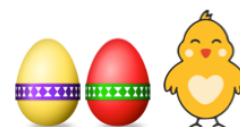


Tithe Farm and Ladygrove Residents Association (TFLRA)

Spring 2019



WELCOME - With Christmas and New Year seeming a long time ago now, we hope you all had a super festive holiday and have enjoyed the unusual warm weather in February. In June when we deliver the Summer issue we'll be doing the rounds and collecting the annual subs of £1 again. At the moment, we are able to afford the extra insert sheet which we hope you are enjoying. So dig around at the back of the sofa, the car glovebox, under the mattress or even your purse, to find your loose change and keep aside for when we knock.



QUESTIONNAIRE - We've included a Questionnaire in this edition as it's always good to hear what you like, don't like, would like to see in the Newsletters and future editions. Let us know!

| | |
|--|--|
| What do you like best about the Newsletter | |
| . Gardening | |
| . Quiz Competitions | |
| . Wildlife | |
| . The pictures / cartoons | |
| . Any other articles | |
| Are there any other subjects you'd like to see covered in future Newsletters | |
| Are there are any other subjects you'd like to see dropped in future Newsletters | |

Please email your replies to tfl_ra@zoho.com or phone / text our telephone number **07547419545** to leave a message, or even drop your reply into No. 18 Mill Road. We'd love to hear from you!!!

ENTERTAINING ABINGDON - Abingdon had many years without any sort of cinema (remember the old Regal opposite the War Memorial?) but we now have four places we can go to for entertainment. The Unicorn Theatre shows many of the latest films in the medieval buildings in Checker Walk, plus some live screenings of plays. The same company has also opened a venue in the Abbey Hall where people speak very highly of the comfortable surroundings. And in the grounds of Abingdon School there is the Amey Theatre which concentrates on live screenings – plays, operas, ballet. And don't forget Abingdon Film Society who show a varied programme of new and classic films on Thursdays at the Health and Well-Being Centre, Audlett Drive. See abfilms.org.uk for their programme.



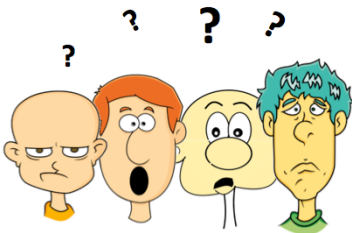
CONDOLENCES - We were sorry to learn of the death of Harry Ovington from Byron Close, who had written of his memories of building his house in a recent newsletter. We send our condolences to his widow and family.

PLANT SWAP - We were very sorry to have to cancel the plant swap last year as the growing season was so late due to the long cold spell in Spring. Hoping for better luck this year. The actual date hasn't yet been decided, although it will be late May/early June. Check the blog in early May for the date and look out for our posters. It will again be held at 39 Masefield Crescent and will be between 3.00pm and 5.00pm. You can bring along your extra plants, surplus seedlings and spare cuttings and be ready to 'swap' - all for free!



ABINGDON LOCAL BUS - Just a reminder about the very useful 41 service which runs weekday mornings and early afternoons. You can find the full timetable on line at <https://www.thames-travel.co.uk/routes/41>. If you don't have internet access and want a timetable, please let us know and we will try to get you a paper copy.

GRIT BOXES - When its icy and your drive, footpath etc becomes iced up, don't forget that you can use the salt/grit mix from the large green grit boxes that are around the estates, located on the entrance of Mill Road and the green on Wordsworth Road. Following the few days of snow we had at the beginning of the year some drives became compacted with ice, a Masefield Crescent resident's car slid down their drive overnight (despite having the handbrake on AND was in gear) and was found part way across the footpath in the morning.



