



## Community Services

### Cogges Manor Farm Museum

### Cogges Bulletin 14 – April 2009

#### **THE 2009 SEASON**

The new publicity leaflet is out now – pick up your copy to find out what is on this year!

The new season starts on April 7th, and the 2009 seasonal staff - both new people and familiar faces from previous years- are now getting ready for the opening. All the Manor House Demonstrators have returned this year, and will be ready to welcome visitors with their kitchen-range baked treats.

**Season ticket** prices have been held to the 2008 levels for this year as Cogges celebrates its 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary as a traditional Victorian Farm Museum. Season tickets are exceptionally good value for money and we hope sales this year will exceed the record set last year. Although a shorter season, the events programme is busier than ever, with something special nearly every weekend. For the cost of just three visits the tickets allow entry throughout the whole season and to all events. Do please come and buy one!

#### **Many thanks to:**

**Derek Malin and Simon Webb** for their care of the farm animals over the winter closedown period. The animals will be returning to Cogges for the opening.

**The Witney Woodland Volunteers** who have come regularly to Cogges this winter and spring and have made a huge difference to the moated castle site. Their recent help with site clearance and repairs following major surgery to a diseased horse chestnut tree, and other dead trees, was particularly appreciated.

On Monday 30th March the Witney Woodland Volunteers came to clear litter on the paths and car parks around Cogges – part of an environmental campaign and 'Clear Up' month. The museum is very grateful for this annual cleaning operation, well beyond our resources, which makes the museum and its environs a pleasant place to visit.

Thanks to **Juliet Curry and her volunteer team** for all their work.

**Also many thanks to:**

**The Oxfordshire Badger Group** who have visited Cogges to advise on a badger's tunnel which appeared recently in the middle of the riverside walk path. Investigation proved it to be a 'trial trench' not a newly occupied set, and we have been able to backfill the hole (and therefore re-open the path to visitors for this coming season!) - although a watching brief will be kept on the area.

**Repair and Maintenance work:**

Work is due to start on the farmyard shelter shed at the beginning of April to re-thatch the 'bundle thatched' roof. As works will take two months, visitors will be able to see work in progress. "Rumpelstiltskin", the contracting firm, are only too happy to explain their work to visitors, and have in fact attended Cogges several times over the past few years to demonstrate thatching techniques on rural craft days.

Further minor works are now underway to upgrade the Manor House including entrance passages and site gates, the former using traditional techniques of lathe and plaster on the wall in the back passage of the Manor House.

**The Transition Process**

A small team of Oxfordshire County Council officers has been meeting with representatives of the Cogges Community Enterprise group to implement the decision of the Council's Cabinet to establish a new Trust which will take over the management of Cogges from April 2010. Detailed proposals for the new Trust will be taken to the Cabinet member with responsibility for Social and Community Services on 5 May. In the meantime the team continues to work towards launching the Trust:

**The following advertisement will be appearing in the Oxford Times and Witney Gazette:**

**Cogges Manor Farm Museum is Changing**

**From April 2010 Cogges will be managed by a new independent Trust with charitable status; Oxfordshire County Council is seeking a Chairman and Trustees with a range of skills and experience including financial/commercial, legal, HR, property, marketing, social enterprise, environmental, agricultural, educational and cultural.**

(Please note these positions will be unpaid)

For a 'Prospectus' see below

Please apply to:

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## **Cogges Prospectus**

### **Cogges is a special place**

It is of national heritage significance: an oasis in the heart of Witney and much enjoyed by local residents and visitors.

### **Background**

Cogges is an *Ancient Monument*; it was scheduled in recognition of the exceptional survival of archaeology and buildings dating from the Saxon period through to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Highlights include the site of a deserted Saxon village, the moated site of a Norman castle built by Wadard, a knight illustrated on the Bayeux Tapestry; features of a 13<sup>th</sup> century great hall in the Manor House; William Blake's 17<sup>th</sup> century extension to the house, including the 'painted room', his private study of c1680; a farm yard and buildings illustrating the adaptations made over 300 years.

Surrounding the historic site are 20 acres of meadow land – home to a wide variety of flora and fauna.

Cogges was purchased in 1975 by Oxfordshire County Council and opened to the public in 1978 as a museum of rural life. Since then about 1.5 million people have enjoyed visiting Cogges. In addition to the capital and revenue support from the County Council, Cogges has received funding from English Heritage, West Oxfordshire District Council, Pilgrim Trust and numerous other organisations and individuals – we are very grateful for that support.

The site lies just over the River Windrush from Waitrose car park – 200 yards from Witney town centre.

