

FREE

LangfordLife

The Voice of the Village

Published by the Langford Village Community Association

Lakeside Drive

Councillor Melanie Magee leads the battle to save Jubilee Lake from neglect



London Road crossing
Make it a double: Matt & Kieran
Save Gavray Meadows
Photography competition



SPECIAL
RELAUNCH
ISSUE

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Steve Clack
Editor

Editor's letter

Welcome to the new-look Langford Life magazine. It's been almost a year since the last issue, during which time we've assembled an expanded team of volunteers (myself included) to put the publication together. One member of the new team, Rich Ponsford, is a professional graphic designer, which has given us the ability to switch to this new, bigger, full-colour layout. We hope you like it.

The most important thing, as always, is that this is *your* magazine. We'll naturally work to update you on the important issues that affect you as Bicester residents, such as the massive expansion planned for the coming years, but we're primarily looking for contributions from the community on what's going on in and around Langford itself. So, whether you've discovered a great local walk or bike ride, or have found a useful local resource or amenity you'd like everyone to know about, just drop me an email and I'll be sure to consider it for the next issue.

We're also looking for a budding artist to create a cartoon strip for each issue, and we're also keen to hear from any Langford residents who would be willing to contribute regular articles. If you think you've got a little talent for writing and would like to join our small team for regular get-togethers and brainstorming sessions, please get in touch.

We're very aware that Langford Life has never had what you'd call a strict production schedule—after all, every one of the contributors works purely voluntarily—but we're planning to publish another issue later this year, then hopefully three issues per year from 2016 onwards. The number of issues per year is really governed by the amount of content and ideas we receive from residents though, so it's very much down to *you*.

Finally, if you like the photo on the cover of this issue and think you're a dab hand with a camera, flick to page 14, where you'll find out how you can get your own handiwork on the next front cover.

Any feedback is gratefully received, so please be sure to email me with your comments and suggestions on this issue—I'll look forward to hearing from you!

EDITORIAL

Editor Steve Clack (editor@langfordlife.org.uk)

Design Rich Ponsford (richard@librodesign.co.uk)

Advertising Mike Oke (secretary@langfordlife.org.uk)

Distribution Bob Rudge (bobrudge@oxon.myzen.co.uk)

LVCA COMMITTEE

Co-Chairmen Dom Cotter/Nick Cotter (chairman@langfordlife.org.uk)

Vice Chairman Ted Kingston (edward.kingston@hotmail.co.uk)

Treasurer Caroline Cadbury (treasurer@langfordlife.org.uk)

Secretary Mike Oke (secretary@langfordlife.org.uk)

Health and safety Matt Phillips (mpp100@hotmail.com)

Website Bob Rudge/Jon Spinage (website@langfordlife.org.uk)

Hall bookings Jayne Rossiter-Gill (bookings@langfordlife.org.uk)

CPRE John Broad (john.broad85@talktalk.net)



Worries for London Road railway crossing

When the East West Rail link to Milton Keynes is opened in 2019, the level crossing on London Road may eventually be closed for up to 40 minutes per hour. **John Broad** reports.

The forthcoming East West Rail link will bring easy access to Winslow, Bletchley, Milton Keynes and Bedford. Subject to funding, it will eventually be extended to Cambridge. Unfortunately, this expansion will result in the gates at Bicester's London Road level crossing eventually being closed to road traffic for up to 40 minutes in every hour.

At a consultation meeting with Railtrack earlier this year, we were informed that neither a bridge nor underpass would be possible to redirect the road traffic. When the Rt. Hon. Sir Tony Baldry MP took the matter up with the Chief Executive of Oxfordshire County Council, it was said that it would take several years for the number of trains to become a real issue, but it's clear to everyone that it will be increasingly costly (and hence unlikely) for a bridge or underpass to be constructed once the lines are in place and frequent trains are running.

Asked by Langford Life to provide an update on the crossing in early May, the Leader of Cherwell District Council, Cllr Barry Wood, told us *"Both the District and County are really clear that the only thing we cannot do is nothing. County highways officers, along with Network Rail officials through the East West Rail Partnership, are undertaking engineering assessments on options which can be characterised as 'go over', 'go under' or 'go round'. These need to have the engineering fully assessed and costed. Once this is done (and my understanding is that it will take a month or two at least), we then have to plump for one of them and then source the funding. This work is going to involve East West Rail and the Department of Transport, as well as local government.*

"There is sufficient time to complete these stages, and I will be able to keep Langford Life (and of course your local councillors) up to date as things progress. In short, be assured we are 'on the case' with this."

When a town becomes a village

Most Langford residents will be aware of the plans to rename Bicester Town station, but where's it all going?

It's been a few months since Chiltern Railways announced its intention to rename Bicester Town station to 'Bicester Village'—but plenty of residents are angry at the decision.

The station, owned by Network Rail and run by Chiltern Railways, has been called Bicester Town since the line reopened in 1987 after a 19-year closure, and most locals seem keen to keep it that way.

