

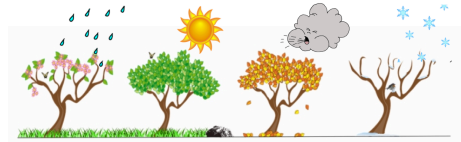


Tithe Farm and Ladygrove Residents Association (TFLRA)



Winter 2019

WELCOME - And here we are fast approaching the season of good will once more with shopping days decreasing and colder grey days increasing. Did this year really happen - it's gone with a blink of the eye!! Once again there's a Christmas Children's Colouring Competition, so don't forget to get those crayons and pens out and send us your beautiful pieces of artwork. Remember, if you have something you'd like printed in our Newsletter then get in touch - this is your news, in your area.



SPIDER STRIKES BACK! - One of our newsletter deliverers, Maureen, had an unfortunate encounter when delivering the autumn newsletter. She had just put a newsletter through a letterbox, turned around, took a step, walked into a cobweb, took another step while wiping it away (not looking at the ground), and twisted her foot over the edge of a raised paving slab. Poor Maureen broke a bone in her foot, but we are pleased to say that she is well on the way to recovery. She blames the spider.

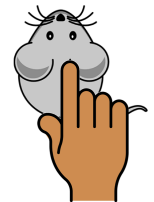


OUR FAIR - Despite the wet weather in October, the two main days of the Fair were, thankfully, mostly dry, unlike the day of the Runaway Fair a week later, when it poured for most of the day. It has all gone now for another year, but if you would like to know more about the origins of the fair and its development over the centuries, you still have time to see the exhibition in Abingdon Museum which runs to the 22nd December. They say 'Come and experience the fun of Abingdon's fair, past and present'. The museum is open 10am to 4pm every day except Mondays - but be prepared to climb the 37 steps to the first floor exhibition!



ASBESTOS IN CEILINGS - Residents will recall our article about the possibility of asbestos being present in the ceilings of our houses. A resident of Tennyson Drive has contacted us to say that before work was done on her property recently, her contractors made certain that ceilings were tested for asbestos. None was found. This is very encouraging news, although no-one can be absolutely certain that this would apply to all Tithe Farm houses. And, of course, Ladygrove and a couple of roads on Tithe Farm had different builders.

GETTING MORE INFORMATION - We often refer to websites and links when we give information about matters of interest. Most residents will have access to the internet, either themselves or via a friend/relation, but if you don't have this access and want to see more information, please do contact us and we will download something for you. Though not pages and pages, please.



CONCERN ABOUT ROAD SAFETY - We have been contacted by a resident who is concerned about the few drivers who come out of our side roads at speed and seeming not to check for pedestrians/other vehicles first. There is little any individual can do about tackling this careless behaviour but we did feel the need to share the concern. Any accident is upsetting and an accident with injuries has such long-term repercussions.

FOR SALE - Pentax K100 digital SLR, with a Pentax 18.55 zoom, a Sigma 18-200 zoom, a Pentax flashgun and various filters and accessories in a camera bag - £120. Contact Martin Gulliver - Tel 01235 530140.





ABINGDON COMMUNITY FRIDGE - This new initiative was launched a few months ago. Based in the Abbey Centre in Audlett Drive, it aims to reduce food waste and food poverty. A large fridge is found in the entrance hall of the Centre and enables local supermarkets and local people to share their surplus food which would otherwise go to waste. It is run on an open access basis - anyone can put food in and anyone can take food out. It is open Monday to Friday between 9.00am and 4.00pm - if you want to know more, the organisers can be contacted at abingdoncommunityfridge@gmail.com.



THE ANSWER'S IN THE SOIL (*Martin Gulliver writes*) - An oft-neglected part of gardening is the soil, but bearing in mind how important it is, a few pointers to helping it along might be useful. Most plant labels suggest "well-drained moisture-retentive soil", and this is ideal but by no means easy to achieve. Being a relatively new estate, this area has a lot of clay near the surface and also sandy areas from the building. The answer is to incorporate anything in the soil that encourages ideal conditions, and these additives come in various guises.

