



Oundle Oracle

December
2010





Mayor's Message

Winter is with us once again and dark nights and cold days have now arrived and yet the anticipation and brightness of an approaching Christmas season is enveloping our beautiful town. I hope as many of you as possible will be at the "big switch on" of the lights on December 3rd to formally kick the Christmas season off. My heartfelt thanks go to the Rotary Club for the Christmas tree and also to the Estate Managers of the Norwich and Peterborough Building Society who allow us to hang our Christmas lights from their building creating a stunning centre of town display.

The Town Council has had a really progressive year. We have a new complement of staff who are working very effectively as a team and I thank you all for the many compliments that we are receiving. Clearly we don't always get it right but we do always listen to feedback and then act on what we hear. I wish to thank our Clerk Debra Raper for her support, leadership and dedication this year. Debra and Councillor Radcliffe are currently engaged in ensuring that the Council achieves Quality Status which we anticipate will happen in the Spring so thanks go to both for their hard work.

Considerable progress has also been made with Oundle 2020 which is developing a sustainable plan for Oundle. Our first focus group was held on September 22nd and over 100 residents contributed their thoughts and ideas. As you can see from the photo, the evening was lively and energetic! We hope to present the results of the recent questionnaire, together with further ideas,



at the second focus group on December 14th so do please come along and help us with this exciting project. I must thank our Oundle 2020 Project Administrator Jasmine for keeping us all on track.

I hope I will see as many of you as possible around the tree on Christmas Eve. I wish you all a very merry Christmas and a happy new year in 2011.

Please do contact me if you want to contribute via 270370 or paulandrewking@btinternet.com

Follow the work of the council on  at

<http://twitter.com/OundleCouncil>



December 3rd

After the lights have been switched on, you've enjoyed the late night shopping and Christmas Market Town Councillors will be delighted to welcome you to the Queen Victoria Hall for seasonal nibbles and drinks.

Election Countdown - Only 5 months to go!

X

The local elections will be held on May 5th next year, so you've got till the beginning of April to decide whether you wish to stand for election to Oundle Town Council.

There will be an opportunity to find out more about being a Town Councillor and the work of Oundle Town Council in February. Join us at the Courthouse on **Wednesday 16th February** at 7.30pm. This event will last an hour. Nibbles and drinks will be served with the information.

"Stand and Deliver.....*stand* for election for the Town Council and help to *deliver* local council services".

Cllr. Gwen Radcliffe

£ £ £ ~ NEEDS AND WANTS ~ £ £ £

Your Town Council made an early start on preparing its budget for 2011/12 and has been faced by a number of serious challenges. Next year East Northamptonshire Council's £14,000 contribution to car parking in Oundle is withdrawn and at the same time we will be taking over from them the £21,000 cost of operating the toilets in the St. Osyth's car park. This means that without any further changes from District and County (and we do expect some) this community will be £35,000 worse off next year.

In preparing the first draft budget not only has the Town Council taken this into account but also included all the aspirational items which it would ideally like to provide for next year. The effect of this would be a 49% increase in the amount to be precepted and raised from your Council Tax. In the present economic climate - any economic climate!- this is unacceptable.

So now we have to separate the wants from the needs (the expenditure we

have no options on) and decide on our priorities and we would welcome your ideas before the budget is finalised in January. For example we have included a doubling of our grants budget from £12,000 to £25,000 because of fears over funding from the County and District Councils for organisations in Oundle. Should we do this?

Councillors are currently debating what cuts could possibly be made. For example the annual cost to you of CCTV in Oundle is £17000.

Please join the debate which will have an impact on what your Town Council will and will not be able to do in the town next year, by letting us know what is and is not important to you.

Cllr. David Chapple, Chair of Finance

We received an e-mail from East Northamptonshire Council on 26th October asking for the following **Statement** to be published in the Oracle. ***Editor***

**Decision made by the Development Control Committee on 18 August 2010
EN/09/00611/FUL at Land End of Creed Road, Oundle**

Under East Northamptonshire Council's Constitution, decisions can only be made by the Committee via a majority voting **in support of** a motion. If a motion does not achieve a majority **in favour** then no decision has been made.

In the case of the Creed Road application, at the Development Control Committee on 18 August, a motion to approve the application with certain conditions was proposed but not approved. The Committee **did not decide to refuse the application**, merely not to approve it with those conditions.

At this stage the Committee could still have decided to:

- approve it;
- approve it with different conditions;
- defer a decision; or
- refuse it.

The further motion which was in fact then proposed sought to **defer** the application to seek further negotiation of the timing of the payments in the Section 106 Agreement and **this was duly carried**. This motion is what the minutes of the meeting recorded as the decision.

