

# Tithe Farm and Ladygrove Residents Association (TFLRA)

## Winter 2021



**WELCOME** - Christmas is only a few weeks away and we sincerely hope this year's celebrations will be a better time than last year when lockdown suddenly hit and threw us all into disarray. With the clocks changing in October the days are shorter and feel gloomier, but fear not as the Winter Solstice happens in mid-December, which is the point at which the path of the sun in the sky is farthest south. At the Winter Solstice, the sun travels the shortest path through the sky resulting in the shortest day of the year with the least sunlight and therefore, the longest night, and the days will now start getting longer.



**COLLECTING SUBSCRIPTIONS** - Our annual newsletter subscription went very well this year, many thanks to all who contributed and an extra thank you to those who further helped our finances by giving a little more. Almost all the collection this year was done using little envelopes for the £1's, either to be collected later or to be dropped into a nearby address. The effort that people went to in taking their envelopes to their road-collector was much appreciated. We do have to say, however, that if you are asked to do this and you have mobility or other problems - please, please don't struggle to deliver the envelope! Either ring us or email us (see end of newsletter) and we will be happy to call back on you to pick up your subscription.



**LAND EITHER SIDE OF MILL LANE** - We have checked with the Town Council to see if there is any update to their consideration of part of the field behind Masfield Crescent as a site for a new town cemetery as the Spring Road one will have no more space in a few years time. We wrote about this in an earlier newsletter. The news is that there isn't any news! The Council is still looking at options. But significantly, it seems that only the land off Mill Lane has so far been identified as a possibility. This land is owned by the Vale District Council. There is also no news that the Vale can give us about the change in leaseholder for the land on the other side of Mill Lane, the field behind Orpwood Way. They can only tell us that the new lease is about to be completed. A resident of Orpwood Way has made the very interesting suggestion that trees are planted in the field behind this road. She has found that this idea has a lot of support among residents. Doing this will, of course, depend on who is leasing the field, what they want to use it for and the terms of the lease.



**CHRISTMAS PAPER RECYCLING** - Keep the sparkle out of your green bin! South and Vale Recycling team are asking that we do not put any Christmas cards / paper in our green bins if they are decorated with glitter or foil - or any shiny bits. Anything like this should go into our grey non-recycling bins as it cannot be recycled. They warn that if it is seen that there is this kind of decorated paper in the green bin, it might not get emptied. They explain that at the Recycling Facility, trucks are scanned for contamination - if the percentage of contamination is too high, the whole truckload can't be recycled but has to go to be incinerated, so wasting other clean and good recycling items.

**GOODBYE TO MARTIN AND JAN ABBOTT** - In September, we said goodbye to Martin and Jan Abbott of Medlicott Drive, who moved back to Yorkshire. Martin had kept us informed with the Neighbourhood Policing news and updates for many years, and also started the Neighbourhood Watch in Medlicott Drive. We shall miss him and wish him and Jan well for the future - and, of course, welcome the new residents who have joined us.



**DOORSTEP PARCELS** - People are increasingly shopping on-line and there are a rapidly growing number of parcels being left on doorsteps, sometimes being 'rescued' by concerned neighbours. Some courier companies are more cautious than others - for instance, by insisting their delivery drivers use their mobiles take a photo of the opened door at the correct address - that way avoiding allegations about a parcel being left on the doorstep. There are many instances, though, of parcels being left in full view of the road by time-strapped delivery drivers, sometimes it seems without even ringing the bell.



What happens if a parcel goes missing? Apparently if you have not given any delivery instructions, then the retailer is responsible if the parcel disappears, but if you have given specific instructions about a 'safe place', such as at the side of the house or behind a large bush, then that reduces your consumer rights! What to do about this? If neighbours are unable to keep an eye on your deliveries, perhaps consider an off-site locker service if that is offered.



**PAPER OR ON-LINE NEWSLETTER?** - This was mentioned again when we were collecting your £1.00s in the autumn. Why do we stick with the paper newsletter when so much is on-line now? We certainly take the point that using paper is wasteful compared to on-line newsletters. And costs more! But, for us, there are problems with just producing a free on-line newsletter. Some residents do not use on-line services, and others who do, but don't like reading longer items from a screen. We still need to collect a bit of money as we do have other minor outgoings besides the printing costs, such as prizes for our competitions. But the big hurdle would be how we gather, retain and safeguard all the hundreds of email addresses - which should be reviewed annually..... The format of the newsletter has changed many times since it started decades ago, but we aren't quite ready yet to ditch the paper and go on-line.



