

Oxford Centre of the National Trust

Newsletter July 2025

oxfordcnt@gmail.com

<https://oxfordcnt.co.uk>

From the Committee

We are delighted to announce that at our last committee meeting in June, two new members were co-opted to the Committee – Liz Humphreys and Margo Boore. We are most grateful to Liz and Margo for coming forward and offering to help and they have already started work in putting together a Lecture programme for the autumn term (see p.3). All lectures in the coming year will now be given in person at Magdalen Auditorium, giving us a chance to socialise over coffee/tea beforehand, and there will be no talks on Zoom.

Carol Smith has also been busy organising another visit – this time to Kenwood in September (see p.2). Unfortunately plans for the Waddesdon visit in August had to be cancelled as there were too few bookings to make it viable but the visit to Wimpole is going ahead. It is very encouraging that we now have these activities to offer our members and we do hope you will, in turn, support the efforts of our Committee by booking the visits and coming to the lectures.

Another good reason for supporting the visits and lectures is that any surplus funds made from these activities enables the Oxford Centre to make annual financial donations to projects at local Trust properties. You can see on pp. 6–7 in News from Local Properties how our funds have contributed in particular towards the conservation, preservation, and restoration of Lady Nuffield's car at Nuffield Place as well as the transformation of the Long Garden at Cliveden.

Looking to the future, however, we need to consider that at the next AGM in March 2026 we will be losing our Treasurer and Newsletter Editor as both Felicity Peacock and Margaret Lipscomb are retiring from these positions. The role of Treasurer is particularly vital for the ongoing functioning of the Oxford Centre. On pages 6–7 are included job descriptions for both the Treasurer and Newsletter Editor in the hope that a couple of volunteers might come forward to shadow these positions in the coming months, in preparation for taking over next March. Having the opportunity to work alongside the present Treasurer and Newsletter Editor would make the transition of roles easier and smoother, so do please consider if either of these positions is something you could take on. We also hope at some point to have a Chair and Vice Chair again – so although we are very encouraged by the active involvement of our new committee members, more help is needed in the future if the Oxford Centre is to continue and thrive.

In addition to arranging activities for its members the Committee also has certain administrative tasks and responsibilities in relation to the national body and we have recently signed a Letter of Affiliation to the National Trust on behalf of the Oxford Centre and members of the Committee are now working on policy statements to cover Data Protection, Equality and Safeguarding, as required by the Trust for all its Supporter Groups. Our Secretary David has also attended National Trust Centres & Associations' Network Meetings on our behalf. We hope to update you on developments regarding these matters in our November Newsletter.

In the meantime we wish you all an enjoyable summer and look forward to seeing many of you on the visits to Wimpole and Kenwood.

OCNT Committee: Margo Boore (Lectures), David Hodges (Hon Sec), Louise Hodges (Membership Sec), Liz Humphreys (Lectures), Margaret Lipscomb (Newsletter Editor), Rupert McNeile (Bookings Sec), Felicity Peacock (Hon Treasurer), Carol Smith (Visits & Events)

Visits

Below are details of our next proposed visit, this time to Kenwood House.

Looking forward to next year, I have plenty of ideas of places we could visit but they may not be where you want to go! So, I would welcome any suggestions you have (within two hours travel time from Oxford) especially if you know there are several other people who are likely to be interested too. Some of the ideas already put forward are: The Stephen A. Schwarzman Centre for the Humanities here in Oxford (following on from the excellent talk we had from Professor William Whyte in March), Uppark, Mottisfont (for the roses), Houghton Lodge, Hughenden, Brighton (but sadly too far), Sezincote, Longleat House and Safari Park, Leicester (for Richard III) and Stratfield Saye (Duke of Wellington).

Please let me know if any of these appeal to you and also your own suggestions – see me at one of our coffee mornings, email carol.smith1591@outlook.com or phone 01865 769277 or 07967 297782

Thursday, 11 September 2025: VISIT TO KENWOOD HOUSE, Hampstead, London

Kenwood House is a gem of a neoclassical villa in Hampstead, set in 112 acres of glorious, tranquil parkland with views over London. It was built in the late 17th century but remodelled in the 18th century for William Murray, 1st Earl of Mansfield, by Robert Adam, who added the library (one of his most famous interiors) and the Ionic portico entrance. In 1925 it was bought by Edward Guinness, 1st Earl of Iveagh, who bequeathed it to the nation in 1927, and it is now managed by English Heritage. Recently the house has been restored inside and out. It has an outstanding collection of paintings including 63 Old Masters by artists such as Vermeer, Rembrandt, Gainsborough and Van Dyck. On your visit you can discover many characters from Kenwood's past including Dido Belle. **Admission to the house is free for everyone.**

