

Winter in Oxfordshire

Helping you
prepare for
the season.



Winter in Oxfordshire

Oxfordshire County Council is making it easy for you and others in your community to get ready for winter.

With practical advice and information about how to stay safe and well, as well as seasonal activities and events.

We hope this guide helps you, your family and friends and enjoy the season.

Not just for Christmas

Give your Christmas items a life after the holidays. Find a new home for your unwanted gifts and recycle your Christmas tree, wrapping paper, cardboard packaging and other items at one of our Household Waste Recycling Centres.

For locations, opening times and materials accepted, visit www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/wasteandrecycling

Picture Oxon

Access, search and buy hundreds of thousands of photos, prints, drawings and sound recordings from Oxfordshire's past and present with the Oxfordshire History Centre's online catalogue, Picture Oxon. www.pictureoxon.com



Save 6250

Norwegian reindeer

Did you know that every Christmas in Oxfordshire we generate 1000 tonnes of extra waste? That's equivalent to 6250 Norwegian reindeer! But the good news is that we can recycle 80% of it.

Better planning and good use of leftovers means that you can create less waste and free up more time for festivities. The Love Food Hate Waste website has lots of tips on how to reduce food waste over the Christmas period www.lovefoodhatewaste.com and our very own Pinterest page has boards with ideas for leftover recipes www.pinterest.com/OxfordshireCC

Stay up to date

Receive updates about weather, roads, latest news and events from Oxfordshire County Council in a way that suits you.

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

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 www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/youxfordshire

On the move

Winter weather can make driving and getting around more difficult and less safe. The Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue team has put together some top tips to help you stay safe while you're on the move.



Reduced visibility and slippery road surfaces make winter driving particularly hazardous and unpredictable. In frosty, icy, foggy or heavy rain, slowing down will give you time to react.

Make sure you are prepared for winter and keep an ice scraper, de-icer, torch, first aid kit and hazard warning triangle in your vehicle. In really bad weather also put in a blanket, shovel and wellington boots.

Top Winter Driving Tips

- Completely clear all your windows and mirrors of ice and make sure all of your windows are demisted and not just a small area.
- Leave plenty of space between you and the car in front. In wet weather stopping distances will be at least double those required for stopping on dry roads as your tyres have less grip on the road.
- Use fog lamps if visibility is reduced to 100 metres or less. Remember to switch them off when visibility improves as they can dazzle other road users. Also take into account that fog also makes the road wet and slippery.
- Winter and spring sunlight can present drivers with an unexpected hazard, if you are blinded by glare, reduce your speed. Keep a pair of sunglasses handy.
- Keep an emergency car kit in your vehicle containing an ice scraper, de-icer, torch, first aid kit, jump leads, high visibility jacket and hazard warning triangle. In really bad weather also put in a blanket, shovel and wellington boots.
- It can take ten times longer to stop in icy conditions than on a dry road, so drive slowly and allow extra room to slow down and stop.
- ACT every month. Check your tyre's Air pressure, Condition and Tread depth at least once a month.
- Check Oxfordshire County Council's gritting maps for live gritting updates at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/winter

Shop Savvy

With Christmas approaching, most of us will be hitting the shops and going online to buy our Christmas shopping. Our Trading Standards Team has a few seasonal tips to help you:

- Watch out for cheap fakes. They could be unsafe and there is no system in place to protect you if they go wrong.
- You don't have an automatic right to get your money back if you change your mind about something you've bought in a shop. Some retailers will offer a return period if the item isn't used so check their policy.
- You do have the right to change your mind with most things bought online, over the phone or by mail order, even if there's nothing wrong with it. The return period is at least 14 days which starts as soon as you receive the item. There are a couple of exceptions to this so make sure you check your rights at: www.citizensadvice.org.uk/consumer
- When shopping online, only use secure sites (with a padlock symbol) and never send card or bank details by email.
- If you experience debt problems, seek free impartial advice from your local Citizens Advice Bureau.
- Never borrow from a loan shark and be cautious about seeking loans online.

Winter Warmer

As the days grow colder you may be turning up the heating or thinking of stocking up on logs and coal.

Here's Oxfordshire Fire and Rescue's advice on how to stay safe and warm this winter:

- Have your chimney swept at least once a year, ideally before you light your first fire.
- Don't overload your fire place, make sure embers are under control and put out properly before you go out or to bed.
- Use a British Standard fire guard to prevent sparks escaping. Never store firewood next to or close to a fire place or stove.
- Don't air or dry clothing near open fires or portable heaters.
- Keep portable heaters away from curtains, furniture and other flammable materials, and unplug them before you leave the house or go to bed.
- Regularly check your electric blanket for wear and tear and unplug them before you get into bed.
- Never use hot water bottles in the same bed as an electric blanket.

