JEM Todd is a well known face around Barton. As part of the Thrive Barton team, he lives in Barton, and has worked here for a number of years.

Jem has been steeped in charitable works since he was very young. On holiday in the Philippines, his mum and dad came out of a restaurant with a friend to discover hungry street children with no homes and no parents. Taking them back inside they bought them a meal, and when the kids asked for the chicken bones to be wrapped so they could chew on them the next day, they knew they had to do something. Some of these children were the same age as their then seven-year-old son.

John and Alison Todd started a charity called Mercy In Action, and from the age of nine Jem found himself in the Philippines every holiday, making friends and running around with street kids, eating ice creams and swimming at the beach with them. Meanwhile his mum and dad were setting up projects to help them, including introducing feeding programmes, building houses and getting other people involved. He loved it, and went every year until he was much older.

The central idea of Mercy in Action is to provide a safe environment for these abandoned children, year on year. The aim is to provide a real community with a family feeling, which provides not only basic needs, but also education, training and even jobs with Mercy in Action. It’s been in existence for 21 years, and the Todds have watched their charges grow up, some to have families of their own.

Jem says Mercy in Action has a 100% success rate, because it operates as a huge family, and even when kids run away for a time they are welcomed back and not given up on.

As a young adult, Jem worked in one of the many charity shops set up by Mercy in Action, which turn over around £800,000 a year and have an impact on about 2,000 youngsters annually. But after a while, he felt the need for a change, as well as to rid himself of any feelings of “entitlement” through being part of a charitable family organisation. He went to train as a community worker at Ruskin College in Oxford. After a short period with Oxford Council he moved to Thrive.

Thrive is an organisation that looks at the needs of the community and plans projects that aim to raise the aspirations of young people, leading them to believe in themselves and in their ability to achieve something greater than they thought they were capable of. One of these projects, as many people in Barton will know, is the Young Achievers’ Dinner which takes place in the autumn.

The youngsters involved will have been meeting over several months to plan the event. They come up with the theme themselves, prepare the room and the tables, cook and serve the three-course meal, and provide entertainment.

It’s a master class in inspiration and coordination. Feeling that he’s achieved all he can at Thrive, it’s time for Jem to “pass on the baton to someone else” and return to the family fold, taking with him his experience of working outside it, always with youngsters.

And it really is a family enterprise. Jem’s sister Emily lives in the Philippines with her Filipina husband and their three adopted and two natural children. She oversees the projects there, as well as the thirty or so employees who carry out its aims, including local social workers.

They also work closely with the International Justice Mission, who rescue children from the sex trade. Mercy in Action houses and supports those children too. Jem’s new role will be to think about future strategy and fundraising opportunities, to help open more shops, and perhaps to put together more teams from the UK.

But don’t worry! Jem won’t be leaving Barton. He’ll be staying put with his wife Philippa and twins Izzy and Noah. Barton Community Association is delighted that he will continue as a Trustee, and the many young people he’s been involved with will be happy too.
**USEFUL NUMBERS**

**SCHOOLS**
- Bayards Hill Primary School 01865 761656
- Cheney Secondary School 01865 765726
- Sandhills Primary School 01865 433000
- Wheatley Park Secondary School 01865 872441

**HEALTH**
- Barton Surgery 01865 744221
- Bury Knowle Health Centre 01865 308400
- Manor Surgery 01865 762535
- Churchill Hospital 01865 741841
- John Radcliffe Hospital 01865 741166
- Nuffield Hospital 01865 741155
- NHS Direct 111

**LOCAL SHOPS**
- Chemist 01865 763106
- Chippy 01865 761712
- Spar 01865 763606

**COUNCILS/COUNCILLORS/MP**
- Andrew Smith M.P 01865 595790
- Barton Community Association 01865 761987
- Oxfordshire County Council 01865 792422
- Oxford Mail 01865 425262
- St Mary's Church 01865 761886
- Barton Pavilion 01865 452616

**SERVICES**
- Barton Community Association 01865 761987
- Leisure Centre 01865 467290
- Barton Pavilion 01865 452616
- St Mary's Church 01865 761886
- Oxford Mail 01865 425262
- Civicare 01865 744174
- Barton Advice Centre 01865 744152
- Oxfordshire Advocacy 01865 741200
- Roundabout Family Centre 01865 764952
- Police – Emergency 999
- Police – non emergency 101
- Recycling and Waste information 01865 249811

**BARTON COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION**

**PART TIME EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITY**

WE ARE looking for someone who enjoys admin work, is able to use their initiative and is organised, self motivated, flexible, familiar with software packages and would enjoy working for the benefit of the community.

