

# Tithe Farm and Ladygrove Residents Association (TFLRA)



# Summer 2021



**WELCOME** - We have so much news to write about, this edition has spread over to 8 pages instead of the usual 6. We must have all breathed a sigh of relief as lockdown finished in May - fingers crossed there won't be another, but who knows, and if means must, then I'm sure we'll all just adapt again as we have before. The weather hasn't been as grand as last year with those lovely long warm months, but early days yet, but looks like the worst of the rain has now passed. The deliverers will be collecting subs with the next newsletter edition in the autumn, so plenty of time to find that elusive £1 in your purse, the car, the back of the drawer or down the back of the sofa.



Since the March 2020 the TFLA haven't been able to meet in person at all due to the Covid restrictions, so we have continued with regularly Zoom meetings which have worked quite well. Last year we had one socially distanced meeting on Wordsworth green, each of us bringing a chair, and have decided to repeat this again this year when the weather permits. You're welcome to join in and dates will be posted on the TFLRA Blog ahead of the green meet ups (do let us know if you have an issue bringing a chair).



**RECENT ELECTIONS** - On 6th May we voted to choose our County Councillor plus our Thames Valley Police and Crime Commissioner, plus a vote to fill the vacancy on Abingdon Town Council which had been created over a year ago on the death of Jeanette Halliday. For the County Council, Neil Fawcett was re-elected. He can be contacted on [neil.fawcett@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:neil.fawcett@oxfordshire.gov.uk). Matthew Barber was elected as the Police and Crime Commissioner. He was the previous Deputy Commissioner and residents may remember that he became involved in the aftermath of the problems caused by the travellers in Mill Lane last year, when it was clear that the Police response had fallen short. On Abingdon Town Council, our new councillor is Rawda Jehanli. At the time of writing this, she does not yet have a Council email address but can be contacted on [enquiries@abingdon.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries@abingdon.gov.uk).

**FEEDING THE BIRDS** - Going for a walk down Mill Lane over the winter and spring has had another pleasure as we have been able to look at the birds taking seeds and suet from the feeders on the bushes. Many thanks to Jill from Tithe Farm, with her constant supply of food for the hungry birds. Her hard work and contributions have been much appreciated. Jill inspired other people to contribute feeders and food, so we and Jill thank those people too.



**WORLD BOOK DAY** - April 23rd seems a long time ago now, but this was World Book Day. There was a lot of effort from our children (and their parents!) in making displays of favourite books on drive ways and front gardens. We saw a lot of people walking around the estate, enjoying all the displays. Again, all your efforts were appreciated.





**TENNYSON DRIVE** - There have been two planning applications for permission to change a three-bed house in Tennyson Drive into a block of four flats. Both applications have been strongly opposed by residents and our local councillors. The first application was refused by the Vale Planning Committee last year and the time to register an appeal has passed. In



December 2020, new plans were sent in by the applicants, showing some reduction in the size of the proposed alterations. It appears that this second application was withdrawn in February 2021. To date, no new application has been made to the Council. Passers-by will have seen the excavated hole with the buried large concrete mass and pipe work - understood to be the one of the old oil storage tanks from the time when the whole of our estate had oil-fired heating systems. Planning applications will have had to take this into account.



**THE EX-SET ASIDE FIELD** - We haven't any more news on the future of this field, but a resident has passed us a copy of letter that our MP Layla Moran had from the Department of Food & Rural Affairs (DEFRA) in mid-February. This talks of future proposals and ideas for supporting access to the countryside but gives no real new information about the situation with 'our' field. DEFRA



does confirm, however, that 'as permissive access does not form part of the public rights of way system, landowners are free to close it and return the land to productive use when an agreement with permissive access expires. The landowner concerned is encouraged, however, to continue the access voluntarily'. We wonder if it is possible that the main purpose at the moment of the 'private land' signs at the entrances is to make sure that no right of way is established.



**OUR POETS** - Some years ago we had a series of articles about our poets but it has been suggested that we re-visit this again just in case residents were wondering who these guys were. William **Wordsworth**, Samuel **Coleridge** and George, Lord **Byron** were three of the 'Romantic' poets writing in the earlier part of the eighteenth century. The others in the 'big six' were Shelley, Keats and Blake (there is a Shelley Close elsewhere in Abingdon). Henry **Longfellow** was an American poet, whose most widely known poem was 'The Song of Hiawatha', a poem now much parodied. Alfred, Lord **Tennyson** could be described as the premier poet of the Victorian era. He was Poet Laureate for much of Victoria's reign, writing poems for special state occasions. Robert **Bridges**, a later Poet Laureate, took to writing poetry and hymns late in life, after a career as a doctor. Here there is a slight connection with our area as he died at Boars Hill in 1930. John **Masefield**, who succeeded Bridges as Poet Laureate, has the strongest connection of all to our area, having died in Abingdon in 1967. Perhaps when Councillors were choosing names for the new estate of Tithe Farm, back in the 1970s, they were thinking of Masefield and his recent death. Possibly wanted to use his name, then afterwards everyone on the committee picked his/her favourite poet? We will never know!!



