

Tithe Farm & Ladygrove Residents Association (TFLRA)

Autumn 2018



WELCOME (*the Editor writes*) - Surviving the summer heat, the rain finally came and rescued our gardens, the wildlife ... and our tempers. I never thought I'd be thankful for rain, though of course we should be grateful for our glorious summer. Thank you to all for this years £1 subs, and a special big thank you to those who so generously gave extra towards keeping this newsletter running. We can't do it without you all. One more thank you to the newsletter deliverers / subs collectors for braving the heat!!!

THE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY AND REDUCING FLOOD RISK IN ABINGDON

- A recent newsletter from the Environment Agency gives updates about this work. They say they are working with the Vale District Council, Oxon County Council and the Thames Regional Flood and Coastal Committee to find ways to reduce flooding in Abingdon. They are in the early stages of investigating an option to put a flood storage area at Abingdon Common, working on progressing a number of design options together with complementary measures such as natural flood management. Examples of natural flood management include woody dams, replanting hedges to slow river flow and managing woodland to maintain soil porosity. They state that they are also considering 'property level resilience to further reduce flood risk', assuring nearby communities that no option would be developed that would increase flood risk outside of the area in which they are working.



Ecologists are surveying the area in and around Abingdon Common for wildlife to enable them to 'design the work to avoid or mitigate for any potential impacts on various species'.

You can contact the project team or ask to be added to their mailing list by emailing at enquiries_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk or you can view updates at <https://www.oxfordshirefloodtoolkit.com/contacts/abingdon-flood-alleviation-scheme>



GULLIES - In July some of you will have seen the large Oxfordshire County Council tanker cleaning the gullies (drains) on our estates. Apparently this work is done every three years. It is not clear whether any obstruction in the gullies contributed to the flooding around Mill Road/Wordsworth Road in May but it is

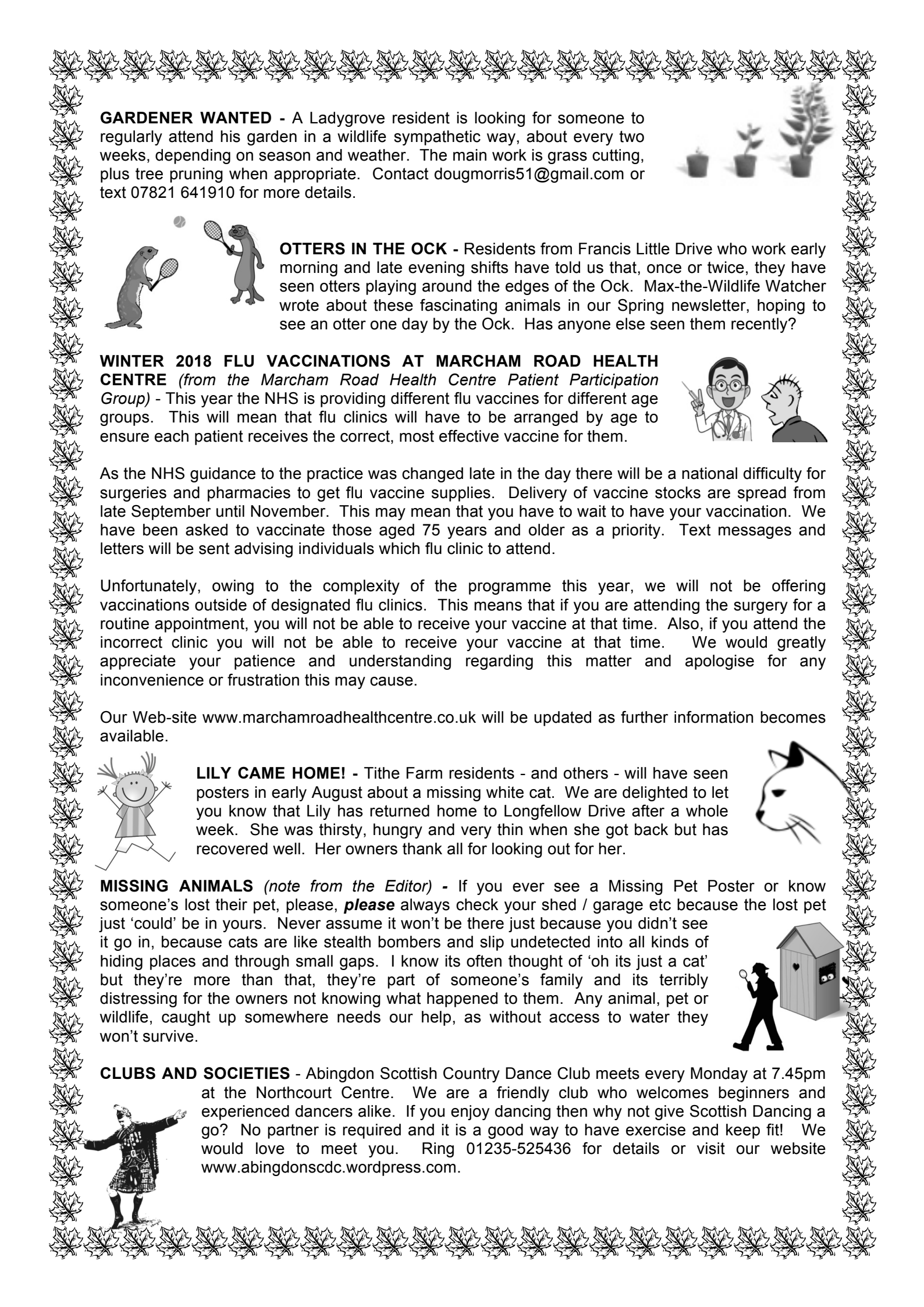
hoped that this work plus the clearing of some of the verges will avoid future problems..... for a while anyway. Members have expressed some concern about seeing workmen emptying buckets of water/water waste directly into the drains. We think that this should not be done - and in fact could lead to the imposition of a fine. Does anyone know for certain?

