



Town Crier



News from Abingdon-on-Thames Town Council

March 2023

Number 70



Photo titled: "Flying ducks"

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MG, GWR & RAF Abingdon

7 January to
26 March 2023

Exhibition
coming soon...



FOLLOW
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& explore
the Museum online
www.abingdonmuseum.com



Family Activities
Oxford Geology Trust
Workshop
Oxfordshire's Past Climates
11th March 2023



Please join experts from the
Oxford Geology Trust, find
out more about Oxfordshire's
past climates and bring your own material for them to
identify and discuss. Come out for some family fun with
hands-on activities including mask making
and the Fossil Lucky Dip (£3 contribution).

Drop in session, booking not required
From 10:30am onwards in the Museum Basement

Town Council Budget

Balanced Budget for Town Council

Abingdon Town Council has agreed
a balanced budget this year, with
increased support for those struggling
with the cost of living crisis.

This coming year, Abingdon Town Council
is maintaining front line services, increasing
support for the Town's young people and
playing our part in tackling the climate
emergency.

The Council will continue to provide
support for young people, working with
both The Abingdon Bridge and Damascus
Project to develop our joint youth project.

The Town Council will increase the
funding provided so that key local charities
including the Abingdon Carousel Family
Centre, Abingdon Citizens' Advice
Bureau and Be Free Young Carers can
continue their work in supporting some of
Abingdon most vulnerable residents.

The Neighbourhood Plan is now getting
nearer to completion, and should go to a
referendum during the coming year.

As part of its environmental strategy, the
Council has agreed to host the One Planet
Abingdon Climate Emergency Centre for
the next five years.

It will also establish a Community
Woodland for the town.

The Council has also set funding aside so
that Abingdon can celebrate the Coronation
in May.

The Town Council's services also include
eight play areas, recreation areas, football
pitches, cemeteries, the Guildhall complex
including the popular Abbey Cinema, and
the County Hall building in which the town
museum is housed. The Council runs the
Monday Market and supports a wide range
of events and community support.

Putting together this year's budget has not
been easy. The Town Council is facing a
lot of pressure from rising prices and staff
costs, but it has been able to limit the rise in
Band D Council Tax to just 9p per week.



Councillor Samantha Bowring, Leader of Abingdon Town Council

Council News

Town Council Update

The Town Council carries out many activities, some of which many residents do not know about Here is an update on some of the Town Council's activity.

Outdoor spaces

The Town Council has a hardworking team of staff who look after many of the town's outdoor spaces. The "Outside Services Team" visit all the Council's play areas every day of year (yes, even Christmas Day!) to make sure that everything is safe and clean and tidy.

Cemeteries and Christmas Lights

The team also open the two Town Cemeteries to visitors every day (Christmas Day last year saw hundreds of visitors). They look after the Town's popular floral displays. Last year they helped put up the new Christmas Lights display, which attracted many very positive comments.



Historic buildings

The Town Council takes care of many of our town's historic buildings – the council are helping fund repairs to the statue of Prince Albert which stands on a column in Albert Park .

The Council is working with local residents and the Friends of Abingdon Civic Society to enhance the planning protection of the area around the Albert Park.

The Town Council is custodian of the beautiful County Hall Building in the heart of the town. This was built in 1678, originally as a court. Nowadays it is home to a museum which welcomes Abingdon residents and visitors to the town and is supported by the Abingdon Museum Friends.

The Guildhall

The Town Council looks after the Guildhall which has some beautiful old rooms adorned with interesting paintings and original features such as fireplaces and chandeliers. It works with the Abbey Cinema, who run the cinema in the new part of the building to make these rooms available for hire at a modest price. These buildings (and the Council's other properties) are looked after by a dedicated Properties Officer.

Council News

Town Council Update

Climate Emergency Centre

In the basement of the museum you will find the Abingdon Climate Emergency Centre where everyone is welcome to visit for refreshments, join in with one of the many activities on offer or learn more about conservation, protection and improvement of the physical, natural and social environments in the town of Abingdon.

Town Twinning

Abingdon has four twin towns. – Argentan in France, Lucca in Italy, Schongau in Germany and Sint-Niklaas in Belgium. The Vale of the White Horse which Abingdon is a part of, is twinned with Colmar in France. The Council is celebrating this with a new Twinning sign post in the Roysse Court Garden opposite the museum and market place, do take a look next time you are in the town centre.

Community Woodlands

The Town Council looks after several woodlands around the town, staff regularly inspect and manage these areas so that they are safe and enjoyable spaces to visit. Staff also work to maintain these as biodiverse areas with habitats for wildlife and a range of native plants. The Council has taken the first steps toward creating a new Community Woodland at Abingdon Common to the west of the town and look forward to keeping residents updated.

