

Parklife

ADJUSTING TO A NEW WAY OF WORKING



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October 2020

Howbery Business Park - Wallingford

Parklife



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Adjusting to a new way of working

As the coronavirus pandemic took hold, our priority was keeping the site running safely and securely for those who needed to access offices, and Parklife has therefore taken a back seat for a few months.

As it's been 11 months since we published Parklife, this issue covers the period before lockdown too. Some 'new' tenants are therefore somewhat belatedly featured in this edition, and some people in photos may now seem shockingly close to each other. The initial lockdown period was very quiet on site, but of course some key workers continued to come into their offices. We have had a skeleton Howbery Park staff on site throughout, and you can read more about what we have been doing during the pandemic on p7. We are now pleased to see more people returning to offices. It is lovely to welcome people back – we really have missed our community – and we have done our utmost to make the site Covid-19 compliant for your return with a raft of new cleaning, and health and safety procedures. Unfortunately, the pandemic has had a severe impact on some businesses, and a few small companies

have sadly had to make the decision to leave the park. In the last few weeks, two new companies have joined us at Howbery: Ipec and Cashflow Advance. Some other companies have recently taken extra space on site, or moved offices, and, as we go to press, we have three vacant offices. Our catering services are closed as it hasn't been viable for us to open with so few people on site. However, we are constantly monitoring when the best time will be to start selling food and drinks again, and are meanwhile working on adapting the restaurant, for instance by introducing cashless payments, and a click-and-collect service. We hope will be seeing more of you on site in the not too distance future. Donna Bowles, Estates Manager

New tenants
A warm welcome to our new tenants:
Ipec
Cashflow Advance

Five-star catering
We retained our five-star food hygiene rating at our last inspection in October 2019.
We are also making sure our catering service is covid-compliant before we re-open.





New queen bees bring back buzz to our hives

The prolonged period of rain earlier this year led to three of our honey bee colonies perishing, but, thanks to three new queen bees, the hives are now buzzing again.

The bees are an important part of our commitment to biodiversity and sustainability, so it was a big blow when just one colony out of four survived the prolonged wet period. Luckily, help was at hand from beekeeper Robin Sergi from Nurture Landscapes (which looks after the grounds and bees) who decided to try and repopulate the empty hives using the surviving colony of bees and an artificial swarming technique.

Robin split the colony between two hives, so that one colony found itself without a queen, prompting its worker bees to develop a new one. Through a process of selecting a number of viable eggs, nurse bees feed the larvae a diet richer in royal jelly than that of the other worker larvae. It then takes around another 16 days for the adult queen to emerge.

He then repeated the process to create a third queen bee from the surviving Howbery colony. For the fourth colony, he used his own hive in the New Forest to develop another queen, which he then moved with a colony to Howbery.

"I've never tried to do this before, so I was thrilled to find that it had worked and that we had new queens in the hives," explained Robin. "It is often seen as easier and quicker to buy in a new queen with colony, rather than develop a new queen from your own stock."

"We are just hoping now that the bees can make sufficient honey in the remaining months to help them survive the winter."



Robin introduces a new Queen and colony into the Howbery hives

Honey for sale

This year's honey is now on sale at £5 per jar.

We also have some of last year's 25th anniversary jars left – available at a special price of £5 for two jars.

If you'd like to buy some honey, please contact Donna:

D.Bowles@hrwallingford.com

A few jars of last year's 25th honey, pictured below, are still available, as well as this year's produce.





Buzzing with pride at bumblebee success

In recognition of our work to support bumblebees over the last year, Nurture Landscapes has presented us with the Biodiversity Award inscribed with the Bumblebee Conservation Trust (BBCT) logo.

We have planted more bee-friendly flowers, created a herb garden and helped improve public awareness of bumblebees to meet the award's criteria set out by Nurture Landscapes and the BBCT.

Nurture's Managing Director Peter Fane presented the award with the BBCT logo inscribed on one of six petals. Bees are the first of six focus areas in the scheme, and other petals will be inscribed once Howbery has supported other types of wildlife. We have picked birds to concentrate on next.

"Howbery is a trailblazing business park in the way it embraces ecological initiatives, and we're delighted it has completed its first year in the biodiversity scheme," said Peter. "It's shown that the approach really does make a difference. It's exactly what we hoped for when we designed the Biodiversity Award in partnership with several conservation groups."

