

Welcome to the 2026 OAHS Newsletter



Included are the minutes of the 2025 AGM, reports from the officers, and the programmes for our upcoming excursions and Oxfordshire Past 2026 which will be held in Henley on Saturday 20th June.

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2026 OAHS NEWSLETTER



Image: Learr Associates

Gardens and trees walk, see page 12

Agenda for AGM 2026

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approval of the minutes of the Annual General Meeting 2025
3. Matters arising from the minutes
4. Introduction and 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 stand again.
7. Any other business

Minutes of the OAHS AGM 2025

held at The Corn Exchange, Faringdon 14th June 2025 at 10.00 am
(Registered Charity No. 259055)

The President, Geoffrey Tyack, took the chair. 45 members were present.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from 6 members.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the 2024 AGM were accepted and passed without correction. Proposed: Adrienne Rosen; Seconded: Ivor Spackman

3. Matters arising from the minutes

There were no matters arising.

4. Reports of Officers and Subcommittees

The Officers' reports were accepted without comment.

Geoffrey Tyack spoke about the OAHS Grants programme. He gave examples of recent awards including the VCH, Mark Davies book on Jericho and the Abingdon Abbey Buildings project. This is a major project and the Society was pleased to be able to make a significant contribution.

Jill Hind talked about the less public aspects of the Society's work in campaigning for and consultation on conservation of Oxfordshire's heritage. Recent consultations have included the Botley West solar farm scheme and the proposed new reservoir near Abingdon. OAHS also organises OCCAF, a rare opportunity for representatives from curatorial, museum, academic, voluntary and commercial bodies to meet and

discuss issues. There is also a Listed Buildings Sub-committee which is consulted on projects affecting such properties. Some members monitor particular areas of the county and the Chairman, Julian Munby, says that they are actively looking for new members.

5. Finance

a) Report of Hon. Treasurer

Bob Crabtree said that the Society had had a very successful year in financial terms, aided by a bequest from a late member and interest rates. The significant increase in the value of the assets has made it possible to award more in grants.

b) Adoption of accounts and balance sheet.

The accounts were adopted.

c) Appointment of Examiners

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

6. Election of Officers

a) All of the present Officers and Committee are prepared to continue in office. These officers were approved by the meeting.

Beverley Lear introduced herself to the meeting as the Membership Secretary. She outlined the different areas she deals with, such as subscriptions, login details, copies of *Oxoniensia* and changes of personal details. Most contacts happen electronically, and she welcomed the opportunity to make a more personal connection

7. Any other business

Geoffrey Tyack gave a short history of the Corn Exchange. Its architect was John Luker, about whom little is known. He was an exponent of the Gothic Revival. Originally the building had included a Savings Bank.

The meeting closed at 10.20 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. 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

Committee for 2025-6

Hon President	Geoffrey Tyack
Hon Treasurer	Robert Crabtree
Hon Secretary	Jill Hind
Membership Secretary	Beverley Lear
Webmanager	Meriel Lewis
Editor	Stephen Miles
Librarian	Julian Munby
Lecture Secretary	Adrienne Rosen
Events Organiser	Holly Kilpatrick
Oxfordshire Past Committee	Rebecca Peacock Eugene Coyle

