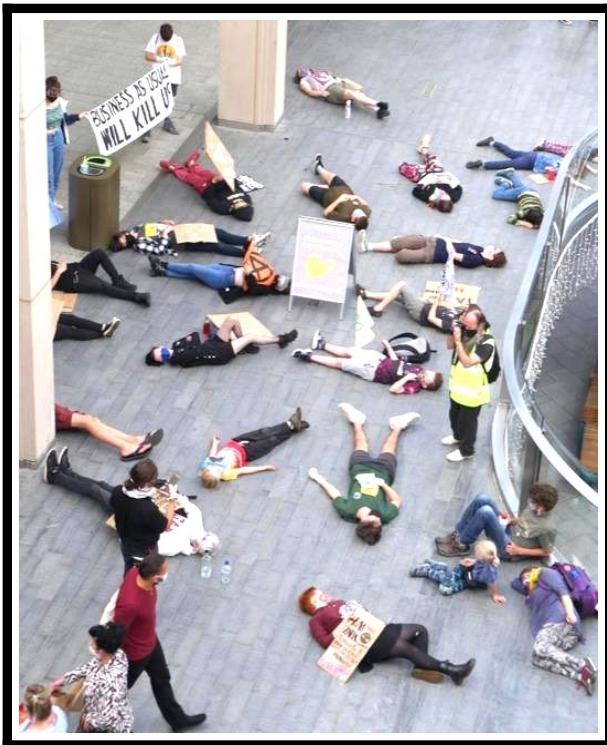


The Sprout



"BUSINESS AS USUAL WILL KILL US" Westgate 'die-in' on 19th August

The newsletter for North Hinksey & Botley

Issue 150 September 2020

The Sprout

Issue 150, September 2020

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From the Editor

Welcome to issue 150, which tells us that *The Sprout* is starting on its fifteenth year of publication. Slowly, slowly, things are approaching ‘normal’ though quite what that means remains to be seen. The Seacourt Hall is reopening (p7), though no sign of the Library as yet. Botley WI held its first meeting (p 31), the voluntary food parcel delivery service has come to an end (p17), but the Community Fridge has reopened (p 39) and a Community Larder has emerged (p23) through which, for a small weekly payment, food which was going to waste can be taken back to feed families – well done, Seacourt Bridge, for providing the space! The Scouts and the Parish Council are still holding their meetings by Zoom, and we look forward to learning how the schools will manage to re-open. Dean Court is holding a coffee morning in the car park (p29). Nature, meanwhile, is not interested in human problems – this year’s extreme weather has been good for pears, and you can find ways of dealing with a glut on p 31. Botley Arts, whose exhibitions, like the Community Fridge, are held in St Peter and Paul’s Church, is showing pictures by Michael Collier (p21). Virus footnote: our cover photo shows how fervently some of Oxford’s young people are hoping for a green recovery. They are not the only ones!

Ag MacKeith

Letters to the Editor

We need our Library

Botley Library moved at the beginning of this year to a splendid new location. There were broadband issues which meant that there was an interim solution with the staff using laptops. At the end of March the pandemic forced the closure of all libraries. Now libraries are re-opening but Botley library remains closed due to those same ICT issues. Why, during over four months of closure, was nothing done to fix this problem? How much longer is it going to be before Botley has the library that it so badly needs?

Colin & Sally Herson

Sharing our playing fields

Covid-19 has shown us the value of our green spaces for healthy exercise in the fresh air, while still self-isolating. As a result, many more people than ever before are now using the Louie Memorial Fields, gifted to North Hinksey parishioners in 1939, for safe recreation. Yet North Hinksey Parish Council is proposing at its meeting on 10th September to sell exclusive rights of access to most of the Upper Field (the football pitch and the MUGA and surrounding areas) for the next four years to a private company (the Acer Trust, which amongst other schools includes Matthew Arnold Academy) for the whole of the school day and for after-school activities from Monday to Friday inclusive. This will severely restrict our freedom to use the Field, and is a huge increase from the current agreement. As before, the Parish Council has failed to consult local parishioners and those who use the field. There is no good reason for Matthew Arnold Academy, a minority of whose students come from North Hinksey Parish, to take over our field, particularly as they already



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hire sports space from the Brookes Sports Centre, and could extend this hiring if more space is needed. If, like me, you agree that what is proposed is unfair, write to the North Hinksey Parish Clerk at clerk@northhinksey-pc.gov.uk and contact your parish councillors (details on the parish council website www.northhinksey-pc.gov.uk).

Andrew Pritchard

The Chair of NHPC Recreation and Amenities Committee, Cllr Caroline Potter, has sent this response: I would like to correct some inaccuracies in Mr Pritchard's letter. The proposed agreement with Matthew Arnold School is for the designated sports facilities only, not the surrounding open green space. It is limited to a maximum of three hours per school day for the football pitch, and states that public access to the playing field cannot be restricted at any time. Any further usage of the pitch or MUGA is on request and subject to approval by the Louie Memorial Pavilion Trustees, like all public bookings of these facilities. The proposed agreement is an extension of the current agreement that was trialled following a full public consultation, and has run successfully since 2017. For details see the NHPC website: July 2020 Council minutes (<https://northhinksey-pc.gov.uk/events-by-year/?event-cat=parish-council-meetings>) and Louie Memorial Playing Fields page (<https://northhinksey-pc.gov.uk/recreation-amenities-committee/louie-memorial/>). To hear the discussion at the parish council meeting on 10th September, book your space with the Clerk via the PC website.



