

German Twinning Report

Largely we have taken our cue from our longer established (1995) French Twinning sister association, although we may have to shake things a bit up to attract youngsters! Many of our small, but growing membership are also members of the French twinning group.

We would like to thank the Town Council for their generous Grant of £3,000 which helped greatly in setting the association up and paying for activities, gifts and welcoming dinner at our very successful twinning ceremony and exchange of charters in the Corn Exchange last year, attended by c. 25 of our visiting German friends, most of whom stayed with local families.

Our gift to Koenigstein is an iron weathercock in the shape of the White Horse to adorn their Rathaus (Townhall), theirs to us is the signpost to both our twin towns (Koenigstein and Le Mele), which has now been erected in the Market Place.

We have now agreed an annual subscription of £15 for individual membership and £20 for family. Our membership and other fundraising continues to go towards arranging activities and comestibles for when our German friends visit us, and to provide floats for our fundraising activities.

Our current list of events that we have organised (and likely will continue to do so on an approx 2 Monthly cycle) are:

1. Wine and Cheese learning event with German theme (ticketed)
2. German film nights at our local Regency cinema run by the Town Council (we run the bar and refreshments)
3. Annual German themed supper (ticketed)
4. Stands at the town's annual Follyfest and Bangers and Beer events (information only really)
5. There is an official town visit to Koenigsetin for the inauguration of KS's new Mayor in May
6. We will be visiting KS weekend of 23-25th June
7. Our German friends are visiting 3rd to 5th October and we will be putting some sort of event on in the Corn Exchange to celebrate their visit

Members get discount on the ticketed events and first refusal on host provided accommodation and board for our visits to Koenigstein.

We are aiming to start up a youth exchange programme too and have identified 2 youth leaders in the 18-25 range (our German friends have now followed suit, so hopefully more on this, but not until at least next year).

Presently we are arranging annual trips each way, but will probably be reviewing this, after addition of a youth exchange trip

All the best

Alan (Association Chair and Council Rep)

Southampton Street Car Park borders

Grant Report May 2024

from Pam de Wit

on behalf of the Volunteer Gardening team

We are very grateful for the Grant of £500 received from Faringdon Town Council in July 2023.

Under the able leadership of Jacky Luker while I was in hospital, the money was spent on a selection of shrubs and perennials to enhance the borders originally planted in 2020. All the new plants were chosen to be in harmony with the existing colour palette of purple/mauve/pink/white with contrasting orange. The new plants were delivered in pots, and were tended by Jacky in her back garden until the weather was suitable for planting in mid-April 2024.

Some members of the original team, with a number of new recruits, continue to maintain the borders, and we have now put in all the new plants, with two purposes in mind:

1. to fill gaps left by plants that had died away or succumbed to winter wet or cold or summer drought.
2. to restore completely the planting at the Portwell exit, where the border was dug up during the building work to install the ECC control box.

With help from the Tidy Team we continue to water as the new plants get established. Photos are attached to show some 'before and after' pictures of this latest planting. It will take a couple of years before we see the full benefits, but look out for Callicarpa and Alliums in the car exit border, more Alliums and a Jasmine in the rose garden behind the Red Lion, and a Daphne near the pink pidgeon. In the Portwell exit border, around the Silver Birch supplied by the building company, there are now a Ceanothus Yankee, a Teucrium (Germander), a group of Japanese Anemones, and nine Verbena Bampton, together with tough ground-cover edging plants supplied from some of the Volunteers' own gardens.

The value of these borders to Faringdon can be measured in the frequent appreciative comments from residents of all ages when they see the Volunteers out there working. Some people now refer to the borders as 'gardens', and some of the Junior School children tell us how important the planting is for pollinators and the environment. We trust these borders, close to the heart of the town, and carefully maintained, offer a warm welcome to residents and visitors, and contribute to a shared sense of proper pride in our community.

Report for Faringdon Town Council

January – March 2024

Root and Branch is a registered charity based on Westmill Farm in Watchfield, Vale of White Horse. We support adults with enduring and significant mental health difficulties from across Oxfordshire and the Swindon Villages on our border. We currently have 10 participants who live within the Faringdon Parish attending our sessions. With your funding we have been able to offer them additional time and activities at the Centre, which has had a direct impact on their mental wellbeing. They have given permission for their stories and quotes to be shared within the report, but asked that they are not published locally as they may be identifiable.

Whilst attending our Centre, Participants are able to take part in healthy hearts activities, as well as crafting, gardening and woodworking. All the activities are therapeutic in approach. We have a Mental Health Support Worker who focusses on emotional wellbeing, crisis support and linking nutrition and healthy hearts to improved wellbeing. Our Skills and Development Mentor supports next steps, arranging courses to learn new skills and promote wellbeing and co-ordinates our 20 volunteers, whom we are lucky enough to have supporting us. Our beautiful garden is run by a Therapeutic Gardener.



