

Finstock News 137

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“Many human beings say that they enjoy the winter, but what they really enjoy is feeling proof against it”.

Richard Adams

“...feeling proof against it” will be a challenge for many of us this coming winter and not just from the pressures of inflation on our weekly costs. The energy crisis may well impact on how well we keep warm in our homes (unless it's still 19 degrees outside), and we may yet be huddled together with candlelight if we have to experience any planned energy rationing.

The upside of this is at least twofold – maybe we can spend more time together with friends and neighbours, either in our homes or in community venues such as the Plough! The other fact is that there is support available and some of this is outlined here below.

Whatever we have to look forward to as we pass through the winter solstice, and before the days start to get longer and warmer once more, may you all enjoy the best of health and have a peaceful and joyful festive season.

* * * * *

West Oxfordshire District Council has been allocated £1,067,000 funding to support the new Sustainable Warmth scheme, which will be used to upgrade local homes with modifications that will boost energy performance, increase their comfort and lessen the impact of rising household energy bills. Councillor Andrew Prosser, Cabinet Member for Climate Change at West Oxfordshire District Council said: “Cutting back on energy use is a priority for many of us right now, but this is a huge struggle for those living in cold homes that are difficult to heat, and particularly for those households that are on limited incomes which may not be able to afford some of the changes needed. The Sustainable Warmth fund goes some way to plugging that gap and will benefit those living in West Oxfordshire’s least energy-efficient homes”

Households are likely to be eligible for a Sustainable Warmth grant if the annual household income is under £30,000 (before tax and deductions) or under £20,000 (after rent or mortgage costs have been deducted). Upgrades to properties which are currently

owner-occupied will be fully funded by the Sustainable Warmth scheme.

More information can be found on West Oxfordshire District Council's website: www.westoxon.gov.uk/warmhomes

Anyone struggling to heat their home, concerned about rising energy prices or wanting to find out more about grant funding opportunities can contact the Better Housing Better

Health advice line for free on 0800 107 0044 or to request an assessment via their website: www.bhbh.org.uk.

To make it easier for residents to find out more about what they are entitled to, and to access the help they need during the cost of living crisis, West Oxfordshire District Council has pulled together information about the support available on their website: www.westoxon.gov.uk/costoflivingsupport



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VILLAGE HALL

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Finstock Baby and Toddler Group

Since September we have been trialling a different arrangement for the group by meeting on alternate Wednesdays (during term-time) and have loved seeing more people coming along to each session as well as meeting new families from around the area.

We intend to continue with these arrangements and it will allow us to plan a variety of fun activities through the term. We were excited to welcome back a Music Time session in October and the children in attendance all had a brilliant time trying out different instruments and singing along together!

Our last session of the year will be Wednesday 7th December (10 - 11.30am in the village hall) so come and join us for our Christmas Party! We will restart 2023 on Wednesday 11th January.

Follow us on Facebook for regular updates and reminders of when the group is meeting.

For any more details contact us on finstocktoddlergroup@hotmail.com. Each session there is a different selection of toys and activities for the children as well as a healthy snack, plus hot drinks and cakes for the grown-ups! If you haven't joined us before, your first session is free (only £2 per family thereafter) - we would love to see you!

Thank you, Helen & Tammy

Finstock Craft Club

Finstock Craft Club continues to meet every Monday, except Bank Holidays. Do come and join us from 7.30 to 9.30pm at the village hall.

A warm welcome awaits. Whether you're new to the village or new to crafting, you can relax in the company of like-minded people.

We are still debating when the best time will be, (next Spring), to hold the long-awaited post Covid craft fair. If you have any suggestions or any other questions, please contact me at: rosacharlesworth@icloud.com

Our warmest wishes to all, for Christmas and the New Year.

Finstock Local History Society 2022.

Friday 20th January: The Green Man in Oxfordshire. Speaker: Tim Healey. Evoking the mystery of this age-old presence in the county's parish churches and historic houses, and also our homes, pubs and shops. Tim will help us understand why and where he may be seen!



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Council welcomes Youth Champion

West Oxfordshire District Council has welcomed 20-year-old kickboxing champion, India Mae, as their new Youth Champion. The World Champion Kickboxer will be working with the council to offer her input on decisions that impact young people across the district.

Cllr. Andy Graham Leader of the Council said, "It's so important that the views of young people are heard and with India as Youth Champion, we have someone who can represent the Council at youth events, presentations and award ceremonies. I think India Mae is going to be a great Youth Champion. I'd like India Mae to be part of the team; I want her to have access to the cabinet and put her views across. We need more youth services and India Mae can help us get it right for this generation and future generations to come".

