

# **TITHE FARM & LADYGROVE NEWSLETTER NOVEMBER 2007**

**Welcome** to the November newsletter. We hope that by now, those residents whose homes were flooded are beginning to see light at the end of the tunnel and will soon have everything sorted out. There are some news items this month that should be useful to flood victims. If you have a neighbour who you know is unlikely to see the newsletter, please pass on the information.

You may have been surprised and disappointed by the item "Floods in Abingdon" on Page 11 of the recent Town Crier. I quote: "When the River Ock burst its banks over the Saturday night and into Sunday morning, around 600 properties were flooded, mostly, but not wholly, in the roads bordering the Ock, especially between Drayton Road and St Helen's Wharf". Why no mention, Town Crier, of the houses West of the Drayton Road?

**Flood Relief Grants** – There is a grant of £250 for every household that has been flooded. If you have not received yours, phone the Vale Council on **01235 520 202**.

**The British Red Cross** is also donating money to flood victims, but priority will be given to the disabled, elderly and people in financial hardship.

**The Vale's Flood review** is now complete and is now, we are told, available on the Vale website:

[www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk](http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk) Do let us know if you can find it. It still seems to be telling us the hot news latest situation on July 24<sup>th</sup> The study of how to prevent future flooding will now start.

**Government website and address** where you can send your views and comments: Leaflets giving this information were delivered to houses most likely to have been affected by the flooding, but here they are again: [www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/floodingreview](http://www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/floodingreview)

Or the address to write to is: **Flooding Lessons Learned Review  
Cabinet Office  
10 Great George Street  
London SW1P 3AE**

**FLOODING – PUBLIC MEETING  
Friday 16<sup>th</sup> November 7p.m.  
at the Guildhall  
with Dr Evan Harris M.P.  
and Environment Agency Representatives  
Your chance to ask questions and have your say!**

**FOUND –in Medlicott Drive – Silver K on a chain.** If this belongs to you, please phone 01235 531 857

Did you snap Suzi? Mrs Elsie Cosser of Francis Little Drive asks if anyone took a photo of her dog, Suzi, a Labrador retriever cross, being carried in a dinghy by the Fire Brigade. If you have a photo, Mrs Cosser would be delighted to have a copy. Contact the newsletter.

**Advertising in the newsletter** – Business advertisements cost **£15** per year for Residents of Tithe Farm and Ladygrove and **£20** for non-residents. Charges for one-off advertisements are negotiable, depending on size.

Private adverts for items For Sale and Wanted, requests, lost and found, school and charity events, clubs, societies, amateur productions etc. are **FREE**. Make sure you get them in by the deadline, and if events take place early in the month, bear in mind that newsletters may not be delivered until the first few days of the month.

**Councillors' Surgery, 13<sup>th</sup> October** – The following matters were discussed: Samantha Bowring and Tim Oates were asked to look into the general condition of roads and footpaths on the estate. There are a lot of potholes and uneven surfaces. They will find out about the Ock footpath to Tesco. There were supposed to be plans to improve this path and move it slightly farther away from the river. The building work on the site of the old Esso petrol station/Crossroads garage is set to go ahead, despite the fact that it was flooded. There were complaints that the dog bins were seldom emptied.

**Can you help?** Could you offer a lift to an elderly person or someone with mobility difficulties needing to get to a doctor's or hospital appointment within Abingdon? We are looking for volunteers. There would be a nominal payment to cover petrol. If you could offer help, please contact the newsletter.

**Free Bus Passes – new rules.** Many people have been confused by the new rules. Due to the popularity of the scheme, the non-statutory part, which includes travel outside the Vale, is proving too expensive. Presumably the impact of large numbers of post-war baby boomers hitting 60 was not anticipated. Now, while journeys starting in the Vale and return journeys to the Vale will still be free, the passes will no longer cover journeys within Oxford City, including the Park and Ride i.e. you can still travel free from Abingdon to Oxford and back, but not get on a bus in Oxford to travel elsewhere in Oxford. They can still be used to travel to "designated towns outside the Vale"(Didcot, Swindon, Newbury, Witney) and hospitals in Swindon and Oxford.