Over the last year, our gardeners have noted each month which existing plants were visited by bees – to make sure that they have a plentiful food supply while out and about. To help plug any gaps, the gardeners have added a range of bee-friendly plants, including a whole new herb garden, wild garlic, a huge patch of wildflowers, and perovskia, verbena bonariensis and sedum. For the new herb garden, we chose to buy plants from the Hairy Pot Plant Company, as they use peat-free compost and coir pots, rather than plastic ones.

The Nurture Landscapes Award with Bumblebee Conservation Trust inscription

To meet the objective of helping improve public awareness, we have shared bumblebee facts on our internal communications and social media channels, and gained coverage of our activities for bees in local publications and websites.

Estates Manager Donna Bowles said: "We have been committed to biodiversity for a long time but the Nurture scheme gives us more structure – and knowing we have made a difference to bees has definitely given us all a buzz!"



Front row (from left): Howbery Park's Operations Manager Mark Baxter, Estates Manager Donna Bowles with the Award, and Technical Services Manager Paul Middleton with the Certificate of Achievement. Back row (from left): Nurture Landscapes' Biodiversity Manager Simon Blackley, Managing Director Peter Fane, and Contracts Manager and beekeeper Robin Sergi.



Herb garden greens

Our new herb garden, which our Nurture Landscapes gardeners created in March, is growing well.

The herbs are also already providing food for bees, and will also add local flavour to our cooking, once our restaurant re-opens. The willow fence is to keep the rabbits away from the tasty greenery.

The herb garden is growing well.



Solar stats

Howbery's solar park generated 665,799kWh of electricity up to the end of August with a staggering 177,620kWh exported back into the National Grid.

With the very sunny spring weather in April we generated this year our highest value ever for the month of April – **107,481kWh**.

We have to go back to April 2015 for a similar amount generated and then it was a mere **102,025kWh**.

The solar park turned nine on 24 June, and has produced nearly **7.1 million kWh** since it began operating. To put this into context, an average size house would typically use approximately **4,000kwh/year**.

It's not just the sunny days that can generate electricity. The dark days of December and January can still produce respectable values. Our highest figure for December was **15,520kWh** and for January **24,680kWh**.



A site for sore eyes

Although Howbery has been quiet during the pandemic, a small team has been busy at the business park, ensuring that the site is safe, secure and looking good, ready for when more of our community returns.

Technical Services Manager Paul Middleton has overseen general water systems maintenance and statutory inspections, while Estates Manager Donna Bowles has been the main liaison point for tenant queries. Operations Manager Mark Baxter has been responsible for delivering an enhanced cleaning regime and introducing extra health and safety measures for shared buildings.

An essential task for Paul from the start of lockdown was running and maintaining the various water systems to prevent legionella developing in stagnant water. His team weekly flushed water systems in high risk buildings from the start of lockdown and has now extended the regime to all buildings, as more offices potentially re-open. Paul also arranged for samples to be taken from shower areas by a specialist firm to check for legionella, as reassurance. Tests came back clear.

On the buildings maintenance side, work was pared down during lockdown to legal requirements, for instance carrying out statutory inspections of our 23 space heating boilers, as well as Lift car inspections. The team also conducted the normal routine tests, such as emergency lighting testing and fire alarms. In the grounds, one of our Nurture gardeners kept basic maintenance going during lockdown, until our other gardener returned from furlough to get the site looking its best.

With few people coming into the park during lockdown, Mark increased security. Unoccupied buildings were locked and alarmed. Where tenants wished to access their offices, they were only opened just beforehand and locked up earlier than previously in the evenings. The North gate was kept permanently closed for extra security until 1 June when a higher number of children returned to the nursery.

The pandemic has of course also led to an enhanced cleaning regime in all buildings with all hard surfaces and all touch points (hand rails, light switches, door handles) being disinfected. As some buildings were closed, only three cleaners (instead of the usual nine) were needed on site in April, but others have now returned from furlough.

