



WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL

Newsletter



CORN EXCHANGE SEATING

This week saw the completion of Phase II of the Corn Exchange refurbishment as retractable seating, was installed at the Corn Exchange. Mayor Cllr Liz Duncan and Deputy Leader of Witney Town Council, Cllr Joy Aitman were delighted to drop in and be first to try the seats, which went in just in time for the first performance of the Buttercross Theatre Group's Pantomime.

The installation provides comfortable seating for an audience of around 130 people and has been designed to maximise the remaining space where possible, while still ensuring accessibility is a priority.

Witney Town Council funded the seating with money set aside for the refit of the Corn Exchange and was also fortunate in securing a Community Facilities Grant of around £35,000 from West Oxfordshire District Council.

[READ MORE](#)

WINTER 2022

Newsletter Highlights

Corn Exchange Seating

Our Christmas Competition Winners

Youth Services Funding

Home Start Article

Home Start Advert

Jo Cox Winter Warmer

Cost of Living Support

Citizen Of The Year

20mph Scheme

Christmas Opening Times

DECEMBER 2022



Christmas Light Winner
Dominic age 5



Christmas Card Winner
Jasper age 6



Christmas Card Runners up
Poppy age 6 & Erin age 9



Christmas Light Runner up
Spencer age 8



Christmas Light Runner up
Ema- Maria age 5

OUR CHRISTMAS COMPETITIONS

These are open to Primary School aged children who live or attend school in the town. Each year we launch a competition to design a new Christmas Light for the Town in July. It's early because it takes a long time to get the making of the light organised.

In September, we start the competition to design the Town Council's official Christmas card and a competition for residents of Care Homes to design a cover for the Mayor's Carol Service sheet.

CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL OUR WINNERS AND THANK YOU TO SPONSOR SCOTT FRASER FOR THEIR SPONSORSHIP OF THE CHILD'S CHRISTMAS LIGHT AND THE BUTTERCROSS TREE .

IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SPONSOR THE CORN EXCHANGE TREE FOR 2023 PLEASE EMAIL info@witney-tc.gov.uk for more details.



Witney Town Council has distributed its Youth Services funding to five Youth organisations.

The Town Council received more applications for this fund than ever before and was not able to help all of those who applied, or award the full amounts requested. The successful applicants were those who demonstrated an immediate funding need and the greatest benefit to Witney residents.

These organisations run projects that have demonstrated a significant impact on the local youth community.

All of this year's budget has been allocated.

Cllr Owen Collins, Chair of Stronger Communities said,

"Since we launched the WTC Youth Services grant, it has been the Council's privilege to be able to support so much of the excellent work that is being done to help young people in our town. This year, we saw a record number of applications for the grant, and were faced with another extremely difficult decision as to how to apportion the funding with the many incredibly worthy and vital organisations applying. It was incredibly hard, as in an ideal world all of these amazing causes would have all the support they need to thrive; nevertheless, I'm confident that we have been able to make a difference, to help them make a difference, to young people of all ages across Witney."

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL - YOUTH FUNDING GRANT

Applications for the fund open on 1st August each Year and close on 1st September. The pot has increased from £10k to £30k but is still in high demand.



WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL

FIND OUT WHO WAS AWARDED- PLUS MORE ON THIS STORY

Being a parent isn't always easy. It can be lonely, frustrating, heart breaking and over-whelming. Many parents need help, advice or support during those early years when children are young.

Getting the support you need, when you need it, can make all the difference. That's why Home-Start Oxford offers free, confidential support for families with at least one child under the age of 5.

Home-Start Oxford is an independent charity which has been helping families since 1988 and supporting families in Witney and West Oxfordshire since 2018.

It provides a one-to-one support service, where its trained, friendly volunteers are matched with families to provide home-visiting support.

Whatever families are struggling with, whether it be mental health issues, relationship stress, debt, illness, disability or trauma – Home-Start is there to help families in need. Alongside this Home-Start also runs groups which are open to all.

In Witney, Home-Start runs three free parent and toddler groups, which have been generously supported by Witney Town Council.

'Puddle Jumpers', which runs twice a week, is the perfect group for children five and under, while 'Little Splashers' is best for babies under one.

All the groups include lots of fun activities, singing, crafts or sensory play and story time. They are a great way to meet other local families and also offer a safe, judgement-free space, where you can access help and support when you need it.

