

New Aerobic Class - Tuesdays at the Junior School - 28/4/04

Now the sun's come out - get ready to put on those bikinis!
Come along & enjoy a fun aerobic (fat-burning) workout designed for all levels of fitness

Please wear loose, comfortable clothing & trainers, & please bring a mat/towel.

If you'd like an informal chat with the instructor, please call Mairi Clare on 01367 242149

When: Every Tuesday

No need to book, just turn up

Time: 7.15pm

Cost: £3.50 per session

Where: Faringdon Junior School Sports Hall (park in the playground)

(Bring your daughter / friend before 13th July and claim your first class free)

Market Square Improvements - 28/4/04

I agree with Harry Mitchell,(!) we now have a skate board park right in the middle of town, (at about four hundred thousand, what a bargain!)

It will of course put anyone else off from using the town centre after six o'clock in the evening, and of course Sunday afternoons, but what does that matter.

I also agree that cars wont be a problem, not because they will be slow moving, its just that there wont be any there, no one local(except the skateboarders) will use the centre.

Everyone seems to hate what has been done.

Would it not have been a good idea to use some of the development land in Swan lane as a car park for that end of the town, to make up for the parking lost in the market square? and of course for the long suffering residents already there,.

As for the give way signs, what a farce, how can you give way to something you cant see coming.

I'm looking forward to some interesting discussions by drivers stuck in the road opposite Deacons, and also opposite Pat Thomas.

There is definitely a village around here missing its idiot. We've had him here " improving" the market place.

Am I the only one that thinks Faringdon looked quite nice as it was (apart from those grotesque concrete planters of course) Just a small, simple, pretty market town, with no aspirations to be French or any thing else.

At least you could pick up your takeaway, and drop your DVD s back without getting knocked over by a skate boarder.

Get the old photos out Jim Brown, lets all get misty eyed over what used to be..... Jim Horton

Street Cleansing - 24/4/04

On 11th May I am meeting with the woman from VWHDC who is responsible for managing the street cleaning contractor.

We will walk round streets in Faringdon and I'll show her how dirty they are.

I know of some places- but would really appreciate it if you told me of areas that you notice- either lots of bigish litter around, or simply in need of sweeping.

A quick email would be great

Gene Webb
<mailto:genewebb@nildram.co.uk>

Town Matters. - 20/4/04

The work on the old Health Centre building seems to be complete... Has it been forgotten ?

It was developed to provide 10 supposedly much needed affordable dwellings so why isn't it being occupied ? I'd like to think that there is a reasonable answer to my question it's just that I don't know what it is..

The failure to provide the long talked about Skate Park is not the tragedy it may have seemed as the area in the centre of the Market Square will provide a suitable alternative. The gentle slopes and smooth surfaces will prove to be very tempting for the Skate Boarders.

Cars will not be a hazard because the one thing Faringdon is not going to get is fast moving traffic in the centre. It's nice to think that that the area will be appreciated by some, if not all, members of the community.

Finally the possibility of traffic lights in the Market Square. Did anyone seriously think that red and white arrows would be any use in controlling the traffic in the town centre ?

The planners may have had faith but I've yet to meet a driver who shares their optimism.
Harry G Mitchell

Town Meeting - 15/4/04

Town Meeting - 15/4/04 This meeting was quite well attended - about 12 residents, plus councillors

Pump House

Work to refurbish the two lower floors of the original building is out to tender. These are due back in May/June. There is about £250k unearmarked money in the coffers. (£150k of this is the Public works loan taken out for the Pump House repairs) This with £40 k budgetted in 04/05 is thought to be sufficient to do the above work

No work has been planned for the old theatre and the building(once a bar/billiard room?) that links to the original house.

The theatre will be mothballed for 5 years, by when, if grant monies are available, it will be refurbished. Concerns were expressed about the noise that a theatre may generate in what will by then be a wholly residential area(Swan Lane)

Skate Park

There is now no money in the budget for this- what was budgetted is now part of the unearmarked money mentioned above. There may be a possibility of having a skate park near the site of the new cricket ground(when the current cricket field and former nursery site are developed) The aim is for the devloper to provide this as a planning gain for the town.

Corn Exchange

It seems that Faringdon Town Council have had use of the Corn Exchange and offices for £0 rent per annum. VWHDC pay for the maintenance of the building and FTC, as the 'tenant' have responsibility for rates, heating, cleaning, Hall management.

It seems that VWHDC now want to charge FTC £17k per annum rent.

This has been under discussion for some time, but has resulted in VWHDC issuing a notice to quit to FTC. FTC have decided not to appeal. There is currently no lease agreement between FTC and VWHDC

FTC appear to be planning to use rooms in the Pump House as their offices

VWHDC Cnclr Alison Thompson was asked to investigate what is to happen to the Corn Exchange. It is a very well used facility now, and would be a real set back for the town if VWHDC fail to continue to manage it if/when the notice on FTC expires (Sept 2004)

A Historical note!! It seems that the Corn Exchange once belonged to Faringdon (in the days of Faringdon RDC 1970s). Faringdon RDC sold it to VWHDC for £36k. The then FT council gave the £36k back to VWHDC to pay for repairs that needed doing. I guess this was to avoid the cost and responsibility of ongoing repairs.

Weeds in streets

Judith Heathcoat was asked to make sure that removal of weeds from Faringdon streets is in the schedule for this Spring.

Market Square parking

Judith Heathcote stated that the Traffic Orders required to enforce short term parking in the Market Square will be in place by the time the improvement works are complete.

CornMarket vehicle Priority system(white and red arrows)

It doesn't appear to be certain that this will work- negative views were expressed. It seems however, that cabling for traffic lights has /will be laid for use if required.

CCTV

VWHDC have carried out a survey for CCTV in the town - possible camera locations were not given. A report will be produced, with costs.

A figure of £5.5k per annum per camera was mentioned

Museum for Faringdon

Apparently the museum group still exists and is still looking for premises. I've asked for contact info etc to put on www.faringdon.org

Swan Lane development

The former Swindon woodworking site is being cleared for development. Swan Lane residents expressed concerns about Health and Safety issues from the large demolition vehicles up and down this narrow road, and the lack of care by the subcontractor when removing large quantities of asbestos. Longer term concerns are about the increase of traffic through this narrow road. London St and Church St are impacted too. This is compounded by inadequate car parking for residents of the new development.

Faringdon Association of Residents

Colin Desborough reported that through FAR efforts, the Drew legacy (left to Faringdon in the 1980s and about to be swallowed up into National Health Coffers) will be spent on Health facilities for Faringdon people. This includes:-

Power supply at the Health centre for mobile breast screening unit

Equipment for the Faringdon First Responder Team

Equipment and supplies for District Nurseries

Funds for health/first aid training in schools

Writers wanted - 12/4/04

Are you a local writer, published or unpublished?

Would you like to appear at the Faringdon Arts Festival?

If so, please contact Paul Cornell at <mailto:paulcornell@owlservice.freeserve.co.uk>

or Tel: 01367 243912

Yurt construction - 13/4/04

Whilst surfing the net I came across your web page and the link to Fernham as I am looking for a yurt maker- one is mentioned on the Fernham page.

Please could you send me a contact if you know it?

I am setting up an environmental show home in Bourton on the Water and am thinking of a yurt for the organic garden.

I would very much like to use someone local if possible so your contact would be much appreciated.

My phone number is 01451 820274.

Best wishes Diana Ray (PS it looks an excellent site)

Coin found in Faringdon - 13/4/04

The Market Place in Faringdon is currently being resurfaced. Last Thursday the digger driver picked up a coin lying among the rubble just outside the entrance to the Crown Hotel.

The coin is silver, very thin, and appears to be from Warwick Castle from about 1643.

I assume, being no expert, that it was a siege coin (Groat?) but not legal tender, as it was legally a token.

I can only speculate that someone in about 1645/1646 tried to use it as a Groat in Faringdon and ended up throwing it away as valueless.

Does anyone know if troops from Warwick Castle's battles ended up in Faringdon?

Did Pickering's Regiment come to Faringdon via Warwick?

John Gillman

Planning guidance- can it be true?? - 1/4/04

I have been told by a senior VWHDC planner that for residents car parking associated with new developments different rules/guidance is used.

For Rural areas, more spaces per dwelling are required because of the need for cars to get to work/shops etc

For Urban areas fewer spaces are required so as to encourage people to have fewer cars and use public transport

Makes sense and good for the environment!!

Apparently the national average, ie rural and urban together is 1.5 ish spaces per dwelling

Here is the huge BUT!! Faringdon is deemed to be an Urban area by planners!! -even though our public transport is seriously limited.

So it seems, it is a deliberate policy to have too few parking spaces per dwelling so as to encourage people not to have more cars than they can park and use public transport!!

Can it be true?? Who decided this? On what basis?

Does anyone know more?

Gene Webb

Dog attacked - 30/3/04

Last Friday lunchtime our dog Murphy, a Weimaraner, was attacked by an Alsation/German Shepherd looking dog, very dark brown almost black colouring.

In the heat of the (very emotional) moment, getting the owners name and address wasn't a possibility.

I must point out that Murphy is a very boisturous dog herself, and has at times been quite bitchy to other bitches the same sort of size when out at the Folly.

It is for this reason that we keep her muzzled and have done since she was 2 years old and we realised we couldn't always control her territorial instincts as she like to run free up there. She has never hurt anyone or anything.

I have a vets bill of £400

I would really like to contact the owner of the alsation

I have registered this complaint at Wantage Police

Dom Matterson.

dom.matterson@btinternet.com

Local pride - 28/3/04

In Prague recently, I watched a man pick up a tissue that a young woman in front of him had dropped. He walked, carrying the tissue for 2 or 3 minutes. As he came in sight of the bin, he overtook the young woman, threw the tissue in the bin and pointedly looked at her.

A non confrontational way of making the point.

I should add that this dropped tissue was very noticeable as there was no other litter on this or any other street in the city.

How do they do it? Why can't we in the UK?

Gene Webb

Prepare your voices for Easter. Let the People Sing! -22/3/04

Open your hearts and voices and come and join us to sing Mascagni's glorious Easter Hymn. We plan to sing at 8 am in Faringdon Baptist Church after the Dawn service and breakfast.

It is a fabulous way to start Easter Day (April 11th).

Everyone is welcome – you do not need to be able to read music, just to enjoy singing and be prepared to practice.

Bring your friends, families and neighbours.

'Note-bashing' practices at Faringdon Baptist Church on Sundays 21st, 28th March and 3rd April from 4-5pm. Final Rehearsal on Saturday 10th April 10-11am.

For further details and general encouragement please contact Lyn Williamson 01367 240033

More houses in Faringdon - 22/3/04

Changes to the draft local plan (to 2011) proposed for Faringdon have been agreed. (yet to go to full VWHDC Council)

This will allow the increase in employment land of over 10 acres plus an increase in house numbers from 133 to 515.

340 will be on the cricket ground and former nursery site, and an increase from 24 to 66 in Swan Lane.

Most of the expansion will be outside the existing Development Boundary

Faringdon Town Council met 22/3 to formulate their view on the planning gain that may be achieved.

Negotiations have not yet started- there will be a mix of monetary contributions and provision of facilities

On the list are:- Contribution to Schools - nursery, primary and secondary

Replacement Cricket Ground and pavilion, to include a skate park

Contribution to community rooms

Community Art

Improvements to Folly Park(likely to increase size by about 25 acres, including Cricket Ground)

Cycle ways and pedestrian routes on the development to link with Town Centre

Off street parking

Affordable housing requirement to be equity share, market rental, or low priced housing rather than 'council' housing for rent Opening of Stanford road onto A420

Link road between Park Road and Stanford Road

Gene Webb

Ferndale Prep School - Fantastic Results - 18/3/04

F Ferndale Prep School in Faringdon has just received another outstanding set of examination results to Senior Schools at 11. Ferndale, a non-selective independent school for boys and girls ages 3-11, has always had unusual success in getting children into a range of schools - including some of the most academically

demanding.

After last year's record number of successes the results this year were expected to be less favourable - but that has not been the case.

Most of their boys are taking up places at Magdalen College, Oxford or Abingdon School; the girls are predominantly going to The School of St Helen and St Katharine or Our Lady's Convent in Abingdon.

Results included 6 Scholarships/Exhibitions. The others have all been successful in gaining places to a wide range of senior schools including Dauntsey's, Kingham Hill, King Edward's, Bath, Cokethorpe, Wychwood, Rendcomb, Pate's Grammar & St Edward's in Cheltenham.

The Headmaster was so delighted he cancelled lessons and as a special treat arranged an entertainer for the whole school as well as a special lunch including chocolates for everyone.

The teachers had champagne.

For more information about the school please telephone Liz Cunningham (01367 240618).

See www.ferndaleschool.co.uk/news.htm for more details

Dogs Mess and poly bags - 8/3/04

I quite agree - there is no point in picking up dog mess if the bag is then to be thrown in the shrubbery.

I walk my dog up there and confess that I don't always remove his mess unless it is on the path or any of the tracks where others walk.

The main problem area appears to be the path leading from Stanford Road (the one past Tuckers Road and Nursery View (?)).

I'm quite sure that a dog waste bin would be used by many dog owners if one was put there. The one by the official Folly path is used.

Name supplied

Can you believe it?? - 7/3/04

What is in the minds of dog owners who conscientiously pick up their dogs mess in a polythene bag, and then throw the bag into the shrubbery.

This seems worse than leaving the mess where it is - at least it will bio-degrade there

Any thoughts? Any suggestions?

Name supplied

Faringdon Folly Cleanup - 7/3/04

Volunteers will be litter picking and sweeping the path up to and around the Folly this weekend, in readiness for the Tower opening from Easter Sunday.

Folly Park Faringdon - 3/3/04

Would you like to get involved in nature conservation in your new park?

We are looking for volunteers to help carry out conservation work in Folly Park, Faringdon.

This Saturday March 6th we will be putting up bird and bat boxes from 10.00am to 12 noon. All welcome.

Meet at the car park. Please wear suitable clothing.

If you are arriving by car, the entrance is between Volunteer Way and the Esso garage on Park Road.

Follow the road sign down the track to the car park. For further information please contact Mary Lambe at Vale of White Horse District Council 01235 540344

mary.lambe@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

A sign for the park has gone up on Park Road and we're hoping to get one put up on Stanford Road shortly.

Roman Coins found in Oxfordshire - 26/2/04

You may have heard on the national news that a rare Roman coin has been found in Oxfordshire. It was in fact found by a brother and sister, the latter lived in Faringdon until recently.

When we've got the full story, we'll put it on this site

Gene Webb

Street Cleanliness - 26/2/04

Apparently the government is pressing for Councils to improve the state of cleanliness of the streets. There was a piece on Radio Oxford Monday morning, when Faringdon was the focus.

It seems VWHDC have responded - I saw the local man using the motorised pavement sweeper today (this is a push one, not a ride on one as used by the previous contractor)

Good news that some action is being taken, but sadly the results are not so good. I walked into the town to see grit and grime that was once on the inside edge of the pavement now moved to the middle where people walk! Its even more noticeable than before!

It must be quite hard work to push this machine, especially when 2 or 3 passes are needed to do the job properly. It is inefficient (and not very motivating) for the man not to have equipment that would do the job more thouroughly and swiftly.

If you have views about the state of cleanliness of streets in the town and streets beyond, contact the Waste Management team at VWHDC.

Email: <mailto:waste.team@whitehorsedc.gov.uk>

or phone them on 01235 520202

Gene Webb

Roadworks in Faringdon - 4/2/04

To add insult to the sixteen weeks of misery which is affecting local traders the workmen have kindly decided to take up the reduced parking spaces offered at the top end of Market Place.

It may be in our interests to suggest Gloucester Street Car Park though this may be a little too far for them to walk!

Name and address supplied

Faringdon Cinema - 14/2/04

I am researching local cinema history and would like to hear from anyone who can provide any info on the old cinema in the Corn Exchange or the later Rialto/Regent, situated where Regent Mews now is. Photos, descriptions of the interior, memories of going to the pictures or working at the cinema would all be of interest to me

Ian Meyrick, Witney (01993 705189)

ian@imeyrick.freeserve.co.uk

Many thanks

Faringdon Town Council website - 4/2/04

Have a look at <http://www.faringdowntowncouncil.org.uk/> - recently launched. Needs more info, but looks to be a good start

Gene Webb

Faringdon Garage, Marlborough St - 30/1/04

A planning application for the erection of 2,3 and 4 storey residential development(14 units) has been made.

Garage buildings will be demolished

Call 01235 520202 to ask questions, see the plans at the Council office in the Corn Exchange.

Gene Webb

Local Government Electronic services - 30/1/04

In 2001 the Government set targets for councils to make 100% of services available electronically (Those that are suitable for electronic service delivery) by 2005. They have given £200k each year to help councils achieve this.

I have just read that Oxfordshire County Council have been named as one of the 16 councils across the country that have not achieved suitable progress and need special assistance.

VWHDC were one of the last 3 councils to have a website- this was available just over a year ago - and it is nowhere near offering electronic services yet - so maybe they are in the same position.

Councils should be offering things like payments, reporting problems, planning applications, booking facilities, consultation with us- all online or through a non manned telephone system - the intention is that the services are then more accessible (ie 24/7) and - if they do it well - money should be saved through automation.

I think a long way to go for our area

Gene Webb

Free parking - 28/1/04

There is now a notice in Budgens that states if you spend a minimum of £10 you will be given up to 40p parking refund on production of a that day's parking ticket receipt . You get a receipt by hitting the appropriate button on the ticket machine.

Chamber of commerce will be encouraging other Market Square businesses to join the scheme.

Gene Webb

Street Cleaning - 27/1/04

VWHDC now have an email address where you can send comments /requests about street cleaning, refuse collection, recycling and public loos. I'm told they look at it each day.

Email: <mailto:waste.team@whitehorsedc.gov.uk>

Town Meeting - 26/1/04

Key points from the meeting

Total FTC precept estimated at £234k (03/04 £208k).approximately 12% increase.

£6500 has been budgeted for a tractor, trailer and other park equipment, to replace that which was stolen.

Insurance claim for old tractor being made.

£3000 has been added to the advertising budget to support the Community Bus

There is to be a new notice board to replace the existing one on the Corn Exchange (£3k budgeted 03/04)

The grants budget has been increased to £20k (from £13k). This is the money that organisations in the town can apply for.

Land behind Willes Close

Skate Park behind Willes close not possible. VWHDC Environmental Health dept have said there will be too much noise pollution for residents (£26.5k budgeted in 02/03 and 03/04 will be returned to reserves)

This land is owned by FTC. and was given to the town by Oxfordshire County Council. There are currently conditions on how it may be used. It currently has no vehicle access.

FTC say they will be considering other uses for the land, *and will welcome suggestions from residents*

Pump House

Tenders are being advertised to repair and refurbish the original Pump House building. It is thought that these will be between £150k and £250k. Disabled access is included, but not a disabled lift to the 1st and 2nd floors. Not clear if this includes the roof, which I have heard needs replacing entirely.

The loan of £150k, plus £20k budgeted in 02/03 and £40k in 04/05 is to cover these repairs. £20k has been budgeted for architects fees in 04/05(same as 03/04)

No mention was made of where the funds for other work will come from. No mention was made of amounts spent so far, but I have heard this is around £90k(probably including consultants and architects fees)
The theatre will be 'mothballed' for up to five years - in which time a decision will be made as to what to do about it.

It was stated by a town councillor that the refurbishment figures produced by De Facto(the consultants that FTC employed at a cost of £28k) were thought to be unrealistically high. (These ranged from around £600k to £1.1m)

No annual running costs or projected income have been calculated yet, but it was stated that income is highly unlikely to cover running costs.