Our days run from 9.30am to 2pm and include a shared hot lunch, which can be the only nutritious/hot meal Participants have all week. Each session at Root and Branch costs approximately £62 per person per session. A quarter of our income is funded from Restore, a member of the Oxfordshire Mental Health Partnership, which leaves 75% of funds needing to be raised through public donations and grants. We do not charge to come here, but ask for a donation of £1 per week to cover refreshments.

Two Participants living within the Faringdon Parish Boundary are experiencing particularly challenging low mood, both of whom identify Root and Branch as a safe place, one who states that:-

‘at the moment
it is the only
reason I get out
of bed’

We have used £900 of the funding from the Town Council to secure an additional session per week for both over two months. One participant has not been able to have heating in his flat throughout the winter, so to be able to attend an extra day, has meant we have been able to get him warm and provide a welcoming relief from the cold. In addition your funding has secured a place for a month (£248) for another Participant to attend, while we seek further funding to continue this place.

We have used the remaining £352 to fund a range of different activities for Parish residents to enable them to engage in an activity which they have felt would support them in learning a new skill. We have paid for a Participant to attend a healthy cooking course, where he learnt how to prepare and cook healthy meals on a budget. With the support of a Volunteer he has tried out a recipe here at Root and Branch, which had unanimous approval!



We have used some of the funding for another Participant to enable them to write a journal about their trauma and survival in the form of a fiction book. This has been both cathartic and challenging and we would not have been able to facilitate this without your funding. This participant stated:-

'Root and Branch is the light at the end of a dark tunnel!'

We have a Participant who was finding it really difficult to motivate himself to come to the sessions, he didn't feel he had any goals and wasn't able to think of outcomes he could aim for. He only managed 40% attendance and was in danger of losing his place here. He felt that having a physical exercise programme may make a difference. We have funded three sessions with a personal trainer (who came to our site) to devise a programme and use the weights that we were able to purchase with other funding. His attendance since has risen to 80% and he has said:-

'for the first time in such a long time I have felt motivated to get up as I have some structure to the day'

We held a Spoon Carving workshop for selected participants. With your donation we were able to fund an additional place for a Faringdon resident to attend an extra day and participate in the activity. As part of her outcomes she had expressed a desire to learn how to work with wood. She was so pleased she was able to attend and shared with us how 'therapeutic the course was'. She felt able to show and talk about the spoon she had carved with Participants at our daily briefing, including telling us how she had made it.



We have funded transport from Faringdon for a Participant who has injured her leg and unable to walk the 1mile across fields from the nearest bus stop. This has meant that they have been able to continue attending during this period.

As part of the work we do at Root and Branch we aim to ensure that activities we offer are therapeutic, increase knowledge and skills (which has a direct impact on self esteem and confidence), in a safe place where they work alongside others who are experiencing challenges to their mental health and offer peer support. Without the Funding from Faringdon Town Council, we could not have achieved any of the above, so a big thank you from Participants, Volunteers, Staff and Trustees.

Tanya Parkinson

Centre Manager Root and Branch

April 2024



YoCO Faringdon 3 Group An Update April 2024

Launched December 2022
11 young people registered
3 Volunteer Leaders

Key Challenges the Group have completed to date:

Youlbury Scout camp for an overnight residential 17/18 June
Buttercup Challenge : 5k run on 21st June
Climbing Snowdon trip 2nd – 3rd August

Key Local Community Events where YoCO Faringdon have helped

- Easter Market Stall 8th April @ Faringdon Market Place
 - United Church Women's Fellowship 10th May (serving afternoon tea)
 - Live at the Park 1st July, Tuckers Park – ran a stall
 - Folly Fest 8th/9th July
 - Truck Festival 21st July (Steventon) – running hotdog stand
 - Rock and Roll Bingo evening 19th October @ Faringdon Football Club
 - Cake Sales @ FCC
 - Festive Faringdon – YoCO Stall
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- YoCO introduced 3 young people to Faringdon Twinning Association, who went on an exchange trip to France from 23rd-29th July to Le Mele sur Sarthe.

Future Fundraising/Community Events

- 1) *YoCO Faringdon group are organising a community music evening at TPHP on 27th April, where a Pink Floyd Tribute Band will be playing.*
- 2) *The group are holding a fundraising event on the afternoon & evening of 18th May at The Corn Exchange where Al Sylvester MBE will be giving a motivational talk.*

The YoCO Faringdon trip to Kenya is scheduled for 23rd August – 2nd September 2024

The group will be travelling to Western Kenya for a 10-day life changing volunteering trip to The Nasio Trust. During the trip, the young people will work hard to build a home, run a school sports day or football match for local children and a carry out a jigger (foot infestation) treatment day for hundreds of small children, only possible because of the number of volunteers.

Faringdon skaters .

Skaters have had a very successful beginning to the year. Achieving Top places in the GB Roller cup Nationals.

Also top places in the GB Championships and 2 skaters selected for the GB Squad.

