

Finstock News 121

Serving Finstock, Fawler, Wilcote, Mt. Skippett and Finstock Heath

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This issue of the Finstock News contains a survey insert provided by the Parish Council, which is designed to learn how we feel about the state of our village and its environment. Please take the time to fill in and return your survey. For details please see the Parish Council report on page 4. We have articles of interest to gardeners who want to start composting on page 11 and a proposed new project for Finstock stating Every Child Deserves a Tree on page 9. There is an article about the unplugged musicians in our village on page 7 and the Village Shop report on page 5 notes that signs are not good for our shop unless we use it more. Enjoy the read!

FINSTOCK FESTIVAL and SCHOOL FÊTE FRIDAY JUNE 19TH and SATURDAY JUNE 20TH

It's hard to believe last year's Festival is long past and this year is coming soon. The £1500 raised last year has been distributed to various village groups. The replacement notice board for Hill Crescent is being worked on and should be up by the spring.

We held our AGM in November and I can report the management posts remain the same: Chairman - Colin Stringfellow; Treasurer - Julie Stringfellow; Secretary - Pete Welply.

This coming Festival we are trying to continue the live music acts through from the school fête to the festival in the hope people will stay on site.

I gave a listing of bands playing at this year's festival in the December *Finstock News*. One interesting band we have booked for Saturday evening 7.15 - 9pm will be a very special treat for you. If you're a certain age, this will be the soundtrack of your youth. We guarantee that when you hear Warren James and his Hot Band performing the music of Lonnie Donegan, Johnny Cash, Buddy Holly, The Everly Brothers, Eddie Cochran and many more legendary American stars you will smile. It will be simply impossible to resist the urge to move with the music. Warren's been performing these classics nationwide to audiences of all ages. It will be an evening to remember.

As things stand the planning is going well. All that is required is your presence at the Festival and we look forward to welcoming you all to our fantastic line up of music, well stocked bar and food. What more could you want?

ROCK ON FINSTOCK FESTIVAL FRIDAY JUNE 19th and SATURDAY JUNE 20th

Colin Stringfellow, Chairman



Sponsored Walk

Finstock kids are raising money for their school by doing a 10-mile sponsored walk. The circular walk starts at 11am on May 16th at the Plough. All are welcome to take part or sponsor us. Use the QR code to donate and for more information go to @FriendsOfFinstockSchool on Facebook.

Ready Reference

From the beginning of the newsletter we have provided a printed Ready Reference with contact information you may need. We list the contact name, email and telephone numbers for everything from children's organisations to emergency numbers for utilities; from local to national government representatives; village activities to the Charlbury Medical Centre; local churches to transport information.

We will no longer print and distribute the Ready Reference. You can find all of this information and more online at www.finstock.org.uk/the-finstock-news.

Finstock Church Spring Book & Plant Fair

Saturday 9th May at 10am



Come and buy...
Plants (annuals, perennials, flowers, vegetables)
Books
Cakes & produce
A tea or coffee with a homemade biscuit

Come & play on the ...
Chocolate tombola
Raffle

...all with a little VE day theme...

Books, plants, cakes and raffle prize donations are always extremely welcome!
 Call Elizabeth on 868203 or Kirsten on 868634



VILLAGE EVENTS



April

17th Local History Broughton Castle

May

3rd FoFS Garage Sale

8th 75th anniversary of VE Day
Bank holiday

9th Spring Fair

15th Local History After female suffrage

16th FoFS Sponsored walk

25th Finstock PC AGM

Finstock Local History Society

Friday April 17th Keith Westcott, historian and detectorist tells the fascinating story of his amazing discovery on the Broughton Castle estate of one of the largest Roman Villas in Britain.

Friday May 15th After female suffrage Women's involvement in public activity between the wars. This is a presentation by the women's section of FLHS following last year's evening on the Long March to Suffrage, which led to women finally getting the Parliamentary vote in 1918. It will look at what happened subsequently in Finstock and the locality.

All meetings at 8pm on Fridays unless otherwise stated, at Finstock Village Hall, OX7 3BU. Refreshments available from 7.30pm. Entry £2.50. Follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/FinstockLocalHistorySociety.

Two Wychwood Villages

As many of you will know the latest book on Finstock and Fawler - *Two Wychwood Villages* was published in early December 2019. It has sold very well since then and we would like to thank those subscribers who purchased a copy in advance of publication and made the whole enterprise possible.

The book has been very well received and copies are still available from me (details below). The monthly local history meetings continue to be held in the Village Hall and are well attended and are advertised here in

the newsletter. If you would like to be added to our growing mailing list and receive a reminder about future meetings do get in touch.

To purchase a copy of *Two Wychwood Villages - Finstock Upon the Hill and Fawler Down Derry*, simply ring Tony Cooper on 868743 or email mini.cooper7@btinternet.com. The price is £30 per copy.

New GP at Chalbury: Dr. Mel Hurney has joined Charlbury Medical Practice. She has a special interest in joints and paediatrics. Dr Hurney will work on Monday, Tuesday and Thursday.

