

# Osney Island Residents' Association Newsletter

## The visiting professor

Nayana Prakash, 14 West Street

For the past few months we have enjoyed the company of a tabby cat, who we have affectionately called The Professor (gender neutral because we do not know if it's a boy or girl). We're very close to the cat but don't know who he/she belongs to – there is no collar. I'm hoping someone can let me know if he has a home, because we are curious about his origins, and his real name: [nayana.prakash28@gmail.com](mailto:nayana.prakash28@gmail.com)



## Learning from lockdown

Jenny Harvey, South Street

Friday morning yoga sessions with Derek Elliot have provided great respite from the stress of running a business and homeschooling. Thanks so much Derek.

Tobias Sturmer, East Street

My personal experience is surely not representative of musicians in the UK at large. But that is exactly where my learning starts off. See, I actually didn't miss gigging at all...at first. What I found much harder was not being able to rehearse with my bands – I'm in four. Those regular get-togethers structured my week, connected me with community, got me out of the house, made me practise and be playful.

Luckily most of my students kept studying with me during lockdown, via Zoom, and I created a method for making online teaching engaging. Financially, I was lucky to qualify for a grant from the Arts Council, which covered the bills for 3 months. In return, I took part in various virtual community-music projects.

Bottom line, I learned during lockdown that having many interests is much more important than being a great musician. The music industry is in dire straits, but what worries me more is the bigger picture: I feel we have an environmental and socio-political crisis on our hands which still doesn't register in us half as much as this pandemic has.

Brian Hurwitz and Fiona Eddleston, South Street

We came to Osney Island in strange circumstances. We'd been planning a move to Oxford for some years, and finally sold our house in London in January. As a stop-gap, we lived with a friend near High Wycombe. COVID-19 and lockdown disrupted our property search, but ironically made it easier for us (and our springer spaniel) to rent a house. As luck would have it, the house we moved into as tenants, sight unseen, was on South Street, a short walk from The Punter.

Despite the stress of trying to buy a house with little on offer, we've enjoyed days in Oxford, sun and rain, surrounded by water and meadows, trying to identify wild flowers. A job with the university and the joys of remote working. Dog-walking explorations, joining places up, Port Meadow to Jericho, finding the canal, Osney Lock to a deserted Christchurch. Newborn ducklings, cygnets and the garden in Abbey Road with its pet tortoises.

We've met kind neighbours, and the OIRA email exchanges have helped us feel part of the community and close to the pulse.

## Tumbling Bay bathing place

Pauline Massey, Bridge Street

Watching a heron at the new fish channel in Tumbling Bay led me to reflect on what it used to be like there. I went to West Oxford School, and one of the highlights of summer was to walk along the towpath to the ferry which took us over to 'Tum', as we called it, for our swimming lesson. A large man, who I think doubled as lifeguard, would punt us across the river from a stone landing stage. This is still visible past the bridge where the Sheep Wash Channel joins the main part of the Thames.

Boys and girls swam in different sections, and there were wooden changing huts bordering the area which is now the fish channel. A diving board was provided for the brave, near to where the lasher tumbled down into the lower section of water. Friends tell me there were slides and springboards too. I kept mainly to the shallow end where the water was opaque, and mud squelched beneath our bare feet. I was afraid of what lurked beneath the water, and not without cause. A pupil from my class was once bitten by a pike. But, undeterred, we returned for our regular swimming lessons.

There was another swimming pool on Potts Stream, accessible from Willow Walk, at the bottom of what is now Monks' Causeway. One of my earliest memories is of tramping with my grandfather, through what seemed to me dense vegetation, to emerge at the beautiful pool. There were dragonflies dancing across the water, and the call of excited swimmers. We set down our stools and proceeded to fish with the m el e all around us.