Soil conditioners can improve the structure of the soil, making it more open which gives better drainage. This includes well-rotted (not fresh!) farmyard manure, or general-purpose garden compost, which not only opens the soil up but also adds nutrients. Used as a mulch - spread on top of the soil - the worms will dig it into the soil for you. This will open up clay soils, and also improve sandy soils. Apply in late spring and early autumn. It's also useful to apply a mulch in the summer after watering plants to keep the moisture in. Use spent compost, such as old grow-bags or soil from summer pots to incorporate in the soil, as although this won't add nutrients, it will improve the general soil structure. Fertility can be improved with a large selection of propriety fertilisers, but my preference is for pelleted chicken manure, being organic and easy to use. Scatter this around the garden in spring as growth starts, and again in mid-summer to keep things going. The best source of compost is of course a compost bin. A small plastic one can still generate a lot of heat - essential for quick composting - and the secret is to make it in layers. Put a few branches at the bottom to aerate the heap, then add layers of prunings, grass cuttings etc, trying to vary the mix. Too many grass cuttings will result in a stodgy mess! Use a fork to turn the compost every so often. The resulting crumbly black mixture is a joy to use.



COMPOST BINS - If you are interested in home composting after reading Martin's article, one of the places to buy a compost bin is via Oxfordshire County Council. They are in partnership with an organisation called 'Getcomposting', who offer a choice of two sizes of home compost bin for under £20.00, plus delivery charge. Apparently if you want to buy two, you'll get the second half price but we aren't sure if anyone here has a garden big enough to justify two bins! Either call 0844 571 444 (quoting reference OXF12L) or see <https://getcomposting.com/profile/login>.

BURTON CLOSE / DRAYTON ROAD IVY PROBLEM - The saga of the ivy obstructing this pathway goes on and on. Several reports have been made about the current problem to Oxfordshire County Council Highways via the FixMyStreet website. In previous years, they took action a couple of times when the ivy growth was bad over the summer months. This time, to our amazement, after waiting for a response for about 4 months, OCC Highways posted that this problem was not their responsibility, the report had been closed, and they had passed the matter on to the 'relevant authority'. As far as we are aware, the footpath is public highway. Public highways are the responsibility of County Councils including the need to take action if a path is obstructed in any way. We are now trying to find out why OCC Highways have suddenly disowned this long-established - and marked - footpath. We have contacted our local councillors. We also decided to contact the developer of The Poplars directly, explaining that the ivy growth over his fence was causing a lot of problems and asking if he could arrange clearance. We will update the blog when we get any news about all this.





Thank you!!



COMPETITION ENTRIES - Lorna and her family will be moving away from 18 Mill Road soon, so we have to stop using her address for competition entries, both for the colouring competitions and the regular quizzes. We shall really miss her - and not just for supplying our post-box! Thank you, Lorna, for all the help you have given over the last few years. We also thank Margaret of 21 Mill Road who has kindly agreed that people can drop competition entries in at her house from now on.

WINTER 2019 NEWSLETTER QUIZ - Christmas is coming and SC is for Santa Claus. The answers to the clues all begin with SC. Closing date **22nd December** - there will be a small prize for the winner!! There are now 3 ways to submit your entry as you can now alternatively fill in the **Newsletter Quiz ONLINE** on the TFLRA Blog <https://tflra-quiz.weebly.com> for submission. So there are now 3 options to submit your entry:

Drop entries into 21 Mill Road (**NEW ADDRESS**)!
Email to tfl_ra@zoho.com
Online on <https://tflra-quiz.weebly.com> and submit

