

The Sprout



Fourth Oxford Scouts' Christmas Camp

The Newsletter for North Hinksey & Botley

Issue 174 February 2023

The Sprout

Issue 174, February 2023

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From the Editor

Welcome to the first *Sprout* of 2023. Christmas seems a long time ago now, but still we have to record the various things that happened on our patch: 4th Scouts festive fun (p19) (and thanks, James Wynne, for our lovely cover photo), Botley Bridges sent out family hampers (p3), and there are more Christmas highlights on page 33. There's a guide to services at Botley Medical Centre, who have turned things round over the past year and now have the approval of the CQC (p5); the Brownies have been busy too (p13) and there's an interview with one of our younger readers about her passion for horses on page 15. Looking backwards, a reader remembers her happy Fifties childhood in the estate behind the Seacourt Bridge (p9), and there's a review of the past year in Raleigh Park (p27). Looking ahead, affordable housing is under construction in a neat and sustainable development near Pinnocks Way (p12), and there's an exhibition by local artists in Ss Peter and Paul Church (p17). Sustainable Botley can now offer informed advice on ways to reduce your energy bills (p21), and the CA can tell you if you are eligible for cheaper broadband (p23). There are free hot meals on Mondays and Wednesdays at Botley Community Kitchen at the Seacourt Bridge pub (p25). All this and much more in this month's issue – *Happy Reading!*

Ag MacKeith

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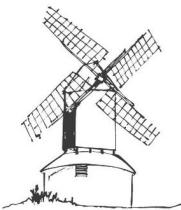
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Christmas Hampers 2022

Thank you for spreading some Christmas cheer to our local community.

This is the third year that Botley Bridges has initiated and co-ordinated local hampers and food boxes for families on low incomes in the Botley, West Oxford and Cumnor area. This is a real joint community effort with donations (both goods and money) coming from local people, local shops and the food bank. Volunteers shopped, packed and distributed the hampers on two days just before Christmas and 120 found their way to local families.

The boxes contained a mixture of staple foods and Christmas treats, as well as some small gifts. Households could request a hamper themselves, and information went out via the local schools, pre-schools, social work departments, churches and the Botley Bridges network.

Thank you so much to all the volunteers – it couldn't happen without you. And thanks to local private donors, and to Tesco, Waitrose, the Co-op, Aldi and the Oxford Food Hub.

Botley Bridges is a local family support charity set up after the Children's Centre was closed in 2017. We rely on parental contributions and grants and donations and our aim is to support families in the local area in a variety of ways – support groups, courses and small grants that make a difference to families. You can donate on our website or contact the trustees.

For more information the website is www.botleybridges.org or you can contact the coordinator on coordinator@botleybridges.org or the trustees on trustees@botleybridges.org





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A Guide to Services at the Botley Medical Centre

There are many different ways to get medical help from Botley Medical Centre.

Appointments with clinicians: You can consult nurses, health care assistants, the midwife, physician's associates, paramedics, first contact physiotherapists, clinical pharmacists, care co-ordinators, social prescribers and primary care healthcare workers (from Mind) at the Practice. A mental health practitioner is also being recruited.

Start by giving the receptionist a brief description of your clinical needs so that they can connect you with the most appropriate person. Or book the appointment yourself, four to six weeks in advance, by phoning after 11am.

GP appointments: you can book a same-day appointment with a GP by calling early in the day; or you can book an appointment online to see a GP face to face.

For the latter, you will need to request online access at the Practice first. Once it is set up, download the PatientAccess app onto your smartphone, tablet or home computer. You will need to identify yourself by following a number of steps. Once your account is set up, you will be able to log in safely and securely. This booking service can only be used for 'on the day' appointments after 0800 hours and will only offer a slot if one is available that day. (Five appointments per GP, per day, are kept for such bookings, and they are often not taken up.) Please book an appointment this way if you can.

Blood test results can also be seen through the app.

Other Healthcare services: Certain healthcare services can be booked without a GP consultation first, as follows:

- ⇒ for muscle- or joint-related issues, Healthshare provides a local physio service, here: <https://healthshare.org.uk/refer-patient/>
- ⇒ for Adults with mild or moderate depression and anxiety, TalkingSpacePLus provides the IAPT service in Oxfordshire, here: <https://www.oxfordhealth.nhs.uk/talkingspaceplus/>

Readers of the Sprout will be aware that the recent CQC inspection has produced a rating of "overall good" for the Practice. This is a significant improvement upon the previous Inspection. The Partners have thanked the Patient Participation Group (PPG) for their continued support, and in response the PPG congratulates the Partners and all the staff at the



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Practice for their hard work, which has resulted in this very good rating, and looks forward to continuing to work collaboratively.

The CQC full report is on the CQC website, and can be accessed here: <https://www.cqc.org.uk/location/1-544081039>

