

# Tithe Farm & Ladygrove Residents Association (TFLRA)

## Autumn 2015

---

**INTRODUCTION** - The Autumn newsletter is here! First of all, thank you all for your contributions and thank you also for your kind words of support. Your feedback is always welcome. We are very pleased that we have collected enough money to cover the cost of printing of the newsletter for another year. Our other expenses are very modest. There has been a lot going on in our area since the last newsletter, the major works on the Drayton Road, the Oxford Flood Alleviation project which may affect us in Abingdon, cuts in the local buses and concerns about footpaths and playing areas. We hope that the information in this newsletter is useful to you.

**NEW CONTACT DETAILS FOR OUR LOCAL COUNCILLORS** - We said we would give residents contact details for our new local Councillors. Town Councillors are Jeanette Halliday - phone 01235-522642 (*via Town Council*) email [jeanette.halliday@abingdon.gov.uk](mailto:jeanette.halliday@abingdon.gov.uk) and David Pope - phone 07774242436 email [david.pope@abingdon.gov.uk](mailto:david.pope@abingdon.gov.uk), and District Councillors are Monica Lovatt - phone 01235-530538 email [monicalovatt@whitehorsedc.gov.uk](mailto:monicalovatt@whitehorsedc.gov.uk) and Chris Palmer - phone 07801062624 email [chris.palmer@whitehorsedc.gov.uk](mailto:chris.palmer@whitehorsedc.gov.uk)

Councillors' News is now featured on the TFLRA blog, and the Vale Councillors have started the ball rolling and have written something for this. See the blog at <http://tflra.blogspot.co.uk>



**THE WILTS & BERKS CANAL** - The Wilts & Berks Canal was opened in 1810 and ran about 52 miles from Semington to the Thames in Abingdon carrying mostly coal from the Somerset coalfields. The canal declined towards the end of the 19th century due to competition from the railways and was finally abandoned by an Act of Parliament in 1914. Much of the historic route has survived and was rediscovered by Jack Dalby whose book about the canal inspired others to consider restoration, leading eventually to the formation of the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust.

In South Abingdon remnants of the old canal can be seen by those who know where to look. Wharf Cottage in Wilsham Road is a former canal building and the iron bridge in Caldecott Road, erected by the Canal Company in 1824, spans the River Ock linking St Helen's Wharf and the Wilts & Berks Wharf.

We can only imagine the busy scenes when the canal traffic was at its height with boats moored and others disgorging their loads of coal. The canal terminal basin was in Caldecott Road between the Recreation Ground and the road itself. It is now possible to walk on the grass where once narrowboats were moored and the line of trees marks the line of the towpath. The canal route (under the wide grassy verge next to the road) is filled in all along Caldecott Road and the slight rise at the junction with Drayton Road is where a bridge used to carry the Drayton Road over the canal. In Byron Close they have the canal route in their back gardens and at the slightly elevated point in Mill Lane, the route of the canal can be seen to the right marked by overgrown twin hedges. Walking further along Mill Lane we come to New Cut Mill (also known as Bugg's Mill) which has the historic canal route to its left and the River Ock to its right. The canal route continues to a low bridge under the A34.

Anyone interested in the Canal and the work of the Wilts & Berks Canal Trust will find their website [www.wbct.org.uk](http://www.wbct.org.uk) very informative. An Abingdon walk may be downloaded from the Abingdon Branch section, highlighting the historic route. Look out for guided walks during Heritage week!

**THE GARDEN IN AUTUMN/WINTER** - As the weather turns colder, plants will slow down. Take out any tender bedding and replace with winter bedding. Other hardy bedding should last until the first frosts. Clear fallen leaves from beds and lawns and compost. Put them in a plastic bag, pierce a few holes in it and by next you should have valuable leaf mould. Raise permanent containers off the ground to aid drainage, and wrap tender ones in bubble wrap or fleece. Perennials can be cut back and split up now. Discard the older central part and plant out the fresher outside growths. Some light pruning can be carried out - mainly just to keep larger shrubs in shape. Those that you normally prune in spring, eg roses and buddleia, can be cut back by a third to prevent them loosening their roots in the wind, before the main pruning next year. You can also prune late-summer flowering clematis - cut back to about 1m high to remove long, old growth and encourage strong flowering shoots. Bare rooted plants - normally cheaper than container grown - can be planted now. Finally, while its quiet and not much growth about, check all fences, supports, tools etc and clean/sharpen/paint them.



