Laser Combat - Who is interested? - 27/12/15
This is, in some ways, the ideal point of the year to be thinking about it. If you want to do something in town as a leisure pursuit, your options are pretty limited, right? Especially if you're a minor. You have to drive to Wantage or Swindon or Oxford for pretty much everything other than about five options. So we should add another option to that.
Who's ever heard of laser combat? (Chorus: "Is it like LaserQuest?" Yes - in the same way as Sudbury House is like Travelodge: technically competitors, but they're not even in the same league) I used to be involved with an arena in the West Midlands; their parent company manufactures the laser guns - they use replicas of real military weapons, rather than a flimsy plastic case that could be from a budget '80s sci-fi film; there's no heavy pack to carry, just sensors on a British military issue flak jacket. We also had a party room so that we could cater for birthday parties as an all-in-one experience, which I'd like to try and replicate.
You could play a 20-minute game for about £10 per person and a 90-minute game was only about £20 per person; obviously, I'd try to keep the prices at that level down here too and, with enough custom, maybe even beat them despite inflation. I have a good relationship with the manufacturers and would probably be able to get a decent finance deal on a system... I already have several people interested in being part of this as a town co-operative (and several more who would totally play) so what I need now, first and foremost, is a candidate place in or near Faringdon to do it. It needs an arena of at least 5000 square feet (about 465 square metres) though this can be just an industrial unit that I would modify, but it also needs a decent front-side space, for reception, office, briefing room, armoury etc. Building all of that would be prohibitively expensive unless there's a millionaire willing to chip in, so it needs to be readily available.
But as well as that, I need to know some other things. More people willing to be part of the co-operative's board, people who would enjoy working there (I always did) and people who would enjoy playing there. So kindly pick an answer on this poll and share it about to other people in town. And feel free to open fire with any comments you have too, I'd be glad to answer queries, address concerns or clarify anything I've explained badly above.
If you know of a possible premises that I could go to look at, then absolutely shout out!
The poll is here:
Douglas Carr

Mummers play - 24/12/15
Saturday 26th December Market Square, 10am

Meditation group? - 24/12/15
Does anyone know of any meditation and/or spiritual groups in Faringdon? I am keen to join.
Name supplied

Quirky....27/12/15
"Hilary – as I’ve told you before, you’re my favourite Faringdon artist. It would be wonderful if you were also involved in the design of the town sign, to be part of the process that ensures we meet the above worthy objectives. Mary Beck – the same goes for you of course."
LOL
Hilary

Folly Tower Light - 24/12/15
Because of safety and reliability problems the light needs to be fully refurbished. Peter white is working flat-out to do the work but we are sorry to let you know that it won’t be ready before Christmas. We know that the light is loved by the people of Faringdon. Please bear with us and we will get the light on ASAP.
Friends of the Folly

Town sign (yawn) again - 23/12/15
The word "quirky" seems to sum up quite well what has already been planned and pulled off by the Pink Pigeons, stone divers helmet, plastic pigeons hanging off of window sills in the town, signs stuck on shop walls all saying Faringdon with the letters moved about to make them amusing, even the banner at the bottom of their website declares "stop press, Faringdon to become the suRURAlist capital of the world" to close to the word surrealist perhaps, but I suppose that's the joke, the trouble is Faringdon isn't a joke.

Is it any wonder that a lot of people are worried that everything proposed is going to have the Berners wand waved over it, I even half expected a pink pigeon to emerge from the refurbished clock cooing the hours.
Berners was just one resident of this town with far to much time and money on his hands, he was frightfully amusing to his friends in what was a different world to now, do we all have to live in the shadow of this eccentric man who seems to be held up in a god like manner by his modern day groupies.
For pity's sake lets all grow up and turn this town into a place to be proud of not some tacky end of the pier show.
Painting toilets to look like something else and having overpriced ridiculous moving town centre signs which are not needed are not going to bring coach loads of visitors into Faringdon .........mind you.. a chair lift to the top of the Folly tower from the town centre might do it....now that's a thought.
Name supplied.
**Town Sign** - 23/12/15

Hilary, many thanks for your very constructive posting relating to the town sign. I agree with much of what you said, and I do hope that your excellent suggestions for other ways that we can celebrate our 800 years will also be organised and made happen! I also agree that just being “quirky” for the sake of it would be completely inappropriate. And I’m not even sure how or why this word <quirky> has crept in and somehow slightly hijacked the discussions. As you can see from the background documents and my summary (N&V posting from approx 10 days ago?) - this is the kind of language that I would prefer to use:

A Town Sign, designed by the community and erected in a prominent spot in the Market Place seems a fitting way to celebrate this anniversary. It can be a celebration of the past; relevant to the present; and take us on into the future.

I don’t think I’ve used the word “quirky” in any of the discussions or background documents, except to describe one of the four options in the town sign first phase public consultation. And similarly: for the toilet art, the artist’s brief requests “celebrating Faringdon in a contemporary but respectful way”. It doesn’t ask for quirky.

So – what would be a better word to replace quirky?


Hey, some people might even call the Folly light "quirky" - but it's much more than that. Whatever is erected in the way of a town sign, it has to be very much part of – and in keeping with – the fabric of Faringdon’s wonderful Market Place.

Hilary – as I’ve told you before, you’re my favourite Faringdon artist. It would be wonderful if you were also involved in the design of the town sign, to be part of the process that ensures we meet the above worthy objectives. Mary Beck – the same goes for you of course.

Sjoerd

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**Two observations on comments** - 22/12/15

The first one is regarding our MP. I don't follow his party but I have found him to be a very good constituency MP. Seriously interested in his constituents and very interested in Faringdon. If you have any concerns email him and he WILL listen. I have had to contact him several times over the last few years on behalf of other people who were reluctant to do it themselves and he was totally brilliant and helpful.

Anna Hoare is wrong. If the site is returned to farmland there is no guarantee that there will access to the fossil faces as there are no rights of way on that land. How can you concrete over the face of a quarry especially as it is protected by an SSSI status. And that is the point. I have actually been in the quarry (by invitation) and there is nothing on the quarry floor. The faces are fascinating and as they are protected the best way of protecting them and giving access to them is to allow part of the floor to be developed. I actually think this could be an opportunity to make a special feature of the quarry to attract visitors who would definitely not be welcome on farmland.

