

Bus Pass Rules - 27/2/05

The bus pass option, which is free of charge, entitles the user to half price bus journeys within the Vale's area and can also be used to travel to Oxford, Swindon, Didcot, Witney and Newbury, including hospitals in Oxford and Swindon

The following people are eligible to participate in the scheme:

Everyone over the age of 60,

Blind or partially sighted persons,

Profoundly or severely deaf person,

A person without speech,

A person who has a disability, or has suffered an injury, which has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on his ability to walk,

A person who does not have arms or has long-term loss of the use of both arms,

A person who has a learning disability, that is, a state of arrested or incomplete development of mind which includes significant impairment of intelligence and social functioning,

A person who would, if he applied for the grant of a licence to drive a motor vehicle under Part III of the Road Traffic Act 1988, have his application refused pursuant to Section 92 of that Act (physical fitness),

In certain cases, companions of severely disabled eligible persons.

The half fare bus pass may be used for journeys:

Within the Vale - e.g. Abingdon, Wantage and Faringdon

To designated towns outside the Vale area. The designated towns are Oxford, Didcot, Newbury, Swindon and Witney.

To Oxford and Swindon hospitals.

The half fare bus pass may be used any time on a Saturday or Sunday or on any day which is a bank holiday in England.

The half fare bus pass may be used during the period 9.00a.m. to 4.00p.m. on any other day.

Information provided by VWHDC

Bus only parking -22/2/05

I have noticed over my 6 months of catching the early heyfordian bus that a number of people are using the "bus' only" part of the square to drop off children/pick up papers.

Every so often there is a reason like two big lorry's coming together and one HAS to use the slip.

I'd just like to point out that there is a bus that runs from Faringdon to Wantage every day with a very reasonable price unlike stagecoach.

Thomas Mildenhall

C&G Closure - 21/2/05

Carol Filleul is sharing the view of many Faringdonians when she complains about the C&G closure and she may well have a good reason for wanting to go to Highworth every week but I think she will have a frustrating journey if she is looking for a C&G branch.

The nearest will be Witney, a 20 mile round trip.

Perhaps, Ed, she could share the cost with your mum.(10.2.05).

If her petrol costs are 30p/mile she must have a big car or is that the taxi fare ?

A car sharing scheme would, in any case, make economic and environmental sense for anyone needing to make this weekly journey.

HGM

Bus Tokens - 20/2/05

How funny (funny-peculiar that is) is it that while there is not much growing about Faringdon, the only thing that is increasing is the number of elderly residents, and then they stop the bus tokens for the over 60's.

Very strange.

And what will happen to the community bus?

Sylvia Bowley

Bus Tokens removal, C&G closure - 19/2/05

Bus token removal is a serious blow. However, not as serious in my mind as the closure of the C&G which leaves me in particular in a difficult position.

It now means that I will have to go to Highworth EVERY week.

The bus tokens were worth £27, the weekly trips to H'worth will total £187.20 (taking 30p per mile) so I will be less well off by some £200 annually.

Will the Pensions board make this up for me? - I think not!

Carol Filleul

Window vibrations, nasty business - 18/2/05

Thank you for the reply J Hurst, or can I call you James?, you can call me Jim as we are all friends here are we not Harry? (nice to see you back Harry. (I thought you were protesting sat up a tree in Orchard hill to stop it being cut down !)

Let me tell you a little bit about myself, if I didn't like children, I would not have bought a house near a school.

If I didn't like church bells I would not buy a house next to a Church, and then try to ban them.

If I didn't like the smell of curry, I would not buy a house next to a Tandoori restaurant.

(do you see where I'm going with this?)

If I didn't like traffic noise, I would not buy a house in the centre of a town, and then try to ban traffic.

The town centre is the heart of Faringdon and as such is everybody's not just the people that live within spitting distance of the Portwell.

As the heart of the town was given a bypass operation several years ago (now that was noisy, as any one living here longer than five minutes will tell you) it managed to plod along quite well for several years. The old adage, if it's not broken why fix it, was it's motto.

Then the infamous improvements came along, and sadly I am now watching my Faringdon die.

Don't get me wrong, I am all for making life better, but it's got to be for all Faringdonians, not just the few that live in the centre.

Jim Horton

Bus Tokens - 16/2/05

By her own admission the Ed. is rapidly approaching middle age and so will be disappointed not to receive her £29's worth of free travel ...but I don't think it will ruin her day.

The state pension is not over generous but there are a few 'perks' she can still look forward to. e.g The £10 Christmas bonus with a warning not to spend it all at once, the heating allowance which really is worth having, in fifteen years time a free TV license and in twenty years time an extra 25p/ week.

An in-depth study of a cross section of Faringdon Pensioners reveals that many, like me, don't really NEED the tokens. Some don't collect them, some stick them in a drawer and forget them, some 'sell' them.

But for some people their withdrawal will have a serious impact on their lives.

Public transport in the Vale is very seldom convenient and the occasional use of a taxi could be a life saver.

How difficult would it be to apply some form of means test so that the really needy are not deprived of this 8p/day addition to their pension ?

To take the tokens away from everyone is taking a sledgehammer to crack a nut !

Reasonably Affluent Pensioner
(PS. I don't open begging letters)

Petition - Closure of TIC and discontinuing of Bus Tokens - 16/2/05

This morning I spoke to a number of traders in the Town who are of course rightly concerned about the Lib Dem plans to close the TIC.

A number of other residents have also been in touch with me about the plans to withdraw bus tokens for the over 60's.

As promised I have produced a petition which I hope can be circulated around the town and made available in as many retail outlets as possible. The petition is attached.

Matthew Barber

FTC and VWHDC Councillor

[Petition](#)

[More information about Bus tokens and bus passes](#)

How about printing a copy and getting friends and neighbours to sign it. I think Matthew is hoping to take the petition to a council meeting on 23rd March

Town Meeting- Closure of the TIC and discontinuing of bus tokens- 15/2/05

The VWHDC has decided to remove the grant to the South East Tourist Board that supports the TICs in Faringdon, Wantage and Abingdon.

The result of this will be the closure of those centres within three months. It has also been decided to discontinue the over sixties travel tokens. Both of these decisions will have serious and lasting effects on Faringdon and the local villages.

In order that the Town can have it's say about these decisions, a **special Town Council meeting has been called for Thursday 24th February Corn Exchange 7.15**

It is intended that the meeting, whilst under the auspices of FTC, will be organised in such a way that the people of Faringdon and the local villages will be able to make their views known. Please come along to the meeting if you have a view, and please pass the information to any other contacts that you think would be interested

An Agenda will be available tomorrow and posters are being designed as we speak for distribution around the town.

The Chamber of Commerce, Faringdon Area Project, FAR, Joint Economic Forum for Faringdon have been invited and we are hoping that the public will turn up in force.

Town Centre Traffic - 15/2/05

Oscar Wilde was a brilliant writer but he had some queer ideas ..literally. He loved men and hated sarcasm. I disagree with him on both counts. I like sarcasm and my only reservation is that otherwise intelligent people have been known to misunderstand it (See Christmas ..Bah Humbug by Ebenezer Scrooge.)

Which leads me in a long winded way to James Hirst's suggestion for the Town Centre. He seems to want to exclude traffic from using Cornmarket. He then seems to propose a stream of puzzled motorists driving round Gloucester St, Marlborough St and Gravel Walk while an equally frustrated lot circumnavigate London St. Church St. and Coach Lane.

As a sarcastic spoof it's brilliant but as a plan for the simplification of our Town Centre it leaves a lot to be desired. So here are some of my suggestions to the Highways and Byways people ...Seriously !

Really discourage illegal parking particularly in Gloucester St and London St.and issue householders in these streets with Residents Parking Tickets allowing them to park within a reasonable distance of their HOMES.

Stop any parking in Gloucester St outside the Corn Exchange.. yes, even for those with GENUINE Disabled Stickers. Traffic waiting to take their chance through Cornmarket form a necessary queue but anyone wanting to turn right up Marlborough St is blocked by the cars outside The Corn Exchange.

Allow cars from Cornmarket to use the slip road in front of The Crown to join Church St. This route is presently used, very infrequently, by Coaches, Taxis and ignorant yobs who ignore the signs...(but some days it's very tempting to follow them.)

Admit that the road narrowing opposite the LloydsTSB Bank, Portwell House and Salutation Mansions is a mistake and remove it.

Finally if anyone from the appropriate department ever ventures into Faringdon please turn the sign outside the chemist's so that it faces the traffic from London St...not the bus shelter.

I know that few locals take any notice of the signs but the occasional tourist just might.

Harry G Mitchell

Black belt (Faringdon Dojo) to attend National Blood Service award ceremony - 14/2/05

Peter Combes has been invited by the NBS (National Blood Service) to attend an award ceremony(10th March 2005) as a thankyou for his longevity and regularity of donating blood, 78 pints to date.

Peter has been a volunteer instructor at Faringdon Judo club for 11 years

For more information about the Faringdon dojo see www.oxfordshirejudoclubs.co.uk

Speed bumps, traffic congestion -14/2/05

As a motorist J. Horton I don't like speed bumps either but as a market place resident do I like my windows vibrating? No.

No idea what suggestions have been made for making the area traffic \ people friendly but here's my tuppence worth...

Prevent traffic from going through the market place from London Street to Marlborough Street or Gloucester Street to London Street.

Keep Marlborough Street & Gloucester Street as one way systems.

Where Gloucester Street reaches the junction with Marlborough Street, traffic should be routed up Marlborough Street and along Gravel Walk.

Make London Street a one way road heading into town.

Where London Street reaches the junction with Church Street, traffic should be routed up Church Street and along Coach Lane.

James Hirst

Ed: *Good solution!!*

Geology walk 26th Feb 2005 - 14/2/05

Oxfordshire Geology Trust (OGT) are producing several geological trails around Oxfordshire, and one of these trails includes a walk around Faringdon. The trail will explore the geology of the area, which includes looking at the world-famous Faringdon Sponge Gravels, how the landscape of the area around Faringdon is related to the geology, and will also look at the town's building stones.

We are holding a Trail Testing Weekend in February, and are testing the **Faringdon Trail on Saturday 26th February**, meeting at **10am outside the Old Town Hall** in Faringdon.

We need lots of volunteers of all ages to come and test the trails, and suspect that most of the interest will come from the local area.

Volunteers will need to bring a packed lunch, suitable walking shoes and wet weather clothing. If people are interested can they contact OGT on 01367 243260, or e-mail contact@oxfordshiregt.org.

Bus Tokens to be discontinued - 14/2/05

VWHDC have announced that bus tokens are to be discontinued.

Last year the Vale issued about 18000 sets of tokens at a cost of £522,000. These were accepted by local taxis so they covered a 24/7 personalised service.

The replacement bus passes will be free and will entitle users to half price tickets when they are issued in the Vale. So a return or single ticket from Faringdon to Swindon would be half price but a ticket back from Swindon, bought in Swindon, would be full price. The council will reimburse the bus company for the other half of the fare.

This service, if it can be classified as such, will be restricted to the bus time table and published bus routes. With only one bus shelter in Faringdon this means wet and windy waits for the majority of users... The dial a ride service will only apply to special needs people e.g disabled.

Name supplied

Ed: - *I'm so disappointed - I was looking forward to getting mine!!*

Faringdon Twinning Events - 13/2/05

Following the January Newsletter we thought it helpful to keep everyone informed of the progress on Twinning plans for 2005, as time is creeping up on us quickly.

We are seeking information on the youth exchange at Faringdon, planned for Easter and the Fete de la Paix - in Le Mele from the 5th 8th May.

We particularly need to firm up on the host families for the youth exchange; and the number of singers available for the May trip - if there is a large enough group to present 3 or 4 songs separately, and if not we could join in with the European Hymn which will be sung in Czech, German, English and French.

Can we also ask you to contact us very soon if you plan to attend the May event. We have had limited response so far, but the organizing groups in LeMele need to know soon as they are catering for groups from Germany, Czech Republic and Faringdon, in what is essentially a 60th anniversary of VE day, but to celebrate the peace.. We hope a significant number will be interested, and we have provisionally booked a coach, which will cost £60 for adults and £30 for children under 16 years

David and Mary Tutt

Tel: 01367 241297 or email: tutt.faringdon@tesco.net

Poor Faringdon- 13/2/05

So, the Cheltenham & Gloucester is closing down, the tourist information is closing down, the Post office is being shoe horned into the paper shop (which I give 18 months survival rate)

Buses and coaches can no longer use the Market place with any ease, people in the town centre still wanting more tarmac dumped to form yet more restrictions on the poor motorist in the shape of speed ramps.

For Christ sake. tell me, why is it that when people move to Faringdon, they start off loving the quaintness a small market town gives, and then within a short space of time, try to change it into "something better," totally mess it up, then move on to another Faringdon and do the same to that poor little town, leaving behind the tumbleweed blowing across the streets of yet another ghost town.

Ah deep sigh!!

Jim Horton

Musical Fund Raising event -11/2/05

M.A.D.D. joins hands with One World Beat with a musical fund raising event at the Faringdon Junior School.

This years event is titled One World Beat against Aids.

All information on www.oneworldbeat.org

Any musicians wanting to be involved please contact Sam on 01367-243806

Tourist Information Office is to close - 11/02/05

I've just heard that VWHDC are to close the TI Offices in Wantage, Faringdon and Abingdon - in order to save £100k .

How on earth this supports the financial health and vitality of small towns is a mystery.

There is a group of people in town trying to improve Faringdon so that visitors want to come here, and spend money, to keep existing businesses financially viable. I thought VWHDC was meant to be doing this too

Gene Webb

Dog Mess on pavements- 11/2/05

If you know or see anyone who is not clearing up after their dog please phone: The Environmental Warden, David Coates on 01235 547641 or 07909 535558

He will progress all complaints with the dog owners.
Name supplied

Cheltenham and Gloucester is Closing - 10/2/05

I have just heard that our C&G branch is to close on 8th April 2005.

This bustling, friendly, helpful branch is presumably deemed to be unprofitable by Lloyds who own C&G. It would soften the blow for the people (not the staff) if Lloyds bank offered the C&G services in their building almost next door - but I gather this is not to be.

Their leaflet points out that our nearest branch is in High St, Witney- some help for people like my mother whose pension is now paid into a C&G account

I'm really irritated - apart from having to rethink how I manage my financial affairs its another nail in the coffin for the vitality of Faringdon

Gene Webb

Moan for the New Year - 9/02/05

Hi, First of all thanks for the great web site, it's informative and sometimes quite funny.

My moan relates to a perception that Faringdon appears to be left out when it comes to sharing services and facilities.

Failing that, it's an inability of the town council to fight the residents of Faringdon's corner or use money wisely.

A good example is the state of children's play areas in Faringdon. The majority, are dirty, broken, and often littered with broken glass and have poor play equipment. I have on many occasions spent a good deal of time clearing away broken bottles before it was safe for children to play.

Another example is the state of the country park, the access to it, and the impossibility to walk or play without getting covered in dog mess. This comment is also appropriate to the area around folly tower.

By contrast, visit the park in Great Coxwell. It's clean, has excellent facilities including an all weather five aside and basket ball pitch. And you could roll around all day without cutting yourself or getting covered in dog mess. Now, how is it that Great Coxwell with a relatively small population can achieve such facilities when Faringdon cannot.

Also while I am ranting, can someone explain to me the situation regarding the Pump house. As I understand it, the town council at some stage decided to take on a listed building liability which has become a money pit, causing higher community charges for residents and preventing money being used for more useful community facilities. The existing owner, is rubbing his hands with glee since he will not take it back until all repairs are carried out. If this is right, it would be funny, but for the fact that it is costing residents money and facilities.

Who made the decision to take on the building, what financial advice was taken. Clearly, the advice was either wrong, in which case the town council should be suing someone, or the town council have made a real blunder which we are now paying for.

Who was responsible for making this monumentous turkey of a decision

Name Supplied

Ed: To report litter/rubbish problems see <http://www.faringdon.org/tareportproblems.htm>

If you trawl through Talking Points and some of the meeting minutes in Town Affairs you can see some of the history of the Pump House. It was a former set of councillors that took on the building. No doubt in 10 years or so time, the then councillors will be blaming the current councillors for the high costs of the Pump House

Speed Bumps - 9/02/05

What a good idea, yes, lets have speed bumps in the market place, that way we can rid Faringdon of the few brave car owners that venture into the market place in the vain hope of ever finding a parking space (since the so called improvements, I've managed it once!!)

Better still, as mid town residents want it all to themselves, sprinkle tin tacks all over the road, that will even get rid of the Faringdonians that live further than two minutes walk away from the centre.

In fact shut the whole place down, get everyone to wear smocks, bustles and all other manner of turn of the century clothing and call it a Heritage centre.

Jim Horton (born in Faringdon, live in Farindon, and have every right to voice an opinion on Faringdon!!)

Speed Bumps - 9/02/05

I think speed bumps, although irritating do seem to be working in the centre of Faringdon, slowing down traffic. Can we have some in the Bromsgrove area please???

We are all tired of the 'boy racers' with their over sized exhausts, blasting their way down our little road.

My windows vibrate with the noise. Sooner or later one of these cars will drive into the barrier on the bridge or cause some kind of accident. There have been several near scrapes.

My husband and I have seen a few cars go round the corner on with a wheel off the ground..

Wasn't some work being organised at one time???

The Faringdon moaner- Caroline

Tradesman- 8/2/05

Can this site be used to help us all get the best out of local tradesmen and avoid some pitfalls?

I'm currently having a problem with a builder and believe that I can probably help others avoid what I'm experiencing and I'm sure there's someone out there who might have been able to warn me.

At present the website gives businesses the opportunity to advertise themselves;

how about us, the people who use their services, doing it instead.... the good reviews and the bad

Name supplied

Ed A tricky one. It could be very useful but we can't publish anything that might be libellous. Any suggestions how it could be done?

Speed Bumps- Market Square - 8/2/05

I for one would gladly back speed bumps along Market Square.

As a resident of the area I get sick of listening to cars burning up and down the main street, not to mention the safety aspect.

Do the police patrol Faringdon (on foot)? I've yet to see any

James Hirst

Tsunami Charity Concert - 7/2/05

I felt I just had to send a note to say how proud I was to be a Faringdon resident on Saturday night.

3 great local bands played to a packed Corn Exchange to raise money for the Tsunami disaster.

The atmosphere was electric and everybody had a fantastic time. A lot of time and effort went in to the organization of the event and the result was amazing.

Faringdon folk benefited from a wonderful night's entertainment for a fiver and well over £2000 was raised for the disaster fund.

Thank you to all involved. Sally TIC

Ed Concert by Kiff, Sad Dads, and the Beamers

Mrs Allnatt- London St - 7/2/05

I have learnt over this last weekend 5th Feb. that Mrs Allnatt (her of sweet shop fame) has passed away.

I would like through your guest book to offer my condolences to her family.

Those of us now in our 50's from Goodlake Avenue, Bennett Road, Pye Street, etc. grew up knowing this lady, she saw our children grow and she knew of my grandson although never met him.

I think she deserves a mention on your web site, bless her, she sold the best sweets.

Margaret (nee Rogers)

Ed Mrs Allnatt had the little shop in London St opposite the Indian Restaurant

Faringdon - what is it like? - 4/2/05

Dear Faringdon,

It's very interesting to read your comments on local matters, especially sewage treatment (and the success of people power), parking, litter, vandalism etc.

My wife and I are considering moving to your area in the near future, perhaps to Faringdon, depends on the availability of housing.

Big question, perhaps unfair, should we consider Faringdon as an option, in your opinion?

Also relevant, are newcomers welcome?

We have had a very bad experience of our current village in Shropshire.

Any advice welcome.

Ray

ray.jordan@btinternet.com

Reply

Dear Ray, We moved to Faringdon from London last October and believe it was the best possible decision we could have made (despite my 2 hour commute to and from the City every day!)

We were welcomed into various social circles within days of arriving and everyone has been wonderful. We managed to find a wonderful builder (Farmer brothers) and plumber (Mike Banfield) just from asking around the pub.

There are local characters like everywhere else but Faringdon seems a cosmopolitan mix of locals and people from all over the country.

There are great takeaways, a Threshers, wine bar, loads of pubs, good hotels and restaurants, fabulous walks around the town.....

There's lots of events too - the Portwell wine bar has open mike nights and a regular live music slot on

Sundays, quiz nights are all over town and the Corn Exchange seems to have plenty of knees-ups.

People did initially warn us of gangs of older kids doing whatever it is they do but our experience has shown so far that they tend to just mooch around in the rain in packs, sulking and seem to be quite tame compared with other parts of the country. Good luck with the move Mel

Faringdon Sewage Treatment Works - 1/2/05

It is FANTASTIC news that Thames Water has decided not to turn our town into the Sewage Sludge Capitol of Oxfordshire.

The Faringdon Alternative Energy Group (FAEG) are also delighted that TW are looking at "other technologies"

.
Thanks are due to many.

Our local MP has been making his own headlines recently but Robert Jackson (after initial reservations) did initiate a meeting between FAEG and the Managing director of TW.

Ed Vaisey provided strong and effective support and special mention to Judith Heathcoat for her boundless energy! The VWH District Council were first in with a motion condemning TW's plans and after a ferocious email bombardment, the leader of Oxfordshire Council sent a forceful letter to the MD of TW.

Huge thanks to fellow members of FAEG ; Tim Fane bravely hosted and chaired the weekly meetings to discuss tactics,

Hamish Wood (lucky not to be arrested for fly posting), Pat and Daphne Saunders, Gordon Dowell, Mike Cawsey (Coordinated the invaluable contribution from Lechlade) and John Wilmer.

But, most important of all were the two thousand six hundred and one signatures on the Petition, the eighty individual letters (authors aged from 4 to 94) and the massive support of the people of Faringdon.

People Power won the day.

Thank you all, be proud!!

Danny Bell

Ed: *Hear Hear!!*

Litter problems again- 31/1/05

Sorry to whinge - whilst out on my walk on Sunday I have noticed so much litter, especially at the closed end of Stanford Road (the approach to crossing the A420).

All kinds of rubbish, cans, bags, bottle, boxes - somebody has even dumped their old kitchen furniture in the trees.

Also on my return at the top of Coxwell Street the same thing is happening, all kinds of debris in the hedgerow. I can't do any more than take a carrier bag with me to collect this rubbish, but who should I get on to to ask them to collect it regularly?

Name supplied

The photos from the Crane are brilliant.

Ed: waste.team@whitehorsedc.gov.uk Tel: 01235 520202 ext 640 Fax: 01235 531981
Other report it contacts on <http://www.faringdon.org/tareportproblems.htm>

The Sludge and the Crane - 31/1/05

Very pleased to hear the news that Thames Water have backed off from their crazy proposal to drive the sludge through Faringdon's narrow streets. I had only been in Faringdon two weeks when I heard their proposal. I just hope that another place doesn't get dumped with the same or similar scenario. Well done to the campaigners, a victory for the people!

On another matter I've enjoyed looking at the photos of Faringdon from the crane, always like to see things from above, and as a photographer myself appreciate how differently the world seems from a great height. The intrepid photographer isn't named, who is it?

Al Cane

Ed: SHE will get in touch with you

Car Parking in Faringdon - 31/1/05

Yawn, yawn not again I hear everyone moan but I feel I must add my voice to the chorus of those who take issue with the way illegal parking is managed in Faringdon;

Why is it that people continue to park in restricted parking areas and on double yellow lines throughout Faringdon – it is simply that they have nothing to fear. I can only suggest that regular ticketing of fixed penalty charges by a traffic warden (imported from another area of Oxfordshire!!) or indeed the police would have people scuttling to use the car parks in Faringdon, and net a tidy income for someone.

I for one am tired of opportunist shoppers and Faringdon workers who park illegally along Gloucester Street.

Alice Randall

ED I agree - but the police say they have no time!!

Town meeting 24th January 2005 - 30/1/05

Unfortunately I couldn't go to this but I understand that around 35 people including councillors attended.

Motion 1 Proposed by Cllr David Hughes

'When essential repairs have been completed on the Pump House that it is offered back to the Owners(Lord Faringdon Collection Trust)'

Cllr Hughes produced a paper for the meeting that indicated since 1999 and when the repairs are complete around £500K will have been spent. (I think this excludes the theatre/back of the building).

A consultancy report (2002/03)and cost £25k) indicated that the community need for the facility is unproven and not viable unless grant funding is found. No such funding is available.

The owners have indicated that they will not consider accepting the building back until repairs are complete., and also penalties may be incurred.

The motion was lost on the casting vote of the Mayor Dee England Councillor

Steve Leniec produced figures at the meeting to justify why the building should be retained. He said it would cost £444k to hand it back - but the meeting realised these were wrong - £138k was much more likely. Interestingly though he provided no figures showing the cost of refurbishment if the building is kept for use by the town.

Councillor Leniec's paper suggested that it would cost the town about £30k per annum after the repair works (Loan repayment £12.5k, 50% Hall Manager £10k, Revenue(unexplained) £20k, less £12.5k income). Just based on these figures it means that the Pump House will cost the town nearly £1m for the remainder of the lease (about 25/30 years)

A resident pointed out that Faringdon's precept is the highest in Oxfordshire:

5.5 times Woodstock

2.5 times Eynsham

2 times Chipping Norton

1.5 times Wantage
1.5 times Grove

The reasons for this are high salary costs (salary for an additional person is included for 05/06) and of course the Pump House.

Motion 2 proposed by Cllr Tim Evans

'that the Town Council should sell back the land adjacent to Willes Close to Oxfordshire CC because of the unresolved difficulties of gaining access to carry out maintenance, and the potential risk of liability'

This motion was lost

There is currently a covenant on this land (it used to be part of Faringdon Junior school and therefore owned by Oxfordshire CC) which states:

- a) Not to use the property other than as open or public open space and in the event of the property ceasing to be used for either of such purposes to transfer the property back to vendor in consideration of the sum of seven hundred and fifty pounds (£750) free from encumbrances other than those subsisting at the date hereof and
- b) To further maintain the boundary marked with an inward T on the attached plan. (I haven't got the plan) The boundary indicated by the T mark is along the south-east of the site.

