

VISIONS

No 128, July 2014

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Green Belt, green field or simply green space? What does each contribute to the quality of our lives?



Reviewing the Green Belt: disaster or distraction?

By Peter Thompson, Chairman

The debate about the Green Belt is distracting us from the real issues.

Many of us involved in planning issues believe that we are in something of a Titanic situation in Oxfordshire. The course we have been following for the past few decades is heading for a number of environmental icebergs. These include energy availability and cost, climate change, air pollution, health issues, traffic congestion, social inequality and despoliation of the landscape we hold so dear.

To confine the debate to the arrangement of the deck chairs when what is desperately needed is a change of course, seems naive and complacent.

Green Belts were introduced for five specific purposes:

- to check the unrestricted sprawl of large built-up areas
- to prevent neighbouring towns merging into one another
- to help safeguard the countryside from encroachment
- to preserve the setting and special character of historic towns; and
- to support urban regeneration by encouraging the re-use of derelict and other urban land.

Green Belts have, by and large, been effective in achieving these objectives, but there are legitimate criticisms:

- they have not restricted the sprawl of many towns and villages;
- they have not protected all countryside from encroachment; 75 per cent of Oxfordshire is not Green Belt, and sprawl has encroached into green landscape in many locations;
- many towns and villages in Oxfordshire are very historic, yet their setting has been compromised by not having Green Belt status;
- the sanctity of the Green Belt has put pressure on the development of every available open space in towns. The Green Belt policy puts no value on green spaces within the city.

Furthermore, there are many allowable exceptions to the restrictions on



Open spaces in the city have no value in Green Belt policies. Do we wish to build in every large garden in Oxford, as here, in order to preserve the Green Belt?

development in Green Belt: roads, railways, stations, car parks, pipelines and pylons included. In fact, an 'exceptional circumstances' concession already allows more or less anything to be built in Green Belt except housing!

Consequently, some authorities are already proposing industrial development in Green Belt, at, for example, Oxford Airport and Begbroke. Even with housing, some councils are qualifying their reassurances that they do not intend building in Green Belt, by adding 'so far', or 'yet' to their statements. The question does not appear to be 'if' they will sanction building, but 'when'.

All planning, whether policy-making or taking decisions on individual development proposals, is required to consider the consequences of the actions, under the headings of environmental, social and economic effects. So the negative consequences of Green Belt policies cannot be ignored:

- increased pressure to build on non-Green Belt land, rural and urban
- separation of residential areas from workplaces, increasing commuting, traffic, congestion and consequent environmental and economic effects
- increased demand for road-building
- exacerbation of housing problems - availability and affordability.

A 60-year-old decision

Decisions on planning issues are supposed to reflect a considered balance of these consequences. But consequences depend on circumstances. Can anyone argue that the circum-

stances of our environment, our economy or our society are the same now as they were in 1955 when the Oxford Green Belt was designated? In truth, the circumstances of our lives are radically different.

To assert categorically that no re-assessment should **ever** be made of the effects of 60-year-old decisions and their appropriateness for current and future circumstances, seems, at best, highly complacent. Green Belts have been successful, but not entirely so and how

they will measure up for the challenges of the future needs consideration.

Let me be clear – no one in the Society concerned with planning issues has ever advocated building on the Green Belt. But we believe that planners need much more than reliance on the rigid retention of potentially-obsolete rules.

Planning a smarter future

If our environment, including our landscape and countryside is not only to be protected, but to be better protected, and if our communities are to be enhanced and successful new ones created, we **MUST** have the very best planning. Simply fighting a rearguard action against development and trying to enforce historic constraints, while perpetuating the fragmented, dysfunctional planning we muddle along with now is not likely to produce a successful or visionary outcome.

That means planning for the wider Oxford region and it means planning for transport needs at the outset. It means answering difficult questions, like should we sacrifice

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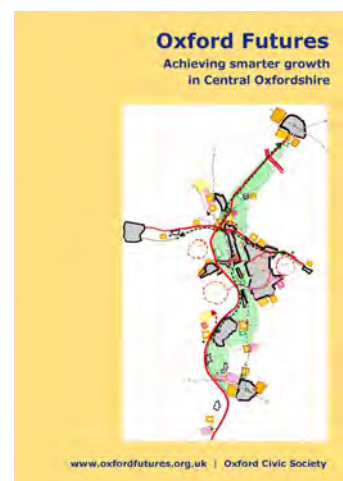
economic growth for environmental protection? It means detailed design and it means consistency.

