

Faringdon Folly. End of season newsletter to volunteers- 30/10/19

Another successful year with lots of positive feedback from visitors and once again excellent support from our loyal team of volunteers. A huge thank you to everyone who has helped. Without you the Tower would not be open. Mostly the weather was excellent, so the number of visitors was good.

Visitor Numbers

- 2019 - 16 open days (no Halloween) 3,189
- 2018 - 15 open days, including Halloween 3,276

There were over 100 more adults in 2019 and about 200 fewer non-paying children. Overall, we earned just over £7,000 in entrance fees, merchandise and donations.

Since June I have been posting our Open days on many Facebook pages within our 30/40-mile catchment. This is in addition to already being on 'places to visit' websites and the local and regional press.

No Halloween opening this year - please tell anyone you know who may not have heard.

Visitor Survey

We analysed information from visitors for 2 open days in September (Total 150 parties, 464 visitors)

- 20% from in and around Faringdon
- 20% from under 10 miles
- 50% 10-20 miles
- 10% over 20 miles
- 70% were making their first visit and surprising that 60% travelled more than 10 miles.

How they knew about the Folly?

- 55% Known/word of mouth
- 27% Internet/Facebook
- 18% other - press, signs or banner

Great to see that our publicity is working and we plan to explore additional methods for spreading the word. *Please let us know if you have any thought on how we could increase awareness.*

September- 4 Tower Open Days

The first 3 were bright and sunny and busy having 690 visitors. Sadly the weather was dreadful on the 4th Sunday. Only 21 people turned up. The indication is that opening every week (April-Oct) would be successful, if the weather **is** was good!

Private Bookings

- 2019 - We had 18 private bookings with income of £1,046 - (26% increase from last year.)
- These included 2 wedding proposals and 6 birthday celebrations.

Woodland

Rob, our chainsaw sculptor will be creating another cannon, as well as refurbishing and weather proofing the existing sculptures.

I'm planning to get both outside boards replaced. They have lasted well but are getting scruffy and the information needs to be updated too. There's no desperate hurry, but I'm aiming for well before next season to get them installed.

Rob will also be surveying the trees to assess their health and whether any actions are needed. We need to reduce the height of a few trees so that the view from the Belvedere Room is unrestricted. I'm hoping this will be done before Christmas.

We have decided to dismantle the giant pie. We did try very hard to make it work - 2/3 rebuilds. Different toppings- camomile, grass, clover, green-roof succulent and they all hated it!

Still no ideas for a replacement.

A group of volunteers from Nationwide will be coming to help in the woodland in November. I plan to get them to pull random brambles, cut them back from paths and prepare some ground for seed (which I've gathered from various places)

We lost a great many young trees and shrubs over the summer due to the very dry conditions. We will be planting replacements very soon and I shall be hoping for a very wet Spring!

You may be interested to know that we have planted about 600 trees and shrubs over the last 7 to 8 years and around 50% have survived - so far!

Thanks so much to everyone who helps to keep the woodland looking so good.

Other Items

- Those who use the Stanford Road gate will have noticed that the Pedestrian access needs to be repaired. Thames Water have been informed, as this is their responsibility.
- I've displayed bin stickers and posters to remind dog owners to pick up after their dog.
- Oxford CC have agreed to add Folly Hill signs at the top of London St (opposite Stanford Road) and on Stanford Road opposite the Folly Path.

If you would like to receive the newsletter- 3 or 4 times a year- or become a volunteer

email enquiries@faringdonfolly.org.uk

Gene Webb

Friend of the Folly

Cycle Park - 30/10/19

Just wanted to say my 4 year old loved his first trip to the cycle park. Zooming around with a big smile on his face

Thanks to everyone who made it.

Adam

Tree Planting at Faringdon Cycle Park, 1pm - 4pm - 28/10/19

Sunday 24th November

Bring a shovel and help us plant the saplings.

Enquiries to cycle@farcycles.org.uk

Grants- available until 28/10- 26/10/19

Local groups in our district can apply for a share of £75,000 as part of our community grant scheme.

If there's a project in your area that would benefit the local community, please encourage them to apply. The grant can help fund capital projects such as initial start-up costs for a new group or activity, improvements to increase the accessibility of community spaces, energy efficiency initiatives, facility refurbishments, volunteer training costs or equipment upgrades.

