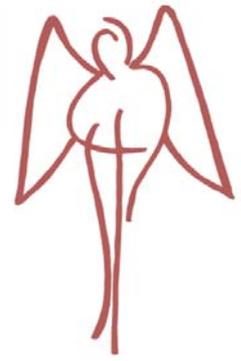


the guardian angel

your community's news & views



Produced for the parish of St Michael & All Angels, Summertown
June 2021

Growing food for everyone

Edible Cutteslowe is an exciting new project for anyone interested in growing food for our community. It is a joint venture involving the Cutteslowe Garden Centre and a number of local groups including the Cutteslowe Community Partnership and Oxford City Council.

Volunteers are invited to help grow fruit, vegetables and herbs in various locations including the Cutteslowe School allotment and a large, circular bed in Cutteslowe Park. The produce will be used for food boxes delivered to people in need and will also be made freely available for local people to enjoy.

This is a sociable experience, great for those who enjoy being out in the open air. Volunteers don't need any special skills as, if necessary, they will be given friendly, hands-on training in planting, nurturing and harvesting. Team leader Noel



Planting out - Noel Tuckwell with support worker Tenika Blake

Tuckwell says: 'This isn't just about the plants, it's about building community. The park is a beautiful, natural, relaxing space. It's a chance to come along and meet people.'

Gardeners who prefer to grow at home or on their allotments are also invited to take part by displaying their plants or produce outside their homes with a sign inviting people to help themselves.

The project is based on the hugely successful Incredible Edible Todmorden enterprise which has not only populated the town with fruit trees and planters filled with herbs and vegetables for everyone to pick, but has enormously strengthened community connections, encouraging people to grow, cook, share, and shop locally.

Edible Cutteslowe is delighted to be joining the many others who have taken inspiration from Todmorden's success.

For more information see:

<https://ediblecutteslowe.garden/> or email: ediblecutteslowe@gmail.com

See also: www.incredible-edible-todmorden.co.uk

Taking the plunge!

Outdoor swimming is becoming increasingly popular and the closure of indoor pools last summer encouraged many of us to rediscover our local rivers as places of recreation.

Until the middle of the last century there were many popular bathing points in and around Oxford and there are still swimming places on the River



Swimmers in the river at Port Meadow

Cherwell at Sunnymead and on the River Thames at Port Meadow and in Wolvercote.

On a warm summer's day no special equipment is required - although some people, like local enthusiast Jane Foster, prefer to wear wetsuits which

allow them to stay in the water for longer, and to swim in the cooler months as well.

Safety is important of course. It's not safe to swim when the flow rates are high and the current strong. It's also advisable always to go with someone else, and youngsters should never swim without an accompanying adult.

Recently there have been significant concerns about the drop in water quality caused by sewage treatment works spilling raw sewage into the rivers. Oxford City Council has called for more real-time data to be shared with the public and Thames Water is working on a system of email notifications for residents and river users to help swimmers assess possible risks. There are also moves to apply for designated bathing water status for a stretch of the Thames within the city, which, if granted, will provide even more information.

Once due diligence has been observed, however, an exhilarating experience awaits - as Jane says: 'It's invigorating. You get a real high!'

See: www.outdoorswimmingsociety.com;
riverconditions.environment-agency.gov.uk



Jane Foster at Sunnymead

This is **your** newsletter; if you would like to contribute in any way, please email: guardianangel.newsletter@gmail.com. We look forward to hearing from you.



Earthwatch – volunteers wanted!

Earthwatch, a registered charity with its European headquarters based in Summertown, is an international organisation whose efforts are aimed at minimising or reversing human impacts on the global and local environment.

The charity works nationally and internationally with government, business, communities, educators, policy makers and scientists. In the UK the focus includes freshwater, coasts, agricultural land, and local spaces.

Katie Scott, Supporter Development Manager, explains: 'Earthwatch works locally by engaging individuals and small groups in contributing to the local environment.'



Photo: Earthwatch, John Hunt

An example is the

Naturehood initiative, which supports school and community groups in creating wildlife-friendly environments in gardens and public spaces. For these and wider activities, educators and their students are supported by a package of online training and teaching materials developed by Earthwatch.