This is what our **Oxford Futures** report is all about. This report, compiled by Nicholas Falk and launched at the end of March by the Lord Lieutenant of the County, Tim Stevenson, summarises the conclusions of four high-level debates we sponsored last year. In essence the report calls for the principles of 'smart growth' to be applied and for difficult decisions to be made in a coordinated way. A summary of the report is enclosed with this newsletter. You can read the full version online on our [Oxford Futures](http://OxfordFutures.org.uk) website or order a paper copy*.

Ironically, in Britain we have some of the best-regarded urban planners and architects in the world, while here in Oxford our two universities teach and research urban design for the communities of the future. Can we not have the debate and leadership we deserve to deliver a better future for our own city, our county towns and our villages?

We'd be delighted to hear your views – email them to newsletter@oxcivicsoc.org.uk or write to me at the address on the back page. We'll print your views in our next issue.

Peter Thompson
Chairman



*Oxford Futures can be ordered from Liz Grosvenor, 15 Lime Walk, Oxford OX3 7AB price £6.50 for members (£10 non-members) including p & p. Cheques should be made payable to Oxford Civic Society.



Walks in Oxford are now a click away ...

Oxford is a wonderful place to explore and a new website makes it easy to find interesting walks.

Richard Bradley from the Streets for People team reports.

Oxford must have some of the best urban walks in the country, taking in not just the colleges but also canal and riverside, former villages, parks, industry, churches and centuries of history. But finding good walks or fully appreciating what a walk offers isn't always easy.

Last year we teamed up with Oxford Pedestrians Association and Oxford Ramblers to identify the most interesting published walks and find a way to promote them. Our aim is to help people

to get more out of the city by exploring it on foot.

At the end of March our President, Sir Hugo Brunner, launched the Walks in Oxford website. This lists over 70 walks categorised by theme (historic, science/ industry for example) with information about the start point, length and whether it's a circular walk.

Note that the details of the walks are not on the site, but one click tells you where to find the source material, be it book or leaflet or another website.



Sir Hugo Brunner, Peter Thompson and other enthusiastic walkers helped launch the website outside the Visitor Information Centre in Broad Street in March

We'd really welcome feedback on the website – www.oxfordwalks.org.uk – and your ideas about new walks to include. You can email us at info@oxstreets.org.uk

We are very grateful to all the website's authors and developers and to Oxford City Council and Visit Oxfordshire (Visitor Information Centre) for their support.



Another brilliant Spring Clean!

Hundreds of local people turned out to support the OxClean Spring Clean as Rosanne Bostock explains.

Our annual Spring Clean is now in its eighth year and is as popular as ever as a community event. Almost all of the LEA primary and secondary schools (36 of them) turned out to support it,

The Hart team from East Oxford with their impressive haul of rubbish and recyclables



over 90 community groups organised two-hour litter picks in their areas and many individuals joined in.

A team from the Society supported the litter pick at Blackbird Leys.

The two-day event in March was launched at Oxford Spires Academy, which has made great efforts in and around the school and in the Cowley neighbourhood.

As a result of everyone's efforts we collected 1,000 bags of litter weighing six tonnes, one tonne of that being recyclables, and a further haul of scrap and fly tip.

We are torn between being pleased that it was such a success and concerned that the message is still not getting through that litter is unsightly, unhygienic and unacceptable.

And the rest of the year ...

OxClean is a year-round campaign. We try to keep up the pressure on all the local authorities to improve their game and work with schools to build a generation who are litter aware.

We'd like to record our warmest thanks to **Liz Storrar**, who has kindly been helping us with school visits for many years and is now stepping down. Liz has worked hard to build relationships with schools.

We urgently need someone to join the OxClean team to visit primary schools and report on the state of their grounds. On the basis of those visits we award certificates of merit. The schools visits would take no more than two-three days per year. If you'd like to consider this, please get in touch with us at info@oxcivicsoc.org.uk or leave a message on 075 05 756 692.



Planning issues ...

The City planners are currently assessing several major planning applications. Clive Booth and Ian Green report on just some of them.

Westgate – only connect

By far the biggest development in the city for decades, the redeveloped Westgate Centre was given outline planning approval in March by the West Area Planning Committee. The outline plan application was the first of a two-part process for planning approval and provided design principles, including the layout and size of buildings and access. We commented extensively on this.

