

# OSNEY ISLAND RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

www.osneyisland.co.uk

NEWSLETTER MARCH / APRIL 2010



## COMING UP

### It's AGM time...OIRA AGM

*From Richard Thurston:* Never mind the forthcoming General Election, our AGM for 2010 will be held on **Thursday 22nd April 2010 at 7.30 pm at the West Oxford Community Centre**. This will be my last AGM as chair, as I will be standing down after four and a half years. Our agenda will include the usual business including approval of reports but also the election of officers (a new chair, vice chair, treasurer and secretary) as well as committee members. Each officer is elected for a term of one year and each committee member is elected for a term of three years.

We'll have more news on our summer event, Tea on the Towpath, and our review of OIRA's constitution, bringing it up to date (see below). We will bring you more news of plans to reduce flooding in West Oxford and we hope to have a member of the Environment Agency as our special guest star. If you'd like to stand as a committee member or officer, please make sure that you submit your name to the secretary, Steve Lynam no later than 14 days prior to the AGM. Please give your contact details and the position for which you'd like to stand, together with a proposer and a seconder, both of whom must live on Osney Island. OIRA is your association, so please come along and help to shape the future direction of your community association and join in the debate. And remember to come along and vote!

### The Allotments AGM

This AGM, always one of the liveliest AGMs ever, will be held in the **WOCC on April 7 at 7.30 pm** to be followed by the famous John Power vegetable curry and a glass of wine or beer.

### Osney Island Boat Club AGM

*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 15 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.

### Easter family activities

10.00 – 11.30am: Make Things For Easter: children's activities for those aged 8 and under and their families. Includes hot cross buns and coffee. Hosted by St Frideswide in the Community Centre. Free entry.

### Hanging Hooke

Islanders Marion Brown and Katja Simon, both scientific researchers, have collaborated to celebrate 350 years of the Royal Society. They are promoting Hanging Hooke, a play about the 17th century scientist, Robert Hooke, which returns to Oxford on **25 and 26 May @ 7.30 pm in the O'Reilly Theatre, Keble College, Blackhall Road**. Produced by Take the Space ([www.takethespace.co.uk](http://www.takethespace.co.uk)) tickets cost £10 either online [www.oxfordplayhouse.com](http://www.oxfordplayhouse.com) or tel: 305305.

### Tea on the Towpath

Tea on the Towpath, the main OIRA event for 2010, is scheduled for **Saturday 19 June from 2 pm – 5 pm**. We'll have the gazebos, tables and chairs along the towpath with tea, delicious homemade cakes, locally produced fruit, vegetables, plants and preserves for sale. Any offers of help to bake cakes and help set up and take down would be very gratefully received. If you can help please contact Bianca Elgar on 202977 or Elizabeth Newbery 793360.

### Flooding update

*From Richard Thurston:* Many people have commented that, despite all of the rain that we've had over the winter, West Oxford has remained dry and unthreatened with flooding. We've been pleased with the work that has been undertaken by the Environment Agency, Network Rail and others, particularly near the Recycling Depot at Redbridge. Watercourses have been widened, redundant structures which impede the

flow of water have been removed, and a new bridge has been built. Each represents significant investment by the authorities with aim of keeping the water flowing and stopping it from ponding in our area, causing localised flooding. But more needs to be done.

Through our involvement with the Oxford Flood Alliance (OFA), we're about to present a whole package of suggestions for further for flood prevention measures for Oxford. OFA is a coalition of community groups and associations up and down the western corridor. We've timed this to coincide with the run-up to the General Election – it would be great if we could elect an MP who was committed to supporting us to lessen the chances of flooding. Details of the whole package will be available on OFA's website, [www.oxfordfloodalliance.org.uk/](http://www.oxfordfloodalliance.org.uk/)

For Osney, flooding is due to one or more of the following: overtopping the banks, surface water overwhelming the drains and ground water rising. We address only surface water here.

### **Surface water**

Water overwhelming the surface water drainage system is a problem for parts of Osney Island. The surface water drain along South Street acts as a sump for the surface water drains for the whole of Osney Island and in times of flood will be overwhelmed. This is because the surface water drains that run south down East, Bridge and West Streets, collect in South Street. In addition, the Bridge Street extension surface water drain runs north to connect with the South Street run.

The South Street surface water drain discharges into Osney Stream via a 300 mm non-return valve by the junction of South and West Streets. When water levels in Osney Stream rise, discharge from the surface water drain is facilitated by a pump, with a backup, at the junction of South and West Streets. Water from this pump flows into Osney Stream; the design of the outfall is not optimal, as surface water is not pumped fully into the direction of the water flow in Osney Stream.