POSTAL PROBLEMS - Over the last few months there seems to have been a lot of mis-delivered post again. One couple contacted us to say that for several weeks they had had to rely on a good neighbour in another road to bring their post to them each day - including medical appointments and bank statements. If that happens to you, there is some useful on-line information about this at:

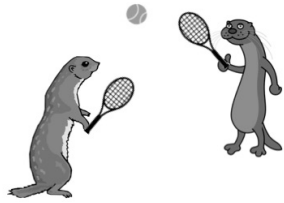


<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer/post/complain-about-royal-mail-or-a-post-office/>

CONDOLENCES - In July we were told of the sad news that David Day of Byron Close had passed away on 27th July. We would like to send our sincere condolences to his family.



GARDENER WANTED - A Ladygrove resident is looking for someone to regularly attend his garden in a wildlife sympathetic way, about every two weeks, depending on season and weather. The main work is grass cutting, plus tree pruning when appropriate. Contact dougmorris51@gmail.com or text 07821 641910 for more details.



OTTERS IN THE OCK - Residents from Francis Little Drive who work early morning and late evening shifts have told us that, once or twice, they have seen otters playing around the edges of the Ock. Max-the-Wildlife Watcher wrote about these fascinating animals in our Spring newsletter, hoping to see an otter one day by the Ock. Has anyone else seen them recently?

WINTER 2018 FLU VACCINATIONS AT MARCHAM ROAD HEALTH CENTRE (from the Marcham Road Health Centre Patient Participation Group) - This year the NHS is providing different flu vaccines for different age groups. This will mean that flu clinics will have to be arranged by age to ensure each patient receives the correct, most effective vaccine for them.



As the NHS guidance to the practice was changed late in the day there will be a national difficulty for surgeries and pharmacies to get flu vaccine supplies. Delivery of vaccine stocks are spread from late September until November. This may mean that you have to wait to have your vaccination. We have been asked to vaccinate those aged 75 years and older as a priority. Text messages and letters will be sent advising individuals which flu clinic to attend.

Unfortunately, owing to the complexity of the programme this year, we will not be offering vaccinations outside of designated flu clinics. This means that if you are attending the surgery for a routine appointment, you will not be able to receive your vaccine at that time. Also, if you attend the incorrect clinic you will not be able to receive your vaccine at that time. We would greatly appreciate your patience and understanding regarding this matter and apologise for any inconvenience or frustration this may cause.