There is currently a part time vacancy (ten hours per week) for an administrator within the Community Association. If you think you are the person we are looking for then please request an application pack (sorry no CVs) and a copy of the job description from Sharon, Senior Administrator on 01865 761987, Sue, Manager on 01865 460446 or call into the office on the first floor at Barton Neighbourhood Centre.

This is a fixed term contract and salary will be based on experience. Closing date for applications is Friday 3 July.

**An evening of clairvoyance**

We have booked Jennie Grayson and Claire Evans to come along for an evening of clairvoyance on Friday 18 September between 7–10pm.

The tickets cost £7 each and they will be limited so if you want to join us for a truly entertaining evening please call Sue on 07866 460446 to book your tickets.

Please remember not to turn up on the evening without a ticket because admission will be refused.

**Barton Community Association (BCA)**

Please note our new website address: www.bartoncommunityassociation.com

---

**Welcome to Barton!**

ARE you new to Barton? Do you want to know what’s going on? Do you want to get involved with your local community?

Do you have young children? Are you elderly or living alone? Are you a family new to the area? In fact, if you just live in Barton and you have answered “Yes” to any of those questions then please get in touch with us here at Barton Community Association.

Please feel free to pop into the Neighbourhood Centre and ask for either Sharon or Sue who will be pleased to give you some local background about Barton, what goes on and what’s available for you. We want to make sure all new residents feel part of our community regardless of your background or culture. We will soon be planning our annual community event The Barton Bash, and you may just want to know what takes place, or you may even want to get involved.

Do you represent a minority culture within our community? If so please let us know as we want to share and integrate our customs for the benefit of all – especially around food and recipes.

Please give Sue a ring on 07866 460446, email at susanholden@hotmail.com contact the BCA office on 01865 761987 or just pop into the office on the first floor at the Neighbourhood Centre.

**Come and join us and be part of a great community.**

---

**BARTON ON FACEBOOK**

What’s going on in Barton? For news, photos, and information go to...

and search for Barton Community to find out.

---

**DO YOU ENJOY READING Hands on News?**

Then why not get involved in the next one?

We are always looking for local residents to write articles, send in pictures and help produce future issues of the newspaper.

07900 038305
clayton.lavallin@hotmail.co.uk

---

**BARTON BASH**

JUST a reminder that this year’s Bash will take place on Saturday 26 September between 12–4pm.

If you want to book a stall, book a performance slot or just be part of the event by volunteering your help then please get in touch and register your interest now.

Look forward to hearing from you. Sue Holden 07866 460446

susanholden@hotmail.com

---

**The Hands on News Team**

Contact: Clayton Lavallin
Email: clayton.lavallin@hotmail.co.uk
Tel: 07900 038305

Contributors: Patricia Dowdall, Pippa Gwilliam, Sue Odwar, Anne-Marie Browne and Safiya Browne.

Hands on News is funded by BCA, GreenSquare and Oxfordshire County Council.

---

**Is your child struggling at school or do they need a boost to improve their grades?**

**Working Tax Credit** - if you are eligible for the “childcare element” of Working Tax Credit, you may be able to claim up to 70% of the cost of The Education Centres course fee’s as a tax credit.

Call for a FREE assessment on 01865 402950 or visit www.oxfordeducationcentres.com

---

**English • Maths • Reading • Science**

Ages 5-16

Oxford Education Centres-the only tuition centre in Oxford staffed by fully qualified teachers

---

**Welcome to Oxford Education Centres-the only tuition centre they need a boost to improve their grades?**

---

Barton's FREE community newspaper

---

**Patent Participation Group at Manor Surgery Headington**

HAVEN’T you ever wondered what makes your surgery tick? Have you ever wondered if you’re part of an advisory group? Ask those questions you’ve always wanted answers to?

If you’ve answered “Yes” to any of the above then why not come along and join us for debate and discussion. The meetings take place in the waiting room at the Surgery in Osler Road and the next one is due to be held on Monday 1 June between 6.30pm – 8pm.