Chris Sugden

LOCAL PLANNING APPLICATIONS

P22/V2778/HH	94 Westminster Way. Single storey rear & side extension with conversion of existing garage.	21 Nov <i>TDD: 16 Jan</i>
P22/V2825/S73 s73 application to modify approved plans) P22/V0480/HH	42 Hutchcomb Rd. Change ridge height & roof finish for single storey rear extension; alter rooflight. Add solar panels to front & rear roof slopes.	29 Nov <i>Target Decision Date: 24 Jan</i>
P22/V2827/HH	57 Yarnells Hill. Single storey garden annexe/pool house with outdoor swimming pool.	29 Nov <i>TDD: 24 Jan</i>
P22/V2842/LDP	7 Finmore Rd. Alter existing dormer & extending.	30 Nov <i>TDD: 25 Jan</i>
P22/V2856/PDH	71 Arthray Rd. Erect single storey rear extension.	2 Dec <i>TDD: 26 Jan</i>
P22/V2869/HH	17 Laburnum Rd. Single storey extension at rear.	5 Dec <i>TDD: 30 Jan</i>
P22/V2837/HH	47 Laburnum Rd. Single storey rear & 2-storey side extension.	7 Dec <i>TDD: 1 Feb</i>
P22/V2910/LDP	13 Hutchcomb Rd. New front window to replace existing door.	8 Dec <i>TDD: 2 Feb</i>
P22/V2610/HH	Flat 1 Little Dene Yarnells Hill. Build garden room for Flat 1 use.	23 Dec <i>TDD: 17 Feb</i>
P22/V2711/FUL	4 North Hinksey Lane. Build 6 flats, car parking,existing building to be retained.	23 Dec <i>TDD: 17 Feb</i>
P22/V2993/HH	10 Yarnells Hill. Erect open sided car port on front driveway.	6 January <i>TDD: 3 March</i>



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A Botley Childhood

Today's children can only begin to imagine the sort of childhood we enjoyed in Botley in the 1950s. Our playground was Seacourt, Poplar and Hazel Roads and the adjacent fields. Playing rounders in the turning circle at the top of Hazel Road wasn't unheard of. Then we would decide who would go into a resident's garden to retrieve a tennis ball or a football. It took some discussion, as one old gentleman living in the turning circle was very hostile towards children! We also had the "Backie", and Wytham Woods where we used to play Waggon Train. We all had our designated roles to play, decided in advance. Then there was the Up-and-Downey Field where the Botley Roundabout is now. Wytham Lane really was a lane, then, and I could still show you where the donkey field was. Picking bluebells and primroses in Wytham Woods for our Mums was so enjoyable, but would be frowned upon now. Blackberrying with our parents was also a regular pastime and then the Mums would bottle the blackberries or make jelly or jam.

The Backie was a field where the Seacourt Older People's bungalows are now. There was an Air Raid shelter at the entrance with a barbed wire fence to stop us climbing onto it, but that didn't stop us. We were familiar with every detail on top and inside the Air Raid shelter. Even though the entrances at both ends had been bricked up, we could still climb down inside and we played there quite happily!

There was a ditch at the bottom of the Backie, which we shared with the cows. We played in it for hours jumping over it, hanging a rope from a tree to swing over it. Someone always ended up falling in, or the rope would break and the child come crashing down. The trees were tall and they were there to be climbed, of course. One particular friend would climb the highest one, get stuck at the top when she looked down, and then we drew straws as to who would go and fetch her Dad to rescue her. He was none too happy, I can tell you, and would berate us for letting her go up there in the first place, but there was little we could do to stop her!

Washing our hands in water troughs provided for the cows wasn't unheard of, either, when we got mud on them – which, of course, we did!! The cows didn't seem to mind and neither did we. We played



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outside in the fresh air and even when it rained we seemed to enjoy ourselves, sheltering in a shed or inside a hedge in the Backie – sometimes lighting fires to keep ourselves warm. We loved making dens where we could enjoy ourselves away from the adults! If anyone hurt themselves, someone would run and get their Mum or Dad. It was generally Mum, as Dad would have been out at work. We used to organize “plays” and act them out in the garden of 7 Seacourt Road to raise money for the Association for the Blind. Yes, we sold tickets and the neighbours would pay a small sum to watch – and we really did organize a postal order and send it off...

So: no mobiles, no computers, just early television in black and white. (The Lone Ranger was a favourite, with his sidekick, Tonto!) No land-line telephones, no ipads – how did we survive? Very well thank you!!!! Most of us are still around to tell the tales, and we still laugh about our escapades.

The local boys would often join us in the Backie and teams would be organized for cricket and football. What good times those were!

Jenny Holloway (nee Morin)



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Crofts Court

Work is going well on this welcome patch of affordable housing along the Eynsham Road. The roof is on, the windows are in, and it is on schedule for tenants to move in by the summer. Once residents have settled in, we hope to welcome as many of you as possible as members, investors and neighbours, to come and see for yourselves how community-led housing can really be of benefit.



The one-bed apartments have been very popular, but there is still a chance of a two-bed one. If you are registered with the Vale and wish to be in line for a two-bed flat, go to <https://www.whitehorsehomechoice.org.uk>. If you are wondering what all this is about, see the December Sprout.

Chance to invest

We are glad and proud to announce that the Oxfordshire Community Land Trust share offer has managed to raise over half its target investment in just nine weeks. However, there is still a way to go, so please do consider investing in this worthwhile project. You can sign up now at www.ethex.org.uk/invest/OCLT



And if you want to support the project but can't afford to invest you can still join us for just £1. Go to www.oclt.org.uk/support-us/ or use your phone.

Fran Ryan, OCLT secretary

Brownies Get Busy

November and December were both very busy months for us at 2nd Botley Brownies. To start with our newest adult volunteer had her Brownie name of “Bumble Bee” chosen by the Unit from a short-list of four. Then on 13th November we reverently laid poppy crosses at the graves of the aircrew of our adopted veteran, Ted. We now act entirely on his behalf and in memory of him since his passing in 2019. We also added a poppy cross in his honour to the other eight we laid down at the Botley Commonwealth War Graves after the annual Remembrance Day Service.

