

## Newsletter - Summer 2018

### Times change.

My father's work experience as a sixteen year-old was working in an iron foundry in Falkirk. This July, our MAD week student volunteers did something quite different. Armed with clipboards and enthusiasm, they helped build the evidence-base for our community-led housing project by interviewing people in Cowley, Oxford. But there is a connection. At times this baking, never-ending summer, the CFO offices have indeed felt like working in a blast furnace. The team has soldiered on, pink-faced and never (too) grumpy, picturing that cold drink of choice hovering in the mid-distance, delivering our core support services and making progress on various other exciting initiatives. So pull up a deckchair on your parched lawn, pour your own cold drink and read all about it our latest newsletter.



Talking to shoppers in Templar Square, Oxford about their housing needs

### Community-led housing - picking up momentum

Community-led housing is about local people playing a leading and lasting role in solving local housing problems, creating affordable homes and strong communities in ways that are difficult to achieve through mainstream housing. Rural Exception Sites, co-housing, cooperatives and community-land trusts are examples of CLH.

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## Community Led Housing

So what's CFO been up to in the CLH world?

Quite a lot!

In June, as part of a training programme funded by the Nationwide Foundation and led by Action with Communities in Rural England, CFO held a conference at Chesterton Community Centre.

The event explored the transformational potential of Community Led Housing and the practicalities of achieving a successful project – from finance and governance to community engagement.

70 people attended from a range of organisations and backgrounds, including community activists, local councillors, developers, architects and local authority officers. Some feedback from attendees:

- *Informative and inspiring presentations*
- *Really interesting range of speakers and knowledge*
- *Impressed by numbers (and range of organisations) attending*
- *Well-organised and informative conference, speakers extremely passionate about the subject area, very motivational*

We are also in the final stages of a major research study (in partnership with Oxfordshire Community Land Trust) for Oxford City Council. This will explore how community-led housing can be delivered sustainably within Oxford and show how it can contribute to meeting the city's housing needs, identify feasible routes to delivery and the support that is needed to unlock the delivery of more projects.



**But the doing is more important than the talking.** So CFO and Oxfordshire Community Land Trust have set up a community-led housing support hub. We call it Collaborative Housing. Find us at [collaborativehousing.org.uk](http://collaborativehousing.org.uk).

This new service will provide information, advice and technical support to those who wish to deliver community-led housing projects. From one-off commissions to full-spectrum support, we offer tailored packages, taking groups from initial concept to homes on the ground.

With the recent announcement by the government of further community-led housing funding to get new schemes on site, the time for CLH is perhaps finally coming. Get in touch with us if you're interested in exploring local possibilities.



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## Unusual Suspects Update

As requested by participants at the Unusual suspects workshop, a toolkit has been developed and is available on our website or click this link: Toolkit Please do get in touch if you have any ideas to add or any examples of how doing things differently has helped your community.

### Feedback

We recently ask participants to reflect on the workshops and if they have tried anything new as a result. The vast majority of the feedback was very positive .

90% of people said that they were now trying to do things differently: having a personal approach, using social media and limiting time people can hold positions of responsibility came top in the list.

Here are some of the comments:

- *'I came out' as a secret volunteer'. The networking was very important.'*
- *'Some aspects of our new village survey were influenced by the workshop'*
- *'The main thing to attract volunteers is time After the workshop, I challenged my organisation to think about how much time we are investing in the community'*

## MAD week



Volunteer students in action

For the second year, we were pleased to take part in the OCVA organised MAD 'Make A Difference week.' This involved approximately 50 students from Bartholomew School, Eynsham, volunteering with 13 charities around Oxfordshire. CFO welcomed 4 students, who worked on our community led housing project supporting community engagement activities. They talked to people in Templar Square, Cowley about their housing needs and also visited several community groups across the City to talk about housing. The results of these activities will feed into the project we are leading on for Oxford City Council. The whole experience was a positive one. Its great to have extra resource, but the perspective, knowledge and enthusiasm that the students bring is hugely valuable.

If you think you can offer a placement next year please talk to Miriam at OCVA: [admin@ocva.org.uk](mailto:admin@ocva.org.uk)

# Community Action Events



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## Workshops & Training

### Getting Involved - September

As part of our support to local communities we have developed a **free one day training and information session** aimed at people who would like to get involved in their community but aren't quite sure how to go about it. It will be held at:

**Hadland Road Community Centre, Abingdon OX14 3YH  
20 September 9.30 – 2.30.**

For further information or to book a place please contact:  
[hilary.lombard@communityfirstoxon.org](mailto:hilary.lombard@communityfirstoxon.org)

We will also be repeating this in December in the North of the County, details to be confirmed.