At the time of our visit, Kenwood is hosting **'Heiress: Sargent's American Portraits' an exhibition of paintings by John Singer Sargent of 'Gilded Age' American women**, who crossed the Atlantic to marry British aristocrats in an exchange of money for titles, including a wartime nurse, a helicopter pilot and the first sitting female MP. **If you'd like to visit this exhibition, you will need to obtain/purchase a timed ticket for entry for 12 noon, 1pm, 2pm or 3pm.**

There may be tickets available on the day which are free for English Heritage (EH) or Art Fund (AF) members (membership card required). If you are not an EH or AF member, the price on the day is £12 for adults under 65, or £11 if you are 65 and over. Alternatively, you can book in advance online on the Kenwood House website (<https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/visit/places/kenwood/>), although I recommend you don't do this until our coach trip is confirmed as actually running. Once on the Kenwood website, find the booking exhibition tickets section. English Heritage members should log in with their membership number to book a free exhibition ticket. To obtain their free exhibition ticket, Art Fund members should also go to the Kenwood website and enter EHARTPASS25 in the promo/gift card section at checkout. You will need to show your English Heritage or Art Fund membership card on the day (*please remember to bring these with you*). Everyone else should follow the instructions on the Kenwood website, exhibition tickets section, where online prices are discounted to £10 for adults under 65 and £9 for those 65 or over.

Catering: The Brew House Cafe serves light lunches, sandwiches, salads, cake and drinks. There are benches in the grounds where you can eat your picnic.

Access: The coach will drop us off at Kenwood's East Lodge. From there it is a 300yd walk along a flat, tarmac, tree-lined avenue to the house. I've requested the golf- buggy service for those who are less mobile. Once inside the house, on the ground floor, there is step-free access. The first floor can be reached by stairs (20 shallow steps with handrail) or there is a lift. Most of the garden and grounds are accessible.

Cost: £35	Booking deadline: Friday, 15 August	Leader: Carol Smith (07967 297782)
Departing:	** Wheatley, Plastows Depot 8.30am	Wheatley, Ambrose Rise 8.35
	Headington Shops (outside Iceland) 8.45	Cunliffe Close 9.00
	Oxford Playhouse 9.15	Parkway P&R 9.30

**** Before choosing this boarding point, please phone 01865 872270 for permission to park your vehicle here as space is limited.**

OCNT Autumn Lectures

All Lectures this coming year will be held at Magdalen College Auditorium, Longwall Street, starting at 11am

Tea and coffee will be served in the Auditorium Foyer from 10.30am, providing a chance to chat with friends!
All welcome! Members £7, non-members £10

Tuesday, 21 October 2025 – ‘Oxford’s base and brickish skirt’: The Development of the Suburbs, 1850–1914 – Liz Woolley

Liz Woolley is a local historian specialising in aspects of the history of Oxford and Oxfordshire. She has lived in Oxford since 1984 and is particularly interested in the history of the city’s ‘town’ – as opposed to ‘gown’ – and in the everyday lives of rural people across the county, chiefly during the 19th and early 20th centuries. She completed an MSc in English Local History (with Distinction) at the University of Oxford’s Department for Continuing Education in 2009, having gained a Diploma (also with Distinction) in the same subject in 2007. She is an experienced speaker, guide, tutor, researcher and writer. Her talk examines why Oxford’s suburbs grew so rapidly after 1850, what factors affected how they developed differently to the north, south, east and west of the city, and the effects that suburban growth had on the city and its residents.



Tuesday, 18 November 2025 – Jane Austen’s Oxford in Life and Fiction, by Thomas Robertson, who is researching a DPhil on Austen’s surviving manuscripts. Further details will follow in the November Newsletter.

16 December 2025 – What a Liberty! Memorable Moments along Oxford’s Ancient Boundaries – Mark Davies

Mark Davies is an Oxford local historian, guide, and author who has provided historical and literary talks and guided walks in and about Oxford for more than 25 years. His publications include historical crime, Lewis Carroll’s ‘Alice’, the suburb of Jericho, and the story of the Oxford pastry cook who was the first Englishman to fly, but of greater relevance to this talk is his interest in the city’s waterways as these defined the greater part of Oxford’s ancient boundaries. He relates dramatic and amusing incidents from five centuries of ceremonial mayoral circuits of the city’s boundaries (franchise or liberty) – mainly defined by its waterways. Although serious in intent, numerous pub-stops and the chance for the populace to highlight local grievances with vigour often resulted in ‘high jinks’ and ‘irresponsible jollity’. Mark is Chair of the Jericho (Oxford) Living Heritage Trust, a trustee of the Lewis Carroll Society, a member of the Society of Authors, and on the committee of the Alliance of Literary Societies. He is also a member of the OCNT!