It's currently unclear whether Chiltern Railways has received the necessary approval from the Office of the Rail Regulator (ORR) to carry out the proposed name change. As the sole operator of the line, Chiltern Railways is required to agree the change with Network Rail and 'gather relevant stakeholder support'. From our understanding, the only stakeholder that has given such support is Bicester Village itself.

If you'd rather keep our station as Bicester Town, please show your support by writing to Victoria Prentis, our new local MP. You can also sign a petition at www.change.org. (just Google 'bicester petition').

For progress updates on the station naming issue, we suggest that you visit the Oxford to Bicester Rail Action Group (OBAG) web site, at www.obag.org.uk.

Bicester **VILLAGE**

Capital surprise for Cubs!

When the 1st Langford Village Cub Scout Pack went sightseeing in London recently, they had a totally unexpected treat in store. Group Scout leader **Ellie Thompson** reports.

Back in March this year, the 1st Langford Village Cub Scout Pack had a day trip sightseeing in London. We travelled by train to Marylebone, then took the Underground to London Bridge. After a quick stop at the Shard, the tallest building in the EU (at 306m), we then walked along the South Bank before visiting Tower Bridge. This gave us great views of the City, and the Cubs really enjoyed walking over the glass floor and seeing the road and River Thames right below them!

After a picnic lunch outside the Tower of London, we boarded a boat and took a tour along the river, up to Westminster. We saw St Paul's Cathedral, the London Eye and the Houses of Parliament. When we got off the boat, we walked up Whitehall and saw the Cenotaph, where the soldiers lay their poppy wreaths each year.

What the boys didn't know was that I had written directly to the Prime Minister prior the trip, and he had invited us to have our photo taken outside No. 10 Downing Street! We had to be searched first by the armed policeman—which was a bit scary—but he was actually very friendly. As an extra surprise, the front door opened while we were there and the butler came out to give us all a special card from Larry, the Downing Street cat, as a

reminder of our visit.

We then walked through Horse Guards Parade, where we saw the soldiers on guard, and finally reached Trafalgar Square, where we got to watch the street entertainers. All in all we had a fantastic (but tiring) day out and learnt lots of interesting facts about our capital city.

As well as our Cub Scout Pack (ages 8–11), we also have a Beaver Scout Colony (ages 6–8) and a Scout Troop (11–14). This next term is really busy

for us, as we make the most of the lighter evenings and get outdoors as much as possible. We are all going away on camps too, when we have a great time making fires, cooking, canoeing, shooting and generally having fun.

All these activities need dedicated leaders who are willing to give up some of their free time. If you would like to help out or learn more about the Scout Group, please contact Ellie Thompson on 01869 322425.



Thank you Ted ...

We'd like to thank Ted Kingston for his valued work with Langford Life over the past 16 years (spanning four different editors), during which time he's been responsible for advertising. Without Ted's considerable efforts to raise these funds, our community mouthpiece might not have been able to continue and flourish.

Thank you Ted. Thankfully we're not losing him from the LVCA: he continues as Vice-Chairman, always ready with wise words (and a glass of red wine) when required.

Mike Oke, LVCA Secretary



SHINY HAPPY'S PEOPLE Ringmaster Mr Happy and Pip the clown with pupils of Langford Village School, and FOLVS members Hayley Durbin (centre-right) and Lucy Baird (far-right).

The circus comes to town!

Langford Village School enjoyed two hours of big-top fun at the end of April, when Happy's Circus came to town ...

Back for the third time by popular demand, Happy's Circus (www.happyscircus.co.uk) paid a visit to Langford Village School on the evening of Monday 27 April with their 600-seat big top.

Happy's is a traditional all-human circus with no animals, but includes a variety of acrobats, aerialists, rolla-rolla balancing and juggling, sword balancing, magic and much more. Led by the father-and-son double act of Mr Happy and Pip the clown, the talented and funny folk of Happy's gave the audience two-hours of immersive

entertainment, minus a half-hour intermission.

Hayley Durbin, one of the organisers and Chair of Friends of Langford Village School (FOLVS), told us *"The families that joined us had a truly wonderful evening and the children have been buzzing about it ever since. Thank you to all that came, those that helped and the Year 6 team of cake and sweet sellers. Also, I'd like to say a big thanks to my amazing parent volunteers."*

Needless to say, the school will be inviting Happy's back to Langford in the next year or two.

Bicester's Big Lunch is back!

Following its great success last year, Bicester's Big Lunch will be back on Sunday 7 June.

Streets lined with tables. Families and friends, young and old, all enjoying each other's company amidst a host of activities, live music, entertainment, amazing food and fun. Bicester's Big Lunch community celebration was the biggest one in the country last year, bringing together 5,000 people onto the streets of Bicester in an event that supported and promoted local businesses, community groups and the talents of local people, funded and organised by local residents and supporting partners.

Come and join in the fun on Sunday 7 June 2015, from 12pm–5pm. To find out more, please go to www.bicestersbiglunch.org.uk.