Straight after Remembrance Sunday we got on with doing our UK Parliament Week 2022 edition Badge, during which we learnt about the restored clock face of the Elizabeth Tower (ask any of our Brownies and they will tell you that Big Ben is the bell inside the tower!). We listened to the Brownie Leaders pitching a pretend new law and then completed our polling cards and voted. Tawny Owl’s won unanimously: “Every class in school should have a pet.” We also played a fact-learning but rather raucous game of “Big Ben Bongo” which was a little bit like playing bingo but the twelve numbers of the clock face were all facts about the UK Parliament. When all your pre-selected numbers were called you had to shout out “Bongo!” as opposed to “Bingo!” Yes, it did feel silly doing that – but the girls wanted another go and their voices had become much bigger and more confident.(See photo.)



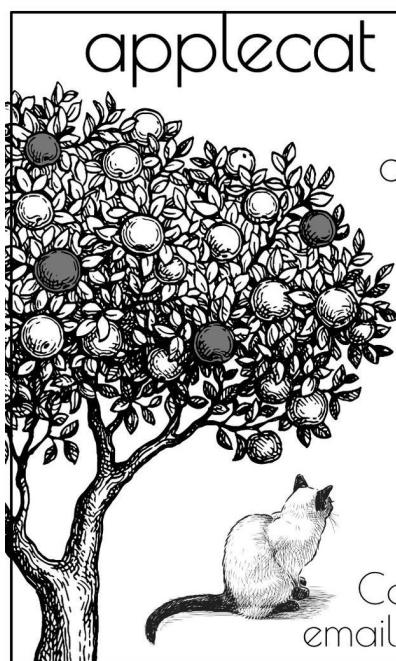
We had a couple of evenings doing more Girlguiding badge work, then after a weekend Christmas Disco, we got crafty. We spent a restful evening turning tiny pieces of special paper into decoupage decoration on Christmas baubles and stockings. Finally, for our last meeting before the Christmas break we had a great time playing party games and each girl left with a Christmas present from the Unit.

Written by the Owls at 2nd Botley Brownies.



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Taking care of horses

I cycle up to the grazing fields in North Hinksey, thinking how amazing it is to have such beautiful fields and horses so close to the city centre. I'm here to interview Lia Sarfatti about horse care, thinking that it basically involves feeding and watering them and... I guess... sometimes I see them wearing coats? And then you trot them around in circles? Well, nothing had prepared me for the complexity of the task.



"It totally depends on the horse," says Lia. "If they live outside, they mostly graze on grass, but some may need supplemental feed, especially in the winter, because the grass is low on nutrients. If they are kept in stables, then they are given hay. This horse here is 43 years old, more than 100 in human terms. She has no teeth, so we get dried pellets of specialist food, and we need to add water and stir, and let it sit before we can give it to her."

"Some horses have medical problems. For instance, this horse had thrush, so its foot needed to be scrubbed with Hibiscrub daily. They

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may need fly spray in the summer. We tend to clip their fur in the winter so that they don't get too sweaty when we exercise them, but that means they need more rugs to keep them warm. At the moment it's cold at night but warm during the day, so we put on a coat in the evening and take it off in the morning. Horses' hooves keep growing like our nails: depending on where the horse gets ridden, it may be shod.

"In the winter these horses get taken to higher ground because their usual fields flood. We need to pick up their poo from the fields to prevent a build-up of manure. And stones have been put down by the gates so it doesn't get too muddy." Having seen Lia in action, I can vouch for the fact that just basic horse maintenance involves an awful lot of walking, lifting and carrying.

So how did she get started? "I took riding lessons at the Old Manor House when it was still a riding stable. After it shut, I tried several other riding schools, but I wasn't happy there. Then I found a riding school in Faringdon that I liked. I started just taking riding classes. Then it turned out that they have a scheme where you can loan a horse: you get to ride the same horse three times a week, and on weekends you help to take care of the horse. I did that for two years. That's where I learned a lot about taking care of horses.

"I've recently got a horse of my own. We had to introduce her very slowly to the other horses, first by having her meet a very gentle small horse, and then adding new friends until she became part of the herd. I had looked at horse rescue centres, but most of the horses there aren't rideable. At the moment I'm working on "flat work" with her, which is the basics of having the horse respond to your commands. You can't jump the horse, or do dressage, or go hacking if the horse's flat work isn't good." Dressage is what I think of as 'dancing with the horse' and hacking is riding in the open countryside.



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Lia clearly loves her horse. "She is so sweet-natured. I love to groom her. I thought I wouldn't enjoy having a horse if I couldn't ride it, but I think I'd love being with her even if I couldn't." Lia's horse is lucky to have such an informed and dedicated owner.

Explained by Lia Sarfatti to Riki Therivel

BOTLEY ARTS host NORTH HINKSEY ART GROUP

Botley Arts are looking forward to welcoming North Hinksey Art Group to their next exhibition in the Church of SS Peter & Paul, West Way from Monday 6th February until 29th April 2023. We very much hope you can come in to see the paintings, perhaps next time you are at the Botley shops?

NHAG is a small and friendly art group, meeting in North Hinksey W.I. Hall every Wednesday morning during term time. The social aspects of meeting regularly – tea, biscuits, and a friendly environment – are essential to the making of our art. The classes are led by the talented Christina Wartke-Dunbar, who encourages creativity and development, with a new subject every week.

The exhibition displays a wide range of subjects – flower and animal studies, interiors, landscapes and seascapes, as well as local scenes. The pictures are all by students from the class. Our artworks employ a number of different media: pen and wash, pastel, acrylic and collage on canvas, and of course watercolour. For more information on the classes of North Hinksey Art Group you can google www.christinas-art-classes.co.uk or call 07931 707997. The classes are for everyone, from complete beginners or those with some experience. For more information on Botley Arts, especially if you are interested in exhibiting work, please see the website on <https://botleyarts.uk>



North Hinksey Art Group welcome you to explore and enjoy our work in the church between the hours of 10am and 4pm from Monday to Saturday, and 12 noon to 4pm on Sunday. Details will be available should you wish to purchase a picture, and we look forward to reading your comments in the visitors' book.

