

# Witney Gazette

Wednesday, February 18, 2015

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50p



**SCHOOL AWARDED  
GRANT TO REVAMP  
OLD CLASSROOMS**

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**WIDOW FULLFILS HER  
HUSBAND'S DYING  
WISH ON TV SHOW**

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Picture: OX72740 Julián Rus

## Pooh sticks' new home

**THE famous World Pooh Sticks Championships is coming to West Oxfordshire.**

The annual event – inspired by AA Milne's Winnie the Pooh story – will be held at Langel Common in Witney on Sunday, June 7.

Day's Look at Little Wittenham,

near Didcot – where the event had been held for 31 years – was no longer considered suitable to cope with the thousands of spectators. Carol Harris, from organisers Oxford Spires Rotary Club, is pictured with other supporters.

● See page 7 for the full story

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# Summer first for Pooh Sticks Championships

**Pete Hughes**  
phughes@nqo.com

ONE of Oxfordshire's quirkier rituals, the World Pooh Sticks Championships, has found a new home.

The annual competition is set to go ahead at a new location in Witney this year and, for the first time, it will be in the summer.

The Rotary Club of Oxford Spire will hold this year's event at Langel Common on Sunday, June 7.

The common, with its bridge over the River Windrush, lies between the centre of Witney and Cogges Manor Farm.

Rotary club member Karen Eveleigh said: "We were delighted to receive such great publicity and support in our search for a new venue and are thrilled to have found this location in Witney."

For 31 years the annual competition, inspired by AA Milne's *Winnie the Pooh*, attracted thousands of people to Day's Lock at Little Wittenham, near Didcot. Some 700 competitors take it in turns to drop sticks off the bridge and "race" them to the other side.

But the event became a victim of its own success and ran out of space for 300 or more cars to park at Little Wittenham.

The Rotary club will now organise the day in partnership with Cogges Manor Farm, which is planning to organise a Stick Day alongside the Championships. Cogges director Colin Shone said:

"Playing Pooh Sticks is one of the most special and essential memories of any childhood."

"We are delighted to be supporting the new home for the world championships." Due to a high level of boat traffic during the summer on the Thames, the Environment Agency only allowed the



The World Pooh Sticks Championships has a new home at Langel Common and will be held in the summer for the first time when the Rotary Club of Oxford Spire puts on the event on Sunday, June 7

event to be held between October and March, which saw it either postponed or cancelled due to bad weather twice in recent years.

The new location on the Windrush, which has no river traffic, will mean that the Rotary club can hold the championships in the summer for the first time.

## Tax crusader in VAT talks with Cameron

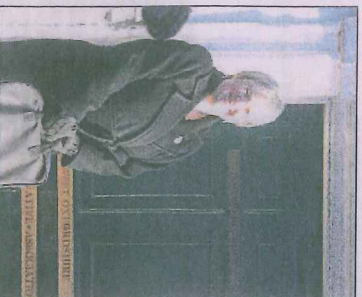
WITNEY-based author Juliet Souch met David Cameron last week to campaign against tax changes that could put thousands of kitchen-table entrepreneurs out of business.

The mother-of-two, who writes under the name Juliet McKenna, spent 25 minutes with the Prime Minister at his Witney constituency office on Friday discussing the new EU VAT laws, which came into force last month.

She said: "It was a positive and constructive meeting with every indication that the Prime Minister understands the seriousness and complexity of this issue."

"He was already aware of it, was keen to get key points clarified and shows every commitment to looking for workable ways forward."

Ms Souch, 49, whose ebooks are sold via an online publisher, is part of campaign group EU VAT Action, fighting for internet giants



Juliet Souch arrives for her meeting with David Cameron

like Amazon to pay more.

Before January, VAT was charged at the rate in the supplier's country but it is now based on the home rate of the customer.

Anyone selling digital services, such as knitting patterns and ebooks, abroad must register for VAT, even if their turnover is under the £81,000 threshold.

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