



W O C A

**THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER
FROM WEST OXFORD
COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION**

**SPRING
'23**

**ISSUE
82**

CONTENTS

Words From WOCA	1
WOCA Stuff	2
Fun Day and WOPA Update	3
wocART's Artweeks Exhibition / Photo Workshop	4
Regular Activities at WOCC	5
Oxford City Larder	6
Little Health Hub	8
West Oxford Academy	9
West Side Stories	10
Low Carbon West Oxford	12
Tumbling Bay Updates	19
Councillor Lois Muddiman	22
Councillor Susanna Pressel	23
Last Words from WOCA	25

Thanks to those who supplied content for this edition.
If you would like to advertise or would like something
included in the next edition, contact us via email:

info@woca.org.uk

www.woca.org.uk



WORDS FROM WOCA

Welcome to another full newsletter for which we owe to WOCA staff member, Erin. Thanks for the wonderful redesign and compilation of the last few issues.

The centre is thriving thanks to the loyalty of so many centre users. We were sad to say goodbye to Keith Birnie after 12 years as our Centre Manager, but Sarah Morgan, who was a trustee, has stepped into Keith's place and has settled in well. Thank you so much to her and to all our staff, including a special thank you to James Kelly, our caretaker, who keeps us all on our toes and the centre smoothly running.

WOCA is always looking for new trustees to join the Management Committee. On the 14th May we will have our AGM where all trustees stand down and can be re-elected and is a perfect time for anyone else to join us. The main trait for all trustees is an interest and enthusiasm for our local community. The AGM will take the usual format of a supper cooked by Tumbling Bay Café with the AGM business between first course and pudding! Please do put that date in your diaries. If becoming a trustee is for you, please contact us via the centre office. No need to be a trustee, but we're looking for help with raising funds and grant applications – if you have any experience or inclination please get in touch.

Planning is underway for the WOCA Fun Day – **Saturday 8th July**. We rely on volunteers coming to help so please look out for more information. Any ideas of stalls or activities that you might like to be part of the Fun Day, please let us know via email on: **funday@woca.org.uk**

Finally, the centre couldn't run without all the volunteers on the committee – the unsung and hard workers for our community centre. As chair, my thanks go to them and all they do to support me and the centre.

Rebecca Huxley (chair WOCA)

WOCA Trustees:

Rebecca Huxley (chair), Louise Siddle (vice chair), Jim McMahon (Treasurer), Lisa Bird, Martin Bourne, Sâmân Jamshidifard, Ros Kilbee, Helen Reid, Shan Saunders, Jane Whitaker, Kerry Wright-Lynes.

WOCA Associates: Cllr Susanna Pressel, Cllr Lois Muddiman

WOCA COMMUNITY SUPPER & AGM

Sunday 14th May, 5:30pm – 8:00pm at West Oxford Community Centre

Come along and share a tasty homemade meal (provided by Tumbling Bay Cafe) with trustees, members of WOCA and local residents!

All Ages Welcome. Free to WOCA Members and under 16s. Non-WOCA Members meal is £4.

Email info@woca.org.uk (with 'Community Supper and AGM' in the subject line) stating the number of places for adults & children you'd like to book.

To be sure there is enough food for everyone, please RSVP by **8th May**.

We hope to see you there!



ROOMS AVAILABLE FOR HIRE AT WOCC

Looking for somewhere locally to hold events, meetings, clubs?

Two seminar rooms suitable for 1-1 sessions or small groups are available for hire!

If you're thinking of starting up a new group or activity which supports WOCA's aims, visit our website for details of grants and subsidies available.

For more information, you can contact us directly via email on info@woca.org.uk or via our website: www.woca.org.uk

Scan the QR code to check out our availability over the next 6 months





WEST OXFORD FUN DAY



Come along and join us on The Road to Nowhere....