*APPLE DAY is beginning to look like
SUNDAY OCTOBER 11th.
WILL CONFIRM IN NEXT MONTH'S SPROUT.*



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Seacourt Hall to re-open at last!

In the July *Sprout* we reported on how Seacourt Hall was being used by the Botley Community Fridge during lockdown for storage and packing; that we had welcomed our new hall manager Lottie White; and that we had launched our new website. Since then we have been closely following the evolving government guidance, keeping in touch with our regular user groups, and planning the steps required for reopening the hall. The Community Fridge



will leave the hall at the end of August to refocus as a community larder working out of the Seacourt Bridge pub. We will then begin the work to make the Hall Covid-secure and put in place the measures required for us to reopen.

We know our regular users are keen to return and we hope to be able to welcome back many groups and activities during September. We plan to reopen in phases with some activities able to take place before others. Please check our website www.seacourthall.org.uk or Facebook page for the latest details. You can also contact Lottie on admin@seacourthall.org.uk or telephone 07452 960100.

At the time of lockdown the new hall had been open for just two months. We were taking new bookings and adding more activities for the community and are keen to bring these back. But we also have a responsibility to do this safely. This means new guidelines and signage in place, which hall hirers will need to follow carefully in order to keep everyone safe and to make the best use of the hall.

The situation and guidance are constantly changing and evolving, so we will keep everything under review. Please continue to keep an eye on our website and Facebook page and on the *Sprout* for updates including a revised date for our AGM.

Lorna Berrett, Chair, Seacourt Hall Management Committee

Botley in Bloom Winners

Best Over All: Jane Bailey and Jamie Bartram of West Way



Winning Garden – 100 West Way

Jane describes the background to the creation of the winning garden.

We bought the flat when it was first constructed and let it out because we were living overseas. On our return to the UK we moved in and decided to do



something with the 'garden' which had more or less been a dump site during the construction. It had a decent beech hedge, some bamboo that threatened to take over the garden and a few plants struggling to grow in the poor soil.builder's rubble. We designed a garden with no lawn but with plenty of sitting area and flower beds. We included a raised bed next to the hedge in the design to limit the road noise. We engaged a local gardener to help with the heavy work and started the project in late April 2019.

After the heavy work we populated the garden with perennial plants bought locally, most on sale or on special offer. We scrounged plants from friends and relatives and then waited for them to settle. As soon as possible we lifted them, split them, and then replanted as many as possible to fill in the gaps. We used a lot of lavender plants to create soft edges to the hardscaping and to attract insects. This was a wise choice. The plants are now very large and covered in flowers.

We added some garden furniture to provide places to sit and relax. We're fortunate to have great neighbours who stop by to chat. Some of our regular visitors are feathered and others have six legs. There are goldfinches and blackbirds that nest in the beech hedge. We have many species of bees including the very entertaining Ivy bees. When we started on this project in 2019 we had no idea that we would be spending several hours each day getting fresh air during the lockdown.

How glad we are that we made the effort. Thanks to the unusually clement weather we were able to have breakfast, coffee, lunch and, sometimes dinner outside several days a week all through lockdown.

Jane Bailey

Being Prepared – 15th Oxford takes on the Crisis

The 15th Oxford Scout Troop is normally based in the New Baptist Church at the new West Way centre, but during the Covid crisis, the Cubs and Scouts embraced a slew of virtual activities via Zoom. These have included mini raft building, quizzes, battleships, bingo and socializing with each other from a safe distance.

In between meetings, a Badges at Home programme has seen 60 badges awarded to the Scouts and 30 to the Cubs! We've now got cyclists, collectors, chefs, gardeners, DIY-ers, and meteorologists amongst others in our troop.

The fun hasn't all been virtual, though. We held a home-based Spring Camp over the VE day weekend that saw all ages building dens or pitching tents to camp out, designing bunting, baking cakes, sending Morse code messages, hosting tea parties, joining online escape rooms and most importantly learning about Scouting during WW2. Summer Camp at Home included more den building, more camping out, sign language, taskmaster tasks, nature trails, international cooking, virtual sports day and campfire songs.

Doggy dawdle

We are two 13-year-olds who love dogs and would like to walk yours

- Experienced dog walkers
- Dogs always on a lead
- Walk in local countryside
- 30-45 minutes
- £6 for one dog or £8 for two
- 4-7pm Monday-Friday and 10am-1pm Saturday

Contact Eva & Mia

DoggyDawdleDogWalks@gmail.com



The traditional camping under canvas as a troop hasn't taken place this year, but we have plans in place for it to return next year, all being well. On that happy day the Scouts will have a weekend camp at a water activity centre in Wales and the Cubs, hopefully, will visit the South Coast and Brownsea Island (site of the first ever Scout camp). Both age groups will camp on a farm over the summer under canvas. Further down the line we have made enquiries about an overseas expedition. Our safety standards are high, but our focus is fun!

