

Finstock News 139

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

Leader, Finstock Community Projects	1	Finstock Folk – Guy Wallis;	7
Important notice; Vicus; Nuak – Thai Food Pop-Up	2	County Council news; To Bus or Not to Bus	8
School News; Friends of Finstock School	3	Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum; Charlbury Medical Centre.	9
Village Hall and activities; Afterschool care; Treedwellers update	4	Local History Society; MP News; During These Months	10
Village shop; Travellers' Tales, Common Leys Farm Shop.	5	Finstock Unplugged; Erratum- Ready Reference 2023.	11
Countryside, Conservation and Environment	6	Garden Corner; Garden Tasks for April.	12

“No winter lasts forever; no spring skips its turn.”

Hal Borland



Spring is with us at last and as the year accelerates into the summer months there are a host of events to look forward to including, in early May, our very own village celebration for the Coronation of King Charles III (see below). Work continues on other key Village issues too, including the traffic calming measures already begun; the scheduled completion of the TreeDweller pods along the top road; and efforts to establish a safe path down to Finstock Halt, together with safe access across the main road to the footpaths on the Cornbury Estate. Keep an eye out for further news – but in the meantime, enjoy the warmer days that are on the way!

FINSTOCK COMMUNITY PROJECTS

We held our AGM at the Village Hall in November 2022 and the FCP officers are unchanged: Chair, Colin Stringfellow; Secretary, Pete Welply; Treasurer, Julie Stringfellow.

A key action arising from discussion at this meeting is that a brand new twelve by six metre marquee has just been purchased at a cost of £1400.00 – this will replace an old one that was badly torn while dismantling the marquee in the strong wind last year.

SUMMER FESTIVAL 2023

FRIDAY 23rd SATURDAY 24th JUNE

The plans for this year's Festival are well underway. We plan to run with the same format as last year and the bands are all booked for both Friday and Saturday evenings. The food supplier is not yet finalised, but several options are being followed up!

Friday night – Live Bands, Bar & Food. Saturday Afternoon will once again be largely the School Fete, along with local musicians. A full bar plus our popular Gin and Pimms bars will be open along with the ubiquitous barbecue! Saturday evening will be more Live Bands, Bar and Food. All events are free entry!

Get the dates in your diaries and onto your calendars - we need your support.

ROCK ON FINSTOCK FESTIVAL!

FINSTOCK VILLAGE - CORONATION CELEBRATION - SUNDAY 7TH MAY 2023.

Finstock is joining in The Big Lunch with Finstock Community Projects arranging a village celebration to be held on Sunday 7th May at the playing fields, from 12 midday onwards.

Marquees will be put up, with portable toilets on site. Weather permitting, there will be field games and arts and crafts for the kids. We even hope to get the Tug of War going! (Republicans versus Monarchists anyone?) Hopefully we'll have some local musicians to entertain us during the afternoon and some background and disco music to take us into the evening.

The event will be free and all are welcome. You will need to bring your own food, drink and chairs, plus small tables, if possible. We will provide as many larger tables and chairs as we can muster in the village.

We aim to give out commemorative mugs for the young children and are busily liaising with other Village organisations to confirm numbers of children in the 0-11 age range.

If you have a child in this age group who doesn't attend the Village School or Baby and Toddler group – and you would like them to have a commemorative mug – please contact Rob (robarkworth@yahoo.co.uk), or Pete (petewelply@btinternet.com) as soon as possible. Come along at any time after 12.00 midday and we'll keep going until the last person leaves, or midnight, whichever comes sooner.

The Build – putting up the marquees, will be on Friday 5th May, so please come along and help anytime from 5.00pm onwards.

Your support and attendance on the day is needed to make this Coronation party a success.

(We are actively seeking sponsorship to support this event – if you would like to contribute, please let us know!).

Colin Stringfellow, Chair.



Heating – Gas Engineers (Including LPG) – Plumbers

With over 50 years' experience we specialise in:

Breakdowns and Repairs

Central Heating

Boiler Upgrades

Cookers / Hobs

Fires

Servicing

Landlord Gas Safety Certificates

Contact:

Gavin: 07967688694

Email: alanlevergasservices@btinternet.com



Pure Relaxation Yoga

Finding Peace through Relaxation



- Local classes in Witney, Finstock & Leafield
- Livestream Classes delivered to your own home
- Breath work, movement and meditation
- Reduce stress & anxiety
- Build strength & flexibility
- Improve balance & posture
- Suitable for all levels including beginners

'Beautifully relaxing classes but they're also powerful...I come away feeling relaxed yet invigorated for the day ahead...' LD

Mandy Nichols

purerelaxationuk@yahoo.co.uk

Text: 07990 513121

Please feel free to contact me to discuss your yoga journey

Important notice

It has been reported to the Parish Council that multiple incidents of vandalism and disrespectful behaviour have occurred in the burial ground, adjacent to the Church Graveyard, in the past few months. Memorials have been desecrated and dogs have been fouling the area. The burial ground is a place where family members and friends spend time in quiet reflection. A place where they can feel close to departed loved ones and this kind of behaviour is extremely upsetting. Please could everyone remain vigilant and report any suspicious activity to the Parish clerk. Dogs must always be kept on a lead when using the footpath through the burial ground.

Julie Stringfellow,
Chair, Finstock Parish Council

The Knobs

An early morning walk past the church, across the old toll road and over to Patch Riding... ...There was a gate here once - Patch Hill Gate, which would have marked the entrance to this important route into and through the forest. The hedges which once lined the route were grubbed out for efficiency forty years ago. I remember walking this path just after it was turned into a battle-scarred landscape and missed what was, I understand, a most beautiful walk.