*** Food * Drinks * Rides * Stalls * Events * Games * Prizes * Music * Dog Show * More to be announced! ***

**Saturday 8th July, 2pm-6pm, Botley Park
All ages welcome!**

The Fun Day is entirely organised and run by WOCA and volunteers, so we need lots of you lovely locals to help make it a glorious afternoon!

Could you help run a stall, move tables, chairs, straw bales, or put up a gazebo? Run a taster session or game? Are you a local musician who would like to perform? We'd love to have you involved in any capacity.

Email us on: funday@woca.org.uk



WEST OXFORD PANTO ASSOCIATION (WOPA)

Would you like to organise the next West Oxford Panto?

Advice, help and funding available
No experience necessary

A great way to meet new people, contribute something to the community and have lots of fun!

If you're interested, please email: info@wopa.org.uk

WOPA will be holding events in the near future - keep an eye on our website for further updates!

www.wopa.me



ARTWEEKS EXHIBITION

This year will mark wocART's 21st anniversary of holding their Artweeks exhibition at WOCC.

We are celebrating the occasion by inviting back all the artists we could who have shown their work with wocART over the years.

So, in 2023, we will have 25 artists in total exhibiting a whole range of work: basketry, ceramics, collage, digital art, jewellery, multi-media, paintings, photographs, prints, sculpture, textiles and more!

Come along and enjoy it all in the **Mary Town Room** at **West Oxford Community Centre** from **Saturday 20th to Monday 29th May**.

PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKSHOP

For beginners, improvers and those with cameras "covered in rust" who would like to learn/remember how to get more out of their cameras/mobile phones.

Informal half day spent discussing a bit of technical and practical info followed by a couple of hours out and about taking photos locally.

£25.00 per person. All proceeds to WOCC. For more info please email: **info@woca.org.uk**

Dates by arrangement / 18+ years only



Tumbling Bay
kitchen & café
Oxford's hidden gem

Freshly prepared food, homemade sweet treats and a wide selection of refreshments

Opening Hours

Tuesday-Friday: 9am-4pm

Saturday-Sunday: 10am-4pm

<https://tumbling-bay-cafe.business.site/>
www.facebook.com/TumblingbaycafeOxford/

SALSA OXFORD



Every Wednesday, £10 per class

8pm - Beginners/Improvers

9pm - Intermediates/Advanced

West Oxford Community Centre
Botley Road, OX2 0BT

www.salsaoxford.com



A Hatha Yoga class suitable for all abilities. Friendly and inclusive.

Mondays, 5:30pm-6:45pm

Main Hall, West Oxford Community Centre

£10 per session

For more information, email: lambert3323@gmail.com

OXFORD MILONGA

Tango is the national dance of Argentina, recognised by UNESCO. It is also a global phenomenon, with people in all countries dancing it as their hobby.

The dance party itself is called a Milonga, and social dancers come from near and far to dance in couples and share their passion for the music.

The Oxford Milonga is a welcoming, inclusive milonga in the heart of Oxford, held on the last Friday of the month from 8pm-11:15pm at WOCA in the Main Hall. As well as great music for tango dancing, there are nibbles and drinks provided.

If tango is your thing, then come along and join the great atmosphere of the Oxford Milonga!

More details on the website: www.oxfordmilonga.org

OXFORD CITY LARDER

One year of **#lovefoodhatewaste** and **#sharethelove**

It's been a year since a few WOCA trustees and volunteers launched Oxford City Larder and we have grown exponentially. Recently, we reached 200 members, becoming the second largest food larder in Oxford. Here's a review of where we are:

We estimate that we have redistributed **60+ tonnes** of surplus bound for landfill!

Not only do we redistribute food, we have also introduced various wrap-around services such as: kids' tables and activities, Janet's mending table, Energy Advice from Low Carbon West Oxford and we are continuously looking to offer more. **St. Frideswide's Church**, in conjunction with the Larder and Botley Community Kitchen, now serve a **community meal** of vegetable curry & rice, served every **Friday** from **4pm-6pm**. The meal is completely **free**, available to anyone and can be eaten in or taken away. It's yet another way we're using surplus food to **#lovefoodhatewaste** and **#sharethelove** together.