Viv Smith

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Camping at Christmas

In early December the Fourth Oxford Scout Group held its annual Christmas Camp. Of the 135 young people who stayed at Youlbury for the weekend, Beavers and Cubs slept indoors, whilst all the Scouts and the older Cubs camped both nights. There were lots of activities including caving, rock climbing (*as per photo*), den building, archery, geocaching, pizzas cooked in cardboard ovens outdoors above a fire, challenges such as making human pyramids, Christmas crafts and making LED Christmas cards.

There was Christmas dinner for everyone on Saturday night (*see photo below*) followed by the traditional leaders' pantomime ('Peter Pan' this year), and then some of the Scouts did their own version of the Twelve Days of Christmas. We would like to thank the leaders and young leaders, and the parents who helped with activities and so much cooking. For the last event of the term we hired the whole of Bicester's trampoline park for a party with pizza afterwards.



The Fourth Oxford Scout Group is a registered charity run entirely by volunteers, with 165 young people aged between 6 and 14 meeting five nights a week, also at some weekends and holidays. We are temporarily based at Oxford Rugby Club (we are extremely grateful for their support). We can be contacted at mail@thefourth.org.uk.

James Wynne, chair of trustees.

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Cut Costs, Save Energy, Help the Planet

Gas prices are likely to stay high for the foreseeable future. We know people have been cutting back on heating, even during the recent cold snaps. If you are struggling to pay bills, or worried about debts or being put on a prepayment meter, there is help available. Just get in touch with Steve Jones, the lead home energy advisor in the Sustainable Botley team: swj6601@gmail.com.

Thanks so much to everyone who's come forward to have your home surveyed for energy saving opportunities. We picked eight typical Botley houses; they have all been surveyed and about half have now been analysed, but it is taking longer than expected! We will publish the full results as soon as we have them.

For some Botley houses there are straightforward recommendations. For the 1950s semis, injected cavity fill cuts heating costs by 20%. Adding 100mm of mineral wool between the joists of an uninsulated loft would save 30%. Replacing single glazing with double would save about 15%. In fact many of these houses have loft and wall insulation and double-glazing already in place, but the loft insulation can be patchy, often because it's been lifted for wiring work and not replaced properly. Tidying it up and filling in any gaps would save energy at very little or no cost, and would eliminate indoor cold spots that can attract moisture and mould.

Many of our houses have a mixture of wall types, which makes it harder to tackle the insulation. The Seacourt Road bungalows and some of the 1930s semis have cavity end walls, but the front and rear might be some kind of solid wall. Some semis have timber-framed sections under their upstairs bay windows. Filling the cavities with insulation does save on the heating and there are grants for low income and vulnerable households. The solid walls will still lose a lot of heat; the most effective solution is external insulation which is expensive, but look out for news about the Government's "ECO+" grants, announced last year for introduction this April – to be distributed through energy supply companies.

We borrowed a thermal imaging camera from Low Carbon Hub in December, and it was really helpful in showing up some of the details of heat loss through odd wall types and patchy insulation. We've booked it again for the week of 13th February. If you're interested in looking for the energy saving opportunities in your home, please do contact me at laurie@livingwitness.org.uk. I'll schedule in as many visits as I can.

The Government's 2021 Net Zero Strategy aims to replace most boilers with heat pumps by 2035, and there are grants available to do this now, through the Boiler Upgrade Scheme. Energy efficiency experts have long advocated a "fabric first" approach – insulating your home as much as possible before changing the heating system. This makes sense because you can then size the heating system appropriately.

Heat pumps are often installed with underfloor heating, because that works with water circulating at 35-40°C rather than the 55°C plus that radiators are usually designed for – and the heat pumps are more efficient working to lower temperatures.

The biggest surprise for me has been realising that it makes sense for most homes to install a heat pump even without adding insulation or changing the radiators. Heat pumps have become more efficient, and there are now models that will deliver water to radiators at 60°C. In milder weather you can run the radiators at a lower temperature to get the best efficiency from the heat pump. You'd have much lower carbon emissions, and the current high price of gas compared with electricity means you'd have lower running costs with the heat pump than a boiler.

Take a look at sustainablebotley.uk for more details of our activities and links to other sources of information.

Laurie Michaelis



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Citizens Advice Henley has noticed that people in need are not taking advantage of cheap broadband and mobile phone schemes, set up specially to help them. Loosely termed “social tariffs” or “essential broadband”, these schemes are discounted deals intended for those on Universal Credit, Pension Credit, Employment and Support Allowance, and some other benefits. Statistics show that only a tiny number of those eligible to register for these low tariffs have done so, although they could save over £100 a year.

Social tariffs are provided in the same way as normal phone and Internet packages, but at a lower price. Network providers liaise with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP) to ascertain customers’ eligibility, and the DWP is required to provide only the necessary information, so that personal information remains safe.

At the time of writing, not all telecom companies offer social tariffs, but people who qualify can switch to a supplier that does provide them. The usual fees for switching contracts, leaving a contract early, or terminating them have been scrapped in many cases for those on benefits who qualify for these tariffs – but check with your supplier to make sure.

More information is available on the Citizens Advice website <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk> or you can call Adviceline on 0808 278 7907. You can also go to <https://www.gov.uk> and search for “cheaper broadband” or to <https://www.ofcom.org.uk> (search “social tariffs”).

