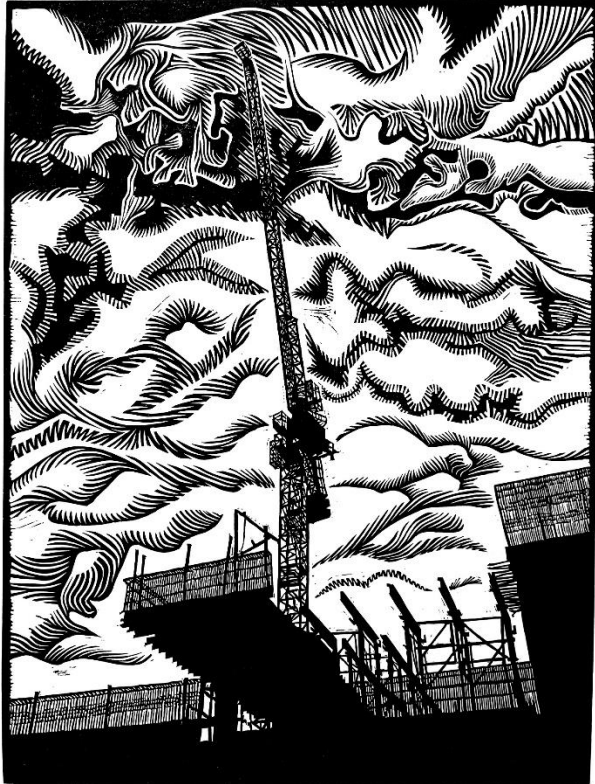


The Sprout



The newsletter for North Hinksey & Botley

Issue 136 April 2019

The Sprout

Issue 136, April 2019

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From the Editor

The Scouts and other youth organizations have lots to say in this month's *Sprout*. The Botley/Oxpens Army Cadets review last year's fun and games (p.31) the 2nd Oxford Brownies, endlessly exploring, take a look at Prosthetics (p.17), and the 4th Oxford Scouts explain why they won't be supporting the Parish Council's bid to replace our dingy pavilion with a multi-use building (p.19). As well as planning the new pavilion, the current council has quite a list of achievements to its credit (p.13), and invited the public to comment at the Annual Parish Meeting on 21st March (p.28). The April meeting will be their last, as a new council will be elected in May. We hope to have photos of all the prospective candidates in next month's issue, but this will mean publishing a week early, and working over Easter, so it will be a challenge. If you intend to stand, please get in touch before 15th April. The climate emergency has not gone away – Matthew Arnold students give their take on it on page 9. It is disappointing, in this context, that the Eynsham Bike Path, that was looking so hopeful, has hit a snag (p.25) but on the plus side, the Community Land Trust has finally submitted the planning application for their sustainable flats in Dean Court (p.7). Another new initiative in the parish is Tap Social's welcome bid to enter the music scene (p.33) The view on the cover of the current state of our shopping centre comes from Emmett Casley, whose terrific exhibition is still available to see at Ss P&P Church until 26th April. Ag MacKeith

Letters to the Editor

Hooray for Hedgehogs

In response to Elaine Sugden's query about where all the hedgehogs have gone, I am pleased to report that we had one last summer who visited our compost heap nightly on North Hinksey Lane [east of the A34]. With bated breath we watched as it sped across the road each night around 10 pm. I hadn't realised quite how quickly they moved! Our neighbour across the road reported that they had seen it with its young in their garden, so hopefully they will survive into adulthood to help sustain the local population.

Kate Griffiths

I noted your piece about the dearth of hedgehogs in Botley. We had a regular visitor [in Montagu Road] from December until January, very well catered for but now hibernating and much missed. We named her Holly.

Bruce Gorrie



Disabled access

Mrs Kellner wrote an article in the December *Sprout*, reiterating the commitment of the Howse family to Elms Parade and to the community generally. Could I bring to her attention, via *The Sprout*, a problem I have been trying for several years to have resolved?

The Dental Surgery on Elms Parade is up a steep flight of steps. There is no disabled stair lift and there is only a banister on one side. It's very difficult for my wife to get in. The receptionist does always ask if she can help her down the stairs, but I very much doubt she could take her weight if she fell.

We would go elsewhere if we could, but as best I know there's no NHS dentist this side of Oxford with an accessible entrance.

One of the Howse family is a wheelchair user. How does he manage the stairs? It's high time this accessibility issue was addressed. Can Mrs Kellner help to make it happen?

Alan Flockton

Water Flows

I have a suggestion about the unknown source of water in the nature reserve ditch (February *Sprout*). Perhaps this is an answer –or perhaps it has nothing to do with it. Anyway, I can tell you what I know, which has beep passed to me through a couple of generations of my family.

When the Howse family sold the fields to build Elms Rise Estate in the years leading up to WW2, there was a panic that the bombing might affect the water supply for the family farm [*Elms Farm, roughly where the Co-op is now*]. So they held onto plots of land which had natural water springs, and created a piped drainage system to bring the water down to the farm in case their water supply was cut off.

Where these pipes come out, I don't know, but I have the start of one on my plot of land [*by Cope Close*]. Are there others on the estate?