Our Web-site www.marchamroadhealthcentre.co.uk will be updated as further information becomes available.



LILY CAME HOME! - Tith Farm residents - and others - will have seen posters in early August about a missing white cat. We are delighted to let you know that Lily has returned home to Longfellow Drive after a whole week. She was thirsty, hungry and very thin when she got back but has recovered well. Her owners thank all for looking out for her.



MISSING ANIMALS (note from the Editor) - If you ever see a Missing Pet Poster or know someone's lost their pet, please, **please** always check your shed / garage etc because the lost pet just 'could' be in yours. Never assume it won't be there just because you didn't see it go in, because cats are like stealth bombers and slip undetected into all kinds of hiding places and through small gaps. I know its often thought of 'oh its just a cat' but they're more than that, they're part of someone's family and its terribly distressing for the owners not knowing what happened to them. Any animal, pet or wildlife, caught up somewhere needs our help, as without access to water they won't survive.



CLUBS AND SOCIETIES - Abingdon Scottish Country Dance Club meets every Monday at 7.45pm at the Northcourt Centre. We are a friendly club who welcomes beginners and experienced dancers alike. If you enjoy dancing then why not give Scottish Dancing a go? No partner is required and it is a good way to have exercise and keep fit! We would love to meet you. Ring 01235-525436 for details or visit our website www.abingdonscdc.wordpress.com.





AUTUMN QUIZ - Sporting Medley - The following phrases are anagrams of major sporting events. Closing date 28th October - drop entries into 18 Mill Road or email them to tfl_ra@zoho.com. There will be a small prize for the winner!

1	MAGIC MOLE SPY	
2	ANNA LIT DRAGON	
3	RACED FORTUNE	
4	FRAUD COW FLIP	
5	A FUN CLIP	
6	BLOWERS UP	
7	LIB DEM NOW	
8	SAXONS IN IT	
9	CHASE VILLA THEFT MEN	
10	HONDA NOT NORMAL	
11	THRONG AT RETURN	
12	SHE HEATS	

Winner of the Summer Quiz was Mrs King of Longfellow Drive who won a box of chocolates!! The answers were: (1) June Brown, (2) Julius Caesar, (3) Juneau, (4) Juliet, (5) Julian of Norwich, (6) June Spencer, (7) Juno, (8) Julia Roberts, (9) Jules Verne, (10) Juliette Binoche, (11) Carousel, (12) Julie Christie.



WINTER COLOUR (*Martin Gulliver writes*) - On an estate like this, most of the gardens are relatively small, and thus a good few of the plants we buy should be able to provide something of interest all year round. This is especially important in the winter, when we don't have the benefit of bedding and summer flowers.

During the winter, the classic providers of colour are winter flowering pansies and violas. These are especially good in containers, but as with summer bedding, make sure they are fed, watered and dead-headed regularly.

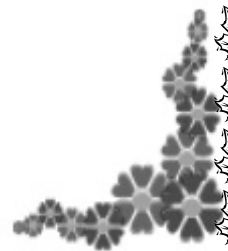
On a more permanent basis, evergreens are invaluable, especially those that have berries. I'm thinking cotoneaster, pyracantha and holly, all of which make large plants. Sweet box (*sarcococca*) is an evergreen shrub with small white flowers, but the scent will fill a garden. Winter flowering heathers will look good, and should be trimmed after flowering to keep them spruce.



Colour in January and February can be provided by bulbs such as snowdrops, winter aconites and hellebores, which will seed happily around the garden. Their bulbs should really be planted in March as bunches of leaves (in the green), as bulbs on their own rarely succeed.



Finally there are conifers in many shades of green and blue, which will be a good backbone for any planting scheme.



WALK ON THE WILDSIDE (by Max the Wildlife Watcher) - Check out the blog for a longer version of this article including Mythbusters about spiders. For example, no, they do not come up through our plugholes!

I apologise in advance, my article this season comes with a health warning. It is about our Autumn unexpected house guests, the Arachnids - spiders. My children and I are some of those weird people that like Arachnids, but I know we are probably in the minority. Why do they choose to make their appearance known at this time of year?