Heads-up Microsoft Outlook users

Extended support for Microsoft Outlook ended 08/04/2014. Outlook is considered unsafe for use. Additionally, email providers like Gmail, Yahoo and Hotmail will stop customers accessing their servers with outdated software because of the risk.

Ladies, give us your support!

Give all your unwanted old bras a new lease of life and help raise money for breast cancer research. Bring them to Joy Murphy at 63 High Street. Against Breast Cancer will receive a donation based on the weight of bras we collect, so every bra counts!

North Leigh History Society

Tuesday April 7th 600 years of Morris Dancing A talk by Michael Heaney. The Cotswolds have a rich tradition of Morris dancing which Michael Heaney, a member of Eynsham Morris Dancers, has researched and traced to its first recorded origins.

Tuesday 5th May The Romanovs. A talk by Chris Danziger. We venture out into Russian history where Chris Danziger traces the ill-fated history of the Romanov dynasty.

Do come and find out more with us at 7.30pm in the Turner Hall, Church Road North Leigh OX29 6TX. Visitors £4, Members free. Further details Diana Power 882301.

Bottle caps raise funds

Your soft plastic bottle tops can be donated to me to help raise funds for The Gift of Sight. We collect only milk bottle tops; that is, blue, green, orange, yellow, and red variety. We cannot accept anything else. Please drop your milk bottle tops off at 63 High Street, Finstock. Joy Murphy

The new Brexit 50p coin states "Peace, prosperity and friendship with all nations."

Wilderness Festival July 30th - August 2nd



on Mondays in
Finstock Village
Hall

- * Engaging and interactive classes with songs, pictures, instruments and toys for babies from 6 weeks to 2 years.
- * Encouraging babies' natural use of gestures to help them **communicate before speech** and reduce frustration as they're starting to talk.

Contact Emily 07795 005832
oxford@singandsign.co.uk
www.singandsign.co.uk



www.royaloakramsden.com

Village Hall

www.finstock.org.uk/village-hall and follow the booking instructions,
Email villagehallfinstock@gmail.com

Village Hall

Anyone who has ventured into the store room at the village hall will know it is a treasure trove of articles, materials and toys lovingly accumulated over the years by the various groups who use the hall. Every year, the shelves get added to, but very little is jettisoned. Time for action! We're now at the point where we cannot move, and access to key cupboards is almost impossible. The user groups, led by the Mums and Toddlers, closely followed by the Guides and Brownies, are having a serious sort out. We're looking at providing secure lockers for some of the key items. Apart from the inconvenience for club members when they can't find what they stored the previous week, there's a health and safety element to making things more efficient.

We recently installed a new bench, just outside the entrance to the hall. This is a memorial to Paul Grunwell, a much loved resident of Finstock, with a fabulous life story for those who knew him. He sadly passed away, but is remembered by a specially brewed memorial ale each year at the Finstock Ale, and by the bench, where we like to think he would have sat, pint in hand, telling his stories. Very sadly, someone has decided to deface this bench with their graffiti. Thank you for your contribution to our lovely village.

Rod Ireland

Short-Mat Bowls

Finstock Bowls continues at the Village Hall every Monday and Thursday from 2pm to 4pm with a thriving group of players. Two teams play in the Witney Triples league each winter Wednesday and two-thirds of players play for Charlbury Bowls Club. Finstock has three of the Mixed Four representing Charlbury - Chris Kuznik of Enstone joined Shaun Morley, Bev Morley and Dave Evans - that came second in Oxfordshire; at the National Mixed Fours Finals held at Solihull, the team beat Hertfordshire 9-8, then Dorset 9-6, before, losing to Kent to finish runners-up in their group and progress to the knock-out phase. However, after falling behind early they lost out to West Sussex. A creditable performance for the first time a Charlbury team had reached a national finals event.

People of all ages and variable health can play. New players are always welcome - we can accommodate four more people at present. Tuition is given, and all equipment needed is provided except a pair of flat-soled shoes (clean soles as well) like trainers. Just turn up and you will be made welcome.

Shaun Morley

Charlbury Bowls Club Open Days

The Oxbrew Bowls Green
74 Ticknell Piece Road, Charlbury,
OX7 3TW, www.charlburybowls.co.uk
Saturdays April 18th and 25th
from 2pm

Wednesday May 13th from 6.15pm

Enjoy a game of skill, but which anyone of any age can play? Like being outdoors in a friendly and welcoming atmosphere? Looking for a summer sport? Or just want to find out what happens at a bowls club? Then come along to an open day and roll up a few bowls. The bar will be open. No obligation, but you might actually enjoy it and want to play more!

Email enquiries@charlburybowls.co.uk for more information

All you need to bring is yourself and a pair of flat sports-type shoes or trainers - we can lend you everything else you need.

Shaun Morley
Treasurer, Charlbury Bowls Club
www.charlburybowls.co.uk

Finstock Craft Club

2019 brought another very successful Annual Arts and Crafts Fair to the Village, so thank you to everyone who participated. Your help and support in whatever capacity, for all local events, is very much appreciated.