I appreciate that this may seem rather complicated but this is the process laid down in the Council's Constitution, in common with many other Councils.

Councillor Pauline Bradberry

29 September 2010

Chairman of East Northamptonshire Council's Development Control Committee

At their September Development Control Meeting the application was again deferred “ *for clarification of the Government’s position on housing targets, localism and spatial planning and in order to enable further progress to be made on the Oundle 2020 Town Plan, which should come to fruition before a decision was made on the application.*” The developer has now resubmitted the application with minor changes.



OUNDLE CEMETERY

Much work has been done within Oundle Cemetery, and our thanks go to our Maintenance team and the work of the Community Pay Back scheme. All visitors are welcomed, for whatever reason, to the peace and solitude of this Cemetery which we hope you will find a calm and welcoming place.

Our wish is to create a well kept setting and maintain the serenity, dignity and order of the cemetery. To help us achieve this goal, we have to be practical and have rules and regulations that enable us to trim, mow and tidy up effectively and ensure that the cemetery remains in good order.

We therefore ask all visitors to the cemetery to help us in this endeavour by kindly observing the following rules and regulations and by maintaining and ensuring that the grave of your loved one is cared for.

Wherever possible, please keep to the footpaths. Please keep your dog on a lead and do not allow your dog to foul the Cemetery.

Extract from Regulations

Memorials: Memorials shall be a single, vertical headstone. Kerbs are not permitted. Approval of the design must be obtained from the Town Council.

Floral Tributes: Planting of flowers and small shrubs are not permitted on graves, but a donation of a shrub, tree, rose bush or bulbs to beautify the Cemetery may be made in memory of a loved one. Donations will be planted and tended by Council grounds staff. If so wished, an approved plaque may be placed alongside the donated plant. Plastic flowers are not permitted.

In April 2011 Northamptonshire County Council takes over responsibility for **Concessionary Transport** from the districts which currently have different schemes. In September NCC asked if they should adopt a scheme that doesn't provide for tokens. We responded that Oundle Town Council was “very concerned by the prospect of changes to the issuing of transport tokens which we believe must be retained and are an absolute necessity in rural locations.” Volunteer Action are lobbying hard on this issue.

Calling All Sports, Leisure & Recreational Club Providers

We are conducting a survey of all the sports, leisure and recreational clubs in Oundle in order to create an *Oundle Sport & Recreational Club Database*. This database will create awareness of the current activities available to residents and visitors of the town.

So from Archery to Yoga and Bird Watching to Hang Gliding (and all activities in between), if you provide a club in Oundle for any age group we would like to hear from you!

Please contact us on 01832 272 055 to ensure your club is included in the *Oundle Sport & Recreational Club Database*. You will be asked to fill out a short questionnaire, either on paper or online which will provide us with valuable information about your club.

The *Oundle Sport & Recreational Club Database* will also support **Oundle 2020** providing up-to-date evidence about existing clubs and enabling them to use this information to influence decision making on future leisure and recreational facilities.

Cllr. Chris Elliot

Winter Weather

There's no law stopping you from clearing snow and ice on the pavement outside your home or from public spaces. It's unlikely you'll be sued or held legally responsible for any injuries on the path if you have cleared it carefully.

Remember, people walking on snow and ice have responsibility to be careful themselves. Don't use the salt found in salting bins - this will be needed to keep the roads clear.

Among the many tips on the Government's website www.directgov.uk are

Clear the snow or ice early in the day

It's easier to move fresh, loose snow rather than hard snow that has packed together from people walking on it. So if possible, start removing the snow and ice in the morning. If you remove the top layer of snow in the morning, any sunshine during the day will help melt any ice beneath. You can then cover the path with salt before nightfall to stop it refreezing overnight.

Use salt or sand - not water

If you use water to melt the snow, it may refreeze and turn to black ice. Black ice increases the risk of injuries as it is invisible and very slippery.



Future of the Oracle

This September the Department for Communities and Local Government issued a consultation document on Local Authority publicity

To give effect to the Government's commitment to stop unfair competition by local authority newspapers, the proposed Code will contain specific guidance on the frequency, content and appearance of local authority newspapers or magazines. They must not appear more frequently than once a quarter, must only include material that is directly related to the business, services or amenities of the authority or other local service providers and should be clearly marked as being published by the local authority.

In our response to the Consultation we strongly opposed limitations on frequency and restrictions to only council content saying the Oracle

“is well regarded by the local community. Whilst restricting its content to only news from the Council would cut its size and thus its cost, the loss to the community would be disproportionate. A wide range of community groups who provide the services highlighted by the Big Society agenda would be disadvantaged, as would the sports clubs, arts organisations and U3A who contribute so much to the physical and mental well being of residents.”

