

# Abingdon

News

The Newsletter of Abingdon School

April 2007

No 14



## Runaway Success!



The Cross-Country Club have had a great season, from sixth place out of forty-five teams in the first race at Knole to first place in the last race at Radley. The Juniors won the County Championships at Cokethorpe for the second year in succession. The Under 15s and Under 17s both won first place in their sections of the County Championships whilst the Under 19s came second. The season finished with the Radley College Mob Match at which Abingdon were the overall winners.

## Mandarin at Abingdon

The classroom is familiar, B3, but the Chinese characters on the whiteboard are not! These Third-year boys are being taught Mandarin, the official spoken language of the People's Republic of China. It was introduced to the syllabus in September and boys will be able to take it up to the International GCE, as well as a Lower Sixth General Studies option.



TASS News p.8  
Josca's News p.9  
OA Club News p.11

## School visits over the past few months:

### Cambodia Camera Action!

Fund-raising efforts by the School during 2006 raised £25,000 so that members of the Film Unit could make a film in Cambodia for the charity, Landmine Disability Support. The Unit spent three weeks in the country, meeting, interviewing and filming people who have lost limbs as a result of landmine accidents. It is hoped that the forty-minute film, raising awareness about the charity, will be shown in London later this year.



### Aquae Sulis



The beautiful green water of the Roman Baths of Aquae Sulis in Bath provided an attractive photo opportunity for members of the Second Year when they visited the site in January. The visit, which involved the entire Second Year, also took in the temple complex and the Roman Baths Museum.



### Osmington

The Jurassic coastline near Weymouth forms a spectacular backdrop for this group of Third-year boys on a geography field trip to Osmington Bay. The group spent the Saturday of the activities weekend studying coastal geomorphology, and the Sunday abseiling, playing volleyball and riding quad-bikes.



### Poland

Twenty-nine Lower Sixth pupils, studying economics and business studies, visited the Polish cities of Krakow and Warsaw in February. The group, seen here standing beside the Chopin monument in Warsaw, also visited the Stock Exchange, the Central Bank and the Koneser Vodka Distillery. In Krakow they toured a hydroelectric plant, a salt mine and the Zywiec Brewery and beer museum. The visit provided a useful lesson in the pros and cons of free market economics.

### Hastings Re-fought

The Battle of Hastings was re-fought on the playing fields of Abingdon last January when the First Years, having made their own weapons, re-enacted the various stages of the battle on Upper Field.



## A Different Angle

This unusual birds-eye view of the School was taken last term and shows the entire School site with the soon-to-be-transformed Sports Hall in the centre at the bottom of the photograph..



## A Different View

It was business as usual at the School on 8 February when unusually heavy snow brought chaos to Oxfordshire's roads and pleasure to a great many schoolboys. The scene has more in common with a Bruegel painting than with the usual view from the Common Room window.



## No Smoking



The message from 'Smokey Sue' on National No Smoking Day was loud and clear – smoking damages

your health. The doll demonstrated to the boys the amount of tar that a single cigarette will deposit in their lungs. It is hoped that many of them will be discouraged from smoking – or encouraged to give it up!

## Charity Football



Over £700 was raised for the Meningitis Research Foundation by Lower and Senior School boys playing in a series of five-a-side charity football matches at the end of last term.

## Maths Challenge and Olympiad



A team of four boys, drawn from the First, Second and Third years, won first place at the regional finals of the UKMT Maths Challenge on 22 March. They won all four rounds of the competition to beat their nearest rivals by an impressive 12 points. In the British Maths Olympiad, four boys, three from Upper School and one from the Fourth year, were awarded distinctions. Furthermore, Yuzhou Ai was awarded a silver medal, and Howard Loh a bronze, for their work in the competition.

## The Taming of the Shrew

An exciting contemporary production of *The Taming of the Shrew* filled the Amey Theatre for three nights in February, despite the best efforts of the snow to disrupt proceedings. The production was set in a 'dynamic' urban environment and the hugely talented cast presented this, one of Shakespeare's most contentious plays, with enthusiasm and flair. In this they were ably supported by dancers, servants, crowds and wedding guests and by the Amey Theatre tech crew.



## Film Unit

The photograph shows the boys filming in a market during their visit to Cambodia in December (See page 2). In March, Film Unit tutors travelled to Malmö in Sweden to present a seminar on the Abingdon Film Unit to an audience of teachers and film professionals, who were very impressed by the mature quality and style of the Abingdon Unit's work.