We have places for new children to join in these amazing activities in 2021. Cubs meet on Friday nights from 6.30 to 8.30, and Scouts follow on from 8 till 9.30. For more info email xvoxfordscouts@yahoo.com.

We are always on the lookout for new leaders or adult volunteers, no matter how much or little time you can give. We promise it is an experience not to be missed.

As Scouts, we believe in preparing young people with skills for life. We bring communities together and contribute to society. Above all, we aim to build better futures.

Tom Freeman

Beans, beans, beans

Do Magic Beans grow up and touch the sky?
Do Baked Beans in the tin see eye to eye?
Does the Runner Bean really want to run away?
Does the French Bean *parler en Francais*?
Is the Broad Bean happy in its skin?
Does the String Bean have to be so thin?
Is the Green Bean jealous of the Leek?
What about the "Has Beans"?
(Destination : – Compost Heap)

The Bean I forgott
is called the Borlotti .

MF

LOCAL PLANNING APPLICATIONS

| | | |
|---|---|----------------|
| <u>P20/V1403/FUL</u> Vary condition 2 on P18/V2968/FUL | Field End, Harcourt Hill. Amend drainage and planting layout. Demolish buildings, erect 2 dwellings and external works. | 12 June |
| <u>P20/V1446/FUL</u> Vary condition 2 of application P20/V0301/FUL | 5 Toynbee Close. Provide Juliette balcony & enlarge internal area. Revise bin collection & parking areas. Erect new building containing two 2-bedroom flats | 17 June |
| <u>P20/V1397/DIS</u> Discharge condition | 4 Chelsie House, 104 West Way. Change of use from residential dwelling to B&B | 23 June |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| 5 (Noise Control) and 7 (Dust Control) ref. P20/V0482/FUL | accommodation, with communal area and bike store. Demolish conservatory and construct single storey extension to rear. | |
| P20/V1392/FUL | 69 Yarnells Hill. Replace single dwelling house with 5 houses. (as amended by plans received 7 July 2020). | 24 June |
| P20/V1522/A | Unit 1, Westway Place. Four internally illuminated fascia signs, 1 internally illuminated projecting sign, 1 non illuminated external delivery area panel. | 24 June |
| P20/V1582/HH | 42 Hurst Rise Rd. Partial build over ground floor, add new door & windows. | 30 June |
| P20/V1587/A | 9 West Way Square. 1 X Internally illuminated fascia - sign A 1 X Internally illuminated projecting sign - sign B. | 30 June |
| P20/V1634/PDH | 11 Lime Rd. Ground floor rear extension, floor plan redesign and associated works. | 6 July |
| <u>P20/V1671/DIS</u> Variation of condition 2- approved plans to P19/V0416/FUL | Botley Centre. Discharge of condition 28 - framework travel plan on application ref. P19/V1731/FUL for internal & external changes to block B. | 8 July <i>Target Decision Date 19 August</i> |
| P20/V1784/HH | 33 Arthray Rd. Single storey rear extension plus 1st floor rear extension. Change workshop to bathroom with sauna behind. | 20 July <i>TDD: 14 September</i> |
| P20/V1661/FUL Variation of Condition 1 of P19/V3252/FUL | 34 North Hinksey Lane. Changes to garage & parking. Variation of condition 2 (drawings) - change to house plans on Planning P16/V2166/FUL (demolish existing house and erect 3 dwellings). | 24 July <i>TDD: 18 September</i> |
| P20/V1515/LDP | 19 Chestnut Rd. Change front door and screen, replace windows & doors. Loft extension to side and rear with Velux roof windows. | 26 July <i>TDD: 22 September</i> |
| P20/V1717/HH | 21/22 Hawthorn Close. Add box dormer to No. 21 to match that at No. 22. Build matching 1st floor extensions above ground floor projections. Build matching ground floor kitchen/diner extensions. | 26 July <i>TDD: 22 September</i> |
| P20/V1781/FUL <i>Comments by 3 Sept</i> | The Willows, 4 Yarnells Rd. Demolish existing house & replace with six 2- bed flats, parking and amenity space. | 5 August <i>TDD: 30 Sept</i> |

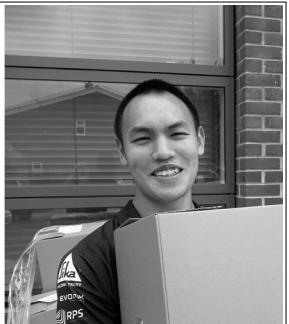
End of the Botley food parcel delivery service

At the end of August, the Botley community fridge is closing its food parcel service. Since mid-March, we have delivered about 12,000 parcels to about 350 families, providing almost 100,000 meal-equivalents, and saving many tonnes of food from being wasted. We have delivered food to canal boats, to isolated farms, to people whom we never saw because they were shielding, to people with special requirements (FODMAP, Chinese diet, no cooking facilities), and to someone whose child we have seen through nappy size 1, 2 and now 3. We have made large deliveries every Monday and Thursday and emergency deliveries when needed; provided food to homeless people three times a week; taken nappies and milk to young families; given our waste food to George the Pig; and had so much fun in the process.