Listed Buildings Sub-committee

Chairman	Julian Munby
Secretary	Lydia Inglis

OCCAF

Chairman	Roger Thomas
Secretary	Roger Ainslie

Reports for 2024 - 2025

From the President

I am writing this report shortly after the last lecture of the 2025-6 series, at which we were treated to a lively and erudite paper by Dr Duncan Murdock, Manager of the Earth Collections at Oxford University's Museum of Natural History, about the discovery of dinosaur footprints at Dewars Farm Quarry at Ardley. It followed a successful series of well-attended lectures, some given in person at Rewley House and the remainder, in the weeks after Christmas, online. They covered an eclectic range of topics, several of them relating to the city of Oxford: '*John Ashdown Remembered: a walk past old houses in Oxford's High Street*', by Julian Munby; '*A new understanding of the Divinity School vault*', by Duncan Taylor, winner of the Society's Brian Cohen Essay Prize in 2025; '*An architectural history of Town and Gown in Oxford*' by Nigel Hiscock; '*Three houses in St Ebbes*' (the Oxfordshire Buildings Record lecture) by Nick Wright; and '*Recent Excavations at Oriel College and Hertford College*' by Ben Ford. Other lecturers addressed topics relating to the county. Martin Watts spoke about archaeological work at Kelmscott, Michael Dawson about the boathouses of Oxfordshire, Peter Steere about Dr Woodforde ('*A Good Man for his Age*'), Abingdon's Medical Officer of Health from 1873 to 1908, and I gave a talk on country house building in South Oxfordshire from 1700 to 1850. I am now looking forward to our programme of spring and summer excursions, which will be publicised soon, and to this year's 'Oxfordshire Past', which will be held on Saturday, 20 June in the 15th-century Chantry House next to the parish church at Henley-on-Thames.

The Society has made eight grants over the past year, which are listed in the Secretary's report. It has also commented on several planning applications for

development proposals within the county; they are detailed in the same report. Volume 90 of *Oxoniensia* appeared in December 2025, edited once more by Stephen Miles, and the Listed Buildings Committee has monitored, and continues to monitor, proposed changes to the county's historic buildings. The Oxford City and County Archaeological Forum (OCCAF) has also kept a watchful eye on recent developments. And I am very grateful to the members of our Committee for their hard work on the Society's behalf, and to our encouragingly large and enthusiastic membership for its continuing support.

Geoffrey Tyack

Secretary's Annual Report

Apart from organising meetings, my time has been spent fielding enquiries including requests for grants. We have been able to award a significant number in the last year. I was able to represent the society at an event celebrating Jericho's history, including the publication of *Jericho Scrapbook*, which we supported and a private view of the Oxfordshire Hoard, where we had contributed to its purchase.

Another task has been providing technical support for the lectures, both at Rewley House and on Zoom. A request last year for some back-up in this area was not a success and I think we are over-reliant on my availability. *If anyone would like to become involved please let us know.*

Part of the OAHS's role is in responding to consultations on development proposals. The major projects recently include Botley West solar farm and the reservoir near Abingdon, now the *White Horse Reservoir*. There are also plans for a new rail hub near Upper Heyford and the Heyford Park housing development. I would particularly like to thank Julian Munby, Roger Thomas and Roger Ainslie for their help with the responses. Rather more pleasant was running a stall to promote the society at *Marcham Uncovered* in October, when the Marcham Society hosted a weekend to celebrate its 30th anniversary.

List of Grants Awarded

Oxfordshire Record Society	£3,000
Victoria County History	£2,000
Abingdon Abbey	£30,000
Blue Plaque Society	£500
' <i>Jericho Scrapbook</i> '	£1,500
Oxfordshire Hoard	£500
Radley dendrochronology	£775 (plus £350 from David Hinton)
Charney Manor Dendrochronology	£1,200

Jill Hind

Treasurer's Report

2025 Accounts At the year-end the balance of income over expenditure was -£9,177, i.e. a deficit. There were a number of reasons for this including slightly increased costs and lower income for paid pages in *Oxoniensia*. Income from members and subscriptions were also lower. The donations (and prizes) made by the society were substantially higher in 2025 mainly due to the £30,000 donated to the Abingdon Abbey Buildings Trust. This will contribute to the major conservation programme underway at the Abbey buildings. We financed the donation by selling £30,000 from the M&G investment.

The price per unit of both the M&G and Schroders investments increased during the year. The net assets at the year-end were £157,047 compared with £170,531 at end 2024. This is a reduction in our net assets of only £13,484 (which takes into account the £30,000 donation).

The finances of the society are thus still in good shape with assets of £157,047. It is to be expected that costs will rise over time due to inflationary pressures but these should be quite manageable. *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 2025 (in February, June and October; the February meeting was held in person, the others 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. The meeting has had regular updates on archaeological aspects of the Botley West solar farm and Abingdon Reservoir, two of the largest developments currently in prospect in Oxfordshire.