## The Marriage of Figaro



A group of twenty of Abingdon's finest singers gave a concert performance of Mozart's opera *The Marriage of Figaro* in the Amey Theatre on 21 March. The boys shared the parts between them and were accompanied on the piano by Andrew Yates whose daughters, together with Cecilia Stinton, sang the female parts.

## Chamber Music Festival

The Chamber musicians were given four hours of expert coaching from a group of six visiting musicians on 28 February. The result of this tuition could be heard at a concert later that evening at which the Senior Quartet played Ravel and the String Octet, Glère.



## The New Magic Show

Simon Evans (OA 2002), last seen at the Lyric Theatre with a trick involving the Headmaster, a cardboard box and a number of sharp swords, will bring his *New Magic Show* to the Amey Theatre for one night only on 28 April. Tickets available from the Box Office: arts.sec@abingdon.org.uk.

## Sabre Rattling



Felix Wood,  
U16 team  
gold medalist  
at the Home  
International in  
February

Abingdon may not be one of the 'big' fencing schools but Felix Wood and Will Fotherby have both been flying the flag for Great Britain in international competitions this year. In January, Will was ranked as the highest British male in the GB U15 sabre fencing squad. Following a series of international competitions, Felix is now ranked sixth in the U17 squad and third in the U16. Both boys have been awarded sports bursaries by South Oxfordshire District Council to help them with the expenses of competing.

## Alex Fisher

Alex Fisher, a member of Oxford United's youth team, was selected for the 1st team squad for their FA Carlsberg Trophy first-round replay against Lewes on 9 January. At one point in the second half it looked as though Alex might be given the chance to play but it was not to be. Youth team coach, Darren Patterson, described Alex as "a smashing lad who has worked hard for the team all season".



The 1st VIII at the Schools' Head

## Boat Club

At the Schools' Head of the River on the Tideway on 15 March, the 1st VIII came third, completing a decade in which the crew have come within the top three places every year. The J16A VIII came first in their section, an impressive result that hopefully will ensure that the success of the 1st VIII continues into the future.

Matthew Rossiter, Alex Freeland, Max Wood and Dean Walker have all been invited to attend GB assessment trials over the Easter holiday.

## Hockey

The first half of the season saw the 1st XI go down to St Edward's, Repton, Dean Close and Stowe. However, after half term, they managed to beat Clifton College, Bloxham, Bradfield and Magdalen College School before falling at the last hurdle in the match against Radley. The most successful team were the Under 15 Cs who, throughout an unbeaten season, managed to score 27 goals whilst conceding just 4.



## Road Relay

David Ridley of School House was the overall winner of the Road Relay with a time of 8.18. The winning team were the Crescent House Sixth-formers, Michael Nagi, Oliver Cook, Luke Powell and Kristian Schneider, with a Fourth-form team from Franklin's – Joe McDonagh, Thomas Watkins, Richard Meadows and Alexander Muir – coming in second.

