



# Wolvercote Commoners' NEWSLETTER December 2016

## Winter comes to the Meadow and Common and with it the need for extra care of the resident horses



Every winter the Commoners get queries about the welfare of the horses on the Meadow, especially during heavy frosts and snow. However, unbeknown to many the horses are checked throughout the year on an almost daily basis. This normally picks up any sick or lame animals which are then dealt with by the owners. During the winter the checking is more thorough to ensure that there is enough available forage for them. Most of the time there is plenty although during prolonged periods of very hard frosts or snow some owners may take the animals off the Meadow. The horses are all winter-hardened so can survive through most winter conditions, they just need some

John Tohill on his rounds



extra food. Many of you will have seen piles of hay scattered about during these times. The only time that they will all be removed is when the whole area floods. We were very lucky to have had Kirsty Morten as our horse warden for many years. However she sadly moved away during the summer. But our luck continued as we were able to co-opt John Tohill onto the Committee. He has many years' experience with horses and is prepared to take Kirsty's place as our new horse warden. John also close contact with Julian Cooper, Landscape & Countryside Supervisor for Oxford Council. So we can be safe in the knowledge that we will be able to continue with a high level of horse care.

The Commoners' next work day on **Saturday 10th December** should be a good pre-Christmas excuse not to go into town to 'fight' for those last few presents. It's our regular **'attack the ditches'** day. To keep Wolvercote Green from reverting into just a bog it is necessary to clear the ditches, which run east west across the Green, on a regular basis. So now's your chance to get out those spades, don the wellies, come down to the Village Hall at 10am and get nice and muddy. Bring the children as well as they'll like the mud even more!

### Commoner's Carols 2016

Don't forget our carol service starting at 6.45 on 19th December in the Baptist Hall. Come along and you'll get to sing your best ever version of the 'Twelve days of Christmas which even includes healthy exercise.



### Dog Walking on the Meadow and Common

Unfortunately there was an incident recently involving dogs. Whilst walking by the bathing place someone was attacked by two large dogs, which were both off their leads. Luckily there was no injury but the person's clothes were badly torn.

There is the misunderstanding that Port Meadow and Wolvercote Common are just open spaces where dogs can run free but is in fact agricultural land. It therefore needs appropriate care and the Oxford Council have regulations relating to its use. One which relates to this incident is that dogs must be kept *under control* at all times. This doesn't mean they can't be let off their leads, it just means 'under control'. Therefore if any dog can't be controlled it should be kept on its lead at all times. The Council does have dog wardens and they are able to issue on the spot fines if it is felt a dog owner is acting irresponsibly. This also includes the owner failing to remove their dog's mess. Dog faeces is harmful as it can cause serious illnesses especially in children and should therefore always be removed...

## Don't forget Village Work Mornings second Saturday of every month

Meet outside the Village Hall at 10am (Bring gloves/wellies). Children welcome

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