We can also arrange this training as a one off bespoke training for your organisation or community.



**FREE workshop**  
**Want to do things in your community?**  
**How to just get on and do it .....**

Join us to learn more about how you can play a leading and lasting role in creating strong, active and sustainable communities

This training will explore what individuals within communities need to know to 'get on and do stuff' in their community and the practicalities of achieving a successful project or community action

**To book your FREE place  
please contact Hilary Lombard**  
[hilary.lombard@communityfirstoxon.org](mailto:hilary.lombard@communityfirstoxon.org)  
or call 01865 883488

Light lunch provided

### Asset Based Community Development Training - November

We are pleased to announce that we are working with Nurture Development, specialists in an Asset Based Community Development approach to working in communities. They are one of eleven strategic partners of the ABCD Institute, and the lead partner in Europe. This approach focusses on identifying what is strong in a community rather than what's wrong and building on the already existing connections within your community.

We are holding a two day workshop on November 28 and 29 in Didcot. For further details and booking:  
<https://bit.ly/2Atcg7C>



## Placemaking - CFO leading the way from theory to practice

In 2016, CFO was commissioned by Cherwell District Council to research best practice in community development on new housing estates. We also undertook similar research for South and Vale District Councils and Sovereign Housing Association.

A couple of things happened with this research. First, recommendations from the study informed CDC's 2018 'Developer Contributions Supplementary Planning Document'.

Secondly, we're very pleased that following successful discussions, Dorchester Living, which is a national housing developer, Cherwell District Council, and Community First Oxfordshire have formed a Community Development Partnership at Heyford Park, a major development site at Upper Heyford.

This partnership will centre on the employment of a Community Development Worker and apply the exemplar community development approach that CFO set out in its research study.

The key message from our research that we will now be putting into practice is that thriving, healthy and socially active new communities have to be nurtured. There are complications to getting where we need to get to but we have the collectives, the individuals, the organisations and the creativity to overcome them.

We can learn from each other. We can refine as we go. And we think that the best way to persuade others to follow a similar tack is to show, in practice, the success of the approach.

We are delighted that Lesley Montague has joined us to deliver this important project. Her objective is to work with local residents to develop a vibrant and self-sustaining community, set up community groups and activities and develop organisations which can adapt to the changing

needs of Heyford Park's expanding population. In addition, we intend that the Upper Heyford project both learns from and contributes to other exciting initiatives, such as healthy and age-friendly communities and social prescribing.



### CFO welcomes Lesley Montague

Lesley is our new community development worker, based at Upper Heyford.

Lesley says: "I am excited to be part of this project and working with my new colleagues from Community First and those in the local community."

Previously, I have worked with vulnerable young people and adults in a variety of settings gaining lots of experience meeting people from all walks of life. I have also worked with volunteers along with project development schemes. I attended Ruskin College which enhanced my passion for local groups and people.

I volunteer in my local community and am very much looking forward to supporting residents to develop a vibrant and self-sustaining community."





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## Community Halls

### Learn more about Charitable Incorporated Organisations (CIO)

We are increasingly being asked by community halls about becoming a CIO. CIO's have been specifically designed for charities, allowing them to register just once with the Charity Commission, thereby cutting out the need to register and report to Companies House. Trustees also have a more limited liability.

CFO has teamed up with a charity solicitor, Tessa Hennessy, to offer a **2 hour seminar** aimed exclusively at village hall trustees who are interested in changing their charity to a CIO. There will be a charge for this event. The training will take place on **19 September from 9.30 until 11.30**.

For further information and to book contact:  
tessa.hall@communityfirstoxon.org

### Electronic Booking System

CFO organised Hallmaster to demonstrate their electronic booking system to over 40 interested attendees from community halls around Oxfordshire.  
hallmaster.co.uk



### News from the County

The new Community Centre at **Longford Park**, Banbury, is very close to completion. With support from CFO and Cherwell District Council, the local volunteer management committee is showing great enthusiasm to ensure the community centre is a success and to make Longford Park a friendly and vibrant place to live. <https://lpcu.org.uk/home/>

**Nuffield near Wallingford**, currently has no village hall. They are looking for funding to enable the Grade II listed Church to be used by local groups. A survey carried out for Nuffield Parish Plan showed that 87% of people in the village asked for a 'Community Space'.