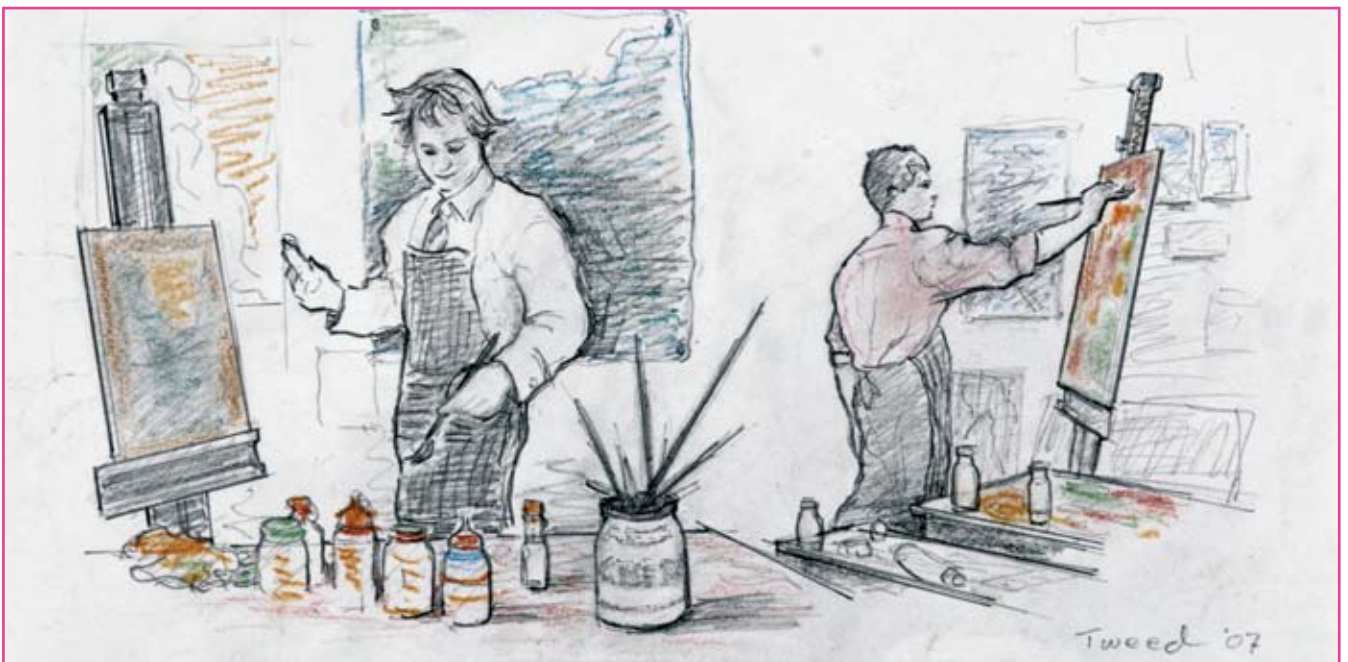


# Artist's Impression of Life at Abingdon



These sketches, drawn by Jill Tweed, have been given to the School by the Old Abingdonian Club to mark last year's 750th anniversary. They show boys going about their everyday activities during the Michaelmas term 2006. The initial plan was to commission a drawing of the main School buildings but such is their unchanging nature that there would have been little to indicate whether it was drawn in 2006 or 1906.

Jill, who trained at the Slade School of Art, specialises in work depicting movement and the life force in human and animal forms. Her commissions include portrait busts of HRH Prince Charles and Lady Diana Spencer to mark their engagement, and a sculptural group commissioned by Hampshire County Council and given to the town of Caen to mark the 50th anniversary of D-Day.





**Above**

Private study in the Lower Library  
Orchestra rehearsal in the Ingham Room  
Lunch time in the Dining Hall

**Centre**

Orchestra rehearsal in the Ingham Room  
Rugby coaching on Waste Court Field

**Below**

The Upper VI artists' studio  
Fencing practice in the Sports Hall



# The Abingdon School Society - TASS

## Burns Night Supper

The eighth TASS Burns Night Supper, held in Oxford Town Hall on 20 January, which raised £3,000 for TASS funds..

Philip Hatzis, VI NAFP, welcoming the guests. Philip, who will be leaving the School this summer, also piped in the haggis.

He has performed this function since 2004, when he was in the Fourth Year. Are there any pipers out there who can replace him?

To read the full report on the Burns Night Supper go to: [www.abingdon.org.uk](http://www.abingdon.org.uk)



**The Abingdon School Society (TASS)** is the parent body that supports the School's aim of educating boys in as full a sense as possible. TASS is made up of various sub-divisions. In the last newsletter we looked at the Music Society.

For an insight into the workings of the **Friends of Abingdon School Boat Club** read Lesley Bucke's article at [www.abingdon.org.uk/go/tass](http://www.abingdon.org.uk/go/tass) In it she outlines FASBC's aims – to support the activities and success of the Boat Club, fundraise and have fun – and invites anyone who wants to support the Club to become a member.

For more information visit [www.abingdon.org.uk/fasbc](http://www.abingdon.org.uk/fasbc), or contact the Membership Secretary, Rowena Vickers: [rsvickers@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:rsvickers@yahoo.co.uk)

## On a Good Note...



The new School notelet, featuring a design by Matthew Halls, 6ADC, can be bought from

the School shop or from the website. All profits will go to TASS. Packs of 10 (plus envelopes) £5. The Abingdon Christmas card, designed by Second Year Charlie Studdy, raised £324.52 for the TASS coffers.