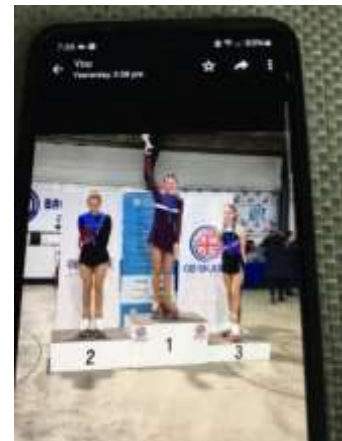
Below are the new dresses which we were able to fund from the Grant given by the Council and smart they look. Also few extra training sessions we were able to fund from the grant.

Skaters training 3 days a weeks total of around 7 hrs week.

During the Easter school holidays skaters trained every day early in the mornings.

The Leisure Centre run by GLL have been a great support to our Team and our club fitting us in when training required.

The club is open to All and our club is growing in the beginners classes



How the FTC grant to FollyFest 2023 has benefitted the town

Background

Faringdon has held a summer festival in the town centre for many years. Its current form as FollyFest, has been running since about 2004 and has evolved from music and performances on a single stage in the market square, to a wide range of workshops and activities aimed at families as well as a programme of live and recorded music across three stages in the town. FollyFest enjoys great support from local businesses who act as sponsors or provide services and equipment at cost, or for free.



Social Impact

FollyFest requires around 120, two-hour marshalling slots over the weekend, all filled by local volunteers. Some do it every year, but for many this is the first time they have participated in such a mass event. Everyone reports how much they enjoy doing their bit and contributing to the event.

Many Faringdon families reunite at FollyFest. Children who have long grown up and flown the nest, come back for the weekend to meet up with old friends and extended family.

FollyFest is free to enter and for some, this allows access to live music and family entertainment which would otherwise be prohibitively expensive.

With over 45 live music acts, FollyFest provides an actual stage for local talent to shine. Hundreds of musicians practice for thousands of person hours, to play sing and dance their way to applause from the local crowds. Particular effort is made to promote children and young adult performers to encourage and boost their confidence on stage.



Financial Impact

The Faringdon Town Council grant of £3,500 is a significant contribution to the total cost of around £17,000 to stage the event.

Town centre pubs, food retailers and other businesses around the market place all notice the increased footfall, and for some, the festival marks a significant component in their annual sales returns.

Across the town and the weekend, a reasonable estimate might suggest the festival generates somewhere in the region of £80,000 for local businesses and stall traders, bringing healthy economic returns at a time when trading is difficult.



Community capital

By making demonstrable good use of all the towns connections, FollyFest increases the sense of community in the town, as local businesses take pride in directly transforming the centre into a festival for the whole weekend.

All of the points described above add up to an event that is unusual in this day and age – a free town festival, run entirely by volunteers, with no brand or political agenda. FollyFest is a jewel in the crown of Faringdon on very many levels.



**Report to Faringdon Town Council
April 2024**

In the words of one of our coaches, 'Wow what a season it has been!'. We entered five teams into the Oxfordshire Netball Junior League and returned to the central venue, Oxrad for matches this year, although there were still some surface issues remaining from the previous season.

In the U13 section, we were only able to field one team due to numbers and experience at the start of the season, but we ended it in a much stronger place with a large, well trained playing squad and a few more waiting in the wings, ready for next season. The team were placed in Division 3 and only lost one match in the ten they played, resulting in a 1st place finish! The last match even saw a couple of the players voluntarily help out the opposition who went down to six players after a nasty injury.

In U15, Thunder played in Division 1 and had a wonderful season with only two losses, one each to the teams above them in the table. The team ended 3rd in Division 1, having been promoted from Division 2 last season. They missed 2nd place by only one point!

U15 Lightning, who competed in Division 2, had a tough season with extremely strong opponents, and ended the season in 7th place. The Lightning squad also grew throughout the season so balancing the playing schedules was sometimes tricky but everyone had a good amount of court time. Despite the results, the team really showed great progression and have really started to grow, as individuals and as a team.

In the U17 age group, we had teams in Divisions 1 and 2 and both teams came fourth in their respective divisions, growing in confidence and skills. They should be extremely proud of themselves, as they conduct themselves perfectly on court and opposing coaches often say to us what a lovely, likeable team they are. The U17s are all polite, witty, fun-loving girls who just want to win their matches whilst supporting each other on court.

Ten girls are leaving the junior section of the club and many of them are continuing by joining the senior section; six of these players have been with FNC for six years.

The coaches have asked me to convey that all the players have worked so hard and really demonstrated great skill and sportsmanship throughout the season, both at training and matches. They have all conducted themselves with dignity and grace, both in success and defeat and the coaches could not be prouder!

Having had 71 players last season, which was too much for our training space and time, this year we purposefully moved to 60 players, which has been more manageable, and is a number we will look to maintain next season.

Prior to 2020, the club also had an U11 section, which gave players in Years 5 and 6 the opportunity to start playing netball, and many continued through the club until U17. With the general increase in players, the club has been unable to run an U11 squad since then, and the Oxfordshire League has not run an U11 division. The League is bringing back the U11 section in September 2024 which we would also like to do, especially as the younger the opportunity we can give players for training and competitive play, the better, but this does create a challenge for us in ensuring every team has sufficient training time.