We have matured into a family where the volunteers signpost and support each other as well as the 200 Larder members. We know many of our members' interests, concerns, and sometimes struggles - motivating us to serve better week after week.

Reflecting on the last 12 months, here's what a few of the Larder volunteers had to say:

"It's a great atmosphere, with lovely people and good strong meaning behind it. Not only are we reducing the potential sent to landfill (and benefiting from some tasty items ourselves) but we get to make a whole host of new friends and meet some truly wonderful people. Not to mention the warm feeling of giving something back to the community. It's never a chore and I look forward to every session" - Jenny

"There's nothing better than sharing food to make friends of strangers and to be alongside people who, like me, can use some cheering along the way. The next best thing is sharing ingredients and finding out what people did with them!" - Katherine

"The atmosphere at the Larder is all about shared experiences such as exchanging recipes, advice on how to cook strange vegetables, respect for each other, working as a team, supporting people and lots more...I love being a part of it" -Zohra

Join us to #lovefoodhatewaste, #sharethelove and #fightstigma every Friday from 4-7pm in the Main Hall at West Oxford Community Centre.

oxfordcitylarder@woca.org.uk
facebook.com/oxfordcitylarder



All things Oxford City Larder! How quickly can you find all the words?

W	P	R	V	E	G	E	T	A	B	L	E	S	L
A	A	E	I	E	T	E	A	I	S	C	R	E	S
C	S	S	B	I	S	C	U	I	T	S	A	U	P
A	T	S	T	A	E	R	T	S	N	J	L	A	I
F	I	A	H	E	L	E	T	O	E	E	J	R	C
R	T	E	P	I	A	N	O	C	I	A	A	I	E
U	S	B	R	E	A	D	B	I	B	S	R	C	S
I	C	O	F	F	E	E	A	A	M	T	S	E	R
T	R	P	A	I	S	A	S	L	A	S	B	C	E
I	E	S	S	P	S	J	P	N	R	T	R	R	D
N	L	R	S	C	R	A	D	D	E	E	E	E	U
S	T	I	L	A	S	N	A	A	A	E	H	A	C
S	R	E	E	T	N	U	L	O	V	W	B	M	E
C	O	L	A	N	D	F	I	L	L	S	W	T	S

- BISCUITS
- SPICES
- PASTA
- WASTE
- HERBS
- TEA
- ICE CREAM
- COFFEE
- SWEETS
- CRISPS
- BREAD
- AMBIENTS
- VEGETABLES
- TINS
- REDUCE
- PIANO
- JARS
- SOCIAL
- LANDFILL
- VOLUNTEERS
- FRUIT
- TREATS



THE LITTLE HEALTH HUB

The Little Health Hub is a thriving complementary health and talking therapies centre. Our home is the Geoff Franklin rooms at WOCC. We have an ever-expanding team of therapists and practitioners who are well-qualified, professional and passionate about promoting emotional and physical health. Many of our practitioners offer low-cost treatments.

Therapies on offer include:

- Acupuncture for adults
- Acupuncture (acupuncture with or without needles) for children
- Osteopathy
- Psychotherapy for adults
- Psychotherapy and counselling for children
- Play therapy
- Teen well-being coaching

For more information, please visit: www.thelittlehealthhub.com

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Welcome back to the all-ability non-selective

WEST OXFORD ACADEMY

West Oxford Academy started in October 2006. The first talk was “The origin of Academies in Ancient Greece” and the most recent was “The future of rocket science”. There have now been 26 terms, usually consisting of eight talks, totalling over 200 talks so far. The current term, which started in March, will be my last. I have loved organising the Academy and remain amazed at the knowledge and interests of West Oxford residents and profoundly grateful that they are willing to share this. And the audience is reliably wonderful. So many excellent questions!