The land is bordered by Willes Close, and a footpath between Park Road and Southampton St (the other side of which is industrial land which no doubt will be developed some day), and the Industrial Estate.

In 1996, when FTC bought the land, the Health centre and the Volunteer Way housing had not been developed.

The Folly Park did not exist. More housing development may happen on the cricket field and beyond. What was once land on the edge of the town is now within the town boundary.

Hopefully FTC will keep the land and make thorough investigations of the possibilities for the future.

Faringdon Town Council Meeting 26th January 2005

Cllr Matthew Barber proposed some changes to the 05/06 budget to reduce it. These largely involved employing a contractor to do the grounds maintenance work rather than an additional FTC employee. Though there was a lengthy discussion, it was apparent that the Council, (and 2 councillors in particular) had no intention of considering the alternative budget seriously.

It seems that 'Best Value' for services will be considered for 06/07

The proposed FTC budget was agreed by all but 2 councillors. This years figure is £25k, a £19k reduction from 04/05. (If you want to see the breakdown , look at meeting notes for 26th January on <http://www.faringdon.org/tatownmeetings.htm>.

It was interesting to note that even though the Town Meeting on Monday was intended to hear residents views on the proposed budget, there was no item to discuss any points made at the Town Meeting on this Council agenda.

Clearly there is no intention to change the budget no matter what residents views are.

So there was no discussion at all about any points that residents raised on Monday.

The amount of time between the Town meeting(Monday) and the Council meeting (Wednesday) was insufficient to submit questions in writing arising from the Town Meeting- 3 days notice is required.

However in public speaking time I suggested that, given the closeness of the vote on the Pump House, that residents were asked their views again, but this time with complete factual information available. eg Spend so far, projected spend - keeping the building or giving it back, predicted annual costs for the rest of the lease.

And for about the 4th year running I requested a business plan for the Pump House.

The reactions from councillors ranged from nods of approval, to, oh no she's whingeing again to sarcastic smiles.

Gene Webb

Thames Water Sludge Plans - they've changed their minds - 28/1/05

Good News!

I have today received the following letter from Mr Sexton, Managing Director of Thames Water and it reads thus:-

"The project team have now completed a detailed review of a wide range of options for the plant necessary to treat sludge in the Western Provinces Area, including the possibilities opened up by other technologies that were not considered initially.

The focus of the review was, of course, on how best to meet the new statutory requirements, taking into account both environmental and financial aspects, rather than on any individual site.

I am able to tell you that it is clear from the review that Faringdon STW is not, on balance, the best location for this additional sludge treatment process. I can, therefore, confirm that we will not be pursuing this option.

We are now consulting with key stakeholders in the alternative areas that have been identified by the review".

I hope that everyone is happy! I know that I'm in 7th heaven!

Judith Heathcoat

Ed. This is really excellent news - Very well done to all those who persisted with the campaign. A wonderful success story

Faringdon School of Performing Arts - 28/1/05

To be started after February Half term

Already there are the schools drama, Faringdon Amateur Dramatics, Contemporary Dance Club(Tues) and now - possibly on Mondays 5.30-6.15 Gp 1 Drama/Singing Gp2 Dance

6.15 -7 Gp 2 Drama/Singing Gp 1 Dance

At Faringdon Junior school (Gym and Hall) on Mondays preferably

Skill sessions in each discipline to start and then working towards a production for Faringdon Madd May Festival.

Contact

Carolyn Murphy 01235 225787 or email: carolyn@murphy111.fsnet.co.uk

Obstructive Parking in Faringdon - 25/1/05

Many people complain about the lack of parking in central Faringdon, but life is not made any easier by people who deliberately cause obstructions by parking without regard to other people.

Church Street became completely blocked by someone who parked nose-in to the Church wall. Within minutes a large queue of trucks blocked the Market Place as none could turn into Swan Lane.

This morning the footpath was blocked by a car parked on the pavement outside Salutation Mansions.

Such parking forces anyone with a pushchair to have to walk in the road on a very dangerous corner.

Grrrrrrrr

John Gillman

Tsunami Fund Raising Event - 22/1/05

Sat 5th February

The Sad Dads, Kiff, and the Beamers

Show at the Corn Exchange

Tickets £5.00 available at various outlets in the town, or phone 01367 243478

In aid of the Asian Tsunami fund

Pavements in Faringdon - 22/1/05

Saw 2 chaps in yellow jackets surveying the state of the pavement in Marlborough St. They told me they were doing the same up towards the Church. Oh good I said Does that mean that Oxfordshire County Council will be improving them? I doubt it, he said, they are obliged to carry out a survey under some European Legislation, but I don't expect they'll do anything about it.

Perhaps they will though??

Perhaps they'll plan something in for the future

Perhaps they'll at least make the results of the survey public?

Maybe this is the time to start making a fuss.

The pavements are a mess and very difficult for old folk and wheelchair users

Gene Webb
The OCC contact is: Oxfordshire County Council, Drayton Tel:01235 531331

Faringdon Arts Festival fund raising event - 21/1/05

Dinner and Dance

Friday 4th February
Sudbury House, 7.30pm for 8pm
Buffet Meal, Black Tie
Live Band (Celebration) and auction of celebrity memorabilia
£40 per ticket or £35 for table of 10 from David Reynolds 01367 243663
Fund Raising event for Faringdon Arts Festival

Vandalism in Skinners Lane - 20/01/05

I would like to nominate Skinners Lane as the vandals paradise . Not only is behaviour completely unseen - being sick - throwing bottles, breaking one of my windows (15.01.05) - daubing red sauce (3 times) over my newly painted white wall ripping off the Skinners Lane sign that took 5 years to get installed - but it seems completely unnoticed by any police who never seem to have cause to stroll round here on a Fri. Sat, or Sunday night.

Felicity Cormack

Vandalism - 19/01/05

Further to the correspondance about vandalism in the London Street area;
firstly: Might I suggest that as this occurs on a repeated basis the affected persons contact the Community Safety Officer, see below

Community Safety Email: communitysafety@whitehorsedc.gov.uk Tel: (01235) 540309

It is worth noting that in some counties, e.g. Somerset, a portable CCTV camera scheme allows this device to be used on a short term basis in various locations. It may be worth suggesting this to the local district council. (I dont think Oxfordshire/WHDC operates this scheme at present)

secondly: The problem mainly occurs after closing time on Saturday/Friday nights. If interested local residents can ascertain where the vandals are drinking - and that shouldnt be too difficult, they can make representations re. the relevant premises to the police and the licensing authority. It is as you know an offence to serve under-age drinkers alcohol. I believe it is also an offence to serve alcohol to anyone who is obviously drunk.
ed. Faringdon Online

Plea for Volunteers- 17/1/05

In Faringdon we have some wonderful people who work for the community and ask for no reward except for the occasional thank you, and the pleasure of knowing that they have done something to enhance somebody else's life.

2 of the Organisations that I am involved in are in need of extra Help.

FARINGDON COMMUNITY BUS- we need help in all sections of running this incredibly well used service. Administration, bookings, telephone answering, and DRIVING. 2 or 3 hours a month would make a huge difference to our workload, and new volunteer drivers doing one morning a month driving would help us keep the service that many people (5,534 passengers in 2004) use it as their way to be able keep going out, for shopping and our afternoon trips etc.

ACTION FOR CHILDREN IN CONFLICT. I am looking for volunteers to help in the Faringdon Shop and also at our Highworth Book Shop. I especially need help in both shops on Wednesdays and Thursdays, again a few hours a week would make a huge difference.

So can you or do you know anybody who can help please let me know on 01367 243743 ot the AfPic shop 01367 242013.

And to the gentleman who doesn't like christmas decorations in shops AfPic spent not one penny on decorations in our shop every single thing was donated and our window displays gave a lot pleasure to a lot of

people and the money we raised gave hope and a reason to live to many people not only in Great Britain and Northern Ireland but to many street children in Africa. Many thanks for reading this talking point and thanks to Gene for suggesting it.
Alison Moore

and more.....16/01/05

Nice little poem Harry, not exactly Pam Ayres, (now there is a poet,) but not bad none the less, a thought crossed my mind, (not a long journey you understand,) that concerning vandalism, in some areas of London they play Des O'Connor music in places where young scally's hang out, and because it is torment to their delicate ears, they move on.

Now, if we could temp Harry to record his musings, it could be played in the darkest parts of Faringdon to move the street urchins into the centre, whereupon they could be rounded up and shipped to say, Beachy Head, thus restoring Faringdon to the quiet peaceful town it always was, and enabling it to be twinned with Brigadoon.

On a serious note though, I parked my car in London Street Christmas eve, yes I was invited to, and some toerag kicked my headlight in at a cost of eighty pounds. Is London street now the crime area of Faringdon? wasn't you was it Hils?.

And as Harry has fired me up again about the new facelift of the market place, is anyone else annoyed about the lack of road width as you leave the square to go to say, Witney. As you approach the Church, you inevitably have to drive in the centre of the road because of parked cars and a stupid rounded path outside the old Faringdon hotel.

It's a great pity Faringdon has not got a "systems restore" on it, putting it back to how it was. And as to all the people that actually liked the improvements, it hasn't turned out to be the horse and carriage picture postcard town you hoped, has it?

(As with all my ramblings there is slight(!) sarcasm about this letter, so for all those that think that there is only room for serious issues on this site, tharrrruump!!!!!!)
Jim Horton

and.....more - 16/01/05

Last night (Saturday) my enjoyment of Casualty was rudely interrupted by noise directly outside my house on London Street. I got up to look and sure enough just opposite the house four youngsters - 15/16 year olds , two boys and two girls - were in what looked like somewhat drunken conversation.

Rather more disturbing was the fact that as they made their way down London Street towards the Market Place one of the boys appeared to be attempting to vandalise wing mirrors ! By the time I had got my shoes and coat on the group had disappeared down the road.

I decided to take a stroll down the street on the off chance that I might be able to get a better recognition of the kids. I didn't see them again but I did bump into a police patrol - en voiture. I told them my story and they gave me a number to contact - the one mentioned by Harry.

I have every intention of using it should the need arise again. So Harry I'm with you.

Whilst I'm on the subject of 'criminal behaviour' perhaps I could also ask others to report instances of people using mobile phones whilst driving. Yesterday morning I and my wife witnessed a local resident on her mobile make a sweeping u-turn at the junction by the Folly pub apparently unaware that a car was following close behind. An accident was narrowly avoided.

But guess what - as the car driver in question proceeded down London St. She was still in earnest conversation. I know who she is , where she lives , what car she drives etc. What would should I do ?
Peter Pettit

More on Vandalism - 15/01/05

Many years ago I was in a Boy Scout Parade watched by my mother. Afterwards she said how proud she was because, as she said "they were all out of step but you" It seems that from the comments I get as feedback I am still the only one in step.

The attached poem....if Hil and Gene print it, gives you my philosophy..and I make no apology for it.

Now to the real reason for this message: Peter Pettit suspects that I had my tongue firmly in my cheek when I

mentioned the endangered species "Bobbies on the Beat." Well of course I did but that shouldn't invalidate my message. In my opinion the yobs are taking over in Faringdon in the evenings simply because they are bored and nothing is done to stop them because most victims of trivial acts of vandalism don't think it is worth complaining about.

The police are overstretched and cannot be everywhere at once but they will concentrate their limited resources where they see they are most needed and the only way they can assess the need is if EVERYONE who feels they have a complaint, however minor, lets them know.

So Peter, if you haven't done already, telephone 08458 505 505 and report the problem. From my own experience I know that you will get a polite hearing and your complaint will be followed up.

And while I have my self-righteous hat on..Am I the only one in Faringdon who wonders why the traffic sign outside the Chemists can only be read by people in the bus shelter or why two parking slots are provided for taxis which are not a public service while the community bus which is has to pull in where it can.

Harry G Mitchell
[read Harry's poem](#)

Vandalism - 15/01/05

Somehow I suspect that Harry Mitchell has his tongue planted firmly in his cheeks. However , he makes a very valid point about observable police presence.

Would that they had been around in the early hours of Saturday morning when person or persons unknown decided they would rudely dismantle the wing mirrors of a number of cars - legally parked - on London St.
Peter Pettit

Planning - 15/01/05

I am glad the writer of 13th Jan agrees that the outline planning requirements fall woefully short of what is required in this instance, and that it precisely why

1 The planning department after discussion with residents, needs to set requirements for the developer with regard to dwelling design, size, colour and, very importantly, density – has anyone worked out the number of houses that could be built if the density was the same as the surrounding Orchard Hill Estate?.

2 The owner and developer need to play their part by taking on board the planners requirements and submitting absolute final plans down to the last detail.

3 Orchard Hill residents can then be expected to make considered judgements on facts rather than suppositions.

I am surprised at only one response to the points I raised 11th January – I am not into confrontation, merely hoping to find solutions, and if this is “assuming negotiation” then surely to get everyone to talk together would be a major step forward.

Having dealt with various aspects of the building and developing business for the last thirty years I am well versed in the vagaries of planning, and what can happen if local people can't agree and others make decisions for them.

Again, comments welcome
Sandra Wheeler

Bobbies on the Beat? - 14/01/05

On Thursday 13th January at midday I was driving down Park Road at my usual 44ft/second (I don't think the metric system will catch on) when I saw walking towards me two chaps in Fluorescent jackets and peaked caps.They could have been Prince Harry and his Aide looking for another Fancy Dress Party and they could have been traffic wardens confusing London Street (where there is always illegal parking) with London Road (where there isn't) but I am convinced they were Walking Policeman.

Now they may just have been going for a well deserved cup of coffee, they may just have been lost but whatever the reason it would be nice to think that in the coming summer we might see more of this endangered species.

It would be great to hear, once again, their distinctive calls of "Allo Allo Allo" as they tell the driver of a people carrier that her son's urgent need to change his video is not a very good reason for parking in a the disabled slot outside LloydsTSB.

Did anyone else see this vision of what used to be ?

Or was it just wishful thinking on my part ?

Harry G Mitchell

18 Coxwell Road Proposed Development - 12/1/05

My response to the perspective expressed in the note dated 11/1/05 below.

The writer makes absolutely no mention of the safety aspects of this proposal. An access road anywhere on the Orchard Hill Estate is dangerous. The resulting considerable increase in traffic movement would cause unacceptable danger to residents, and especially children who for decades have enjoyed the safety of playing on these roads.

The writer might have misinterpreted the opposition of residents but the one thing that has been staggeringly refreshing in my personal contact with over 100 residents is that not a single person has raised concerns over anything financial! They are, bar none, concerned about the adverse effects on their lives; safety, pollution, noise!

Regarding the writer's proposed solution she assumes a level of negotiation. Negotiation by definition is mutual agreement where ALL parties reach a win/win situation. Let's take the writer's classification of parties. Set aside the Planning Controllers who have nothing to gain or lose by doing their job. That effectively leaves two camps; Owner(s) and Developer on one side and residents on the other. The former has already proved to be vague with their development proposals. What they seek is outline permission. The writer might not be aware, but this plan can then be changed in its entirety once it has been agreed in principal! How fair is that? The residents (over 300 of them) lose out big time for the enormous gain of maybe 3 or 4 people! Call that negotiation?

One further "outside of the box" thought is this. Look at the wider issues at play here. If approval is given to knock down a perfectly functional 35 year old 4 bedroom house to access infill land it will set a precedent and thereby open the floodgates for this to happen anywhere in Faringdon and the surrounding area! The effect on the local population could devastating!

When one adopts a steadfast position it does not mean they HAVEN'T "looked outside the box" to get the facts and knowledge that led to that position! Sorry, writer I might be "off my trolley" but I'm definitely staying "inside my box"

David Reynolds

Development of Carters land, rear of Coxwell Road - 11/1/05

Further to previous proposals and objections - these are the salient points as I see them -

1. There are four camps to be satisfied the OWNER, the DEVELOPER, the PLANNING CONTROLLERS and the LOCAL RESIDENTS.
2. Give and take is the only way that this predicament can be solved so that everyone is moderately satisfied and no-one feels railroaded.
3. The Orchard Hill estate was built in the 1970's and 80's on three sides of Carters land.
4. Had their land been available at that time the development would have been planned to include it and there would be no problem now.

PROPOSED SOLUTION TO SATISFY EVERYONE - to design a fully integrated access and extension to/from the Orchard Hill estate and then build homes that are exactly the same as those they are integrating with, in design, size, colour and, very importantly, density.

The end result would be that the OWNER and the DEVELOPER may make a smaller profit but within a foreseeable timescale;

the PLANNING CONTROLLERS would need to use all their powers to ensure full integration to the existing development but would save taxpayers money by getting the matter settled;

and the LOCAL RESIDENTS would have all the facts and a complete 'known quantity' to deal with, accept and move on.

While the building is happening it will be disruptive to all in the area - I live on the Orchard Hill estate and can see Carters land from my house so I will be affected, although not as much as some.

Each of the four camps needs to "think outside the box" and be totally open and honest with their requirements and expectations in order to quickly move towards a solution.

Comments welcome.

Sandra Wheeler

Faringdon Arts Festival Fundraising Dinner/Dance-8/1/05

Friday 4th February

Sudbury House Hotel (Black Tie)

includes: Buffet Meal

Live Music from *Celebration*

Auction of various items:

Signed books from famous authors

Signed items from the casts of top TV shows (inc. Dead Ringers, Casualty, Cutting It and Emmerdale)

A day out behind the scenes of one of the UK's top publishers

A flight in a Tiger Moth

And various other items kindly donated by local and national businesses.

All profits donated to the Faringdon Arts Festival Trust to help support this year's event.

£40.00 per ticket (£35 per head for a table of 10).

Please call 01367 243663 for tickets or send your cheque to:Faringdon Arts Festival Trust, PO Box

2390,Faringdon, Oxfordshire, SN7 7ZN

David Reynolds, Festival Chairman

Christmas Cheer - 6/1/05

Amidst the negative comments regarding both the controversial building development at Swan Lane, and the standard of the Christmas lights in the town, I would just like to thank the builders at Swan Lane on my two year old daughter's behalf, for the Christmas lights on the crane!

She has loved looking out for the crane and it has made our journeys into, out of and around the town so much more fun!!!

Maria Timms

FIRE STATION RECEIVES REPLACEMENT APPLIANCES-5/1/05

Faringdon Fire Station has been issued with two replacement Fire Appliances.

It has always been the policy of Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service that brand new vehicles spend the first two years of their working life at a Whole time Fire Station,(a kind of running in period)

Then for about eight years they are stationed at a retained Fire Station like Faringdon, then for about two years they are used as reserve / spare appliances.

This gives them a total working life in Oxfordshire of about twelve years with the Fire service getting the best use of them over this period.

If you look at the registration numbers you will see they are consecutive(OV51 FB3 OV51 FB4) & if you look at the side of the vehicles you will see lights which are used at night to illuminate the working area around the vehicle.

How the Firefighters of thirty,forty or fifty years ago would have enjoyed this facility.

Bill Law

18 Coxwell Road – Update on Planning Proposal GFA/4905/5-X -5/1/05

The residents of the Orchard Hill Estate received a wonderful Christmas mail surprise in the form of the amended proposal to the development of 18 Coxwell Road.

The amendment was requested from the developer because they, apparently, forgot to mention in the original that they intend to bulldoze through the family house that is No. 31 Elm Road! (Yes, they forgot!

Incompetence?)

The amended plan for the developed site (available for inspection at the Town Council Offices) also shows

many mistakes and inconsistencies which both go against planning rules and, frankly, contradict what the developers themselves have previously stated!

This amended plan merely reinforces the reasons why this proposal should be rejected. The danger from increased traffic movement, poor parking facilities, and pollution leap out of this plan as will be obvious to anyone who views it. (except perhaps the developers themselves, it seems). All in all the application shows an astounding display of amateurism and it must be questioned whether the developer should be afforded the trust to be handed a chunk of Faringdon to play with!

The Town Council have displayed wonderful support against this proposal. Having rejected the previous version of this plan in December they unanimously rejected this amended proposal at the planning meeting last night (4th January). They too believe there are safety issues and that the plan is too vague on which to base objective planning decisions.

There is still time to send objections to the Vale of White Horse (closing date 10th January). There is already massive (and, I'm told, largely unprecedented) opposition to this plan but your voice still counts. If this development affects you in any way write to the Vale and let them know how you feel. You are also more than welcome to contact me on 01367 243663 (and this offer includes the developers and owners of any of the properties at the centre of the application!)

Happy New Year!
David Reynolds

[directory](#)

Faringdon - Best Market Town - 20/05/05

Well, I voted for us, anyway! here were my reasons It's community spirit, it's great people, it's new Arts Festival, it's old church, it's Fairtrade status (first in the South East) it's Folly tower - and it's 'Faringdon-Online' web site
Hilary Taylor

You can vote on http://www.countrylife.co.uk/webforms/favourite_market_town.php

Planning - 18 Coxwell Road - 18/5/05

I've heard that at the Planning Committee meeting all the Conservative councillors voted against giving planning permission, and all the Libdem councillors except one (who abstained) voted to approve the application. It seems likely that the one Libdem councillor who abstained was actually against giving permission, but chose not to vote 'against the party'
So they all vote on party lines - not, it seems, for the community.

If you add to this that Council committees are made up of councillors in the same proportions as the overall numbers in each party for that council area, the lead party will always have more representatives on a committee than the opposition.

OK so there are labour councillors too and perhaps independents, but the whole system seems to me to be rigged so that the lead party can control and dominate irrespective of local issues and local views

So much for democracy and local representation

I'm not sure if this approach to forming committees is in local government law, or whether all the partys just like it that way - for fairly obvious reasons.

Name supplied

Car Sharing - 15/5/05

I hope you've all noticed the Car Pool scheme we've put on the Home Page. You can advertise for a lift or to give a lift

Have a look at <http://www.faringdon.org/mscarpoolinfo.htm>

Do use it

Gene Webb, Hilary Taylor

Dr Who - 14/5/05

Congratulations to Paul Cornell of Faringdon for a great episode (no 8, called Father's Day) of Dr Who - it was believable(sort of), very funny with much more human interest than weird monsters.

They meddled with time and brought Rose's father back to life- it was 1987, she met him, it was emotional, the world had changed because of it- so he had to die again - but this time not alone

I hope you didn't miss it- but if you did you could look at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/doctorwho/video/index.shtm>

and also <http://www.bbc.co.uk/doctorwho/confidential/index.shtml> for Dr Who confidential - behind the scenes action and thoughts

Listen out for the Didcot line!!

Gene Webb

A new fan of Dr Who

Parking - 11/5/05

Just imagine how things would be if a parking warden patrolled the streets of Faringdon!

I expect he/she'd be lynched in hours :)

As much as I don't agree with police wasting their time on parking matters, I'd rather it was them than a warden anyway.

Name supplied

While We're Being Environmentally Aware.... - 11/5/05

What about a car-share scheme in Faringdon?

If we're all going to buy proper shopping bags instead of getting free plastic bags, lets extend the sentiment further....

I drive to Didcot and back every day, departing at around 6:45am and returning from Didcot around 7pm. There is an empty seat in my car. I would be happy to offer a lift to anyone email garthpool@yahoo.co.uk if they so need it and would urge other Faringdon residents traveling regularly doing the same.

Perhaps a page could be added to this excellent website where you can state your availability?

What do we think?

Mel Taylor

Ed: Sounds a good idea to me. Anyone else interested?

18 Coxwell Rd... Now David, don't be shy, tell us what your really think !- 11/5/05

I agree with everything David Reynolds says about the Coxwell Road proposal and how it has been dealt with by our District Council. If his criticisms seem harsh it should be pointed out that his statement is considered by many to be the diplomatic version of what so many of us are feeling.

Hilary and Gene would probably, quite correctly, censor what we really think.

So I will try to be equally as politically correct ..

Dundas Court (The former Health Centre) was completed more than a year ago and there are now signs of life ..two cars and a motorbike to be precise.

The Swan Lane Development has so far had no queues of potential buyers camping outside and there are 'For Sale' or 'To Let' signs all over Faringdon.

The inscription on the Statue of Liberty says.."Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses"

But I don't think it suggests sending them to Faringdon.

For a start there would be nowhere for them to park.

So, Question..Why does a Developer from somewhere near Milton Keynes want to build here in Fun-Filled-Faringdon ? Answer....Enormous profits for the Developer... and the Land Owner.

Question.. Why should the Vale Planning Department oppose this perfectly legal business deal ?

Answer.....The reason is given in the Vale's Council Vision first published in October 1995. One of its stated aims is: To improve the quality of life of all members of the community."

There are at least three hundred members of this community plus our own Town Council who do not believe that this development will improve the quality of their lives and the Vision makes no mention at all of Developers from Milton Keynes.

As I see it the eight councillors who supported this profit motivated scheme have let us, and themselves, down. Shame on you !

Harry G Mitchell (NIMBY)

18 Coxwell Road Proposal - 10/5/05

Once again the residents of Faringdon get kicked in the teeth by the powers that be in Abingdon.

I regret to inform that the Planning Committee at the Vale of White Horse last night voted in favour of the proposal to build 16 dwellings on the site accessed via Elm Road. Apparently the proposal fits current criteria

and the valid objections and concerns of 300 residents on the Orchard Hill Estate on road safety, noise and pollution, character and appearance and the dangerous precedent this proposal sets were disregarded.

Some Councillors did support our corner but the vote went to 8/7 in favour of the proposal with 1 abstention. Personally, I believe this decision is disgraceful as do the many residents of the Orchard Hill Estate who will be affected by it.

I am also disgusted at the process and treatment meted out to the public during these planning meetings.

Cllr Richard Farrell (Chair) opened the meeting by calling for more transparency and openness in the Planning Committee to gain the trust of the public. He then went on to interrupt me twice during my statement, on the second occasion to incorrectly tell me I had run out of my allotted time.

For your information at these Planning Meetings the public have only 3 minutes in total to speak so every second is crucial and believe me, when your 3 minutes are up you are simply cut off.

I sincerely hope that in the Vale's search for "public trust" more attention is given to listening to the words of the public speaker than is given to monitoring how long it takes to say those words.