However, in April 2008 a new scheme will start, allowing people to use their passes anywhere in the country outside peak hours. The Vale website, which seems permanently out of date, is helpfully telling you that in order to get your new national pass you should have sent in your form and a new photo by 24<sup>th</sup> August. However, they do give a number: Assisted Travel Department 0845 300 6129.

**Pedestrian Crossings** that don't beep. We had a question about this last month and Paul Nye has provided a useful answer:

"I believe it is due to the fact that when you have several crossing points close together, as is the case at the end of Preston Road, it can be confusing to blind/sight impaired people if they hear a crossing beep which is not actually for the point at which THEY are crossing, but the one adjacent.

Pedestrian crossings which are out on their own, singly, still retain the beep, while those which are in groups (as at T-junctions, or are in close proximity to other crossings) have a little rotating wheel thing on the traffic light pole, which the blind person can feel for. When they feel it rotating, they know they can cross at their crossing." Thank you, Paul. I didn't know about the rotating wheel, but will try it out!

### **Recycling news**

There are now recycling bins for tetrapack cartons at Drayton recycling centre (though it was jammed full when I went there) and Tesco. Books, videos and CDs can be taken to Tesco car park or Peachcroft shopping centre. Large electric or electronic items, taken to the dump or collected by the council must now be taken by the council to an approved site for refurbishment or reusing the parts.

Only 40% of drinks cans are put in recycling. The rest seem to end up in the gutter or on open spaces.

**Litter Pick** – Abingdon Green Gym is doing a litter pick along the path to Tesco on **Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> November**. If you would like to join them, meet on the Ock Path, on the bridge nearest Tesco at 10a.m.

**LARKMEAD QUIZ NIGHT**  
**Friday 9<sup>th</sup> November 7-10.30 p.m.**  
**Larkmead Main Hall**  
Teams of adults and children welcome  
6 per team maximum  
Tickets from Larkmead School office  
Bar available

**CHRISTMAS EXTRAVAGANZA EVENING**  
**Wednesday 28<sup>th</sup> November**  
**Parade – 6.45 p.m.**  
**Christmas Lights Switch On 7p.m.**

**RIVERSIDE PRE-SCHOOL** is looking for relief staff to cover staff sickness, courses and at other times on an ad hoc basis. - £5.95 per hour.

Contact Jane Nye on 01235 533 861 for further details and application form.

**Save Radley Lakes – the campaign continues** – You have probably read in the newspapers that the application to register the lakes as a Town Green has been turned down. However, other legal challenges are being considered so the campaign and the fund raising continue.

### **C.O.G. – Community in the Old Gaol**

The future of the Old Gaol on Bridge Street is being decided. For many years it housed the Leisure Centre. It closed when the new Tennis and Leisure Centre opened and has since then been boarded up. The C.O.G. campaign wants at least part of the building to be dedicated to community use, rather than entirely sold off to commercial concerns.

#### **What is happening?**

- The district Council has short listed an undisclosed number of developers who had to hand in their bids by 22<sup>nd</sup> October.
- Councillors will be reviewing the bids during the next few weeks and a decision is expected on 7<sup>th</sup> December.
- No public consultation will take place before then, but there may be some after a developer has been chosen.
- The Council will be under pressure to select the proposal offering the highest price. This may include cafes/bars but is unlikely to include space for any community activities.
- **C.O.G. is pressing**
- To see the bids before 7<sup>th</sup> December so it can show the Council how community activities could be incorporated without significant loss of value.
- For the Council to take note of the 5000 signatures on the petition and have a meaningful public consultation.
- **What can you do?**
- Your Vale Councillors\* will have a part to play in the decision. Please get in touch to let them know how you feel.
- Fill in the questionnaire in the current edition of Vale Views.