But it's time to close. Many of our volunteers are going back to work, and many of our food recipients either no longer need food or can pick it up from the newly-formed community larder. SOFEA, which has been providing much of our food, is stopping its free food parcel programme at the end of August.

Now for the many, many thank-yous. Thank you to everyone who grew, collected and donated food, toiletries, and pet food, and sewed masks. Thank you to Saman for weekly deliveries of much-appreciated samosas for our volunteers. Thank you to everyone who contributed money, which helped to pay for our drivers' petrol and for the purchase of nappies and milk for our young families, incontinence pads/pants for the not-so-young, and deodorant, toothpaste, breakfast cereal and sweets for the homeless deliveries. Thank you to our grant providers, who stepped up rapidly at the beginning of lockdown.

Thank you to the Seacourt Hall Trustees for use of the excellent space, North Hinksey Parish Council for provision of loo rolls and for facilitating one of our larger grants. Thank you to Branches for the use of their fridge. Thank you to our local supermarkets – the West Way and Magdalen Street Tescos, Waitrose, Aldi and the West Way Co-op – for their surplus food, the Oxford Food Bank for lots of non-perishables, several chicken farms for their surplus eggs, and other stores and wholesalers who also donated food. Thank you to Souya Ltd. who delivered milk to us every Monday. Thank you to our fellow community fridges and hubs for the exchange of food and food recipients.



Thank you!
to all the
wonderful
fridge
volunteers

This is only a few of them



The biggest thanks by far, however, goes to our brilliant, fantastic team of volunteers. A small team of drivers picked up food most days of the week and delivered it to the hall; a bigger team packed it into bags on Mondays and Thursdays; a really big team delivered the parcels all around Oxford and beyond (Kennington, Yarnton, Cutteslowe etc.); and a small team has been going out on bikes three times per week for our homeless deliveries. The volunteers have supported our food recipients with patience and grace – dealing with people who are only voices on an intercom, or who aren't in and want the food delivered elsewhere, who are deaf, or where the driver is the only person they will talk to that week. Every volunteer has been a joy to work with, and I have learned so much from them. I'm particularly grateful to Orit, Rita and Egle for the admin help, and to Joe who leads many of the homeless runs.

The community fridge is not closing. It will reopen in its traditional fridge-in-St.-P&P-church format in early September. This will be complemented by the newly-formed Botley community larder. Do visit both of them: we look forward to seeing you.

Riki Therivel

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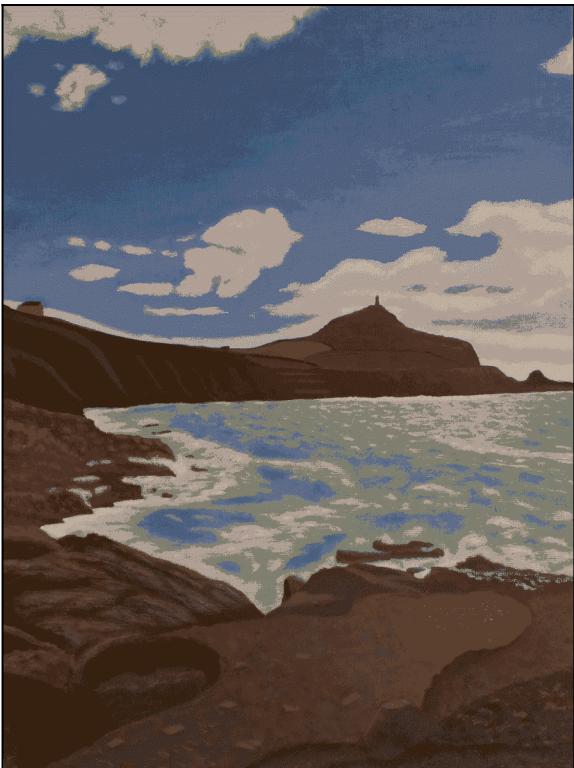
Landscapes

Botley Arts is back with a sparkling new exhibition by Michael Collier. Michael is delighted to be exhibiting his work with Botley Arts, which consists of local Oxford scenes contrasted with images from Cornwall.

As Michael writes:

"The paintings in the exhibition are local views in Oxford and Cornwall, the two places where I spend most of my time. These are quite contrasting landscapes, each with their own attractions. The meadows in Oxford sometimes dotted with sheep, cattle or horses offer some tranquil scenes. Rivers and canals with their bridges, boats and trees along the banks make good shapes and contrasts, and of course still waters with their reflections are always a challenge to pull off. Cornish views are a mixture of seascapes,

rugged headlands, cottages and patchwork fields – very varied terrain. The colours can be extraordinary and the light is often strong. It is very enjoyable painting these scenes and spending time on the detail seems worthwhile to get a good effect. I like to find new subjects and my style has gradually developed as I find what works. Nearly every subject presents a fresh challenge and makes you wonder how other painters would have tackled it. Not every attempt works out and some you have to come back to and re-work. Although exhibiting requires a lot of preparation I am always glad of feedback, because I am always learning and experimenting. I've tried different mediums over the years but seem to come back to oils which are easy to work with and give a rich texture. My paintings are generally of similar size, not large, and in



standard mounts and frames, because that's what people seem to prefer. You can contact me on michaeltcollier@btinternet.com"
The exhibition opened on Monday 24th August and will run until the end of November. The Church is open every day and the exhibition can be viewed during daylight hours every day except Sundays.