India Mae is a ten times World Kickboxing Champion, Junior Female Martial Artist of the Year, personal trainer, fitness coach and sports model. India expressed how pleased she is to take on her new role, "To have this role at 20 years old is absolutely brilliant. It is important because people look up to me and when they see me in this position they will think that they can achieve their goals and keep going to the top of their game". She also stated that she'd love to see more young people take up sport. The council has a number of champion roles but the role of Youth Champion is the first "Champion" to be brought in externally from the council

Marc Thompson

School News

a selection of wonderful poems, focusing on the senses, sent in by the school:

I asked the little boy who could not taste

I asked the little boy who could not taste,
"And what is taste like?"
"Why celery," said he
"Is green and bright.
Why peas are little but always in sight.
Strawberries are squishy, ripe and plump.
Lemons are sour and make you jump.
Grapes are small but pack lots of punch.
And toffee is hard but makes you munch..."
"And Dream."

I asked the little boy who could not taste

I asked the little boy who could not taste
"Why what is taste like?"
"Why pizza," said he,
"Is flatter than a piece of paper,
Chicken nuggets are taller than any
skyscraper.
Fish and chips are a remote-control car that
races down Finstock Hill.
Roast Dinners are the real deal.
And Toad in the Hole a square...
of joy."



I asked the little girl who could not hear

I asked the little girl who could not hear
"And what is sound like?"
"Why water," said she
Is like a waterfall flooding down the track.
And footsteps the joy of walking along a
beach,
A collection of tropical fruits like a mango
or a peach.
And rain is like a shower of snowflakes that
trail from the sky."

I asked the little boy who could not feel

I asked the little boy who could not feel
"Why what is texture like?"
"Why kittens," said he,
"Are a gentle meow which brightens my day,
They give lots of life and make you want
to stay.
And cotton, like soft clouds in the sky,
They make me want to touch them and my
friends ask me...
"Why?"
And water delicious and refreshing, some
drink water...
But others, fizzy pop just like my daughter!
With leaves in Autumn, floating down,
Pick them up with your feet or else you'll
frown.
And paper, sometimes white and pale, never
ever rainbow...
In the daylight, snails' trails shine".

Events at Finstock school – come and join in!

Fri. 2 Dec: School Christmas Fair, 3-6pm. With mulled wine, tombolas, crafts, Father Christmas in his grotto & all the usual fun of the Christmas Fair!

Wed. 7 & Thu. 8 Dec: School Nativity Play. Watch the school website for details. All welcome; refreshments will be served.

Wed. 14 Dec: Coffee and Carols for the Community, 2.30pm. Everyone is invited to the school hall to hear the school's young musicians, have some free refreshments and of course - be present for the **FoFS Christmas raffle draw** (at 3pm)! Raffle tickets are available in the village shop or from fofsfinstock@gmail.com.

Thurs. 15 Dec: Christingle service in the church - all welcome

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Letters to The Editor

a platform for exchange of views

To the Editor:

You published a letter from me in the Aug/Sept edition of the Finstock News concerning links between the village school and the wider community.

As a result of that, I was pleased to be invited to visit the school and discuss the issue with the Head Teacher Miss Leanne Dixon. I was well-received and enjoyed my tour of the school.

I was keen to emphasise that, far from attacking the school, I was eager to promote cordial relations with the wider community. By wider, I mean those Finstock residents who do not currently have children/grandchildren in the school. Many of us have, of course, had prior links of this kind and were actively involved in the life of the school in the past.

Miss Dixon would welcome involvement from the wider community e.g., in the school committee which meets three times a year. She would also appreciate volunteers to help maintain the garden/outdoor spaces. If you would like to help, please contact her -office.3040@finstock.sch.uk

I told her about the history of wider community involvement and made some suggestions. In essence I said that the school needed to show itself to the community by inviting the village to their events or putting on additional performances, e.g., of Christmas plays or concerts, perhaps in the village hall. Equally they should consider participating in community events themselves, such as the Finstock Festival/School fete and the Local History Society.

I have volunteered to help with putting on a school concert and have already made contact with the parent whose initiative this is. My hope is that this event will be open to the wider community.

Ruth Nissim

"The average cost of a pint of milk in the UK has increased from 42p to 59p in the last year alone, a 40.5% increase. The costs of a 250g pack of butter, a kilogram of tomatoes and a kilogram of salmon fillets all rose by more than 20% over the same period" – ONS, quoted in The Week.