We are currently planning a therapy health day that will take place at the Neighbourhood Centre later in the year. Come along in June and see what happens and have your say.

If you need transport to access the meeting then please give Sue a ring on 07866 460446.
BARTON has recently received a well-deserved spring clean thanks to local residents, community organisations, Oxford City Council and local Councillors. Barton’s Housing and Environment group, which is part of Barton Community Partnership and made up of key local representatives, organised its yearly Spring Walkabout in February. During the very well attended walkabout areas in need of a good clear up were identified including areas in Sherwood place and Bayswater Brook.

Community Clear up day
The group then took part in the National Community clear-up day on Saturday 21 March where local residents, members of the Communities and Neighbourhoods Team at the City Council and local councillors spent two hours clearing up Bayswater Brook, collecting 15 black bags and finding five children’s scooters, three bikes, two wheelbarrows and a shopping trolley amongst other items! Once reported the bulky items were cleared up within days by the City Council’s Parks team.

Moss Removal
You may have also noticed Council staff spraying walls, drying areas and walkways all over Barton in May; this was the first step towards improving the street environment by removing moss as part of the City Council’s Great Estates programme, the same programme that improved grass areas in Burchester Avenue to allow parking last year.

Sherwood Place Weeping Willow Tree
The maintenance of the Sherwood Place willow tree and its surroundings has been an on-going item discussed by the housing and environment group and due to the group’s determination to keep it on the agenda it has finally been solved. The ownership of the tree has now been identified as Barratt Homes and they have now completed the pollarding of the tree and grass cutting. The tree does now look very bare, but nothing to worry about as it will recover over the next two years.

As you can see the group was been involved in making change happen in Barton and we are encouraging more residents to become involved to continue this work as part of the Community Partnership.

Get Involved in Barton
If your interest is not housing or environment, there are other theme groups that meet in Barton as part of the Community Partnership, these are: Health and Well-being, Learning, training and employment, Community Safety and Barton Integration and Community Engagement Partnership (BICEP). To find out how you can get involved in the Barton Housing and Environment group or one of the other theme groups, please contact the Barton locality officer Azul Strong at astrong@oxford.gov.uk or call 07767 318274. To report fly tipping, graffiti or abandoned vehicles, please contact Safer Oxford on 01865 249811 or email saferoxford@oxford.gov.uk. If you require a bulky waste collection, each household is entitled to two free collections per year of up to three items per visit. To request a collection, please call 01865 249811.

To find out what is happening in Barton, please visit: www.oxford.gov.uk/barton
**POLICE UPDATE**

In general
It’s been relatively quiet in Barton recently, bar one or two incidents. There was an incident outside the shops quite recently, when a shop window was smashed. The problem was identified as local youths getting drunk. The situation has been dealt with by mounting extra patrols.

Any adult found purchasing alcohol for an underage persons will risk prosecution, or a fine of £500. Police officers will check the CCTV footage and use evidence from that. There’s a clear notice warning people not to do so, so ignorance will be no excuse.

New team members
The police team has three new faces, which brings it up to its full strength of two police officers and four PCSOs. They are PC Richard Morley, PCSO Tom Wiltshire and PCSO Sam Timms.

PC Richard Morley writes: “I began working for Thames Valley Police in 2010 as a control room operator. In 2012 I joined a response team as a police constable based at Cowley, which included spending some of my time in the Barton area. I joined the Barton, Risinghurst and Sandhills neighbourhood policing team in March 2015. My primary role is to tackle drug-related crime in the area. I enjoy spending time outdoors so you will see me out and about with the rest of the team.”

PCSO Tom Wiltshire writes: “I was born and bred in Cardiff, Wales. I studied Police Sciences at Glamorgan University before moving to Oxford last September. My wife works for South Central Ambulance Service, so I followed her up to this neck of the woods.

“I am an avid sportsman, I enjoy playing and watching rugby, football, and cricket. I’m a keen cyclist and as a PCSO I relish the opportunity to get out patrolling my the area by bike.

“I’m looking forward to working with and getting to know the community of Barton, Risinghurst and Sandhills.”

PCSO Sam Timms writes: “I’m a new PCSO in the Barton, Risinghurst and Sandhills neighbourhood police team. I have lived in the Oxfordshire area my entire life. I have spent the last eight years working in retail, and look forward to working with Barton residents.”

