

# Welcome to the 2025 OAHS Newsletter



Included are details of the 2025 AGM and reports from the officers, the programmes for our upcoming excursions and Oxfordshire Past 2025 which will be held in Faringdon on Saturday 14th June.

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# 2025 OAHS NEWSLETTER



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*Excursion to Exeter College see page 12*

## Agenda for AGM 2025

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approval of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2024
3. Matters arising from the minutes
4. Reports of Officers and Subcommittees
5. Finance
  - a) Report of Hon. Treasurer
  - b) Adoption of accounts
  - c) Appointment of Examiner
6. Election of Officers
  - a) All committee members are prepared to restand.
7. Any other business

## Minutes of the OAHS AGM 2024

held at John Paul II Centre, Bicester 15th June 2024 at 10.00 am  
(Registered Charity No. 259055)

The President, Geoffrey Tyack, took the chair. 34 members were present.

### 1. Apologies

Apologies were received from 2 members.

### 2. Minutes

The minutes of the 2023 AGM were accepted and passed without correction. Proposed: Elizabeth Wells; Seconded: Martin Henig

### 3. Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising.

### 4. Reports of Officers and Subcommittees

The Officers' reports were accepted without comment.

### 5. Finance

a) Report of Hon. Treasurer

Bob Crabtree described the satisfactory financial situation of the society, with the value of investments up and a healthy balance of income over expenditure. This is despite an increase in the cost of producing Oxoniensia and a larger sum dispersed in grants. The current position shows assets in the region of £145,000. There is a view that the Society should increase its spending and one route would be a further rise in grant allocations.

b) Adoption of accounts and balance sheet.

The accounts were adopted.

c) Appointment of Examiners

Bob Crabtree expressed thanks to Jim Robinson for his audit. That Chapman, Robinson and Moore be reappointed as auditors was agreed unanimously. Proposed: Jill Hind; Seconded: Simon Townley.

The President asked those present to approach the committee with suggestions for projects which might be deserving of a grant.

### 6. Election of Officers

a) David Clark is resigning from the Committee, following his resignation as Chairman of the Listed Buildings Sub-committee. Geoffrey Tyack paid tribute to his major contributions over the years, both to historic buildings and the committee generally. All the other existing Committee members were prepared to restand.

b) Holly Kilpatrick has come forward to act as Excursions Organiser and her programme for 2024 is underway.

These officers were approved by the meeting.

### 7. Any other business

There were no matters raised.

The meeting closed at 10.10 am.

### Would you like to help run OAHS?

You could join our committee. We meet four times per year and there are other sub-committees which continue their work all year round.

*See their reports inside this issue.*

We are also looking for volunteers to help with running the lectures, both at Rewley House and online. This does not have to be a committee member.

Contact Jill Hind, OAHS Secretary, for more details  
[secretary@oahs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@oahs.org.uk)

## Reports for 2024 - 2025

### From the President

2024-5 has been another successful season for the Society. As always, the most important activities over the autumn and winter have been our lectures, all of which have been well-attended, both online and in person. Archaeology was highlighted by Carl Champness in the 'Story of Oxfordshire told through ten digs'; by Francesca Giarelli on iron-age occupation and a Roman villa complex at Grove, near Wantage; and most recently by David Miles and Simon Palmer in a fascinating and wide-ranging talk on the Uffington White Horse (the annual Tom Hassall Lecture). Aspects of local history were covered by John Maddicott in a lecture on John Prideaux, Rector of Exeter College in the early 17th century, and by Michael Redley in a paper on temperance in Henley before the First World War. Art and architecture featured in Eleanor Townsend's lecture on parish church patronage in the Middle Ages, and in papers by Kathryn Davies on artisan art in early modern Oxfordshire (the annual Oxfordshire Buildings Record Lecture); by Mark Kirby on early 17th-century stained glass in Oxford; by David Clark on the work of Clough Williams-Ellis in Oxford; and by Nigel Hiscock on the numerous and often controversial buildings put up by Oxford University and the colleges since the Second World War.