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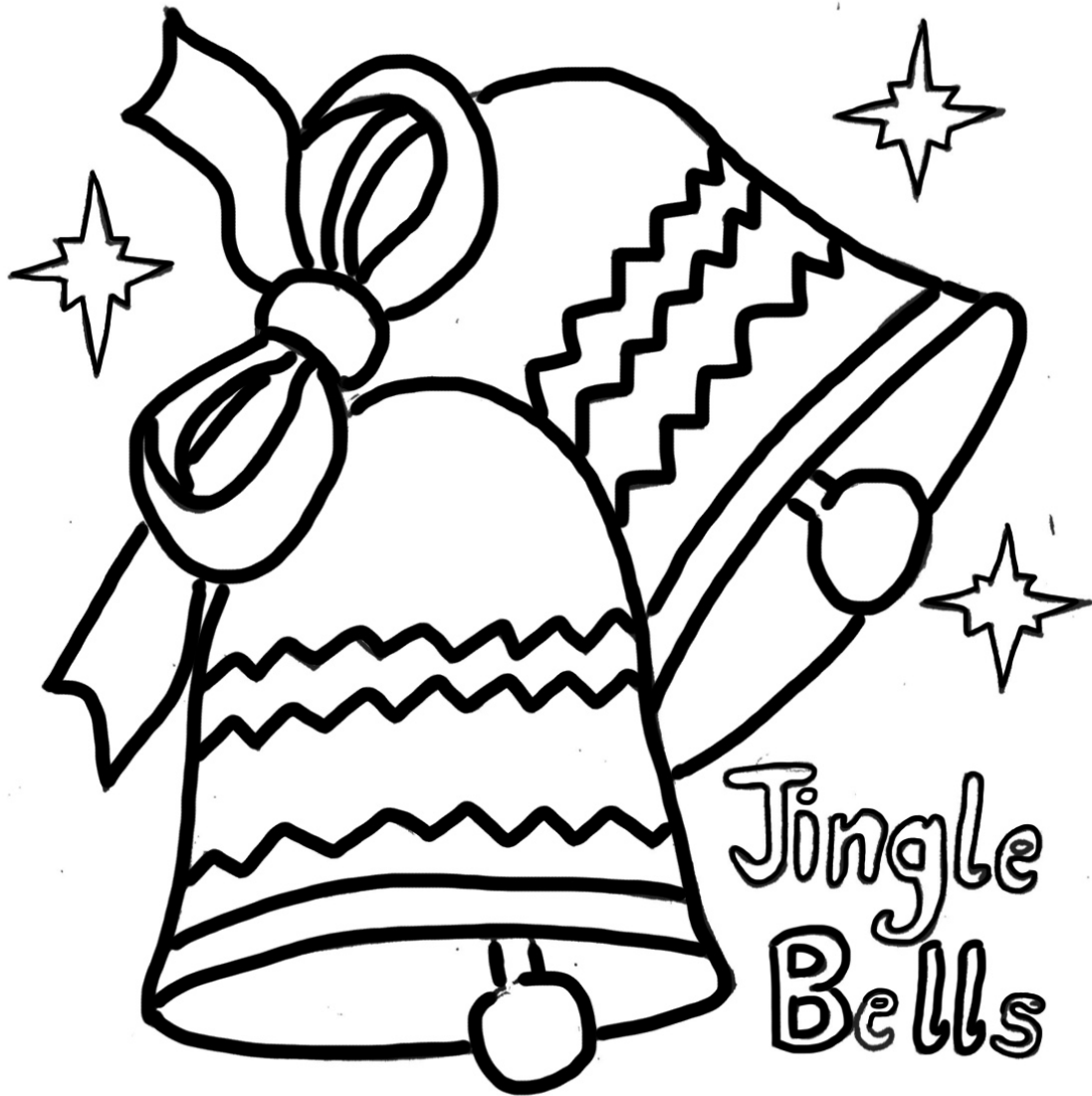
1	Mr X Factor	
2	Blue and smelly - goes with port	
3	Steve David and Hurricane Higgins needed one	
4	In Wilsham Road - it has boats	
5	The tallest spire and of interest to Russians!!!	
6	Edible relative of the conker	
7	Where you find Eastbourne, Brighton and Bournemouth	
8	Where you find Los Angeles and San Diego	
9	Village South of Abingdon	
10	Patron Saint of Travellers	
11	Olympic gold medal runner, President of the IAAF	
12	Pedigree feline with blue eyes	
13	Ten-legged marine crustacean resembling an arachnid	
14	Saccharum officinarum	
15	Hypnotises cobras with a flute	
16	This one was named 'Desire'	