The developers are now preparing the second part, covering the detailed design. They have held preliminary consultations on the emerging designs, including a presentation to OCS in May. The developers will undertake further consultations in July and we will be submitting further comments. It is expected that the detailed planning application will be submitted in August.



When the Westgate Centre is completed, Thames Street will look something like this

Image courtesy of Westgate Alliance

In general we support the redevelopment which will provide shops, cafés, restaurants and leisure uses including a cinema, set in a mix of covered streets, arcades, lanes and squares. However we continue to have serious concerns about some aspects of the proposal.

We are not convinced that adequate consideration has been given to how the anticipated 25 per cent increase in visitor numbers will travel to the city centre. More private cars are undesirable and implausible given the levels of congestion. The developers' assumption is that visitors will use

public transport but their access proposals virtually ignore the rail system and simply specify bus routes around the convoluted perimeter of the site, with bus stops wherever they can be squeezed in. Our concern is shared by the two main bus operators, whose views are given on page 7. We all agree that the answer lies in a strategic approach to city centre / city transport arrangements beyond the immediate boundaries of the new development.

We are also concerned that preliminary designs of the John Lewis building show little regard for significant pedestrian access from the south, especially following completion of the Oxpens and station redevelopments.

In our view, the success of the redevelopment will depend on the provision of an attractive city-centre environment with good links with all its surrounding areas, where shopping is part of a recreational environment for residents, workers and visitors.

The Northern Gateway

This is a large area of land between the A34 and the Bicester railway line running from the Peartree interchange to the Wolvercote roundabout. The potential impact of any development for the quality of life of those living in this area and those travelling through it cannot be over-stated.

Together with the Wolvercote Neighbourhood Forum and others, we have contributed views. Consultations on what should be included in an Area Action Plan began in autumn 2013, with further consultation on options in February and March. The results of these consultations defy summary in this short report but they can be viewed on the City Council's website.

Our position has always been that no development is acceptable until drastic measures are

completed to resolve the conditions on the road network – some of the worst congestion and poorest air quality in the county.

A proposed submission to the Secretary of State will be the subject of a third consultation this summer. The final stage will be a public inquiry in the winter and we will again offer our views.

Barton Park – how to access?

When the plan for this new development of 885 dwellings west of Barton was being discussed two years ago, we argued strongly for the creation of good links between it and the city for public transport, cyclists and pedestrians, but not private cars. This is essential to avoid the damaging effects of isolation and more congestion on existing roads. The plan provides for a route across the Northern By-Pass into Northway.

However, local people have formally proposed that open space on the Northway side of the A40 should be designated a Town Green. This would block the planned access route.

A two-week public hearing started on 7 July. If the Town Green application is successful, the developers are confident there is an alternative solution.

Barton is currently reached via a single road (shown at the bottom) from the congested Headington roundabout. This will be untenable when Barton expands so new access routes are essential

Image courtesy of Wikimapia





... from Westgate to west Barton

Roger Dudman Way

We were invited to meet the consultants advising the University of Oxford on the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in May to discuss the approach being taken. Given that the intention to commission this voluntary EIA was made eight months ago, this work seems to be taking a long time. It is disappointing that the University has not acted more swiftly in dealing with both this and the measures to be taken to mitigate the harm done to the views from Port Meadow.

In Vincent Goodstadt's independent report on this development, he recommended that a fresh look be taken at the way in which the impact of proposed developments can be gauged using 'view cones'. An assessment of the Oxford View Cones was published by the City Council early in June and is out for consultation until 25 July.

This seeks to provide an evidence base for the significance of each of the ten

view cones as a part of Oxford's heritage, in order to better understand how they can be most effectively managed in the future. What concerns us however is that vision is selective and distant objects can seem larger than the camera would show them. The Roger Dudman Way buildings look **very** small in the photograph included in the consultation document!

St Cross College

In October last year, the West Area Planning Committee refused an application from St Cross to extend alongside Pusey Street and Pusey Lane in response to strong public objections, including ours. The objectors criticised the destruction of the Grade II listed boundary walls, the loss of the fine view of the west window of Pusey Chapel, the massive bulk of the alien, four-storey flat-roofed building and the harm to the surrounding Conservation Area. Following an appeal by the University, a hearing was held on 19

June and the inspector's decision is expected in the late summer.

The Florey Building

James Stirling's Grade II listed building which overlooks the meadow at Magdalen bridge, is in need of modernisation. The Queen's College recently invited us to a pre-application consultation with Avanti Architects, the winners of Queen's open competition.