John Kibble remarked, "We used to start on a Monday morning, very early. How bright and crisp it was, wishing mother goodbye for the week - and away down Patch Riding past the old Pest House and the gateway where there used to be stone pillars and balls, called 'The Knobs' by elderly Finstock people to this day". The route is easy to follow and eventually you come to the hollow way which has been carved out of the surrounding land due to continuous use by carts and wagons hauling timber. It is a well walked route which becomes easier on the eye as you pass the quarry workings and deer proof fencing and enter the forest proper. The gamekeeper's gibbet near the old gate is no longer proudly displayed. Some things have changed for the better.

Up until the 1960's, Ernest Hutt, who worked as a gardener on the Cornbury Estate, would walk to work from his house on Well Hill, down Patch Riding and along to the estate greenhouses which were extensive. Sadly, they were demolished some years ago. He was one of a team of estate gardeners working long hours to produce items for the table at Cornbury Park and he loved his job. No doubt everything gets delivered by van today. Or maybe helicopter!

Many years ago, I met a local resident who was 'wooding' for his winter fire. He lived in one of the cottages on Patch Riding and had an old wheeled trolley with which to take home fallen branches. To me he could have been a character in an eighteenth-century

painting as he was dressed in working clothes and looked like he had spent his whole life outdoors. He hardly said a word to an over-inquisitive newcomer. Despite many visits to Patch Riding I never met him again. I regret that.

Keep walking that path and don't worry about The Knobs.

Vicus

Nuak!

Thai Food Pop-up restaurant and takeaway, Finstock Village Hall, **Saturday 13th May 5pm-11pm**. Free entry.

Authentic Thai food including legendary Pad Thai and selection of Thai dishes, bar, cocktails and disco! nuak.popup@gmail.com

Noah Derrington

THE EDITORIAL COMMITTEE

Kay Connolly	868561	Member
Lesley Dore	868280	Distribution
Tony Hirstenstein	868600	Member
Nick Murphy	868575	Member
Su Jordan	07824 567765	Advertising
Pete Welply	868140	Editor

petewelply@btinternet.com

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.



**BLINDS
AND
CURTAINS**

WINDOW DESIGN

SOFT FURNISHINGS

**COMPLETE SERVICE FROM
MEASURE TO FITTING**

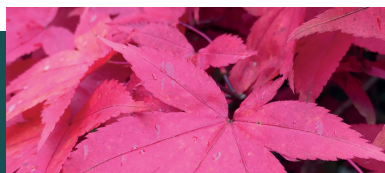
**FABRIC SHOWROOM OPEN BY
APPOINTMENT**

www.windowdesign.co

01993 870606

**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

School News

A roar could be heard from the Cherry class last term as our youngest pupils became explorers and travelled back in time to find out more about 'Dangerous Dinosaurs'- discovering more about fossils, how we know that dinosaurs existed and enjoying listening to a range of stories including 'Tyrannosaurus Drip'.

Oak class had great fun with their topic 'Bright Lights, Big City' as we found out more about the features of a big city and how they compare to both Witney and Finstock. We learned about 'The Great Fire of London' and the reasons the fire spread so quickly. All of the children enjoyed learning about how the fire changed the city and we even learned more about the history of the fire service! This term, our topic is exploring 'School Days'. We will be finding out more about what school was like in the past and exploring more about the history of our school. We would love to hear any stories you may have!

The children in Cedar class have wowed us with their work for our project on *Rocks, Relics and Rumbles* during the spring term. As part of this, we have become volcanologists by studying the eruptions of Pompeii and Mt Saint Helens in detail. We also created fortune tellers to inform our classmates about other eruptions around the world (this was a particular highlight!).

We found learning about the Ring of Fire to be incredibly exciting! Did you know that approximately three-quarters of the world's volcanoes are found there? As well as this, we studied about Mary Anning and created comics about the fossilisation process. As part of our Art lessons, we looked more at Ammonites, before creating our own model versions out of clay. Additionally, we investigated the effects of Tsunamis, including the one that devastated Indonesia in 2004.

Next term we will begin a new project: *Britain at War*, where we will uncover the causes, events and consequences of the First and Second World Wars. As part of this, we will have an exciting memorable experience to kick start our learning. During our upcoming project, we will be studying the influence of new inventions during wartime; how Britain was impacted; and the legacy of the wars in their aftermath. The children are very excited about our new project already and I can't wait to share their learning with the village in due course.

If you have any information, artefacts or anecdotes relating to the village during the war, we would love to hear from you – please get in touch!



Outside areas

Could we also put out a request for some "loose parts". I'm thinking of milk crates, tyres, boxes, dressing up clothes, etc., to enrich our outside play provision for Cedar class.

Miss Dixon and the Finstock Team

A message from the Chief Executive Officer of The MILL Academy Trust: Re: The future of Finstock Church of England Primary School

I am aware of some very inaccurate rumours circulating in the local community about the future of Finstock Church of England Primary School. I am writing to assure you that Finstock Church of England Primary is not closing and, indeed, has a balanced budget for the next five years, which is as far ahead as any school will plan for.

Yours sincerely, Wendy Hemmingsley

Friends of Finstock School

**Jumble Sale - Saturday 22nd April
2-4pm in Finstock Village Hall**

Do you have any items in your home you would like to sell and make some extra cash? Book a table at our indoor Jumble Sale. Book your space by emailing focsfinstock@gmail.com.

Everyone is welcome to join us on the day - selling or buying - and there will be refreshments for sale to enjoy while you have a hunt around for some bargains!

**Finstock Summer Fete - Saturday
24th June 2-4pm on the Playing Fields**

Save the date! We'll have lots more details to follow for our annual Summer Fete and infamous raffle - please keep the date free and join us on the playing field for a fun filled afternoon.

