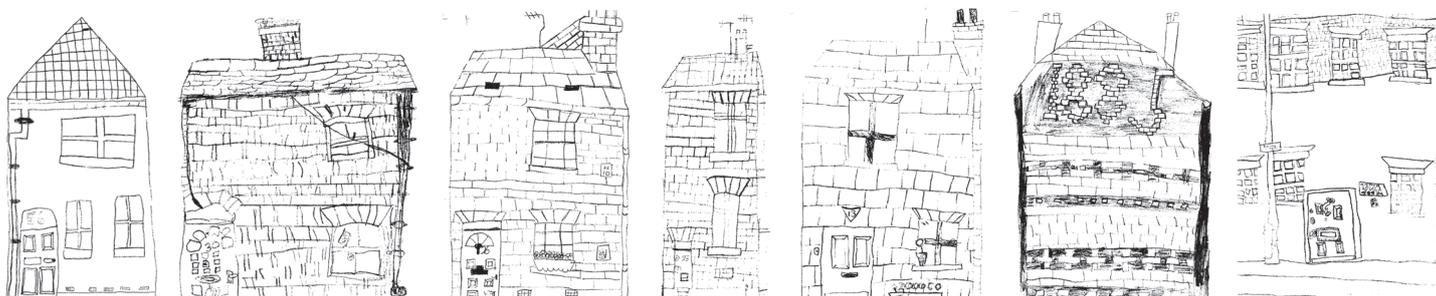


OSNEY ISLAND RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

www.osneyisland.org.uk

NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER / OCTOBER 2008



COMING UP

Foodie Saturday, September 20

This year our big Island event 2008 is **Foodie Saturday, on September 20 from 2 – 5 pm on the riverbank on East St.** Like Open Gardens – with which this event with alternate if it is a success – the object is to raise funds for the newsletter.

There will be locally produced fruit and vegetables, homemade cakes and bread, pickles, chutneys, jams and jellies, homemade elderflower cordial, flowers, bulbs and seeds, old cookery books, homemade sweets, BBQed sweetcorn and hot potato cakes, old kitchen bits and pieces, homemade pop corn, biscuit decorating and apple bobbing for children, free range eggs and organic apple juice from Binsey and Bob Summers will be demonstrating and selling his rush work. Teas and homemade cakes will be served around 3 pm

WE DESPERATELY NEED HELP: If you can help to serve on the stalls, help to set-up and clear up, bake cakes, bread and other produce, or donate plants, and non-electrical kitchen bits and pieces, please contact Elizabeth on 01865 793360 or email elizabeth@newberyandengland.com or Bianca Elgar on 202977. Old cookery books should be delivered to Anna Truelove 83 Bridge St, – but give her a ring first on 245496. If it drizzles we will carry on. If downpours threaten we will postpone. **SEE YOU THERE!**

Allotments: rent day

A reminder that Sunday Sept 7 is the first of two rent days. Failure to pay could mean expulsion from the lotties!

NEWS AND VIEWS

Low Carbon West Oxford is through to the final of the Big Green Challenge!

Low Carbon West Oxford is really excited to have won through to be one of 10 finalists out of an original 350 bids in the national Big Green Challenge competition (www.biggreenchallenge.org.uk). The aim of the competition is to support new ideas to help communities

save energy, reduce their carbon emissions and help tackle climate change. Each of the ten finalists gets an initial £20,000 to pilot their ideas this year and could win up to £1,000,000 for the community in subsequent years.

Our winning idea is to set up our own green 'renewables building society' to help everyone in West Oxford save energy and money. We aim to raise an income from generating renewable electricity, which is then used to reduce household and business carbon emissions. If we can raise the funds to put in place 750,000 kWh of renewable energy generation per year through solar, water and wind projects, we could generate around £100,000 a year. This cash would be used to help all of us reduce our carbon footprint, and have the added benefit of helping save money on expensive energy bills. We have a really high ambition – to reduce our energy use and carbon emissions by 90% by 2050!

What renewables schemes do we want to install? We want to generate electricity by using grants to put solar panels (photovoltaics in the jargon) on the massive roofs of Osney Mead Industrial Estate and the Botley Road retail warehouses. We also want to generate electricity from a micro-hydro project at Osney Weir. We have had interest already from building owners on Osney Mead and from the Environment Agency, so we are feeling confident that we can do it. Finally, we hope to work with Oxford Brookes University on a wind project at their campus on Harcourt Hill.

How can we use the money to help people cut their household energy bills? That is what we want to find out during this pilot year by working with a range of households across our community. **If you want to get involved in this really exciting project, this is how you can do it.** We are looking for around 35 volunteer households of all types (rented or owned) and ages who want to make energy savings. All you have to do is commit some of your time and you will get back a really good package of expert help to work out what changes you might make and what help you would need to make them. **For more information and to have an initial chat, please call Barbara Hammond on 01865 245047 or email on Barbara.Hammond@zen.co.uk.**

Environmental improvements

Last year we asked you what you'd like to see by way of improvements for Osney. We presented your comments to our City Council and, following a tour of the Island with council officials and Cllr Pressel back in February, we now have: A new bottom step for the North Street footbridge, Vegetation clearance on North and West Streets, Hard surface to the towpath between the Waterman's and the footbridge to the Lock.

