	Weds 7pm–9pm in term time. Louie Memorial Pavilion. botleyyouthclub@gmail.com
Cumnor Choral Society	Thursdays, 19.30–21.30 St Andrew's Ch. Steve Morris, chair. www.cumnorchoralsociety.wordpress.com
Cumnor Chess Club	Thurs 7–9pm Cumnor Old School. Steven Bennett 01993 684494 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/ tel 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
Lawn Tennis Club	Family club Email: Tennis@OxfordSportsLTC.org 07824 881680 www.oxfordsportsltc.org
West Oxford Singing Circle	Weds 2-3pm, WOCC, Emily 07969 522368 or see www.emilyschoirs.co.uk
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 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	clerk@northhinksey-pc.gov.uk
Oxford Flower Arranging	4th Thursday Cumnor. Dympna Walker: Ox 865259
Oxford Harmony	Wednesdays 7.30 – 9.30 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 .
Raleigh Park, Friends of	Email: raleighpark@raleighpark.org.uk
Seacourt Hall Management Committee	Contact Lottie White, 07452 960100, or see https://www.seacourthall.org.uk
Shotokan Karate Club	6+ WOCC twice weekly Martyn King 07836 646450
Stagecoach Botley	Botley School, Saturdays 9:00am–3pm <i>Performing Arts for 4-16 yr-olds</i> 01865 590510 or 01235 390810
West Oxford Bowls Club	Dave Ellerker 07931 603801 wobc.membership@gmail.com
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/
Women's Institute (Botley)	Alison Jenner 07598 251161 alisonjenner@yahoo.com
Weight Watchers	Thursdays 6pm at SS Peter & Paul Church Hall Banso tel: 07779 253899 bansob@aol.com

Botley Baptist Church, 1 Church Way	Contact: Building Manager 07742 662668 botleybaptist@gmail.com
The Rosary Room Yarnells Hill, Elms Rise	Contact: Maria Brown, Tel: 01865 247986.
SS Peter & Paul Church Hall, West Way, Botley	Contact: 01865 242057 or osneybenefice@outlook.com .
Women's Institute Hall, North Hinksey Lane	Contact: Val Warner Tel. 01865 245273
Seacourt Hall, 3 Church Way	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, 2nd, 4th, 5th Sunday 11.30am Holy Communion
 3rd Sunday 11.30am Matins

St. Peter and St. Paul, Church of England, West Way
 Sundays 9.30am Holy Communion
 Wednesdays 10.30am Holy Communion in Chapel of Holy Spirit
 1st Saturday each month, 4–5.30pm Messy Church for children and carers
 Rev Clare Sykes, Tel. 01865 242345 or revclare@btinternet.com
See table above for Church Hall enquiries.

Our Lady of the Rosary, Roman Catholic, Yarnells Hill
 Saturday 6.30pm Mass
 Sunday 9.15am Mass
 Fr Daniel Lloyd 07584 323915 dlloyd@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk.

Botley Baptist Church, 1 Church Way
 Sunday Service 11 am
 Wednesday Zoom Bible Study 7.30pm
 Choir practice Thursday 2pm
 Diane Melchert **07742 662668** www.botleybaptistchurch.org

Calvary Chapel
 Sunday services on 1st Floor, 1 Church Way at 9.30am *with crèche, children's Sunday school and youth group*
 Pastor Steve Vickery 01865 586332
contact@ccox.church website: www.ccodox.church

What's On

July

- Sat 1st** and Sun 2nd, 2–4pm, SS Peter and Paul, Helen Ward demonstrates her approach to painting
- Sun 2nd** 2.30–4pm, St Margaret's Church, Binsey, Oxford Family Book Group event: Treacle Well Tales
- Wed 5th** 2–3pm Chawley Grove Care Home, Intergenerational playgroup (book via Botley Bridges) (also on 19th)
- Sat 8th** West Oxford Fun Day
- Mon 3rd** 2.30pm, Dean Court Community Centre, U3A talk: Janine Kilroe, A photographer's tale
- Sat 15th** 2pm, Library, Q&A with Olivia Kiernan
- Fri 21st** End of School Term
- Sun 23rd** 3pm, LM Pavilion, Arnold's Way, SPROUT AGM
- Thur 27th** 7.30pm, Seacourt Hall, Parish Council Meeting
- Fri 28th** morning, Seacourt Hall, Health Visitors Baby Clinic (drop in)

August

- Wed 2nd** 2–3pm, Chawley Grove Care Home, intergenerational playgroup, older siblings welcome (also 16th, 30th)
- Mon 7th** 2–3pm, Botley Library, Science Activities for 4–8 year olds

See Botley Bridges' Facebook page for activities with young children across the summer.