Corn Exchange

VWHDC own this building and are intending to charge a rent to FTC for its use. FTC believe that the costs they already bear - management, cleaning, floor maintenance, Council Tax, heating etc amounts to around £17k per annum, and that this is sufficient. They are in discussion.

I asked that FTC suggest to VWHDC that the loos need refurbishment.

New stage for the Corn Exchange is no longer planned (£5k in 03/04 to be put back in reserves)

Repair of Portwell Pump

This important feature of the Market Place was damaged by a Stagecoach bus some time ago. Joint Environment Trust is pursuing its repair. It is thought that it belongs to Lord Faringdon as it was once part of the Pump House.

Faringdon Town Council web site

It will be accessible on Monday 2nd Feb. No idea what its like, or what the address is. I expect Google will find it!!

I understand it has cost £1200, with £550 running costs budgeted in 04/05

Street Cleaning

I asked the VWHDC councillors present to look into this as the streets are very dirty again. I asked FTC also to push for improvement.

Pavements and parking

As these are County Council issues, Judith Heathcoat our County Councillor spoke with the concerned residents after the meeting

There were only 5 non councillor people there - sad!

Gene Webb

Puppet Show at the Corn Exchange - 10/1/04

Faringdon Town Council and VWHDC arranged this puppet show. It was great - Arabian Nights stories with wonderful hand made puppets - the children loved them- and were spellbound for nearly an hour and a quarter. I think there's another show in February- Rumpelstiltskin

Find more of these joint events on at <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/Arts/DetailPage-3538.asp>

Computer Courses - 9/1/04

The Haven (Oxfordshire Mind) has a computer course running on a Thursday from 11a.m. - 1 p.m. starting on 22nd January.

The course will be designed for beginners mainly, but will also cater for those with some experience of using a computer.

The Haven is an open access mental health centre in Wantage, and more details can be obtained by phoning Lynne or Helen (the workers) on Tuesdays and Thursdays between 10.30 a.m. and 4 p.m. on 01235 771043.

Dog Mess at the Folly - 9/1/04

As a responsible dog owner, who enjoys the beautiful views from the Folly and circular walks around Faringdon I am very concerned with regard to the amount of dog mess accumulating in these areas.

It is also being compounded by some individuals clearing up after their dogs but discarding the *undegradable* plastic bags under the vegetation, which seems somewhat counter productive.

Additional waste bins would be a great idea at the alternative exit points from the Folly, especially at the bottom of the track that leads off Standford road.

A Waste bin at the corner of Coach Lane and Church Street would also enable a "dropping off" point for those on the circular town walk.

Kind Regards Lisa Heaton

Free parking - 9/1/04

Budgens will refund at least some of your car parking costs if you take your ticket into the store. The only way I can think it works is that you have to load your shopping into the car then go back to Budgens with the car park ticket and the receipt - to minimise the time that your car is parked without displaying a ticket.

Have a look at the notice in the car park that mentions 'participating shops'.

I've checked that Budgens do this, but I don't know if other stores will do the same - I'll check - but maybe one of you knows??

Gene Webb

Parking Permits - 27/7/04

I received this from VWHDCs Parking Services dept.

Parents can purchase a 20 minutes term time only permit allowing you to drop off in the morning and collect in the afternoon from our office at the Corn Exchange Gloucester Street for a fee of £10.00 a term.

There's information about other permits on <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/CarParks/DetailPage-5559.asp>

Gloucester Street Annual 3 months £40, Annual £120, 1 day per week £25.00

GW

Folly Path - 24/7/04

I'm fairly certain that VWHDC have accepted that it is their responsibility to clean the Folly Path.

Let's hope so!!

Gene

Free parking at school times - 24/7/04

I've heard that parents can park in the Gloucester St car park at no charge in order to take and collect children from school.

Does anyone know this to be true?? Where is it publicised?

Gene

Car park permits - 24/7/04

I learned recently that you can buy annual/3month of day permits for the Gloucester St Car park. Have a look at

<http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/CarParks/DetailPage-5559.asp>

Drew Legacy

The money from the Drew Legacy (pursued successfully by Colin Desborough and Clive Davis of Faringdon Association of Residents (FAR)) is now coming through.

The work to install adequate power at the Health Centre for a breast screening mobile vehicle will start 'imminently' Community nurse equipment is being received, and I think the First Responder money is on its way.

Initially Frank Roberts(also of FAR) spotted that this money was about to be put into a national NHS pot.

Through this and Colin and Clive's energy, the £50k, bequeathed to the town, is actually reaching us.

Thankyou to all of you!

CCTV

Now that Broadband is available in Faringdon, the cost of CCTV is much reduced, and now becomes an affordable possibility.

The Chamber of Commerce is pursuing this, as I understand our VWHDC councillors are.

Faringdon Town Council Meeting - 14/7/04

Pump House

Tenders for renovation and mechanical and electrical work have been received The main contract is to be awarded to Latimer, the lowest tender is £176861

The lowest mechanical (£23616) and lowest electrical (£60578) are felt to be too high, so the specs are to be reviewed as there is 'considerable scope for reduction' Two areas mentioned that could be considered to

reduce the cost are an IT network and Fire safety of the building

It is anticipated that the M&W work will cost 25%-30% of the main contract- up to £53k

So will this 'do' the whole building - no only the first floor. This is level 2A . Level 1 having already been done to make the building weather proof /safe.

It was mentioned in passing that Lord Faringdon has agreed that the 2 upper floors can be used to raise income - it was not clear if this meant residential accommodation or offices.

The Theatre - renovation/demolition was not mentioned.

No mention was made of how much had been spent so far.

FTC have received a claim for costs from Lord Faringdon's solicitor of £29478. They intend to try and reduce this through negotiation.

Corn Exchange

FTC have rescinded the decision not to renegotiate the lease for the Corn Exchange as they now have a letter from VWHDC indicating that only a peppercorn rent (rather than the £17k per annum originally wanted) is appropriate.

As well as the level of rent, ££ to cover internal repairs, building security, external repairs needs to be agreed. The current lease expires 31/8/04.

I got the impression that if FTC choose not to take out a new lease that VWHDC would close the building. FTC get the income from the building, but also pay all the running costs (not external repairs)- and as such provide a service to VWHDC as they have offices in the building. VWHDC run the community buildings for Abingdon and Wantage- not something that they appear to want to do in Faringdon.

It seems that FTC have considered moving their offices into the Pump House Great concern was expressed over the meeting that Cnclrs Barber, Cox and Thompson (all VWHDC councillors, Barber and Cox FTC cnclrs also) had with Lord Faringdon.

They said that they went to see him in their capacity as VWHDC (not FTC) councillors to understand his 'side' of the history of the Pump House. In passing they mentioned that FTC were considering using an upper floor as the Town Clerks office.

This was considered by other FTC councillors to have severely compromised any negotiation that FTC have with VWHDC over the Corn Exchange lease.

It must be difficult sometimes to be both a FTC and a VWHDC councillor- sometimes these organisations have conflicting aims, or are 'in opposition' and the 'hats' they must wear are constantly changing.

I just wish they would have Faringdon, not councillor hats on.

As a result of the meeting FTC received a letter from Lord Faringdon's solicitors. The reply has cost the town additional ££. The matter is to be referred to VWHDC Standards Committee

New Sewage Treatment Plant, Lechlade Road

It seems that Thames Water is planning a lime treatment facility that will deal with sewage waste from the surrounding area. Cnclr Heathcoat stated this could mean 4 lorries a day coming along Park Road. It seems that Thames Water don't need planning permission to do this.

The worst impact would be the smell - it is anticipated that given the plants proximity to Faringdon, that it would reach the Town centre.

Cnclr Heathcoat is actively pursuing this to prevent any detrimental effect on Faringdon, the residents and the surrounding countryside.

Gene Webb

Messy Faringdon - 19/7/04

The Folly park is in a bit of a mess. There are lots of bags of rubbish hanging from the entrance gates. There is no sign of a bin anywhere, so people have obviously just dumped their rubbish at the gates. It looks a real mess. Also all around the picnic tables there are bottles etc lying on the grass.

On the entrance route into the park there are two sets of dumped settees/chairs and an old smashed up TV.

The approach to the park is less than impressive, due to all the mess.

On route to the park we walked down Volunteer Way, and the children had a play in the playground there. The bins there are overflowing and consequently, the whole area is covered in litter.

I have to say that walking around yesterday afternoon, the town looked a bit sorry for itself, too
Hopefully we can all nag the right people to get it sorted out

Jo M

Reply from VWHDC Parks and open spaces section

"Folly Park is owned by the District Council the road way into the site I believe is owned by a Mr Barnsfield. An order has been raised for the installation of a litter bin, if it is not already in place then I would expect it to be in by the end of this week. Litter clearance will take place once per week (most likely on a Monday).

Volunteer Way is still in the ownership of the developer although it is hoped that it will be transferred to the DC in the near future"

Local Plan - 14/7/04

Sharon McIntosh's plea for letters to the Environmental Services Directorate (ESD) arrived on the website on 12/7/04. As I pointed out on 28/6/04 such letters should have been submitted by 15/7/04...i.e. today.

However anyone who feels strongly about the matter should still write.

They will probably receive a letter back saying "The Director of Environmental Services acknowledges the receipt of your letter and notes your representations which will be taken into account before the application is determined" (I have quite a collection of them.)

However despite the rather formal phrasing of the reply I really believe that notice is taken of them. So Nil Desperandum !

I would also suggest that letters are backed up by phone calls to the ESD on 01235-520202 ext 505.

You will receive a pleasant surprise when you are connected to a friendly person prepared to give you a sympathetic hearing.

If sufficient calls are made the ESD will get the message that their plans are not universally welcomed.

Remember that when plans are made available to public scrutiny the Planners are entitled to assume that their ideas are acceptable unless they are told otherwise...SO TELL THEM !..But be nice !

Harry G Mitchell.

Notice of Second Deposit of the Local Plan - 12/07/04

One day in mid June It was suggested to me that I should attend a public viewing of these plans as they concerned the area directly opposite my property. On the same day a map showing exactly what was being proposed for the area came into my possession and I was very shocked.

So much so that I knocked on the doors of many of my neighbours to ask if they knew anything about the plans, no-one did!.

I Have an original first draft map dated October 2002 (PolicyH4(i)) which shows the Proposed housing site, old Tuckers Nursery on which 60 house were due to be built as this was brown field there were few objections to this and the people of Faringdon were delighted that a "10 acre landscaped park-including planting of 1000 trees,areas for ball-games,kite flying,picnicking and a pond should be of benefit to the whole town".

The new plan Second Deposit Draft local plan 2011. Shows an entirely different picture as it proposes the change of use of the Country park to a housing development of between 400 and 600 affordable and social houses and the relocation of the country park to the sandy field known as Jespers hill. This will also be the site of the new cricket ground. As well as opening up Stanford road from the new A420 roundabout.

This will cause many traffic problems for this area as it is almost impossible to make your way down London Road or Ferndale Road as it is because of the severe car parking problems.

The Country park project was part of a Section 106 agreement whereby planning permission was granted for

housing development linked to the provision of a "significant contribution" to the community, in this case the proposed park and the first phase was completed all except the provision of bins with the help of a £78,375 grant from the "Excellent" Countryside Agency's Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund . Faringdon residents, Faringdon Town Council and Fishing Club gave their support and although small it is a very pleasant, open space that is far from the busy road and which has attracted all kinds of wildlife in the short time it has been open and people have come from far and wide to visit.

Work on the second phase was due to begin in the spring of 2003 and the good people of Faringdon are still waiting patiently for their promised Country Park, but I'm afraid we have a fight on our hands because the District Planning Officer told some Residents at a small ,hastily arranged meeting on Friday in the Old Town Hall that his decision was final and that he was fully in favour of the changes!

So, how do you feel about this? are you willing to fight for your rights or will you stand back and let this happen just as we all did with the so called improvements to Faringdon Town Centre?

Please give us the support we need?

Do get involved by writing to: The Director of Environmental Services Vale of the White Horse District Council
Abbey House Abingdon OX14 3JN by July 15 2004

Thank-you!

Sharon McIntosh 01367 243596

Faringdon Enterprise Gateway - 8/7/04

The Faringdon Enterprise Gateway now officially open for business, and we are running a series of business seminars over the coming months.

The next one is planned for Thursday 15 July (09.45 - 13.00) and is focused on helping the Over 50's who are thinking about or are planning to go into Self Employment.

The event is jointly run by PRIME (who are specialists in this area) and OBE (who are focused on business start-ups in the county.)

Please contact me directly if you wish to attend.

David North Director Faringdon Enterprise Gateway Unit 3 RAC, Park Road, Faringdon, Oxon SN7 7BP

david@faringdongateway.co.uk

0845 458 3080

www.faringdongateway.co.uk

Speed Bumps - 9/7/04

I sent an email back on 12.05.04 commenting on the fact that the speed bumps outside the Corn Exchange are rubbish teeth jarring ones, as opposed to the higher quality (if I can use that word when referring to speed bumps) version seen around the town hall area.

I did mention at the time that I'd be happy to eat my words if I was wrong and the work had not yet been completed.

I am happy to report that I can partly eat those words as more work has since been done. White paint has been added to them.

At least now I can see the point when my shock absorbers disappear out of the top of the front wings of the car, rather than it taking me by surprise.

Thanks a lot.

Richard Edgington.

Car Parking in Faringdon - Public Meeting - 6/7/04

At the Corn Exchange on Thursday 15th July at 7:15pm to discuss the car parking report the Working Party has submitted.

The meeting is planned to be fairly informal with tables around which people can sit to discuss the report. I hope that sufficient people from the working party will attend so they can be at the table to discuss the report with others

Tim Evans

Faringdon Arts Festival - 5/7/04

What a great event - so many activities to choose from - the town was buzzing. Well done and THANKYOU to all of you who organised it and so successfully managed it. I hope you want to do it again
Gene Webb

Notice of Second Deposit of the Local Plan - 28/6/04

(involving Policies H4, E3 and L12)

The Changes are on deposit from 3rd June to 15th July.

There was an Exhibition explaining this planning issue in the Corn Exchange on 25/6 and 26/6. I went to see it and found it to be BORING and INCOMPREHENSIBLE but certainly not crowded.

I probably won't spend my time trying to understand it. But I am not proud of my lethargic attitude as I also ignored the alterations to the Town Centre Plan and only took an interest in it when I thought the result was a disaster.

This plan sets out in some detail what will happen to Faringdon in the future. It offers the opportunity for residents to question it and submit comments on it but objections must be in writing and be submitted by the 15th July 2004.

The VWHDC can't do any more !

I don't suppose I'll bother until it's too late.

Anyone interested ?

Name supplied

Having objected to a number of parts of the first draft, I meant to go - but I forgot all about it- I too will complain later I suspect Ed

Parking - 24/6/04

I was just thinking, If the ex community centre in the market place is not to be used as a theatre and is to be used as office space ???, why not remove all the unused and very tatty buildings to it's rear, and make parking with access to the market place through the community centre.

Also, the McCarthy development, why force them to build the extra affordable housing, thus causing more parking problems, why not ask them to make use of that part of land for pay and display 24hr parking for the council.

Wont' solve all problems, but could help.

Andy Boston

Market Restaurant Faringdon

Footballers? - 25/6/04

I don't waste my valuable time watching football but while waiting for Mastermind to come on I happened to see a bit of the match and.. We wuz robbed.

Was it because our captain was afraid to get his haired messed up by playing too hard ? NO. - Because he was using Harmony Hair Spray so no worries there.

Was it Wayne's mum because she didn't tie his shoe lace properly..NO. Because she had offered to put Velcro on his boots but he said it would make him look a cissy.

Was it Urs Meier the referee..NO..Because he had asked if he could have his blind dog with him and it was refused.

Was it Sven ? NO..Because when he should have been discussing tactics the Bank of England increased the Base rate and Sven was trying to work out how much extra income he would get for his £100,000 a week pay packet

So who was to blame.?

It was Ricardo their Goalkeeper. . It wasn't scoring the winning goal. It was what he did when Sven was going enny meeny mine moe to decide who should take the penalties.

It was a long chat because David had promised Posh that Brooklyn could have a go if necessary because he repeatedly beat his dad in their back garden.

During this chat Ricardo deliberately and with malice aforethought emptied his waterbottle on the penalty spot. Poor David slipped on it but in the 75 degree heat it dried out before the Portuguese had their go..

Quite simple really and I repeat... We wuz robbed!!
HGM

Poppies - and why they're so good this year - 22/6/04

The farm has been farmed organically for the last eight years by Neill Saunders, and for the last four years the sandy land has been in a nitrogen fixing red and white clover ley (short term grass and clovers) Hence the ground is a lot more fertile than in previous years and we were expecting a good yield of Organic bread making wheat (variety is Solstice)

It seems that the poppy seed which has laid dormant for many years experienced a specially good growing season with conditions just right for them to take over and produce the spectacle we do have.

Spraying started about 1947 - before that farming was organic - and poppy seed from before 1947 remains in the soil and given the right conditions it seems all seeds germinate.

Lots of people had pulled up around the roundabout this afternoon and were running around in the poppies - it was not intentional that we grew poppies - guess we should have asked for a small donation to the Church funds.

Daphne Saunders
Thanks Daphne Ed



The Poppy field - 20/6/04

Any chance of putting your photo of the poppy fields on the website with some info on its owner or origin?
It isn't often that Fun-Filled-Faringdon can have attracted so much passing interest.

PS..I understand that Opium, Morphine, Heroin production is not very complicated and reprehensible though it is, it might reduce our Council Tax...No ? Oh well just a thought !

Harry Mitchell

Poppy pictures soon Ed

Old Health Centre - No Occupants and Lots of Weeds!- 17/6/04

It was all completed and ready for occupation about 6 months ago and it's still empty.
The developers must have invested a fortune to buy and refurbish the building.

I cannot understand why they aren't rushing to get it occupied and start to recover their investment.

I heard that there are 9 units for shared ownership plus one for rental, and we keep hearing about the need for more affordable houses.

Anyone know what's happening?

Eddie Williams

Speed Bumps are not Pedestrian Crossings - 17/6/04

On 24/5/04 I predicted that granting Cover Construction permission to build 16 houses behind the Old Health Centre would be asking for trouble and on 1.6.04 the Town Council shared my view.

Not a lot of people know that because not a lot of people attended the insufferably overheated meeting where the matter was discussed.

I am now prepared to make another prediction.

Sometime in the future, maybe not tomorrow, maybe not next week or even next month, someone is going to be killed or seriously injured in our Town Centre.

The reason ? The speed bumps are being mistaken for pedestrian crossings

.

There are two reasons for this misunderstanding.

Firstly they are level with the pavements making it easy for prams, bundle buggies and Zimmer frames to cross and secondly most are marked by stout wooden posts which appear to invite pedestrians to cross.

Drivers, apart from the occasional visitor, know that the speed bumps can seriously damage their car's suspension so they slow down. Pedestrians assume that this marked deceleration is to allow them to cross and so confidently hurl themselves, complete with prams, bundle buggies or Zimmer frames, in the path of a driver who, as he approached, had no intention of stopping.

I don't know why the speed bumps have been made so inviting but I can understand why the posts are there. Should we ever have a serious flood in the centre of the town or a snow fall which obliterates the speed bumps drivers will still know exactly where to slow down.

This situation has never happened in my 40 years living here but that doesn't mean it can't happen and due praise to the planners who have anticipated this eventuality.

Harry G Mitchell

PS. Has everyone seen the Poppy Field from the Stanford Road Island ? It looks great.

My memory of the discussions about the new Market Place are that these are meant to be crossing points - but of course not controlled pedestrian crossings. I hope your prediction is wrong!!

