



Florence Park



Newsletter

Nov 23-Feb 24

Hello! This newsletter is made by neighbours for neighbours. **Get in touch** if you can help to put the newsletter together in future - florenceparknewsletter@gmail.com

To the Manoir born

Back in April this year, Florence Park Community Association held a prize draw for those setting up regular donations, with the fabulous prize of a meal for two at Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons, kindly provided by the restaurant themselves. James Shaw was the winner, however he very generously donated the prize to Pete and Avril Cann for all their amazing efforts for the community. Here is Pete's article about their experience:

"Yes, it was our very own bus service, the number 46, that took us one July evening from Cornwallis Road to Le Manoir aux Quat'Saisons restaurant in Great Milton. We were the lucky recipients of a voucher for an evening meal donated by the owner of the Michelin-starred Le Manoir, Raymond Blanc, to the Florence Park Community Association. We have to thank James Shaw for this gift as he was one of the winners of the association's annual prize draw. He very generously passed the voucher on to us.

For those who have not been to Le Manoir, the restaurant is part of what is now a hotel. What was once a 17th century manor lies in several acres of beautiful gardens. The restaurant grows its very own vegetables. And what vegetables! I mean, who's ever heard of Lazy Housewife String Bean? Or Bloody Warrior Lettuce? The gardens are open to visitors so take advantage of it.

We had visited the gardens before but this was the first time we had ventured into the manor. We were shown to a lounge for an aperitif. Of course, we have one of those every evening. We were shown the wine list. Now this was a difficult choice as the wine was not part of the gift. The prices ranged from £39 to, um, £2,100! After much deliberation of about five seconds we went for the £39 one, a Languedoc for all you wine connoisseurs.

The restaurant itself is in a conservatory which gave a lovely view of the gardens. Our menu featured their own vegetables. I don't believe we had those odd-sounding ones in our seven courses. Yes, you did read right, seven courses, but it is no surprise to say it was all delicious. Gooseberry and elderflower with mackerel – how about that for a combination!

We had to have meat, of course, and that was veal with girolles. No, we didn't know what they were either. They turned out to be mushrooms (prized ones, of course). In case you wondered, we did have caviar. Yes, you're right, definitely overrated.

It wasn't just one dessert to finish on, but two – one fruit, the other chocolate. We really needed a coffee at the end of this feast, served throughout by first-class staff.

And to take us home, the ever reliable 46."

If you would like to become a regular donor to the Florence Park Community Association you can do so here: <http://www.florenceparkcommunitycentre.org.uk/payments.html>



FINDING THE LIGHT
Lanterns, Lights and Lasers

17th & 18th November 2023
4.30pm - 9.30pm - Food + Music + Hotdrinks + Carousel rides
FREE event in FLORENCE PARK, OX4 3PJ

More info - www.flofest.uk

Finding the Light 2023

(part of the OCC Christmas Light Festival)

17th & 18th November 4.30 - 9.30pm

Free Christmas Light Festival event with Lights, Lantern, Lasers

Food, Drink, Carousels & lots of MUSIC!!

Hosted by FloFest with support from Fusion Arts, & OCC

Neve, a child of Florence Park

I would love to introduce you to my daughter Neve. Neve was born on a frosty Saturday morning in November 2012. She died at home at the end of April, 2023. Her birth and her death bookended a life lived full of energy, wit, feistiness, curiosity and sorrow.

From the age of three, Neve attended Larkrise Primary School. Much of her outside school time was spent in Florence Park and its playgrounds. You could often see her riding her bike, playing with friends, on the swings or high up on the climbing frame. She always had snacks with her and was often up to mischief!

Neve was diagnosed with brain cancer in July 2020 and her final three years were filled with hardship and suffering. However, they were also years filled with connection and support and incredible people. Neve spent much of that time at home, with visits to Helen and Douglas House when needed. She was firmly a child of Florence Park, in every way. For her ninth birthday, she asked for a big painting of Florence Park. Thanks to Etsy, we managed to find her a glorious autumnal painting, by Daniel Drury, of the chestnut alley. It still hangs on the wall of her bedroom now.