The proposal involves opening up the present unwelcoming approach route, substantial internal re-modelling to increase the number of study bedrooms and infilling part of the ground floor area to match the ground floor areas which Stirling himself designed for ancillary accommodation. A new low-rise building located in a triangle of land on the west side of the Florey Building will provide catering facilities and a lecture theatre. Our reaction was generally favourable, subject to examining the proposal in detail when a planning application is submitted.

Battling to save Minchery and Cheney Farms

Gillian Argyle recently took up cudgels on our behalf to preserve the historic Minchery Farm.

As the city has grown, farmhouses and barns have been overwhelmed by the tide of development. A few buildings have somehow survived, but the danger

of their falling into ruin has not gone away; the best need safeguarding.

One of these is Minchery farmhouse, known as The Priory, on land leased to Firoz Kassam by Oxford City Council. It has the Kassam Stadium looming over it. Grade II* listed, The Priory dates mainly from the 17th century but some parts are much older. It is a truly historic place, the adjacent 12th century priory having recently been excavated by Archeox.

The farmhouse was recently used as a pub by Oxford United fans but when the landlord was dismissed in June 2013 the pub was closed and then vandalised. The County Council took some emergency action in boarding up the windows, but the whole place was and is in a very sorry state.

We were approached by a local councillor to get the situation publicised, and this we did. However, apart from a court case last month in which Firoz Kassam appealed, unsuccessfully, against the County Council's decision to list the whole site as a Community Asset, nothing has been heard from the Council. Meanwhile, a report has been sent to English Heritage, who had it on their Buildings at Risk list.

Another case we have been asked to look at by local residents is that of Cheney Farm, in Cheney Lane, worked by the Morrell family's tenants until the 1940s.

Its use is currently under discussion between the County Council, Oxford Preservation Trust and local people. It needs restoration and will have to earn its living in some suitable way to fund its future. A decision is awaited.

*Gillian, pictured outside Minchery Farm
Photo courtesy of Oxford Mail*



Transport – of plans and the lack of plans

The Transport Group has been campaigning on several fronts to get the best possible solutions for the city and its region. Andrew Pritchard updates us.

The Local Transport Plan

We responded to the County Council's *Strategic Environmental Assessment Scoping Report for the Local Transport Plan 4 (LTP4)*, particularly highlighting the large part cycling can play in reducing transport emissions and addressing other issues. In our view different solutions might be applicable for journeys of:

- less than five miles, where cycling is ideal and often fastest for those who are able;
- 5-20 miles, where inter-town rail and bus services can be used; and
- more than 20 miles, where the speed of rail, if available, has advantages over other methods.

In all cases the car is a major competitor. Consultation on the Plan itself is now under way, with most stages before implementation due to be completed by summer 2015. Read more on the Council's website:

<https://consultations.oxfordshire.gov.uk/consult/ti/LTP4/consultationHome>

**CONNECTING
OXFORDSHIRE**

Public consultation on a new Local Transport Plan



Summer 2014

OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL

We were very pleased recently to meet Sue Scane, the County Council's new Director of the Environment & Economy, to discuss our concerns about transport planning for the whole of the Science Arc area, as well as more local plans. We expressed our concern about the need for impartial evidence to support an Oxfordshire Strategic Traffic Model, to be produced in July or August, and for consultants who are aware of Oxford's peculiar local problems.

Keeping buses ahead

On page 7 you can read about the bus companies' concerns about transport to and from the new Westgate development. This was one of the main topics discussed at a recent meeting with representatives of Stagecoach and the Oxford Bus Company.

The Smartzone ticket has apparently increased the number of passengers interchanging between different bus routes and we suggested a map for bus users, in the style of the London tube-map, highlighting the best interchange locations. All sides agreed that it was important that any decisions made, as the result of the Local Transport Plans now being put together, were future-proofed.

Silence on the station

Together with Ian Hudspeth, the leader of the County Council, we are concerned that we have heard nothing since December about the Station Masterplan, its cost and how a proper interchange with buses and coaches will be fitted into the present site, despite requests for information.

At a recent meeting of the local branch of Railfuture, we were told by a representative of First Great Western, who currently run Oxford station, that if it had been on the continent it would have eight platforms.

With all the new train services being planned over the next few years, it would become more of an interchange station, and the Cowley line might be used for passengers. The Oxpens site was apparently ruled out as the

platforms would need to be slightly curved (a feature also of Paddington, York, Newcastle and other stations).