*"I would never
die for my beliefs,
because I might
be wrong"*

*Bertrand Russell,
quoted on The Browser*

PETER SMITH & SON

FUNERAL DIRECTORS LTD

Independent Funeral Directors with family values

• Pre-paid funeral plans

• Funeral Planner of the Year 2018 - Regional Winner

• Funeral Planner of the Year 2020 - South Midlands Runner-up

• All types of memorial work
including restoration and renovation

• Personal 24 hour service

• **Directors: Peter Smith and Sean Smith**

• 135 Burwell Drive, Witney OX28 5LP

• 01993 702000

• www.petersmithandson.co.uk



VILLAGE HALL

www.finstock.org.uk/village-hall • villagehallfinstock@gmail.com

FINSTOCK VILLAGE HALL

The Hall continues to thrive and the trustees agreed to maintain a hire rate for bookings from the village for just £5 an hour! We don't believe comparable facilities can be found at this rate anywhere else in the county. One of the ways we can continue to do this is to have a successful beer festival, which should raise more than £3,000 for the Hall charity. We are delighted that once again, this year's festival will be sponsored by Howse & O'Reilly, whose name has adorned our festival glasses from the start. Big thanks to Derek Bennett and his company for their generosity.

In 2023 the ninth Finstock Ale will be held at the Village Hall on Friday 1st and Saturday 2nd September, so get those dates in your diary. Once again, you can expect good food, some light entertainment, but most importantly, an eclectic range of beers and ciders quite dissimilar to other beer festivals in the area – we aim to offer you beers from around the country which have been sampled by members of our team. At the start of April, we'll be touring the Black Country to try and unearth some new gems. We're sure to go back to Bristol for those hop-centric IPAs, and we'll find more delights such as the Foresters Black smoked stout which won last year.

We'll hope to welcome you in September. If you would like to sponsor a cask of beer, you'll get free entry and free beer, as well as the acclaim of your fellow villagers. Just let us know if you'd like to help, via our Facebook page or leave a message at The Plough.

Rod Ireland



FINSTOCK CRAFT CLUB

We are very happy to announce the date of our first, post Covid, Finstock Arts and Crafts Fair. Please make a note of the following date: **Saturday 17th June 2023.**

More detailed information will be available in the coming months, however if you do have any questions, please email me at: rosacharlesworth@icloud.com

The craft club continues to meet every Monday evening, except bank holidays, at the village hall, from 7.30 to 9.30pm. Still just £2.50 (although this is a slight increase from last year) per session, with a free taster session for any newcomers. A warm welcome awaits all who are interested in joining.

As above, if you have any questions about anything related to the club or the craft fair, please send me an email, as above.

Rosa Charlesworth

TREEDWELLERS UPDATE

We can now confirm that the long-awaited Open Day for having a look over the Pods is now set for Saturday 20th of May from 12.00- 3pm.

With regards to Finstock School's Summer Raffle, we are offering a two-night break, staying in a Pod, as a prize – the only condition being that it would need to be a mid-week break. We will provide a voucher so that there is something tangible to receive.

Regarding jobs, we seem to be OK for now, though we are still looking for a Site Manager (see box advert on page 8) and cleaners. Interested individuals should email ronan@treedwellers.co.uk.

Tim Rees, Founder and CEO

House prices in the UK now stand at more than nine times the average salary, a ratio not seen since 1876

JUDD'S JUNIORS AFTER SCHOOL CARE

Many of you will know me as I've been running Judd's Juniors Childcare from my house in Finstock for over ten years. Along with my assistant Helen, we have looked after many young residents over the years!

We thought we would share news of how our After School Care provision has been going since we moved it to Finstock School in January. Sessions are run Monday - Thursday with availability between 3 - 5.30 pm. We pick up children from each class and use the school hall as our base to provide a warm and friendly environment for children of all ages, with a light tea provided for children staying until 5.30 pm.

We make daily use of the wonderful outside areas at school, including the all-weather pitch for ball games and running around as well as the mud kitchen and sand pit in the top garden. We have a variety of toys and games for the children to play with inside which they can choose as well as quiet areas to relax with a book or space for drawing and colouring. Have a look at our details on the Finstock C of E Primary School website www.finstock.oxon.sch.uk/2443/after-school-care-judds-juniors or contact us on juddsjuniors@hotmail.com to book an after-school visit or session.

Tammy Judd

FINSTOCK VILLAGE HALL
Baby & Toddler Group
Alternate Wednesdays
10-11.30am (Term-time)
**ALL WELCOME
0-4 Years Old**
JOIN US FOR FUN ACTIVITIES, TOYS, RIDE-ONS,
MUSIC, STORIES, ARTS AND CRAFTS!
£2 per family, includes healthy snack for
children/hot drink and cake for adults!
CONTACT US ON:
finstocktoddlergroup@hotmail.com
Or follow us on Facebook!



It is now a matter of weeks, rather than months, until the shop closes its doors for the final time. As a precaution, we will run our final 100 Club draw at the end of March, after which we will close down the Cooperative bank account for the Club. We are mindful that a good number of you have annual direct debits payable at the start of April, and we want to avoid taking money which can't be used. Any payments made after the end of March should be bounced back to your bank. It is very quiet at the shop now; most days revenue is below £150. But we still have wonderful local produce so come and get it while it's available!

Please continue to use us over the coming months.

OUR OPENING TIMES ARE:

Mon, Wed, Thu, Fri:

8.30am – 3.30pm

(last time for posting 12 noon; P.O. shuts 1pm)

Tuesday: 8.30am – 1.30pm

(last time for posting 12 noon; P.O. shuts 1pm)

Saturday: 9.00am – 1.00pm

(no P.O. services)

Sun: Closed

Reduce your food miles to the minimum!

Common Leys Farm in Hailey has opened a Farm Shop, selling home produced/reared beef, lamb, goat and pork, as well as vegetable and plant produce.

Open Mon-Fri 8.15 am – 4.45 pm.

E:farmshop@abingdon-witney.ac.uk
or call 01993 208 148 for further information.

"Tact is the great ability to see other people as they think you see them"

Carl Zuckmayer, quoted in Forbes.

