

# OSNEY ISLAND RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

www.osneyisland.org.uk

NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER / DECEMBER 2007



## Happy Christmas!

On behalf of everyone on Osney, our thoughts are with those neighbours who had to move into temporary accommodation. We hope that you are able to return to normal as soon as possible.

### COMING UP

#### The West Oxford Academy

Don't forget these excellent little talks by local people which cost just £1 with a glass of wine. They last for just one hour including questions. The last one in 2007 is 'The never-ending detective puzzle – piecing together family history' by Fiona Hedges on **November 27** at WOCC @ 8pm.

#### Local History Christmas special

At 7pm on **Thursday 6 December** at the West Oxford Community Centre. Come and have a mince pie and a glass of wine; mull over past talks, and review those ahead. Cost £2.00 Email Alison Mathias [acmathias@tinyworld.co.uk](mailto:acmathias@tinyworld.co.uk) or pop into the WOCC to let her know you are coming by **Tuesday 4 December**.

outside your door please let me know too. We're looking forward to the biggest turn out ever!

#### 40% House: 34 East Street Open Day

You are invited to our open days where we will be explaining the energy efficiency and renewable technologies we have used in refurbishing our house. The next open day is **Saturday 8th December 3-5.00pm**. Just come on the day or call David or Barbara Hammond on 01865 245047. The two open days we have had so far have been very successful with lots of visitors. The Sustainable Energy Academy [SEA] in London who run them celebrated their 1000 visitor at our house on 5th Oct with presentation from the Mayor.

#### Christmas services

##### At St Frideswide's

Wed 19th Dec 7pm Community Carols  
Sun 23rd Dec 6.30pm Nine Lessons and Carols with junior choir  
Mon 24th Dec 4.30pm Children's Crib Service  
Tue 25th Dec 10.30am Mass of Christmas Day

##### At St Margaret's, Binsey

Sun 23rd Dec 3pm Carols by Candlelight  
Tue 25th Dec 9am Mass of Christmas Dawn

### FLOODING UPDATE

We'd like to update you on your committee's work to make sure that the authorities support us to protect our area. Although we remain critical of our City Council's response, there is some progress to report.

#### Flood relief

The planners of Oxford's grand flood relief scheme must overcome many hurdles in order to secure funding so the scheme is many years away from completion. But the Environment Agency (EA) has secured funding to undertake a review of 'small scale' projects. Whilst this review won't be finished until late spring 2008, we have been reliably informed that some preventative measures may be started soon. We believe that one of these projects will be to purchase and train staff to enable them to deploy a temporary flood barrier for East Street. In any future food this would avoid the need for residents and fire fighters to have to build a sandbag wall.

#### Children's lantern parade

From *Annabel Dunstan*: The traditional Osney Island Children's Lantern Parade and carol singing will take place on **Saturday 8th December**. Meet outside the **Waterman's Arms at 6pm**, bring a lantern and dress warmly! Refreshments en route! Everyone welcome. If you would like to provide treats please drop a note in to me at 23 East Street or call me on 07790 216 441. Also if you would particularly like the group to sing



It's encouraging to hear that the EA is seeking advice from colleagues in other regions regarding the most successful type of barrier. We've publicly criticised our City Council's budgeting of a cost of between £500,000 and £1,000,000 for the barrier - OIRA has obtained quotes of around £30,000 to £40,000 for such a barrier.

In previous editions of the newsletter, we've reported on the joint City and County Council initiative of 'Community Planning'. One of the outputs from this will be the development of a Flood Plan for our area, with the immediate aim of recruiting flood wardens for each street. Anyone who might be interested should contact Richard on 07973 292 035 or 01865 723 663.

### **Thames Water**

We're pleased that Thames Water (TW) agreed to have all of the drains on Osney flushed through; most had become quite heavily silted. This work was completed at the end on October. Thames Water is also looking to install a bigger pump at the corner of West and South Streets. They are also looking to have the pump alarmed and linked to their control room, to detect any failure with the pump. This is a critical piece of equipment as it provides the only outfall for the drains on the southern part of Osney. The pump is protected by a tidal flap and TW are looking at replacing this with a non-return valve as we've requested.