Your views

We'd love to know what you think about your new-look Langford Life magazine. We're always looking for new ideas, or if you have an event coming up and would like to tell people about it, get in touch. Email editor@langfordlife.org.uk with your suggestions, or find us on Twitter @LangfordLife.

Bicester Garden City?

Bicester has been chosen as the site for the UK's next 'Garden City'—or at least 'Garden Town'. But when is it going to happen, and what does it all mean for residents?

Anounced by the coalition in December last year, the government plans to make Bicester its second new 'Garden City', after Ebsfleet in Kent, to help deal with the country's housing shortage.

Bicester was already due to get more than 13,000 new homes, primarily from the new 6,000-home eco-town development already under construction and the UK's largest self-build scheme at Graven Hill, but the Garden Town plans are likely to accelerate the growth.

If you're wondering what 'Garden Town' really means, the government said it doesn't want to *"impose any definition of what garden cities are"*, but features can include *"quality design, gardens, accessible green space near homes, access to employment, and local amenities."* Whether this is purely rhetoric or is likely to translate into real benefits to residents remains to be seen.

While government funding and loans of up to £100m have been alluded to, primarily to boost housebuilding, there are likely to be numerous local projects competing for this, including a new M40 junction to ease congestion into Bicester. The funding award is also planned to help provide up to 21,500 new jobs in the area.

These plans followed an expression of interest from Cherwell District Council, after the Department for Communities

and Local Government announced it would offer financial support for local authorities who met the criteria of Garden Town status by providing affordable homes, schools and jobs while preserving the countryside.

New infrastructure

Although additional infrastructure is planned to support the 13,000 new homes, it's not clear what this is likely to involve. Rail links will certainly improve when the Bicester-to-Oxford and second Bicester-to-London rail links open from Bicester Town station later this year, and again when the East West Rail link gives us a direct connection to Milton Keynes, and hopefully on to Cambridge.

If the rumoured new M40 junction is eventually approved, it will be constructed near Arncott, south of the current Bicester junction.

20+ years to completion?

If you're concerned that Bicester is likely to double in size any time soon, it's important to note that the first 10,000 homes at the eco-town, Graven Hill and south west Bicester aren't due for completion until around 2031. The remaining 3,000 will then be added after the current Local Plan expires in 2031. Of course, by that time there might be significant other expansion planned, but that's at least 16 years away.

Local concerns

Local residents have voiced mixed feelings about the level of proposed development. Lots of us are concerned with congestion around Bicester, with the town already having grown in population by well over 50% in the past 20 years, with remarkably little infrastructure growth to support it.

A good example of this is the newly-completed Bicester Cottage Hospital, which has just 12 beds—that's just one for every 3,000 residents. Also, with millions of visitors per year, Bicester Village adds significantly to our congestion problems, particularly during weekends and bank holidays.

Commenting on the new plans, Helen Marshall from the Oxfordshire branch of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England (CPRE) told the BBC earlier this year: *"I think most people in Bicester will have slightly mixed feelings. It may bring relief for some of the infrastructure problems and it might be good for the local economy but at the same time they don't want to lose the character of the town as it stands or the fact that it is in a rural setting surrounded by very lovely rural villages - so it's going to be a balance."*

If you're concerned by the plans, write to Victoria Prentis, our local MP, or visit the CPRE web site (www.cpreoxon.org.uk) to register your support.



Repairs due for Jubilee Lake

The pathways and brickwork around Jubilee Lake have been gradually deteriorating in recent years, but help is imminent.

Still a popular spot for a stroll or just to feed the ducks with the kids, Langford's Jubilee Lake has gradually been falling into disrepair.

Over the past few years, the brickwork around the edge has deteriorated to the point that bricks have been coming loose and falling in. This has been starting to pose a real safety hazard.

Councillor Melanie Magee (<http://melaniemagee.co.uk>) has been chasing up the situation for some months now, and after ascertaining that the paths and brickwork are the responsibility of Thames Water, she has succeeded in getting a commitment from them to carry out the necessary repairs.

After a visit to the lake from a Thames Water representative in

February this year, the company has highlighted several areas that need urgent attention and have raised the relevant repairs with their contractors. Work is currently planned to begin sometime in May.

If you've spotted bits of orange paint on the paths and brickwork recently, these are the areas that have been earmarked for repair.

We'd like to say a big thank you to Melanie for persevering with this, and hence helping to get Landford's biggest lake into (hopefully) ship shape!

In future, if you notice any serious deterioration around Jubilee Lake, you can contact Thames Water's customer relations representative, Jon Denny, directly on 0800 0093965, from 8am–5pm, Monday to Friday.



Jubilee Lake, back in better days.



Garden ideas?

Whether you've got green fingers or just some good ideas, we could use your help to refurbish our community garden ...

The Langford Village community hall in Nightingale Place (just to the left of Tesco) has been refurbished with a new kitchen, toilets and windows over the past few years, but we're now turning our attention to the back garden.

It's a great asset that we'd love to make more attractive and suitable for everyone, but we need your suggestions. Maybe you think we should add a couple of benches for the comfort of mums and dads, together with some play equipment for the kids? Or perhaps some floral surroundings that everyone can enjoy?