Play areas

The Council looks after eight of the town's playgrounds, two dedicated football pitches and a number of small open spaces and amenity areas. Improving opportunities for healthy activities and sports and play is important to the Council. Over the next few years the Council is planning major refurbishments of some of the recreation areas to enhance playgrounds and sports facilities, starting with major improvements at Caldecott Recreation Ground.



Become a Town Councillor

If you live or work in Abingdon and you care about your local area you may wish to stand for election to the Town Council in May. You do not have to be a member of a political party to stand. The role of councillor offers you the chance to make a huge difference to the quality of life for people in Abingdon. Being an effective councillor requires both commitment and hard work. If you feel you can work to balance the needs and interests of residents you can find out more by visiting www.gov.uk/government/get-involved/take-part/become-a-councillor

Town Clerk

Making the new Mayor

The annual meeting of the Town Council is held in May each year when the Mayor is installed for the new Civic year. This year's "Mayor-Making" is scheduled to take place on the evening Monday 15th May, when the retiring Mayor (Cllr Andy Foulsham) will present his "Mayor's Awards" to members of the public for their outstanding contributions to the life of the town



Farewell to Nigel Warner

In December 2022 the Council said goodbye to its long-standing Town Clerk Nigel Warner who, after 22 years of hard work and dedication has retired .

Nigel was not only a Council employee but a friend to many in the town. He did a huge amount during his time with the Council and his knowledge and experience will be missed. Everyone wishes him all the best for a happy retirement.

Following a very thorough recruitment process, Alan Rouse has been appointed to be Abingdon's new Town Clerk and took on the role on 1st January, have worked with Nigel during December. Alan joins the Council from Oxfordshire County Council and brings a wealth of local government experience with him.



Bun Throwing

Coronation Bun Throwing

On Saturday 6th May 2023 King Charles III's Coronation will take place at Westminster Abbey conducted by the Archbishop of Canterbury. This promises to be one of the defining events of 2023.



The Coronation will be a three-day spectacle, kicking off with grand processions from Buckingham Palace and a religious service on Saturday 6th May followed by a concert at Windsor Castle on Sunday 7th May and a Public Bank Holiday on Monday 8th May!

The coronation has been on the cards since Charles was proclaimed as King in September – this will be the first weekend coronation ceremony since 1902 when Edward VII was crowned.

Sticking with Abingdon's 400-year-old tradition, the Town Council will be holding a Bun Throwing to mark the royal occasion.

Councillors in full ceremonial robes will climb to the top of the County Hall and throw several thousand currant buns down at the chanting crowds filling the Market Place below.

Keep an eye on our website and social media for more information.



One Planet Abingdon

One Planet Abingdon, The Green Forum and our exciting plans for the future

Abingdon Town Council declared a Climate Emergency in March 2019, in recognition of the crises of climate change and the destruction of our natural environment.



As part of the Council's pledge to take positive action, a Green forum was established following a proposal from Councillor Gabby Barody. The Forum promotes and initiates changes which will help towards carbon neutrality within the town, reduce waste, promote well-being and improve bio-diversity.

It is also a collaboration of local voluntary groups who are active in trying to improve the town's environment, including representative from One Planet Abingdon.

The Forum' activities revolve around a new theme each quarter. After a lot of success in 2022, these are the themes for 2023:

Jan-Mar 2023	Sustainable Food
Apr – Jun 2023	Zero carbon energy
Jul – Sep 2023	Sustainable Water
Oct – Dec 2023	The effect of our lifestyles on the poorer countries of the world

The Climate Emergency Centre is based in the basement of County Hall in the Market Place. It offers free tea, coffee and cake.

Find out more at: OnePlanetAbingdon.org

Yellow Submarine

Mayor backs Yellow Submarine

One of our Mayor's charities is Yellow Submarine who are an award-winning Oxfordshire charity that believes people with learning disabilities and autism deserve to live life to the full.



They tackle the problem that many people with learning disabilities leave school with limited life skills and as a result poor life chances. This often leads to isolation and being marginalised.

Yellow Submarine's projects start working with young people in community settings from the age of 11 onwards, to build their social skills, confidence, independence and ultimately their employability. At the same time, we are supporting families and carers with respite.

2023 is a special year for Yellow Submarine, it marks 10 years since the opening of their Life Changing Café on Park End Street in Oxford. For the past decade the charity

has been providing a stepping stone from education to employment for over 50 trainees.



At the end of last year Yellow Submarine were nominated for the national Independent Awards, run by founder of Not on the High Street – Holly Tucker. With the support of their faithful customers and supporters they won the High Street Shop Award.



For more information visit www.yellowsubmarine.org.uk

Warm Spaces

Town Council supports warm spaces

Abingdon Town Council has given a grant to the Abingdon Baptist Church to continue to provide a warm space for residents struggling with rising energy costs. Abingdon Warm Hubs are free to attend, everyone is welcome, provide a safe environment and the opportunity to meet new people. Days and timings for Abingdon warm hubs can be found below;



Mondays 11am - 4pm

St Edmunds Catholic Church, 1 Oxford Road, Abingdon

Providing hot lunch, refreshments, conversations, and games

Tuesdays 1pm – 4pm

Peachcroft Christian Centre, Lindsay Drive, Abingdon

Providing warm drinks, comfy chairs, quiet workspace.

