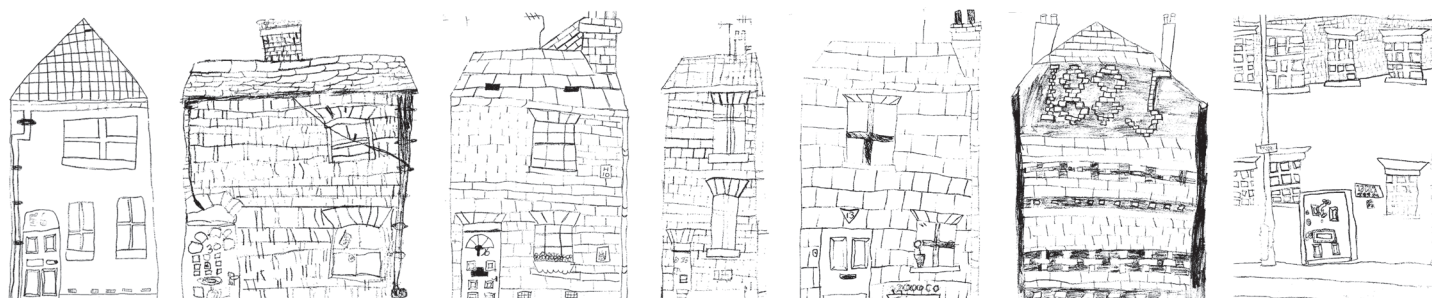


OSNEY ISLAND RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

www.osneyisland.org.uk

NEWSLETTER MARCH / APRIL 2009



COMING UP

OIRA AGM

From Richard Thurston: This will take place on **April 22 @ 7.30 at the Democrats'** and business will include the election of officers (all OIRA officers are elected for a one year term only), a motion to amend OIRA's constitution to enable the committee to make grants for good causes, discussion about cold calling and deploying CCTV on the Island (see below).

Osney Island Boat Club

From Simon Stubbings: The OIBC exists to provide boating facilities for residents of the Island. Unfortunately the boat shed on the towpath can only accommodate a limited number of craft. However, one of these belongs to the Club and it is available for use by members. In addition other members are often prepared to lend their boats out. The Club's Annual General Meeting will be held in the **Waterman's Arms on Thursday 23 April at 8:00pm**. The business of the meeting itself is not normally riveting, being generally confined to the routine matters of election of officers, approval of accounts, and fixing of subscriptions for the coming year. However it is an opportunity for members and prospective members of the Club to get together, enjoy a drink and find out more about how the Club operates. All are welcome to attend.

The allotments AGM

This AGM, always one of the liveliest AGMs ever, will be held in the **WOCC on April 2 at 7.30 pm** to be followed by the famous John Power vegetable curry and a glass of wine or beer.

Open gardens

From Anna Truelove This popular biannual event will take place on **Sunday, May 17. BUT we need about 12 gardens and so far we only have 2!** If you are able to open your garden or could offer other services such as serving teas, making homemade cakes or manning the plant stall, helping to clear up, please contact me on 245496 or drop a note through 83 Bridge St.

Jazz brunches

Saturday 14 March 11- 12.30 at **WOCC: Fats Waller**. £5 concs £3 to include coffee and croissant. A bargain!

OIRA website

As you know the OIRA website is currently being redesigned and should be up and running again in April. We would like to have a changing gallery of photographs of the Island. If you have any that you'd like included, put them on a disc and post them through 3 North St.

Lent talks on Christianity and Art

On Wednesdays until 1st April, there will be a Lent talk @ 7pm-8pm at the West Oxford Community Centre. Each week a different speaker will give an illustrated talk, with discussion and coffee.