Oxford Parkway – coming soon



Designs for Oxford Parkway, the first new station in the county since 1935

Image courtesy of Chiltern Railways

We met Graham Cross, Business Director of Chiltern Railways, who told us that they are planning to run trains to Bicester and London from Oxford Parkway by summer 2015. This is the new station at Water Eaton, next to the Park and Ride, which will be extended to take extra traffic. The service will link to the bay platforms at Oxford station by 2016, though these will not accommodate the nine-car trains that may be necessary at peak periods.

We were concerned about the lack of information about proposed public access to Oxford Parkway from northern Oxford.

Frideswide Square revisited

Despite the lack of a Station Masterplan, preparations are already being made for reconfiguring Frideswide Square. We have so far been unable to discover what provision will be made for cyclists to cross this complicated junction, or how the significant excavations that will be needed beneath the Botley Road bridge will affect road levels.

The extent and cost of these excavations to provide normal headroom for buses and HGVs will be increased if two more platforms and tracks are required at the existing station site, though not if the Society's preferred location for the new station at the Oxpens were chosen.



Westgate – the challenge for bus operators

Phil Southall from the Oxford Bus Company and Martin Sutton from Stagecoach explain the issues they face in the Westgate development.

The main bus operators in Oxford believe that the redevelopment of the Westgate shopping centre is vital for the economic sustainability of the city centre. Being able to be more competitive with other towns and cities with a better retail offering is a must. However, the benefits of the new centre need to be maximised by planning effectively for buses at the outset.

Both Oxford Bus Company and Stagecoach aspire to provide a 'best in class' facility alongside the new centre, particularly at 11 new stops being developed in Castle Street and Norfolk Street. These stops must offer passengers a good experience to make them want to come into the city centre by bus.

In frequent meetings with the Westgate Alliance, they have listened to and taken on board what we have said and adjusted their plans accordingly.



Our main challenges have been:

- Lobbying for Queen Street to remain open to buses until all supporting infrastructure to facilitate its closure is in place. This may or may not be when the Westgate opens. We have now had it confirmed that the Queen Street closure is not linked to the Westgate development and will be the subject of a separate consultation exercise at a later date.
- Ensuring that sufficient space on the highway is made available for the 11

stops to function independently on Castle Street and Norfolk Street. Buses need to be able to manoeuvre in and out without causing any obstructions on the carriageway.

- Ensuring that there is sufficient pavement space to accommodate a bus shelter with real time information at each stop.
- Ensuring passengers have room to wait for their bus without feeling in the way of general pedestrian traffic around the shopping centre.

The work is still ongoing with the Westgate Alliance, Oxford City Council and the County Council to find acceptable solutions. Both operators are committed to fighting for the best solution possible for our passengers within the constraints that we face.

Celebrating the Oxford Canal



As the Oxford Canal Heritage Project nears completion, its Project Manager, Maria Parsons, reports on its achievements.

The project, funded by the Heritage Lottery, aims to raise awareness of the cultural and industrial heritage of the canal. Managed by the Jericho Living Heritage Trust and overseen by the Oxford City Canal Partnership, the project has developed information and resources for local people and visitors about the final three miles of the canal from Duke's Cut to Hythe Bridge Street.

Tony Joyce, David Feeny, Steph Pirrie and Mark Davies have steered the project, supported by over 250 volunteers from schools, local community groups, academia, statutory agencies, voluntary organisations and businesses.

The outcomes include the Oxford Canal Heritage Oral History collection, soon to be deposited at the Oxfordshire History Centre. Local schools have developed resources for children covering art, film, geography, politics and nature studies.

In April, winners of a Canal Art competition, run in conjunction with Artweeks and ECCO shoes, had their pieces exhibited alongside professionals at the Jam Factory which was also the venue for a talk about Art of the Canal by Mark Davies, local author and canal historian.

Over 200 people enjoyed our Open Day on 3 May at the Old Fire Station, where Tony Joyce chaired talks, performances, films and interviews followed by an evening concert featuring local folk musicians, poets and the Jericho Choir, organised and hosted by Steph Pirrie, musician and conductor. A live reading of four short canal plays at St Barnabas Church was the final highlight. Artistic Director, Katie Baxendale, a locally-based BBC

scriptwriter managed the process from a call for plays, *Inspired by the Oxford Canal*, to the selection of the finalists, their mentoring by renowned local authors and recording of the plays.