Groups can apply for a minimum of £1,000 (and up to 50 per cent of the total cost). Applications must reach us by midday on 28 October - for more information visit whitehorsedc.gov.uk/grants.

Safe Places in Faringdon- 25/10/19

<https://www.safeplaces.org.uk/member-schemes/>

Faringdon Information Centre

Faringdon Library

Faringdon Leisure Centre, Fernham Road

The Mustard Seed

Stay Grounded

Perry Bishop

Costa Coffee

Volunteers for Home Start wanted - 17/10/19

Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire is looking for new volunteers to support local families with young children who are experiencing difficulties.

Are you a parent, or have experience working with young children, and can spare 2-3 hours per week giving friendly practical and emotional support?

Full training and on-going staff support given. Please contact 01235 511152 or admin@homestartso.org for more information.

Safe places in Faringdon- 14/10/19

Our Community Safety team are working with Thames Valley Police, Oxfordshire County Council Fire and Rescue Service, Oxfordshire Family Support Network and local communities to launch the nationally recognised 'Safe Places' scheme across South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse.

The Safe Places Scheme aims to help vulnerable people feel confident and safe whilst out and about. If someone is feeling lost, anxious, confused, bullied, abused or harassed they can go to a Safe Place.

Safe Places offer support to elderly people, people with dementia, those who may have a physical or learning disability, people with mental health needs or someone who feels unwell.

Read more about it and see the logo on

www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/services-and-advice/community-advice-and-support/community-safety/safe-places-vale-white-horse

This scheme is being set up in Faringdon. I know that Perry Bishop and the Mustard seed are participating already.

Climate Change initiative in Faringdon - 11/10/19

Notes from 5 Climate Emergency Action Groups can be found

on <http://faringdowntowncouncil.gov.uk/homepage/climate-emergency/>. The page will be updated with more

information as soon as we establish a date for the next Climate Change Working party meeting.
Faringdon Town Council

Pavements in the Market Square- 10/10/19

In response to an inquiry, An employee of OCC told me *I've recently been asked to provide estimates to replace the worn out surfacing. Your local County Councillor is pushing hard for these footways to be resurfaced so there's high level interest in them. In short, no promises of it being done before Christmas but watch this space.*

I then asked if it would be regular tarmac or the beige stuff (which wears so badly) and was told:
The materials being looked into is both similar to what's there and standard tarmac. VERY much depends on the cost of the beige surfacing.

As you say, the material looks great in the short term but the Utility companies find it difficult to find in small batches so replace with standard tarmac. My choice would be standard tarmac but it's out of my hands decision wise. You could always make representation to Cllr Heathcoat about the replacement material.

I then asked Cncllr Heathcoat *'I wonder- what is your view as to which is the most suitable material. Will it be decided wholly on cost? If tarmac is chosen, will all the pavements be done or will we end up with a mixture of beige and standard? It seems the down side of the beige material is that utility companies find it difficult to match when they carry out their work- and of course that it is has not been hardwearing-(but maybe it has improved now) Has it been/will it be discussed with FTC? '*

and she replied

'The improving of the pavements in Faringdon, town centre is in its early stages. I have met with officers on-site.'

Street Lighting in Faringdon- 10/10/19

Many of you will have noticed the work being done on our street lights.

OCC told me - *'we are currently replacing the street lights in Faringdon which are coming to the end of their serviceable and structural life, therefore the column and lanterns are being changed for new. We are also changing the rest in the road to LED so the lighting levels meet the required standards. The New LEDS consume roughly 50% less energy than the old lanterns and are also pre-programmed to dim to 50% light output from 22:00 to 06:00.'*

Ed

Climate Change initiative- 9/10/19

Following the meeting on Monday 7th, Faringdon Town Council will be establishing a Climate Change working party. Several people from Mondays meeting have volunteered to lead action groups- ie Green transport, recycling, sustainable living, nature, plastic use.

Notes from the meeting, a call for volunteers and what happens next will be on the [Town Council website](#) and [facebook page](#)

Re comments from John - 9/10/19

I have say that on the whole the houses on the Bloor estate are fairly well put together. Any housing estate is going to mass purchase products and suppliers change specs. This is not a reflection on the build quality though.

What is an issue on the estate is the weeds and upkeep of the roads. This, however, is where a massive bone of content comes in.

