

Royal British Legion

Faringdon and District Branch

Report for Annual Town Meeting 2018

In the year that we commemorate the 100th anniversary of the end of the First World War, the Royal British Legion will re-enact the Great Pilgrimage of 1928:

A decade after the end of WW1, veterans and war widows visited the battlefields of the Somme and Ypres before marching to the Menin Gate in Ypres on 8 August 1928.

On 8 August 2018, two representatives from every branch and county or their local community will carry their standards along the same route in Ypres to the Menin Gate, representing an entire generation that served while defending their country.

So far, over a 1000 branches nation-wide have registered.

The Royal British Legion Faringdon & District Branch applied for a grant from Faringdon Town Council to help us to meet the costs involved in sending two representatives of the branch to take part in this special event, and we are very grateful that this grant was awarded.

We will provide an update on the how the event went once it has taken place.

Faringdon & District Branch of the Royal British Legion

Report for Annual Town Meeting 2018

Faringdon & District Branch of the Royal British Legion are grateful to Faringdon Town Council for their grant for the Festival of Remembrance 2017-18. Monies raised from this event are in aid of the R.B.L. POPPY APPEAL, an ongoing annual appeal.

One hundred years ago, Britain's bravest were laying down their lives for the sake of future generations. Of those who returned, many faced new battles at home, with unemployment and homelessness, often on top of having devastating injuries. In 1921 the R.B.L. was founded to help those returning heroes, and continues to do so, caring for Service men, women and their families whatever hardships they may face.

In recent years a Centre for Blast Injury studies has been established, where vital research is funded by the R.B.L. that will save lives and limbs and also improve the rehabilitation of our wounded Service men and women. All monies therefore raised throughout the years for the Poppy Appeal are to support those who have given so much for our country and we in turn hope to help them in their future.

## **REPORT TO FARINGDON TOWN COUNCIL – CITIZENS ADVICE OXFORDSHIRE SOUTH AND THE VALE APRIL 2018**

### **Introduction**

Oxfordshire South and Vale Citizens Advice (CA) is an independent charity delivering the Citizens Advice Service locally. **9 FTE** paid staff support **150** trained volunteers in **5** Advice Centres serving over **10,000 clients a year** face to face and by phone. We advise on debt, benefits, employment, housing, consumer issues and relationships. Independent assessment shows we are good value for money in terms of benefits for each pound spent. Independent assessments consistently give us top marks for the quality of our advice. We are a member of the national Citizens Advice charity but do not receive funding from it. The national charity sets the advice standard, assures quality and audits the service.

### **Citizens Advice in Faringdon**

We started to provide an advice service on Wednesday mornings in the Pump Rooms on 20.4.2016. Demand for this service has gradually increased over the past 6 months. We are grateful for the support of Town Council staff in enabling the development of this service. They have improved the advice room and waiting area and let us know when clients are ready to be collected.

**Total number of Faringdon clients served by Citizens Advice in 2017/18** **623**  
(by phone or face to face in any Citizens Advice location)

**Total number of clients served by CA in Faringdon in 2017/18** **101**

The service is proving to be much more successful now it is located in the Pump Rooms. In April we started to introduce two advisers on a Wednesday at Faringdon due to the increase in clients attending on a Wednesday. We also offer two appointment slots.

## Annex 1: Our performance in 2017/18

The total number of clients supported by Citizens Advice Oxfordshire South and Vale in 2017-18 was **10,115**. This represents a **17%** increase over the past 2 years. Most people approached us for advice on the following topics:

· Benefits and tax credits	31%
· Debt	13%
· Employment	9%
· Housing	9%
· Family / relationships	7%
· Legal	5%
· Financial service & capability	5%
· Consumer	4%

**97%** clients rated the service they received from OSAV Citizens Advice as “good” or “very good” and would recommend the service to others. Immediately after advice, **58%** of respondents said their problems had been resolved “completely” or “mostly”. When clients were contacted by phone *13-17 weeks after advice*, **72%** of clients reported their problem had been resolved “completely” or mostly. Analysis based on 1,341 feedback forms Feb- April 2018).