For further information regarding exhibiting with Botley Arts please contact Jennie Hopkins: [jennie31317@gmail.com"](mailto:jennie31317@gmail.com)

A Community Larder for Botley

Botley Community Larder will officially open at the beginning of September. We will be providing affordable, surplus food to the local community – food that would otherwise go to waste. The food provided will include ambient food, chilled meat and dairy products as well as heaps of fresh fruit and veg.

Now that our sister service, the Botley Community Fridge, is winding down, we are keen to step up and provide for the countless households catered to by the Fridge throughout Covid-19. The Fridge has provided an awesome community service to the whole of West Oxford and we hope to maintain and grow that. After a long time searching for the



perfect location, we finally found our home in the Seacourt Bridge Pub, in the heart of the Botley community. The pub is run by an incredibly generous manager, Tracy, who has kindly offered us her space free of charge, and supplies all the wonderful teas and coffees.

We will be providing the food in a market-type set up, with members able to select from 10--20 items of food (depending on membership), plus fruit and veg, per week. We also hope to host a range of wrap-around services. We will be running a community café when the larder is open, offering hot drinks, squash and cake to all those who attend. Membership will also allow members to access discounts at local independent businesses, utilities discounts and much more in the future. We are also hoping to provide freshly cooked reheatable meals thanks to a generous offer from Oxford Mutual Aid.

Membership starts at £3.50 per week for an individual and £7 per week for a family. There is also a £10 annual joining fee to cover costs of running the Larder. If you are keen to join but feel you can't afford it, come and talk to one of our volunteers. We reckon that for £7 family weekly membership, the food equivalent would cost around £24 in Tesco, and an individual could save up to £500 per year on their weekly shop.

This is not a food bank. We are not just a food service, we are a community hub. We are all about getting together, supporting individuals and businesses in Botley, helping the environment, and going home with a load of delicious, low-cost food. We are preventing food waste by saving tonnes of perfectly edible (and often delicious and high-quality) food from going into landfill. We are not means tested, ANYONE and EVERYONE can and should join! Whether you are environmentally-conscious about food waste, keen on community-building and getting to know other locals, or just enjoy great food at a low cost, this Larder is for everyone. Do consider joining – the first two weeks of membership are free if you would like to sign up and trial it. Come along to the Larder sometime for a cup of tea and cake, a chat and to find out more.

The Larder will run every Thursday from 3.30pm--5.30pm starting September 3rd, at the Seacourt Bridge Pub, West Way, Botley, Oxford OX2 0JB. Drop by, or message Botley Community Larder on Facebook, or email us on botleylarder@gmail.com.

We look forward to seeing you.

Sorcha Maynard

Pears: dealing with gluts

If you have your own pear tree, then you will be able to pick more pears than you can eat before they rot, even if you follow our advice from last year to pick them before they are fully ripe and store them in the fridge. If nothing else, you will run out of fridge space! Since modern pears have been bred to be eaten raw, they can lose flavour when cooked. Here are two ideas for preserving pears that actually enhance the flavour.

Poirot Pears



2kg small firm pears, whole
or if large, quartered and cored
500g sugar
150ml white wine (or cider) vinegar

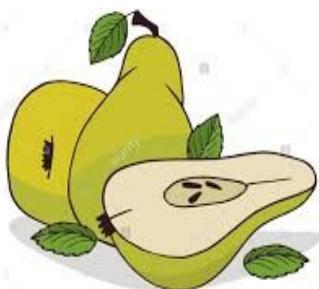
Place pears in 3 litre slow pot or casserole

Gently heat vinegar with sugar, stirring occasionally, until dissolved.

Pour over pears. Cook very slowly for 6 hours (or more) till soft

To bottle, carefully transfer the pears to clean, hot jars; bring the syrup to a boil and reduce slightly. Add juice to pears to fill the jars and seal.

This recipe was adapted from Fiona Nevile on Cottagesmallholder.com who called them Belgian pears for no obvious reason. She used whole pears, which look prettier but you need to have perfect fruit of all the same size and they take up more space in cooking and storing.



Pear Compote

1.5kg ripe pears, cut into small dice
150g raisins
350ml apple juice
1 tsp ground cinnamon
0.5 tsp ground ginger
Juice of lemon (optional)

Bring to boil, then simmer, covered, for 10 minutes.

Stir and cook 10 minutes more, uncovered, till juice is thickened and pears tender.

Can be frozen or bottled and served hot or cold.

Colin & Sally Hersom

Coffee in the Car park at Dean Court Community Centre

As part of our reopening, we're inviting you all to join us for a socially distanced coffee morning on Saturday 26 September, 10am–12 noon.



We'll be offering free tea and coffee (and excellent company!) in our car park and a chance for you to celebrate the amazing community spirit that has been shown over these past few months.