I hope this may help you.

Andrew Burk

Briony and Botley Centre

Sprout readers will be amazed or appalled by Briony Newport's letter last month. So many of us tried time after time to get the Vale or its management company to maintain the old shopping precinct as an attractive local centre, to replace defunct lighting, clean the lights, replace dangerous paving, and repair and paint those bits of the structure which were literally falling down, thereby discouraging graffiti and vandalism.

To discover that our Parish Council Chair and Vale Councillor decided merely "to keep a low profile and see what happened" beggars belief. If we don't like the new Centre when it is finished, we now know why.

Andrew Pritchard

[There will be no further correspondence on this subject. Ed]

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Community-Led Homes... the next step

Oxfordshire Community Land Trust is delighted to say we have now submitted our planning application for the new flats in Dean Court. The details are here: www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk. Search for application **P/19/V0424/FUL**

Please let us know if you have any questions about this. It's a very exciting moment for us as we finally look forward to the next stage.

It's also very important that we have as much support as possible from local people for these flats: so if you support us, please write to the planners saying as much. The flats will be genuinely and permanently affordable, thus contributing to a more sustainable community. They will be spacious, well-insulated and light.

They are relatively high density, in keeping with new developments, and follow planning rules. This scheme will help reduce pressure for development on precious green belt. The flats also bring the added benefit of a car share scheme and will have fewer cars than a typical development of this size.

It's also time to start finding prospective tenants. Do you know anyone who might be interested?

People who are interested in living there must

- i. be registered on Vale's Housing Register (www.whitehorsehomechoice.org.uk)
- ii. have a strong local connection to the area of Cumnor Parish
- iii. be interested in cooperating with other tenants to help run the project as effectively as possible*.

If you know anyone who meets these criteria, ask them to get in touch.

Meantime we'd also like some local people from Dean Court to be involved as the project develops. If you have any interest in working with us on this, please get in touch. No previous skills required. Join us if you want to help promote genuinely and permanently affordable community-led housing. To get in touch please email: info@oclt.org.uk or visit our website www.oclt.org.uk

** full training and support will be given to tenants to do this. Details will be developed in collaboration with the successful tenants: it could involve running the car share, ensuring the grounds and shared spaces are well looked after, making sure the shared bins are put out. It is not expected that tenants would undertake repairs or rent collection.*

Fran Ryan

Climate Crisis – youth strikes

Over 1000 youths in Oxford and 1.5 million worldwide in a staggering 125 countries. Students across the globe are standing together to protect our futures, which governments are overseeing.

To be part of a world-wide climate protest is quite something; in over 125 countries a million other students just like us do really care about the future. On Friday March 15th we went on strike for the second time, this time as part of a global movement.

You might remember the last strike when it was suggested that we should stay in school to learn about how we, as young people, can become the future saviours of our world. But this is missing the point. Our global strike is underlining the government negligence that has put the future climate at the bottom of their priorities. The last significant piece of Climate legislation was over a decade ago, and while this was a step in the right direction the issue is simply not being adequately addressed by the powers that be. In some parts of Oxford there was an average of 61 micrograms of nitrogen dioxide per cubic metre of air in 2016 – that's over 50% above the EU's safe limit. Nitrogen dioxide is linked to cancer, asthma and heart problems on a local level.

Our previous climate strike was broadly successful; both Oxford City Council and the Vale of the White Horse District Council have since declared a climate emergency, but this is not enough. We want the Government to call a climate emergency. We want UN countries to agree to stricter terms than the Paris agreement. We want carbon emissions slashed, along with investment in fracking. Staying in school helps nobody. To quote many placards held at the strike: "We're missing our lessons to teach you one." We don't feel our



education is giving us sufficient knowledge to tackle climate change. The youth are the future. How are we supposed to bring about change if we aren't given the tools? Climate change is not taught in school as an emergency, it's just another interesting fact about the world. If the government wants children to stay in school they should be sure to educate them on the issues that will affect students – issues that their generation has caused.

Of course it's very easy as an adult to say that we're just children bunking off school; that we're kids looking for an excuse to miss lessons who don't actually care about the issues. If that were the case the climate strike movement would not be international. There would not be placards filling Bonn Square for the second time in just over a month. There would not be children as young as eleven passionately giving speeches with one simple message: "if you won't stand up for our Earth, then we will." In many ways it's quite poetic that, in the age

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of huge blockbuster superhero movies, young people in Oxford are working to save the world. It's belittling and somewhat ignorant to suggest that because young people are young they can't enact change.

Gandhi said we should be the change we wished to see in the world, and that is what we are doing. We are taking action so the Government can recognise our valid and pressing worries, so our future is bright and clean in years to come.

Charlotte Czernuszka, Trixie Panatti-Reeve, William Evans & Lulu Panatti-Reeve (students at Matthew Arnold School)

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**OUR COVER PICTURE SHOWS AN IMAGE OF THE PROGRESS OF THE SHOPPING CENTRE. How are yours coming along? Keep sending them in to the Sprout, and we'll publish the best and make an archive of them all.**

## North Hinksey Parish Council

By the time this goes to press, North Hinksey Parish Council will be winding down its current term in anticipation of the **local elections on Thursday 2nd May**. The Annual Parish Meeting on 21st March gave us the opportunity to reflect on this council's work, and to look ahead to what awaits the new council (*see page 28*).