I am also staggered that one of the Councillors abstained particularly as she was against the proposal and her vote would have altered the decision. What is the point of sitting on a Planning Committee if you are not prepared to make a decision?

Yes, I am annoyed. Not just because this particular proposal has been passed but also at the obvious contempt and disregard with which the public are treated by the Vale.

Beware, you could be next!

David Reynolds

david@reynolds46.fsnet.co.uk

...and even more! - 09/05/05

There are in fact, two separate problems, one being the lack of residential parking, and the other being indiscriminate illegal parking along the main shopping areas

There are many causes - One is the overall increased use of cars; with many town centre cottages occupied by relatively affluent couples/families with more than one car. Another reason (in the shopping area) is the loss of loading space behind the shops in London Street as these accesses have gradually all been granted planning permission for small developments. Many of the residential developments in the town centre have inadequate parking - and the older town centre cottages and houses often have no provision at all except 'on-street', having been built before motor transport was heard of. Most of the little parcels of land in the town centre hinterland have also gone to residential development. This seems to be a problem faced by very many towns with narrow streets and limited access.

It isn't the loss of parking spaces in the Market square which has *caused* these problems, though that has made the 'shopping' one slightly worse. Many people have simply become lazy about parking in the designated car parks; after all, no-one expects to go into Swindon and certainly not Oxford and park outside a town centre shop, but here, as has been pointed out, the authorities' attitude towards illegal parking is inconsistent and lax.

No-one is going to relinquish the convenience of parking right outside their chosen shop, or on the double yellow lines right outside their house, unless they are obliged to or suffer the consequences of their actions in the shape of a fine or two, but the police cannot be everywhere at once, and the traffic wardens seem to visit only sporadically.

Our planning authority mainly comprises people who don't live here, and they do not seem very aware of the day-to-day problems which we have.

As for the lack of residents' parking; until car parking land has higher priority and becomes as valuable as residential development land there will be little incentive for improvement; after all, if we all owned bits of land and had the choice between selling it for development or at considerably less profit, for a car park, which would we choose, I wonder....?

Hilary Taylor

....and more - 09/05/05

I just hope that the people who are complaining about the parking problems the town centre is now facing are not the same ones who applauded the "improvements" to the market place, anyone with an ounce of sense

knew that removing parking spaces in the town centre would cause this problem, unfortunately, the sensible people of this town never go to the meetings, as it is, so it always will be.
name supplied

More illegal parking - 8/5/05

I too live in a road where illegal parking is rife.
Most days there is at least one car parked on the double yellow lines all day, often less than three feet from my front door.
No action ever seems to be taken.

Stage Coach buses used to come down London Street, being much more convenient for those who live at the east side of the town, but now they have stopped using this route as the illegally parked cars made their passage too difficult, and also we have lost the bus service to Bath for the same reason.
Name supplied

Illegal Parking - 8/5/05

The police are NOT taking a tough line re parking in Faringdon. They are taking an arbitrary and inconsistent line.

When traffic is heavy and illegally parked vehicles are causing an obstruction you cannot get anyone to take notice for love nor money. We have had vehicles parked illegally in our road at rush hour times when the bus and other large vehicles can't get through.
Call the police! Haha. Twenty minutes hanging on the line. Bus outside can't move. Nobody cares.

Three o'clock in the morning, no obstruction, no problem, every one one inch over a double line gets ticketed. There is one young lady who parks illegally all day, every day. She has received two tickets in six months. she obviously feels it's worth it as it hasn't stopped her.
This might seem like a joke rant, but to be honest if an ambulance or fire engine needed to get through in these circumstances it is probable that the legally parked vehicles would be shunted as they are the easiest.

Personal opinion is that just ONE week of ticketing every illegal parker every day followed up by the same the following month would mainly resolve the issue.
Name Supplied

Illegal Parking - 05/05/05

The law may well be an ass, and you may well feel that you have unfavourably treated, however it is a positive move that the police authority are taking a tough line on illegal parking in Faringdon. Nobody wants to live in a cowboy town!!!!
Name supplied

Skate Park in Faringdon - 28/4/05

Dear interested parties
We are a small group of mothers who would like to see a skate park in Faringdon.

On Monday we are going to walk in support of a skate park in the MADD parade
If you or your children would like to join us please meet at 12.45pm in the Junior School playground with a skateboard.
Look forward to seeing you
Best wishes
Mandy James.

Plastax survey - Multiple votes per household - 28/4/05

From the Faringdon PLASTAX Survey results so far (have you taken the survey yet? See Homepage of this site www.faringdon.org - top centre) it's becoming clear that most of us WOULD like to be better ethical consumers - and we don't mind a bit of help by being charged for our laziness should we forget to bring our

long-life bags when we go shopping!

That's great. Keep voting!

However - in order to ensure that the results are representative and can't easily be cooked, the survey only allows one vote per computer. Should there be more members of the same household who wish to register their vote, then they will need to do so using different computers.

A survey that's more rigorous than postal voting in the general election therefore...

Sjoerd

BBC RaW Stories - 27/4/05

RaW stories is a BBC Project ahead of the BBC's big literacy programme October 2005 - 2008 and it is very much to reach out to people who may not think the BBC is relevant to them, who feel marginalised, and their experiences undervalued.

We are proposing running workshops between now and mid July to begin to establish contacts which the BBC can work with when the big project kicks off and to begin raising awareness around literacy and the importance of everybody's stories.

We don't have to call what we do literacy. Really these are fun workshops that will help to raise the confidence of participants and help them to tell their stories.

We will be working on some basic skills to help tell their side of a story, validate their experiences etc.

These are one off workshops after which some participants will be offered the opportunity to work more with the BBC to turn their stories into broadcast material, including learning to edit if they wish etc.

I don't know if this would be of interest to anyone you know in Faringdon in anyway, or if you can put us in touch with other groups for whom something like this might be more appropriate.

It would be great if we could find a way of working alongside you to offer these workshops if you feel this is appropriate. We aim to work within existing frameworks so that we don't just jet in and then out again and there isn't any follow up, or contact afterwards.

We hope to have 8-12 people per group (25+ years, although this is fairly flexible), and would be happy to offer to run workshops to meet demand. We can put posters and advertising in the post if that helps. Do let me know if I can give you any more information. I look forward to hearing from you

Anna Fowler 01865 242974

anna.fowler@homecall.co.uk

[More information](#)

Plastic Bags - 27/4/05

We always need plastic bags for recycling in the Charity Shop AfPiC. Although we are more than delighted when customers don't wish to use one.

I think the fairtrade bag is wonderful and we have sold loads. And I love mine. But won't a bag free town be great!!!!!!!

Alison Moore

Litter walk - 23/4/05

I don't know if you will be coming out as far as Folly View Road but if you want to see a really dirty path look no further than the path running between FVR and Leamington Drive

It is always in a terrible mess. I asked the council repeatedly if a bin could be placed on the path as there is currently no bin from Costcutters all the way up to the school, so the kids get there snack and then dump the litter on route to school.

The man at the council was of the opinion that the kids wouldn't use it anyway !

He got so fed up with me calling he told me he would not return anymore of my calls !!

Lucky for him he doesn't live by it !!

Ruth Mitchell

ED: I suggest you contact one of our local VWHDC councillors and/or get friends and family to inundate the Council on waste.team@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

To report other street problems see www.faringdon.org/tareportproblems.htm

My cat - 23/4/05

Just a little up date on my poorly cat who was shot on March 29th, to any interested people out there. She has been very poorly, lots a sickness and diarrhoea. She now has an infection in the leg and is back on antibiotics after another trip to see the specialist vet in Birmingham on Tuesday 19th April. The vets bill is now near to £2300.00 which although we are insured have yet to see any of back yet.

The police have taken a statement and The folly paper have visited us and we will be in next issue. SHAME on who ever did this, the stress and anxiety to me and my family as been awful and we have a long way to go yet.

Ruth Mitchell

Tourist Information centre and Pump House - 21/4/05

I braved a Faringdon Town Council Meering last week.- here are some of the items discussed

Tourist Information Centre

FTC have had discussions with VWHDC and Tourism SE with a view to taking over the running of the TI Centre.

It would cost £15k (net) in the first year. It was suggested the money would be found as follows:

£4k from VWHDC (TUPE)

£4k JEFF

£2k from Corn Exchange Bar franchise surplus

£4.5k Willes Close skate park fund(currently £15.3k)

£0.5 Didn't note this down

A working party has been set up to consider this further, including the location - either the Pump House, or the Old Town Hall. and where the running costs for following years will come from

Pump House

Cncllr John Gillman put forward a paper indicating the options for the Pump House. This was not discussed. The current plan, however, continues - ie to open all floors of the old building and mothball the Community Room(former bar) and the theatre.

There was no discussion of the spend do far, or what monies remain from the £150k loan and the capital sums raised through the Council Tax. It does appear though that work to cost about £60k is under discussion

John Gillmans paper showed that the direct running costs of the Pump House are estimated at £22.8k per annum (inc £9k for a part time caretaker), with income estimated at £4.5k in year 1. (the costs exclude the cost of the loan £12k pa, share of overheads, or if my suspicions are correct, the rest of the salary for the caretaker)

There is disabled access to the ground floor only. The meeting stated that there is no necessity to have disabled access to or a fire escape from upper floors, though I gather that maybe FTC will install a stair lift for disabled access to the first floor.

I know someone who has been into the Pump House - apparently it is looking really good
Gene Webb

Poor Traffic Signage in Faringdon Town Centre - 21/4/05

Working in the town centre I am becoming increasingly concerned about the amount of traffic using the 'Buses Only' lane in the Market Place (immediately outside Sadlers and the Crown Hotel).

On numerous occasions I witness vehicles of all descriptions using this as a short cut into Church Street with little or no regard for pedestrians or buses. I have more than once nearly been struck as a pedestrian crossing this road.

I do genuinely believe that visitors to the Town get confused in Cornmarket and bear left into this lane without noticing the 'Buses Only' sign. However it is also obvious that a number of drivers who regularly travel through the town centre are deliberately using this 'short cut'.

The purpose of this message is two fold.

Firstly pedestrians beware of the danger. I am so concerned about the risks that I now challenge drivers given

the opportunity and point out that the lane is not for their use.

Secondly if anyone in authority reads this (I have written to the Town Council) please can you do something about it - more prominent signage may be necessary and spot Police checks at busy times of the day would soon deter the guilty offenders

Name Supplied

Car Parking - 29/4/05

Memo to local government officials: how to kill off a small market town in Oxfordshire:

- 1) Increase the rates for parking in the town's public car parks for a second time in the year;
- 2) Ask your community police to apply fixed penalty notices to ALL cars parked on single yellow lines, even when these yellow lines seem to be there for no reason, and the cars are not causing any congestion or obstruction;
- 3) Sit back, relax, and watch everybody go to supermarkets or neighbouring towns (e.g. Wantage, Burford) with free parking!

How are those of us who live and maintain the older houses in the heart of town, and who are reliant on the town centre street- and car-parking to park our cars while we WALK to the LOCAL shops and services, supposed to carry on living here?

Our car was ticketed on Monday 18 April on the single yellow line outside no.s 9-13 Gloucester street (a line that even the Highways Agency admit is completely spurious) while we were walking to the medical practice on Volunteer Way. This seemed like the right thing to do, as Government and bodies such as Transport 2000 suggest that cars should not be used for journeys of less than 2 miles. And yet, ironically, if we had taken the car, we would have missed the traffic police and not got the ticket!

Mark Allen

Dundas Court, Faringdon - 18/4/05

As I am sure you know this is the old health centre which has been turned into a shared ownership housing scheme to help local youngsters and key workers get onto the property ladder. One or two of the properties have recently become available and we have been asked to help the housing association find suitable people who may qualify.

If anyone thinks that they fit the bill please contact me. Terry Miles Camerons The Studio, 90 Walm Lane, London, NW2 4QY. Tel: 0208 459 0091 Fax: 0208 451 3337 Email: trm@cameronslondon.com

Misquote from Animal Farm.. "Wounding cat is BAD. Killing fox is Good" - 15/4/05

I'm not very fond of cats....They frighten my goldfish, they kill birds in my garden leaving pathetic piles of feathers and they think my nicely raked soil is preferable to their litter boxes.

BUT I can understand that for many people a cat is a valued part of the family and I can appreciate the misery which the recent shooting has brought to its owners. They, particularly the children, have my sympathy.

As to the shooter..Scum ? Mindless idiot? or just a bored teenager ? Who knows ? And if he, or she, is ever traced what will happen to them ? Will they be excused because they come from a broken home, had a deprived childhood or just didn't think they would hit anything ?

Final thought.. I wonder, how do those who believe it is OK to have foxes torn apart by dogs react to this more obvious but less trendy cruelty ?

Name supplied

Skateboarding - 15/04/05

I am concerned to hear that some of the funding previously earmarked for a skate boarding facility in Faringdon, has been allocated to other local projects including keeping the Tourist Office open.

I would be grateful if someone who knows the background to this could post an update on the situation. Believe it or not, there are many young people who are still hopeful that a site will eventually be identified, and indeed

many local people who are frustrated by the numbers of youngsters on the streets of Faringdon with no where to go. A first step to breathing new life into this project will be to establish exactly what funding exists and why, if the fund has been raided, what plans there are to repay.

I would also urge the council to seriously consider, if it doesn't already have this mechanism in place, a means of giving the youth of Faringdon a voice, in line with broad social and educational policy.

Alice Randall

More 18 Coxwell Rd. - 14/04/05

Harry Mitchell has summarised the history pretty well. This is the sixth planning application relating to this land (and should not be confused with version No. 5, which is also still grinding on).

Many readers may recall that last summer with your support we defeated application number 4. That was to create a new junction on Coxwell and a new access road to be squeezed through the gap between our house, 16 Coxwell Road, and 20 Coxwell Road. This new road would run the entire length of our house and garden. We felt it would have a very damaging impact on our property and also for that matter on number 20, which would lose most of its gardens.

We were immensely grateful for the support we received last year and impressed by the thoroughness with which the planning committee considered the application. To our huge relief they eventually voted for rejection. This latest application (version 6) is a repeat of last year's application (version 4) with some minor technical alterations. It is exactly the same in principle. It will have exactly the same effect on our house and garden and it will have the same implications for traffic and pedestrians on Coxwell Road.

There is an undeniable tendency to get worn down by this process of repeated planning applications. But if you still think this proposal is a bad idea, please do send a letter to Mr Deans at VWHDC Planning Department, PO Box 127 Abbey House, Abingdon OX14 3JN. Please quote reference number GFA/4905/6-X. There is still a little time for letters of objection to be taken into account and as we know from past experience (including the battle with Thames Water) these things do really matter and People Power really can work.

David Janata & Fiona Duffen

18 Coxwell Road development- with apologies - 10/4/05

Yes, I know it's boring reading yet another article about the proposed development. I find it boring writing about it so I'll keep this update as brief as possible:

The object of the exercise is to maximise the profit from selling a large, now superfluous family home by replacing the house, tennis court and swimming pool with a small estate.

This is the saga so far:

Proposals 1, 2 and 3 have been considered by the District Planners and rejected. They are history
Proposal 4 was rejected by the VWHDC and an attempt to over-rule their decision is going to appeal in Bristol
in October
Proposal 5 was rejected by the VWHDC mainly because the access route was completely unacceptable

Proposal 5 (amended) is the same as Proposal 5 but with no mention of the offending access route.

The suggestion that Posh and Bex are showing an interest and might overcome the access problem by replacing the tennis court with a Helipad is ridiculous....or is it ?

Proposal 6 is exactly the same as proposal 4 but involves an ACOUSTIC BARRIER which, I understand, will be as much use as a chocolate fireguard. This has been rejected by the Town Council and is now waiting for yet another discussion by our very patient and long suffering District Council.

Harry G Mitchell

Poor cat - 9/4/05

I sincerely hope you find the scum who shot your cat.

Makes me sick.

Another aspect of life here is tainted...

Name supplied

Race for life - 7/4/05

I am a female, 30 something year old nurse, just moved to Faringdon, would like to start wheezing/running in order to take part in the Race for Life - any other women interested?

Please email me!

aliavery@msn.com

My cat has been shot - 6/4/05

I wanted to make the people of Faringdon Aware of an incident that took place on Tuesday 29th March 2005. My young two year old Black/white female cat was shot by some mindless idiot. This happened we think around 7.00 in the morning. She returned home to our house on Folly View Road at around 7.15 extremely distressed and obviously badly hurt.

A trip to the vet revealed by xray that she had not as we first thought been hit by a car but shot in the top of the leg with an air rifle. Since then she has needed to see an orthopedic specialist near Birmingham to under go a long operation in order to save the leg. She has since returned home but is far from better. The leg now has external fixates to hold the pins and rods in place and now it's a case of keeping an eye out for infection and keeping her confined to a small cage so she has no movement for sixteen weeks and she will need to return to Birmingham to have further operations and reviews and of course see the local vet as well.

Luckily we are insured as already the vet bill is near to £2000. We as a family have been extremely shocked and upset, how do I explain to my two young sons why someone did this? It was bad enough then we thought she had been hit by a car but to know someone out there took pleasure in doing this to our treasured family pet is defies belief. The lack of respect to another living creature and the family behind that animal is absolutely despicable.

I understand that not everyone likes cats but what would make this behavior acceptable, there are other way of deterring a cat and if it was just for 'sport' this person is the lowest of the low.

The police were very interested in finding who did this, so if anyone out there knows anything ,no matter how small. All little bits of information add up to a bigger picture

PLEASE contact the police on 01235 776000 Crime number MC 9248211/05 . What could this person shoot next ?

I enclosed my e-mail if anyone needs to contact me direct : ruth.mitchell@firenet.uk.net

Cash available for clubs and groups - 6/4/05

Could your group, club or pre school make use of a cash injection?

The Oxfordshire Community Foundation has £000s to spend in the **Faringdon area**.

If you are involved with community groups please come along to our lunch at:

The Corn Exchange in Faringdon from 12.30-2 on 12th April for further details and a sandwich.

Or call 01865 798666 or view our website www.oxfordshire.org

Plastic or paper bags - 5/4/05

I was very impressed by Sjoerd Vogt's information about the adverse environmental effects of plastic bags and felt quite guilty about my light hearted suggestion that we should use paper bags.

I admired his knowledge of the subject which I assumed was the result of intense research and felt I owed it to him to investigate further. (Well, the alternative was to watch TV so it was really no contest.)

It took only a few minutes to find that his article was a straight 'copy and paste' job from a site called 'reusablebags.com' This site is in the business of selling reusable bags like the ones favoured by Mr Vogt and while I am sure the facts they give are probably correct, and I have no objection to a little plagiarism, they can hardly claim to be unbiased.

So at the moment I will continue to use plastic bags despite the fact that I now feel that maybe I shouldn't.. Meanwhile I am looking for a site called 'Brownpaperbagsareus.com' to get another slant on the argument.

Harry Mitchell

Dr Who - 1/4/05

Local writer Paul Cornell has written episode eight of the new series of Doctor Who, probably to be broadcast on May 14th. Paul has also written several episodes of Casualty, and is the author of two novels, Something More and British Summertime.
Gene Webb

Pump Rooms - 24/3/05

It is a pity that your report was not factual but influenced by your own prejudices. It is a fact that the Pump Rooms are likely to be a cost to the Town whether we keep them for public use or try to return them to the landlord for his own purposes. The reasons are clear:

- 1) The landlord (understandably) wants his premises brought up to a standard that is acceptable to his advisors. This is a condition of the lease. The cost of doing so is the costs currently being incurred.
- 2) The landlord does not want the premises back. He has made it absolutely clear that his main concerns are that the building should be brought into good order and maintained - as the lease requires - for the benefit of the people of Faringdon.
- 3) The facility that is about to be provided for the people of our Town will be the envy of Towns of similar size throughout the country. We will have a magnificent "village hall". I think it should be remembered that such community facilities are always a cost to the community. If you look at the costs of the Memorial Hall at Shrivenham or the Village Hall at Steventon you will find that the Pump Rooms at Faringdon are a bargain.

The benefits that our Town will gain from this facility are worth the relatively small costs that will be met by the Town in the future.

On the matter of the vote at the Town meeting - very surprisingly considering the apparent make up of the meeting - the motion to return the Pump Rooms to the landlord was lost. The vote was not as even as Gene has indicated. At least three of the "return" voters were from outside of the Town and in theory not allowed to vote - ie they do not pay the Faringdon precept. It was a clear and interesting defeat for the hand it back lobby. They seem to have a problem with democracy.

A cash flow and business plan is being prepared. It will be presented to the next FTC meeting. If and when this plan is agreed, we should all get behind this excellent facility and help to make it work.

I think we should remember that the only people in the Vale that are interested in the Town, its development and its future, are the people of our Town. It was demonstrated on Wednesday that the Vale have no interest in our Town or our views. So let's get together and make this potentially excellent facility work for all of our community without the backbiting and feuding that has been going on

Alan Hickmore

GW: Let's hope that the business plan, long overdue, will provide enough information for councillors and residents to see clearly the plans for use and the cost implications are- only then will it be possible to make a non prejudicial informed decision - whether to keep it or hand it back

PAPER OR PLASTIC? - 24/3/05

I'm grateful to Harry Mitchell for introducing the paper/plastic question into the "Bags for Life" debate.

So - Paper Bags Are Better Than Plastic, Right?

The answer to the "paper or plastic?" dilemma is: Neither. They're roughly equal in pros and cons. While convenient addictions, they both gobble up natural resources and cause significant pollution.

Issue 1: Energy and natural resources

It takes more than four times as much energy to manufacture a paper bag as it does to manufacture a plastic bag.

ENERGY TO PRODUCE BAG ORIGINALLY(BTUs)

Safeway Plastic Bags: 594 BTUs

Safeway Paper Bags: 2511 BTUs (Source: 1989 Plastic Recycling Directory, Society of Plastics Industry.)

Of course, most paper comes from tree pulp, so the impact of paper bag production on forests is enormous. In 1999, 14 million trees were cut to produce the 10 billion paper grocery bags used by Americans that year alone.

Paper bag production delivers a global warming double-whammy – forests (major absorbers of greenhouse gases) have to be cut down, and then the subsequent manufacturing of bags produces greenhouse gases.

Issue 2: Pollution

The majority of paper is made by heating wood chips under pressure at high temperatures in a chemical solution. As evidenced by the unmistakable stench commonly associated with paper mills, the use of these toxic chemicals contributes to both air pollution, such as acid rain, and water pollution. Millions of gallons of these chemicals pour into our waterways each year; the toxicity of the chemicals is long-term and settles into the sediments, working its way through the food chain. Further toxicity is generated as both plastic and paper bags degrade.

POLLUTANTS PAPER V.S. PLASTIC

Paper sacks generate 70% more air pollutants and 50 times more water pollutants than plastic bags.

Source: "Comparison of the Effects on the Environment of Polyethylene and Paper Carrier Bags", Federal Office of the Environment, August 1988

Issue 3: Recycling

It takes 91% less energy to recycle a pound of plastic than it takes to recycle a pound of paper.

But recycling rates of either type of disposable bag are extremely low, with only 10 to 15% of paper bags and 1 to 3% of plastic bags being recycled, according to the Wall Street Journal. ENERGY TO RECYCLE PACKAGE ONCE (BTUs) Safeway Plastic Bags: 17 BTUs Safeway Paper Bags: 1444 BTUs Source: 1989 Plastic Recycling Directory, Society of Plastics Industry. Although paper bags have a higher recycling rate than plastic, each new paper grocery bag you use is made from mostly virgin pulp for better strength and elasticity.

Issue 4: Degradability

Current research demonstrates that paper in today's landfills does not degrade or break down at a substantially faster rate than plastic does. In fact, nothing completely degrades in modern landfills because of the lack of water, light, oxygen, and other important elements that are necessary for the degradation process to be completed.

At the end of the day using **reusable bags** are the only real answer...

Sjoerd Vogt

Pump House - 20/3/05

Following the 2 FTC councillors letters last month- each giving different points of view and both being vague about costs, I was pleased to see a Pump House working party meeting advertised, that residents could go to 'and participate'

At last, I thought, there is some attempt at getting the views of the people. It didn't really work out that way- we could speak when we were invited to, but not really influence the course of the meeting.

So I just thought I'd let people know what I could about what is going on!

Main points

They agreed to discard a number of options, including returning the building to the landlord on the basis that FTC have been advised that it could cost £10k pa for the remainder of the lease (est 32years) to cover repairs. Who advised this was not mentioned, but I doubt it was through discussion and negotiation with the landlord. There seems to be no intention to pursue this. Interesting too that the repairs figure to be included in FTCs projected running costs is £2k pa. Quite a difference.

Another discarded option was to repair the building and then mothball it - this clearly would cost money - £4600 per annum was estimated, but this excludes insurance - necessary but costly and difficult to get for any empty building.

It was agreed to mothball the theatre and community room at the rear until an investigation into repair or demolition costs and potential uses has been carried out. The general view of the councillors was that it seems a shame to knock down a useful building- but this is with little good information about repair costs or uses.

Ideas for the use of the Pump House were discussed- this covered meeting rooms, space for youth, and office space for community organisations. There was some discussion about potential income - but this was very much finger in the air as the charges for the rooms haven't yet been decided.

Direct costs of running the building are being worked on.(insurance, cleaning, heating, repairs etc) This will include 50% (ie£9k) of a new post - a facilities manager, but not the cost of the loan that has already been taken out, or other costs(eg additional salary, fees, recruitment costs) that might arise through keeping the building running. It was indicated that someone always needs to be in charge of the building when it is open- and this will be day time, evening, weekdays and week end. When it was pointed out that 50% of a full time job can't possibly cover this expanse of time, we were told that existing council members of staff will be available also. This surely cannot be without extending their working hours? Perhaps the councillors are going to be rostered volunteers - this was not mentioned though.

There is to be a Business plan produced in time for the April Full council meeting, when the project will be discussed. This hopefully will show the various options (whether rejected already or not), costed in detail for the medium term and in outline until the end of the lease and I hope a breakdown of what has been spent to date. It really bothers me that options have been rejected when it is clear that the full cost position and what the building could be used for has still not been investigated thoroughly.