It will also be an opportunity for you to learn all about the exciting plans we have for making our Community Centre even more sustainable and future-friendly. Some of you may already know that our main hall roof leaks if it rains heavily and is windy at the same time (not uncommon here in the UK!). So as well as carrying out repairs to that, we're killing two birds with one stone and installing several eco measures at the same time.

If all goes to plan, the Centre will be kitted out with photo-voltaic (solar) panels to harness the sun's energy and we'll be putting in two charging points for electric vehicles. They'll go nicely with our bike racks! Lighting will be upgraded to more efficient LED versions, and anything else eco-minded you can think of, we're on it.

While we're at it, we're also planning to replace the brick wall between the Centre and Pinnocks Way playpark with a fence and gate, opening up the access between the two sites and improving the appearance of the area. *A win-win situation!*

We've been busy applying for grants and formulating fundraising plans, and we'd love your input. So do come along on the 26th and let us know what you think. Perhaps we can tempt you to sponsor a roof tile or two?!

Rachael Monks, Centre Manager

Botley Women's institute



Botley Women's institute in true W.I. fashion has risen like a Phoenix from the flames and is back in action again. So far we have enjoyed walks with the W.I. Walking Group to Hinksey Park, Grandpont and along the river back to North Hinksey. We also walked along the Towpath to Binsey and returned along Binsey Lane to the Botley Road. We walked all the way round Farmoor Reservoir on 3rd August. What a beautiful day that was – the cloud formation was absolutely stunning (as you can see in the photo). On Tuesday 4th August eighteen of us held our first meeting in the W.I. Hall with Liz Manson, President, conducting the meeting as usual. Everyone had the best time with lots of chat and laughter. The Corona Virus/COVID 19 that afternoon could have been on the moon. We met friends and shared time, tea (we had brought with us) and biscuits (wrapped) in the time-honoured way – obeying all the social-distancing rules of course. We had a ZOOM contact set up so that members who couldn't attend could see other members. The whole afternoon was an unqualified success in the W.I. calendar. We are, of course, all mourning the loss of our beautiful Denman College*. It was something very special in the lives of W.I. members. But we are all looking towards the future with optimism. Well that is what W.I. members do, don't they? Among many other things.

Jenny Holloway

*Which has been hit hard by the lockdown. The proposal to close the college is out for consultation, so a decision has yet to be made. Ed

Scouts zoom into action

The Fourth Oxford have been holding virtual meetings on Zoom during summer term, and we are looking forward to starting face to face meetings again as soon as is possible in the Autumn. Meanwhile, some in the group have been setting up a Minecraft server in which to hold meetings. There are different worlds to explore, mazes and other challenges, and spaces to run wide games like capture the flag. There is a scout hut, a medieval castle, an amphitheatre and a giant TV in which to perform before an audience seated on a giant sofa, a hot air balloon, and numerous enormous wild animals.



We have managed to run one Minecraft session for a few of the scouts, where they were set a challenge – to create a home for a character of their choice. There were some amazing creations, which included: a space ship hovering in the sky with a laser beam firing at the ground with sparks flying off; an evil looking square dark building, made for a demonic king with a throne and places for his cringing servants; a magic house with pumpkin lanterns floating in space; an elaborate igloo; an underground cellar for a demon, guarded by a lava boundary and a maze, all hidden deep in a forest; a pyramid house with a library and helpful hints for Minecraft construction; a wizard's keep with a secret room behind a fire, holding lots of chests and with a look out post with a hot tub; a moated shelter with home comforts and a secret stash of cake and diamonds; an enormous hole in the ground leading to a small home; an evil lair with skulls, surrounded by a moat with fish and submerged blocks of fire; and an abandoned prison with secret spaces, inside secret spaces, for a superhero to craft his weapons.



James Wynne, Chair

Randoms

Testing the water

Registration is now open for the next Thames Water Blitz between 25th and 28th September! If you have taken part before, you can just sign in to the FreshWater Watch website (<https://freshwaterlinks.org.>) and click the registration link on your profile page. Don't forget to follow Covid-19 guidelines – made easier by this being an outdoor activity. This will be the tenth WaterBlitz taking place in the Thames Valley! It is timed to coincide with regular water quality monitoring undertaken by CEH (Centre for Ecology & Hydrology). Sampling at the same time as CEH helps to provide information from areas and water body types that would otherwise not be monitored. If you are interested in seeing the data collected during previous WaterBlitz events and getting to know more about your local freshwater environment, go to the Freshwater Links platform: If you are registering for the first time, the link is www.earthwatch.org.uk/waterblitz. If you have any questions, you can ask them by email on water@earthwatch.org.uk



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www.garagedoors.org

Giving bats a helping hand

Have you ever stood in your garden at dusk and watched bats swooping through the air at lightning speed? It's an exciting sight! These fascinating little animals are a valuable part of nature in the UK, but they're getting rarer. A gradual loss of habitat and roost sites are cutting the numbers, but there are things that you can do to help. The UK has around 15 million gardens, covering an area greater than all the National Nature Reserves combined! So our gardens and public green spaces are important habitats for wildlife, including bats. BBOWT (our local Wildlife Trust) has sourced a booklet telling you

how to make your garden bat-friendly, and some of the things bats get up to. https://cdn.bats.org.uk/pdf/Resources/Stars_of_the_Night.pdf