A new Oxford Canal Heritage Trail Guide was developed covering 12 places of interest along the canal. Signage is currently being made and will be installed by Oxford Open Doors. The guide is available now either in audio for MP3s or smartphones or as a PDF from the website where you can find all other resources. See www.oxfordcanalheritage.org

The winning artists with their entries





A low carbon future for Oxford



The Low Carbon Hub has a raft of renewable projects in the pipeline, as Georgina Matthews reports.

A small social enterprise, the Hub is tackling the big issue of climate change, here, in Oxford. We have a long way to go to achieve the City's current targets of 40 per cent CO₂ reduction by 2020. To help us get there, we have developed an innovative model to get the public sector, businesses and communities to join the challenge and develop renewable schemes for local benefit.

This is how it works. The Low Carbon Hub partners with businesses and the public sector to develop, manage and raise the finances to install renewables through community share offers. Our

partner organisations get discounted, green electricity and precious CO₂ savings; local investors get a decent return; and the Hub gets a sustainable income from the feed-in tariff and electricity sales to support community-led energy projects. What's more, the income from these schemes helps us to support householders to reduce energy use. All of this creates a positive carbon-cutting chain of benefits. Everyone's a winner.

Rooftops and rivers

The Hub's first solar scheme with the Oxford Bus Company is up and running, one local school is generating clean, green energy and the Osney Lock Hydro community project is under construction (see photo above). These projects are the front-runners, generating enough power for about 100 homes, but the potential to scale up is huge. Our development pipeline includes 7MW of projects to be built in the next year: 1MW of solar PV on 20 Oxfordshire schools; 1MW of renewables with businesses; and potentially 5MW of community energy projects. The future's looking bright for Oxford.

An award-winning vision

The vision is for a new energy system in which the rooftops, waterways and woodlands of Oxfordshire become the power stations of the future: all developed, run and owned locally. This vision and our work are now being recognised nationally and we have been shortlisted for *The Observer* Ethical Awards (Community Energy Project); 2degrees Champions Awards (Social Value) and have won 'highly recommended' in the National Energy Foundation awards for community-based renewable projects.

To build the next school and corporate projects, we have just secured a £2.3 million loan from Oxford City Council. In the autumn, we will launch a community share offer to replace the loan so that energy assets can be owned by local people. The loan will then be 'recycled' for next year's projects. If you want to be the first to hear about our share offer, you can sign up online at www.lowcarbonhub.org

Barbara Hammond, the Chief Executive, will give a talk to OCS on 18 November. Put the date in your diary!

Photo of the Osney turbine courtesy of Andrew Watson

Museum of Oxford – the next stage

David Juler updates us on MOO – the museum that owes its survival to OCS activists and volunteers.

Did you know that the last time the museum had any capital works completed was during 1975? Now a new project will renovate the unused space

in the old museum, to reveal the Victorian splendour of the building.

This space will be used as the home for collections showcasing the living and social history of the city. Some of the collections are emerging from storage while others will be brand new.



The new additions to the museum will contain flexible spaces which can be used for cultural and commercial events to diversify and increase public engagement.

Our photo shows one such event, attended by OCS members.

To ensure the museum's future, we need to sustain the fantastic support we've had from local societies, communities and individual volunteers. We would love to hear from anyone who can lend their skills, experience and support.

Do contact David on 01865 252417 or museum@oxford.gov.uk if you would like to be involved or if you have any questions.





Holywell Cemetery – a threatened oasis

Martin Murphy, a Trustee of the Friends of the Cemetery, explains the significance of this Oxford gem.

Hidden away behind St Cross church (now the Balliol College archive), this cemetery is one of Oxford's best-kept secrets. Opened in 1847, it was originally maintained by the six parishes of east-central Oxford, but the gradual disappearance of all but one of these parishes deprived it of a regular income, and it is now entirely dependent on voluntary contributions. The aim of the Friends of Holywell Cemetery, formed in 1987, is to maintain its historic monuments within a setting of natural beauty and urban wildlife.

Victorian Oxford remembered

Coming through the gate 40 years ago the historian A L Rowse could hardly believe the treasures he found within: "The whole of Victorian Oxford leaps to the eye from headstone to headstone".

As one might have expected there is an abundance of dons, whose names recall a century and a half of university history: Max Müller, the Sanskrit scholar; J W Burgon, indefatigable defender of lost causes; Henry Acland, friend of Ruskin and creator of the University Museum; John Stainer, the composer; Hugh Cairns, the neurosurgeon; Walter Pater, Maurice Bowra...