With the lecture programme now over, our attention turns to our spring and summer excursions, details of which will be circulated soon, and to our annual 'Oxfordshire Past' day of talks that will be held this year in Faringdon on Saturday 14 June. Oxoniensia meanwhile continues to flourish under the capable editorship of Stephen Miles. Volume 89 came out in December, and I am looking forward to Volume 90, which will appear towards the end of this year. The Society's Brian Cohen essay prize has recently been awarded to Duncan Taylor for a paper on the iconography of the carvings on the vault of the 15th-century Divinity School in Oxford, which will be published in due course.

The Society has made grants towards the Oxfordshire Victoria County History and for mapping for the forthcoming second edition of the Historical Atlas of Oxfordshire. Grants have also been made in support of dendrochronology work in Burford, and to Mark Davies for the production of his 'Jericho Scrapbook'. We continue to support the Oxfordshire Blue Plaque scheme: recent plaques have commemorated Rev. W.A. Spooner, of 'Spoonerism' fame (11 Keble Road, Oxford), Dr Isabelle Little, a pioneering GP (2 Holywell Street), the virologist Sir Anthony Epstein (19 West Street, Osney island), the ecologist Charles Sutherland Elton and his wife Edith Scovell, a poet (61 Park Town); the Second

World War pilot and 'Spitfire girl' Freydis Sharland (Brook Street, Benson) and the artist and writer Frederick Etchells (West Challow). The Society has also made a grant for post-excavation work close to the manor house at Appleton and for publishing the results. Current applications for support have been made by the Abingdon Abbey Buildings Project, and also for dendro work at Radley Church and for the conservation of cruck timbers from Radley, currently in the Oxfordshire Museum Store. We have also commented on several planning applications, notably the proposed Botley West solar farm and Thames Water's proposed reservoir between Marcham and Grove. The Listed Buildings Committee has meanwhile continued to monitor proposed alterations to historic buildings both in the city of Oxford and in the county as a whole.

I am gratified and reassured that our membership has held up well over the past months, and that we continue to attract new members. This could not have happened without the dedication of our committee members, to all of whom I am very grateful, and I also thank all our members for their continuing support for the Society.

*Geoffrey Tyack*

### **Secretary's Annual Report**

In addition to ordinary secretarial tasks, I have been taking the lead in managing the technical side of lectures, including hosting on Zoom. While I am happy to do this, we would like to identify other people who can take over when I am unavailable or because they would like to do it. Please do contact me at [secretary@oahs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@oahs.org.uk) if you would be interested.

The number of requests for grants has increased recently and this has meant that the Grants Sub-committee has been busier. A small group from the committee are meeting representatives of the Abingdon Abbey Buildings: Enhancement Project on site to help determine how OAHs should support this complex project.

I have continued to represent OAHs at events connected with the proposed Abingdon Reservoir scheme. OAHs has agreed to be a signatory to the 'Heritage Alert' submitted by Stop Botley West, for which I am the main contact.

Thame Museum held its second History Fair and I organised an OAHs stand. The society also had a presence at the CBA South Midlands Group conferences.

*Jill Hind*

## Treasurer's Report

At the year-end there was an excess of income over expenditure of £21,367.25 which was substantially higher than at the end of 2023. In part this reflected a bequest of £8,941.11 received from a previous member of the Society.

Publication costs for Oxoniensia were much the same as in the previous year but receipts from the journal were higher due to a higher revenue from paid pages. Donations and grants from the Society were slightly higher at £5011.19. £2,000 was donated to the Victoria County History (Oxfordshire) and the remainder to a number of research projects.

In 2024 an additional £20,000 was invested in the Schrodgers unit trust. Both this and the M and G unit trust increased in value slightly during the year. They also provided £7092.71 in dividends. Overall the net assets of the Society at the year-end were £170,531.07, an increase of around £25,000 over the year-end 2023 figure.