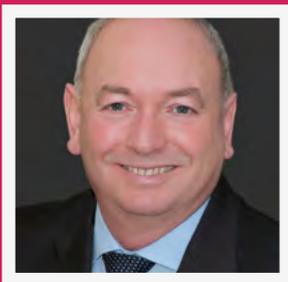
In buildings where offices are shared between multiple tenants – Isis, Windrush, Manor, Thames and Stables 4 – there are new signs advising people to use the kitchen and toilets one at a time and to social distance in communal areas. There is also automatic hand sanitizer and disinfectant cleaning spray in toilets and kitchens.

The catering service has been closed since the start of lockdown but Mark has kept in touch with suppliers and ensured that no food has gone to waste, which included donating some crisps and fizzy drinks to a charity. He is gauging when enough customers will be back to warrant opening the catering service. Meanwhile, he is working on modifications to meet government guidance on Covid-compliance, for instance introducing a click-and-collect service and cashless payments.

“Tenants are now slowly starting to return,” explained Donna, whose tenant liaison activities have included showing potential new tenants around the site and sorting the post. “Meanwhile, we are all working to keep the site in good shape with coronavirus-secure procedures in place for when more people return.”



ABHI praises Howbery lockdown



As head of a HealthTech association, Peter Ellingworth needed to be able to communicate effectively and

professionally during lockdown. Howbery's continued service throughout the period allowed him to access his office in the Manor House and work with the necessary high level of professionalism.

Peter represents and supports healthcare technology suppliers as chief executive of the Association of British HealthTech Industries (ABHI) – its 300 members supply the healthcare service with products from syringes and wound dressings to surgical robots and pacemakers. The rest of the 12-strong ABHI team is usually based in London, but Peter uses a one-person office on Howbery Park as a local base, reducing his commuting time.

"Howbery provided me with a safe, quiet space with secure and reliable broadband in lockdown, which was critical for my work, as I was often on video calls representing ABHI's members to government, the NHS, industry leaders and regulators," explained Peter. "For example, I had to present evidence to parliament's International Trade Committee on April 23rd, during a two-hour session.

"The site has also felt very safe and secure, and the Howbery team communications have been great. From day one of lockdown, they have gone above and beyond what was needed to meet government guidelines, while still maintaining a service."

As the strict lockdown eased, Peter was also able to hold some face-to-face meetings in the Manor House meeting rooms with colleagues. The location also works well, as a good number of ABHI's members are based in Oxfordshire, Berkshire, and in the south and west of London.

"As well as offering great service, I also think that Howbery Business Park is a wonderful place to have an office," added Peter. "Its grounds are ideal for walks, and I can't wait for the café to re-open!"

Soundabout Inclusive Choir

Sophia Nicholls, who runs a charity based at Howbery, appeared with her family in early May on BBC One with her singing group. The Soundabout Inclusive Choir helps to overcome the isolation felt by some people with special needs.

At Howbery Sophie runs ASNA, which supports the spiritual, social, physical and emotional needs of people living with disabilities and special needs.

You can watch the clip on YouTube at bit.ly/IncChoirBBC

The Soundabout Inclusive Choir meeting in person before lockdown.



Style Acre uses extra space

Style Acre is using some extra office space at Howbery Park to give the charity more room to run their day opportunity support services for people with learning disabilities and autism.

Style Acre is offering two people 1:1 day support sessions at Howbery as they were unable to move into a new supported living house in Wantage in August as planned. The coronavirus pandemic led to its opening being delayed to October. Although the people who will be moving into the house are continuing to sleep overnight in their homes, daytime support is helping them get to know the charity better, and helps Style Acre plan for the mix of people in the house.

“We’re really grateful to Howbery for letting us use the extra office space,” commented Cheryl Claxton, Fundraising & Marketing Manager at Style Acre. “We needed more space to offer these two people support, as we are now taking smaller groups than usual in our community hub building because of the pandemic. We are taking people out for walks and trips to replace activities in the building, but we needed some additional building space for these two people.

It makes a big difference to how we can support these people at this time, when we do not have additional funds to hire building space.”

Style Acre runs one of its community hubs from the ground floor of the Howbery Evenlode building, while it has an office upstairs. The running of the community hubs is subsidised through fundraising – there are two further hubs in Didcot and Banbury. The charity also has a shop in Wallingford and a Tea Room in Blewbury, which offer work placement opportunities for the people it supports.

Howbery Park Estates Manager Donna Bowles said: “Style Acre is a great charity, and has been an exemplary tenant, so we were pleased to help out by offering some extra space free of charge.”