Though the newsletter isn't fully on-line, the TFLRA do have a blog and website which was set up in 2013, which we use to post important notices and snippets of the paper newsletter, plus you can enter and submit your answer to the quiz via the website too. The next thing we're looking into is an alternative means for residents to be able to pay their yearly subscriptions via the website rather than you having to fish around for that elusive £1. We'll keep you posted on this.

**MASEFIELD CRESCENT** - Like Byron Close and a few houses in Mill Road, most of Masefield Crescent was sold as individual building plots round about 1970. Most of these houses have been sold and resold many times in the subsequent 50 years or so but a few of the original residents remain. We talked to some of these about their memories of building their own houses. A lot of the work was done by these people and their families themselves, only calling in builders when necessary, and doing this while living in an on-site caravan. They talk about the good feeling of community with neighbours, also building their own houses, about helping each other out and in some cases swapping jobs. One resident was a flooring specialist so he did his neighbour's floors and the ceiling expert neighbour returned the favour. No house could be identical but, as you may have noticed, one pair of houses are mirror images of each other, and plans for one house type have been repeated, but with 'tweaks' to the frontage - very hard to spot these! Memories of cost of the plots differ but all are agreed that the odd numbers cost £1750, the even numbers, with their open views, cost more - some remember £750 more, others remember £100 more. Houses could be completed for a total cost of about £5000.



Of course, the houses have been worked on over the years and must now be almost unrecognisable from the original basic structures. But memories of the original hard work remain - one resident recalled that a delivery of pre-mixed concrete arrived unexpectedly. Only she was there, so there she was, in her 1970's mini-skirt and boots, frantically shovelling concrete.



**CHRISTMAS QUIZ - DOWN THE CHIMNEY** - Solve the clues, then read the initial letters of the answers downwards! Once again, 3 ways to submit your entry - (1) drop your entry into **21 Mill Road**, (2) email to **tfl\_ra@zoho.com** or (3) complete online for submission at **<https://tflra.weebly.com/quiz.html>**. There will be a small prize for the winner! Closing date 22<sup>nd</sup> December. Good luck!



1	Viscum Album	
2	He's on the shelf	
3	Christmas bird (not for eating)!	
4	Plenty in a Christmas cake or pudding	
5	Scandinavian name for Christmas (English spelling)	
6	Religious Christmas song	
7	Ilex	
8	Santa's lead reindeer	
9	"Born is the King of ....."	
10	Santa's eco-friendly vehicle	
11	Christmas bird (for eating)	
12	Name of the three wise men	
13	December 1 <sup>st</sup> - 24 <sup>th</sup>	
14	26 <sup>th</sup> December - St ..... 's Day	

<b>NAME</b>	<b>ANSWER - LETTERS DOWNWARDS READ:</b>
<b>ADDRESS</b> <i>(not for publication)</i>	
<b>TELEPHONE</b> <i>(not for publication)</i>	

**QUIZ ANSWERS AUTUMN 2021 - OLYMPAGRAMS** - (1) Laura Kenny, (2) Tom Daley, (3) Matty Lee, (4) Kate French, (5) Adam Peaty, (6) Tom Pidcock, (7) Max Whitlock, (8) Charlotte Worthington, (9) Bethany Shriever, (10) Joe Choong, (11) Lauren Price, (12) Tom Dean, (13) Duncan Scott, (14) Dylan Fletcher, (15) Jessica Learmouth, (16) Kathleen Dawson. The winner of the quiz was John from Ladygrove, who wins a small prize - well done Sir!!



**CHILDREN'S COLOURING COMPETITION** - This time the artist is Evie from Ladygrove (aged 11) who has drawn this 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 your entry into **21 Mill Road**. Closing date 22<sup>nd</sup> December. Winning entries will be displayed in the Stonewater Common Room window. Good luck!!