---

**Household crime:**
- Make sure all windows and doors are closed and locked. (even if you are in the back garden)
- Not leaving any valuable items in front of windows or in plain sight.
- Investing in an external security light, or consider leaving a light on in your house if it will be dark before you get home.
- Consider getting CCTV, it might be expensive but it will deter criminals. If CCTV is too expensive you can opt for the cheaper option by purchasing a dummy CCTV.
- Never leave car keys where they can be seen from the front door.
- If you need to speak with a PCSO or Police officer further, we welcome you to down the Barton Neighbourhood office at Underhill Circus, Barton, Oxford.

---

**Car crime:**
- Don’t leave any valuable items in your car e.g. loose change, Sat-Nav, mobile phones, removable radios and sunglasses.
- Wipe any Sat-Nav marks left on the windscreen.
- Consider fitting anti-tamper screws to your number plates.
- Never leave car keys where they can be seen from the front door.

---

**Crime prevention**

- Take a dip with five swims for £5
- Ladies Swimming lessons

Also coming soon to Barton:
- For more information on these classes please contact the Leisure Centre on 01865 467290 or visit the Active Women website: www.oxfordshiresport.org/active-women/
- More information about the This Girl Can campaign can be found at: www.thisgirlcan.co.uk
Care home residents get their bowling shoes on!

FROM motor-biking to bowling, residents at Townsend House in Headington have geared up to enjoy an afternoon of bowling at the Bowlplex centre in Oxford. Faces lit up when they saw the variety of games on offer.

After digging into a light seasonal packed lunch, it was time for them to get their game face on.

Pamela Reading, 84, provided some much needed encouragement and was the group’s main supporter. When asked how she liked the outing she said: “I just like being here. The balls are a bit heavy, but that is just part of the game I guess”.

Paul Gardiner, 31, and Activities Coordinator at Townsend House said: “It was great to see the residents smiling and seeing them having fun. Although it’s not a difficult game, when it was my turn the guys decided to lower the guard rails which put me at a significant disadvantage, but I gave it my best shot.”

Peggy Gubbins, 97, who mentioned that she is not able to see as well as she used to said: “It was really good taking part in the game. I find it really hard to see and I did not expect to win but winning was a real bonus.”

Residents were presented with their certificates of participation after the games and they said it will remind them of the fun they had.

For further information, please contact: Luciano Thomas, 07881 831818

Can you help?

WE’RE now booked for the summer holiday coach trips, and below we’ve listed the dates and destinations. ALL tickets will be £10 per person (even babies need to be allocated a seat) and each passenger will need to be a member of the Association.

This costs just £1 per year and is free for under 16’s. Membership forms are available from the BCA office at the Neighbourhood Centre. Many of you will already have a membership and this will cover you for the coach trips. We offer a payment option so tickets can be paid for over a period of time, but must be paid in full before the departure date. No seats are guaranteed until full payment is received.

Please book and pay for your seats early to avoid disappointment.

Last year we had eight coaches leave Barton with many disappointed would be passengers left behind because they left it too late. All coaches leave Barton Neighbourhood Centre at 8am and return by 8pm.

- Bournemouth Tuesday 4 August
- Brighton Wednesday 12 August
- Weston Super Mare Thursday 20 August
- Weymouth Friday 28 August

To book your seats, pay for memberships and tickets please contact Sue on 07886 460446 or email susanholden@hotmail.com

Alternatively, pop into the BCA office and have a word with Sharon who will be able to provide membership forms and help you with ticket availability.

SEA-SAND-SUN: All aboard the Barton Express!

WE’RE now booked for the summer holiday coach trips, and below we’ve listed the dates and destinations. ALL tickets will be £10 per person (even babies need to be allocated a seat) and each passenger will need to be a member of the Association.

This costs just £1 per year and is free for under 16’s. Membership forms are available from the BCA office at the Neighbourhood Centre. Many of you will already have a membership and this will cover you for the coach trips. We offer a payment option so tickets can be paid for over a period of time, but must be paid in full before the departure date. No seats are guaranteed until full payment is received.

Please book and pay for your seats early to avoid disappointment.