\* Your Vale Councillors are Samantha Bowring and Beth Fleming

**For more information go to [www.oldgaol.org.uk](http://www.oldgaol.org.uk)**

### **The Garden in November**

The first frosts will almost certainly come at the beginning of this month so after this dahlias can be lifted and hung up to dry ready for storage over winter. Frost-damaged plants should now be cleared away (buzy lizzies are particularly messy I find) and the gaps filled with winter flowering plants such as pansies, violas, heathers or pots of spring bulbs planted up in September.

Tulip bulbs should also be planted now, and in the veg patch, earth up leeks and plant onion sets to over-winter.

Now is a good time to clear out the greenhouse and clean pots and trays ready for next year. If the last lawn cut is done this month (we can but hope...) then get the blades sharpened now rather than waiting until the spring and the first cut of next year.

If any potted plants are being left out over the winter, wrap them in bubble wrap to keep the worst of the frost out. This can look messy so think about re-potting the plant and lining the inside of the pot permanently with bubble wrap before putting the plant back in. This also helps retain moisture in the summer.

If you are leaving some tender plants in the ground over winter, protect the crowns with compost or some bracken, if you can get hold of some. This is purely dead fern leaves which do not decompose very readily so will keep the crowns protected throughout the winter.

**Martin Gulliver**

**October Quiz answers and November Quiz** – The October quiz was won by the Edgecombes of Wordsworth Road. Here are the answers: 1)The Man with the Golden Gun 2) Goldfinger 3)Goldeneye 4)Silver Surfer 5)Long John Silver 6)Gold Rush 7)Silver Lining 8) Golden Hind 9)The Silver Chair 10)Golden Fleece 11)Golden Jubilee 12)30 Pieces of Silver 13)Golden Eagle 14)Silver Medal 15)Gold Coast 16)Goldilocks 17)Silver Birch 18) Silverfish 19)Goldfinch 20)Golden Arches 21)Golden Goose 22)Silverside 23)Gold Cup 24)Golden Gate Bridge 25)Quicksilver

**November Quiz – One More River** – I was a bit worried that the subject of this quiz might be tactless in view of the July floods, but I hope nobody minds. Hidden in the following passage are 25 British rivers. You might even find more – river names tend to be short and snappy. Answers as usual to Eleanor at 23, Masefield by 21<sup>st</sup> November.

My friend Kenneth was going for a hike and suggested I came with him. I hadn't taken any exercise for ages. It was time I underwent some training. Usually I walked, well, in truth, ambled no more than half a mile a week. This would really test me, though I seemed a comparative youngster to him. I had put on thick socks and donned a tweed jacket when he arrived at my house, complete with map, compass and, being a keen birdwatcher, well equipped with binoculars. "If you wear that jacket," he said, "you'll feel the wind rushing through it. Luckily, I have a spare waterproof with a mesh lining that I can lend you." I delved deep in the hall cupboard and found an alpenstock belonging to my grandfather. "I, at least, am armed with a stick," I said, "for the steep parts". "Have you got everything?" asked Ken. "Yes, I'm sure," I replied, and we left.

It was good to be out in the fresh air, enjoying the sunshine. We set off up the slope, Ken setting a fast pace. "He must be almost twice my age – seventy, nearly seventy-one." I thought, trying to keep up. The climb was hard, but worth it as we reached the top of the highest hill. We stood in the lee of a large boulder. Across the sky, clouds streamed, way above us. Below us was a lake with birds darting across the surface of the water. "Isn't it awesome?" I said. We wanted to be back before dusk, so we turned and set off for home.

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**Councillors' Surgeries**

**There will not be a councillors' surgery in the Jephson Common Room in November .  
The next one will be in December.**

**Mike and Marilyn Badcock 1<sup>st</sup> Saturday of the month in the Family Room,  
Abingdon Conservative Club, Ock Street.**

**Date of the next TFLRA Committee Meeting –  
Wednesday 14th November 2007 8p.m. in the Jephson Common Room.  
Deadline for items for the next newsletter – Sunday 21st November 2007**

**Contact us – items for publication:**

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Dining table Teak, in good condition (no scratches) and six chairs.  
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