I have digital photos of the poppies if anyone wants one - they(the poppies) are truly wonderful Ed

smoking - 7/6/04

i completely agree with you.. smoking like didcot power station does make you smell and could possibly give you cancer, along with other things like breathing problems etc? so why do they do it?

well, my friends say "i'm not doing it to act cool, i'm just doing it" but the reason most young people do it is because it gets them into a whole new friendship group, they get named "cool" and "sound" and normally they only smoke around friends, not when they're alone. also, if you lend someone "cooler" than you a cigarette, then maybe they might think you're "cool" too..

i know this from experience.. well if having yellow nails and smelling like a barbeque is cool.. i'd rather be a nerd :)

kate (or katherine)

Speed Bumps - 1/6/04

Whose idea was it to have a "speed bump" outside the front entrance to the Corn Exchange?

Surely nobody in their right mind would attempt to drive round that sharp corner (from Gloucester Street) at a speed in excess of 10 mph.

So take the damned thing up and put it somewhere where it would be more useful.

Donald Barber

I actually thought this was happening on 2nd June. When I walked through the town at about 4pm it was being dug up. When I walked back 2 hours later it didn't look as if anything had changed to me. It's still there anyway. What is going on? Ed

From 'the pensioner' - 1/6/04

Comments from Katherine (age 14) have been an eye opener for me

I have a query to add to the pensioner's list which Katherine or her mates might like to answer. She gets £520 annual pocket money and I assume that her friends get roughly the same. This will subsidise buying clothes, CDs, DVDs, trips to the cinema, cosmetics (just for the girls...I hope) etc.

My question is why do so many of her age group spend money on cigarettes ?. OK so the lucky ones may not get lung cancer but they will certainly smell like old ashtrays.

I do understand that some of them may have an inferiority complex and feel more secure with a cigarette in their mouths. (actually a dummy might act just as well and wouldn't do any harm).

They try to copy their elders without realising that most of them belong to that pathetic group who say "I could give up tomorrow if I wanted to".

So there we go Katherine or any other teenager... Do you and your friends believe that smoking is cool and sophisticated or just gross, manky or minging ?

HGM

Reply to the "pensioner willing to learn" - 1/6/04

(im sorry to call you that, i don't know your name) Of course i'll try to get my friends involved.

You're granddaughter may like to point out that you don't know what is cool and what isn't.. well with all the 70s and 80s music coming back into fashion.. and the dress sense too, you probably are more clued than we are, maybe u could teach us a thing or two! :D

we have to take big bags to school as most of the schools in this area don't have lockers!(or if they do they havn't got the keys back from the people who used them the year before, and people end up taking your thing- sad i know, but it happens!) so we have to carry all our books to each lesson. which, when you have two or three books for each one, can be a very big pain! quite literally sometimes. then, on top of that, they need lunchboxes, or money for lunch, clothes for after school, if they arn't going straight home, and for the girls a very big bag of make-up. (i know all this because my make-up bag was probably the biggest)

As for spitting.. i have NO idea why they do it, girls do too, just not quite as much-not very lady like, huh?

the answer is yes, WE DO text eachother the night before about what we'll wear, and i'd get calls in the morning to double check too... strange, you may think, but everybody does it!

i don't think boys realise that the things they do can be inconveniencing others.. and i don't think they mean to either, its just the way they are.

Pocket money. that's a hard one, some people have to do chores, and for each chore they get a certain amount of money, as for me, i have to keep my room reasonably tidy, and do the washing up on the occasion i don't beg my older brother to do it, and i get £10 a week, and £5 in my bank account-to save.. though i often decide to take a shopping trip and spend most of my savings.

I hope i have helped you to understand a little more,or maybe i've made you even more confused, (i don't know) keep the questions coming, i'm delighted to have the chance to explain a few things, maybe people will understand that we're not just animals that that make mess and eat to many sweets. -most of the time. :)
katherine

The improved Market Place through the eyes of a 14 year old - 31/5/04

Good for you. It was great to see your comments on the website particularly as it coincides with mine despite the slight age gap (well to be honest the gap is 60 years)

Is there any chance that you can get some of your friends to add their views on this or any other topic ?

My grand-daughter is a bit older than you and often makes it clear that I don't know where she is coming from and I don't have a clue about what is cool and what isn't. How about educating me?

For example what on earth do kids carry in the gigantic back packs they take to school? I have been all round the world plus a few other places and I didn't need a case much bigger.

Why do boys need to spit so much and do they do it on their own carpets at home ?

Some days girls go to school in skirts and the next day in trousers and they all seem to change on the same day...do they text each other the night before ?

When boys leave their bikes on the pavement do they measure the distance from each side in order to get exactly in the middle where they cause the most hassle ?

How much is a reasonable amount of pocket money for a 14 year old ?

I reckon that list will do for starters so how about some answers.
Once again well done
A pensioner willing to learn

*It would be good to hear the views of young people - any subject within reason!! Do email us on talkingpoints@faringdon-online.co.uk
We need to know the senders name- but it doesn't have to be published
Ed*

Faringdon Market Square - 30/5/04

At 14, you may think i should like the "new improved" market place, i mean its new, modern, just what a teenager like me would love to see right? In fact, you're very wrong.
Being home taught i don't spend a lot of time in the town centre anymore. I'm either studying or with friends in swindon/oxford. so how shocked i was to walk into town to find it had been modernised!
i've lived in faringdon most of my life and have always remembered it as being old fashioned and beautiful.

The road between the bargain centre and rob the cheese is barely big enough for one car to drive down. This

may have been intentional-to stop so much traffic passing through. But instead, people are driving up onto the pavement to get passed one another, especially in rush hour and after school. How long will it be before some unfortunate person gets injured?!

The new pavements are uneven and within a couple of months will be dirty and chewing gum stained. Why they decided to use such a light colour i don't know.

At school we were taught that many famous people who visited our town.
There is nothing left now to show it's history.
What next? knocking down the churches to replace them with burger bars?

In all, i do like the look of the town, it would look great in a place like swindon town centre. but not in a small place like Faringdon. it's taken the life and history out of our town.

kind regards. katherine, age 14



.....The First Casualty?-

25/05/04

Oh dear, I see we have our first casualty in the new improved Market Place, and if you look carefully at the colour scheme of the offending scrape, you will surmise, as I did, that the vehicle responsible for leaving the tell tale paint on the post belongs to none other

than.....Stagecoach. Not surprising, since there is insufficient room for the buses to turn, if there are vehicles waiting at, or approaching, the junction of Market Place and Cornmarket/London Street. Personally, I quite like the *look* of the new development, but yes, for those who disagree, there was a time when we could have raised various points, and objections, as there were exhibitions about the various schemes on offer, in the Corn Exchange at the planning stage. Most of us however, don't have enough specialist knowledge of town planning and traffic management arrangements, to make informed comments, and have to stick to whether we like the general appearance, or not. We fail to 'spot the deliberate mistakes'.

It is perplexing for us - ignorant members of the public - armed with only local knowledge and common sense; when (presumably) experienced planners devise these sometimes unworkable schemes. Remember the old adage - "measure twice, cut once"?

Doubtless it will all sort itself out, but if Stagecoach continue to bend their buses on our hitching posts, I rather fear that we may be the losers.

Hilary Taylor

More Market Place24/05/04

The changes to our town centre have resulted in a great deal of comment...most of it adverse. The planners, and I'm still not sure who THEY are, have been getting a lot of criticism but I wonder if this is justified.

I presume that everyone living in Faringdon did, at some time, have the opportunity to make known their views. Until something affects me directly I leave everything to those public spirited men and women who are prepared to spend time in, often boring, meetings.

The first time I took an interest in the project was when the pretty coloured picture, optimistically entitled: Faringdon ~ Market Place Improvements, was made available in the Corn Exchange in December 2003. By then it was too late as the decisions had been made.

The Swan Lane development is ongoing and has been widely discussed. It is almost certain that it will lead to parking problems in the surrounding roads.

Due to illegally parked cars London Street is now a no-bus area and there is some confusion about where the buses are supposed to go. It is understandable that passengers may be confused but, according to Hilary, this confusion is shared by the drivers. Decisions are presumably now being made to sort out this mess.

I am not aware that I have a particular aptitude for seeing into the future, at my age it is perhaps just as well. But I am prepared to inform the planners of a possible problem which can still be avoided.

I predict (completely free of charge) that if The Cover Construction Co Ltd get, at their fourth attempt, planning permission for 16 or so houses behind the Old Health Centre Site (which is still unoccupied and therefore still a car-free zone) the congestion in Coxwell Road will also lead to the extension of the Faringdon No-Go Area for buses.

Subsequent criticism of The Planners will be justified. Faringdon pensioners are given free bus tokens but they will soon be as much use to car-less pensioners as a pair of Roller Skates.

Finally...I was pleased to hear Faringdon mentioned on the TV Local News. It seems we have the most expensive petrol in Oxfordshire...I understand the reasons for this but it is still a rather dubious honour.
Harry G Mitchell

Market Square- 21/05/04

I have mixed feeling about the Market Square improvements except for one area; as a driver it is now dangerous territory. Most oncoming vehicles do not stop or give way as they approach the Market Square from the Corn Exchange.

If they are in a line of traffic, they just barge through regardless of whether there is any room. Also the pedestrian 'crossings' are deadly.

Most pedestrians see it as their right of way to cross the road at this point and expect the traffic to stop. But they are not Zebra Crossings!

I don't see any reference to this type of crossing in the Highway Code so does anyone actually know the protocol here?

They seem like an accident waiting to happen.

So is the town more popular now?

I have had occasion to be in the Market Square on both Saturday mornings and Saturday afternoons for the past three weeks. Afternoons are dead!

Have any of the local businesses reported up/downturn since the it re-opened for business? I for one would be very interested to hear...

Martin Long

Talking Points -15/05/04

Richard, at last someone else has realised that this forum is to talk about the things that matter to us in Faringdon, perhaps now others may voice an opinion about the " improvements?", and not to sell keep fit classes or trying to flog breakfasts!!.

Come on, use this " talking points" for having a good old moan, or heaven forbid, praise something, its one of the better things in Faringdon.

If you don't, well I will have to keep talking about the horse coral in the market place, actually mentioning that, have a look at the old photos, the ones that show the old cattle and sheep market, and try to spot the difference between then and now.... Jim Horton. (again)

A Vote for the Market Place -15/05/04

I like our newly refurbished Market Square – it is altogether lighter, cleaner and has a pleasant “open” feel to it. I am not convinced about the priority system at the narrow part by the Corn Exchange. The line of sight is not as good as it should be, there may have to be some rethinking about this.

Also – are we just to be left with a “bump” by the Corn Exchange, or will it be surfaced to match the “bumps” in London street and beside the chemist.

Julia Burn

Village View of the Market Place - 14/05/04

As someone has already said - nobody seems to like it - as a resident of Longcot I can't get over the lack of common sense that's gone into this new look. No thought for local business - I'll think twice about coming into town when there's not enough parking - either during the day or in the evening.

I also felt it was empty and forlorn when I took back a video the other evening -I also felt different, it's less friendly, just a few onlookers.

How on earth did it get past the planning stage - were there no impressions posted of what it would be like? The bus problem must be a nightmare too.

It seems a real shame - all it needed was a bit of TLC and general brightening and cleaning up with a few more interesting shops and ones that don't shut at lunchtime!

Longcot Resident

Speed Bumps - 12/5/04

If, after years of motorised transport, the centre of Faringdon is now deemed too treacherous to do without speed bumps, could we at least have good ones (like the ones outside the town hall) throughout the town, rather than a mixture of good and, quite frankly, rubbish ones such as those outside the Corn Exchange.

If the work is not yet complete, then I'll be more than happy to eat my words.

Also, I do have to echo some of the points on this forum. I liked the town centre as it was.

It looked nice and old. If I'd wanted to live in Swindon, then I'd have moved there.

Richard Edgington

Stagecoach buses - 12/5/04

Having travelled on the bus to Oxford today - I can confirm that the buses now leave from the Market Place. The driver of the bus on which I returned, however, went up Coxwell Street without going to the Market Place.

When we stranded passengers complained he told us that he hadn't been told by the supervisor about the new arrangements.

I now have a telephone number for Stagecoach, and I subsequently phoned them and explained the above, and my other complaints about myself and other passengers being left behind when the bus leaves early.

I spoke to 'Chris', the travel clerk. I presume she is nothing to do with customer service, should such a concept exist within the Stagecoach organisation.

She said she would pass my comments on, (but failed to ask my name or anything else, so?)

I did make the point that Stagecoach seem quite unconcerned with the convenience of their passengers, a comment with which she did not disagree.

The number to ring if you wish to make a comment/complaint to **Stagecoach is 01793 521415**

Hilary Taylor

A bus in the Market Square - 12/5/04

The good news.

This evening I saw a Stagecoach bus bound for Swindon waiting in the Market Place - so they are back!

The bad news. I saw another one bound for Oxford arrive after the Swindon one.

It could not get round the corner to turn from Cornmarket round the Old Town Hall because there were stationary cars and a lorry waiting to turn into London Street, which was congested with more stationary cars.

This may herald the cessation of the bus service into the Market Place, as there is insufficient turning space for the buses when there are cars waiting at the junction.

(The bus route up London Street has already been axed because illegally parked vehicles make the road too narrow for the buses).

Hilary Taylor

Buses in the Market square - 10/5/04

Hilary, and all other people wishing to catch public transport, you've got it all wrong, you're not supposed to catch buses in faringdon town centre, they make the place look untidy, and they are not colour coordinated with the new tarmac,

So lets get rid of the centre parking for the nasty smelly things, same thing with cars, we can't have them making the centre look too modern, with all that flash metallic paint, and the dreadful car alarms going off whenever someone looks at them.

It would disturb all the visitors, drinking their coffee, sat at the bistro style table sets bought by the local shops to use on the extra wide pavements.

No, the way forward for us Faringdonians is to have.....horses, the council have now provided us with a coral where the buses used to park, to keep them in while we shop, and there is a hitching post outside the bank(very frontier town)

Of course the colour of the horses should match the tarmac, that should be easy enough, they used to colour dip the pigeons,horses should be no problem.

Forget the sealed knot, lets have a wild west show.

If you think I'm being stupid, well the planners started it.

As I said Mr Brown, get the old photo's out, I've gone misty eyed again.

Jim Horton

Faringdon Business Breakfast Club - 8/5/04

Would you be interested in a Faringdon Business Breakfast Club?

To provide regular opportunities for local networking, informal seminars, knowledge sharing, or just to meet and chat to other local business people.

To register an interest, please email PortwellBar@aol.com or leave a business card at The Portwell Bar, 26a Market Place (beneath Portwell House Hotel).

Faringdon Police Station opening times - 25/10/04

As many of you are aware, we do not currently have a front desk clerk to open the police station due to the departure of Liz to pastures new.

We are endeavouring to maintain a level of service for you and as a result, an officer will be covering this task on a temporary basis.

As the officer will also be working at Wantage, this will mean that Faringdon Station will be open on occasions rather than full-time.

However, the benefits will be that when the station is open, it will be for the whole day and sometimes at weekends.

The opening hours will be posted on the front door of the station on a regular basis to keep you informed
WPC Kirsty Reed

Governors wanted for Primary Schools - 21/10/04

If you are keen to volunteer to become a School Governor, please contact me on this email address. Mjhoxon@aol.com

The LEA (Local Education Authority) Governorships are my gift, and I have to write to the LEA proposing any candidate.

I look forward to being absolutely inundated with volunteers.

Judith Heathcoat (C/Cllr. Faringdon Division)

Just Imagine! - 21/10/04

In reference to the debate on the proposed sewage treatment plant. Photographed the sign on Park Road today with new additions.

Al Cane



Sorry - 20/10/04

I had not forgotten the cd, I said at the time it was a wonderful way of celebrating the millennium, and I still think the hard work and commitment that was put in was awesome.

Harry has already corrected me over my lack of one line, that being, the "town council has done nothing", I thank him, and apologise to you.

However I will take you up on one point, I do care a fig about who does thing for us in Faringdon, the councillors are there for us, not to make themselves look good or to bolster their own ego's, they, like us have become reliant on individuals to make this town the envy of other towns.

Will the council be putting a Christmas light on the folly?, no.

Will they produce a calendar of events for Faringdon to raise funds to replace the money lost on court cases?, no.

Was the music festival their idea? no.

I could go on, but even I am getting bored, therefore, I offer it to the house.....

On a more personal note, many of you know that my wife, Gilly, died at the end of August, after a long battle with a brain tumour, There will be a celebration of life gig at the corn exchange, on the 27th November, (from 7.30 onwards) the idea is to raise a shed load of money for the Prospect Hospice at Wroughton.

The Sad Dads, and a support jazz band will supply the music. There will be an auction of autographs (Sir

George Martin, Rory Bremner, Jilly Cooper, Jennifer Saunders, Kylie & Dannii Minogue plus many more)
Entry is free, donations in a bucket.
Come along, have a dance, or even sing with the band.
I hope to see you there, you can put me in my place in person!!!!
Jim Horton.
Ed: *I kind of agree with your view about councillors - but I do try and remember that Faringdon Town Councillors are all unpaid volunteers*

Lottery Surgery day - 20/10/04

Faringdon Area project(FAP) arranged for a Lottery expert to come to Faringdon to advise local people on whether their projects would be eligible for Lottery funding.
It was a great success- of the 16 projects it was felt that 13 would benefit from making an application for grant funding.

Both groups and individuals came forward with a range of initiatives including cycling, skating, transport, food, youth and even a museum project

There's lots happening in and around the town

Gene Webb

Find out more about FAP by clicking on [Frequently asked questions](#)

Find out even more by coming to the meeting on 25th November at Sudbury House - look out for posters and details in the Folly

Sorry, HGM, - 19/10/04

....obviously I didnt make myself clear. My letter wasnt meant to sound 'wrathful', merely factual. The council helped us financially when we asked for assistance, and I think it unfair to say "they jumped on the bandwagon" when it was obvious that it would be a success. That was simply not the case.

In the event the project worked better as a private initiative because we didnt have to wait for approval while it was discussed and modified endlessly by various committees. We could get on with it while the enthusiasm was there.

Personally I dont think it matters a fig who runs events/projects etc. in the town - anyone can do it if they have the interest and aptitude - and there have been many local events and many organisations which prove it.
Hilary Taylor

FotoFaringdon 2000... Credit where it's due.- 19/10/04

Jim Horton obviously hit a nerve when he left out a little phrase which would have avoided him incurring Hilary's wrath.

He should have said , and I'm sure meant to say, and given the chance would now say.. "We haven't got a millennium anything.... PROVIDED BY THE TOWN COUNCIL".

The CD of FotoFaringdon 2000 was, and still is, a fantastic and unique concept. I sent copies to friends and keep a copy on my computer and I find it invaluable. But it was the result of private enterprise.

Hilary admits that her idea received no recognition from the Council until it became obvious that it was going to be a success when they jumped on the bandwagon. It also sounds as if the Council are also off the hook if the councillor who received the suggestion originally made a unilateral decision to file it under B1N.

Without naming names would I be correct in assuming that the far sighted Councillor is the same one who still relies on gas lighting as he/she maintains that electricity will never catch on ?

HGM

Oh, come on - ".....we havent got a Millennium anything.....". - 18/10/04

Some people have a short memory indeed. What about the cd, available to anyone - FotoFaringdon 2000?

Produced for the town, by the volunteers of the town, over a period of many months and much tedious work.

Dave Heady's marvellous interactive tour of Faringdon, coupled with a record of every single building, not to mention the mammoth exhibition of the project in All Saints' Church, was a terrific memorial project and will be a perennially valid historical document.

