

Osney Island Residents' Association Newsletter

A community approach to net zero carbon

Barbara Hammond, West Street, CEO Low Carbon Hub
You may be aware that Project LEO (www.project-leo.co.uk), a major UK energy innovation programme, is running a project on Osney Island to see how we can make the transition to electric bikes and cars, and electric forms of heating.

We've got the hydro and sub-station data, so we know the pattern of generation and usage across the island. We're negotiating for an EV car club for Osney. Now we want to explore how households on the island can help balance the local grid, with property-level generation and storage.

We need a small number of keen householders to take part in a cutting-edge initiative: Osney Supercharge. Do you have PVs on your roof and want to install a battery as well? Would you like to become an energy pioneer and have PVs and a battery installed? Costs of installation can be covered. Even agreement to share your meter data with us could help. To find out more contact Simon Collings: simonjc_uk@yahoo.com

Voicing the climate crisis

Tobias Sturmer, East Street

The climate crisis is overwhelmingly complex and, as a result, our responses to it vary hugely. I made a short film in the run-up to COP26 in which four local people speak their truth about the crisis. My aim was to communicate not the protest and civil disobedience aspect of XR, but the inner, quiet and heartfelt connection some of us feel at this time.

My hope is that the deeper meaning in these rather intimate portraits comes across, and that the thoughts expressed draw in those people who find it difficult to face up to the reality of our situation. The video is on YouTube: <https://tinyurl.com/3smhf2s2>

Working life

Two islanders give some insight into their working life.

Lauren Robinson, East Street, trainee clinical psychologist



Sam and I, with our cat Minou, recently moved to East Street from Brockley in southeast London.

My role as a trainee clinical psychologist with Oxford University brought us here. I am now working with many

different types of people with mental health difficulties, within the NHS, on a 3-year doctorate programme.



I completed my PhD in child and adolescent mental health at University College London and a postdoc at King's College London, working with young people with eating disorders and various comorbid difficulties. Sam has been fortunate to continue his role in software engineering and now works from home, so you might see him gazing onto the beautiful river from his office upstairs.

We are enjoying the beauty of the island and the walks, running routes and pubs in the area. Thank you to our neighbours for showing us such a warm welcome and we hope to catch up with many more of you in the new year.

Jen Meakin, North Street, co-founder of The Allergy Team

I set up The Allergy Team with two friends, one of whom has food-allergic children. It is an online resource to help families living with food allergies to thrive — 'team' because it is all about supporting each other.

Naively, we didn't realise that starting and running a business would be a team effort behind the scenes too. We have careers in journalism, marketing and the food industry behind us but there's so much more that we have had to get to grips with and not a day goes by when I am not out of my comfort zone. From day one, Osney Islanders have been behind us: from patient listening at the embryonic stages, to responding to my request for bookkeepers, providing a possible new recruit and, most visibly of all, our logo and branding designed by Phil on East Street.

It has been amazing. Thank you. And thank you to everyone who has shared our information with their family and friends with food allergies. We have lots going on and more to come: www.theallergyteam.com or email me: jen@theallergyteam.com

Anyone for fish and chips?

Kit Thompson, Bridge Street

As an alternative to the excellent lunches from Tumbling Bay Café, Fish4Lunch at Aldens Fishmarket on Osney Mead is still doing fish and chips on Friday and Saturday lunchtimes. Cooked as you wait, and can be brought

home in a bike pannier in five minutes, still hot and delicious. <https://fishmarketoxford.co.uk/fish4lunch/>

Park End Street and the Forest of Dean

Pauline Massey, Bridge Street

I was interested to read in the November newsletter David Walker's account of Park End Street, including the origin of its name from a coal-mining village in the Forest of Dean. My grandfather, originally from Jericho, went to the Forest of Dean during the First World War to work down the mines. I had often wondered why he chose this location. On a walk with local historian Liz Woolley, she indicated that there had once been a colliery office linked to the Forest of Dean in Park End Street.

Working in the mines was so dangerous that my grandmother was warned to always have a clean shirt and suit ready, in case my grandfather was killed in an accident. Fearing for his safety, and having a young family, she persuaded him to return to Oxford. They came to Osney Island in 1916, where they rented a house in Bridge Street. My grandfather went on to work for the Great Western Railway as a fitter's mate, helping to repair steam engines.