Oxford Spring Clean-up

This will be over the first two weekends in March – 3rd to 5th and 10th to 12th. Anyone and everyone is invited to get together, separately or in groups, to clean up those spaces round our patch that generally get neglected. A place as famous for volunteering as Botley should have no difficulty in setting up a few groups to deal with notorious hotspots like the bike path up to the A34, or the banks along Westminster Way. Once you’ve got a few names, register at Oxclean.org.uk and take it from there. Please give them ten days’ notice if you can. They will supply hi viz vests, litter pickers and sacks.

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Food for Free

On a cold, raw day in January, I set out to see what Doc Saman's Community Kitchen was all about. I knew the general idea – he was cooking up meals from food that would otherwise have gone to waste, and he was serving them to anyone who came along to the Seacourt Bridge on a Monday or a Wednesday afternoon. Hot meals for anyone and everyone, no questions asked. I had a nervous feeling that he wasn't getting very many takers, and I thought it would be a shame if all that good will went to waste (as well as the food). Besides it might be a chance to get a tasty take-away for supper!

I needn't have worried. The Seacourt Bridge was a haven of quiet warmth. It wasn't packed, but it wasn't empty either, and people were sitting around, peacefully chatting and eating. Saman came out to say hello, and brought me a plate to try. I asked how things were going, and he said the take-up was between 30 and 60 a day. Quite a wide range, I thought, but he said nothing was wasted, because any food left was put into boxes and served out later to anyone who asked for it. And anything left was frozen, for distribution at the West Oxford Community Larder on Fridays.

He didn't cook it all by himself – he had a little squad of volunteers from Matthew Arnold School and elsewhere, and his young son was there to help too.

I said I felt a bit of a fraud, taking his supplies, but he insisted that the only way for people who really needed a hot meal not to feel noticed, was for them to be lost in the crowd. So I gladly took away a Tupperware supper for my household, and very nice it was too!

On my way home, I called in on an old friend, recently bereaved and rather lonely, and mentioned where I had been. He was delighted to hear what was on offer, and shot off to get his own supplies.

Well done, Doc, and all power to your elbow!

Ag MacKeith



Graham Blake

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A Year in Raleigh Park

Despite the vagaries of the weather, and the uncertainties of COVID, there has been continuous activity in the Park, and our efforts continue to be noticed and appreciated. The fen restoration work funded by the Freshwater Habitats Trust was recognised by a Letter of Commendation in the Oxford Preservation Trust Awards for 2022 – our second such award, though the bigger prizes of Plaques and Certificates continue to elude us. We are grateful to Judy Webb and Andy Gunn for providing photographs to support our application, and to Rod D'Ayala and Adam Bows for carrying out the rewetting work leading to the award (*see photo*).

Clive Smith and Adam Bows flew the flag for the Friends with a stall at the Botley Jubilee Festival in June. We were delighted to receive a grant from North Hinksey Parish Council towards the purchase of noticeboards, which will be located at the main entries to the Park, to allow us to display information about the Park wildlife and notifications of our activities. The remainder of the costs will be covered by donations, and we hope to add an information board nearby when funds allow. OCC have agreed to install the boards for us, and we are looking for volunteers to help design our wildlife information displays.

Volunteer work in the Park has been coordinated by Adam Bows, with support from OCC and BBOWT. Our links with the Freshwater Habitats Trust continue, as Adam now works for the Trust, as does our former Wild Oxford godfather Andy Gunn. Some of the equipment installed for Adam's MSc research is still producing valuable measurements of water levels and water quality. The benefits of the rewetting programme were apparent when the Park recovered with surprising speed from the protracted drought of the Summer. Adam has created a



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Park Twitter account **@RaleighParkOx** to supplement his personal account **@at_bows**, both of which are steadily gaining followers. His posts provide observations of wild flowers and fungi, and a record of volunteer activities and the work of our guardian angel Judy Webb in reintroducing lost species to the Park.

The bird feeding station has been ably maintained by David Brown and Clive Smith, and has been kept well stocked by a small group of members, now coordinated by David. Clive also continues to maintain the bird boxes in the Park. The Oxford Badger Group ran their vaccination programme for a second year. In June we said farewell to Carl Whitehead, our Park ranger, who was a constant presence in the Park, managing work and work parties and providing assistance and encouragement.

Planning issues continue to require our attention and vigilance. Two proposals, both in the heart of the water catchment area for the fen, have been with the Vale Planning service. One, for two houses beside the bridleway from Yarnells Hill, was rushed through planning approval, with a number of toothless planning conditions regarding protection of the Park.

The second, for three luxury houses on land owned by the Warburg family, immediately above the Long Tongue fen, and requiring the relocation of an active badger sett, has been rumbling on for two years, with cosmetic amendments by the developers eliciting ever more detailed responses from ourselves, Judy Webb and Adam Bows. (In the process we have learned a lot about hydrology, planning law, SuDS and vortex flow control systems.) The proposal was due to go to the Vale Planning Committee in December, but was taken off the agenda at the last minute, and is scheduled to return in the New Year. I am grateful to Councillor Debby Hallett for her steadfast support, and for the cooperation of other groups and individuals objecting to the scheme, which has allowed us to present a united front.

In the background a small battle has been won, in that the Vale now seem to accept that OCC, as owners of the Park, the Friends as an interested party, and the Freshwater Habitats Trust as a stakeholder, are entitled to be consulted in a more formal way than has been the case.

As ever, full details of Park activities will be found on our website www.raleighpark.org.uk

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Kennington Memory Club

Day Centre News

Living well with dementia

February already!