FAULTY TIME DISPLAY AT THE DRAYTON ROAD BUS STOP -

How many of us have reported this problem over the past year? The Residents' Association is aware of at least six reports to contact@oxontime.com and we are sure that many other bus users have done so too. But at last we have managed to get a reply from the organisation! But the news is not good. We were told that, in the first place, the County Council have not allocated any budget for repairs of this sort and, secondly, that these sort of displays are now regarded as 'old technology' and that 'newer replacement solutions' are being looked at. In the meantime, they suggest we use our smart phones to access Oxontime information from various sources, such as Traveline, or look at their website. They do acknowledge that there will be some people who are unable to access information this way.

SPEEDING ON OUR ESTATES - We are aware that a number of residents have complained about vehicles occasionally speeding along our roads. We are not aware of any accidents or injuries because of this – yet. But the threat of something dreadful happening is always there if people are selfish enough to try to get off our estates just those few seconds quicker. We hope to be able to discuss this with our PCSO sometime when she is able to get to a TFLRA meeting although we are unsure what she will be able to advise. Does anyone have any ideas about how to tackle this problem? We would say now that we know that it is extremely unlikely that any kind of traffic calming measure such as 20 mph zones, speed bumps or chicanes could be installed.



FENCE PROBLEM BETWEEN MABERLEY CLOSE AND FRANCIS LITTLE DRIVE - Many thanks to the resident who fixed the broken down fencing on the footpaths between these two garage areas. The footpaths and garage areas are 'private property' so there was no chance of getting this fixed through any local Council.

NEW ABINGDON TOWN CEMETERY? - Followers of the Abingdon Blog may have seen a report on 3rd February saying that Abingdon Town Council are considering sites for a new cemetery as the existing one is getting full. Apparently it has grave space for about another eight or ten years. Currently, there are about 100 burials a year - so 2 or so a week. One possibility is land behind Masefield Crescent. The blog has a picture of the field opposite the new Morland Gardens houses but we understand from Cllr Mike Badcock that the Council are actually considering the top of the field next to Mill Road. All this must be at an early stage of planning and we don't know what other sites the Town Council may be looking at. We'll ask Councillors to keep us updated.



BUYING PLANTS (*Martin Gulliver writes*) - These days there are a proliferation of garden centres and they are far more numerous than nurseries, although the latter, if you can track them down, have a far wider range of plants. Mail order is also an option, with excellent prices, and a wide range, but many people like to see what they are buying. Here are a few tips when perusing plants in the garden centre.

Look for a healthy plant with no dead or diseased wood, and strong new growth in the form of new buds. Beware of plants that look weak and leggy.

Don't be afraid to tip the plant out of its pot to check the root ball. The roots should fill the pot, but not to the extent that there are circling the pot - this may indicate an old plant that is pot-bound. Make sure also to remove any small weeds from the pot - too many weeds may also indicate an old plant.



Check the label carefully - will it suit your soil? The place you plan to plant it? Will it grow too big? Is it frost resistant? If in doubt ask an expert at the centre.

Most centres will be selling plants in bloom at the time for obvious reasons - but don't be afraid to buy dormant perennials this time of year as long as they look healthy and are showing signs of growth.

Beware of plug plants and bedding on sale early. They may need protection from frost and centres are inclined to display these early under cover, but they will suffer if planted out immediately. Finally, don't be afraid to check the 'sale' items - these are often plants past their flowering time that can be bought cheap for colour later in the year. Indeed perennials that have gone over can be split to provide more plants - this goes for any perennial bought while dormant on just in bud.