Winter 2026 Talks:

20 January: The Long Garden Conservation Project, Cliveden, by Anthony Mason, Head Gardener

17 February: Oxford Preservation Trust – a tour of our work, by Stephen Dawson, Heritage Director, OPT

17 March: AGM plus a talk, to be confirmed.

Liz Humphreys and Margo Boore

News from our National Trust Neighbours

Nuffield Place Update about BUD

I am thrilled to share with all the members of the Oxford Centre of the National Trust an update on the conservation, preservation, and restoration work that is currently underway on 'BUD' (Lady Nuffield's Wolseley 8) that the Oxford Centre provided a generous donation towards last year.

BUD has now had a full condition assessment, the previous one of these having been done back in 2011 when the National Trust became the custodians of Nuffield Place, and we are now able to approach how we care for BUD based upon the findings in this report. Our first step is to bring in an expert from the British Motor Museum at Gaydon to check that the engine is running at its most optimum settings. Aiming to visit in July, they will also be able to advise us on a suitable place for the brakes and the small dents to the bodywork and bumpers to be repaired. Because BUD is listed as a collection item, and not a vehicle, this process is not as simple as with other historic cars – for example a privately owned Wolseley. We are also going to undertake remedial work such as touching up the chipped paintwork, and repair to the running boards, and this can be done by our conservation teams at the property.

In preparation for this next stage of work, our conservation team and collection care volunteers have been giving BUD a deep clean. This involved two members of staff and four volunteers, and BUD's fame meant that teams from local properties Greys Court and Basildon Park were eager to join in with this and future cleaning tasks! We have also performed practical tasks ensuring that we have the correct tools, storage, and workshop space on the site to enable this care of BUD to continue in the future.



BUD being cleaned

All Nuffield Place BUD images © National Trust Freya Pook



Conservation Team looking for pests



Back seat removed looking for pests

As part of our engagement with visitors around this conservation work and the preservation of BUD, two of our volunteers are also going to be providing talks about Morris Motors and BUD throughout the year. These will be impromptu and dependent on volunteer availability so keep your eyes open on the website to see when these will be happening if you are interested in coming along to visit (<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/oxfordshire-buckinghamshire-berkshire/nuffield-place>). Finally, I am very pleased to say that the BUD Fundraising Pin Badge that we had made in 2023 is returning to our retail shop very soon, having sold out earlier in the year!



BUD cleaned and back in garage

Steven Williams, Site Manager, Nuffield Place

News from the West Oxfordshire Portfolio

By the time you read this, the temperature may have cooled a little. But the heat doesn't stop activities in West Oxfordshire.

Coleshill hosted a network of **Supporter Groups** at Coleshill recently and it was a pleasure to meet David and Louise Hodges from OCNT. The day was organised by the central Supporter Group team and I was keen to show off the Heritage & Rural Skills Centre. It was insightful to hear more about the challenges and achievements of the representatives.

Elsewhere in West Oxfordshire, the summer season has been busy. At **Chastleton**, volunteers have enjoyed talks on the soundscape of Chastleton – one on 160 years of music and another on English wall paintings – both given by volunteers. Inspired by Chastleton, art days and the Behind Closed Doors tours are popular. Chastleton also remains cool on hot days so something to note for a warm day.

At **Coleshill**, the story of the moment is the culmination of the **Saturday Club**. This is a free 20-week term time programme for 13- to 16-year-olds. Katy, our Programmes & Partnerships Officer, developed a Craft & Making programme with the tutors from the Heritage & Rural Skills Centre making Coleshill a living classroom. We had 12 young people who have learned so much, made friends and enjoyed every minute of it. After the Christmas break, one young person claimed that the previous weeks were boring and they were so glad to be back! They have forged metal with the blacksmith, carved wood and stone, woven willow, created stained glass pieces, learned about lime plaster with a master plasterer on a trip to Chastleton and finally completed their own piece of pargetting. It wasn't just crafts – they have also spent time with the Nature Recovery team monitoring riverflies and learning about the local environment. The work they have produced is nothing short of inspirational. They have their final exhibition at Somerset House on 5 July and there will be an exhibition at Coleshill in August. I will keep you posted on the dates.