Have you got used to it being 2023 now? For most people the need to write the date has reduced now we don't write cheques, make payments online or by card, and have the date updated automatically by computer. So the reinforcement in our minds of which year it is does not happen so frequently, and our memory can let us down when we're put on the spot. It is like this all the time for those with dementia. The memory becomes totally unreliable, with great holes in it. Even the good times and enjoyable events of the past that we used to recall and remember with pleasure may not be there any more.

How are those New Year resolutions going?

Kennington Memory Club is looking for new volunteers who could offer particular skills, talents, experience or interests to share, such as piano playing, leading exercise sessions, arts and crafts, leading singing, or to leading reminiscence sessions. Helen, our Organiser, on 07852 883496, is the go-to person to contact about this. Or is fund-raising your thing? Chris would love to hear from you on 01865 300345.

Kennington Memory Club offers company, activities, games, sing-songs and a delicious hot lunch to its members at the Day Centre, whilst the carers benefit from some valuable respite time from their responsibilities. Contact Helen on the number above if you would like to register a person with dementia for the Club.

A date to note: Kennington Super Spring Sale will be held at St Nicolas' Church, Abingdon on the morning of Saturday March 11th. Do come along to support the Club. There will be bargains galore!

P.S. Keep your eyes open for more information about Ladderthon 2023, coming up shortly! www.kenningtonmemoryclub.org.uk

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Christmas Highlights

February seems a bit late to remember Christmas highlights, but better late than never, so let's pay tribute here to the Lunch Club Christmas Dinner. This festive meal, with its well-dressed tables and raffle, was as popular as ever and many of the volunteers who went to so much trouble to decorate the tables and cook the delicious food, were also to be seen in Seacourt Hall on 17th December, when the parish council offered mulled wine and mince pies to Botley's cohort of volunteers. About a hundred people came, many a good connection was made – the *Sprout*, for instance, got to shake hands with some of the stalwarts who are setting up our online archive. Ali Hogg's brilliant Christmas decorations, courtesy of all the local schools who coloured in the card shapes he supplied, added a festive touch, and a good time was had by all. The picture shows Caroline Potter, hardworking chair of the council, enumerating the dozens of different groups who were represented.

Elsewhere, carol singers were out. Here's a word from a group on Elms Rise: "Big thanks once again to the residents of Cedar, Beech and Laburnum Roads who supported the house-to-house carol singing just before Christmas. The singers from Wesley Memorial Methodist Church raised £194.18 for Christian Aid's Christmas Appeal and the carols were greatly enjoyed by residents of all ages, and the singers too. Thank you! www.wesleymem.org.uk."





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More Sewage Spills in Seacourt Stream

Since some time last year, Thames Water have been publicizing the dates when there are sewage spills in our rivers. They mainly cover Witney Sewage Treatment Works and Cassington STW upstream of Port Meadow and Oxford STW downstream. On Jan 2nd this year they launched a new River Quality system linked into their Event Duration Monitors, recording storm discharges. The link to the new system is: <https://www.thameswater.co.uk/edm-map> where you will find maps showing the current situation.

There were two days in January when heavy rain resulted in sewage discharges into our local little river. The sewage spills out from Combined Sewer Overflows – escape valves for when a heavy downpour flushes huge quantities of rainwater into the system threatening to overwhelm it. There are two CSOs in Botley, one at the entrance to Westminster Way and one in North Hinksey Lane by Willow Walk. The Sprout receives notification from WASP (Windrush Against Sewage Pollution) when our patch is hit, and we were told of releases on 12th January and on January 14th. The map at the link above only shows the current position and the most recent discharge. It's too late to see how bad the first one was, but the second one was for 3hrs 40 mins into the river from Westminster Way, and for 12 hrs 15 mins by Willow Walk.

Having said that, the very widespread flooding – nice to see the flood plain doing its job! – must have ensured the sewage was very well diluted indeed, so we don't need to lose too much sleep over this latest spill. Thames Water seem to be wholehearted in their determination to restore the rivers in their care to the clean waters they used to be, and their website is easy to access and understand. For more information on these releases see www.thameswater.co.uk/riverhealth

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It's a great start that they are not trying to hide what's going on – what we need now is for it to stop! Meanwhile, we can help by making sure we've put some planting to absorb rainfall around the parking spaces in what used to be our front gardens, and by refraining from using our washing machines on a daily basis!

Randoms

Warm welcome

UK Oxfordshire will be hosting a Warm Space in Seacourt Hall every week from Tues 14 Feb – Tues 28 March from 1pm-2.30pm, in partnership with Seacourt Hall. All adults are welcome to come in for a free cuppa and a warm welcome, and especially our older residents. There will be information available, book corner and card games. Looking forward to seeing you there. Contact Diane on 0782 7235 436 or email dianelong@ageukoxfordshire.org.uk if you would like to know more or to work out how to get there.

Time to get walking!

Whether you want to walk on your own or in company, you can find free down-loadable details of walks and groups online at <https://www.walkinginengland.co.uk/oxfordshire>. Walks can be from half a mile to twelve miles long, and there's a note of suitability for pushchairs and wheelchairs, so everyone can find a walk to enjoy.

John Harris

Hi-viz Sprout

It seemed a pity to waste the Sprout logo devised for the football kit of the Weetabix Wildcats (aka the female element of Botley Boys and Girls Football Club), so we decided to invest in some branded hi-viz vests for our sturdy deliverers. From now on they will stand out in the crowd, and given the dank foggy weather towards the end of January, that can only be a good thing!

Being old has compensations!