Key actions undertaken by the current council include:

- Supporting the formation of Botley Bridges family services when Children's Centres were closed throughout Oxfordshire
- Creating an NHPC Facebook page and launching a new NHPC website
- Securing a new bus shelter for Lime Road
- Supporting the relocation of Seacourt Hall to its current premises, and working with developers towards the smooth completion of the West Way development
- Hosting the annual Remembrance Day service at Botley Cemetery and Commonwealth War Graves, with a particularly well-attended centenary service in 2018
- Supporting the completion of a Neighbourhood Plan and its submission for independent examination
- Working with neighbouring parish councils to resist the Oxford Cambridge Expressway
- Installing new play equipment in the upper Louie Memorial Playing Field
- Planning for a new Louie Memorial Pavilion building and surrounding facilities

The most recent step towards the rejuvenation of the Louie Memorial Playing Fields was NHPC's approval in March of a planning application for a new multi-use building to replace the current pavilion and scout hut. The plans were displayed at the Annual Parish Meeting, and copies are available for viewing at the parish office (2nd floor, Grant Thornton building) and at Botley Library. Vale of White Horse District Council will now run a formal public consultation while -

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the planning application is being considered. All of the planning documents and information on how everyone can submit their comments to Vale planning officers are available on the Louie Memorial page of the NHPC website: [https://northhinksey-pc.gov.uk/recreation-amenities-committee/louie memorial/](https://northhinksey-pc.gov.uk/recreation-amenities-committee/louie%20memorial/) Check the website for details of when the Vale's consultation period opens and closes.

NHPC thanks all who have engaged with our work over the past four years. If you are interested in joining the parish council for its next term, we encourage you to put yourself forward for election. The deadline for receipt of nominations is **Wednesday 3rd April at 4pm.** You can find all the information about voting or standing in the May election on the district council website: [http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/local-democracy/elections-0) **local-democracy/elections-0** or check the Elections and Staffing page on the NHPC website at [www.northhinksey-pc.gov.uk](http://www.northhinksey-pc.gov.uk)

**Colin Ryde, Clerk, on behalf of the Parish Council**

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Holy Week & Easter Services

Palm Sunday – 14 April

9.30am Holy Communion at St Peter & St. Paul, West Way
11.30am Holy Communion at St Lawrence, North Hinksey

Maundy Thursday – 18 April

9.00am Morning Prayer at St. Lawrence
7.30pm Holy Communion at St. Frideswide, Botley Road

Good Friday – 19 April

9.00am Morning Prayer at St. Peter and St. Paul
1.30pm Quiet Service at St. Peter & St. Paul
2.00pm Walk of Witness leaves St. Peter & St Paul
2.30pm Quiet Service at St. Lawrence

Easter Sunday – 21 April

9.30am Holy Communion at St. Peter & St. Paul
10.30am Holy Communion at St. Lawrence

www.osneybenefice.org.uk

The Anglican Parish of North Hinksey with Botley

Pancakes and Prosthetics

Shrove Tuesday had to be marked so 2nd Botley Brownies got out our portable mini cooker. Mr Tawny kindly came and cooked us pancakes on it. Whilst it is fantastic (and a freebie from saving loads of Sainsbury's supermarket vouchers) it is a little slow to cook pancakes on, so he continued cooking throughout the evening, filling the hall with the gorgeous smell of pancakes, lemon and sugar whilst we did many other things including paper pancake racing (see photo).



The following week as part of the New Brownie Programme, we had James, a Brownie dad, come to our Brownie meeting to discuss his job. We started guessing what he did for a living with 'Twenty Questions'. We failed miserably, although we did establish that he didn't wear a uniform and that his company made things. Finally, from some large cardboard boxes under a table and disguised with a fabric covering, he produced items one-by-one made by his company that he had assembled just for our talk: *Prosthetics* – and each item was lovingly admired and passed from one girl to the next. The detail was incredible – they really do look just like the real thing. They are just so convincing, and clearly made by people with a passion for authenticity – look closely at this Brownie!

There was everything from a tiny false toe to a lower limb. Then he moved onto functioning limbs – some with interchangeable ends depending on your hobbies. The girls took it all in their stride, and although it's a great shame that they are needed at all, the pride with which they are fabricated came across in the finished products. James's job is to ensure that his company continues producing exceptional quality products but also innovates with new technology like phone apps. What a brilliant place to work!



Lucy Howes

4th Oxford Scout Group and the New Pavilion

There is great excitement about the plans for a new pavilion, and publicity from the Parish Council has portrayed the project as having the backing of the 4th Oxford Scout Group. This is no longer correct, and we wish to explain why we have decided we must object to the planning application.

The 4th Oxford are a large and thriving scout group, with a membership of 86 young people involved at evening sessions every week, with activities and camps at week-ends and during school holidays. There is a team of leaders and helpers, a group scout leader and an exec committee (the trustees of the charity). All those involved in the group are volunteers, and parents help regularly at sessions too. Demand for scouting in the area is greater than ever, and we are exploring adding additional nights to meet this.