I have started to write about Neve's story and about illness, caring, dying, death, grief and more. Alongside my writing, I am also painting Neve. I would love to share my writing and artwork with our local community, as this community was such a source of support for our family. You held us up and kept us going.

Please come find me here <https://emilytammam.substack.com/>



Wildlife Conservation volunteering around the city

Oxford City Council Countryside Ranger Service manages just under a 1000 acres of nature reserves throughout the city including Port Meadow, Shotover, Lye Valley, Longbridges, The Kidneys and many more. We are looking for more volunteers to join our regular Thursday volunteer group which carry out practical conservation tasks across all of our sites. This includes:

- 🌿 Learning to scythe
- 🌿 Coppicing
- 🌿 Hedge-laying
- 🌿 Meadow and fenland management
- 🌿 Fence repairs
- 🌿 Tree planting
- 🌿 Litter-picking

And much more

Please come along and join a friendly informal group and play a part in tackling the biodiversity crisis and helping nature throughout the city. The group will be led by eminent ecologist Judy Webb and our junior ranger. No experience required! Come along for exercise or just a cup of tea and biscuits. Email Tom on oldginger16@gmail.com if interested.



Florence Park Bridge Group

Do you fancy a friendly game of bridge? Come and join our newly formed bridge group. We meet at FPCC at 7.30 pm on the last Thursday of the month for a very informal evening of bridge. All abilities welcome. So if you fancy it, turn up at 7.30 pm on Thursday 30th November, or email me on viv.peto@retired.ox.ac.uk for more information.

Helping to keep Florence Park safe

Neighbourhood Watch Network is the largest voluntary organisation for crime prevention in England and Wales, and gives free membership with window stickers and road signs to deter crime.

Would you like to start a Neighbourhood Watch scheme or be a member in your local area? Neighbourhood Watch is most effective where there is a local scheme run by a Coordinator who has an email circulation list to share local crime and community safety information and to promote being a good neighbour.



The Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator is known by Thames Valley Police (TVP) Oxford as the main contact with the local neighbourhood policing team for their particular road (s). As a Coordinator, you can share and be given information by your designated police community support officer (PCSO) and pass this on to residents. The police and Neighbourhood Watch share a unique partnership by keeping communities safer. This takes little time but is effective when you have any local issues.

You can join online as a member at <http://www.ourwatch.org.uk> but we are also particularly looking for Coordinators. If the latter, please let me know if you want further information or want to become a Coordinator.

Maggie Lewis
Area Coordinator OX4
Area Representative and Administrator Oxford Neighbourhood Watch
Vice Chair Thames Valley Neighbourhood Watch Association

Hedgehogs need our help!

As winter is approaching, please think about helping hedgehogs to hibernate safely. First make sure when you tidy your garden to leave piles of dead leaves near a hedge, useful for their nest, and a pile of logs might provide shelter too if you have not got a hedgehog house for them. Every garden should have a small wild area!

Be careful when moving open compost piles, it would be easy to hurt or kill a whole family nesting there (I still remember the horror of doing this once...). Also: talk to your neighbours to ensure a 'highway' is made between all the gardens in your street, as hedgehogs have to travel far for food.

If you can provide a feeding station (out of a big plastic box), put out some cat biscuits and always a bowl of fresh water (not milk!). The hedgehogs need to feed well before hibernation and will sometimes wander out in the middle of it for some food...

Make sure your pond has stones or a plank set so that they can easily get out if they fall in.

The population in Florence Park has declined, I have not seen one in my garden for two years, but I still have a film of a mother and her hoglet going to the feeding station and am hoping to see that again one day. The hedgehog house sheltered against a shed is full of hay, ready for moving in, just in case. There are some still living around Florence Park I have been told, so please ensure we can help them survive the winter.

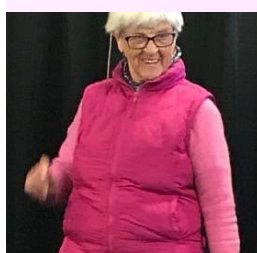
If you need more information, please contact the PTES : People's Trust for Endangered Species. They are working hard to help this small endangered mammal we rarely see, and they need more hedgehog champions! Give me a call if you want more information.