U3A members are offered a free tour at the Ashmolean, on Tuesday 21 February or Tuesday, 21 March, from 2-4pm, looking at images of the natural world in the museum's collections. The sessions will start with a guided gallery tour of about an hour, taking in images from nature on ancient sculpture, carvings and artwork; the use of flowers, trees, and leaves in objects from Eastern art; and, in Western art, looking the stories of trees in paintings. Refreshments and the chance to handle some objects related to the session will follow the tour. There is no need to book, just turn up on the day. However, if you would like further information, please contact Martha Holland at martha.holland@obg.ox.ac.uk or on 01865 610305.

Councillor surgeries

Judy Roberts will be holding County Councillor surgeries in Botley Library between 10 and 12 on the first Saturday of every month. Emily Smith and Debby Hallett will be holding the next District Councillor surgery at the Missing Bean between 11 and 12.30 on Sat 25th February.

Sprout online archive

Hallelujah! It's ready to go. Anyone interested in looking up back issues of our beloved local newsletter can find them to read or download at <https://archive.thesprout.org.uk/> The whole archive isn't there yet, but you can at least find all of 2022, and more will follow as the team get to grips with it. Very many thanks to David Brown and Gareth Sinclair, as well as to John Lines and Colin and Sally Herson. The directors are in two minds about having each month's *Sprout* there as well. We'll let you know as soon as a decision's made.

Botley Bowl Skatepark

This is still moving ahead more slowly than we would like, but moving all the same. After many stops and starts, it's now looking likely that the planning application will be approved at the February Parish Council meeting, and will be submitted shortly afterwards. At that point it will go out to public consultation. And it is sure to come up as a topic for discussion at the Annual Public Meeting on 16th March. Council meetings are public events, so feel free to come along on 23rd February to show your support. You can find details of the design process here: [@botleyskatepark on Instagram](#). The first picture you see is the latest design, and the one that, with or without a rail, will be submitted in the planning application.

Flood Scheme

This still hasn't gone out to public consultation. It is expected to happen during the Spring but dates have yet to be announced. Meanwhile, the scheduled January–March closure of Willow Walk for widening the bridleway and foot-bridge has been postponed due to flooding (!) The work is intended to: replace the footbridge with a 3m wide deck for pedestrians and cyclists; widen the existing bridleway from 1.8m to 3m, and resurface it, reconstructing the existing culvert near the footbridge, and diverting the underground utility (11kV) while the work takes place.

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

1st Botley Brownies Girls aged 7–10	Dean Court Community Centre Thur 6–7.30 Jean Metson, firstbotleybrownies@gmail.com
2nd Botley Brownies Girls aged 7–10	Rosary Room, Yarnells Hill. Tues 6:15-7:45 Alison Griffin 2ndbotleybrownies@outlook.com
4th Oxford Scout Group Beavers, Cub Scouts, Scouts	mail@thefourth.org.uk Website: http://www.thefourth.org.uk/
15th Oxford Scout Group Boys and girls welcome	Fridays, Cubs 6.30-8, Scouts 8-9.30, Pavilion, Fogwell Rd. Amy Cusden (Cubs) 07887 654386, Tom Freeman (Scouts) 07837 623768 xvoxfordscouts@yahoo.co.uk
Baby & Toddler Group	Tues/Thurs 9.15–11, SS Peter & Paul Church Hall
BikeSafe. B4044 community path campaign	Wants to connect Botley to Eynsham. Meets every 6-8 weeks. Contact via website B4044path.org
Books on Wheels R.V.S.	Free Library Service for housebound Ox. 248142
Botley Boys & Girls F.C. Football teams from ages 8-16	Terri Matthews: clubsecretarybbgfc@gmail.com
Botley Community Larder	Thursdays, 3.30 to 5.30 at St P&P Church Hall, West Way, Facebook or email botleylarder@gmail.com
Botley and Kennington Patients Participation Group	Second Tuesday in the Month, early evening. Contact csugden@ocrpl.org
Botley Library	07922 849680. Open till 7 on Friday and 1pm on Sat, otherwise 9.30 to 5.30 (closed Wednesdays).
Botley Memory Lane Café	Thursdays 10-12 Seacourt Hall Lounge, Diccon James 07740 611971
Botley Seniors Lunch Club	Alternate Thursdays. Seacourt Hall. Jackie Warner Ox.721386
Botley Youth Club	botleyyouthclub@gmail.com
Cumnor Choral Society	Thursdays, 19.30-21.30 St Andrew's Ch. Steve Morris, chair. www.cumnorchoralsociety.wordpress.com
Cumnor Chess Club	Thurs 7–9pm Cumnor Old School. Steven Bennett 01993 684494 www.cumnorchessclub.co.uk
Cumnor & District Historical Society	Last Monday of the month 7.30-9.00 Cumnor Old School. 01865 724808
Cumnor Gardening Club	http://cumnorgardens.org.uk/ tel 01865 721026
Harmony InSpires, Ladies' Acappella Singing Group	Wed 7.30 at Appleton Village Hall. C. Casson 01235 831352 or harmonyinspires@hotmail.co.uk
Hill End Volunteer Team	Contact: David Millin on david.millin@hill-end.org , call 863510 or visit www.hillend-oec.co.uk
Lawn Tennis Club, N Hinksey	Family club Email: Tennis@OxfordSportsLTC.org 07824 881680 www.oxfordsportsltc.org