Just to put the record straight, though - I set out the idea for this project, together with some suggestions for the methodology - and sent it in a letter to one of our town councillors, at the time when they were asking for suggestions for a Millennium scheme.

I heard nothing, and only months later when a group of us had decided to go for it by ourselves (and at our own expense) did I discover that the letter had been binned without the suggestion ever having been put to the council.

Later the council did make a financial contribution.
Hilary Taylor.

In Praise of....sort of - 18/10/04

I keep hearing about, and reading about the new statue, about how good or bad it is depending on your opinion.

I would like to add my tenpeneth if I may.

At the moment it looks too clean, too new, like a new mushroom shining in the ground, on a misty, cold November morning, as much of a beacon as Pete White's on top of the folly. When its aged, it will look fine. Years ago farmers used to age new barn and outbuilding roofs with buckets of slurry, so that the moss would make it look like its been there for years(just apply like paint, and leave to dry, a bit smelly, but it works)

Any way I digress, what I'm amazed about is the fact that something was actually built, it was discussed, planned, and executed with very little fuss. Pity the now fabled and forgotten Millennium clock wasn't treated in the same way.

O.k so no one with any sense wanted the clock, not at fifteen grand anyway, but nearly five years down the road and we haven't got a millennium anything, apart from an abandoned community centre and less car parking, (and still we keep moaning, are we Farindonians never satisfied)

There, I've said my piece apart from one thing,

I remember a visitor to Faringdon once said to me,(this is not me talking you understand, I like Faringdon) "If God ever wanted to give the world an enema, Faringdon is where he would stick the pipe,"
Now, we are having problems with sewerage lorries, something about moving in mysterious ways springs to mind.

Jim Horton

Thames Sewage Treatment - 16/10/04

ALL IT TAKES FOR EVIL TO FLOURISH IS FOR RIGHTEOUS PEOPLE TO DO NOTHING!

OK..... Thames Water isn't really evil and I'm not particularly righteous but the principle is the same. So I want to register my objection to a scheme which involves carting lorry loads of sewage through Faringdon and to point out that for everyone who does bother to complain there are probably hundreds who don't !

Like everyone I mention this sewage business to I am appalled by the suggestion that we are to have an uncertain number of vehicles containing an unknown quantity of sewage passing through Faringdon. I admit I don't know why it might be considered desirable to bring it here and I also admit I don't know exactly what it is. That's not quite correct. I do know exactly what it is but I don't know what form it will take as it accidentally gets dropped in Park Road and Gravel Walk.

What I also do know, as every right minded resident of Faringdon must know, is that it doesn't matter too much what the contents of the lorries will be. What is important is that neither of the roads involved should have to be made even more dangerous than they already are, particularly for school children who use them every morning and evening.

I have become accustomed to the farm vehicles, buses and refuse lorries which regularly use these roads for I realise that they are a necessary evil.

But it is hard to understand how anyone who has driven on this route can justify extra lorries no matter what they contain. My objection would be just as strong even if they were loaded with Thornton's chocolates- which they aren't !!

Chocoholic

Beavers, Cubs and Scouts- 14/10/04

Faringdon could start a second Beaver Colony and Cub Pack

If only we had the leaders!

If you're interested contact Denise Pargeter

Tel: 01367 241911, email d.pargeter@btinternet.com

Parking standards in Faringdon - 14/10/04

Information from VWHDC once indicated that Faringdon is treated as an urban area for guidance in numbers of off road parking spaces per new dwelling. It seems this is not the case.....

The parking standards, which are maxima levels as per the government guidelines, are subscribed to rather than set by the Vale.

They are the same for all five district councils in the county, in an effort to ensure consistency.

Faringdon is not in Type 1 (Urban= 1 space per dwelling up to 2 rooms, 2 or more bedrooms on merit) which covers the central areas of Abingdon and Wantage. Actually we are in Type 2(Rural=1 space per 1 bedroom dwelling, 2 spaces per 2/3 bedrooms, >4 bedrooms on merit) which covers the rest, ie rural parts of the Vale.

These standards are too low, but at the moment that is where it stands. The fact that we share these standards with the other districts will make it harder to change so we would need to convince the whole of Oxfordshire in order to change them.

It is also worth noting that these are guidelines and there are exceptional cases. To suggest these were firm rules would be to misrepresent their intention.

Info provided by a local councillor

In praise of...contd- 13/10/04

In the midst of some very serious issues being discussed on the site may I offer further thoughts on the lighter subject of the statues.

Harry, Caroline and Philistine (his/her self description...not mine!) have all stood up and voiced an opinion. All credit to you and I have no doubt there are many, many more who think the same way but have not been vocal.

But my further point is this. All art is "modern" at some point...Monet, Escher and Strauss all had a problem with being seen as too modern in their day. Would we generally consider that still to be the case? I think not.

And a further question to ponder... I wonder what our resident modern art critics think of the rather "modern" abstract form a horse that adorns White Horse Hill?...or is that acceptable because it's 2000 years old? It's all subjective.

Any of those people mentioned above (or anyone with a view for that matter) are welcome to join us in shaping the next Faringdon Arts Festival...we want to put on something for everyone, so your input is welcome!

Anyone interested can contact me via email at [david@faringdonartsfestival.org](mailto: david@faringdonartsfestival.org)

David Reynolds

Chairman Faringdon Arts Festival

106 (Planning Gain) for the Market Place improvements- 13/10/04

This article brings into focus three facts if Planning Gain money has been, or may be, used for anything other than building houses.

1..90% of people reading it will not have a clue what it means and are quite happy to remain in ignorance.

I would like to find out more about the VWHDC's interpretation of the Section 106 guidelines but I don't know where to start looking.

2..At the moment my understanding of Section 106 agreements is that Planning Permission for developments may be granted if the developer agrees to include in the package a few Affordable or Low cost houses (and what they are is anybody's guess). In other words it seems to be a form of legal backhander which benefits the community at the expense of the developer and I can live with that.

3.. And this is the difficult bit... I cannot see how it could be justified to subsidise any work in the Market Square either in the past or in the future unless the Council consider that any Planning Gain Cash is theirs to use as they think fit for any project. Also... If the Council had allocated Swan Lane 106 cash to the Market Square BEFORE planning permission for the Swan Lane Development had been formally given it rather implies that the granting of Planning Permission was a foregone conclusion.

Harry G Mitchell

Ed I understand the rules around planning gain are many and various, but in principle it is likely to cover things like required changes to roads, utilities, education, play areas/open spaces. VWHDC planners negotiate with the developer on our behalf. Faringdon Town Council are asked their view - for significant developments

Sewage Treatment Proposa- 13/10/04

As at yesterday evening, the Petition has been signed by an amazing 1879 people!!

We are still receiving more forms and letters in the post

I believe that there are at least a further 250 signatures yet to be processed and hopefully more.

We have about 30 excellent individual letters but could do with more...please write more letters!!

Many thanks to Sqn Ldr Mike Cawsey for a tremendous effort in Lechlade.

The current breakdown of the Petition is:

1192 Faringdon (63%),

384 Lechlade (21%),

249 Local Villages (13%)

and 54 others (3%).

Others includes an ex pat living in Spain who visits Faringdon on a regular basis, a daughter of an elderly Lechlade resident who lives in Exeter etc.. Obvious "fakes" such as Mickey Mouse have been voided .

We need to keep up the momentum and explore all possible avenues to ensure that Thames Water abandon this ill thought out proposal.

The recently published Environment Agency "at risk from flooding map" shows part of the existing Sewage Treatment Plant Site to be in the "at risk" area.

I would also urge the Highways Authority to let TW know that the access to the site is both narrow and badly placed and would undoubtedly constitute a significant additional hazard on the A417.

Danny Bell

Charge for taking rubbish to the Stanford tip - 12/10/04

I have heard that VWHDC have decided to charge everyone who takes rubbish to the tip if they have more than 3 bags.

No idea what charge or from when

Does anyone know??

Gene Webb

Response from Oxon CC

The Stanford Waste Recycling Centre is owned by Oxfordshire County Council.

Household waste can be deposited by the householder free of charge and the Council has no intention of changing this.

The centre will however accept DIY waste from householders and has done so for four years. There is a charging system for DIY wastes which are classified as industrial wastes.

This is preferential to making householders dispose of such wastes at commercial waste centres and at commercial waste prices. All the monies raised from this system are used to improve facilities at the centres.
John Cherry Service
Development Officer Waste Management Group OCC

Information from a local resident

The VWHDC Waste Management referred me to OCC Waste Management and they said there are no plans to increase charges and they remain at:
up to 3 bulky Items free then a charge of £1.00 per item,
also tyres cost £1.25 each and a wheel and a tyre £1.75.

Market Place refurbishment- 12/10/04

I've heard that VWHDC are planning to make some alterations to the market place. No idea what they are.

I've also heard that VWHDC earmarked some of the 106(Planning gain) money for the Swan Lane development to fund their contribution to the Market Place refurbishment. Full planning permission has only just been granted, so it seems that VWHDC were anticipating the success of this planning application. I think it unlikely that Faringdon Town Council would have agreed to this, though I am assured that their views are considered in defining 106 agreements

I have no memory of us ever being told this. If it is true it is another example of VWHDC not being open about the financial dealings in relation to 106 agreements.

I'm trying to find out what else has been included in this 106 agreement for Swan lane development
Gene Webb

Pump House Faringdon- 12/10/04

At the last full council meeting Cnclr David Hughes raised a motion that sufficient repairs are made to the Pump House and that it be returned to the owner, Lord Faringdon.

This has been suggested a number of times over the past 4 years, but this time some progress has been made. Although many members voted against the motion, it was agreed that the suggestion should be looked into.

- 1 Lord Faringdon will be asked if he would accept the return of the building.
- 2 Whether the Public Works loan can be used for this purpose(and the building not become a community facility) will be ascertained.
- 3 Repair, refurbish and running costs will be calculated

Comment from Ed

1 I find it amazing that after so long FTC do not know the answer to this already. Clearly all the options for the Pump House have not been considered - certain members of FTC have been determined to keep the building irrespective of costs to us.

*2 Three councillors have been very vocal on this in the past stating categorically that the terms of the loan did not allow the money to be used only for repair. This has found to be **totally untrue**. It has now been established that the money can be used wholly for repairs or it can be repaid early - though in the latter option penalties(not quantified) would arise.
Your guess is as good as mine as to how and why this mis information was put about*

3 We were told that a full business plan would be produced as long ago as 2001- it still has not been, despite spending £12k on consultants(who indicated that use of the building by community groups had not been established and grant funding was unlikely). Current annual costs to us are estimated at £30k, but the general view is that this is very low and could be as much as £60k. This excludes anything to do with the theatre

I am told the matter is to be discussed again at the council meeting 10/11/04

Redevelopment of Faringdon Former Health Centre - 12/10/04

Beacon Housing Association purchased the Health Centre in Coxwell Road, from South West Oxfordshire

Primary Care Trust in November 2002.

The original Victorian building, constructed 1892 as the local Cottage Hospital, has now been refurbished and converted into a terrace of 2 x 2 bed and 1 x 3 bed houses. The single storey 1960's extension has been refurbished and converted to form 5 x 2 bed bungalows and 1 x 1 bed bungalow around a central courtyard. Four of these units open onto the courtyard, which has been subdivided to provide private enclosed patios.

The former Physiotherapy Centre is now a detached 1-bed bungalow. The development is set in communal grounds with allocated and visitor parking to the front. Each unit is fully carpeted (vinyl sheet in kitchen and bathroom) and also benefits from a separate external store.

Having shown interest in the architecture and design, I was delighted when Jonathan Brookes, Development Manager of Beacon Housing Association, offered to take me on a guided tour of the finished building. I was very impressed by the way the building has been sympathetically restored and converted to provide high quality residential accommodation.

The external appearance of this classic Victorian building has been retained, any additional brickwork and windows being perfectly matched to the original design. The front section has been converted to a two-storey building and the additional windows blend well with the original design, even enhancing the overall appearance.

Each unit has a unique layout to optimise the available space. All have modern kitchens and bathrooms, several of them having generous living rooms.

Grant funding from the Housing Corporation has assisted the cost of converting the complex of buildings to provide high quality residential accommodation. As a condition of this funding, 9 of the units are to be made available for shared ownership purchase and the detached 1 bed bungalow for intermediate rent by key workers, who have a reasonable income but are unable to afford a home of their own on the open market.

Beacon Housing Association is therefore targeting public sector workers i.e. teachers, nurses/health workers, social workers, occupational therapists, fire fighters, police, police civilians, probation service staff and council planners. Prospective applicants should also have a local connection i.e. they must already live or work in Faringdon, or have family in the town or surrounding area.

It is proposed (subject to agreement with Royal Mail) that the scheme be known as "Dundas Court". Captain Dundas initiated public subscriptions to help build the original hospital and contributed a considerable amount of the money required. It is fitting, therefore, that the development should be named in his honour.

The development of this important Faringdon landmark was of great concern to many residents. I am delighted with the outcome and would like to congratulate Beacon Housing Association

Anyone interested in the units at Dundas Court and able to meet the key worker/local connection qualifying criteria should contact Brenda O'Flynn, Sales and Marketing Manager, on 01753 606420.

Eddie Williams

Ed I understand that these properties have not been properly put on the market as there is some question over the fact that planning permission was given for social, not key worker housing. May only be a rumour!!

Red House Barn, Coxwell Road - 12/10/04

Faringdon Association of residents and residents have succeeded in preventing this site from becoming an industrial area. The owner appeared to be developing it without planning permission. VWHDC have taken legal action requiring the barn to be demolished.

Historical Society Books - 12/10/04

In reply to Harry Mitchell's concern regarding the Historical Societies book stock.

We are pleased to tell you that a new location has been found within the library building where all the Societies books, periodicals and documents are held and can be referred to.

Please ask staff for details.

The library is currently being refurbished and will re-open at 2pm on Monday 25 October.

We look forward to seeing all readers existing and new .

Mary Fellows Faringdon Library Manager

As old as the Hills - 11/10/04

Is the Folly Park in Faringdon ..a famous tourist spot ?
Some people say it may be ... but others say it's not.
It hides behind a garage far from the Market Square
But many of the townfolk don't even know it's there.
The Council in their wisdom discussed it and decreed
A landmark like the Folly Tower is what we really need.
Now useless towers are costly though they may improve the view
But we already had one and we don't have room for two.
They discussed it and researched it and said that for a start
They really would get with it... and buy some Modern Art.
Could it be a fountain or a speaking floral clock
Some might think these rather bland (and some might even mock..)
And so it was decided...a sculpture would fit the bill
And the obvious place to put it was on the Folly Hill.
So now we have four statues...
Tourists...Come and see
But if you're not sure what they are..
I hope you won't ask me

Harry Mitchell

Alternative proposal for the Sludge - 10/10/04

A proposal to Thames Water for a
More Environmentally-Friendly and Financially Sounder Long- term Solution to the Problems of Sludge
Disposal
in the Wantage, Witney, Faringdon and Abingdon area, Oxfordshire has been made

Supported by the Countryside Agency, VWHDC, Faringdon Town Council, SEEDA and DEFRA.

[Download the proposal to Thames Water](#)

Better Utilisation of Faringdon Police Station - 9/10/04

Liz Watson has left the Faringdon Police Station so it will no longer be open on a regular basis.
The Faringdon Historical Society is looking for a new home for what the Faringdon Folly calls its collection of
Boos. (presumably books not booze?)

Surely the Police Station must have a fairly secure room/cell which they could allow the Society to use.

The Police Station carpark is still the largest under used parking area near the town centre.

How difficult would it be to use a few spaces for Marlborough St Residents parking ?

Just a thought !

Harry G Mitchell

Ed I agree with your idea in principle - a small town like Faringdon needs to make best use of its facilities by sharing. Not sure that the use of the police station car park by the general public would work - there are lots of visiting police people. However there is a large space behind the nearby telephone exchange that is mostly empty.

I'd like to see other publicly owned buildings and spaces made more available for multi use - schools- buildings and outside space, council offices, library,

Request to write letters of objection -Sewage Treatment proposal - 5/10/04

A message of thanks to all the 130 Faringdon folk who came to the meeting in the Faringdon Infants school tonight. To those who weren't able to come, the Alternative Energy group are sending, by attachment, a proposal that they have made to Thames Water. [Click to open Proposal to Thames Water](#)

T.W. have said they will respond in 10 - 12 days time.

The group would like you to read the proposal, to write letters to:

John Sexton, Managing Director of Thames Water, 14, Cavendish Place, London W1M 0NU,
Margaret Beckett Minister for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, DEFRA, House of Commons, London
..... and to others. preferably, ... write by email - (or post) to:
Tim Fane at Northfield Farm, Radcot Road, Faringdon,
or Pat Saunders at Woodhouse, Faringdon, SN7 7NL

The group will then photocopy your letters onto others who may be able to help or influence.
Tonight, a suggestion was made, and it is to be taken up, - to make a place available in Budgeons where
petitions can be signed.
Please encourage Faringdon folk to do this. Also, please pass this onto those friends and neighbours who will
also contribute to the large number of letters that is needed to change Thames Water's present plan ... that is to
start building the lime dosing plant on the Lechlade Road in Jan 2005. It will be a permanent sludge storage
site for the growing towns of Abingdon, Wantage and Witney. If building starts, Faringdon will never be the
same as now.

Sincerely
Pat Saunders, Tim Fane, Danny Bell, Hamish Wood,
and others from The Alternative Energy Group

[Letter to Judith Heathcoat, Oxon CC, dated 28th Sept 2004](#)
[Comments on Thames Water Sludge report, August 2004](#)

Sewerage Treatment Plan - 07/10/04

Just to say thank you to all the people who attended the meeting at Faringdon Infants School. We are very
aware that this is a battle worth fighting!
Thank you to all the people who took away petition sheets, and the people who put their names forward for
signature collection on Saturday in the town centre.
There was a great turn out, including a lady from Thames Water!

There were also residents in the audience from Lechlade, they to have offered help and support. Its our
understanding that petitions are now being circulated around their town. Every single one counts!
Once again thank you to all concerned.
Hamish Wood.

Faringdon Sewerage Treatment Plan - 06/10/04

Yesterday evening, a Public Meeting was held at the Faringdon Infants school to discuss Thames Water's plan
to build a Lime Treatment Plant at the local Faringdon Sewage Treatment Plant (see Gordon Dowell's letter of
the 15th September).

The venue was packed out with 130 worried residents from Faringdon and Lechlade. Thames Water's
proposals and their implications were discussed ...3500 large HGV vehicle movements each year, significant
odour pollution, increased danger on the A417 as lorries try and manoeuvre in and out of the narrow single
track access road etc.

The Faringdon Alternative Energy Groups (FAEG) alternative proposals were also read out. Members of FAEG
answered many good questions from the audience and emphasised that this is not a case of "Nimbyism" as a
well researched practical and environmentally friendly alternative proposal has already been sent to TW.

It is now hugely important to try and convince TW and any individuals/organisations that an alternative solution
must be found as the implications of the existing proposals are truly horrific. Time is tight as TW are planning to
start work in January.

Petitions are being placed in many of the town's shops and will be taken round the town this weekend. Please
sign the Petition and also write to Mr John Sexton MD of Thames Water expressing your concerns.

It would be very helpful if your letters and petitions could be sent to **FAEG, Northfield Farm, Radcot Road,
Faringdon, SN7 8DT** so that copies can be taken and sent to those in a position of influence. Anyone requiring
petitions or further information or able to volunteer some time this weekend(9th ,10th Oct) please contact

danielbell@btopenworld.com.

Thank you
Danny Bell

In answer to : 'In Praise of the Folly Park Sculpture' 06/10/04

I am one of those people who enjoy seeing the sunrise, sunset, visiting traditional old pubs, old houses, walks in the unspoilt country side e.t.c.