We are working with TW to review the drainage run in the Bridge Street extension. At present, this runs into the South Street drain, and then via the pump through the outfall into Osney Stream. We believe that if a new drain could be dug through the EA's yard, and the fall of the drain in Bridge Street reversed, this will significantly help residents in Bridge and South Streets as it will relieve the pressure on the drains in this part of Osney which appear to be overwhelmed in times of extreme flooding.

At the time of writing, TW have not yet committed to a time for the completion of this review.

### **Osney stream**

Oxford City Council has cleared some vegetation from Osney Stream, although we are rather doubtful about the long term impact on flood relief. Further along Botley Road, Aldi's plans to open a store were rejected by Councillors. As we went to press, the plans for the Bodleian's new depository on Osney Mead were due to be debated by the full committee of our City Council.

### **Insurance**

We're not aware of anyone who has had problems arranging insurance nor in renewing their policy, but support should be available through the National Flood Forum. We recommend that Islanders view the National Flood Forum's website [www.floodforum.org.uk](http://www.floodforum.org.uk) which contains advice on products and measures to help prevent, and survive a flood. Islanders without access to the internet should contact one of the committee members who will be pleased to obtain details.

### **Flood fair**

In the absence of immediate activity from the EA or our City Council, OIRA asked the National Flood Forum

to work with the EA to arrange a Flood Products Fair. The aim was to allow us the opportunity to ask the experts and also the chance to purchase products which might help to prevent flooding. The event took place on Thursday 15th November and exhibitors said that it was the best attended fair organised so far.

Whilst we firmly believe that, in the absence of any immediate action from our City council or EA, it is sensible for householders to take steps to protect their homes, please talk to the planning department prior to installing any flood protection products to ensure that they are compliant with the present planning arrangements.

One provider of airbrick covers and flood guards (which go across doorways) has offered Osney Islanders a significant discount, if a bulk order is placed. Please see the manufacturer's website for details of the products [www.floodgate.ltd.uk](http://www.floodgate.ltd.uk). Floodgates' representative has advised that the more products that are ordered, the bigger the discount they would make available. Although OIRA can't recommend any particular product, nor can we vouch for the effectiveness of any products, we are happy to coordinate a bulk purchase – please contact OIRA at [askoira2@osneyisland.org.uk](mailto:askoira2@osneyisland.org.uk) to express interest, without any obligation. Of course, other products are available.

We have secured an open invitation to visit the EA's regional HQ in Wallingford. To express interest, email us at [askoira2@osneyisland.org.uk](mailto:askoira2@osneyisland.org.uk) There is still much to be done and we continue to work to make sure that we are better protected in future.

## **BITS AND BOBS**

### **Osney Island Gardening Club**

We held our inaugural meeting in October and established a pattern for occasional informal meetings to be held in turn in each other's houses, trips to other gardens, lending a bit of elbow grease where needed, swapping advice and plans to share bulk orders for bulbs and materials. If you would like to join contact Elizabeth Newbery on 793360 or email [elizabeth@newberyandengland.com](mailto:elizabeth@newberyandengland.com)

### **Tuesday lunch times**

Do you work from home? Are you a bit fed up with the lack of office gossip? You may like to know that a bunch of us meet in the Waterman's every Tuesday lunch time from 12.30 onwards.

### **St Frideswide choirs**

Anyone interested in singing in the adult or junior choirs would be most welcome. Please contact Fr Russell on [rdewhurst@mac.com](mailto:rdewhurst@mac.com) or 242680. If anyone who is housebound would like Holy Communion at Christmas time, please get in touch.

## **PEOPLE**

*From Ray, the lockkeeper:* To my friends on Osney Island: I would sincerely like to thank you all for the very generous present of garden vouchers following the infamous Osney flood. I feel very humble and touched

by your generosity. I did the best I could which would have also been done by my colleagues. I intend to buy a tree/shrub to plant for the future enjoyment of yourselves as well as us at the lock. I hope that you all realise that you are more than welcome to visit the lock at any time. Many thanks, Ray, Dee & Sam.