**Green Witch**

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**Re Faringdon Police 'Station'** - 22/12/15

All of you hands up when A) You last went to the police station in Faringdon and B) When was it last manned? The fact is they have massive cuts to make and losing the police station is not really the issue. What is important is that they still do the occasional patrol and drive by plus still make use of community officers.

Without jinxing things Faringdon has got a lot better lately and when you look at all the crime figures around Oxfordshire it is doing OK.

**Robert Perkins**

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**Dry Cleaners London St?** - 22/12/15

Any one got any news as it seems to be shut all the time.

**Susan McCutcheon**

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**Recorders wanted** - 22/12/15

I am starting a recorder group for our young ones at church (after the little Ukes)

We need recorders - any size - and I wonder if anyone who is de cluttering or upgrading or just feeling a bit of Christmas spirit have one they would give us.

It would be magic for Christmas Day, but could wait till the new year.

If you have a recorder that you no longer use, please contact Dllm.williamson@btinternet.com 01367 240033

**Lyn Williamson**

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**Faringdon Police 'Station':** 22/12/15

‘POLICE counters across the county are to close, it has been confirmed this afternoon...

The changes are scheduled to come in from April 1 2016 and will affect Cowley, Henley, Didcot, Thame, Wantage, Faringdon, Wallingford, Carterton, Woodstock and Chipping Norton.’

Just as well the town is totally crime free... I would say contact our MP, but I don't think he knows where Faringdon is apart from the bite we are taking out of his new houses total.
Together we can protect Faringdon’s unique site of geo- and biodiversity. - 21/12/15
A big thank you to everyone who has backed the campaign to PROTECT WICKLESHAM QUARRY FROM DEVELOPMENT. 11th January 2016 is a key date and we urge you to lend your voice to the public consultation.
Natural England calls it “one of Britian’s richest palaeontological sites.” Wicklesham Quarry SSSI is too important to be buried under concrete and warehouses. It is the last exposure of the Faringdon Greensand geology of the Corallian Ridge, and its unique fossil record has contributed to the development of paleontology since the 17th century.
Under the Convention on Biological Diversity, Wicklesham quarry is part of the West Oxford Heights Conservation Target Area (CTA). CTAs cover only 17% of Oxfordshire land but support 83% of UK BAP priority species and 95% of Oxfordshire’s SSSI sites. Wicklesham tetrad’s 11 rare plant species and the quarry’s mature breeding colonies of protected Great Crested Newts are intrinsically linked to its rare underlying geology.
Objections to Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan's proposal to turn Wicklesham Quarry into an industrial warehousing (B2, B8) site must be made by 11TH JANUARY 2016 to the Vale of White Horse District Council, and they will then go forward to the independent planning inspector.
You can email protectwicklesham@gmail.com and request the campaign’s submission points on how the Neighbourhood Plan’s proposals for Wicklesham Quarry breach the “Basic Conditions”.
Anna Hoare

Driveway revival. - 21/12/15
Thank you “Faringdonians” for your suggestions. Have a number of quotes to go through and shall make a decision soon.
Colin

Folly Tower Light - 21/12/15
A number of people have been asking us, about this year light on top of the tower and why it is not up there yet.
First, we do not know what we will have on top of the tower this year. This is decided by our Electrician (Peter White).
The reason the light is not yet on top of the tower is due to the weather and Peters availability.
This year the weather has not been on our side as most of you will have noticed.
All the equipment for this years light is in the Tower and ready to be put up. We are now waiting for a small break in the weather and Peter being available to put the light up.
Raoul van Eijndhoven
Folly Tower Team

Lorries on Radcot Bridge - 21/12/15
https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/weight-restriction-orders
Here members of the public can make their own sightings by completing a report. Please no photographs as they can often cause difficulties with some prosecutions as the actual method of taking the photograph is often challenged as a more serious offence, especially if taken on a mobile phone whilst driving.
Can I just add the actual going over the bridge is not the offence. It is the act of passing through both restrictions signs which are 1.2 miles apart.
OCC

Faringdon’s historic Market Place - 21/12/15
I’ve long since thought that the look of Faringdon would be much improved if there was some sort of colour scheme from which to choose. Would be good if shop signage and window styles were part of the scheme.
Local Yokel

Faringdon’s built heritage - 21/12/15
"I would hate to see a form of forced uniformity"
Mike - Forced uniformity isn’t what I was suggesting.
H T

Town sign - 20/12/15
I agree with Hilary. On one of my vernacular architecture courses I learnt that Faringdon is unique as it contains elements of Vale as well as Cotswold architecture. There are also hints of attempts at copying Coleshill House in some of the roofs. The facades of Gloucester Street and London Street are particularly attractive and there is something in the idea of taking the best elements of these into the market square.
Incidentally, I can see why the PPs might think the disabled parking sign is redundant, since I saw a perfectly fit man park his truck there while he went into the bank. Let him just wait until his knees are as arthritic as mine!
Mary Beck

Quirky signs or homogenous blandness? - 20/12/15
OK, so some of the market square facades do need some serious renovation, however, does the varied colours of the individual buildings jar the senses? No I don’t think so. Rather they serve to emphasize the variety of the time span of construction. Some like McColls which in my view is rather naff, need toning back to reflect the overall antiquity of the Market Square, but I would hate to see a form of forced uniformity that blights so many communities administered by such as the National Trust. One "quirky" sign that is crying out for inclusion however, should be placed adjacent to the junction of Stanford Rd. and London Street (Road). In cast iron and pointing down hill, it should read: “To The Beach”.
Mike
That festive time of the year - 18/12/15
One could always send Krampus cards instead -- based on old European folk law, Krampus was a helper to St Nicholas, where as Nicholas rewarded the good children, Krampus would do the opposite. Could be a busy boy round here!

