



HRA NEWSLETTER

Highfield Residents' Association

Autumn 2010

HRA EVENTS PROGRAMME – IT'S YOUR CHOICE

Over the past few years we have held a wide variety of events for our residents including street parties, open air cinema evenings, music sessions, history evenings, swapshops, barbeques, open gardens, pub quizzes, childrens' parties, street carols, ceilidhs and more. Without exception these have all been very well supported by residents and, judging by the feedback, have been much enjoyed. For example over 100 residents and friends came to our café music evening last April for a great session of live music. So that we can continue to hold events which you enjoy it would be good to have your views on our past programme and suggestions for future events. Just email or phone Frank or Patrick with your comments and suggestions (contact details at the end of the newsletter). Look forward to hearing from you.

Frank McKenna, Patrick Coulter

COMING EVENTS *(watch the notice-board for more details)*

Nov 20th (Saturday) **HRA Pub Quiz in the Butchers Arms 8pm for 8.30pm start.** Fantastic prizes and a buffet supper. Come with family and friends and have a fun night out at your local.

Dec 10th (Friday): **HRA Christmas Event. Join us to celebrate the festive season.** Santa will arrive at 6pm to meet the children (All Saints Road by the notice-board) followed by street carols and refreshments afterwards (indoors). More details later.

February **Headington Past and Present – an evening exploring our local history.** Date and details nearer the time.



Photo: Alan Dearden

OUR NEWEST COMMITTEE MEMBER:

As a new member of the committee, I'm very pleasantly surprised that the HRA is operating to what I think is a 'positive' strategy. It is possible to organise a residents association purely on the defensive and negative sides - they are necessary sometimes. What HRA is doing is finding imaginative ways of connecting people in our patch. As there's no limit to the imagination of the people living in our streets, there's every opportunity to suggest new things that might help that positive approach - pulling together as it were. Please don't hesitate to contact anyone on the committee with your thoughts.

Mike Ratcliffe

DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

HMOs – what a mess...

You may have seen press coverage of the houses of multiply occupation (HMO) debacle, but the twists and turns in the licensing rules and planning controls of smaller HMOs could go to court. Oxford City Council tells me it is seeking judicial review of changes made by the new coalition Government to a new planning law which originally gave Councils full control over the numbers of HMOs. Our Council (along with other Councils) is fighting those changes because it says the law won't work now.

There is a further blow, a legal challenge by landlords in Oxford has forced Oxford City Council to back track on new licensing rules for HMOs.



Photo: Harry Edwards

Dorset House

Recent news is this site was sold by Quintain to another developer for £5m, but the intentions of the new owners have yet to be revealed. Meanwhile it serves as a compound for the London Road works.

How green does your garden grow?

The Government has issued planning recommendations to Local Authorities changing the status of garden plots to that of 'greenfield sites'. This status carries higher planning protection, from the current designation 'brownfield sites' (also known as previously developed land) that leaves them more open to infill development.

A place to work, rest, or play...

The welcome news that came in just a couple of days too late for the last Newsletter

Warneford Meadow is finally confirmed a Town Green. So, after four years of planning and legal challenges by residents the final acts in this lengthy and costly battle were played out this spring:

- ♣ In March the High Court judge rejected the judicial review appeal by the owners of the Meadow (the Secretary of State for Health) so the original findings of the Enquiry Inspector that the Meadow should be registered a Town Green were upheld.
- ♣ The Mental Health Trust (representing the owners) subsequently confirmed that they accepted the Court's findings and would not be seeking further appeal.
- ♣ The County Council completed the registration administration on 6 April 2010.

The Friends of Warneford Meadow (FoWM) that have battled to get this result are now setting up a working group (*Warneford Meadow: What Next?*) to look at further activities to maintain and enhance the wildlife and amenity value of the meadow.

An apple a day...

Whilst on the topic, for those that haven't discovered it, the Meadow includes an orchard with some important and rare apple varieties tucked behind the trees on the boundary with the Warneford Hospital playing fields. The annual 'Apple Day' on 26 September was reported to be the biggest so far after City-wide publicity. It was a bumper crop this year – so there was plenty of apple juice made on the day - despite the 'scrumping' that goes on beforehand.



Photo ©Friends of Warneford Meadow

A nice note to end on!