**HAZARDS ON OUR ROADS** - We have been asked to mention once more concerns about hazardous parking and speeding. It is difficult for residents to do much about these problems, but if you are bothered by cars parked in a hazardous spot or across the pavement, you may wish to report these problems (anonymously) on FixMyStreet or even contact our PCSO Clare Atkins. It could also be useful to report speeding to the Police.





**SUMMER QUIZ 2021 – SUMMER SUNS ARE GLOWING?** - The letters represent the initials or first line words of well known songs. A/an/ the are represented by lower case, all other words by capitals, eg., S i t C = Summer in the City.



SUN / SUNSHINE / SUMMER / SUMMERTIME		
1	B M S I Y S	
2	H C t S	
3	Y A M S	
4	t S H G H H O	
5	S A t L I E	
6	S L H M a B	
7	G D S	
8	W A G O a S H	
9	I t S W t W I H	



AND OF COURSE, RAIN		
10	S i t R	
11	I C S C N t R I G	
12	D R O M P	
13	a H R G F	
14	R D K F O M H	
15	P R	



Once again, for EITHER quizzes, drop your entry into 21 Mill Road - OR - email to [tfl\\_ra@zoho.com](mailto:tfl_ra@zoho.com) - OR - complete online for submission at <https://tflra.weebly.com/quiz.html>. There will be a small prize for the winner! Closing date 2<sup>nd</sup> July. Good luck!



**ANSWERS - SPRING QUIZ** - (1) Bed, (2) Stone, (3) Way, (4) Head, (5) Top, (6) Water, (7) Cup, (8) Bell, (9) Paper, (10) Glove, (11) Table, (12) House, (13) Cap, (14) Step, (15) Shed. Winners were Lee and Luci from Tennyson Drive - well done!



**ANSWERS - SPRING CHILDREN'S SCAVENGER HUNT COMPETITION** - Answers were (1) 46, (2) 5, (3) 46, (4) Medicott Drive, (5) 56, (6) 25 (Ely Close), (7) 2, (8) 44. Everyone that entered was a winner, so all entries got a little prize. And we apologise for the confusion caused by our error in question (6) about the sun dial. As most people worked out, we should have said Ely Close, not Orpwood Way. We disregarded answers to this question, but most of you worked it out correctly anyway!



**CHILDREN'S SUMMER SCAVENGER HUNT** - And here is another popular Scavenger Hunt for the children - walk around our estates, hunt for special points of interest and see if you win a prize!!!

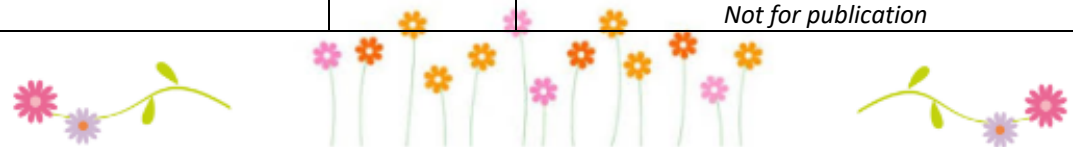


1	What time are letters collected by the Post Office on Saturdays on Tithe Farm?	
2	What shouldn't you do on the large green area in Shepherd Gardens?	
3	How many bungalows are there in Byron Close?	
4	What animals are hiding in the front garden on 16 Ely Close?	
5	The even house numbers in Mill Road start at 6 and go up to 68. One number is missing - which one is it (it's not 2 or 4)!!!	
6	What are the words on the blue sign at the end of Masefield Crescent (high numbers end)?	
7	How many trees are there on the Wordsworth / Longfellow green?	
8	Jenyns Court is on the Ladygrove estate - how many flats are there in this block?	



