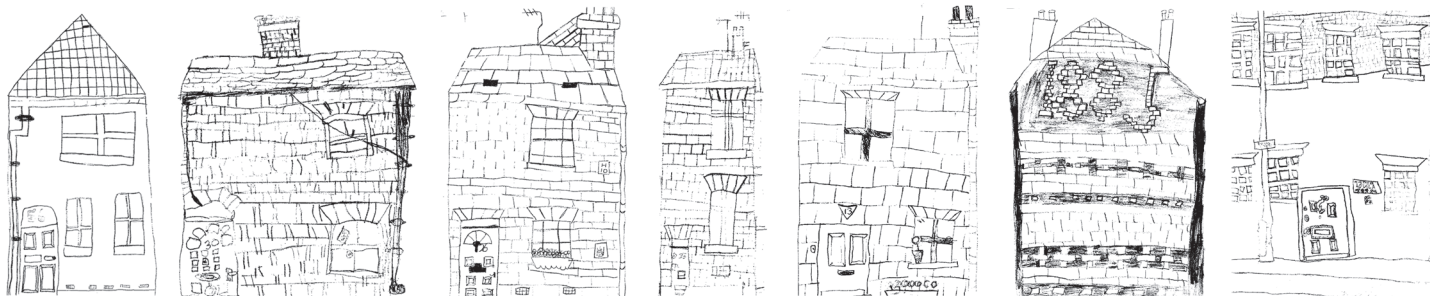


OSNEY ISLAND RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

www.osneyisland.co.uk

NEWSLETTER JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2012



Happy new year!

WHAT'S ON

'Greening' Bridge Street: Short Note and Invitation

From Georg Deutsch: The responses to the idea to use part of the Bridge Street bicycle parking areas for wooden planters was overwhelmingly positive. However, there was some concern that these planters might minimise the space for either cars or bicycles. They do not as they are to be put on the raised 'platforms' in the front- and back ends of the bicycle areas, but perhaps this was not made entirely clear in the original note. As there is no rush to put these planters up – no action is needed after all until February - it might be useful to have a public airing of views about the planters idea prior to the regular OIRA Committee meeting, Watch this space.

West Oxford Academy

From Sue Hutchinson: West Oxford Academy starts again on 17 January at 8pm in the Community Centre cafe. Topics for the term include 'Archaeological finds from a Roman settlement in the Egyptian Desert', 'The life of an online journalist', 'Monetizing publishing for the digital era' and 'Why gun control is difficult in the USA'.

Street Party

A street party is planned for July 2 to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee or the Olympics - depending whether you are a Royalist or a Republican. If you can help we'd love to hear from you. Email the committee to express an interest or come along to the next committee meeting.

ISLAND NEWS

Gardening scam

From Miranda Jones: For some years I had been looking for someone to level out the paving stones which had moved into dangerous positions, due, I thought, to tree roots pushing them up. A couple of well-established building companies had declined, stating that the tree needed to come down or that the slabs would break on

being lifted. I then called Lady Gardeners whose small leaflets have been coming through Osney doors for several years. The lady came to see the job immediately and offered to start work the next day, including several other small jobs like pruning my roses and creosoting some wood. I received an outrageous estimate of four figures which she reduced by a couple of hundred. I knew the rules: written estimate, references, time to consider but for whatever reason, I accepted her deal. I called back in the evening to ask again for a written estimate but again she told me not to worry, that VAT and all materials were included. Indeed, she and a young man appeared the next morning and did a fair job of levelling the patio. It was uneven as originally no foundations had been laid for the slabs and the tree roots were not at all a problem then. The cement may not last too long but the work was reasonable. I suppose I was glad to find someone for whom it did not seem an impossible job.

The young man did the work; the lady carried sand from the van; there was a lot of standing around; 13 hours work was done in four days; most rubbish was taken away and I reluctantly wrote a cheque for two-thirds of the sum, being unable to find the balance immediately, which I promised in good faith within two weeks. Upon my return from abroad, I phoned the Office of Trading Standards whose office is on Osney Mead and they were with me within an hour of my call. These people are travellers from Dunstable and are well-known to the Office. A phone-call to Lady Gardeners from him had her relieving me of any further debts. The accompanying police officer was sympathetic to the pressure used by doorstep salespeople as I felt very angry with myself for being conned. I simply felt that I had paid more than twice what would have been a reasonable price for 13 hours' work. Other gardening services leaflets are also to be avoided as the individuals were known to be dubious by the Officer. There is legislation that ANY doorstep contract MUST have a written estimate with seven cooling-off days and NO WORK should be commenced without the CUSTOMER'S written assent. CAVEAT EMPTOR.

