WMC

Waterways Management Company

Waterways World

Autumn 2026 Newsletter

GreenSquareAccord

Back by popular demand …

Saturday 12th December

Waterways Christmas Event



When? **4 pm**

… don't be late!

Where? On the **Green**

Who? **Everyone**

Come and enjoy: Mulled wine, hot drinks, crepes, burgers, Santa making his traditional visit, brass band, carol singing, stalls. All free but donations welcome!

International Cookie "competition": Since the Waterways is home to so many nationalities, we are inviting families to bring along a batch of their homeland traditional cookies that may be special at Christmas or not. All variations are welcome.





WMC Board Members Wanted

The Waterways Management Company is looking for new board members, as a number of directors have retired in the last year. We meet every two months and monitor the work of the managing agents and other contractors maintaining the estate. We would particularly like to recruit new members from under-represented parts of the estate: Lark Hill, Cox's Ground and Elizabeth Jennings Way; and would like to strengthen our legal, finance and IT expertise. The role is open to leaseholders and freeholders. If you think you might be interested and would like to find out more about what might be involved, please contact Brian Shine through the Chair's email address (wmc.chair@thewaterways.co.uk).

"Waterways World" is the newsletter of the **Waterways Residents Association (WRA)** CIC, a volunteer group representing 500+ Waterways households. Short articles, pictures, questions, and other contributions are always welcome: **WRAchair@gmail.com**, or **WRAeditor@gmail.com**

Please Play Ball in the RIGHT Place



Please be considerate of your neighbours and use appropriate play areas for football and ball games. Playing in the roads can create safety risks for children and other residents, as well as cause accidental damage to vehicles and property. Thank you.

Easter Event

A Wonderful Easter Egg Hunt!

What a lovely way to spend Easter Sunday morning! Our neighbourhood Easter egg hunt was a great success, with between 70 and 80 children joining in with their families.

With glorious weather providing the perfect backdrop, the children enjoyed searching for Easter eggs, while families had the chance to catch up, chat and enjoy the morning together. There were plenty of smiles, excitement and Easter cheer all around.

A big thank you to everyone who came along and helped make the event such a special occasion. It was wonderful to see so many families taking part and enjoying our community together.

We hope you enjoy these photos capturing some of the fun!





Feature: Wildlife in the Waterways



Copyright: R Stremme

An uncommon site in our gardens.

Recently pictured in the garden of one of our team – a Sparrow Hawk looking like they are calmly waiting for their next meal to arrive at the bird feeder beneath its feet!

Sparrowhawks are small birds of prey. They're adapted for hunting birds in confined spaces like dense woodland, so gardens are ideal hunting grounds for them. Adult male Sparrowhawks have a bluish-grey back and wings and orangey-brown stripes on their chest and belly. Females and young birds have brown back and wings, and brown stripes underneath. Sparrowhawks have bright yellow or orangey eyes, yellow legs and talons. Females are larger than males, as with all birds of prey.

Conservation status

Sparrowhawk numbers plummeted in the 1950s and 60s, largely as a result of organochloride pesticides. These chemicals built up in the food chain and resulted in the shells of Sparrowhawk eggs becoming very thin and prone to breaking during incubation.

After these pesticides were banned, Sparrowhawk numbers recovered. However, between 1995 and 2023, Sparrowhawks declined by 25% and they now feature on the Birds of Conservation Concern Amber List.

Report from the Chair of Waterways Management Company

At the last Annual General Meeting of the Waterways Management Committee (WMC) in December 2025, we said we would seek a new property manager. We short-listed two companies from a long-list of six companies, and appointed Common Ground Estate and Property ManagementCompany, based in Henley with an office in Littlemore, from 1 October 2026. Please register with Common Ground on their website so that you can report work that needs doing and manage your account.
Progress so far:
- We have set a budget and sent out requests for service charges.
- We are identifying and prioritising work that was not completed by our previous property manager.
- We will keep nearly all our current contractors, some of whom have been with us for many years.

Our next Annual General Meeting is on Tuesday, 8 December, 2026 at 7.30 p.m. in the Woodstock Road Baptist Church Hall. We will circulate an Agenda at the beginning of November, including a list of current directors whose term comes to an end and a form to allow people to nominate new, or reappoint current, directors.