We've had a quiet January and sadly two of our regular members have had to leave us. We're going to miss them! Although in recent weeks, three new members have been welcomed to the club. One is a Finstock resident; the others are from Hailey and East End. As always, we offer a very warm welcome to all newcomers from Finstock and the surrounding area. Whether you're new to crafting or are a bit of an expert, we'd love to see you.

We meet as usual, every Monday except Bank Holidays from 7.30pm to 9.30pm. All you need to bring is whatever current project you're working on. We're here to help if you're just starting out on your crafting journey, so if a chat and a cuppa are all you want to do on your first visit, that's fine too!

Rosa Charlesworth
On Behalf of Finstock Craft Club

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News from the Parish Council

A questionnaire has been delivered to every household in the village with this edition of the Finstock News. The PC would like to thank the Editors and volunteer distributors for agreeing to undertake this delivery. Please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire as it is a vital source of up-to-date information on villagers views on the state of the village and an opportunity to suggest ideas for improvements. The questionnaire is available online at the PC website if you wish to reply electronically. The results will be presented to all at a special village meeting in the near future.

The flooding problems in the village remain a source of continued dialogue with Thames Water (TW). Recently it was announced that a Sewer Depth Monitor is to be installed which TW claim will provide advance warning of a build-up of blocking material, enabling them to take pre-emptive action to avoid actual flooding. Time will tell whether this device will be sufficient. The PC will monitor the situation and maintain pressure on TW if that proves necessary.

A recent initiative from WODC and the Police focusses on fly-tipping. Detailed information on how to report any fly tipping you may find is available on the WODC website. (westoxon.gov.uk/flytipping).

In an effort to improve the quality of the local environment, WODC has called for an end to the dumping of sewage by Thames Water into our rivers. The PC strongly endorses this initiative, one that many villagers who relish the beautiful countryside which we live in will no doubt wish to see end.

Hywel Davies for the Parish Council

Green Banks Fields

Once again, as summer approaches, from April 1st, would everyone please keep to the two footpaths that just go along two sides of Green Banks Fields - up the right-hand side of the field through the main gate, and the one straight across the top of the field, between the two field-gates up there. Please do not go right round the field, or diagonally across the centre - this is just to let the grass recover, and then be ready for hay-making. Also, you MUST pick up your doggie poo, as this is very detrimental to the hay, and is especially dangerous to sheep if they eat the contaminated hay. (There is a doggie-poo collection bin just by the entrance to the field on the High Street!)

Many thanks for your cooperation, and have a SUPER Summer!

Viv Wightman

Loss of Blood Pressure Kits.

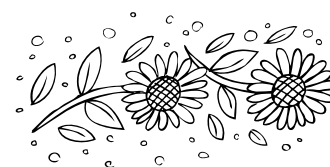
The patient group has learned from the Practice that none of the 20 BP kits that have been loaned to patients to monitor their blood pressure at home have been returned. This represents a loss of £400 to the Practice. If anyone has a BP kit at home belonging to Charlbury Medical Practice, please return it!

"Reasoning will never make a Man correct an ill Opinion, which by Reasoning he never acquired." Jonathan Swift

Rate relief for businesses

More than 300 retail businesses in the district will qualify for 50 per cent relief from business rates. Each qualifies by nature of the fact they are a retail business in a property with a rateable value below £51,000. The government introduced the retail discount last year but has increased it from 33 per cent to 50 per cent from April 1st 2020.

The council will also give a further 92 businesses in the district pub relief for 2020. Any qualifying licensed premises with a rateable value under £100,000 will be eligible for £1,000 in addition to the retail discount.



THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

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Photographs thanks to staff members and others.
Read the *Finstock News* online at www.finstock.org.uk; or write to us at 63 High Street, Finstock Oxon OX7 3DA.

Plan ahead - Know the deadlines

| Issue | Deadline |
|------------------|--------------------|
| Feb/Mar | First of January |
| April/May | First of March |
| June/July | First of May |
| August/September | First of July |
| October/November | First of September |
| December/January | First of November |

Please keep articles short. As space is limited, the Editors reserve the right to shorten long pieces in the interest of balance. *Finstock News* does not necessarily share the views expressed in readers' letters.



Our Bar is open:

Mon: 6pm - close
Tues - Fri: 12 noon - 3pm & 6pm - close
Sat: 12 noon - close
Sun: 12 noon - 6.00pm

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Our work to sustain the Shop and Post Office continues, and thanks to a most generous donation, we have a lifeline for a few more months. But the signs are not good. In fact, Storm Ciara decided to demolish our new shop sign, ripping it from its mountings. We are still not getting the level of custom to keep the shop afloat. The directors have discussed this situation thoroughly. We have applied for grants, but to date we have either been unsuccessful, or found ourselves ineligible, as many grants will not provide for building refurbishment and refitting. We have taken the view that to succeed long term, the shop has to be supported by adequate customer revenue or 100 Club investments. Neither is happening to the level required. We also see the lovely Post Office and Stores in Kirtlington facing closure, in circumstances similar to our own.

