

# Osney Island Residents' Association Newsletter

## Power in Osney

Mark Van Oss, East Street

When the Saïd Business School's new Global Leadership Centre across the river is complete we hope to see an excellent conservation of the 1892 bright polychrome brickwork visible from East Street.

This brickwork on Osney Power Station was originally designed as an eye-catching celebration of the new industry. When the power station was opened, gas and oil lamps and DC low-voltage current were in competition with Osney's 'Oxford System' of AC. Initially this supplied just five street lamps, which had dragon finials. Within three years almost all the college and university buildings, many households, pubs and shops were electrified and we still enjoy the use of AC power today.

Water from the Thames cooled the coal- and refuse-fuelled boilers and steam turbines until the power station was closed in 1969.

## Award winners on the island

Jen Meakin, North Street

Jen Meakin and her colleague Sarah Knight set up The Allergy Team to help people with food allergies to thrive. This summer their business has won two awards.

- Innovate UK (the national innovation agency) gave The Allergy Team an Inclusive Innovation Award for its work championing people with food allergies and advocating for their inclusion in all areas of life.
- The Allergy Team was also declared Health and Wellbeing StartUp of the year in the Startup Awards London. These awards celebrate the achievements of entrepreneurs in all sectors of the economy.

The Allergy Team supports families, businesses and schools in keeping people with food allergies safer ([theallergyteam.com](http://theallergyteam.com)). Sarah and Jen recently launched an allergy forum for Greggs, to promote allergen awareness and best practice among the bakery chain's staff.



▲ Jen being presented with the StartUp Award by Michael Acton Smith, CEO of Calm app



▲ The brickwork on the old power station

## Vishuddha Yoga Centre, East Street

As it celebrates its first anniversary the Yoga Centre, designed by Adrian James, has won a Royal Institute of British Architects (RIBA) Regional Award (South). The award jury published an enthusiastic article in *The RIBA Journal* about the centre ([tinyurl.com/mspvf5ew](http://tinyurl.com/mspvf5ew)), which ends:

What is truly remarkable about the Vishuddha Yoga Centre is how well the drive for low energy and sustainability harmonises with the yogic philosophy of the charity that runs it. The use of natural materials, such as plywood and bare blockwork, has kept embodied energy low, while the careful modulation of natural daylight prevents overheating. This alignment of values gives the building a unique character and a true sense of purpose, making it a truly exceptional space.

The owners, James and Jacqueline, were also pipped at the post for a RIBA South Client of the Year Award.

## And a near miss...

*Elizabeth Newbery writes:* There was a rumour swirling around North St that two of its residents had won major awards. While this is certainly true of Jen (see above), I'm afraid for me it was sadly not so. The gossip was that I'd been summoned to Buckingham Palace, possibly for a major award. The first bit was true-ish but the reality was that, as a supplier (I've recently written a kids' book on kings and queens for the Royal Collection Trust) I was invited, not to receive a gong, but to a preview of the display of coronation robes which are part of the summer opening of the palace. Oh well...

## New on the block

Michael Rawson and Michaela Sommerová, West Court

We moved quietly to Osney in January and have been settling in since. We like the 'island feeling' and have particularly enjoyed Chatty Wednesdays, Tea on the

Towpath, the boat club, and a crash course in local government courtesy of the email list.

Michaela works in R&D for Infineum, a chemicals company just outside Didcot. She enjoys yoga at the very-local Vishuddha Centre, tray bakes, and petting other people’s animals. Michael works partially-remotely as a computer scientist for the technical university in Vienna and therefore disappears once a month. He enjoys jazz (all of it), cycling (on the road if all went well), and getting grumpy about technology headlines.

Mauricio, Vivien and Ignacio, East Street

We moved into a house in the middle of East Street last month. Vivien is a research fellow on climate-related topics at Imperial College London, and Mauricio is a strategic communications specialist who consults for a variety of clients. We both lived and worked in Washington DC for more than 20 years. Our son, Ignacio, has just finished sixth form and will be taking a gap year before going to uni.