NAME	AGE	ADDRESS & TELEPHONE NUMBER

*Not for publication*



## GARDENING - TREES IN A SMALL GARDEN (*Martin Gulliver writes*)

Trees can add a lot to a garden - but they can also dominate so choose carefully! Assuming you want them to be decorative, blossom is important, as well as size. Always check what the final height and span of a tree will be and its rate of growth. Most blossom comes in the spring, the idea being to attract bees to pollinate the tree. Then leaf cover, and of course in autumn the leaves will generally fall if the tree is deciduous, so bear in mind leaf clearing. Never plant a tree too close to the house as the roots can affect foundations if it gets too large. The most popular trees are of course fruit-connected - think cherries, apples, pear, etc. Small trees like this are normally grafted on to a particular rooting stock to ensure the tree remains small. This is where a cutting is attached to an existing root, rather than just having it grown from seed ... or a pip! When planting a tree, try and plant when it is dormant, in autumn, when the soil is still warm but not frozen. Bare rooted trees are cheaper, and to plant these, dig a hole larger than the roots when spread out and incorporate well rotted manure in the hole if possible. Ensure the soil level matches that appearing on the tree from when it was dug up. Of course, with container grown trees, this is easier to gauge. Fill in around the roots and firm in, then water well so get rid of air pockets. Keep it well watered. Staking is important although not essential if the tree is in a sheltered back garden. Slight wind rocking the tree will strengthen the roots, but severe wind might damage so staking to be on the safe side is recommended. DON'T plant the stake too close ... 12-18 inches is fine. Either put the stake in at an angle towards the trunk and tie in it, or put in three stakes and a network of ties to hold the trunk in place. In both versions, ensure the ties are not too tight to allow some movement, and avoid damaging the trunk as it grows.



**TREES ON MASEFIELD CRESCENT PLAYING FIELD** - And while we are thinking about trees, you may have noticed recent work on the trees in Masefield Crescent playing field. They were inspected and trimmed where necessary by contractors working for the Town Council. One tree was removed as it was diseased. We have asked the Town Council - twice - if they intend replacing this with a new sapling, but at the time of writing, we are still waiting for their reply.



**QUEEN'S GREEN CANOPY** - Fitting in nicely with our gardening article this time, we should mention that from October 2021 to the end of 2022, individuals are being encouraged to plant a tree in their gardens in commemoration of the Queen's platinum jubilee.

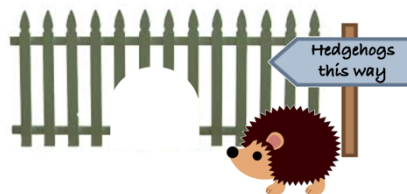


**UNMOWN LAWNS IN MAY?** - Walking around our estates, you may have noticed that some residents did not mow their lawns in May. Almost certainly this was not because their lawn mowers had broken down and probably not because it was too wet, but that they had decided on 'No Mow May'. An organisation called Plantlife, a Wild Plant Conservation charity, had started a campaign to encourage people to leave their lawns alone in May to help our bees, butterflies and other insects. We will mention this again in spring next year in case other people are interested. In the meantime, you can read about this on the Plantlife website at <https://www.plantlife.org.uk/everyflowercounts/>. The growth on our verges also got very long and we wondered if the Vale Council was also observing No Mow May. But not so, the verges were cut on 24<sup>th</sup> May. We have been told, however, that they are reviewing their mowing regimes in view of the Council's climate emergency declaration and their wish to minimise the impact of grounds maintenance operations on our native flora and fauna.



## HEDGEHOGS, SWIFTS AND ORCHIDS (*Max the Wildlife*

**Watcher writes)** - Where have the **Hedgehogs** gone in our local area? I am just not seeing them on our estate dead or alive. Our neighbourhood should be prime real estate for them. Please leave a small gap (the size of a CD case) in your fence to allow easy movement between houses, so they do not waste valuable energy 'going the long way'. I would like to dream that new housing estates would do the same. Do not use slug pellets, but beer traps or 'nematode slug control' from garden centres. Hedgehogs are our natural 'slug hoovers' and should be a part of the next generation's life experiences. Max the Wildlife Watcher will be back with a fuller article next time!



**Swifts** - The 'speedy, adrenaline fuelled' swifts are back. Being spotted in Abingdon in the second week in May and landing in my nest box with a fast thump on the 19th May. I have been playing my swift sounds to attract a second family in my other nest box, and I am happy to report so have other likeminded neighbours. Once the swifts know where the boxes are, the sound does not need to be too loud. I have three swifts again... parents and a juvenile?? We will see how many I get at the end of the summer..... If you are interested in putting up boxes this summer ( so the youngsters know where to come back to next year) or early spring, do contact Abingdon Swifts on their Facebook page. Wishing you a wonderfully Wild Summer.