We had hoped that the offering of "refillables" where customers could collect staple foods in their own containers, avoiding excess packaging, might capture the imagination, but the truth is that very few people are using the service in Finstock. Now we see the new "Wast0" store in Witney, which has a far greater range of products, just a short cycle journey or a short walk once you are in Witney. While we continue to hope that our fortunes will improve, we also have a responsibility to explore the financial and legal implications of the process of closure. So if you wish to keep a shop and Post Office in the community (and its presence does enhance the value of property) then come and support us. Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Friday 8am – 5.30pm Thursday 8am – 3pm Saturday 8.30am – 1pm Post Office Monday – Friday 9am – 1pm Last acceptance time for postage 12.15

Finstock School

With the weather (finally!) turning warmer, we can't quite believe how quickly the school year is moving. Signs of Spring have been popping up across the school site, the lighter mornings have been welcomed by all and going home in the light after clubs in the afternoons has been a huge treat!

The school went on a Memorable Experience trip to Hidcote Manor in March to kick start our penultimate projects with a science focus, before we celebrate the upcoming Olympic Games in Japan this summer with a sports focus for the school.

We have had several successful events run by the Friends of Finstock School, including the Valentine's Disco, Chocolate dress down day for the chocolate bingo and Pamper night at the village hall.

The biggest event of the year is just around the corner- our Summer Fête in conjunction with the Finstock Festival, we hope to see you all there in June! As usual, it will take place on the Finstock playing field. Please do get in touch if you have, or know of any sponsors or donors to help raise money for our school by donating.

The beginning of Lent was marked by an Ash Wednesday service at Finstock School for our children and families with Paul the Vicar, and an Eastertide service will take place as usual at Leafield Church with Leafield school. Please do come and celebrate with us if you are able to, and in the meantime we wish you a fantastic Easter.

*Best Wishes,
Finstock School*

Finstock Baby and Toddler Group

We've settled into another year and already Easter is fast approaching! It's been a busy few months with lots going on for all our attendees - we're always happy to welcome new people to our group too so do come along and try us out if you haven't been already - the first session is free!

Over the half-term we had a big clear out/tidy up of the store room and will be able to rotate our toys on offer more easily. Each week we set out different areas including small world/role play, construction, ride-ons/vehicles, a reading area, arts and crafts and a dedicated baby area to keep the littlest attendees safe and snug on soft mats. We'll have some seasonal themed crafts over the coming weeks too throughout spring. We have a Facebook page which we regularly add to so keep an eye on that to see what's going on. We will also be holding more Stay-and-Play mornings at our brilliant village Pre-school, alternating with arranged visits to our group as well.

We will be here every week during term-time from 10-11.30am - we will break up for the Easter Holidays, so the last session will be Wednesday April 1st. The group is only £2 per family which includes a snack for the little ones, plus a hot drink/cake for the adults – this is provided on a voluntary rota basis so we are grateful to all our attendees for joining in and helping out with this! We're a friendly group and love to see you all each week.

*See you there!
Helen and Tammy*

Crime Prevention Toolkits

<https://tinyurl.com/t9hkayo>

The National Police Association has free Public Safety Brochures. Please feel free to download and print any of the following materials. Available brochures include: Internet Safety; Crime Prevention; Home Security; Identity Theft; Non-prescription Drug Use; Prescription Medications.

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COUNTRYSIDE CONSERVATION

President Lyndon Johnson once said, "If future generations are to remember us with gratitude rather than contempt, we must leave them a glimpse of the world as it was in the beginning, not just after we got through with it."

Bumblebees are in drastic decline across Europe and North America owing to hotter and more frequent extremes in temperatures, scientists say.

A study suggests the likelihood of a bumblebee population surviving in any given place has declined by 30 percent in the course of a single human generation. The researchers say the rates of decline appear to be "consistent with a mass extinction".

Bumblebees play a key role in pollinating crops such as tomatoes, squash and berries. The researchers say their methods could be used to predict extinction risk and identify areas where conservation actions are needed.

Attract bumblebees to your garden by growing plants rich in pollen and nectar: sunflowers, comfrey, Salix/willows, catmint, hellebores, spring blossoms, Michaelmas daisies, heathers, wallflowers, cornflower and knapweed; avoid double flowers. Plants with spring blossom to grow include apples, peaches, apricots, cherries and plums, as well as popular choices for wildlife gardens like blackthorn and hawthorn.

www.gardenersworld.com/plants/the-best-flowers-for-bumblebees

WastO Witney is the first zero-waste shop in Witney located in Wesley Walk where Rosa's flower shop was based.

Clothing Waste

According to WRAP (the Waste Action & Resources Action Programme) an estimated £140m worth of clothing

goes into landfill each year in the UK. The average lifetime of a garment is estimated to be 2.2 years.

Make Do and Mend!

