

The Sprout



Spring blossom at the allotments

The Newsletter for North Hinksey & Botley

Issue 155 March 2021

The Sprout

The Newsletter for North Hinksey & Botley

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Issue 155, March 2021

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From the Editor

Welcome to the March *Sprout*, keeping you in touch with what's happening in Botley. What's topical this month? Covid-related: Oxfordshire Healthwatch wants to know what you think of the vaccine (p25) and a new testing centre to supply fast and free tests to people in work has opened in Wantage (p43). Volunteers have been driving people to their jabs in Kennington (p41), and people have been finding things to keep themselves entertained in Lockdown (p37). Some have managed to make a business of it, and we celebrate International Women's Day on 8th March with tales of two enterprising women who have found a niche to supply (p9). The 4th Scouts are disappointed by the Pavilion plans on page 21, and locals are still unconvinced by the Flood Scheme (p27). On 16th March you can Zoom in to the *Sprout* AGM deferred from last summer (p38), and on 18th it's that once-a-year chance to talk to the Parish Council about their plans for the Upper Field and anything else you want to raise at the Annual Parish Meeting (p15) also via Zoom. Our letters page (p5) urges us to involve older teenagers in running things – the *Sprout* has always supported this, and would very much welcome some youthful input to our pages. If you or anyone you know would like a column, let me know! Happy reading – the next issue should be in print.

Ag MacKeith



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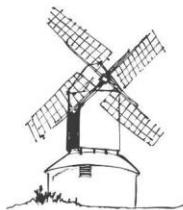
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Letters to the Editor

Challenge to the local community

I felt I needed to write to express my concern over the paucity of provision for young people in our community. This is not new but is exacerbated by the current pandemic. By young people I am referring to those moving through adolescence and thus speaking broadly about the 13–19 age group (and older for young people with learning disabilities). Provision in our community has always been sparse and with the closure of Branches Café and the demise of the Scout Group on Arnolds Way support has just reduced further. Coming into a relaxation of lockdown, we need to think about how we engage with our young people as the future of our community.

The 13–19 year old group is often neglected. These young people are both diverse, with some finding their way seamlessly through adolescence whilst many struggle and need support. The tension between physical changes through puberty and the much later development of the brain make adolescence what it is – a time for risk taking without internal moderation, challenge to authority and difficulty in finding their role with adults. Poor mental health, unsafe sex, drug and alcohol misuse, breakdown of relationships, both within the peer group but also with parents and school, are all symptomatic of adolescence. The prevalence of these issues and behaviours are higher in this age group than in any other and make this period of young lives unsettled, difficult, sometimes troubled and often acrimonious. Added to this mix has been the pandemic: young people deprived of mixing with peers, school operating only on-line, stress at home, a reduction in employment opportunities for post 16s and for some the meaninglessness of a gap year before university.

Young people are the group most often feared in the local community, adults fearful of the local shops after dark, fearful of passing teenagers who are loud and unruly, and now fearful that young people are not complying with lockdown rules. The community has a responsibility to think about how it responds to young people, how it is supporting them through adolescence to become respected adult members of our community.

The Positive Activities in Leisure Time for Young people (13–19 years and up to 25 years for those with learning disabilities) legislation came

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into being in 2006. Whilst not directly imposing a duty on local authorities at any level to provide positive activities, it did lay out the need for young people to be supported in their local community. The legislation talked about both recreational and educational provision, highlighting the need for both outside the formal school, college or work setting. Educational provision is defined as personal and social development opportunities, planned input to challenge young people's thoughts and actions, to enable young people to seek out appropriate information and most importantly to use this information effectively. Provision may be through a range of media that involves and inspires young people to become engaged including offering positive adult role models.

We urgently need to think about how we respond to this need for our young people in Botley; whilst this is a big challenge for all of us, we need to embrace what we currently have, albeit limited, rather than alienate or set young people's groups up in opposition. We need to strengthen a cohesive community offer to help ensure we have responsible and active members of the community for the future.

How can the community get behind this? How can young people themselves become involved? – a Youth Parish Council perhaps?

Ruth Ashwell

SPROUT grants

The *Sprout* still has some money to give away. So far, we have been able to support the Friends of Botley School's Laptop Appeal and give Food for Charities money towards the expenses of their many volunteers. If a couple of hundred pounds or so would make all the difference to your community venture, of whatever kind, please do get in touch via the editor's email (Editor@TheSprout.org.uk) and if we can reasonably help you, we will. All grants are at the Directors' discretion, but they come with the minimum of form-filling and bureaucratic fuss. The money is there, but you will have to ask! We look forward to hearing from you!



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Women's Work: A Sprout Special for International Women's Day (March 8th)

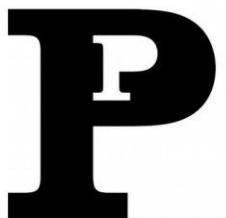
No crisis without a positive spinoff, they say...well, admittedly, in the case of our current pandemic, you need to *s-t-t-t-r-r-r-r-r-e-t-c-h* your imagination. But here at the Botley Farmers Market we've got walking cooking proof in the form of Becca Howard, who runs the Oxford Pizza Project *in her spare time*; she is a full time sales rep during the week. When lockdown began last Spring, Becca began making pizzas from home in the rural area where she lives near Oxford, catering for friends, family and neighbours. Almost immediately, demand spiralled beyond the limits of her conventional domestic oven, so she did her research and bought a specialist gas-fired pizza oven which produces results in 60 seconds. Becca proceeded to secure pitches first at Appleton and then at Botley Farmers Market, where today she is a familiar smiling face... and she reiterates that she would probably never have launched such a project were it not for lockdown.