18 March 'Gaze we on those glorious scars': picturing Christ's wounds. The Rev'd Dr Helen Orchard.

25 March Caravaggio and the art of the Counter-Reformation. Katherine Wodehouse.

1 April Full of Grace: the Annunciation in Art. Dr Paul Spencer-Longhurst.

Oxclean

From Pauline Martin: OxClean now has more groups than this time last year, turning out to clean up an area they care about all across the city. The big challenge is how to keep Oxford looking clean and tidy throughout the year. Osney Island already looks pretty good – but we could ALL spend just 30 minutes or so every so often, checking the frontage of our property from the front door as far as the gutter – maybe clear some weeds, pick up any litter lying there or around nearby bikes and parked cars, remove any clutter on the pavement? If you're already doing that – thank you!

Streetcar at WOCC

Streetcar, a pay-as-you-go-car, is now available parked at the WOCC. It costs £49.50 per year + £5.95 per hour including fully comp insurance 24/7, emergency breakdown and 30 miles of fuel per day. And what's more it's a Golf.

FLOOD DEFENCES FOR OSNEY ISLAND

From Richard Thurston: Islanders who are on the Environment Agency's (EA) mailing list will have received a leaflet giving an overview of the options on which they are presently consulting to reduce the risk

of flooding for Oxford. There is a public meeting at the Town Hall and we urge residents to attend. In addition, we have invited the EA to attend our AGM; at the time of going to press have not yet heard whether they will accept the invitation.

The EA has presented nine options for dealing with risk of flooding ranging from doing nothing to building a new river course to the west of Oxford; this is likely to pass under Botley Road at The George Public House and take in the Seacourt Stream.

The last five options show that differing numbers of households will benefit from the various options; we have made a formal request to the EA to ask them to confirm which households would be excluded from the different options. The EA has stated that their mapping is not sophisticated enough to pin-point individual houses. We have therefore asked them to confirm which streets might be included or excluded from each option. This is a matter that we will be pursuing with them as we believe that it prevents a fully informed judgment on which of the five options should be supported.

We thought that it would be useful to provide an update on flood defences for Osney – what is in place and what we hope to achieve, but first a recap.

What causes flooding in Osney?

Three things:

Water overtopping the streams and river banks;
Drains being overwhelmed;
Rising ground-water.

What is being done and what do we want to achieve?

Demountable barriers: following the July 2007 floods the EA bought demountable (portable) flood barriers intended to protect the island against flood water coming directly from the surrounding rivers. The barriers are stored at the EA depot on the island. EA staff have been trained to get the barriers into place when flooding threatens. These provide protection for East Streets, and the top and bottom of West Street.

Drains becoming overwhelmed: water overwhelming the drainage system also contributes to the problems on Osney; these problems will not be solved by the barriers, nor will they prevent ground water from rising. The surface water drain along South Street acts as a sump for the whole of Osney Island and in times of a flood event will be overwhelmed. Surface water drains run south down East, Bridge and West Streets, to collect in South Street. In addition, the Bridge Street extension surface water drain runs north also joining the South Street run. This entire run discharges into Osney Stream via a single outfall by the junction of South and West Streets. It then is recycled past the rear gardens of houses in Doyley Road and the west side of the Bridge Street extension. This contributes to the overtopping of the riverbank for the southern part of Osney Stream. Medium term, the present outfall (at the junction of West and South Street) should be enhanced to allow more water to be discharged into Osney Stream. Long term, we would like to see that the surface water drains should be redesigned with the creation of a second outfall into the Thames, below the weir pool, south of the EA yard. The surface water drain