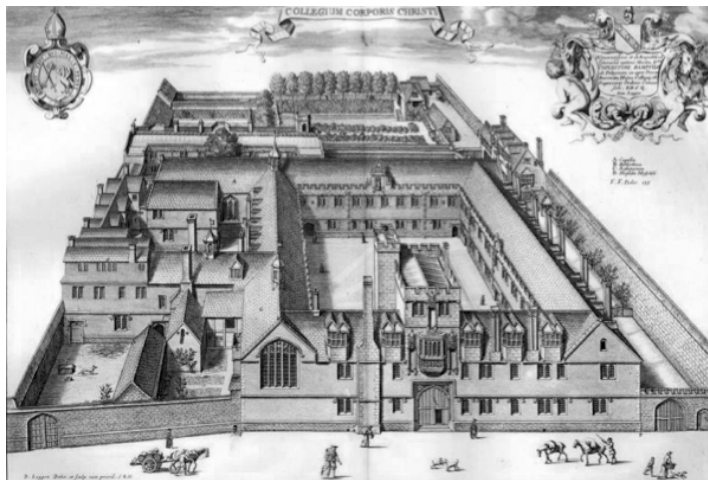
## How the allotments began

Gus Fagan, Bridge Street

Some time around 1850 Oxford City Council purchased 6 acres of land in Botley Meadow from the estate of Henry Ward for the sum of £460. In 1853, it leased this land to the Osney, St Thomas and New Botley Allotment Association. This Botley Meadow site was, as far as we know, the first allotment in Oxford.

Twenty Pound Meadow came 25 years later when the city acquired part of Rewley Meads from Corpus Christi College. This land had been owned by Corpus from the mid-sixteenth century, and the story of how the city acquired it has to do with a lane between Corpus and Christ Church which was owned by the town. Apparently the lane had, in earlier times, been a means of access for cattle to the meadow between Christ Church and the river. Some time around 1557 the lane was leased to Corpus and used as a back entrance to the college.

In 1607 the college built a residence for its president in the lane. In the engraving by David Loggan, you can see the lane on the right, with the new building. So the lane had effectively become part of Corpus and was no longer a public right of way. In the nineteenth century the college finally settled the legal situation by agreeing a deal whereby it gave the city part of its Rewley Meads estate, a site of roughly 11 acres adjacent to the river, in exchange for the lane. This was Twenty Pound Meadow. In 1878 the city leased it to the allotment association formed on Botley Meadow in 1853.



▲ *Corpus Christi, 1675*

## Osney Lock Hydro

Ali Lloyd, Director (South Street)

You may have noticed that there was scaffolding at the Osney Lock Hydro scheme during July. The solar PV array on the turbine-house roof had been out of action for several months owing to a manufacturing fault. The manufacturer has now replaced the panels with new, higher-capacity ones. Unfortunately we had to wait until the end of the hydro generating season to do this and then were delayed by COVID-19.

With the PV array back in action, the hydro site is once again generating clean, green electricity all year round. We are also making use of the summer off-season to carry out our first major inspection of the hydro machine itself, as we have now completed 5 years of operation. In that

period we have generated over 800,000 kWh (compared to typical household consumption of around 3,000–4,000 kWh per year).

## Reducing plastic waste

Simon Collings, South Street

Earlier this year a group of residents on the island got together to look at practical ways to reduce the amount of plastic we use. We compiled a list of suggestions which is available on the OIRA website: [osneyisland.org.uk/reducing-plastic-waste/](https://osneyisland.org.uk/reducing-plastic-waste/)

Since COVID-19, avoiding plastic packaging has become more of a challenge, but plenty of options still remain. Many on the island will no doubt already be actively adopting these behaviours. But the list may provide some new ideas, so please take a look. If anyone has suggestions they would like to add you can send them to Jane Buekett. Please help reduce avoidable plastic waste.

## Open Gardens

Tentative plans to have a delayed Open Gardens in September have been dropped owing to concerns about distancing and a second COVID-19 spike. We look forward to spring 2021 when Susan Hutchinson (West Street) will be the organiser. In the meantime if you would like to add your garden to the gallery at [osneyisland.org.uk/open-gardens-online-2020/](https://osneyisland.org.uk/open-gardens-online-2020/) please send a photo to Jane Buekett ([janebuekett@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:janebuekett@yahoo.co.uk)).

## Allotments

Jude Carroll, field secretary, Twenty Pound Meadow Back in March, when food supply chains wobbled and panic-buying began, people who had never planted anything before turned to growing their own food. They also talked about doing so as if it meant you scattered a few seeds, waited a bit, and voilà, you're self-sufficient! Well, it's true that now, we have had gluts of courgettes or precious handfuls of peas or strawberries. Getting there, however, has meant waiting for things to grow and rejoicing when they did.

We have come through the driest May on record. Our crops have escaped the hungriest badgers in creation and more blackfly on the broad beans than anyone could imagine. (Sadly, carrots proved too tempting for our night-time foragers.)

