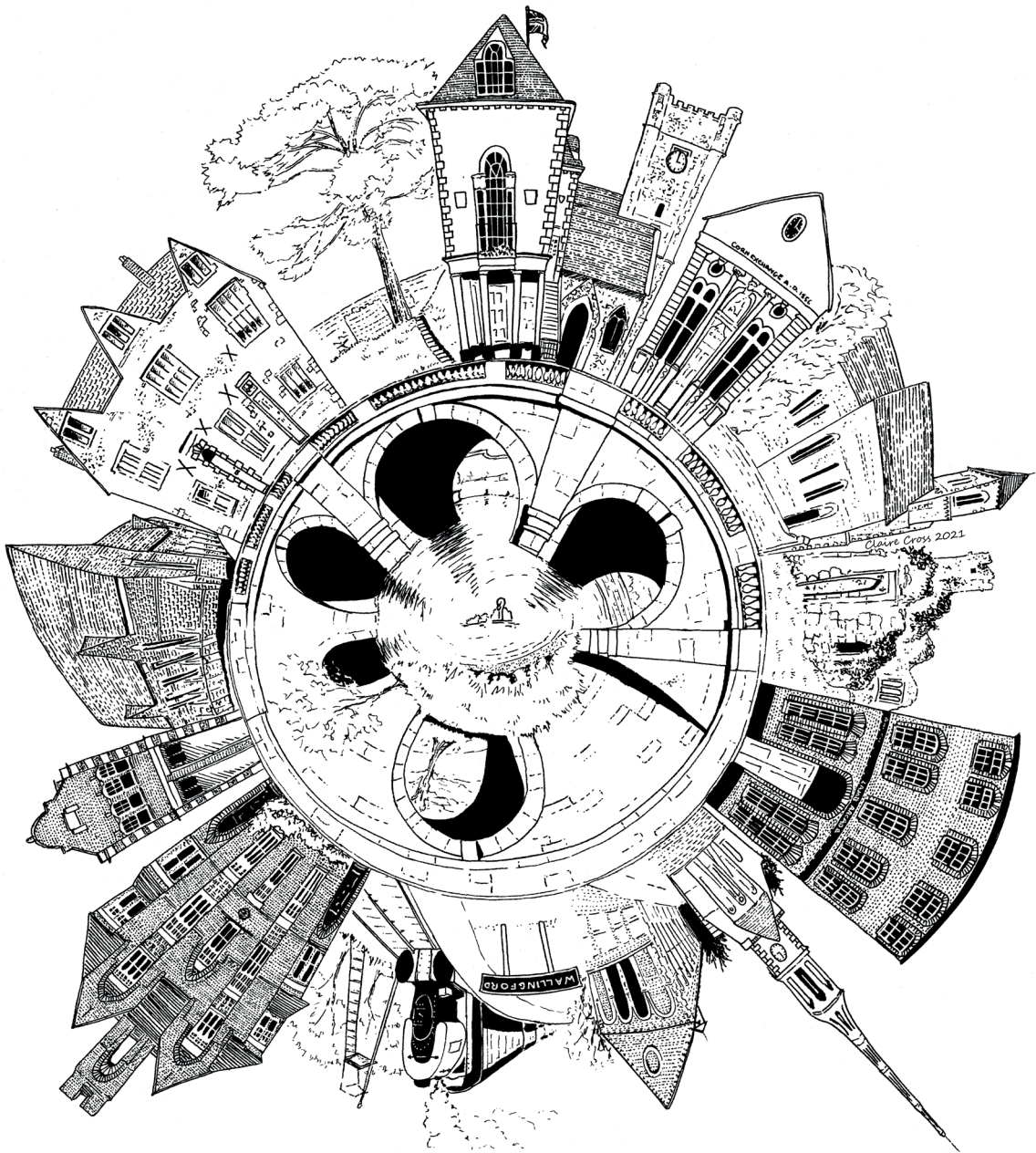


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## Wallingford Wine of the Month

As winter draws in, the natural reaction for all of us wine It's that time of year again, when any spare hour is an opportunity for celebration, and the chill and darkness of the nights is sharply contrasted by warm welcomes and bright lights. Through Christmas and New Year, I always like to have something cold and ready to go, just in case a friend drops round, or an invitation pops up that I'd forgotten about.

