

Oxford Waterside Residents' Association

February 2020: Issue 70

There are lots of Waterside activities to put in your diary, we always need helpers so please email us if you would like to get engaged, meet your neighbours and make new friends. If you are interested in being our contact with the local police please let us know as Allison is standing down. Also many thanks to Jane Doorly for keeping us updated on Thames Water.

Waterside Diary Dates

Sunday 1st March 2-4pm

Waterside & Spinney Litterpick

Come to Merrivale Square to pick up your litterpickers and bags.

Also Saturday 29th

February at noon.

Aristotle Lane

Recreation Ground Litterpick in celebration of Leap Year!



Friday 13th March 7pm St Margaret's Area Society meeting with local

police. To be held at Keble College's HB Allen Centre. Contact OWRA for further info.

Waterside Travel Book Club Meeting

Wednesday 18th March 8pm

Contact sarahjmunro@hotmail.com

Summer Sports and BBQ

Saturday 6th June

Save the day!

Sports 3-5pm followed by BBQ

Please be advised that the road around Merrivale Square will be closed to ALL TRAFFIC from 3 til 5pm.

If you have a problem with this please let us know (owra.owmc@gmail.com) by 1st April so we can make alternative arrangements for you.



If you would like to help with any of these events contact us on owra.owmc@gmail.com

OWRA & OWMC AGMs

Monday 15th June at

St Margaret's Institute

The May Newsletter will have our OWRA agenda and annual review, if there are any burning issues you would like discussed drop us a line.

We will include a membership payment envelope with the May Newsletter.

Electric Vehicle Charging Group

This group was formed after the last Waterside AGM. Given plans to make Oxford City centre only open to electric vehicles, this has real relevance for the convenience of residents as well as being of importance in broader terms for our environmental impact as a community.

Four diverse members: Diane Newell, Jonathan Finnerty, Juliette Ash and Jennifer Watkiss. Objectives set at the 1st meeting are to look at what might be possible on Waterside and make some recommendations to the OWMC.

In January and February we are researching our options, including conference calls booked with Elizabeth Bohun, Lead Technologist – EV Integration at Oxford County Council and separately with Sarah Hassenpflug, Sustainable City Project Manager at Oxford City Council, and by looking at the options available in the market at a well timed breakfast at the Said Business School in February.

We will be checking with residents and owners to understand what plans and preferences you have around electric vehicles and charging for the future once we have understood the practical options. But we would love to hear from anyone in Waterside who would like to be involved in the research work or who wants to contribute ideas and experiences to it.

It is hoped that the findings can be presented at the OWRA/OWMC AGM.

dinewell.dn@gmail.com

Local Neighbourhood News

Canal Footpath News

The Canal & River Trust is working closely with Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford City Council on a project to make improvements to a 2.3km stretch of towpath between Aristotle Lane and Godstow Road for the benefit of local people, boaters, and other towpath users.

The project is nearing completion. Much of the surfacing work has been completed in the southern section along with several improved access points. This popular section of the towpath has been reopened for people's enjoyment. The banks have been reinforced in places to establish wetland plants. These help to reduce bank erosion and provide habitat for the water voles, a nationally threatened species.

Much of the project will have been completed by mid-February when the towpath will reopen. Current activity will focus on completing the surfacing in the northern section up to Godstow Road, along with new signage and waymarking throughout. Contractors will return in Spring to apply a top surface of chip onto the tarmac. This can only be laid during periods of warmer weather. Once completed this will provide approximately 4 km of towpath, accessible 365 days per year running into the heart of Oxford. A dedicated group of volunteers help to maintain the Oxford Canal, attending to graffiti and planting along the walls. **They do not appreciate the amount of garden refuse that Watersiders are throwing over the wall and have asked that you desist!**

Garden waste (brown) bins can be obtained from Oxford City Council from just £49pa.

https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20070/garden_waste

George Street Junction

Over recent years there have been a number of changes in the layout hoping to make the crossing easier and safer to use. All seem to have fallen short in one way or another and the one currently operating is no different. The new layout will separate the junction into two streams of traffic, Worcester Street (north) and Hythe Bridge Street will operate together whilst George Street and Worcester Street (south) will work separately. Improvements will also be made to cater for the safe movements of both pedestrians and cyclists through and around the junction. The pedestrian crossings will be retained, but in this simplified layout, pedestrians using them only have to expect vehicles coming from one direction. See the diagram on

<https://www.jerichocentre.org.uk/>

Also follow links to County Council Consultation on the Walton Street closure. Open til 29th May.

Waterside Gardens

Apart from routine gardening, Nicholsons are renewing some of the plantings on Waterside.

This winter older shrubs and plants that were overgrown or dying have been replaced in Merrivale Square and Plater Drive. Dead/leaning whitebeam trees at the entrance to Rutherway have been removed, the replacements will probably be flowering cherries. Two cleared borders on Rutherway will be left bare for several months to ensure regrowth clearance, they will be replanted with flowering trees/shrubs, including multi-stemmed Amelanchier and Cercis. There will be further work to refresh the gardens in 2020.

Waterside House Martins

Waterside is lucky to have been chosen by many of these lovely birds to build their mud nests under the eaves of our houses, or in specially sited nest boxes. They delight with their aerial antics and it is lovely to listen to the birds' families gently chattering to each other, cheeping quietly together for an hour or so after dusk as they settle into their mud-nests for the night after a day's flying and insect-hunting. Whole families return to their nests long after their young have fledged, and roost in their nests, until they all leave for Africa and the winter.

If you need to intercept their droppings, a simple board can be used, or follow RSPB advice:

"While most people welcome house martins, the birds can occasionally be a problem, for instance if a nest is above a door. These conflict areas can be isolated by closing in the triangle under the eaves where the nests are built with a piece of wood, fine mesh chicken wire or parallel wires stretching from the outer edge of the soffit board to c.15cm down the wall.

Things you need to avoid

- Do not deny martins access to parts of the roof where their presence does not create a problem.
- Never put these deterrents in position to prevent access to an active nest and only remove existing nests, if essential, during the winter months when the martins are not in residence.
- **Knocking down an active nest or preventing birds access to their eggs or young is illegal and attracts potentially high penalties."**
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Your OWRA committee

Kay Gordon (Chair), 10 Merrivale Sq. 420532

Allison Hood, 16 Plater Drive. 07469 259510

Sarah Martin, 49 Plater Drive. 07970 100286

Sarah Munro, 9 The Villas. 580650

Sam Mahony, 39 Plater Drive. 07739 009640

Jen Watkiss (Treasurer), 28 Plater Drive. 514615

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