Make Do and Mend was a pamphlet issued by the British Ministry of Information in the midst of WWII. It was intended to provide housewives with useful tips on how to be both frugal and stylish in times of harsh rationing. With its thrifty design ideas and advice on reusing old clothing, the pamphlet was an indispensable guide for households. Readers were advised to create pretty 'decorative patches' to cover holes in worn garments; unpick old jumpers to re-knit chic alternatives; turn men's clothes into women's; as well as darn, alter and protect against the 'moth menace'. An updated version of the book was recently released to coincide with the economic recession, offering similar frugal advice for 21st century families. British Library <https://www.bl.uk/learning/timeline/item106365.html>

Things we cannot recycle

Things to put in your rubbish bin: carrier bags, fruit/vegetable packaging, etc.; cling film, cellophane, bubble wrap, plastic film, etc.; crisp packets, sweet and chocolate wrappers; baby, cat and dog food pouches.

Historical footpaths

All rights of way must be identified before a government deadline of 2026 after which it will no longer be possible to add old paths to the official record. Ramblers have a new mapping site to identify footpaths.

The online tool divides the official map into 150,000 1km squares so users can compare historical and current maps side by side, spot any differences and submit missing paths.

Ramblers will then recruit volunteers to make applications to local authorities to restore paths before 2026 deadline.

Under English common law rights of way don't expire but the Countryside and Rights of Way act 2000 required all rights of way to be recorded. The Ramblers is calling on the government to extend the deadline for registering historical paths by at least five years.

www.ramblers.org.uk/news/latest-news/2020/february/find-map-save.aspx

Council action plan on single use plastics

WODC has issued a Statement of Principles which pledges to minimise and remove single use plastics (SUPs) across its offices and catering services. It is also designed to encourage contractors and residents and businesses in the wider community to minimise their use of SUPs. A '12 Days 12 Ways' campaign highlighting how to avoid SUPs and suggesting alternatives has now been launched on social media.

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(NB: Temporary class in Leaffield Hall every Thursday 7pm while Ramsden Hall is closed for refurbishment)

Deborah Manning School of Dance

Classes are held weekly in many villages around Oxfordshire.

A Jazz & Commercial Class for age 7-18 years is held at the Finstock Village Hall every

Thursday as well as Adult Ballet, Tap & Jazz Classes being held every Wednesday Evening.

Please contact Connie Manning on

01993 779125

conniemanning16@yahoo.co.uk

to arrange your

FREE TRIAL NOW!

Finstock Unplugged

Finstock Unplugged is an informal meeting of local acoustic musicians and singers held at The Plough, Finstock, on the last Monday of the month, from 8pm onwards. We take over the front bar, but the other spaces remain open for the usual clientele - or for anyone who wants to listen.

Finstock Unplugged was started by two Finstockians, Rachel Fox and Ginnie Redston, who for some time had been performing at events at Cogges and various folk and acoustic clubs locally, particularly at the Chippy Folk and Acoustic Club where Ginnie is a committee member and the Witney Acoustic Room. Knowing that other musicians sometimes met at The Plough, we asked Guy, the landlord, if he would give us houseroom on a Monday evening once a month. Luckily for us he agreed, and what began as an experiment in the autumn of 2018, became a regular session from then on.

Why 'Finstock Unplugged'? This is because we want to make it clear

that we are open to a wide range of music which embraces traditional folk music, but which also welcomes other genres. We love to hear traditional folk, but we also like Americana, Blues, 'classic' songs from the 1950s onwards, as well as original songs by our local performers. This means that there is considerable variety from session to session, as the flavour of each meeting is influenced by what our regular local musicians choose to perform. One month may have a strong Celtic/traditional flavour, but the next may focus more on Americana and blues. The one thing we are strict about, is that musicians must perform without any electronic amplification - i.e., unplugged!

A typical session begins quietly. The tables in the front bar will have been pushed back or removed so that there is room for musicians to sit round in a roughly oval arrangement. A few of us gather and chat as we unpack our gear and settle ourselves into our

chosen places. Then others filter in, to the point where sometimes more chairs need to be provided. Once the session starts, we work round the circle so that everybody gets an opportunity to contribute.

Musically the evenings are often wonderfully varied, as already described. Over the months since we started this venture, we have been lucky enough to attract some regulars who have a very high standard of technical musicianship and they are generous in contributing 'fills' and 'breaks' to others' performances; sometimes, if it's a song everyone knows, we'll all join in, so the performance becomes a cheerful 'jam'.

We continue to be very grateful to Guy at The Plough for supporting us. Remember, it's held on the last Monday of the month at The Plough; musicians in the front bar while other areas remain open for customers. Why not come along and see?