Authenticity is the word at the Oxford Pizza Project: Becca says that "the dough prep is the most time-consuming part, as I ball it up by hand and ferment it for 24 hours. I use a traditional Neapolitan dough recipe (flour, water, fresh yeast and salt) and try to keep it as authentic as possible, but I also like to be inventive with toppings."

What about the future? Becca emphasises that "the positive feedback from customers makes me feel warm and fuzzy inside... I've got a few ideas but haven't decided where I want to take them yet... watch this space!"

But Becca is not the only dynamic one-woman entrepreneur at the Market in Botley on Saturdays. She shares a house



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with Camilla Brown, co-founder of Young in Spirit. In Becca's words, "We've had a lot of fun doing the markets together. It's nice living with another woman also running a business; we encourage and motivate each other."

Once you've satisfied your hunger with some delicious pizza from the Oxford Pizza Project, how about popping over to the next-door stall for a unique drink? Camilla produces Collagen, the world's first gin with added collagen. I had to admit ignorance, having only a vague notion of what collagen was. The dictionary defines it as the most abundant protein in your body, a major building block of bones, skin, muscles, and blood vessels, calling it *the glue that holds all together*. Impressive!

"What's the history?" I asked Camilla, who replied, "My aim was to mix the worlds of beauty and booze together and create a gin that could sit behind a bar, but also on a beauty counter." Each

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contains 100mg of pure collagen and 11 botanicals which have been chosen for their anti-ageing benefits, such as pink grapefruit, star anise, and vanilla. More recently, Camilla has added two variants to her range: Collagen Rose, and Collagen Lavender & Elderflower. "Unfortunately," she adds, "you won't look younger; it's alcohol at the end of the day... and when people taste the gin, they realize that it's not a gimmick... it is a quality, smooth, gin."

So what inspired Camilla to dream this up? She reports that she worked in PR for some ten years, "creating weird and wonderful campaigns to get brands into the press."

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In 2016, she had an idea for a new, 'anti-ageing' gin for a well-known hotel company, which ended up going viral worldwide. Subsequently, in her words, "after ten years of making other people famous, I decided to do it for myself. So I quit my well-paid job and turned a PR stunt into reality."



After many hurdles, Young In Spirit launched early in 2017. By the end of that year, Collagin was stocked at a number of familiar High Street shops nationally. In 2018, the Company appeared on Dragons Den, and as she says, "the business went crazy."

And then Covid-19 struck. Young in Spirit suffered as much as the next small company ineligible for government aid. As a result, says Camilla, "I decided to take matters into my own – sanitised – hands. I posted on social media that I would personally deliver a lockdown deal consisting of a bottle of Collagin and four free tonics to anyone in Oxford. I ended up doing over 50 drops during the first lockdown!"

The future for Camilla's singular product is hardly bleak. And here's a *Sprout* exclusive: Young in Spirit is launching in Japan this Spring! However, Camilla plans to continue operating her Collagin stall at Botley, emphasising that she "loves working next to her housemate, friend and fellow girl boss, Becca Howard of Oxford Pizza Project." She adds that "I've had to turn down opportunities all over the world because as a one-woman business, I wasn't ready. I am now."

Ruth Cameron



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Annual Parish Meeting – online on 18th March



In 2020 we were unfortunately unable to hold our Annual Parish Meeting because of the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic, making it unsafe for everyone to gather together in Seacourt Hall as usual. This year the pandemic is still with us, and the Hall is currently closed, but thanks to the wonders of Zoom we are now able to hold our meeting online.

**2021 Annual Parish Meeting online on Zoom,
7.30pm on Thursday 18th March.**

Look out on the NHPC website at www.northhinksey-pc.gov.uk for the full agenda, which includes the Zoom link plus a further link to relevant documents on Dropbox.

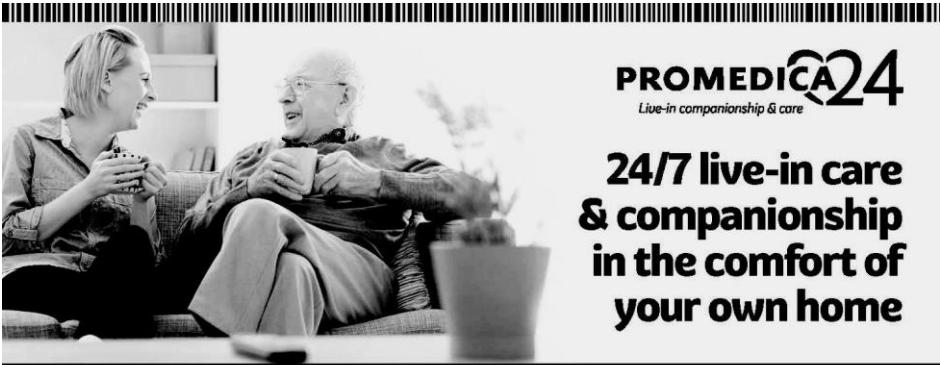
All parishioners are welcome to join online. Attendees will have their microphones set to mute unless they are presenting, asking or answering a question. It won't be quite the same as usual but it will allow for plenty of participation.

The first half of the meeting will cover a variety of topics, including updates on the local community response to Covid-19 and our Climate Emergency plans. The second half will be devoted solely to our plans for a new pavilion and other future improvements to the Louie Memorial Playing Fields.