REPAIR CAFÉ - ABINGDON - We've been sent this information about a new initiative run by Abingdon Carbon Cutters and Christ Church in Northcourt Road. We understand that they intend holding these repair cafe sessions every two months. The

next one will be **Saturday 27th April 2019**, Christ Church, Northcourt Road, 3pm - 5.30pm. As well as tea, coffee, soft drinks and cakes available, plus family craft activities, volunteer fixers will be on hand to work with you to:

- . Repair household electrical items (including computers)
- . Give advice with simple computer problems
- . Mend and glue broken items / toys
- . Mend clothes / up-cycling / fabric crafts
- . Repair clocks, watches and mechanical items
- . Help with bicycles
- . Sharpening knives, tools, etc



SPRING QUIZ - in this **BRAIN CHURNING** quiz, the answers all begin with 'BC'. Closing date 14th April - drop entries into 18 Mill Road or email them to tfl_ra@zoho.com. There will be a small prize for the winner!

| | | |
|----|---|--|
| 1 | American singer and actor on the road with Bob Hope | |
| 2 | Western Province of Canada | |
| 3 | Veteran comedy writer, often appearing on 'I'm Sorry, I haven't a Clue' | |
| 4 | Pink and yellow, covered in marzipan | |
| 5 | Fun for the kids at a fete | |
| 6 | Labour red haired firebrand of the Wilson era | |
| 7 | Where the Severn meets the sea | |
| 8 | Physicist and TV presenter, once in a rock band | |
| 9 | 35 Ock Street | |
| 10 | Stilton, Roquefort, Gorgonzola | |
| 11 | West Midlands area | |
| 12 | The number of candles give away your age | |

CHRISTMAS QUIZ ANSWERS - Again many thanks for all the entries!! Our independent judge selected Jill from Longfellow, who won a box of chocolates. The answers to the quiz are (1) I'm Dreaming of a White Christmas, (2) Walking in a Winter Wonderland, (3) Santa Claus is Coming to Town, (4) Rudolf the Red Nosed Reindeer, (5) Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas, (6) I Saw Mummy Kissing Santa Claus, (7) When Santa Got Stuck up the Chimney, (8) Rocking Around the Christmas Tree, (9) Mistletoe and Wine, (10) Do They Know its Christmas.



CHILDREN'S CHRISTMAS COLOURING COMPETITION - Thank you to all the budding artists who sent in their entries - we had lots of super pictures and each design was a masterpiece which made selecting a winner very hard. Our independent judge finally chose one from each category and the winners were Alice from Masefield for the under 6's who won some gel colouring pens and Imogen of Tithe Farm for the 6 and over category who won a modelling box.

Well done to all who entered!!!

JUST FOR FUN - SUDOKU PUZZLES

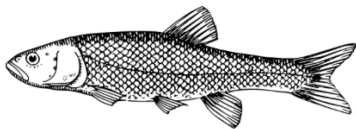
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THE POPLARS - Residents will have seen the For Sale/Sold signs outside this former care home on the Drayton Road but we are not sure how many people will be aware of the planning application made to the Vale just before Christmas. This was noticed by the Residents' Association in mid-January, about a week before the end of the month consultation period. The information is on the Vale's Planning website under P18/V3012/FUL. You will see that the application is to demolish the existing buildings and rebuild with a three-storey block of 8 two-bed flats. Considerable concern was felt about the height and bulk of the building, the loss of privacy for residents of Burton Close and Mill Road, the number of vehicles likely to be going in and out at this very busy junction and anxiety about the safety of school children using the adjacent alleyway and pedestrian crossing. We did our best to alert people to this application and some objections were made before the consultation closed.



At the time of writing this (early March), the outcome of the application is still undecided. We are hoping that this might mean that these plans are being revised to something more in keeping with the area. As soon as we know of any developments, we will update the blog.



SOMETHING FISHY IN THE RIVER OCK (*by Max the Wildlife Watcher*) - When looking into the shallows of the clear waters of the River Ock, I am happy to spot a fish or two. As the river is barely 9 m. wide most of its length and very shallow and very clear, it allows you the luxury of observing fish behaviour up close. I cannot get the perfect answer to the species that I have seen from the Mill Bridge crossing. I know that there will be many experts out there who will know a lot more than I do.