TRAVELLER'S TALES

Australia North West Territory

I have had the opportunity to visit Australia a few times. My first visit was to the usual tourist locations: Sydney, Great Barrier Reef, Uluru etc. Subsequent visits were to different areas of this vast continent. The visit that really sticks in my mind is the one in 2014 when we visited part of the large state of Northern Territory. We flew from a cool, and slightly wet Melbourne (it was early Spring) to Darwin where the warmth and humidity was apparent once we landed.

Not walking far or fast soon came to be the order of the day, plus several stops at air-conditioned cafes or, best of all, the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory. Not only did they have some fascinating Aboriginal artworks but it had a cafe that sold the best iced coffees ever. Darwin is the capital of Northern Territory so has its own government buildings - all for a population of less than a quarter of a million.

After a couple of days exploring Darwin, we drove into Kakadu National Park. The park covers 20,000 square miles and is full of wetlands, birds, reptiles, gorges, flowers etc. We stayed in a hotel made of corrugated iron and shaped like a crocodile and drove to the various lookouts and bird observation stations. Fortunately, there were plenty of storyboards letting us know what the birds were. Most fascinating was the Jacana or Jesus bird, as it seemed to glide across the top of the water and lily pads.

The highlight of this trip was the Sunset Yellow Water River Billabong Cruise. For one and a half hours we cruised around spotting Cormorants, Egrets and the large Black-necked stork. We also saw several crocodiles. They were, however, clearly well fed and not at all interested in a boatful of tourists. The sunset was spectacular. However, unlike in the UK where sunsets can last a long time, in the Northern Territory they are over in about half an hour.

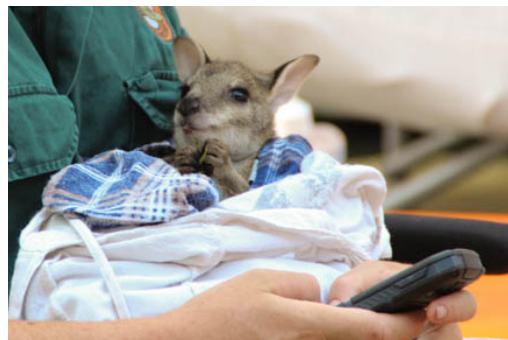


Nourlangie there were images of recognisable animals such as kangaroos, but also the mythical figures that are part of Aboriginal cultural heritage.

Our final evening was spent at a Mindl Beach food market. Not only food was being sold, there was a mini funfair and I got up close to a rescued baby Kangaroo. Eventually it was sunset time and it was amazing to sit on a beach with the locals watching the sun go down –

I hope this has given you a taste of the Northern Territory.

Deborah Jackson





WORTHY WETLANDS

Wetlands provide habitat for wildlife and important ecosystems services for people. These services include space for wading birds, insects and other wildlife, all of which work together to keep the ecosystem in balance. Wetlands can also act as a buffer and protect from land runoff or pollution so people can enjoy e.g., a positive fishing experience, swimming, kayaking or other waterside activities. Such activities are known to have a beneficial effect for mental health and anxiety, as well as a benefit to physical health. However, around the world, wetlands are often drained to make way for increased or more efficient agricultural productivity, thereby limiting and degrading the service they provide to people, and the Evenlode Catchment is no stranger to this. With the increased risk of flooding, exacerbated by climate change in recent decades, should we relook at wetlands and their use for society?

Eoghan Concannon, Evenlode Catchment Partnership Project Manager



Wetland creation site in upper catchment, ECP

Stop 'wishcycling' and get wise: how to recycle (almost) everything

From contact lenses to blister packs and used dental floss, there are items that perplex even the most dedicated recycler. Here is the expert guide to getting organised – and getting rid of your rubbish. Eighty per cent of UK households are still unclear about how to recycle effectively – but don't forget, in Oxfordshire you can use the **'Waste Wizard'** tool, (tinyurl.com/bdfr2p8) – just drop in your postcode and search any item to see the best options for recycling.

BRIDEWELL GARDENS – OPEN DAYS 2023

Bridewell Gardens provides a mental health recovery service for West Oxfordshire, supporting people who have experienced severe and enduring mental illness. Bridewell is a creative and inspiring walled garden and vineyard where people can find hope in recovery, gardening and working with nature.

We look forward to sharing our beautiful gardens with you this year.

Bridewell's plant sale will be held on Saturday 29th April 10am to 1pm where you can browse a wide variety of perennial plants for sale in our stock bed avenue. Please note – the walled garden will not be open during the plant sale.

The walled garden and vineyard are open to the public for our Open Days: Sunday 21st May, 18th June, 16th July, 10th September 11am-4pm. Pop-up café in the garden for tea and cake. High quality plants for sale, home produced jams and chutneys and our acclaimed organic sparkling wine. Make a day of it, bring a picnic blanket and relax in the vineyard with friends and family. Speak to Bridewell staff about the recovery service and the support provided at the gardens. Dogs on leads are very welcome. Families and children are encouraged to explore the site.

No booking required. Suggested donation £5 per person.

Bridewell Gardens, The Walled Garden, Wilcote, Oxfordshire OX7 3DT



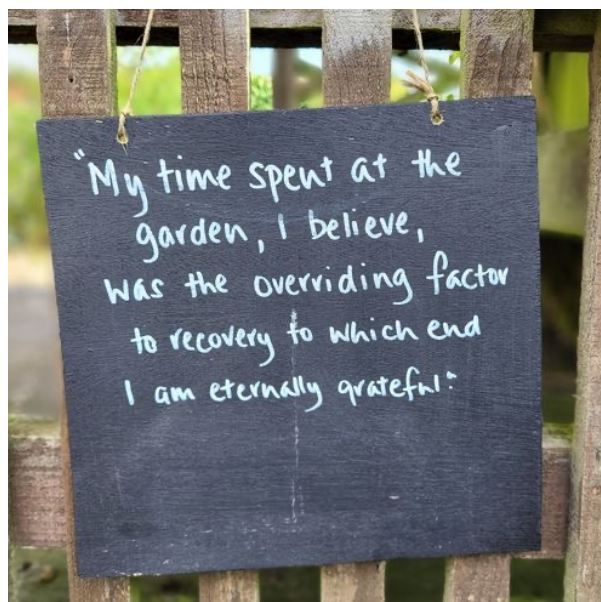
ABOUT BRIDEWELL GARDENS:

Nature based interventions include a wide range of initiatives using the natural environment (Green care) or water, rivers, lakes and the sea (Blue care) to support people with mental and physical health, social and emotional issues.