There will be open question sessions at the end of each, but please send in any questions by noon on Monday 15th March to Sharon Henley, our Parish Clerk via email clerk@northhinksey-pc.gov.uk as there may be little time for additional questions asked on the day. Please also feel free to send in suggestions for other topics of local interest that you might like us to cover in updates during the meeting, and we will try to slot them in where possible.

We hope to see many of you online at the meeting.

Councillor David Kay, Chairman, North Hinksey Parish Council



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Botley Seniors Lunch Club – Christmas Hampers 2020

Dreaming of Christmas in the middle of summer? Botley Seniors Lunch Club volunteers obviously were when it became increasingly apparent that the pandemic meant we wouldn't be cooking our traditional festive lunch for local elderlyies. Instead we thought it would be good to deliver Christmas wishes and a hamper of goodies to our regular customers in early December. The planning began in earnest on a sunny morning in September when five volunteers met in my garden for coffee and a planning meeting. That was the easy bit.

The first problem was to find addresses. I soon realised that 'Club' is a bit of a misnomer, in that we don't keep contact details – all local senior residents were welcome to come along for a meal on the (pre-coronavirus) days we cooked. We urged friends of friends to supply us details and compiled a list. Had we included all our regulars? Were we risking offending others? These were among the questions that kept me awake at night!

Ah, funding. A call to our Treasurer confirmed we had some spare cash and I applied for a grant from the Midcounties Co-operative Community Support Donation Fund. The Co-op's form-filling suggested that I wouldn't get a reply until early December (slightly panicking now – how would I explain this to the Treasurer if we were turned down?) but the Co-op came up trumps in early November. Thank you!

The first expenditure was on jute bags in which to put the goodies. These could then be re-used by the recipients and formed part of their Christmas present. More considerations and decisions – what to buy/when to buy/what else to include/dietary requirements/make or buy Christmas cards/what to do for couples? I was in danger of overthinking this.

A socially distanced Sewing Bee was held to make pretty Christmas decorations for each bag. The volunteers enjoyed the chance to chat and the felt hearts created looked gorgeously sparkly and festive. *Another tick off the list!*



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By the end of November I had taken delivery of, as well as storing, over 540 items, most of which were food bought tirelessly by Jackie W while keeping a close eye on 'use by' dates. As well as ensuring that it stayed in good condition, all that remained was to work out how to pack and deliver the hampers in an appropriate manner while following government guidelines. The solution for packing included a gazebo over my patio and a strict appointment timetable for helpers. Several volunteers delivered the hampers while I cleared up at home but they reported back on how thrilled recipients were with their surprise delivery. Here's a selection of comments from the thank you cards we received:

'... so kind and thoughtful of the Lunch Club and the Co-op, and, believe me, very much appreciated.'

'...such a surprise and raised my spirits during this difficult time.'

'Thank you very much for the lovely surprise bag of goodies – a real treat'.

Several people phoned to pass on their thanks to the volunteers. It was so good to hear how much our efforts were appreciated and we hope that we'll be in a position to re-open Lunch Club in the not too distant future.

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The 4th Oxford Scout Group is moving

The 4th Oxford Scout Group are large and thriving with about 100 members providing exciting, fun and educational activities that help young people develop the skills they need to take an active role in their local community. We have just vacated our hut on Arnold's Way, which we built almost



50 years ago, even though it has many years of use left in it. We have had to move against our wishes, to secure the long-term future of the group. This is because of the new community centre project, even though physically the scout hut does not need to be knocked down if the new pavilion is to be built, and though North Hinksey Parish Council have no use for our building whilst it tries to find funding for its project.

From March 2018 when we realised that the Parish Council's project would not work for the scout group, we worked with them to see exactly how the new building would work, and to see if it could be changed to meet our needs. After nine months of exhaustive and exhausting discussions, it was clear that the scout group could not operate in the new building due to the limited access, increased costs, inadequate facilities that fundamentally don't work for us and several other major issues. We were not actually being offered the 'like for like' replacement of the scout hut we had been promised and which had drawn us along so far.

We have explained the difficulties to the Parish Council again and again, and have put forward a number of viable alternative plans, but since 2018 the Parish Council has refused to engage with the issues or consider the alternatives. Unfortunately, either the current project works as a community centre, or it works for a large and thriving scout group, but it can't work as both. It fails to meet its core requirements.

It is fair to say that for two years we have robustly resisted being forced

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out of our hut by every means possible. We owed it to the future generations of young people who want to enjoy scouting and all it has to offer. We have explained that if the Parish Council did not change its plans, we would have to move elsewhere, because there was no other option for us and no sense in discussing using a building we would not use. Our experience is that much of what the Parish Council has said about its project and the scout group bears little connection to reality, but we are not equipped for a raging publicity battle to correct everything said against us. We have a scout group to run, and we are all volunteers.

This has all been a time-consuming tangle of huge proportions, which was made unnecessarily more complex when the Parish Council decided to terminate our lease in June 2020. There was no need to, it was a protected tenancy that would have continued indefinitely, whilst leaving the parish council free to terminate it, if and when they needed to build their project. The lease did not 'expire' as they suggest, they tried to terminate it with a Section 25 notice sprung on us without any warning or discussion.