The Evenlode community hub in its more crowded days before the coronavirus pandemic.



Composting coverage

The Nurture Landscapes team uses compost generated from grass cuttings and leaves for our shrub beds and tree circles. By managing the natural process of composting throughout the year, the team can add fresh nutrition to the soil, and send no greenwaste to landfill.

Woody garden waste is stockpiled and chipped for use as a decorative dressing. The roses in the Stables Courtyard particularly love the compost, and we had another impressive floral display this year.

Applying compost





Style Acre receives large grant

Style Acre has received a £30,000 grant from the Government's Coronavirus Community Support Fund, distributed by The National Lottery Community Fund. The funding will help the charity to cover core costs for its community hubs at a difficult time.

People with learning disabilities and autism are particularly vulnerable in this pandemic, according to Style Acre. The changes to routine are causing heightened anxiety, people are feeling isolated and are struggling to understand what they can safely do and when.

Despite access to the community hub buildings being restricted due to Covid-19, Style Acre's Day Opportunities team have had to find a way to creatively support over 220 people who normally attend the hubs on a regular basis. This funding is helping to revamp their Day Opportunities and deliver a constantly changing service.

The community hub teams are currently supporting people who normally attend the hubs in a number of ways, including 1-2-1 and small group activities in the local community (walks, day trips, support with day-to-day needs) and support in the

hubs where possible, as well as a timetable of online Zoom activities.

The charity ran an initiative called StoryFest across the month of September, focused on keeping up motivation levels and morale – something that is becoming even more important as the pandemic continues. As things progress, longer term consequences to people's wellbeing are also becoming apparent. The support of the charity's Day Opportunities and Ways to Wellness programme are becoming vital in supporting people both physically and mentally.

Cheryl Claxton, Fundraising & Marketing Manager said: "We are very grateful to the government for funding us through the Coronavirus Community Support Fund. It looks like it will be a challenging winter for lots of people, and people with learning disabilities and autism need our Day Opportunities service to adapt to whatever happens over the next few months. This grant will help us revamp our support as the pandemic continues to develop."

There are a number of ways to support the charity. Please contact Cheryl on community@styleacre.org.uk or visit: www.styleacre.org.uk



Return to work tips from You HR

With the furlough scheme due to finish at the end of October many businesses are considering how their employees can return to work with a successful transition, especially due to uncertainty over changes to restrictions.

Some people are struggling with the transition from a very different existence during lockdown back into a working routine and, if expectations are too high that things will return 'to normal', there is a danger of employees becoming overwhelmed.

If you would like to find out more about You HR Consultancy's tips on making sure the transition back to work is successful, visit: <https://www.youhrconsultancy.co.uk/return-to-work-a-successful-transition> or contact alice@youhr.co.uk

The You HR team has river team building fun to keep up their spirits while out of the office.



Coaxing rescues cygnet

Pippa Burr discovered a cygnet lost in the middle of Howbery Park in January. She describes below how she coaxed it back into the water.



Photo courtesy of Pippa

I was on my way home from the gym and the cygnet was sitting in the road near the big car park and looking lost. I called Swan Lifeline (based in Windsor) and they recommended trying herding it gently back to the river, which was quite a long way. I didn't want to distress it, so coaxed it towards me with clicking noises and talking to it like a mad woman!

It followed me (walking backwards) to beyond the Manor House and then we made our way, very slowly, across the grass to the river bank in the bushes. Here it discovered the natural 'slipway' and glided serenely into the water. It stayed close to the bank for a while and then went on its way.

It was a really uplifting experience. I coach leaders in resilience and this was just the sort of activity I would recommend to clients to fill up their resilience tanks, so I certainly had a lot of benefit from it.



Sleuths solve water leak mystery

Our technical team put on their detective hats this spring and scoured under the Manor House floorboards to solve the mystery of the noisy heating pump.

Technical Services Manager Paul Middleton and Maintenance Engineer Rob Hickman noticed that something was amiss in early May when the Manor House basement heating pump was much noisier than usually on a routine check. They deduced that air must have got into the pump, and that water must be leaking from one of the pipes carrying water around the heating network.