Another project is Tiny Forests, the planting of small and often neglected urban spaces with trees, providing wildlife habitats. Two sites have recently been planted in Oxford, in co-operation with the city council.

Earthwatch also supports and organises many citizen science activities, in which volunteers make observations that are essential for research projects. One example is FreshWater Watch, a global project which enables individuals and communities to monitor, protect and restore their local water resources.

Locally, the Thames Waterblitz is run twice a year in cooperation with Thames Water. Volunteers are given test kits to collect samples showing levels of pollutants such as nitrates in their local river, canal or pond.

The results are made available to support Thames Water's planning of remedial actions to improve water quality.

Earthwatch is recruiting volunteers for this and a range of other activities. For more information see: <https://earthwatch.org.uk>

All aboard!

The miniature railway has been a much-loved feature of Cutteslowe Park since it moved there from Blenheim Palace in 1988. It is run entirely by volunteers from the City of Oxford Society of Model Engineers who maintain the track and rolling stock, manage passengers and, of



course, drive and guard the trains! They have recently used their engineering skills to complete a 230 metre track extension and have plans to replace the ground level wooden sleepers with recycled ones. Chairman Denis

Mulford loves watching the expressions on families' faces as they ride around the track and would like to say a big thank you to the Friends of Cutteslowe and Sunnymead Park, the City Parks Department, and all the passengers.

For more information see: www.facebook.com/cuttesloweparkminiaturerailway; cosme.org.uk

yourstruly... Brenda Boardman Environmental change campaigner



Brenda travelled for two and a half years after leaving school, and the kindness of people living in poor conditions made a lasting impression on her. Her doctoral research concerned fuel poverty, concluding that its chief cause was energy inefficient housing stock. Brenda went on to consider the link between fuel poverty and global warming as a further compelling

reason for creating energy efficient homes. While working at Oxford University's Environmental Change Institute Brenda helped bring in the ABC energy efficiency labelling on domestic appliances. She is both an expert in her field and an active campaigner for change.

Brenda is currently co-chair of Oxford's Coalition for Healthy Streets and Active Travel (CoHSAT). She says: 'We are the first generation to realise the connection between burning fossil fuels and climate change, so we have a responsibility to act.'

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New health centre for Diamond Place?



It's looking increasingly likely that a new health centre will be included in the proposed redevelopment of Diamond Place in Summertown. In a

recent community meeting organised by the Summertown & St Margaret's Neighbourhood Forum Dr Matthew Cheetham from the Summertown Health Centre made a powerful case for a new centre to replace existing outdated surgeries on Banbury Road. Tom Morris from Oxford City Council assured the meeting that this is being actively considered (along with housing, a new building for the North Oxford Association and other uses) but said that funding for the project is yet to be finalised. The Neighbourhood Forum will ensure that the community continues to have its say in any future redevelopment plans. www.summertownstmargaretsforum.org.uk

Changing with the times



When Covid struck early last year, Colombia Coffee Roasters in Summertown started to sell takeaway coffee. Owner Milly Barr (pictured) soon realised that customers needed

other items too, so fruit, vegetables, flowers and other goods started to appear. The new business was a great success and what began as a temporary response to lockdown is now a permanent feature.

The company has strong ethical values. The food is organic and locally produced where possible and their coffee comes from small farms in Colombia and is roasted in Wheatley using one of the most environmentally-friendly machines on the market. Milly says: 'People can now buy good healthy food when they come in for their coffee.'

The shop also delivers in Oxford and offers a 50% discount to NHS workers.

www.colombiacoffeeroasters.co.uk

Cool for school

Cutteslowe School - at the heart of the community



Cutteslowe School aims to play a key role in developing citizens of the future and to bring stability, harmony, compassion and tolerance to its children and their families by working at the heart of our community. Recently the school has joined with other local groups to form the Cutteslowe Community Partnership whose aim, summed up in their tagline 'Love Cutteslowe', is to give all local people a sense of involvement and wellbeing.

The children have already taken part in various projects including the Pen Pal project, the Lights Festival, and Hope for Hospitals and there are plans to develop community volunteering with small groups of pupils supporting more vulnerable members of our community by helping in the garden or with other practical tasks.