At the February meeting we had a short presentation, followed by a discussion, from Paul Chadwick about his doctoral research on characterisation and prediction of Roman farming settlements and landscapes; some of his study areas are in Oxfordshire.

OCCAF would like to thank Oxford Archaeology (OA), especially Katrina Anker, for hosting our meetings, whether in person at OA's offices or on their Teams account.

Roger Thomas (OCCAF Secretary)

Membership Secretary's Report

It's my 6th year as membership secretary of the society, and once again I can report that our membership remains stable at around 500 members – we continue to receive a steady flow of new members keeping pace with so called 'natural wastage'! That said, we know surprisingly little about those that join us, or indeed, of those of you who have been members over years. The health and vitality of the society depends on our ability to serve our members interests and it would be helpful to know what you like about OAHS and why – the converse of course is also important for us to know – if you'd like to jot me an email and let me know, it will help us to understand who we are as a society and to inform our future planning.

More prosaically, quite a lot of you now elect not to receive a hardcopy of *Oxoniensia* and instead access it online. For the first time this year we have also been able to offer our institutional subscribers online access, but as this includes most Oxford University Colleges and the County Libraries, it comes as no surprise that they still want a copy on their library shelves. Nonetheless, I can fully appreciate that shelf space in our homes might be under pressure and the online option is a good compromise – do let me know if you would like to change to online *Oxoniensia* only. I'm afraid there is no difference in the subscription rate but you might find it more convenient.

Whilst on the subject of *Oxoniensia*, I have one or two libraries who for various reasons are seeking copies of *Oxoniensia Vol 89*. Do let me know if you have finished with your copy and would be willing to pass it on as I no longer have any spare copies to distribute and we do try to prioritise library readerships where possible. I should emphasise that we have no capacity to receive whole runs, and this is a specific request for Vol 89 only.

Lastly, as I said, this is my 6th year as Membership Secretary – a role that involves dealing with the routine correspondence of membership, keeping our database of members and subscription payments up to date, and preparing the recipient list for *Oxoniensia*. At the present time, it also includes managing institutional subscriptions and invoicing. It would be great if there was someone with whom I could share these tasks. If you fancy giving it a go, do please get in touch with myself, and/or Dr Jill Hind, OAHS Secretary.

Beverley Lear, Membership Secretary

members@oahs.org.uk

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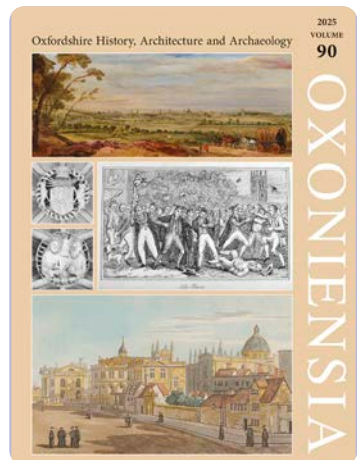
Oxoniensia

This year's *Oxoniensia*, due out in early December, includes a varied and stimulating mix of history and archaeology. Contributions include an article by John Blair about the origins of the well-known Roman villa at Shakenoak in west Oxfordshire which makes the novel argument that the complex may have originated as a first-century water cult site. Professor Blair's second contribution is a piece about the Victorian 'Lady Well' at Wilcote, which through new fieldwork is shown to cover an earlier springhead which fed a rectangular pool, possibly part of a scheme of landscaping by the late seventeenth-century lord of the manor John Cary. Extensive fieldwork by staff and students of the Oxford University Department for Continuing Education underpins a broad reconsideration of the landscape archaeology of Hampton Gay, near Kidlington.