All ideas are welcome—the more imaginative the better. Please bear in mind that we've got a limited budget to work with, but get in touch to discuss if you've got a plan.

We'd also love to hear from individuals or groups who'd be willing to volunteer a little of their time to help get the new garden established.

If you'd like to get involved, email Dom Cotter at dbc@b7media.com or tweet us @LangfordLife.



RAISING THE BAR Landlords Kieran (left) and Matt outside the Nightingale pub.

Nice one, Nightingale!

Since taking over The Nightingale last year, Langford's one and only pub has gone from strength to strength. Now a bustling meeting point and local entertainment spot, we talk to landlords Kieran and Matt about the secrets of their success.

So, what were you both doing before you came to Bicester?

Kieran: We were running a couple of nightclubs in Malia, in northern Crete. I'd been working in Greece since 1999, when I went to Corfu to be a Club 18-30 rep. It was just supposed to be a year out after finishing my education, but it turned into five years there. When I left Club 18-30 in 2004, I went to Crete and got involved in what turned into the first Indie music nightclub in the Mediterranean. I then took on a second nightclub opposite the first, and after meeting Matt in 2007, he ended up running one while I managed the other.

Because of the problems with the Greek economy, the nightclubbing seasons were just getting shorter and shorter each year. In the early days we worked eight months on and four

months off, but at the end we were only working a 10-week season, which wasn't sustainable for us.

So, in 2012 we decided to move to Gütersloh in Germany, where a friend of ours was having problems with her bar. It was next to the British army base there, so to bring in more people we turned it into a squaddie bar, but with nightclub-style entertainment. It was a brilliant success, but because it was in a residential area of the city centre, it eventually had to be closed down because of the disturbance.

The brewery called us and told us about a pub in Bicester. We just said "Where's that?"

Matt

After that, we went back to Crete for a final season to close things down, but soon decided that we'd have to bite the bullet and come back to England.

And you came straight to Bicester?

Matt: No, we'd never even heard of Bicester at that point. We came back in late 2013, which our families were really pleased about, and stayed with my mum in Milton Keynes.

We knew we wanted to run a pub, so applied to seven different breweries. In January last year we were approached by Charles Wells brewery, and looked at alternative pubs in Milton Keynes, Essex, and even all the way up in Stockport. After all this we had our hearts set on one in Great Horwood, between Buckingham and Bletchley.

On the very same day we told the brewery this was the one we wanted,

they called us up and told us not to sign anything until we'd taken a look at a pub in Bicester, at which point we just said "Where's that?"

When we first arrived at The Nightingale, we were really struck by the beer garden at the front, and thought how great it would be in the summer. Then, when we saw the shops, the doctors' surgery and the school nearby, we just thought "Wow, what a location." As soon as we stepped inside and saw what a good size the pub was, we both saw the potential and thought "This is it." We just fell in love with the place straight away.

But you didn't move to The Nightingale until around the middle of the year?

Kieran: That's right. The previous landlord, whose parents built the pub 19 years ago, had another five months left on his lease. Charles Wells required us to develop a business plan anyway, so we spent that time making lots of visits and working out our strategy for entertainment, which was going to be our main emphasis.

Bearing in mind that we'd never run a regular pub before, we decided to make use of what we'd learned from our nightclub days and the bar in Germany, where our entertainment programmes had worked really well. In Crete, because our two places were on the beach road alongside lots of other nightclubs, it was so competitive that we had to think of new entertainment every night to make ourselves stand out. So, when we came to Bicester, we had to translate all that knowledge and expertise into a recipe that would work here.

It all sounds a bit scary.

Kieran: Yes, we started on 9 June 2014, so our first weekend was the first England game of the World Cup. It was a real baptism of fire. As it turned out, people had heard that the pub was under new management and the place was packed—it was a great atmosphere right from the start.

So you got the entertainment programme rolling straight away?

Matt: Absolutely. Right from the beginning we set up karaoke, talent shows, quizzes, OAP bingo on Mondays, live bands every Saturday—it was all really well received.

Our first weekend was the first England game of the World Cup. It was a baptism of fire!

Kieran

What about competition from other pubs?

Kieran: Because we're the only pub on Langford our competition is mainly from Bicester town, and a lot of the Langford Village locals would rather stay closer to home.

Matt: And the best way to encourage that is to make sure your pub becomes a hub of the community.

Kieran: Yes, so to get more involved with the community, one of the first things we did was to sponsor Bicester United, and to get involved in local charity and school events. For instance, at halloween last year we had to run three parties to fit everyone in: two for the kids and one for the adults.

To be honest, I think the most important thing we offer at The Nightingale is the warm welcome. We've always wanted to run a place where our customers are really our friends, and

I think that's exactly what we've got. We get people of all ages, families with their kids and their dogs—it's great. In the summer we put lots of stuff in the garden for youngsters to play with, and we've always encouraged kids and families, right from the start.