One Witney mum recently recalled the day she first attended a Home-Start group, saying:

"I had all these fears running through my head about being judged as a mother and a single parent and was so worried that nobody would like me. My experience couldn't have been more different. For the first time since having my daughter I felt like I belonged and that I was in a safe space where I could be open and honest about my experiences."

It is the openness and friendliness of the groups that has meant they have become firm favourites in the Witney calendar.

Home-Start is proud to be there for Witney families that need a helping hand but couldn't do it without the work of its volunteers. With the pandemic and now the cost of living crisis, families need support more than ever before. The charity hopes to be able to expand its work in Witney, but to do this, it needs more volunteers.



Volunteering for Home-Start can be incredibly rewarding. Just 2-3 hours a week can make such a difference to a family's life.

Volunteers are needed to help run the groups and to continue the crucial one-to-one support Home-Start offers too.

Being friendly, compassionate and having experience of caring for children and understanding the pressures of parenting is all that is asked for, as full training is given.

Home-Start's next volunteer preparation course will take place in early 2023, so now is the perfect time to get in touch.

To find out more about volunteering, visit:

Volunteer | Home-Start Oxford
(homestartoxford.org.uk) or scan the QR code.



For information about groups, please visit:
[Get Help | Home-Start Oxford \(homestartoxford.org.uk\)](http://homestartoxford.org.uk).

Up to date information about the Witney groups and other events can also be found on [Facebook @homestartwitney](https://www.facebook.com/homestartwitney) or by contacting jan@homestartoxford.org.uk

Witney Home-Start groups:

Puddle Jumpers

(0-5 year old's and their parents/carers)

Mondays: 9.15-10.45am at Ceewood Hall

Wednesdays: 9.30-11am at Witney Methodist Church

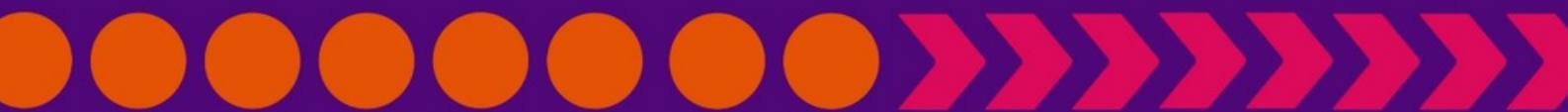
Little Splashers

(Under 1's and their parents/carers)

Tuesdays: 1-2pm at Witney Methodist Church

(booking required)

For information email:
Jan@homestartoxford.org.uk





Earlier this month Witney Town Council was delighted to be able to announce some good news about the pitches at the Leys.

Protective fencing which had been in place around the renovation work being undertaken on The Leys pitches was removed on Tuesday 29th November. The grounds team have mowed the field, completing a full cut and collect to help keep the thatch level under control and ensure the new sward has the best chance to further enhance its root strength. The Autumn weather was much milder than usual, so the new grass had germinated better than expected.

The Council was able to open up a portion of the field for football earlier than expected. It marked out two 7 x 7 and a 5 x 5 pitch that were bookable from the following weekend.

The rest of the area will require some additional work but is still on target to be in play in January.

In addition to this, as a result of the Council bringing its grounds maintenance contract in house it has been able to invest in a Shockwave linear decompaction machine that will enable the team to perform more frequent decompaction work on all its football pitches. This will allow for decompaction work to be carried out more frequently during the out of season maintenance periods, which will greatly improve the condition of all of the Town Council's sports pitches.

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL LEYS PITCH LATEST



WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL

[READ MORE ABOUT THE DISTRICT COUNCIL'S STRATEGY FOR SPORTS PITCHES ACROSS WEST OXFORDSHIRE](#)



WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL

Witney Town Council's Jo Cox Winter Warmer

Tuesday 17th January 2023 11am - 3pm
Tuesday 14th February 2023 11am - 3pm

Beat the Winter Blues and the cold and join us
in the Corn Exchange, Market Square, Witney

Drop in between 11am and 3pm

- Soup and a Roll
- Join Carl, our Parks Ranger for a short Ranger Ramble to Mill Meadow
- Entertainment, Games & Activities
- Good company and chat

It's all FREE and all ages are welcome

**THE GREAT GET
TOGETHER**
INSPIRED BY JO COX

WHO WAS JO COX AND WHAT IS THE GREAT GET TOGETHER?

The Great Get Together is a community initiative inspired by Jo Cox that brings people together to celebrate all that we have in common.