I am not old (29!) but have been brought up to appreciate the beauty of the world..natural beauty. There IS a place for modern art (studios/galleries, peoples own homes) for those who like it to appreciate it, with whatever value it may hold for them..but why on an unspoilt piece of land which has to be viewed by all?

I am afraid I can't agree that the sculptures 'raise the profile of Faringdon another notch!'...more like having to add another notch on your belt because of an expanding and unwanted waistline!
Caroline

Beauty is in the eye of the Beholder - 28/9/04

I appreciate David Reynold's defence of the Folly Sculpture. He states that art is subjective and I accept that 'As Old as the Hills' may well merit a place in Tate Modern.

He suggests that I broaden my vision and 'let it mean what I want it to mean'.

He sees it as an eye catching focal point for travellers on the A420 and all I see is a group of beautifully carved stones with holes.

The intention of Modern Art is to provoke a positive reaction. Tracy Emin's 'Unmade Bed' and Damien Hurst's 'Cow in Formaldehyde' may well have been acclaimed by the judges for the Turner Prize but both leave me with a feeling of disgust.

It could be argued that as art they succeed because they certainly provoked a positive reaction in me. My only reaction to the Faringdon Four is bewilderment.

I know that as a Faringdon Council Tax payer I must have contributed a few pennies to the cost of this installation but I would have preferred the money to have been spent on a bus shelter or a skate park despite the fact that I will never have use for either.

As to the Folly Tower. It is now undoubtedly a positive attraction in Faringdon but initially it was not a popular project.

When it comes to planning matters, who you know is important, and Lord Berners knew a lot of people. He commissioned it but even he felt that a hundred foot high square brick tower was too stark so he insisted on having it crowned with a Gothic Turret.

In my opinion it became a worthwhile work of art when it served as a background for the poppies earlier in the year and when it was surmounted by a rotating beacon and an illuminated Star at Christmas Time.

Finally my apologies to our Mayor. I got it wrong when I gave Jerry Patterson the credit for cutting the ribbon when it should rightly have gone to her. Mea Culpa.

Puzzled Philistine again

Ed. Any chance of putting a photo of our latest acquisition on the website ? A lot of readers won't know what it is or even where it is.

Good idea - soon to be done- Ed

Who Cut the Ribbon? - 27/09/04

I would like to correct who opened the Folly park. Dee England Cut the ribbon not Jerry Patterson.
Dee England

Parking Back in Focus - 27/09/04

I was wondering if there is any further news on the parking situation in the Bromsgrove area (particularly outside our house!) We were on holiday when the request for suggestions was made but thought that a 'residents parking only' would be a good solution.

I understand this method is used for the area by the piano shop/opposite chip shop in Faringdon.

Also...what has happened to the idea of the speed humps that were going to be introduced down our road? Any information would be gratefully received.

Thank you
Caroline, Faringdon

In Praise of the Folly Park Sculpture^{26/09/04}

I don't know why but I'm surprised at the negative attitudes appearing on the website about the new statues in Folly Park. I thought I should redress the balance a little by adding something positive.

As Chairman of the Faringdon Arts Festival I presided over many meetings in the formative stages where the issue of "is it art?" came up time and time again when deciding whether an event should be included. What became clear is that there is no clear! What is art to one person is a complete non entity to someone else. But then that's the beauty of art isn't it? It's subjective and means what it means to the person viewing/listening/performing it.

For me, the best art is usually the less obvious variety.

Can I suggest therefore to those who don't "understand the meaning" of the statues to broaden their vision a little and allow themselves the privilege of letting them mean whatever they want them to. I think the statues are eye catching and another Faringdon focal point for people passing by on the A420. (The other, of course, being the Folly Tower which I'm sure was also vilified when it went up all those years ago!).

Apart from the artistic merit we should be praising anything that raises the profile of Faringdon another notch!

David Reynolds

Resident and Faringdon Arts Festival

Folly Park Sculpture^{-19/9/04}

As from Saturday 18th September 2004 the "As old as the Hills" sculpture in the Folly Park is officially part of our Nation's Heritage and to travellers along the A420 it will be an ever present reminder that they have just missed Faringdon.

In time I'm sure that The Faringdon Four will be as famous as Gateshead's Angel of the North and the Concrete Cows of Milton Keynes.

At the inaugural festivities The Wantage Silver Youth Band gave their usual enthusiastic entertainment but the main attraction was to be Rory Bremner's unveiling (of the statues).

Fortunately the rain stayed away but unfortunately so did Mr Bremner.

With only a few minutes notice our Mayor had to take over from him and in the absence of our famous guest I rather hoped she might do an impersonation of Margaret Thatcher.

The ribbon was cut by the Leader of the District Council, Jerry Patterson, causing one old lady to say "How long has Rory Bremner had a beard"

I asked one teenager what he thought of the sculpture and he assured me he thought it was "cool" but I am still unclear about the message being conveyed ...I'm sure I'm not the only person who would appreciate an explanation.

Still Puzzled Philistine.

New Sculpture in the Park - 21/09/04

My family and I have decided we must write to say what a HIDEOUS site the new sculpture is on the Folly hill. Unfortunately you can see it from a great distance away. What a waste of money! Was this really the best idea people could come up with to spend money?

Surely the historic town of Faringdon could benefit in numerous ways which do not ruin the views for those people with different artistic tastes. I could go on...my whole family and friends think it's a bad choice!

Caroline, Faringdon

Faringdon Arts Festival Needs You! -17/9/04

This year's Faringdon Arts Festival was a huge success.

To make 2005's event (during the week ending 11th July) even better, we're looking for volunteers at all levels, with roles to suit however much time you have available .

It's tremendously satisfying work, ideally suited to those with a gift for organisation and/or an interest in the arts. Help put something back into the town we love!

Either call Paul Cornell on 01367 243912 or join us for drinks and nibbles at our recruiting evening in the Portwell Bar on Wednesday October 6th, anytime from 7pm

As Old as the Hills - 17/9/04

I have just taken a muddy walk to get a sneak preview of the Sculpture which is to grace the Folly Park. I thought that the expected crowds at the unveiling ceremony might prevent my full appreciation of its artistic merits.

At school I distinguished myself by being the first, in fact the only, boy to be thrown out of my art class because I informed my art master that my total inability to learn how to appreciate anything artistic was his fault not mine. This view was not shared by my headmaster nor by my father who had to write a letter of apology to the aggrieved teacher.

So will someone please try to do what my teacher failed to do and update my appreciation of modern art by explaining what this sculpture is all about. It looks to my untutored eye like four aliens wondering how they finished up in Faringdon.

Specifically: Why is it called "AS OLD AS THE HILLS"for it clearly isn't !

Also I notice that anyone seven feet tall can line up and peer through the two holes in the tallest figures and get a clear view of the fourth lamp post on Park Road.

Is that significant ?

Puzzled Philistine

Proposed New Lime Treatment Plant at Faringdon Sewerage Works-

15/9/04

I would like to bring to the attention of the people of Faringdon, my concerns regarding the proposed sighting of a lime treatment plant at Faringdon sewerage works.

The main problem will be the smell, especially when the treated sludge is moved away from the site. The smell will be awful and carries a long way on the wind, plus the extra flies and traffic.

I had 17 years working at sewerage works. 11 at Witney main works and 6 at Faringdon works.

I retired in 2003, take my word you do not want this.

Witney is the most obvious place to add lime to the sludge, because Witney is a main sludge centre. 20 odd years ago sludge cake was stored at Witney works but the people of Witney soon put a stop to it and they won't allow it to happen again because of the smell etc.

So why should we have this at Faringdon.

Please go and protest to Oxfordshire county council now!

Sincerely Gordon Dowell - Faringdon

The Corn Exchange- 10/9/04

There has been a question mark over whether Faringdon Town Council would continue to run the Corn Exchange(owned by VWHDC). Apparently VWHDC wanted to charge FTC a significant amount of money as

rent.

The matter appears to have been resolved.

"The Executive Committee of the VWHDC met last Friday and discussed the terms of the lease (which had already been agreed by the Town Council).

Apparently, the Executive Committee approved the terms and we are just waiting now for their Legal Department to draw up the necessary documents for signature.

The main terms were

1. 5 year lease
2. Peppercorn rent
3. Equal sharing of costs for internal and external repairs"

Gene Webb

Folly Park Entrance - 6/9/04

The District Council say they will finally do something about this eyesore. It doesn't do to rush these things. They will clean up the entrance presumably so that Rory Bremner won't be offended by it (though the potholes, despite any red carpet, may make his eyes water) and the Environment Agency will inspect the site and gather evidence in order to activate an enforcement action.

The evidence that is to be gathered is the presumably the rubbish which the DC are going to remove. I'm sure that the two visits will be carried out in the correct order (well fairly sure) but just in case.....Please inspect it THEN remove it.

My apparent lack of faith is because the Technical Officer (Waste Management) seems to think the official Opening is on the 19th and this website says that it is on the 18th.

I know which date is in my diary and I haven't checked with Rory Bremner but I think his diary will also have a big red ring round the same one.

Harry G Mitchell

Faringdon Fossil Trust - 3/9/04

Faringdon Residents will be pleased to learn that after a lengthy gestation the setting up of Faringdon Fossil Trust is virtually complete. This will enable the town to take over the fossil site in Fernham Road and to develop it as a geological and natural history reserve.

The site will be administered as a trust, the trustees being the representatives of Faringdon Town Council, the (OGT) Oxfordshire Geology Trust (formerly known as RIGS) and the Faringdon Community College, with provision for 3 additional co-opted trustees.

The trustees will be Alan Hickmore(FTC), Tim Evans(FTC), Dr Bill Horsefield(OGT), Prof Norman Snelling(OGT), the Faringdon Community College representative has yet to be nominated.

Prof Snelling has been elected the first chairman of the Trustees for a period of 4 years.

The appropriate documentation is at present with the Charity Commissioners awaiting their final rubber stamp. Once this has been dealt with the formal hand over of the site will take place.

Visits will not be possible until all construction work has been completed and the Reserve formally opened. We hope this will be sometime in 2005

Prof Norman Snelling

Path around the Folly - 1/9/04

For the past five years folk who have enjoyed the unique openness and views from the Folly may have appreciated the 20m circle of set aside that was sown just below the circular footpath. Many will have enjoyed seeing the wheat crops, predominantly attractive with poppies.

Five years is the maximum time that set aside can be grown on agricultural land. Both stubble and set aside is

now reseeded with a deep rooting, long lasting mixture of grasses, lucern and clovers.

It should look green and attractive, and will be harvested and fed to cattle through next season.

A proposed new hardcore track from the Stanford Road to the Folly, will provide car access for disabled people on Folly open days

Pat Saunders

Opening of the Folly Park - 3/9/04

The unveiling event in the park is on the 18 September. We will be in the park from 2.30 to 4.30 pm (some of us will be there a lot earlier). Rory Bremner will be unveiling the sculpture at 3.30.

The sculpture has been made by a local artist, Michie Herbert.

We're having an arts company organising activities for the children and after the unveiling at 3.30 the Folly tower will be open for people to walk up to and enjoy the view.

Environmental Health are organising the removal of the rubbish from the entrance, its really sad people have started dumping there.

Sorry we missed the deadlines for the free papers

From Mary Lambe, VWHDC

Thames Water - Sewage Treatment- Lorry Movements - 28/8/04

I sat down last night to figure out just how many lorries will be going along Park Road, Gravel Walk, and Lechlade Road.

The numbers look like this (based on Thames Water information!).

I have also included a small allowance for staff, and maintenance.

Deliveries to site. 4 lorries in + 4 lorries out per day = 8 per day 8 per day x 22 days average per month = 176 per month Collection from site. 36 lorries in + 36 loaded lorries out= 72 per month Staff, deliveries, manager, maintenance, and loader. 1 extra member of staff 5 in + 5 out = 10 per week = 40 per month

Weekly delivery of lime 1 in + 1 out = 2 per week = 8 per month

Loading shovel deliver + collect from site= 4 per month

Manager/maintenance visits (approx) = 24 per month

This makes a monthly total of 324 additional vehicle movement. I have not included Saturday working, which Thames say will happen!

This is a great deal of extra loading on what is already a busy road, but of particular concern should be the school children who use this road!

There are three crossings. Park Road, Gravel Walk, and The Lolly Pop Lady at the top of Lechlade Road. She looks after the safety of children who attend the Junior, and Infant schools!

It should also be noted that children cross Park Road during the working to use the Tuckers Park sports field.

Thames Waters proposals will increase the risks for all of the population of Faringdon, regardless of age!

Hamish Wood.

[Information from Judith Heathcoat](#)

Sewage Transport - 27/8/04

The fight goes on!

I recently attended a site visit to Fleet sewage works. This was arranged by Thames Water to view what will be happening on the Faringdon site.

I can now say the lime mix does smell, but sadly the site at Fleet does not deal with imported 'cake'.

This is apparently sewage sludge that has been pressed, or spun to reduce the water content. This process should reduce some of the smell, but does not kill the pathogens that live in the sludge.

As yet I have not been able to witness the smell from this 'cake', but have been told that even after the pressing process, the smell is highly offensive.

I suspect that a trip to the plant in Wantage is now in order! The people of Faringdon will have to put up with this being transported by road from Witney, Wantage, and Abingdon.

Once processed at the Lechlade Road site, this mix will, once again, hit the roads! This time with articulated lorries delivering this mix to suitable land in the Cotswolds!

We should remember that what goes in, must come out. With four lorries in every working day for a month (4 lorries x 22 days a month average) this totals 88 lorry loads. This will exit the site over a 2-4 day period, Thames Waters own figures.

The lorries used to empty the site will be bigger than the ones coming in, but Thames Waters own figures state that 36 loads will come out. With between 8 and 16 loads trying to get back in (and back out empty), we may need to close the Lechlade Road to allow Thames Water to operate efficiently!
Hamish Wood.

GFA/4905/4-x - Yes again - 31/8/04

On Tuesday 31st August the VWHDC Planning and Development Committee discussed yet again, the proposal to build 9 houses in the garden of 18 Coxwell Road and by an overwhelming majority refused permission for the development.

It would be nice, but probably naive, to hope there will not be a GFA/4905/5-X.

Harry G Mitchell

Folly Park Entrance - 30/8/04

I took two pictures today (Monday, August 30) of the shameful mess at the entrance of the Park. Unbelievable!

Who is going to do something about it and when?

Rochus Zuurmond



Reply from VWHDC

The entrance issue was brought to my attention a little while ago. Unfortunately it has not turned out to be an easy one to resolve. This area is private land and therefore the Vale has no obligation or responsibility.

There is permitted access across the land to get to the park, however as this is not a public footpath/bridleway/byway the District Council would not have any responsibility in this case.

I have spoken with the landowner regarding the removal of the items. On this occasion we have agreed to remove the items as a gesture of goodwill and as the official opening of the park is on 19 September, it will be cleared by then.

I have also spoken with the Environment Agency and know that they are interested in enforcement action in this case, so will need time to inspect the site and gather evidence.

Technical Officer (Waste Management)

Opening of the Folly Park is 18th Sept- see above

Planning Application GFA/4905/4-x 18 Coxwell Road- 25/8/04

To build or not to build a small estate in the grounds of 18 Coxwell Road has been under discussion for about 18 months.

The problems associated with extra traffic etc on Coxwell Road as well as the disruption to the lives of the owners of the adjacent properties has been widely discussed.

The Town Council at their meeting on 24th August gave yet another 'thumbs down' to the proposal but the final decision will be made by the Planning and Development Committee at their meeting in the FARINGDON COMMUNITY COLLEGE, FERNHAM ROAD at 6.30 on TUESDAY 31st August.

Why not come along and see democracy at work ?
Free admission, unfortunately no refreshments !

Harry G Mitchell (Self Confessed owner of one of the adjacent properties)

More on the proposed Sewage Works - 20/8/04

Investigation into other places where sewage treatment works are in place and views about the impact on Faringdon. See the [letter to Judith Heathcoat](#)

The letter concludes

We know there are less-odorous systems that Thames Water are presently using than the system they are proposing for the Faringdon site.

The proposal at Faringdon is the worst that could be used.

The smell of untreated pressed sewage sludge as experienced at Wantage and Abingdon was dreadful. However the removal of this material from Wantage and Abingdon is done on approximately two days every two months. This is on average one day per month that the smell/odour has to be tolerated by the general public.

The proposal at Faringdon is that the smell/odour/transport/pathogens will have to be tolerated by the general public and school children on 5 days per week and twelve hours per day throughout the year, because in the Faringdon proposal, TW will be continually moving this untreated material through Faringdon.

See also [Letter to Thames Water](#)

Tim Fane

Folly Path - 19/8/04

I learnt during that last Folly Path campaign two years ago, a number of things about local government (pretty eye watering most of it), amongst which

- the VWHDC are responsible for the dogs mess and any litter/broken glass on the Folly Path, the CC for the weeds and overgrowth.

One path, two councils. That's English rural bureaucracy for you. You couldn't make it up.

Because it is 'paved', the CC are involved.

The Town Council have no responsibility to it all. And aren't interested in taking any up either, including it seems, speaking up on its behalf on a regular basis to the VWHDC or the CC, to keep the Town and or The Folly looking tidy;

if they do - it is almost 100% ineffectual as the look of the place will testify.

Nor do the TC put any pressure on The Folly Trust to maintain the area around The Folly itself, or so it would seem given the near ruinous state in which it is usually to be found.

Why would they, after all it has nothing to do with them, what with it being the biggest tourist attraction in Faringdon and everything, an emblem for the town, why would the TC bother getting involved in that?

Much better to have really long meetings about nothing in particular (apart from agreeing that nothing to do with the town is their responsibility) and finish them by agreeing to another really long meeting about nothing in particular (apart from agreeing that nothing to do with the town will continue to not be their responsibility) in a few months time, during which time, absolutely nothing will have been achieved.

So it would seem that three local councils couldn't care less about the appearance of Faringdon.

The proof, as they say, is in the pudding. Far better to spend money on some pretend 'historic' town walls on Park Road, announcing your entry into 'historic' Faringdon as you sweep past an 'historic' light industrial estate and past a revolting looking but clearly 'historic' new petrol station.

The only way the Folly Path gets cleared other than at times that suit no one, is if someone rings the OCC and asks specifically for it to be done.

DM

Folly Park - 16/8/04

IT seems that the VWHDC and the Town Council are unable to act to improve the disgusting situation in, and into, The Folly Park.

However there is one thing the Town Council could do and that is take down the sign in Park Road which might tempt the unwary tourist to pay it a visit.

The Park and its access should be kept as a shameful secret and there is no reason to advertise its location to visitors until we can be proud of it.

Harry Mitchell

Raw Cake ?..Flour, Eggs and Milk...I don't think so ! - 16/8/04

It seems that the Lechlade Road Sewage Works may become the recipient of 15000 cubic metres annually of Raw Cake from Abingdon, Witney and Wantage (this includes our own modest offering).

Hamish Wood in his letter refers to it as Sewage Crust.. I have obviously spent a rather sheltered life in some respects because I'm not sure what it is ! I don't even think I want to know.

Is 15000 cubic metres a small mountain or a medium sized lake? What I am quite sure about is that 15000 cubic metres sounds like an awful lot ofwhatever it is.

I don't think Park Road and Gravel Walk will benefit from its passing, though the occasional Tomato Grower might notice an increase in the size of his crop and how will the Witney contribution be routed ?

The Government has decided that the rather dubious honour of being the dumping ground for this....whatever it is.. belongs to Faringdon so the OCC, VWHDC and Town Council seem powerless to act.

Roll on the next general election.