Arranging all that entertainment from week to week must be exhausting?

Kieran: But it's what we're used to. After a busy Mother's Day this year, we were up at 6am the next day to do breakfast for 76 visiting French students. The great thing is that we enjoy doing it, and being entertained ourselves. There's not much fun in just standing behind a bar all day long, but the way we do things at The Nightingale, it's really an extension of our own social lives.

Is the work all done now, in terms of the changes you had planned for the pub?

Kieran: No, we've got lots of new ideas lined up. Because the live bands worked so well last year, we're now thinking of summer festivals for 2015. Also, we've got a new Aunt Sally league just starting, a pool league, and we've now got ladies asking for a darts league. We've got more comedy nights planned too. These are all new ideas that'll help us to satisfy more people.

Is there anything you've struggled with?

Kieran: Yes. Coming from a nightclub background, we'd never even worked with a kitchen before and had no experience of the food side of things.

Matt: We've been through seven chefs since we've been here. It was our nightmare—our one and only headache and source of stress. I was in the kitchen at first, and ended up in hospital. We then tried another cook, then had a go at the fine-dining route, which didn't work and nearly crippled us with the wages. It all turned around when we decided to opt for simple, tasty pub grub. So, now we enjoy bringing the food out and people compliment it.



What's the best thing about running a pub?

Kieran: For me, it's always looking forward to the next thing. We have a mass of good stuff planned for each week, and it's just different all the time. There's so much going on that we sometimes worry we might annoy people on Facebook by posting too many upcoming events, but we hope there's something for everyone.

Because Bicester has such very low unemployment, it's been difficult for us to get staff from the start. So, we brought some of our friends over from Crete to help—our restaurant manager, Jeanette, ran a restaurant there for 19 years. We also brought in our barman, Marc, from Germany. Because most of our team are used to working in a holiday environment, we're always happy and chirpy. Essentially, we work with a bunch of people who all want to have a good time.

When you work at a holiday destination you meet people for a week or two, then they're gone. So all our staff would rather be here, where they can make long-term friends.

And any other challenges?

Matt: There's a lot more to running a pub in the UK than what we were used to in Greece. The pace is relentless here, and of course there's no season when we can easily take a break. We managed a week's holiday in January, but were so stressed about how things were going back here—it was awful. We're planning a holiday in October though, and hopefully things will have settled down enough that we can enjoy it more.

Kieran: There are always new challenges, and from time to time we try things that don't work so well. We've had a few bands that we've had to stop halfway through the night because it just wasn't working.

Matt: But some great successes too. My favourite event so far has been 'Bicester's Got Talent', which we did last year, with a £500 prize for the winner. We had so many entries that we had to do eight heats and two semi-finals.

At the final on 7 December, you just couldn't move in the pub. The local papers came along, we got some celebrity judges—it was fantastic.

We can't wait to do it again this year. We can't wait for the summer either, when we can really make the best of the beer garden. We'll have barbecues, DJs—the whole dynamic of the pub changes with the seasons here.

We're learning all the time—you make mistakes and you learn from them. That's all part of the fun!

Kieran: The very best part for us is that we've now got a pub that brings local people together, and that side of things is just getting stronger and stronger.



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Save Gavray Wildlife Meadows for Bicester!

Gavray Meadows, running along the north-east side of Gavray Drive, is an important conservation area. You can help to save the meadows from development and irreparable damage.

Gavray Meadows is home to a wide variety of flora and fauna, including deer, birds, lizards and wild flowers. Many of the bats and newt species on the site are becoming endangered, as are kestrels, which make regular appearances there.

The proposed housing development on the site will destroy much of this important local wildlife spot, as well as increasing the frequency of flooding in Langford Brook and traffic congestion in the south-east of Bicester.

A group of local residents have joined forces to help save Gavray Meadows by raising awareness of the importance of the site. When Cherwell District Council's Local Plan Part 2 process starts in July and August this year, there will be a public consultation to designate sites loved by the public

as Local Green Spaces, which gives us the chance to have our say and seek protection for Gavray Meadows. If we get enough support we could even organise a deputation of Langford residents to call an extraordinary meeting to bring pressure to bear.

If you'd like to add your voice to help save the Meadows, visit www.facebook.com/savegavraywildlifemeadows, which is running the campaign, or www.facebook.com/WildLifeNewsGavrayMeadows, where campaigner Pat Clissold is posting photographs to document the wildlife and show what a wonderful place it is.

You can help by 'liking' the photos, or if you have young children, maybe ask them to speak to their teachers about the meadows to raise awareness of the cause?



A (now somewhat rare) jay, photographed by Pat Clissold on Gavray Meadows

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Nature Tots

9th June, 14th July, 8th Sept 2015
10am–11:30am or 1pm–2:30pm

Join us with your pre-school little ones at our nature reserve. For nature discovery, craft, fun, stories and exploration. Suitable for children 3–4 years. Dress for the outdoors.