The finances are thus in a very sound position and there is considerable scope for giving grants if suitable projects come forward. We offer a payment to speakers and excursion organisers and this will be increased in 2025 to £75.

*The Statement of Accounts is shown opposite*

**Bob Crabtree**

## Oxford City and County Archaeological Forum (OCCAF)

OCCAF brings together archaeologists from the local authority, commercial, museum, academic and voluntary sectors in Oxfordshire. to discuss topics of common interest or concern.

OCCAF met three times in 2024 (February, June and October, all online). For each meeting, reports from the City Archaeologist, County Archaeology Team, Finds Liaison Officer and South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group informed Forum members about current or recent work, allowing any issues of concern or particular interest to be discussed. We also had short presentations from Martin Watts of Cotswold Archaeology about their current project at Kelmscott, and from Julian Munby about the problems of a single site (Bicester Priory) being excavated by multiple organisations on different occasions.

OCCAF also had input to the OAHS response to the enormous Botley West Solar Farm scheme. Another significant case in 2024 was the A34 junction improvements at Lodge Hill, north of Abingdon. Following earlier representations to the County Council, evaluation work by Oxford Archaeology located more of the 'Sugworth' Quarternary river channels (originally identified when the A34 was built in the 1970s), and Palaeolithic artefacts.

**Roger Thomas (OCCAF Secretary)**



## Membership Secretary's Report

Membership figures have remained stable at around 500. Our members represent a broad spectrum of interests focused on many aspects of Oxfordshire's history, architecture and archaeology. Whether for academic, professional or purely personal interest, we are a broad church and welcome anyone with similar passions. Please do extend the word should you have friends whom you think would be interested in joining.

I must also remark on the long-term loyalty and commitment members show towards the society. It is always nice to hear from you. I am your first port of call and members write to me when they change their address or need more information about subscriptions or other issues.

However, if your problem relates to the website or your password, you are far better to contact our website manager directly ([webmanager@oahs.org.uk](mailto:webmanager@oahs.org.uk)). Whilst I do my best to be prompt with a reply, I apologise if on occasion you have found me slow. If you think I've forgotten, I respond well to reminders!

Inevitably, I am sometimes contacted regarding the resignation of memberships. Whilst I can adjust the membership record to note this, it is important for you to know that I am unable to cancel standing orders on your behalf – this is an arrangement directly between yourself and your bank and I have no legal right to intervene.

On occasions we still receive payments long after a member has deceased or resigned. Whilst I try to notify you, often addresses change and I have no other means of contacting you, and we continue to receive payment. Needless to say, it is very kind of you to continue subscribing but clearly this is probably not your intention.

Finally, you will all be pleased to know that again this year there is no change in the subscription rate of £18 for standard membership and £25 for family/household membership. Payment by PayPal (via the secure link on the OAHS website) or Bank Transfer are our preferred payment methods, but we do still accept cheques. As usual subscription payments run from 1st Jan – 31st December. Again please contact me should you need any further details.

For any correspondence, please use my email address:

[members@oahs.org.uk](mailto:members@oahs.org.uk)

*Beverley Lear, Membership Secretary*



## Oxoniensia

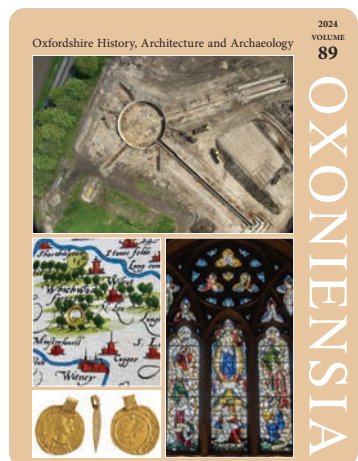
This year's Oxoniensia, due out in early December, includes a rich and stimulating mix of history and archaeology. History contributions include an article by Graham Jones on early medieval Mercian kingly place-names in and around Oxfordshire, and Christopher Dyer's examination of the character and fate of the deserted north Oxfordshire settlement of Brookend in Chastleton. Mark Curthoys and Ellie Reid's article informs us about the Oxford-based lithographer and engraver Nathaniel Whittock whose work includes a well-known bird's eye view of the city published in 1843. Alexander Spain supplies a fascinating picture of the foundation of Pusey House, which for him represents a crucial moment in the history of the Gothic Revival, the Oxford Movement, and the University of Oxford. Archaeological input includes Tom Davis's new identification of a Civil War retrenchment adjacent to the former Marston ferry to the north-east of Oxford.