But there is no barrier here between town and gown. The names of many



A little jewel of funerary art: the grave of Lewis Theodore Pilcher, aged four, only child of Theodore and Sophie Pilcher, and his devoted nurse Elizabeth Sibley, both drowned at Medley Weir in May 1893. The marble casket tomb is adorned with exquisite copperwork



The cemetery receives many visitors during Open Doors weekends – and they may find a harpist to entertain them

tradesmen will resonate with older readers: Boffin the baker, Payne the jeweller, Blackwell the bookseller; Castell the robemaker; Gillman the bootmaker; and Salter the boat builder among them.

Visitors who come to look for the grave of Kenneth Grahame, author of *Wind in the Willows*, may also be surprised to stumble across Kenneth Tynan, the *enfant terrible* of his undergraduate generation, or the American science fiction writer James Blish.

By contrast, there is one wooden cross brought from Flanders which commemorates Ronald Poulton Palmer, the most celebrated rugby player of his time, killed in battle in 1915.

The monuments themselves illustrate changes in taste, ranging from the Puginesque canopied

tomb of Henry Bird, a Magdalen College chorister who died in 1856 at the age of 12, to the Celtic crosses which came into fashion towards the end of the 19th century.

The cemetery is open without charge all the year round and is increasingly popular with students, townspeople and foreign visitors who value its peaceful atmosphere. This is now threatened by proposals for a massive development in Manor Place, at the rear.

For a subscription of £10 a year the Friends of Holywell Cemetery receive an annual newsletter with articles on its history and wildlife. All funds raised go towards paying the expenses of maintenance and conservation.

If you are interested in joining please send a cheque (payable to The Friends of Holywell Cemetery) to the Secretary, Mrs Janet Keene, at 7 Norwood Avenue, Southmoor OX13 5AD.



Booking form: Sept – Oct ticketed events

Closing date for applications: **Saturday 16 August**. Please enclose:

- 1 cheque/s payable to Oxford Civic Society, one for each event
- 2 one stamped, addressed envelope for all tickets

Member's name

BLOCK CAPITALS PLEASE

2nd member's name (if applicable).....

Address

.....

Postcode

Telephone

Email

Event	No. of tickets	Amount enclosed
For events on more than one date, please delete any dates you <u>can't</u> do and indicate your preferred date/s		
Somerville and Keble College chapels Saturday 6 September, 2pm@£8	
Oxford Canal Heritage Trail walk Saturday 4 October, 2pm Sunday 5 October, 2pm@£5	
Headington Quarry, Oxford's industrial village walk Saturday 11 October, 2pm Saturday 18 October, 2pm@£5	

Note: Tickets are allocated soon after the closing date but if you miss it, it's always worth asking if there are places left. Cheques are banked three weeks after ticket issue; after that no refunds can be given.

Send this completed form to Alan Hobbs, 66 Southfield Road, Oxford OX4 1PA



Programme calendar 'cut out and keep'

September – November 2014

**ticketed events*

Saturday 6 September * 2pm
Somerville and Keble College chapels
A visit

Thursday 16 October 7.30 for 8pm
Ibrahim El-Salahi, Sudanese artist, talks about his life and work

Saturday 4 October* 2pm
Sunday 5 October* 2pm
Oxford Canal Heritage Trail, a walk with Mark Davies

Saturday 11 October* 2pm
Saturday 18 October* 2pm
Headington Quarry, a walk with Barry Carter

Thursday 6 November 7.30 for 8pm
The search for Oxford's medieval wall, a talk by Roger Gelder and George Ross

Tuesday 18 November 7.30 for 8pm
The big energy shift, a talk by Barbara Hammond of the Low Carbon Hub

***Contact for booking/tickets only:**

Alan Hobbs, 66 Southfield Road
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Tel: 01865 248 105

If, at the last moment, you can't attend, please phone Alan Hobbs – someone will be pleased take your place





Programme September – November 2014

Open talks – all welcome

No pre-booking, free to members. Help us to recruit new members by bringing a guest to one lecture free
£4 for other non-members

Ibrahim El-Salahi, Sudanese artist

Thursday 16 October

Ship Street Centre, Jesus College (The Bastion) †

Coffee/tea 7.30pm, talk 8pm

Ibrahim El-Salahi, a Sudanese artist who has lived in Oxford since 1998, will talk about his life and work. His major retrospective at Tate Modern last year highlighted one of the most significant figures in African and Arab modernism. An exhibition of his work is currently on view at the Vigo Gallery in London W15 1AL.

