

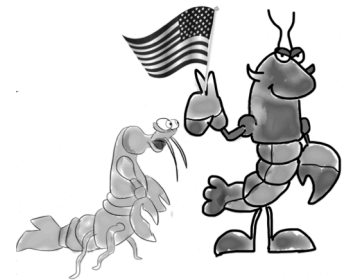
Tithe Farm & Ladygrove Residents Association (TFLRA)

Spring 2017



WELCOME – This being the first Newsletter of the year, and though it seems a long time ago a Happy New Year to you for 2017!!! We've had some really cold weather but with the temperature rising a little it already feels Spring-like 'but n'er cast a clout til May be out'. Welcome to our new residents - we hope that you will want to continue receiving the newsletter, which comes out four times a year. During the next edition in summer the deliverers will also be collecting the yearly subscription ... a whole £1 – such good value for a year!!

WALK ON THE WILDSIDE (by Max the wildlife watcher) - Hopefully spring will be now upon us, with scents of bluebells, catkins on willows and new leaves unfolding on the trees. You may take a spring walk along the River Ock, but beware of the alien species that lies beneath. Anglers will be well aware of this alien infestation, but for the ordinary people we will only notice them when looking over a bridge hoping to catch a glimpse of fish. What am I talking about? A crustacean: the American Signal Crayfish. It is bigger than our native white clawed crayfish, which it out-competes for food and habitat. They carry a disease which kills our smaller native species and their burrows damage the sides of the river. Apparently they were brought into the country by the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food (MAFF) to boost commercial fisheries and may have escaped or been released.



What can we do? Not a lot is the answer. The Environment Agency says: *"Signal crayfish have been present around Oxford for over 25 years. We don't have clear evidence that local trapping of signal crayfish is beneficial to stocks of the native species. We issue authorisations for trapping of signal crayfish in the Thames for commercial and domestic consumption, and in some cases, intensive trapping, to reduce the nuisance impact on anglers."* You have to be licenced by the E.A. to catch them and putting them back is forbidden (failure to comply carries a hefty fine) but they do make for good eating! Remember the Hairy Bikers came and visited Abingdon Lock in 2013 to sample the fayre, helped by a local man 'Crayfish Bob'. Maybe our local restaurants need to take note and increase crayfish on the menu; it is local, seasonal and fresh and eco-friendly way of saving the Abingdon Environment.

The full report can be found on the TFLRA blog <https://tflra.blogspot.co.uk>



THE DRAYTON ROAD BUS STOP SAGA! – As you will recall from earlier newsletters, this saga has been going on now for over a year. In October 2015 we told the County Council that the concrete road surface at our bus stop was breaking up badly. In January 2016 they told us that it would be repaired in the new financial year. Then in October 2016 we were told that money for minor repairs had run out and it would probably be fixed in the following financial year. And now we see on Fix my Street

report 770685 in December that the County Council say that they have 'assessed this in line with our highway policies and found that no further work is currently required'. We have written to them (twice) and asked them how their policies have changed during the year to make this work now unnecessary and if they now believe that there are no safety issues for the waiting passengers and the passing cars should a block of the loose concrete be thrown into the road by a bus. At the time of writing, we have yet to hear back from them.

VALE E-NEWS - Are you interested in keeping up to date with the news from the Vale Council? The Vale produces an electronic newsletter every two months with news and updates – you can sign up to it at www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/valenews



VEGETABLES IN CONTAINERS (*Martin Gulliver writes*) - With most gardens being small, few can afford the space for a vegetable patch, but many can be sown in amongst other ornamental plants, or in containers. I recently bought a 6' vegetable trough, and grew French beans, carrots, lettuce radishes and salad leaves. Tomatoes can easily be grown in pots, as can cucumbers. Avoid root crops unless you have a deep container ... carrots will be ok but parsnips less so. Keep them well watered and fed, and ensure good drainage. A sunny position is also important. Salad leaves are ideal – cut and come again leaves will do well in pots, but discard after three cuts and sow at regular intervals. In trays, try sowing peas, about 1" apart, then harvest the tops when they reach about 3" – they are lovely in salads. A large pot with bamboo supports will be ideal for runner beans, or smaller French beans with no support. Beetroot can be sown amongst other plants, its red/green leaves adding colour. Similarly dwarf beans with red or white leaves are decorative. Radishes work well too, as they come up and are harvested in a short space of time – they are a good filler while other plants expand. A greenhouse, even unheated, can give extra protection and apart from the crops mentioned above, chillies and peppers work very well in pots. Fruit wise, I have been successful with melons in the greenhouse, and blueberries and strawberries work well in pots. Herbs of course respond well to pot culture – in fact with garden mint it is essential! Again keep in a sunny place and keep trimmed. Finally, potatoes do well in sacks, earthing up and rolling up the sack as the plants grow.