Harry Mitchell

Folly Hill again - 12/8/04

I would just like to make a comment regarding our lovely Faringdon FollyTower.

We all remember how beautiful the folly was when the poppies were in bloom, but I would be very interested to hear from other walkers after they have taken a walk up the Folly now!

I know that all farmers have to plough their land. What I do not understand is the need to plough so close to the circular path that surrounds the folly walk. Me and my children walked up the folly today and practically had to walk in single file !!

I am surprised that at a historical place (which is visited by the townspeople and tourists)it is not specified that a certain amount of 'Green' should be kept along side the path to make the walk more pleasant, and not so restricting.

We have taken much pleasure in the walks alongside the stunning poppies and now it seems that no thought has been given to the fact that this is one of our few special places that many people enjoy.

I have written a polite letter to Mr Saunders, who is the farmer who rents this land and will be interested to see if he replies to me

Name supplied

Maybe worth asking the Folly Trust chairman if he can do anything Ed

Folly Hill - 12/8/04

Anybody hoping to go for a picnic, dog walk, kite flying session, people looking forward to a safe place to stroll with toddlers and buggies ? Forget it.

Any disabled, elderly or Thames Water Board men hoping to drive up the hill? Forget it (unless you treat yourself to a 4WD first).

For some reason, the owner of the land has decided that you can no longer enjoy the beautiful area surrounding the Folly Tower. He's ploughed it all up. Usually he leaves some grass areas around the top - but not anymore. Just a single track is left, the rest is mud.

The path leading up from Stanford Road is now too narrow for most cars to risk, which obviously affects people with disabilities.

Yes, I appreciate that money was lost with the poppies ruining the crops, but was this drastic action really necessary ?

I do hope the extra money that is made from the extra crops that can be planted this year will make the owner happy - sadly it is at the expense of a beautiful, historic and popular landmark.

I ask myself why he did it - the only answer I can think of is - because he can

What's that old saying ? - 'Support Your Local Farmer'. I try to, I just wonder why we bother sometimes.

Name Supplied

Folly Park and Volunteer Way - letter to VWHDC- 11/8/04

I went for a run through Folly park the other morning, and whilst I was pleased to see that a bin has been installed, it was full to overflowing, and there was rubbish lying around on the ground.

Also the entrance track/road to the park has had yet more household waste dumped on it, to the point where it would be difficult to get a car through to the car park area. Will notices warning of fines for dumping rubbish here be put up at some point?

It will be a difficult area to prevent dumping, as it is tucked away behind the industrial units, but perhaps something could be done.

Are the council planning to clear the large pile of sofas etc that has so far been left here? It looks very scruffy, and I suspect that if it isn't cleared, more people will be tempted to dump things there.

Also the bins in the Volunteer Way playground were again full to overflowing. How often are these supposed to be emptied?

Name supplied

VWHDC Response - 12/8/04

Folly park:

The litter bin should be emptied on a regular basis by the Parks department's contractor - I think that it is weekly.

The entrance issue was brought to my attention a little while ago.

Unfortunately it has not turned out to be an easy one to resolve. This area is private land and therefore the Vale has no obligation to remove the fly-tipping.

I understand that there is a permitted access across the land to get to the park, however as this is not a public footpath/bridleway/byway we would not have any responsibility in this case. (I am checking with our legal department to confirm the specific details)

I have got the details of the land owner and will contact them regarding the removal of the items.

For this reason we are also not able to erect signage, but the land owner may wish to.

Volunteer Way:

At this stage, this park has not been adopted by Oxfordshire County Council. The developer is still responsible for the maintenance and cleaning of the park, play area and surrounding roads.

I have made them aware of this problem and they have assured me that this is in hand.

Any comments from others, Ed??

Sewage Treatment Works, Lechlade Rd - 9/8/04 **Extract of letter to Robert Jackson MP**

Thames Water (TW) have selected Faringdon, Farnham and Crawley as the TWA Southern area sites for lime dosage treatment plants. The Faringdon site will deal with the raw cake imported from Witney, Abingdon, Wantage and Faringdon. Their estimation is of 15,000 cubic metres per annum, which we believe to be low. The plant lay out briefly involves a cake reception area, a lime silo, conveyers, mixers and storage area of 4000+ cubic metres. A loading shovel heaps the treated cake into a storage area at 3 metres high before loading it onto lorries.

At present there are 16 lorry movements in 4 weeks, in the future there will be 356 lorry movements per 4 weeks. In the 13 (4 weeks) year there will be 4628 lorry movements.

The potential odour problems could be huge with Faringdon itself at 1000 metres and closer residential properties listed. Three National Trust cottages 274 metres, Step Farm house (listed National Trust) 425 metres, Cottages on Northfield Farm 487 metres, Park Farm buildings 487 metres, Northfield Farm house (listed) 639 metres, Manor Farm house and 2 properties 700 metres, Dove Lodge (listed) 913 metres, Faringdon House (listed) 974 metres. Faringdon Circular Path and cycleway 2 metres. Faringdon House parkland (Heritage site gardens open) site of many Faringdon events, Round Table Bonfire Night, Scouts camping site, Guides (worldwide event 2000 campers), Sealed Knott 2000 taking part in the battle of Radcot 1645.

Tim Fane

[Full letter to Robert Jackson](#)

[Letter to Folly July 2004](#)

Volunteer Way childrens play area -5/8/04

Whilst I understand the children's play area belongs to the developer and I would imagine is likely to for a while, I would like to ask the District Council to come and have a look at the state of the park which is a health hazard for people of all ages.

Not only is there broken glass, there is rubbish on the ground as the bins are overflowing with hazardous waste that includes soiled nappies and remains of food etc.

All this while children are playing there.

There are waste bins throughout the town which are emptied regularly, realistically how much extra is it going to cost the council to empty the two at the park as well to make a safer environment whilst still being owned by the developers who are long gone from the site.

Name supplied

Contact parks@whitehorsedc.gov.uk if you want to report similar situations

Faringdon's Future~ Thriving Market Town or Commuterland - 5/8/04

A few weeks ago I contacted the VWHDC requesting information about the Old Health Centre Building...I wanted to know why it was still empty and mentioned that it looked neglected.

My query led to a response from The Regional Development Manager of The Nucleus Housing Group Ltd. He implied that my comments were, to say the least, unkind and definitely unjustified.

He told me that the building was completed in February but there were financial problems associated with getting them occupied which I don't pretend to understand.

He conceded that the grounds were rather scruffy but said that "this problem had already been identified and will soon be addressed.

He also said The Association is about to launch a sales drive targeting public sector workers i.e. teachers, nurses/health workers, social workers, occupational therapists, fire fighters, police, police civilians, prison staff, probation service staff and council planners.

That was five weeks ago. The building is still empty, the grounds are still scruffy and as far as I am aware there is no queue of eager Public Sector Workers gazumping each other for this rather striking and very nicely refurbished accommodation.

Throughout the country, according to John Prescott, families are in urgent need of homes.

But here in Faringdon we seem to have homes in urgent need of families... Do we really need hundreds of extra houses ? And if we do who are they for ?

Harry G Mitchell

Parks and Open spaces - 4/8/04

I thought I'd have a go at the poor quality of grassed and open space maintenance in the town, so I took some photos and sent them off as examples to VWHDC, Parks dept.

This was the response:-

- The road way into the Folly park, I believe, is owned by a Mr Barnsfield
- Volunteer Way is still in the ownership of the developer. It is hoped that it will be transferred to the DC in the near future.
- The paved area at Westbrook is owned by the Vale Housing Association (01235 536001).
- New trees at junction of Lechlade Road were planted by Oxfordshire County Council
- Grass encroaching onto adopted pavements/paving slabs is the responsibility of Oxfordshire County Council. The VWHDC have cut back edges in the past at the request of OCC for which they have been charged
- The two roundabouts are not the District Councils I would suggest you contact OCC who I am sure will be able to inform you.

All this is another way of saying - not our responsibility- but is it any wonder that this fragmented approach does not result in a well cared for town!!

This is what VWHDC do:

The standards and frequency of maintenance does vary from site to site and is adjusted according to the season etc. In general the grass is cut 12 times per season; shrub beds visited monthly and play areas inspected weekly during the winter and twice per week during the summer
I hope visited and inspected means doing some maintenance work!!

If you have any comments on this type of maintenance you can email VWHDC on parks@whitehorsedc.gov.uk, which I'm told is looked at regularly.

GW

Bureaucracy Rules OK - 4/8/04

I've just had to re submit an application for sheltered accommodation for my mother, because VWHDC have changed the rules or the computer system or both.

What amazed me was that even though my mother has been on the Housing register for more than 10 years, is in receipt of a pension, has lived in Faringdon all her life and so has paid Rates, Community Charge, Council Tax to VWHDC, I still had to provide proof of residency and a copy of her birth certificate

I can well understand that in this day and age this is necessary for new applicants, but was it really necessary in this instance? Such details could easily have been checked on making/accepting a housing offer. I wonder who made up this rule? Not someone with efficiency in mind I guess

Still it provides people with jobs I suppose!!

Gene Webb

Free car parking at school times and Parking permits - 2/8/04

Why not combine both these issues. Why not issue 'Parent Permits' for Gloucester St car park. These will be available to people taking children to school who live a certain distance away. (I will leave how far to the debate.)

Only valid for the times that school starts & finishes.
This will have a number of effects:

1. The car park will have spaces for those who need to park in the morning/afternoon.
2. The roads will be clearer of those who could walk the kids to school.
3. Kids get a nice walk to/from school.

David Poultney

Thanks David -see below - I've just added what VWHDC offer- sounds good - but at a price

Noise from Pioneer Road - 1/8/04

Has anybody else noticed the excessive noise that appears to come from one of the industrial units in the Pioneer Road area, particularly at weekends and evenings ?

I hesitate to describe the noise as music, however it certainly does not appear to be within the scope of normal light industrial operations.

I suppose that all aspiring musicians need somewhere to practice, but it is unreasonable to inflict it at full volume for extended periods on the rest of us.

Today, a hot sunny Sunday, when most of us are relaxing in our gardens, the cacophony has continued non stop from lunchtime through to late evening.

Name supplied

Scrooge, you're having a laff - 25/12/04

I have just read Mr Scrooge's letter It may be this rather fine glass of châteaux nuf de pap'e I am quaffing,(hic) or it may be not(hic) but is he not praising the volunteers of this town(hic) and having a go at the lack of festivities at Budgens(hic) But as he is a total arse, he is trying to be, what's the word I'm looking for here..... em.....sarcastic?

Wasted on here Mr Scrooge. Still it has fired up a good 'ol firestorm, much more readable than planning applications Nos GFA/ whatever,yawn yawn.

I'm sure Mr Scrooge is doing a good impersonation of Vicky Pollard as we read this, explaining that yeah, but no, but yeah what happened wuz.

Bring back the stocks that is what I say, not exactly politically correct, but a lot more fun.

By the way there are lots of things to do for the Faringdon festival, perhaps Mr Scrooge, could volunteer to have wet sponges thrown at him, as recompense while the bands change over.

Just a thought.

Jim Horton.(Hic)

Another Response to Scrooge - 24/12/04

Well said David Reynolds

All year round I hear grumbling and criticism about the town and about the happenings in it, both officially organised and those executed by people who give up their time to do things for an ungrateful, whingeing public. Some people (funny how they're usually anonymous) seem to do nothing but sit on their backsides and moan after the event. Criticism is fine when it's constructive, and there's lots to irritate and annoy us - but I for one like it here, there's loads going on, a great community spirit for those who care to look, something for everyone, so may I make a request to all the miseries out there who side with Scrooge, and say take a little time to find out what actually happens here, and why - instead of jumping in with your knee jerk, ignorant, grumbling responses. Just try working out just how much time, effort and organisational skill it takes to do *anything* around here and that includes the work done by the much maligned town council. Volunteers may not always get things right, but at least they make the effort!

Hilary Taylor

GFA/4905/5-X 18 Coxwell Road - 24/12/04

In amongst my Christmas Cards I have just received GFA/4905/5-x Amended Plans.

This latest proposal is:

Demolition of no.18 Coxwell Road and 31 Elm Road and insertion of new residential development at land to the rear of 31 Elm Road, between Hawthorn Road and Coxwell Road.

There is no mention of how many dwellings will be included in this 'new residential insertion' but I understand the suggestion is for 16.

The proposal was dated the 20th December and was sent by second class post so objectors will have to send their protest letters to the Town Council and the District Council by the 10th January 2005.

So please, when you are busy writing your 'thank you' letters don't forget to write to Mr Deans and our own Town Council.

This latest proposal is running concurrently with an appeal against the refusal of GFA/4905/4-x which is not due to be heard until October 2005 so it is not surprising that the developers are becoming a little impatient.

I am aware that this is the season of goodwill to all men (and women of course) but I can't believe it was intended to include Backland Developers.

So far the FTC and the VWHDC (despite one or two developer sympathisers) have looked after the interest of the vast number of Faringdon protesters and I am sure we would all wish them a Happy and Peaceful 2005 and ask them to bear in mind that that is all we are asking for.

Harry G Mitchell

Christmas Bah Humbug - a response! - 23/12/04

Much as I support everybody's right to have their own view of Christmas I do take offence at the comments below from "Ebenezer Scrooge Esq"! (He hasn't even the courage of his convictions to state his real name!).

Many events and activities that people both enjoy and benefit from in Faringdon and the surrounding area are organised and run entirely by people who have the goodwill to volunteer their time to give something back to the community. The folks who take out Thomas the Tank for fundraising every year do a great job and the money goes to many good causes. I for one wouldn't want to be out in all weathers doing this.

Good on you folks.

Mr. Scrooge it is easy to sit back and knock things. How about trying your hand at getting involved? There are many good causes to volunteer for but, as an example, we're always looking for people for the Faringdon Arts Festival.

You might even enjoy it!

David Reynolds

Parking on Street - 23/12/04

I've read the many comments regarding on street parking and who should have priority, residents or visitors. The real answer is that no individual has the right to obstruct the highway by antisocial parking, it is of late commonplace for people to park on footpaths which is totally illegal but rarely if ever policed.

Parking on the footpath causes extreme danger to people walking by as they often have to walk in the road to get past the offenders vehicle, This is particularly a problem for the elderly and for people with pushchairs and prams who have every right to expect free unobstructed use of the footpath.

In short, don't buy a house with no off road parking if you have a car. If the area you intend parking in is not wide enough for you to be able to park without mounting the footpath then go and find somewhere else.

Simple really isn't it.

P.James

Folly Tower Christmas Lights - 22/12/04

Hooray- the Folly Tower has been lit again this year - this time from the base, so that the structure of the tower can be seen. Once again its Peter White who has done this on his own initiative - so thanks to him again- its a great Faringdon advert for motorists on the bypass and a pleasure to residents I'm sure.

Since the millenium, each year Peter has found a different way to make the Folly special - the wondrous millenium beacon, lighting the room near the top of the tower, the star.

Thanks Peter

Christmas - Bah Humbug - 22/12/04

Fact...The object of any business is to make money and not to squander it.

Thomas The Tank Engine, manned by volunteers, has been out in all weathers for the past three weeks collecting money. Very commendable !.. BUT THE MONEY WILL BE GIVEN TO SO CALLED DESERVING CAUSES. Is there no welfare or social security benefit system in this country?

The town centre has a Christmas Tree and Christmas lights which in themselves produce no profit but they can be defended because they do encourage shoppers to spend on things they don't really need like Turkey, Christmas Puddings, Mince pies, presents for people they don't really like and cards for people they don't really know.

Even the editors of this free (I hate that word) website have fallen prey to this seasonal disorder and wished their contributors a Merry Christmas.

At this time of year most businesses seem to feel the need to squander some of their profits on such frivolities as decorations and lights.. I feel ill at the thought of all this unnecessary expenditure.

But there is one haven of calm sanity..the local super market. As I stood there checking my bill, a procedure which fortunately very few people bother with, I was impressed by the air of calm. The long queues at the only two open tills were not assailed by Christmas Carols, there was no spurious attitude of Christmas cheer and I was delighted to see that the Christmas Grotto, which in the past had given (another word I hate) pleasure to children, who spend very little money, had not reappeared. I had already been impressed by the electricity-

saving lack of lights on the Christmas Trees outside this establishment.
My congratulations to the person who had the strength of character to ignore totally the so called festive season.
Where can I buy shares in your business ?
Ebenezer Scrooge Esq.

Christmas Lights - 22/12/04

Talking of Christmas lights - I was thinking of walking round Faringdon this year and taking photos of the various displays - but as usual I just haven't got around to it. SO. Next December - I shall do this - and I hope to publish the pictures on the web site for all to see, and have a competition to see which display is voted the best by our visitors. Maybe we can get someone to sponsor it and have a prize. Any Comments/suggestions - good idea/bad idea??

Hilary Taylor. joint Ed, FO

Dog Mess on Folly Hill 22/12/04

Being a regular walker to my two Labradors on Folly Hill I am appalled and disgusted by the dog cr*p all over the hill itself but most of all on the footpaths.

To think we may get snow this winter and children will be rolling and sledging down these paths and the hill turns my stomach. As well as being a major source of annoyance when at least twice a week I have it all over my boots, dog waste matter contains a parasite which can cause blindness.

Having just moved from London where it is extremely socially unacceptable to allow your dog to foul and not clear up after it seems that Faringdon is way behind. No-one enjoys picking up after their dog but its something you must do for the good of the community.

If I pass one more dog owner who will cheerily say "Good morning" whilst allowing their dog to poo all over the path I will be offering them a bag and asking them to use it.

Can we not do more to make dog owners clear up after their dog? Yours feeling queasy now
Mel Taylor

Have a look at <http://www.faringdon.org/tareportproblems.htm> for information on reporting all sorts of problems. The contact for dog mess is VWHDC waste.team@whitehorsedc.gov.uk Tel: 01235 520202 ext 640 -maybe they don't provide sufficient dog mess bins, or clear them out often enough - there is a dog warden here; and as you may know - allowing your dog to foul a pavement is an offence. You could always take your camera, when you see this happening get the evidence, and report it to the police - Ed

Dinner and Dance, 4th February, Sudbury House- 22/12/04

Sudbury House, 7.30pm for 8pm

Live Band and auction of celebrity memorabilia

£35 ticket from Tourist Information Office or David Reynolds 01367 243663

Fund Raising event for Faringdon Arts Festival

Merry Christmas - 22/12/04

Thankyou to all of you who contribute to this section of the website- we're always pleased to get comments and views - about almost anything!

Thankyou too to those who read it regularly - we now get 600/700 hits to the site each week.

Any of you who have something to say, please write to us- we don't have to publish your name (though we do need to know it)

Happy Christmas

from Hilary and Gene

Xmas lights. 20/12/04

Do the town council want to hire a designer for next years display in the town centre? If so may I suggest they speak to the residents of Park Road and Marlborough Close. Their displays are excellent.
Congratulations to them.

P.S The Folly Tower looks great. Just as it should ,well done to whoever is concerned in its lighting up.
Name withheld

Folly Park Sculptures 20/12/04

Although I don't fully understand them, I quite like the sculptures in the Folly Park. I guess they represent a family (or Stonehenge with holes in)

But can someone please explain why they are made of fibreglass. Was it to do with how they were cast or were they made this way for cost reasons ?

Is it surprising that fibreglass statues are easier to vandalise or will deteriorate quicker than ones made of concrete or stone

I know concrete can be vandalised too and ultimately, anything can be defaced if someone really wants to go to the effort.

Please don't get me wrong though, I'd rather have a park with plastic sculptures than no sculptures.
Richard Edgington.

Faringdon Arts Festival 20/12/04

Hi. I'm the chap with the phone number on the front page of this site, and I thought I'd add a few details of what we're after for next year's Faringdon Arts Festival.