Merry Christmas, Mike.
Ho! Ho! Ho!!
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Krampus

Block Paved Driveways- 18/12/15
The contact phone number for AK Arlott is Ken Arlott 07736 897759
Unfortunately the landline number is no longer in use.
Sam Lewis

Bin Collections over Christmas - 18/12/15
Ed

Town Sign - 18/12/15
The Town centre comprises a number of fine buildings in a conservation area. They are imposing and handsome in their own right. They are all listed buildings. The buildings and the conservation area itself tell much of the story of the town’s history. Our built heritage deserves to be seen to its best advantage, not upstaged by a ‘quirky’ sign. I doubt very much whether tourists will flock to Faringdon to see a sign, but may be encouraged by a sympathetically improved town centre.

The Market Place has a very distinctive and potentially distinguished style. The (painted) buildings, while individually attractive do not always harmonise with each other, and so contribute to a discordant look. Study the green-and-orange Old Town Hall and ask yourself if it looks good against the backdrop of the surrounding buildings, or not. Maybe, instead of striving to come up with ever more additions to be ‘bolted on’ to the existing agglomeration of planters, seats, and signage we might imagine that it could be better to simplify, perhaps implement an integrated and imaginative colour scheme and enhance the visual impact of the existing environment. Some of Oxford’s historic streets are a good example of how this might be achieved.

I believe that a sympathetic refurbishment of the town centre, a well written history, maybe a locally written play, (Dramatic Society? – or see ‘How To Put On a Community Play’ by Sarah Burton), an exhibition with a well produced catalogue etc. would all make just as – actually more - fitting and informative celebrations for 2018 as a quirky 12ft high town sign. We’ve had plenty of quirky, thanks.

Hilary Taylor

New houses planned for Fernham Road Faringdon Not Great Coxwell - 17/12/15
This is very confusing this is not in Great Coxwell, it is a technicality to say this due to how the boundaries are set out . It is in fact in Faringdon on the Fernham Road ( school and leisure centre road). The address and post code of these houses would be Faringdon not Great Coxwell. Another development on this already congested road, planning permission had already been given for another development on this road How many more houses is our town expected to build our schools and health center are already struggling.
houses on Fernham Road P15/V2649/O - 21/11/15
Land at Fernham Road Great Coxwell. Erection of 25 dwellings with open space and associated infrastructure
Target decision date 5th February 2016
http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/java/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=ApplicationDetails&REF=P15/V2649/O
Name Supplied

Faringdon based Chef heads to the final of Masterchef the Professionals - 17/12/15
Restaurant 56 has really been getting things right in Faringdon and is a great asset to the town. Now Nick Bennett is heading on the right track to win Masterchef the Professionals.
On a side note did anyone else know we have the very talented Rory Bremner as a resident of Faringdon?
http://www.oxfordmail.co.uk/news/14149913.Faringdon_chef_books_place_in_TV_show_final/
Rob Perkins.

Re-driveway needs reviving - 17/12/15
Colin, my near neighbours used;
A K Arlott & Co. 01367 240793
They are very pleased with their driveway and it looks very nice.I will certainly be getting A K Arlott& Co. to quote for mine when I get my driveway block paved in the near future. I am sure they can give you the addresses of driveways they have paved, so you may have a look at their handiwork.
Regards mark

Driveway - 17/12/15
just had my drive block paved by martin whittle did a good job
Gordon Brockie
Re: Driveway needs reviving - 17/12/15
Would recommend WG Clay Contractors (01367 244047). They have done work for family members over the years, always with really good results - and very pleasant to deal with as well!
Richard King

Self Defence classes - 16/12/15
Combined Self Defence are pleased to announce, that to complement their existing Tae Kwon Do classes that from January 2016 they will be opening an adult only self defence class based on Bruce Lee’s Art of Jeet Kune Do.

Jeet Kune-Do or JKD as it is commonly referred to is a mix of open hand and weapon based training to give you the tools to deal with one or more attackers, standing up, on the ground or if a weapon is involved.

Jkd is particularly effective for “non martial artists” as the skills you develop are directly applicable to self protection, and can be used without the years of training that some classical martial arts require to install the automatic responses from blocks and punches, and in these increasing times of trouble, are skills that everybody should have to hand.

We offer all new students a FREE 4 week training pass to properly help people evaluate and decide if this type of training is appropriate and enjoyable for them.

Classes are held at Ferndale School in Faringdon on Tuesday evenings from 7-8pm.

To register your interest please fill out the booking form at www.selfdefencevoucher.co.uk or call Lee on 07977 560086

To Kick Start your New Year, In January 2016 we are offering all new students a Free 6 week training program instead of the usual 4 weeks.

We Also have a T.A.G.B Tae Kwon-Do club, which is a separate martial art.

TAGB Tae-Kwon-Do
Tae Kwon-Do is one of the fastest growing martial arts in today’s world. We train in Ferndale School on Tuesdays with a Junior class 4-11 years starting at 5pm and a Teens/Adults class starting at 6pm. All instructors are police checked, insured and qualified Black Belts within the Tae Kwon-Do Association of Great Britain.

We offer all new students a FREE 4 week training pass to properly help people evaluate and decide if this type of training is appropriate and enjoyable for them.

Classes are held at Ferndale School in Faringdon on Tuesday evenings from 5-6 & 6-7PM.

To register your interest please fill out the booking form at www.martialartsvoucher.co.uk or call Lee on 07977 560086

To Kick Start your New Year, In January 2016 we are offering all new students a Free 6 week training program instead of the usual 4 weeks.

We offer all new students a FREE 4 week training pass to properly evaluate our classes.

Regards
Lee Chapman
lee@cirencomputers.com
07977 560086

Photographic exhibition - 15/12/15
Faringdon Photography has a gallery showing in the Portwell Angel from now until the start of January 2016. A great place to eat (their cooked breakfasts are awesome!) or to meet for a drink.

Ian Campbell

Driveway needs reviving - 15/12/15
Have a concrete drive which is past its best and looking to get it block paved probably. Can anybody recommend a decent tradesman or company who will do a good job please. Have seen a few done badly and would like it done properly. Would be done sometime in the new year. Thank you

Colin Eddy

Fossil Finials - 15/12/15
The Fossil finials on the Folly Park View estate were not a Pink Pigeon project. The money came from the arts funding from the Bloor S106(?) money. The project was facilitated by Abigail Brown the Arts Development Officer at the VWHDC but we, the residents, chose the artist (who happens to be a member of the Pink Pigeons I believe) but we had input on ideas and had final say in the designs that were used. It’s great to hear that they are as popular as ever.