### **The vision for the future**

After running Cogges as a museum of rural life for Oxfordshire for over 30 years, Oxfordshire County Council has now decided to transfer the management and operation of the site to a new charitable Trust (a company limited by guarantee). The Trust will be formed during 2009 and will take over the management from 1 April 2010.

The Council has agreed revenue funding support of £160,000 pa for two years, 2010/11, and 2011/12 and a one-off capital contribution towards developments on the site of £250,000.

### **The new Trust will be independent of the Council.**

**Oxfordshire County Council is leading the development of the new Trust and is seeking a Chairman and 10 Trustees – a team with a range of skills and the time, energy and determination to drive the project forward.**

**Initially 3 or 4 ‘subscribers’ are needed to establish the Trust and to work with the Council on this transition phase.**

The new Trust will be responsible for the overall management and direction of Cogges.

The vision for change has been influenced by the ideas of the Cogges Community Enterprise Group who put forward an exciting proposal for Cogges as part of a process of seeking a new future for the site. Their ideas include developing the farm and garden at Cogges, establishing a ‘food hub’, promoting sustainability and healthy eating, introducing Oxfordshire crafts and local artists, and using Cogges as the base for a wide range of community interests.

The new Trust will aim:

***To ensure a long term viable and sustainable future for public access to and enjoyment of Cogges Manor Farm and its environs***

- *To preserve and interpret the heritage of the site*
- *To advance community development, culture, the arts and education*

**DRAFT ‘Objects’ and ‘Powers’ of the new Trust (these have yet to be confirmed):**

- 3.1 to preserve and protect the archaeological, historical, architectural and environmental heritage of the site of Cogges Manor Farm and associated land for the benefit of the people of the County of Oxfordshire and wider members of the public;
- 3.2 to advance the education of the public in an understanding of rural heritage and contemporary farming and food production including but not exclusively by:
  - 3.2.1 the establishment and operation of a facility to be open to members of the public;
  - 3.2.2 interpreting the rural history of the site;
- 3.3 to use the site as a resource for facilitating the development of the local community to enhance environmental, social and economic well-being;
- 3.4 the promotion of arts and culture and encouragement of creativity;
- 3.5 such other charitable purposes beneficial to the public consistent with the objects above as the Trustees shall in their absolute discretion determine.

4. It is proposed that the new Trust will have the following Powers in order to further the Objects above (but not for any other purpose):
  - 4.1 to raise funds. In doing so, the charity must not undertake any substantial permanent trading activity and must comply with any relevant statutory regulations;
  - 4.2 to buy, take on lease or in exchange, hire or otherwise acquire any property and to maintain and equip it for use;
  - 4.3 to sell, lease or otherwise dispose of all or any part of the property belonging to the charity. In exercising this power, the charity must comply as appropriate with sections 36 and 37 of the Charities Act 1993, as amended by the Charities Act 2006;
  - 4.4 to borrow money and to charge the whole or any part of the property belonging to the charity as security for repayment of the money borrowed. The charity must comply as appropriate with sections 38 and 39 of the Charities Act 1993, as amended by the Charities Act 2006, if it wishes to mortgage land;
  - 4.5 to co-operate with other charities, voluntary bodies and statutory authorities and to exchange information and advice with them;
  - 4.6 to establish or support any charitable trusts, associations or institutions formed for any of the charitable purposes included in the Objects;
  - 4.7 to acquire, merge with or to enter into any partnership or joint venture arrangements with any other charity formed for any of the Objects;
  - 4.8 to set aside income as a reserve against future expenditure but only in accordance with a written policy about reserves;
  - 4.9 to employ and remunerate such staff as are necessary for carrying out the work of the charity. The charity may employ or remunerate a Director only to the extent it is permitted to do so by clause 5 and provided it complies with the conditions in that clause;
  - 4.10 to enter into legal arrangements with individuals or bodies in the voluntary sector in order to further the work of the charity;
  - 4.11 to deploy its assets:
    - 4.11.1 deposit or invest funds;
    - 4.11.2 employ a professional fund manager; and

4.11.3 arrange for the investments or other property of the charity to be held in the name of a nominee;

In the same manner and subject to the same conditions as the trustees of a trust are permitted to do by the Trustee Act 2000;

4.12 to provide indemnity insurance for the Directors or any other officer of the charity in relation to any such liability as is mentioned in clause 4.2 of this clause, but subject to the restrictions specified in clause 4.3;

4.13 to pay out of the funds of the charity the costs of forming and registering the charity both as a company and as a charity;

4.14 to do all such other lawful things as are necessary for the achievement of the Objects.

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