The scout group can't agree to the new short term lease the Parish Council have offered instead. It is drastically different from the previous lease in its operation, and it imposes unnecessary, expensive and onerous personal obligations on the trustees of the scout group. It removes existing legal rights, and it is so severe in its effects that a special "declaration" is required for the agreement to be valid. This declaration includes warnings underlined and in bold type such as "If you commit yourself to the lease you will be giving up these important legal rights: [with a list of important statutory rights set out]."

The Parish Council recently voted to refuse to even discuss offering the scout group a long-term lease with a break clause if their project gets funding. The council has also refused to discuss with the scout group how to escape the impossible situation we all find ourselves in right now, and despite attempts by third parties to help start discussions. We do not think this situation is acceptable.

Basically, the Parish Council are offering us two dead-end options or we have to vacate our hut. The first dead-end is the new project, which can't work for us. The second dead-end is a lease until 2022 and a refusal to discuss anything longer-term, which merely delays our inevitable departure. We will therefore have vacated the hut by the end of February as demanded by the Parish Council, in a Covid-safe way, to try to secure a future elsewhere. This is a tragedy. It must have been possible for the Parish Council to replace the pavilion in a way that does not force out the

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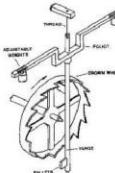
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largest youth group in the area. There must have been a better way forward.

We are however extremely grateful to Oxford Rugby Club who are temporarily able to hire us their hall for the five nights a week we need. If we are not given our hut back, which would be our first choice, we will try to make the site our long-term home. The hall is not as good for us as a purpose-built hut, and it is on the edge of our catchment area, but there is enormous goodwill at the rugby club and we hope families can make the transport work. This arrangement offers us the possibility of a positive future in which we hope we can continue to thrive.

Trustees of the 4th Oxford Scout Group, Registered Charity No. 267799

[There are obviously differences in opinion between the Scout Group and the Parish Council over the matters described in this article. For those who'd like to delve further, the NHPC website (<https://northinksey-pc.gov.uk>) has a Scout Hut Lease background page. Editor]

WHAT DO YOU THINK ABOUT THE COVID-19 VACCINE?

Healthwatch Oxfordshire wants to hear your views on the COVID-19 vaccine.

The county's independent health and care watchdog is running a survey asking people what they think about:

- The vaccine itself
- Information about the vaccine
- How the vaccine is being delivered

Have your say here: www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/CovidVaccine-yourviews

Healthwatch Oxfordshire will report what it hears to those in charge of managing the vaccine delivery locally, to help identify if improvements are needed. They really want to hear how people feel about the vaccine, particularly the reasons why they decide to have or not have it.

“All feedback is completely anonymous – we don’t need to know who you are, but we do need to hear your views. Please do take a few minutes to share your thoughts with us on this.”

For a paper copy of the survey, or a translated version, please call 01865 520520 or see www.healthwatchoxfordshire.co.uk



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Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme – an even fresher look

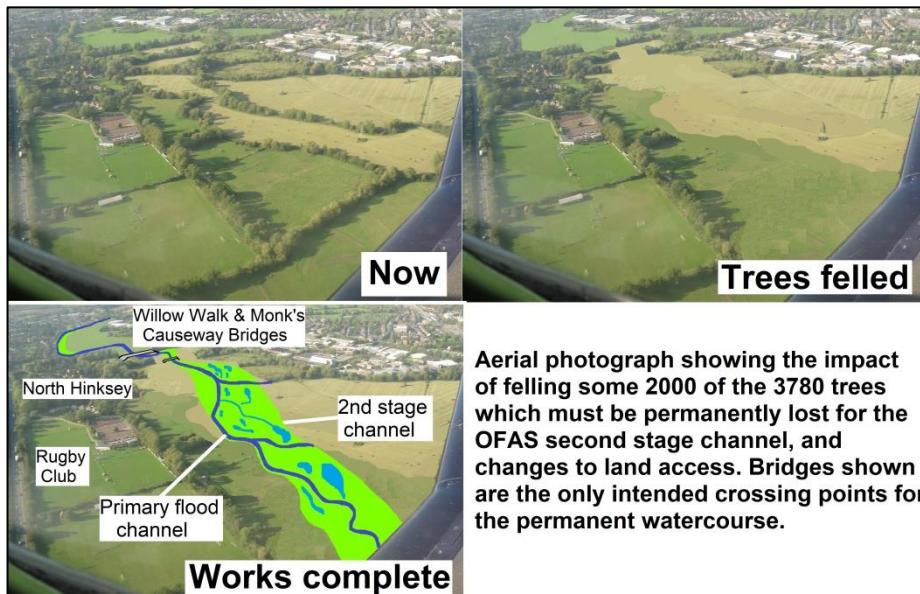
The Sprout reported in February that 'the Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS) will create a new stream with wetland wildlife corridor with a gently sloping flood plain'. Hinksey and Osney Environmental Group (HOEG) read with interest the Environmental Agency's 'fresh look' at the scheme and had this to say: A disadvantage of the scheme is the massive amount of spoil to be taken away by road or rail. The good news is that recent research by the scheme has confirmed that the extra volume (which their proposed channel would provide) might not be needed for storing flood water, the existing volume already available may be enough. The OFAS scheme has since written that it will 'undertake a separate [model] run with a 'smoothed' section of flood plain' that might, just possibly, get the same result as Oxford University hydrologists and prove that the 'massive amount of spoil' – at least 275,000 tons – does not need to be taken away at all, whether by the A34 or the railway. If not, HOEG's proposal of a 'pumped underground pipeline' from Seacourt to Kennington will come to the rescue, with a fraction of the ground disturbance and still better value than the present design.