Last year we had eight coaches leave Barton with many disappointed would be passengers left behind because they left it too late. All coaches leave Barton Neighbourhood Centre at 8am and return by 8pm.

- Bournemouth Tuesday 4 August
- Brighton Wednesday 12 August
- Weston Super Mare Thursday 20 August
- Weymouth Friday 28 August

To book your seats, pay for memberships and tickets please contact Sue on 07886 460446 or email susanholden@hotmail.com

Alternatively, pop into the BCA office and have a word with Sharon who will be able to provide membership forms and help you with ticket availability.
The BCA is looking at applying to become a Parish Council. To move the former voluntary organisation up to a state run Parish Council, the elected Parish Council would have to be supported by external funding to make sure it can continue. The Parish Council would be offered quality refreshments, and have laptops, smart boards, iPads, Kindles, and a sports cage available to use. It would also replace the former external funding to make sure the Parish Council can continue to serve the community and the residents of the new Parish Council. An induction is required before your first visit, please contact the centre to book. 20 July to 31 August, Monday to Friday, Barton Leisure Centre, Cost: £4.20, 427039.

FREE Swimming Sessions for those under 17 years of age and over 60 years of age.

Barton Leisure Centre 01865 427039, 424720.

Fusion Lifestyle: Junior Gym sessions for ages 5-12.

Barton Leisure Centre 01865 427039, 424720.

StreetSports: football, dodgeball, basketball, cricket, volleyball, netball and more!

Barton Leisure Centre 01865 427039, 424720.

Barton Bash

Barton Leisure Centre 01865 427039, 424720.

Barton's FREE community newspaper — Barton on its Community — June 2015

www.bartonsonourcommunity.org.uk
Sunday Lunch Launches in July

A NEW lunch for all the family will launch in Barton next month.

“Sunday Lunch” is being hosted on the first Sunday of the month by Barton Community Church, to give everyone in the community – young and old, families and individuals – the opportunity to have a cooked meal with neighbours and friends.

“Sunday is a great time to get together with friends and family and have a cooked lunch,” says Robin Peake, of Mather Road, from Barton Community Church. “We love our community and we want to give people the opportunity to get to know other people and enjoy a tasty meal. Mandy from Eatwells is cooking, so we know that it’s going to taste good!”

Tickets need to be bought in advance. They are just £1, and can be bought from Barton Community Church by calling Jem on 07581 794222

Activities and games for children although any young people under 16 years old need to be accompanied by an adult who will be responsible for them.

“Sunday Lunch” will meet on the first Sunday of every month at 1pm at Barton Neighbourhood Centre. The first event will be on Sunday, 5 July.
“Don’t just think about it, do it. The only thing that is stopping you is you!”
Says Ruskin College Social Work student Lisa Wiggins.

BEFORE starting the degree in Social Work at Ruskin College (Dunstan Road, Old Headington) Lisa studied some short courses at the Roundabout Centre in Barton which included Budgeting with a Smile, and her Level 2 in maths and English. She is now coming to the end of her first year studying a BA (Hons) Social Work degree.

Remembering the last time she did any formal study, Lisa said “it was my GCSE’s back in 1992! I didn’t do that well, getting grades D and E”.

Before coming to Ruskin Lisa was working part time and looking after her two children now aged two and four. Lisa had been in the same job for 15 years and felt like she was stuck in a rut.

Lisa was extremely anxious about returning to education and was worried that everyone would be younger than her and she wouldn’t fit in. Lisa needn’t have worried as the college has given her so much support, not just from course tutors, but from Learning Development and the counselling service. She is loving her time at Ruskin. Not only is she enjoying the course but she has made some wonderful friends.

When asked what has been her biggest achievement Lisa said it was getting a first (the highest grade you can get) on her first assessment.

When Lisa finishes her course at Ruskin she hopes to work within the Children and Families department as a social worker, and her long term aims are to be a strong, influential and inspirational woman to encourage other women to go out and get what they want in life.

Would Lisa recommend Ruskin to others? “Absolutely” she says, what are you waiting for? Don’t just think about it, do it. The only thing that is stopping you is you!”

To add words of encouragement Lisa let us know that when she first applied she didn’t get past interview stage. She was absolutely devastated.

Instead of letting this knock her back she followed the advice given to her by the interviewers and used the following few months doing all that she could to get accepted the next time.