Ginnie Redston



*Josie and Jim at
Finstock Unplugged July 2019*



*Dave's knees Harry on dobro Colin,
Ben and others - Finstock July 29th 2019*

NICOLA MORGAN DC FMCA

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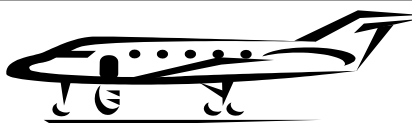
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County Council report

The County Council approved the budget for 2020/2021 at a meeting in February and for the first time in many years we did not have to absorb huge cuts. Which is great for this year but there is as yet no certainty about next year, as we do not know what will be available from government. This makes it very hard to plan ahead and the Council resolved to write to the Secretary of State asking that the new government consider providing councils with a five-year budget, so that they can plan their services more effectively. The Lib Dem and Labour groups jointly proposed an amendment to include £200,000 in the budget for a review of youth services across the county. This was accepted. We will now employ a small team to review what services are currently offered and what needs are not being met. In 2021/22 we will include a budget for the provision of a county-wide youth service. This is particularly important because not only have youth clubs disappeared, many of the charitable organisations that offered youth services have been forced to close because there are no more grants available – for example, Base 33 in Witney, which helped many disadvantaged young people in the past, but had to close its doors a couple of years ago.

Young people in our villages are very dependent on bus services, and these too have suffered from cuts. I have identified a pot of money which is designated to support the bus services in and around Charlbury. This is money that has been set aside for this purpose from recent housing developments in Charlbury, but it has not yet been used and I am now working with officers to make sure that it goes to support the X9 route so that we can maintain the current timetable. Without this money there is a risk that some of the timetable might have to be cut again. The Lib Dems on the County Council are committed to supporting bus and rail services and better cycle paths – it makes no sense to declare a climate emergency and then build new roads to the detriment of public transport, cyclists and pedestrians.

Once again, from April, County Councillors have been given a small

budget to use to support initiatives in their own wards. Last year I was able to support the Finstock school and the Village Shop, so if anyone has a project that they would like me to consider for a grant, please let me know.

Liz Leffman
County Councillor

District Council report

My report is primarily dedicated to the issue of young people who are often without a real voice and yet are our greatest concern and pride. As a father of two boys and having dedicated most of my life as a teacher, youth worker and writer, young people have inspired me. We, as parents and carers do our best but more can be done to ensure their needs are catered for outside the home and school. The changing needs are often difficult to keep up with but we must keep up or at least invest in those that can.

Youth Services have in the past been cut to the bone. I and my colleagues at the County Council are committed to a review to ensure the young are a high priority to be supported, encouraged and facilitated in terms of grants, support services, social media and other activities and events. This will augment what is already provided by the many volunteer groups and charities that exist!

To this end, I want to hear the views of young people, parents and other interested individuals. Your views/ideas

that will help to make things happen in a sustainable way and in a manner that young people can take ownership and responsibility for with guidance and appropriate resources. Engaging young people requires a flexible and diverse approach and I am exploring this with my colleagues so that we have every chance of maximising that reach. Want to help or make initial suggestions? Any positive comments welcome.

My intention is to come forward with a draft plan for West Oxfordshire and I know Liz Leffman is doing that at a county level and of course that means Finstock, Charlbury and Fawler too in the coming year so let's get started!

In these difficult and challenging times both Liz and I want to extend our helpline to anyone who has difficulty in coping with issues affecting you and please do not hesitate to ring or email us. We cannot always help with every matter but be reassured we know someone who will. Above and beyond that the Finstock community will always rally together and that is reassuring, too.

Have a great Easter and or holiday break and may spring look after us!

Cllr Andy Graham
07908832632 or
andy.graham@westoxon.gov.uk

The District Council tax for 2020-21 will rise by £5pa. The average Band D property in the District will pay a total of £2087.92 in council tax.

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Every Child Deserves a Tree



'No-one is too small to make a difference' is one of the slogans of Greta Thunberg, the climate activist and surely no place is too small to make a difference, too. Could we in Finstock play our part to curb the effects of the climate emergency by, for instance, planting trees - doesn't every child deserve a tree? A 'tree' does not need to be a giant such as the great oaks we can see in Cornbury Park: hedges and bushes do the same job in capturing carbon. But there are other concerns too: the disappearance of so much wildlife, such as the field mice, grass-snakes and slowworms, which are protected species, from the Allotments Field and the larks which used to nest there. What can give us hope, however, is that children growing up today are very aware of these problems and all over the world are coming up with their

own solutions. Finstock's schoolchildren now have an active Eco-group. No-one is too old to make a difference either! Finstock's older residents have a wealth of knowledge about our environment and how it has changed in their time: they can be a 'window into the past' if we want to restore something of what has been lost. Gardeners have always been aware of wildlife, as witness the bees and other insects that visit the lavender and other flowering plants in the village's many beautiful gardens (and even the smallest garden pond seems miraculously to acquire its own population of newts and frogs) and they have seen how the numbers of all these have drastically declined in recent years.

On a more positive note, a great deal is now beginning to happen: WODC is keen to support local environmental initiatives and there is a county-wide organisation, the Trust for Oxfordshire which supports 'habitat creation and enhancement projects'. The Parish Council have agreed to include a question on environmental issues in the Village Survey, which is an opportunity to make your views known. We can all make a difference.