Either would mean that 95% of the existing hedgerows and riverbank wildlife corridors could stay, likewise precious flood plain ecology, meaning a much simpler and less intrusive construction process. Even more important, they could mean a design that passes through the planning process and the compulsory purchase inquiry in no time at all, bringing forward the moment when Oxford can sleep more easily in flood time.

This should be welcome news for the residents of Botley Road and the Hinksey villages. There are other benefits along the 8 km route. The interruption to the scheme caused by the need to replace the A423 bridge at Kennington means, as reported in the *Sprout*, a chance to make necessary changes. The old scheme showed water levels lowered in all communities except Kennington, where they are actually raised by almost the same amount. So this gives the relevant authorities the chance to revisit a concept raised separately by Network Rail and by the Environment Agency during the last ten years: taking water under the railway to alleviate a long-term silting problem with one of the existing railway bridges.

Further rationalisations are emerging from talks between the OFAS Team and HOEG. The scheme is reconsidering the way it gets water past the historic blockage at the Old Abingdon Road so as to reduce traffic

disruption, and they have shown South Oxford residents a new three-phase construction process. But, as with the bypass area, there is potential to dust off an alternative that has been around since 2012, a single phase, single bridge design that again will bring forward the completion of the flood-way.



HOEG will continue to liaise professionally with the scheme, working for simpler and (evidently) more economical solutions to elements that contribute to the same reduction of flood risk to Oxford and its neighbouring communities.

HOEG will be making a presentation to North Hinksey Parish Council at their March 25th meeting. Further details of our concerns can be found on <http://www.hinkseyandosney.org>

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When writing this we don't yet know what the Prime Minister will have announced on 22nd February about the easing or continuation of the lockdown. Hopefully with vaccinations rolling out apace, a date for lockdown let-up will now be in sight. Once this happens, it is likely that Day Centres, such as that run by Kennington Memory Club, will be able to resume their sessions. These will operate with everyone who comes into the building having been vaccinated. There will also be all the necessary infection control procedures in place, so members and their families should have confidence that they are as safe as they possibly can be when at the Day Centre.

We're sure there may be potential members who would welcome the chance to attend, having been severely limited in what activities have been possible during lockdown, and contact with others outside their own household having been very limited. Carers may also look forward to the

chance of a short period of respite during the Day Centre hours. If this is the case, please contact the organizer, Helen, on 07853 883496 to discuss getting a name on the waiting list, so that you will be contacted as soon as the start date can be confirmed. More on our website: www.kenningtonmemoryclub.org.uk

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Botley's Green Spaces

Our local environment is unique and changes across the parish – from the flood plains on the edge of Oxford to farmland up on Hinksey Heights.

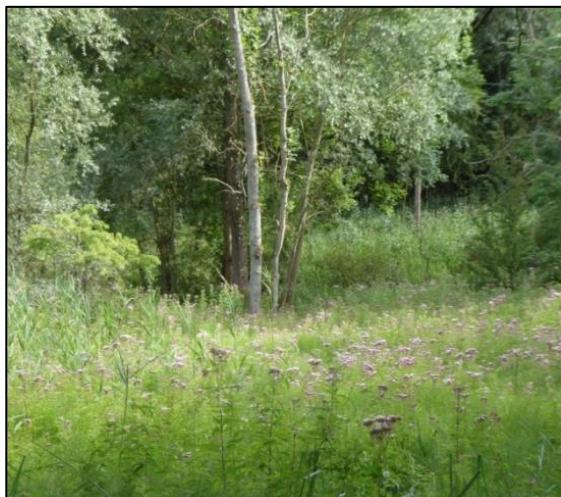
North Hinksey Parish council looks after some of them and as part of our work to protect and improve them we asked you, the people of Botley, what you thought about all our main green spaces.

207 people filled out our survey – about 10% of all households. Many thanks to all of you! We heard from a lot of people who clearly care passionately about some or all of the local green spaces. Pulling together all the views is a big task and work is ongoing, but we can share some first results.

What did we learn? Firstly that people use green spaces a lot. Nearly half the respondents said they used the Upper Louie Memorial Field at least once a week, for walking with or without a dog, for meeting friends (hopefully distanced!), for taking exercise or simply sitting and relaxing.

They may be up the hill and on the very edge of Botley, but the Louie Fields, both Upper and Lower, are popular places. Even though they are well used, 54% of people liked them for being 'close to nature'. Perhaps unsurprisingly other sites did better on that: 72% of people highly rated Raleigh Park (used by 28% of respondents at least once a week), but for 'getting down' with nature there was a clear winner – 97% of those who rated it said the Hinksey Heights Nature Trail was 'good' or 'very good'. (See photo.) The trail also scored 92% good/very good on 'attractiveness' and 83% on 'peace and quiet' – the Upper Louie Field scored only 36% on that.

Most of the feedback was positive. Only 3% of people thought the Louie Fields were bad for 'safety' (and no one went for 'very bad'). The only site in the survey that rated 'very bad' in how it is looked after was the North Hinksey Nature Reserve, which became the favoured hangout for a group street drinkers for most of last year, starting during the first Lockdown. But only three





people gave it that negative review, and the site has now been cleaned up.

As with any green spaces there are concerns about dog mess and litter. Nine people felt that the Louie Fields have a 'serious problem' with dog fouling – though 29 thought that there were 'no problems'. The nature reserve (as above) and Brookes playing field were seen as worst for litter, but the Brookes site is generally very popular and 71% saw no problems on how it is looked after. We should perhaps be grateful that the University is so relaxed about how local people use their grounds.