Celebrations don't have to mean fizz of course, and they certainly don't have to mean Champagne. A good bottle of white is always welcome, and some of the best late night chats occur over an indulgent glass of red, or even port or sherry. But there's a reason why we associate sparkling wine with celebration – it's refreshing, light on the stomach, and still carries the sense of generosity and exuberance that helps a party go with a swing. And while I will rave to anybody who listens about the quality of Crémants, Cava, and especially of English Sparkling wine, this month we're looking at that most rare and sacred of beasts: delicious, affordable Champagne.

Champagne De Saint-Gall is a union of Premier- and Grand Cru growers, who have spent 60 years growing the grapes and making the wines for the biggest names in the business. If you've ever treated yourself to a really special bottle of Champagne, the chances are that some or all of the juice originated in their state of the art winery in the Grand Cru village of Avize. Deciding to launch their own brand, they set aside roughly 10% of their best grapes, poached the winemaker from Bollinger, and are steadily building themselves a formidable reputation in the industry, with their 2004 Orpale cuvée winning Decanter's 'Best in Show' accolade in 2019.

Their hallmark is deliciously rounded, dry and elegant wines with a subtle patisserie flavour building on the palate, fine bubbles and a long, clean finish. The Tradition NV is an elegant Champagne, fresh and full of flavour, with a lingering, moreish aftertaste, and it is more than a match for its more famous and expensive peers. It's an indulgent luxury, because Champagne always is, but you might find that this price means you can justify an extra one or two pops of the cork this December.

**With best wishes from all of us at Grape Minds: may all your celebrations go with a pop!**

**Michael Jelley is the Director of Grape Minds Wallingford**

**Wine Name:** Tradition Premier Cru Brut NV

**Producer:** Champagne De Saint-Gall

**Grapes:** Chardonnay (70%), Pinot Noir (30%)

**Region:** Avize, Champagne, France

**Exclusive Price:** £26.99/bottle until the next issue.

**Just mention Window on Wallingford in store!**



**Local business woman and designer Jo Beavan started creating her ceramic ovenware range, Polkadot Parsley, from her home in South Oxfordshire in 2013. She has lived and worked in the UK and France for the past ten years and loves to find unique and beautiful homewares which are both pleasing and practical to use.**

The range is designed and produced by Polkadot Parsley in fourteen sizes and two neutral colours, Mink (dark) and Taupe (light). In response to their customers' feedback they are now introducing more ceramic products, including a long platter, small platter, flan dish and dipping bowls.

All their ceramics are made from a hard wearing stoneware clay making them durable, chip resistant and stronger than earthenware and porcelain. Stoneware has a very good thermal shock resistance making it ideal for cookware. All the products are ovenproof, dishwasher proof and freezer proof. They can also be used in the Aga. To care for the ovenware they should be washed before using for the first time and avoid using abrasive and metallic cleaners. If you follow these instructions you will have a wonderful product which will last for a long time.

You can only buy Polkadot Parsley products direct from Jo Beavan [www.polkadotparsley.com](http://www.polkadotparsley.com), email [jo@polkadotparsley.com](mailto:jo@polkadotparsley.com) or **Tel: 07798 797068**. Sign up on her website for a regular update with news, offers and styles.



*"I love my large dishes in Mink and Taupe because they are so deep - they look perfect a year on - have not chipped!" Sally B*

*"Not to be seen anywhere else on the high street!"*

*"I just wanted to say how brilliant your dishes are - we put them on our wedding list and they were very kindly bought. We were thrilled!"*

*"My favourite dish EVER - small square!"*

**This month's spotlight shines a light on Loddon Brewery based in Dunsden Green near Caversham.**

### **Why are we showcasing something that's not strictly local?**

Well, husband and wife team Chris and Vanessa Hearn who set up the brewery nearly 20 years ago reside in nearby Benson and their four children were all locally educated. With strong ties to our lovely local area, you may have visited a nearby establishment or shop selling their award winning and locally produced beers.