The search for Oxford's medieval wall

Thursday 6 November

Ship Street Centre, Jesus College (The Bastion) †



Coffee/tea 7.30pm, talk 8pm

This talk by local historians **Roger Gelder** and **George Ross** will tell the story in pictures and maps of a medieval walk round Oxford, identifying surviving sections of the city's 13th century wall – not

least the Bastion itself in Jesus College. It will include historic Oxford events along the way.

The big energy shift

Tuesday 18 November

Magdalen College Auditorium, Longwall Street †

Coffee/tea 7.30pm, talk 8pm

The Low Carbon Hub is spearheading the change to a new energy system for Oxfordshire with communities at its heart. **Barbara Hammond**, Chief Executive of the Low Carbon Hub, will talk about its innovative approach to developing energy with business and public sectors, as well as local communities, and enlarge on the desire to put local energy needs more into the hands of local communities.

† **Wheelchair - accessible venues**

Members-only visits

Tickets needed for these events
Bookings by **16 August**

Somerville and Keble college chapels

Saturday 6 September, 2pm

Almost all Oxford colleges have chapels, where services continue to this day. Some are justly famous, like Keble chapel, for its architecture, setting and its origins in the Oxford Movement. Others, like the chapel of Somerville are less well known and less visited: the chapel stands alone by the Garden Quad, a 1930s building of dressed Clipsham stone and tall narrow windows. The tour will start at Somerville and end with tea in Keble hall.

Oxford Canal Heritage Trail walk

Saturday 4 October, 2pm and

Sunday 5 October, 2pm

An undemanding two mile tow-path walk from Wolvercote Green to Hythe Bridge to celebrate the completion of the new Lottery-funded Heritage Trail. Local historian **Mark Davies** will point out important landmarks and discuss people and events associated with this precious 'half town and half country' waterway and relate the latest plans for the Jericho boatyard. The path is level but may be muddy in places.

Headington Quarry, Oxford's industrial village

Saturday 11 October, 2pm and

Saturday 18 October, 2pm

The haphazard origins of Headington Quarry are reflected today in the village's winding roads, interconnecting alleys and hollows. What began as a series of stone quarries worked by itinerants only gradually became a village with church, chapel and school, while its reputation for lawlessness continued well into the 20th century.

Barry Carter, a history lecturer at Oxford Brookes and long-term Quarry resident, will lead a walk that highlights the Quarry's history and some notable locals such as CS Lewis and William Kimber.





OCS people

New members of Executive

We extend a warm welcome to **Ian Green** and **Jonathan Scheele** who were elected to the Executive Committee at the AGM. Ian has over 40 years' experience in urban and regional planning in more than a dozen countries around the world, while being based in Oxford. Jonathan spent 38 years with the European Commission, including nine years working on EU transport policy. He was Director for European infrastructure planning and financing, as well as for 'smart' transport.

President's reception

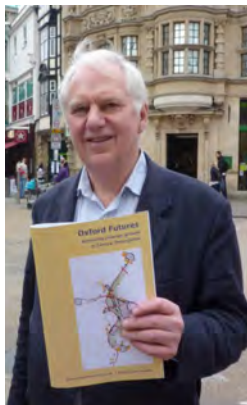


This summer event is an opportunity for the President, Committee and working group members to meet new members, councillors, council officers, corporate members and others with whom we work. Held on a glorious June evening, this year's reception was again hosted at the historic Judge's Lodging in St Giles, courtesy of St John's College. Over 50 people enjoyed the hospitality and speeches from Sir Hugo Brunner and Peter Thompson, seen here mingling with guests.

Nicholas Falk shortlisted for award

Nicholas Falk and some of his associates have been short-listed for the prestigious Wolfson Economics Prize for showing how a garden city could be built that is "visionary, economically viable and popular". Shown here with the *Oxford Futures* report he compiled on our behalf, urban economist Nicholas is the founder of the URBED consultancy. His view is that "garden city principles could be used to double the size of some towns while protecting the quality of rural villages".

You can read about his ideas at www.policyexchange.org.uk/wolfsonprize/item/wolfson-economics-prize-2014



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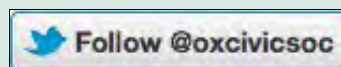
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