'House spiders' are brown, long-legged species of the genera Tegenaria and Eratigena. They are among the largest spiders in the UK, one sort with a leg span of 14 cm. Tegenaria Domestica has six forward facing eyes and long legs, making it a superb ambusher; helping us to keep our homes free from unwanted insects and other invertebrates. Females can live for several years and may stay in the same web complex all this time, just repairing it when necessary. If they are found in the same locations all year, why do we start

seeing spiders more in our rooms as the weather turns colder? The answer is quite simple - when animals make themselves visible, it is often down to sex. During spider season, romantic males are on the lookout for females. The males have a shorter life span and are smaller and more dispersive than the females. And do empathise with the smaller male spider, he has to make sure that he is recognised as suitable suitor and not as his 'loved one's' next tasty treat.



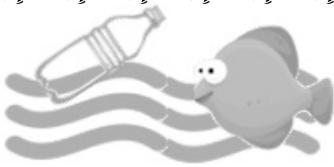
A 2013 survey by the University of Gloucester showed that sightings of spiders in the house peaked in mid-September and tailed off by the end of October. So if you are lucky to see a courting 'Romeo' house spider, before you 'put your foot on it', remember they are harmless, offer a free pest control in our homes, represent a healthy, balanced ecosystem and only honour us with their wandering presence for a short period of time.

Acknowledgements to BBC Wildlife magazine article by Adam Hart and Anne Goodenough, October 2017.

ESTATE HISTORY - In our Spring newsletter we heard about the building of the first houses on our estates. Not all the houses were constructed by building companies - houses in Masefield Crescent, part of Mill Road and Byron Close were built by individuals. Or in the case of 8 houses in Byron Close, by a co-operative group.

Harry who is 94 has lived in the house he built in Byron Close for nearly 50 years. He tells us how he became interested in the self-built idea back in 1960. After much research, and with the help of Peter Jacques another founder member, started the project with 6 other like-minded people. They formed an association with members putting £250 each in as capital, to start them off. As each family moved in to their house, they paid rent to the association while they were building the other houses. All the 8 people in the association had to have a trade or skill as the work was done collectively. They had to commit to working 32 hours a week on the houses, and were allowed one week's holiday each year! Self-build associations or co-operatives were very unusual in those days, and Harry and Peter had many disappointments (which included the Town Clerk paying Harry a site visit, when he said 'Harry, I am not the bearer of good tidings, the council have decided not to finance your scheme') before they found, eventually, other funding for the group. Harry did most of the design work for the houses, which were basically identical, although some members made small changes to the layout. Harry tells the story of how the houses were allocated when nearing completion. Of course, there could be problems if several people wanted the same house or no-one wanted one particular property. Everyone had to write down their preference with their names. The choices were opened up, and guess what - everyone had chosen a different house! So 8 people moved into the houses of their choice, they bought the properties off the association (which was then dissolved) and we hope lived there happily for a long time. Harry and his wife certainly have, and we understand that two other families remain from the original eight.





PLASTIC NOT SO FANTASTIC (*Eleanor Dangerfield writes*) - Anyone who hasn't spent the last year or so in an isolation chamber will know of the problems that discarded plastic is causing, particularly in the world's oceans. However, it is hard to imagine how we would manage without it. It is, after all, strong, light, waterproof, versatile and durable and it is this very durability that causes problems.

There's a lot we've found out about plastic recently. There's plastic in teabags for example, though some manufacturers have now phased it out. How about plastic "nurdles", lentil sized pieces of plastic used to make plastic items, which are found washed up on beaches, or "microbeads" used as the abrasive element in scrubs and toothpaste?