The East Street willows

From Richard Thurston: Islanders will be aware that we made a formal complaint to the Ombudsman for Local Government regarding Oxford City Council's handling of the initial and subsequent complaints OIRA made concerning the felling of the willow trees on East Street. We were always of the view that the complaint was somewhat academic because no actual loss was incurred by anyone and the trees have of course been replaced (although not without much effort!). This view was confirmed by the Ombudsman, writing 'in our view there were faults, but they did not cause an injustice'.

The Ombudsman was reassured that our City Council's failings were eventually put right because they now have a formal, City-wide policy which covers how trees are to be handled in sensitive locations; this includes the communication programme and consultation with conservation officers (although we note that the conservation officer does not have the power to stop a council-owned tree from being felled).

Whilst appreciating our view that the Council's investigation and handling of the complaint lacked robustness, the Ombudsman discontinued his complaint with the words 'there is no injustice resulting from that which I could pursue.'

Many Islanders will be disappointed that there is no formal censure of our City Council, but we have helped to encourage the creation of a City-wide tree policy and, most importantly, our replacement East Street willows appear to be thriving.

St Frideswide's Parish Church (Church of England)

Sat 13th September: Oxfordshire Historic Churches Trust "Ride-and-Stride". St Frideswide's will be open 10am-6pm, please feel free to come and look around.

Thu 23rd October: 7.30pm High Mass to celebrate the feast of St Frideswide. Preacher: The Archdeacon of Oxford. Hertford College Choir will sing the mass. Refreshments follow the service, all are most welcome. We keep our patronal festival on a weekday evening so local residents usually unable to join us on Sundays can attend.

The main Sunday service at St Frideswide's is at 10.30am every Sunday: Parish Mass, with traditional hymns, a thought-provoking sermon, and Holy Communion. Mass on weekdays is 7pm on Tuesdays and 12.30pm on Thursdays.

Father Russell Dewhurst is very happy to discuss baptism/christenings, banns, weddings, or any other matter: phone 01865 242680 or email rdewhurst@mac.com

The Low Carbon West Oxford Food Group

The Low Carbon Group are putting together a **beautifully designed calendar** featuring locally sourced recipes and lovely photographs of fruit and veg on the allotments plus lots of space for writing notes (as required by busy mums). Great to be on sale on foodie day and hopefully in local shops too.

Our land: fill or till?

From Ann Hunter: I imagine all of us on the Island (and elsewhere) have our specific gripes about fortnightly garbage collection in Oxford. Mine happen to be twofold: concern for the crazy level of stuff going to landfill (attracting rats and ruining our lovely landscape); and distaste for stinky bags of prawn shells, greasy leftover cooked meat, and other organic nasties of that ilk.

One solution is to put all that stuff in carefully wrapped and sealed bags in the freezer for two weeks. (Ugh! And that still leaves the problem of landfill and plastic that can take anything from 100-1000 years to degrade.) Another is to throw much of that stuff down the loo. (Yes, and clog up our beautiful city's ancient sewage system still further.)

I believe there is a better way. I have been experimenting for the last few months, getting my 'lavender bag' (what a misnomer!) down to the smallest possible dimension with absolutely non-recyclable garbage. To date I have managed the size of an average plastic shopping bag. And here are three ways to do it:

- 1 Create a compost heap in your garden for green waste you don't want lying around in a soggy mess in your 'green bag' and then have to drag through your freshly carpeted living room.
- 2 Invest in a 'big can of worms' – composting tiger worms produce some of the finest compost on the planet (also known as 'the caviar of composts') and a fertilizing liquid that grows bigger, better, healthier flowers, fruit and veg than I have ever seen before. These worms and the bins they live in can be bought from various sources (see below) and will eat and compost almost anything, including uncooked fruit, veg, peelings, tea bags, coffee grounds, egg shells, vacuum cleaner dust, human and pet hair, cardboard loo rolls, egg boxes, shredded b/w newspaper, and other sundry odds and ends. They can't manage any cooked food, cheese or milk remains, citrus or onion products, fish, or meat scraps. The contents of the bin do not smell. And the great news is that... (see 3 below):
- 3 Anything that the wormery can't cope with (citrus skins and pith, onions, fish skin and bones, prawn shells, meat scraps, stinky cheese remains) can be chopped up and fed to a Bokashi bin. These are sold in pairs. The idea is that kitchen scraps are chopped and topped with a layer of Bokashi bran (looks like bran flakes, smells pleasantly yeasty, and consists of a bran plus yeasts and micro-organisms). The bins measure 12.5" x 10" x 14.5". The contents of these bins do not smell either! When one bin is full, you replace it with the empty one and start again. Meanwhile, the first one

ferments for two weeks, at which time you can (a) feed it to your wormery (b) put it on your compost heap (c) dig it straight into the soil. And bingo! Problem solved – no smelly organic, methane-rich remains in your wheelie bin/lavender bag!