For the best part of 80 years our group has enjoyed a fantastic home on the Louie Memorial Field which, like most scout groups, has afforded us the ability to operate at very low running costs, providing scouting to all.

The scout group is only viable because of the community support we receive. We benefit from a lease of land, rent free, on which we have the scout hut. We use the hut most evenings in a week, and during the day for preparations for activities and camps, and for drying our many tents (several of which are very large). Repairs to the hut are done by volunteers, and often with donations of materials. The hut is available to the community and has been hired for various events.

We are also supported through fundraising for e.g. our Christmas raffle and an annual sponsored walk. Leaders and parents contribute many hours of their precious time throughout the year – we arrange activities around our volunteers' other commitments.

Discussions about the possibility of a new pavilion have been ongoing for many years. Whilst discussing the possibility that this would also replace the scout hut, we were assured that a new building would be a like-for-like replacement of our hut, that it would be affordable, and that we would have the priority access we need if we are to continue to thrive.

After the public consultation in April 2018 we realised that we would be competing against others for use of the new building, and either the scout group would dominate evening use, or we would have our current activities and future potential restricted. We explained this to the Parish Council in early May 2018 and told them that we wanted to keep our hut. We were told that this was not an option, and that we would get what we needed in the new pavilion design. We continued discussions on the express understanding that keeping the scout hut is our best option.

By late November 2018, it was clear to us that it would be impossible for the scout group to exist at all under the Parish Council's plans, and that we could not agree to their proposals. The business plan for the new pavilion requires us to pay almost all our membership fees to



hire the hall. Currently we spend 20–25% of our income for utilities,

about 40% on activities and about 40% has be paid to the Scout Association to cover insurance and local and national services. The council then suggested we should pay up to 60% of our current income, which would leave nothing for our main activities. As our numbers are cyclical, when our numbers inevitably reduce, the hire would become even more unaffordable. We are also expected to reduce the number of nights we hold meetings and shorten sessions to fit two sections into one evening, which drastically changes what we can do, and fewer leaders will be available. The plan itself does not provide us with the separate break-out room or appropriate storage for our kit. There are other significant difficulties, but we should keep this brief. We have also not been offered the long-term security we get from an actual lease of a building.

In December 2018 we wrote a long and detailed letter to the Parish Council explaining why it would be impossible for the scout group to use the pavilion under their proposals. We asked them to reconsider and vote to continue with the new pavilion but leave the scout hut in place. We are keen to see the pavilion redeveloped, and the buildings could easily co-exist. At the meeting, after a relatively short discussion, the council voted to continue with the existing plans to demolish the scout hut. In the three months from 20 December no one from the council has responded to our letter to tell us how the new pavilion could be viable for us. We told the council in January 2019 that we would have to object to the planning application.

It is difficult to understand why the Parish Council is taking this approach. We can't agree to pay sums we can never generate, or to artificially reduce what we do, and we have to ensure the group continues to thrive. We have to object to the planning application because it does not provide for the survival of the scout group. We have started the process to find a site to build a new scout hut, although it seems wrong that we should incur this cost when our existing scout hut could be renovated at a much lower cost. Raising the extra funds will not be easy.

As the executive committee of the 4th Oxford Scout Group we are trustees of a charity who must find the best long-term solution for the group. The plans do not provide us with what is required to run our scout group effectively, and the cost is unaffordable, which is why we will be objecting to the planning application.

The Exec Committee of the 4th Oxford Scout Group

Eynsham Bike Path Sidelined

We were shocked to learn on 20th March that the County Council had just dropped the Botley–Eynsham bike path from their funding bid. It was part of the A40 improvement programme, and quite how they could think that losing the sustainability component would make their bid more attractive in the current climate is anybody's guess. Here's what BikeSafe have to say about it:

“The campaign has run for 7 years so far

For seven years we have been campaigning for the B4044 path to be built. Last year, following pressure from the County Cycling Champion, Cllr Dr Suzanne Bartington, the path was incorporated into the A40 Improvement Scheme plans which will be submitted to central government in the next few days in a bid for funds. The inclusion of the path gave the OCC plans a sustainable transport component, essential to this type of new road planning.

“OCC announce that they will not include the B4044 path

Last Friday Oxfordshire County Council announced that they were going to cut out the B4044 path part of the bid on the grounds that

this component weakens their case for the A40 Improvement which amounts to a dual carriageway and retention of the existing cycle and footways. That is they are taking away the pollution-lowering part of the bid to strengthen their plans for a dual carriageway and all the additional traffic congestion this will produce both on the A40 and the B4044.

Specifically they say that they could not claim that the B4044 path would “unlock new homes”

“No prior warning given

They did not give any warning of this decision to their Cycling Champion, nor to BikeSafe, nor to the Oxfordshire Cycling

Network. It was just announced as a fact.