We also asked about the future – Would people like to see improvements? Unsurprisingly again many said their favourite spaces were 'fine as it is' – 80% for the cemetery. The lowest such score (27%) was for the most used site – yes, the Upper Louie Field! The support there is for more seating and waste bins, and also for more trees and flowers, while numerous people added calls in the comments box for the former skate park to be revived.

Many other comments were about the current state of many local paths, following a long wet winter and heavy use. The council will need to work with others to look at how we can help restore some of these – this may be a challenge for action as we emerge from lockdown.

Finally, it was interesting to see how many people were unaware of some of the sites such as Tilbury Fields (where we planted trees back in December), the Nature Trail, and North Hinksey village green. We are working on a guide to local walks and will produce a map of these spaces, along with a more detailed report of the survey findings. All these issues will be discussed at our rescheduled green spaces workshop towards the end of March.

Chris Church

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Keeping Going in Lockdown

Barricane: The Sky and Us

Rosy and Emily's friendship began at a leaving party. They sat in a pub garden, watching the river as it went dark, sharing a bottle of wine and began to sing harmonies –Radiohead of course, this is an Oxford story – and over the next few years a close friendship and tight musical partnership grew.

Emily, who works in environmental sustainability, and Rosy who is a nurse, have young families but still make space in their lives to write and rehearse their songs. They both sing and play guitar. The two different vocal parts dance and weave around each other, and it's never quite clear who is singing the melody or harmony – or even if it matters.

One night, while practising in Binsey Church, they met a woman who had just split up with her boyfriend and had gone there for some solace. She said the singing made her feel better and told her story. Rosy and Emily wrote her a song, and she liked it so much she offered her services as a photographer if they ever recorded anything, something they were already considering.

The idea of recording an album grew. We have all found things to keep us going through lockdown. For Emily and Rosy, their pandemic project was to try and somehow record the album. During the worst of the Covid surges, Rosy worked 6 days a week at the JR, training nurses and doctors re-deployed to the wards, while Emily and her family needed to shield. Their music became more important to them than ever.

Having chosen a name and built up a stock of original songs over the past three years (more info on <http://www.barricane.muaic.com/>), they approached producer and multi-instrumentalist, Mac, to help develop their sound beyond acoustic guitar and vocals.





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They are very excited with the result. The album **The Sky and Us** by Barricane is a journey through a range of musical vibes – from indie-folk, rock, electronica and trip-hop, all tied together with vocal harmonies and themes of existence, perspective, everyday magic and the natural world. It includes *For Caroline*, the song that helped to start it all. **Black and Blue** is the maiden single from the album and is going to be released on February 26.

In a way, most of our lockdown projects have had something in common as we look forward to the Spring – trying, to various degrees and in many ways to mend broken and battered hearts.

Rosy Piper

South View Shenanigans

Here are some Lockdown things we've been doing. First time round, with sunny weather and longer days, it was so much easier! That was when the baby learned to crawl, then he learned to walk and grew some hair. And now he's teaching himself to dance and learning to talk. I remade the tea cosy. It was in rags since its last makeover, 20 years ago.



The whole household moved into a new dimension in a nearby tree, with aerial walkways, a net for lying in, and a spaceship called Sonic Boom from which all the baddies in the neighbourhood could be taken out.

This last Lockdown, with short dark days seems to have mainly involved more sleeping on my part. But the evening we spent without electricity will stay in our memories. We piled wood on the kitchen range and chopped leeks and potatoes for soup by candlelight. I got down the oil lamps from the top shelf in the larder, and gave them their first clean in thirty years.

The paraffin had evaporated, and of course you can no longer go and buy it (or anything else) by the gallon in the local petrol station, so I'll have to find out how to replace it. Luckily we had loads of candles, so we were able to play games by candlelight. It's surprising how quickly your eyes adjust to that mellow glow. Our five-year-old forgot to be afraid of the dark for an evening, and keeps asking for a repeat.

The other highlight was the family Desert Island Discs by Zoom. About twelve of us joined in from all over the country and as far away as France, so there was only time for one disc each, and a few words about why you had chosen it. It was nice to be reminded of all our shared memories, and two hours passed in a flash. Some of us bothered to dress up, which added to the sense of occasion, and hopefully there will be more gorgeous outfits at the next one on 6th March.

And at last the days are getting longer, the bitter weather has eased up, and the time has come to reclaim the garden from the rats and the weeds. The end of lockdown is in sight, although still only on the distant horizon. My phone is crowded with Signs of Spring, posted on WhatsApp by my far-flung family, all rejoicing in the signs of new life.

Ag MacKeith

TWO SPROUT AGMs ON ONE NIGHT

For the Company years 2018–2019 and 2019–2020

Tuesday 16th March, via Zoom

at 7.30 pm and 7.45 pm.

The first meeting should have taken place in Summer 2020, and the second later this year. But the Board have decided to hold these two meetings now to avoid further delay. The formal business will be held first, and any discussion at the end. To join, first download <https://zoom.us/> and then use the following link, or if that doesn't work, use the meeting ID and passcode:

<https://us04web.zoom.us/j/72950005828?pwd=bStJeEVYajAxb1pzS1g3Y2FUWk8wZ09>

Meeting ID: 729 5000 5828

Passcode: xCxtj0

We will organise a party in the summer in place of the normal meeting and when such things are allowed.

Don't Be Fooled By Scammers!