As they gear up to celebrate their 20th anniversary, they are making great changes and strides and have come a long way since taking over a disused and dilapidated grain store and barn in a corner of the Philimore Estate. Hopefully by the time you read this their brand-new purpose-built farm shop should be fully open for shoppers looking to get the beer loving relative in their lives a gift for Christmas which is fast approaching.

In addition to the brewery and farm shop they have a 150 cover tap yard for people to sample their beers and other locally sourced produce from ciders, condiments, gins and much more. They also invite local food vendors every weekend to provide food for anyone feeling hungry. Being situated next to a bridleway and footpath makes them a popular destination for lovers of the great outdoors such as horse riders, cyclists and dog walkers. But that's not all, last year the brewery even launched their own cycling club, the Dragonflies and launched their very own music festival, LoddFest featuring a brilliant line-up of local bands.

Chris said *"Before the coronavirus pandemic we were a brewery with a small taproom. The pandemic gave us a stark choice, adapt or suffer. We adapted but in a process that has felt natural, logical and proactive and we have been tremendously thankful for all the wonderful support we have received in these interesting times from our small team of ten fantastic staff and of course we couldn't have done it all without the loyalty of our customers both in the wider trade and those who come and visit us directly. Watch this space because the future is very exciting!"*

**We will indeed Chris!**



## **Featured Beers**

### **Hoppit- 3.5% Classic Bitter**

This is the first beer ever brewed by Loddon and is a lovely lower strength session bitter. It's got a light copper colour from the English Fuggle and East Kent Goldings Hops. With bags of flavour for a low abv bitter it is very popular with food led and destination pubs and is available in bottle and cask.

### **Citra Quad- 4.4% Hazy Session IPA**

The first creation of our current head brewer Jake and he hit the ground running with a crisp and refreshing hoppy beer that has hops added at four separate points in the brewing process. Amazing Citrus flavour with a lovely balanced bitterness and a huge amount of flavour. The beer is unfiltered which makes it suitable for Vegans and is available in can, cask and keg.

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# The Little Artichoke

Now that life has returned to some sort of normality after the past 20 months, many people are eating out in pubs and restaurants again, thank goodness.

However, some of the things we discovered in lockdown which made our lives somewhat bearable have survived and one, for my family, is a fine dining experience at home.



I recently discovered an amazing new business in Cholsey set up by Jason and Claire, called The Little Artichoke. Born out of a love for brownies and shellfish, they cook everything in their EHO certified kitchen and deliver to your door in a cool box, ready to heat up in the oven and serve at your leisure.

We had ordered a meal for three, and Jason duly arrived two hours before we planned to eat, and carried the cool box into our kitchen. Inside was a feast of fish! Two cardboard boxes contained a cooked Lobster Thermidor, all ready to pop into the oven for 10-12 minutes, and a Dressed Brown Crab, which could be eaten chilled, but with instructions on how to heat it up in a pan. Prawns and Langoustines dressed with herbs, also cooked but with simple instructions to put in a pan and stir regularly for 8 minutes, were delivered in recyclable dishes. Finally a large portion of minted new potatoes with butter to reheat in the microwave, and a mixed salad with balsamic dressing. Delicious food, beautifully prepared and so simple to serve.

Half of the fun of eating shellfish is the dismantling of the shells to get to the meat. I would advise getting some special crab and lobster crackers and some shellfish forks to enjoy the most from your shellfish, especially all that lovely meat in the claws. We had to improvise, but that made it all the more fun and it's amazing how filling the fish was.

The Little Artichoke have a number of different sides to the business, from high quality finish at home dishes, to cooking mastecclass. They also provide private chef dining if you're hosting a dinner party and catering from BBQs and buffets, to exclusive intimate events.



The Little Artichoke

Jason has 18 years of experience working as a chef in varying different settings. He trained in a Michelin-starred hotel kitchen where he gained an amazing range of skills. After working in the kitchen of one of the largest riverside gastropubs in the country, he moved to Australia and worked as a pastry chef before taking up the position of head chef at a fantastic steak restaurant. Back in the UK, he was head chef at a local pub before moving on to set up and run the kitchen in a shellfish and steak restaurant. He decided that he didn't want to continue working the long hours as a chef any longer and so to expand his food knowledge he worked as a butcher for a couple of years before setting up The Little Artichoke.