While Vivien grew up and studied in Oxford, Mauricio is from Bolivia and did most of his studies in the USA. We are enjoying meeting and socialising with islanders, as well as discovering the fabulous walks along the Thames. Vivien reckons that Mauricio may be making history as the first Bolivian ever to live on Osney Island. Can anyone prove her wrong...or right?



**Horrible history...in my family**

Pauline Massey, Bridge Street

An old photograph has languished in my shed for years. Relatives, I presumed, but no one could identify them. Until I found myself, almost by accident, at a family history talk. Up popped the photograph of the mystery couple. It turned out the speaker and I share great-grandparents, and the photograph was of them. This was happy news. However, as my newly discovered cousin continued with her talk, there was something disturbing in the lives of our mutual ancestors.

Thomas Clay, born in 1810 in Elsfield, was accused of murdering the gamekeeper of an MP. Thomas was a poacher, but protested his innocence of the murder until the bitter end. The judge said that the evidence was circumstantial, but Thomas was still found guilty and sentenced to death in Oxford prison. He was hanged there on 5 March 1836, a month after his wife gave birth to their son.

I like to walk through the castle area with its historical associations. However, when I do so in the future, it will be with a sense of sadness at the gruesome end of one of my ancestors.

**Noise from neighbours**

On densely populated Osney any noise from homes or gardens is likely to affect several other households. Please consider your neighbours. Avoid loud conversations in the street or garden, and inform close neighbours in advance about parties or noisy DIY. Council advice (see the City Council website) is to hold parties in a proper venue such as a hall. If it must be in your home, take the party indoors and turn down the sound by 11 p.m.

If you are troubled by noise, the first step is to politely mention it to your neighbour, preferably face to face. They may not be aware there is a problem. If loud noise continues on a regular basis, log each event in a diary, and record the sound. You can download the Noise App for this purpose. You can then report the problem on the City Council website, and send them recordings. They will only respond if the problem is ongoing

Fireworks are prohibited between 11 p.m. and 7 a.m. There are extensions to this for Chinese New Year, Diwali, New Year’s Eve and bonfire night. This regulation is enforced by the police, not the council.

**Be aware of flood risk**

Mat Lloyd, Flood Resilience Officer, River Thames

The Environment Agency wants you to be aware that it is changing the way it uses temporary flood-prevention barriers on Osney. We will provide the same level of protection, but in a different way. In future flood events demountable barriers will still be used in South and West Streets. Along the river bank in East Street EA staff will build a sandbag wall if necessary, rather than trying to erect barriers under wet and dangerous conditions.

Remember that the barriers are only effective in relatively minor events when water levels don’t overtop them. In a serious flood which affected all properties on the island they would offer no protection. It is important to plan for flooding *before* it happens. Make sure you are signed up for flood warnings ([www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings](http://www.gov.uk/sign-up-for-flood-warnings)) and think about what you would do if your property was threatened with flooding.

There is some local flooding information on the OIRA website here: [osneyisland.org.uk/flooding/](http://osneyisland.org.uk/flooding/) and FAQs here: [osneyisland.org.uk/flooding/faqs/](http://osneyisland.org.uk/flooding/faqs/)

You can contact the Environment Agency by emailing: [enquiries\\_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk](mailto:enquiries_THM@environment-agency.gov.uk)

**Being flood ready**

A Be Flood Ready centre has been opened in Wallingford by Defra. It will be used to train builders and insurers in making properties flood resilient. Members of the public planning to flood-proof their homes can visit by appointment.

Simon Collings of South Street was interviewed on *BBC News South Today* for an item about the opening of the Wallingford centre. He spoke about his experience of being flooded, and of using property-level defences, on Osney.