In addition, I am pleased to announce that the prestigious Brian Cohen prize\* has been awarded to Duncan Taylor for an outstanding first publication on the history of Oxfordshire. Taylor's piece is a detailed examination of the iconography of the many bosses and carvings in the fifteenth-century Divinity School attached to Oxford's Old Bodleian Library. A persuasive case is made for the vault and its imagery to be understood as a statement of the political positioning of Oxford University with the Yorkist Edward IV and a rebuttal of charges of Wycliffite heresy. The prize will be awarded to Duncan at one of our lectures, and further details will be given nearer the time.

*Stephen Miles, editor of Oxoniensia*

\* For full details of this prize, see page 11 or [oxoniensia.org/briancohen.php](http://oxoniensia.org/briancohen.php)

*Cover of 2024 Oxoniensia Volume 89*



## Listed Buildings Sub-Committee

In 2024 the listed buildings sub-committee sent detailed comments to the relevant council planning departments on a number of planning applications, the majority in Oxford city.

Of the 32 cases we commented on in 2024, two were withdrawn and two were refused. Six applications are still pending; the majority were approved. Most Oxfordshire LPAs referenced OAHS LB's comments within delegated planning reports that accompany decisions. In the few cases this did not happen, we contacted the case officer to gain their assurance this would be rectified in future.

Concern remains that some planning applications are registered despite containing inadequate documentation. Others do not include a heritage assessment at all, or submit a heritage assessment written by someone who is not a qualified heritage professional.

Esther Robinson Wild, who kept us abreast of updates to documentation and best practice from Historic England and other national bodies, has resigned from the committee due to pressure of work. We are very grateful for all her good work for OAHS over the years.

Local council	2024 total (2023)
Cherwell	1 (1)
Oxford City (including the Victorian Group)	24 (35)
South Oxon	4 (4)
Vale	0 (4)
West Oxon	3 (2)
<b>Total</b>	<b>32 (56)</b>

A new case officer, David Wheeler, was recruited in West Oxfordshire in 2024. He is working closely with Heather Horner.

We continue to work closely with OPT on cases affecting Oxford city. The new director of OPT, Anna Eavis, is now in post following a handover from Debbie Dance, and we look forward to welcoming her to our June meeting. Charlie Jacobs and Laura Warden, project officers at OPT, also attend LB meetings to keep the committee updated of current cases and share best practice.

We are always keen to hear from OAHS members who would like to join the sub-committee and get involved in the protection of Oxfordshire's architectural heritage. Please contact [lbsecretary@oahs.org.uk](mailto:lbsecretary@oahs.org.uk) for an informal discussion about this interesting role.

*Lydia Inglis (Secretary)*

### Research Grants

The object of the Society is to advance education and to promote study and research into Oxfordshire's archaeology, architecture, and history, and kindred subjects, especially in their relation to one another; and to make available to the public the results of such research.

We offer grants, normally of up to £3,500, for individuals, groups and organisations, to support research into the history, architecture and archaeology of Oxfordshire (including the city of Oxford). Grants may be given for original research, or the publication and dissemination of research, related education, or conservation of items of historical, architectural or archaeological interest.