I would like the Academy to continue and would be happy to share my experiences and then support anyone who would like to take over. Please do contact me if you are interested in finding out more about running West Oxford Academy. I have found that curiosity and willingness to talk to complete strangers, coupled with a good memory for people who have offered talks are key skills. My organisational skills, on the other hand, are rudimentary at best, but this seems to matter less than I expected! - ***Susan Hutchinson***

westoxfordacadmy@gmail.com

The Academy meets at West Oxford Community Centre on **Tuesdays at 8:15pm** in the Mary Town Room. Tickets are £3.

Each session consists of a 20–30 minute talk by a local resident, followed by questions and an informal discussion over a glass of wine. The whole thing will last an hour. It’s a wonderful chance to find out about a wide range of topics and meet new people.

The last talk will be on 2nd May.

Title and Speaker	Date
The English essay from Hazlitt to Dickens. <i>Uttara Natarajan</i>	25th April
16 Years of West Oxford Academy. <i>Susan Hutchinson</i>	2nd May

WEST SIDE STORIES

Willow Walk

Probably most of us know that works are underway on Willow Walk, to make it a better cycle track. In case you haven't ventured out into the cold to take a look at what's going on, here are some photos of progress by local photographer Mark Elphinstone!



West Oxford supports Ukraine!

A couple on Osney Island are hosting a single lady; Helen from Alexandra Road has driven on two trips to Poland to deliver supplies for Ukrainian refugees, and to bring refugee families to host families in England; and in Hill View Road, Gary and Ursula took in a Ukrainian cat, whose family were in housing in another town where their cat couldn't live with them!

Lots has been happening at St Frideswide's lately!

On Saturday 3 February, the church filled up to hear a really interesting talk by local historian Malcolm Graham on the history of St Frideswide's, followed by tea and delicious home-made cakes. The Ash Wednesday evening service was accompanied by some divine music, conducted by the organist Stanley Godfrey. Stanley became St Frideswide's new organist in August last year, and the church's reputation for musical excellence is increasing. His musicality - he is blessed with perfect pitch and considerable talent - is matched by his infectious enthusiasm. Stanley was Organ Scholar at St Peter's College, and combines being organist at St Frideswide's with training as a secondary school music teacher at Reading University. This summer he will be touring with St Peter's in the Netherlands.

On Ash Wednesday, Stanley conducted singers Sarah Davies, Beth Fitzpatrick and Amy Gadhia in Missa quodlibetica trium vocum by Carl Luython; Misere Mei Deus by Sarah MacDonald; and Poulenc's Ave Verum Corpus - a beautiful experience.

Finally - it looks like some swans are thinking about moving in to Alexandra Road! Or are they looking for Swan Street?...



westsidestories@woca.org.uk



Ruskin College
Oxford

Free short courses

Available to Adult Learners 19+ • Running from April 2023

Certificates of Community Learning awarded upon successful completion of course





LOW CARBON WEST OXFORD

The LCWO year in review: what have West Oxford residents done this year to work towards net zero and a greener, fairer future?

Every year in the spring, a dedicated group of West Oxford residents who make up the trustees and management committee of Low Carbon West Oxford get together to look back at the activities and achievements of the last year, and forward to set priorities for the next.

We are proud of what we have achieved over the last year with a team of 11 committed core volunteers, a two-day-a-week member of staff (Programme Lead Mim Saxl) and event management from Karen Starr.

Here are a few of the highlights from the period March 2022-23...

The LCWO Business Scorecard

In September last year, we concluded several years of research and engagement with 16 big businesses on the Botley Road with the launch of our report, **'Not-So-Super-Stores? Are the big retailers in our West Oxford community helping or hindering climate action?'**.

In our research, which scored businesses against a host of sustainability indicators developed by LCWO with expert guidance, Currys came top of the leader board, scoring 82%, with Screwfix and Aldi not far behind on 76%. Four laggards scored less than 15%, suggesting they might be taking little to no action to tackle the climate emergency. Bottom of the table were Carpetright and Schmidt on 12%; Home Bargains with a score of 6%; and Wren Kitchens with 0%...