The typical working day at Bridewell may include any number of different seasonal activities: sowing seeds, watering, weeding, planting, site maintenance, pruning vines, tending veg and ornamental plants, harvesting soft fruit, making jams or chutneys, blacksmithing, willow-weaving, woodwork and caring for Bridewell's chickens. We recognise the value of these activities comes in the benefits they can offer for people's mental and physical health: from improving concentration, providing focus, positive risk-taking, opportunities for conversation and socialising with other people, decision making, team work, and learning new practical skills.

Bridewell Gardens is an exemplar of green care and social and therapeutic horticulture. We greatly value sharing our experiences with other projects as people seek to develop similar initiatives across the UK.

Charity Number: 1158456



FINSTOCK FOLK: GUY WALLIS

JS – What was your background like?

GW – I was born in St Georges Hospital in Hyde Park, London before it was closed and became the Lanesborough Hotel – perhaps a harbinger of what my life was to become! I was brought up though in Surrey where my mother and sister still live. From 17 I was doing shifts in local pubs and by 18 did a 3-year HND course in Catering & Management. I worked at Trust House Forte for quite a while in London.

JS – Some of your locals call you the “Brummie from Surrey”- how did that come about?

GW – Ha ha – After working in Hotels in London and Manchester, I then ran a pub in Stratford-upon-Avon, which is where I picked up the accent no doubt! Hotels really are a 24-hour operation and they are very draining. Later Jordan, my son, joined me in the pub locally and after a while took an interest in being a cook. Before long Jordan became the Sous Chef in a very popular Midlands pub.

JS – So when did you buy The Plough?

GW – 2013 – we had a ten-year anniversary recently. We wanted a pub with less than 30 covers, a vibrant village and this part of West Oxfordshire is popular. It ticked all the boxes. Myself and Jordan own the pub 50:50 – so we are committed to doing the best we can.

JS – How was lockdown?

GW – To be fair the Summer one was great. I went cycling with Jord, the weather was fantastic and I lost loads of weight. The winter one was tough. It was a bit like ground hog day and although the take away service helped us tick over – it didn't really make any money.

JS – How are the Pods coming along?

GW – One lesson from Covid\lockdown was that to survive in the future we need to diversify. Finstock has more public footpaths than any village in West Oxfordshire so I hope they'll be popular with walkers. We are the oldest institution in the Village (older than the church by 80 years) it makes sense that we do it. David Pratley has done the majority of the ground work and we hope to be open in the Summer.

JS – What's the best thing about Finstock and what would you change?

GW – There's lots of great people in the Village, I love them! Some people think that there should be street lighting. I'm totally against that. It's great to see the stars!

Guy Wallis was talking to Julian Stewart



PJR

Plumbing & Heating

Installation, service, repair

Gas safety certificates



Tel: 01993 881069

Mob: 07515 733398

email: rj_pimm@hotmail.com



This photo is of Guy in a Football team with long hair. Even Jordan found it difficult to recognise him! The challenge to readers is “The first one to accurately guess who Guy is, gets a free bottle of Prosecco”

PELLMANS

Your Local Solicitors

- **Business and Employment Law**
Contracts, Legal Compliance and Disputes
- **Property**
Buying and Selling Homes, Commercial and Agricultural
- **Wills, Probate and Trusts**
Tax Planning and Lasting Powers of Attorney

01865 884400

www.pellmans.co.uk

1 Abbey Street, Eynsham,
Witney, OX29 4TB

Home visits and
evening appointments available

County Council News

The County Council has just published its 2023/24 budget. The cost-of-living crisis has hit councils hard, with increases in wages, energy prices and extra demand for children's and adult social services. We will be putting up council tax by an additional 2.99% to offset some of the pressures that we are facing. We have been given extra funding by government for adult social care but that is conditional on us raising council tax by a further 2% to pay for some of those costs, therefore the total increase will be 4.99%.

We began the budget process knowing that we would have to make significant savings of around £40 million. The settlement that we have had from government is a bit better than we expected so we have been able to increase spending in some areas in line with the council's priorities. These include an extra £3 million to support climate action, including tree planting, £2.5 million to support rural transport, and an additional £1 million to improve road markings, cycle paths and pavements. We are also putting aside £2.3million to support low-income households so that they will not have to pay the extra 4.99% council tax.

I am supporting the village to get the footpath that runs across the field behind the Crown reopened. This route has been used by residents for many years as a safe way to walk alongside the B4022 towards the station, but sadly the track has been closed by the field's owner recently. Work is underway to see if this can be designated as an official footpath. I have been asked whether a pavement along the road is an option but the road is narrow and that would not be a safe route. I hope that the footpath can be reopened in due course.

The roll-out of the 20 mph speed limit across the county is happening, and over 200 communities in Oxfordshire have now signed up for this. Fawler had their signs installed recently, and Finstock will be getting the signs in the summer. In Charlbury, an application has been made to extend the 20mph limit to the outer areas of the town, and a new traffic calming build-out has been installed on the Enstone Road. People are generally pleased to see the measures that we are taking to make their communities safer, and I have been working closely with Finstock Parish Council to improve road safety in the village, and on the Witney Road.

I was delighted to see reports in the press recently that the government is considering adopting 20 mph as the default speed limit in built up areas nationally. We are really leading the way!

*Liz Leffman 07741 073088,
Liz.leffman@oxfordshire.gov.uk*

To bus or not to bus - that is the question?