### **The Democrats' Club**

Welcome to **Marcus and Annette** who have just taken over the Democrats' Club. According to Andrew, a long time member, the club was formed when the Swan, a pub in Bridge Street closed and two of its clients felt it needed a new home. As they were well connected, both socially and politically, they arranged a venue, named it The Democrats' but gave it a constitution that made it clear that it's was social rather than a political club. One of its goals was 'improving members' morals' – but don't let that put you off, membership is only £7.50 a year and it's a good place for a drink a game of snooker and 'Aunt Sally' in the summer.

### **Garage to rent**

I have a garage to rent at West Court and would love to give Osney Island people priority if they are interested. Please phone 07950585129

## PLANNING

We have received the following planning application. Application no 07/02436/FUL. Proposal: insertion of new window to front elevation at first floor level. Location: 19 East St. Please send your comments to Planning Support Team ex 01865 252860 x 2860 by December 1 2007.

## USEFUL NUMBERS

*City Council*, tel: 249811; *County Council*, tel: 792422; *County Councillor Sushila Devi Dhall*, tel: 5534150; *Alan Armitage*, tel: 516115; City Councillors: *Colin Cook*, tel: 272548 (day) 721844 (evening); *Susanna Pressel*, 7 Rawlinson Rd Oxford OX2 6UE tel: 554001 email: cllrpressel@oxford.gov.uk; *Community Beat Officer WPC Jan Warner*, tel: 08458 505505; *Hotlines: muck (dog muck, graffiti clean-up, needles and syringes, litter etc)* tel: 0800 783 1957; *refuse collection problems*, tel: 725912; *collection of up to 3 bulky items*, tel: 252900; *advice on disposal of hazardous waste*, tel: 815796; *information on drain clearance*, tel: 252907; *energy advice*, tel: 252197; *free advice on home insulation*, tel: 0800 3166011 (there are discounts for some people); *noise complaints* daytime 252553, out of hours tel: 742138; *Community Centre*, tel: 245761; *on-street fines*, tel: 247090; *car park fines*, tel: 794307; *car removals*, tel: 846000; *furniture recycling*, tel: 763698, *phone payments of all fines*, tel: 252609; *residents parking permits*, tel: 252693; *bike theft and abandoned bikes*, tel: 0845 8505 505 *abandoned and unlicensed vehicles*, tel: 252944; *recycling*, tel: 0800 783 1957.

## THE DIRECTORY

The following list is compiled from Islanders recommendations only. No one pays for an entry and suppliers are removed if there are reports of unreasonable rates or service.

Please note that Belinda Coburn (Sewing Service), who is living in temporary accommodation because of the floods, will resume her service when she is back in her house.

## TRIED AND TESTED

### **Hairdresser**

Nadine Wright, hairdresser, (ex-Mahogany, will come to your home and is highly recommended) Mob: 07824 660184.

### **Garden design and maintenance**

Olivia's Gardens tel: 07866 476044. Olivia Stewart, a fully qualified horticulturalist, runs a complete service from design to maintenance ('first class').

### **Washing machine repairs**

**RG Domestic** tel: 01865 718299 mob: 0771 113 2961. Repairs all makes and has timed appointments including after 6pm – a godsend for those who are out all day. Chris Griffin of CE Electrical Services tel: 01865 842598 or mob: 0778 23 60 979 ('I can thoroughly recommend him')

### **General builder**

Chris Willis, mob: 07974 155 638 does general building work/carpentry, for example (re)hanging doors, laying patios, decking, associated painting/ decorating, as well as kitchen/bathroom fitting. ('the work was carried out efficiently and to a very high standard'.)

Pete Coles, plumber, general building work and decorating. Tel: 07789 164027 ('very reliable and helpful')

### **Building and roof repairs**

Keith Webster, tel: 01865 374585 ('strongly recommended')

### **Carpenters**

Rycote Carpentry tel: Daniel 07980301579 or Robin 07947573371. ('They live on the Island and I was really impressed with their work, fast, efficient and competitive pricing).

### **Plumbing and heating**

Ivan Kilbee, tel: 01235 847527 mob 07050 133783; ('I have used Ivan for several years for servicing my boiler and general plumbing work. I'd give him a beta plus. His work is good and he comes on time, but he's not always easy to reach even on his cellphone.')

Peter Deadman, tel: 724384 ('very good and should be kept in the directory').