### How to apply

1. A proposal of up to 1,000 words should be sent to the OAHS Secretary, Jill Hind ([secretary@oahs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@oahs.org.uk)) outlining the activities proposed. The proposal should contain a time chart for the project, the amount of grant requested, a breakdown of how this will be spent and an indication of the public benefits from the OAHS funding.
2. Applicants should also provide a CV and an academic or professional reference that supports the proposed activity.
3. An application can be made at any time in the year and will normally receive a response within three months.
4. After completion of the research grant holders are expected to submit a report of around 500 words suitable for publication on the OAHS website.

### Brian Cohen Oxoniensia Essay Prize

Guided by its objective of promoting knowledge of the history of Oxfordshire and its buildings, and in order to increase involvement in such studies, the Society is offering an essay prize to an author who has not previously published in the field.

A prize of £250 is offered annually for a high-quality essay on a subject related to the archaeology, architecture, or history of Oxfordshire. If no essay is deemed worthy the prize will not be awarded. The winning essays will be considered for publication in *Oxoniensia*.

## Excursions

All excursions must be booked in advance  
via our website [oahs.org.uk](http://oahs.org.uk)

If you need help logging in you can email the OAHS  
Webmanager for assistance, see below for details

Our excursion programme is still being finalised, see opposite, but all details will be published on our website when they become available, so please check there for details.

Our first excursion of the year will be on Thursday 17th April when Liz Woolley will be giving us a guided tour of the Grandpont area of Oxford.

This will be followed by a trip to Adderbury with Anthony Wagg and a visit to the Commonwealth War Graves in Botley.

From September, we will have three more excursions, the first to discover how the Jackson Library at Exeter College has been refurbished and view the College Hall and Chapel. We are still coordinating the final two events with Geoffrey Tyack in Ewelme, and Julian Munby leading a tour of two fine churches and these details will be on the website and advertised by email.



*Caudwells Castle (Liz Woolley)*

**Holly Kilpatrick**

**Excursions Organiser Email: [excursions@oahs.org.uk](mailto:excursions@oahs.org.uk)**

To book, go to [oahs.org.uk/excursions](http://oahs.org.uk/excursions)

*If you have forgotten your login details or have not logged into the website before and need to be issued with a new login, please email: [webmanager@oahs.org.uk](mailto:webmanager@oahs.org.uk) giving your name, address and Membership Number which you will find on the address label for this newsletter*

*St Mary's Church, Adderbury  
(Alan Ford / CC BY-SA 2.0)*



<b>Date</b>	<b>Excursion</b>	<b>Leader</b>
Thursday 17th April	Guided tour of Grandpont	Liz Woolley
Wednesday 7th May	Guided tour of Adderbury	Anthony Wagg
Thursday 12th June	Guided tour of the Commonwealth War Graves in Botley Cemetery	Dick Richards
Thursday 4th September	A guided tour of the Jackson Library, Exeter College	Joanna Bowring
TBC	Visit to Ewelme	Geoffrey Tyack
TBC	A guided tour of two North Oxford Churches: St Giles and St Mary Magdalen	Julian Munby



*Steve Daniels CC BY-SA 2.0*

*Commonwealth War Graves, Botley Cemetery*

## Oxfordshire Past 2025

[www.oahs.org.uk/oxpast](http://www.oahs.org.uk/oxpast)

Every year, the OAHS holds an annual meeting for members, local societies and interested non-members. It is a day of short talks with display stands about the history, architecture and archaeology of the county. Each year it moves to a new town in the county and partners with a different local group or society. It is an opportunity for like-minded people to get together and hear about new and ongoing research in the county. It is a chance for members to meet the OAHS committee and to meet up with old friends and make new ones. It also includes the AGM which is held at the start of the event. It is open to non-members too. It is a great opportunity to learn more about the society if you are thinking about joining the OAHS.



### Location and venue

Oxfordshire Past this year will take place in Faringdon at the Corn Exchange on Saturday 14th June from 10am to 4pm and will include the OAHS Annual General Meeting. The day will once again involve a diverse programme of talks, including the county round-ups, recent research around the county and on topics local to the Faringdon area. There will be a range of stalls from groups and societies to visit throughout the day.