ANSWERS TO THE AUTUMN QUIZ - (1) Too many cooks spoil the broth, (2) A stitch in time saves nine, (3) Many hands make light work, (4) A rolling stone gathers no moss, (5) When the cat's away the mice will play, (6) Pride goes before a fall, (7) A bird in the hand is worth two in the bush, (8) A friend in need is a friend indeed, (9) A drowning man will clutch at a straw, (10) A miss is as good as a mile, (11) Beauty is in the eye of the beholder, (12) Absence makes the heart grow fonder, (13) Don't count your chickens before they are hatched, (14) The early bird catches the worm, (15) Half a loaf is better than no bread.

WINNER OF THE AUTUMN QUIZ - a lady from Tithe Farm (who prefers to stay anonymous) wins a box of chocolates. Well done!!!



CHILDREN'S COLOURING COMPETITION - Here is another lovely picture for all you budding artists out there to colour in with crayons, pencils, paints, stickers, glitter whatever rocks your imagination!!! There are 2 categories - up to 6 years old and 6 years and over. There'll be a small prize for the winner of each category. Drop entries into the new address of 21 Mill Road and don't forget to include your first name only, age and contact number. Closing date is **22nd December**. Winning entries will be displayed in the Stonewater Common Room window. Good luck!!



NAME	AGE	TELEPHONE NUMBER
		<i>(not for publication)</i>



MAX THE WILDLIFE WATCHER WRITES ABOUT THOUGHTS OF SUNNIER CLIMES - Winter is the time for frosty winter walks in the low sunshine, then warming up near a cosy fire. It's often the time when we start thinking about our summer holidays and something to look forward to.

I thought I would give you an update on my summer visitors who are now (hopefully) carrying out aerial displays in South Africa and across the continent; my recent guests the Swifts. A couple of years ago I told you I put up two swift boxes and played the swift calling songs in daylight to entice them to my home. This was kindly set up by Abingdon Swift project.

Mid May I started playing the sounds again and on the 28th May we were lucky to have 4 or 3 swifts regularly using the boxes, I think to roost. I never saw them bringing nesting material into the box, but I still need to check if a nest was built (need to borrow a long ladder). Over the next two months they regularly came in at dusk, flying low under the roof line and manoeuvring around our trampoline. An impressive feat that was done at speed. We didn't see them every day, as you just had to be lucky to be outside at the right time when they left the nest. On the second of August we saw them for the last time; two swifts entered silently one of our boxes at dusk. We went on our holidays and by the time we returned, they had gone on their.... 'winter holiday'. I hope they return next year and this time maybe they will be old enough to lay eggs. Since then we have had starlings showing interest in the nest box, but I understand that the swifts are good at pushing them out, if these 'lodgers' are there on their return.

A friend of mine went to a talk by the Abingdon Naturalists society in autumn. Apparently, there are 56 known swift boxes in Abingdon and the surrounding areas. Eight boxes put up this year. What I find really exciting, is that a forward-thinking Churchill Retirement homes are adding swift boxes to their new buildings in Ock street.

2019 was the 40th year of the Big Garden Birdwatch, the annual event by the RSPB to watch birds for one hour in late January. Over the 40 years they have seen a drastic decline in the number of house sparrows and starlings, but they still come in the top ten of our most common seen birds in the garden. There has been an increase in goldfinches and long tailed tits visiting the gardens. Once again, the house sparrow has hit the top spot. At number two is the starling, closely followed by the blue tit and the blackbird. The woodpigeon flies in at number five, followed by the goldfinch, great tit, and robin at number 8. The top eight remain the same as last year, so it's a battle for numbers nine and 10. The chaffinch has seen off the long-tailed tit to be at number 9, and the magpie has crept in at number 10.