We have kept the membership fee at £40 for the season (players also pay a small membership fee to England Netball, which includes insurance). Our fee has been flat for the last four years, despite a considerable increase in our cost to hire the leisure centre. The Youth Grant and grants for equipment from Tesco and Waitrose have made this possible. However, we are currently looking at our fees for next season and think there will need to be an increase, provisionally with a different payment model, to ensure that we remain affordable. We will always offer assistance to any family that struggles to pay the fees, as our priority is to keep our players in the club.

The Youth Grant from Faringdon Town Council has yet again been vital this year in supporting the club, the majority of which has gone towards the leisure centre fees. The fees have increased by a further 10% from April 2024 (vs 2023). Since 2020, the hourly cost of hiring the leisure centre has increased by 63%. We are also very grateful to Faringdon Community College, who give us their free hall time in the leisure centre until 5pm every Thursday.

We have applied for a Stronger Start grant from Tesco which we are waiting to hear the result of. If we are successful, it will be used to purchase some training equipment.

Following our AGM last year, the junior club has merged with the senior club, although we will continue to maintain separate incomes for transparency. This will enable us to work more efficiently as one club, with one committee (many members held similar roles in both clubs) and will give us a greater scope for fundraising. In line with this, we have updated our constitution, also ensuring it is aligned with the latest guidance from England Netball.

We finish the season in a very positive place; we have a club that provides an extremely high quality of coaching and players who love playing and we have a great reputation locally. We have merged our junior and senior sections and have been able to invest in better quality kit, including new posts and padding, to give our club a more professional foundation and strength for the future. Some of the operational issues we faced last year, particularly with the leisure centre, have been solved, but our biggest challenge is how to grow to meet the demand. We regularly turn away players throughout the season, and need to accommodate a new U11 section if we are to give the younger players an opportunity to start earlier. We are still very keen to create an improved training space and welcome the opportunity to work with the Town Council on this.

Nicola Ferguson
Chairperson, Faringdon Netball Club
26/04/2024



BE FREE YOUNG CARERS REPORT

April 2024

FARINGDON TOWN COUNCIL FUNDING

The beginning of this report highlights the efforts and initiatives undertaken by Be Free Young Carers to support young carers within the Faringdon community. The Young Carers who we support in Faringdon are individuals caring for either parent or sibling.

- A total of **28** young carers have been registered within the Faringdon community, indicating a notable presence of individuals engaged in caregiving responsibilities.
- Our records show nearly half of these young carers are facing various mental health issues, including anxiety, depression, sleep disturbances, stress, loneliness, and anger.
- Collaborations have been established with Faringdon Community College, Faringdon Junior School, and Elms School. All schools in Faringdon received invitations to take part in our world book day tour and our youth workers have provided their expertise on setting up a young carers groups.
- The BFYC befriender and volunteer coordinator made visits to the council office, leisure centre, shops and cafes requesting display of our poster advertising our services and raising awareness.

SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITY PROGRAMME³

Thanks to your amazing support, we have had an extremely successful 2023/24

- We have hosted **36 trips and activities** for our young carers aged 8-12 years old, **filling 683 places.**
- Our trips have included, going to **Chessington World of Adventures, Wet n' Wild,** and **Hillend Survival Skills!**

Our feedback forms have shown:

- 100% reported that they felt happy and had fun when on the trip
- 98% reported that they were able to connect with other young carers on the trip.
- 91% reported that the trip provided a break from their caring role, the remaining 9% responded 'maybe'
- 88% would recommend our trips to other young carers, 11% responded 'maybe'

SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITY PROGRAMME⁴

Here is direct feedback we have received:

"This has been a fantastic opportunity for Mary* and we are extremely grateful that she has been included, she loves going on the trips and will regularly ask when the next one is. Thank you so much to all the staff involved in making these events possible! I particularly enjoyed the chocolate event that was something me and Mary could do together! Again, I cannot thank you enough for the time and effort that makes these opportunities available to families like mine" – Parent of a young carer

"Thank you so much for the trip, I find school hols can be particularly tricky to judge with one disabled child/one young carer to make sure everyone's needs are met and having a great day out with you guys makes a huge difference!" – Parent of a young carer

"Be Free make me feel like I'm actually involved in everything that's needed. Once we're done and I make friends and I am happy and I get away from everything else. Kind of like away from reality sort of thing." – Young Carer

*Name changed to protect the identities of individuals

SCHOOL HOLIDAY ACTIVITY PROGRAMME PHOTOS



1-2-1 EMOTIONAL SUPPORT AND COUNSELLING

6

The need 1-2-1 Emotional Support and Counselling has sadly continued to rise, however we are able to provide the crucial support.