Our dates are 4-10 July, 2005, with bigger 'headline' events every night of that week (so far including Radio 2's 'whispering' Bob Harris, and Glenn Tillbrook, the songwriter of Squeeze, in concert), leading to a packed weekend on the 9-10th.

That will include the Royal British Legion's National Day of Celebration on the Sunday morning: we're working with them to make that something special.

What we're after in terms of local acts is: everyone!

If you can play the violin, sing, recite a poem, whatever, we're after you to appear on our Market Place stage over the weekend. And if you have an art skill to pass on, then it's entirely possible we might set aside a workshop for you also.

It's not just the experts we're after: we want everyone to take part. And we're also always pleased to get offers of practical help, especially to be provided on the weekend itself.

So do give me a call on 01367 243912, or drop me a line at paulcornell@owlservice.freeserve.co.uk And tell me what you can do!

Paul Cornell

The Star of Faringdon 20/12/04

The non appearance of the Folly Tower Star has been a disappointment to a lot of Faringdonians and this year's floodlighting unfortunately doesn't have the same impact.

However I understand it was installed by Peter White of Faringdon Electrical Services who also provided the Millennium Searchlight and the cost was shared by them and the Folly Tower Trust.

If we are to get the Star back for next year perhaps the Faringdon Town Council might be persuaded to provide some financial backing.

Meanwhile I am sure I'm not the only one who would like to thank Peter and the Folly Tower Trust for their efforts.

On Sunday my Grand-daughter insisted that we paid a visit to the Faringdon Four in Folly Park because she said 'they looked lonely'. It's hardly surprising. The access road is a disgrace and only fit for Multi Terrain Vehicles (the type used by trendy mum's taking their children to school).

I don't know or care who owns it but if any members of the FTC or VWHDC did visit the sculpture occasionally they might be motivated to get something done to this pot-holed track.

At the entrance to the park there is a big pile of Firework remains...It's been there for almost 2 months ... Is it Rubbish, or yet more Modern Art ?

I would also like to second Jim's thanks to Hilary and Gene for keeping this site running. As he so obviously demonstrates there is a desperate need for it. I assume that making contributions is cheaper than visiting a psychiatrist and less embarrassing than phoning The Samaritans.

It certainly seems to work for Jim (OK, Yes..... and me !)

Finally, Merry Christmas to all Faringdon-online readers and contributors I hope that everyone (apart from the odd backland developer) gets everything they hope for in 2005
Harry G Mitchell

Merry Christmas - 19/12/04

I would just like to say to everyone that comes onto this site, and to Hilary and Gene for keeping it going, Merry Christmas.

Its always informative and entertaining, some serious issues, and some daft, mainly caused by Harry and myself trying to lighten, or wind others up enough to join in.

The "When Harry met slurry" badinage was my favourite

So while we all have a well earned break. A message to all the councillors, town centre planners, infill builders and all the other annoyances in Faringdon that make me into a grumpy old man, "we are watching you".

And to Harry, sharpen that quill, get out your tin helmet and flack jacket, because "in coming!" will be your most used phrase of 2005

Prepare to do battle, I did hear a rumour that your computer screen looks like a snow scene where you use so much Tipex to cover up your spelling mistakes. il that right?

Jim Horton

Rotary - where the money goes - 17/12/04

The Rotary Club of Faringdon & District has supported the following during the period July 2003 to August 2004

Rotary Shoe-Box scheme (500 boxes),

Hope & Aid Direct (Convoy of Hope to Kosovo),

Coping with Life (videos for local schools),

Life Education Centres - Bus Appeal,

Life Education Centres, Oxfordshire,

Faringdon Community Bus,

Faringdon Christmas Lights-On,

RUFJI Leprosy Trust,

Aqua box 30,

Red Cross Iran Earthquake Appeal,

Rotarians Eliminating Malaria in Tanzania (REMIT),

Rotary Youth Leadership Award 2004 (outward bound course for a local young person),

Spinal Injuries Fund - sponsorship of nurse Jill Church,

The Friendly Club - Shrivenham,

Water Aid,

Rotary Foundation,

Bromsgrove Day Centre Faringdon (towards equipment),

Stroke Awareness Day,

Senior Citizens Party,

Churches Together in Faringdon,

Farm Africa,

Faringdon Bowls Club,

Faringdon Pre-School Re-Building Appeal.

Many thanks to those who so generously support our Christmas Appeal with Father Christmas and Thomas the Tank Engine and also our numerous fundraising activities throughout the year.

Vandalism - Folly Park sculptures - 17/12/04

Letter to VWHDC

I'm sorry to report that vandals have attacked the Folly Sculptures and inflicted some damage on one of the structures. The outer layer has been broken and an area of about 6 inches diameter has been removed, exposing the fibre glass layer.

At first I thought it might be frost damage, but on closer inspection, other statues have evidence of impact.

I suggest you consider getting it repaired to prevent water damage to the rest of the statue.

I think the statues are an asset to the town and it would be a big shame if they were not repaired.

EW

Reply from VWHDC

Thank you for your email, it is really sad to see the sculptures damaged. We have told the police and hope to get the sculptures repaired in the new year.

The Star of Faringdon - 18/12/04

What happened to the star light on the Folly? It was great last year and could be seen from Wantage, could it be restored for next year?.

Paul -Faringdon

Christmas Lights- 14/12/04

I for one think the lights in the Market Square in Faringdon are perfect.

Understated and elegant -they look festive without being trashy.

The tree, however, does look like they ran out of lights half way through!

Mel Taylor

ROTARY CHRISTMAS COLLECTION with THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FATHER CHRISTMAS - 9/12/04

SATURDAY 4 DECEMBER - FARINGDON Stanford Road area, Berners Way, Tuckers Road, Nursery View

MONDAY 6 DECEMBER - FARINGDON Highworth Road area, Westland Road, Orchard Hill, The Pines etc.

TUESDAY 7 DECEMBER - Shrivenham

WEDNESDAY 8 DECEMBER - Clanfield

THURSDAY 9 DECEMBER - Stanford in the Vale

FRIDAY 10 DECEMBER - FARINGDON Park Road area, Marines Drive, Town End Road, Marlborough Gardens, Volunteer Way

MONDAY 13 DECEMBER - Watchfield

TUESDAY 14 DECEMBER - Southmoor

THURSDAY 16 DECEMBER - FARINGDON & GREAT COXWELL Coleshill Drive etc., Fernham Road, Folly View Road, Great Coxwell

FRIDAY 17 DECEMBER - Lechlade

SATURDAY 18 DECEMBER - Lechlade

MONDAY 20 DECEMBER - Longworth & Buckland

TUESDAY 21 DECEMBER - Uffington, Fernham, Little Coxwell

Meeting with Thames Water - 8/12/04

A meeting took place between John Gilbert of Thames Water and various representatives of the campaign against the Sewage treatment plans in Faringdon

[See the minutes of the 2nd Dec meeting](#)

18 Coxwell Road - proposal GFA/4905/5-X - 7/12/04

On Tuesday night the Town Council overwhelmingly and rightly rejected the above proposal to put an access road between No31 and No33 Elm Road mainly on the basis of the dangers of the increased volume of traffic.

This is an extremely popular decision for more than 300 residents on the Orchard Hill Estate who are affected by this proposal.

However.....and there's always a however isn't there?....the Town Council is aware that this proposal is incorrect and we are told that another is being submitted to include the demolition of No31. What this means is that although the current proposal has been rejected the new proposal will be the subject of an entirely new debate and any objections by residents and other members of the public must again be submitted to the Vale and Town Council as before.

It is particularly important to keep letting the Vale know how you feel because although the Town Council can add their thoughts to a proposal the decisions are finally made at the Vale in Abingdon by people who will have no idea about the dynamics of the community in which we live.

As always I can be contacted on 01367 243663 or david@reynolds46.fsnet.co.uk

David Reynolds

Christmas Lights - 09/12/04

For a market town wishing to promote itself, the Christmas lights are disappointing. Did they all come on at the 'lighting-up' ceremony - if not why not - and what happened to the displays which once adorned the old town hall which were provided by The Folly Ball? Do they not meet current regulations?

Faringdon's Christmas Lights were previously installed by Peter White who gave us the wonderful Millenium Beacon atop Folly Tower.

May I ask of those who know what the installation cost was then, what the cost is now for a poorer display and why the decision was made to employ another organisation to undertake the installation.
name supplied

Emergency Telephone Numbers- 08/12/04

I wonder if it would be possible to print some of the emergency telephone numbers, and details of what to do if you have to report a crime in the What's On in Faringdon paper. This way people who don't get to read this website would be fully informed, as this paper is delivered to your door.

I know there are numbers printed in the small white business book (not sure what it's called) but unfortunately when our windows were smashed in last week, none of the numbers enabled us to talk to an actual person.
Caroline, Faringdon

Christmas tree - 08/12/04

I promise not to always moan on this website BUT... Doesn't the Christmas Tree in the centre of town look like a child that's had a growth spurt!?

The poor thing is so tall and gangly and isn't even properly dressed..the lights only cover half the tree.

Is that it..or is there more to come?

Caroline,Faringdon

Police Station Manning - 6/12/04

I would like to draw Faringdon residents to a scheme I read about in the Telegraph a few weeks ago; so frustrated were a local community by the fact their police station was unmanned for periods of the day that they banded together, approached their police authority and got the go-ahead to run the police station with the help of local volunteers. When a crime was reported to them it was possible to contact the community police directly.

Just a thought.

Penny, Gloucester Street

Ed: Thanks Penny. In fact I and Hilary Taylor have been Police volunteers for a couple of years now. We mostly help out when the station is manned- there are too few of us to be able to open it regularly and reliably. I'm pretty sure that Jane Rennells, the sergeant, would welcome more volunteers

18 Coxwell Road - 6/12/04

I understand from Martin Deans (VWHDC Planning) that the developer's agent has spoken to him and confirmed that a mistake has been made on the planning application – apparently it is proposed to **demolish No 31**.

This will be corrected as part of the amended application.

The Vale is awaiting written confirmation from the developer but as this has come verbally from Martin Deans we should assume that this is the intention.

David Reynolds

Thomas the Tank Engine - 6/12/04

Could anyone publish (preferably here on the web) which days and where the Rotary Club "Thomas the Tank Engine" will be coming around Faringdon this week.

If younger children are to enjoy events such as these, parents usually need to do a bit of planning (food, baths, etc.).

Some notice/ publicity with details would be useful.

Please don't think this minor gripe a criticism of the good works that the Rotary club do.
Merry Christmas all!
Simon.

Relocation of the Post office to Dillons - 5/12/04

The notice from the Post Office National Multiples Partner Manager(John Holden 08457 223344) first indicates that the move is being considered, but then later that it will happen in January 2005.

The notice points out that the same range of services will be available and that Dillons offers easier pushchair and wheelchair access.

It was 7 years ago that Faringdon Association of Residents launched a campaign and successfully prevented this from happening. I fully expect the same to happen again.

Questions must arise:

Where will the Post vans stop - on the pavement?? Even if not, the congestion in the town centre will be worse

What view will the police take re traffic congestion

There may be level access into the shop, but crossing the 2 roads is trickier

What will happen to the PO (purpose built) building

Is there space enough for front and back office services??

In his notice, John Holden says he welcomes comments!!

Gene Webb

I've been told that both buildings are owned by T&M (Forbuoys and Martin)

18 Coxwell Road - Meeting Update from Weds 1st December - 4/12/04

Over 50 concerned residents from the Orchard Hill Estate packed into last Wednesday's meeting about the latest proposal to access the 18 Coxwell Road site via Elm Road.

There is a strong movement against this proposal based on the effect it will have on the lives of over 300 residents on the Estate! The general feeling of residents is that they are concerned at the danger that will result from the inevitable increase in traffic volume during and after development of the site.

There are particular concerns about the safety of children who currently play in this area and within yards of the proposed access road. The road infrastructure of the estate is simply not suitable for this proposal.

The Orchard Hill Estate was built as a cul-de-sac and the increase in the number of resident owned cars is already far in excess of what would have been envisaged when the estate was built thirty years ago. Utility and emergency vehicles currently experience problems negotiating parked cars on the narrow roads.

Residents believe this will only get worse. Concerns are also expressed at the lowering of the quality of life for residents through the increase in noise and pollution during and after development of the site.

The problem with this proposal is that it is ill-conceived and simply hasn't been thought through. There are few details available on exactly where the road will cut through. We know it's between 31 and 33 Elm Road but if, as the application states, no trees are to be felled, it is impossible to see where the road will go.

There was speculation at the meeting that No 31 Elm Road has been earmarked for demolition but there is no confirmation on this.

Secondly, we still have no idea how many properties are to be built on the site although the Vale has requested this information from the developer.

There are many, as yet, unanswered questions which we will continue asking until we get the answers.

Also, the numbers present and tone of this meeting should leave no-one in any doubt that the residents are strongly against this proposal and are collectively ready to oppose it through every means at their disposal.

Anyone who is affected by this proposal (including the developer!) is more than welcome to call me on 01367 243663.

David Reynolds

Old Health Centre^{01/12/04}

A few years back there was an article in The Folly newspaper to the effect that the old health centre building had been left to the people of Faringdon and was subsequently converted to its use as a health centre. Unfortunately, I don't recall who left it or indeed in what year, but at the time wondered why, if the building was left to us we couldn't have had it converted to a community centre after the new health centre was built. It also begged the question as to whether any of the money from the sale to the developers for private housing has been returned to the local community. Has anyone any knowledge of these matters?

JM

The number to ring

to report a crime to the police is:

0845 8 505 505 - ed, FO

If you wish to contact the police to offer information which might help track down criminals or wrong doers, there are several ways of doing so.

*Phone 01235 776000 (Wantage control room)

*Visit the Faringdon station personally. There is a telephone outside the police station which can be used when the station itself is unmanned

*Drop in a note. If you would like to see a specific officer, then leave a message to that effect.

Crimestoppers? I dont think so- 30/11/04

.I sympathise with Caroline and trying to get through to the police. I too tried to contact the police to report a crime. However, on calling the local number which I think is for Wantage I was unable to get through - just rang and rang. I then called 999 who told me to ring the same number again. By the time I got through and reported the crime about 25 minutes had gone by. The police were then on the scene pretty quick but the offenders had gone. Perhaps if those minutes were saved the offenders could have been caught nearby. Maybe as they weren't caught they could be getting ready to commit another crime?

Name withheld

Just say "No" - 30/11/04

Reading the letter about the window being smashed is one of to many stories you hear of today. mostly caused be young teenagers who have never been told " no".

Everywhere you go nowadays you meet up with spoilt brats running wild, everywhere seems to be a crèche,I visited the health centre last week, a place where you really don't want to be because your properly feeling under the weather, for the forty five minutes I waited, there were screaming children running wild,playing with the toys laid out to hopefully keep them quiet, with the parents totally oblivious to the mayhem, they carried on reading their magazines.

It got to a point where a dear old lady tried to talk to one of the children to calm it down, with no effect at all, and still no response from the parent.

Its just the same when you go to a restaurant.

I'm not talking burger bars, where you expect to find total bloody chaos; no, proper grown up restaurants, for grown ups.

Still the children are heard and also sadly seen, and what makes it worse is the feeble, " mummy's getting cross now" which is totally ignored by the spoilt offspring. No amount of staring by other diners has any effect either, and of course we have far better manners than to actually say, " for Christ sake shut that bloody kid up, we are trying to have a quiet meal here. Here's a surprise, no, we don't think your child is a little darling, and, we haven't come here to be your baby sitter "

To be honest, I would rather be in a room full of smokers, than a room full of badly behaved children, in fact, instead of making smokers leave a building to smoke, forcing them outside because its anti-social, I think any one with badly behaved children should be legally forced to do the same, as they are also anti-social, seeing groups of parents lovingly looking at their little darlings while freezing their bits off, would make the rest of us give a great big cheer. By the way, I am a parent , and my daughter has been brought up with manners, and to respect other people, its not difficult to do, you don't have to watch daytime television to learn it, just learn to say "NO", that way, they might not go around smashing peoples windows, oh! a pig's just flown past the

window.....

Name withheld

18 Coxwell Road - 30/11/04

There will be a meeting of residents at the Old Town Hall 6.30pm Weds 1st December to discuss the newest application to build an access road via Elm Road to 18 Coxwell Road.

Anyone who believes they will be affected by this proposal is invited to attend.

David Reynolds

Police Station..... Where? - 29/11/04

Saturday, early evening, around 6.30pm I go to stroke my cat sitting in the window. It's dark so the curtains are pulled..next thing I know...BANG!!!...someone has bashed our window in.

The noise alone nearly gave me a heart attack! I was stood in the window so immediately opened the curtains to look out, but saw no- one. I stood there shaking while my husband flew outside with rage.

This is the 3RD TIME IN 1 YEAR! .Our next door neighbour's window was broken too a few months back, so it's not just our house.

My husband said he was going to phone the police..a waste of time really, but he wanted to report it. We know Faringdon police station is never open anymore so knew not to phone there...tried Wantage, closed after 5.30pm ish..phoned Highworth..not your area sorry..try Swindon..not your area sorry, try READING! Phoned Reading who were very understanding and gave us a crime report number but are 50 plus miles away!

What could they do?

We need some police around Faringdon..this is a petty crime instance, but it very inconvenient and frightening if this happens to you..and when someone decides to scratch your new car.

We used to like Faringdon.

Caroline,Faringdon

Oxfordshire Geology Trust- Press Release - 29/11/04

UNCOVERING OXFORDSHIRE'S AMAZING GEOLOGICAL SITES

Oxfordshire Geology Trust has received a grant of £7,040 from English Nature, through Defra's the Aggregate Levy Sustainability Fund (ALSF), which will enable us to improve exposure of, and access to, some of our most needy geological sites.

Oxfordshire has a rich and varied Earth Heritage which has been exploited for generations as a source of aggregates. As a result of this quarrying, rocks and fossils have been exposed which would otherwise never have been seen. It is these rocks and fossils which tell a fascinating story about how Oxfordshire's environment has changed over the last 200 million years.

Unfortunately, many of these exposures are being neglected and are in need of conservation and re-exposure if local communities and future generations are to have the opportunity to experience at first hand the evidence of our past environments.

Using the ALSF grant, we will be arranging practical geoconservation days when volunteers will be able to help with the clearance of the sites.

The perfect opportunity to get out into the countryside and get your hands dirty!

The Trust will also be arranging field trips to the sites once the clearance work has been undertaken so that local communities can have the opportunity to appreciate the Earth Heritage that is right on their doorstep.

If you would like further details about the project or would like to get involved please contact:

Jane Worrall, Director, Oxfordshire Geology Trust

Tel: 01367 243 260 or Email: contact@oxfordshiregt.org

Scroll down [on the History page](#) see information about Faringdon's SSSI off the Fernham Road

Faringdon Post Office Move - 27/11/04

Is this a good thing or not? I am not so sure....

The current Post Office offers a large range of services - will these reduce for the move?
Can Dillons fit everything without reducing their services?
What will happen to the old building?
How will the postmen park to collect the post from Dillons?
Sarah Allen-Stevens

Faringdon Post Office to move to Dillons - 25/11/04

This is planned to happen in January 2005
Points made are:
Dillons is only 120 yards away
Brand new Post Office Counter
A bright orderly retail offer
Additional space within the store- improved manoeuvrability especially for wheelchair and pushchair users

There'll be no break in service

The note I saw is from John Holden, National Multiples Partner Manager
Customer Helpline: 08457 22 33 44

Rumour is a lying Jade - 24/11/04

No I don't know who first said this but I can give Gene and Hilary one or two facts.

Health Centre.