This issue is very dear to my heart as I have an elderly relative in Winchester who is constantly being ripped off. It's why the Directory exists: no one pays for an advert – it's word of mouth recommendations only and the reason why it gets circulated all over Oxford./Ed

A BIT OF LOCAL HISTORY

Mick's Cafe

From Joyce Chalmers: No one will have missed the small white building standing next to the Youth Hostel. It looks immaculate from the outside and inside it is bright, clean and colourful. The murals of characters on the wall add a whimsical charm to what must be a 'one of a kind' sort of place these days. The building itself has quite a history: in the 1920s during the Depression, a Christian Organisation took over the small building or had it built, but in any case, it was opened as a Soup Kitchen and served rail workers who were coming into Oxford looking for work on the railways. (Note: To this day, the building is still owned by a Christian organisation based in Reading.) As the Recession receded and the Soup Kitchen was less vital, it was leased out as a Tea Shop, called Cripsey Road Tea Rooms. Due to family problems, the Tea Rooms became rather neglected and by the time the building was up for lease again, it was quite run down and business was very sparse. At this point (about 1986) Mick Harris, a van driver and an accomplished drummer in a band called State Affair, saw an opportunity and Mick's Café was born. (Mick Harris and his band, State Affair, were quite the go-getters in their day. They appeared on Opportunity Knocks, winning two weeks in a row to mention just one of their many accomplishments!) Today, Mick's Café is clean, friendly and fun. It's truly a place of local colour and has been featured in TV shows and one well-known movie, 'American Friends' starring Michael Palin. A wall is adorned with a mural of cartoon characters of his employees, who are largely family members – daughter Jenny, sister Pauline, and brother-in-law, Richard. Mick's wife Stephanie also comes in once a week. In this day of new-age food, it is a delightful surprise to find on our very doorstep a good old fashioned and authentic English breakfast featuring 'the works'. You can eat in or take out. The long bench seating arrangement means rubbing elbows with some interesting and friendly locals who are always happy to shove aside and make room. The café is open for business 7 days a week:

REQUESTS, RENTALS, FREEBIES

Short term lets required

Couple currently living on West Street, looking for short term (3-4 week) let on Osney Island or surrounding area from 7-9th of Feb to beginning of March. Happy to cat/dog sit if someone wants a holiday! Please contact Stephen or Jenny on 07849830622 or 07905821120 or email stephen.d.mooney@gmail.com

From Karen Brooks: I have some friends from Texas who are looking to rent somewhere this summer in Oxford. They would be happy to housesit, house swap or rent. They will be here mid May to early August but

won't be in the UK for all that time. If anyone can offer accommodation for a week, two weeks, a month or long during this time please contact Karen Brooks – 62 Bridge St, karen@chillipots.co.uk

From Paul Hughes: I lived on Osney Island back in 2005 and was a resident through the floods of 2007. I now have an ever increasing family and would like to move back to the Island. If any residents are contemplating a move away and are thinking of selling their property, my wife and I would be very interested in talking to you! We are looking for a min of 3 bedrooms and upstairs bathroom. Please contact me on :07760281432 or 01865 721389 or email: firstofficerhughes@gmail.com

Dolls for sale

From Zoe Mulcare: A wooden doll's cot £5, doll's car seat £2, a fantastic almost new Silver Cross doll's pram £20 and many other girl's toys including a large quantity of Polly Pocket dolls all priced up at bargain rates by their previous owner! Do email me zoemulcare@yahoo.co.uk if you are interested.

An Island in Osney

As usual there were more people who wanted the remaining copies of this millennium booklet than there were booklets. If you were lucky in the draw, we have called you to arrange collection. If you were not lucky, sorry, we have kept the names and phone numbers and will contact you if any other booklets surface.

Dog dirt

There have been several complaints recently about dog dirt. It's particularly horrible if it gets trodden into the house. If you own a dog please could you make sure you remember to take a plastic bag with you to scoop up any mess?

Crime

From Jane Buekett: A spate of crime seems to be hitting the Island. The police have been round after the house next door to us had an attempted break-in last week, a bike was nicked from the railings at the top of West Street and a house in West Street was burgled. No doubt there is more outside our immediate area that we don't know about. I wonder if there is something that Islanders can do about it, other than being vigilant. I guess it looks like an affluent area but in reality Osney is probably pretty poor pickings for casual burglars as we are not big on games consoles and giant TVs and I doubt they are looking for books and pianos!

BIRTHS, MARRIAGES AND DEATHS

Liza Swann

We are very sorry to hear that Liza Swann has passed away. She died peacefully at her home in Osney on December 22 aged 84 with family around her. She was a long time resident of Osney - living first on West and then on South Street and many local people will be familiar with the sight of Liza taking her regular constitutional around the Island.

USEFUL NUMBERS

City Council, tel: 249811 (now 24 hours); *County Council*, tel: 792422; *Alan Armitage*, tel: 516115; *Susanna Pressel*, 7 Rawlinson Rd Oxford OX2 6UE, tel: 554001 email: cllrspressel@oxford.gov.uk; *City Councillors: Colin Cook*, tel: 272548 (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; *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

New recommendations for 2012

Cleaners

Husband and wife team Rui and Marcia are looking for work and come highly recommended by several Islanders. Email: rnunes@hotmail.com or text to mob: 0742 907 8580.