One councillor (who I think was once involved with the community association), mentioned that, in its heyday, the Community Association generated £38k pa from letting of rooms, but this included the theatre and community room at the rear. If bar takings were included, income was up to £98k. I wonder where all the money went!!

FTC will say that the town has rejected the option of handing the building back to Lord Faringdon. It may be appropriate to remind them that at the town meeting in January the vote was 16:16 with a 'keep it' casting vote by the Mayor.

Hardly overwhelming support!!
Gene Webb

GFA/4905/6-X - 18 Coxwell Road Development - 18/3/05

I suppose there are still a few people who don't know what this project is all about (lucky them) and I am well aware that many regular viewers of this site (e.g Jim H) will skip this item thinking that it has been mistakenly resurrected from the archives.

It seems to be exactly the same as GFA/4905/4-X which was rejected by the Town Council and the VWHDC and which is now in the queue for an appeal to be heard in October. In fact IT IS VIRTUALLY THE SAME.

So what is the point of resubmitting it and why now ? The FTC and VWHDC are obliged to discuss all applications but I suspect that the objections raised when it was described as GFA/4905/4-X may not be considered. It is therefore necessary for all the objections to be resubmitted..a tedious, time consuming nuisance ! But..Failure to express opposition may be taken as approval.

And why now ? There are three possible reasons..

Firstly: The Faringdon Folly has opposed this project for the last two years and, no doubt, would do so again. Unfortunately the copy deadline for the next issue was 16th March 2005 and the date of the letter announcing the latest proposal was...you've guessed it ..16th March 2005.

Secondly: Easter is an important festival for Christians and Chocoholics and the machinations of Developers are easily overlooked at this time

Thirdly. We are all beset by so many more important problems: Do I send Chas and Cam a wedding present ? Do I trust Tony Blair ? Do I want to walk through Faringdon with a jute shopping bag ? If I drive into the Town Centre will I be able to park ? Do I add my real name to this article ?

But seriously Folks....People Power is a reality in Faringdon as proved by the number of Sewage Lorries we won't be having polluting our town. Most of our councillors will oppose this scheme yet again but they need to be reassured that they are reflecting the views of the majority. So please do write to the FTC and VWHDC **before 6th April 2005** confirming your continuing opposition..

There is no guarantee that all your letters will be read but they will certainly be counted and you will get a nice letter in reply.

I have a drawer full.
Harry G Mitchell

Old Bags 18/03/05

What on earth is wrong with an 'ordinary' shopping bag?? (I've had mine for years) You do need, of course, something in which to put those annoying items sold loose so that you can actually buy the amount you need (potatoes, apples, etc) but these could be biodegradable paper. Trouble is - what ever would I scoop up my dog's doings into.....somehow paper bags dont work.....(sigh)
.....There's always *something*, isnt there?
Old bag with an old bag.

Paper bags, anyone? 18/03/05

For the past few days the lead article on this website has been a justified attack on the plastic bags which have become an important part of our lives. Sjoerd Vogt's suggestion that we should all purchase a long life shopping bag is commendable and I can picture our Town Centre thronged with happy environmentally aware shoppers with a mobile phone in their left hands and a pretty shopping bag in the other. Unfortunately this image would not appeal to everyone and it doesn't go with a wrong way round base-ball cap. There is an alternative which the Americans have been using for decades. The brown paper bag...this would be free at the point of sale (a bit like the NHS service ?) and it is fully bio-degradable. It can be recycled, used to line bins and waste baskets, or simply thrown into landfill sites. It has only one drawback. The supermarkets would have to pay for them. But, considering the advantages, I think most of us could live with that !
HGM

Bag for life - 15/3/05

You can buy, for £2, a bag from the Mustard Seed to use instead of plastic bags from Budgens(or any other shop that provides them)
The ubiquitous plastic bag, handed out in its bilious billions by our helpful shops, choking our environment and strangling our wildlife. 98% of seabirds off our coasts are now found to have ingested plastic of some sort, and many die as a result.

If shops stop giving away free plastic bags, and we stop expecting them, then the problem disappears. Instantly. Ireland introduced an environmental levy on plastic bags - or "plastax" as it is affectionately called - early in 2002, and within just three months the number of plastic bags handed out had dropped by 95%. The plastax has been hailed as an extraordinary success by retailers and consumers alike, and the money raised through the levy goes entirely on environmental projects - so the benefits of plastax are magnified.

Giving away free plastic bags is like leaving all of Faringdon's hot water taps running. It's energy and money down the drain. It's mad, bad, sad, and so unnecessary. This kind of wastefulness is now unthinkable in most of Northern Europe, and the UK needs to catch up.

if you don't already own a trusty long-life shopping bag, then do buy an eco-friendly ethically produced super-strong Jute bag that even carries the Faringdon Fairtrade Town logo. There is strong synergy between the Fairtrade message and the bag-for-life.
Sjoerd Vogt

Faringdon Fossickers - 15/3/05

You may find the following events of interest.

- 1) There will be a geological field trip in and around Faringdon on Sunday 20th March. This is being run by the Oxford Open University Geology Club but since I am one of the joint leaders the Faringdon Fossickers are all invited. We start at 10 am outside the Old Town Hall in the centre of the town and will finish about 12.30 pm. You will need car transport but please share vehicles if you can.
 - 2) Open Evening: Oxfordshire Geology Trust formerly RIGS) are holding an open evening on Tuesday 22nd March, 7pm at the Vale and Downland Museum in Wantage. The open evening will include a short presentation about what we do, and why Oxfordshire's geology is so interesting. There is the chance to come and get your rocks and fossils identified, find out about the geology of your local area, and to have a look at our collection of Oxfordshire rocks, fossils and dinosaur bones! There will also be geological activities for the children, so this will be an enjoyable night out for all the family. If you would like to come, or would like further details, then please contact:
Oxfordshire Geology Trust on 01367 243 260, or e-mail contact@oxfordshiregt.org.
Norman Snelling
PS I hope I shall soon be writing soon with encouraging news regarding the Ferndale Rd. fossil site
-

Faringdon Artistic Skaters - 14/3/05

Hi All Arrived back safe and sound from Skating British Novice Championships.

Great results!!

Boys Figures1st Ben Trimbell

Boys Freeskating..... 1st Ben Trimbell

Boys overall Champion.....Ben TrimbellThis was Ben's First competition

Girls 45 competitors. We had 8 girls competing

Girls Figures places 4th/5th/6th /7th/9th/10th/11th/12/

Girls Short program 2nd/3rd/4th 7th/8th/9th/10th/11th

Girls Long program 2nd 3rd 4th 5th 7th 9th 12th 13th

All marks are added to for overall places

Girls final positions 4th/5th/6th/7th/8th/10/11th/12th

You can see that Faringdon in their first competition at this level did themselves proud. Just out of the medals in the girls but marks were very close.

Faringdon is now well and truly on the map.

We are taking 17 children to Soham on the 24th April many again competing for the first time.

Thankyou all those that helped with sponsorship without this we would not have had those little extra's

Thankyou.

Dee and Steve England

Performing Arts - 14/3/05

We now have a Performing Arts Club for young people between the ages of 8 - 12 in the town (so a theatre to perform in would be splendid)

The club is every Monday in Faringdon Junior School from 5- 6.30 and includes Drama and dance sessions.

After Easter we hope to extend this to an acrobatics and a singing session! Please could you advertise on your web site.

Carolyn Murphy

01235 225787 cmm1046@kingalfreds.oxon.sch.uk

Post Office Closure - 12/3/05

The removal of the Post Office to Dillons was done very quickly and deliberately over a holiday period not giving anyone any time to effectively object.

Has anyone else noticed that anyone new to the town may have difficulty finding Dillons stated on the Post Office door as it is now Martins.

The new Post Office sign is not all that visible and is mostly green rather than the more identifiable red.

Or am I just being a grumpy old woman.

Jane Boulton

Ed: Join the club!!

Unhappy about withdrawal of Bus Tokens and TIC Closure? - 11/3/05

Are you unhappy about... Withdrawal of Bus Tokens and Closure of Tourist Information Centre

There will be a PUBLIC DEMONSTRATION to coincide with the Vale of White Horse District Council meeting which will be taking place in the **Corn Exchange Meeting at 5.15pm at the Old Town Hall Wednesday, 23rd March 2005**

Please come along and show your opposition to the cuts.

Matthew Barber

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF TIME TO 5.15pm

Signs of Life at the Old Health Centre - 11/3/05

I'm sure that someone knows what the future holds for the Old Health Centre buildings but it would be nice if the rest of us were let into the secret.

As I drove past on Thursday I saw some boys skate-boarding in its car park despite the fact that the barrier was still in place. I had a short but friendly conversation with them during which I was told that they did not live there they just thought it seemed like a good place to play.

I couldn't fault their logic. I understand that, despite recent changes to the laws on Squatters Rights, if they keep using it for about 12 years it might become theirs.
HGM

Vale Tridents Triathlon Club - 5/3/05

On Saturday 25th February the first ever Vale Tridents Triathlon Club was launched at Faringdon Leisure Centre.

The club is led by fully qualified coaches and is the sister club of the biggest Junior Triathlon club in the country - Swindon Tridents.

We are grateful to Soll Leisure for allowing us to use their facilities and are very lucky to have a full sized sports hall and 25m pool. There are now approximately 40 members of both boys and girls between the ages of 7-16 from beginners to some experienced triathletes!

People have been attracted to the club from a huge variety of nearby towns and villages and that is thanks to the Secondary School Sport Coordinators and the Primary School PE Coordinators In Wantage and Faringdon who are encouraging more young people to lead active lifestyles both in and out of school.

The club is being sponsored this month by the King Alfred's School Sport Coordinator Programme and we are looking for some new sponsors to enable us to keep the club going now after Easter (if you or your company are interested please do contact me).

Triathlon involves swimming, cycling and running and is excellent for all round fitness.

Some members of the club are looking forward to entering the Wantage Aquathlon in May, the Swindon Triathlon in June and possibly a Faringdon Triathlon in September.

If you would like to join the club please contact me for more information - the first session is free!

Carolyn Murphy

Partnership Development Manager

King Alfred's Community and Sports College

01235 225787 cmm1046@kingalfreds.oxon.sch.uk

60th Anniversary VE day celebrations in Le Mele - 4/3/05

Faringdon Twinning association will be going on Thursday 5th May and returning on Sunday 8th May.

The cost is £60 adult, £30 under 16's.

If you're interested contact Jeanie Pugh Tel: 01367 240374

email: jeaniepugh@ukonline.co.uk

Showcasing Shorts - Oxfordshire's Short Film Festival - 3/3/05

2005 Showcasing Shorts - a festival for regional film makers

Showcasing Shorts 2005 is an opportunity for new film makers and animators to show off their talent to the public. The intention of Showcasing Shorts is to bring new film shorts made by artists based in Oxfordshire and the close neighbouring counties to the big screen at the Phoenix Cinema and to tour the selected films to film clubs and societies throughout Oxfordshire.

If you have a short film of any genre, be it drama, documentary or animation we'd like to see it.

There are no specific criteria for style or content and is open to all genres (documentary, drama, experimental, art house, animation, etc). photograph of camera heads

The work should be shot in or produced by people with a connection to Oxfordshire (or bordering locations) and be made during the past 12 months.

The maximum duration for work will be 15 minutes; there is no minimum duration.

It's free to enter and the selected work will be screened at the Phoenix Cinema, Oxford on the 5th, 6th and 7th of May 2005, followed by screenings throughout the county.

Deadline for submissions: 31st March 2005. After submission the work will be viewed and selected by a panel of judges.

You will be notified if your work has been selected by the 22nd April 2005.

If you require any further information please contact Gary Shenton on production@ofvm.org

Showcasing Shorts is a collaboration between OFVM and the Phoenix Cinema, Oxford and is financially

supported by Oxfordshire County Council

18 Coxwell Road - 30/6/05

In response to Mr Reynolds letter below.

The saying "united we stand, united we fall" comes to mind, except in this case where it needs modifying to "united we stand, except in the case of development in my back yard".

I recall residents on the Orchard estate encouraging residents on Coxwell Road, to support their cause to fight development, indeed petitions were brought around properties in Coxwell Road. Coxwell Road residents would have expected the same support, which is now clearly being actively withdrawn.

At the end of the day it all comes down to money, residents are worried about the effect on the value of their properties and are now seeking to protect that investment. The direct effect on the amenities 16 and 20 Coxwell Road is far greater than that on the Orchard Estate either on any individual property or as a whole.

Is it right that 2 residents who will be significantly affected, should be sacrificed in favour of more residents who will be marginally affected. I think not.

Ok there will be some disruption during construction, but following that phase the difference will be minimal. The effect on 16 and 20 however will be direct and long term, traffic noise will intrude into the whole of their property for ever. Shame on you all for selling yourselves out.

Another phrase. "I'm all right Jack and S_d everyone else comes to mind". Trying to justify yourselves by claiming the lesser of two evils may make you feel better, but at the end of the day, you are selling out and trying to push the burden onto someone other than yourselves.

As the article below states, we all try to protect our investments, does this make any of us better than the developers or the current owners of no18, who after all are doing exactly the same thing.

Development of the site itself is either good or bad. It doesnt make it good just because it does less damage to you personally.
Shame on you all.

I also note that many residents of the estate made claims that Faringdon does not need any new houses due to the amount of vacant properties and housing to let and for sale. However, how many of you made representations to the Local Plan which allocates 400 houses on a green field site at the old cricket ground/Nursery site. Not many I bet.

As long as its not in my back yard its ok say you all.

My sympathy goes to residents of no 16 and future residents of no 20, I'm afraid the masses are selling you out.

Devils advocate.

Faringdon Area Project - 29/6/05

FAP has published its first newsletter giving information on the progress of projects in and around Faringdon.

The Cycling & Walking project group has been awarded a grant from Awards For All and Oxfordshire Rural Transport Partnership

. ...meanwhile the Faringdon Community Bus is looking for committee members and volunteer drivers so that they can extend the routes

.... ...the Technology Study project commissioned by FAP and carried out by Oxfordshire Rural Broadband is nearing completion

... ..and the Skate Park project is gaining momentum with the added support of the Vale of White Horse District Council and the local Police

. ...a new facility on the faringdon.org website has just been launched offering a Car Pooling Service for sharing journeys to and from work

. ...Faringdon Local Food Initiative has been successful in getting good quality local produce into schools ... an event is to held be to promote local interest in Folly Park

...there is a strong demand for a new performance venue in Faringdon with an estimated 100 groups in the

area who would use the facility
See [the full Newsletter for more information](#)
Sarah Allen Stevens

Faringdon on TV - 29/6/05

Just to correct John Gilmans point. The program is Heart of the Country and is 7.30 on Thursday 30th June
Dee England

18 Coxwell Road - 29/6/05

The Planning Committee meet on 4th July at the Corn Exchange, Faringdon to decide on application GFA/4905/6-X, an updated version of the previously rejected GFA/4905/4-X. (4-X goes to appeal later this year).

However, 6-X appears to satisfy the objections previously raised and there is a strong possibility it will be recommended for approval by the planning officer.

There are facts.

Approval to redevelop the 18 Coxwell Road site with a minimum of 16 properties accessed via the Orchard Hill Estate has been approved. That this land will be developed is now beyond debate. It is now a question of how the land will be redeveloped.

The owners of 18 Coxwell Road do not favour either a large development nor access via Orchard Hill but do wish for the smaller development outlined in GFA/4905/6-X to proceed. However, if it doesn't get approval, and 4-X loses on appeal there is very real likelihood that the Orchard Hill Estate proposal would move forward.

"Between a rock and hard place" springs to mind! However, my view is that if the site has to be developed at all (which I would prefer not but recognise it is now an inevitability) the more contained development outlined in 6-X with access via Coxwell Road affecting one or two residents is infinitely preferable to the awful proposal which affects the 300 residents of the Orchard Hill Estate.

As such I would lend 6-X my support in an attempt to see the Orchard Hill Estate proposal thwarted.

It is possible for me to speak at the meeting and I would ask you to contact me if you have any views you would like me to consider before I do so.

David Reynolds
01367 243663

18 Coxwell Road - 26/6/05

In response to HGM, £350,000 may have had something to do with it, i.e the sale price of no 20 according to upmystreet.com

Then again I'm sure that 99.9% of the population would sell their own property for an overly inflated price if it were offered. That probably includes most of the people who object to various application as they emerge and which affect them.

I say lucky sellers of no 20 for purchasing a property which has been a better investment than originally thought, rather than having a dig at them.

After all, we all buy our houses not only to live in but as an investment, otherwise we would all rent.

I look forward to the slating which I will no doubt get.
Name supplied

18 Coxwell Road - 26/6/05

David and Fiona are understandably concerned about the impact of the proposed access road on their property but they seem to be unaware of the following:

It seems to me that No 20 was bought in order to use it as an access route to the property at No 18. I have been told that the previous owners had described it as their Dream House so what changed their minds ?

Had it been detached I have no doubt that it would have been demolished.
If the application is passed, I do not think sufficient consideration would be given to the disruption to tenants

They also are under the impression that some fair minded and impartial Planning Department will discuss the pros and cons of the proposal and its impact on the community as a whole and will be influenced by a group of people at the back of the meeting making their objections clear.

As the last planning meeting about this saga demonstrated, the decision will probably have already been decided by the LibDem Leader beforehand.

From the tone of my comments you may ask me, am I disillusioned by the whole Planning Meeting debacle in respect of the Coxwell Road Plot ???

After a great deal of soul searching I have to admit that there is a distinct possibility that I might be !
Harry G Mitchell

Faringdon Area project - 26/6/05

FAP has 2 job vacancies, one for an administrator, the other for a project coordinator. You'll find the job descriptions on the [FAP page](#) in the Town Affairs section of this site
Closing date for applications is 25/7/05
Martyn Baker

More about 18 Coxwell Road -23/6/05

The latest episode in this saga, planning application GFA/4905/6-X will now be decided by the Vale Planning Committee in the Faringdon Corn Exchange at 6.30pm on Monday 4th July 2005.
This is the renewed application to access this site for development by creating a new junction on Coxwell Road and an access road to be squeezed through the gap between our house, 16 Coxwell Road, and number 20 Coxwell Road. This new access road will run the entire length of our house and garden.
We believe it will have a very damaging impact on our property. It will also have a very damaging impact on number 20 Coxwell Road, which will not only lose most of its gardens but, will also have to have its bedroom windows sealed up and air conditioning installed (seems bizarre but apparently true).

Do please come along to the committee meeting on 4th July (whatever your views).
A public presence really does seem to make a difference.
David Janata & Fiona Duffen

Faringdon on TV - 23/6/05

Faringdon will feature in Out in the Country on ITV1 June 30th, 7.15
John Gillman

Faringdon Arts Festival - 23/6/05

Faringdon Arts Festival will soon be here, with big events every night from 1-7 July, and a big weekend from the evening of the 8th to the 10th.

Highlights include Sir George Martin, Radio 2's Bob Harris and musical guests, Glenn Tilbrook of Squeeze, Comedy Night with Richard Herring and other Radio 4 comedians, special shows from the Faringdon Dramatic Society and Faringdon Singers, Mark Viner, The Fantini Consort and The Magic of the Musicals.

Check out our website at: <http://www.faringdonartsfestival.org/> you can book tickets by credit card on 01367 240570
Swift booking is now advised for Sir George, Bob and Glenn.

We also need volunteers to steward on the day: dive in, have fun, and help out your town! Contact us on the same number or on info@faringdonartsfestival.org if you want to have a go.

Fun at Folly Park -21/6/05

Enjoy fun activities and tell us your ideas about Folly Park!
Sunday 3rd July 2005 2 - 4pm at Folly Park, Faringdon (entrance by petrol station on Park Road)

Come along and
Do some fun activities (for children and adults, such as art and crafts, nature trail, face painting, wildflower identification etc.) · Tell us your ideas about Folly Park by putting them on a 3D model made by schoolchildren from Faringdon Junior School · Enjoy free cake and refreshments!
The event is organised by local residents and BTCV (British Trust for Conservation Volunteers).
For more information, please contact Joan on 01367 242 970 or Katrina (BTCV) on 0118 947 5049

We are still looking for volunteers to help at the event. If you would like to help, please contact Katrina on 0118 947 5049.

Faringdon Rugby Club - 17/6/05

Faringdon Rugby Club was established in September 2004 and is run by local volunteers. It caters for 5-13yr olds and will commence training on the first Sunday in September. Training takes place on the school field by the leisure centre 10.30-12.00 every Sunday.
Rachel Kenyon
r.m.kenyon@faringdon-cc.oxon.sch.uk

Change the World for a fiver - 17/6/05

50 actions to change the world and make you feel good.
Published to mark the launch of - We Are What We Do, a project of Community Links 'tackling the causes and consequences of social exclusion in east London and sharing the local experiences with practitioners and policy makers nationwide. 'Acting local thinking global'
A great read as well as an insight to the little things that make such a difference
www.wearewhatwedo.org

More White Band - 18/06/05

Well done to the webmasters of the Faringdon Community Website for giving the Folly White Band Event such prominence on the Home page - and for having the white band across the top corner. I'm certainly going to be there on the 1st July as part of the Procession.

2005 is a year in which we WILL make history, and it's absolutely vital that we - both as individuals and as the community of Faringdon - take this important stand. It is obscene that we allow 30,000 people every day to die because of the choices that we make.

If not US - then WHO ? If not NOW - then WHEN? See you there on July 1st. Don't miss it!
Mairead Boyce

White Band event - 1st July - 16/06/05

Yes - of course I would urge everyone to come to the White Band MakePoverty History Folly Event on the 1st July so that our politicians know that they have a mandate to take the necessary decisions! I'm also looking forward to the event - and it's fantastic that we can combine this kind of Community activity with the making of a powerful statement for change. And I also applaud the Faringdon Arts Festival for embracing this as their opening event. But at the same time we must realise that Climate Change - if not tackled urgently - will wipe out all the benefits that the MakePovertyHistory campaign is seeking to bring about.

We must realise that the way we treat our planet is as important as the way we treat our global neighbours. You can't have one without the other. In this context, the Faringdon Fairtrade Jutebag is a powerful symbol for all of us. Bag for Fairtrade; Bag for a caring culture (as opposed to a throw-away culture); Bag to save precious energy and hydrocarbon fuels; bag to save our planet; BAG FOR LIFE; The lives of many millions of farmers in the third world. I carry mine with pride.

Reggie Norton

Becoming an independent councillor - 16/06/05

There are currently over 2,000 Independent councillors in the UK.

If you stood you would not be on your own. Why not contact the LGA Independent Group on 02076643206 or via email at independent.group@lga.gov.uk for more info. They provided me with some good advice, do not operate a party whip and may provide you with suggestions for your literature.

Name supplied

White bands - 14/06/05

are available in The Mustard Seed, and also in the AFPIC Shop (both in Cornmarket). The acrylic (stretchy rubber) bands are best. They wash easily, & don't break. The material ones get grubby quickly - and the clips can be flaky.

Sjoerd Vogt

White Bands - where to buy? - 13/06/05

Looking forward to a great day on July 1st but can anyone let me know where you can get a Make Poverty History wristband in Faringdon? I work out of town all week but haven't see any on display anywhere. I thought Faringdon TIC may be the place but have not had a chance to call in yet. Many thanks.

Una Vickers

WHITE BAND DAY - JULY 1ST - 12/06/05

As the first event of the Faringdon Arts Festival, there's going to be a giant white "MakePovertyHistory" band (22 meters long!) artistically placed round the top of Folly Tower on the afternoon of July 1st.

But it's 480 meters round the Folly Hill path. So - IF we get more than 500 people to join us in making this important statement just before the start of the G8 Summit, then we can ALSO make a giant Human White Band of support!

I do hope that everyone who can be there will come, and will also encourage friends to come. If you're involved with any groups or clubs or businesses, perhaps you can also get involved as a group? Tandem kite flying? Synchronised windmills? Pantomime horse in the shape of a giant white band filled with children? Gigantic white chinese dragon? 100-foot white model of Folly? Life-size replica of Gondolfier's hot-air balloon capable of carrying the entire Town Council aloft ?

Wear White, Wear your White Wristband, bring anything white that catches the wind.

Be there.

We owe it to our Faringdon Fairtrade status!

Sjoerd Vogt

Sjoerd Vogt

UNIVERSITY OF BATH SEEKS LOCAL FAMILY TO WELCOME FRENCH STUDENT - 12/06/05

- The Division for Lifelong Learning at the University of Bath is once again running the Module Anglais programme and seeks a family in Faringdon to host a postgraduate French student from now to July 17. The French students first spend six weeks improving their English at the University of Bath and then complete a six-week unpaid work placement with employers from various industries. During the work placement the 20-24 year-old professionals live with local families and individuals who share their homes in order to help the students improve their English and understanding of British culture. We are looking for a family to host a student working at the Shrivenham Hundred Business Park, ideally on the #66 bus route. If you are interested in becoming a host, or would like more information, please contact **Rachel or Joelle at 01225 386146** or email R.H.Owens@bath.ac.uk.

Madd May Fest 2005 - 2/6/05

M.A.D.D. people would like to thank all the people who came to the festival. Their support made this year a resounding success and has put us "Firmly on the Festival Circuit"

Next year it will be on the same weekend 28th April-1st May.
Tickets will be on sale from Feb 2006.
Interesting acts already booked.
Sam and Hilary Prince

Skeffington Report??? - 2/6/05

I enjoyed the article from Name Supplied 27/05/05 (NS 27 for short) and admire the way he (or she) presented the facts in such a way that sticking a small estate in the back garden of 18 Coxwell Road would seem to be quite a reasonable thing to do. I only wish he (or she) was on the side of the protesters.

For those of you who are a little vague about the Skeffington Report (1969) I would remind you that it was basically a recommendation that the Community should be given a greater role in Planning their own environment and that decisions reached should be easily accessible. Those planners who realised that public involvement in planning decisions would reduce their opportunities to steer decisions in favour of themselves or their friends scathingly referred to it, as does NS 27, as 'The Busybodies Charter'

NS 27 admits that Pre-Skeffington being on a Planning Committee was like a licence to print money and he accepts that groups of landowning/local business chums could award themselves lucrative contracts etc.... I agree !