- We delivered **181** sessions of counselling
- We delivered **184** sessions of Emotional Support

Here is feedback we have received:

- “The 1-1 support has been excellent. Both my kids are very shy and found the group activities harder, but it’s been so good that Lorraine signposted Lucy* to the theatre club which she loves, and Joseph* has really enjoyed and benefitted from the 1-1 sessions.”
- I honestly would be lost without the support for my boys. I can’t put into words how helpful the 1-2-1 support Michael* is having with Gemma is. If you knew how many different interventions Michael has tried, and nothings helped till this. It’s a relief and massive help for the whole house.”

*Names changed to protect the identities of individuals

13+ YOUTH GROUPS

Our 13+ Youth Groups have been a great success. We have hosted 21 trips or hangouts for our young carers over the age of 13.

- We have filled **357 places** on our trips or hangouts since June!
- We have provided **99.5 hours** of respite for our teenage young carers, that is over **4 days in total!**

Our feedback forms have shown:

- 100% reported that they felt happy and had fun when on the trip
- 99% reported that they were able to connect with other young carers on the trip.
- 91% reported that the trip provided a break from their caring role, the remaining 9% responded 'maybe'
- 96% would recommend our 13+ youth group to other young carers, 4% responded 'maybe'

13+ YOUTH GROUPS

Here is direct feedback we have received:

“Katie* had a brilliant time this weekend and hardly stopped talking about what she'd been up to from the moment I collected her to when she went off for an early night last night. She's already talking about next year's festival!” – Parent of a young carer

"Thanks again to both of you for running these events. Henry* has really enjoyed being part of the group and it's so good to see him develop and grow because of them. After Thorpe Park he was absolutely buzzing and now can't wait to go on any type of 'big' ride available” – Parent of a young carer

*Name changed to protect the identities of individuals

13+ YOUTH GROUPS



BEFRIENDING

Over the last 6 months our Befriending service has had great growth. We now have 5 matches up and running and have done fantastic trips such as:

- Ice-skating
- Bowling
- Mini golf

We have increased our number of Befrienders from 6 to 20 which means we can now offer the service to nearly triple the young carers.

Here is a quote from one of our Befrienders:

"I feel he needs time and space to calm his life down - so that he does not have to rush things and can really enjoy them. I feel that in the next few months I can give him that time."



THANK YOU!

From the whole Be Free
Young Carers team. Your
support has really made a
positive impact in the lives of
young carers.

Faringdon Town Council

Council Report

Activity 1st April 2023 – 8th April 2024

1. An Introduction to Oxfordshire South & Vale Citizens Advice

We are an independent local charity providing free, confidential and impartial advice on a wide range of issues such as debt, benefits, housing and employment to over 10,000 local people each year. We serve the communities of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse.

For the people of **Faringdon** we offer a telephone Adviceline service, email support, web chat and once a week we hold a vital Drop-in Service at the Pump House, delivered by our volunteer adviser, Gita Dwarka and Trisha Ingram, and facilitated by the Town Council. We are currently the front line in helping people navigate the cost-of-living crisis. We are also encouraging people to 'self-help' with the recent addition of a chatbot on the website to help people access the online support they need.

Our approach is to empower people. We can all face problems that seem complicated or intimidating. We believe no one should have to face these problems without good quality, independent advice. Our work gives people the knowledge and the confidence they need to find their way forward. Our service is available to everyone.

Our local volunteers provide the backbone of our advice services. We cannot meet the many challenges of our community without volunteers, recruited from the communities that they serve. Many of our volunteers are very experienced people, they update their skills regularly and bring a huge amount of experience and wisdom to their work with clients. Their enthusiasm and dedication define the culture of the charity.

2. Client Count for Faringdon

Over the last year we have managed **256** unique clients (Faringdon only) dealing with **1,018** issues resulting in **1,007** activities by our volunteer workforce. Some clients attend several times over a year. While the client numbers are slightly down on last year the 'issues' clients are presenting with have almost doubled which indicates the increasing complexity of cases, especially when dealing with debt clients.

In Faringdon Town alone we facilitated **£139,712** income gain to those we supported (e.g., Benefit or Tax Credit gain, access to charitable funds, social welfare). In addition we supported clients in achieving over £40,000 of debts being written off. This is practical, measurable, real support for those most in need in our community but we must do more to effectively meet this crisis head on and continue to alleviate hardship. We hope this demonstrates 'value for money' to Faringdon Town Council for the investment they make in our organisation.

3. Top Issues that clients in Faringdon ask Citizens Advice for help with.

The **top 3 benefit related issues** clients present with are:

- Initial claim for Universal Credit
- Personal Independence Payments (PIP)
- General benefit entitlement

The **top 3 debt issues** clients present with are:

- Fuel Debts
- Debt Relief Orders
- Breathing Space Moratorium

4. Faringdon Client profile:

- Our clients are the most vulnerable in society with 46% describing themselves as having a long-term health issue and 4 % registered disabled.
- 77% clients are White British, 8% White Other, 3% Asian, 6% Black, 2% Mixed and 4% Other
- Nearly twice as many women (63%) as men (37%) use our services
- 60% of client's are below the age of 50. The age group that uses our services the most are between 3-34.