in the Bridge Street extension should be altered from its present run of south to north (into the South Street 'sump') into a new alignment running south, via the EA's yard, into the Thames, with a pump for high flood events. This would create the essential second outfall, thereby relieving the South Street run, and the present single outfall at the junction of South and West Streets. In 2008 Thames Water replaced a poorly-performing pump (present to supplement the drainage) in the southern end of the island. We have explored the possibility of having a bigger pump; the City Council has suggested that funding might be in the region of £40,000 for the installation of this. In the south west corner of the island is an area which cannot be defended by the demountable barriers and where river water came onto the island in the July 2007 floods. Oxford City Council has taken an important first step in supporting householders make their homes flood resilient; perhaps by creating a barrier from existing garden walls and so on, supplemented where necessary. All householders will need to agree to participate, but if that can be achieved we are reasonably hopeful that funding can be found. We are seeking to encourage these efforts. In 2007 we approached a manufacturer to see whether we could negotiate a discount for the purchase of demountable barriers; staff changes at the manufacturer meant that this initiative did not progress as quickly as we would have wished, but the City Council may now be ready to throw its purchasing-power behind this and move the initiative forward.

Ground water rising Flooding will also occur as the water table rises; demountable barriers cannot prevent this. Islanders are encouraged to consider installing a submersible pump. When building works are undertaken, have you considered raising power points, and seeking to make your new works flood resilient?

Campaigning: OIRA is affiliated to and participates actively in the Oxford Flood Alliance (OFA), a campaigning group aiming to bring about long-term solution to the flood risk for west Oxford. OFA's new website will give more details: oxfordfloodalliance.org.uk

Vote for Canute! Of course, it should also be noted that we have local and European elections in June; which of our candidates will support the measures that we believe will be needed to protect our Island? As we go to press we are contacting the candidates to share with them our aspirations for Osney.

CRIME

We are sad to report that there has been a recent spate of vandalism on Osney recently, most recently with a number of cars having been damaged. Whilst Osney is one of the safest areas in the City, these troubling events can occur from time to time. What can be done about it? Firstly, Oxford Police encourage Islanders to report any criminal activity to the police. This is important because without reporting the incident, the police will not know where to deploy their resources - PCSOs and police officers. Secondly, have you joined the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme? Their ringmaster service gives an update on criminal activity and their meetings enable residents to engage with the police and

allow residents the opportunity of helping to prioritise police resources. It's been suggested that CCTV might deter this type of activity - what you think? Please let a committee member know what you think.

Cold calling on the Island

From Richard Thurston: A referendum on unsolicited door-step selling? Osney to become a 'cold-calling' free zone? What's your view of people who ring your doorbell without an appointment and attempt to sell you things on your door-step? Or perhaps offer you the chance to switch energy supplier, or maybe undertake building work? Some Islanders may be troubled by such calls, whilst others may have found them useful and might have benefited from the services that were offered. Your committee is keen to learn your views. If there is a reasonable demand for an end to cold-calling and door-step selling, we may have the opportunity to become one of the first areas in the City to vote on whether to become a cold-calling free zone.

Oxfordshire Trading Standards operates a scheme which, if implemented, would advertise that cold-calling was not permitted by placing signs on lampposts and at key entry points to the Island. There would not be any day-to-day enforcement, but a helpline number for Trading Standards would be made available, together with advice on what to do about cold-callers. To cover the cost of a referendum, the County Council would make a £2 per household charge, to go towards the costs of the referendum, and, if a majority vote in favour, towards the expense of creating and installing the signs. You might ask whether applying for the zone is actually worth doing – after all there is no day-to-day enforcement. Can OIRA take on the consultation ourselves? Can our councilors negotiate a better deal? Please let a committee member know if you have any views – either for or against. We will update you in the next Newsletter.

PEOPLE

Island babes

West Street's baby boom continues: congratulations to Lilina and Howard on the birth of Lola on 4th February and to Lisa and Giles on the birth of their son Sam in March.

The Democrats

From Marcus and Annette Cornish: We would like to welcome Osney residents and their families to the WODC. Membership of £9.22 a year entitles you to club functions such as bingo, skittles evenings, children's discos and quiz nights. We also offer pool, bar billiards, darts and Aunt Sally. We have a large function with a stage and a bar which is available for private hire. We are a friendly, family centred club and you can be sure of a warm welcome. Pop in and see us, have a drink and ask for a membership form.