News from The Plough

By the time Finstock News goes to press, the 20th AGM of the Village Shop and Post Office will have taken place. For anyone following the fortunes of the shop, the core message will come as no surprise. While Post Office income holds steady, the revenues of the shop declined by more than £12,000 in the year to June 2022, and only stringent cost-cutting and transfer of funds from the 100 Club kept losses to three figures.

As everyone is only too well aware, costs since June have risen steeply. Our insurance premiums have gone up 25%, our energy bills have risen, and we were not helped by the failure of the large chiller, which cost over £2,000 to replace. And customer footfall continues to decline. Last year, we calculated we needed to take £350 a day to break even. In the second half of 2022, we have averaged £175 a day. We are currently looking at some new product offerings, and will continue to promote our community shop as best we can. Come and pay us a visit.

Our opening times are:

Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri: 8.30am–3.30pm
last time for posting 12 noon
P.O. shuts 1pm
Tue: 8.30am–1.30pm
(and P.O. as above)
Sat: no P.O. services 9am – 1pm (
Sun: Closed

THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

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Photographs thanks to team members and others.

Contact us as above, e-mail the Editor, or write to us at 53 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.



We cannot believe that we can now update you all on our glamping pods! You may or may not have heard from a little birdy that we have finally added in our two new glamping pods, which will hopefully be available to book by the start of next year, if not sooner! Adding accommodation to the pub has been something we've dreamed about for a long time, and we couldn't be happier that our dream is now a reality. Don't forget to keep an eye on our Facebook (The Plough Inn - Finstock) and Instagram (@theploughfinstock) for all pod related updates, and for our announcement of when they're available to book.

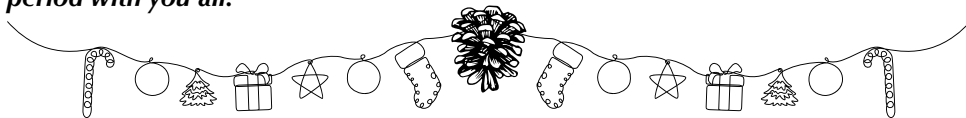
Aside from all things glamping pods - Christmas is nearly here!

You may have missed the Wreath Making Workshop in November, but you mustn't forget that we're serving our Christmas Fayre Menu from 1st December until 24th December. All of our Christmas menus, including Christmas Day and Boxing Day menus, are available online and physical copies are available at the pub. We'd suggest booking as soon as possible as tables are booking up fast!

Lastly, we couldn't say goodbye without shouting about our Lunch Club Menu! We know how much the cost-of-living crisis is affecting everyone, especially during the Christmas period, and we're so proud of this menu, that not only is affordable, but the dishes are still the same top quality that you're used to here at The Plough! Please visit our social media for our menu.

Main Course £9.95 | 2 Courses £12.95 | 3 Courses £15.95

We absolutely adore this time of year, and we're so excited to share this festive period with you all!



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The Finstock Ale

For many, November 5th was a damp squib of a bonfire night. For the members of the Finstock Ale team, it was a real banger! A big blue bus with Paul Fagg at the wheel set off to Bristol to present the certificate for the winning beer at this year's festival. Dawkins Ales, a regular supplier to our event (but not a brewer you'll find in any Oxfordshire pub) took the honours with their smoked stout, Foresters Black. The Finstock team were met at the brewery and were able to taste the full range of Dawkins' current brews before Rod Ireland presented the certificate on behalf of the Finstock Ale. He recalled the special relationship with Dawkins, forged several years ago when the tranquillity of a Thursday morning yoga session in our Village Hall was rudely interrupted by a loud explosion, followed by an ominous "glug, glug" sound. The plastic bung on the barrel of

Dawkins Best Bitter had burst its thread, and the contents had spilt all over the floor of the Evenlode Room! (Now you know why each year we cover the floor with two layers of waterproof sheeting). However, all was not lost. After hurried phone calls and an emergency dash to their brewery, we secured two new pins of beer which settled in time for the festival that weekend, and we have featured Dawkins beers at every festival since.

When visiting an oasis of beer excellence such as Bristol, it would be remiss not to carry out additional research for next year. I'm pleased to report that some extensive study was completed at three other breweries, the leading-edge Left-Handed Giant (if you're curious, you can search for the legend of how the left-handed giant created Clifton Gorge); a new kid on the block Newtown Park; and finally New Bristol Brewery, whose Wonderland IPA was the winner at Finstock Ale 2019. New Bristol have just opened their refurbished taproom, and it was here that we were able to sample several of the range of seven strong stouts the brewery is issuing for Christmas. Released at the rate of



one each week, they are all in excess of 7% abv, and include delights such as Maple and Pecan, Ferrero Rocher, and Salted Caramel Espresso Martini. Now I'm fully aware that at this point, there will be perfectionists sniggering about such flavours and bemoaning the demise of plain traditional beer. All I can say is that the Finstock Ale has always been clear about its mission to promote extraordinary beers, and these wonderful examples met with the universal acclaim of the team. So much so that the return journey was celebrated with a prolonged sing-song!