TESCO PATH UPDATE - Users of the river path to Tesco's will have seen the long crack in the tarmac, near the weir end. The Vale Council are aware and have said this may be treated with sealant if the crack worsens. They have repaired the new wooden fence where it was vandalised. The long story of the barbed wire continues though! Some has been removed already and the Vale will be removing more where it is considered to be dangerous. When the work is done, the path will have to be closed for a short period because of the machinery that will be used. See the blog for any updates.



EDIBLE GARDENING - Stonehill in Oday Hill are running courses on gardening and related topics. If you are interested in learning more about Edible Gardening, there is a course on this on 2 April 10am - 4pm. For more details you can check out <http://www.stonehillgardens.co.uk>

DATE	TIME	TOPIC
March 19 th	10am – 4pm	Introduction to Permaculture
April 2 nd	10am – 4pm	Design your own edible space
May 21 st	10am – 4pm	Introduction to Forest Garden Design
June 18 th	10am – 4pm	Timber Frame Building (Roundhouse Construction)
July 16 th	10am – 4pm	Straw Bale Building
August 13 th	10am – 4pm	Cob Building
September 24 th	10am – 4pm	Wattle and Daub Building
October 15 th	10am – 1pm	Composting including Wormeries



change at the last minute.

PLANT SWAP – For all Tithe Farm and Ladygrove gardeners!! There will be another Plant Swap this year on Saturday 20th May on the driveway at 39 Masefield Crescent between 3.00 p.m. and 5.00 p.m., come rain or shine. Bring along your extra plants, surplus seedlings or spare cuttings and be ready to 'swap' - all for free!! Please do check the Blog beforehand in case the date is

MASEFIELD CRESCENT PLAYING FIELD - The Town Council tell us that there are plans to improve the play equipment in Masefield Crescent playing area later in the year. Some items have already been removed due to 'age and condition'. They have no details of the replacement pieces at the moment, so we will post updates on the blog when we get more information.



SPRING QUIZ – LETTER SWAP - The answers to the clues consist of two words which are identical apart from two letters which have been swapped round. Sometimes the letters are adjacent, sometimes they are separated by one or two letters. Example: Divided item is tipped over. Answer: split – spilt.

No	Question	Answer 1	Answer 2
1	Reaction at atom's centre is vague		
2	Have a dialogue about protecting nature		
3	A loaf / hair on chin		
4	Commerce / footstep		
5	Military / to do with matrimony		
6	Unfastened / joined together		
7	Path to follow / legal process		
8	I am frightened of holy things		
9	Thin slice of precious metal		
10	Shellfish prefers quiet waters		
11	Utensil for cheese paring / to hold a stocking up		
12	18 th century dance takes 60 seconds		

Closing date for entries is 30th April – drop entries into 18 Mill Road or email them to tfl_ra@zoho.com

WINNER OF THE WINTER QUIZ - Winners of the Winter newsletter 2016 quiz were Valerie Hitchcock and a resident from Ladygrove. A small prize for you both!! The answers were: **Christmas Songs** (1) *I saw Mummy kissing Santa Claus*, (2) *Mistletoe and wine*, (3) *Walking in a Winter Wonderland*, (4) *The Twelve days of Christmas*, (5) *Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas*, (6) *Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer*, (7) *Rocking around the Christmas Tree*, (8) *When Santa got stuck up the Chimney*, (9) *We wish you a Merry Christmas*, (10) *Santa Claus is coming to Town*. **Pantomimes** (1) *Jack and the Bean Stalk*, (2) *Dick Whittington and his Cat*, (3) *Red Riding Hood*, (4) *Mother Goose*, (5) *Babes in the Wood*, (6) *Snow White and the Seven Dwarves*, (7) *Goldilocks and the Three Bears*, (8) *Puss in Boots*, (9) *Beauty and the Beast*, (10) *Robin Hood and his Merry Men*. Thanks to everyone who sent in their quiz.

