

## Up and Coming La Dolce Vita

Having spent my first year as a graduate in Italy, I have returned to England with a different outlook on life. When I opted to 'Teach English as a Foreign Language' abroad, I always assumed that I would be back. The truth is that Italy has set a trap and has succeeded in ensnaring me.....



Becky and her mother Pauline

### Fantastic Students

I have been working for The Cambridge Institute, a small, private, secondary school (liceo) that doubles up as a language school for students of all ages who want to learn English. On my first day of teaching I was a little scared when confronted with my first student, an advanced learner who seemed to know much more than I did about English grammar. It was a worrying start but my confidence boosted when she passed her exam in December with 76%, making me the proudest teacher in the world! Over the year my students have been fantastic, *including* the classes of men who all seemed to fulfil that stereotypical image that we all hold (when I say bad *and* good, I'm sure you all know what I mean....).

Lanciano, my home for the last year, is situated on the East coast of Italy, in Abruzzo. Ten minutes drive from the beach, and twenty minutes from the mountains, it is the ideal location for the finer things of life. It is also a major wine producing area, with vineyards scattered

throughout the countryside-a fantastic opportunity to develop those taste buds for Montepulciano d'Abruzzo.

### Seize the Moment!

It is January 2005, and Lanciano (of all places) is struck by an enormous snowstorm, taking the town by surprise and leaving people with a choice of

being stranded in their homes or taking to their skis to move about town. Of course the 4ft to 6ft snow did have its benefits; no work for a week! The irony was that skiing was off the agenda as it was impossible to heave the car out of its hiding place, much to my disappointment.

In May the summer begins. Finally, the opportunity arises to head off to the beach and embrace those clear blue, sunny skies with open arms. Trips to crumbling castles, wine tasting events and horse riding in the mountains with a 10 course dinner afterwards were the culmination of my time in Italy, and provided me with the excuse to eat plate after plate of pizza and pasta, which was just fine by me! Just in case you were wondering, the rumours are true; lunch without pasta, breakfast without a coffee, and Sunday afternoons without an ice cream and a stroll down the promenade are official crimes in Italy, or at least, it seems that way. What a wonderful country! *Continued on page 9.*

---

So it is set. I am destined to return in August, for what could be another year or maybe longer, working for an Italian radio station in the same area. Sometimes I ask myself whether I'm mad and whether I can withstand the crazy driving, the lack of time-keeping skills, and the ability to stand around talking

about nothing for *hours*, but then I remember the sociability, the never ending happiness, and the fantastic food and wine, and I realise that sometimes, you have to be spontaneous and seize every opportunity that is given to you! In the meantime.....  
arriverderci e ci vediamo!  
**Becky Marshall**

## New Role For Councillor Hilary Biles

Our local councillor Mrs. Hilary Biles has recently been appointed as the new Cabinet Member for WODC, with responsibility for Housing.

Cllr. Biles represents Ascott and Shipton wards and has been a member of West Oxfordshire District Council since May 2002.



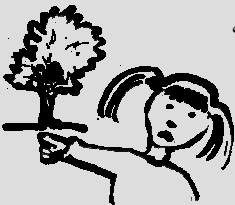
long and hard she fought to prevent the closure of Langston House. In May 2005 she was elected to represent Chipping Norton on the County Council.

Speaking following her appointment Hilary said; "I look forward to my new role. Providing affordable housing

continues to be a priority for the Council and we have had considerable success in building new homes and gaining financial resources to do this. However, central government cutbacks may mean some difficult decisions in the future regarding housing related support for vulnerable people, but I can assure everyone that I will be doing all I can to protect this sector."

**Carys Davies,**  
**WODC Publicity Officer**

For the last two years she has chaired the Economic and Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee. She also sits on the Development and Control and Uplands Planning Committees. She has represented the District Council on the Oxfordshire Joint Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee and has campaigned hard to maintain local health services. Many in the villages will remember how



"There was a young girl from Dumbree,  
Who couldn't climb a tree;  
She tried and tried then nearly cried  
And ran away for some tea  
That silly young girl of Dumbree."

**Miranda Harrison**