As members of Oxford Flood Alliance (OFA), islanders Richard Thurston and Simon visited the new centre and

there is a report from their visit on the OFA website: [oxfordfloodalliance.org.uk](http://oxfordfloodalliance.org.uk)

You can see the BBC news video here: [youtube.com/watch?v=\\_8Fn7WwZX\\_Y](https://youtube.com/watch?v=_8Fn7WwZX_Y)



▲ Pumping flood water from Osney houses in 2014

**Tea on the Towpath and Open Gardens**

Susan Hutchinson, West Street

We were so lucky with the weather. There were new gardens and old favourites and a new location for the teas. Sitting on the towpath, meeting new neighbours and catching up with old friends is such a pleasure. And Osney bakers are the best. Thank you all so much for your delicious contributions.

Some numbers: eight gardens and Osney Hydro were open, all different and all full of character. We raised £470 for OIRA.

So many people contributed to the event, but I’d like to say a special thank you to Jude, Julia and Karen and everyone who helped with the teas, to Peter and Rebecca who played and sang, to Jula who managed the cash, and especially to the gardeners who worked so hard on their gardens and then generously shared them.

**Chatty Wednesdays**

Eli Harriss, Bridge Street

Osney Chatty Wednesdays continue to be a lively opportunity for neighbours to gather for a drink and a chat. Come and meet your neighbours! We get together in the garden at The Holly Bush, weather permitting, for a few hours on a Wednesday evening once a month to talk about cycling to France, local planning developments, Bolivian politics, dealing with slugs, Spurs...basically, any and everything.

The next few Chatty Wednesdays will be from 6.30 p.m. on Wednesdays 23 August, 13 September and 11 October. Reminders will be sent out via the Osney email list. Come along and look for me wearing a high-vis cycling jacket.

**St Frideswide’s Church**

Anne Andrews, Bridge Street

St Frideswide’s is not going on holiday. The main Sunday service is Holy Communion (modern language) at 10:30 a.m. Apart from the last Sunday of each month,

there is a Book of Common Prayer Holy Communion service at 8:30 a.m. Full details of services in the parish are on the noticeboards in Bridge Street and outside the church.

The Friday Community Meal continues, but with a pause on Friday 25 August. Posters at the church give further details.

**Seasonal recipe: crabapple cake**

Eleanor Dickey, Bridge Sreet

There are several crab apple trees in the local area where you might harvest fruit this autumn.

- Enough crabapples to yield c. 1.5 pints when cut up
- ¾ pint self-raising flour
- ¼ pint milk
- 115 g butter
- 1 egg, well beaten
- ¼ pint + 2 tablespoons granulated sugar
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon cinnamon
- ¼ teaspoon nutmeg
- ⅛ teaspoon cloves

Wash and core crabapples and cut them into pieces no more than ½ cm thick, leaving the skin on. Add cinnamon, nutmeg, cloves, and 2 tablespoons of sugar. Mix together and spread evenly over the bottom of an iron skillet or oven dish c. 9 inches in diameter. Combine flour, salt, and the rest of the sugar. In a largeish pot melt the butter, remove from the heat, and add the milk and beaten egg. Stir in the flour mixture until well blended. Pour this batter over the crabapples and bake in a hot oven for around half an hour.

**Directory of local suppliers**

This list is compiled from islanders’ recommendations only. Suppliers are removed if there are reports of unreasonable rates or service. The list is online at: [osneyisland.org.uk/directory-of-local-suppliers](http://osneyisland.org.uk/directory-of-local-suppliers) Local shops and services are listed at: [osneyisland.org.uk/local-shops-and-services](http://osneyisland.org.uk/local-shops-and-services) Please contact Jane Buekett to submit additions or changes.

**Baby kit**

Baby kit for hire: 01235 280081, [www.babycomes2.co.uk](http://www.babycomes2.co.uk)

**Bicycles, repairs and accessories**

Jon Wyver: 07842 901873, [info@oxbicycles.co.uk](mailto:info@oxbicycles.co.uk), [www.facebook.com/oxbicycles](https://www.facebook.com/oxbicycles) (will deliver and pick up in Oxford free of charge).