New walking map for Botley

An Oxford based charity – the Centre for Sustainable Healthcare – is creating a new map of Botley as part of its Green Health Routes Project. The map will show walking routes from Botley Health Centre to the area's nearby green spaces. The charity will be working with the surgery to establish a weekly led health walk and other nature based activities. They have previously produced Green Health Routes maps in other parts of the city, including East Oxford, Wood Farm, Marston, Blackbird Leys and Jericho. Andriele (Andy) Madison who is leading the project, would like to hear from Botley residents with details of your favourite local walks and green spaces. Find out more on <https://nhsforest.org/green-health-routes> and please send your suggestions to Andy on: andriele@sustainablehealthcare.org.uk The project is supported by Postcode Local Trust, a grant-giving charity funded entirely by players of People's Postcode Lottery.

Abingdon Dolphins

Have got in touch to say they are now offering swimming lessons from skilled and experienced teachers. Find out more from 07931 714120 or email enquiries@abingdondolphins.co.uk

Organise fuel bills, suppliers, before winter

Citizens Advice has advisers who can help you sign up with a new fuel or electricity company, or switch to a better tariff. There's no charge and you won't be steered towards one particular supplier because they have no links with any of them. They offer one-on-one sessions (by telephone at present) and can help you understand energy bills and various kinds of tariffs, supporting you if you want to switch and calculating the savings you might make. If you've fallen behind on bill payments, they can advise you on ways to reduce your debt by budgeting or trying a new payment scheme, for example. They can also check your benefit entitlements and help you to claim them if you're eligible. (There are several helpful schemes like the Priority Services Register and the Warm Home Discount.) And they can help you resolve complaints against your current supplier, if needed. There's more information on citizensadvice.org.uk/energy or phone Adviceline on 0300 330 9042.

The (original) Botley community fridge reopens

We're delighted to tell you that the Botley community fridge will reopen on Monday 7 September in the glassed-in lobby of **St. Peter & St. Paul church, 81 West Way OX2 9JY**. It will be **open every day 10-4** though in time, as church services resume, the Sunday times will shorten. The fridge gets surplus food from two Tescos, Aldi, Waitrose and Sainsbury's. The fresh food is free and available to anyone: it is a way of reducing food waste. There will also be some shelving with non-perishables which are specifically for people in need.

To keep everyone safe, the following has been agreed with environmental health:

- Do not enter the church if you have coronavirus symptoms: high fever, new continuous cough, loss or change to your sense of smell or taste
- Only one per person in the lobby, and no children
- You MUST use hand sanitiser before touching any food
- Note your name and contact details in the book, for track-and-trace purposes
- Please take only a small carrier bag of food, leaving some for other people
- After taking food, promptly leave the church premises (including parking lot)

There will be lots of food in the fridge right away, and we hope that there will also be lots of people taking it! We look forward to seeing you there.

Riki Therivel

Reverend Clare takes a break

Revd Clare Sykes will be on sabbatical leave from 31st August to 22nd November, and out of email contact, although her church email address will be monitored on a weekly basis during this period.

School Bus resumes

It is a relief to note that Oxon County Council have continued to fund the 63 bus, which brings pupils in from Southmoor, Longworth, Hinton Waldrist, Appleton, Eaton, Cumnor, etc, will be running from September. It's a two-hourly service running throughout the school day, so also taking shoppers into the centre of Oxford. Not workers, though! They can get in, but will need to find another way to get home again.

More winners of the Botley in Bloom competition



Elisabeth Clarke and Peter England outside their garden in Poplar Road, winners of the Best Vegetable Element

Catherine and Emmett Casley, of Crabtree Road, winners of the Best Car Bower



Patients Participation Group

*Highlights from the minutes of the Patients Participation Group of Botley and Kennington Medical Practice meeting on July 14 2020
(12 members were present)*

Recent experiences with Botley Medical Centre (BMC)

there are reports of patients' failing to get seen or though to Reception. Phone too often unavailable and long wait to get through, although one member had reported a happier experience. BMC need to correct the on-line prescription system or make sure that patients know that any alteration to choice of pharmacies will only kick in after the first order.

Action: BMC to remedy the glitch causing this issue

'Front of house' issues: A member of the PPG had a problem making herself understood to the receptionist once she got through (after 25 minutes). We suggested that BMC could compile some **Customer Service Target Levels of Service**, including an acceptable number of rings (or minutes) within which the phone should be answered, and provide staff training. 'Front of house' welcome is as important as confidentiality.

Prescriptions: Woodlands Pharmacy (Botley Road) will receive prescription requests and repeat requests, lodge them with BMC, prepare and deliver medication directly to the patient's door (for free) within two or three days. Wootton Pharmacy (Besselsleigh Rd, Wootton) also lodges such requests with BMC. Patient Access is working well for one PPG member who collects prescriptions from Kennington Pharmacy 3--4 days after ordering on-line.