**In the Summer time** - Hopefully we are now enjoying the delights of summer and meeting our friends and family once more on lovely sunny walks. Last year I was amazed to find a local patch of Pyramidal orchids, which I just had been too busy before to notice. You can sometimes even notice them on roundabouts and motorway verges around Oxford. Orchids hold the title of the largest family of plants on the planet, with about 28, 000 recognised species globally and come in a wide variety.

You can see orchids throughout the UK, flowering between April and September, hitting peak flowering season from May. Tempting as it may be, don't pick the flowers. Orchids look their best out in the wild, and some species are legally protected so you could be breaking the law. Orchids have delightful exotic looking flowers, generally having six petals or sepals, with one lower one that acts as a landing platform for insects when they collect nectar. The pyramidal orchids are found on chalk grassland. Look for the dense pink flower spikes of pyramidal orchids and the taller, cylindrical spikes of fragrant orchid, which smell sweetly, especially in the evenings. Of the fifty or so species native to the UK, some are surprisingly common and widespread. Lots of them prefer poor quality soil, which offers biodiversity, due to not one plant outcompeting all the others. Such habitats include chalk grasslands and boggy areas. There are many sources of information where to spot them: start with your local Wildlife Trust (BBOWT). Yet again Dry Sandford is a good place to find a variety of plants. However, BBOWT's top pick is Hartslock near Goring; a beautiful sloping chalk grassland overlooking the Thames. Renowned for its hundreds of monkey orchids, lady orchid, and very unusually the hybrid between the two, other orchids found here include bee, pyramidal, common spotted orchids, common twayblade, and white helleborine. Red kites soar overhead and Chalkhill and Adonis blues add a splash of colour later. Some orchids mimic the look of a female insect to attract a male insect 'slave' to transport their pollen. I remember the thrill and magic of spotting a bee orchid on Wittenham Clumps. Less 'fragrant' and more 'smelly' is the lizard orchid. A rarity found at just a few sites in the south of England, this giant among orchids has a spike of gorgeously twisty, spiral-lipped 'lizard' flowers, and smells strongly of goats!





**HELP YOURSELF FREEBIE DAY ON 3<sup>RD</sup> JULY?** - In the last newsletter (and on the Tithe Farm Facebook group), there was a suggestion that we put our unwanted odds and ends on our drives on 1<sup>st</sup> May for others to help themselves for free - which turned out to be a great success!! The variety of things offered was amazing - books, CDs, china, Christmas ornaments, children's toys, magazines, household goods, sports items and much more. One of the most notable things of the day was how everyone enjoyed meeting each other.



Some residents thought that repeating the Freebies day on the first Saturday of each month would be too often. Residents now suggest that we should definitely have another Freebie day on **SATURDAY 3RD JULY**. And again, assuming nothing happens in August, again on Saturday 5th September to put out those unwanted (non dangerous!) odds and ends.



**ALBERT PARK SINGERS** - The Albert Park Singers are a friendly mixed choir in Abingdon. We meet in St Michael's Church, Park Road, Abingdon on Mondays between 7.00pm and 8.30pm, and perform at several informal concerts during the year. We sing a wide variety of popular and traditional songs, light classical and

show tunes. We will be starting our rehearsals (government guidelines permitting) on Monday September 13th.



You can find out more from our website <https://albertparksingers.wordpress.com/> or contact Lesley Bosley (lesley.bosley@gmail.com) or Anna Sylvester (annasilvester@hotmail.co.uk).



**NORWAY CONSTITUTION DAY** - Well, did you know that 17<sup>th</sup> May was the constitution day of Norway? If you had been on the Masefield Crescent playing field on the morning of that day, you would have seen several families celebrating what is known in Norway as Nasjonaldagen, their national day. Flags were being flown, flowers brought, special food eaten and impressive national costumes worn. And the rain kept off!



**CHAUNTERELL WAY PLAY PARK** - Following a recent spate of anti-social behaviour gathering on the Chaunterell Way play park, we would encourage anyone to report any further concerns to the local PCSO or even the Police on 101, plus the Town Council for clearing up any litter. Many thanks though to the residents who cleared up the dangerous litter left behind.



**FOR SALE** - John Lewis King size Mattress Topper, almost unused. Described as 'Soft touch, washable, 6cm deep'. Has hundreds of enthusiastic 5 star reviews on the John Lewis site. Used for two nights only - I just didn't like it! Cost £95.00 - will sell for £50.00 (prefer cash). Contact me at 39 Masefield Crescent or use the TFLRA phone to leave a message - 07856869335.