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We have been given no time to respond. We think this is a betrayal of all the work BikeSafe has done and paid for and shared with the OCC at no cost to them. It is a betrayal of your unstinting support for the B4044 path and of the public generally, who were asked last December to see the plans at the public consultation. It is a betrayal of all 3 MPs in our area, the county councillors and countless district and parish councillors who support the B4044 path.

It is also very bad news for businesses in Witney, Eynsham and Botley who all want to see the B4044 community path built because it helps their employees travel and be fit too."

In response, Councillor Hudspeth has reaffirmed his support for the B4044 Bike Path. It was taken off the funding bid because that was primarily for housing infrastructure. But what's gone wrong when improving the traffic flow on the A40 has to be promoted as a housing issue? It doesn't make sense! The Housing Infrastructure Fund is supposed to unlock infrastructure for housing, but it sounds like this bid would help to unlock car-based development, not the kind of sustainable development that is needed in Oxfordshire.

Ag MacKeith

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Annual Parish Meeting

North Hinksey's Annual Parish Meeting took place on the night of the Spring equinox – 21st March. This is really too late for the Sprout copy deadline (15th) but here's a speedy account squeezed in at the last moment.

The meeting was well attended – not packed, as such meetings are when the locals are riled up about something, but with about 40 members of the public present. There were five sections:

- a presentation from SDC, the builders of the new shopping centre
- an account of the implications of the Expressway
- an explanation of the plans and thinking behind the new pavilion
- a presentation by Adi Wright, our local policeman (in as far as we have one) and
- questions sent directly to the parish council from the public.

On the chairs was a fat document with last year's minutes, reports from all the PC committees, and written answers to the public's questions. There was also a Financial Statement for 2017, supplied by the new Clerk, Colin Ryde, from the sea of paperwork. (You can find the current statement on the NHPC website.)

SDC and the shopping centre

While we waited, SDC answered questions about parking. They use the Park & Ride, and are laying on a shuttle bus to bring workers to the site. We need a prominent sign saying **BADLY PARKED? – CALL THIS NUMBER** so we know who to call if things get out of hand. The mild winter has meant they are ahead of the game: groundwork for the section on the Baptist Chapel site is nearly completed and the Premier Inn will start to go up, floor by floor at the start of April. The student accommodation should be finished by the start of August, so students can move in for the Autumn term. SDC can organize site tours if people want them. The pedestrian crossing work will be done in April and should take two weeks. Local school kids have had fun naming the tower cranes. North Hinksey school called TC1 'Betsy', and Botley went for 'Ucrane Bolt' for TC2. The section which now houses the Co-op and Tesco won't be demolished until their new homes are ready. This last section will all be living space.

Oxbridge Expressway

David Kay, the PC chair, described how this had been imposed without any prior consultation, and showed an aerial view which made

very clear why it would be disastrous to widen the A34 through Botley. This and the climate emergency are why the parish council has joined the Anti-Expressway Alliance, which so far includes some 20 parish councils stretching up to the M40 at Bicester. In fact, the road is not a transport solution but a housing opportunity. It would double the population of Oxfordshire. The railway option is the one that would address transport issues. The line is already there as far as Milton Keynes – just in need of electrification, freight provision and a more realistic budget. The problem is at the Cambridge end, where houses have been built on it.

Pavilion planning application

These will shortly be sent in to the Vale, who will then organize the public consultation. This will be a further chance for people to comment. She drew attention to some anonymous leaflets which had been circulated, distorting the facts to give a false picture. The footprint of the new pavilion is slightly bigger than the scout hut and old pavilion combined, but it is still only 0.6% of the entire green space. No public money – no money at all! – is being spent on evicting the Scouts from their hut. The PC is still intent on reaching agreement.

Police issues

Adi Wright, our local policeman, delighted the room with his upbeat presentation and his stunning sideburns. There has been a string of shed thefts, and he urged us to contact the police and get our power tools marked with Smartwater, etc. There have also been some burglaries – thieves are no longer interested in laptops and TVs, what they are after is gold and cash in any currency. Also car keys. Smart keys for smart cars left near the front door can be intercepted from outside, though there are ways of preventing this. (Expect to see some future advice in the *Sprout*.) Scams are also a problem, usually by phone or email. There's a phone one going round that pretends to be from BT (*mutter of agreement from the audience*). If it comes to you, hang up and tell Action Fraud (phone 0300 123 2040). He explained that the police have been told to take no action on parking issues unless the parking is actually a hazard to other road users. And when challenged to provide *local* news to local newsletters like this one, he said he would do his best to keep us informed in future, and to book Have Your Say surgeries far enough ahead for us to promote them.

Most of the public were happy with the written answers to their questions, so the meeting closed at around 9.30.

AgM

Army Cadets

What have Botley/Oxpens Detachment Army Cadets been up to?

Casting our minds back to a very hot summer in 2018, the detachment had a great time at West Oxford Community Fun Day. The cadets took part in the activities put on by other organisations as well as staging our own. We arranged a problem-solving and teamwork exercise, which involved trying to remove a box of vital supplies from a minefield (only hypothetical!!) using just a rope, tent pegs, duct tape, some climbing carabiners and a heathy amount of ingenuity. By all accounts the cadets had a fun day and so did the general public



The summer also held the culmination of the cadet calendar, our two-week-long annual camp. Here, the cadets get up to all sorts of activities. The first week is all about living outside, sleeping under the stars and running around getting muddy and dirty, coupled with shooting, military training and fieldcraft. The second week is taken up with active pursuits such as archery, climbing, mountain biking and paddling, to name just a few.