After discussion we agreed to **publish PPG minutes in local newsletters and on BMC website**, as this would keep patients up to date and stem misinformation and rumours.

[Drs Ahluwalia, Ballesteros and McEwen and Esti Ballesteros joined meeting. The meeting continued...]

Communication: PPG's objective No. 1 within its 2020 Action Plan is to *improve communication*. The BMC agreed that this was key, as was to be honest and open at meetings, to be supportive and respectful, and to work towards the same objectives. They further offered to be in two-weekly touch by email. This was **agreed and noted**.

National changes in Primary Care It was noted that money is being given to create federations of practices, which they have to accept if they want to get funding. But more has been achieved by local initiatives than by centralized responses to the pandemic.

Patients with hearing difficulties need other ways of contacting the practice than by telephone. The BMC website has an email address and web based consultations are possible, but reordering a prescription requires signing in to Patient Access, which can not be done by email.

PPG supporting BMC with new projects: BMC wishes the PPG to support new patient engagement events and projects. The PPG suggested this could be addressed through working groups. **Action: Sylvia to initiate setting these up, and members to volunteer.**

Further initiatives: The BMC suggested the following initiatives. *Access to an allotment for those with mental problems; and help for patients who find it hard to use the internet* **Action: Anne to write an article for publication**

Work still needs to be done by BMC on the leaflets provided by the PPG after last year's cancer screening talk. **Action: Dr Ahluwalia and/or Akinola will support Jacqui to produce this leaflet.**

Reopening Kennington Health Centre

The Oxford Clinical Commissioning Group is currently looking for an alternative Covid-19 Centre. Kennington cannot cope without KHC for another year.

Publication of minutes of PPG meetings

The PPG will publish its minutes in local newsletters, with a view to generating interest, and encouraging others to attend meetings. (Minutes would not include confidential items.) BMC agreed that PPG minutes could appear on the PPG page on the practice website. The secretary offered to maintain the PPG webpage. **Action: BMC to set up access for PPG to post minutes**

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

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

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| North Hinksey Preschool and Childcare clubs | Mon–Fri 7.45am–6.00 pm. Tel 794287 or email nhps.manager1@gmail.com |
| N Hinksey Art Group | Weds 10 – 12.00 W.I. Hall Tel: Christina 07931 707997 |
| N Hinksey Bellringers | Contact: Ray Rook 01865 241451 |
| N Hinksey Conservation Volunteers | Meets at weekends Contact Voirrey Carr 07798743121 voirreyc@aol.com |
| N Hinksey, Friends of | Annual Cricket Match & Walk. Douglas Bond 791213. |
| N Hinksey Parish Council | Sharon Henley, clerk@northhinksey-pc.gov.uk |
| N Hinksey Youth Club | Weds at LM pavilion, Daz on 07791 212866 or see F'book |
| Oxford Flood Alliance | R Thurston 01865 723663 or 07973 292035 |
| Oxford Flower Arranging Club | 4th Thursday Cumnor. Dympna Walker: 01865 865259 |
| Oxford Harmony Men's Acappella singing group | Meets Wednesdays 7.45 pm at Seacourt Hall, Contact pro@oxfordharmony.co.uk |
| Oxford Otters | Swimming for people with disabilities. Sundays, twice monthly. Contact: Alan Cusden 723420 |
| Oxford Rugby Club | Boys and girls from 5, kevin.honner@ntlworld.com Seniors, training etc jbrodley@chandlings.org.uk . |
| Oxford Sports Lawn Tennis Club, N Hinksey | Family club: Melanie Riste 848658 melanie_riste@hotmail.com |
| Raleigh Park, Friends of | raleighpark@raleighpark.org.uk |
| Saturdads at Botley Bridges | Fun activities and trips for Dads and under 5's 10 am–noon 1st Sat of month. Tel: 243955 |
| Seacourt Hall Management Committee | Michael Cockman 07766 317691 michael.cockman@gmail.com . |
| Shotokan Karate Club | 6+ WOCC twice weekly Martyn King 07836 646450 |
| Walking for Health | 2nd & 4th Saturdays 9.45 Botley Library. Alan 07941 610913 |
| West Oxford Bowls Club | Contact details on www.westoxfordbowlsclub.co.uk |
| West Oxford Taekwon Do Club | Mon, Thurs 6.30-8pm, MA gym, contact Chris Hall 01865 570291 www.wotkd.co.uk |
| West Oxford U3A | (Uni of the 3rd Age) http://westoxfordu3a.org.uk/ |
| West Way Day Centre | Mon & Fri 10–3pm, Field House, 07740 611971. oxfordshirehub@royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk |
| Women's Institute (Botley) | Liz Manson, 244175 or liz.manson@virginmedia.com |
| Weight Watchers | Thursdays 6pm at SS Peter & Paul Church Hall Banso tel: 07779 253899 bansob@aol.com |

Sprout

September 2020

**Still too few public gatherings for a diary,
but here are some useful phone numbers.**

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

Church contact details are on the inside back cover.

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

Citizens Advice Adviceline on 0300 3309 042

Woodlands Pharmacy: 01865 242649

Lloyds Pharmacy: 01865 247023

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

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

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

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