Lisa did volunteering and attended free courses. Ten months later she had another interview and was accepted a couple of days later. “I could of given up says Lisa, “but I am so glad I didn’t”.

Do you want some publicity for your trade?

WE ARE currently exploring the possibility of printing a local information directory to be delivered to all households within our community. This will include contact details of all statutory and commercial organisations that operate within Barton, together with contact details of local tradespeople who wish to advertise their skills.

So, do you do dressmaking, garment alterations, gardening, carpentry, electrical work, carpentry, do you run a taxi service (No need to let us know about the Mum and Dad free taxi service that many of us operate on a regular basis!) are you a dab hand at decorating or do you run a catering business? Are you a registered child-minder with vacancies? Are you skilled under the bonnet of a car or van? Are you a mobile beautician or hairdresser?

The list is endless so if you would like to be included in this proposed publication please let us have your details so that we can start compiling the list of entries.

Phone Sue on 07866 460446 or email susanholden@hotmail.com . Alternatively, call in to the BCA office at the Neighbourhood Centre and leave your details with Sharon.
Evergreens Club is alive and well!

**WE ARE** currently putting plans into place to restart the Evergreens Club each week at the Neighbourhood Centre. Currently we are looking at Thursday afternoons between 2pm – 4pm and the sessions will include refreshments and a weekly raffle.

We also have the opportunity to bring in some taster sessions such as Tai Chi and Easy Exercise. As in the past we will also offer a variety of activities including Scrabble, Board Games, Puzzles and much much more. Possibly the odd game of Bingo or maybe the odd song or two! We are hoping to attract some external funding so that we can start planning some day trips as we have done in the past including a trip to the Black Boy pub to find the chap who had originally laid the drains. This proved to be something of a problem and Gerry went along to the Black Boy pub to find the chap who had originally laid the drains. Apparently, this exercise cost Gerry a couple of pints, but he pinned down the information he needed, and the following week the drains were located. This proved to be something of a problem and Gerry went along to the Black Boy pub to find the chap who had originally laid the drains.

Along with a cockney friend, Sam Shaw, Gerry organised several outings for the local residents, but was told that before that could happen they would have to create a youth club. Initially Gerry and a group of friends organised a charity football match and asked Wilfred Pickles, a well known radio celebrity at the time, to do the honour of kicking off the match, but he asked for a fee of £200 for his appearance at the match. Eventually Mr Pastry, another well known character, offered to do the honours and even gave them a cheque to double what they had already raised.

Gerry was very active in trying to get a community centre for the local residents, and was told that before that could happen they would have to create a youth club. Initially Gerry and a group of friends organised a charity football match and asked Wilfred Pickles, a well known radio celebrity at the time, to do the honour of kicking off the match, but he asked for a fee of £200 for his appearance at the match. Eventually Mr Pastry, another well known character, offered to do the honours and even gave them a cheque to double what they had already raised.

Along with a cockney friend, Sam Shaw, Gerry organised several outings for the local children. The first meeting was held in the Princes Castle in Barton Village Road, and it was here that the Barton Midgets Football Club was formed. Their first kit sponsor was Aldens Butchers. A picture of Harry Howard and Gerry knocking in the first stake of the community centre appeared in the Oxford Mail in September 1947. The building itself was not new. It was moved from the canal side at Gloucester Green and was moved to Barton in sections. Before the building could be put in place the original drains needed to be located. This proved to be something of a problem and Gerry went along to the Black Boy pub to find the chap who had originally laid the drains. Apparently, this exercise cost Gerry a couple of pints, but he pinned down the information he needed, and the following week the drains were located and erecting the community centre building could begin. This was done entirely by volunteers, residents who gave up all their spare time at evenings and weekends to help you put your memories into words so that we can enjoy talking about our history as well as local characters.

**YOUR STORIES**

If you have similar stories you would like to share with our readers then please get in touch. Do you remember Blenheim Nurseries in Barton Village Road, The original Fox Public House and Princes Castle or the newer Fox Public House (Do you remember Fred Walters who ran the pub with military precision) that stood where Ellington Court now stands. Did your children attend Bernwood School or Barton Village First School? Do you remember any of the teaching staff who possibly taught you and your children?

**A LITTLE BIT OF BARTON HISTORY**

How many of you remember Gerry McLean?