Here's to next year's Finstock Ale, which will be held once again at the Village Hall on 1st and 2nd September. Dates in your diary now!

Rod Ireland



On at the Oak

• New winter menu available now •

Sun 11 Dec: Christmas Quiz, 6.30pm

Teams from 2-6 people. Kitchen open until 8pm

Thu 15 Dec: Wreath Making Workshops, 5-8pm

Craft your own mossed festive wreath with our in-house florist Natasha. Includes a drink & festive small plate buffet. £45

Sun 18 Dec: Honky Tonk Piano Evening, 5.30pm

The brilliant Eugene Portman returns for another sing-song in the bar

Sat 31 Dec: New Year's Eve

Festive treats, cocktails, cheesy music & more..! Dance floor open from 9.30pm; festive small plates served until 11pm

Sun 1 Jan: New Year's Day, 12-8pm

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The Ramsden Banner Scaffold

You may not have noticed the detail, but during the course of this summer, the signposting scaffold located adjacent to the turning towards Ramsden from the B4022 has been rebuilt and refined. Likened to the famous item of office equipment, the guillotine, (or beheading device, depending on your perspective), because of the mechanism used for raising and lowering the banners, it is however NOT 100% complete. It needs two six metre scaffold poles (or equivalent) to really finish it.

If you think that you might be able to help out – or know a person who could – please contact

Bill Miller – bill.miller@gmail.com

COUNTRYSIDE – CONSERVATION – ENVIRONMENT

“Adapt or perish, now as ever, is nature’s inexorable imperative”

– H.G.Wells, quoted in Hospitality Net

FINSTOCK FOR NATURE

The autumn half term can bring mixed fortune when it comes to the weather, but the morning of 25th October shone brightly for the half-term Family Activity Day, organised by Finstock for Nature. With support from Rowan Wynne-Jones and Jennifer Lanham from the Evenlode Catchment Partnership, a fun filled few hours were had by all! Families gathered by the Bower on Well Hill to make willow bird feeders together with some imaginative clay “tree faces”. Following refreshments everyone took off down Dark Lane for some tree and bird-call spotting, after which Tony Cooper gave us all a very entertaining talk about the old settlement of Tapwell, that used to overlook the Evenlode and Fawler. After returning to Well Hill a picnic lunch rounded off a thoroughly enjoyable morning with nature.



“Someone is sitting in the shade today because someone planted a tree a long time ago” –

*Warren Buffett,
quoted in the Montreal Gazette*

Recycling Issues

Residents living in West Oxfordshire are being asked to check the suitability of their waste for recycling before it goes in the blue-lidded wheeled bin or, in the case of glass, the black kerbside box. The focus of the latest campaign by Recycle Now encourages householders up and down the country to ‘get real’ about recycling, in a push to keep up the quality of materials which can be effectively reprocessed and to recycle more of the right materials more often.

The campaign is also highlighting the problems of putting unwanted items into the kerbside recycling purely in the hope that they will get recycled down the line, and advises that putting in too many of the wrong things can result in entire loads being rejected by the companies that reprocess the waste.

While collecting recyclables all together in a wheeled bin makes using the service easier for householders, this does mean that crews are unable to check everything which is being presented. It’s only once the materials end up at the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF), where the items will eventually get sorted out, that we can gauge the

quality of what has been collected. Needlessly transporting materials not destined for recycling costs time, wastes fuel and has implications for the environment and the sorting process. We’re asking residents to get behind this year’s campaign and check beforehand if they are unsure of what items are suitable to be recycled.

Some of the most problematic items found in the Council’s recycling bins are plastic sacks and carrier bags, plastic film, food and textiles.

To support the efficient recycling of materials residents are reminded that recycling must be put loose into the wheeled bin. As part of the separation process, recycling is loaded onto a conveyor belt where different methods - typically magnets, currents, and optical sorting - will be used to identify different materials and mechanically separate them back out. **Bagged recycling disrupts this.**

In order to be reused or reworn, textiles must be dry but also clean. Therefore, any unwanted clothing and paired shoes should be bagged, with handles tied, and left beside the recycling bin on collection day.

*From the West Oxfordshire
District Council Newsletter*

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PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

Time of fruitfulness

It's been a real delight to walk our countryside in the last couple of months as the weather has been kind and temperatures high. The trees are gradually changing colour and the view from our lovely village hall towards The Plough is pure delight - although only fifty years ago it was a different scene, with few trees to be seen.