The two notice boards that were commissioned as part of the arts project as well should be completed and installed soon and the fencing around the balancing pond has just had the designs ok’d. All done with input from residents of the estate.

Emma Riddle (Folly Park resident and member of the residents association)
RE: Fossil Finials - 15/12/15
They were indirectly connected in as far as a past PP member Gill Campbell was the active consultant to the Folly Park View Art team.
They were catered for by money left from Bloor Homes as part of the Estate arts money. It was this that helped fund the diver in the town center.
The Residents Association worked hard on getting the right look for the entrance and are working currently on some final things for the Estate including a fossil based fencing art project around the balancing pond. A fossil based Folly View Park sign for the front of the estate, a Notice board and hopefully dustbins at some point.
It is great to get positive feedback on the finials that are certainly quite magnificent and very apt for the area. I am sure you will be very pleased with the further improvements underway.
Rob.

Petrol in Wantage 101p/litre and Diesel 107p/litre - 15/12/15
Regards Mark

Eccentric/Quirky - 15/12/15
I think what Number 6 was getting at was while a small amount of eccentricity is ok and enjoyable too much soon becomes tacky and tedious.
Simply by our feathered friends holding Berners up to be the second coming, I and a great deal of others think this and the fact the usual apathy from most of the other residents of our town over what is planned gives them carte blanche to do what they like, so everything soon falls under the "quirky " banner.
I'm a great believer in less is more, where as more soon makes you feel sick.
I love to see this town alive but please don't turn it into a lunatics playground or try to make it the quirky capital of the world, it deserves far better treatment than that.
Name Supplied.

Fossil Finials - 14/12/15
I'm on Folly Park View; a relatively recent Faringdon resident. We (or at least the people I speak to on the estate) really like our four fossil finials at the entrance, and the link it gives us to Faringdon's history and the farningdon sponges. That was another pink pigeons project I'm told. And speaking for myself, I really do like all the quirky stuff! It definitely makes me more likely to want to come into the town centre, rather than drive to Swindon or whatever. And when we have family to stay, I love showing them around. Keep up the good work!
Folly Park View Resident.

Faringdon and the Civil War - 14/12/15
I would love it if a local artist got the job for the art installation on the public loos- someone who is interested the Battle for Faringdon and the part it played in the 17th century Civil War. It was a hugely important event in 1645 and there is nothing in the town about it. It would add to local knowledge about our history as well as improve the town visually.
Old Faringdonian

Faringdon Singers Concert - 14/12/15
It was a wonderful concert. The Faringdon Singers sang beautifully and there were many opportunities for the audience to sing too.
A lovely occasion
Local Yokel

Children singing- very funny - 14/12/15
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ihQuiyVlXU&feature=em-share_video_user
Ed

Faringdon Singers Concert & Refugees - 14/12/15
The Faringdon Singers raised just over £500 yesterday for the HARBOUR PROJECT in Swindon at their annual Carol Concert in the Catholic Church. The Harbour Project welcomes refugees and helps them find their feet. MANY THANKS to the very generous audience. Let's follow Canada's lead! See https://goo.gl/zImlBI
Sjoerd

Public Toilets - 14/12/15
The Pink Pigeons obviously find this all very amusing but seriously, the Vale has 5K left over from the toilet refurbishment. Goodness, who did the quotes for them? I could suggest that they should have spent more money and had them made secure, vandal proof and in the first place properly furnished as there were no baby changing/nappy facilities. I hope this has been rectified now.
I actually find spending this amount of money on making the loos more interesting quite obscene in the current climate. I think everybody wants clean, tidy and properly maintained loos which could be done with 5K.
I really do appreciate that the PP's want to make the town quirky and interesting but history does that on it's own. Adding to the town with some of these 'enhancements' could very easily push our towns history to the background, or is that the idea, the PP's become part of the history?
Having lived here all my life, many decades actually, I still have family who remember Lord Berners. He was unique and
original. Sadly, there is nothing original about copying ideas of a rotating sign from Berlin and a toilet from New Zealand. As for a toilet block in New Zealand being the second most visited attraction, I can't say it was second on my list or anybody else I know who's visited. Maybe in the town they are in but in the whole of New Zealand, really?

Of course, well done for persuading the owner of the Nut Tree clock to have it spruced up, it looks lovely. But well done also to all the people and volunteers in the town who do things that go unrewarded and unnoticed. My own late Father was one of these people, not part of a group, just somebody who liked to do good things. I'd like to think that the pink pigeon who sorted it out would have done so anyway, not just because he/she is a pp.

So sorry, I will never support anything that allows a sum of money this big to be spent on prettying up public toilets. I find it disappointing that anybody would do. It has nothing to do with not appreciating art but it has everything to do with seeing people scraping money together to have a decent life, but then having to see 5k flushed down the pan and being done so by the District Council.

If they have 5k left over then I'd rather see it given to the schools for art equipment or to the elderly in care homes to provide stimulation.

Name Supplied.

MULTITASKING PIGEONS - 13/12/15
It's a fair cop guv. We're guilty as charged by Name Supplied. We've been caught with our pants down. At risk of frightening the horses, we'd like the following offences also taken into account m'lud. We do indeed have multiple projects on the go simultaneously (at present there are seven) and some of these are indeed in "a town centre location" (of which there is more than one).

Funding for each project typically involves a lot of cajoling, badgering and cage-rattling, as well as the generosity of individuals and businesses. It's time-consuming, but can also be rewarding. For example, it was a pink pigeon who successfully persuaded the owner of the Nut Tree to spend the money to carry out the recent clock spruce-up. It was the perseverance of a particularly persistent pigeon who discovered the leftover loo lolly in the council crapper coffers. What would happen to the money if it wasn't spent on this little loo project, I wonder? Well, in a moment of honesty, a district councilor did admit that "we seem to spend an awful lot on consultants…" Best to spend it on a Faringdon Town Centre location – don't you think? And we certainly don't want that lot in Wantage getting their greedy hands on it.

Pink pigeon

FRENCH TOILETS - 12/12/15
My family stopped going to France fifty years ago because of the state of the awful french toilets. Mind you, they might have improved since my grandparents' time.