Project team Mim and Ruth with Dan from Currys at the launch



LOW CARBON WEST OXFORD

The project led to engagement from Screwfix, Currys, Waitrose, Dunelm and Bensons for Beds, and has been particularly well received by local council representatives, leading to new connections and collaboration with both City and County Council.

We also ran a 'how to' workshop for other communities considering how to engage similar businesses in their local area, which went well.

Going forwards, we are working with local social enterprise Low Carbon Hub to tailor a community-owned solar panel offer to the businesses, and have meetings to discuss next steps with Rachel Wileman, Director of Planning, Environment & Climate Change at Oxfordshire County Council, and Cllr Anna Railton, Cabinet Member for Zero Carbon Oxford and Climate Justice at Oxford City Council. A special thanks should go to Councillor Susanna Pressel for her support and championing of our business engagement work and report.

TAKE ACTION: Pick the issue that matters most to you (you can chose from our list of indicators), pop into a store, ask to see the manager, mention the scorecard and quiz them about what they are doing to improve local performance – and if you do, don't forget to let us know how it went!

Find out about our business engagement work and download the report here:
www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk/business



Supporting our community with rising energy bills and the cost-of-living crisis

Last March we were invited by new group Sustainable Botley to join a panel event on home energy. In preparation and based on our years of offering workshops as part of our various programmes on the topic, we developed a leaflet on top energy saving hacks for the home and pulled together a list of current funding and support. Our '**Energy advice and funding resources**' booklet has proved very popular: for example, we delivered 2000 copies to local libraries in the Oxfordshire area.



LOW CARBON WEST OXFORD

In addition, we offered free radiator foil and draft proofing tape to all West Oxford residents, conducted a pilot of four free home energy assessment visits with an expert advisor, and gave various workshops, including at the Diocese of Oxford and St Frideswide's Eco Day.

However, perhaps the biggest development in the last year has been the training of LCWO Management Committee Chair Neville Scrivener and staff member Mim Saxl as Energy Champions, through Low Carbon Hub. Neville, with occasional support from Mim, has been running **energy advice stalls at Oxford City Larder at WOCA on a Friday afternoon**. At time of writing, we have notched about 160 conversations with larder visitors and are always happy to answer questions and help attendees get the information they need.

Come find Neville and Mim at the Larder on a Friday for freebies (radiator foil, radiator keys, draught excluders and more), information and advice about current funding, sources of support and practical ways to reduce your energy bills and make your home warmer, safer, cheaper to run and better for the planet.



Energy Champion Neville with the advice stall; freebies lined up and ready to go.

Check our events page for news of upcoming energy advice stalls: www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk/calendar



LOW CARBON WEST OXFORD

Check out our energy advice and tips available on our website	www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk/energy-use-at-home
Energy saving advice from Low Carbon Hub	www.lowcarbonhub.org/energy-saving-advice
Better Housing Better Health - Free phonenumber for Oxfordshire residents	www.bhbh.org.uk 0800 107 0044

For more information and resources, visit our website:
www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk

To keep up with us, follow us on Facebook:
www.facebook.com/lowcarbonwestoxford



Energy Saving Homes - working with other low carbon groups across the city

We are lucky enough to be one of a whole network of community action groups across the whole of Oxfordshire working towards a greener, fairer, net zero future, and as a member of Communities for Zero Carbon we work particularly closely with fellow groups in the city, (CZCO)

www.lcon.org.uk/communities-for-zero-carbon-oxford



LOW CARBON WEST OXFORD

Last summer, the team, led by colleagues from Rose Hill and Iffley Low Carbon, and Low Carbon Oxford North, pulled together ten days of open home tours (**Energy Saving Homes**) either side of an **Energy Saving Fair** at Oxford Town Hall, and produced a series of bitesize films (see website above) covering different measures, including insulation, heat pumps and help with finance. More house tours happened during Oxford Open Doors in September. A number of West Oxford residents opened their doors, and Lead Programme Manager Mim appeared on the ITV news to call for the government to offer more funding and support to make widespread domestic energy saving measures possible.