NS 27 then goes on to imply that After-Skeffington the Committees miraculously cleaned up their acts. He, or is it she, says "You have to admit that things have improved since then.".... I do not agree ! I would like to think that things have improved but it is a fact that the wishes of a large number of the community can be ignored.

The Ancient Romans had some funny ideas, e.g.. the diet they fed to their pet lions would be frowned upon today. But they did believe in Natural Justice. This said that some things were so obviously wrong that there was no need to have a law opposing them. The Coxwell Rd. project falls into that category. Hundreds of Law abiding, Council Tax paying, households should not be inconvenienced so that one or two can make a profit.

Finally, and reluctantly, I have to take issue with David Reynolds. He criticises contributors who don't wish to be named and feels that their contributions are suspect because of their anonymity. I think it is important that all views are aired and Gene and/or Hil always know who the writer is.

This website is for everyone and I like to read the views of anyone from teenagers to geriatrics and I don't care what you call yourselves.

So, please, get tapping that keyboard.

Incidentally how is the Folly cat ?

NS 02 aka HGM

Faringdon Arts Festival Seeks Local Artists 02/06/05

If you're a painter or photographer in the Faringdon area, and not a member of the Faringdon Art Society, we'd like to exhibit your work over the main weekend of the Faringdon Arts Festival (9-10 July) at our exhibition venues.

A limited number of spaces are available, and artists should be able to bring all that's needed to hang their own work. Please contact Our [arts venue organiser](#) .

Also, if you have a performance skill of any kind, from juggling to comedy, we want you to Come Up And Play, on the Market Place stage at teatime on Sunday 10th July. Acoustic music only.

No need to book in advance. All welcome, one number or quick item each!

For all this and more, check out our web site at www.faringdonartsfestival.org/

Nuisance calls - 1/06/05

Last night I was woken at midnight by the telephone - an automated reverse charge call routed through a company called "0800 reverse".

Being sleepy, and worried that it might be a member of my family in trouble, I accepted the call, only to get a silent response.

When it rang again I accepted the call, still worried that it might be one of the children - (caller is not identified) After a second silent response I realised that this was a hoax. Following that, the phone continued to ring incessantly, despite my lifting and replacing the receiver several times, and switching on the answerphone, until I disconnected my phone.

I complained to BT, - they were not responsible, and could do nothing. I complained to 0800 reverse, who were not responsible, and although they knew who the caller was, would not reveal the identity. Ofcom said it was not their concern, and Icstis said they could only investigate premium rate calls. My only remedy was to block calls from this caller.

I find it totally disgraceful that there is no redress against this anti social behaviour, and that companies - specifically *0800 reverse* - should support this kind of thing by allowing the culprit to remain anonymous, and presumably continue to annoy other people. I await my bill to discover how much this episode has cost me. Multiply it by however many calls this person makes. Who gains by this?

name supplied

ps I have just discovered - '0800 Reverse' makes a connection charge of £3.00 per call (payable by the recipient) so no prizes for guessing why they don't wish to discourage calls, however antisocial or malicious.

Re entry - More Development 31 May - 1/6/05

None so blind as he/she who refuses to see!

I have previously stated my reasons for opposing proposal X-5 earlier in these pages however I will repeat for our anonymous contributor one fundamental danger with this proposal.

It includes the demolition of a perfectly acceptable 35 year old family house in order to access the site. This sets a precedent for it to happen anywhere else in Faringdon.

If our anonymous contributor thinks that these development opportunities are limited in Faringdon he/she obviously lives in a very different town to the one I do! Frankly I don't see the difference between one large development of 400 houses to 25 developments of 16 houses. The end result is the same.

Now, I'm not against an increase in population, indeed it is potentially beneficial to the town. What I am against is the wilful disregard of resident's genuine concerns on safety, pollution and comfort in the pursuit of the Authority's/Governments targets to achieve this housing.

Just on a slightly different tack when I read comments on faringdon.org I am slightly cautious of the motivation behind comments made by an author who wishes to be known only as "name supplied".

David Reynolds

More development...

As was stated about the Coxwell Road site (10/5/05) "*the proposal fits current criteria*" so even if the council had vetoed it, the developer would most likely have appealed to the Secretary of State, won, and given the council no option but to stick us with a huge bill for legal fees. Then of course there would have been a different cause for complaint. The chances are that whichever political party had control on the planning committee, that particular proposal would still have eventually gained approval.

In the days before the Orchard Hill estate was even a twinkle in a developer's eye, exactly the same arguments were raised by some of the residents on 'The Pines' estate when an extension of the built area was proposed. Some of the houses were to be of a smaller type than the existing ones. There was uproar at the thought of further development there but it went ahead - we now have Cedar Road, Ash Close, Ferendune etc. around there and the extra housing has been integrated without problems. So why exaggerate the issue? No-one likes new construction around them, particularly when it is feared to be 'not in keeping' but it's just a small housing development, and after completion, is unlikely to be intrusive.

Re. the broader matters that have been raised - there is very significant difference between the Southampton Street development and Coxwell Road. Town centre infilling adds to congestion and reduces residents' already inadequate parking in the vicinity of the development. The Coxwell road site has neither of these disadvantages. As for urban infills setting a dangerous precedent; there is very limited scope for these in Faringdon, since most have already taken place, years ago. The idea that small infills will add up to hugely inflate the overall population is illogical. The vastly greater peripheral developments (without compensating employment provision) are far more worrying vis a vis the growth of our 'dormitory' status, yet these don't seem to have attracted the vigorous opposition from our councillors which would have been expected given the comments which have appeared here.

More light industry might well be advantageous in adding to the locally employed proportion of the population, and the diversity of employment. It would make no impact on the reliance on cars, however, which are used for far more varied reasons than getting to work. You cannot turn the clock back; Faringdon and towns like it, unless they grow to the size of large conurbations will for the foreseeable future depend almost entirely on personal transport.

I agree wholeheartedly with what is said about council treatment of the public during meetings - although if you knew local government life in the 'good old days' before Skeffington*, you might remember that groups of local landowning/business chums could often get together, without opposition, and tacitly award each other lucrative planning permissions/contracts - without inconvenient debate, intervention - or scrutiny from the public. You have to admit that things have improved since then.

name supplied.

**The Skeffington Report circa 1969, known in local government circles as 'the busybody's charter'*

Wake up call for the Libdems - 27/5/05

Libdems on the District council (and certain Developers) are getting a great deal of criticism on this website. They probably feel that the comments are biased and over the top.

What they have to understand is that they are all trusted to do a reasonable job for the community and when it seems that, as in the Coxwell Road Saga, they appear to be abusing their position in a way that affects a large number of that community they should not be surprised when there is a backlash inspired by indignation and disappointment.

It's a long time to the next election when we will be able to show them what we really think but in the meantime all we can do is complain and hope that at least some of them will alter their attitude.

Remember Luke 15:7 is reported as saying.. "Joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth" And if you are not biblically orientated how about Abe.Lincoln saying. "You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time "

All we are saying is. "Give us a break and do what we elected you to do.

Put the community first !"

Vox Populi Faringdoni

The Plot Thickens.....25/05/05

Sounds like a cover up to me.

But seriously AKA, why don't you contact the council and find out, then you can put us all out of our misery? Hil.

The Big Fight : Town & Countryside v Cover Construction - 25/5/05

The Planners, VWHDC, have given their approval to the proposal of Town & Countryside Land Acquisition and Development UK Ltd to build in the back garden of 18 Coxwell Road.

The Assistant Director (Planning), VWHDC, has just announced that there will be an appeal on 18 October 2005 to allow Cover Construction Co Ltd to build in the same back garden.

It sounds as if it is going to be very crowded..What is going on ?

Slightly Confused of Faringdon

(AKA. Harry G Mitchell)

Faringdon Dragon Country Story Tape - 24/5/05

A local man, Cleve Gibson, has written stories based around this area.

You can reserve the tape online from [Oxfordshire library](#)

or from [Audio Books for Free](#)

Cleve has also produced a Dragon Country screen saver. If you want a copy, email him on

cleve@leyondar.co.uk

Housing Development in Faringdon - 23/5/05

I totally agree with David's comments.

An in-fill housing development at Coxwell Rd may seem innocent enough, but add it to the social housing development in Southampton St. South where little provision is made for parking and no additional support to public transport.

Add to this the refusal of business development at Wicklesham and Stanford for expanding businesses at Faringdon and Faringdon further becomes a dormitory town reliant on cars.

And just a final thought, with the in-filling for retirement apartments at Swan Lane - when the retirement age is due to rise - more cars, less jobs?

Faringdon is being pushed aside and forgotten about by Abingdon and whilst our District Councillors can try their hardest, they are in a minority on the Council at the end of the day.

It seems like it is up to Faringdon to make its voice heard.

Name supplied

Faringdon Youth Centre - 22/5/05

Oxfordshire County Council Youth Service based at the Faringdon Community College available Tuesdays and Fridays. Young people's clinic on Tuesdays from 12-2,

Youth Sailing Club on Fridays 3.30-7pm,

Dj workshops Tuesdays from 3.30-5pm,

Plus trips and much more...

Allan Connor

faringdon.youth@oxfordshire.gov.uk

www.spired.com

Housing Development - 22/5/05

In response to "name supplied"'s comment dated 21 May 2005 it seems that our wannabe "Independent Thinker" is missing the point.

Let me reiterate. The development of 16 properties on the plot of land in question serves nobody's interests but the Developer's. The proposed development is totally out keeping with the rest of the Orchard Hill Estate potentially affecting over 300 residents with increased traffic hazards, noise and pollution!

Who is the "...the community as a whole" if it is not the 300 residents already living in this area.

Now don't get me wrong, I understand that "infilling" is a current dictate from Central Government and that this piece of land falls within this category. I don't like this dictate because you cannot apply the same principles to a country market town as you would to a South London suburb.

However that's the way it is, so all that can be done is to try to get the least harmful development. On this basis it would be naive not to support a plan to develop this piece of land with a reasonable number of dwellings accessed sensibly and safely via a main road (remember Coxwell Road was originally the A420).

The owners of 18 Coxwell Road are perfectly within their rights to capitalise on their asset and I firmly believe they are reasonable people who would support a more restrained development.

My real beef in all this however IS with the Councillors in Abingdon. I must assume "name supplied" wasn't at the meeting I attended. What I think is absolutely appalling is that the Lib Dem Councillor in question vociferously opposed the application and then declined to vote!

Why? This is NOT independent thinking, this is someone who does not wish to be seen doing the wrong thing amongst peers.

In isolation the passing of this application in this manner might seem very innocent but multiply that by every application passing that Committee and you have a potentially disastrous problem across Faringdon and surrounding area!

David Reynolds

Faringdon

Reply to Independent Thinker aka Name Supplied - 22/5/05

My apologies to Independent Thinker. It has been said that ensuring a communication is intelligible is the responsibility of the communicator and I obviously failed to make my meaning clear.

I will try again.

I have no quarrel with Councillors of any party supporting any proposal if they believe that it is the correct action, even when their opinion differs from my own. That is why we trust them with protecting our community. What I, and many others, find hard to accept is that a Councillor can be seen to oppose a proposal but abstain from voting against it.

The conclusion I draw in this particular case is that the equivalent of a three line whip was in force. I believe that Libdems, on this occasion, knew they must vote for the proposal if they agreed with it but abstain if they didn't.

And a second apology. I must admit that I had never considered that building sixteen small houses was intended to benefit the community as a whole.. I have now considered it.....I still believe that it is only intended to benefit those involved in the development ...and **** the community as a whole.

HGM

Becoming an independent councillor - 21/05/05

Visit this web site - <http://www.picx.co.uk/fags.html> or you could ask your local returning officer for details. The problem is - as an independent you don't have much of a 'voice' on a large district council, and although, as you may find out - there is no deposit to pay, you will have to find your own expenses and there will be no party machine to support you during the election period.

Its easy to complain about decisions when you havent had to go through all the arguments, but not so simple if you're faced with, say, having to decide between cutting the budgets of, e.g. social services, street cleansing, and the TIC, for the whole of the district, and not for just your own little patch.

If being an independent were such a good thing - why didn't our present local councillors all stand as independents?

Or don't the conservatives (or labour, for that matter) toe the party line.....?

If you do decide to stand as an independent, I'll probably vote for you, so best of luck!

N James.

Development - 21/05/05

When someone doesn't agree with your opinion, it doesn't mean that they don't have minds of their own. Quite the reverse, in fact.

Have you considered the possibility that several councillors on the much maligned planning committee might have agreed that providing sixteen smaller, more affordable dwellings to replace one very expensive one - in the middle of an already residential area, was actually in the interests of the community *as a whole*?

'Independent thinker'

name supplied

More party politics - 21/05/05

I went to the council meeting where the LibDems managed to decide to get rid of Travel Tokens and the TIC. I was horrified when I realised how our local government toes the party line rather than doing what is best for the community.

I have always maintained that party politics have no business in local government.

In a general chat with Roger Cox on my way home I said as much.

I do have a personal preference politically in national government but in local politics I vote for the candidate that I think has our local interests at heart.

I would be willing to stand myself as an Independent but have no idea what it entails or how to go about it.

JB

Toeing the Party Line or Serving the Community? - 20/5/05

The Councillor who abstained from voting at the 18 Coxwell Road Planning Meeting might be criticised for her failure to stand up for her beliefs. But I understand that she was brave enough to oppose the proposal during the discussion before the vote and that must have taken a certain amount of intestinal fortitude.

This might encourage others to defy the orders of their political masters in the future and it is reassuring to know that at least one Libdem on the District Council has a mind of her own.

HGM

Photos - Faringdon Arts Festival - 30/7/05

[Great photos of the Arts Festival](#) - Glenn Tilbruck, Peter Wentworth, Kiff, painting the underpass - and maybe you!!

All provided by Al Cane
Gene Webb

Storm in a tea/coffee cup - 29/7/05

I too was concerned about the problem with the 'public seating' so contacted the Coffee Shop and received this reply...which should satisfy anybody !!

Our apologies if the lady felt she could not sit on the public seating. This may have happened when the shop was being staff run on that day. All the staff have now been briefed to the fact that the stone seating **MUST** be kept clear of our tables and chairs.

We now have a 7ft gap between the stone seats and our own so there shouldn't be a problem.

If she still finds there is a problem then by all means she can sit at a table.

Regards Darren

HGM

Tables and Chairs - 29/7/05

As new visitors to Faringdon and being interested to discover more about the town, I was disappointed to read about the criticism regarding tables & chairs outside the coffee house.

This was one of the features that made the town look friendly, warm and vibrant.

It is a unique place and good to see people enjoying the environment and the English summer sun.

Please keep them!!

Jenny Taylor

Tables and Chairs - 28/7/05

It has been a delight to see tables and chairs in the market place. However, I understand that the fuss started because Coffee Shop tables & chairs were placed in such a way as to block comfortable use of the Portwell stone benches which are intended to be available for anyone - not Coffee Shop patrons exclusively.

Common sense must prevail lest petty jealousies and rivalries spoil a good thing. What about dealing with what **CAN** be done in harmony rather than petty complaining.

Don't throw all your toys from the pram!

Name Supplied

Arts Festival from the other side - 27/7/05

Many people have said how much they enjoyed the Arts Festival and I would like to add my view from the performers side. The audiences for the events, attendees at workshops etc all made a great contribution too and made performing a real pleasure.

Thanks to you all for your enthusiasm and applause!

Steve Wright

Tables and Chairs - 27/7/05

Harry, thank you for your vote of support.

I sincerely hope my comments always make sense even if people don't always agree with them!

I understand the petition is at the Coffee House.

David Reynolds

Market Place - 26/7/05

Thank you to everyone for all their support in our campaign to save our tables and chairs outside. We have been overwhelmed by the support for them and it is great to see so many people enjoying them.

Any additional support and names on our petition will help with our position in saving our outside seating for all to enjoy. Any comments or support can also be emailed to us at faringdoncoffee@aol.com. The petition is at the till in The Faringdon Coffee House and for those of you who cannot get into us during the day, The Portwell Bar have a copy for you to sign during the evenings.

For dog walkers and 'ciggie consumers' we tend to keep our seating out for as much of the year as we can so we hope it provides you with a seat to be able to enjoy.

Thank you.

Tracy and Darren Rutter

Market Place - 26/7/05

People used to sit outside in the summer most specifically outside The Bell and The Volunteer. I heard that this was stopped (unintentionally I fear) by the ban on drinking in the Market Place.

I always thought that this was silly as tables and chairs and people enjoying themselves makes the town alive.

Jane Boulton

Market Place tables and smoking - 26/7/05

Congratulations to David Reynolds. This time his comments make sense.

I agree completely with his remarks about the tables and chairs in the Market Place (I presume the legs are made different lengths to allow for the slope) but I feel that another aspect of this very pleasant addition to our Town Centre should be mentioned.

As the anti-smoking lobby gains support we are seeing more and more nicotine addicts hanging around outside their shops or offices satisfying their cravings for 'ciggies'. The provision of an outdoor cafe scenario during the summer gives them somewhere to indulge their habit without appearing to be social outcasts.

Perhaps someone could come up with a suggestion telling them where to go during the winter. Not even the teenagers who consider smoking makes them look cool can be happy with lurking in the car park toilets and the facilities for addicted mums to park their prams must be rather limited.

Any suggestions as to where they can go ?

Harry Mitchell

Tables and Chairs in the Market Place - 25/7/05

I agree whole heartedly with David Reynolds about the tables and chairs in the Market Place. It really looks like summer and one could pretend one was in a foreign town on a sunny day! Where can I find this petition to sign it?

Name Supplied

Ed: My guess is at the Portwell Bar and the Faringdon Coffee House

Tables and Chairs in the Market Place - 19/07/05

Since the refurbishment of the town centre one of the more attractive features for me has been the emergence of tables and chairs outside the Faringdon Coffee House and Portwell Bar.

It is fantastic to see people soaking in the town's atmosphere outside on a hot summer's day. People outside talking, laughing, doing business just lifts the town and gives a feeling that "something is happening" here in this town.

Now it seems this might be under threat!

It is my understanding that due to ONE complaint about the tables and chairs outside the Faringdon Coffee House it has now come under review and as a result it is possible that ALL establishments will not be permitted to put tables and chairs outside.

In my view this a negative and retrograde step suggested by ONE negative perpetrator who lacks vision (or has another agenda!) and should be resisted.

There is a petition to support the continuation of tables and chairs outside which already has dozens of names to it. If you support this please make your voice heard.

David Reynolds

Faringdon Arts Festival - 18/7/05

A rather belated note to say a huge Thank You to all those involved in organising and performing in the Arts Festival - Clearly a massive amount of work went into it and I just want all those involved to know that it is very much appreciated!

It was so lovely to see children dancing around the market square (my one and three year old included!)- long may it continue!

Anna Marlow

Faringdon Arts Festival - 16/7/05

Again, just to echo everyone else's comments on the Arts Festival - a big thankyou to everyone involved in making it such a memorable event for Faringdon.

It's taken me a few days to come off the Saturday night Junior school cloud, so I am a little late in adding this note to the many others !!

Both the Arts Festival and MADD Fest have done a fantastic job in pulling in some great acts for Faringdon.

Long may it live !!!!

Sarah Allen-Stevens

Memorial Concert to celebrate the life of Betty Bleakley- 13/7/05

Saturday 6th August, The Abbey Hall, Guildhall in Abingdon 7.30pm. free admission, refreshments
A well known soprano who lived at Kingston Lisle. She died aged 73 last month.

She appeared at hundreds of concerts throughout the UK under her stage name, Elizabeth James.

She studied singing with the famous baritone Fredrick Sharp, and served on the Wantage Music Festival committee.

She was also a talented artist in watercolours and painted many commissions, exhibiting during the Faringdon Art Festivals.

Betty's husband Mr Desmond Bleakley will be playing the organ, and many of her former pupils will be coming long distances to perform as vocalists.

Those who have known Betty, those who have studied under her, and those who just enjoy music are very welcome.

Enquiries: PGSAUND@aol.com

Folly Park dragonflies - 13/7/05

If you have not been to Folly park recently, try to go there have a look round the lake. We went there on the weekend and there were so many dragon flies and damsel flies there it was lovely.

I think there is even a rare one there too if I identified it correctly.

Stunning coloured ones, blues and greens. I have never seen more than one at a time but there are loads of them there, they are landing on the banks too, so you can creep up on them and get a good look.

Name Supplied

Proposed Building in the Grounds of Sudbury Court Hotel- 13/7/05

It might be worth nipping down to the District Council Offices at the Corn Exchange to take a look at planning applications GFA/7366/31 and GFA/7366/32-LB (6th July 2005), which deal with a proposal to erect four dwelling houses in the grounds of Sudbury Court Hotel, in a corner adjacent to the footpath leading to the Folly and Stanford Road.

To reach the development, part of the stone wall along the 'lay-by' in London Road would be breached and some trees and shrubs grubbed up so that a 'sinuous drive' can be constructed, which would run behind the avenue of 'overgrown limes'.
RI Vanhegin

Faringdon Arts Festival - 12/7/05

If anyone would like to give some feed back with regard to the Arts Festival and/or would like to be involved next year please email julie.farmer@faringdonartsfestival.org
The Management Team would like to thank everyone who attended the Festival and hope that you will be able to support us all next year
Julie Farmer

Re: Road closure 12/7/05

A notice board has appeared today stating "No access via A4095 to Witney from Faringdon 25th to 30th July use A420 & a415 via Kingston Bagpuize"
OK. So I understand that the road is closed BUT where? It is about 12 miles to Witney and there are several other venues en route. Could we please be told where the road works are as going to Kingston Bagpuize may not be the best route for other destinations
Jane Boulton
Ed: Have a look at press releases on this site. There is one that states 'The A4095 from Faringdon to the Thrupp turn, a route used by some commuters from Witney to Swindon, will be closed and repaired from July 25 for six days'

Faringdon festival - 12/7/05

As so many others have said a brilliant weekend made even better by the good weather.
The concert put on by Glenn Tilbrook was a wonder to behold, I have seen some mighty fine acts in my years on this planet, Queen, Floyd, (no, not Keith) etc, but I have never seen anyone work so hard, and enjoy the crowd as much as the crowd enjoyed him.
I have to keep reminding myself that this happened in Faringdon!

We all, and I include myself in this, are always moaning about one thing or another and putting a negative spin on the efforts of the few people that work hard for us in this town, but the last ten days (and also the Madd festival in May)makes me feel proud to live in this fine town.
So thank you to everyone involved.
Jim Horton

Faringdon Arts Festival - 12/7/05

Fantastic festival;
Saturday and Sunday were particularly wonderful with non stop fun and masses to do; my children ended up with personal lists of things to do and places to be in order we could all get to the various activities and experience the sights and sounds!!!!.
Will there be any opportunity to feed back or make suggestions for future planning?
A big thankyou to the organisers and to the stewards who were so helpful and encouraging.
Alice Chenneour Randall

Faringdon Arts Festival - 12/7/05

To Echo it even more... A brilliant Festival with something for everyone.
The atmosphere in the Market Square over the Weekend was superb.

The highlight for me being the Saturday night gig at the Junior School with excellent local Band Cooper Black supporting a brilliant performance By Glenn Tilbrook.
Seen a lot of live Music events and this was one of the most memorable, a great Evening!
Many congratulations to the Organisers and all involved.
Faringdon now has an annual event which should be the envy of Towns all over the Country.
Graham Fletcher

Faringdon Arts Festival - 11/7/05

To echo Gene's comments, the Arts Festival was great.
It's something for Faringdon to be very proud of.
Congratulations to the organisers.
Richard Edgington.

In case of emergency contact number - 11/7/05

Following the disaster in London East

Anglian Ambulance Service have launched a national "In case of Emergency (ICE) " campaign with the support of Falklands war hero Simon Weston and in association with Vodafone's annual life savers award.

The idea is that you store the word " I C E " in your mobile phone address book, and against it enter the number of the person you would want to be contacted "In Case of Emergency".

In an emergency situation ambulance and hospital staff will then be able to quickly find out who your next of kin are and be able to contact them.

It's so simple that everyone can do it. Please do.

Please will you also forward this to everybody in your address book (or just tell your family and friends), it won't take too many 'forwards' before everybody will know about this.

It really could save your life.

For more than one contact name ICE1, ICE2, ICE3 etc

Robert Sharp

Faringdon Arts Festival - 11/7/05

Congratulations and thankyou to everyone involved with the Arts Festival - the organisers, helpers and the performers- it was a super festival- enjoyed by all
Hopefully, this is now an annual event!!
Gene Webb

Re 18 Coxwell Road.- 8/7/05

I am sure I will not be the only one to point out to Mr Reynolds -

- 1.The Medical Centre had a one way system with separate entrance and exit, so no queues.
 - 2.Visibility from entrance and exit was excellent.
 - 3.Its busy times did not coincide with rush hour on Coxwell Road.
 - 4.It had a big sign at the front saying "Medical Centre".
 - 5.Traffic was generally much less then anyway.
 - 6.Quite possibly location and access were among the factors in its decision to relocate somewhere better.
- Name Supplied
-

Le Mele-Libcany Twinning - 7/7/05

This is just a reminder about the up-coming 10th Anniversary of the Le Mele-Libcany twinning, which is planned over the 4 days from 4th-7th August.

A small number of participants have already declared their interest, and we need to inform Claire Bresson at the beginning of next week of the numbers planning to go.

Can you therefore please e-mail me by Sunday 10th July if you would like to go. Transport will be in own cars, so you would need to make your own travel arrangements.

If we co-ordinate carefully, we should be able to minimise costs by filling cars.

PS Please don't forget the AGM planned for Wednesday 20 July and photo/pictures of the May Peace anniversary trip.

David and Mary Tutt

tutt.faringdon@tesco.net

400 houses on the Old Nursery Site - 8/7/05

Does anyone have any information on how the public enquiry to the council's proposal to build 400 houses on the old nursery site is going? I believe there are 3 weeks still to run.

I noticed today that some survey work is being carried out on the Jespers Hill site (flat large field between Nursery View and A420). The council couldn't give me any information about this. It looks like some kind of soil and ground survey.

