



Farndon Local
History Site
www.farndon.org.uk

LEWIS'S *of* FARNDON



It is quite ironic that on the very day that the old riverside tea rooms and boathouse were being demolished, that a new venture was being launched just a few yards away on the High Street. Such a tragedy to see the old buildings from your childhood being removed, but quite wonderful that a long needed facility has appeared in our midst to breathe new life into the centre of the village.

Situated on the site of the old Nag's Head Inn, and built with a sympathetic frontage with bay window in keeping with the appearance of the former, Lewis's will soon become the place to meet.

(The front of the Nag's Head was supposed to have been preserved and incorporated into the new design, but it was eventually found to be too structurally unsound to proceed and a completely new build resulted).





The new coffee shop is the brain child of Alison Roberts, aided by business partner Karen Kidd. Both are Farndon residents, Alison born and bred in the village, daughter of local builder Tom Lewis. Alison still works part time in her career in finance, and Karen in P.R., but this is a special dream come true for them both.

Alison told me, 'I have passed by the development countless times, and always thought how the village was crying out for a café of some sort, and how this would be the ideal location. Originally it was intended by the builder as a two-unit shop development, but when we viewed it we felt one unit would be too small, so we secured the whole space before the separate build had begun'.

All early days just yet with an introductory menu, which includes breakfasts before 11am, light lunches – sandwiches, paninis and salads, and a children's menu. Delicious cakes and cream teas, plus an ice-cream selection, make you forget any thoughts of a diet in an instant.

As they say themselves,

'At Lewis's of Farndon you'll always get a warm welcome, a relaxing experience, great food, and of course, fabulous coffee. As a family run business, located in the heart of Farndon, we're proud to serve a wide variety of distinctive and exciting coffee drinks from ethically sourced Arabica beans that are freshly ground for every cup. Add to that our range of speciality teas, soft drinks, mouth-watering cakes and freshly prepared hot and cold dishes, and we're sure you'll leave us as a satisfied friend!'

This menu is a limited opening offering which Lewis's intend to develop once they have become established. Wisely, they are keen for customer feedback to tailor needs to their clientele, as well as offering something new.

Alison is passionate about fostering a sense of community spirit and hopes the coffee shop can provide a focus. Ideas abound as she chats to her customers who volunteer suggestions – from mum's and toddler's hour, to knitting circles and book clubs. My own preference is for a bloke's corner with newspapers on tap, a laptop, books, and headphones



linked to a radio broadcasting the Test Match Special (too much?). There is already free wi-fi. Alison has a policy of not rushing customers, so just pass me that footstool and I'm sorted.

Mike Royden



Alison with her staff (left to right); Jess, Emily, Jake, Alison, Nicky.

THEN and NOW



c.1905



2005



Opening Day 14 July 2016