- At: **Meadow Farm Nature Reserve**, between Blackthorn and Piddington, Thame Rd, near Bicester, OX25 1TW.
- **Booking Essential:** via www.bbowl.org.uk/whats-on, or telephone 01869 245864. Enquiries telephone, or email meadowfarm@bbowl.org.uk
- Suggested donation: £4 per child

Supported by
The National Lottery
through the Heritage Lottery Fund

We need YOU!

If you can spare an hour or two a few times a year and could use a little exercise, read on ...

Delivery of Langford Life is entirely dependant on a team of volunteers to make sure all 2,100 households receive their copy. However, we're currently short of regular distributors for Avocet Way (62 homes), Goldcrest Way (34 homes), Lapwing Close (55 homes), Martin Close (35 homes) and Ravencroft (91 homes).

So, if you can spare an hour or two a couple of times per year, please call Bob on 01869 321308, or email bobrudge@oxon.myzen.co.uk

Don't forget our website!

Don't forget to visit the LVCA website at www.langfordlife.org.uk for the latest updates on what's going on around Langford Village. If you'd like to receive automatic email notifications whenever new content is added to the site, just hover your mouse over the 'Contact' option on the menu bar at the top of every page, then choose 'Subscribe' from the drop-down menu, enter your email address in the box provided and hit the 'Subscribe' button.

If you want to unsubscribe from the notifications at any point, simply follow the same procedure and hit the 'Unsubscribe' button.

On the site, you'll find news items, contact details for committee members, booking information and an up-to-date events calendar for the community hall, plus the last dozen or so back issues of Langford Life in downloadable PDF format.

Community policing update

An update on Langford community policing from local Thames Valley Police Neighbourhood Supervisor, PC **James Elton**.

Recent burglaries

Residents should be aware that Langford Village suffered a small spate of break-ins during early March, involving two properties on Robins Way and one in Ravencroft, two of which were entered via forced patio doors. As always, we ask you to remain vigilant at all times, and if you see or hear anything suspicious then please report to us immediately via the non-emergency 101 number. If you have information that could help with our enquiries but wish to remain anonymous, please call Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111. For useful information on door and window security, visit www.langfordlife.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/03/Door-window-security-1.pdf.

Residents might also be curious about some damage caused earlier this year to the Langford Village Pavilion and school, where a number of windows were smashed. Three youths have been identified and are being dealt with.





Travellers pitch up on Mallards Way Meadows

On 6 May a number of travellers moved onto Mallards Way Meadows, which is Bicester Town Council land. The Chief Officer at Bicester Town Council contacted Thames Valley Police that day, who asked the travellers to leave. The travellers vacated the site on 8 May, largely thanks to the diligence of the officers and Council staff involved, especially the quick actions of Langford residents, Councillors Nick Cotter and Dan Sames.

'Have Your Say' events

As always, the Neighbourhood Policing Team have a number of 'Have Your Say' events scheduled for the coming months. Here's a list of the ones we have planned for June:

Friday 12 June 11:00–12:00

Pioneer Square (outside Sainsburys)

Monday 15 June 15:00–16:00

Tesco, Glory Farm

Wednesday 17 June 09:00–10:00

Emmanuel Church, Bure Park

Wednesday 24 June 10:45–11:45

St Edburg's Church coffee morning

Just drop in if you have any issues or concerns you'd like to chat about with our team. We run these at least every few weeks at various locations, so for details of upcoming events just go to www.thamesvalley.police.uk and click on 'Your neighbourhood' at the top left sidebar, then 'Thames Valley police area' on the following page, on '3 Cherwell and West Oxfordshire' adjacent to the map on the page after that, and finally on the '5 Bicester Town' link. Then bookmark the page.

You can also contact the team directly by dialling 101, or emailing us at BicestertownNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk.

Peregrine Power!

All but a handful of the streets on Langford Village are named after British birds. **John Holt** tells us a little more about the peregrine falcon, and whether you're likely to see one in these parts...

The most interesting thing about the peregrine falcon is undoubtedly its speed. In a vertical dive it's the fastest creature on earth, reputedly reaching speeds of 320km/h (200mph) and beyond. That dive is most likely to be heading straight for a lark, thrush, pigeon, gull or duck, which the peregrine will catch in mid-flight.

In the UK they're most common in the highlands of north and south-west England, Wales and Scotland, on coastal cliffs, and increasingly on buildings and in quarries.

You won't have to travel far from **Peregrine Way** to see a wild peregrine falcon, but in the winter you'll need luck, sharp eyes and a strong pair of binoculars. Gallows Bridge BBOWT Reserve along the A41 is a good place to start, where they can often be seen atop one of the pylons, waiting for an unwary flock of pigeons to pass by.

You may be better off waiting for the summer though. For the past three years a pair has nested on the 12th floor of Aylesbury County Hall. You can see the nest from street level, but a webcam lets you view what is happening live in the nest (www.bbwt.org.uk/aylesburyperegrines).