Thanks.

Name Supplied

18 Coxwell Road. - 7/7/05

Dear Mr Reynolds, I'm sorry the old Health Centre closed. It's true, there was a constant stream of traffic going in through the wide, one-way entrance with good visibility, and coming out of the one-way dedicated exit which was also wide and had good visibility.

The Health Centre was moved to improve service to Faringdon, by Doctors who live here. BIG DIFFERENCE. The proposed exit is narrow, ugly and offensive, does not meet minimum safety standards and is to be created to improve (at any cost to Faringdon) an individuals private wealth.

I understand he will live abroad.....

Mark Lawson

18 Coxwell Rd - 7/7/05

I think that Mr D.A.'s argument is absolutely correct. The safest proposal must be approved not the proposal that affects the least number of people, that just doesn't make sense.

There's no doubt that the entrance discussed at the last Council Meeting is extremely hazardous and also clearly described as such by the speaker from the Town Council (who is also correct) and yet their wishes appear to be ignored.

I firmly believe that if there's no safe proposal, and clearly this is not, the site development should not go ahead.

It is a pity that this has caused such polarisation within the neighbourhood.

There is a further option to access the site which was approved a few years ago but has not been progressed further and that is to access through the old Health Centre development and take out the physio's building.

It was used for years and has wide viewpoints both up and down Coxwell Road and must be safer than access between 16 and 20.

The overriding factor for Planners consideration in any of these proposals must be Road Safety regardless of the engineers views on width of roadways etc etc.

I repeat, that if there is no safe proposal the site development should not go ahead, regardless of the developer's wishes.

Name Supplied

18 Coxwell Road- 7/7/05

Great insults Mr Reynolds, I expected a more mature balanced response rather than the barrage of cheap shots.

I'm glad you consider this as some sort of game, I am simply trying to raise the profile of an important issue which will affect (to different degrees) a number of people.

Despite what you believe, I don't really care which of the applications is implemented, neither affects me, I have no interests emotionally or financially. I thought I made that quite clear, but obviously not clear enough. I said that in planning terms both schemes in my view were acceptable, my reservation was that the traffic situation and the amenity issues in relation to the Coxwell Road scheme were of greater significance and that if a choice had to be made between the two schemes then the best option in planning terms was the Orchard Road scheme. It would be much better accessed and it would enable a better form of development (in planning terms).

Central Government advice is there for a reason and luckily for future generations it is. The approach which you seem to be advocating is that if there is an objection to a development scheme for whatever reason, then it should not take place. The problem is that in many cases local objections are not planning matters and are

comments made through fogged glasses. If it was the case that spurious and biased objections were given overwhelming weight then very few brownfield sites in residential areas would be developed as there is always opposition. Similarly, no Greenfield sites would be developed because there would be more opposition.. In fact there would be no development what so ever anywhere. Now that would be constructive wouldn't it. (please do not insult me for suggesting that residents in this case have made spurious objections, I am not, I'm simply making a point generally which I trust you will understand)

In the case of the 300 against 2 argument, do you genuinely believe that just because 300 is more than 2, that that would justify any decision. It may fall into the strict definition of democracy, but is it morally right. If 300 residents are not materially affected by a proposal but object to it anyway, but two are significantly and materially affected does this make it ok because of mob rule. (I appreciate that you take a different view about the materiality of the effect, but the point is the same). Personally I think not, but that's my view.

Your memory has slipped a little and your knowledge of Coxwell Road is not that good. As a matter of fact, the access into the old health centre was one way with separate ingress and egress, hence there was no conflict. The site is now served by a wider access which enable ingress and egress at the same time, so there is no conflict. The proposed application access is substandard in this regard, if a vehicle is egressing, any vehicle accessing the site will either have to wait on the carriageway or the egressing vehicle will have to reverse. Not an ideal or particularly safe solution.

In terms of the material effect on the properties backing onto the site, that will be predominantly the same whichever development takes place, albeit that the numbers may be slightly different. The significant materiality relates to the effect on properties 16 and 20 Coxwell road, which has the substandard access immediately abutting their properties.

In terms of constructive alternatives, my view is that there is probably not now one available, I thought I made this clear. However, my starting point is and has always been that there is nothing wrong with either of the schemes in planning terms anyway. I have simply put forward an unbiased comparison between the two implementable alternatives before us now.

I'm not sure how I can be accused as being a bully by using the word NIMBY. I think you will find that you yourself said that the development is very much in your own back yard. In that case I would have thought NIMBY was the correct phrase. However, if that upsets you I unreservedly withdraw the remark.

I again stress that the purpose of my input was to create debate and even up the weight of opinion. If you wish to trade insults then I'm afraid that I will not be drawn in.

I accept that you may not agree with my view, and that's your right. However, because I do not agree with you, does not make me a bully, indeed neither does it make me wrong. If you are so committed to your democracy idea, I would have expected a more mature response and debate

One thing I am right about, is that the site is suitable for redevelopment, this has been my approach all along and remains so. Indeed, permission has been granted for three alternatives. (the last subject to the safeguards about noise). There will therefore be three possible permissions to be implemented. I remain of the view that the Orchard Road development is the best option and it is my democratic right to make that point. If it is not and I am not allowed to make any comment then who is being the bully.

Devils Advocate

ps, any news on that poor cat anyone

18 Coxwell Road - 7/7/05

Since my last posting the application to access the site via Coxwell Road has been approved by the Planning Committee subject to a third party analysis of the acoustic fence issues. So still we all wait!

However in the meantime let me respond to earlier comments. Okay Mr Advocate, let's play the game.

Whoever you are you obviously have the time on your hands to write monologues and stand around on Coxwell Road all day! I'm not convinced that you're totally impartial but I'll take what you say at face value and respond as such.

The problem with the planning system as it stands is NOT that the majority of the public do not give a fig...the problem is that the public's perception is that it has absolutely no control over the decisions. Yes, it is possible

for local residents to lodge opinions to the powers that be but I'm afraid the reality is that if an application meets current planning guidelines and, more importantly falls in line with current (central) policy, it will go through regardless of whether it affects 2 people or 300 people.
Incidentally, Mr Advocate YES the majority should prevail. That's what choice by democracy is all about isn't it?.

Even more interesting to me are the comments about traffic on Coxwell Road. I have only lived in Faringdon for five years but that's long enough to remember when the health centre was open. Forgive me if my memory is slipping but I don't recall too many visitors to the centre arriving by Harrier Jump Jet or Helicopter...I do recall however a constant stream of cars turning in and out of the centre both ways into Coxwell Road all day long. Notwithstanding the many dozens of traffic movements per day, to my knowledge there were no great traffic disasters. So why should there be a sudden hazard surge with the introduction of 8 additional houses?

I also continue to be puzzled by Mr Advocate's assumption that there will be "less significant and material effect on adjoining properties". Residents of Elm Road, Hawthorn Road and Beech Close all back onto the site. How exactly are they not affected? (also I refer to my earlier comments about the effect on the house that is a foot away from the house to be demolished in Elm Road!).
Still no convincing argument or constructive alternative in my opinion.

Oh! and by the way...in my book NIMBY is a word invented and used by bullies who prefer you not to disagree with them! David Reynolds
01367 243663

Make Poverty History parade photos - 4/7/05

Congratulations to all those hundreds of people who made it to Faringdon's Make Poverty History Campaign event on Friday 1 July. It was an uplifting couple of hours walking up the hill and wrapping the tower with the banner and a great community event.

It was also the first event of the current Faringdon Arts Festival.

For those who couldn't make it I'd like to share some of my photographs of the event.

Please go to www.photobox.co.uk/album/1554263 and there you will find a public gallery of 50 photos from the day through a public folder in Photobox.

You may need to register with Photobox (it's free) to view them.

Al Cane

More photos at http://www.faringdonfairtrade.org.uk/Events/MPH_PHOTOS/mph_photos.html

Sjoerd Vogt

18 Coxwell Road - 4/7/05

For what its worth, this response will probably be too late to make any difference to anyone, but I feel it needs to be said.

HGM, thanks for the positive comments about the role for anonymity, and for the right to debate. I simply do not wish to put my head above the parapet, however if anyone wishes to make comments about what I have to say either now or in the future, you can address me as Mr Devil's Advocate. My purpose is to create debate particularly about planning matters.

My response to Mr Reynolds. The comments I make are my own, they are entirely independent, I have no connection with the owners of the site, the adjoining residents or indeed with any of the prospective developers. The development, in either form is unlikely to affect me in any material way. I therefore suggest that I can probably be considered as pragmatic, if indeed more so as I can deal with facts as they are in an entirely unemotionally way, and cannot be accused of being a NIMBY, nor will I profit or lose out.

The purpose of my piece was to provoke a reaction. It has surprised me that it has provoked so little. The problem with the planning system as it stands is that the great majority of the public do not give a fig unless something affects them directly. Again, I ask the question, how many people actually objected (apart from those immediately surrounding the site) to the proposal to build 400 dwellings on the cricket/ground nursery site, but are of the view that no more houses should be built in Faringdon. As a community, we should be planning for ourselves, but we let others do it for us, in fact that's because we are actually incapable of doing it for ourselves. In this case the rational for decision seems to be that those that shout the loudest and who are in the

majority should prevail, that simply cannot and should not be right. 300 against 2 is irrelevant, it is the planning merits which are important. For the record, I personally feel that 400 dwellings for Faringdon is right, but that the amount of social housing (probably 50%) will do little to balance the social structure of the Town, which has already had more than its fair share.

Perhaps I should give my impartial views on the development proposals for 18 Coxwell Road more fully. Because I'm impartial, I can stand back and put any emotional attachments aside. It is irrelevant whether I live on the estate, or even adjacent to the site, the planning facts and merits remain the same.

Compare the number of houses on the Orchard Hill Estate with those on the Canada Lane Estate. Notwithstanding, the nursing/old peoples home/hospital, the allotments and bustle at the entrance (Orchard Hill is obviously not affected by a school), there are approximately 20% more dwellings on the Canada Lane Estate. The roads are of a similar standard to Orchard Hill and the Estate was built as a cul-de-sac, in fact the parking requirements on the Canada lane estate are lower than for Orchard hill, so it was built for less cars. What does this tell you? Walk from one end of Orchard Hill to the other end of Canada Lane, there is no perceptible difference, either in terms of noise, traffic, disruption or most importantly safety.

In my view, following the obvious temporary disruption during construction, the site will be integrated into Orchard Hill and everyone will be wondering why they made such a fuss. The site will be served by roads capable of additional traffic (they are the same standard as Canada Lane) and the immediate access into the site is two way and safe.

By comparison, the access onto Coxwell road is far from perfect and will at some stage cause a fatality. The access from Coxwell road is simply not wide enough to enable a free flow of traffic in and out of the site. The disruption this will cause to adjoining residents with cars in laybys potential reversing and revving of engines is much greater than in the Orchard Hill estate. Most important however is that the egress onto Coxwell Road is dangerous and will at some time cause a fatality. Because the access is too narrow into the site any vehicle coming down Coxwell Road, from the Highworth Road direction will indicate left, if there is a vehicle wishing to exit, then the vehicle wishing to enter will have to remain on the highway until the access is clear. Traffic behind the vehicle also coming down the hill will see the car in front indicating left, they will not be able to see why. Many will attempt to overtake, and one at some time will do so hitting the egressing car. Now, how well do residents of the Orchard Estate know the idiots who drive down Coxwell Road, the speed at which they do so, and their disregard for speed restrictions. Yes I know they are breaking the law, but the situation is real. Perhaps if you bothered to analyse the way traffic moves along Coxwell Road, particularly in the context of my scenario above you will also see that the Estate Road option is much safer.

These are not emotional comments, but interpretation of fact. I would estimate that one out of three cars on Coxwell Road Break the speed limit. One out of 30 by ten MPH, one idiot out of a hundred does close to 60 MPH. Stand on the pavement in Coxwell Road for a whole day, make that judgement yourself. You cannot make judgements about safety unless you have bothered to experience the situation in reality.

So you see, simply supporting an alternative scheme, without knowing the facts yourself is Nimby'ism in the extreme.

In terms of providing an alternative solution I would be more than happy to do so. In fact there is an ideal solution which would suit everybody, however, it costs, and to be honest, it probably is no longer economically viable. If there is anyone out there who will buy 18 Coxwell Road, and stump up an extra £750,000-£1,000,000, I will have a good go at finding a solution to suit everyone. The trouble is however that the land value has now been realised and the alternatives much more difficult (and probably impossible) to implement. Everyone now knows that there is a pot of gold to be had and everyone potentially will want their share.

I'm afraid we now have to live in the real world, there are two potential alternatives, and in my view, there is only one safe alternative, and one which will have less significant and material effect on adjoining properties. That is the scheme served Via the Orchard Estate. Residents of the Estate will not like this analysis I'm sure, however, it comprises the view of an independent, unaffected, busy body who felt it was time to give an unbiased view.
Devil's Advocate

Welcome to the Folly Cat - we can use a bit of humour - 2/7/05

I liked the poem from Folly Cat, despite its dig at me,

I hide my name because I feel that an-on-im-ity
Ensures I don't get targeted - for it's an even bet
That some of those I mention might sometimes get upset.
I use the local website to air my point of view
I find it therapeutic and it's something I can do
To highlight local issues that others seek to hide
Some folks might not like it but most are on my side.
So Folly Cat, let's hear your views,
I'm sure we'd get along
I don't claim that I'm always right..
But I'm hardly ever wrong.
HGM

Lands End to John O'Groats for Cycling Safety - 2/7/05

The health and environmental benefits of cycling are undeniable. Cycling to work is an efficient way of keeping fit and reducing road traffic pollution. However we cannot expect people to consider cycling to work without a network of safe cycle routes.

We are celebrating our silver wedding anniversary by cycling on a tandem from Lands End to John O'Groats to raise money for the cycling charity Sustrans, and to highlight the importance of safe cycle routes to work. We are starting from Lands End on Friday 1st July and if all goes to plan, we will reach John O'Groats on Friday 22nd July.

We are hoping to start a campaign for a dedicated cycle route from Faringdon to Swindon. One proposal is to use the path of the old railway line from Faringdon to Uffington and then along the line of the old Wiltshire-Berkshire canal through Shrivenham and into Swindon. We are very happy to accept sponsorship for Sustrans. The easiest way is via our website www.justgiving.com/lejogwilliamson.

As the local transport plans are being formulated in both Swindon and Oxford, we are hoping that others will take the opportunity to write in both councils in support of safe cycling.

The contact in Swindon is the cycling officer Mr Philip Martlew (01793 466369) and in Oxford is Mr Craig Rossington (01865 815575) . The issues they have to consider are traffic congestion, road safety, air quality and accessibility to services.

If anyone is interested in taking this project forward and has time, energy and experience to lead to this project, please contact us.
If you share our views, now is a very good time to write or phone the cycling officers.
David and Lyn Williamson

Paws for thought: "In Defence of Anonymity" -2/7/05

Miaou! - I am the Folly Cat,
and appositely named at that ,
by HGM (or AKA);
anonymous, I slip away.

'Name supplied' but not revealed
I wear my false face like a shield,
fending off the angry slights
that anonymity ignites.
For in this town, I've varied roles
in furtherance of many goals.
I might be neighbour, child or spouse
in bungalow, or flat, or house.
Professional, or artisan;

hermaphrodite, or woman, man.

But, truth to tell, tho' rage be vent
I merely relish argument.
No disguised agenda, me
who pens my case in secrecy.

So, just recall when next you write
with scorn, and irony and spite -
'*He who writes and runs away
may live to write another day*'

NS27. AKA The Folly Cat

n.b. I am not 'Devils Advocate', by the way; just a former 'Name Supplied' mentioned in dispatches.

Exercise Class for Mums and toddlers - 1/7/05

DO YOU WANT THE CHANCE TO KEEP FIT & TONED BUT DON'T HAVE THE TIME FOR EXERCISE CLASSES?

Why not join a new fitness group with mums of toddlers & pregnant women in mind?

Easy-to-do exercises with qualified (& pregnant!) instructor

Meet 10.00am Tuesdays at the play park on Volunteer Way throughout the summer holidays.

Babies & toddlers in pushchairs more than welcome.

Please call 07843 761 286 to confirm your place (£2 per session) and if weather is uncertain- free drink & snack for toddlers

Mairi Clare Dunlin

18 Coxwell Road - 1/7/05

My response to "Devil's Advocate" (no name again I notice!). Firstly, I must point out that the comments below are mine, David Reynolds (I do put my name up there!) I am not arrogant enough to suggest I speak on behalf of every resident on the Orchard Hill Estate.

However, being a very pragmatic sort of chap I tend to deal in facts rather than emotions and these seem to be blatantly obvious to me. I reiterate: "That this land will be developed is now beyond debate". It's been Approved! Passed! Accepted! How many other ways can I say it? I don't like it any more than Mr/Mrs Advocate and likewise feel for the occupants of the immediately adjacent houses in Coxwell Road.

However, if it must proceed does it not make sense to support an option that has the least adverse impact on the community as a whole? I'm not convinced that Mr/Ms Advocate knows the area that well as he/she would know full well that for some residents of the Orchard Hill Estate it is "very much in their back yard".

Furthermore for the residents of the house in Elm Road whose property is less than one foot away from the house to be demolished, who is going to tell them that they will be only "marginally affected"?

With reference to "protection of investment", in my conversations with residents on the Estate I have NEVER had a single comment about the affect on the value of properties. This is about quality of life, safety and comfort. No one is "selling out".

Mr/Ms Advocate I half expected someone would make this response. No doubt you have our own reasons for taking your stand. However I notice also that you present no viable alternative. Now, wouldn't that be constructive?

David Reynolds
01367 243663

Web Blog for Faringdon ++ - 31/12/05

I've just started a blog (that is, an online diary) about my writing and the life of Faringdon, including, on a regular basis, some fiction about our town.

The aim is, as always, to put Faringdon on the map.

It's at: <http://paulcornell.blogspot.com/>

Paul Cornell

Ed: Thanks Paul - this will add another dimension to Faringdon goings on

New Year Resolutions - 31/12/05

Now is the time for those New Years Resolutions. What will yours be ?

Whatever it is the chances are you won't keep it for more than a week and then you will find a valid (in your eyes) reason to abandon it . Here are a few to consider with the reasons and excuses thrown in. How about adding your own...

You don't have to keep them !!

Stop smoking.. Why? Because ...it's expensive, it damages your health and it makes you smell like an ashtray But... You can afford it (lucky you), you could stop if you wanted to (could you really ?) and no-one has proved to your satisfaction that it causes Lung Cancer, Emphysema and Heart Failure

Cut down on the drinking..Why ? Because... it's expensive, it damages your health and it is the cause of far too many unnecessary accidents. But you can afford it (lucky you), you could cut down if you wanted to (could you really ?) you never drink and drive and anyway you're a much better driver after a couple of drinks .

Reduce you weight this year..Why ? Because if you don't obesity will be next years problem. But eating is one of your main pleasures (sad) anyway he/she like you 'cuddly'.

Start using this website to air your grievances. Why ? Because most of the 'Powers That Be' do take notice (though they don't like to admit it) But.. you know for a fact that most of the 'Powers That Be' are still having difficulty coping with such innovations as electric light, colour TV and mobile phones.

Stop writing sanctimonious twaddle like this. Why ? because it irritates far too many people. But..(in my case) I enjoy it and you don't have to read it.

But if you are still with me..

HAPPY NEW YEAR HGM (Name Supplied)

Folly Lights - 31/12/05

I've enjoyed looking at the changing coloured lights at various times. It makes me feel good about Faringdon.

Thank you.

Mike Heathcoat

A favour - 30/12/05

I would like to request a favour from other residents of Faringdon.

On the 16th of December my 6 year old son left his bike, which was old but well loved, outside Dawn's Barber shop. We were in the shop for a short time but during that time his bike was taken. He was very upset and I was very disappointed since I feel that we live in a small town where people are known to each other and can be trusted.

The bike is silver in colour and has Pacific Hammer written on the side.

If anyone sees this bike could they please let me know through these pages.

Please lets stop this type of thing happening, we should not have to accept this in our community.

Thank you
Mandy James

Hello everyone - 23/12/05

Firstly, a big thank you to Hil's and Gene for keeping this site fresh. Now, I have not visited here for some time, and there seems to be a lack of humour about the site, always very informative of course that goes without saying, but I have always felt that this site was like a good local newspaper, everything from serious issues right down to the cartoons, where has all the fun stuff gone?

OK we had the serious debate about the folly lift, (I still prefer the ferry boats in the town centre) and I assume that everyone in Orchard hill has now moved to other parts of Christendom as its all gone quiet on the building front (they said it would be all over by Christmas, this time they seem to be right).

The poor old Tourist information has now ended up in no mans land, where you can hear the cries of "we're over here" but we still can't quite manage to reach them.

Petes light, once again shows us how to get home to Faringdon from villages on foggy nights, and seems to blind others on clear one's.

I still think the statues in the park at this time of year could be made into a Nativity scene, aided by Pete's lights of course as the star, a few tea towels on their heads etc, I'm sure you get the picture.

Of course the battle of the slurry trucks was won, but now it appears we will be part of several flight paths, so the poor folk of Faringdon are still going to be shat upon, this time around though, from a great height, it does seem sometimes that we are always in the cack, it just varies in depth!

Still as proven many times in the past, we Faringdonians are a feisty lot, and I'm sure that in 2006 this site will be the sounding board for all us angry, cynical, idiotic, opinionated, hard done by and occasional praising folk. I look forward to it, bring it on.....by the way, what ever happened to the folly cat? now there was a great rival to HGM- so many questions, so little time.....and I still haven't bought the presents.

Oh dear oh dear

Merry Christmas, everyone!

Jim Horton

Christmas Lights - 22/12/05

We, and by that I mean mostly my 9,8 and 3 year old children love the Folly tower lights. In fact we love any Christmas lights!

We have a great time looking at all the street displays, the big christmas tree, the shop window lights and of course the wonderful efforts by the residents of Faringdon.

My 3 year old however is waiting for the return of the magical crane, and is most adamant that it WILL return even though we have been along Swan Lane to show her all the completed houses !

Merry Christmas!

Maria Timms

Folly Lights - 22/12/05

I've just strolled along Park road to see the Folly Tower Lights- I liked them - though I couldn't quite tell what the shapes were - except the purple star (must go to the optician in the New Year)

So thank you to Peter White (I guess?) once again, plus a plea for a beacon again one year - now that was impressive, and so pleasing to see the countryside lit up as the light revolved.

You've started a tradition, Peter - for me much more pleasing than the normal town and street Christmas decorations - but then I am a bah humbug sort of Christmas person

Gene Webb

I suggest those who find the lights distracting when they're driving, to concentrate on the road and not look at them!!

Seasons Greetings - 22/12/05

Mike's information about the Gas Works in Coach Lane was informative but not very Christmassy. Richard's attempt to introduce a little controversy about the light on the Folly Tower was appreciated but his wife's problem when driving worried me so much that I couldn't bring myself to comment (apart from suggesting she wears sun glasses).

Yet at this time of year I feel that someone must be able to add an interesting seasonal message.

It doesn't have to be clever or even particularly humorous so what about it DR, JH or even our respected Ed.

In the absence of anything better all I can manage is..

Merry Christmas and a Happy 2006 to everyone who visits this website

Harry G Mitchell

Ed: Thanks Harry for all your contributions- I wish more people would write to us too

Folly Lights - 22/12/05

I was distracted too but the purple one that gave a star effect was most pleasing.

Name supplied

Voice coach wanted - 21/12/05

Can anyone suggest a good voice coach in Wantage, Grove, surrounding villages, SIV etc ????

Name supplied

Folly Tower Lights - 21/12/05

I like the lights on the Folly this year, but my wife thinks they are distracting when she's driving home from work. I thought I'd mention this in talking points in order to open a completely pointless debate on the subject.

Happy Christmas.

Richard Edgington

Gas main works London St/Coach Lane - 19/12/05

NOTICE OF CLOSURE FOR GAS MAIN REPLACEMENT WORKS

Notice has been given by Oxfordshire County Council and Wales and West Utilities that Coach Lane and London Street will be closed temporarily for essential replacement of ageing metal gas main pipes by modern plastic pipes as follows:

" Coach Lane work starts 3.1.06, road closed from 9.1.06 to 16.1.06 except for access.

" London St work starts 16.1.06, road closed until 27.2.06 except for access.

Diversions around the works will be clearly signposted.

Businesses will be open as usual and pedestrian access to shops and premises will be maintained at all times.

The work has been planned at this time to avoid the busy Christmas period.

A Press Release was issued by Wales and West Utilities on 16 December 2005.

Provided by Mike Heathcoat

Faringdon Arts Festival 2006 - 14/12/05

I've just retired as Events Director of the Faringdon Arts Festival, and I wanted to say, on my way out of the door, what a wonderful bunch of people the Committee, and the dozens of folk who worked in various departments, are.

Working on the Festival for the last two years has been one of the best experiences of my life, a tremendously satisfying time.

I'm sure the next Festival, over the weekend of 7-9 July, will be an absolute triumph, and I look forward to seeing everyone there.

FAF still needs people to help out, and I'd not only recommend doing so as great fun, I'd be happy to pass on details of any volunteers to the Committee.

Once again, thanks to everyone, and good luck for next year.

Paul Cornell

paulcornell@owlservice.freemove.co.uk

Parking - 14/12/05

At the risk of sending the folk of Faringdon into a complete frenzy of comment writing, and just before Christmas too, I would like to say how wonderful it is to see the local police taking such a positive line towards illegal parkers in Faringdon - namely issuing parking tickets!!!

I hope the local council will begin to see the benefit in terms of increased income from those using the designated car parks.

Name supplied

New sign on A420 - 13/12/05

Can someone explain the practical use of the new sign (which has replaced the perfectly adequate luminous bollard) at the end of London Street where it joins the A420?

Coming off the A420 from Oxford - I can only see it just before I drive into it! In my view it's an accident waiting to happen.

Will anyone join my campaign to reinstate the old bollard? Or at least get something which serves a useful purpose (more taxpayers money wasted)

Name supplied

P.S. On the other hand the Faringdon Christmas lights are most brilliant (quite literally!)