There is a class of people using the Internet to try to steal money from other users. To succeed in this sphere, you need to be amoral, ruthless, plausible and technically competent – in a word – a scammer.

Most of us are confident that we are smart enough to avoid being scammed, but every year, thousands are defrauded of millions.

In a previous edition of the *Sprout* (September 2019) your Editor shared the experience of nearly being cheated out of £6000. Someone pretending to be from BT Hub telephoned her just as her Internet connection went down. How they managed that is a mystery, and it left Ag receptive to the caller. Fortunately, she realised what was going on just in time to stop the raid on her bank account.

There are half a dozen email scams on the go at the moment, some more threatening than others, but the phone scams, once you get sucked into them, are harder to detach yourself from.

Other phone scams include:

- Calls apparently **from HMRC**, demanding payment for an outstanding tax bill. However, HMRC never phones anyone with such threats, and the best action is simply to hang up.
- Calls **from BT** notifying a phone bill reduction. The caller will ask for personal details which will be used to remove money from your bank account.
- Calls apparently from such as **banks, Amazon and Facebook** apparently offering refunds. All you must do is to give your account



details, *which you should not do*. If you have any concern that such a call may be genuine, check with the organisation apparently involved, using another method of contact.

This kind of attack is common, widespread and can affect anyone. The crooks usually attempt to get you to give them personal information by dangling a bait whereby you are going to get some reward if you'll tell them what they want to know. Scams come via your telephone, or by email, but rarely, these days, by letter, as paper communications leave a trail. Electronic bank-transfers are very fast, and your money can be gone well before you suspect something is wrong.

All honest citizens should bear in mind that if something appears to be too good to be true, then it usually is. Disbelief in sudden good fortune is an effective defence against scammers, as is having an answerphone facility. I let all calls for which I don't recognise the number go to my machine. They don't get beyond my recorded 'Hello, we're not here now....' because *the crooks want to speak directly to you*.

There are some useful websites such as "Hoax-Slayer" where you can find information on which scams are doing the rounds. Talking to others who have had similar experiences will also sharpen up your anti-scam antennae. A quick look at Nextdoor North Hinksey will flash up a few currently going the rounds, and ways people have frustrated them. It really helps to be able to share your discomfort with a fellow sufferer.

Beware! – and be safe.

Tony Kerrison

Randoms

Dog Fouling

The Sprout has received this heartfelt plea:

"Would you mind adding something short and punchy to the Sprout about people cleaning up their dog poo on the Fields? These are the only places people can legitimately go for exercise, and now that the running season is starting up, they'll be in even more demand. It's really... *ahem...* shitty to step in filth when you're trying to run off four months of sedentary and crisps."

Local Volunteers help the Vaccination Programme run smoothly

Local volunteers around Kennington, Botley and Cumnor have generously offered their time and transport to help the vaccination process go forward.

As a Patients Participation Group we have been very pleasantly surprised at the number of people who have come forward – some even took holiday leave from work. Volunteers have helped inside the practice, cleaning seats and helping patients, others have stood out in the cold and wet to direct people to parking spaces, help them out of their cars when needed and support them into the vaccination centre. One even took the practice wheelchair home to sort out the flat tyres.

The generosity of people when coming for their vaccinations has also been overwhelming, with sweets and biscuits given to volunteers.

Our secretary's own personal involvement began when it was clear their next door neighbour, who is 80 and partially blind, could never take the bus rides into Oxford and out again to get there, since the vaccination centre for the whole Botley and Kennington Practice is situated about four miles from Botley. She would have had to walk a mile to the nearest bus stop, and then walk half a mile between bus stops in Oxford. This would also involve the risk of exposure to COVID on the four buses. So he and his wife offered to drive her down.

This expanded to contacting the surgery and the PPG and asking the doctors to let the PPG know of any who had no means of getting to the clinic for their vaccination. Over two weeks a team of 48 volunteer drivers have taken 65 people to have their vaccinations who could not have got there otherwise. One of the drivers asked: "Is it your faith that has enabled you to set this up?" The most unexpected and seemingly go-getting people for themselves have been very keen volunteers. There is almost a race among drivers to be the first to offer a lift. There has been a very generous spirit around this. It means that the elderly and infirm do not feel neglected or isolated when it comes to this matter.



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draughty corridor, with a song in my heart as I repeatedly say, “Welcome, follow the arrows!” to an incoming line of gallant octogenarians and, “That way to the car park, have a nice day!” to those departing. No buzz compares to this. It is pretty good to hear on the news that the UK’s vaccine distribution is outrunning most of the world, but nothing beats being there as a tiny cog in the process, seeing the first patients emerging from the drizzling gloom.”

However this is, as they say, a marathon not a sprint. We have also been asked if we can, when needed, take medical equipment to patients’ homes, currently mainly pulse oximeters.

We will need volunteers for a good part of this year but it is being done with good will and the desire for us all to get back to some sort of normal.

Botley/Kennington Patient Participation Group thanks each and every one of you – we couldn’t do it without you!