More local history

In this podcast local historian Mark Davies describes how his research into the history of Medley Manor Farm revealed its ownership by his own eighteenth-century ancestor: <https://tinyurl.com/MedleyManor>

Nature notes

Veronica Strang writes: Glimpsing a kerfuffle in my garden, I looked out to see a bird of prey diving at a pigeon, which managed to escape by ducking into a nearby vine. I thought at first it might be a red kite, but greater bird-nerd expertise than mine suggests that it was more likely a sparrowhawk. It was very cross that the pigeon declined to be post.

Elsewhere on Osney a resident has spotted a bright green parakeet in her garden. Has anyone else seen them on the island?

And in December a seasonal poster of the Osney Dodo appeared one dark night at the end of Mill Street. Who was responsible? Nigel Allen sent the email group a photo of a shadowy figure armed with poster and steps. Was it: (a) Charles Darwin? (b) Lewis Carroll? (c) Greta Thunberg? (d) A certain resident of South Street?

Vishuddha Yoga Centre

The Vishuddha Yoga Centre in East Street is due to open in May, with the objective of supporting the physical, emotional and spiritual health of the community through yoga. It will be run as a charity by yoga teachers and experienced students, led by the community it seeks to serve.

The building is fully electric, with solar PV panels and battery storage to maximise the use of green electricity. It is highly insulated, and the heat recovery ventilation and filtration system retains warmth in the building, while bringing in clean, fresh air.

The edges of the small back garden are being planted to provide places for wildlife, with a focus on permeability. Rainwater from the roof is directed backward to a large soak-away under the garden rather than towards the river. Valves at the base of the building front and back allow water to pass through, minimising impact on flood risk for neighbours.

All these measures aim to create a viable long-term resource for the island and the wider community.

Osney Island boat club

Fiona Ravenscroft, South Street

Are you interested in getting out on the river? The Osney Island Boat Club keeps three kayaks and a Canadian canoe for use by members. They are stored on the island with easy access to the river. Yearly membership, open to any person/household/family on the Island, runs from 1 April and costs £50 per year per household plus a £30 joining fee. Please contact Fiona at osneyislandbc@gmail.com for further details and a look at the boats.

West Oxford Academy

Susan Hutchinson, West Street

West Oxford Academy will be back in May, running for eight weeks. Each session consists of a 20–30 minute talk by a local resident, followed by questions and informal discussion over a glass of wine. Talks we have lined up include: Rocket science, Medley near Binsey, Quantum computing, The Oxford Community Land Trust, Lowland Rescue Oxford.

The programme is not final, so if you are interested in contributing a talk or would like to suggest a speaker, please contact me: westoxfordacademy@gmail.com

Art on Osney

Elizabeth Newbery, North Street

We are now a group of 12 painters, potters, printers, textile artists, marbled paper and basket makers. In November we had our first island exhibition.

In the words of one member 'it wasn't exactly like Artweeks — there weren't so many spontaneous sparky meet-ups of friends, neighbours and family as used to happen in the Before Time. But in spite of masks, lower numbers and polite distancing and dodging, it was great fun.' We were so grateful for the large number of locals and more distant folks who dropped in.

Our next meeting is Tuesday 22 March, 7 p.m., venue to be decided. If you would like to join, email: elizabeth@newberyandengland.com

Masha Unkovskaya writes: I only had time to visit the house of Louise and Bob Summers. What I saw left me feeling that we have many talented and industrious people around. Annie Wootton's papier mâché creatures were full of life and expression. Louise's prints and particularly collages intricately made from recycled materials were very interesting. And Joanna Jacob's knitwear and especially her framed 'words on paper' emphasising the invisibility of mental problems I found impressive. When we have another Art on Osney exhibition I'll make sure not to miss any part of it.



▲ *The strange and ever-changing life of an Osney skip*

Open Gardens 2022

Susan Hutchinson, West Street

Open Gardens last June was a great success: nine gardens open and a chance to meet neighbours safely out of doors. All being well, Open Gardens and Tea on the Towpath will take place this year in late May or early June. I am looking forward to this very much.

If you would consider opening your garden, please contact me: osney.open.gardens@gmail.com or 01865 428323. Everyone is welcome to join in. Provisional offers are not binding, and gardens don't have to be manicured: the overall aim is variety. Some people find Open Gardens a good stimulus to get out working in the garden.

I am happy to continue organising the sharing of window-box containers. If you would like to borrow containers or have spare, please contact me, as above.

Christmas events 2021

For the second year running Debbie Hall coordinated a living Advent calendar with displays appearing for each day of Advent in windows around the island. The windows celebrated everything from *The Snowman* to the diversity of languages heard on the towpath, and the creativity of islanders was inspiring.

Carols were once again heard on Osney thanks to Matt Dyson who organised this year's chilly but heart-warming carol-singing tour of the island, ending up in The Holly Bush.