It was then easy for Rob and Paul to check that no pipes were leaking above ground, but that meant the leak must be from the 10 per cent of the network that is underground pipe – much trickier to locate. As the water was soaking away into the ground, there was no visible sign over ground of where the pipe had cracked.

“To help us locate the pipes, we referred to the 1951 drawings from when the heating was first installed, and the 1967 drawings when it was extended to incorporate the Thames Wing,” explained Paul. “We started taking sections of floorboards up in the café, and the wrought-iron grills. Rob did most of the work and it took us several weeks to pinpoint the leak, as we were very careful taking up the flooring – we didn’t want to damage it.

“The pipework in the Coffee Lounge area where the leak was coming from needed repairing by a specialist contractor, but we did the tricky work of finding it. The pipes above ground are in good condition, but as it’s quite damp below ground level, so some of the existing underground pipework is not in as good condition.

The repair has now been completed and at the same time we installed additional isolation valves in case we suffer another leak – it will allow us to isolate this section of pipework without causing the rest of the Manor House and Thames Wing heating to be disrupted if anything goes wrong again.”

Rob and Paul examine the 1951 and 1967 drawings.



Wellbeing at Howbery

Supporting wellbeing is an important part of the Howbery mix. We try to help people wind down by creating space in our grounds to relax or exercise, and offering a range of workshops and other activities.

Our lovely grounds are one of the main ways we aim to support wellbeing. Being able to take time out of a busy schedule and walk or just sit and appreciate our wonderful surroundings is so important to our busy lives.

Our grounds also provide opportunities for exercise. They are ideal for lunchtime walks, or even a quick trip out on the river. Our allotments are allocated each year to tenants free of charge, and members of the Sports and Social Club can play tennis or table tennis, and, in usual times, companies take part in a summer volleyball championship.

We believe that our commitment to biodiversity and sustainability also contributes to wellbeing, for example with the beehives becoming a focal point in our grounds. Our unique trees from all around the world also give the site a special feel, and we are planning to launch a new tree trail in spring.

We usually run a number of nature-related workshops each year, led by Nurture Landscapes, which maintains our grounds. These typically cover our bees, honey extraction, wreath-making and seed planting. We are considering how we can continue to host these while the pandemic continues.



In a sleep workshop, Davina Bannister from Tessaro gave tips on how to improve sleep. She used props to explain how caffeine affects the brain.



At the start of this year, we were delighted to join forces with HR Wallingford's Women's Network to offer some extra workshops to tenants, which included one on the importance of sleep, and how to improve it.

We are also fortunate to have a yoga studio and Lifestyles Gym on site, offering yet more options to tempt our community to help keep healthy and fit.



A stress buster at Howbery

By switching to a new career in acupuncture, financial expert Des Le Roy is planning to reduce his own stress levels, along with those of his clients. It may be quite a change of activity for Des, but there is one common factor for him – he can run both practices out of Howbery Business Park.

Des launched his acupuncture business on 4 July, welcoming his first patients in a treatment room at Lifestyles Rehab, Gym and Performance Centre (following Covid-19 secure guidelines). While building up his new practice, Des plans to continue heading up his insolvency advice firm, Elliot Johnson. After three to four years, he will hand over the reins of the company, which is based in our converted Stables building, to his son.

“My current area of work is very stressful – advising clients who can no longer pay their creditors – so when I first started the degree in acupuncture four years ago, I wondered if it could possibly be an alternative career,” explains Des. “I had become fascinated with acupuncture while receiving it myself.

Des Le Roy begins offering acupuncture therapies at Lifestyles Gym.

My interest grew during the course at the College of Integrated Chinese Medicine in Reading, and now I am certain I wish to pursue it as a career.

“Acupuncture businesses have been closed during lockdown, but re-opened on 4 July. The west is gradually becoming more interested in acupuncture as a way of treating mental and physical wellbeing and as a means of support to conventional medical treatment, so I hope there will be no shortage of clients.”

Des is also expecting Elliot Johnson to be busy once the government sets out a roadmap for businesses to exit lockdown. During the pandemic, employees have been on furlough, as Des believed it was difficult to give meaningful advice in uncertain times. Elliott Johnson has grown from one employee to six since Des set it up in 2011. He initially had an office in our Innovation Centre and moved into the larger Stables block in December 2018.