Eliane Aubain 07989 037650



Lindsay Marsh's 90th birthday

Many of you will know, or recognise Lindsay Marsh, a Florence Park resident who turned 90 in September. Her birthday happened to be during rehearsals for the Oxford People's Theatre for their next production 'The Moon and Darker Tales'.



Lindsay is very active in our community, having been a cast member in several of the pantos, attending a lot of events at the Community Centre, a regular member of the book club, often going to Flo's, and riding her bike everywhere. We would like to wish her a belated happy birthday and thank her for all her support!

Tac-au-Tac Dance Theatre
Joelle Pappas Projects Contemporary Dance and Choreography

Creative Contemporary Dance Classes

... an imaginative approach to dance technique...
... develop confidence and musicality...

On Fridays at Iffley Church Hall

tacautadance@gmail.com

What's on at the Florence Park Community Centre

ZUMBA: Mondays 9.30–10.30am

Join Nuria on Monday mornings for uplifting Zumba nuria.myfitnessclass.com/classes

Fit for the Over 50's Class: Mondays 11.15am

Award winning bodyweight/equipment based exercise class. Call Carl on: 01865 920460 or email: carl@livinginfitness.co.uk. Booking essential to secure a space

Cygnets (Children's art class): Mondays 4.30–5.30 pm

Traditional drawing, painting & sculpting. Professional materials provided. Ages 5–13 years. Contact oxford@cygnetsartschool.com or 07880 501 560



Starling Yoga: Mondays 5.30–6.30 pm

Explore a range of postures, breathing techniques & mindfulness practices. Contact <https://www.starlingyoga.co.uk/offerings> booking preferred, £8, £10 or £12.

Oxford Ukuleles: Fortnightly on Mondays 7.30–10pm

Next beginners class term starts 9th Oct 2023. Email info@oxfordukuleles.co.uk or see www.facebook.com/groups/OxfordUkuleles or oxfordukuleles.co.uk

Book Group: Third Monday of the Month 2.30–4.00pm

Florence Park Book Group welcomes any one who enjoys reading and discussing books. Members get to choose a book so there is a diversity, as well as occasional poetry months.

Low Cost Acupuncture: Tues, Weds, Thurs & Fri from 9.30am

Curious about Acupuncture? Suffer with aches, pains, headaches, tension, stress or depression? Book a session today. Sessions cost £16.50, last about 30 mins and will be done in a group setting. For more information and reviews contact Joe: joe@holistic-health.org.uk or www.holistichealth.org.uk/booking or www.facebook.com/holistichealthox

Puppy Play & Training: Tuesdays 6–7 pm

Do you have a puppy between 8–16 weeks? Come along for a six-week training course please email Emma: rdtoit@gmail.com for more information

Buttercross Theatre Drama Class: Tuesdays 6.45–8 pm

If you have an interest in the performance arts arena, come and step into a world of meeting new people, boost your self-confidence, self-esteem, develop your hidden talents and let your creativity run riot. Find your voice through our fun filled sessions. We work on improvised performance, script work and acting for film and tv. Contact us at hel-lo@buttercrosstheatreproductions.co.uk

Managing the Menopause: Second Tuesday of the month 7–8.30 pm

Drop in support group for peri-to post-menopause. Please email Emma: hello@managingthemenopause.com for more information

Florence Park Baby Coffee Group ("Cake Club"): Wednesdays, drop in 10.00am-12.00pm

A friendly hang out space for parents to take themselves and their new (not yet mobile) baby/babies, where you are served fresh coffee, teas, homemade cakes and biscuits. Free entry, donations welcome. Contact cakeclub-fpc@gmail.com or florenceparkcommunitycentre@gmail.com

Florence Park Toddler Club ("Toddle Time"): Wednesdays, drop in 12.15–2.00pm

A friendly hang out space for parents and their crawling and walking baby/babies where you are served fresh coffee, teas, homemade cakes & biscuits. Free entry, donations welcome. For babies that are mobile to 2yrs. Contact cakeclub-fpc@gmail.com or florenceparkcommunitycentre@gmail.com

Kids Martial Arts: Wednesdays 6–7.00pm

For 6yr+, £3.50 per lesson (first lesson free). Contact Matt Hills for information or to sign up 07790180137

Florence Park Talks: Second Wednesday of the month 7.30pm

Florence Park Talks present a series of illustrated talks aimed at those with curious minds. The subject matter is broad and varied. These talks are free to attend, although we encourage you to donate a minimum of £5 per person. The collected funds go towards the running costs of the Florence Park Community Centre. Social Pub bar is open all evening. Contact Mick on 07874 926633 or florenceparktalks@gmail.com for further information on how to book in advance.