The Bottom is a real wooded enclave with just the odd rooftop poking through the treetops with drifts of smoke ascending to the heavens. You know that the pub fireplace is lit and will be a really cosy place to sit and have a pint.

It has been a very good year for fruit and nuts and our birds should do well over the winter. Blackberries, rosehips, and of course apples are a-plenty so our visiting Fieldfares and Redwings will not go hungry. The latter have recently arrived to our shores.

The walnuts have also had a good season and can still be found if you search for them. If you know of a good supply do let me know. A few walnuts in the pocket to share on a walk can be quite a feast and are very good for you. Our forebears would eagerly look forward to the walnut harvest in the village and there must have been many more walnut trees around as the nuts would be collected and sent off by train to the London markets. I suspect our local squirrels do very well from the few trees that we have left now.

The spiky Sweet Chestnuts are also carpeting the floor and if you are careful, you can extract them from their husk and store them safely over the winter. They bake well. As with all foraged food do leave some behind when collecting - for other folk and, of course, our wildlife.

Vicus



In April, Wilderness Festival asked local worthy causes to put forward requests for funding. That process is now complete and these local causes are to receive the following amounts - The Woodpecker Community Shop, £640 for a new till and scales
A second netted goalpost for the playing fields £915.

Improvements to the exterior of the school £945.

"Wilderness is one of the best Festivals in the country. It's also the kind of Festival that if you lose your phone, it'll get handed in. I know because that happened to me. We are lucky to have this event on our doorstep and grateful for their contribution".

"Wilderness Festival is committed to supporting the residents and businesses of Finstock, Leafield and Charlbury. The Wilderness bursary provides funding to initiatives at the heart of these communities. We are thrilled to award grants from 2022's bursary to Friends of Finstock School, The Woodpecker Community Shop and the Finstock's playing fields." -

Paul Glossop, Festival Director

Finstock for Nature

After a consultation period the Parish Council recently voted on the Finstock for Nature proposals. It was in favour of the proposed projects for the Allotment field and the broad verge along the High Street – but rejected the planting of an Orchard on the east side of the playing fields, having received several letters of concern by residents.

Julian Stewart



NEW YATT RIDING FOR THE DISABLED: VOLUNTEERS NEEDED



New Yatt Riding for the Disabled (RDA) is a charity based between Bridewell and North Leigh which provides regular, therapeutic riding lessons for our local disabled community. **We urgently need more volunteers** with all levels of experience. As a volunteer you can join a regular, weekly half day session with riders, or you can sign up on a rota basis for the half-hour pony checks at 3.30pm each day. Training will be given and we will also match any jobs and roles to your abilities. If you are interested in volunteering or would like to know more information, please contact our volunteer liaison officer, Sara at nyrda-volunteers@googlegroups.com or have a chat with Annie at 53 High Street (868140).



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County Council News

I am sure that, like me, you will have noticed the Parish Council's recently acquired speed monitoring device. The PC is now looking at buying some posts to put in different locations so that the device can be moved around and I am looking at how these can be funded by the County Council. Following the recent Parish Council meeting, where the future of the village shop was discussed, Andy and I are also hoping to be able to support the shop with a donation from our Councillor Priority Funds.

I have recently been made aware that the primary school has lost a number of students, and I have been in touch with the school about this. I am also looking at what the County Council can do to support the school. However, it is now part of an Academy Trust, and therefore the local authority no longer has any responsibility for it, so the degree of influence I will have is very limited.

Recently the County Council has completed consultation on traffic filters in Oxford, designed to reduce the number of cars in the city and speed up bus travel. This is very important as we are investing in a fleet of electric buses, having won a bid from the (previous) government, and having committed to speeding up bus travel as part of that bid. A YouGov poll conducted by Oxfordshire Liveable Streets showed that 60% of people polled approved of this measure. We have introduced a new parking policy that will significantly reduce the number of cars on new developments in and around the city, and also approved new requirements for transport planning that will help the county move towards our goal of net zero transport by 2040.