**Building and roof repairs**

Rob Cassettari, North Hinksey Builders: 01865 242312/07977 152884/07900 881511, [robnhc@virginmedia.com](mailto:robnhc@virginmedia.com)

Everest Roofing Ltd: 01865 881685, [enquiries@everestroofing.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@everestroofing.co.uk)

Brian French: 07957 315303 (local general builder and plasterer: takes on small jobs)

Paul Hackett, P & R Roofing Ltd (Horspath): 01865 875523, [info@prroofingoxford.co.uk](mailto:info@prroofingoxford.co.uk), [www.prroofingoxford.co.uk](http://www.prroofingoxford.co.uk)

Mark Mavrommatis: 07970 974792 (installs new windows, repairs old ones)

Tim Mera, KM Builders Oxford: 01865 608649, 07462 971475, [k.mbuildingservices@yahoo.com](mailto:k.mbuildingservices@yahoo.com), [kmbuildersoxford.co.uk](http://kmbuildersoxford.co.uk)

Oxford Roofing and Maintenance: 01865 820323, 07468 429000, [oxfordroofingandmaintenance.co.uk](http://oxfordroofingandmaintenance.co.uk)



Richard S. Pocock: 07766 026648 (general builder)  
Mike Shephard, MJ Construction (Abingdon): 07834 321274, [mjconstruction@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:mjconstruction@hotmail.co.uk) (larger jobs)

### ***Carpenters and flooring***

Steve, Amazon Flooring: 07899 918015  
Jonathan Everett, Lockwood Carpentry: 07597 952381, [j.everett.lwc@gmail.com](mailto:j.everett.lwc@gmail.com)  
Bill Spires: 07786 672492 (carpenter willing to take on smaller fiddly jobs)

### ***Car repairs and MOTs***

Oxon Autos in Grove near Wantage (will come to you): 07899 762949, [oxon.autos@live.co.uk](mailto:oxon.autos@live.co.uk), [oxonautos.co.uk](http://oxonautos.co.uk)

### ***Cat sitting/feeding and dog walking***

Shirley Gibson (also housework, shopping, companionship): 07510 991213 (Binsey)

### ***Chimney sweep***

Martin Simmonds: 07762 816185, [enquiry@ashlogs.com](mailto:enquiry@ashlogs.com), [www.ashlogs.com](http://www.ashlogs.com)

### ***Cleaners***

C&S Cleaning Services: 01865 872395, 07824 159855  
Edna: 07548 384737

### ***Computers***

Bill Baxter, The Animated Laser Company: 07774 412944 (noon to midnight, Old Marston), [bill@animatedlaser.co.uk](mailto:bill@animatedlaser.co.uk)  
Bill Richardson: 01865 376100, [bill@macfaction.co.uk](mailto:bill@macfaction.co.uk) (Macs)  
Mac Simple: 01865 580886/07974 321064, [www.macsimple.co.uk](http://www.macsimple.co.uk)

### ***Damp***

Damprot Renovations Ltd: 01865 742144  
Stonehouses: [stonehousewaterproofing.co.uk](http://stonehousewaterproofing.co.uk)

### ***Drains***

Matthew Andrews, Drain Technology: 07557 272393, 01865 587086, [enquiries@draintechnology.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@draintechnology.co.uk), [www.draintechnology.co.uk](http://www.draintechnology.co.uk) (lives on the island)

### ***Electricians***

Baldwin Appliances: 01865 377484, [www.baldwinappliances.com](http://www.baldwinappliances.com)  
Jamie Cooke: 07775 700300, [JC.Electrical@hotmail.com](mailto:JC.Electrical@hotmail.com)  
DEC Electricians: 01865 725453, [mail@decoxford.co.uk](mailto:mail@decoxford.co.uk), [www.dec-oxfordltd.co.uk](http://www.dec-oxfordltd.co.uk)  
RJB Electrical: 01865 882723/07711 934348 (rewires and new installations)  
Mark Morris (Botley): 07970 342375 (also plumber)  
Andy Webb (A W Electrical Services, Yarnton): 01865 377171, 07931 127982