I have decided to describe *Squalius cephalus*, also known as Chub (it sounds great with my native northern accent). Spawning happens when the water temperature reaches 14°C, and lasts from May to September. Juvenile chub seem happy to shoal in very large numbers (safety in numbers), seemingly in same year group and with other fish of a similar size, so you'd often find them alongside dace, gudgeon and similar sized perch. When they get larger they get more wary (survival of the fittest?) and swim with smaller groups of a similar size.

It is a stocky fish with a large rounded head. Its body is long and cylindrical in shape and is covered large greenish-brown scales, which are edged with narrow bands of black. The tail is dark brown or black, the dorsal fin is a greyish-green and all the other fins are orange-red. The large, solitary adults prey mainly on freshwater shrimp and small fishes. Large chub also eat considerable numbers of small fish, as well as frogs, crayfish, voles and young water birds! They have also been observed eating berries such as blackberries and elderberry from overhanging trees. The fish can live for up to 22 years in the wild, where the age of fish can be assessed through by the number of rings that are visible in scales.

If this has whet your appetite at becoming an angler, contact the Abingdon Town council for a permit or Abingdon and Oxford Anglers Alliance. The fishing season ends at dusk on 14th March and commences at dawn on 16th June. This allows most fish to mate and spawn, so the river is quietly restocked. Fishing permits are free for Abingdon residents.

I would like to think the river systems of the UK are much cleaner than 30 years ago, but the Environment Agency who monitor the local rivers will have a much better idea. The best thing we can do is make sure none of our own litter goes in the river. I try and pick up any I see, whilst enjoying a walk along our lovely local river. I have heard reports that signs of otters have been spotted in the river Ock again, maybe this is the year I will be lucky to see one?

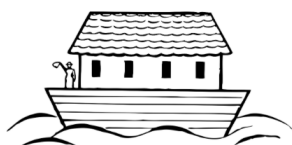
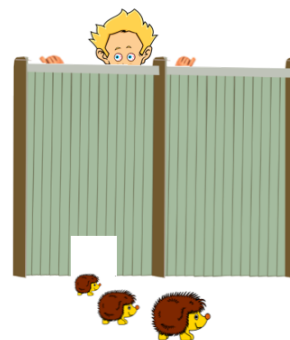




POT HOLES AT JUNCTION OF FRANCIS LITTLE DRIVE AND MILL ROAD - Problems with the poor road surface at this junction continue. In 2018, potholes were reported and were later filled. However, the edges of the new filling appeared to crumble almost immediately. There were a couple of new reports on FixMyStreet complaining about this. The whole area is now in a very poor state and was again reported. In mid-February, Oxfordshire CC Highways confirmed that 'it would be fixed'.

At the time of writing, we see that 2 or 3 of the larger pot holes have been marked to be filled. It seems that there is little chance that the whole area will be tackled, so the problems will continue.

HELP THE HEDGEHOGS! (*Eleanor Dangerfield writes*) - It's a few years since I saw a hedgehog in my garden. Hedgehogs are in trouble and need our help. They'll soon be coming out of hibernation and looking for food. Hedgehogs forage at night and cover a large range, up to three miles. The best way to help them is to collaborate with your neighbours and cut a hole in your fence. About the size of a CD case is sufficient so there's no risk of dogs getting through. This way we can make a "hedgehog street". If you put food out for hedgehogs, never, ever give them bread and milk. Apparently mealworms are bad for them too, though they do love them. You can buy specialised hedgehog food or meat based cat or dog food. Don't give them too much, however. After all, you do want them to eat up your slugs!



FLOOD PREVENTATION - Very little hope for better flood protection in Abingdon in the near future emerged from the public meeting held in the Guildhall on 7th March. Local papers have published an account of this meeting with MP Layla Moran and the Environment Agency, so residents will know that the plan for a water storage area on Abingdon Common has been 'put on ice' due to the cost and the Environment Agency's projection that that this would not be as effective as they originally thought. Other long term solutions are being looked at apparently, at a relatively lower cost.

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 our telephone number **07547419545** to leave a message.



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