Local residents Suzanne and Angela talk heat pumps and under floor insulation at their home tours during Oxford Open Doors 2022

OTHER STUFF

Transport:

Neville has continued to represent LCWO as an active member of the **Coalition for Healthy Streets and Active Transport**. The team is keeping a close eye on developments with the **closure of the Botley Road** and plans for traffic filters - supportive of measures that cut emissions, but keenly aware of the need to mitigate the impact on local people, in particular those with mobility issues. We have submitted a bid to fund the purchase of an **electric cargo bike** for the West Oxford community.



LOW CARBON WEST OXFORD

Events:

Last year, we **planted 500 trees** in 1.5 hours on Oatlands Rec with the help of over 100 volunteers! Our brilliant **Bring & Takes** came back from the their Covid pause, and Karen ran both a **repair café** and **cook-off** at West Oxford Fun Day using food that would have otherwise gone to waste. **The next Bring and Take is planned for 13 May at West Oxford Community Centre.**



Tree planting in Oatlands Rec, 6th March 2022

Talking to kids about the climate crisis

Mim has continued her work on the Westmill grant-funded guide for talking to children about climate change and was very happy to visit West Oxford Community Primary to talk about COP27 last November. Since being invited to participate in the Story Museum's 2022 Inspiration Day, a day-long workshop to explore staff and trustees' personal responses to the climate emergency, deepen insights into children's responses and needs, and generate ideas for the museum's 2023-24 creative and learning programme, Mim has been invited to advise on the forthcoming Brilliant exhibition, launching in May this year. Green Parent Magazine is also publishing an article about her interest in working with children on the climate crisis so see the website for news of that in the near future.





LOW CARBON WEST OXFORD

Comms:

As well as our appearance on ITV, LCWO was invited to participate in the making of a documentary about the effect of lockdown on domestic energy use by Oxford Sparks, who make films for the University of Oxford.

Lessons from Lockdown was released in March last year, and can be watched online following this link:

www.oxfordsparks.ox.ac.uk/videos/lessons-from-lockdown-energy-use

Watch this space – coming up this year, subject to final agreement and funding:

Two Bring & Takes, dawn chorus walks, a teddy bears' picnic at Kingfisher Corner, repair café, guided tree walks, more West Oxford Apple Juice, digital footprint workshops, publication of our guide for talking to kids about climate change, more Energy Saving Homes and Oxford Open Doors events, Energy Champion stalls and support with cutting your bills and making your home warmer, installation of an electric cargo bike in West Oxford, more business engagement... and more!

Volunteer with us: get involved!

We'd love fellow West Oxforders to get involved in what we do – as volunteers, committee members, members, or just by joining our newsletter mailing list – and we're always keen to hear about new things people want to happen or need some support to make happen locally themselves. If you'd like a no-obligation chat about how you could get involved, drop Mim a line at: mim@lcwo.org.uk



Sign up for the LCWO newsletter on the website:
www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk/maillinglistsignup



Find out what is coming up on our calendar:
www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk/calendar

www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk

TUMBLING BAY PRESERVATION SOCIETY

A year ago, around 40 people gathered early one evening to hear of the Council's plans for Tumbling Bay. The concrete north wall had become unstable and the Council talked of collapsing the bank into the basin and naturalising a new bank. In October, we met with the Council who talked about installing a bank of gabion baskets on the north side stepped down into the basin. We were concerned about the risks of baskets hidden in the water and the Council would not agree to install steps.

We were told a planning application was being prepared and the community would have the chance to comment. In February, we submitted a petition to the Council which was signed by 2271 people. It called for:

- Preservation of the historic character and shape of Tumbling Bay by seeking to repair or replace the existing wall
- Ladders continue to be in situ to allow people to get out of the river safely
- Council co-operation with local residents to explore ways in which funds could be raised to pay for the renovation work so that cost would not be a barrier as we understand that Council funds are hard pressed

On March 20th, we spoke about the petition at a full Council meeting. Enter the link below to see the presentation and hear the councillor discussion:

https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=TB_WI_z24zw

(Begins at 3:15 hours)

There was a lot of positive support and the Council voted unanimously for what we wanted, which was further engagement with local residents.