In June last this year I sent a letter of complaint to the VWHDC about the old Health Centre saying it looked neglected and asking them what was going on
I received an email from the Regional Development Manager of the Nucleus Housing Group dated 01/07/04 (almost 5 months ago) which said :

"The former Faringdon Health Centre in Coxwell Road, Faringdon, was purchased by Beacon Housing Association in November 2002 from South West Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust. The building works were completed in February this year. However, grant funding was not made available by the Housing Corporation until the end of the project. This grant allocation has determined the category and tenure of the finished units - the nine units forming the main quad are to be made available for shared ownership purchase by key workers and the detached 1 bed bungalow for key worker intermediate rent.

Shared ownership and intermediate rent properties are particularly appropriate for key workers whom have a reasonable income but are unable to afford a home of their own on the open market. The Association is about to launch a sales drive targeting public sector workers i.e. teachers, nurses/health workers, social workers, occupational therapists, fire fighters, police, police civilians, prison staff, probation service staff and council planners. Whilst it is hoped that applicants will have a local connection it must be recognised that some key workers wishing to live in Faringdon will work outside the area and may travel to, say, Oxford or Swindon".

John Prescott tells us that in this country we are ankle deep in families needing homes but here in Faringdon we have homes in need of families and we are supposed to be planning hundreds more (houses not families).

18 Coxwell Road.

The owners of this property are determined to maximise the profit on the sale of their, now surplus to requirements, family home by selling it with outline planning permission for a small estate.

Rumour says it will be called The Rabbit Warren.

No one can blame them for trying if they have such a pressing need for a few more £££,£££,£s.

Certain members of the Town and District Councils sympathise with them but the vast majority has made it clear that the extra profit for one family does not justify the misery it will cause to others in Faringdon.

The main objection will always be that any development will cause disruption to the many neighbours and danger to children going to and from school.

This latest proposal via Elm Road is the fifth attempt but it uses a different Developer and Agent from the previous four. At the same time the Developer and Agent of the first four attempts has appealed against the refusal of the fourth proposal. Are you still following me ?

This complex procedure is attrition planning which means that anyone can submit a plan to build anything anywhere and there is no need for the proposer to have bought nos 31 and 33 Elm Road or even told the owners before applying to build there.

The owners of 31 and 33 could clarify the situation but that's up to them.

Finally when the Town Council and District Council refuse to accept a proposal an appeal can be lodged with The Planning Inspectorate in Bristol. This worthy body probably know as much about Faringdon as I do about Bristol but a clever Barrister/Developer/Agent could make any project sound reasonable.

Remember the Millennium Dome ?

Does that help ?

HGM

Old Buses - Fernham Road - 23/11/04

Today I saw 4 very old and dilapidated double decker buses parked at the end of the Fernham Road.

Who owns them? Is this becoming the bus park for Faringdon?

Just curious

Gene Webb

Ambiguous Rumours about the Old Health Centre - 23/11/04

I wonder where these rumours emanate from?

As I understood the (then current) rumour, the properties at the Old Health Centre were earmarked for 'key workers' from the outset. If we are to believe rumours, then - according to a correspondant - Eddie Williams (TP 17/06/04) there were 9 units for shared ownership and only one for rent anyway.

The development was allocated by the end of 2002 - and ready for occupation in or about January 2004 (according to the above) so what grants were available then that have been axed in mid project?

Were grants secured in the first place, that have now been withdrawn by the Labour Government? From whom, - the Vale council? - the Vale housing association? - the developer?

Private developers/landlords are not presently eligible for grants for housing to rent as far as I know.

Who 's "we"? - and what does it mean "the only way we could secure them"?

If the homes only now 'need to be marketed' to find owners/occupiers, how were occupiers to be found before 'the plug was pulled' ? Divine intervention?

There was a (controversial) bill going through parliament this year which would have offered grants to private landlords/developers to rent as affordable homes - could this be what was meant? If so, they were never available in the first place because the bill was only getting its second reading by the time the homes were presumed ready for occupation. It was a revival of a conservative plan which was shelved (in 1995) and has been/is strongly criticised by housing associations because the not-for-profit housing associations would have been competing against commercial firms for funding. - instead of (as at present) having partnerships between house builders and housing associations

The scheme for loans to key workers (a totally different scheme) has floundered in some areas because of lack of proper planning, ambiguity regarding the criteria for procurement of these, and a lack of funds in the face of the considerable demand. Are these the grants which are referred to?

So who is the developer anyway - if it's a private developer the failure of the bill to be passed can have had no real bearing on the situation - unless of course there was the expectation of retrospective funding, for some reason. So what/for whom exactly were the grants which have now 'had the plug pulled' on them?

Perhaps the source of these confusing rumours could enlighten us all with a few unbiased FACTS, then ignorant people like me wouldnt be left wondering.

Hilary Taylor

Old Health Centre- 22/11/04

I've been told that 'Because the Labour government pulled the plug on grants for housing to rent the only way we could secure them was to accept funding for these properties for 'keyworkers'. Now they need to be marketed to find people: teachers, health workers, police who would like to rent or buy via shared ownership'

I've heard a rumour that there is delay in selling the property as there is some problem with vehicle access-

seems unlikely as the 'inning and outing' of cars when it was a Health Centre was constant.
I've also heard, a rumour again, that maybe because of the delay in putting these properties on the market that the developer has gone out of business.
Gene Webb

18 Coxwell Road - 22/11/04

I've heard a rumour that the would be developer for this site has bought nos 31 and 33 Elm Road - where the access is wanted to be
Gene Webb

Swan Lane Development - 20/11/04

53 sheltered apartments and 12 Affordable dwellings

As part of the planning agreement, the Housing provider (Kindle Housing, Sidmouth), and the developer(McCarthy & Stone) will provide:

- £9262 for offsite recreational facilities (*no detail as to what, where, when- but the money will go to VWHDC*)
- £4800 for Faringdon Market Place improvements(*no detail as to whether this is for further changes or to help pay for what has already been done - VWHDC will know*)
- £2000 towards the Faringdon Community Bus (*no detail as to when this will be paid*)
- Affordable Housing(up to 80% private ownership) - to be available before more than 27 of the private dwellings have been occupied.

Faringdon Town Council Matters - 20/11/04

Pump House

Faringdon Town Council have asked Lord Faringdon if, following the necessary repair work, he would accept the return of the Pump House. Apparently he said 'not at the moment' .
It seems that the lease signed by former Town Councillors doesn't allow for early termination.

So the work continues

Starting the work was delayed through the contractor who was awarded the contract increasing the price before work had started. FTC decided to get new quotes from 2 contractors. The contract has now been awarded to EW Beard.

Current work will make ready the ground floor (2 rooms) and toilets, including mechanical and electrical work on the ground and first floor(including an external lift to the ground floor). Target completion for this phase is about July 2005

Still to be done are the 1st and 2nd floors.

The Theatre and the old bar are likely to be 'mothballed' pending a decision to demolish or renovate.

If you want to see the detail of the schedule of works, ask at the FTC office.

Perhaps Lord Faringdon will accept the return of the building when the repair work has been done.

Land adjacent to Willes Close

Extract from Recreation and Open spaces meeting 20/10/04

The Clerk passed on advice received from the Solicitor regarding options for the future disposal of the land, which confirmed that the only option was to sell the land back to the County Council for the sum of £750.

Cllr. Leniec proposed that an item be placed on the Agenda of the **January Town meeting** to discuss the future of the land and a Motion to allow Council to sell the land back to the County Council, and this was seconded and CARRIED.

Ed note

This land was once part of the Faringdon Secondary Modern school(later the Junior school). It belonged to Oxon CC, who I understand sold it to FTC for a very small amount of money on condition that it is used for Community purposes.

The space is 'land locked' at the moment, but it is not beyond possibility that when the nearby industrial land is

developed and there is housing on the cricket field that vehicle access would be possible.

Also everyone knows that permitted land use changes over time - there was a time when 'back land development' was not permitted, or who would have thought that it would be possible to build on contaminated land.

I wonder what Oxon CC would do with it if it was sold back to them - build houses??, change to industrial? Sell it for lots of ££??

Perhaps we need to come up with suggestions for the use of the land- anything to stop FTC from giving away one of the few, potentially valuable assets that the Town owns.

The town meeting is on Mon January 24th, 2005

Corn Exchange

The new lease for the Corn Exchange includes a responsibility (thought to be 50:50 with VWHDC) for repairs - internal and external. FTC are required under the terms of the lease to build a £20k fund to cover this so they will be precepting £5k per annum at least for the next 4 years.

The good news is that the Corn Exchange is generating more income now, and if it wasn't for this £5k it would almost be breaking even.

Thanks to Cnclr Matthew Barber for this information and the planning gain information for Swan Lane development

[Matthews website](#)

GFA/4905/5-X - 17/11/04

This refers to the development in the back garden of 18 Coxwell Road. It was preceded by GFA/4905/1, GFA/4905/2, GFA/4905/3 and GFA/4905/4 .

The latest version, not surprisingly known as GFA/4905/5, involves a different Developer and an access through Orchard Hill and Elm Road.

This means that in addition to the families bordering the garden of 18 Coxwell Road (of which I am one) there will now be a further fifty or so families which will have their lifestyle severely damaged by the extra traffic generated if this development goes ahead.

The noise and dirt created by a constant stream of Bulldozers, Skip lorries, Concrete mixers and General Construction traffic during the many months of construction work can only be imagined.

In June last year the owners of the property said in a statement to The Folly "We are not prepared to comment on what other people in the town are saying or doing..."

It is to be hoped that the Town and District Councils do not take the same cavalier attitude.

Harry G Mitchell

18 Coxwell Road Development - 17/11/04

Just when you thought this had gone away it raises it's ugly head again.

An application has been received (again) by the Vale of White Horse to demolish 18 Coxwell Road to build an unknown number of houses on the site.

The difference with this application is that the access is to be through Elm Road (currently a cul de sac).

If this proposal goes ahead it will affect every resident in and around the area, Orchard Hill, Beech Close, Hawthorn Road, Highworth and, of course, Elm Road.

I have seen the plans for the development which do not make good reading for residents in the area.

I am interested to hear from anyone who might be affected by this proposal.

David Reynolds 01367 243663.

Thames Water Treatment Works - 17/11/04

Thames Water have agreed to review their plans - but the case is not yet won - more letters are needed.

Send them to Tim Fane at northfieldfarm@btinternet.com

See [letter from OCC to Thames Water](#)

Road works in London St - 11/11/04

Businesses in London St were given notice yesterday 10/11 that roadworks(power company) were to take place from Monday next until nearly Christmas. As you can imagine this caused them great concern - trade in this busiest period of the year would be seriously reduced.

Many people leapt into action - Judith Heathcoat(County Councillor), Faringdon Town Council, Chamber of Commerce and it now appears that the works will be put back until the New Year

Good News!!

Gene Webb

[Action information from Judith Heathcoat](#)

Thames Water - Review of Sewage plans- 10/11/04

John Sexton MD of Thames Water has written to Faringdon Alternative Energy Group(FAEG) saying "Our proposals have prompted a significant number of representations from the local community and I appreciate the concerns that have been raised. I have, therefore, asked the project team to carry out a further review of the options available to us enabling compliance with the regulations for sludge recycling, which come into force next year.

Obviously I cannot prejudge the outcome of this review and it may be that Faringdon remains the better option. However, I can assure you that the review will be objective and take full account of the concerns that have been raised with us.

The review will be complete by the end of this year and I propose that we meet again early in the new year. In the meantime, I have asked the team to continue to meet with local interest groups to ensure we fully understand the local concerns."

Tim Fane FAEG

[See comment](#)

[See response to letter](#)

Yet another takeaway- 7/11/04

I was browsing the proposed Planning Applications submitted to VWDC on 31st October 2004 and was shocked to see the plans to convert the old book shop to a takeaway outlet.

Do other readers think Faringdon is in need of yet another pizza/kebab house.

Personally, I think it would be more appropriate to introduce perhaps a clothes shop, after all where can you even buy a pair of knickers????

Karen. (Resident in Faringdon for best part of 40 years!)

Ed Won't help the traffic problem in Marlborough St either!

Reply to Jim's latest - 7/11/04

"There are more things in heaven and earth, Jimmy, than are dreamt of in your philosophy"
(With apologies to Hamlet Act 1 Scene 5)

Belated Christmas Presents

Jim Horton's idea made me laugh but when I went to bed

I had a rather silly dream inspired by what he'd said.

I dreamt I had a visit from the Aliens on the Hill

I don't know why they picked on me.....I guess I never will.

The tallest one was standing there with a towel on his head

His outfit was a stylish sheet..with stripes of blue and red.

He had the others with him they were a motley lot

I thought "They're Carol Singers" but then I thought " They're not"

Their leader told me they had come..'from a world afar'.

What brought them here to Faringdon?...They mentioned Pete White's Star.

They'd come to us with presents. At least they said they were.

The Gold was very welcome.. but what is Frankincense ?.. and Myrrh ?

I told them their computer had got their route quite wrong
I wished them Merry Christmas and said now please get along
I also said " You're miles off track and sorry to relate
The place you want is Bethlehem
and you're two thousand years too late".
HGM

Paddy Wagon to Kosovo - 6/11/04

Hope and Aid Direct, an all-volunteer organisation, (Registered Charity No 1077146) motto "We take Aid NOT sides" has been taking aid to the Balkans for some years now.

The Hope and Aid convoys of Humanitarian Aid started going to the Balkans soon after the civil wars that ravaged the country and split the population, ruining lives, and dividing the population along ethnic fault lines. Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) poured from one region into another as the increasing violence polarised the population.

Hope and Aid Direct has been regularly, twice yearly Easter and early Autumn, travelling from the UK mainly in 38 and 7.5 tonne trucks taking Humanitarian Aid in the form of supplies and practical help to the refugees and IDPs.

This Autumn's convoy, the seventh to Kosovo since 2000, consisted of two 38 tonne articulated lorries, seven 7.5 tonne trucks and one jumbo transit. One of the 7.5 tonne trucks, 'Paddy Wagon' named after Jack Curran (Devizes) and yours truly (yes you've guessed it TWO Paddies) joined the convoy and both of us travelled to Kosovo for the first time .

Frank Callanan

[Read much more about the trip](#)

When Harry met Slurry.... - 6/11/04

Harry, and other friends of the statues, I have come up with a fantastic idea.

Would it be possible do you think, that as Christmas is coming, could we turn the statues into a nativity scene, of course a wood like stable would have to be put up, cheaply done in plastic, covered in real sawdust for the affect, and with Pete Whites folly star angled to shine over head I think it would be a fantastic sight. To add more realism, a few sewerage lorries going by to add that authentic "stable smell"

I think people would come from miles around, possibly even be on Central news, oh the possibilities are endless,.

Perhaps you all could think of ways to theme them for Spring, Summer(people dancing naked would be good for me) and Autumn.

I commend this idea to the house..... Jim Horton

Let's look on the bright side - 2/11/04

It seems a shame that the Folly statues are receiving so much adverse comment. It is obvious that their fame is spreading and already we have news that they have aroused interest as far afield as Stanford in the Vale. Not only did our welcome visitor stress the good points of the Folly Park but she has expressed an interest in our Farmers' Market and in bringing her 2 year old with her she may be ensuring the future of this facility as long as we are able to provide the correct 'choccys'.

There was also an apocryphal story that a group of Priests from Lourdes wanted to become our Twin Town until they found that they were holey and not Holy statues...An easy mistake to make.

As to the sludge lorries...Ok, so multiple thousands of people have made it clear that we don't think their dangerous and smelly passage through our roads are a welcome addition to the delights of Faringdon. But to be fair there are thousands more who think it is a great idea... for example the residents of Wantage 10,000, Abingdon 34,000 and Witney 17,000....that's an awful lot of support.....and sewage
Harry Mitchell

Thames Water - 2/11/04

I have just returned from County Hall having started there at 0730 this morning. I write to advise that my motion (below), was passed nem com! Thames Water did have representation in the gallery. I look forward now to meeting Mr Sexton, Director of Thames Water on Friday 5 November.

Judith Heathcoat (C/Cllr. Faringdon Division)

This Council urges Thames Water to defer the commencement of the upgrading of the treatment plant at Faringdon until further investigations have been made into the environmental impact the expansion will have on the town and surrounding area and the economic feasibility of enlarging local treatment plants to take local sewage.

The environmental study must take particular note of the odour emanating from the plant and the effect this will have on a town where SEEDA and the County have invested heavily.

The study must also examine the high level of traffic movements in a residential area, and an area where traffic calming measures are being sought. The traffic routes proposed are in a closely populated area passing a primary school out onto a rural road.

The study must also reflect the damage that would occur from pollution which, in turn, will affect disastrously the livelihood of organic farmers in the close proximity of this plant

Faringdon Sewage Treatment Works - 1/11/04

Apologies for the delay in posting this update. First, the official number of signatures on the Petition was a massive 2,477. This was way ahead of our original target and goes to show the strength of the town's opposition to the Thames Water proposals.

The signatures were collected in just one week and included significant numbers from local villages and Lechlade....thanks to all concerned.

Late arrivals have recently increased the total to 2,601.

We also received 80 individual letters to John Sexton, the managing director of Thames Water. Several letters were from children the youngest being just 4 years old...many thanks to all who wrote.

The Petition, the letters, a copy of our alternative proposals and a covering letter were placed in a dozen smart folders and sent to various "influential" individuals including John Sexton, the local MP's, Margaret Beckett, DEFRA and others. The front of each file contained a colour photo of the field of poppies with the Folly in the background.

During the past few weeks we have met up with the Shadow Minister for the Environment, arranged a meeting due to be held within the next week with John Sexton, MD of Thames Water, arranged a slot on Radio Oxford (due next Wednesday 10th November). We will shortly also be presenting to the full meeting of the Oxfordshire County Council in support of a motion to urge Thames Water to delay their proposal pending a review of the environmental implications. The VWH council has already carried a motion to ban sewage lorries from passing through Faringdon.

Lawyers representing the Faringdon House Estate are also looking at the legality of TW's use of the access road to the Faringdon STW.

Thames Water regrettably still have the Law on their side in so far as their proposal is deemed to be a permitted development. It may be that none of the above actions in isolation will succeed in stopping them but the more legitimate obstacles that we can throw in their direction, the better.

Predictably, TW's initial reply to the Alternative Energy Group's proposal was not encouraging but it was flawed in many respects and indicates that the company really has very little idea of the local issues. We believe most strongly that we have won the moral argument and presented TW with a viable and soundly based alternative but we need to keep applying pressure, and more media coverage is needed.

All ideas and offers of help are most welcome

Daniel Bell

Folly Park - 1/11/04

I have been recently using the folly park. I take my 2 yr old for a walk there regularly. It needs a better much

better sign post for one, only spotted it by accident and seeing it on this website.

The statues whilst a little odd are defiantly different. "what are they meant to be anyway?"
We were looking at them the other day. I thought they were carved stone...they are not- they seem to be cast of some sort of plastic with sand stuck to the outside. I don't think who ever made them took into account the weather on the hill, bits of the sand coating are falling off and you can see the plastic underneath...in a few yrs time it will be gone and they will probably look awful.

That aside the park is very nice, I think. We have been there several times, as the paths are not muddy, the amount of birds we have seen and heard is great, even on a cold, but sunny day at the end of October. Shame the dog pooh bin was overflowing, but at least people are bothering to put it in it, or by it.

We come from Stanford by the way. We haven't been to Faringdon much recently, but nice to see the square has been "tarted up" looks much nicer. Also enjoyed the saddlers lunch. My little boy specially likes the chocccys they sell. Now we have been there will be using the local shops a bit more often. We are going to see what the local farmers market is like this week. Angela Vickery