On a more forensic scale, Robert Heath-Whyte explores the iconography and meaning of the ivy-leaf plant borders of the fine medieval wall paintings in the chancel of Chalgrove church in the south of the county. Other contributions include Malcolm Graham's history of the nineteenth-century Oxford 'ragged school' for poor children, Simon Wenham's examination of the boating business Hobbs of Henley, and Wendy Austin's fascinating reporting of the volunteer project to uncover the physical remains and history of Slade Camp, Shotover, an army base converted to temporary civilian housing in the 1940s which for twenty years was home to homeless families and migrants who had come to work at the Cowley car works.

Stephen Miles, editor of Oxoniensia

*For full details of the OAHs essay prize,
see page 11 or oxoniensia.org/briancohen.php*



Cover of 2025 Oxoniensia Volume 90

Listed Buildings Sub-Committee

In 2025 the listed buildings sub-committee sent detailed comments to the relevant council planning departments on a number of planning applications, many of them in Oxford city.

Local council	2025 total (2024)
Cherwell	2 (1)
Oxford City	12 (24)
South Oxon	5 (4)
Vale	1 (0)
West Oxon	5 (3)
Total	25 (32)

Of the 25 cases we commented on in 2025, three were withdrawn and three refused. Three applications are still pending; the remaining 16 were approved. Most Oxfordshire LPAs referenced OAHS LB's comments within their delegated planning reports. In the few cases this did not happen, we contacted the case officer to request that our comments are taken into account 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.

Abigail Lloyd has resigned from the committee due to pressure of work. We are very grateful for all her work in Oxford city. Peter Howell has not attended meetings for some time due to ill health, so the 'Victorian Group' element of our casework is much reduced; this accounts for the large reduction in comments sent to Oxford city. David Wheeler, as well as assisting Heather Horner in West Oxfordshire, is acting as caseworker for Cherwell. A new case officer for Oxford, Judith Curthoys, is in post and already busy reviewing current applications in the city.

We continue to work closely with OPT on cases affecting Oxford city. There is usually an OPT officer at each meeting, and we are very grateful to them for keeping the committee updated on current cases.

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 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) 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

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. All excursions are free of charge to members; refreshments, if offered, will be paid for by the member usually on the day.

Our first excursion of the year will be in April with a guided tour of the Examination Halls in Oxford.

This will be followed by a trip to Harcourt Hill with Malcolm Graham in May, in June there will be a tour of Chipping Norton with Sean Callery and a look at two 'St Peter' chapels with Julian Munby, and in July a walk around the St Thomas area of Oxford with Liz Woolley. In August Alastair Lack will be taking us around Woodstock, and Beverley and Michael Lear will be discussing green spaces in Oxford. Our final excursion of the season will be to Jericho where Geoffrey Tyack will lead a walk. All the dates and details will be on the website and advertised by email.



Lion Brewery, St Thomas Street (Liz Woolley)

Holly Kilpatrick

Excursions Organiser

Email: excursions@oahs.org.uk

To book, go to 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 giving your name, address and Membership Number which you will find on the address label for this newsletter

*Examination Schools
(Steve Cadman / CC BY-SA 2.0)*



Date	Excursion	Leader
Wednesday 29th April	Guided tour of Examination Schools	James Tibbert
Monday 11th May	Guided tour of Harcourt Hill	Malcolm Graham
Friday 5th June	Tour of Chipping Norton	Sean Callery
TBC June	St Peter's Chapels	Julian Munby
Thursday 23rd July	Guided tour of St Thomas area	Liz Woolley
Tuesday 4th August	Tour of Historic Woodstock	Alastair Lack
Saturday 8th August	Gardens and trees walk in Oxford	Beverley and Michael Lear
Thursday 3rd September	A Jericho walk	Geoffrey Tyack



Jericho St Barnabas Community Centre (Iain Tullis CC BY-SA 2.0)

Oxfordshire Past 2026

www.oahs.org.uk/oxpast

Come along to our annual day conference to hear all the latest updates from around the county, with talks on the archaeological work in Oxford city, research for the Victoria County History in west Oxfordshire, the latest finds recorded by the Finds Liaison Officer for the Portable Antiquities Scheme, and the recent work of the Oxfordshire Buildings Recordings Record.