Claire has 20 years experience in finance, from small businesses to large corporate companies, so with her knowledge and experience of back-office support, she was able to help the idea of The Little Artichoke grow.

[www.thelittleartichoke.co.uk](http://www.thelittleartichoke.co.uk)



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*Merry Christmas*



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# NATIONAL BROWNIE DAY

## WEDNESDAY 8TH DECEMBER

Considering there is a national day for almost everything (national bubble wrap day!) surely national brownie day can't be passed without celebration?! Ahead of national brownie day, I was fortunate enough to be able to have a chat with Emily Bullock, the owner and founder of award-winning Cocobolo brownies.

Cocobolo was founded at the start of 2019 after Emily decided to take the plunge to pursue her passion for baking, moving away from her 25 career in the NHS. Emily had always enjoyed baking as a hobby and decided to concentrate on brownies after many compliments from friends and family, and from there the business "naturally occurred." Since then Cocobolo has featured in the food and drink section of Vogue and achieved a Guild of Fine Food Great Taste award in 2021.



The largest-ever brownie weighed 3,000 pounds, and the first was created in 1893, in Chicago.

### Brownie decorating!

There are many ways you can add a Christmas touch to your brownies whether that is through flavour or...decoration! Why not turn your brownies into Christmas trees, snowmen, Santa's hat, or a reindeer?



Image from cakesmania.net

If you do create any Christmas brownies, please send your photos to [info@windowonwallingford.co.uk](mailto:info@windowonwallingford.co.uk)

### Q&A with Emily

**Question:** How did you come up with the name Cocobolo?

**Answer:** "With lots of thinking...I liked the natural element of it, I was looking at the names of trees, and Cocobolo is a tree, when it's cut into it's very rich and dark, just like cocoa! It just fitted really well with half the name being cocoa, and it had quite a ring to it!"

**Question:** What's your favorite brownie flavor?

**Answer:** "The hazelnut giandjura blondie, huge chunks of hazelnut mixed in with chunks of milk chocolate!"

**Question:** Which brownie is most popular?

**Answer:** "The salted caramel is definitely the best seller!"

**Question:** What is the furthest place your brownies have reached?

**Answer:** "I don't generally send internationally, but there have been boxes that have gone to America and quite frequently to Jersey and The Channel Islands."

### Christmas selection brownie box:

This is a mixed box with 6 different flavors all Christmas-related including chocolate orange and salted caramel shimmer! The box can be brought in quantities of 6, 9, 12, and 18. The box is also available in a gluten-free range. To order visit [www.cocobolobrownies.co.uk](http://www.cocobolobrownies.co.uk). This box would make a great present for a lucky recipient or even yourself and is a great way to support local businesses over the festive period. As well as this all brownies are packaged environmentally friendly, so you don't have to worry about wasteful packaging!

Written by Rosa Maitland



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We have a range of standard roles and some more specialist opportunities too. We like to give volunteers an opportunity to try a range of areas before they find something that suits them. You might become a shop cashier, sorter and pricer, or you might find yourself in a more specific role such as an Online lister, Social media volunteer, an Admin support volunteer or even a Lead volunteer.

No previous experience is needed for these roles. When you apply we will ask you to come in for an initial chat to get an idea of what you'd like to do in the shop. From there you can meet the rest of the volunteer team and get involved with whatever area of the shop takes your interest. Volunteering at Oxfam is the perfect way to gain new skills, whether you're looking to improve your CV, take on a new challenge or just have fun!

At Oxfam, we are committed to ensuring diversity and gender equality within our organisation and encourage applicants from diverse backgrounds to apply. You can apply online <https://www.oxfam.org.uk/shops/oxfam-shop-wallingford/> or pop in for a chat and pick up a volunteer application form. Call or email us on **01491 834179** [oxfamshopf3733@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:oxfamshopf3733@oxfam.org.uk)

We look forward to welcoming you soon

Best wishes

Madeleine, Mandy, Fabi and the team



# OXFAM

## CPRE Oxfordshire Flooding and Pollution Report – a survey of Oxfordshire's Town & Parish Councils, 2021

Findings show that at least 17% of towns & parishes in Oxfordshire experience flooding problems and at least 20% of towns & parishes experience issues with sewage/sewerage infrastructure.