A focus on client numbers or statistics does not capture the experience of our clients. Many are overwhelmed by their problems. Often their home or job is at risk. This has a big effect on them and their families and their hope for the future. This is reflected in some of the testimonials we have received from clients:

- *"I am always impressed by the quality of advice given and that it is free. Thank you for your help."*
- *"It is some time since I contacted the CAB and unfortunately, I cannot remember the name of the lady I spoke to but she was a pleasure to speak to and helped my understanding of the situation enormously. I would definitely use the CAB again, thank you!"*
- *"I said that I could have solved the problem without help, but I would have written a 3-page essay on my health problems and you helped me to condense it and put what was actually needed. This help was needed."*
- *"I would like to thank your two colleagues very much. I had been trying to tell SSE advisors for 3 years there was a problem with my meter readings and my direct debit was far too high. I had got to the point of despair and came back to you. It was investigated for a few days and the problem was found. It took a week or so more to fix it. I am very pleased with the way it has worked out. Thank You!"*

5. Client satisfaction and impact

We know our service makes a positive impact on the lives of those we help. Last year, approximately 400 of our clients took part in an independent survey of our service. The results show we are succeeding in our main aims to empower people with **89%** of clients answered positively when asked if the advice we had given them enabled them to move forward and **89%** said they would recommend the service.

Good advice is also an effective health intervention albeit an undervalued one. As part of the same survey, clients were asked “as a result of the help you have received from Citizens Advice, do you feel less stressed, depressed or anxious?” 43% said a ‘great deal’ or ‘a lot’ another 41% reported it had ‘helped somewhat’ or ‘a little’. Client reported a positive impact on their physical health too.

As a result of the help you have received from Citizens Advice, do you feel less stressed, depressed or anxious? (Positive = A great deal + A lot + Somewhat)



As a result of the help you have received from Citizens Advice, do you feel your physical health has improved? (Positive = A great deal + A lot + Somewhat)



6. A view from out Faringdon Outreach Worker, Trish Ingham

“It is a very busy Outreach service - it is an essential service for Faringdon. The Faringdon Town Council staff there are friendly, helpful. We are so busy because we deliver a holistic service to the residents of and around Faringdon”.

7. In conclusion

We do hope the Town Council will be able to continue its funding. It's more important than ever. Thank you for your ongoing support – we simply could not operate in Faringdon without you.

Joseph Mailler, Advice Services Manager, Oxfordshire South and Vale Citizens Advice

Longview
Canada Lane
Faringdon SN7 8AR

Mrs Sally Thurston
Faringdon Council
The Pump House
5 Market Place
Faringdon SN7 7HL

gk
April 2024

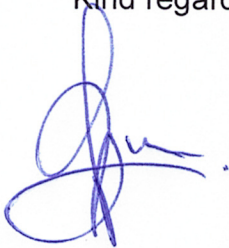
Dear Sally

**FARINGDON FOLLY WOODLAND GRANT - FARINGDON COUNCIL GRANT
SUBCOMMITTEE UPDATE April 2024**

In your Grant Award letter dated 18 July 2023 you asked for a report "to provide a summary of how funds have been spent" to be submitted to the Grant's subcommittee by 15th April 2024. As given in my last report, the £3000 grant from Faringdon Town Council helped us pay a bill of £4680 which the Folly Trust was obliged to pay for tree inspections and follow on safety work.

I would once again like to express the very sincere thanks of the Folly Trust for the grant and I would be very happy to attend your May meeting to tell our residents how the grant has benefited people in Faringdon

Kind regards



Paul Peel

Woodland Manager (Volunteer)

**QUARTERLY REPORT ON FARINGDON
JUNIOR YOUTH CLUB / WINTER 2024
(JANUARY TO MARCH)**



'Visit from James Pelling, local PCSO from Thames Valley Police - Tuesday 6th February'



'Visit from OCC Youth Service / Jo Hoskin - Tuesday 9th January'



Sessions take place at Faringdon Cricket Club on a Tuesday evening, Our
Winter sessions re-started after the Christmas break on Tuesday 9th
January 2024

ATTENDANCE NUMBERS

DATE	NUMBER	YEAR 6	YEAR 7	YEAR 8
9/1/2024	3	1	2	0
16/1/2024	16	11	4	1
23/1/2024	9	6	2	1
30/1/2024	10	5	5	0
6/2/2024	8	4	4	0
13/2/2024	8	5	3	0
20/2/2024	NO	SESSION	HALF	TERM
27/2/2024	13	7	6	0
5/3/2024	14	9	4	1
12/3/2024	12	9	3	0
19/3/2024	12	7	5	0
26/3/2024	7	6	1	0

Our average attendance number per session at Faringdon Town Football Club from November 2021 to July 2022 was 5.04 Children and Young People per session

Our average attendance after relaunching at Faringdon Cricket Club from November 2022 to February 2023 was 13.7 Children and Young People per session

Our average attendance number from March to July 2023 (including the change to a Tuesday evening) was 12.6 Children and Young People per session.