Helen Fallows

Get your waste to the right place

The Waste Wizard is a new online tool to kill the confusion around recycling and help Oxfordshire defeat General Waste. Type in your postcode and the name of any item to find out whether it can be reused, repaired, donated or recycled - oxfordshire.gov.uk/wastewizard.

Friends of Finstock School News (FoFS)

Our events season rolls on towards summer with the Finstock Garage Sale on Sunday May 3rd and the school Sponsored Walk on Saturday May 16th. Please keep an eye on our Facebook page for updates on these - @FriendsofFinstockSchool - or look out for posters around the village and on the shiny new school noticeboard.

We'll also be deep into prize-gathering for our famous Summer Raffle during this time. Tickets will be available in the Village Shop and from the school office (mornings only) throughout May, and will be announced on the village Facebook page. We are so grateful to the many local businesses who regularly donate a range of fabulous prizes - their generosity is humbling! If you have a prize you or your business would like to donate for this year's raffle - to be drawn as ever at the Summer Fête and Festival on June 20th - please email FoFS' Chair, susannastarling@gmail.com.

Su Jordan, Chair

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In Memory of Nicky Higgins

A huge THANK YOU for the generous donations to Katharine House Hospice as over £1,680 has been raised in memory of our mum, Nicky.

We are sorry that we have not expressed our sincere thanks sooner. It has been a tough four months as we get used to not having our wonderful Mum around to turn to and share events with.

We did not foresee when we arrived at Katharine House Hospice we would only have Mum for another three weeks, but Oh Boy! We wouldn't have asked for that time to be any different. The love and care she received was exceptional, regularly Mum and I would sit in her beautiful room looking out onto the lovely garden and think we were staying in a hotel spa without the guilt from eating the cakes which were brought to us daily on a trolley. We intend to continue fund raising for the hospice and I hope these few words will also encourage further support from you:

"Katharine House Hospice is our local hospice, caring for over 900 patients every year from our community, helping families across 500 square miles in north Oxfordshire, South Northamptonshire and South Warwickshire. They help to Make Every Moment Matter and provide free of charge, compassionate end-of-life care for patients and families, helping them to live their lives to the full. Katharine House receives just a quarter of its funding from the government and relies on the support and generosity of the local community. The money raised to remember Nicky is particularly important at a time when the hospice faces a massive funding shortfall and is struggling to protect services. A heartfelt thank you goes to everyone who has donated".

**Sarah, Individual Giving & Legacies
Manager**

To repeat the words from Sarah, my brothers and I would also wish to say a heartfelt thank you for remembering Mum so generously and hopefully with our continued support we can also allow other families to enjoy the time they have together in such beautiful surroundings. Thank you again!

Katy, Jason and Dan

Girl Guides

We've had a busy few months within Finstock Guiding Units, with all our badge work. This term we have been focusing on traditions that have included Chinese New Year, Christmas, Pancake Day and thinking day. Up and coming activities within the units are focused on what makes us all unique.

We have welcomed lots of new girls to our units this term; we now have 13 Rainbows, 11 Brownies and 13 Guides. As we continue to grow we are looking for volunteers. If you think you could

offer your time to any unit we would be extremely grateful.

All sections meet on a Wednesday.

Rainbows - for girls aged between 5 to 7 years. Contact for rainbows is Sian - finstock-rainbows@outlook.com

Brownies - for girls aged 7 to 10 years. Guides - for girls aged 10 to 14 years. Contact for brownies and guides is Kim - Kimberley.lovelock@yahoo.co.uk

It is the Alice in Wonderland artist, Sir John Tenniel's 200th anniversary.



Get help with home repairs

There are services and funds available to help people (owners and private tenants) stay independent, safe and well in their homes, and Oxfordshire County Council has developed a referral service to help residents (or carers) access the right organisations in their area, to get the help they need.

The type of help that can be provided

are services such as new boilers, repairs to boilers, loft or cavity wall insulation, access to a local and trustworthy repairs service and general advice on how to stay safe, well and affordably warm in your home.

For more information or to make a referral visit www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/homerepairs

**It is the Alice in Wonderland artist, Sir John Tenniel's 200th anniversary.
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HOME COMPOSTING

What is it and why should we compost?

There are lots of ways to approach this question. One person may be doing it in order to safeguard the environment, another to save money that the council could otherwise spend on recycling or landfill. My own reasons are slightly different.

Some years ago I was on a course where the teacher told us that "Waste is food." In other words, everything that we have been habituated to throw away can be put to use in another process. This applies with particular force to the food we eat. If the surplus is returned to the soil we can use it to grow more food.

In my view this is not just an option; it is a duty to nature. If we say "Well that's why I have a green bin; the council takes care of it", that duty, which is so easy to perform, is not fulfilled.

There are many economic and environmental reasons for home composting. Personally, I do it because I am too mean to give away anything that I can return to the garden; but other people can take comfort in knowing that they are reducing the burden on the council, and landfill in particular.