## What a Result

Over 110 families entered the TASS Christmas Quiz which was won by the Middleton family who received the £50 prize.

## Tappins Travel Awards

TASS/Tappins Travel Awards are open to both Upper and Lower Sixth-formers for help with gap year projects. Application forms are available from the Headmaster's office and should be submitted by the end of April.

For an account of Aaron Lewin's gap year project in Mali, for which he won an award last year, go to [www.abingdon.org.uk/go/tass](http://www.abingdon.org.uk/go/tass) Aaron writes about the poverty of the country and of how he learnt that a lack of material possessions is no bar to happiness.

## Griffen Ball – 30 June

- Four-course dinner and coffee
- Dance Band, Brass Band and Disco
- Casino, Magician and Tops / Tails
- Bucking Bronco and sumo wrestling
- Fantastic Firework display

Tickets £60 (staff and Upper VIth £40) [www.abingdon.org.uk/go/griffenball](http://www.abingdon.org.uk/go/griffenball)

The organisers would welcome any contributions to the evening via sponsorship – contact Robert Pattison: [robert.pattison4@btopenworld.com](mailto:robert.pattison4@btopenworld.com)

## Dates for the diary

**Friday 18 May**  
FASBC Wine Quiz Fundraising Evening at the Boat Club

**Saturday 12 May**  
TASS Fish and Chip Supper Quiz Night

**Saturday 30 June** Griffen Ball  
7:30pm to 1:00am

**Saturday 29 September**  
TASS Wine and Cheese evening.  
All welcome

## Recruitment Drive!

We are looking for new members for the TASS Committee, in particular for a TASS Secretary. Duties: send out agendas; maintain contact list; take and circulate minutes of TASS meetings. There are around six meetings a year, including the AGM.

If you don't want to join the committee try volunteering on a one-off basis.

Volunteers needed for:

**Open Day, 6 October**, a couple of hours on the day to serve lunch and refreshments to current and prospective parents.

**Burns Night, January 2007.**

**Parents' evenings** where TASS serves hot food and beverages – ideal for those who have come straight from work. If you would like to help in any way, big or small, then please contact Karen Brombley Tel: 01235 529659 email: [kbrombley@hotmail.com](mailto:kbrombley@hotmail.com)

## TASS Funds

TASS's main aim is to raise money to support Other Half activities. This year £3,175 has been donated to the following:  
Kayak Club £500; Cross Country £500  
Fencing Club £500; Shooting Club £500  
Karate Club £575; Sailing Club £500  
3rd year Community Service  
piano tuning £100

## Second-hand Uniform Shop

Opening hours 12.15 – 1.15

Saturday 21 April	Wednesday 25 April
Saturday 12 May	Wednesday 16 May
Saturday 9 June	Wednesday 13 June
Saturday 23 June	Wednesday 27 June
Saturday 30 June	



## Private Peaceful

The School put on a production of *Private Peaceful* in the hall at the end of the Spring Term. Adapted from Michael Morpurgo's original novel, it is a poignant play concerning the execution of British soldiers in World War One. The mature subject matter was effectively handled by the cast, providing a thought provoking evening for the two full-houses. The wealth of dramatic talent at the School means that future productions can be approached with confidence.



## Puppet Workshop

'Art Circus' ran two very busy and productive half-day puppet workshops on the theme of Greek myths and legends. All the Year 3 children were involved in designing and making shadow puppets, scenery and backdrops.

## Ski Switzerland



Josca's and The Manor Preparatory School joined forces on the slopes.

## Warhammer Club



Warhammer Club is enjoyed by boys of all ages throughout the school.

## Undeclared Colts Football



Colts A (above) – played 7 won 7  
Colts B – played 7 won 5, Colts C – played 5 won 5

The three Colts teams played 19 games between them and only lost 2 games.

A terrific season for all three teams! We, as coaches, have thoroughly enjoyed working with you, as players, because you have been motivated, enthusiastic and determined to improve and learn. Our thanks to you for making this season so enjoyable.

## Out of the Past

### Another Country?

"The past is another country – they do things differently there", just how differently can be seen from these photographs showing life as it used to be at Abingdon School, in some cases more than a hundred years ago. The photographs have been chosen to complement the drawings of School life today on pages 6 and 7.