Now that the Government is offering a two-pound bus ride for everyone – why not try it? Admittedly some firms, including our local operator Pulham's, have decided not to join this initiative but it is still worth venturing out especially whilst there is still uncertainty around rail services. Recently I had no access to a car so, with my American friend Melissa, we decided to venture further than the usual, reliable X9 route to Witney or Chipping Norton.

For example, we easily went to Oxford and Abingdon. Then we went via Witney to Cheltenham across the Cotswolds on a double decker with a friendly retired bus driver and long-distance walker heading for Somerset! From Chipping Norton we went to Banbury and on another day to Stratford on Avon. Of course, you could be more adventurous and go via Chippy to Woodstock and Burford, then home via Witney. Or by careful planning you can get to Bicester or Wallingford or Swindon via Oxford - or even Leamington Spa and Coventry via Chipping Norton.

In short there are so many options. The secret is to study timetables first so as to avoid for example taking the last bus from Banbury that failed to meet the Finstock bus in Chippy because of late running. This needed a quick adjustment to then go to Woodstock and be rescued by a good neighbour! Remember to get home early and generally avoid Sundays when church services are more frequent than buses.

In short, you get a great variety of excellent drivers, wonderful scenery, fine vernacular architecture, amazingly historic towns and villages, and an entertaining mix of passengers, young and old, local and from elsewhere, including the Ukraine. Of course, there can be unexpected issues too - like diversions or delays through road works; or trucks unloading; or thoughtless car or van drivers; or even the occasional really dirty windows, notably on the Banbury buses!! But thanks to our friendly drivers and this new initiative anyone can have a wonderful cheap day out by bus at least until June.

Mike Breakell



Treedwellers Cornbury require Hotel Manager



Treedwellers Cornbury is an exciting new forest accommodation experience located adjacent to Finstock village. We are seeking a dynamic Hotel Manager who is happy to be on call at various times throughout the year.

TREEDWELLERS
EXTRAORDINARY TREEHOUSE ESCAPES

- Basic Salary: £26,000pa, with bonuses
- Working Days: 19 in every 20, including weekends; shared with an assistant
- Holiday: standard allocation, plus 1/2 day per month paid for personal development / community support/service.

For full job description and application details, please email ronan@treedwellers.co.uk

“Their Finest Hour” Collections Day at Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum

- Share your family’s Second World War stories and objects to be digitized for an online archive
- Opening from 11am - 3pm, Saturday 1st April 2023
- Museum Open Day - free admission to the museum
- See Second World War living history displays, kit displays, and art exhibitions in the museum galleries

Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum (SOFO) is looking for people to bring their stories and objects relating to the Second World War to their Digital Collection Day at the museum in Woodstock on 1st April 2023 from 11am - 3pm.

The event is part of a nationwide campaign organised by *Their Finest Hour*, a team based at the University of Oxford and funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund, which is collecting and preserving the everyday stories and objects of the Second World War.

As these stories are fast fading from living memory, it is vital that they - and the wartime objects that often accompany them - are preserved for future generations.

At the Digital Collection Day, stories about your family’s wartime experience – and associated objects such as diaries, letters, medals, journals and ration books – will be recorded, digitised, and then uploaded to the *Their Finest Hour* online archive, which will be free-to-use and launch in June 2024.

Dr Stuart Lee, *Their Finest Hour* project leader, said, “We know from previous projects that people have so many wonderful objects, photos, and anecdotes which have been passed down from family members which are at risk of getting lost or being forgotten. Our aim is to empower local communities to digitally preserve these stories and objects before they are lost to posterity.”

The project team is especially interested in collecting contributions from people from underrepresented backgrounds in order to increase the diversity of people benefiting from Second World War heritage.

With often limited parking in Woodstock, Blenheim Palace will also be kindly supporting this event, offering free parking to those attending to share their stories. The museum is just a short walk into town through the palace’s Woodstock Town gate.

Charlbury Medical Centre Items

Time to check your blood pressure?

The South East NHS is raising awareness of the dangers of unchecked high blood pressure which can increase the risk of stroke, heart attacks and kidney disease among at risk adults.

A third of adults in the UK have high blood pressure and don’t realise they have it. It can be a silent killer as usually there are no symptoms, so knowing that you may have high blood pressure and taking steps to manage it could save your life. Find more information at www.southeastclinicalnetworks.nhs.uk/hypertension/

Averose Pharmacy in Charlbury is taking part in the scheme. If you are aged 40 and over and haven’t checked your blood pressure recently, ring the pharmacy on 01608 810 315 or call in to make an appointment.

Council tax discount

Our council tax bills for 2023/2024 have just arrived. Here we inform people about the discount for households where a person is considered to be “severely mentally impaired”.

In order to qualify someone must be medically certified as “severely mentally impaired”. This might be because of a dementia; Parkinson’s disease; profound learning difficulties; or a severe stroke. The GP signs a form to confirm the impairment. They are not allowed to charge for this.

Secondly, the person must be in receipt of a qualifying benefit. This might be Attendance Allowance, Disability Living Allowance (higher or middle rate care component) or Personal Independence Payment. There are more qualifying benefits – too many to list here.

If the person lives with one other adult in the household the discount may apply. There are other circumstances under which the discount will apply, once again too many to list here.

If you think your household might be eligible for the discount, contact West Oxfordshire District Council – at tinyurl.com/2hnfb2yc; or by telephoning 01993 861 000 or by calling in at their town centre shop: 3 Welch Way, Witney, OX28 6JH, open Monday to Friday 9am to 5pm

Susan Smith, Charlbury Patient Participation Group



Your local community pharmacy

Going abroad?

We now offer most travel vaccines & anti-malarial tablets

Want to lose weight?