Tealights on the towpath sadly had to be cancelled owing to heavy rain and rising Covid cases in the city.

St Frideswide's Church

Rev. Rachel Cross

In 2022 we celebrate St Frideswide's 150th anniversary as part of the community of Osney and West Oxford. Over the last two centuries, years of tumultuous events and great cultural shifts, St Frideswide has been a constant presence pointing towards the eternal love, mercy and presence of God. And so we look forward to celebrating this anniversary together with you.

Regular Sunday services at St Frideswide's:

8.30 a.m. BCP Holy Communion (except last Sunday of the month)

10.30 a.m. Holy Communion

Last Sunday of the month:

9 a.m. BCP, St Margaret's, Binsey

10.30 a.m. Holy Communion, St Frideswide's

From window cleaner Mikey Temple

I'm sorry to tell you that I will no longer be able to cover the window cleaning round in Osney. I'm starting a new job as an electrician for a small company and I cannot spare the time. Thank you very much for your custom in the past.

Thanks to Elizabeth and Robert

Two long-standing members of the OIRA committee, both of whom have made big contributions to Osney, have stood down.

Elizabeth Newbery was editor of the newsletter for over 20 years, as well as organising many social gatherings.

Robert Lawrence, during his 10 years on the committee, conceived and set up the Osney email group, with all the benefits this has brought to islanders.

Many thanks to both of them.

OIRA Annual General Meeting

After two lockdown years with no AGM, the 2022 meeting is planned for Monday 25 April, 7.30 p.m., in the main hall at the West Oxford Community Centre. All islanders welcome. There will be a talk by the new Ecology and Biodiversity Officer for the City Council, and refreshments (alcoholic and non).

WOCC currently requires mask-wearing and social distancing, for which there will be plenty of space in this larger room.

Directory of local suppliers

This list is compiled from islanders' recommendations only. Suppliers are removed if there are reports of unreasonable rates or service. The list is online at: 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

Babysitter

Clementine: 07305 524076

Bicycles, repairs and accessories

Jon Wyver: 07842901873, info@oxbicycles.co.uk, 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

Everest Roofing Ltd: 01865 8816856, 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, 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, kmbuildersoxford.co.uk
Oxford Roofing and Maintenance: 01865 820323, 07468 429000, oxfordroofingandmaintenance.co.uk

Richard S. Pocock: 07766 026648 (general builder)

Mike Shephard, MJ Construction (Abingdon): 07834 321274, mjconstruction@hotmail.co.uk (larger jobs)

Carpenters and flooring

Steve, Amazon Flooring: 07899 918015
Jonathan Everett, Lockwood Carpentry:
07597 952381, j.everett.lwc@gmail.com
Bill Spires: 07786 672492 (carpenter
willing to take on smaller fiddly jobs)

Car repairs and MOTs

Oxon Autos in Grove near Wantage
(will come to you): 07899 762 949,
oxon.autos@live.co.uk, 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, 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
Judy Dendy: 07554 660468,
www.computerdendy.co.uk (lessons and
basic troubleshooting)
Bill Richardson: 01865 376100,
bill@macfaction.co.uk (Macs)
Mac Simple: 01865 580886/07974
321064, www.macsimple.co.uk

Damp

Damprot Renovations Ltd: 01865 742144
Stonehouses:
stonehousewaterproofing.co.uk

Domestic help

See Cat sitting.

Electricians

Baldwin Appliances: 01865 377484,
www.baldwinappliances.com
Jamie Cooke: 07775 700300,
JC.Electrical@hotmail.com
DEC Electricians: 01865
725453, mail@decoxford.co.uk,
www.dec-oxfordltd.co.uk
RJB Electrical: 01865 882723/07711
934348 (rewires and new installations)
Andy Webb (A W Electrical Services,
Yarnton): 01865 377171, 07931 127982

Footcare in your home

Kate Reid: 07952 127534

Fresh fish

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

Garden compost and manure

George: 01793 575100/07831
437989, info@muckandmulch.co.uk,
www.muckandmulch.co.uk

Gardening services

David Morris: 01865 725875 (gardening
maintenance and some diy)
Jason: info@oxfordgardenservices.co.uk
(tree surgery)

Rory Whelehan: 07341 849035,
rorry@rorlyn.co.uk (gardener, lawn/hedge
cutting, general tidying)

Clive: 07787 741968

Heather: 07522 856744 (one-off or
regular jobs, heavy or light work including
pruning)

Green builders and installers

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

Gutter clearing

Ben's Gutters: 0800 9173157/07778
240161, info@bensgutters.com,
www.bensgutters.com