John Abbey, **plumbing, heating and gas services** tel 01865 761881 mob 07802 399694 ('a great plumber!').

### **Handyman**

Jon Butt, tel: 07766 144116 ('a friend recommended him. He lives in Witney but very willing to travel to Oxford')

### **Chimney sweep**

Dennis Northcott, tel: 01235 526617 (does a good job)

### **Window cleaning**

Paul Smith, mob: 07979 692895 ('like many others I use Paul's window cleaning service. He is amiable and reliable.') I Elmsdown Cottages, Wilcote Riding, Finstock, Oxon OX7 3BZ m.0797 9692895.

### **Interior and exterior decoration**

**Paul Simmons**, tel: 01993 852317 mob 07803 603504 (good clean work and costs are reasonable)

**Dave Buckle**, tel: 848630 evenings ('friendly, efficient and good value')

**Steve Brierty**, mob: 07850 357414 / 01491 836762 ('strongly recommended')

### **Sewing Services**

**Jan Donley**, tel: 249625 upholstery (I've been please with everything she's done)

### **Damp**

**Damprot Renovations Ltd**, tel: 742144 ('have done some replastering for us on a couple of occasions and are good').

### **Apple Macs**

**Bill Richards @ Macfactor**, tel: 01993 811197 ('excellent and will come out if not too busy')

### **Oven Cleaning**

**Chris**, tel: Freephone 0800 458 0484 (doesn't use any chemicals)

### **Ironing services**

**Creases**, tel: 01869 347414 ('they collect and deliver - I've used them for years')

### **Coal deliveries, firelighters and kindling**

**Turners of Sunningwell**, tel: 01865 730087 (very reliable)

### **Beauty**

**Julia Harris** does manicures and pedicures in your home. Her contact details are Harris 07843 477452  
Email: jools010@googlemail.com (a very good service)

## **OIRA COMMITTEE**

### **Communications officer**

Your committee is seeking a volunteer to work alongside our webmaster to make sure that our website, [www.osneyisland.org.uk](http://www.osneyisland.org.uk), and our notice board, are kept up to date. No experience is required and the time commitment should be less than an hour or so each week. Internet access is essential. To find out more about the role, please email **Richard Thurston** on [chairaira@btinternet.com](mailto:chairaira@btinternet.com) or telephone 07973 292 035 or 01865 723 663.

### **Treasurer**

We are also **DESPERATELY** in need of a treasurer. If you can add up and can spare a hour or two a month please get in touch with **Richard Thurston** on [chairaira@btinternet.com](mailto:chairaira@btinternet.com), or telephone 07973 292 035 or 01865 723 663.

### **Committee members**

**Jude Carroll**, 10 East Street, tel:793 247 (*Secretary*);  
**Bianca Elgar** 15 East St tel 202977; **Elizabeth Newbery** (*Newsletter*) 3 North St 793360; **Kate Stewart** 18 East St tel 241856; **Anna Truelove** 83 Bridge St 245496 (*Vice Chair*); **Richard Thurston** 38 West Street, tel: 723663 (*Chair*); **Zoe Teale** 29 East St 247897. The email address for any OIRA committee member is [askoira2@osneyisland.org.uk](mailto:askoira2@osneyisland.org.uk)

### **Next meeting**

The OIRA committee's next meeting will take place on 11th December at 8pm in the Democrats' Club on North / East Streets. If you'd like to raise an issue drop in or let someone on the committee know. You can find our agenda the minutes on the Bridge Street notice board and on the website. Next newsletter is due out mid January 08. If you would like to put an item in contact: **Elizabeth Newbery** 3 North St. 793360, email: [elizabeth@newberyandengland.com](mailto:elizabeth@newberyandengland.com) or use the tear-off strip below.

### **A note on the Internet**

Contributors should be aware that the newsletter is automatically posted on the Internet just as it appears in print.

### **Web master and gazebo hire**

**Tony Roberts**, 1 Bridge St, tel: 721596

### **Notice board**

**Richard Thurston**, 38 West St, tel: 723663

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Please use this tear-off strip to write down any requests for inclusion in the newsletter or concerns that you may wish Committee Members to raise at OIRA meetings. Post it through the door of any of the members listed above.

Name

Address

Tel. no.