Harry Edwards

BOOK CLUB

In November, members of the HRA book group will be meeting up for the third time to talk about *the Cellist of Sarajevo*, and *the Bookshop* by Penelope Fitzgerald. We meet every other month in people's sitting rooms, often with a glass of wine too, and have already discussed *the Glass Room*, and *Troubles* by JG Farrell, which was recently chosen by the public as the "Winner of the Lost Man Booker prize" of 1970. We've had some lively evenings, with a range of different views, and look forward to many more.

The group is already more than full up, but if there are more people who'd like to be in a book group, why not start another? If you're interested, do send us your name and contact details, and if there are enough on the list we can help get another one going.

Susie Pye

Vacancies for Street Representatives for Lime Walk North and Lime Walk South. If you live in Lime Walk and have an interest in local community issues please have a chat to any member (details on page 4) if you think you'd like to help.

CARBON CONVERSATIONS

As indicated to members by email, HRA was invited to be the first group to take part in the Carbon Conversations series being run in association with Low Carbon Headington.

Developed by Cambridge Carbon Footprint, the series consists of six two-hour practical sessions on low-carbon living, using the manual developed for them by Rosemary Randall. The course facilitators are Mary Gill and Halla Huws and the course is held at Hilary Rollin's house, with sessions on *Looking for a Low-Carbon Future*, *A Low-Carbon House*, *Transport and Travel*, *Food and Water*, *Consumption and Waste*, with a final reunion meeting after Christmas. We have all had our carbon footprint measured, and are encouraged to read as widely as possible on the low-carbon topic, borrowing books from a selection provided. Signing on with I-measure (<http://www.imeasure.org.uk>) is also recommended to enable us to monitor our gas and electricity consumption. HRA members have been joined by two representatives of other residents' associations.

It is too early to give more than an interim report, but to date participants and facilitators alike speak most highly

of the sessions – in terms of awareness-raising, exchange ideas and sheer enjoyment.

Hilary Rollin

TRAFFIC GROUP

Proposals by the County Council for managing traffic through Highfield were displayed at the exhibition on May 27th. The details are at <http://snipurl.com/1b6ulk> which includes a brief summary of the feedback. It was an "informal" consultation by them: that is, it was only the first stage in trying to formulate a plan. They drew no firm conclusions and made no recommendations for further action at this stage because the general uncertainties over funding mean everything has to be reviewed. The HRA Traffic Group had a meeting in September with the County and City councillors for our ward, urging them to argue as persuasively as possible for the continued assignment of the "S106" (developer contribution) money that has already been allocated for the Highfield scheme. This is not taxpayer or ratepayer provided money.

The next steps will be the presentation of a formal report on this initial proposal and the reactions to it, to the County Council's Transport Committee. They will judge, with the help of the officers, how to modify it, taking into account the available funding. There will then be a further consultation. It is very unlikely this will happen until well into 2011.

You'll be aware of another issue, the modification of the on-street parking regulations in Highfield (strictly, Headington West, Zone B). Our streets have historically had varying practices about parking and the Traffic Group has not tried to form a co-ordinated response to the consultation about it, which was conducted in July. The proposals can be seen at <http://snipurl.com/1b7g39>

As always, Simon or Frank want to hear your comments or queries (details on page 4).

Simon Hunt, Frank McKenna

Do we have your correct email address?

All our activities are advertised on our Community Noticeboard in All Saints Road. We also circulate members by email. Over two-thirds of our members are now contacted in this way, and if you would like to be included, or you have changed your address, please let Gill know (details on page 4)

Useful addresses:

Member of Parliament (Lab) **Rt Hon Andrew Smith MP**, House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA or Unit A, Bishops Mews, Transport Way, Oxford OX4 6HD Tel:595790. E-mail: andrewsmith.mp@virgin.net

County Councillors - Headington & Marston

Roy Darke (Lab), The Oak Barn, 80 Edgeway Road, Oxford OX3 0HG. Tel: 790670. Mobile 07753 483368.

E-mail: roy.darke@oxfordshire.gov.uk

M. Altaf-Khan (Lib Dem), 83 Hugh Allen Crescent, Marston, Oxford, OX3 0HL. Tel: 798777. Mobile: 07931 345554.

E-mail: altaf.khan@oxfordshire.gov.uk

County Councillors - Barton and Churchill

Liz Brighouse, **OBE** (Lab), Willow Bank, Old Road, Headington, Oxford OX3 8TA. Tel/Fax: 766995. Mobile: 07710 451769.