Remembrance Day - 13/12/05

I have been in few places where the Remembrance Sunday Act of Remembrance has been held with such reverence and respect as it is in Faringdon. Representatives of the whole community and of all the churches gather at the Parish Church for an hour long service of Remembrance, which includes the full formal Act of Remembrance with two minute silence at the traditional time of 11.00am.

I should emphasise that this is not a normal Sunday morning service, but is devoted entirely to the observation of Remembrance Day.

We are delighted to act as hosts to the community on this occasion that is important to all of us. The Act of Remembrance at the War Memorial in the Market Place follows at about 11.30am in addition to this.

I hope that those who wish to give Remembrance Day their fullest respect will join us not only in the Market Place, but also at the full Remembrance Service beforehand, where they will be very welcome.

Charlezs Draper, Vicar of All Saints Church

Happy Christmas - 9/12/05

A couple of weeks ago my wife and I spent a pleasant few days in Stratford. While we were there the Mayor switched on the Christmas Lights. To be honest I think he would have done it even if we hadn't been there. The ever increasing cost of the lights was mentioned and also the fact that of the 600 retailers in the area only 100 had made any contribution. It was made clear that future Christmas Decorations could be in jeopardy unless there was a radical change of heart.

This time last year I submitted an ironic letter which I signed Ebenezer Scrooge. It was intended to be a humorous 'Thank You' to the people who provided us with the Christmas Atmosphere in Faringdon but I also mentioned that our local supermarket seemed to have made no effort at all to add to the celebrations. In the Carter era Carols entertained the queues at the checkouts and there was even a Christmas Grotto for the kids. Unfortunately my attempt at humour was misunderstood by one or two regular contributors and as the website was out of action for a few days I was not able to dig my way out of the hole into which I had dropped myself.

This year I'll dispense with any attempt at humour and just say:

THANK YOU... to all those who contributed financially and otherwise to the Faringdon Festivities

THANK YOU... to Gene and Hilary for keeping www.faringdon.org going

THANK YOU ...to all the contributors who ensure that this website averages 100 visitors each day... even when they don't share my viewpoint (or my sense of humour)

Harry G Mitchell

15 Minute Club Party - 8/12/05

17/12/05, Faringdon Junior School, 7.30pm. Tickets £5 from Portwell Bar

Live music from :

Watt 4

Kyra

Jon lane

PowerTrain

Alex and Holly

Bobby Moore's Shorts

Naomi & Dominic Bullock and Hannah Rhodes

Proceeds in aid of Breast Cancer

Festive Faringdon - 6/12/05

To Trevor from The Nut Tree and the team who put Festive Faringdon together.

Congratulations on a wonderful and exciting event. The atmosphere in the Market Place on Saturday and the fair was excellent.

A lot of hard work and thought had gone in to this event. FAP's presence on Saturday was to provide the Mulled Wine, and the feed back we received from all our 'customers' on our stall was excellent.

Thank you and well done to you all.

Julie Farmer

Remembrance Sunday - 15/11/05

Please can someone explain why on Remembrance Sunday, Faringdon has the 11am two minute silence at 11:30am? It seems bizarre that a national occasion to mark the end of the 1st World War and commemorating the deaths of millions of servicemen, women and civilians in both world wars and in countless conflicts since has been put aside to fit in with some unknown timetable.

As an ex-member of the armed forces I am appalled and angry that a tradition that has been in place since 1919 is moved to a more "convenient" slot, presumably to accommodate the church service which could easily be held before or afterwards as almost every other town and village across the UK manages to do.

Remembrance Sunday is a national commemoration to respect the time when "the guns went silent, on the eleventh hour of the eleventh month." It is applicable to all denominations of Christianity, not just a select few. On behalf of the thirty of so people, several elderly or with small children waiting by the memorial from 10:30 on a cold day in November to pay their respects and attend a service which didn't happen until an hour later I wish to raise this as an important issue which should be considered prior to next year's parade.

Incidentally, is a loudspeaker so we could all hear the prayers and reading out of the question too?

Please lets restore this event to its rightful time and commemorate the date with the respect it requires.

Mel Taylor

Ed: Apologies for the delay in publishing this

TIC - 2/12/05

Yes, the Tourist Information Centre provides a valuable service.

Whenever I visit the TIC, which is quite frequently, there is always a steady stream of visitors and paying customers. And aside of visitors to the town perhaps what isn't appreciated by many is that the TIC provides an invaluable resource for local people.

The shelves are stacked with locally produced books and cards etc. that probably wouldn't have an alternative outlet if there was no TIC. The TIC also makes a fantastic contribution during the Faringdon Arts Festival pro-actively selling tickets.

Signage could be improved but this all comes down to funds....speaking of which...the question we should be asking is why is the Vale of White Horse District Council still paying rent on a building that the TIC vacated 6 months ago?

I thought the whole point was to save money!

David Reynolds

Ed: I've heard it said that the landlord, Faringdon Collection Trust, will not allow signage on the Pump House

The TIC - 1/12/05

Yes we do need to support it but the TIC needs to be visible, high profile and above all accessible, because the idea is, is that it should attract visitors, and not simply be dependent on its local supporters; the contributor who has struggled to access it with pushchair is flagging up a real issue; the staff are wonderful and what is on offer is first class and I am not knocking the principle of having a TIC in Faringdon but we do need to ensure it has the optimum conditions to flourish, given its current site!
Name supplied

Support for our saved TIC - 01/12/05

We are lucky to have a Tourist Information in Faringdon at all, due to running costs and let us not forget that we really are a very small town!
If we all support it as best we can, then hopefully it will survive and go on to develop into a prominent and permanent establishment bringing with it future tourism that we so need in Faringdon.
name supplied

Revitalised Railway Link - 01/12/05

a really excellent idea, especially for those without their own transport.
The Faringdon Community bus could easily have the timetable adjusted to link with the morning trains, I am sure, and perhaps some arrangement for afternoon returns.
I'm all for it! Katie Foot (currently in Toronto but shortly to return to Faringdon)
Katie Foot

The TIC - 01/12/05

I deeply resent some of the points raised by the last contributor; I simply questioned the value - I am not aware that I am small minded and I certainly did not set out to 'denigrate' or 'run down';
I've always considered it important to question, and since the public investment in the TIC is considerable I uphold my right to do so. I have no agenda and no axe to grind.
The points you make are important but you do yourself no credit by taking such aggressive tack.
name supplied

or not..... 30/11/05

As a relative newcomer to Faringdon I've found the move of the TIC a real pain. Previously I could just pop in whenever, and find out useful information for visiting friends and relatives (useful as I dont know the area myself).
After the move, it took me 2 weeks(!!) to find it again. Then I found I couldn't actually access it, as I had a pushchair and there are a set of steep stairs and a heavy door in my way.
There is a 'disabled entrance' with lift, but I havent worked out how to access this without going up in to the TIC first.
So as much as it is useful, it is also inaccessible and frustrating to use, as well as impossible to find!!
name supplied

.Let's hear it for the TIC! - 30/11/05

The Tourist Information Centre hasn't lost its usefulness just because it has moved up the street. What it has lost is its visibility. The services, - (vastly more than advice on local walks) are still available, and it is still busy. The TIC does not simply provide information about local events and local places to go - it provides details of accommodation countrywide, travel bookings, events information, gifts, cards, and lots more.
Fortunately it's scope isnt as narrow as the outlook of some of the people it serves.
I agree with the last correspondant's comments, however, with regard to the signage, in particular. It could be improved at relatively little cost, I imagine, - at present it is amateurish and uninviting, mainly, one suspects because the TIC is not seen as a commercial enterprise, and is expected to provide its resources for next to nothing. Tourism has great potential in this area, and you will go a long way to find staff as helpful and friendly as those in the local office. The TIC should be supported and developed, not denigrated and run down.
H Taylor

TIC - more..... - 29/11/05

I too wonder about the value of having our own tourist office; whereas before I always called in to see what was going on because the office was very prominent in the market square (and it did get a good share of the passing trade), the current location is hidden away - it doesn't have the same potential to draw people in; the signage is dreadful and there is no 'corporate' feel about the place certainly from the outside.
name supplied

Tourist Information Centre - is it needed? - 29/11/05

Is the tourist info centre really needed in Faringdon? How much is it costing us and how often is it used?
I went in to ask about local walks and found I got better advice at White Horse Country Wear.
I also tend to pick up leaflets in the library for local events and places to go.
Do others think this is a good way to spend Faringdon's limited resources?
name supplied

Faringdon Arts Festival 2006 - help required - 28/11/05

The chap who books the guests for Faringdon Arts Festival is seeking to retire from his post, but doesn't feel able to until he's found someone to fill his shoes. It's a very rewarding hobby, and you'd be part of a team that's great fun and very supportive.

Also, the outgoing organiser would be on hand to advise, and to hand over all the information on where previous guests were to be found.

The 2006 Festival runs from 7-9 July, so there'd be plenty of time to learn the ropes with everyone helping you out.

If you're interested, **contact**

Paul Cornell on paulcornell@owlservice.freemove.co.uk

Market Place Paving. - 28/11/05

Since the Market Place was repaved, many of us have commented about how good it looks.

However, there is a problem when, like today, 27th November, it is wet and icy. The paving looks just the same but is like an ice rink and deadly to the slightly infirm (not me, although I did fall).

Can it be arranged for the area to be gritted or salted before someone less able to recover from falls is seriously hurt?

Steve (not very infirm) Wright

Faringdon Walkcards - 25/11/05

I Used walkcard 7 of your 8 card pack on Saturday 19/11. Excellent ! . Ideal for the area. Well thought out . Well presented. Easy to use. No bad points. your cards should prove popular with the 'occasional' walker
Good value in their laminated packs. Found detailed directions round farms etc very good . I couldn't get lost no matter how hard I tried !. I mentioned the packs to Abingdon TIC . They thought the packs were a good idea for their area. It would be interesting to know how well this format of presenting walks would go down in my usual walking area of The Lakes and Yorkshire Dales. Hope you sell lots of packs,
Peter Richardson

These are available from **Faringdon Tourist Information Centre** (The Pump House, Market Place, Faringdon)

ROTARY CHRISTMAS COLLECTION with THOMAS THE TANK ENGINE & FATHER

CHRISTMAS - 25/11/05

MONDAY 5 DECEMBER - Shrivenham

TUESDAY 6 DECEMBER - Shrivenham

WEDNESDAY 7 DECEMBER - FARINGDON Stanford Road area, Berners Way, Tuckers Road, Nursery View

THURSDAY 8 DECEMBER - FARINGDON Highworth Road area, Westland Road, Orchard Hill, The Pines etc.

FRIDAY 9 DECEMBER - Lechlade

SATURDAY 10 DECEMBER - Lechlade

MONDAY 12 DECEMBER - Stanford in the Vale

TUESDAY 13 DECEMBER - Southmoor

WEDNESDAY 14 DECEMBER - FARINGDON & GREAT COXWELL Coleshill Drive etc., Leamington Drive, Fernham Road, Folly View Road, Great Coxwell
THURSDAY 15 DECEMBER - FARINGDON Park Road area, Marines Drive, Town End Road, Marlborough Gardens, Volunteer Way
FRIDAY 16 DECEMBER - Clanfield
MONDAY 19 DECEMBER - Watchfield
TUESDAY 20 DECEMBER - Uffington, Fernham, Little Coxwell
WEDNESDAY 21 DECEMBER - FARINGDON Pye Street, Goodlake Avenue, Southampton Street etc

Gloucester Street Car Park - 19/11/05

..... is a useful amenity but it is never full, despite the fact that 30p/hour is not expensive if you want to take advantage of the facilities on offer in Faringdon.
But - .Law-abiding parents collecting children from school can run up a bill of over £6.00 /month and that is expensive. The alternative is to try to find a parking spot in Gloucester St, which is not easy, or to use the car park without buying a ticket which is too wicked to contemplate.

Some towns provide a limited number of free 30 minute parking spaces in their car parks so why could we not have a similar system in Faringdon.
Incidentally there are over 100 hits per day on this website and if a few of you browsers supported this idea, the powers that be might take notice.

It would be a popular innovation and would cost almost nothing. How could any planners turn down such a worthy and cheap idea?

name supplied

Ed: I vaguely remember that VWHDC offer some sort of deal for the to/fro school traffic - maybe worth contacting them- 01235 520202

New performing Arts classes for children - 12/11/05

Modern Dance, Acro Gym, break dancing and coming soon: Team Gym/Circus skills/Team Building/Drumming
At Faringdon Junior School

Please call: Carolyn Murphy or Kim Paul 01235 225787

[More information](#)

Re-opening the old rail branch line from Uffington to Wicklesham Quarry- feasibility - 30/10/05

Faringdon Town Council have set up a working party, led by John Gillman, to investigate the possibility of opening the railway in Faringdon.

How wonderful it would be!!

Read [the vision statement](#) and see the [proposal on a map](#)

John has already made contact with the appropriate person at Oxfordshire CC, inviting him to come over to Faringdon to discuss the feasibility

Gene Webb, for John Gillman

Faringdon Area project - 25/10/05

There are many projects happening- promoting tourism, strengthening the Faringdon economy, developing recreational activities, including facilities for the youth of the town - AND opening the railway!!

Read about it all in the latest progress report and minutes on www.faringdon.org/tafap.htm. If you want to join the forum to get involved and be kept in touch, complete the membership form too

Nuisance phone calls - 25/10/05

In reply to the '0800 reverse' I had written about it earlier in the year as we had had some problems. I recently spoke to BT and all they could offer was a service called 'choose to refuse' which is not free, you have to pay a charge every month.

But it was no good for 0800 because the number doesn't come up on phone! The BT girl was sorry she couldn't

help and couldn't offer me anything else to stop these calls.

Perhaps a few letters the BBC's Watchdog programme will help! Surely we are not the only town to be plagued by 0800 reverse.

Name supplied

18 Coxwell Road - United we stood? - 25/10/05

Never let an (attempted?) witty, thinly veiled personal attack get in the way of the facts....eh HGM?
Makes good reading but I will stick with the pragmatic stance if that's OK.

You miss out an important fact. There are TWO proposals that have been APPROVED. One via Coxwell Road to build 9 houses and one via Orchard Hill to build (a minimum of) 16 houses. The latter was approved first and potentially affected over 300 residents on the Orchard Hill Estate. However, despite huge opposition, it was APPROVED...hence the FACT; "That this land will be developed is now beyond debate".

That statement doesn't imply a switch to support another proposal...it means that we all have to understand that it is now cast in stone that this land will be developed in some shape or form.

So, presented with two options what is the best way to proceed? In my view it must surely be to try to ensure that the development that moves forward is the one that has the least adverse impact on the most number of people.

I do sometimes wonder to what extent emotions obscure the facts in this whole saga!

David Reynolds

Nuisance phone calls - 24/10/05

We don't publish any posts for which there is no contact information, but for the the person who wrote about a nuisance phone call, here is some information:

These nuisance calls come via a so called 'service' known as 0800 reverse. This enables anyone from any number to make a call, without revealing their identity, and you cannot hear the caller until you accept the call, thereby agreeing to pay for it.

I too have had unwanted calls from 0800 reverse, several, in the small hours. There is no indication of who is calling, so those of us with , for example children who may be in trouble, have little option but to answer.

'0800 reverse' refused to give me the caller's number when I contacted them, so I was unable to ascertain where the calls were from until they appeared on my BT bill, and had to be paid for.

'0800 reverse' make a connection charge of £2.50 addition to the call charge.

There is no good reason to withhold a caller's number, and '0800 reverse' is making a profit out of nuisance calls while maintaining that it is offering a legitimate service. I complained, but BT, and 0800 reverse are quite unconcerned - each, of course, profiting from this unnecessary 'service'.

I think if anything is to be done to curb this nuisance - it must be through a concerted effort by a number of affected people.

ed. FO

Update on 18 Coxwell Road ..United we Stood...Divided we didn't -

24/10/05

DR reminds us that the Faringdon Market Scene will now be enhanced by outside seating following unanimous support from Faringdonians....United, we stood !

Earlier in the year we were faced with the prospect of sludge lorries polluting our streets and this proposal was withdrawn following unanimous opposition by Faringdonians...United, we stood !

Also earlier in the year unanimous opposition to the Development in the garden of 18 Coxwell Road continued to prevent it being permitted...United, we stood !

Unfortunately when one opposer to the new development was offered a solution which would obviate any disruption to him he offered his personal gratuitous view which was "That this land will be developed is now

beyond debate. ! Divided, we no longer stood !

The situation at the moment is that Outline Planning permission has been given to build 9 houses with access from Coxwell Road and the devastating effect on the families in 16 and 20 will, of course, be the subject of Crocodile tears. .

It will be interesting to see what 9 houses looks like if they are built and it will be no surprise to see that 9 becomes 9+?. WATCH THIS SPACE

Harry G Mitchell

Outside Seating, Market Square - 21/10/05

Thank goodness that common sense and public opinion does win sometimes!

Congratulations to Darren and Tracey on winning your campaign to keep the chairs outside.

The trilogy of the Coffee House, Portwell Bar and latterly The Bell with people chatting and laughing outside does so much to lift the face of Faringdon on a sunny day (and perhaps a few less sunny days too as we approach winter!).

I hope the original complainant, whoever you are ;-), can now get to the point where you can also enjoy outside catering life in Faringdon!

Regards

David Reynolds

Office Furniture and equipment available - free- 20/10/05

This offer is open to local schools, community centres, hospitals, hospices, nurseries, charities, etc.

Visitor chairs (fixed legs).approximately 120 chairs - ideal for a local community hall.

Task chairs (with 5 star caster base).

Assorted desks.

Assorted meeting tables.

Computer/printer tables.

Metal and wooden cupboards.

Metal filing cabinets.

Pedestals.

Electronic white boards.

White boards.

Notice boards.

Over head projectors and screens.

Electric fans. Electric lamps.

Glassware (for school science labs?)

Planters and plants.

I would like to encourage you all now to consider local 'bodies' that you may be in contact with that come under the categories of either education, health care or a charitable group.

If you know of any, or you can ask them, that would appreciate any of the items listed above, and they can come to site to remove them their selves, please can you send me a note.

The note should state:

1/ The local body that you are nominating.

2/ A few short sentences on what that body does.

3/ Specifically what items, and how many of each, they would like.

4/ Why the items are required or how they will be used.

All requests will be considered favourably. We will confirm if the items are available and will arrange, via Johnson Controls, for the receiving bodies to come onto site w/c Monday 21st November, to view and remove what they would like.

Please can you send in any requests by Friday 11th November.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to give me a call.

Rachel Kenward

Tel:- 01235 46 9207

e-mail:-Rachel.Kenward@Infineum.com

Outside Seating, Market Square - 20/10/05

Thank you to everyone who has provided support and encouragement in our campaign to save the outside seating provided for all outside The Faringdon Coffee House and around The Portwell this summer. As most of you know, due to one complaint, the license we already had approved for the seating became under threat. Following the complaint the license came under review.

Following so much support and encouragement for it to stay both Town Council and County Council have approved the seating arrangement in its current amount and location.

In celebration of the saving of the seating, due to popular demand and in thanks to everyone for their support, please enjoy the seating throughout the year with the help of the **outdoor heating** we have provided.

The thousands of signatures we received on the petition have overwhelmed us. Thank you to everyone who supported us and thank you for your much appreciated continued custom. ENJOY!
Tracy and Darren Rutter

Re. Loose Ends - 16/10/05

As of this morning there has been no trace of the stolen ponies. My granddaughter goes to that riding school every Sunday morning. Those were the two best ponies and she is very upset as are the owners. Jane Boulton

Loose Ends...Anybody... 14/10/05

I don't care what happens to Frankie and Danny in Coronation Street. BUT.. What happened to Ruth Mitchell's cat ?
Were the stolen ponies found ?
Has anyone claimed the Parakeets?
Has the Arts Festival runner-up been traced ?
HGM

Prize winner - Faringdon Arts Festival - 6/10/05

Faringdon Arts Festival are seeking the child who came second in the competition set by the visiting Dandy artist over the weekend of the Festival. Somehow the prizes weren't given out on the day, and while the winner and the third place runner-up have now had their Dandy-related merchandise, we still can't find the second place runner-up. So if that's your child, please get in touch with Paul Cornell, paulcornell@owlservice.freeserve.co.uk

Faringdon under a new flight path - 3/10/05

It seems that the Civil aviation authority are intending to have a flight path over Faringdon - including Stanford, Lechlade, Coxwell, Coleshill

The CAA is consulting on its proposals until 7 November 2005.

Objections should be sent to Mr JD Benoist, CAA House, Kingsway, London; 020 7453 6550; westend@dap.caa.co.uk.

See cpreoxon.org.uk for a press release with map and more information also

[NATS/MOD JOINT FUTURE AIRSPACE DEVELOPMENT TEAM WEST END AIRSPACE CHANGE PROPOSAL](#) a Civil Aviation document giving technical information and noise level estimates

Thanks to Peter for passing the information on
Gene Webb

Stolen Ponies - 29/9/05

On the night of Friday 23rd Sept. two children's ponies were stolen from Miss Goodwin's fields off the A420 at Gt.Coxwell. near Faringdon. The gates remained padlocked. The wire was cut and hurdles were used to load

them.

The owners of these ponies (aged 8 yrs) are desperately upset.

One pony is 12.2 hands - a grey mare, the other pony 12.2 hands - a chestnut gelding with a white blaze, aged 30yrs.

Please speak to the police and Miles Saunders on 01367 240558 if you have seen this loading or can help.

Parakeets - have you lost any? - 29/9/05

Two parrots or parakeets have been seen on Canada Lane this morning (Tuesday 27th September) if anyone has lost them from their aviary.

They were on the telegraph posts near the allotments

Teresa

Health Walks in Faringdon - 29/9/05

There is likely to be a 'taster' health walk in Faringdon sometime in the future. Look out for notices

[More information on progress for Faringdon Health Walks](#)

VWHDC Freecycle Group - 22/9/05

Got an old sofa, redundant mattress or baby clothes that are too good to take to the tip but not worth selling?

Looking for spare building materials, a bean bag, an old video?

Then you need to join Freecycle, which has just arrived in the Vale of the White Horse.

The Freecycle Network is an Internet community of local people who are giving (and getting) good stuff for free in their local area. The goal is to keep usable items out of the rubbish, keep streets and alleyways clean and save our countryside from being overtaken by landfill sites that no one wants in their own backyard.

Anyone with access to a computer can log on to **Error! Hyperlink reference not valid.**, click on the region where they live (UK) and click on a link to their local community Freecycle site.

There are currently more than 2900 Freecycle sites worldwide, with 150 in the UK alone.

The Vale of the White Horse site has just started and is looking for members.

The site is moderated by a local volunteer who will be building community involvement and making the site fun and productive.

The address is: <http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/valewhitehorsefreecycle/>

It's FREE to join, and everything offered on the group must be FREE, legal, and appropriate for all ages. There is no bartering, trading, swapping or selling allowed. Apart from that, there's no limit on what you can offer or request, from furniture, toys and computers to greenhouses, cars and the kitchen sink!

All we ask is that new members place an OFFER before they request items.

We're changing the world, one gift at a time.

Reduce, reuse, recycle - and Freecycle! - pass it on.

Folly Park Improvements - 22/9/05

A group of people have got together to plan (and make) improvements to the Folly Park. The next meeting is 7pm. 15th October, in the old Town Hall.

If you're interested in getting involved, contact thamesandchilterns@bctv.org.uk

[See the minutes of the meeting 8/9/05 to see the ideas being discussed](#)

Re Cobbles, Seating, Market Square - 19/9/05

So far as I understand it, this is the final bit of the market square improvement program.

When the original work was carried out, the Portwell was surrounded by scaffolding due to the bus incident.

Now that it has been rebuilt, the cobbles are being taken up and then relaid.

Simon Holmes

Ed: Thanks

Canada Lane development - 19/9/05

There is to be a Planning and Development Committee meeting on 26th September 2005 at 6.30pm at the Guildhall, Abbey Close, Abingdon to discuss the planning application for the Tectronics site (GFA/19230). They are asking if anyone wishes to speak at the meeting and that they be informed of their intent to do so before midday Friday 23 September.

Name Supplied

Breast Screening - 19/9/05

A mobile breast screening unit will be at the Faringdon Health Centre week commencing 10/10 (precise day not known) for about 6 weeks.

This has been made possible by FAR who made sure that the money from the Drew Legacy was used to benefit the people of Faringdon.

Colin Desborough, FAR chairman

[Read the full story](#)

A Trafalgar Day Dinner in Faringdon? - 19/9/05

To provide for a local commemoration of Trafalgar Day (Friday 21st October), the Faringdon Area Visitor Group has suggested to Glenn Geldard, the new licensee of The Bell, that he put on a Dinner for Trafalgar Day.

His restaurant is being refurbished at the moment and by then will have been re-launched as Floyd's Brasserie - actually Thursday 17th September.

Contact Robert Dyer if you're interested

robertf.dyer@virgin.net, phone 01865 820282

[More information](#)

Canada Lane Traffic - 19/9/05

I understand a traffic impact survey of some description has been commissioned by Tetronics which is rather conservative in terms of the predicted increase in traffic on Canada Lane (as a consequence of the planned building);

this will do much to set back the efforts of some of our community who are supportive of the need to ensure greater safety for the children who cross Canada Lane to get to and from school.

Alice

Gloucester Street

Faringdon Arts Festival 2006 - 19/9/05

Friday 7 July - Sunday 9 July 2006

Put the dates in your diary!!

Projects in Faringdon - 19/9/05

Calling anyone with projects relating to Faringdon and the surrounding villages!

Faringdon Area Project are holding a cafe in the Old Town Hall, Faringdon on Saturday 24th September from 10.00am to 2.00pm.

If you would like us to publicise your project please call Julie Farmer on 0845 8591720 or email

anna.marlow@fap.org.uk. Hope to see you there!!

Anna and Julie FAP

Cobbles, Seating, Market Square - 17/9/05

Does anyone know what they're doing in the seating area outside the Pump House. Looks as if the cobbles have been taken up- but what is to be put down??