The consultation closed on November 10th and we await the outcome with interest.

Cllr. Val Chesser

Festival Round Up



Oundle Festival of Music & Drama

March 30th to April 2nd, 2011

Competitive Festival for amateur performers of all ages

Each year we listen to competitors and teachers to review the classes, which range from those for under 8's to senior citizens.

This year's details can be found in the Syllabus available from Oundle Bookshop and Oundle International Festival Box Office.

You can also find out about entering the Festival, or acting as a volunteer at www.ofmd.org.uk or by contacting Gwen Radcliffe 273191

Closing date for entries, January 18th, is approaching fast.



On September 23rd Peter Snow came to Oundle to fascinate us all with his talk “ To War with Wellington”. It was his first visit to Oundle and he was thrilled to discover what we know already, describing the town as “a revelation” and “unspeakably beautiful-you must be very proud”. Our extended programme ends with a joint venture with Oundle International Festival when we are very pleased to welcome back the popular children’s author Michael Morpurgo. **Val Chesser**

Oundle Town Rowing Club Goes To Paris

As part of Oundle Town’s twinning celebrations in June of this year, rowers from Andrésey, in France were hosted by members of Oundle Town Rowing Club. As a result of this visit members of OTRC were invited back to Paris to participate in the annual row through Paris city centre on the river Seine, ‘Traversée des Hauts-de-Seine et de Paris’ on September 26th.



‘The Paris Crossing’ is part of the Randon Aviron EDF 2010 series of rowing tours and is a 30 km circuit which begins by boating in the dark from the very impressive Sevres Boat Club at 6am and then passes through the city centre. Approximately 600 people and 130 boats take to the water and all navigation traffic is halted for the event to start.

The famous landmarks of Paris are seen from a unique perspective as the sun rises. The course takes in The Eiffel Tower, Notre Dame, L’Esplanade Des Invalides, Palais Bourbon, Musée D’Orsay, The Louvre and The National Assembly Buildings. The rowers circumnavigate the L’Ile Sainte-Louis and pass back under famous bridges such as Pont Alexandre and Pont des Arts before the return to Sevres for a celebration lunch approximately 3 hours later.

Oundle Town rowers, like the Dunns pictured here, were incorporated in 3 of the Andrésey club ‘yolettes’ (touring coxed quads). Many of the crews were in fancy dress, and a festival atmosphere prevailed. The trip was blessed not only with good weather, but with excellent hosts. Thanks go to Jerome, Eric and Jean-Luc from Andrésey Rowing Club. Our recommendation to any one who is considering trying Rowing Touring is most definitely to give it a go. Varying degrees of muscle ache are a small price to pay for such a fantastic experience.



Jo Milborne (Oundle Town Rowing Club)



Lifelong Learning is alive and well in Oundle. Since the University of the Third Age (U3A) opened its doors for a preliminary meeting in October 2008 the membership has grown to over 500 and is making a very positive contribution to our community. It has been amazing to discover the talent hidden within the people of this town and the surrounding area.

For those new to the concept, U3A is open to anyone who is not in full time employment and exists as a self-help educational movement and is a registered charity. Much of the activity takes place in Interest Groups whereby members who have a particular passion or a wish to learn more about a particular subject can either join or set up a group to study it. This may sound worrying but the approach can be from very informal to more academic depending on the make-up of the group and this is decided upon by those who join.

Each group has a leader who encourages the members but does



not necessarily have to do all the work so if you have an interest which is not covered why not be brave enough to start one?

As we reach our second anniversary it is astonishing to realise that we now have 48 interest groups covering such diverse activities as Poetry; Shakespeare; Walking; Languages; Art Appreciation; Information Technology; Singing; and Family History. Although most groups meet on weekdays, there is also a Weekenders Group which includes lunch and good company.

A key part of the organisation is our Monthly Meetings held on the second Monday afternoon of each month in the Victoria Hall. This is a good way to meet other members over a cup of tea and to listen to a variety of talks. Topics this year have included The Meaning of Dreams; The Cole Porter Story; and Dialects and their Origins.

We are constantly being reminded that we are an ageing population and how important it is to keep active both mentally and, where possible, physically so what better way than to join the U3A, make new friends and develop your interests? Membership Forms can be downloaded from the website <http://u3asites.org.uk/oundle>; collected from Oundle Library or obtained by telephoning 01832 273349.

Non members are also welcome to attend a monthly meeting for a fee of £2 to sound us out.

Judith Finn