The Saturday Club

Looking ahead, we are planning a **1940s day at Coleshill on Saturday 6th September**, a week before our Heritage Open Day.

Sarah Hannis, Senior Volunteering & Community Officer, West Oxfordshire portfolio

Cliveden

Earlier this year OCNT donated £1,500 to Cliveden for the redevelopment of the Long Garden at Cliveden (<https://www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/oxfordshire-buckinghamshire-berkshire/cliveden/the-long-garden-project>). Work has progressed apace and below are images of the transformed garden. Anthony Mason, Head Gardener, will be coming to tell us more at the Lecture on 20 January 2026.



Images Courtesy of National Trust Cliveden

Could YOU be our next Treasurer or Newsletter Editor?

At next year's AGM on 17 March 2026, Felicity Peacock will be retiring as OCNT Treasurer having served in this role for 14 years and Margaret Lipscomb is retiring as Newsletter Editor after 7 years (2 more than she originally anticipated). It is particularly important that we fill the position of Treasurer as a charity such as the Oxford Centre cannot continue functioning without one.

On the next two pages are outlined the key functions of the Treasurer and the Newsletter Editor. If you think you might be interested in taking on either role and would like to find out more, please do get in touch. Contact emails are given for both the Treasurer and Newsletter Editor.

OCNT Treasurer

- The Treasurer needs to be able to handle Excel spreadsheets and have a computer or laptop at home for frequent access to keep the record of income and payments up to date
- They must pay in to the bank branch all cheques and cash received and record it accurately on spreadsheets
- To prepare a report for each meeting of the Executive Committee showing all expenditure and income received during the year to date, how much each outing has cost and any surplus, and anticipated expenditure during the next 3 months set against the balance in the Bank.
- To recommend to the Committee how much the Oxford Centre can afford to donate to local NT properties at the end of the year, and to obtain the wish lists of local properties.
- The Treasurer must be registered with Barclays Bank for online banking to authorise payments of invoices and expenses and check balance sheets regularly, as well as writing cheques when necessary (NB all expenditure to be authorised by the Treasurer and one other member of the Committee/or the Chair).
- Liaising with the Membership Secretary concerning subscriptions received, including those from new members.
- They will need to liaise with Visit Leaders to check that the price charged for outings will cover the expected costs, record all payments received and pay all invoices for expenses incurred by the visit.
- The Treasurer books the lecture theatre dates, agrees the charges, and pays the invoices.
- The Treasurer or a deputy must take and record entrance charges at the lectures either in cash or using a credit card reader connected to a mobile phone app.
- The accounts are finalised as at 31 December each year and set out for audit by the Honorary Auditor by the end of February, in time for presentation at the AGM.
- (optional) Managing the 200 Club donations, issuing share numbers, handling the monthly draw for prizes.

For further information, please contact Felicity Peacock: treasurer.ocnt@gmail.com

OCNT Newsletter Editor

- The Newsletter Editor needs to have a computer or laptop at home. The current Newsletter and Booking Forms are produced entirely in Microsoft Word so all you need is a familiarity with this or a similar package.
- With the Committee, set deadlines for copy for the 3 Newsletters a year – February/March, July/August, and November.
- Contact possible contributors (eg representatives at local Trust properties) to inform them of deadlines for copy.
- Collate and edit copy received about Visits, Lectures, Activities, News from Trust properties etc. and format into a 4, 6 or 8 page Newsletter.
- Adapt and customise Booking Forms to include relevant details for each visit.
- Finished copy is sent to Chair (or circulated to Committee) for final checking and any further amendments; it is also sent to Janet Redfern for proofreading.
- Finalised files are saved as high resolution pdfs for printing and low resolution for sending out via email; the newsletter editor is responsible for the print version, the Membership Secretary circulates the online version.
- Before sending to print, ask Membership Sec for numbers for postal mailing; the Membership Sec also sends the addresses for the postal mailing to the printer once the print order has been placed.
- Liaise with the printer (University Print Studio): alert printer to possible date for submitting print order; send order and pdf files for printing via email, requesting an estimate and order number (copying in Treasurer and Membership Sec); once the estimate is confirmed, the printing process is commenced and the printer stuffs the addressed envelopes and sends them to the mailing department for posting.
- Newsletter Editor receives a hard copy in the post for quality control and to check postal delivery time.
- An additional task for the future will be to supply copy from the Newsletter to update the OCNT website (a task currently undertaken by Felicity Peacock who is also retiring)

For further information, please contact Margaret Lipscomb: editor.ocnt@gmail.com

OCNT Coffee Mornings

Come and join us at the end of the month!

