

HRA Update, July 2023, our 65th edition

Advance Notice re Trains: Network Rail improvement work continues as part of the upgrading of Oxford Station, expanding the railway infrastructure in the area, and improving the local road network. This means there will be no trains through Oxford from **Saturday 29 July to Sunday 6 August**, nor on **Sunday 13 August, Sunday 10 September, Saturday 16 September, and Sunday 15 October**. For information about the rail replacement services that will operate during this time visit: <https://www.gwr.com/travel-information/travel-updates/planned-engineering/oxford> In addition to work on the track, the Osney Lane footbridge will need to be closed from **Saturday 22 July to Monday 14 August**. Access under Botley Road bridge will remain open throughout this period.

BE WATER AWARE! This message comes at the start of a water safety campaign aimed especially at secondary school pupils. Please share the message with teenagers. The number of deaths by drowning in the UK is still unacceptably high; 62% of drownings happen inland in rivers, canals, lakes, reservoirs and quarries. Many of the victims never intended to enter the water and a staggering 83% of them were male. Underlying currents can catch out even good swimmers. Swim only in supervised areas. NEVER jump in from a height; the water may be less deep than you think, or there may be dangerous items under the surface.

Are you living near a cannabis farm?



Cannabis farms are often run by organised crime groups who don't care who they exploit or how they damage the local community.

Spot the signs

- Strong odour of cannabis
- Covered-up windows
- Lots of condensation
- People coming and going
- Buzz of ventilation

Remember, you can report anonymously to Crimestoppers on **0800 555 111**.



Get Safe Online
Free expert advice

Today's home is very convenient and smart, with more and more devices responding to a tap in an app or the sound of one's voice. However, every device that's connected to Wi-Fi is also transmitting data which could be of interest to criminals, from speakers, to voice assistants, cameras, intruder alarms, door locks and even security lighting. To find out how to protect your smart devices, go to the *Get Safe Online* advice in the link below:

https://www.getsafeonline.org/smartdevices/?utm_source=nwemail&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=nwjune23

Extension of £2 bus fare cap: Millions of passengers across England will continue to 'Get Around for £2' and access vital bus services. Single bus fares at £2 outside London will be extended until the end of October 2023 and then at £2.50 until 30 November 2024 when a review of future bus fares will take place.

Late night recycling until 8 p.m.: Skip the queues! On Thursdays throughout the summer months all household waste and recycling centres are open until 8 p.m.

Abandoned Trolleys: You can report these in one of two ways: via Fix My Street: https://www.oxford.gov.uk/info/20060/street_cleaning/169/report_an_abandoned_shopping_trolley or direct to Trolleywise: https://www.wanzl.com/en_GB/360-degree-service/TrolleyWise

Calling all Cat Owners: New legislation introduced in England in March 2023 requires **all cat owners to have their pets microchipped by June 10, 2024**. Owners who do not get their cat microchipped will be given 21 days to have a chip implanted; neglecting to do so could risk a fine of up to £500.



Anyone meeting any of the following criteria is entitled to get their cat neutered and microchipped at one of the participating vets for £10.

- Being in receipt of any of these means-tested benefits: universal credit, income support, housing benefit, council tax benefit, pension credit, income-based ESA, income-based JSA, working tax credits and child tax credits
- Having an annual household income of less than £25,000 before tax
- Being a full-time student living away from home

Anyone who is eligible is advised to book an appointment directly with a participating vet, stating that they are eligible to use the Cats Protection £10 neutering scheme.

<https://www.cats.org.uk/what-we-do/neutering/find-a-vet-new-scheme?searchString=oxford>

Calling all Dog Owners: a) The Control of Dogs Order 1992 states that your dog must wear a collar and a tag when in public. b) In England, dogs over eight weeks' old must be microchipped and registered with their keeper's contact details. All keepers, including breeders, must keep these details up to date, the only exemption being where a vet has certified that a dog is unfit to be microchipped.

Reminder re Royal Mail Stamps: From August 1 the 'everyday' stamps showing the Queen's head on a plain coloured background will only be valid if they have a unique barcode on the right-hand side. From that date, using the old, non-barcoded stamps will result in a surcharge for the person you send the item to. Before July 31 people should use up any 'everyday' non-barcoded stamps they still have. Anyone who cannot use up any non-barcoded stamps will still be able to swap them for new barcoded stamps through Royal Mail's free Swap Out scheme by printing a form from the Royal Mail website; or picking one up at a local Royal Mail delivery office or Post Office. Non-barcoded Christmas and other Special stamps with pictures on continue to be valid for postage and cannot be swapped.

Ticket Offices at Train Stations Survey: Train operators are consulting on how tickets will be sold in the future at the majority of stations, including Oxford. Their rationale is that customers are making changes in the way they buy tickets, and that there is a good case to be made for bringing staff out of the ticket office and onto the concourse. They maintain that they are not reducing station hours, and that the change will result in better engagement with staff. Access to other station facilities and services such as passenger assistance, toilets and waiting rooms will remain unchanged. For information see: gwr.com/haveyoursay

Feedback must be received by Wednesday 26 July 2023. To respond go to Transport Focus, (the independent transport-user watchdog), go to the link below and click on Consultation Response Form. NB Oxford does not feature in the list, but if you key in OXFORD, it will appear, with GWR alongside, and you will find a box in which to key in your reactions to the proposal:

<https://www.transportfocus.org.uk/train-station-ticket-office-consultation>

Or you can write to: RTEH-XAGE-BYKZ, Transport Focus, PO Box 5594, Southend on Sea, SS1 9PZ

Keep this information to hand...just in case

A suspicious email? Forward it to: report@phishing.gov.uk

A suspicious text? Forward it to 7726, or SPAM

A call supposedly from your bank? Phone 159

Headington News website: <https://www.headington.org.uk/news/today.htm>

HRA Addresses:

HRA Admin: hracttee@gmail.com

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HRA Planning: hra.oxford.planning@gmail.com

HRA Webmaster: hra.website@gmail.com

HRA Website: <https://highfieldresidents.weebly.com>

Disclaimer: The information we give in each edition is, as far as we can tell, correct at the time of circulation but please be aware that it can change. HRA's Update is now being circulated on an occasional basis, according to the information thought to be of relevance to members.