Where to buy wormeries and Bokashi bins: originalorganics.co.uk, greengardener.co.uk, and several other sites (shop around – prices vary). And good luck!
Anne Hunter 79 Bridge Street, Osney Island

BITS AND BOBS

Osney Island Boat Club

On Sunday August 31, 20 members of the OIBC met for their annual outing, paddling silently but swiftly up country, pitching camp, warding off hostile natives, wrestling with crocodiles and discovering new species of almost everything. OK, we had a jolly nice picnic. If you would like to join the boat club (no boat necessary) please contact Simon Stubbings, 30 East St.

Jam for charity

From Karen Brooks: I am also holding a charity BBQ on Saturday 13th September. Tickets are £12.50 and include all food but bring your own drink. Starts at 2pm and will be a great local event to raise money for the orphans in Colombia: www.friendsofcolombianorphans.org Tickets can be bought from Karen Brooks, 102B Bridge St, 07810 805406 or email info@chillipots.co.uk. We need though to raise £10k this year. With our newly granted charity status in the US, we want to start “Academia de Corte y Confeccion y Tejidos Moda de Punto” - that is a garment construction academy, where the mission is to provide the girls with basic and advanced knowledge of garment construction both in sewing and knitting. So if people can't support the BBQ then they can still support this worthy cause by ordering some jam or making a donation instead. Jam is £3.45 a jar or £10 for 3 jars.

Craftsperson wanted

In post-butterfly Britain I have decided to resurrect two wooden butterflies from Thailand to hang on an outdoor mirror. However, years of neglect have caused considerable wear and tear to paint and wood. Is there a carpenter/craftsperson out there who can help – ideally to fix the originals, otherwise to make me British versions. Each butterfly is about the size of a large hand. Please contact me: Julia Hamer-Hunt, 57 Bridge Street. Tel. (01865) 240904, email: juliahamer_hunt@hotmail.com

Births, marriages and deaths

Sadly, we have to report that Neil Anderson of Mallison Court has died after a short illness. He was 64. Neil had lived on the Island for at least seven years and was an great supporter of Island life, delivering batches of the newsletter, enthusiastically updating everyone in the floods last year, and generally being an all round good egg. He will be sadly missed.

USEFUL NUMBERS

City Council, tel: 249811 (now 24 hours); *County Council*, tel: 792422; *County Councillors: Sushila Devi Dhall*, tel: 553415; *Alan Armitage*, tel: 516115; *City Councillors: Colin Cook*, tel: 272548 (day) 721844 (evening) email: cllrcook@oxford.gov.uk; *Susanna Pressel*, 7 Rawlinson Rd Oxford OX2 6UE, tel: 554001 email: cllrspressel@oxford.gov.uk; *Community Beat Officer PC Jan Warner*, tel: 08458 505505; refuse, recycling, free collections, bulky items, street cleaning, drains and flooding tel: 252900; *free advice on energy*, tel: 252197; *free advice on energy and home insulation*, tel: 252197; *noise complaints*, daytime tel: 252553, out of hours tel: 742138; *Community Centre* tel: 245761; *on-street fines*, tel: 247090; *car park fines*, tel: 252489; *furniture recycling*, tel:763698; *residents parking permits*, tel: 0845 634 4466; *bike theft and abandoned bikes*, tel: 0845 8505 505; *abandoned and unlicensed vehicles*, tel: 252900.

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. New entry: Lee Chapman a green electrician ('he advised the pub on how to save energy and help the environment'). Mob: 07825 133337.

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'.)

Electrician

Lee Chapman a green electrician ('he advised the pub on how to save energy and help the environment') m 07825 133337

Building and roof repairs

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

Carpenters

Rycote Carpentry tel: Robin 07947573371. ('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 882810 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')

David Morris tel 725875 (reasonably priced; highly recommended)

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

Wayne mob: 0791 7785 906 (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)

Removals

Isis Van Man 01865 553347 help@Isisvanman.com (very helpful and friendly)

OIRA COMMITTEE

Richard is back!

Since the departure of Richard Thurston as Chair, the committee has been somewhat rudderless. But help is at hand - he's back! Needless to say, if anyone one is interested in joining us we would be delighted to hear from.

Committee members

Bianca Elgar 15 East St tel 202977; *Stephen Lynam* 11 South St (Secretary); *Fiona McFarlane* (Treasurer) 11 South St; *Elizabeth Newbery* (Newsletter) 3 North St 793360; *Kate Stewart* 18 East St tel 241856; *Anna Truelove* 83 Bridge St 245496 (Vice Chair); *Duncan Wagstaff* (web and noticeboard) 38 Bridge St; phone 07812 125 650. The new email address for any OIRA committee member is askoira3@osneyisland.org.uk

Next Committee meeting

Next Committee meeting The OIRA committee's next meeting will take place on **October 20 @ 8pm** 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 November 08, last date for copy **October 30**. If you would like to put an item in contact: Elizabeth Newbery 3 North St. 793360, email: 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.

Gazebo hire

Sally Roberts, 1 Bridge St, tel: 721596

Notice board

Duncan Wagstaff, 38 Bridge St; tel: 07812 125 650

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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.