What is Oxfordshire Past?

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 the latest updates on research around 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.

Location and venue

The Henley Archaeological and Historical Group, the host society this year, was founded fifty years ago. Its Chairman will welcome us to the town, and describe the role the group has played in uncovering its archaeology and history.

The venue, **the Chantry House**, accessed from the churchyard behind St Mary's Church and close to the riverside, is a Grade 1 listed building, which has been dendro-dated to 1461. Perhaps originally built as a merchant's dwelling and store house when Henley was an inland port, it was subsequently a charitable foundation school for the town.

The venue is located in the heart of the town, with good access to nearby rail and bus networks as well as local car parks. The address is:

Hart St, Henley-on-Thames RG9 2AT

Henley is a busy town, particularly in the summer months, and there is a women's regatta event on the same day as Oxfordshire Past. It is strongly recommended to allow plenty of time to get to Henley, use the regular buses from Oxford and surrounding towns, or the rail network as Henley has a railway station.

Electric charging points are available in the Greys Road and Kings Road car parks. Southfields Car Park (off Goodall Close) is long stay. Henley station and Henley Rugby Club have all day parking too.

There is very limited parking at the venue, if you require a space as a Blue Badge holder, please get in touch with Becky Peacock to book your place. These will be allocated on a first come, first served basis.



The Chantry House (N Chadwick CC BY-SA 2.0)

Booking

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

Online payments are preferred but you may send a cheque made payable to OAHS along with your name, email address and postal 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

The venue is on two floors with the talks on the first floor. It is a short flight of even stairs with good handrails. Plenty of time will be given to allow movement up and down the stairs, and assistance from one of the volunteers will be available. The stalls and refreshments are all on the ground floor.

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

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 or call 07584 501610. All stalls come with a complimentary ticket to the event.

Oxfordshire Past 2026 Programme

Time	Talk	Speaker
9.45-10.00	Registration	
10.00	Introduction	Becky Peacock, <i>Oxfordshire Past Organiser</i>
10.00-10.15	OAHS AGM 2026	All OAHS members welcome
10.15-10.20	Welcome to Oxfordshire Past 2026	Geoffrey Tyack, <i>OAHS Chairman</i>
10.20-10.40	Recent archaeological work in the city of Oxford	David Radford, <i>Oxford City Archaeologist</i>
10.40-11.00	Life in Henley in the Second World War	Annabel Lyell and Chris Whitehead, <i>Henley Archaeological and Historical Group (HA&HG)</i>
11.00	<i>Coffee break</i>	30 min break
11.30-11.50	Update on the work of the Victoria County History	Simon Townley <i>Victoria County History</i>
11.50-12.10	'Professors of Rowing': two momentous Oxford-Cambridge Boat Races at Henley	Mark Davies, <i>Oxford historian and Chair of Jericho Living Heritage Trust</i>
12.10-12.30	200 years of the Warneford Hospital	TBC
12.30-12.45	Project news and updates: Jericho Living Heritage Trust HA&HG and museum consultation	All welcome to apply to speak in this slot
12.45	<i>Lunch break</i>	1 hour break
13.45	Welcome and introduction by Henley Archaeological and Historical Group. Celebrating 50 years	Michael Redley, <i>HA&HG</i>
13.50-14.10	Update on the work of the Oxfordshire Buildings Record	<i>Oxfordshire Buildings Record</i>
14.10-14.30	Update on the finds recorded through the Portable Antiquities Scheme around Oxfordshire	Edward Caswell, <i>Oxfordshire Finds Liaison Officer</i>
14.30-14.50	The history of Council housing in Henley	Michael Redley, <i>HA&HG</i>
14.50	<i>Tea break</i>	30 min break
15.20-15.40	Around Henley	Geoffrey Tyack, <i>OAHS Chairman</i>
15.40-16.00	TBC	
16.00	Closing address	Geoffrey Tyack, <i>OAHS Chairman</i>
16.05	Close of event	

To book and for recent amendments to the programme go to
oahs.org.uk/oxpast