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





**WILDLIFE GARDENING** (*Martin Gulliver writes*) - This time of year, wildlife has the tricky task of getting through the winter, and we can of course help. Apart from the usual supply of bird food in hangers and tables, the garden itself can be a rich source of sustenance and shelter. Shrubs with berries provide colour and food - cotoneaster, pyracantha and escallonia being popular. Leave some plants to seed - especially teasel and sunflowers, as the birds will raid these. Insects will relish Ivy, winter flowering heathers and hellebores as well as midwinter bulbs such as snowdrops and winter aconites. Ivy especially is a rich source of nectar for bees late in the season. Shelter is important to keep insects safe from predators. If cutting down an old shrub or tree, build a log pile and fill the gaps with branches. This will provide a useful habitat for all sorts of garden-friendly insects. A bee hotel can be fascinating and invaluable for solitary bees to shelter. There are many articles on the net showing how these can be built, along with more extravagant insect hotels. Also keep an eye on bird baths to make sure they are kept ice free. Even a small dish with water in it placed outside each day will keep the birds happy.



**ROOKS** (*by Max the Wildlife Watcher*) - This winter, when hopefully we might get to meet up with family and friends, I thought I would talk about the other mass gathering of our gregarious neighbours, often overlooked, our local rookery, by Oday Hill stables. There are many superstitions surrounding members of the crow family and many of these can be traced back to the rook. For example, the saying 'as the crow flies' is likely to refer to the rook which has a very direct flight, particularly when returning to its roost site in the evening.

The rookery is a wonderful place to observe the rook's behaviour. Rooks add sticks to previous years' nests through the winter and early spring. Unfortunately, the easiest places to find these sticks are from the nests of neighbouring birds! It is said that if rooks build their nests high in the trees, then we will have a good summer, if they build low down then it will be wet and cold. Apparently rooks pair up with the same partner every year. Unlike the similar looking carrion crow, the Rook has a black body and a grey bill and 'baggy trouser' feathers around its legs. It is a sociable bird, so can be spotted in flocks feeding in fields. The rook's name is derived from its call, originally referred to as the 'hroc' which is a lovely rendition of one of its many vocalisations. Rooks are extremely talkative and have a range of metallic notes with sharp fragments as well as the more drawn out 'craaaa'. The collective noun for rooks is a parliament, this strange term is a reference to rooks gathering in a huge circle around one or two individuals. The assumption is that the rooks in the middle are on trial and so this is their parliament.

Recent tests on captive birds have shown that rooks can use tools to retrieve food including being able to use two tools in succession. They could also bend a piece of straight wire into a hook so that they could retrieve a bucket laden with food from a well. They would probably make light work of some of the family games played over the festive season, such as 'operation' and 'buckaroo'! Enjoy.



**ABINGDON MACULAR GROUP** - Age Related Macular Degeneration (AMD) causes loss of central vision, making reading, writing, crafts and any close work increasingly difficult. Do you have this condition or know anyone who has? Abingdon Macular Group is a small, friendly group which meets on the second Thursday of most months from 10.30 to midday at the Baptist Church Hall, 35 Ock St. Abingdon. We have speakers on topics related to visual impairment or of general interest. We also have occasional outings, lunches and activities. Friends and family members are also welcome. For more information, contact Eleanor on 01235 531 857.





**THE POPLARS ON THE DRAYTON ROAD** - As we have mentioned this last year - and probably in previous years as well, this empty property continues to deteriorate. Eighteen months ago, in May 2020 it was given planning permission for demolition, to be replaced by a block of 8 flats (see Planning Applications P20/V0435/DLS and P20/V0101/FUL on the Vale of White Horse Council's planning website). We have no information on what is happening here - does

anyone else know anything? Tithe Farm and Ladygrove residents may have to ignore the overgrown garden with its accumulating rubbish but we are affected by the pavement being obstructed by brambles near our road crossing and also the ivy, once more growing over the Burton Close/Drayton Road alley way.

These two problems had twice been reported to Oxfordshire County Council Highways as they have the power (and duty) to enforce clearance of the obstruction of a highway. Oxfordshire Highways have recently responded, updating the FixMyStreet posting to say that a letter had been sent to the land owner, requesting removal of the obstruction. We must keep an eye on this and ask OCC to chase the owner again if the work is not carried out in a reasonable time. The update started with their usual, rather confusing sentence, saying that 'This report is not the responsibility of the County Council'. We take that to mean that they are not responsible for going out and removing the obstruction themselves but for enforcing the removal by someone else. We feel that sentence could be better worded.