The allotments in August have moved from being an escape from lockdown to a place that shows what hard work and persistence (rather than scattering and hoping) can produce. And it's a place where many newcomers have moved from fantasy to competence. Long may it continue.

## Boat club

Fiona Ravenscroft, South Street

Since restrictions on using the river were lifted in May, many of us have been out enjoying the water in the club's boats. We can explore upriver, downriver and tributaries (if you are good at ducking under tree branches). The boat club has three kayaks and a canoe available for members. If you are interested in finding out about membership contact me: [fiona@myphone.coop](mailto:fiona@myphone.coop)

## COVID-19 support group

Sian Allen, West Street

Despite the return to (semi) normal, a reminder that help is still available if you need it at any point, with shopping or anything else. We are also still looking for a few more volunteers to help with deliveries from the Co-op in Botley to people who are shielding. Please get in touch with me at [sianallen41@gmail.com](mailto:sianallen41@gmail.com) if you might be able to help out. Thank you.

## The Holly Bush

Nick and Liz West

We are so excited we can throw the doors open after 3 months of lockdown. Safety is paramount here, sanitiser is everywhere and table service rules supreme. No ordering at the bar, no need to book, just turn up and we will sit you at one of our socially distanced tables.

Don't want to come to the pub? Our menu is available for take away and we are trying to set up a delivery service so we can bring the pizzas to your doorstep.

And...we finally have a dog. Please say hi to Ninja the Pomsky next time you are around. He loves attention and treats.

## St Frideswide's Church

Revd Kate Seagrave, Mission Priest

We are delighted to announce that services have resumed at St Frideswide's. In addition to our usual 10.30 a.m. parish service, we are holding Holy Communion at 8.30 a.m. (using the 1662 Prayer Book) and evening worship (no Communion) at 5 p.m. each Sunday. These extra services give lots more space for social distancing. All welcome.

We can now perform weddings and baptisms, although with restrictions on numbers. Funerals and the strewing of ashes continued throughout lockdown.

The church is open as much as possible during the day for individual prayer, so please do call by. If you would like to help steward during one of these times, we would love to hear from you. We are also continuing our online worship. If you would like to receive our weekly email, join our WhatsApp Daily Prayer group or contact us for spiritual and pastoral support then let us know. [osneybenefice@outlook.com](mailto:osneybenefice@outlook.com)

## West Oxford Academy

Susan Hutchinson, 42 West Street

I have decided not to run an Academy programme before Christmas. I am thinking seriously about a term after Christmas but will make a decision nearer the time. Please don't let that stop anyone offering talks or suggesting friends or neighbours who could contribute. Contact me at [westoxfordacademy@gmail.com](mailto:westoxfordacademy@gmail.com) or by a message through my door.

## Recipe: Bajan fish cakes

Matt Dyson, Bridge Street

As a child I spent a year living in the Caribbean, and have had a love of lime and nutmeg since. On a trip back with family (to Barbados especially) a decade or so ago, we spent a day on a catamaran, and everyone got on like a

boat on fire. The crew shared some recipes, and given the proximity of the Fishmarket on Osney Mead, I thought some others might like the recipe for Bajan fish cakes.

2 tbsp oil

1 cup onions finely chopped

1 cup flour

1 tsp baking powder

1 egg beaten

¼ cup milk

1 tsp butter

1 or 2 large red hot peppers seeded and finely chopped

¼ cup scallions finely chopped

3 tbs bajan seasoning

½ pound salted cod, soaked and cooked until salty taste is gone, then flaked

Sauté onions just until glassy. Place flour, baking powder and salt in a bowl, make a well in the centre and pour in egg, butter and milk. Mix together lightly, add the rest of the ingredients and stir well.

Drop by tablespoonful into hot oil in a heavy pan, but do not crowd them. Cook for about 3–4 minutes until golden brown on both sides. Remove from pan and drain on absorbent paper. Serve very hot with cocktail sauce.

Bajan seasoning is available in some places, or you can make some: [www.bajanthings.com/bajan-seasoning/](http://www.bajanthings.com/bajan-seasoning/)

## Children's wordsearch

You can download a summer wordsearch from this page: [osneyisland.org.uk/newsletter-links/](http://osneyisland.org.uk/newsletter-links/)

## Directory of local suppliers

This list is compiled from islanders' recommendations only.

Suppliers are removed if there are reports of unreasonable rates or service. But try to sort the issue out between you and the supplier first — someone's livelihood is at stake.