Donna Bowles, Estates Manager at Howbery Business Park, said: “We are so pleased that Des is choosing to run his new practice from here, collaborating with Lifestyles Gym. It’s always a joy to hear that our community is working together.”

www.desleroyacupuncture.co.uk



New wine outlet

Wine Merchants **Welch & Co** moved their warehouse and offices into Howbery Park last November. The premises in Innovation West are proving very suitable, especially given the aircon facility to keep the stock (and sometimes the staff) at the right temperature.

We are a small local company of some 32 years history, specialising in selling to the trade – bars, restaurants, hotels and theatres. If you've had a drink in the likes of the Lord Nelson, Branca, Avanti, the Miller of Mansfield or the Wallingford Corn Exchange, you may well have sampled our wares.

As of March 2020, of course, with the closure of on-licensed premises that trade came to an almost complete stop, so we decided to set up, fast, as an online wine merchant for private sales. Pierre le Vin was born.

And it's been going well, not to mention it's been fun. We very quickly were offering above **200 wines**, mainly in the price range £6.75 to £10.00, and a variety of gins, none of which

is to be found in large multiples and all satisfying our long-term criteria for clean, well-made, honest wines, at least good examples of their type. Sounds simple, but there is a lot of fuss behind this to do with minimal intervention, no flavourings or additives, emphasis on vegetarian and vegan friendly and so on, but crucially 'Does it taste good?'

We are offering **free local deliveries** up to 20 miles if you buy 12 bottles or spend £100 and we've recently opened our doors (in a covid-conscious manner) to retail **from the warehouse door**. If you come and visit, we may not look like a shop if the main doors are closed but inside you'll see we've been enjoying creating a retail friendly display and you'll find us ready to talk about what you enjoy and what we may be able to offer.

Hopefully, as conditions improve, we can begin staging **tasting events** and possibly wine courses at Howbery itself. We certainly plan to be a welcome presence.

Our retail site is: www.pierre-le-vin.com and we're on Facebook: www.facebook.com/pierrelevinoxfordshire

Peter, Paul, Lesley-Anne and Joel





You HR Consultancy joins our friendly community

You HR Consultancy moved onto Howbery Park early this year, attracted by the chance to become part of a friendly community in a lovely setting.

The community-focused company, which offers core HR services and organisational change support, believes in using local space. The team of 10 are planning to make the most of being able to hold meetings in Howbery's historic Manor House and unwinding in the lovely grounds.

CEO Jonna Mundy, who founded You HR Consultancy 11 years ago, commented: "Howbery is everything you would expect a business park to be and more. The grounds are beautifully maintained, there are boats to borrow by the river, and it's ahead of the game on so many things, such as corporate social responsibility (CSR) – for example with the bee initiative. This is an area of focus for our company too this year.

"It's great that the park has good public transport connections, as well as having on-site parking, which is convenient for some of our clients – primarily SMES, not-for-profit and public sector organisations. We already had some clients on the park, and we have gained some more since moving here. Everyone is so friendly here – when we move around the park it's great to talk to people."

You HR Consultancy has supported clients throughout lockdown, dealing with business continuity matters relating to the pandemic alongside their full service offerings of everyday HR Support, people development and business optimisation as well as business growth, change and development.



The You HR Consultancy team making the most of Howbery's beautiful outdoor spaces pre-lockdown.

The team is looking forward to returning to the offices at Howbery when possible and were pleased to meet up for a bit of river team building fun recently to keep team spirits up.

www.youhrconsultancy.co.uk

DuoCall moves in

DuoCall, a voice and IT managed service provider, has taken offices in Howbery Business Park after one of its customers recommended the site.

Group GTI, which has been a tenant at Howbery for over 10 years, suggested the park to DuoCall when it was looking for larger offices for its Oxfordshire-based team. Three people from DuoCall have moved into its new Howbery office, which has enough space to allow the company to continue expanding as they add more members of staff to their growing team.

DuoCall has been growing organically out of its Rotherham-based office since it was established in 2007. Its current customers range from start-ups to multi-national companies, and include the Malthouse Practice in Abingdon and the Pig chain of hotels.

DuoCall Channel Director Andrew Ringsell said: "We're all about offering support and many of our customers are based around the Oxfordshire region, so having a base close to these clients is important. GTI spoke very highly of Howbery, and its location suits us really well: it's a convenient commute for the three of us based here, and it's well connected to drive to customers – we're close to Reading, Oxford, the M40 and the M4. We're considering purchasing electric cars, as we could charge them on the park."