**PARKING** - Residents will be aware that, since 1st November, the responsibility for enforcement for on-street parking in Abingdon and other local towns has passed to Oxfordshire County Council who now employ Civil Enforcement Officers - or Traffic Wardens in old-speak! These Officers (C.E.O.s) are patrolling areas in Abingdon where there is a Traffic Regulation Order in place. Essentially this is the area of the town centre, although other temporary orders can be made in cases such as when

there are major road works along one of the roads in Abingdon - for instance, this happened in Northcourt Road a little while ago. There is little chance that the C.E.O.s will be seen on our estate roads or on other residential estate roads in our town as they can only operate where there is a traffic regulation order in place. It is hoped, however, that people will continue to avoid blocking estate driveways or leaving a wheel over a dropped kerb. Should this happen, it is probably best to contact the Police on 101, as could be done if it appears that vehicles are parked dangerously. If you want to read about all this in more detail, visit:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/residents/roads-and-transport/parking/new-parking-enforcement-areas>

The County Council are consulting Town and Parish Councils about future plans for parking restrictions in local areas, both where restrictions already exist and where they may be brought in. If you have any thoughts on this, do contact Rawda Jehanli or Eric de la Harpe, our Town Councillors.

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**NEW SPEED LIMITS IN ABINGDON?** - The County Council are responsible for the setting of local speed limits across the road network in Oxfordshire, with the exception of motorways and trunk roads. They do this in consultation with other local councils. Wallingford, for example, is likely to have new 20 mph limits in the centre of the town. We understand that imposing new speed limits is costly, so priorities will have to be worked out by the County. Abingdon Town Council has recently formed a

working party to look at the possibilities of having 20 mph speeds in Abingdon, either in the town centre only or with other areas across the town. Next year, the Town Council will agree a bid to go to the County Council. We hope to have more information for the next newsletter. In the meantime - when you are driving on our estates - remember Twenty is Plenty!



**CLIMATE CHANGE** (*a resident writes*) - After COP26 it has all gone rather quiet but the climate emergency continues. We know that electric cars, solar panels, planting trees, etc all help but we can also make a difference in smaller ways if we all follow these suggestions. Here are 8 ways to cut your Carbon Footprint at home:



1. Use electricity when it's less carbon intense, usually 1am - 5am. Check the National Grid's tool at [carbonintensity.org.uk](http://carbonintensity.org.uk).
2. Defrost food in the fridge to help cool it, and make sure hot food cools before you put it in the fridge or freezer.
3. Get a Smart meter to keep an eye on how much electricity you're using and identify power guzzling gadgets.
4. Reduce heat loss by fitting loft insulation. Already done that? Consider your walls, floors and double glazing.
5. Cut draughts around windows and doors with draught strips. Put a balloon up your unused chimney or cap it to keep heat in.
6. Consider a heat pump when your boiler needs replacing. They're pricey but use naturally occurring heat to warm your home.
7. Turn off the heating in rooms that you don't use often or turn your thermostat down a degree to cut gas use.
8. Check your heating controls. You should use a room thermostat, programmer and thermostatic radiator valves.



#### WASTE COLLECTIONS OVER CHRISTMAS PERIOD

Normal Collection	Revised Collection Day	What Waste?
Friday 31 <sup>st</sup> December 2021	Wednesday 5 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	Black - Food
Friday 7 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	Tuesday 11 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	Green - Food - NO Garden
Friday 14 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	Monday 17 <sup>th</sup> January 2022	Black - Food
Friday 21 <sup>st</sup> January 2022	Saturday 22 <sup>nd</sup> January 2022	Green - Food - Garden
There is more on all this at <a href="http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/christmaswaste">www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/christmaswaste</a>		



**TAI CHI CLASSES** - These are held in Trinity Church Hall, Conduit Road on term-time Tuesdays between 12.30pm and 1.30pm. Originally organised by Age UK, these particular classes are meant for the older person. Tai Chi is a soft and gentle form of exercise, suitable for any age group. Look at <https://www.taichichuan.org.uk/about-tony.htm> if you would like to know more or if you want to contact Tony Jones, the teacher. Classes are £6.00.



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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: or email: [jazzercisewantage@outlook.com](mailto:jazzercisewantage@outlook.com) or Tel. 07917-205372. Facebook & Instagram: @jazzercisewantage
- **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.
- **Forever Aloe Vera** - Aloe has natural soothing, cooling and moisturising properties. Our range of drinking gels are great for skin health, the immune system and is an ideal digestive aid. Our bottles also contain vitamin C which contributes to a natural energy-yielding metabolism. In five flavours! Contact Charlotte Membury for further information or advice on how Aloe can help with your health on 07850-198846 or email [charlottemembury@gmail.com](mailto:charlottemembury@gmail.com) or visit: <https://thealoeveraco.shop/9olpExEY>

**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*