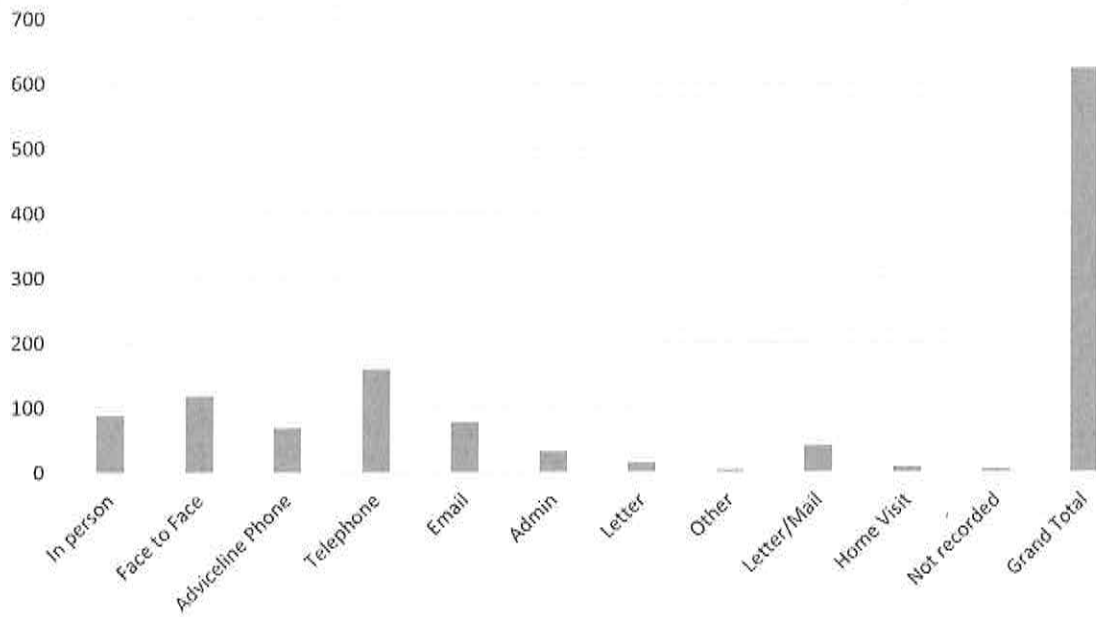
## Annex 2: A Case study

Our client came into office with his partner. Both were very upset. They did not have enough to live on since his Statutory Sick Pay (SSP) stopped last June and they have used up most of their savings to avoid going into debt. They applied for Council Tax reduction of 25% as his partner is getting Carers Allowance for looking after him. This was granted quickly.

They applied for Universal Credit (UC) which was eventually awarded. This involved significant problems as neither could use a computer and he cannot use the phone as a result of suffering a stroke. Citizens Advice opened new email accounts for them. Eventually they were assessed for UC at home but the process took a long time and caused a great deal of stress. They found the application process so tortuous that his partner started to take anti depressants. Her doctor said that she had seen 3 people in one morning stressed by UC applications.

Once the problems were resolved, the client sent the adviser a thank you card.

### Faringdon April 2017 - March 2018





# Faringdon Town Council Review

We received £100 from you in November 2017 to Continue the counselling and support for male and female victims of abuse. We sent requests to all parish councils in the district and received a total of £1880. We have seen 2 clients so far this year from your parish which equates to 1% of our total client base. As im sure you can appreciate this is a very difficult cause to raise funds for as no one likes to think about abuse. We receive no statutory funding, so all donations are vital to continue this support. In rural communities' victims can very often feel that they do not get access to as many services as in the city, so it is important that we continue to provide local services. We appreciate that the Town councils are pushed for monies and that they are being financially stretched so again thank you so much for your support.

Anji Hall  
Chair of trustees  
Clean Slate  
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## How the Faringdon Town Council grant helps Follyfest to happen.

### Background

Follyfest (see <http://faringdonfollyfest.co.uk/>) formerly known as the Faringdon community arts festival runs in the last week of July, with some gaps since around 2002.

The basic concept of the festival, ("*a festival by the people of Faringdon, for the people of Faringdon*") remains firmly in place. It's free to enter, with an emphasis on local music, artistic talent and business offerings, aimed at a complete range of age and ability groups, including families.



Over recent years we have made efforts to develop the festival beyond the live music played on 2 stages, and work closely with the Pumphouse project, the Piano Shop, local drama society and choirs, local businesses and a variety of other clubs, churches and groups, to produce an event very particular to Faringdon.

Last year, at this same meeting, the Town Mayor Dr. Mike Wise challenged us to create events that include all of Faringdon, especially the new comers to our rapidly expanding town. We believe that the poetry, music, plays, games, singing, dancing and craft events we are planning are a great opportunity to welcome and bring in everyone from the town.

### Town Council grant

As the single biggest donor to Follyfest, the Town council grant is absolutely central to its success. The reassurance that 35% of our annual fundraising target is safe, provides motivation to all the follyfest committee to go out and fundraise the remaining monies and voluntary support. The town council grant also provides confidence and motivation to our other key sponsors that we are able to put on a festival of significant scale (in good weather over 2,500 attendees) where their local business will be recognised and gain profile.