WINNER OF THE CHILDREN'S COLOURING COMPETITION - We had lots of lovely entries for the children colouring competition from the Winter Newsletter 2016. Our independent judge selected 2 winners who were Charlie from Mill Road and Imogen from Coleridge Drive who both won a small prize. Well done - a huge thank you to all who sent in their beautiful drawings!!

RUBBISH!! - We have heard a few complaints about bits of rubbish being left behind in the street when the refuse bins have been emptied. Biffa have told us that the crews should carry brooms etc for collecting up anything that is dropped in the course of emptying the bins. And if they don't – residents should let Biffa know as soon as possible on 03000 610610.



SOAKAWAYS - A Tithe Farm resident found that her house's rainwater pipes were connected only to a ground water soakaway and not to a Thames Water sewer. Thames Water automatically assume that properties are connected to their sewers and charge for processing the rainwater – have a look at your water bill.



She contacted Thames Water, told them that 'her' rainwater didn't go into their sewers and got a back dated rebate! It is worth checking if your property uses a soakaway - if your rainwater pipes don't go into the sewers, you may wish to contact Thames Water on 0800 980 8800 or look at their customer help website at <http://thameswater.co.uk/>

ABINGDON MACULAR GROUP - Have you been diagnosed with macular degeneration or do you know somebody who has? Abingdon Macular Group meets on the second Thursday of the month from 10.30 a.m. to 12 noon at the Baptist Church Hall, 35 Ock St. For further details contact Eleanor on 01235 531 857.



BE AWARE - Thames Valley Neighbourhood Watch Association (TVNWA) have circulated an email warning people of the risk of criminals stealing details from the new credit/debit cards which have Radio Frequency Identification technology. They warn that details could be obtained by these criminals just by brushing past a pocket or bag with their device. TVNWA recommend that everyone carrying contactless cards use a Card Defender holder, a sleeve card

holder which blocks the criminals' devices and protects the cards. Card Defenders are available from TVNWA for £1.00 each, 5 for £4.00 or 7 for £10.00 plus postage. They can be ordered by contacting naomi.arnold33@gmail.com

BARTON FIELDS (by David Guyoncourt) - To get to Barton Fields, cross the footbridge over Abbey Stream near Abingdon Weir and you will find an interpretation board with a map of the nature reserve. The site extends for nearly half a mile beside the Thames. The land slopes gently towards the river changing from dry grassland higher up to marsh in the lower part. Abingdon Naturalists Green Team manages the site, and have created wildflower-rich areas in the grassland and several ponds in the marsh. They also arrange school and youth group visits to the site. Children enjoy pond dipping, have fun identifying bugs or look under reptile mats for critters beneath. In winter the marsh is frequented by birds such as snipe and water rail, while in summer many different species of warbler can be heard. Our smallest mammal, the harvest mouse, builds nests in the reeds and grass snakes hunt for amphibians, which are swallowed whole. The grassland is a good place for butterflies and twenty-four species have been recorded there. For further information or if you would like to take part in conservation work on this site, contact David Guyoncourt: david.guyoncourt@ntlworld.com



ADVERTS - 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!

Window Wise – Supply and fit double glazed windows, doors and conservatories – Repairs undertaken on all double glazing – No pressurised sales – Friendly service. Ring Martin for a free quotation on 07885571778 or 01235-559334.

Milk and More - delivered to your door! To arrange home deliveries of milk and other goods, contact Steve Enock Dairies Ltd of Milk and More. Deliveries on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Tel 0345 606 3606 email steveenock@hotmail.com

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

Irish Dancing School - All ages and abilities welcome. Community Centre, Boulter Drive Abingdon OX14 1XP. Thursdays 5.30pm-6.30pm. Contact Sam Crossan 01235 520886 or email crossanschoolofirishdancing@hotmail.co.uk.



NEXT MEETING - please see blog at www.tflra.blogspot.co.uk for the next meeting.

CONTACT - For contributions, articles, announcements or if you'd like to come along to a meeting email at tfl_ra@zoho.com or phone **on our new number** 07548419545 to leave a message.



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Blog: <http://tflra.blogspot.co.uk>