Squatter.

P.S. Was it the pink pigeons who were responsible for the very helpful direction signs on the lamp post just behind the new toy shop? One says "Public Toilets" and then just underneath it says "Pay & Display".

The Prisoner 2016 - 13/12/15
Rotating 3D signs in the middle of the town, a concrete divers helmet, artistically decorated public toilets, strange characters dressed up as long dead eccentrics, a flock of plastic pigeons adorning several buildings, strange signs stuck onto walls in the town centre all saying the same thing but with the letters mixed up just to make it amusing.

All we need now are some large white balloons guarding the roads into Faringdon all called Rover of course then we can get twinned with Portmeirion and then we can all be extras in the remake of the cult sixties surreal series only this time filmed in Faringdon.

Name supplied then allocated a number.

Number 6

Public Loos - 13/12/15
I had the need to use the public loos in Ross-on-Wye recently. The need was urgent and I rushed in and did what I needed. I then looked for loo paper. There was none in the cubical. Nor was there any where it would ever be. I went to wash my hands and left the loo which is when I found the paper, just inside the door. Does anyone know how much paper they will need before they go and who thinks to look for the paper before they go in the cubical.

Bizarre.

TRIPADVISOR: ALWAYS JUDGE A PLACE BY ITS TOILETS - 12/12/15
And Lewis Mumford (the famous town planner of the 60's) would agree: “A civilisation may be judged by the way it disposes of its waste" (Mumford, 1965). As would Action for Market Towns: "Towns are often judged by their loos. " And Mary Portas (much loved retail guru, broadcaster & campaigner - and and straight-talking retail marketing consultant) : "Really important: get your toilets right". Remember the "Hidden Britain" Consultants who wrote the secret shopper report for Faringdon in 2012? What was top of their list: the toilets. It seems that visitors are very heavily influenced - both positively and negatively - by the public conveniences.

If you're looking for inspiration, google "Hundertwasser toilets"! Opened in 1999, they have become the second most visited attraction in New Zealand. Something similar for Faringdon?

Sjoerd
**£1 PER LITRE FOR PETROL?** - 12/12/15
Not quite. But if you’re going to, or passing through, Lechlade its £105.9. So 3p cheaper than the Esso garage in Faringdon.

Tony

**Public Toilets** - 12/12/15
I think, name supplied, you will find that the 'call for submissions' re the public toilets is a typical example of the Pink Pigeons famous wit.
It's awfully funny don't you think? ;)
A. N. Other

**Public Toilets** - 12/12/125
Dear name supplied,
I think I love you.
Mary Beck

**RE: The Esso price discrepancy - pay at pump** - 12/12/15
I was disappointed to see that pay at pump had been removed, so when I was paying inside the shop asked why it had been removed and if it would be back. The reply was that the new owners did not think they made enough money from fuel only sales and by making you go into the shop to pay, customers are more likely to buy other (overpriced) things.

As a resident of a village between Wantage and Faringdon, the higher price of fuel in Faringdon is another reason to head towards Wantage for my shopping trips when I need to buy fuel too.

Tom

**Faringdon Car Parks** - 11/12/15
**The question:** This morning at about 0950 I parked a car in the Budgens car park and obtained a free ticket. The rules I believe stipulate that no free return is allowed within 2 hours? I was therefore surprised that at about 1520 hours today when I returned to the same car park I was denied another free ticket. The message in the machine said – NO RETURN.

I therefore had to pay but surely this should not be the case? I was way beyond the 2 hour return prohibition. This has happened to me before at the same car park but I have not previously queried this. Could you please look into this and let me know what the criteria is? Thanks

**The reply**
I have consulted the Car Parks team and

It appears that the technology in the car park machines are not intelligent enough to be able to calculate the time between tickets obtained on the same day and to know that two hours has passed since the registration was first input. The only way we are currently able to enforce this is to program the machine to 'clear down' all data at midnight at which point the vehicle registrations are wiped from their memory allowing anyone who has had a free ticket to get another one the next day.

The car parks team advise users who return to the car park more than two hours after they leave the car park to use the other pay and display machine. The two machines do not 'talk' to each other and so do not recognise registration numbers from each other. This is a workaround due to the type and age of machines.

If car park users find themselves in any kind of predicament, the car parks team encourage users to call them during normal office hours on tel. 01235 547665 or email carparks@southandvale.gov.uk and they can give anyone advice.

Name Supplied

**2 new shops in Faringdon** - 11/12/15
Gluck Gifts and Homeware 8 London St
Little Big Top Cornmarket

**Faringdon Free Food** - 11/12/15
After a break last month, this Sunday morning (13th December) we'll be running a short tidying up session, particularly of the Town Centre planters, to prepare them for winter.
We'll meet at 10.00 am in the Market Square. All adults and children are welcome.

Mark

**RE: The Esso price discrepancy** - 11/12/15
It has indeed risen dramatically since the refurb and you are not even getting the benefit of paying at the pump. It is certainly a shame that they seem to be blinkered about their price. Sadly whilst you still get people stopping and using them I don't see that price coming down any time soon.

If all the town were to boycott them for a month I am sure they would buckle and be fairer with the pricing. It comes to something when you can go to the BP off the A420 and get it cheaper!
As far as I can tell the only good thing since the new takeover is the new free cash machine now outside and available 24/7.

Rob

**Public Toilets** - 11/12/15
So am I reading this correctly, the Vale Of The White Horse District Council has found 5k to spend on works of art for the public loos? The same loos that have just been vandalised?
And who are these many local people who felt the refurbishment was a missed opportunity to use the central location for an artistic enhancement to the Town?
I'm guessing the same people who are pushing hard for a great big 3D rotating sign in the middle of the town to go along with their divers helmet?
I thought the sign was for the central location but now it seems the loos are a central location too.
I love this bit 'The work/s of art should reflect the character and distinctiveness of the area and be used to celebrate Faringdon in a contemporary but respectful way'. Ok, shove it in the toilets then.

Name Supplied.