Summer very quickly turns into Autumn and the new school year, and our preparations for Remembrance Sunday. This year was important as it was the centenary of the end of the First World War. Oxpens/Botley Detachment did two parades. The first was at the poignant Commonwealth War graves service in Botley. We then hot footed it to Christ Church Cathedral where we joined cadet organisations from all around Oxfordshire for a special commemorative service. Cadet Corporal Williams had the honour of reading a poem and did a great job, even if she was a bit daunted by the task.



The detachment ended the year with a break from normal cadet training for our annual Christmas party. This included all your favourite Christmas party elements: bad jumpers, silly hats, finger food and a plethora of classic games like Articulate and Pictionary.

If the Army Cadets sounds like something you or someone you know (aged 13–18) would enjoy www.armycadets.com/county/oxfordshire-acf/ is our website where you can find out more, or you can email me at 2038thomps@armymail.mod.uk **Mark Thompson**

Musical Notes

Tap Social Movement, the social enterprise pub, brewery and cafe on Curtis Industrial Estate have just added another string to their bow by becoming a fully kitted-out live music venue. A brand new stage and PA have been put together through a collaboration between Tandem Collective (a non-profit arts collective), Upcycled Sounds (local recording studio/record label) and WeGotTickets (locally based ticket platform).

The groups to put the venue together in their spare time to support the local music and arts scene at a time where many independent venues are struggling. The Cellar closed last month after several decades of hosting gigs, and the Wheatsheaf is also facing pressures. The Tap has a lot of potential as a venue with few noise restrictions, a large capacity and easy access for band equipment, plus all gigs help support their amazing work with ex-offenders.

The new stage has already hosted gigs from a 15 piece jazz orchestra to reggae, talks and a theatre production. “We’re extremely excited to be collaborating with Tandem Collective and Upcycled Sounds to welcome this new monthly concert series to Oxford’s music scene ... huge thanks to Tandem and Upcycled Sounds for getting us involved and facilitating the stage and PA system,” enthused the Tap Team.

Upcycled Sounds and Tandem Collective have been running a monthly gig series since the stage opened, featuring a range of local and nationally acclaimed bands. Their next two gigs bring soul, jazz and folk acts to Tap, which have been featured by BBC Radio 3, *The Times*, the *Guardian* and graced stages from WOMAD to the V & A. They are:

- *Hejira + Fran & Flora*, Wednesday 10th April, 7.15pm, and
- *Firefly Burning + Iyatra Quartet* (in partnership with Oxford Contemporary Music), Wednesday 5th June, 7.30pm.

Advanced tickets are £8 from www.tandemfestival.com, under 'Events'. **Hannah Jacobs**

LOCAL PLANNING APPLICATIONS

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| P19/V0368/HH | 38 Hutchcomb Rd. 2-storey rear extension and front porch extension. | 11 February <i>TDD: 8 April</i> |
| P19/V0387/LDP | 56 North Hinksey Lane. Single storey extension. | 11 February <i>TDD: 8 April</i> |
| P19/V0397/N1A P19/V0373/FUL | Riverside Court, 9 West Way. Convert existing offices to 34 apartments. Re-clad existing building, alter doors and windows. Raise roof. | 12 February <i>TDD: 9 April</i> 15 February <i>TDD: 12 April</i> |
| P19/V0410/FUL | 1 Maple Close. Change of use to 7 bedroom HMO property. | 15 February <i>TDD: 12 April</i> |
| P19/V0253/FUL | Ideal Eyes 76 West Way. Renewal of planning application. Convert ground floor space to residential use. Remove garage for parking. | 19 February <i>TDD: 16 April</i> |
| P19/V0451/FUL P19/V0448/HH | Thatched House Stanton Road. Demolish existing dwelling, outdoor sheds, car port. Erect new house with indoor pool and garage. | 21 and 22 February <i>TDD: 18 April</i> |
| P19/V0474/PDH | 56 Cedar Road. Demolish existing outbuilding & proposed rear extension. | 22 February <i>TDD: 5 April</i> |
| P19/V0529/FUL | Seacourt Tower, Homebase Ltd. Refurbish building including external alterations, new entrance lobby, reconfigure car parking. | 28 February <i>TDD: 25 April</i> |
| P19/V0556/PDH P19/V0547/LDP | 9 Beech Rd. Single storey rear kitchen/dining extension. Convert roof space. | 1 March <i>TDD: 12 April</i> 4 March <i>TDD: 29 April</i> |
| P19/V0455/FUL | 32 Lime Rd. Change of use of residential outbuilding to mixed ancillary residential use & short-let accommodation. | 6 March <i>TDD: 1 May</i> |
| P19/V0538/FUL | 75 Laburnum Rd. Partially demolish and alter interior to make four 2-bed flats with 4 parking places. | 13 March <i>TDD: 8 May</i> |

Roger Ainsworth (1951-2019)

The *Sprout* is sorry to report the death of a distinguished North Hinksey resident on 23rd February: Professor Roger Ainsworth, Master of St Catherine's College. He died after a short battle with cancer. He was often to be seen on his bike on Willow Walk, while his black E-type Jaguar and unfinished boat project sat under the walnut tree outside his house beside the church in North Hinksey Lane.