A cleaner

From Pauline Martin An excellent cleaner I know (and strongly recommend), has some spare hours on Friday to fill. If you need her help call me on 250870

Cat sitter wanted

We are looking for an Osney Island cat sitter or for

other cat owners who would be happy to do a cat-sitting swap when we're away. Please call Judith on 07775 650 450 if you can help.

Freebies and for sale

Two glazed garden pots, one large and one small free to anyone who wants them and some garden lights, unused £5. Call 793360.

Jam jars

Sarah Dyer, who used to store and distribute unwanted jam jars, has moved away. Is there anyone out there who would take this over? Please contact 793360 if you can help.

Holy Week and Easter Services

At St Frideswide's

9th April: Maundy Thursday

7.30pm Sung Mass with a watch

10th April: Good Friday.

10-11.30am Make things for Easter. For under 8s and their families at the West Oxford Community Centre.

Craft activities, with coffee, juice, and snacks. All welcome. 12pm An hour at the cross. Brief addresses with hymns & prayers

12th April: Easter Day

10.30am Mass of Easter Day

At St Margaret's, Binsey

10th April Good Friday: 4pm Evensong

12th April Easter Day: 9am Mass of Easter Day &

3.30pm Festal Evensong

Every Sunday there will be Parish Mass at 10.30am at St Frideswide's as usual. All are welcome. Please contact Fr Russell Dewhurst on 01865 242680 or rdewhurst@mac.com to enquire about baptisms, weddings, or any other matter.

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 so always check the latest list.

New entries: Lyntee Basha recommends Colin Pizzie who does electrics, plumbing (including showers), kitchens and bathrooms. She says he is punctual, reliable, knowledgeable and his charges are very reasonable. Bianca Elgar recommends Baldwin Domestic Appliances on 01865 377484 and says 'they can fix anything'.

TRIED AND TESTED

Garden design and maintenance

Olivia's Gardens tel: 07866 476044. 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; Chris Griffin of CE Electrical Services tel: 01865 842598 or mob: 0778 236 0979 ('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 ('really fantastic') mob: 07825 133337; DEC electricians on 725453 ('very good')

Building and roof repairs

Keith Webster, tel: 01865 374585 ('strongly recommended'; PJS Roofing Ltd ('member of the Confederation of Roofing Contractors and provides a reliable and professional service') tel: 01235 559803 mob: 07702 946255

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.');

John Abbey, plumbing, heating and gas services, tel: 01865 882810, mob: 07802 399694 ('a great plumber!').

Handyman

Jon Butt, mob: 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, mob: 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: 0785 0357414, tel: 01491 836762 ('strongly recommended'); Rob Bennett, mob: 0790 5819310 ('Highly recommended')

Flooring and general carpentry

Amazon Flooring on 07899 918015 (highly 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

Macfaction: bill@macfaction.co.uk, tel: 01993 811197 ('knowledgeable and helpful')

Oven Cleaning

Wayne, mob: 0791 7785 906 (doesn't use any chemicals)

Ironing services

Beautiful Creases (ironing service that collects and delivers) tel: 01993 708333.

Beauty

Julia Harris does manicures and pedicures in your home. Her contact details are Harris, mob: 07843 477452 Email: jools010@googlemail.com (a very good service); Nadine Wright, hairdresser, (ex-Mahogany, will come to your home and is highly recommended) mob: 07824 660184.

Removals

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

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: cllrspresel@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.

OIRA COMMITTEE

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; Richard Thurston 38 West Street, tel: 723663 (Chair); Kate Stewart 18 East St tel 241856; Anna Truelove 83 Bridge St 245496 (Vice Chair); Duncan Wagstaff (web and noticeboard) 38 Bridge St; tel: 07812 125 650. The new email address for any OIRA committee member is askoira3@osneyisland.org.uk

Next Committee meeting

The OIRA committee's next meeting will take place on 27April at 15 East St @ 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 May 09, last date for copy April 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.

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.