Who has commissioned it??

Who is paying for it?(us of course, indirectly)

Why is it being done??

Gene Webb

Faringdon Projects - 17/9/05

Calling anyone with projects relating to Faringdon and the surrounding villages!
Faringdon Area Project are holding a cafe in the Old Town Hall, Faringdon on Saturday 24th September from 10.00am to 2.00pm.

If you would like us to publicise your project please call Julie Farmer on 0845 8591720 or email

anna.marlow@fap.org.uk. Hope to see you there!!

Anna and Julie FAP

Housing in Canada Lane - 15/9/05

My son attends Faringdon Infant School and in this weeks schools newsletter they have informed parents that they have discovered there is an application for 24 flats on Tetronics land and they are concerned about the effect this will have on traffic and access in Canada Lane so near to the school.

The newsletter also states that the school office has a petition to sign for those of you that are concerned ,I shall definitely be signing it.

Name supplied

Housing in Canada Lane - 8/9/05

I appreciate the serious comments on this website and enjoy the spoof items about such things as Cable cars and ferry boats but I have to admit I can't decide which category the item about building 24 houses with an access to Canada Lane belongs.

Please Gene enlighten me(and anyone else who uses Canada Lane)...Should I be laughing or crying ?

HGM

ED: *I guess it depends whether you're the owner of the land(laughing) or concerned about more traffic in Canada Lane (crying??)*

Housing Development in Canada Lane - 9/9/05

I've just heard that a development of 24 houses (36 car parking spaces) to be built on the Tetronics site in Canada Lane, is being discussed.

I wonder how the road safety aspects are being considered - I understand road access will be where the current access to Tetronics is (almost opposite the Infant School), with the entrance onto Lechlade road by the Duke of Wellington being closed.

Anyone know anymore??

Gene Webb

The Car Pool works!!! - 8/9/05

Just to let you all know that the car pool page works!

I was contacted by Andrew and I drove us to Didcot this morning and will drive us back tonight.

Despite some debate about the best route (mine!), in car entertainment (Dolly Parton v Radio 4) we both felt very smug - Andrew in particular for not having to fork out £3.70 a day in parking tickets as well as fuel!

I urge you all, especially in the light of fuel about to top £1 a litre to think green and think car pool

Mel Taylor

Ed: *Excellent news - let's hope that more people will get involved*

Youth Meeting - 8/9/05

There is a Youth Meeting being held on the **15 September 2005** to discuss the Youth Fair in October and any other youth projects that are currently in place or people would like to put in place.

I have become aware that there are a number wonderful projects in Faringdon and our surrounding Villages that could potentially help each other and then assist other projects and some support, advise and may be additional volunteers or contacts.

For more information about the meeting please contact Julie Farmer, FAP Managing Co-ordinator

I look forward to hearing from you.

Unit 3 RAC, Park Road, Faringdon, Oxfordshire, SN7 7BP.

Phone: 0845 859 1720

Email: Julie.Farmer@fap.org.uk

Party in the Park - 6/9/05

A huge thank you to the great work that the organisers and volunteers gave to the Party in the Park at Great Coxwell on Saturday.

It was a lovely family atmosphere with fab music, amazing fireworks and lots of fun attractions for the children
Well done to you all!

Laura Bishop

Electric Blanket Testing - 3/9/05

VWHDC offer free testing of electric blankets at various venues. In Faringdon it will be Friday Sept 9th pm
We run the event on a bookings only basis (each blanket can take up to 5 minutes to check).

Bookings can be made by phoning Trading Standards (01865 815607) during office hours (there is also
Minicom 01865 815350)

When people book, they are told where the tests take place. If people want to bring several blankets – either
their neighbours' or their own – we ask that they let us know when they book, so that enough time is allowed.
Dot Morrison Health

Development Officer Vale of White Horse Council
01235 520202 x554 dot.morrison@whitehorsedc.gov.uk

Faringdon News - 1/9/05

Some of you get an email from me occasionally letting you know about events and issues in Faringdon. I have
had many of the recent email returned to me as undeliverable- rather more than usual- so if you've changed
your email address and want to continue to receive these emails, do tell me your new address.

If you don't get these emails and want to know more - do get in touch and I'll send you an example. (emails are
sent blind, so your email address is not spread around)

genewebb@nildram.co.uk

DREW Legacy - congratulations - 1/9/05

I have just read the story of the Drew Legacy - and would like to say a huge 'thankyou' to Colin Desborough
and the FAR for pursuing this matter.

Dealing with bureaucracy (not to mention the 'not invented here' syndrome) requires huge reserves of tenacity
and stamina, and we owe a debt of gratitude to Colin et al for taking the time and trouble to do this on our
behalf.

Hilary Taylor

DREW Legacy saved by the FAR - 1/9/05

The information about the Drew Legacy will soon be forced off the screen by trivial items like this but before it
does go I would like to pay tribute to the members of the FAR who, I know, had quite a battle to ensure that the
money was finally used in the way that Sidney Drew intended way back in 1989.

Thank you and well done FAR

HGM

Drew Legacy - 1/9/05

Faringdon Association of Residents (FAR) have successfully rescued £50000 left to Faringdon by Sidney Drew
in 1989. The money seemed to get lost in various National Health organisations, and was destined to be put
into a national 'pot'.

FAR have prevented this from happening and the money has been spent to benefit the people of Faringdon -
as was intended by Mr Drew.

The money has been used to fund equipment for the Faringdon Responders, equipment for community nurses,
AND a connection at the health centre for a mobile breast screening unit.

Women in Faringdon will no longer have to travel to Wantage.

Colin Desborough

Chairman of FAR
[Read the full story](#)

The Sheriff's men - As I walked out one summer evening - 30/8/05

Those who went to the concert at All Saints on Saturday will know that this was a wonderful musical occasion. Four hugely talented young men (2 tenors, 1 counter tenor and 1 bass) sang a range of songs from medieval England to 20th century barbershop. They met at Nottingham University, but William Burns went to school in Faringdon, and his parents still live here.

Their performance was excellent - pure pleasure to listen to and watch
They raised £550 for Christian Aid

FAP Coffee Morning - 30/8/05

On Saturday 24 September, Faringdon Area Project (FAP) will be holding a coffee morning in the Old Town Hall, Faringdon from 10am to 2pm.

We would like to invite all residents of Faringdon and the surrounding villages to come along on the Saturday to find out what FAP has been doing over the last few years.

After undertaking the health check three years ago a number of initiatives were discussed to help further develop our remarkable town and its Hinterland. Since then, with the generous help of a number of dedicated volunteers, the Town Council and the Vale of the White Horse District Council a wide variety of projects have been undertaken.

These projects are in various stages of development and with your help and support will continue to go from strength to strength. Please come along for a coffee and find out more about us - we'd love to see you!

Julie and Anna Tel 0845 859 1720 or 07899994081

Ed: Julie is the new FAP coordinator and Anna the administrator

Youth fair in Faringdon

On Saturday 15 October 2005 FAP, in conjunction the Town Council, the Vale of the White Horse District Council and a number of organisations in Faringdon and the surrounding villages, will be hosting a Youth Fair in The Corn Exchange from 10am to 2pm.

The Fair is intended to introduce new opportunities to young people in and around Faringdon. We would like to invite all residents of Faringdon and its Hinterland, especially those between 11 and 25 years of age, to come along on the day to find out what activities may be of interest to them in the area.

A number of local organisations have been invited to take part, all of which would welcome new members of all ages and abilities. For those interested in skating there will be a mobile skate park in the town centre on that day. Please look out for our adverts to find out more.

Julie and Anna Tel 0845 859 1720 / 07899 994081

Faringdon Arts and Community Centre project - 28/8/05

There is a perceived need in Faringdon for a flexible multi purpose Arts & Community Centre, to serve both the town and surrounding villages.

The questionnaire aims to consult potential users as to their individual needs with a view to taking this project forward.

If you or your group have a need for performance, exhibition - or any sort of community space, please do complete the attached survey.

[Arts and Community Centre User needs assessment survey](#)

Carolyn Taylor

alanandcarolyn@btopenworld.com

New access to the Folly - 27/8/05

Thames Water and Faringdon House Estate have negotiated an easement for TW to drive to the Reservoir for their business recordings. So in return, TW have agreed to put in a hardcore track (It is not a footpath and OCC do not have any interest in this).

The track will start at the Stanford Rd entrance (not the footpath one, but further along), and around the corner from the entrance will be two 10' wooden gates which will be locked and used only for TW, for farming

operations and those with need to get to the Folly, ie the Trustees and electrician.
Disabled drivers etc will be given access on Folly open days.

Alongside these gates will be a 4' gate open at all times for walkers and their dogs. The track will follow the hedgeline up to the Folly, along left to the reservoir. It will be dug deep enough that there should be no water erosion and the track will not be washed away as it presently is.

This should be a benefit to all users of the track, and we hope that walkers will respect the agricultural crops growing alongside the track. Hopefully it might prevent flytipping

I understand the legal side is almost signed by all, and TW will have access to instate the track within a week or two

Daphne Saunders

Stanford Fire - 24/8/05

My wife and I have a lot of bus tokens which we don't need. I know many others don't really need theirs. Would the powers-that-be be prepared to buy them back and donate the money to the Stanford Fund? Collection boxes in Lloyds Bank etc would be a fitting resting place for a reminder of the good old days when The Vale was able to afford such generosity
HGM

Fire at Stanford - 25/8/05

I was sad to read of the fire at Stanford-in-the-Vale last weekend and was pondering what Faringdon could do to assist. Insurance cash always takes weeks to come through so how about a collection?
Perhaps we could donate bedding, towels, pots and pans too?
Can anyone volunteer their home/office as a collection point?
What are other reader's thoughts?
Mel Taylor

Lost watch - 23/8/05

I've found a watch at Badbury Clump.
If you have lost one contact me on 01793 496721

Health Walks - 22/8/05

WANT TO FEEL FITTER, HAPPIER AND HEALTHIER????
THEN COME TO A MEETING ABOUT THE NEW FARINGDON HEALTH WALKS SCHEME.
HEALTH WALKS ARE:
- FUN
- FREE
- A GREAT WAY TO IMPROVE YOUR HEALTH AND FITNESS
- SUITABLE FOR ANY AGE GROUP

HEALTH WALKS ARE LED BY TWO TRAINED LEADERS TO ENSURE SAFETY AND ENJOYMENT FOR ALL.

OPEN PUBLIC MEETING ON **THURSDAY 22ND SEPTEMBER 7.00 FARINGDON BAPTIST CHURCH**

Interested but can't make the meeting?

Ring Health Visitors

Lorraine Lumsden or Kim Campbell 01367 245417 to find out more

Folly Park development - 22/8/05

The Folly Park Fun Day and Consultation was a great success - we had about 100 people attending and enjoying the activities, and lot's of ideas were discussed and stuck on the model!

Thanks to everyone who helped plan and run the event and thanks to all the people who came along!

I would like to invite you to our next meeting, which will be held on **Thursday, 8th September at 7-9pm at**

Faringdon Town Hall We will look at all the different ideas, prioritize them and think about how to put them into action.

Please come along as we need as many people as possible to help decide what is going to happen at Folly Park!

If you have any questions or comments then please don't hesitate calling me.

Katrina Pengelley

K.Pengelley@btcv.org.uk

Berkshire & Oxfordshire Community Project Officer

Petanque - French Bowls - 22/8/05

Faringdon Bowling Club has kindly agreed to allow an area of its grounds to play Petanque. The idea of Petanque originated from FTC publicity committee and was later supported by FAR, whose members, with considerable effort prepared the ground.

6 people have already indicated that they intend to play and more have declared an interest. Anyone who would like to join is very welcome

Contact Dave Hughes 01367 240222 for more information

Mars spectacular - 20/8/05

I am afraid this is a spoof notice sent around from two years ago.

Although Mars this year will be a lot better to view for people in Faringdon than it was two years ago because it will be higher in the sky it is not the closest it has been. If there are any amateur astronomers who would like to set up a Mars night sometime in the autumn then I would be glad to help out.

Name supplied

Violinist wanted - 20/08/05

Can you play Violin/fiddle?

A new band is about to be formed in Faringdon,(Running with Sissors) from members of the local pop and rock outfits,

We have bass, drums,mandolin/guitar, and keyboard and are desperatly searching for a voilin player who would like to play in the folk/rock style.

First get together will be at the Coleshill village hall, Sunday 25th September from about one o'clock onwards, if you are interested please contact me.

HORTON@hortonsn77ug.fslife.co.uk.

jim horton

Do,do,do,do,twilight zone. - 19/08/05

You must be pysco-ceramic Mr Hunt, Pets-r-us are indeed moving into Faringdon, you can never have enough of a good thing I say.

I also understand that another Faringdon web site is to be set up, a sister site to Faringdon online, Faringdon offshore, for those residents who like to get away from it all.

ah! great times we live in, never mind, as soon as the holidays are over, I'm sure we will all be back to the riviting serious issues that make this site great.

Lets face it a twilight zone now and again harms no one.....or does it?.

The Gate Keeper.

Twilight Zone....? - 19/08/05

Monorails? Cable Cars? Ferry Boats? I have been away from the wonderful Faringdon website for a while and I feel that I have re-entered an episode of The Twilight Zone.

I was just getting my head around a town the size of Faringdon having 2 pet shops, 2 piano shops, 3 gift shops, a diminishing amount of public houses for us all to enjoy (The Bell seats look great by the way)6 takeaway outlets and an extremely questionable supermarket.

Any news yet on the new uses of the C&G and Tourist Offices? I am thinking of getting a pet but feel that at this

time 2 pet shops will not be adequate. Any chance of a third?
Ray Hunt

New Look Website - 15/08/05

Like the website Gene and Hilary - it's beginning to look like a real portal for Faringdon!!!

Many thanks for providing such an invaluable service for the community.
Cheers
Sarah Allen-Stevens

0800 reverse - 'service'? - 13/08/05

I too have had unwanted calls from 0800 reverse, several, in the small hours. There is no indication of who is calling, so those of us with , for example children who may be in trouble, have little option but to answer. '0800 reverse' refused to give me the caller's number when I contacted them, so I was unable to ascertain where the calls were from until they appeared on my BT bill, and had to be paid for.

'0800 reverse' make a connection charge of £2.50 addition to the call charge. There is no good reason to withhold a caller's number, and '0800 reverse' is making a profit out of nuisance calls while maintaining that it is offering a legitimate service. I complained, but BT, and 0800 reverse are quite unconcerned - each, of course, profiting from this unnecessary 'service'.

name supplied

0800 Warning - 12/8/05

A warning to anyone who answers one of the new 0800 reverse calls.

We answered two of these to find there was nobody at the other end! Apart from being annoying and the worry that it was one of our children trying to contact us it has cost us £6.78 for the calls!

I have checked out the numbers from my phone bill and one of them is the phone box by the church. This is obviously kids messing around. So be warned if in doubt don't accept the call!

Name supplied

Ferry boats please - 12/8/05

I agree with Mr Horton about the ferry boats, they would look lovely in the market square, and with the portwell lit up,mmmmm.

I could help out with the boats even. For most off my life I have run a very successful Fair, now as I am retired, I have several swinging boats taking up room in one of my sheds, I would be more than happy to sell them to the Faringdon residents. for a reasonable fee of course.

I have been told that HGM is a bit of a carpenter, perhaps he could carve some figure heads for the boats,in the shape of local celeb's?, and Mr Horton could paint them up.

Stan the Fairground man.

P.S if the monorail gets the go ahead I also have some stuff from the high wire act I used to do, cable,poles ect, and some nice satin uniforms. anyone interested?

Cable car - 10/8/05

Cable car- now you're talking!

How about adding a bit of artificial snow to Folly Hill to complete the look?

We could be sitting on a gold mine - Faringdon could become the next St. Moritz!

Name supplied

Monomania - 10/8/05

The Monorail is causing quite a stir but it is a surprise that some people were not aware of its existence. As is usual with all planning matters the project was probably discussed fully prior to its adoption. I understand that it was first mentioned during a meeting at which Faringdon was designated a deprived area as mentioned by

Folly Cat. As this designation was based solely on the assumption that by the year 2011 we would have more than 500 extra domestic units but have no increase in the infrastructure it was felt that the term 'deprived area' was a misnomer.

During the original discussion the term 'foreigners' was accidentally used to describe 'key workers' but this was later changed. 'Foreigners' now refers to anyone living outside the community bus catchment area but the exact explanation of 'Key Worker' is still open for discussion..

This information was probably available for inspection at the District Council Offices between 9.00am and 12.30pm Monday to Friday and a copy was possibly displayed on the notice board outside the Corn Exchange in Faringdon. Unfortunately owing to the ingress of rain water the notice may have been blurred but as ever the FTC would have provided all the information they had, on request.

I hope this clarifies the matter for the correspondent who seems to have had no knowledge of the proposal. His or her lack of information gives the impression that planning matters are discussed behind closed doors and that sometimes decisions reached are not easily accessible for public scrutiny.
HGM

Monorail? - 10/8/05

I'm afraid that I cannot agree with either the folly cat, or Mr Harry(in his case, I would always take the contrary position with much glee).

No, I much prefer the more natural proposition of the Ferry boats.

With most places in this country now becoming flooded during the winter months, this seems a much better, and environmentally stable idea,

I know the brave few that suggested this were laughed out of the meeting, with their jute bags being thrown out after them, but I for one think they have a point.

Can I ask you to remember the great flood of Faringdon a few years ago, true, a great deal of damage was done, but can you remember how nice the little boats looked in the market place, bobbing up and down (even before the outside tables and chairs were thought of, it looked quite like Venice) with the occupants of the said little boats trying to catch the fish that had escaped from townfolks ponds.

Of course as a trial run it was a disaster, but with a bit of thought, and a few more sandbags I personally think it would be a winner, why, we could even be twinned with Venice. Of course that would only be practical in the winter months,

I suppose Thames water could be asked to tap a main pipe, but that would be stupid, as they would put a meter on it, and once again Faringdon residents would be faced with a massive bill.

No a bit more thought needs to be put into this, but I still say a monorail is a bad idea, perhaps this fine site could run a pole(!) on it, monorail or Ferry boats?

Jim Horton

Monomore - 10/08/05

Let me just say I think the monorail proposal is quite splendid.

I understand that it came about as a spin-off from the original Faringdon improvement initiative after we were designated a 'deprived area'. I also thought that it was intended that this was to be eventually extended to encompass the surrounding villages, thereby creating a fast, convenient transport network linking the villages with Faringdon and lessening the need for motor transport.

This would of course have a considerable impact on parking problems for shoppers etc, and would allow Faringdon to become once again the hub of district activity. In turn the improved transport link would enable us to have more facilities for use by the surrounding rural community, and perhaps we could become the showcase market town that no doubt our local authority would like.

I also love the idea of a cablecar between the Old Town Hall and the Folly Tower. What an attraction! Presumably this would entail a fairly robust support system but hey, - we could do with some innovation round here. I am fully in agreement with HGM. Lets go for it.
Folly Cat.

Monorail - 10/08/05

Ok, I've scrolled back down the page to look for anything else about the Monorail, I've done a search on the internet for 'Faringdon monorail'.... I can't find any information!

Could someone provide some background or outline the plans?

Many Thanks

Name supplied

Re Market Place ++ -10/8/05

I have to confess that I'm no expert in the distribution of funds raised through licensing. However, if it works the same way as other government collections I would suggest that any funds collected in relation to the Portwell seating will be deposited into a central fund rather than into a box marked "Give this money back to Faringdon". Even if this were the case how much are we talking about? A few hundred pounds?

The cost of the events and facilities mentioned by "name supplied" runs into tens of thousands of pounds. The revenue collected from the Portwell licence, though much appreciated, is not realistically going to make a huge dent in this. To a local trader, however, a few hundred pounds could be a big outlay as well as a huge bureaucratic inconvenience.

I would much rather make it as easy as possible to promote a crowded bustling outdoor café life that encourages visitors to stop and use the other town shops and facilities while they're here.

Yes, to sensibly placed tables and chairs around the Portwell. No, to a licence fee and unnecessary bureaucracy in order to put them there!

David Reynolds

Reply to Monorail protestor - 10/8/05

The comments of this writer are typical of the narrow minded attitude which has kept Faringdon back in the 19th century

Yes! the Monorail may have a few teething problems but the positioning of the stations has not been finalised and the planners of the FTC have promised an urgent in-depth revue of the alternatives as soon as they are back from their summer holidays

For quite a while now it has been obvious that the present ground network of roads in the town centre is not working ! In 1847 a survey revealed that the average speed of the traffic through the town centre was 4mph and it has not increased since then. (Apart from jobs on motor bikes who are allowed to go as fast as they like)

That leaves two possibilities:

The first is to install an underground system this is still being looked into.

The second is an above ground system which makes use of the only space in Faringdon which has so far not attracted the attention of the VWHDC planners.

The addition of the proposed cable car from the Old Town Hall to the top of the Folly Tower will attract visitors from as far away as Clanfield or even Carterton so Name Supplied.... Please reconsider your position and give the project the backing which it truly deserves.

HGM

Photographic Competition - 9/8/05

The Vale of White Horse District Council is running a photographic competition over the summer. The subject for the VIP Photographic Competition 2005 is 'Vale Attractions and Events'.

The theme is open to your personal interpretation but should capture the energy of local attractions and events through the eyes of those who visit or live in the area covered by the Vale of White Horse District Council (the Vale).

Entries must have been taken in the Vale between 31st May 2005 and August 2005. The closing date for entries is 12 September 2005.

You can download and print off a copy of both Application form and Rules as a Word Document.

For further information please visit <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/Tourism/Events/DetailPage-8034.asp>

Public Transport in Faringdon - 9/8/05

I think it's disgusting that they can try and sneak the monorail plans past us. Why does a town the size of Faringdon need a public transport network? It's ecology/political correctness gone mad.

Has anyone been consulted about the siting of the four stations? Certainly, expanses of track space from the old railway do exist, but especially having the central stop elevated beside the Old Town Hall will be an eyesore. One might say that the geography of Faringdon is just too uneven for a monrail system to flourish.

As for ticket prices, if the system is to work at all, and not be a Planet of the Apes-style monument, rusting away for future Faringdonians to wonder at, then may I suggest that a pound is surely the most one would pay to ride from the United Church stop to Rob the Cheese's doorstep?

Every day another aspect of life in Faringdon is tarnished.

Sigh

Name Supplied

The Red Planet is about to be spectacular! - 8/8/05

This month and next, Earth is catching up with Mars in an encounter that will culminate in the closest approach between the two planets in recorded history. The next time Mars may come this close is in 2287.

Due to the way Jupiter's gravity tugs on Mars and perturbs its orbit, astronomers can only be certain that Mars has not come this close to Earth in the Last 5,000 years, but it may be as long as 60,000 years before it happens again.

The encounter will culminate on August 27th when Mars comes to within 34,649,589 miles of Earth and will be (next to the moon) the brightest object in the night sky. It will attain a magnitude of -2.9 and will appear 25.11 arc seconds wide. At a modest 75-power magnification .Mars will be easy to spot.

At the beginning of August it will rise in the east at 10p.m. and reach its azimuth at about 3 a.m. By the end of August when the two planets are closest, Mars will rise at nightfall and reach its highest point in the sky at 12:30a.m. That's pretty convenient to see something that no human being has seen in recorded history.

So, mark your calendar at the beginning of August to see Mars grow progressively brighter and brighter throughout the month.

Share this with your children and grandchildren. NO ONE ALIVE TODAY WILL EVER SEE THIS AGAIN
John Gillman

Market Place ++ - 8/8/05

Whilst seating in the Market Place can only be a positive step for the town it should be made clear that the complaints, yes there have been more than one, do not just relate to the obstruction to the public seating area around the Portwell but the much needed extra licensing revenue that isn't being collected at present.

Surely extra revenue means extra funds that could be spent on hanging baskets, funding for the annual Xmas

evening and more money for the Faringdon Arts Festival - now a local treasure.(Well done to all those involved for putting Faringdon on the map).

Name Supplied

What is this life if, full of care, we have no time to stand and stare? -

4/8/05

On Tuesday morning the Town Centre looked like an advertisement for the Perfect English Market Day scene. Like most residents I don't usually take the time to 'stand and stare' but on Tuesday I did the staring bit because I was stuck in one of the inevitable logjams as cars,vans and a coach tried simultaineously to use the road outside Lloyds.

The slip road past The Crown is presently restricted to Taxis, Buses and inconsiderate jobs but if it was opened up as a one way road for everyone there would be two benefits. Firstly the jams might be reduced and secondly Gene would not be taken by surprise when she did find cars using it.

HGM

New Look Website - 3/8/05

Thanks for giving the website a new look, it's good to refresh things.

Having been in Faringdon for almost a year I've found this community website extremely useful, for both information and images and sometimes entertaining - talking points!

It gave me the information to get involved in the Arts Festival, which was great, which allowed me to meet new people and otherwise settle into this town much quicker than otherwise might have been the case.

So thankyou Faringdon.org and cheers for linking in my photos of the festival.

Al Cane

New look website - 3/8/05

Hil Taylor and I have been spending quite a bit of time changing the look of the website. There's more to do still - a better index and layout for the business directory will soon appear.

Do have a look around and tell us what you think - or give us ideas for new content, - it will all be helpful in making the site even more useful.

Please do write to Talking Points- the more contributors there are, the more interesting it becomes.

The number of visitors has grown over the 4 years since we launched the site- but we want it to increase even more.

Look forward to hearing from you

Gene Webb

Cars using the slip road by the Crown - 2/8/05

Sitting outside the Faringdon Coffee House today, having a very nice cup of coffee and delicious coffee cake, with a friend we noticed as many as 20 cars using the slip road between the Crown and the Old Town Hall .

When I cross the road there I tend not to expect any traffic on that road - I must change my ways - it's highly used- illegally.

Gene Webb

Garden Waste - 2/8/05

VWHDC have a scheme where if you hire a brown wheely bin for £29 per year, you can fill it up with garden waste and cardboard and it will be emptied every fortnight.

[Have a look at their website](#)

Gene Webb