Seedlings Music & Singing with Sarah: Thursdays, 09.30–10.15 am

Weekly drop-in for babies and parents. No need to book. £3 payment (cash preferred, but you can pay via the website when you arrive) 45 minutes of songs and playing with instruments to make lots of lovely sounds and noise. Any ages up to pre-school.

Then you can follow on with a free stay and play intergenerational group - Nippers & Slippers. Have a cuppa and a chat, along with residents of the ISIS care home

Nippers & Slippers: Thursdays 10.30 am–12 pm

Weekly drop-in for babies & parents. No need to book. Intergenerational stay, play, chat and relax. Collaboration between the Community Centre and the ISIS–held at the ISIS Care Home across the road from the Community Centre on Cornwallis Road.

T'ai Chi sessions: Thursdays 5.45–6.45 pm

Cost: £50 for any 5 sessions or £80 for all 10. Contact Anne for more information: taichi@annemack.org, tel: 01865-714849 or taichi-in-oxford.co.uk

Bridge Group: Last Thursday of the month 7.30pm

Do you fancy a friendly game of bridge? Come and join our newly formed bridge group. Contact viv.peto@retired.ox.ac.uk for more information.

Pilates with Jane: Fridays 9.30–10.30am

Contact Jane on janecallawaypilates@hotmail.co.uk to sign up (booking essential). clevermovement.co.uk

Over 60's Free Lunch Club: Fridays 12–2pm

Please do get in touch to discuss with Rachel coming along and joining fpcover60@gmail.com or 07864 028 591

Oxford Maternity Library: Last Saturday of the month 12pm–3pm

The newly re-formed and not-for-profit Oxford Maternity Clothes Library is just that. It makes so much sense—rather than buying new clothes that you'll only get a few months use out of, you can hire a whole wardrobe for next to nothing. See their Facebook page for details: www.facebook.com/oxfordmaternityclotheslibrary

Singing Women: Monthly Saturday workshops 3.00–5.00 pm

See Emily's website for more details: www.emilyschoirs.co.uk

Sunday Lunch: First Sunday of the month 12.00–3.00pm

The Social Pub bar will also be open for a lunch time pint or glass of wine. Profits fed back into the Community Centre to help sustain our lovely classes & events.

Upcoming special events at the Florence Park Community Centre

- ✪ Florence Park (and beyond) Women's Network: 17 November 7pm
- ✪ Winter Market: 18 November, 11 am–3 pm
- ✪ Sunday Sessions: 12 November 3–6pm
- ✪ Open Mic: 3 December 4.30–9.30 pm
- ✪ Xmas Film Night: 8 December 5–9 pm
- ✪ Songs of the Season: 16 December 6.30–9.30 pm
- ✪ Panto: 24–27 January
- ✪ Hugh's Hedgehog Talk: 23 February 7 pm
- ✪ Florence Park (and beyond) Women's Network: 2 February 7pm

Panto 2024

Florence Park Community Centre & the Florence Park Players will be bringing SNOW WHITE to the Community Centre in January 2024



Tickets will go on Sale at the start of December
There will be five shows from 24 – 27 January 2024
If you would still like to get involved please get in touch, many hands 🙌 make this a truly community production.



FLORENCE PARK SUNDAY SESSIONS

Our Sunday afternoon gathering for families and friends, featuring great live music, activities, food & bar

12 NOV 3-6PM

ROGER BEAUJOLAIS
(VIBRAPHONE VIRTUOSO)

JACKIE OATES

(LOCAL LEGEND OF ENGLISH FOLK)

lovin. it local

Florence Park Community Centre,
Cornwallis Road

£6 adults, under 12s £4

Tickets available from wegottickets.com
more info @ facebook.com/floparksundays

The Jolly Postboys under new management

Our local Florence Park pub, the Jolly Postboys, has recently changed management. Here, new manager Louis tells about what's been going on so far, and what we can look forward to from the pub:

"It's a great pleasure to introduce myself and re-introduce The Jolly Postboys.