### CPRE Oxfordshire wants to see:

- Thames Water setting out clear measures to address the issues raised in this report, including targets and investment commitments.
  - Local MPs supporting the Sewage (Inland Waters) Bill and the Environment Bill to ensure water companies are legally bound to stop discharging raw sewage into the ocean and rivers.
  - Oxfordshire Plan 2050 to ensure all new developments demonstrate that their associated infrastructure will either maintain or improve water quality, not add to the risk of flooding, and be in place before the site is occupied.
  - The river Thames to achieve Bathing Water designation.
- CPRE Oxfordshire has produced an interactive map highlighting where the issues are, view the map and download the report from our website: [www.cpreoxon.org.uk](http://www.cpreoxon.org.uk)
- Did your Town or Parish Council respond? If not, you can let us know what flooding and/or sewage issues your neighbourhood is facing. Contact [campaign@cpreoxon.org.uk](mailto:campaign@cpreoxon.org.uk)

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## Magic Carpet Chaos

By Alip Nurehmet

On the 8th November we made a breaking discovery about a little girl flying on a magic carpet. A teacher (Mrs Beckett) at the scene told us "I couldn't believe my eyes. Everyone was pointing and shouting when the girl flew above us all.

Reports tell us that the girl looked scared and shocked. Was she being chased? Has she escaped from somewhere? The little girl might have crashed because a red carpet was found in the Crowmarsh Gifford School playground but sadly the girl was no-where to be seen.

There is now a mission to find the girl. The police are using their helicopters and are trying to get her back home and the Class 3 detectives from Crowmarsh School are looking for clues and helping with the investigation. If you see anything please call Crowmarsh School and report to Class 3.



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Our membership continues to grow and our recent "tea party" welcomed thirty of the new members who joined us in the past 12 months.

We had a very successful trip to Gloucester Cathedral last month and are looking forward to our outing to the Aerospace (Concorde) Museum in Bristol. Our Christmas treat in December is a trip to the Mill at Sonning to see the musical "Top Hat".

Speaker meetings are going well at St Mary's Church in Wallingford who we thank for their warm welcome. Our next talk is the **"600 years of Christmas" on 6th December**. A varied and interesting programme of talks has already been arranged for the new year. We couldn't run our Interest Groups without the many volunteers who help to co-ordinate the groups, often hosting them too. In January we're holding our annual event to thank them for their hard work throughout the year.

For more information and an enquiry form have a look at our website:- [www.wallingfordu3a.org](http://www.wallingfordu3a.org). Prospective new members are always welcome at our monthly coffee mornings (**Centre 70 every first Friday from 10.30am**) or speaker meetings (**every third Wednesday, St Mary's Church at 2pm**).

I wish all our readers a very Happy Christmas and good wishes for the New Year.

Neil Kelly, Deputy Chairman. Thameside (Wallingford) u3a



We are very excited at **GGWE** to bring a new experience to you in Partnership with **The British Owl Project**.

I'm sure like myself you find Owls fascinating and they are one of my personal favourite to photograph.

Lu at The British Owl project has a small collection of Owls that are used mainly as ambassadors to their species, raising awareness of their wild cousins and helping us understand what we can do to help them thrive in the wild.

We have devised a small group photography workshop for you to capture some unique photographs in natural surroundings and as with birds in the wild Lu's Owls have individual personalities so can lead to some interesting photography.

These workshops will suit photographers of all ages and regardless of type of equipment you have, you won't even need a big lens as we can get much closer than you would in the wild. So whether you have a Bridge camera or DSLR you will leave with some amazing photos.

If you are interested in any of these workshops please click on the link below to see some examples of what you can expect on the workshop, the dates available and drop us a line if you would like to attend one or have any other questions.