Builders

We employed Mark Mavrommatis tel. 07970 974792 to install new windows, repair old ones, paint. He did an excellent job and at the moment is very reasonably priced because he is re-establishing himself in the Oxford area.

Handyman/house and garden maintenance

Andrew Russell tel 01865 453497 mob: 07977 837675 (highly recommended).

Kitchen fitters

Benchmark Kitchens tel. 372372 (helpful kitchen designers with a good range of products).

Boilers

Just had our boiler fixed by this young man; excellent service and thoroughly nice person: Jamie Cooke Tel: 07775700300 email: JC.Electrical@hotmail.com

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. The list is only as good as the updates so please let me know if anyone has retired or dropped out for other reasons.

TRIED AND TESTED

General builder

Chris Willis mob: 07974 155 638 does general building work/carpentry eg (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 tel: 01865 776319 mob: 07760 327 057 also does plumbing ('reliable, helpful and reasonable rates'); ACH Plasterers info@ACHplastering.co.uk tel: 01865 300 300 ('Did a great job and friendly, efficient too!); too!); Building

specialist in carpentry and joinery, NHBC registered est 1974: R.P. Lepper tel: 01993 882522 mob: 07801 136 4817 ('excellent, experienced workmanship')

Building and roof repairs

Gosford Builders tel: 01865 373467 mob: 07855 373467 ('good work and very fair rates')

Plumbing and heating

Plumbing and heating: Aquatic tel: 01865 74999 mob: 07050 011884 (highly recommended); Ivan Kilbee tel: 01235 847527 mob: 07771 787585; ('good work and comes on time'); APV Boiler Services tel: 01865 377264 ('friendly, efficient and clean workers'); Colin Pizzie (electrics, plumbing, kitchens, bathrooms) tel: 01235 554655

Electricians

RJB Electrical (rewires and new installations) tel: 01865 882723 mob: 07711 934348; J.L. Electrical (rewires, fuse boards, sockets, lights) mob: 07825 133337; CE Electrical Services tel: 01865 842598 or mob: 0778 2360 979 ('thoroughly recommended'); DEC Electricians tel: 725453 ('very good')

Domestic appliances

Baldwin Appliances tel: 01865 377484 www.baldwinappliances.com; Washing machine repairs. Contact: Chris at Oxford Domestic. Appointments can be booked online at oxforddomestic.com or tel: 01865 407494. ('skilled, timely, user friendly with very reasonable fixed prices and no call out fee').

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)

Chimney sweep

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

Window cleaning

Paul Smith mob: 0797 9692 895 ('amiable and reliable.')

Interior and exterior decoration

Dave Buckle tel: 848630 evenings ('friendly, efficient and good value'); Steve Brierty 01491 836762 mob: 0785 0357414 ('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 pleased with everything she's done); Belinda Cockburn mending, making and alterations tel: 01865 250054 ('her sewing is first class'); Ann Paver tel: 249129 soft furnishing including drapes, curtains but not upholstery ('highly recommended')

Damp

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

Apple Macs

Bill Richardson email: bill@macfaction.co.uk tel: 01993 811197 ('excellent and will come out if not too busy'); APi Computing tel: 01865 821536 mob: 07964 796007 ('efficient, not too costly'); Mac Simple is based in Osney Mead tel 07974 321064 www.macsimple.co.uk

(‘excellent and local’).

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’)

Removals

Isis Van Man tel: 01865 422342 mob: 07828 185884
email: help@Isisvanman.com (‘very helpful and friendly’)

Hairdressers

Highly recommended hair stylist who does your hair in the comfort of your own home! (former Art Director Mahogany and Toni & Guy) Sally Horton mob: 07815 445229.

Gardening Services

Marion White, lady gardener tel: 01865 245071. (Good hourly rate, great work and winner of the Oxford in Bloom (small garden category); Oxford Garden Services mob: 0755 498 7911(‘excellent tree surgery at fair rates - and they cleared up well afterwards’)

OIRA COMMITTEE

Stephen Lynam (Secretary and Vice Chair) 11 South St tel: 201334; Suzanne Jeffrey 13 South St tel: 247737; Fiona McFarlane (Treasurer) 11 South St tel: 201334; Elizabeth Newbery (Newsletter) 3 North St tel: 793360; Kate Stewart (Chair)18 East St tel: 241856; Anna Truelove 83 Bridge St tel: 245496.

The new email address for any OIRA committee member is askoira@osneyisland.org.uk

Next Committee meeting

The OIRA committee’s next meeting will take place on Wednesday, 28 September at 3 North 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 July , last date for copy June 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-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.

Notice board

Suzanne Jeffrey, 13 South Street tel: 247737
email: Suzanne@dands.org.uk

Next Committee meeting

The OIRA committee’s next meeting has been postponed due to illness. Please log on to the website www.osneyisland.co.uk for the date of the next meeting.
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 March, last date for copy February 29. If you would like to put an item in contact: Elizabeth Newbery 3 North St. 793360, email: elizabeth@newberyandengland.com or use the tear-of strip below.

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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.