Thames Water has a plan to replace this pump with one of the same capacity; they will add telemetry to advise their control room if the pump ceases to work. Replacement of the pump (and installation of a pump of greater capacity) is limited by the restricted access on site. When water is discharged into Osney Stream, it is recycled past the rear gardens of houses in Doyley Road and the west side of the Bridge Street extension. This may contribute to flooding. During a flood event, temporary pumps are brought into Bridge Street extension to remove excess water into the Thames via a passageway into the EA's yard.

OFA proposes that the present pumping station by the junction of South and West Streets is upgraded by the installation of a pump of greater capacity; this will mean that a sump of greater volume will need to be dug. The outfall should be redesigned so that the water is discharged with the flow of water in Osney Stream. Our concern about the possibility of recycling water remains. To complement this scheme, and lessen the impact of recycling, a short spur should be taken from the Bridge Street extension surface water via the

passageway on the east side of Bridge Street into the EA's yard, where a new sump should be created. From the sump, excess water would need to be pumped into the weir pool. Modelling of the drainage system would need to be undertaken to establish whether pumping would be required at times when flooding was not occurring. As present occupiers, the EA is believed to be the owner of this land; an easement would need to be granted to Thames Water to allow access for maintenance and pumping

### **A new legal structure for OIRA**

From Steve Lynham At the next AGM members will be asked to vote on a resolution to incorporate our community association and to transform it into a 'Company Limited by Guarantee' or CLBG. CLBGs are private limited companies where the liability of the members is limited and can be as little as £1 per member. This article explains why the current officers of the association have decided to recommend this step.

OIRA is not currently a legally recognised body in its own right. As OIRA does not have a distinct legal personality, it is the current officers who would in practice face the risk of legal action if anything the association did gave rise to litigation (for example if someone was injured during the course of an OIRA event.) The risk would be potentially unlimited i.e. their total personal assets (such as their home) could be put at risk.

We want to ensure that this risk does not inhibit residents from becoming officers, which will be to no-one's benefit and could even imperil the continued existence of OIRA. If we do not take action this may restrict the range and frequency of community events organised by OIRA. As a responsible organisation, OIRA should be insuring against accident or injury at events to ensure that the funds are available to properly compensate those who are harmed.

It is possible to insure against such risks, but this can be expensive and the current officers believe that every prudent step possible should be taken to reduce the cost of such insurance. Limited liability would give the officers (who would then become directors of the CLBG) a much higher degree of protection. Insurance costs should also be lower since liability would be limited.

Complying with the rules under the Companies Act for a CLBG will result in extra work and some additional costs, but the current officers of OIRA are confident that they can deal with these obligations and keep the costs to a minimum. Set up costs should be less than £200 and annual compliance costs trivial. We expect that these costs can be financed from our currently available funds. We very much hope that as many of you as possible will turn up at the AGM to discuss this issue.

### **Easter at St Frideswide**

Sunday 28 March: Palm Sunday procession and Eucharist, 10.15am, St Frideswide's. Traditional Palm Procession from Osney Island to the church.

Thursday 1 April: Maundy Thursday service, 7.00pm, St Frideswide's. Eucharist of the Last Supper with the traditional washing of feet and the stripping of the altars.

Friday 2 April (Good Friday):Liturgy of the Passion, 12 noon, St Frideswide's. Traditional Good Friday Liturgy of the Passion. Includes the reading of the Passion, the creeping of the cross, prayers and communion.

Sunday 4 April (Easter Day): Easter morning Eucharist, 10.15am, St Frideswide's. Sung Eucharist to celebrate the resurrection of our Lord.

## BITS AND BOBS

### Osney Island honey?

Are you interested in keeping bees? We are looking for someone who would like to become a volunteer beekeeper. There may be money for training. Low Carbon West Oxford hope shortly to have a local site where we will be able to put some beehives. Keeping bees will help local fruit and vegetable growers and play a part in sustaining our local eco-system. Even better, we hope to produce our own West Oxford honey! If you are interested please contact [lowcarbon@hotmail.com](mailto:lowcarbon@hotmail.com).

### The Osney Island Music Project

From John Tatlow The aim is to create and air new works through regular gatherings of informal 'music circles' at our house 15 South St, with weekly meets for an hour or so free on Wednesday evenings. Anyhow, whether you just curious about your only latent musical abilities or an absolute enthusiast about music then, blow the dust from your flute, get that guitar out the back of that wardrobe and shows us what you can do. It's all therapeutic and, besides, life's too short not to play! [johnftatlow@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:johnftatlow@yahoo.co.uk)

### House sit wanted

Ex Osney Islanders Paul and Terry de Villiers, are looking for a house sit for Terry's parents for about two weeks during the summer holidays. They are happy to look after pets and to cover basic costs (water and electricity). If you are interested please contact Terry/Paul on 01865 202846 email [devilliers.milne@ntlworld.com](mailto:devilliers.milne@ntlworld.com).