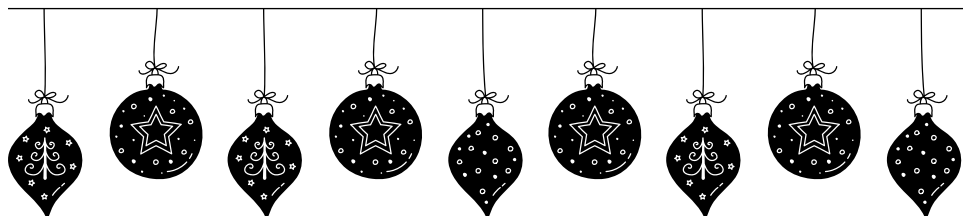
The County Council is currently working on the budget for 2022/23. The County Council's revenue budget, which pays for adult social care, highways maintenance and children's services, is already stretched thanks to increased demand, and we have had to find savings of £30 million, but we have also had to find a further £15 million in savings to deal with inflation. While this is a challenge, we are looking at new ways of managing our services, providing early intervention and focusing on prevention when it comes to health. To this end we are working more closely with our health partners, through the newly established Integrated Care System that will bring together health and social care services across Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire and Berkshire.

2022 has been a very challenging year – we have emerged from the Covid pandemic into a cost-of-living crisis, which has affected many people in our towns and villages. The County Council has made a fund of £2 million available to support local communities, keeping our libraries open and offering grants to community buildings to stay open as warm spaces. We are also working with the District and City councils to support people who are struggling with their council tax, and have joined with the Oxfordshire Community Foundation to establish a cost-of-living grant fund.

I would like to wish everyone a very happy Christmas, and the hope that 2023 will prove to be a much easier year for us all.

Liz Leffman.

liz.leffman@oxfordshire.gov.uk





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DISTRICT COUNCIL NEWS

It has been a very eventful year in 2022. As one of your local councillors on the District Council I have been supporting the Charlbury Bowls Club application for funding which I am pleased to say was successful; supporting the preservation of the Area of Natural Landscape as a recently appointed member of the board; and becoming the leader of the West Oxfordshire District Council as part of the West Oxfordshire Alliance - a cooperative and collaborative partnership of fifteen Liberal Democrats, nine Labour and two Green councillors.

We have been busy changing the way we do things in West Oxfordshire so that there is more public engagement, meaningful consultation and a more qualitative delivery of services. The cabinet is now on tour in the district and one of the first of the cabinet making decision meetings was held in Charlbury, where members of the public could ask questions about the decisions made at the meeting and meet the cabinet who are responsible for environment; community delivery; housing and social wellbeing; communities and the cost-of-living crisis; climate change; finance and economic development; and the Local Plan review.

The Local Plan review has started and this administration has made sure that the residents were consulted first so that views were taken on at the early stages to inform and influence the planners as to what should be included in the plan. This administration is committed to the right kind of houses in the right places - that help those most in need and secure the homes in our villages and towns where local

people and families are prioritised. Homes that are environmentally quality assured and where infrastructure has been planned and provided before building and transport has been factored in, to ensure safety and active travel is realistically integrated.

We are preparing for our villages and village shops to be prioritised and supported as part of local economic development and want to see more assistance given to those wishing to start their own small business. Expressions of interest in rural grant support will have started with the announcement of a grant scheme early in the New Year.

I am looking at the Recycling and Waste Services, with the hope of bringing a more environmentally acceptable solution to reduce the carbon footprint and I will be addressing that in the New Year - working with our colleagues in neighbouring authorities to ensure we can work together in partnership.

Finally, a huge congratulations to India Mae Thompson from Finstock for being appointed Youth Champion for West Oxfordshire District Council (see article on page 2). She will represent the council at youth events and presentations and ensure the views of young people are brought to the decision makers in order to ensure that their voice is heard.

There are many challenges ahead for us all but I know that in Charlbury, Finstock and Fawler, by working together with integrity, transparency and openness, we can resolve many of the issues. I continue to work for you to that end.

I wish you all the best of the festive period and a peaceful New year.

Kindest Regards,

Cllr. Andy Graham

Armistice Sunday Remembrance Service, 13th November 2022

We closed the short stretch of road from the main road to Church Rise, as usual, on Sunday at midday, ready for our Remembrance Day Service - which was well attended as usual - Vicar Paul led the tribute, followed by the Last Post, the two-minute silence and the Reveille, before Len Nichols then said The Exhortation - all very Moving! Three lovely girls from the Brownies and Rainbows read out the names of the Fallen from Finstock in both wars, before Mrs Hilary Stacey read out the names of the Fallen from Fawler. Wreaths were then laid by:

Mr. Steve MacLennan for The Royal British Legion,

Mr Marc Thompson for Finstock Parish Council,

Mrs Hilary Stacey for Fawler Parish Council,

Mr Len Nichols for The Korean War Veterans,

The three Brownies/Rainbows for The Children of Finstock.

The Kohima was then said by Mrs Rosa Charlesworth and the closing prayers by Vicar Paul.