Medicated weight loss medication available now without a prescription

Opening hours

Mon – Fri	9am – 6pm
Sat	9am – 1pm

Services include

- NHS and private prescriptions
- Health advice
- Free blood pressure checks
- Text alerts
- Safe disposal of unwanted medication

Market Street
Charlbury
Oxfordshire
OX7 3PL
01608 810315

FREE DELIVERY SERVICE TO YOUR DOOR

**REMINDER - Finstock
Local History Society
Draft Programme 2023**

**Friday 21st April 2023: Your house
in Finstock has a history**

Speaker: Michelle Greenwald – Local
Historian

People have been living in this village
since the 1100s but our houses and their
uses have changed a lot in that time. Or
have they? Michelle will use examples of
village houses from the old to the new
to answer that question.

Friday 19th May 2023 A guided walk
around the village highlighting places
of historical interest, led by members
of FLHS.

All meetings are held in the village
hall – doors open at 7.30 and a bar is
available.

Talks start at 8.00pm.

You do not have to be a member to
come along and we look forward to
welcoming you.

GREEN BANKS FIELDS

Over the winter months many of
you have got into the habit of roaming
freely around my field - because most
of the normal footpaths have been
virtually impassable. BUT NOW - As I
always ask you - from 1st April would
you please keep to the two Public
Footpaths, the one from the main gate
up on the right-hand side, and the one
across the top of the field. Please do
not walk across the middle of the field,
or round the other two sides – as it all
needs to recover, so that the grass can

be harvested for hay. ALSO - would
you please collect your doggy-poo, as
this is very detrimental to the quality of
the hay and very dangerous for sheep.
There is a bin near the entrance to the
field on the High Street.

Many thanks,

Viv Wightman

NEWS FROM OUR MP

I am just writing to update you on
some recent progress with Thames
Water in West Oxfordshire as I know
this is a matter of importance to you.
I share the frustration that Thames
Water have been regularly releasing
sewage from Witney Sewage Treatment
Works over the last few months. I have
therefore written to the Chief Executive
of Thames Water on two separate
occasions – at the end of November and
the beginning of January – to reaffirm
my strong opposition to any sewage
releases across West Oxfordshire.

I am very pleased to have now received
confirmation, following my campaign,
that expansion works to increase
capacity of investment to STWs across
West Oxfordshire, including Bampton,
Chipping Norton, Church Hanborough,
Enstone, Finstock, Middle Barton,
Milton-under-Wychwood, South Leigh
and Stanton Harcourt will go ahead.
It is essential that once these upgrades
are complete, sewage releases are
permanently ceased. If this is not the
case, I am very clear that it will be vital
for Thames Water to provide further
necessary investment at speed.

I welcome the recent progress being
made both locally and nationally to
address these issues. I can assure you
that I will continue to hold Thames
Water to account until this is a purely
historic issue across West Oxfordshire.

Robert Courts

**DURING THESE
MONTHS**

April 2, 1982 - The beginning of
the Falkland Islands War as troops
from Argentina invaded and occupied
the British colony located near the tip
of South America.

April 6, 1896 - After a break of
1500 years, the first Olympics of
the modern era was held in Athens,
Greece.

April 10, 1998 - Politicians in
Northern Ireland reached an
agreement aimed at ending 30 years
of violence which had claimed over
3,400 lives.

May 10, 1994 - Former political
prisoner Nelson Mandela was
inaugurated as president of South
Africa.

May 20, 1932 - Amelia Earhart
became the first woman to fly solo
across the Atlantic, completing a
2,026-mile flight in about 13 hours.

May 29, 1660 - The English
monarchy was restored with Charles
II on the throne after several years
of a Commonwealth under Lord
Protector Oliver Cromwell.



MOSSINATOR®
ROOF CLEANING SYSTEMS

- Moss Removal
- Roof Cleaning
- Softwashing
- Patio & Driveway Cleaning

Contact Jake
01865 362797
info@mossinator.co.uk
www.mossinator.co.uk

**West Oxon Handyman
& Home Improvement
Services**

Electrical / Plumbing / Flooring /
Decorating / Tiling / Woodwork

Flat pack furniture /
Bathroom & kitchen installation

Quality finish Fully insured
No job too small All jobs considered

For a free quote call 01993-868725
or 07717-878323

Email: nathan_randell@hotmail.com



FINFOLK UPDATE

Finstock Unplugged Meeting at The Plough, Finstock, 30th January 2023

It was an exciting and very welcome return to The Plough after a two-year hiatus, with twenty-one performers and another nine or so listeners who from time to time peeped in from the front bar. We were fortunate in attracting musicians from further afield as well as locally, including Colin Pitts from Evesham and Kim Hobday of Adderbury and Banbury Folk. It was also great that the full Hex Collective (Jim and Josie) attended and treated us to some of their new music, with Josie singing as well as playing mellifluously on her cello. Turning Signs (Brock and Kim) were also in excellent form and they treated us to a performance of their song about the Ascott martyrs, which has now been recorded.

In fact, there was a welcome variety of instruments on offer that evening: at least a dozen guitars, three piano accordions of various sizes, one cello, one double bass, a whistle and of course plenty of good voices. Later in the evening, Ben, who founded Bone Saddle, led us in a moving a cappella version of 'Oh brother, where art thou?' Colin G, Anabel and Gordon, along with others, also made contributions which ensured that the evening went well.

If you would like to see filmed extracts from some of the evening's impromptu performances, they can be found on our Finstock Unplugged group page:

www.facebook.com/groups/590308302389899.

Finstock's Micro-gigs 2023: Confirmed Dates for spring and early summer 2023

At Wilcote Art Studios, OX7 3DX (Between Witney, Charlbury and Woodstock. Good parking.)

As usual, I attempt to keep a balance between traditional folk music from the British Isles, Americana and Blues, and the work of singer-songwriters. There's also a healthy mix of established performers and emerging talent.

Friday 31st March An Evening with Greg Brice, recently recognised by *Blues in Britain* as one of the top young blues guitarists in the UK, 2023. Greg has agreed to participate in a Q/A session towards the end of his concert, to provide the audience with an opportunity to ask questions about composition, technique, and influences.