FVP is the last estate that should get formally adopted by the council however the council are doing all they can to get out of it because it means they will then have to upkeep it.

There is a long standing empassé between them and Bloor. This is the real issue of concern.

Name Supplied

Climate Change meeting- 6/10/19

We would like to hear your views and suggestions on how the council together with the community of Faringdon can play a part in tackling climate change.

Come and join us on the **7th of October at the Corn Exchange at 7.00pm**

For any further information or if you have an idea you would like to share before the meeting please write to office@faringdowntowncouncil.gov.uk

Faringdon Town Council Climate Emergency statement:

[Climate Emergency statement](#)

Thankyou - 6/10/19

I would like to thank the very kind people of Faringdon who have donated dog food, old dog beds, sardines in oil, thick bleach, washing up liquid and washing power to me for Many Tears Animal Rescue. They re home over 3000 dogs a year and are so very grateful for any donations.

If you do wish to contribute please call me or drop me a text on 07901712340 and I will happily collect from you.

<https://manytearsrescue.org>

Rotary Young Citizen Awards - 6/10/19

Do you know a young person who deserves recognition? The Rotary Club of Faringdon & District is inviting

nominations for The Rotary Young Citizen Awards. These awards recognise young people under the age of 25 who have demonstrated their commitment to citizenship, goodwill and understanding through various activities. The awards can be for individuals or groups, for projects and initiatives that showcase positive citizenship and the important responsibilities assumed by young people. Nominees do not necessarily have to be working on a Rotary project to be eligible, they just have to be recognised by your local Rotary club as worthy of nomination.

This year, Faringdon Rotary are also introducing a new award, the Rotary Young Citizen Sporting Hero Award to recognise and highlight the achievements and contribution, as a positive role model to others, of a sports participant or a group or an individual or group who is enabling others to participate in sport.

Also offered for nomination is the Rotary Young Citizen Peacemaker Award, reflecting Rotary's area of focus on Peace and Conflict Prevention/Resolution, to recognise young people, aged under 25, who have made a significant contribution by building peace and understanding, whether in their school, local community or with a peace project internationally.

Nominations must be with Faringdon Rotary by 14th December. To nominate a worthy young citizen or for more information email quoting "young citizen" to: info@faringdonrotaryclub.org or message [facebook.com/faringdon.rotary](https://www.facebook.com/faringdon.rotary)

Pavement parking ban in the pipeline - 6/10/19

Jesse Norman, head of the Department for Transport, has responded: "The department [DfT] is now undertaking a broader piece of work to gather evidence on the issue of pavement parking. We expect to be able to draw conclusions later this year."

What would the punishment be?

It's difficult to predict what the punishment for pavement parking would be. It would be easy to suggest that the fines will be roughly the same as what they are in London, so up to £130 - reduced by 50% if paid within 14 days.

London street is ridiculous now and the parking on double yellow lines outside the houses and for the shops down London street we counted 15 cars parked up nose to tail on double yellow lines half of them would be in the pub and no doubt drink driving as well!!!

Will this part of London street be narrowed down to one lane to stop the illegal parking and you traffic lights at the top and bottom of London street on a trail bases, as the car parks are empty.

Just my two pence worth of a residence of forty five years.

John Murph

Re-FOLLY PARK VIEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENT - 6/10/19

Reference the comment on the houses built by Bloor homes developers, You get what you pay for! wait till the cracks appear and windows don't shut.

Cheap Cheap.

John Murph

New venture for Faringdon - 6/10/19

Introducing a new venture to Faringdon. Listening Touch Therapies is owned by an independent mobile therapist offering services for holistic wellbeing for all. With nearly a quarter of a century caring for children, the elderly and people with special needs Listening Touch Therapies comes with kind hands and an open heart.

Services includes;

Massage for all ages and abilities

Massage for dementia patients

Massage for special needs and/or disabled children and adults

Rainbow Kids Club

Baby massage classes

FREE Cuppa and cake sessions for parents

and lots more planned for the new year.

please see website for further information.

www.listeningtouchtherapies.co.uk

Beer and Bangers - 6/10/19

I would just like to pass on our gratitude to the organisers and helpers who gave up their free time for the Beer & Bangers at the weekend. Once again, my family and I really enjoyed the beer, bangers and the great music. Well done.

Regards

Grumpy Old Man.