NO DEEP CLEAN THIS YEAR - Residents may recall that last year we were very successful in getting help from the Vale's funding for additional work, clearing and cleaning areas which would not normally be done. Verges and paths were cleared around the entrance to our estates. No such luck this year in getting work done here - apparently the work concentrated around the Copenhagen and Colwell Drive areas, where gutters and gullies were cleared and de-weeded. We'll try again next year



TESCO TROLLEYS - Unfortunately, there seems to be an on-going problem with Tesco's trolleys being left on our estates, especially in the Burton Close area. Almost certainly by someone who uses the trolley for much of the distance home, then carries it the rest of the way, probably to the other side of the Drayton Road. It would be good to think that Tesco could find a way to stop this happening but in the meantime, these abandoned trolleys can be reported to the store either on customer.service@tesco.co.uk or by ringing 0800 505555. Lines are open 9am to 8pm Mon to Sat and from 9am to 6pm on Sundays. Although you have to go through a lot of options before you get to a real person to speak with!



DOG WASTE BIN - The mysterious disappearance of the dog waste bin from the top of Mill Road was reported to the Vale Waste team on 27th November. The following day, they rang to say that a replacement had been ordered and should be in place within the week. Excellent news to be able to report pleasant and prompt service from our local District Council.





CHRISTMAS BIN COLLECTION

DUE	WILL BE DONE	NOTE
Friday 27 th Dec 2019	Monday 30 th Dec 2019	Green bin, food, no garden waste
Friday 3 rd Jan 2020	Monday 6 th Jan 2020	Grey bin, food
Friday 10 th Jan 2020	Saturday 11 th Jan 2020	Green bin, food and garden waste

Note that collections for 11th Jan 2020 will start at 6am



MARILYN BADCOCK - Many of us will have seen that Abingdon has three new Freewomen, the highest honour that the Town Council can award. One of these is one of our own Ladygrove residents, Marilyn Badcock, who has lived on the estate for 42 years. Marilyn has been very active on community groups for many years, she has twice been Mayor of Abingdon, she has served on the Town, Vale and County Councils and has also served as a Governor of 7 schools within the town. This tradition of creating Freeman (and Freewomen) goes back to 1835. Previously, only certain 'freemen' of a town could vote. The 1835 Reform Act changed that and many more men could vote. But the tradition of creating Freeman - and more recently Freewomen - started when this honour was awarded to people who had given distinguished voluntary service to a town.

MEDLICOTT DRIVE - The renovated pavements in Medlicott Drive look very impressive now – such a contrast to much of the rest of our estate pavements. Delighted as we are that work has been done, we have no information about why Medlicott was selected as some residents feel that the pavements of their roads are also in very poor condition. In the last newsletter, we reported that we had managed to contact Oxfordshire County Council Highways to ask about the time scale for pavement works and the meaning of the yellow markings. Residents will recall that we were told that all this work would be some years in the future. We have followed this up, (twice) asking for more information in view of the unexpected Medlicott work. We also asked if they felt the yellow markings identifying the pavement problem areas would last until work started in years to come. And what would happen if pavements deteriorated further in the meantime. So far, no reply has been received. We will update the blog when/if we do manage to get a reply.



DATES OF MEETINGS - It has been suggested that we ought to include dates of future meetings in the newsletter, rather than just relying on our blog. We agree - something we should be doing. The first three meetings in 2020 will be Monday 13th January, Tuesday 11th February and Monday 16th March. Meetings are at 8.00pm in the Stonewater (Jephson) Flats common room at the end of Bridges Close. Residents are most welcome to come on a regular or occasional basis but do check the blog/contact us beforehand in case we have had to have a last minute alteration. We'll put the dates of the next three meetings in the Spring Newsletter.

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.
- **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 our telephone number **07856 869 335** to leave a message.

Chair: Anita 39 Masefield Crescent / Treasurer: Val 17 Nash Drive / Editor: Kay 36 Masefield Crescent