Everyone loves Forest School!

Cutteslowe School is also lucky to have space to incorporate Forest School learning into the curriculum, and the children love this aspect of their schooling. For the school it's an exciting step towards achieving their vision of holistic



development for the students, as they engage with and explore their environment, learning to respect the natural world and understand our place in it.

All the children, from the nursery school upwards, take part, helping with the goats and hens, watching how the pond develops, and looking out for the wildlife around them, as well as having fun in mud and puddles, rain and sun. Parent volunteers love helping too!

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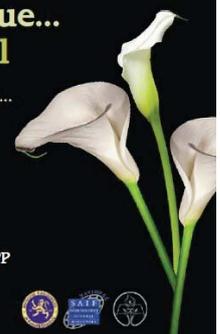
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St Michael & All Angels Church
All are welcome!

We are open for public worship but will keep Covid protocols to make people feel as safe as possible.

Sundays

8am: Holy Eucharist
Traditional language; no hymns.

10am: Parish Eucharist
With choir and hymns.

Please check the website for current provision for children.

6.30pm first Sunday of the month: Silent prayer

6.30pm all other Sundays: Taizé worship
A short, meditative candlelit service with chants and silent prayer.

Weekdays

9am Mondays to Fridays: Morning prayer

10am – noon Tuesdays: Baby and toddler group
Please check website for details or email Clare Leal: curate@stmichaels-summertown.org.uk.

5.30pm Thursdays: Choristers' practice age 3+
Term-time only. Contact Alice: **07791 328108**
Please check website for latest updates.

6.30pm Thursdays: Choir practice
Contact Stephen: **07717 852020**

8.30am first Saturday of the month: Men's breakfast
An informal social. Contact Steve: **01865 552475**

For enquiries about baptisms, weddings and funerals please email Gavin Knight:
gavin.knight@stmichaels-summertown.org.uk

Contact details

The Revd Gavin Knight (vicar)
The Vicarage, 33 Lonsdale Road, OX2 7ES
07833 251939

'No matter where you are on the journey of faith, you are always welcome at St Michael & All Angels!'

Parish office
Contact: Leah Mattinson **01865 552738**;
office@stmichaels-summertown.org.uk

Church and church hall bookings
The church and the upper and lower church halls (with kitchens) are available for hire.
Contact: bookings@stmichaels-summertown.org.uk

The Cat Group at St Michael's



No, not a get-together for cat lovers! 'Cat' in this case stands for catechesis, the ancient Christian word for spiritual formation and discipleship. In the Early Church catechesis

encompassed not only instruction in doctrine but the whole of Christian living. Last autumn about a dozen members of the congregation of St Michael & All Angels, led by the vicar, Gavin Knight, and curate, Clare Leal, began meeting on Zoom to continue this tradition and explore how to live as Christians in our present world. Tom Wright's topical book *God and the Pandemic* seemed a good place to start. Since then meetings have focused on the gospel reading and sermon from the previous Sunday. The emphasis is on theological reflection, honest questioning and mutual encouragement.

If you would like to join in, please contact:
vicar@stmichaels-summertown.org.uk

The Living Room—for homeless people

Mary Gurr, chair of OWNS writes: The Oxford Winter Night Shelter, providing safe space for rough sleepers, ran for three successive winters, and at the end of each season we were delighted to find that at least half of our guests had not returned to sleeping on the streets. Covid restrictions meant such accommodation was no longer suitable but when the situation changes we will once again provide winter shelters.



In the meantime OWNS wants to continue to benefit homeless people using its expertise and volunteers. We are convinced that a day centre providing sanctuary and support is needed. We will supplement the work being done by existing day services. They will refer guests who will benefit from the small-scale service we are offering.

We are grateful to a partner charity for leasing a property to us, and we plan to open The Living Room this summer. The premises will have a shower, washing machine and computers. It will be a place of respite from the streets with volunteers who will provide vital hospitality and a listening ear.

For more information on how you can get involved see: www.ownsoxford.org.uk or email: mary.gurr1@btinternet.com