It is also online at:

[osneyisland.org.uk/directory-of-local-suppliers/](http://osneyisland.org.uk/directory-of-local-suppliers/) Please contact Jane Buekett to submit additions or changes.

### Baby kit

Baby kit for hire: 01235 28008, [www.babycomes2.co.uk/](http://www.babycomes2.co.uk/)

### Babysitter

Clementine: 07305 524076

### Bicycles, repairs and accessories

Warlands Cycles, Botley Road: 01865

723100, [www.warlands-cycles.co.uk/](http://www.warlands-cycles.co.uk/)

Jon Wyver: 07842901873, [info@oxbicycles.co.uk](mailto:info@oxbicycles.co.uk),

[www.oxbicycles.co.uk/](http://www.oxbicycles.co.uk/) (will deliver and pick up in Oxford free of charge).

### Building and roof repairs

Rob Cassettari, North Hinksey Builders: 01865 242312/07977 152884/07900 881511, [robnhc@virginmedia.com](mailto:robnhc@virginmedia.com)

Everest Roofing Ltd: 01865 8816856,

[enquiries@everestroofing.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@everestroofing.co.uk)

Brian French: 07957 315303 (local general builder and plasterer: takes on small jobs)

Paul Hackett, P & R Roofing Ltd (Horspath): 01865 875523,

[info@prroofingoxford.co.uk](mailto:info@prroofingoxford.co.uk), [www.prroofingoxford.co.uk](http://www.prroofingoxford.co.uk)

Mark Mavrommatis: 07970 974792 (installs new windows, repairs old ones)

Tim Mera, KM Builders Oxford: 01865 608 649, 07462 971475,

[k.mbuildingservices@yahoo.com](mailto:k.mbuildingservices@yahoo.com), [kmbuildersoxford.co.uk](http://kmbuildersoxford.co.uk)

Oxford Roofing and Maintenance:  
01865 820323, 07468 429000,  
[oxfordroofingandmaintenance.co.uk](http://oxfordroofingandmaintenance.co.uk)  
Mike Shephard, MJ Construction  
(Abingdon): 07834 321274,  
[mjconstruction@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mjconstruction@hotmail.co.uk) (larger  
jobs)

#### **Car repairs and MOTs**

HiQ Autos in Ferry Hinksey Road:  
01865 241180, [oxfordhiq@hotmail.com](mailto:oxfordhiq@hotmail.com),  
[www.hiqonline.co.uk/hiq-centres/oxford](http://www.hiqonline.co.uk/hiq-centres/oxford)  
Oxon Autos in Grove near Wantage  
(will come to you): 07899 762 949,  
[oxon.autos@live.co.uk](mailto:oxon.autos@live.co.uk), [oxonautos.co.uk/](http://oxonautos.co.uk/)

#### **Cat sitting/feeding and dog walking**

Shirley Gibson (also housework, shopping,  
companionship): 07510 991213 (Binsey)

#### **Chimney sweep**

Martin Simmonds: 07762 816185,  
[enquiry@ashlogs.com](mailto:enquiry@ashlogs.com), [www.ashlogs.com](http://www.ashlogs.com)  
(also supplies ash logs)

#### **Cleaners**

C&S Cleaning Services: 01865 872395,  
07824 159855

#### **Computers**

Bill Baxter, The Animated Laser Company:  
07774 412944 (noon to midnight, Old  
Marston), [bill@animatedlaser.co.uk](mailto:bill@animatedlaser.co.uk)  
Judy Dendy: 07554 660468,  
[www.computerdendy.co.uk](http://www.computerdendy.co.uk) (lessons and  
basic troubleshooting)  
Bill Richardson: 01865 376100,  
[bill@macfaction.co.uk](mailto:bill@macfaction.co.uk) (Macs)  
Mac Simple: 01865 580886/07974  
321064, [www.macsimple.co.uk](http://www.macsimple.co.uk)

#### **Damp**

Damprot Renovations Ltd: 01865 742144

#### **Domestic help**

See Cat sitting.