If we did not receive the town council grant, we would not be able to put together a festival of the size and variety that we do. We would either look to change the venue, in order to provide for ticketed entry, or reduce the scope of the festival, which would then serve as a disincentive for our sponsors to be as generous as they are.

Participants enjoy Follyfest hugely, whether first timers, who are often surprised that such a small town can put on such a good festival, or people who have grown and moved away from Faringdon, but come back specifically to meet up with old school friends and family for the weekend. The town council association with the festival works well with all these groups.

## **Report: Grant for Folly Woodland work from Faringdon Town Council**

The snow and wind in December and January caused significant damage to the tall trees at the Folly. Our contractors spent more than 2 days making damaged trees safe and releasing hung branches from high up in the pine trees. This was in addition to the work done by volunteers who collected together broken branches and Simon Cook who chipped them for us.

The trees are vulnerable, being exposed and on a hill, and the damage this time was extensive. The total bill was £2800 of which Faringdon Town Council and Faringdon United Charities each gave us £500.

The work was necessary to continue to allow local people to roam in the woodland in safety.

[www.faringdonfolly.org.uk](http://www.faringdonfolly.org.uk)

[enquiries@faringdonfolly.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@faringdonfolly.org.uk)

May 2018



## PAD Committee

The PAD (Public Access Defibrillator) Committee is made up of volunteers from the local community: consisting of volunteers from the First Responders, Girl Guides (Faringdon), Faringdon Town Council and residents. Following the purchase of a PAD sited at Budgens car park; the committee monitors, maintains and promotes the use of the PAD. A grant from Faringdon Town Council (July 2016) allowed the committee to purchase a warranty package, training unit, room hire and provided for professional training facilitator fees. Faringdon now has 4 PADs in place and the PAD at Southampton St car park (what was Budgens) has been used once.

Over the course of the year the PAD awareness programme has gone from strength to strength. Public awareness sessions have been provided:

2 December 2017 during Festive Faringdon – members of the public were able to practice CPR and familiarise themselves with the use of a Defibrillator.

14 April 2018 – A car wash and fundraiser was organised at the fire station and the Committee was invited to attend and set up a stall as a community awareness exercise and demonstrated AED and CPR.

The PAD Defibrillator, situated at the fire station, was handed over by 41 club and Rotary club to the care of the PAD Committee on 10 March 2018. Whilst it is in the Committee's care, the 1<sup>st</sup> Faringdon Cubs will monitor the unit on a weekly basis.

Upcoming events:

We are looking at the possibility of a community Safety Display and demonstration at 'live in the Park' on 20 June 2018

Additional activities:

Ongoing Discussions with members of the community about how to support them in considering installation of PADs in more locations in Faringdon,

The Committee is also working with the Brownie and Cubs to produce a PAD Defib map to be circulated in town, showing the sites where the PADs are located.

We shall continue to engage with the community to raise awareness, provide equipment demonstrations, CPR demonstrations and to support the local community.

Cllr. Angela Finn

### **The Faringdon Beer Society – Bangers and Beer Festival Grant 2017/18.**

The Faringdon Beer Society have run beer festivals in the Corn Exchange on a Friday and Saturday at the end of September for the last 3 years. The aim of the festival is not just to serve and drink real ale but to also involving other areas in the community in activities on the Friday night, Saturday afternoon and evening – these have included the local choir, local DJ, singer songwriters, local artists and food (bangers) from our local butcher.

In 2016 the event made a loss and it was in doubt that the event would be run again.

Faringdon Town Council saw the value of this community event and awarded us a Grant of £400 to enable greater advertising to publicise the festival. In addition they offered to waive the hire charge of the venue. This generous support gave us the ability to exploit the ability to broaden our advertising and run the festival again in 2017.

This 3rd festival was heralded as the best yet with £1,000 being raised for local charities and more people through the door enjoying a lovely community atmosphere with no trouble or poor behaviour. The audience on the Saturday through the afternoon and listening to choir in the evening, included families and range of age groups – it was a joyous occasion.

The increase in numbers was due primarily to advertising budget and grant made available. This coupled with local businesses sponsoring barrels provided us with the confidence to buy a wider range of beers and introduce a more ciders plus set up a processco stall which proved very popular!

Securing a grant to focus on advertising in Faringdon and the surrounding villages was absolutely key to success of this event and our enthusiasm continues to run it again in 2018 and beyond.

The Pump House newsletter said this:

“From 29th September to the 1st October, the Faringdon Corn Exchange was the venue for the 3rd Annual Faringdon Bangers and Beer Festival, in support of The Pump House Project and The Place.