Roger became Tutorial Fellow in Engineering at St Catherine's in 1985, having worked for ten years in industry at Rolls-Royce and then at the Atomic Energy Research Establishment at Harwell, and became Master of the College in 2002.

He was elected a Fellow of the Royal Aeronautical Society in 2004, in recognition of his work in the field of jet engine research, and in 2017 he became a Fellow of the Learned Society of Wales, a distinction which acknowledged his academic excellence in the subject of mechanical engineering. In honour of his work promoting the College's connection with Denmark, Roger was appointed a Knight of the Order of the Dannebrog by HM The Queen of Denmark in 2005.

Roger played a number of major roles in the University. In his capacity as Pro-Vice-Chancellor from 2003 onwards, he served as chair of the University's Building Committee, where, over 13 years, he oversaw a £750 million building programme. But he always felt that the most important part of his work – and the aspect that he enjoyed the most – was interacting with and encouraging the students.

The Vice Master, Professor Penny Handford, said that the whole college community “valued his loyal friendship, his outstanding leadership, and his contribution to the advancement of St Catherine's College”, while the Vice-Chancellor of the University, Professor Louise Richardson, said: “Oxford has lost its longest serving head of house, a deeply committed University citizen and a widely respected academic. The speed of Roger's illness and death has caused a deep sense of shock and sadness across the university. His wife, Sarah, and children Tom, Emily and Harriet are very much in our thoughts.”

With thanks to Chris Sugden

Nature Notes

Spring seems to have arrived early this year. Already snowdrops and crocuses are nearly over and the tiny white blossoms of wild plum (*Prunus domestica*), always first in Spring, can be seen. Look out for the small yellow fruit later in the year. Along Willow Walk, passers-by heard the distinctive rattle of a spotted woodpecker. Grey squirrels are everywhere. Tiny Muntjac deer, easily mistaken for a dog, are regular visitors to the hedgerows now, and often you can spot them before they spot you. Harder to see, but more spectacular are the big roe deer, alone or in groups, making a dash across the fields with those distinctive white tufts on their hindquarters. Heron fish all year round in the Hinksey Stream, patiently waiting in ambush or suddenly leaping into the air with a spectacular flash of grey wings. Visitors to the Fishes at this time of year may be lucky enough to spot the huge buzzard which regularly perches on the nearby willows. The warm weather has encouraged many walkers into the fields, where it is easy to spot a kestrel in its distinctive hover. After being cooped-up indoors for the last few months, it's good to be outside again.

Rod Chalk

Citizens Advice boosts help for UC claimants

Citizens Advice now offers a new service to help speed things up if you are having problems with claiming Universal Credit for the first time. The "Help to Claim" service will be available over the phone, face to face, and online through "webchat" and Internet content, from 1st April.

They can advise on eligibility, set up an email address or Universal Credit account, fill in the initial application form, get access to a computer, or arrange advance payments. They can also help make sure that the right evidence is submitted with your form. And if you only need minimal help with your application, Citizens Advice can provide tips if you get stuck. They also support people who are already receiving Universal Credit.

The national Freephone number for Help to Claim is **0800 144 8444**. Phone and webchat services are available from 8am–6pm. (Mon-Fri) For any other issues you might need help with, please telephone the Adviceline on 03 444 111 444. If you'd prefer to talk face to face, the office at 95 St Aldates is open Monday to Friday, 10am to 2pm.

Randoms

WaterBlitz

You can now register to take part in the 8th Earthwatch WaterBlitz. This happens twice a year, and will take place around the weekend after Easter, 26th to 29th April. What happens? Hundreds of volunteers, using the kit supplied, test local ponds, lakes, ditches, springs, streams and rivers for phosphates and nitrates. The tests are quick and easy to use, and coverage by volunteers is much wider than Thames Water could carry out on their own. It's a chance for all of us who care about the environment to make sure key pollution sources are identified, as well as clean water spots that act as refuges for some of our special wildlife that's more sensitive to water quality, such as the beautiful but rare fen violet.