Like the More in Common Network, The Great Get Together was born out of the incredible grassroots response to Jo's murder in 2016. Since then, millions of people have been involved in organising and attending Great Get Together events across the UK.



"I will not live in a country
where thousands of people are
living lonely lives forgotten by
the rest of us."

Jo Cox

Help is available for anyone who is impacted by the cost of living crisis

Visit our website for:

- ? A list of all the financial support you may be able to access
- ? Local community groups that are happy to help
- ? Advice on how you can help others



www.westoxon.gov.uk/costoflivingsupport

Tel: 01993 861077 Email: community.support@westoxon.gov.uk



WEST OXFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL COST OF LIVING SUPPORT

[See the pdf from West Oxfordshire District Council on our website, for a full list of available support and organisations that can help.](#)





Citizen Of the Year



Awards



The search is on to find Witney's Outstanding Citizen of the Year. This prestigious annual award goes to someone who has given their time and energy to benefit their local community usually (but not always) on a voluntary basis.

Judges will be looking in particular for selfless service to a voluntary body or the community or someone whose service is acknowledged as making a real difference to the everyday lives of others. There is no age barrier, but nominees must live within Witney.

Friends, relatives, neighbours and colleagues have the chance to nominate a special person for the prestigious title or any of the other awards which include; a Certificate of Outstanding Merit, Outstanding Commitment to Public Service and Outstanding Contribution. Witney Town Council is looking for people who have given exemplary service, which may be paid or unpaid, who make a real difference to Witney.

Residents who go that extra mile to help others will be recognised in the annual awards, presented by the Mayor at the Civic Reception in March next year.

ANYONE thinking about nominating a deserving individual as Witney's Citizen of the Year or for any of the other awards has until 31st January 2022 to submit their details.

If you know someone who has demonstrated extraordinary commitment, energy and effort in order to achieve something of great benefit to you or your community nominate them on this [link](#) or contact the Town Hall for a nomination form.



WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL - CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

[NOMINATE NOW USING OUR ONLINE FORM](#)



WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL

A safer pace, for a safer place!



We all want safer roads, cleaner air, and less pollution and Witney Town Council is supporting Oxfordshire County Council's commitment to help communities who want to change the pace to 20mph.

Witney is at the forefront of a pilot town-wide scheme which has lowered speed limits, particularly in residential areas.

Upcoming changes you will notice:

1. 20mph areas and zones
2. New road signs
3. Measures to encourage more walking and cycling to help create safer and more pleasant places for communities.

Together we can make it easier for us all to stay safe, walk or cycle and enjoy a quieter, healthier environment. So, when you see the area is 20mph, please stick to it.

Maps of the designated zones and areas can be found on the Town Council's website and further information can be found here: www.Oxfordshire.gov.uk/20mph

The County Council's animation explains all - [view it here](#)

WITNEY TOWN COUNCIL - CITIZEN OF THE YEAR AWARDS

[NOMINATE NOW USING OUR ONLINE FORM](#)



WITNEY
TOWN COUNCIL

INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR TOWN COUNCIL

It's easy to keep up to date with our meetings and the agendas, minutes and reports that pertain to them.

You'll find information on our councillors, other important documents and information, and you can subscribe to updates here too.

CLICK THE IMAGE TO VISIT
WEBPAGE



If you are one of our partner organisations, or receive grant funding from Witney Town Council and would like to submit an article about your organisation, please contact communications@witney-tc.gov.uk.

Our Spring edition is always tight on space as it is a paper version and contains information about how the Town Council spends money and also contains a Residents' Satisfaction Survey, but we can offer space in other issues. The Newsletter is currently issued quarterly



SIGN UP TO THE NEWSLETTER

You can sign up to receive digital issues of our newsletter. Look out for the sign up forms on our website and social media pages coming soon.

NEXT TIME

Our next issue is due in the spring and will contain our annual survey so that you can feed back to us where we have got it right or wrong. Let us know what you would like to see more of.

Christmas and New Year Office Hours and Emergency Contacts



Our offices will be closed for the Christmas period from 4.30pm on Friday 23rd December and will re-open at 8.30am on Wednesday 28th December.

We close again for the New Year break from 5pm on Thursday 29th December and re-open at 8.30am on Tuesday 3rd January.

In the event of a life-threatening emergency please call 999.

For other emergencies you can refer to the Town Council's [In an Emergency website page](#) for guidance.

For urgent issues relating to the Town Council's buildings or land only please call 07423 124006