Petrol £1.00 a litre. - 11/12/15
Won't happen in Faringdon as since the Esso was taken over by the present landlord, the prices have increased on all the stations they run.
The Esso near to Sainsbury's at Stratton always price matched the store but now its 3-4p a litre dearer. Why? Profiteering clear and simple. Do as I do. Boycott the place and go elsewhere. Even cheaper in Oxford and fairly soon in Carterton there will be an ASDA fuel station AND they are always cheaper.
Esso Faringdon are plain and simply ripping everybody off. Go elsewhere.

Colin

Calling local artists - 11/12/15
VWHDC have found some money for making the Public Loo Building look more interesting. Here is the artists' brief.
It would be great if local artists who know Faringdon well responded. Deadline is 21st January 2016
Pink Pigeons

PETROL TO FALL BELOW £1 PER LITRE... - 11/12/15
... scream the headlines. I bet it doesn't in Faringdon which consistently 3p more per litre than anywhere else. Why?
Tony

Re: Faringdon History. - 10/12/15
Can I add to Margaret's history, Faringdon was also very involved in the earlier civil war in the 12th C between King Stephen and the Empress Matilda (aka Maud). The reason there is a bend in the road at Radcot is because Matilda had it rerouted to go round the castle she had there, the remains of which are still there as a ditched mound.
One of them also had a fortress on Folly Hill.

Green Witch

Vale town High Streets. Footfall increases - 10/12/15
High streets in the Vale of White Horse district continue to buck the national trend with footfall increasing significantly from the previous year.
Surveys carried out across town centre locations in Abingdon, Faringdon and Wantage during September and October revealed that the number of people visiting each area had increased by an average of 15 per cent compared to same period in 2014, the third year running that footfall in the town centres has risen.
The results are very impressive, especially when compared to the national average, as high street footfall continues to decline, dropping 0.9 per cent year-on-year (ATCM - High Street Index figures).
The biggest increase locally was seen in Faringdon where footfall rose by a very impressive 25 per cent. Wantage saw a 19 per cent rise, while Abingdon's footfall increased by eight per cent.
Cllr Matthew Barber, Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council, said: "It's really promising to see that footfall in our town centres is continuing to rise. The more people we have coming to our town centres the greater the support for local traders and the more retailers there will be who may consider setting up shop in the Vale. Our towns have been really good at putting on events to help attract people. We also have our two hours free parking scheme and the ever popular markets to help encourage more shoppers."
To read the full survey please click on Footfall Survey 2015.

VWHDC

ALEXANDERPLATZ AND THE ROTATING SIGN - 9/12/15
Andy Hayter's post about the World Time Clock in Berlin is fascinating. I tried googling "Alexanderplatz" as he suggested, and he's absolutely right! Alexanderplatz is huge, and a Berlin-based friend estimates that there must be close to 50 statues and installations and works of art and landmarks in "the Alex" (that's what they call it there) . And yet - when you google it, most of the images are of just the one installation: the Weltzeithu - the world time clock. And the reason for this focused fascination? Because it rotates. It was built in 1969, and if lovers hold hands under the rotating structure for a non-stop 24 hours, then they will be together forever. Or so it is said!
Sjoerd

John Gillman - 9/12/15
John Gilman would have loved the celebration of 800 years. His knowledge of the Civil war was second to none.
Miss his stories
Dee England
I'm pleased we are celebrating 800 years of Faringdon's history. John Gillman, who loved this town and did so much for it, said this was the second most destroyed town in the Civil War. We lost our church tower and many people - including those in London Street - lived under canvas for many months. But the town survived - I feel lucky and privileged to live here - and is still a great and vibrant place. We have already celebrated our eccentric and brilliant Lord Berners - the diver and the blue plaque on the Folly Tower - now let us commemorate our important place in the country's history - in the Civil War.

And not now for such an important anniversary, but let us already remember the hanging of many of our townsfolk outside what is now the Hare in the Woods, watched by Judge Jeffreys from his courtroom in the Crown.

Faringdon is no ordinary town!
Margaret Barker

TOWN SIGN – AND MARKET CHARTER ANNIVERSARY IN 2018 - 8/12/15

Many thanks to all those who have contributed to the town sign discussions in any way; on facebook, on faringdon.org, or on the printed voting slips in the Tourist Info Centre. Clearly, we want the discussion to involve as many people as possible. You may have seen that there are also voting slips in the Folly newspaper. Views will inevitably differ; reaching consensus is often not an easy process! However, we do hope that everyone taking part in the discussions will do so in a positive and constructive way.

And of course we also hope that people will find the time to read the comprehensive background documents - all on www.pinkpigeons.info. This is where you will find the full details and the thinking behind the town sign.

However, at the same time we appreciate that time is precious. Therefore – here’s an eight-point summary of the “Background & Process Document”.

1. On the 7th March, 2018, Faringdon will celebrate 800 years since the granting of its market charter by Henry III. We want to ensure that we have a thriving and vibrant marketplace that will be at the heart of the community for another 800 years. A Town Sign, designed by the community and erected in a prominent spot in the Market Place seems a fitting way to celebrate this anniversary. It can be a celebration of the past; relevant to the present; and take us on into the future.

2. The process of developing the sign is being coordinated by the “Pink Pigeons”. This is an open group, and all are welcome to participate and to come to Pink Pigeons meetings. The process is taking place in stages – and is designed to be as consultative as possible.

3. The first public consultation stage began in the third week of November, and continues until January 18th; when there will be a presentation at the open Town Meeting in the Corn Exchange.

4. This first stage is to introduce the concept of the Town Sign and to choose the general direction that the town sign will take; for example Traditional; Contemporary; Quirky; or Rotating.

5. Mockups have been prepared so that people can better visualize what a particular approach might look like. These have been labelled: SHIELD, HILL, BOWLER, and GYRATORY. The elements included in these mockups are purely illustrative. If you have other ideas in terms of the general direction, then you are encouraged to express these views through the additional comments.

6. The Joint Economic Forum have contributed £300 towards the process of developing the town sign. No other funding is in place at the moment. Contributions will be sought from individuals, businesses, and appropriate funding bodies.

7. The Town Council are supportive of this process and in particular the public consultation, but have not approved the town sign; nor have they expressed preferences. The District Council are also being consulted, through the Vale Arts Officer and the Vale Conservation Officer.