Four fascinating photo facts

- The oldest photograph, *View from the Window at Le Gras*, needed an exposure time of *eight hours*!
- The Apollo missions left a total of 12 Hasselblad cameras on the moon to allow for the extra weight of lunar rock samples brought back to Earth.
- 300 million photos are uploaded to Facebook every day!
- Student Robert Cornelius is credited with taking the first selfie—in 1839!

How to improve your photography

You don't have to be an expert to be in with a chance of winning our competition. You just need a camera and your imagination. Here are a few handy hints to get you started...



- 1 Think about your composition. There are lots of different rules for composing an image, such as the age-old 'Golden Ratio' method, but these days cameras come with their own built-in composition aids. Perhaps the simplest is the 'Rule of Thirds' which divides your viewing screen into thirds both horizontally and vertically. If your camera has this feature, turn it on and align key elements of your scene where the lines intersect.
- 2 Take a moment to identify the direction of your light source. There are exceptions, but for best

results try to take your photos with your back to the light source. Be sure to keep your own shadow out of the shot!

- 3 Experiment with your camera. Don't be scared to try different settings—forget the manual, it's the best way of finding out what your camera can do. Try different shutter speeds for creative effect. A slow shutter speed will give the impression of movement, while a fast shutter speed will give crisp results. A wide aperture will blur the background, heightening the emphasis on your subject. A narrow aperture will capture

every detail from foreground to background. This effect is called 'depth of field'.

- 4 It sounds obvious, but before you go out on a shoot, make sure your battery is fully charged. There's nothing more annoying than missing that perfect shot because of a flat battery.

- 5 Most importantly, have fun! It's easy to get distracted by all the technical stuff, but the most important bit of kit is YOU! It doesn't matter how old your camera is, or how much it cost, just grab it and get snapping!

Rich Ponsford

Photography competition

Think you're handy with a camera? Read on ...

In every issue of *Langford Life* we're going to be running a photo competition. No huge cash prizes, unfortunately, but you'll get to see your name in print, and enjoy the fame that goes with having your photo on the cover of the magazine and posted through every letterbox in Langford.

The subject can be anything from your last street party to a close-up of a kingfisher swooping over Langford brook, but as long as you're standing somewhere within Langford Village when you take the picture, you're eligible to enter.

Your photo should be **at least 3264 pixels wide by 2448 pixels high**, which is the equivalent of an 8-megapixel

camera (although the higher the resolution, the better). The winning photo will appear on the front cover of the next issue, so bear in mind that we'll crop your image to make it exactly the same shape as the one you see on the front of this issue.

Please email a low resolution copy of your entry to editor@langfordlife.co.uk. If your photo is picked as the winner, we'll let you know and ask you for the picture at full resolution. There are no time limits for entry, so if you miss the next issue, we'll simply enter you into the competition for the following one.

The next issue will publish towards the end of the year, so chilly scenes may stand a better chance of winning...



Wordsearch



This wordsearch contains the names of 26 birds, which also happen to be Langford street names. They may run backwards or forwards, either horizontally, vertically or diagonally. Can you find all of them?

CHAFFINCH	NIGHTINGALE
CORNCRAKE	NUTHATCH
DUNLIN	OSPREY
FIELDFARE	PARTRIDGE
GOLDCREST	PEREGRINE
GOLDFINCH	REDWING
GREBE	SANDERLING
HERON	SANDPIPER
KESTREL	SHEARWATER
KINGFISHER	SWALLOW
LAPWING	TURNSTONE
MARTIN	WOODPECKER
MERGANSE	WREN

Sudoku



5		7	6		8				
		2	1	7					9
4				5				8	
	5	6							
1	4							3	7
						9	6		
	1			8					3
6				1	7	2			
			2		3	8			1

Solution on page 18

No way!*

The first documentary reference to Bicester is the Domesday Book of 1086 which records it as *Berencestra*. Its two manors of Bicester and Wretchwick were held by Robert D'Oyly, who built Oxford Castle.

(*yes way)



Yoga Class

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WHERE THE STREETS HAVE NO NAME



Hi. Bono here. I've come to Langford Village to visit my good buddy The Edge, who's just bought a 2-bed coach house here. But - would you believe it - the streets have no name! Fill in the blanks to help me work out which Langford street this is.

__ E __ I __ Y



Community hall schedule

Here's a list of current regular events at the Langford community hall at Nightingale Place (next to Tesco Express), with contact details for each. Please see <http://www.langfordlife.org.uk/community-hall/bookings-calendar/> for the latest updates.