#StayWellThisWinter

We all know that winter can present health challenges, especially to older people, young children and those with long term health conditions. Oxfordshire County Council's Public Health team have put together the following advice so that you can help yourself and your loved ones stay well this winter.



Feeling under the weather?

Seek advice from a pharmacist at first sign of illness, before it gets too serious.

Stay Flu Free

For many people flu is unpleasant, but for some it carries a very serious risk of complications. That is why the following people are entitled to a free flu vaccination on the NHS:

- People aged 65 and over
- Pregnant women
- Children and adults with long term health conditions
- Carers
- Healthy children aged two, three and four years (on 31 August 2015) and children in school years one and two are also now offered an annual flu vaccine nasal spray

Our Public Health team is urging anyone who is eligible to speak to their GP or pharmacist about how to protect themselves, and their loved ones, against flu.

Keep warm, keep well

When cold weather arrives, deaths among older people and at-risk groups can rise considerably. But there are things that you can do to keep your family and people in your community warm and well, to help prevent this rise:

- Keep your home warm. Your main living room should be 18-21C (65-70F) & the rest of the house no lower than 16C (61F).
- Layer your clothing to stay warm & stay inside during cold periods if you have heart or respiratory problems.
- Check on older neighbours and relatives to make sure they're warm enough, especially at night, and have stocks of food and medicines so they don't need to go out during very cold weather.

If you're worried about a relative or elderly neighbour, contact your local council or ring the Age UK helpline on 0800 00 99 66

Oxfordshire be ready

Winter weather can cause emergencies which can have a big impact on our daily lives. Although we can't prevent these events, there are steps you can take so that you're prepared if and when they happen.

Flood Proofing

If you're in a flood risk area, consider flood-proofing your home. You can find a list of options and approved suppliers on Blue Pages, an online directory of property flood products and services. Check on the Environment Agency's website to see if your property is at risk of flooding.

Grab Bag

Prepare a grab bag containing essentials. Pack in it items, such as insurance documents; contact numbers; bottled water; snacks; spare clothes; medicine; essentials for kids/pets; money; phone charger and glasses.

Services Outages

Utilities companies offer priority services to those who rely on their services. This means they will do their utmost to prevent their supply going off and, if it does, make sure your service returns as a matter of urgency, providing additional support if necessary in the meantime. If you are elderly, disabled, have a child under the age of 5 or use specialist medical equipment, then you are eligible to join. Contact your electric, gas and water provider(s).

Snow Code

In icy or snowy conditions, make sure you:

- Salt paths in advance of snow/ice and clear it early.
- Check on your neighbours.
- Only drive if you have to.
- Prepare your car (de-icer, shovel, warm clothes, charged mobile phone).
- Check the gritting routes online (www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/winter).

To salt your paths, you can use grit and sharp sand; dishwasher salt; table salt and soda crystals. Salt and grit bins are there for public use to keep your paths open. But they'll only be filled once, so use it sparingly! Find your nearest grit bin at www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/salting

For more information about preparing for an emergency, and community resilience, contact Oxfordshire County Council's Emergency Planning Team:

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/emergencyplanning
emergencyplanning@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Feeling Festive

'Tis the season to be jolly and there is lots going on around the county to get you into the festive spirit.

Christmas In Oxfordshire

Experience Oxfordshire's website is the go to place for events happening in Oxford and across the county. Information on everything from carols and high tea at Christ Church to theatrical events, check their website and get those dates in your diary.

www.visitoxfordandoxfordshire.com

Walking In a Winter Wonderland

It might be cold outside, but it's definitely worth putting on some extra layers to explore the real winter wonderland that is Oxfordshire's countryside. If you're stuck for inspiration of where to go, we've got lots of suggestions for walks listed on our website

www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/walksandrides

Alice

Fall down the rabbit hole this Christmas with Creation Theatre's production, Alice. Daily showings run from 8 Dec – 2 Jan at The Mill Arts Centre. To book tickets and find out other events, visit:

www.themillartscentre.co.uk

A Christmas Carol

Experience the classic festive ghost story with a twist! Pegasus in association with Flintlock Theatre presents Dickens' A Christmas Carol 4 Dec – 2 Jan.

For tickets and more information, visit:

www.pegasustheatre.org.uk

THE OXFORDSHIRE CRAFT GUILD
CHRISTMAS SELLING EXHIBITION



Free events featuring many of the county's leading craft designers and makers. This selling exhibition displays jewellery, textiles, ceramics, keepsakes and treasures - perfect for Christmas!

14 November - 23 December,
The Oxfordshire Museum

Opening times:

Tuesday – Saturday: 10am – 5pm

Sunday: 2pm – 5pm

01993 811456

oxon.museum@oxfordshire.gov.uk



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