**RECENT PAVEMENT WORK** - While our pavements look much better after the work a few months ago, people have been very surprised at how quickly the weeds are taking over again. We queried this with Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) Highways, along with a few other points. The questions and the responses are listed below.



**We said that we understood the slurry surface had a life span of about 5 - 7 years. We asked what is likely to happen at the end of this period.** They said *'the surface may last longer and in many cases, does, depending on many factors. It is only a very thin surfacing so should not break apart, it will gradually wear away.'*



**We asked about what are OCC's long term plans when the life span of the slurry coating has been reached.** They replied *'that the slurry is used when the actual condition of the footway is sound, therefore, when it wears away the functionality of the pavements remains unchanged, although they may be visually unappealing'.* They went on to say that *'urban roads and footways on housing estates are inspected once a year, as part of OCC's statutory duties. If an area raises a concern, this is then further inspected and assessed by their Technicians. Any areas that have an immediate concern, such as trip hazards – raised covers, uneven or potholed areas - will be repaired'.*



**We asked about the weeds growing strongly through the slurry surface. Although most of this growth is near the edges near to the gardens of residents, there are some areas where weeds are coming through the middle of the pavements. Here the slurry is breaking up around these growth areas. We asked if this was expected and what will OCC do about the damaged areas.** They replied *'that several weeks before surfacing, weedkilling is carried out. Changes to legislation mean that only 'contact' weedkillers can now be used, so while the visible plant is killed, the root system and seeds may survive. Therefore some weed growth is expected after treatment'.* They add *'that OCC has not had a budget for weedkilling for many years but if areas of prolific weed growth create trip hazards, these should be reported on FixMyStreet. These areas will then be inspected and, if necessary, the work passed to OCC's contractors for removal by hand'.*



**WASTE IN COMMUNAL AREAS** - A month or so ago, residents near a Bridges Close garage block were very concerned when debris apparently from the roofs of one of the garages was left in the garage forecourt for a while. Before it was removed (by whom is unknown), neighbours had contacted various agencies, not only out of concern about the rubbish but also because of the possibility of asbestos being present. It is our understanding that the forecourts of these garage blocks are not council land (ie public land) but owned 'jointly' (ie privately) by the people who own the garages. There was no problem this time with removal of the debris, but it is possible that rubbish may appear again in the future in other communal garage blocks. So, we consulted the Environmental Health team at the Vale Council - the officer started by saying he did visit the block in view of the complaints but the waste had gone by then. Some of what else he said is overleaf:





**Continued.../** 'With regards to any further concerns, I would suggest that you call 01235-422403 or email [env.health@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:env.health@southandvale.gov.uk). The incident would then be assessed and allocated to either Environmental Protection or Envirocrime teams within the council or you may be referred to another agency such as the Environment Agency or Health & Safety Executive. If the concern is investigated internally any action including enforcement would be determined on a case-by-case basis. The council does not normally arrange clearance on behalf of private landowners but request the landowner disposes of any waste in an appropriate manner. It is only in extreme cases that waste would be removed by the council and would only be the result of certain enforcement actions, that may even require court action'.



We're not sure how much help this is should there be a more serious problem in future, but we thought we should pass on what we did manage to find out.



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**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.



- **Jazzercise Wantage** - Jazzercise is the original dance party workout. We fuse dance cardio with kickboxing, pilates and strength training - set to the hottest playlists. Come and join the fun, all fitness levels welcome. Currently meeting Tuesday and Thursday evening at Milton Hill House, Milton and Saturday mornings at Snells Hall, East Hendred. For more information contact: Tel. 07917 205372 or email: [jazzercisewantage@outlook.com](mailto:jazzercisewantage@outlook.com) - Facebook & Instagram: @jazzercisewantage



- **Hair Beautique** - A locally run home Hair and Beauty Salon, with a friendly service. Appropriate face coverings and sanitisers available. Contact: Chloe 0794 679 4786 for further information and opening hours.



- **Oxford Kitchens and Bathrooms** - One of our residents is a director of Oxford Kitchens and Bathrooms, based locally in Wootton. They are entering the 42nd year of trading in 2021, with the same management that started the business in 1979. Their website is at [www.oxfordkitchens.co.uk](http://www.oxfordkitchens.co.uk) if you would like to know more about them.



**NEXT MEETING AND CONTACT** - The regular 'in person' meetings are currently postponed, but residents are most welcome to join future meetings, either on Zoom or a meeting on Wordsworth Green (weather permitting). Do check the Blog / contact us beforehand to check for dates. For article contributions, announcements, advertising or if you'd like to come along to a meeting, email at [tfl\\_ra@zoho.com](mailto: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