[https://ggwildlifeexperiences.co.uk/photography\\_sessions/british-owl-photography-workshop/](https://ggwildlifeexperiences.co.uk/photography_sessions/british-owl-photography-workshop/)



**GG Wildlife Experiences**

**Steven Gozdz**  
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[info@ggwildlifeexperiences.co.uk](mailto:info@ggwildlifeexperiences.co.uk)  
[www.ggwildlifeexperiences.co.uk](http://www.ggwildlifeexperiences.co.uk)



**Housing association Soha has launched a large-scale creative writing project for its residents and anyone who lives anywhere where it has homes – and that includes Wallingford.**

**'Playing with Words'** is a series of professionally-led free workshops to encourage creativity on the theme of 'community' in poetry, prose or music.

For six months, free in-person and online sessions with Kevin Campbell of The KCD Collective will take place across Soha's area and culminate in a gala evening in July 2022 at Didcot's Cornerstone Arts Centre to celebrate Soha's 25th anniversary.

The invitation to get involved with 'Playing with Words' is offered in 8 languages to encourage as many people as possible from all cultures and backgrounds, Soha residents or not, to participate. Soha says the most important aspect of 'Playing with Words' is getting the community together to learn new creative skills and inspire each other. Just attending a workshop doesn't mean signing up to present your work next summer – but if you would like to, all the better!

**Find out more and where to catch a workshop by calling Andrea or Liz in Soha's Resident Engagement team team on Freephone 0800 014 15 45 or emailing [ri@soha.co.uk](mailto:ri@soha.co.uk).**





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Heart of Nature 1st -14th Nov  
Market & Gallery 7th Nov  
Decoration Workshops Nov & Dec  
Xmas shopping 1st-14th Dec  
Xmas Makers Market 5th Dec



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# The Shack - Wallingford's Hidden Gem

The Shack is a totally independent family business, selling preloved and handmade items.

Mother and daughter, Georgina and Karin, started their recycling business in March 2020, only two weeks before the first lockdown! Due to lockdown, The Shack was forced to close, and Karin used Facebook marketplace to help grow her business. Since reopening in March this year, things have only gone from strength to strength.

After speaking to Karin and Georgina, it was clear that their motivations for setting up The Shack was to eliminate wastage and encourage the use of preloved items. Their ethos is that in a world where we are all trying to do our bit for the environment, recycling is the way to go.

Everything that is sold is sourced from house clearances therefore everything is unique and there is wide variety of items. Due to the constant supply of items coming from house clearances, Karin and Georgina never have to look anywhere else to source their items. The Shack is officially listed as a recycler, and they hold a recycle license to allow this to happen. As well as selling a unique range of preloved items, Karin also sells handmade items that she herself has made. There is a lovely range of handmade throws, blankets, hats, gloves, scarves and bunting. The idea of handmade items all came about in the mist of 'lockdown madness!'

The name for the business came up after a lot of discussion from family, and they eventually decided on The Shack (officially 'The Shack at the back'). 'At the back' refers to the location of the shop. They are located behind the Lamb arcade, on Castle Street, opposite the Hong Kong House, alongside the traffic lights. Due to the location, The Shack requires word of mouth and social media to let people know they exist as they are quite hidden!

In a small market town like Wallingford, it is really important that we support small independent shops as they rely on support from local people. As well as helping a local business, why not help support the project of recycling and repurposing?

Article written by Rosa Maitland



Everything you want  
but don't really need!

Doing our   
bit to recycle



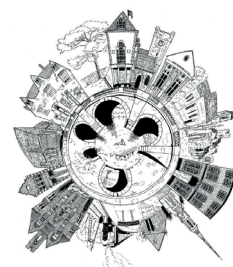
**The Shack  
(Behind the Lamb Arcade)  
Castle Street OX10 8DL**

 **theshackwallingford**

## About the cover artist

I was born in Wallingford and went to Fir Tree School and Wallingford School (as Claire Nutt) and I now teach art with the Wallingford and District Art Club. Even though I now live in Abingdon, Wallingford is very close to my heart and it was a pleasure designing and drawing this picture. I loved choosing what to include and drawing all the little details in ink, showing the different types of brick, stone and tile with just black and white.

**A print of this image is for sale at the Wallingford Information Office or contact me on [clairey\\_cross@yahoo.com](mailto:clairey_cross@yahoo.com) and I can arrange local delivery.**



# Shaun Guard

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