#### **Electricians**

Baldwin Appliances: 01865 377484,  
[www.baldwinappliances.com](http://www.baldwinappliances.com)  
Jamie Cooke: 07775 700300,  
[JC.Electrical@hotmail.com](mailto:JC.Electrical@hotmail.com)  
DEC Electricians: 01865  
725453, [mail@decoxford.co.uk](mailto:mail@decoxford.co.uk),  
[www.dec-oxfordltd.co.uk](http://www.dec-oxfordltd.co.uk)  
RJB Electrical: 01865 882723/07711  
934348 (rewires and new installations)  
Mark Morris (Botley): 07970 342375 (also  
plumber)

#### **Exterior and interior decorators**

Rob Bennett: 0790 5819310  
Steve Brierty: 01491 836762/0785 0357414  
Dave Buckle: 01865 848630  
Sam Gordon: 07976 516941 (plasterer)  
Andrew Turner: 07591 491 804 (repaints  
masonry, front doors and windows)

#### **Flooring and general carpentry**

Steve, Amazon Flooring: 07899 918015  
Jonathan Everett, Lockwood Carpentry:  
07597 952381, [j.everett.lwc@gmail.com](mailto:j.everett.lwc@gmail.com)

#### **Footcare in your home**

Kate Reid: 07952 127534

#### **Fresh fish**

Kim: 07806 602776 (Cleethorpes, delivers  
to the island about 6 p.m.)

#### **Gardening services**

David Morris: 01865 725875 (gardening  
maintenance and some diy)  
Ben Renals-Wells: 07891 422574  
A.P. Van Olsen Oxfordshire Gardens &  
Dry Stone Walls: 01865 552036/07860  
334871, [www.oxfordshiregardens.co.uk](http://www.oxfordshiregardens.co.uk)  
Jason: [info@oxfordgardenservices.co.uk](mailto:info@oxfordgardenservices.co.uk)  
(tree surgery)

#### **Green builders and installers**

Energy My Way: 0845 371 3181,  
[www.energymyway.co.uk/](http://www.energymyway.co.uk/)  
JoJu Solar: 0800 0542 977,  
[www.jojusolar.co.uk/](http://www.jojusolar.co.uk/)  
Next Generation Renewable Energy Ltd:  
01993 810130, [office@ngre.co.uk](mailto:office@ngre.co.uk)

#### **Gutter clearing**

Ben's Gutters: 0800 9173157/07778  
240161, [info@bensgutters.com](mailto:info@bensgutters.com)

#### **Handymen**

Andrew Russell: 01865 453497/07977  
837675 (painting, decorating and garden  
maintenance)

#### **Home hairdressers**

Sally Horton: 07815 445229  
Nadine Wright: 07824660184  
Barry: 01865 400717/07860 895364

#### **Locksmith**

Davies Hardened Security: 01865  
371816/07711 625092

#### **Logs**

Logs for All: 0845 269 0306,  
[www.logsforall.co.uk/](http://www.logsforall.co.uk/)

#### **Newsagent delivering to Osney**

Mr Patel, Court Candy Shop, 65  
Woodstock Rd, Oxford OX2 6HJ:  
01865 515506/07917 990029,  
[court CANDYSHOP@GOOGLEMAIL.COM](mailto:court CANDYSHOP@GOOGLEMAIL.COM)

#### **Oven cleaning**

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

#### **Pests**

Avenge: 02865 246195/078 79405060  
(based in Binsey)

#### **Plumbing and heating**

APV Boiler Services: 01865 377264  
Jules Jones (formerly Smith):  
01993 778244/07790 961395,  
[reallygoodplumbing@outlook.com](mailto:reallygoodplumbing@outlook.com)  
Ivan Kilbee: 01235 847527 /07771 787585  
Mark Morris, Botley: 07970 342375 (also  
electrics)  
Milton and Swan: 07779 992115,  
[www.miltonandswan.com/](http://www.miltonandswan.com/) (all-female  
plumbing, tiling, bathrooms)  
Remloc Plumbing and Heating: 01235  
536345 (Abingdon)  
Byron, Sure Gas Boiler Repairs: 07899  
629629

#### **Removals**

A. G. Jacob and Sons: 07977 963929,  
[www.agjacobandson.co.uk/](http://www.agjacobandson.co.uk/)  
House and Carriage: 01608 811444/07769  
585988

#### **Sewing services**

Elizabeth Feast: 01386 861010 (loose  
covers)  
Maria Skoyles: 01865 721460/0759 0264  
246 (sewing, repairs and alterations)

#### **Stonework surfaces and tiles**

Jashim Hussain of Ultragranite: 01865  
407555, [www.ultragranite.co.uk](http://www.ultragranite.co.uk)

#### **Window cleaning**

Mark Jennings: 01865 848904/07773  
159198  
Michael Temple: 07983 767075,  
[michaeltemple1@outlook.com](mailto:michaeltemple1@outlook.com)