In February we submitted a Freedom of Information Request to obtain the details of options that we knew the Council had looked at. This is what we now know:

- Option 1 - Replacement by a concrete wall £202,000 with a life of 80 years
- Option 2 - Steel piling £192,000 with a life of 125 years
- Option 3 - Re-naturalisation of the bank £173,000 with a life of 4 years
- Option 4 - Gabion baskets (we have been told this can not be vertical but must be stepped) £166,000 with a life of 100 years (although some suppliers at least seem to say 60 years in water)

So what next?

We hope to hold a community meeting in April. We will update through the WOCA Weekly e-newsletter. Our aim is to ensure community feedback on the options. We are heartened that the option which provides the longest life, while not being the most expensive, is steel piling - a tried and tested method of edging Oxford's waterways. It replaces the basin's damaged vertical wall with a new vertical wall and retains the sense of history and purpose of Tumbling Bay.

Tumbling Bay Preservation Society

Join our page on Facebook to keep in touch -
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/355216079676319/>



Tumbling Bay then and now...

THE PERCH BEER FEST

Saturday 29th & Sunday 30th April
12noon - 9pm

Come & enjoy the best of local brewers in our very lovely, very large beer tent!

Over 50 Beers and Ciders to try from local and regional breweries. Fabulous food available all day from our Shed Bar and in the restaurant. Live Music and the Hook Norton Shire Horses.



www.the-perch.co.uk/beerfestival
www.the-perch.co.uk

STRUGGLING WITH TECHNOLOGY?

Who else (perhaps like me of the older generation who were not brought up with IT) gets increasingly frustrated with their mobile phone and computer? I suspect lots of us.

Who (perhaps of the younger generation that was brought up with IT) would be willing to devote an hour or so to help us to perform operations that might be simple to you but could help us avoid hours of frustration?

If there is interest, I'd like to suggest a regular session at WOCC (say once a month) for an 'IT Surgery'. Hopefully we could find a team of local people who could offer their services on a voluntary basis...

If you are interested in this idea from either standpoint could you please email me and we'll try and get something going.

Thanks so much,
Tony

amtalbot393@btinternet.com

U3A

Special Interest Groups (SIGs)

Our SIGs continue to thrive, pursuing their special interests, such as churches & pubs, gardening, walking, Bridge, Scrabble and discovering music. The Cinema Group meets once a month at Tumbling Bay Café, WOCC. We have two new SIGs – a reading group which meets monthly at Botley Library, and a lunch group which has proved particularly popular. Members of u3a can join as many groups as they like and some may even fancy starting a new one.

NEW MEMBERS ALWAYS WELCOME!

We meet twice a month: **2:30pm, Dean Court Community Centre, Pinnocks Way, Botley**. Do come along to a meeting – without obligation – and see what you think. You will be very welcome!

www.westoxfordu3a.org.uk

UNPRECEDENTED CHANGE IN WEST OXFORD BY COUNCILLOR LOIS MUDDIMAN

The number of large building projects in West Oxford which have already begun or are in the planning stages is unprecedented in the 30 years I have lived here. They include: Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme, Osney Mead, OxWed, DFS/Carpetright, Osney Power Station, Gibbs Crescent, Cherwell College, Oxford Train Station, Willow Walk and King George's Field cycle paths and the Tumbling Bay Pool Refurbishment.

They all bring change, (some positive, some negative) disruption and inconvenience during their construction phases. What has become clear to me is the importance of engaging with the formal planning process as early as possible. All projects are improved following input from residents. It can be complicated and time consuming and the sheer volume of information is sometimes over whelming, but it is best opportunity that residents have, to minimise or prevent any negative impacts.