You will need to register before 21st April to allow time for testing kits to be posted. Register here and get your free Freshwater Watch kit: <https://freshwaterwatch.thewaterhub.org/group/thames-blitz>

If you are interested in seeing the data collected during previous WaterBlitz events and getting to know more about your local freshwater environment, take a look at the Freshwater Links platform: <https://freshwaterlinks.org>

Bluebell Teas

Here's another Spring event to look forward to. During May Besselsleigh Wood is filled with a glorious carpet of bluebells. On Sunday 5th May, 2.30 pm – 4.30 pm, tea and homemade cake will be served at St Laurence Church in Appleton. Everyone is welcome to call in for refreshments. Contact Carol Dodimead for further details on 07767 796071

Big Clean Up

This massive communal exercise of citizenship took place in and around Oxford on the first weekend in March. The Old Botley posse cleared up around McDonalds down to the Cemetery, including the stream along the town end of North Hinksey Lane, which harboured bottles and empty cans *in bags!* You can't help wondering why someone should have gone to the trouble of collecting and bagging them, only to throw them into the brambles – but I suppose it's rather like clearing up after your dog and then lobbing the little black bag into a tree, where it can hang till kingdom come! I'm told there were other

collective efforts on Elms Rise and in the Seacourt Nature reserve, but no photos have been received, so you will just have to imagine them. One good effect is that having spent a couple of hours making the place clean for once, I now find it hard to pass by without picking up any fresh sweet wrappers and plastic rubbish as they appear. Word got back to me that people were out looking for teams to join, and would like something more organized next year. If this was you, get in touch and we can get something going.

Community Fridge

The Fridge celebrated its second birthday on 16th March, with a cake and lots of pats on the back. All praise to Riki Therivel, whose brainchild it is, and whose constant care holds it all together. It is now part of a new CAG called Food for Charities, with Riki in the chair, Grant Nightingale as secretary and Hannah Fenton as treasurer. Here's a photo of the happy occasion.



Parish Council Elections

The new parish council will be elected on 2nd May. We will do our level best to get the *May Sprout* through your doors before then, with a list of all the candidates, but it will be a major effort to get out a week early, with Easter in the way, so we aren't promising. *Deliverers, please take note and rush the May edition out as fast as you can!*

Bust Stops on the A34

Highways England are removing the three bus stops on the stretch between North Hinksey Lane and Westminster Way. Highways England are also responsible for the Stanley Close underpass, although they take no interest in it. Is it time to persuade them to refurbish it, put in accessibility ramps, refresh the mural, etc?

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

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| 1st Botley Brownies Girls aged 7–10 | Dean Court Community Centre Thur 6–7.30 Fiona Wheeler, 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 | Meet Fridays, Botley Baptist Hall Contact: Julie Tatham 01865 863074 or Amy Cusden 07887 654386 |
| 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 |
| 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 Health Walks | Wednesday 9.30 a.m Contact: Briony 246497 |
| Botley Library | 01865 248142. Open till 7 on Friday and 1pm on Sat, otherwise 9.30 to 5.30 (closed Wednesdays). |
| Botley Singers | Thur 7.30, St Andrew's Church, Dean Court. Angela Astley-Penny Ox.242189 angastpen@aol.com |
| Branches Café, Westway Place, Open to All 8am-3pm, | Open for young people 3-5 daily, Th. eves 7–9 Tel:01865 251115 www.branchesyouth.uk Facebook Branches Youth Cafe, Instagram @_branches_youth_ |
| Community Fridge | For all. Put food in, take food out. Ss P&P church, Mon–Sat 9–5, Sun 11–5. Riki Therivel 07759 135811 |
| Cumnor Choral Society | Friday 7.30 to 9.30 pm Contact: 01235 533726 or 07552 786127 or www.cumnorchoral.co.uk |
| 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 | Details on website at http://cumnorgardens.org.uk/ or phone Chris Impey, 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 01865-863510 or visit www.hillend-oec.co.uk |
| Let's Sing! – singing group | Weds 2pm, WOCC, details Emily 07969 522368 or email emformusic@outlook.com |
| Morris Dancing – Cry Havoc | Barbara Brett 249599 or bag@cryhavoc.org.uk |

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| Mum and Baby Yoga for babies from 6 wks to crawling | Mondays 10.30 at Dean Court CC, contact Jacqueline Rice via https://yogawithjacqueline.co.uk |
| North Hinksey Preschool and Childcare Clubs | Mon–Fri 7.45am –6.00 pm. 01865 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 Horticultural Soc | Contact: Ann Dykes Ox 251821 andykes@hotmail.com |
| N Hinksey Parish Council | Colin Ryde, tel 861992, clerk@northhinksey-pc.gov.uk |
| N Hinksey Youth Club | Wednesdays at Arnold's Way pavilion, call Daz on 07791 212866 or see Facebook |
| Over Sixties Lunch Club | Every other Thursday. Seacourt Hall. Viv Smith 01865 241539 or Jackie Warner 01865 721386 |
| Oxford Flood Alliance | R Thurston 01865 723663 or 07973 292035 |
| Oxford Flower Arranging Club | 4th Thursday Cumnor. Dymrna Walker: 01865 865259 |
| 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 or melanie_riste@hotmail.com |
| Parkinson's Disease Soc | Contact: Pen Keyte, Branch Secretary 01865 556032. |
| Raleigh Park, Friends of | David Brown raleighpark@raleighpark.org.uk |
| Saturdads 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 | Contact: Michael Cockman 07766 317691 michael.cockman@gmail.com . |
| Shotokan Karate club | 6+ WOCC twice weekly Martyn King 07836 646450 |
| Weight Watchers | Thursdays 6pm at SS Peter & Paul Church Hall Banso tel: 07779 253899 bansob@aol.com |
| 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 07815 899698 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 email liz.manson@virginmedia.com |