Donna Bowles, Estates Manager at Howbery Business Park, commented: "It's always great to see members of our community working together, and wonderful that DuoCall already have contacts on the park. Our tenants range in size and cover a variety of services – including HR, marketing, plumbing, mortgages, and wellbeing – so there are lots of opportunities for collaboration."

www.duocall.co.uk

Andrew Ringsell, DuoCall Channel Director, outside the company's new base at Howbery Business Park.





Helen and Bruce Gordon have moved into offices at Howbery that have exceptional character and light.



Kite Creative feels snug at Howbery

To reflect its ethos, Kite Creative picked Howbery to base its expanding design and build business which specialises in the refurbishment of the spaces we live and work in.

Kite Creative places enormous emphasis on creating beautiful places centred around the needs of the people who inhabit them. Its new offices at Howbery are in a former stable block, which has exceptional character and light, along with a convenient location and parking.

Now in its sixth year of business with 30 subcontractors on its books and several employees, Kite Creative had outgrown the purpose-built studio in the garden of its co-founders and directors, Helen and Bruce Gordon. They were pleased to find offices with a character that represented what they were trying to achieve within commuting

distance of home, which also offered enough space for storage and to showcase the company's work.

"The beautiful view of the Manor House from our office window says it all," said Bruce, Kite Creative's Managing Director. "I can't think of a nicer place to have an office in the area where we live. I love the way things are run here, and it's a very calming environment."

Creative Director Helen added: "We get involved from the front end of a refurbishment; we're not just about designing and building new interiors. We spatially plan interiors, making sure everything works together. This takes away the stress of refurbishment from the client, along with our promise that it will be delivered on schedule and to budget."

Helen and Bruce each bring different skills to Kite Creative. Helen specialises on the interior design side. With her background as a textile designer and retail buyer, she brings a deep understanding of colour and texture to the interiors they create, bolstered by her Architectural Interior Design qualification from the renowned InChbald School of Design in London. Bruce meanwhile focuses on the construction and project management, drawing on his experience as a designer maker and his work on major Hollywood films to provide flawless finishes and smooth project management.

www.kitecreative.co.uk



Cashflow Advance sets up at Howbery

Raj and Cindy Tanna have moved into an office on Howbery Park with their expanding young business, drawn back by happy memories from earlier in their careers.

Raj and his business partner Ahmed Omar founded Cashflow Advance two years ago to help customers access working capital via a merchant cash advance product. As their business model was based around card payments, the pair then added a card payments processing review service. By seeking better deals, Raj says they can reduce their customers' card processing costs by as much as 40%.

"We have thrived during the pandemic thanks to card payments increasing, businesses seeking to cut costs, and e-commerce companies flourishing," said Raj. "We now have a team of seven, plus a sales network of around 70 partners, who sell our services."

When they first set up Cashflow Advance, Raj shared an office in Enfield with Ahmed. It was a taxing commute, though, so when an office became available at Howbery he was "delighted". Cindy Tanna, Raj's wife, who joined the company in August last year as Head of Operations, shares the office in Howbery's Manor House with him.



Cindy and Raj Tanna in their Manor House office.

"It's a fantastic place to be," Raj enthused. "Donna, Mark and the team have been great at helping us settle in. We wanted to return because we liked the environment and that period of our early career. Cindy worked for CPL Executive Search here and I was at AngloInfo. I enjoyed playing for its volleyball team, and we even won the Howbery competition one year."

Donna Bowles, Estates Manager, commented: "Having people return here makes our efforts to ensure that the park is a lovely, relaxing and supportive place to work feel worthwhile. We're very happy to have Cindy and Raj back."

<https://cashflowadvance.co.uk>



HR Wallingford's labs remain in high demand

The Froude Modelling Hall with its extensive modelling labs has a huge footprint on Howbery Park. Laboratory manager Dr David Todd explains why there is still a demand for HR Wallingford's physical models, despite burgeoning computer power.

Over the last 70 years, we have constructed scaled models for everything from breakwaters to beaches, turbines to tsunamis, and pumping stations to fish passes. Our modelling facilities are the largest and most versatile in Europe, with over 14,000 m² of lab facilities.