We've got used to stores charging 5p for plastic shopping bags and Waitrose has now phased out its disposable coffee cups. Many companies are replacing plastic straws with cardboard and plastic shafts of cotton buds will be replaced with cardboard. Apparently, these get flushed down loos, along with disposable contact lenses, dental floss and wet wipes (whatever happened to a damp flannel)? Here are some suggestions for reducing plastic use:



Added Ingredients in Stert Street does refills of washing up liquid, laundry liquid, fabric softener, surface and toilet cleaner. Take along your own bottle. **Just Trading** in Wallingford does refills and many other items. **Fairtrade at St Michael's** in Cornmarket for reusable cups, bags, bamboo plates, and "sporks" For "ladies things" – www.earthwise.girls.co.uk or www.ecofemme.org **For babies** - washable nappies from thecotton_nappycompany.co.uk or from naturalcollection.com (which also sells all sorts of other eco friendly items). **Mesh drawstring bags** for fruit, veg etc., from Amazon.

If you have any other ideas, comments or suggestions or can recommend other shops or websites, we'll publish them in the next newsletter.



TIDYING OUR ESTATES - The Vale of White Horse DC again funded two workers from Biffa and invited bids from local Councillors/Councils across the Vale to identify areas that needed tidying or cleaning that would not otherwise be done. Many thanks to our local Councillors who supported our ideas to do some work on the verges, footpaths and gullies around the Mill Road/Burton Close areas. We were successful and two Biffa workers, AJ and Martin, worked hard in very hot weather in the days that had been allocated

to our area. Of course, much more would have been great - we'll try again next time.

And many thanks to the kindly resident who has taken it upon himself to tidy the edge of the Longfellow Green. Much appreciated Sir.

ABINGDON TOWN BUS SERVICE - We understand that Abingdon Town Bus service 41 will start again on 22nd October for one year, thanks to generous financial support by the Town Council. It will run from Mondays to Fridays and will use approximately the same route and same timetable as before. We'll post more information on the blog when we know the details.



GRASS CUTTING - Things may have changed by the time you are reading the newsletter but at the time of writing this article, grass cutting hasn't started again much after the hot summer. When grass was growing at the beginning of the summer, however, people were asking why the District Council's contractors do not remove the grass cuttings when the public areas are mown. We did ask the Parks Team of South and Vale D.C. about this. The answer was, of course, cost. We also asked if the decaying clippings could damage the grass growth below – we were told that these can actually improve the health of the grass as decay can add to the nutrients in the ground. These clippings aren't called 'clippings' by the way – they are called 'arisings'. Don't ask us why!



THE THREE B's WALK FROM CULHAM LOCK - Not a children's discovery walk, but an interesting walk for parents and children, looking at the history, the lock and the boathouses (see the board just before Culham Lock).

Children - take a notebook and count the Bridges (10?), Boats (20+) and Butterflies (?)
Length: about 2 miles (an hour's slow walking). Not suitable for pushchairs.
Parents: please always closely supervise children by water and next to the road.

1. Park at Culham Lock Car Park (508949).
2. From the entrance on the road, walk along the pavement for a few metres to the canal path on the Abingdon side of the bridge. Take the canal path. There is an interesting history board just before the path junction. Pause a while to enjoy the boats at the lock.
3. Follow the Thames Path along the canal. At the far end of the first field, cross left over the bridge towards Sutton Courtenay.
4. Follow the track in front of you between the fields (or walk along the path parallel to it).
5. Cross the weir and bridge, then follow the leafy path along the causeway (1000+ years old) and over several more bridges to Sutton Courtenay.
6. Emerge on the Appleford Road. Walk left along the road (take care) and take the next driveway left after the white pillars of Mill House (opposite The Fish).
7. Cross over the stile in front of you and walk across two fields, following the hedge on the left then the river, to the kissing gate on the main road.
8. Cross the road carefully (a one way traffic system) to the pavement and walk back over the two road bridges to the car park, crossing the road carefully again.

ADVERTS - You can advertise your business. A full advert can go on the Blog with a short summary in the paper newsletters. £10 for residents for a 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 pressured 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 or email steveenock@hotmail.com.*
- **Simon's News** - *Newspaper home delivery, 7 days a week – telephone 01235-553001.*

NEXT MEETING AND CONTACT – Please see Blog at <https://tflra.blogspot.co.uk> for the next meeting. For article contributions, announcements, advertising or if you'd like to come along to a meeting, email at tfl_ra@zoho.com or phone / text on our new number **07547419545** to leave a message.



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