Wednesdays 12pm - 2pm

Abingdon Salvation Army, 12 West St Helens St, Abingdon

Providing Tea, Coffee, Wi-Fi, Conversation and games.

Thursday 12.30pm – 4.30pm

Christ Church, Northcourt Road, The Barn, Abingdon

Providing hot soup, drinks, and conversation

Friday 2.00pm-4.30pm

Abingdon Baptist Church, 36 Ock Street, Abingdon

Providing Tea, Coffee, Squash, Biscuits and conversation

To find out more please visit www.warmwelcome.uk

Help is available to local residents with the cost of living from :

Abingdon Community Fridge: www.facebook.com/abingdoncommunityfridge

Citizens Advice Bureau: Located in Abbey House in Abbey Close or visit Caox.org.uk

Abingdon Food Bank: abingdon.foodbank.org.uk

Meet Our Archivist

Meet Our Town Archivist

Behind the scenes here at Abingdon Town Council we have our very own Archivist, Mrs. Jackie Smith.

Jackie became interested in the history of Abingdon after joining the Abingdon and District Archaeological Society in 1969. In the early 1970s the then Borough Council granted the society the use of the Museum Basement for two evenings a week.



Jackie then became involved in a project recording old Abingdon pubs, initially trawling through published histories before becoming acquainted with old documents borrowed from Morland's Brewery archives.

It was soon obvious that prior to the 19th century many town buildings had been owned by the Borough Corporation and let out on leases of 21 years until being sold off in the 19th century. Fortunately, these archives had not been deposited but were available in town to study.

In 1991 Jackie started working at the Centre for Oxfordshire Studies and in 1995 Jackie

was appointed to succeed Bill Liversidge, who was Abingdon's first Honorary Archivist.

Jackie has recently been answering enquiries relating to the historical use and appearance of properties in the town such as Fat Face and flats overlooking the Market Square, and answering a question from the Curator of Archaeology at the Museums Resource Centre at Standlake regarding the existence of a mortuary and the nature of staffing at the 19th century Abingdon Cottage Hospital in Bath Street.

Amongst answering historic queries Jackie is also busy preparing for this year's Heritage Open Days (www.abingdonheritage.org.uk) as well as providing regular local history articles about Abingdon for 'Heralding the Past' features in the Herold Series.



If you have a link to historic Abingdon, an interest in Abingdon's history, you can contact Jackie by emailing archivist@abingdon.gov.uk

Upcoming events

Break out of the winter blues and welcome the Spring at the Abingdon Events Partnership family fun day on Saturday 8th April at Abingdon Market Place. There'll be an Egg hunt and Easter crafts to try, local food stalls and Live music. Best of all the event is free! Most crafts will be free to try except for the Chocolate Workshops which cost only £5 (to cover the products you will use). Each "chocolatier" will come away with a chocolate gift made by their own hands.

Full details of all these and more local events can be found at

www.abingdon.gov.uk



March

4 Sat 9am - 5pm

11 Sat 9am - 4pm

18 Sat 10am - 4pm
10.30am - 1pm

1- 26 Tue-Sun 10am - 4pm

20 Mon 7.30pm - 9.30pm

22 Wed 7.15pm - 10.00pm

23 Thur 11.00am - 1.00pm

Art and Design for Young People, Sunningwell School of Art and Design

ATOM Festival, Abingdon Events Partnership Abingdon Market Place

Clubs and Societies Day, Abingdon Town Council, Guildhall Abingdon

Abingdon Repair Café, Abingdon Museum

Exhibition: 'Planes, Trains and Automobiles, Abingdon County Hall Museum

Catherine Sampson talk 'Royal Women' Abingdon Family History Society.

Long Furlong Community Centre Abingdon

In the court of Princess Turandot, Amey Theatre, Abingdon School

Knit & Chat, One planet Abingdon, County Hall Basement

April

8 Sat 9am - 4pm

22 Sat 9am

29 Sat 9am - 3pm

East Egg Extravaganza, Abingdon Events Partnership Abingdon Market Place

Walking Event, Abingdon Events Partnership, Abingdon Market Place

Local Excellence Market, Abingdon Events Partnership, Abingdon Market Place

May

13 Sat 10am - 2pm

15 Mon

20 Sat 9am - 4 pm

Abingdon Eco Fair, Abingdon Carbon Cutters, Abingdon Market Place,
County Hall, Abingdon Guildhall

Mayor Making

Christian Aid Sale, Abingdon Christian Aid, Abingdon Market Place

For more information and updates visit our website and social media channels.



www.abingdon.gov.uk



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