West Oxford Singing Circle	Weds 2-3pm, WOCC, Emily 07969 522368 or see www.emilyschoirs.co.uk
Morris Dancing – Cry Havoc	Barbara Brett 249599 or bag@cryhavoc.org.uk
North Hinksey Preschool and Childcare clubs	Mon–Fri 7.45am–6.00 pm. Tel 794287 or email nhps.manager1@gmail.com
N Hinksey Art Group	Weds 10–12.00 W.I. Hall Christina 07931 707997
N Hinksey Bellringers	Contact: Ray Rook 01865 241451
N Hinksey Conservation Volunteers	Meets at weekends Contact Voirrey Carr 07798743121 voirreyc@aol.com
N Hinksey, Friends of	Annual Cricket Match/ Walk. Douglas Bond 791213.
N Hinksey Parish Council	clerk@northhinksey-pc.gov.uk
Oxford Flood Alliance	R Thurston 01865 723663 or 07973 292035
Oxford Flower Arranging Club	4th Thursday Cumnor. Dympna Walker: Ox 865259
Oxford Harmony	<i>Wednesdays 7.30 – 9.30 pm at Seacourt Hall</i> Contact pro@oxfordharmony.co.uk
Oxford Otters	Swimming for people with disabilities. Sundays, twice monthly. Contact: Alan Cusden 723420
Oxford Rugby Club	Boys and girls from 5, kevin.honner@ntlworld.com Seniors, training etc jbrodley@chandlings.org.uk .
Raleigh Park, Friends of	Email: raleighpark@raleighpark.org.uk
Seacourt Hall Management Committee	Contact Lottie White, 07452 960100, or see https://www.seacourthall.org.uk
Shotokan Karate Club	6+ WOCC twice weekly Martyn King 07836 646450
Stagecoach Botley	Botley School, Saturdays 9:00am–3pm <i>Performing Arts for 4-16 yr-olds 01865 590510 or 01235 390810</i>
Well-Being Walks, Botley	2nd & 4th Saturdays 9.50 Louie Memorial Field car park, Arnolds Way. Ashley 07717 714477
West Oxford Bowls Club	Dave Ellerker 07931 603801 wobc.membership@gmail.com
West Oxford Taekwon Do Club	Mon, Thurs 6.30-8pm, MA gym, contact Chris Hall 01865 570291 www.wotkd.co.uk
West Oxford U3A	(Uni of the 3rd Age) http://westoxfordu3a.org.uk/
Women's Institute (Botley)	Alison Jenner 07598 251161 alisonjenner@yahoo.com
Weight Watchers	Thursdays 6pm at SS Peter & Paul Church Hall Banso tel: 07779 253899 bansob@aol.com

The Sprout

The Newsletter for North Hinksey & Botley

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

Advertising rates:

½ page:	1 issue £56;	3 issues £135;	5 issues £196;	10 issues; £336
¼ page:	1 issue £28;	3 issues £67.50;	5 issues £98;	10 issues; £168
1/8 page:	1 issue £14;	3 issues £33.75;	5 issues £49;	10 issues; £84

Subscriptions: If you live outside North Hinksey Parish you can still receive The Sprout on a regular basis. Just take out a postal subscription – only £12 per annum, delivered to your door. Contact: Janet Bartlam: 01865 453111.

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

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

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Botley Baptist Church, 1 Church Way	Contact: Building Manager 07742 662668 botleybaptist@gmail.com
The Rosary Room Yarnells Hill, Elms Rise	Contact: Maria Brown, Tel: 01865 247986.
SS Peter & Paul Church Hall, West Way, Botley	Contact: 01865 242057 or osneybenefice@outlook.com .
Women's Institute Hall, North Hinksey Lane	Contact: Val Warner Tel. 01865 245273
Seacourt Hall, 3 Church Way	Contact: Lottie White on 07452 960100, or email admin@seacourthall.org.uk
Pavilion, Arnold's Way, Elms Rise, Botley	Contact: Darren Blase 241254 louiememorialpavilion@gmail.com
Oxford Rugby Club, North Hinksey Village	Contact:.. Mary Bagnall mary.bagnall1@btinternet.com.

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

St. Lawrence, Church of England, North Hinksey Lane

1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th Sunday 11.30am Holy Communion
3rd Sunday 11.30am Matins

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

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

Our Lady of the Rosary, Roman Catholic, Yarnells Hill

Saturday 6.30pm Mass
Sunday 9.15am Mass
Fr Daniel Lloyd 07584 323915 [dlloyd@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk.](mailto:dlloyd@portsmouthdiocese.org.uk)

Botley Baptist Church, 1 Church Way

Sunday Service 11 am
Wednesday Zoom Bible Study 7.30pm
Choir practice Thursday 2pm
Diane Melchert **07742 662668** www.botleybaptistchurch.org

Calvary Chapel

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

What's On

February

- Mon 6th St Peter and Paul's Church, art expo of local talent open till April.
- Sat 11th 7.30, St Michael's Church, Cumnor, Harpers Gardeners Folk Concert. Adults pay, children free
- Sun 12th 8pm, the Vine in Cumnor, Botley Bridges Quiz Night
- Mon 13th 2.30pm, Dean Court Community Centre, U3A talk: Catriona Bass: Long Mead – Wildflower Meadow Restoration and Recovery
- 13th Feb for a week, Thermal imaging camera available if you want to monitor where your house loses warmth (Sustainable Botley) laurie@livingwitness.org.uk
- Thur 23rd 7.30, Seacourt Hall, North Hinksey Parish Council
- Mon 27th 2.30pm, Dean Court Community Centre, U3A talk, Jeremy Holmes on "Rags to Riches and Giving it All Away – The Story of Andrew Carnegie, the World's Richest Man"

March

Weekends 3-5 and 7-10, Big Spring Clean (oxclean.org.uk)

Thur 16th Annual Parish Meeting

*Every Monday and Wednesday afternoon, between 3 and 5,
Seacourt Bridge Pub, hot meals for free.*

*Every Thursday, 3-5pm in Ss Peter & Paul Church Hall:
Botley Community Larder*