### ***Footcare in your home***

Kate Reid: 07952 127534

### ***Garden compost and manure***

George: 01793 575100/07831 437989, [info@muckandmulch.co.uk](mailto:info@muckandmulch.co.uk), [www.muckandmulch.co.uk](http://www.muckandmulch.co.uk)

### ***Gardening services***

David Morris: 01865 725875 (gardening maintenance and some diy)  
Jason: [info@oxfordgardenservices.co.uk](mailto:info@oxfordgardenservices.co.uk) (tree surgery)  
Rory Whelehan: 07341 849035, [rory@rorlyn.co.uk](mailto:rory@rorlyn.co.uk) (gardener, lawn/hedge cutting, general tidying)  
Clive: 07787 741968  
Heather: 07522 856744 (one-off or regular jobs, heavy or light work including pruning)

### ***Green builders and installers***

Energy My Way: 08453 713181, [www.energymyway.co.uk](http://www.energymyway.co.uk)  
JoJu Solar: 01865 403336, [www.jojusolar.co.uk](http://www.jojusolar.co.uk)  
Next Generation Renewable Energy Ltd: 01993 810130, [office@ngre.co.uk](mailto:office@ngre.co.uk)

### ***Gutter clearing***

Ben's Gutters: 0800 917 3157/07778 240161, [info@bensgutters.com](mailto:info@bensgutters.com), [www.bensgutters.com](http://www.bensgutters.com)  
Greg Zasuwa: [clearviewforyou@gmail.com](mailto:clearviewforyou@gmail.com) (also window cleaning)

### ***Handymen***

Andrew Russell: 01865 453497/07977 837675 (painting, decorating and garden maintenance)  
Colin Stanley, The Small Odd Jobs Company: 07804 908545

### ***Home hairdressers***

Sally Horton: 07815 445229  
Nadine Wright: 07824 660184

### ***Locksmith***

Davies Hardened Security: 01865 371816/07711 625092

### ***Newsagent delivering to Osney***

Mr Patel, Court Candy Shop, 65 Woodstock Rd, Oxford OX2 6HJ: 01865 515506/07917 990029, [court candyshop@googlemail.com](mailto:court candyshop@googlemail.com)

### ***Oven cleaning***

Wayne: 07917 785906 (doesn't use chemicals)

### ***Painters and decorators***

Rob Bennett: 07905 819310  
Steve Brierty: 01491 836762/07850 357414  
Dave Buckle: 01865 848630  
Paul Buckle: 07920 099196  
John Chappell: 07985 490970  
Dan Driscoll: 07934 718788, [danieldriscoll63@gmail.com](mailto:danieldriscoll63@gmail.com) (also home repairs)  
Sam Gordon: 07976 516941 (plasterer)  
Brendan McCarthy: 07982 614633

### ***Pests***

Avenge: 02865 246195/07879 405060 (based in Binsey)

### ***Plumbing and heating***

APV Boiler Services: 01865 377264  
Byron Morris, Avid Heating (boiler repairs etc.): 07899 629629, 01865 703303, [www.avidheating.co.uk](http://www.avidheating.co.uk)

Jules Jones: 01993 778244/07790 961395, [reallygoodplumbing@outlook.com](mailto:reallygoodplumbing@outlook.com)  
Ivan Kilbee: 01235 847527 /07771 787585  
Mark Morris, Botley: 07970 342375 (also electricians)  
Remloc Plumbing and Heating: 01235 536345 (Abingdon)

### ***Removals***

A. G. Jacob and Sons: 07977 963929, [www.agjacobandson.co.uk](http://www.agjacobandson.co.uk)  
House and Carriage: 01608 811444/07769 585988

### ***Sewing services***

Maria Skoyles: 01865 721460/07590 264246 (sewing, repairs and alterations)

### ***TV aerials, wi-fi and satellite dishes***

Oxford Aerials: 01865 400141, <https://oxfordaerials.co.uk/> (installers and repairers)

### ***Window cleaning***

Mark Jennings: 01865 848904/07773 159198  
James Middlebrook, Transparent Window Cleaning: 07957 410771, [messageTWC@gmail.com](mailto:messageTWC@gmail.com)  
Torridon Slaney: 07746 356307