#### Art Class



Plaster casts of ammonites and ears decorate the walls and each boy sits neatly at his desk with a board and a shared mug of water. The classroom is B9 and the date perhaps around 1920.

#### Away Match



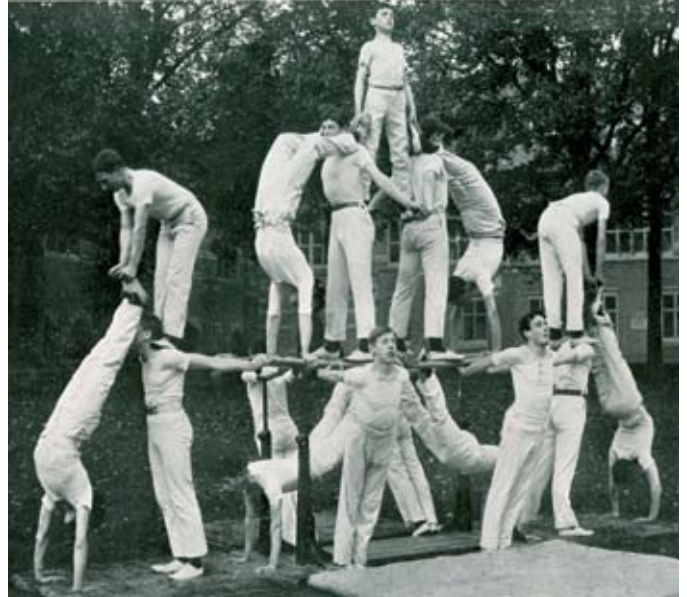
Three horse-drawn vehicles and a number of bicycles prepare to leave the front of School for an away match sometime around 1897. Horse dung creates a contemporary hazard.

#### Mothers and Sisters



The photograph was probably taken in 1913 at the celebrations to mark the 350th anniversary of the re-founding of the School.

#### Keep Fit



This gymnastic display at the front of School is dated 1907.

#### Feeding Time



Fifty years ago lunch was taken in what is now the Lower Library, served out by masters sitting at the head of tables – no choice and no leaving until everyone was finished.

## President's Dinner Saturday 7 July

The annual President's Dinner will take place on Saturday 7 July. As with previous occasions, members are very much encouraged to bring partners. Why not get a year group or a professional group together and book a table? Among the guests will be members of Common Room past and present. Good food and wine, entertainment (by OAs and current pupils from the School), great company and overnight accommodation; we hope that as many of you as possible will be able to attend.

## Development Office

We are pleased to announce that Mrs Jan Glover will be joining us as our Development Officer on 23 April. Jan has had a long career in marketing and development planning and has recently been working as Bursar at the Manor School. As an ex-parent of an Abingdon boy and with strong connections within the local area, Jan is well qualified to take over the OA Office and to launch our Development Office and associated appeal.

## City Lunch

If you would like to make sure that you are on the email list for the next City Lunch, please contact Matthias Bader at [matthias.bader@hawkpoint.com](mailto:matthias.bader@hawkpoint.com)

## Abingdon Alligators Cricket Fixtures

1 July 2007: v Downside Wanderers

War Memorial Field, 11.30 am

2 July 2007: v Old Whitgiftians

War Memorial Field, 11.30 am

4 July 2007: v St Edward's Martyrs

St Edward's School, 11.30 am

7 July 2007: v Headmaster's XI

Upper Field, 2.30 pm

8 July 2007: v Radley Rangers

War Memorial Field, 11.30 am

Contact: [john@malachi.co.uk](mailto:john@malachi.co.uk) or the OA Office

## OA Club AGM/Abingdon School Open Day

Saturday 6 October 2007

All OAs are invited to visit the School and attend the OA Club AGM on Saturday 6 October. The AGM will take place in Christ's Hospital Room starting at 11.00 am.

## OA Professional Development Awards

Applications for the 2007 Professional Development Awards must be submitted by the end of July. Forms are available on the OA Website or from the Office.

## Charitable Challenge

Matt Terry (OA 2000) and Quentin Lett (OA 2000) have raised £3,500 for Mercy Corps, a sustainable charity working in India. Starting from Cochin in the jungles of Kerela, they raced a rickshaw over 2,000 miles to Darjeeling, in the Himalayas, taking less than two weeks. Matt and Quentin finished fifth out of a field of forty rickshaws.