Handymen

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

Home hairdressers

Sally Horton: 07815 445229
Nadine Wright: 07824660184

Locksmith

Davies Hardened Security: 01865
371816/07711 625092

Logs

Logs for All: 0845 269 0306,
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

Oven cleaning

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

Painters and decorators

Rob Bennett: 0790 5819310
Steve Brierty: 01491 836762/0785 0357414
Dave Buckle: 01865 848630
Paul Buckle (Dave's son, and now taking
over from him): 07920 099196
John Chappell: 07985 490970
Dan Driscoll: 07934 718788,
danieldriscoll63@gmail.com (also home
repairs)
Sam Gordon: 07976 516941 (plasterer)
Andrew Turner: 07591 491804 (repaints
masonry, front doors and windows)

Pests

Avenge: 02865 246195/07879 405060
(based in Binsey)

Plumbing and heating

APV Boiler Services: 01865 377264
Byron Morris, Avid Heating (boiler repairs
etc.): 07899 629629, 01865 703303,
www.avidheating.co.uk
Jules Jones (formerly Smith):
01993 778244/07790 961395,
reallygoodplumbing@outlook.com

Ivan Kilbee: 01235 847527 /07771 787585
Mark Morris, Botley: 07970 342375 (also
electrics)

Milton and Swan: 07779 992115,
www.miltonandswan.com (all-female
plumbing, tiling, bathrooms)
Remloc Plumbing and Heating: 01235
536345 (Abingdon)

Removals

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

Sewing services

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

Window cleaning

Mark Jennings: 01865 848904/07773
159198

Windows

Oxford Refurbished Sash Windows, John:
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 (for Defra
approved wood and coal burners)
Lee Hill: 01865 787 940 (HETAS approved)

OIRA info

Bridge Street noticeboard

To display something on the noticeboard
(no larger than A5) contact Julia Marsh
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

OIRA committee

Alison Burdett alison.burdett@gmail.com
(email list), Alistair Butchers
alistairbutchers@gmail.com, Joyce
Chalmers 07837 127883, Maureen
Ergeneli 07816 580990, Alan
Goodwin (chair) 07765 034918
alan@alanguardwin.co.uk, Eli Harriss
gekh2@yahoo.co.uk, Jennifer/Nick Meakin
(secretary) jennifermeakin@gmail.com,
Karen Schoenemann 07718 632742,
Gareth Strange 01865 727680, Jula Turner
(treasurer) 07971 881258.

Newsletter and website editor: Jane
Buekett (janebuekett@yahoo.co.uk, 01865
251454). Newsletter distribution: Anna
Truelove.

Date: February 2022

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Osney Island Newsletter supplement

Osney Bridge – There is still no date for work to start on a permanent new water pipe to replace the damaged one under the bridge. However, I do now have dates for a lot of the preparatory work, which will be carried out this month. I keep impressing the urgency of this work on Thames Water and the County Council.

Traffic in Botley Road – I know the congestion and pollution are a daily nightmare for many residents. The councils are trying to get the Westgate car park to raise their parking charges and trying to get more people to use the park and ride car park by putting up signs on the ring road, by keeping the cost of parking there down and by introducing a better season ticket.

Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme – the Environment Agency is about to put in their planning application, which must then be validated by the County Council before being published. The proposed new channel will benefit from the rebuilding of the structurally weak A423 bridge near Redbridge. The cost of this bridge has now gone up to *£90 million*, because the County Council wants to include new bus lanes, cycle lanes and footways.

River Thames – Our campaign against sewage in our rivers seems to have had an effect. Thames Water say they are no longer paying dividends to their shareholders and are gradually carrying out substantial investment in their treatment works – at last! Campaigners have found out that in our region half of these are a long way from having the necessary capacity.

New footbridge – The proposed new pedestrian and cycle bridge to link Osney Mead with the city centre is now in an advanced stage of planning. They have looked into whether it's possible to improve the gasworks bridge, but decided against it for various reasons. They say that "in developing proposals for the new bridge, the impact on both views along the river and ecology are being taken into account, to ensure that the character of the area is respected and maintained."

Finally – Please contact me if you would like to know more about EV chargers, or the new customer services and advice centre, which both councils and the CAB have just opened in the Westgate Library, or an appeal for people to help with reading at West Oxford School, or new football sessions for women on the basketball court in Botley Park and in WOCC, or the new community larder, or the OxClean litter-pick on 18-20 and 25-27 March or anything else. AND – the Zero Emission Zone is launching at last in the city centre on 28 February!

Susanna