Our average attendance number for Autumn 2023 was 4.85 Children & Young People per session

Our average attendance for Winter 2024 is 10.18 Children & Young People per session

'Visits from Abi Brown, Arts Development Officer at VWHDC - Tuesday 5th and 19th March'



OPA would like to thank the following for their financial and practical support, without whom this project would not have happened



**OXFORDSHIRE
COUNTY COUNCIL**



Cllr Bethia Thomas via her
Councillor Priority Fund



play 4 life





FARINGDON JUNIOR YOUTH CLUB - CLUB RULES - CODE OF CONDUCT

AS AGREED / WRITTEN BY THE CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- 1) NO Swearing - Talk to each other nicely
 - 2) NO Violence, Fighting or Aggression
 - 3) ASK for consent before taking photos
 - 4) CLEAN / TIDY up after yourselves
 - 5) DON'T violate each others personal space
 - 6) NO eating / drinking each others food, snacks or drinks unless invited
 - 7) INDOOR voices inside / OUTDOOR voices outside
 - 8) RESPECT each other, the venue and the staff
-





OXFORDSHIRE PLAY ASSOCIATION

OPA's Vision is to 'Improve Lives Through Play'
OPA's Mission is to 'Champion and to support
the rights of all Children & Young People to
have access to, high quality, inclusive Play
opportunities to improve their Physical, Mental
and Spiritual wellbeing'

T = 07436 270267

E = enquiries@oxonplay.org.uk

W = www.oxonplay.org.uk

Facebook =

<https://www.facebook.com/OxfordshirePlayAssociationOpa/>

Twitter = @oxonplay

Report for Faringdon Town Council
Grant of Room hire.

Faringdon Bangers and Beer Festival, Corn Exchange 6-8 October 2023

The Faringdon Bangers and Beer Festival became an annual event before the Covid pandemic and was stopped due to National restrictions and associated risk assessments.

In 2023 the Risk assessment fell into the acceptable category and planning went ahead to hold this event once again.

In the past, any financial profit from the event was donated to local charities (normally The Place and The Pump House Project, who both receive support from FTC). That was also the intention for the 2023 event. For this reason the Faringdon Bangers and Beer Festival is not eligible for any financial support funding.

We did however apply for Assistance in Kind in accordance with section 4 of the Grants policy. This was worth and equivalent of £390 in the Corn Exchange room hire charges, to cover set up, event and clean down times.

The event was successfully executed as planned and was enjoyed by all who attended.

We achieved over 80% seated capacity on the first evening and over 90% standing capacity on the Saturday, although 20% of this was the Cotswold Voices.

We estimate in the region 500 people (of all ages) attended the event over the weekend. A number had traveled from local villages and many from the new estates in Faringdon and gave positive feedback on events in the town in general. One group of international mountain climbers from UK and Europe have an annual "get together" and chose our event as their focal point. Staying in a local hotel and eating in local restaurants over the weekend.

While we provided a selection of sausages from Pat Thomas butchers we did allow other food to be brought in by the public. Evidence showed that the local Pizza takeaways were also being supported.

As well as being able to donate all our profit to two local charities, provide another "Festival date" during a lull in Faringdon's ever expanding Events calendar, it does benefit people and businesses in The Town.

The support from FTC is publicly acknowledge through various media channels during the lead up to the Bangers and Beer festival and on posters at the event.

The organisers very much appreciate the Assistance in Kind from the Grants committee as it alleviates some of the financial stress during the planning. Local charities benefit from the non-financial contribution made by FTC and a sense of acknowledgement for the organisers that their efforts are supported by the Town Council.



The Pump House Project
Swan Lane
Faringdon
Oxfordshire
SN7 7AF

Registered Charity No: 1151905

April 2024

The last year has been a year of learning for us here at TPHP. We have been even more responsive to the needs of the community and are working with a bigger number of service providers within the county than ever before.

We currently offer a number of exercise classes of varying types (Tai Chi, Parkour and Table Tennis to name a few) for ages 5-95 - some running for many years and some more recent - for example our recently launched youth Boxing classes which have been well received by the local community.

We offer cake café all year round which sees from 40 to 70 individuals joining us weekly for coffee and cake, company, informative chats from external agencies or a game of scrabble and in the winter months (Sept to Feb inclusive) we have our winter warmer hot spot that runs once a week and this year saw up to 20 individuals every week joining us for a warm space, company and a free hot meal.

We continue to offer our space to external services and organisations for free. Those that offer a community service and need a building to operate from. We currently have Home Instead offering a Dementia based Singing Group, Turning Point Drug and Addiction Services proving a drop in/drug testing clinic, Oxfordshire Hospital School taking outreach space to teach children with long term health conditions when on a reintegration programme back into school and an employment support drop in with Oxfordshire Talking Therapies. We will continue to liaise with agencies and services such as these as we feel that it is important that they are able to provide their support within the local community and many do not have a budget to hire space.

www.thepumphouseproject.org.uk

email: info@thepumphouseproject.co.uk





Alongside that we have been working closely with VoWH Reintegration Team to support the 600+ refugee families from Afghanistan being housed by the MOD in Shrivenham and Watchfield alongside other Government Agencies housing refugees from other countries directly into Faringdon itself. This has involved sourcing clothes, shoes, bedding, furniture, kitchenware, childrens toys, garden equipment – everything and anything really through the generosity of our wider community. Due to lack of storage we have taken a storage unit on Park Road at a reduced cost whilst we work through this immediate need.