As usual it was a very moving Remembrance Service. I would like to thank everyone who helped me – as usual - with the road Closure etc.

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Antics

'Antics' (named after a skewbald stallion, owned by Sandy and Ian Vandenberghe) is a charity based at nearby Hartsop Farm that was set up in 2003. The charity has the specific aim to raise money for children aged 18 years and under who are affected by cancer. This can be a child who is in active treatment for cancer or who has a sibling or parent in active treatment for cancer, or who has suffered bereavement of a parent or sibling through cancer. With the money raised through the charity, funds are provided locally and nationally by way of grant aid or through the purchase of goods or for social needs such as a relief break for the child.

I have been working as an Equine-Facilitated Learning (EFL) Practitioner since 2015 and have delivered sessions for businesses with Lead Change and children/young adults with HorseHeard - in fact we ran a HH "Being Friends" programme with Finstock School back in 2017. Most recently I was working with young offenders in Milton Keynes. I have recently learnt more about Antics and thought it would be a nice idea to raise money for such a worthy cause whilst enabling more people to get up close and personal with horses without having to ride them. They really are the most amazing beings and it is a real privilege to work with them and see the benefits humans can gain from interacting with them.

Roz Danks



Fun With Horses!

- ◆ Have you ever wondered what Equine-Facilitated Learning (EFL) is all about?
- ◆ Would you like to discover what you can learn about yourself from horses?
- ◆ Suitable for all ages

Well now you can!

I am offering 1 hour EFL sessions to raise money for Antics', the charity based at Hartsop Farm on the Witney-Charlbury road.

There is no riding involved as the entire experience is on the ground. The time spent with the horse is an opportunity to:

- ◆ Gain valuable insights into your personality and behaviours in a safe and non-judgmental way
- ◆ Boost your confidence
- ◆ Develop your emotional resilience
- ◆ Practise mindfulness
- ◆ Practise non-verbal communication
- ◆ Enhance your wellbeing by coming into close contact with a purely sentient being

And have fun whilst doing so!

Antics
Supporting Children Affected by Cancer

*Suggested minimum donation of £20

For further information or to book a session, please contact Roz Danks on either 07966 019540 or equinefl@gmail.com

Antics: Supporting Children Affected by Cancer
www.anticscharity.co.uk Registered Charity Number: 1102359
Hartsop Farm, Witney Road, Ramsden OX7 3AS

COTSWOLD GARDEN DESIGNER

- Looking to improve your outside space but stuck for ideas on how to make the most of it?
- Want somewhere to entertain?
- A space for your children to play?
- Or maybe you just need a quiet place to relax, a calming, scented corner, just for you?



I can provide a full garden design, planting plans or a simple garden report - some ideas of how you could best use your outdoor space and the types of plants that you like and would suit the environment.

CONTACT LORRAINE:
lorraine@cotswoldgardendesigner.co.uk
07516262560
www.cotswoldgardendesigner.co.uk



All Hallows Barn Dance

Delighted to report that a fabulous evening of song and dance was had in the Village Hall on 12th November to celebrate the Celtic end of the year 'Samhain' and to lift up the spirits for the coming Winter. Finstock Festival Band were out in numbers and style – what a joyous sound from this bunch of talented musicians. Kath Lucas' calling had us in constant motion and when we weren't dancing we were singing. Many thanks to members of Finstock for Nature who ran the bar very expertly. People came from far and wide – North Leigh, Charlbury, Oxford, Exeter and even Columbia! Nextdoor.com is clearly extending its reach. Thanks to all players and volunteers and to the Village Hall committee for ensuring this both practical and beautiful space is accessible to our community.

Geoff Griffiths



Finstock Unplugged

This is just to remind you that you really don't want to miss our next Finfolk Concert!

Who: **The Boot Band, with support from The Hex Collective**

When: **7.30pm, Friday 2nd December 2022**

Where: Wilcote Art Studios, 4 Hunt's Copse, Wilcote Riding, OX7 3DX, just outside Finstock. (Good ventilation; distanced seating)

Tickets (cost £12.00) from Ticket Tailor. <https://buytickets.at/finstockunpluggedfinfolk/762760>

NB: only 33 tickets are available, to allow for distancing.

Earlier this year the Boot Band performed stunning sessions at Folk Weekend Oxford's 2022 Festival, and at Hanfest '22. The band's repertoire spans an eclectic mix of their own tunes, Susanna's self-penned songs, traditional folk songs, covers, traditional English and Eastern European tunes, and anything else that takes their fancy! After a 14-month break, we are delighted to be able to offer audiences an opportunity to hear them again.