E-mail: liz.brighouse@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Roz Smith (Lib Dem), 12 Weyland Road, Headington, Oxford OX3 8PD. Tel: 741872. Mobile: 07722 840117.

E-mail: roz.smith@oxfordshire.gov.uk

North East Area Committee:

Area Co-ordinator (Angela Christofoli) Tel: 01865 252688

Committee Secretary Tel: 01865 252516. E-mail: northeast@oxford.gov.uk

City Councillors - Headington Ward

David Rundle (Lib Dem) 39 Catherine Street, Oxford OX4 3AH. Tel: 07980 894147.

E-mail: david.rundle@oxfordlibdems.org.uk

Ruth Wilkinson (Lib Dem) 21 Thames View Road, Oxford OX4 4TQ. Tel: 07789 368300.

E-mail: clrrwilkinson@oxford.gov.uk

City Councillors - Churchill Ward

Joe McManners (Lab), 1 Woodbine Cottage, Headington Hill, Headington, Oxford OX3 0BT. Tel: 07758 601604.

E-mail: clrrjcmcmanners@oxford.gov.uk

Mark Lygo (Lab), 20 Valencia Road, Headington OX3 7PL. Tel: 07918 635395. E-mail: clrrmlygo@oxford.gov.uk

Headington North Neighbourhood Police Officer, PC Chris Miles, Tel: 08458 505505.

E-mail: Headington@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

Thames Valley Police Website: www.thamesvalley.police.uk

Oxford Brookes Customer Relations Officer, Andrea Siret, Tel: 484451. E-mail: community@brookes.ac.uk

Oxford City Council Website: www.oxford.gov.uk. Tel: 249811

Oxfordshire County Council Website: www.oxfordshire.gov.uk. Tel: 792422

Headington Website www.headington.org.uk

Headington Forum Website http://forums.e-democracy.org/groups/oxford-hm

Headington Car Club E-mail: headingtoncarclub@googlegmail.com

HRA Incidents Register, Auriol Hamer. Tel:761092. E-mail: richard.hamer@chch.ox.ac.uk

HRA Committee

Patrick Coulter	20 Stapleton Road	Tel: 766341	patco@supanet.com
Zohra Ashraf (Membership)	55 Latimer Road		
Gill Beeston (Treasurer)	14 Stapleton Road		gillianbeeston@waitrose.com
Harry Edwards (Planning)	17 Finch Close	Tel: 767936	harry.edwards@solar-link.co.uk
Frank McKenna (Traffic)	92 Lime Walk	Tel: 769708	frank.mckenna@btinternet.com
Simon Hunt (Traffic)	28 Latimer Road	Tel: 435877	svhoxford@gmail.com
Claire Fell (Young Families)	68 Stapleton Road		clairegarton@yahoo.co.uk
Susie Pye (Events)	18 Bickerton Road	Tel: 762261	susiepye@phonecoop.coop
Hilary Rollin (Environment)	63 Old Road	Tel: 761545	hrollin@btinternet.com
Mike Ratcliffe (Secretary)	37 Bickerton Road	Tel: 763074	mratcliffe@brookes.ac.uk
Nicholas Rollin	63 Old Road	Tel: 761545	nicholas.rollin@btinternet.com
Tony Joyce (Honorary Member)	68 Blenheim Drive	Tel: 556050	tandk@appleinter.net

HRA Street Representatives

Barrington Close	Margaret Belfrage	11 Barrington Close	
Bickerton Road	Mike Ratcliffe	37 Bickerton Road	Tel: 763074
Brookside	Laura Ess	13 Brookside	Tel: 762559
Finch Close	Harry Edwards	17 Finch Close	Tel: 767936
Highfield Avenue	Monyca Douglas	34 Highfield Avenue	Tel: 761441
Latimer Road	Patience Bayley	31 Latimer Road	Tel: 761691
Lime Walk (North)	to be filled		
Lime Walk (South)	to be filled		
Old Road (part)	Hilary Rollin	63 Old Road	Tel: 761545
Old Road (part)	Auriol Hamer	67 Old Road	Tel: 761092
Stapleton Road	Diana Chandler	46 Stapleton Road	Tel: 764809

Edited by Gill Beeston

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