Master Composter scheme – Garden Organic

These are some of the reasons why I joined the Master Composter Scheme, then run by Garden Organic. We went on annual training courses; accumulated a lot of literature on composting benefits and methods; manned stalls in various places; and visited interesting gardens such as Les Quatre Saisons (where I failed to recognize Bob Flowerdew, he of the long pigtail, even though I had his book on gardening!).

Composting methods

This will not be a learned disquisition dealing with all possible methods of composting; although I have to own up that my garden has become a kind of museum of composting techniques! First of all, kitchen scraps go into the Bokashi system. And what may that be, you ask? It consists of a pair of airtight bins that sit indoors, and a container of Bokashi bran, from which you sprinkle a handful every time you add scraps to the bin; when one bin is filled it is put aside until the second one is full, in about two weeks; after that the contents of the first bin are buried in the ground (not too close to growing plants) or in a compost heap. (It then vanishes into the ground.) The system can deal with meat and cooked food, and it enriches the soil with 'effective microorganisms.' It is very easy to use, and the slight smell of fermentation is quite agreeable.

Normal garden weeds and grass clippings go into a conventional heap, or else into a new Hotbin, which heats all the contents up so as to promote quick composting. Best practice is to break up stalks and roots before putting them into the bin or heap, accelerating the natural process. Wood cuttings are mostly shredded and added to the heap or the bin.



Do's and don'ts

No stones or plastic can be composted. The remaining instructions about 'greens' and 'browns' are matters of judgment, and do not apply to the Bokashi method. Which brings us to:–

The vegan episode

I was demonstrating composting at Oxford Town Hall, parading my Bokashi bins in front of the council notices about 'greens' and 'browns,' do's and don'ts which I was happy to say could be ignored. Along came a lady eager to learn how the Bokashi bran is made, for which purpose I had copied and laminated the pages from Professor Higa's book. She studied the ingredients: "EM-2 [a special liquid from effective microorganisms], rice meal, fish bran and molasses. FISH BRAN? But I'm a vegan!"

(I have since learned that Bokashi can be made with only vegetable input. But it must be very difficult to be a vegan; how do you stop birds contributing to the veggie crop?)

Tony Hirstenstein

All natural homemade weed killer

My youngest told me about this and it works a treat. I used a smallish spray bottle and estimated the ratio of ingredients. The recipe calls for 1 cup of Epsom salts to 10 cups of apple cider vinegar plus a few squirts of washing up liquid. I spooned a few tablespoons of Epsom salts (available at the pharmacy) into the container, topped it up with apple cider vinegar leaving enough room at the top to be able to shake the container I let the mixture sit for a bit to allow the salt to dissolve before adding a few squirts of dish soap. It did the job perfectly.

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In the last months of 1914, during the First World War, many of the wounded were suffering sepsis, the potentially life-threatening response triggered by a bad infection. By December 1915, a British report warned that the thousands of wounded men were running out all the materials for bandages. Doctors tried everything from irrigating the wounds with chlorine solutions to creating bandages infused with carbolic acid, formaldehyde or mercury chloride that would keep wounds clear of infection, but in the end, there simply wasn't enough cotton. Sphagnum moss was known to have antiseptic properties and produce sterile environments by keeping the PH level around the wound low, inhibiting the growth of bacteria. Sphagnum pads were also superior to cotton for dressing wounds as they absorb liquids 3-4 times as much as cotton, rendering frequent change of dressing unnecessary. Sphagnum moss bandages worked well for the wounded, saved many a life and were cooler, softer and less irritating to the skin than cotton.

Peatlands full of Sphagnum and other mosses are good at trapping carbon from the air and have stored a large amount in their underground layers,



if they defrost or dry out, that carbon will leak into the atmosphere. Scientists fear that bogs and swamplands could be drained or negatively impacted by agriculture and industry, or the peat used as biofuel. Mosses are among the first colonisers of "green roof technology" to vegetate roofs and condition soil by increasing water storage and air spaces. Sphagnum moss is even used in the making of whisky!

See how many kinds you can find and enjoy their beauty.

Robert.

**Royal Botanic
Garden Edinburgh
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www.rbge.org.uk/whats-on/350th-anniversary.

Established in 1670 as a physic garden near the Palace of Holyroodhouse, in 2020 the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh will celebrate its 350th anniversary with a year-long programme of talks.

Charlbury Evening Surgeries:

running between 6:30 and 7:30 will take place on April 16th, and May 6th. These clinics are designed for those in work who have difficulty in getting to appointments during the day. They are staffed by one GP from the Practice and one Practice Nurse. Unfortunately there is a very high rate of last-minute cancellations especially for the nurse clinics. Non-attendance and last-minute cancellations are expensive in terms of time and money and deprive others of an appointment, so please keep the appointment or let the practice know as soon as possible if you cannot attend.
(Charlbury Patient Participation Group)

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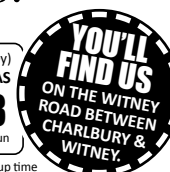
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