8. Proposed next steps after the general direction has been chosen: Submission of pre-application; public consultation 2nd phase (choosing the elements); invitations to submit designs (local artists especially welcome to submit); fund-raising.

We do hope this is helpful, and will lead you to want to read the full documents and join in the discussions!

Pink Pigeons

Harry the cat is missing - 8/12/15

Harry is long haired - mainly tabby on the back and tail and white on his tummy and legs. His face is mainly white with tabby above the eyes. He's got black around one eye and pink around the other. He's 17 and has arthritis, so sometimes limps a little when he walks. He is missing his bottom fang tooth.

Please contact Anne Walton on 07871 709277 or hannahcampbellwalton@hotmail.co.uk
Housing and A420 6/12/15 - 8/12/15
Yes Mark, My sensibilities have been offended or perhaps aroused would be a better description. I seek fair play. My point, that seems to have eluded you, is that News and Views should not be used to post insulting and abusive remarks about people and then the contributor allowed to skulk behind a pseudonym. I'm surprised our esteemed Editor allows it and that you seem to condone it.

On a happier note, the new clock looks great. A real bonus for Faringdon It will look even better when the weather mellows it Congratulations to all those involved in the project
Dennis Haynes

A420 and a roundabout - 8/12/15
I agree Rob. This strategy is just tinkering. I laughed whilst reading many of the areas mentioned, especially
"A new roundabout will be located on the A420 at Great Coxwell to replace the existing slip road. This upgrade is funded and will be delivered by the developers of the nearby strategic sites"
- The roundabout is apparently now not a condition of the approval of the housing in Faringdon, so for sure will not happen. and "SV 2.10 Delivering improvements along the A417 corridor to address congestion, safety and the conflict between the volume of traffic, east-west travel, and access to the villages along this route. Elements of the strategy include junction improvements, bus stop infrastructure, footpath and cycleway improvements and speed limit reviews. "

The A417 needs improvement for vehicles. It will be completely choked, and commuting will be impossible when thousands of houses are built in Grove, Wantage, Charlton. They are not understanding that most of the people who work in the Science Vale? Milton Park etc. commute by car, and will only ever commute by car. Many do not work a 9-5 routine that allows the use of Public Transport even if it was available. Many commute from 25-30+ miles away.

The A420, just gets a cursory mention. I feel sorry for those, who have to commute in to Oxford. Just wait to see how much worse the A420 it will get when those 8000 houses go in near Stratton, plus the houses at Watchfield Shrivenham etc. It's a shame that people can't see the gradual ruination of a once beautiful county.

Regards Mark

Town Sign - 7/12/15
I've followed the debate about the sign with interest, and can see both sides of the story - those who want a different sign drawn from Faringdon's history in order to welcome visitors to the town at each of the 5 access points into Faringdon (well, 3 - the A417 roads into town are already catered for), but equally I think something bolder will get people talking about the town, hopefully far and wide.

I remember visiting Berlin way back in 1982, and one of the high points was seeing - you've guessed it - the revolving sign in Alexanderplatz, described variously as "one of the most visited squares in Berlin" and "a site of many attractions". But here's the interesting bit. When you click on "images" you'll find that 80% of the images are of just one particular attraction, the Weltzeituhr, or world time zone clock. It's not tall, it's not old, and it's architecturally a bit Eastern Bloc. But it's also described as one of the most popular rendez-vous points in Berlin - and it's still going, which should allay fears of the thing grinding to a halt at regular intervals.

As far as location is concerned, my vote would be for the island on the Cornmarket - it offsets the Portwell bench perfectly, whereas if it were outside Marriots I think it would be too close to it. Even better would be on the apron outside the Old Town Hall, but I'm guessing that this would be too obtrusive at events such as Folly Fest.

Andy Hayter

Normal rubbish response about A420/A417 access in the week day mornings - 7/12/15
It has got increasingly frustrating trying to get out onto the A420 due to no one giving you a chance at the roundabout at Park Road. The traffic from Swindon and on the way speed past the roundabout causing 15 to 20 minutes just to get from the Esso station out at any time from 7AM.

Exasperated I tried to contact the highways agency about this roundabout. The response is a two fingers tough luck. If we get any more traffic it is just crazy that nothing will be done and it will get worse and accidents then occur:

See the verbatim reply below.

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Unfortunately the County Council does not have a budget this financial year (and unlikely next financial year) that typically could be used for provision of traffic signals at this location.

However, A420 / A417 Park Road Junction, has been identified for upgrading (in particular increased capacity on the approach from Faringdon) in the Connecting Oxfordshire: Local Transport Plan 2015-2031, also known as Local Transport Plan 4. Please see pages 86-94 for the A420 Route Strategy chapter:


The relevant proposal is on page 91:- Investigate upgrading of the A420 / A417 Park Road junction, Faringdon

Full Council adopted Local Transport Plan 4 in September 2015 and officers will now look at ways to bring forward schemes. As
stated in the chapter, the timescales are yet to be determined as funding will need to be secured through the planning application process for housing and other development sites.

Regards
Lee J Turner MCIHT
Principal Traffic Technician
Traffic Advice & Design

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Rob Perkins

**Dog mess on the Rugby pitch** - 6/12/15
As I'm sure you are all aware the Rugby season is in full swing up at the Cricket ground.
Seniors training - Thurs evening match Saturday's
Mini and Junior training - Sunday's
It has been noted that the amount of dog poop not being picked up is escalating.
We have over 100 children training on this ground every week and would appreciate it if you could kindly pick up after you dog. Can we take this opportunity to thank the responsible owners who do pick up after their dog.
Faringdon Rugby Union Football Club

**Housing and A420** - 6/12/15
The government guidance that Planning authorities must accept applications for housing wherever possible, leaves the Planning Authority with little or no room for negotiation for monies for essential infrastructure. Schools get funds, as well as social housing and road changes (provided the Highways authority says it is needed) So developers will pay something, but if the demands are (in their view) too high, they say 'not viable, we won't build' There is little the Planning authority can do- the government is demanding the building of houses.
Name Supplied

**Housing and A420** - 6/12/15
Dennis. I would call people who allow tens of thousands of houses to be built all over Oxfordshire, without the decent infrastructure to go with them as idiots. Sorry if your sensibilities are offended.
Regards
Mark