It has been a whirlwind few months since taking over, but I'm delighted with the progress we've made and even more delighted with the fantastic response and support from our community. We are working to ensure that The Jolly Postboys is the local that we can all be proud of. I'm a firm believer in pubs being at the heart of their communities, offering friends, neighbours, relatives a place to unwind and socialise.

As a local resident I was a regular of The Jolly Postboys and have seen it change considerably since we first moved to the area. I was saddened to see the pub struggling (like many others) post-covid, having shone so brightly before then. My background was pubs and restaurants and I have spent several years working closely with some of the larger pub companies on the food side of their operations. Having always harboured an ambition to one day have my own pub, I felt I had to grasp the moment when The Postboys became available.

I'm aiming to develop a really fun, welcoming community pub, with good food and diverse drinks. I think the changes to date reflect this; we had a brilliant Summer-ish party in August, relaunched the kitchen with a simple menu of pub classics, introduced bean bag throwing game "Cornhole" to Florence Park, tested the grey-matter of locals with a rather lively pub quiz

and hosted a raucous birthday bash for one of our regulars. We've got much more planned for the diary too: a brilliant festive menu, snow parties, NYE shindig and more...

We've also built the foundations of a really good team around the pub, many will recognise Ed from the 'old days', he's stepping up and taking on more responsibility for the front of house operations. In the kitchen we've got a really solid team in Vlad and Joe, who have a great blend of experience and energy as we start to push ahead with our more expansive menu plans and (crucially) Sunday roast dinners.

I think Florence Park is blessed with a really great community of vibrant, unique, hard-working, socially spirited and engaged people – it's a privilege to be part of it and something I'm really proud of. Equally, I hope that you can feel proud of your local pub. I hope that we will continue to see many of you here enjoying good times, good food and drink and participating in our events.

Your friendly local publican,
Louis x

We are working on our communications, currently the best place to see regular updates on the pub is via our Instagram account @jollypostboysoxford. We will be looking to regain control / revitalise the Facebook page and also a monthly JPB email newsletter in the near future.



Local resident profile: Trevor Williams

Trevor Williams is a local Oxford musician performing live and teaching in schools. He first started playing the piano at the age of seven and went onto play guitar at age 14. His favourite instrument is the drums but he plays guitar, piano and ukulele. He believes music can express moods and emotions and introducing / teaching music is something that children enjoy.

He gets inspiration from the current climate and says he "likes being creative, creating something new and likes expressing mood and emotion and gets pride out of accomplishing a final product". He claims "you always get nerves, self-conscious or paranoia". He plays both solo and in bands "when you're solo you have more control, when you're with a band it sounds greater". His most recent work is the 'Brown River' ep.

You can find him at <https://linktr.ee/trevwilliams>

Saturday Morning Football

Florence Park Saturday morning football has now been running for over 10 years. It's held at 10.30 am every Saturday morning, come rain or shine, and welcomes players of all ages and abilities. A number of regular players are off to university this year – we wish them well and look forward to seeing them at Christmas vacation.



NEW VINYASA YOGA CLASS

Fridays 1-2pm (term time)
Iffley Church Hall
OX4 4EG

£12 drop in or book in advance at:
www.bridieyoga.com

Bridie Yoga

Sunday mornings are for junior parkrun!



Florence Park junior parkrun continues to go from strength to strength as ever more local families are discovering the joys of getting out and being active on a Sunday morning.

The free event, which sees children aged 4–14 walk or run two laps of the park, launched in December 2019 and since then over 1,000 different children have taken part, clocking up over 16,500 laps of the park between them. The event averages 60 juniors per week but the recent months has seen attendances of over 100 juniors for the first time!

Junior parkrun is organised entirely by volunteers and has become a social hub for the community, young and old alike. The team would like to thank all involved for their support and encourages individuals and families to come and discover junior parkrun for themselves!