### Wanted: house to rent

Academic couple looking for a two bed house to rent on Osney Island from the end of May 2010 for at least one year, possibly longer. If you can help please email: [charlottevbates@gmail.com](mailto:charlottevbates@gmail.com)

### For sale and freebies

Two old-fashioned music stands free to good musical home. Contact 242150.

### Parking restrictions in Bridge Street

*From Richard Thurston:* From time to time, parking in Bridge Street is restricted or suspended when the Environment Agency moves lorries and machinery in to or out of the depot at the end of Bridge Street. By the time you read this, we'll be mid-way through a short consultation to establish residents' views. We believe that an alternative access to the yard could be created via Ferry Hinksey Road. In the next edition of the newsletter, we'll update you with the results of the survey.

### The Osney Island website

Alan our new website manager is doing a great job— why not visit it and see photographs of last years events

and this year snow? If you would like to post anything on the website please email: [alan@hilcot.demon](mailto:alan@hilcot.demon).

## THE DIRECTORY

The following list is compiled from Islanders' recommendations. 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. OIRA cannot be held responsible for any claims as a result of hiring anyone in the Directory. You are always advised to get two quotes.

## TRIED AND TESTED

Note that several names on the list have retired or disappeared for other reasons. Does anyone know of a good carpenter? Or hairdressers/beauticians that come to your house?

New entry: Gosford Builders 01865 373467 m 07855 373467 general builder and roofers ('good work and very fair rates').

### 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'.)

### General building, plumbing and repair work.

Pete Coles, Tel: 01865 776519. (Reliable, helpful, work of good standard, and reasonable rates).

### Electrician

Baldwin Domestic Appliances on 01865 377484 ('they can fix anything'); Lee Chapman a green electrician ('really fantastic') mob: 07825 133337; DEC electricians on 725453 ('very good')

### Plumbing and heating

Ivan Kilbee, tel: 01235 847527, mob: 07771 787585; ('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.');

APV Boiler Services (Kidlington) Tel: 01865 377264 (friendly, efficient and clean workers).

### 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**, mob: 07899 918015 (highly recommended)

### Sewing Services

**Jan Donley**, tel: 249625 upholstery (I've been please with everything she's done); **Belinda Cockburn**, tel: 250054 mending, making and alteration service ('her sewing is first class and she is so pleasant'); **Ann Paver** tel: 249129 soft furnishing including curtains, drapes etc. but not upholstery or loose covers ('highly recommended').

### Damp

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

### Apple Macs/Computers

**Macfaction**, bill@macfaction.co.uk, tel: 01993 811197 ('knowledgeable and helpful'); **API Computing** Andy Izzard, tel: 01865 821536 mob: 07964 796007 E-mail: andy@apicomputing.co.uk, www.apicomputing.co.uk (very efficient, not too costly, and ultra reliable)

### 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.

### Removals

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

### Cleaners

**Adela** 07751821113 (always on time and does a very nice job)

## USEFUL NUMBERS

**City Council**, tel: 249811 (now 24 hours); **County Council**, tel: 792422; **County Councillors: Sushila Devi Dhall**, tel: 553415; **Alan Armitage**, tel: 516115; **Susanna Pressel**, 7 Rawlinson Rd Oxford OX2 6UE, tel: 554001 email: cllrspressel@oxford.gov.uk; **City Councillors: Colin Cook**, tel: 285770 (day) 721844 (evening) email: cllrccook@oxford.gov.uk and **Susanna** (as above); **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; **noise complaints**, daytime tel: 252553, out of hours tel: 742138; **Community Centre** tel: 245761; **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 tel: 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; mob: 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 **April 22 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 May 2010, **last date for copy April 30**. If you would like to put an item in contact: Elizabeth Newbery 3 North St. Tel: 793360, email: elizabeth@newberyandengland.com or use the tear-of strip below.

### A note on the Internet

OIRA website: www.osneyisland.co.uk Contributors should be aware that the newsletter is automatically posted on the Internet just as it appears in print. Please bear in mind that OIRA can't accept any responsibility for the contents of external websites.

### Gazebo hire

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

### Notice board

**Duncan Wagstaff**, 38 Bridge St; mob: 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.