**OVERGROWN FOOTPATHS** - We talked to our local Councillors about the state of the footpath between Chaunterell Way and Tesco's. We were pleased to see that the Vale Council has now cleared the path of overgrown vegetation. Thank you to our Councillors for their help. We have also contacted the Vale Council about the very poor surface of the path, which is deeply rutted and becoming difficult to walk on. The Vale Property Team are inspecting the path and will let us know what remediation work can be done. We will put an update on the blog when we get this information. Residents have also pointed out that the footpath between Burton Close and Drayton Road is also getting obstructed with

vegetation now. We are taking this up with the County Council as they own and manage this footpath.

**A WALK ON THE WILDSIDE** by *Max the Wildlife Watcher* - Being new to this area I was quickly amazed by the range of habitats on our doorstep. Whether it was the farmland off Mill Road, the meandering River Ock with its reed beds, to the tree lined River Ock Valley Walk. I soon got to wondering what hidden wildlife secrets would be revealed. Some of my nature highlights spotted so far are hedgerows brimming with butterflies and moths, a quick blue flash of a kingfisher skimming the River Ock on the valley walk and spotting a family of four fallow deer between the 'pooh stick' bridge on Mill Road and the superstore. Not forgetting the iconic call of the red kite as it patrols our estates on a daily basis. Please let the Newsletter Editor know if anything new catches your eye on [tfl\\_ra@zoho.com](mailto:tfl_ra@zoho.com) or on 07732251334.



Wishing you a wild Autumn.

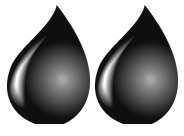



### **WINNER OF SUNFLOWER COMPETITION**

The winner of the tallest sunflower competition goes to Ellie from Mill Road. Her sunflower grew to 2m 10cm when last measured!! A small prize to the winner!



**BUS SUBSIDY CUTS** - The cuts to bus service 41 will have been in place for a couple of months now. The committee has been told that ceasing to go to Tesco's is causing people the most problems. Unless the County Council can increase their bus subsidies or Thames Travel change their mind about the route of the 41, there seems little prospect of this situation changing. We can only suggest that people affected, write to their County Councillor or possibly their MP.



**OXFORD FLOOD ALLEVIATION SCHEME** - The Environment Agency in partnership with the County Council, Oxford City Council, Vale of White Horse District Council, Thames Water and the Oxford Flood Alliance are developing a scheme to reduce the flood risk in Oxford. This would take the form of a flood relief channel, west of Oxford between Botley Road and Redbridge and between Kennington and Sandford-on-Thames. The agencies are in a period of consultation, and if approved construction would start in 2018. As part of the consultation there have been a series of open days inviting the public to view and discuss plans.

For Abingdon, we're concerned we could be affected particularly as the relief channel would feed back into the Thames upstream of Abingdon. For the Tithe Farm and Ladygrove estate we are predominantly affected by the behaviour of the River Ock during flooding. To that end, one option being considered for the River Ock is a bund, which is a large area that would be used to increase water storage capacity, of the River Ock, west of the A34. The idea is that the extra capacity can be used to hold water back in times of high water and reduce the flood risk to homes and businesses adjacent to the Ock meadow at the north end of our estate. Schemes for the River Stert and St Helens Mill are also being considered for Abingdon.

The assertion is that the agencies are working to reduce flood risk overall and not transfer it elsewhere. The claim is that to gain approval for the whole scheme, it will have to be shown that no communities downstream are put at greater risk of flooding as a result of the scheme. Our local Councillors are not so sure and are pressing for a full independent assessment of the proposals. Agencies are continuing to gather opinions of residents, local businesses and other groups that have an interest.