#### **Windows**

Oxford Refurbished Sash Windows, John:  
[info@sashrefurbcompany.co.uk](mailto:info@sashrefurbcompany.co.uk) (refurbish  
the wooden frame and insert double-  
glazed panels)

#### **Wood-burning stove fitters**

Heatstore in Charlbury: 01608 819088,  
[www.heatstoreltd.co.uk/](http://www.heatstoreltd.co.uk/) (for Defra  
approved wood and coal burners)  
Lee Hill: 01865 787 940 (HETAS approved)

## **OIRA info**

### **Bridge Street noticeboard**

If you want to display something on the  
noticeboard (no larger than A5) contact  
Julia Marsh [julia.marsh@btconnect.com](mailto:julia.marsh@btconnect.com)  
or put it through her door at 26 Bridge  
Street.

### **Osney email list**

To join the residents' email list,  
moderated by Alison Burdett, contact:  
[osiramanager@gmail.com](mailto:osiramanager@gmail.com)

### **Welcome pack**

New to the Island? Contact Jude Carroll,  
10 East St, 01865 793247 for a free  
welcome pack.

### **OIRA committee**

Alison Burdett [alison.burdett@gmail.com](mailto:alison.burdett@gmail.com)  
(email list), Joyce Chalmers 07837  
127883, Maureen Ergeneli 07816 580990,  
Alan Goodwin (chair) 07765 034918  
[alan@alanguoodwin.co.uk](mailto:alan@alanguoodwin.co.uk), Elie Harris  
[gekh2@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gekh2@yahoo.co.uk), Robert Lawrence  
01865 428323, Jennifer/Nick Meakin  
(secretary) [jennifermeakin@gmail.com](mailto:jennifermeakin@gmail.com),  
Elizabeth Newbery 01865 793360  
[elizabeth@newberyandengland.com](mailto:elizabeth@newberyandengland.com),  
Piper Osborne 07894 719001, Karen  
Schoenemann 07718 632742, Gareth  
Strange 01865 727680, Anna Truelove  
(newsletter distribution) 01865 245496,  
Jula Turner (treasurer) 07971 881258.  
Newsletter and website: Jane Buekett  
([janebuekett@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:janebuekett@yahoo.co.uk), 26 South  
Street). Deadline for November  
newsletter: 25 October.

**Councillor Susanna Pressel**

Jericho & Osney Division

7 Rawlinson Road  
Oxford  
OX2 6UE

Tel: 01865 554001

Email:  
susanna.pressel@oxfordshire.gov.uk

## **OIRA Newsletter supplement – August 2020**

### Bus gates

The County Council is asking for our views on the introduction of two temporary, experimental bus gates (like the one in the High Street) one of which will be in Hythe Bridge Street. The idea is to speed up the buses, improve air quality, prevent through-traffic, and more specifically to respond to the Covid-19 crisis. A third bus gate may be installed later in Oxpens. They would operate from 7.30am to 6.30pm.

They are thinking of allowing residents who live near each bus gate, including at least people at the east end of Botley Road and I hope Osney Island as well, to drive through it at off-peak times. There is clear and useful information at [www.oxfordshire.gov.uk](http://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk) and a short survey, so please give your views. **The deadline is the end of Sunday 9 August.**

If you don't have internet access, please contact me with any questions and so that I can pass on your opinion.

Note: As I write, the County Council has suddenly decided to remove the barriers in Walton Street, possibly in the middle of August. This may be good news for those of you who need to drive to the health centre in Jericho.

### Response to the pandemic

In Osney there has been a magnificent neighbourly response to the difficult situation we are in, especially from Sian Allen of West Street, who is still busy organising volunteers and helping hundreds of people throughout the Botley Road area. Thank you, Sian!

Please contact her or me if further help is needed or if you can volunteer.

### Hedgehog highways?

If you are in the Osney email group you will know about the happy sightings of hedgehogs (now an endangered species) on the Island. If you are not part of the group and have internet access, please join it – or I could send you some of the correspondence. Several residents are keen to create “hedgehog highways” (without bus gates.....) by making small holes in walls or gates to connect as many gardens as possible. That would be brilliant, however, I have had requests for people *not* to put out food for the hedgehogs (or for pigeons), since that would encourage rats, which are already a problem in some parts of Osney.

With best wishes

Susanna