We have averaged 28 modelling projects per year over the last 10 years, with durations in the lab ranging from several weeks to many months. Three of our largest ever models have been constructed in the last two years alone. So why is physical modelling at HR Wallingford so enduringly popular?

Physical modelling occupies a space between two forms of computer models that are used to simulate small geographical areas, and really large areas. Between them, there is a size and type of simulation – for example for breakwater stability across full port or harbour areas, or eroding of beach areas – where it is still more cost-effective and efficient to use physical models.

For large geographical areas – of the order of tens to thousands of kilometres – “large area” models are used. These models have a resolution (the distance between points at which calculations are performed) of metres to kilometres, and are used for simulating, for example, sand moving along a large area of coastline.

These models, however, lack the fine resolution often required for structural design studies, and contain simplifying assumptions or equations for the models to run efficiently. They are less suitable to look at the interactions between, for example, waves and a breakwater, as the model is not sufficiently refined to allow the motion of individual rocks or armour units to be estimated.

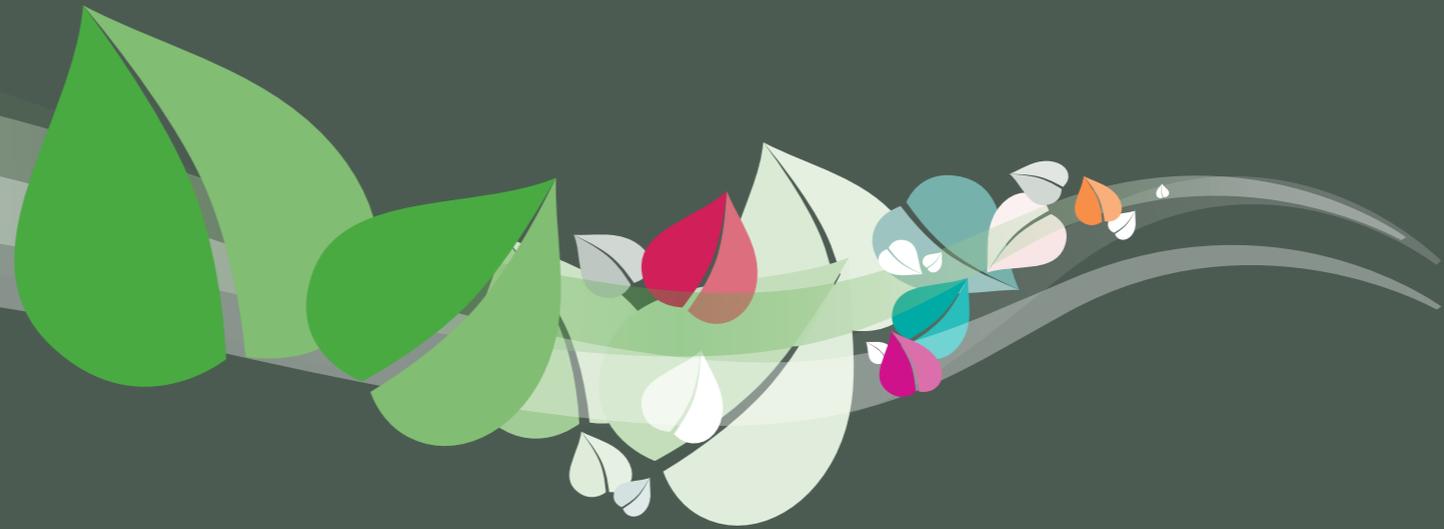
For very detailed studies of small areas, CFD (Computational Fluid Dynamics) models are used. They are ideal for small geographical areas – of the order of centimetres to metres, such as the end of a breakwater or a power station outflow. The resolution of CFD models is much greater than that of the “large area” models.

However, due to their complexity, CFD models are computationally expensive, and therefore not as well suited as physical models to simulating complex areas, such as erosion protection around offshore wind turbines, in terms of cost and effectiveness.

Physical models are therefore simply sometimes the right choice for the job.



Our largest ever physical model of a mobile bed was built to examine the long-term impact of developing a new port in Corsica on the nearby beach.



News... News... News

A Note From The Editor:



Keep us posted – to include your news and stories in Parklife, please email them to me, Donna Bowles d.bowles@howberypark.com

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