Mondays

Baby and toddler group (9:15–11:15am)

Andrew Smith 01869 240467

Cubs (6:30–8:00pm)

Ellie Thompson 01869 322425

Tuesdays

Musical minis (9:30am–12 noon)

Leena Thakker 01296 739652

Freestyle dance (4:00–5:30pm)

Mary-Ella Tuppenney 07745 500043

Beavers (6:00–7:30pm)

Ellie Thompson 01869 322425

Square dancing (8:00–10:00pm)

Julie Davis 01869 246455

Wednesdays

WI (1:30–3:30pm - first week of the month only)

Beryl Mann 01869 325834

Judo (5:15–6:15pm)

Dave Cooper 07947 109185

Aikido (8:00–10:00pm)

Martyn Tyas 01869 321375

Thursdays

Rugby tots (9:00–11:00am)

Rob Hill 08453 131908

Rainbows (4:30–5:30pm)

Karen Smith 01869 324512

Brownies (6:00–7:30pm)

Tracey Honey thoney@sky.com

Ignite youth club (7:45–9:00pm)

Rev. Steve Barber 01869 388978

Fridays

Yoga class (9:30–10:30am)

Elaine Whittaker 07917 453224

Ballet tots (1:30–2:00pm)

adults (2:00–2:45pm)

main class (3:30–8:30pm)

Victoria Hill 07748 455093

Sundays

Rugby tots (8:30am–12 noon)

Rob Hill 0845 313 1908

For general booking enquiries or to rent the hall for your own event, please call 07946 289092 (9am–6pm) or use the booking form on the website.

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SORRY! Over the past few months we've been having some difficulties taking hall bookings, as we lost the mobile phone we used to take the calls and had to get a new number issued. Please accept our apologies for any inconvenience caused.

Local directory

Civic

Oxfordshire County Council 01865 792422
Cherwell District Council 01295 252535
Bicester Town Council 01869 252915
Social Services 01865 375515
Bicester Library (Old Place Yard) 01869 252181
Bicester Police Station 01869 320919
Langford Village CP School 01869 369021
Bicester Leisure Centre (Queens Avenue) 01869 253914

Medical

Langford Medical Practice 01869 245665
Bicester Community Hospital 01865 903880
John Radcliffe A&E (Oxford) 01865 741166
NHS 111 (fast medical help—less urgent than 999) 111
St John Ambulance Bicester 01869 246648
Child Line 0800 1111
Samaritans 0845 7909090

Transport

Bicester North Station 01869 245900
National Rail Enquiries 08457 484950

Bicester Taxibus 01869 323535

Thames Transit Buses 01869 772250

Dial-a-Ride 01869 320132

Places of worship

St Edburg's (Anglican) 01869 252377
Emmanuel (Anglican) 01869 244918
Immaculate Conception (Catholic) 01869 253277
Orchard Baptist Church 01869 388978
Methodist Church 01869 240671
Salvation Army 01869 369160
Bicester Community Church 01869 244741
Elim Christian Centre 01869 252753
Hebron Gospel Hall 01869 277300

Other

NSPCC 0808 800 5000
Citizens Advice Bureau 01869 321076
RSPCA 08705 555999
Crimestoppers 0800 555111
Gas emergency 0800 111999
Electricity (power loss) 08457 331331
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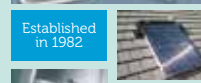
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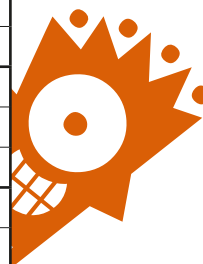
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magazines – manuals – marketing – periodicals – reference
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01869 321661

richard@librodesign.co.uk

Sudoku solution (from page 15)

5	3	7	6	9	8	4	1	2
8	6	2	1	7	4	3	5	9
4	9	1	3	5	2	7	8	6
3	5	6	7	4	9	1	2	8
1	4	9	8	2	6	5	3	7
7	2	8	5	3	1	9	6	4
2	1	4	9	8	5	6	7	3
6	8	3	4	1	7	2	9	5
9	7	5	2	6	3	8	4	1



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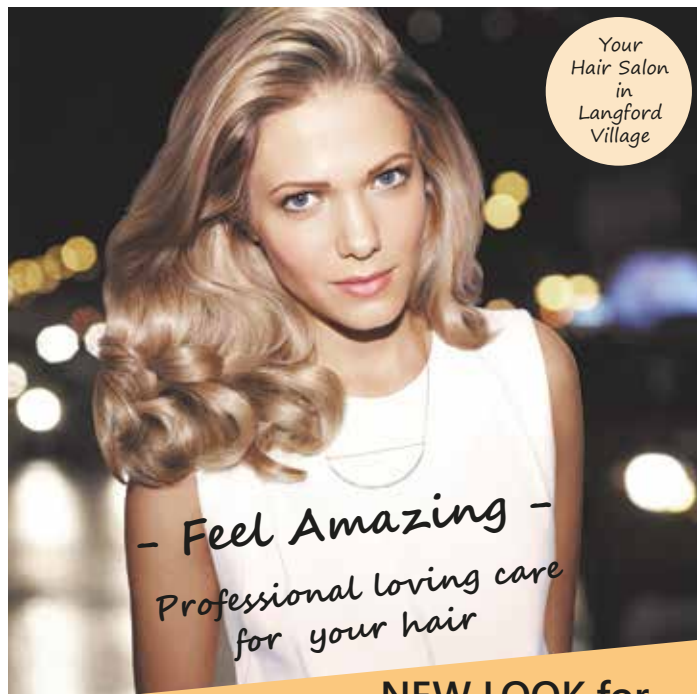
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