



HRA NEWSLETTER

Highfield Residents' Association

Spring 2011

PROGRAMME OF COMMUNITY EVENTS

Many of you will have enjoyed our most recent community events - the pub quiz in November and our Street Carols evening. We're now arranging our Spring and Summer programme which offers something for everyone to enjoy, including swap mornings and street parties. Our aim is to hold a community event once a month or so and we do need your support both in advance to help plan and organise, and by coming along on the day to join in. If you have suggestions for events or would like to help with the programme contact Frank, Susie or Patrick (details page 4). Thanks.

Patrick Coulter

PROGRAMME

Thursday 14th April **HRA AGM** – 7.30pm in All Saints' Church House, New High Street, Headington (see opposite box)

Saturday 7th May **Swap n' Coffee morning** on All Saints Road from 10am - bring along your unwanted goods and exchange them - or just leave them for others to have - absolutely free! AND enjoy a tea or coffee and chat with neighbours.

AND we are planning:

Sunday 19th June **Midsummer Street Party** (with a street garden theme)

Saturday 24th September **Street Cinema Evening**

Plus another pub quiz, a history evening and more.

DON'T MISS A GREAT EVENING! HRA belongs to you so come along to the **Annual General Meeting** and

- hear what we've done in the past year
- discuss plans for the coming year
- raise local issues
- hear how we've spent your subscriptions
- elect officers and committee for 2011 (we are seeking new committee members)

Then (around 8.15) -

"THE FUTURE OF HEADINGTON" – Martin Yapp, Community Development Officer Oxford City Council, will discuss the future development of our Headington community and how we can take part in shaping that future. Then we'll have questions and discussion followed by refreshments at 9pm.

Highfield?? Silverstone!!

You'll know by now that the County Council transport planners withdrew their proposed prohibition on right-turns into our residential area. Unfortunately, they have not offered any alternative measures to reduce through traffic in Highfield. Their most recent proposals have been drawn up to a much tighter budget than they had initially allocated for the scheme for us. The scheme has been combined with one for Old Road. In early January two of the planners kindly gave up their evening to come to a well-attended and vigorous meeting with residents to explain their revisions. Their plan will now simply comprise: (i) a modified table at the Lime Walk-All Saints' crossroads, with single-lane approaches from North and South Lime Walk. This should slow vehicles considerably at that junction,

though not elsewhere. It will be easier for pedestrians to cross there; (ii) an alteration of the Latimer Road-All Saints junction to try to inhibit drivers who treat this section as a rather exciting chicane; (iii) "entry treatments" at all the entries to the area from Old Road and from London Road – similar to the one already at the north end of Latimer Road. HRA Traffic Group said that measures to slow traffic should have higher priority than ineffective entry treatments costing around £5000 to £7000 each. But this has failed to sway the proposals now before the all-important Decisions Council meeting: 10.00, March 24th. See <http://tinyurl.com/6qsazs2>. More at the AGM. As always, Simon or Frank will be glad to hear your comments or queries (details page 4).

Simon Hunt/Frank McKenna

DEVELOPMENT MATTERS

All Saints Road – the development ‘hot-spot’



© Stephanie Jenkins

Initial plans (submitted Jan) to develop the corner of Lime Walk and All Saints' Rd (opposite the church) were withdrawn and replaced by a new scheme that substitutes office space for the flat above the office in All Saints' Rd. The house on the corner remains intact and has garden space allocated to it. The adjoining flats would have extended gardens on space from the workshop that would be demolished. Cllr Ruth Wilkinson is working with planners and the Royal Mail to make sure the post-box is re-instated. See www.headington.org.uk/news for an interesting site history by Stephanie Jenkins.

Meanwhile, the City Council put in their plans for the council depot they own (adjoining the above plot) for a three-storey block of 3 flats. This bid has just been changed, to two flats on two-storeys, after it was pointed out to City planners they had already ruled three-storeys was too high for the plot next door. Oops!

Oxford University – Old Road Campus – a £57 million hot potato?

In early January we were invited to see early plans to develop the above site – demolishing three buildings to make way for a new Nuffield Department of Clinical Medicine, and an Institute of Rheumatology – bringing 150 staff from London. The scale and impact on Old Road (and Mileway Gardens) was shocking, and we said so. We also encouraged the County Highways and Oxford University to work together to develop an off-road cycleway that avoids the Old Rd 'hill'. Unfortunately we are getting mixed reports back - the University say they have a plan but County Highways have ruled it out and are pressing ahead with a cycle-lane as part of the Highfield traffic measures (see Traffic Report). Meanwhile, the University have been granted approval for temporary buildings, and the revised buildings designs are being unveiled at an exhibition on 24 March, so we can update you on these at the AGM.

Sewage in the Brook – again?!! You may remember that the Brook was the focus of attention, a couple of years ago, when a sewage discharge was traced back to the 'misconnection' of new central Headington flats to surface-water drains. In February a sharp-eyed resident spotted a pumping operation at the

Churchill Hospital pond. This was being directed by the Environment Agency (EA) as a result of sewage contamination from the Churchill site. The pollution is being linked to damage to plant species in the Lye Valley SSSI which prompted some testing of the Brook and the ongoing clean-up operation. James Dixon, City Parks & Open Spaces Manager, confirms that Thames Water is investigating the source, and we are promised a report from the EA on the outcome.



A convoy of tankers has been removing polluted water from the Churchill pond to halt further damage to Boundary Brook

Goodbye - area committees?