The festival attracted young and old from across the local district, with many also coming from much further afield to sample the 14 excellent real ales, 4 ciders and of course the ever popular “Pimp my Prosecco” bar (first seen at the Folly Festival in the summer).

Sustenance was provided by the hugely enthusiastic Pat Thomas team who supplied some wonderful sausages, The Celtic Dragon variety being particularly in demand! Throughout the weekend, a great selection of local musicians, entertained us, along with additional music supplied by Al Cane (one of TPHP greatest supporters).

It was a wonderful event, and we’d like to thank Tim Cave and the FBF committee (Mark Blatch, Adrian Aldridge, Neil Osment and TPHP trustee Andy Brown) for raising £1000 for the two charities.

We look forward to the 4th Annual festival same time, same place next year!

Mark Blatch  
Faringdon Beer Society

## Report from Faringdon Whist Drive

Faringdon Whist Drive meets every Tuesday afternoon in the Old Town Hall. Our group has been running for many years, and most of our members are senior citizens. However, we also welcome new members of all ages and playing abilities. The club provides an opportunity for friendships to be made and maintained, as well as helping members to keep their brains agile.

The club is self-funding, with members paying a small weekly contribution to cover running costs, including hire of the Old Town Hall. However, without the subsidised rate granted to us by Faringdon Town Council, we would no longer be able to cover our costs.

The grant we receive has enabled Faringdon Whist Drive to continue to provide a friendly and welcoming place for people to meet, combating loneliness and keeping minds active. We are grateful to Faringdon Town Council for its support.

Mrs Sylvia Peacock

Faringdon Whist Drive

April 2018



*In the Vale  
For the Vale*



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Wantage Independent Advice Centre (WIAC) would like to thank Faringdon Town Council for the £1,500 grant provided for the financial year 2017-2018. Our Management Committee and all of our volunteers, a band of now in excess of 120 people, very much consider its service reach to be "In the Vale, For the Vale".

The funding contributes to the provision of the services across all three of the WIAC work-streams: Advice Service, Transport and the Good Neighbour Scheme. Our free advice offering, volunteer transport and befriending services are all fully entwined but can equally be provided "solo", tailored to suit each client's needs.

Statistics and figures for the financial year ending March 31<sup>st</sup> 2018 are in the process of being independently examined by a local firm of accountants. The final accounts will then be published in the WIAC's annual report and shared at our AGM on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> June. The WIAC's board of trustees would warmly welcome attendees to this public event from the Faringdon community. Faringdon's demand for our help in 2016/17 showed a 9% increase over the previous year and early indications from our collation and analysis exercise, underway at present, are that this growth pattern continued on into 2017/18 with a likely double digit increase identified. If there are any specific questions with regard to the statistics and trends, prior to the circulation of our finalised Annual Report, these can always be submitted to the Operations Management team at the WIAC.

The WIAC continues to support the Faringdon community with regular drop-in or booked appointments at the Pump House, though advice clients also still benefit from our Monday through Friday 930am to 4pm service provided in the neighbouring market town. Coupling our driving and Good Neighbour services together it is possible to enhance the local bus service by providing transport for a client over to our Centre or even visiting a client in their own home to talk about matters such as Attendance or Carers Allowance, Disability Benefits, Trading Standards, Utility worries or loneliness.

Although experiencing a slight setback to plan with regard to timescales, the WIAC has been able to benefit from a closer, more formal relationship with the Town Council from October last year following the appointment of Cllr Bentley to the position of nominated Town Council representative on our Management Committee. Cllr Bentley's experience and her close links to the community will, without question, facilitate our goal to further extend our reach within this area. Increasing our understanding of your town's specific needs and the available resources will further foster our partnership with Faringdon and enable us to help more of the residents and attract additional, local volunteers. There has also been the very positive step of working more closely with the White Horse Medical Practice which has produced an increase in the level of referrals to us but has also seen the start of a collaborated effort to target the wellbeing of residents.

The WIAC has welcomed several new volunteers from the Faringdon Community to its organisation over the last year; it has been particularly pleasing to embrace four into our Good Neighbour team. The principal aim for this year will be to successfully identify and train a couple of Faringdon residents to become volunteer advisors so that they, with the support of the experienced existing team and the Advice Supervisor, can focus on our regular Pump House sessions and therefore further extend our "on the doorstep" advice availability. It is important to stress that it is possible to make a difference with even the smallest amount of "donated time"; in the Transport and Good Neighbour areas the level of flexibility is considerable. Please don't hesitate to ask for more information or pop in for a chat about the volunteering opportunities.

Report Date: 3<sup>rd</sup> May 2018

Prepared By: P Roscoe, Joint Operations Manager

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