## David Milton

David Milton (CMR 1955–1986), Head of Economics and Director of Studies, died in Devon on 13 March 2007.

If you have any news, or would simply like to make contact, the OA Office details are:

Administrator, The Old Abingdonian Club, Abingdon School, Park Road, Abingdon, OX14 1DE

Tel: +44 (0)1235 849074

Email: [administrator@oaclub.org.uk](mailto:administrator@oaclub.org.uk)

Website: [www.oaclub.org.uk](http://www.oaclub.org.uk)

# Old Abingdonians

## Toby Jones Stars in Infamous

In a mesmerising performance, Toby Jones (OA 1985) more than holds his own among an illustrious cast that includes Daniel Craig, Sandra Bullock, Sigourney Weaver and Gwyneth Paltrow. Made at the same time as *Capote*, the release of *Infamous* was delayed so as to put more time between the two productions. Toby's performance has been compared very favourably to that of Philip Seymour Hoffman, who played Capote in the earlier film, a performance that won him the 2005 Oscar for Best Actor.

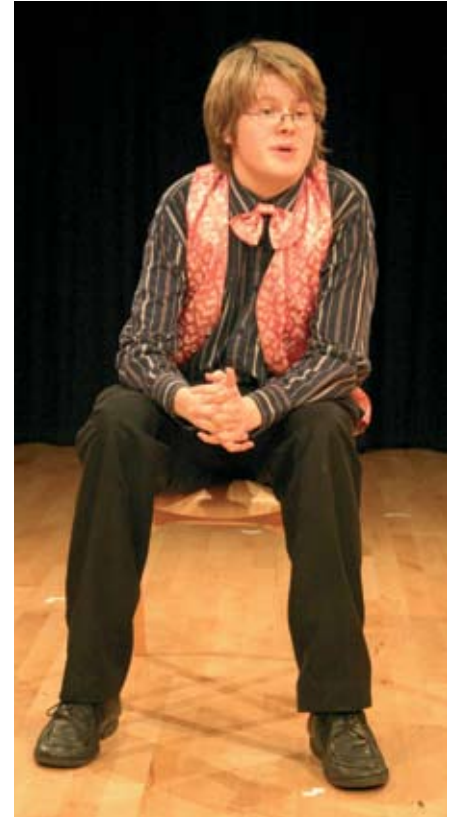


## BAFTA Award for Wayne Yip



Wayne Yip (OA 1997) has won the Sixty Seconds of Fun Orange Bafta award for his minute-long film about a grandfather's birthday party. Wayne, who usually makes pop videos, says that the film is pretty surreal but that people seem to find it funny in an uncomfortable sort of way. He's hoping that the award might be the start of something big as his ambition is to direct action packed blockbusters since, as he says, "Blowing up jumbo jets or directing massive fight scenes would be a lot of fun".

## Tim Dawson



A 30-minute pilot of the sitcom, *Coming of Age*, written by Tim Dawson (OA 2006) and produced by the creative team behind *Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps* was recorded recently at BBC Television Centre and will be shown later in the year. *Coming of Age* follows five friends as they suffer the delights, surprises and embarrassments of being seventeen. A BBC spokesman described it as, "a witty observational drama by someone who currently knows what it's like to be a teenager". Tim wrote and produced *Bang Goes Douglas Smith* which was performed in the Amey Theatre in 2004.

## Nick Brodie Coxes Oxford Boat

Underdogs Oxford, coxed by Nick Brodie (OA 2004), held off the favourites, Cambridge, in the early stages of the 153rd Boat Race on Saturday 7 April. Cambridge eventually pulled away to win by one and quarter lengths. Experts had predicted a bigger winning margin for the crew with five returning Blues and two world champions on board.

In 2002, whilst in the Fifth Year, Nick coxed the Abingdon 1st Boat to victory in the Schools' Head of the River Race, the National Schools' Regatta and the Princess Elizabeth Challenge Cup at Henley Royal Regatta.



Abingdon News is the newsletter of Abingdon School, Park Road, Abingdon, Oxford OX14 1DE Tel: 01235 521563 [www.abingdon.org.uk](http://www.abingdon.org.uk)

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Design by Deepfusion [www.deepfusion.co.uk](http://www.deepfusion.co.uk) Tel: 01865 407610

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Registered Office: Stratton House, Bath Street, Abingdon OX14 3LA Registered Charity No. 1071298