Friday 26th May The Holy Fools. Led by Tennessee songwriter Chris Floyd on vocals and guitar. The HFs feature all-original songs, steeped in Floyd's rural roots in country, blues, folk, and gospel. Recently featured in *Americana-UK*.

Further info: www.theholyfools.com

STOP PRESS!

**NOT a micro-gig, but in
FINSTOCK VILLAGE HALL
on Saturday 20th May, 2023,
from 7.30pm:**

**Josh Newman and Mitch Keely
of Moonaroon (see above),
with Louis Thurman are:**

THE OAKSTONE TRIO

**They are an Oxford-based trio who
play and sing lively and engaging
English traditional music.**

Come and hear them!

All tickets will be available through Ticket Tailor, and the first two dates on the list are already bookable. For updates and other news about Finstock, see: www.facebook.com/groups/590308302389899

Ginnie Redston

*"The bad news is
time flies –
the good news is
you're the pilot"*

*Entrepreneur
Michael Altshuler
quoted in Reader's Digest*

ERRATUM – Please note these amendments to the Finstock Ready Reference 2023, published with the last issue of *Finstock News*.

The Plough Inn telephone number should be 01993 868333

West Oxfordshire District Council – 01993 861000

Oxfordshire County Council – 01865 792422

Charlbury Library should be entered under Libraries and Learning, *not* Police and Crime!



All types of tree work carried out including stump removal & hedge cutting.

Contact us today for a free quote
NPTC Qualified & fully insured.

✉ kptreecare.co.uk
✉ kptreecare@outlook.com
☎ 07788 289344

Proud members of

Checkatrade.com
Where reputation matters



DIRTY CARPETS, UPHOLSTERY, RUGS



**Most carpets
dry within the
hour**

**Unbeatable
results,
removes
almost all
spots & stains**

Call

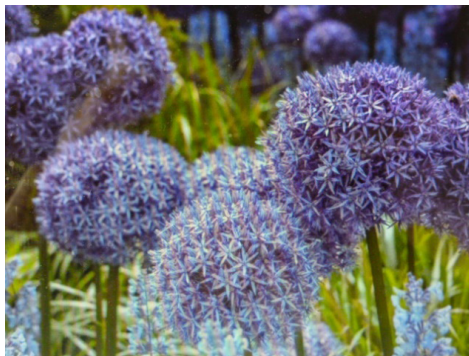
GRIMEBUSTERS

01993 868924 01865 726983

www.grimebusters.co.uk

GARDEN CORNER

The welcome arrival of the warmer weather brings the colour back into the garden, and plants such as the flowering Alliums start producing handsome blue/green pointed leaves, some with dark red tips in late February. In April-May large purple or white balls of flowers make them great feature plants in borders going well with herbaceous peonies. They come in a range of sizes and shades of blues, purples and violet. "Globemaster" produces sculptural 8-10" diameter globes on sturdy stems, making stunning features in clumps above the other border plants.



The classic border alliums look fantastic growing through a mass of soft flowers in a **flower bed**. Amethyst globes of 'Purple Sensation' hover above the biennial bellflower *Campanula patula*, and *Allium cristophii* grows through an airy sea of Cranesbill (*Geranium album*). Many alliums also combine well with glaucous or silver-leaved plants, such as Sea Kale and *Artemisia*. Taller forms – which don't block the view of the plants behind – can be grown in the middle of the border as vertical accents. Shorter alliums (such as 'Eros', moly and chives) look good growing through gravel at the border edge. Flowering Alliums are loved by bees, whereas they repel Aphids, so make good companions for roses. Giant Flowering alliums native to the Mediterranean, love full sun and well drained soils. Best planted in October about six inches deep on a handful of gravel, to aid drainage during wet winter months, eight inches or so apart in groups. I dry the flower heads and together with poppy capsules make excellent flower arrangements.

Another charming allium which will grow in light shade is the Sicilian honey garlic (*Allium Nectaroscodium siculum*) an ideal companion for Hostas as it repels slugs and snails as well as deer. Its bulbs are planted about 4" (10cm) deep and 3-4" (8-10cm) apart in sun or part shade, amongst other plants that are in leaf in late spring. In May/June very attractive clusters of large white hanging bell shaped flowers appear, with pink centres on 3-foot stems. As these flowers fade, they turn upright to form curious, shuttlecock-like seedheads that extend the season of interest as well as a twist to flower arrangements. This heirloom garlic is a perfect garlic to enhance simple dishes of pasta, garlic and olive oil. You can also flavour stir-fries, grilled meat, marinades, salads, sauces, salsa, chutney, relishes and dips.



All members of the Allium family including onions, alliums, garlic, leeks and chives, produce the chemical allicin which is harmless to humans but toxic to slugs and snails if consumed. All repel carrot flies, cabbage worms, as well as deer and rodents. As a result, they are a great choice of barrier plants when planted in vegetable gardens or flower borders. Enjoy the garden in the sunshine.

Robert

Garden Tasks for April

- Sow hardy annuals, herbs and wildflower seed outdoors
- Tie in climbing and rambling roses – rose pruning ensures that plants grow vigorously and flower well each year
- Repair Lawns – re-seed bare patches or use turf from another part of the lawn
- Feed hungry shrubs and roses

"The problem with history is that there are too many people in it"

*Nick Hornby,
quoted on The Browser*

If you would like to advertise in the Finstock News please contact
Su Jordan at Tel: 07824 567765
advertfinstocknews@gmail.com

Very reasonable rates:

Display box size

9cm x 6cm £15.00

13cm x 9cm £25.00

Circulation details upon request



TOWN & COUNTRY
TREES LIMITED



**A tree surgery company with
the integrity you can trust.**

Tel: **0845 458 2980**
Mobile: **07976 261850**
Email: **info@townandcountrytrees.co.uk**
www.townandcountrytrees.co.uk