*The Corn Exchange, Faringdon*

The venue is located in the heart of the town, with parking close by and good access to bus networks (S6 between Oxford and Swindon; 67 and 68 between Wantage and Faringdon) Faringdon is just off the A420, with the A4095 leading out towards Witney and Bampton, and the A417 out towards Lechlade and Burford.

The address is  
Corn Exchange,  
Gloucester Street,  
Faringdon SN7 7JA



## Booking

Tickets cost £10 (including tea/coffee during the day) and may be purchased in advance from [www.oahs.org.uk/oxpast](http://www.oahs.org.uk/oxpast).

**Online payments are preferred** but you may send a cheque made payable to OAHS along with your name and full address to Becky Peacock at:

**Oxfordshire Past, Janus House, Osney Mead, Oxford OX2 0ES.**

## Refreshments

There will be two refreshment breaks of 30 minutes with complimentary tea and coffee included in the ticket price. There is a 1 hour lunch break where catering is not provided. However there are places across the town to enjoy a light lunch or you are welcome to bring a picnic or packed lunch with you.

## Accessibility

There is a fully accessible street level entrance to the Corn Exchange from the Gloucester Street side of the building. The toilets are fully accessible within the venue and refreshments will be served in the same room as the event. The venue has audio-visual support and a hearing loop is also available. These details and other accessibility information will be provided with your ticket when you book or on the website page for the event.

## Programme

The programme is printed overleaf but is subject to change so please consult the website for full details nearer the time: [www.oahs.org.uk/oxpast](http://www.oahs.org.uk/oxpast)

## Get involved!

If you would like to have a stall or advertise a project, publication or new research, please contact Becky Peacock by email [oxpast@oahs.org.uk](mailto:oxpast@oahs.org.uk) or call 07584 501610. All stalls come with a complimentary ticket to the event.



*Oxfordshire Past 2024 in Bicester*

## Oxfordshire Past 2025 Programme

Time	Talk	Speaker
9.45–10.00	Registration	
10.00	Welcome to Oxfordshire Past 2025	Geoffrey Tyack <i>OAHS Chairman</i>
10.00-10.20	OAHS AGM 2025	All OAHS members welcome
10.20-10.40	Recent archaeological work in the city of Oxford	David Radford, <i>Oxford City Archaeologist</i>
10.45-11.05	The excavations at Smokedown Farm, Thrupp, nr Faringdon	<i>South Oxfordshire Archaeological Group</i>
11.05	<i>Coffee break</i>	30 min break
11.35-11.55	Trees in the historic environment – some Oxford case studies	Beverley and Michael Lear <i>Lear Associates Limited</i>
12noon-12.20	Recent archaeological work across Oxfordshire	Vicky Green <i>Oxfordshire County Council</i>
12.20	Project updates and news	
12.30	<i>Lunch break</i>	1 hour break
13.30	Welcome and introduction by Faringdon & District Archaeological & Historical Society (FDAHS)	<i>FDAHS</i>
13.30-13.50	Local history group talk	<i>TBC</i>
13.55-14.15	What is below your house? Roman and iron age settlements around Faringdon	Kate Brady <i>Oxford Archaeology</i>
14.15-14.35	Update on the work of the Victoria County History	Simon Townley <i>Victoria County History</i>
14.35	<i>Tea break</i>	<i>30 mins</i>
15.05-15.25	The history of RAF Brize Norton	Andrew Marshall, <i>Brize Norton Heritage Centre</i>
15.25-15.50	Oxfordshire Buildings Record activity	<i>Oxfordshire Buildings Record</i>
15.50	Closing address	Geoffrey Tyack, OAHS
16.00	Close of event	

To book and for recent amendments to the programme go to  
[oahs.org.uk/oxpast](http://oahs.org.uk/oxpast)