Some say it is a political move by City Councillors to disband area committees in order to centralise planning decisions. Whatever you might feel about the politics it was clear to Patrick and me, at a recent NEAC meeting, that Councillors had no idea how the replacement 'Area Forums' would interact with local Headington communities efficiently. There is a chance to debate this with Martin Yapp, NEAC Coordinator, when he joins us at HRA AGM.

Last but by no means least, an update from our Autumn edition.... Oxford City Council have recently announced details of phased licensing of all **Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMO)** within the City boundary, and also given notice that planning permission will be required to change use from residential (C3) for use as HMO (C4) from March 2012. Whilst we don't think these measures will reduce the numbers of HMOs, they should help control bad behaviour, and set basic standards of accommodation.

The new owners of **Dorset House** moved quickly with Brookes University to submit a planning application for **313 student rooms**. The application will be decided by **Strategic Development Control Committee 31 March** so more on this at the AGM. We believe Latimer Grange residents have a legitimate planning objection to the height and bulk of the four-storey blocks, and although Cllr Ruth Wilkinson reinforced the point at NEAC, members' comments to SDCC were to support the bid, albeit with 2 additional conditions. HRA have urged NEAC to include residents' participation in the Management Plan development.

Harry Edwards 18/3/11

From Old Home to Superhome

From the outside, and indeed from the inside, 29 Stapleton Road looks pretty much like any other Edwardian semi. However, this family home has been transformed over recent years from old home to 'Superhome'. Which means it is one of 80 old homes in the UK which have reduced their carbon emissions by over 60%. This has been accomplished through a combination of energy efficiency and renewable energy measures, including wood-fibre internal and external solid wall insulation, hemp underfloor insulation, solar water heating, a wood-burning stove, double-glazed sash windows and efficient lights and appliances.

In September 2010 over fifty people from Oxford and beyond came to visit the house, to learn from our experience and to take away ideas for their own homes. There is another chance to visit our house from 1-5pm on Saturday 2nd April, when it will be open as part of the national Superhomes Spring Opening. Also open at the same time is 70 St Leonard's Road, which has a range of interesting features including rainwater harvesting, a timber-frame extension and sheep's wool insulation. For more information see: <http://climatex.org/articles/eco-renovation/2011-open-eco-homes/>

Tina Fawcett and Richard Blundel, Residents

Environment Column:

Such was the interest generated by the HRA Carbon Conversations course that participants decided a further follow-up meeting should be held in order to continue supporting one another in reducing our carbon footprints. Low Carbon Headington is currently repeating the course for residents of New Headington, with one HRA member attending that course. A group member will give a talk on 9th May on *Health and Wellbeing with a Low-Carbon Life-style* (further information from Hilary, details, p4).

HRA's Oxclean took place on March 19th when a committed band of adults and children purged our streets of litter. Many thanks to all concerned, and to other residents who created their own unofficial litterpicks on other dates throughout the year. Please feel free to do this!

Eco Open House Day 2011, on Saturday April 2nd from 1-5pm, is run under *ClimateXchange* which is local, and the *Old Home Super Home Network* (see Tina and Richard's article, above).

Headington Car Club is growing and needs more cars. If you have a reliable and presentable car that you need for only a few hours each week, you

could make great savings by putting it in the car club. The cost of insurance, tax, MOT and servicing would be covered for you. You could use it, and so could other club members. The club runs under the umbrella of Commonwheels, 'the car club that works for the common good'. Details page 4)

Hilary Rollin

The Incident Book, kept by Auriol Hamer for some years, is being taken over by Hilary Rollin. The importance of keeping a record of incidents is confirmed by the police; however minor each incident may seem, it can help build an overall picture of problems in the area. Please phone or email Hilary (details p 4) with information and, if relevant, a photo so we can document anything from broken wing mirrors, break-ins, late night noise, traffic accidents, pollution of Boundary Brook, sightings of rats, potholes, etc

Community Messaging (formerly known as Ringmaster): *Message from Andrew, resident of Highfield, who currently forwards information he receives from Thames Valley Police to HRA for circulation to members. He suggests residents might prefer to subscribe directly to the scheme which would allow faster circulation of information. HRA will continue to circulate by email the general messages.* Ed.

Community Messaging is a free service to anyone living in the Thames Valley. It has been identified as a potentially effective way of reaching the public with community safety messages and information about crime in their area. It is a system where information can be sent directly to residents and members of local businesses who register to receive messages. The majority of these are members of Residents' Association schemes/Neighbourhood Watch Schemes, who pass on the information to thousands more people.

After a crime has taken place, a message can be sent out almost immediately through Community Messaging, warning people to be vigilant and, if available, circulating the descriptions of those responsible and the details of any suspicious vehicles to the community, encouraging witnesses to come forward. Other information could include upcoming Have Your Say meetings and emergency incident information (such as flooding or a large fire) and advice on what to do.

Further details and an application form from: <https://www.tvpcommunitymessaging.org/rmwebportal/startup.aspx?selectedtab=home&tabstate=portal>

Andrew Reid, Resident

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.

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Roz Smith (Lib Dem), 12 Weyland Road, Headington, Oxford OX3 8PD. Tel: 741872. Mobile:07584257156.

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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: cllrwilkinson@oxford.gov.uk

City Councillors - Churchill Ward

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

E-mail: cllrjcmcmanners@oxford.gov.uk

Mark Lygo (Lab), 20 Valencia Road, Headington OX3 7PL. Tel: 07918 635395. E-mail: cllrmllygo@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>

HRA Incidents Register E-mail: hrollin@btinternet.com; Tel: 761545

Headington Car Club Website: www.oxcar.org.uk; Email: info@oxcar.org.uk; Tel: 0845 602 8030

HRA Committee

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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	Zohra Ashraf	55 Latimer Road	
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
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