If you become a member of WOCA (£6 per year), you will not only be supporting a fantastic local community organisation and get discounts on room bookings, you'll also receive their weekly eNewsletter (WOCA Weekly). It's full of local news and it's where I post regular updates about how to engage with this complicated process.

Please do consider contacting info@woca.org.uk to sign up and if you'd like more information about any of the projects mentioned, please contact me.

**cllrImuddiman@oxford.gov.uk
0748 301 0611**

Your MP at the time of writing is:

**Layla Moran
House of Commons
Westminster, London,
SW1A 0AA
layla.moran.mp@parliament.uk
020 7219 3905**

UPDATES FROM COUNCILLOR SUSANNA PRESSEL

Network Rail

We now know at last that the railway bridge over Botley Road will be closed this year from Tuesday 11th April until October. It will then close again next year from March until about October (though they hope to reopen it earlier, if possible). The buses will stop next to the bridge and pedestrians and cyclists will be able to get into town through the tunnel. There will be marshals to control the flow and to make sure cyclists dismount. The emergency services are making special arrangements. It is now looking more hopeful that Thames Water can repair the water main on Osney Bridge during these closures, to avoid further disruption for road users in the future.

EV Charging

Many residents are asking about EV charging facilities. The most powerful charging centre in Europe is located at Redbridge car park, but if you want something nearer to home, please search for Electric Vehicles on the County Council website or contact me.

City Centre Regeneration

A planning application has gone in for the wasteland and car parks between the ice rink and Osney Lane. They are proposing to build 234 flats (half of them would be affordable, mostly social housing), lots of labs for science and technology research, office space, a hotel and 258 student rooms (the Council says these would free up family homes, where students currently live). It would be almost entirely car free. The plan is also to expand Oxpens Meadow and create new green public spaces within the site, including an amphitheatre for free open-air events.

Binsey Lane

After campaigning for years, I'm delighted to say that there is now a 20mph speed limit along the whole length of Binsey Lane. This should make it safer for its many users.

Tumbling Bay Bathing Place

A planning application will soon be going in for restructuring the badly cracked north-east wall at the bathing place, to make it safe again. The ladder will be replaced and more reeds will be removed.

Oxford Flood Alleviation Scheme (OFAS)

Many local residents are fearful of another flood and impatient to see the start of this scheme. If the Environment Agency gets planning permission, there will be a new stream surrounded by a sloping floodplain of new wetland habitat and grazing meadow, to create more space for water away from built-up areas. The County Council should be able to decide on the application later this year, after another round of public consultation. DEFRA will decide on the compulsory purchase orders. Please get in touch with me for more information.

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Susanna is also your county councillor.

Susanna holds a Ward Surgery on the third Saturday of each month between 11:00am-12:00pm at West Oxford Community Centre.



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As you're probably aware, there are a few (some would say too many) redevelopments and changes taking place in West Oxford at the moment, such as: GRAHAM redeveloping the old Power Station, the redevelopment of Gibbs Crescent, Cherwell College redeveloping the old Railway Club on Mill St, Mission Street redeveloping the old Argos site and DFS/Carpetright site, O.C.C./Nuffield College/OxWED redeveloping Oxpens, Oxford Uni & other stakeholders redeveloping Osney Mead Industrial Estate, the Environment Agency and their Flood Alleviation Scheme, Network Rail/Kier redeveloping the station/Botley Road closures, Thames Water fixing the water mains under the bridge (at some point), Willow Walk closure and the potential implementation of 'traffic filters' (and probably a few more we've forgotten about). A lot is going on!

Keep an eye out for updates regarding local redevelopments and more, displayed on the WOCA noticeboards and in WOCA Weekly (weekly e-newsletter for WOCA Members). If you find information relating to local redevelopments and would like us to spread the news, email us on: **info@woca.org.uk**

If you would like to advertise in the next edition, please contact us on: **info@woca.org.uk** for more information.

Thanks to all who supplied content for this edition.

WOCA Team





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