Currently the Parish Council meet in the church, but in the future it is hoped that the Boy's Brigade and exercise classes can also use the facilities. The ancient Ridgeway path runs close by and tea, coffee and cake are offered to the walkers, along with the use of a portaloos.

Congratulations to **Leafield Village Hall**, which has just been awarded a grant of £47,000 by WODC towards a new extension for their village hall.

## NEWS & UPDATES



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### Community Shops Update

The next **Shops Networking Meeting** will be in September at Brightwell-cum-Sotwell village hall, next to the Village Stores. The meeting is a chance for Oxfordshire's community shop managers, trustees and volunteers to get together, visit different shops, discuss current issues and share ideas. Date to be advised. If interested please contact Tessa.

Congratulations to **South Stoke Community Shop** which received an award under best group category at the Oxfordshire Charity and Volunteer Awards 2018, organised by OCVA.

Well done to Nicky Kennedy and all the 40 volunteers at the shop. The shop not only sells produce, but also supports local businesses as a community hub and provides refreshments to families who visit the playground in front of the shop.

**Finstock Village Shop and Post Office** has had a new coat of paint and they hope to do up the car parking area outside the shop to make it more attractive. They plan to encourage walkers and cyclists to stop by and have a drink and a bite to eat. A grant is hopefully imminent to support their new plans.



Finstock village shop and Post Office

### Rural Oxfordshire Network (RON) Care in the Rural Community

**Wednesday 17 October 2018 at Wooton & Dry  
Sandford Community Centre, OX13 6DA**

You are invited to the 4th event of the Rural Oxfordshire Network (RON). This networking forum is for anyone who lives and/or works in Oxfordshire who cares about rural Oxfordshire.

The event is organised by Community First Oxfordshire, OCVA, the Diocese of Oxford, Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils and Volunteer Link Up.

This event will focus on care and caring in the rural community with speakers from Oxfordshire Association of Care Providers and Carers Oxfordshire and more.  
Cost: £5.00 (to cover expenses)

**For further details and register:** <https://bit.ly/2OHwspl>  
or contact CFO and speak to Emily.

## News & Updates

### Community Led Housing Conference. 25th Sept 2018 - Radnage Village Hall, Bucks HP14 4DD

If you missed the opportunity to attend our first conference in June you now have a second chance. CFO will be holding a one day conference looking at the transformational potential of Community Led Housing and how to achieve a successful project. For more information and to register for this free event, please click here: [CLHHousing](#)

### OXONVOLUNTEERS.ORG – the countywide volunteering website

Looking to help others in your community? Keen to gain new skills and meet new people? Oxonvolunteers.org has opportunities for you to get involved all over the county. Whether it's a one-off hour or a regular weekly slot – you'll find them all here. Visit [oxonvolunteers.org](#) and register via the blue 'Try Volunteering' button!

### NFU and Crimestoppers launch new Rural Crime Reporting Line

The NFU have launched a new service for farmers and the public to give information anonymously about rural crime.

The 'Rural Crime Reporting Line' is part of the NFU's ongoing work to tackle the serious issues surrounding criminal behaviour on farms and in the wider countryside. By ringing 0800 783 0137 or visiting [www.ruralcrimereportingline.uk](#), you can anonymously give information about crime relating to large-scale industrial fly-tipping, hare coursing, machinery theft or livestock theft.

### New chair for CFO

The Board of CFO is looking for someone with an interest and enthusiasm for working to improve community life in Oxfordshire and take on the role of Chair.

For further details see our web site or click the link: <https://bit.ly/2nh4PqA>

### Bulk Oil Buying

Winter might be the last thing on everyone's minds at the moment, (as we all try to stay cool,) but that is precisely why NOW is a good time to buy. Prices are low, there is no pressure on the suppliers and you can rest easy knowing you have a full tank ready for winter! To place your order or join our bulk oil buying scheme please contact: [oil@communityfirstoxon.org](mailto:oil@communityfirstoxon.org)

### CFO Annual Report



Check out what we got up to in 2017-18 by following the link: <https://bit.ly/2LYBKpu>

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