In addition we are still running the Community Cupboard and daily Fridge from the premises and see in excess of 40 individuals most days and are 'shopping for' around 15 families (70+ individuals total) every month. We work with Vale Community Impact, Social Workers, VoWH and other agencies to reach those that find themselves in a time of need. Many aren't regulars and those that are are offered referral to the food bank if they are not already using it.

The only projects that we are unable to currently run from the building are Repair Café and COGS and this is due to the need for parking for the former and the need for quiet dedicated space for the latter.

For a small charity with a relatively small building and very little storage we feel that we achieve a great deal – all of which is centred around, and benefits the local community.

With the help of the National Lottery grant we have undertaken internal strengthening employing a part time member of staff to supervise grant applications and act as back up for the general day to day tasks that need undertaking. We now have one full time and three part time positions within the charity.

The down side to this past year is the impact on the charity of the current economic crisis. This has resulted in a drop off in attendees to the events and activities that we run and a drop in the number of volunteers available as many find that they are helping with child care whilst their children return to work or increase their hours.

Sarah Stoves
Project Manager

www.thepumphouseproject.org.uk
email: info@thepumphouseproject.co.uk





The Pump House Project
Swan Lane
Faringdon
Oxfordshire
SN7 7AF

Registered Charity No: 1151905

April 2024

The ability to keep the building, The Old Theatre, on a zero rent we feel has had a huge impact on the community.

If, as a charity, we had to pay the going rent on a building of this size it would impact the number of affordable activities, classes and services we are able to offer Faringdon and surrounding areas.

We currently offer a number of exercise classes of varying types (Tai Chi, Parkour and Table Tennis to name a few) for ages 5-95 - some running for many years and some more recent - for example our recently launched youth Boxing classes which have been well received by the local community.

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FARINGDON TWINNING ASSOCIATION

ASSOCIATION DU JUMELAGE



FARINGDON - LE MÊLE SUR SARTHE



Report for 2024 Town Meeting

Faringdon Twinning Association is very active thanks to an enthusiastic committee. We are grateful for the support we receive from the Town Council, especially our FTC representative Dr Mike Wise.

On the Ascension Day weekend of 20th May 2023, we received a party of 26 visitors from France. The Friday visit was to Oxford on the bus followed by the official opening of the Clos Mêlois Boules Park. The Saturday night soirée in the Corn Exchange was attended by about 70 people with entertainment provided by Al Cane.

The Youth Exchanges resumed after a gap of 4 years due to Covid. Ten delightful French teenagers (9 girls and one brave boy!) accompanied by Candice and Mateo visited Faringdon between 16-23 July. They had a very full programme of activities supervised by members of twinning, including a day in Faringdon Community College, a boules evening, Laser Quest, the Cotswold wildlife park, Oxford, a hike, and shopping.



On Sunday 23 July, they returned to Pays Melois accompanied by 11 Faringdon teenagers with Lucy as their leader, for a fun 6 days in France. Great friendships developed and the group returned home with big smiles, and a little tired from the final night party!!

We are most grateful to Faringdon Town Council for the Youth Grant which supported the exchange.

During August, Louise (16) from le Mele stayed with 2 families and gained work experience in some local establishments, achieving her main aim of improving her English.



Faringdon French Twinning is thriving with more than 40 making the August trip to Pays Melois, including many new members, and 6



on bikes. We were treated to a day in Amboise, visiting the fabulous Clos de Luce, home of Leonardo da Vinci in his final years.



A super lunch in an underground cave was followed by a wine-tasting. The culmination of the weekend was a party at the



community hall of St Aubin with entertainment from a local young musician, and the Faringdon Twinning Dancers!



During the winter months, we have social functions such as French Film Nights (in October and March), a Winter Dinner at the Old Crown in January, and recently a Quiz Night. All these events prove very popular.

2024

On May 9th, 48 French will arrive in Faringdon including many children, hosted by local families. The following day we will be taking them on a guided tour of London, and on Saturday we have a big party in Stanford-in-the-Vale Hall.

July sees the annual Youth Exchange, where a group of French children accompanied by 2 leaders stay in families in Faringdon. We have a full week of activities planned – this is where the Town Council Youth Grant is so very helpful. A group from Faringdon then travel with the French to le Mele where they have a week of fun! Currently we have leaders and 5 children planning to go, space for 5 more!

August 10th is the 80th Anniversary of D-Day and Mayor Peter Castle is representing the town in France along with 2 Twinning Members.

In August we take a coach to le Mele for the Bank Holiday weekend (23-26th) where we are treated to superb hospitality and a sightseeing trip to a local place of interest. Places still available on the coach!

Anyone is welcome to join the Town Twinning!