We are negotiating with Berkeley Homes to transfer the freehold of the common areas to WMC.
Other projects that we hope to make progress on over the coming year include:
- Providing more bicycle storage
- Resurfacing of parking areas for some houses in Frenchay Road
- New community notice boards
- Exploring EV charging
- Communal areas needs / expectations - any concerns
- Improving energy efficiency / sustainability
- Looking after the gardens, trees and the wildlife corridor

Please feel free to suggest other projects and ways in which we can improve the estate and make living here better for everyone.
We have a new email address (wmc.chair@thewaterways.co.uk).

Communications with Common Ground

Common Ground have been active across the development in the past few weeks since they were awarded the contract to manage The Waterways.
They have provided a new portal with instructions on how to sign up to this. On this site you are able to register work that is needed to be done as well as discuss issues with other people. You will have received an email from them if you are the owner of a property on the development.
Hopefully thing will settle down for them quickly and we will see some progress on the maintenance and other issues that have been outstanding for some time.
Thanks for your patience whilst the new company was installed in the role.

Thank you to Howard Buss

We would like to say a heartfelt thank you to our neighbour Howard Buss, who recently took the time to clean up tag graffiti in our neighbourhood.
As you can see from the before and after pictures, the graffiti made the area look untidy and was becoming an eyesore. Rather than simply walk past it, Howard, who has been a volunteer with the Canal and River Trust for years, rolled up his sleeves and cleaned up almost all of it. He tried, but could not entirely get rid of a tag under one of the murals on the Elizabeth Jennings Way bridge. We will be painting over it soon.
Small acts of kindness like this make a real difference. They show how much can be achieved when members of a community take pride in where they live and look out for one another.
Thank you, Howard, for giving your time and effort to help keep our neighbourhood looking its best. Your thoughtfulness is greatly appreciated by everyone who lives here.
PS: To the graffiti sprayer – PLEASE STIOP.!


Before


After

New Neighbours

If you know of new neighbours moving onto the estate, do let me or any other WMC director know the address ***so we can deliver a "Welcome to the Waterways" booklet****.*

Local Information e-Mail List

If you would like to join the e mail list to receive occasional updates of local interest*, such as meetings or events, and Thames Valley Police reports of local incidents, please send your details to the email address here:* wmc.chair@thewaterways.co.uk

Further Update on what was the Nursery

The building that housed what was the nursery but also a number of apartments and the Waterways Community Room at 51 Complins Close, was sold to The University of Oxford.
Over the next three months the area will be refurbished as a nursery for Oxford University. It will be good to have the building used again to bring some life back to the area.

Christmas Joy with Kidlington Concert Brass
Get into the festive spirit with Kidlington Concert Brass, your local Championship Section brass band, for an afternoon of seasonal music. Their Christmas Joy concert takes place at 2pm on Sunday 13 December at Exeter Hall, Kidlington – a cheerful festive outing for all ages. Tickets are £15 for adults, £7.50 for students, and free for under-16s, and can be booked in advance at kidlingtonconcertbrass.org.uk/tickets.





The WRA Community Room (a.k.a. 'Room 51'):

*'Room 51' is a **Community-Owned Event Space** available for short-term hire. It is located above the Nursery in 51 Clearwater Place.*

It's a warm, carpeted space, seats up to 30, has kitchen and bathroom facilities, a projector stand and screen, lift and disabled access. It's suitable for **meetings** and **events** of many kinds, e.g. **classes**, **children's parties**, **reading or study groups, or as a space for rehearsals or consultations** ...

The room is available to Waterways residents for £6 per hour during the day, and £11 per hour in the evenings and at weekends. It is currently used regularly for music lessons, meetings, and break-out space for home-working.

Book Your Space ...

via e-mail: ***WRAroom51@thewaterways.co.uk***
or online: ***room51.thewaterways.co.uk/booking-form***

The WRA: About Us ...

Waterways Residents Association (WRA) is a registered not for profit Community Interest Company (CIC), managed and run by **unpaid volunteers (contact us if you would like to join!)**, representing all 500+ Waterways households.

WRA organise regular community events, including the annual **Summer BBQ, Christmas/Year-End Party**, **Easter Egg Hunt,** and multiple **Litter Picking** campaigns each year. **Suggestions for other events are welcome!**
We also maintain the **WRA Community Space** (see above), which is collectively owned by the community of residents. Rental income is a vital part of WRA funding.

Our activities are funded by grants, donations, and rental income. Financial support from **GreenSquare** Group, the **Waterways Management Company,** and **Oxford City Council** is gratefully acknowledged.

thewaterways.co.uk/about-the-waterways/**wra**

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Sharon Grisbroke, Raquel Stremme and many more neighbours help with event planning and execution, coordination and communication.

Find us on: facebook /TheWaterwaysOxford

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