Sylvia Buckingham (Chairperson)

LOCAL PLANNING APPLICATIONS

<u>P20/V3257/FUL</u>	Gateways, Harcourt Hill. Replace existing house, plus additional dwelling & garage in rear garden.	22 December
<u>P21/V0042/HH</u>	43 Cedar Rd. Rear single storey extension.	4 January <i>TDD: 1 March</i>
<u>P20/V3366/FUL</u>	New Barn, Stanton Road. Build new 4 bedroom dwelling with attached garage.	11 January <i>Target Decision Date: 8 March</i>
<u>P20/V3259/HH</u>	46 Laburnum Rd. Single storey rear & side extension, top floor loft conversion. Plus car parking.	13 January <i>TDD: 10 March</i>
<u>P21/V0097/FUL</u>	32 Lime Rd. Change of use from a small HMO (use-class C4) to a large 9-bed HMO, associated hardstanding and creation of a dropped kerb.	21 January <i>TDD: 18 March</i>
<u>P21/V0138/FUL</u>	6 Elms Parade. Change of use from Use Class E to hot food takeaway use. Addition of external flue. <i>(Intention - Fish & Chip shop).</i>	27 January <i>TDD: 24 March</i>

New Covid test centre set up in Wantage

From 23rd February the Beacon in Wantage will become a Covid-19 testing site for public-facing workers and volunteers, even though they are not displaying symptoms. Around 1 in 3 people with Covid-19 have no symptoms but can still pass it on and so regular testing of public-facing workers will help to stop the spread of the virus.

People in these roles who can't work from home and don't have access to workplace testing will be able to book a weekly test at the centre. Tests take only 15 minutes with results available within an hour.

South and Vale District Councils have worked closely with partners across Oxfordshire to help set up this rapid symptom-free testing site to help stop the spread of the virus, protect the NHS and vital social care services, and ultimately to save lives.

Employees from Thames Valley Police and Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue were the first to be tested at the centre, followed by early-years workers and council staff in key public-facing roles. The 15-minute test being used is a lateral flow test which involves taking a swab of the back of the throat and inside the nose. The swab is then given to trained staff at the test centre who process the test on-site. Results are given within an hour by text message or by email. Anybody who tests positive is provided with detailed information on how to self-isolate, along with advice on the support that is available for them through their isolation period.

Cllr Helen Pighills, Vale of White Horse District Council Cabinet Member for Healthy Communities, said: "We're really pleased to have been able to put forward the Beacon, along with over a dozen staff from the South and Vale District Councils, to help with this vital part of the local response to the pandemic. I'm also delighted that the programme has been expanded to include all public-facing workers much earlier than originally anticipated.

"I strongly encourage all those who leave home to work or volunteer to get a test as soon as you can. There is financial support available for workers who test positive and have to self-isolate."

The Beacon is an arts and community centre in Wantage. It is run by the District Council but has been closed during the pandemic. It will be used as a symptom-free test centre for as long as is required to help stop the spread of Covid-19.

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

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

North Hinksey Preschool and Childcare clubs	Mon–Fri 7.45am–6.00 pm. Tel 794287 or email nhps.manager1@gmail.com
N Hinksey Art Group	Weds 10 – 12.00 W.I. Hall Tel: Christina 07931 707997
N Hinksey Bellringers	Contact: Ray Rook 01865 241451
N Hinksey Conservation Volunteers	Meets at weekends Contact Voirrey Carr 07798743121 voirreyc@aol.com
N Hinksey, Friends of	Annual Cricket Match & Walk. Douglas Bond 791213.
N Hinksey Parish Council	Sharon Henley, clerk@northhinksey-pc.gov.uk
N Hinksey Youth Club	Weds at LM pavilion, Daz on 07791 212866 or see F'book
Oxford Flood Alliance	R Thurston 01865 723663 or 07973 292035
Oxford Flower Arranging Club	4th Thursday Cumnor. Dympna Walker: 01865 865259
Oxford Harmony Men's 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 9.50 Louie Memorial Field car park, Arnolds Way. Alan 07941 610913
West Oxford Bowls Club	Contact details on www.westoxfordbowlsclub.co.uk
West Oxford Taekwon Do Club	Mon, Thurs 6.30-8pm, MA gym, contact Chris Hall 01865 570291 www.wotkd.co.uk
West Oxford U3A	(Uni of the 3rd Age) http://westoxfordu3a.org.uk/
West Way Day Centre	Mon & Fri 10–3pm, Field House, 07740 611971. oxfordshirehub@royalvoluntaryservice.org.uk
Women's Institute (Botley)	Liz Manson, 244175 or liz.manson@virginmedia.com
Weight Watchers	Thursdays 6pm at SS Peter & Paul Church Hall Banso tel: 07779 253899 bansob@aol.com

Halls for Hire (eventually!)

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

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

St. Lawrence, Church of England, North Hinksey Lane

1st, 2nd, 4th Sunday, Sung Eucharist 11.30 a.m.
3rd Sunday, Matins 11.30 am

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

2nd Saturday each Month, 4-6pm Messy Church for children and their carers
1st Sunday of the Month, 9.30am All Age service of Holy Communion
All other Sundays, 9.30am Holy Communion with activities for children
Every Wednesday, 10.30am Holy Communion at Field House
Rev Clare Sykes, Tel. 01865 242345 or revclare@btinternet.com

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

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

Botley Baptist Church, West Way Place

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

Calvary Chapel

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

Sprout **March 2021**

Still in lockdown, though not for much longer, and a couple of Zoom meetings to look forward to:

Sprout AGMs for 2019 and 2020 on the same night:

Tuesday 16th March, 7.30 and 745 pm.

Annual Parish Council Meeting on Thursday 18th March

See <https://northhinksey-pc.gov.uk> and the newsletter through your door. Your chance to let them know how they are doing!

NHPC Green Spaces forum has been postponed till the end of March.

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.

Church contact details opposite.

Oxford Hub's email is: hello@oxfordhub.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. 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