The Hex Collective, increasingly in demand, features traditional songs as well as original compositions by singer-songwriter Jim Driscoll, and is known for a melodic and imaginative use of guitar, cello, accordion and voice.

Wilcote Studios offer an unusually congenial location with excellent natural acoustics in a high-ceilinged, airy studio space. Good parking.

DURING THESE MONTHS

1st December, 1919 - Lady Nancy Astor became the first woman in the British House of Commons.

4th December, 1791 - The *Observer*, now the oldest Sunday newspaper in the world, was first published in Britain.

25th December, 1066 - William the Conqueror was crowned King of England after he had invaded England from France, defeated and killed King Harold at the Battle of Hastings, then marched on London.

1st January, 1973 - Britain, Ireland and Denmark became members of the Common Market (EEC).

4th January, 1809 - Louis Braille (1809-1852) was born in France. Blinded as a boy, he later invented a reading system for the blind using punch marks in paper.

27th January, 1832 - British novelist Lewis Carroll (1832-1898) was born in Daresbury, Cheshire, England (as Charles Lutwidge Dodgson). Best known for *Alice's Adventures in Wonderland* and *Through the Looking Glass*, he also lectured in mathematics and was a pioneering photographer.



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Winter cheer



"Christmas
r o s e"
(*Helleborus
Niger*) with its
large sparkling
white flowers,

pale yellow centres, and glossy dark-green leaves is a welcome sight in winter. This clump-forming, semi-evergreen perennial member of the Buttercup family originates in Switzerland, southern Germany, Austria, Slovenia, Croatia and Northern Italy where it can be found growing on the slopes of the mountains. Its pure white flowers can be used to brighten up winter mixed containers with other plants, such as the Japanese **Ophiopogon planiscapus niger**, a superb clump-forming perennial that produces black ornamental grass with narrow strap-shaped leaves. In summer, small violet-purple flowers appear, followed by black berries. A few snowdrops and trailing variegated Ivy can be added to complete the Winter Pot.

If you want more colour, dwarf grasses look great planted in patio pots where they will also add texture. **Festuca glauca** is the truest blue of the



dwarf grasses with stiff thread-like blue foliage which forms dense, upright tussocks, from which steel

blue flower-heads appear in summer and is totally drought-proof once established. The grass goes well with

hardy Cyclamen or early flowering red polyanthus and a few winter pansies. If you want a red grass, try Japanese blood grass **Imperata cylindrica 'Rubra'**, with its elegant bright red-green foliage.

Another good pot plant is the heather **Erica carnea** which tolerates less acid soil, so it can cope with chalky soil. On the moors, sheep and grouse play an important role by nibbling off the tops of the plants. This kind of pruning encourages new compact growth and better flowers.



The flower colour comes in a range of reds, pinks and whites. Some varieties have yellow foliage which can get red tips or lime green foliage. A pot near the house with winter-flowering pansies and early-flowering crocuses, lifts the spirits in the depths of winter. They tolerate the worst of winter weather and there is no need

to use a special potting compost but it is important that the soil is damp and well-draining. Erica combines well with plants like dwarf conifers and polyanthus or winter flowering violas.

I like to pot some dwarf bulbs such as miniature **Iris danfordiae** which make a joyful yellow splash. It comes from Turkey, with two bluish green, thick leaves, and a short slender stem holding the scented yellow flower. Best grown in a well-drained soil in full sun, planting the bulbs 5-10cm apart, at twice their own depth. Other colours of dwarf **Iris reticulata** are available and can also be planted on rockeries or the front of a border. With the milder winters many bulbs are flowering earlier, many Snowdrops starting to flower in December. Snowdrops are often considered a sign of warmer weather ahead and bring the promise of spring.

Pots of flowers bring early colour and joy at this time.

Robert



THE MUMMERS ARE COMING!!

If nowhere else, they will perform at

The Plough on Sunday 18th December at 1.30 pm-ish!

Red Letters on your Calendars now!



A few jobs around the garden for December and January

- Insulate outdoor taps and prevent ponds from freezing
- Keep mice away from stored produce
- Reduce watering of houseplants
- No December door is complete without a Christmas wreath, and making one using readily available materials from your own garden is easy - <https://www.rhs.org.uk/garden-inspiration/seasonal/christmas-wreath-ideas>



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• Sat 24 th Dec	6.00am – 2.00pm	• Sun 1 st Jan	CLOSED
• Sun 25 th Dec	CLOSED	• Mon 2 nd Jan	CLOSED
• Mon 26 th Dec	CLOSED	• Tue 3 rd Jan	7.00am – 5.00pm
• Tue 27 th Dec	CLOSED		



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