### ***Windows***

Oxford Refurbished Sash Windows, John: [info@sashrefurbcompany.co.uk](mailto:info@sashrefurbcompany.co.uk) (refurbish the wooden frame and insert double-glazed panels)

## **OIRA info**

### **Bridge Street noticeboard**

To display something on the noticeboard (no larger than A5) contact Julia Marsh [julia.marsh@btconnect.com](mailto:julia.marsh@btconnect.com) or put it through her door at 26 Bridge Street.

### **Osney email list**

To join the residents' email list, moderated by Alison Burdett, contact: [osiramanager@gmail.com](mailto:osiramanager@gmail.com)

### **OIRA committee**

Andrew Boag [andrew@boag.org.uk](mailto:andrew@boag.org.uk),  
Alison Burdett [alison.burdett@gmail.com](mailto:alison.burdett@gmail.com) (email list),  
Claire Dalton (secretary) [claire.dalton@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:claire.dalton@hotmail.co.uk),  
Maureen Ergeneli 07816 580990,  
Alan Goodwin (chair) 07765 034918 [alan@alangoodwin.co.uk](mailto:alan@alangoodwin.co.uk),  
Eli Harriss [gekh2@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:gekh2@yahoo.co.uk),  
Karen Schoenemann 07718 632742,  
Jula Turner (treasurer) 07971 881258.

Newsletter and website editor: Jane Buekett ([janebuekett@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:janebuekett@yahoo.co.uk), 01865 251454/07716 408085). Newsletter distribution: Anna Truelove.

**Councillor Susanna Pressel**  
7 Rawlinson Road, Oxford, OX2 6UE

**Osney and St Thomas Ward**

Home: 01865 554001  
E: [cllrspressel@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:cllrspressel@oxford.gov.uk)

## **OIRA newsletter supplement – August 2023**

### Improving the Island's road surfaces

At last the two worst streets have been resurfaced. Unfortunately they ran out of money to give the same treatment to the third worst – Swan Street. That will have to wait until they come back on 16–18 October to micro-asphalt the remaining streets – probably South and West first. I'm afraid all vehicles will have to be parked elsewhere for those 3 days. You will get a letter nearer the time offering free parking at Seacourt park and ride car park, but I think you can also park in Ferry Hinksey Road.

Annoyingly, they couldn't get rid of the puddles that often form in the "channel setts" (i.e. gutters) in East Street, because improving the drainage would apparently make the street more vulnerable to flooding – extra drains would more quickly "surcharge" when the river level rises.

### Air quality in Botley Road

The Annual Monitoring Report for 2022 is now on the City Council website. It shows the data from the four NO<sub>2</sub> monitors along Botley Road. The level of NO<sub>2</sub> has fallen consistently since 2016 (and it will, of course, be even lower this year and next year). The levels are now far below both the legal limit and the local target.

### Community Recycling Centre (CRC)

The City Council has decided to remove most of the CRCs in September, including the one in Ferry Hinksey Road. They feel that they are not needed so much, now that we all have access to kerbside recycling. Most of the containers are owned by charities, which often fail to empty them regularly. They are notorious areas for fly-tipping, and cost a lot to manage each year. The Council will provide information as to where we can take books and clothes instead.

### EV charging

The County Council is planning a large expansion of its Gul-e trial early next year, using cross-drains on the pavement. This enables households with no off-street parking to charge their electric vehicles from home. If you might be interested, please register here: [www.gul-e.co.uk](http://www.gul-e.co.uk) Details of more public charging points will follow, together with more electric car club cars.

### South Street pump

Thames Water has concluded that the enormous puddles that formed in South St in early June were a one-off and that the pump is working fine. They will continue to monitor it. However, they ask you to report any further incidents to them on Twitter or Facebook or phone the Customer Contact Centre at any time on 0800 316 9800.

Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me if you have any questions or concerns.

Best wishes

*Susanna*