**Small business Saturday in Faringdon** - 5/12/15
Saturday 5th December

**Does anyone remember Edward Davis?** - 5/12/15
Just wondering if there is any one who knew my late father Mr Edward Andrew Philip Davis - old friends or relatives on my dads side. He passed away on February 25th 1978 on the A420 at Bucklands Crossroads near Faringdon. A long shot I know, this would be an end to my research. Also a Big thanks to a Mr William Law who sent me the News paper reports regarding my late fathers death.
Spencer Davis

**Re. Housing and A420 posted on 2/12/15** - 4/12/15
In the preamble to News and Views we are asked to post our views without being rude or insulting. Is it then acceptable for sad Grumpy Old Man to describe people as "idiots" which they clearly are not and then hide behind a nom de plume?
Dennis Haynes

**Late Night Shopping** - 4/12/15
It's not every day you get Carol Singers singing to you at your place of work! That's exactly what happened tonight to me! Thank you to Lyn Williams and all the singers who came in from the rain and the wind to sing in Budgens tonight. I really enjoyed it and appreciated the chance to join in!
Thank you
Fiona Merrick

**Jobs in Faringdon** - 3/12/15
More jobs on the Jobs and Volunteering page on this site
Ed
Late night shopping in Faringdon Thursday 3rd - 3/12/15
If you are late night shopping this Thursday in Faringdon town, come into The Wheatsheaf for a night cap before you head home. FREE mini sausage rolls will be on the bar, plus we will be selling our special Mulled warming Apple cider as well as our normal great range of drinks at LOW every day prices.
REMEMBER Late night shopping evening this Thursday arranged by our local retailers, music, refreshments and a great opportunity to pick up some unique Christmas presents FREE mini sausage rolls on the bar at The Wheatsheaf
#shoplocalthischristmas #supportsmallbusinesses #latenightshoppingoxfordshire
PLUS SATURDAY 5th December - Small business Saturday in Faringdon. Pop into the Wheatsheaf for a beverage and (FREE sausage rolls on the bar) . Local businesses participating will be giving triple points with other special events planned in town
The Wheatsheaf, 5 London Street, Faringdon, Oxon SN7 7AE www.facebook.com/TheWheatsheafFaringdon 01367-244219 or 07815 071858 Geoff & Jo Robbins

Best at Recycling - 3/12/15
It's official - residents of South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse continue to be the best in the country at recycling. According to official Defra figures, South Oxfordshire sits at the top of the chart for 2014/15 with a 67.3 per cent recycling rate, with the Vale just below in second place with 65.6 per cent.

Housing and A420 - 2/12/15
Without a roundabout at the A420 junction, this and Fernham fields will be a traffic disaster. Obviously the idiots who compile this rubbish don't spend every morning queued up on Park Road trying to get onto the A420.
Traffic lights will never happen, due to the constant volume of traffic coming from Swindon, which would back up for miles.
A roundabout has to be a condition of approval.
Grumpy Old Man

Cornmarket Clock - 2/12/15
Read the history, see old and current photos in the In the Past section of this website.
Thankyou to contributors
Ed

Steeds development - 2/12/15
This application goes to the VWHDC Planning Committee on 9th December.
There are many objections but:
RECOMMENDATION
It is recommended that authority to grant planning permission is delegated to the head of planning, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the committee,
subject to:
1: A S106 agreement being entered into with both the county council and district council in order to secure contributions towards local infrastructure and to secure affordable housing, and;......
Full Committee report

Faringdon’s Humpty Hill has been awarded Town Green Status - 2/12/15
An area of open farmland in Faringdon, Oxfordshire has been given protected town green status by a council. Residents campaigned to preserve the land on Highworth Road, known as Humpty Hill, for three years following a proposed 100-home development.
Oxfordshire County Council's planning committee voted unanimously on Monday to register the area as a town village green.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-oxfordshire-34972137

Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan 'Basic Conditions' - 2/12/15
Consultation on Faringdon Neighbourhood Plan has been extended to 11th January 2016 by VWHDC because of their earlier errors in posting the documents. The Planning Inspector will receive all these responses and will be assessing whether FNP meets the 'Basic Conditions'.
A meeting will be held on 16th December at 7.15pm at Little Coxwell Village Hall to discuss the issues: what are the 'Basic Conditions'? Does FNP identify them correctly? Does it meet them?
You are welcome to attend if you are interested in these questions and considering making a submission.
Please remember, any response you have already submitted to the Town Council will NOT be going forward, so this is the most important opportunity members of the public will have to make their views known.
Anna Hoare
New Police Commander - 1/12/15
Superintendent Rory Freeman will be taking over as Local Police Area (LPA) commander for South and Vale LPA. Supt Freeman joined Thames Valley Police in 1992 and worked as a patrol officer at High Wycombe, Bourne End and Aylesbury. In 2000, he moved to the Headquarters Public Order Department where he spent almost five years training police officers to manage public disorder and protest.
Since leaving the Public Order Department, he has led patrol, neighbourhood and custody policing teams across Oxfordshire as both a Sergeant and Inspector. He currently works as Head of the Criminal Justice Department.
He said: “I’m really pleased to be moving into this new role, and I’m looking forward to getting started on 1 December. “The team at South and Vale is already really strong; we have some hard-working and talented officers and staff serving the area and acting Superintendent Jim O’Ryan, who has been an interim LPA Commander, has been great at leading the team. “We have some challenges ahead as a Force, but I’m looking forward to working with communities to address any issues they are facing, develop solutions with them, and to build on this success.”
His predecessor A/Supt O’Ryan will return to his role as Deputy Commander at Milton Keynes. A/Supt O’Ryan said: “Working at South and Vale has been brilliant; it’s such a different LPA from Milton Keynes and so it’s been an interesting and enjoyable experience. I’m very proud of the team at South and Vale and it’s been a privilege to lead them “I’d like to wish Supt Freeman every success in his new role here, and while I’m sorry to be leaving South and Vale it will be good to return to Milton Keynes as Deputy LPA Commander.”
Supt Freeman will be starting his new role on Tuesday 1 December. A/Supt O’Ryan will also be starting his new role on 1 December.