GERRY cycled from Liverpool to Oxford back in 1932 looking for work. He found employment at Pressed Steel and moved to Barton on 20 January 1947 – the year of horrendous snow conditions throughout the country. At that time there were no footpaths and conditions were impossible. Gerry and his wife had a daughter who attended St Joseph’s School as there were no schools in Barton. Later on they had two sons.

Gerry was very active in trying to get a community centre for the local residents, and was told that before that could happen they would have to create a youth club. Initially Gerry and a group of friends organised a charity football match and asked Wilfred Pickles, a well known radio celebrity at the time, to do the honour of kicking off the match, but he asked for a fee of £200 for his appearance at the match. Eventually Mr Pastry, another well known character, offered to do the honours and even gave them a cheque to double what they had already raised.

Along with a cockney friend, Sam Shaw, Gerry organised several outings for the local children. The first meeting was held in the Princes Castle in Barton Village Road, and it was here that the Barton Midgets Football Club was formed. Their first kit sponsor was Aldens Butchers. A picture of Harry Howard and Gerry knocking in the first stake of the community centre appeared in the Oxford Mail in September 1947. The building itself was not new. It was moved from the canal side at Gloucester Green and was moved to Barton in sections. Before the building could be put in place the original drains needed to be located. This proved to be something of a problem and Gerry went along to the Black Boy pub to find the chap who had originally laid the drains. Apparently, this exercise cost Gerry a couple of pints, but he pinned down the information he needed, and the following week the drains were located and erecting the community centre building could begin. This was done entirely by volunteers, residents who gave up all their spare time at evenings and weekends to make sure their dreams became a reality. Amongst the volunteers were plumbers, bricklayers, roofers and ground workers together with an army of willing labourers. There was also help from local students. Jim Alday’s house was used for regular meetings and Councillor Whatley performed the opening ceremony with Jock McKenzie as Chairman of the Association. With the A40 on the doorstep very often the Welsh Rugby teams called into the Fox on their way to and from London. On many occasions they ended up at Gerry’s house for a nightcap before returning to London.

Gerry was given the honour of returning some 43 years later on 22 August 1990 to turn the first sod for the current Neighbourhood Centre.

If you have similar stories you would like to share with our readers then please get in touch. Do you remember Blenheim Nurseries in Barton Village Road, The original Fox Public House and Princes Castle or the newer Fox Public House (Do you remember Fred Walters who ran the pub with military precision) that stood where Ellington Court now stands. Did your children attend Bernwood School or Barton Village First School? Do you remember any of the teaching staff who possibly taught you and your children?

**YOUR STORIES**

If you have similar stories you would like to share with our readers then please get in touch. Do you remember Blenheim Nurseries in Barton Village Road, The original Fox Public House and Princes Castle or the newer Fox Public House (Do you remember Fred Walters who ran the pub with military precision) that stood where Ellington Court now stands. Did your children attend Bernwood School or Barton Village First School? Do you remember any of the teaching staff who possibly taught you and your children?

**YOUR STORIES**

If you have similar stories you would like to share with our readers then please get in touch. Do you remember Blenheim Nurseries in Barton Village Road, The original Fox Public House and Princes Castle or the newer Fox Public House (Do you remember Fred Walters who ran the pub with military precision) that stood where Ellington Court now stands. Did your children attend Bernwood School or Barton Village First School? Do you remember any of the teaching staff who possibly taught you and your children?
Free early education for two year olds.

Your child could receive up to 15 hours a week if your household income is less than £16,190 a year.

Find out at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/twoyearoldfunding
Calling all 18 - 30 year olds
WE NEED YOU!

- Are you aged between 18-30 years old?
- Are you a resident of Oxford City?
- Do you want to earn yourself up to £40 worth of vouchers*?

We are looking to recruit Mystery Shoppers aged 18-30 years old. You can do this on your own or with a group of friends. You will be trained to test, evaluate and report on our services we provide to you. It can get you involved in our work, give you a voice and help us shape the services we provide.

If we are getting it wrong we need to know!

Contact us now and find out when our next training session is:
Call 01865 252374 or email tenantinvolvement@oxford.gov.uk

* Your vouchers will be given to you when you have completed the training and first mystery shop. Additional vouchers will be given on completion of further mystery shopping sessions.

Building a world-class city for everyone