OCNT hosts informal coffee mornings every month (except December) on the last Tuesday from 10.30 to 11.30am. This is an excellent opportunity to renew acquaintance with good friends and make new ones, as well as enjoying a relaxed cup of coffee or tea.

The coffee mornings are held at the Cosy Club restaurant on Cornmarket Street, next to WH Smith. It is on the 1st floor, but there is a lift. Those attending coffee mornings there have commented on the comfortable surroundings, the delicious coffee, the friendly service and the central location within the city centre.

Why not come and join us for a social catch-up and a relaxing hour? There's no advanced booking – just turn up at the Cosy Club on the morning and you will be very welcome.

The next coffee mornings are on:

Tuesday, 29 July 2025; Tuesday, 26 August; Tuesday, 30 September; Tuesday, 28 October; Tuesday, 25 November

December - No Coffee Morning – Happy Christmas and New Year!

Tuesday, 27 January 2026; Tuesday, 24 February, and Tuesday, 31 March.

Dates for your diary ...

JULY	
Tues, 22nd	*Day Visit to Wimpole Estate, with Carol Smith
Tues, 29th	Coffee Morning at The Cosy Club, just drop in 10.30 to 11.30am
AUGUST	
Fri, 15th	Booking deadline for Kenwood visit (11 Sept)
Tues, 26th	Coffee Morning at the Cosy Club, just drop in 10.30 to 11.30am
SEPTEMBER	
Thurs, 11th	*Day Visit to Kenwood House, with Carol Smith
Tues, 30th	Coffee Morning at The Cosy Club, just drop in 10.30 to 11.30am
OCTOBER	200 Club Draw, no 4 of 7
Tues, 21st	Lecture: Magdalen Auditorium , 10.30 coffee, 11–12 noon, ALL welcome. Liz Woolley, <i>'Oxford's base and brickish skirt': The Development of the Suburbs, 1850–1914</i>
Tues, 28th	Coffee Morning at The Cosy Club, just drop in 10.30 to 11.30am
NOVEMBER	200 Club Draw, no 5 of 7
Tues, 18th	Lecture: Magdalen Auditorium , 10.30 coffee, 11–12 noon, ALL welcome. Thomas Robertson, <i>Jane Austen's Oxford in Life and Fiction</i>
Tues, 25th	Coffee Morning at The Cosy Club, just drop in 10.30 to 11.30am
DECEMBER	200 Club Draw, nos 6 & 7
Tues, 16th	Lecture: Magdalen Auditorium , 10.30 coffee, 11–12 noon, ALL welcome. Mark Davies, <i>What a Liberty! Memorable Moments along Oxford's Ancient Boundaries</i>

Note: *Members need to have booked a place for these events, see p.2

OCNT's 2025–26 Executive Committee

President:	Dr Nick Brown, Principal, Linacre College, Oxford
Chair:	Committee vacancy
Vice Chair:	Committee vacancy
Hon Treasurer:	Felicity Peacock treasurer.ocnt@gmail.com 07975 678475
Hon Secretary:	David Hodges secretary.ocnt@gmail.com
Membership Secretary:	Louise Hodges membership.ocnt@gmail.com
Newsletter Editor:	Margaret Lipscomb editor.ocnt@gmail.com
Visits/Events:	Carol Smith
Bookings Secretary:	Rupert McNeile
Lectures:	Liz Humphreys & Margo Boore

Supporting Roles

Proofreading:	Janet Redfern
Auditorium helpers:	David Hodges, Fran Billington, Hilary Whitehouse
Publicity:	Vacancy
Walking group:	Vacancy
Holiday coordinator:	Vacancy
Website Manager:	Ashley Castelino

Members' Contact at Pegasus Grange: Val Gould

We would like to thank all the Volunteers who have helped run our activities over the past years and who have now stepped back from involvement. We hope very much we can find replacements for them in the coming months. Please contact us if you can help.

When you applied for membership of the Oxford Centre of the National Trust you gave us contact information so that we could keep you informed about forthcoming activities and invite you to take part in our events. This information is used solely for the purposes of running the Centre and its activities. It may be exchanged among members of the Committee but will not be shared with any other organization other than the printers who are supplied with postal addresses of members who receive their newsletter by post for mailing purposes. Your details will be kept securely, and you have the right to opt out of our communications at any time and to request to see what information we hold about you. If you wish to do this please contact: **Membership Secretary, email membership.ocnt@gmail.com**