<https://www.parkrun.org.uk/florencepark-juniors/>

Looking for a Fab Christmas present?



Introduction to spinning yarn,
Sunday 14 Jan 2-5pm

During this three-hour workshop you will learn the basics of spinning yarn on a drop spindle and take home your very own skein of hand spun yarn!

Katherine from Yarny Goodness will provide all the materials you need to give this ancient craft a try. You'll learn the basics of turning fibre into yarn, how to spin using a drop spindle, and how to ply and finish your yarn

Participants will be limited to 6 to ensure individual attention.

£35 per person. To book, email Katherine at hello@yarnygoodness.net

Learn
TAEKWON-DO 태권도

4TH DAN INTERNATIONAL INSTRUCTOR
ALL ABILITIES WELCOME

ST. MARY & ST. JOHN SCHOOL
MEADOW LANE

UNDER 13'S
FRI 5:30-6:30

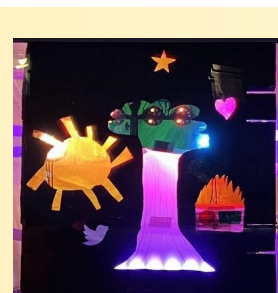
07818 420809

Facebook.com/ Oxford City TKD
Oxford City TKD @ gmail.com

"The quill feather of the jackdaw..."

Friday 24th Nov '23
7pm (Doors 6.30pm)

In aid of:



Register to take part in the Florence Park WINDOW WALKABOUT

Friday, Saturday & Sunday 23–25 February, 6–9 pm

Decorate your windows in any way you like and light them up each evening for people to enjoy. Your decorations can be as simple or as elaborate as you like. Black paper and coloured tissue paper work well when lit up with lights. There's an easy 'how to' guide on our website: florenceparkwindowwalkabout.weebly.com, or you can contact the team on florenceparkwindowwalkabout@gmail.com or on 07980 588494 if you would like this sent to you.



We would love to get as many houses as possible signed up to take part in the 2024 Florence Park WINDOW WALKABOUT. If you would like your house to be involved and to go on the Walkabout map please fill in our simple form at <https://tinyurl.com/FPWW24> or follow the QR code.

A big thank you to our Florence Park News distributors

Ever wondered how the newsletter reaches your doormat? The answer is Florence Park community magic.

Three times a year I organise the distribution with Sara Reevell at the community centre, calling for volunteers to take on a street. Between us some 25 volunteers deliver 1,400 copies to every household in Florence Park and all the local venues. The volunteers change with each issue – there's never any pressure to do it again and no-one has to deliver more than 60 to 100 copies. It's great for seeing what neighbours are doing with their front gardens!

Get in touch if you'd like to be contacted about delivering.
Judith Secker (seckerjudith@gmail.com)



Florence Park Talks

Florence Park Talks present a series of illustrated talks aimed at those with curious minds. The subject matter is broad and varied. These talks are free to attend, although we encourage you to donate a minimum of £5 per person. The collected funds go towards the running costs of the Florence Park Community Centre, a registered charity.

They always take place on the second Wednesday of every month at the Community Centre on Cornwallis Road, OX4 3NH. They begin at 7.30pm, and the Social Pub bar is open all evening.

Please email florenceparktalks@gmail.com for further information on how to book in advance. Or call Mick on 07874 926633. Please recommend other speakers you'd like to see.

8th November: Danny Dorling presents "OXFORD – OCTOBER 2023 ACTING UP IN THE MOST UNEQUAL CITY IN THE MOST UNEQUAL COUNTRY IN EUROPE".

Local hero Danny returns to the theme of inequality and the invisible walls of Oxford.

10th January: Ibrahim Fowler presents "LONGING FOR A PLACE CALLED HOME – THE STORY OF THE STATELESS KURDISH COMMUNITY". Over 1% of Oxford residents are Kurds, and Ibrahim can enlighten us on this fascinating community.

14th February: Our old friend Maurice East returns with an entertaining critique of Oxford's challenging transport system from a historical perspective "THE TROUBLE WITH TRANSPORT IN OXFORD – A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE" is the initial title.