This is where we come in. The agencies have produced a questionnaire and are looking to residents, local groups and business for local knowledge on the behaviour of the local watercourses during times of flooding. The questionnaire can be found on the TFLRA blog here <http://tflra.blogspot.co.uk/> Please fill free to fill it in and email it back to: [OxfordScheme@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:OxfordScheme@environment-agency.gov.uk) More information on the proposed scheme can be found at the following:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/oxford-flood-risk-management-scheme>  
<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/oxford-and-abingdon-flood-alleviation-scheme>  
or email: [oxfordandabingdon@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:oxfordandabingdon@environment-agency.gov.uk)

**DRAYTON ROAD** - Following the resurfacing of the road, it was noticed that the stretch from Mill Road to the pedestrian crossing wasn't included. We raised this point with the County Council and their reply was *'with regards to the additional section of carriageway up to the Mill Road junction, we can appreciate that this road is not in good condition and that this causes concern. When the authority first considered Drayton Road for maintenance, the most deteriorated section of carriageway was put forward for treatment. The scope of the scheme was later reviewed and increased to include an additional deteriorated area. Unfortunately with a limited budget for maintenance treatments across the county we were not able to increase the scope any further without taking funds away from other, potentially more deteriorated sections of the network. We recognise that this is far from ideal, however we will consider the additional section for a future maintenance/resurfacing scheme'*.

**NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH** - A Neighbourhood Watch scheme has been started in Medicott Drive. Residents will remember that there was a piece in the Spring newsletter saying that a scheme can be started by calling Carol Rudd, the Watch Scheme Co-ordinator at Abingdon Police Station, on 01235-556937 or [carol.rudd@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:carol.rudd@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk) The volunteer coordinator for Medicott Drive says that the scheme was very easy to establish and he feels that it is very beneficial for residents. He is happy to guide other volunteer coordinators through the process - please contact Martin on 07753915437.

**TRIFFIDS** - We have been asked to remind people living at road junctions to check that their shrubs and bushes don't cause loss of driving sight lines – and that people don't park on corners.

**AUTUMN QUIZ - BLUE HEAVEN**



- 1) Happening very seldom .....
- 2) Happening totally unexpectedly .....
- 3) Thinking out of the box .....
- 4) In royal veins .....
- 5) Donald Campbell's ill-fated jet car .....
- 6) Children's programme started in 1958 .....
- 7) Balaenoptera musculus .....
- 8) Feeling miserable .....
- 9) Wireless technology invented by L.M. Ericsson .....
- 10) Calliphora vomitoria .....
- 11) Intellectual woman .....
- 12) Original description of plan or idea .....
- 13) Manual worker in U.S.A. ....
- 14) Waltz by Johann Strauss .....
- 15) He dozed off and neglected his herding duties .....

Closing date 31<sup>st</sup> October - drop entries at 18 Mill Road or email at [tfl\\_ra@zoho.com](mailto:tfl_ra@zoho.com) - a small prize will go to the winner!

**ADVERTISEMENTS**



**Something Fishy!** A large variety of fresh fish delivered to your door. For further details ring MURRAY WALL 07808-868090 or email [muzzywall@live.co.uk](mailto:muzzywall@live.co.uk)

**Mathews & Son - Greengrocers** - Daily deliveries and retail / catering supplies. 5 Harwell Road, Sutton Courtenay OX14 4BN. Tel 01235-848239 / mobile 07958-534183. Email [mathewsandson@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mathewsandson@hotmail.co.uk).

**Simon's News** - Newspaper home delivery, 7 days a week - telephone 01235-553001.

**Natural Movement Training** - Christof Bachmann, Personal Training & Sports Massage Therapy - telephone 07547-818614 - email [contact@ptoxford.co.uk](mailto:contact@ptoxford.co.uk) - website [www.ptoxford.co.uk](http://www.ptoxford.co.uk)

Remember that you can also advertise your business. A full advert can go on the blog with a short summary in the paper newsletters. £10.00 for residents for the year. We look forward to hearing from you!

**NEXT MEETING** - Monday 12<sup>th</sup> October - See blog for more details and meetings.

**CONTACT** - For contributions, articles, announcements or if you'd like to come along to a meeting - email at [tfl\\_ra@zoho.com](mailto:tfl_ra@zoho.com) or phone 07732251334 to leave a message.

Co-ordinator: Maureen, 8 Byron Close - Treasurer: Anita Wickens, 39 Masefield Crescent  
Blog: [www.tflra.blogspot.co.uk](http://www.tflra.blogspot.co.uk)