



HRA NEWSLETTER

Highfield Residents' Association

Spring 2013

COMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

The Autumn Pub Quiz, Christmas Street Carols and Spring Litterpick were as popular as ever, but unfortunately we've had to defer our planned local history evening until later in the year/early next year. On Easter Monday we'll hold a social evening round the bonfire. Looking further ahead we're planning an open gardens weekend in June and our annual street party will move to September to celebrate Streets For People day and include a street cinema evening. Later in the autumn we'll have another of our popular cabaret style music evenings. Details of all events will be circulated nearer the time and advertised on the community noticeboard in All Saints' Road.

Holding regular popular community events is the key to a thriving local residents' association. We're lucky in having several good halls, an excellent local pub and streets we can use as venues for our events. So it would be good to expand our range of activities. If you would like to join us in planning and organising events we'd be delighted to hear from you. Please contact any of the Committee listed at the end of the newsletter.

Patrick Coulter

EVENTS: the programme for 2013 is taking shape, with the following currently proposed:

Bonfire Party: On Easter Monday (1st April), a bonfire party will be held at 28 Latimer Road at 7pm

Annual General Meeting: Tuesday 9th April – see box opposite for details

Open Gardens: on the weekend of 8/9 June, we will hold an open gardens event. A popular event, gardens will be open from 2-4 on either afternoon for visits. More details to follow

Street Party: in September, a themed street party ending with a street cinema. Details to follow

Later in the year we have plans for a **history evening** and a **cabaret evening**

HRA AGM

WEDNESDAY 9th APRIL 7.30 PM
ALL SAINTS' CHURCH HALL, NEW HIGH ST

HRA belongs to you so come along 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 2013*

(we are seeking new committee members)

Then (around 8.15 pm) -

"WILDLIFE IN HEADINGTON"

Howie Watkins (wildlife broadcaster and campaigner) will describe the extensive wildlife of Headington and we'll discuss how HRA can contribute to its conservation. Followed by refreshments at 9pm.

NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN:

One of the themes of our issues with the planning of development in and around Highfield has been the apparent lack of joined-up thinking, of a strategy for Headington. At a recent public meeting, there was overwhelming support for the process of agreeing a Neighbourhood Plan. These are part of the government's localism agenda, and allow communities to develop a plan that can have force in planning matters,

consistent with the City's Local Plan. This should allow for better co-ordination, looking beyond a single planning application or traffic measure. A forum will take forward the process, and there will be consultations and even a formal referendum before the Neighbourhood Plan is approved. You can find details of the process on the Headington Action website: <http://www.hcda.org.uk/> There are plenty of opportunities for involvement in the process.

Mike Ratcliffe

TRAFFIC CALMING MEASURES:

The good news! You must have seen, we hope, the great work done by Phil Gauron and his crew to decorate the All Saints/Lime Walk junction with flowers and windmills. It made the *Oxford Mail*. Well done, Phil!



The less good news! Each year the County Council monitors speeds and volumes of Highfield traffic using **radar black boxes** mounted on lamp-posts at five standardised locations. You may have seen them recently, one in each street, for the 2013 survey. They were there for about ten days at the end of February. They count everything over 6 mph in both directions, at 15-minute intervals throughout the day and night, so there is a lot of detail.

The data for 2012 was at an unusual time of year (June 22nd – July 3rd: schools were still in). We have obtained and analysed it. Some highlights (means covering between 4 and 9 days of data):

1. The worst speeding was at Lime Walk South near Cecil Sharp Close where the figures were:

Weekdays: 3796 vehicles per 24 hours, of which **5.2% (206 vehicles) exceeded 31 mph** and 64.4% exceeded 21 mph. Mean speed: 22.6 mph

Saturday and Sunday: 2516 vehicles per 24 hours, of which **8.2% (196 vehicles) exceeded 31 mph** and 72.1% exceeded 21 mph. Mean speed: 23.8 mph

2. At all sites, a noticeably greater percentage of vehicles exceeded the speed limit on Saturday and especially on Sunday, compared with weekdays.

We think there is a very strong case for extra speed calming measures. Sadly, HRA's move towards community-sponsored sight-line disrupting features reported in the last Newsletter ("DIY streets") have been rebuffed by the Cabinet member for Transport, Cllr Rodney Rose. We're trying to counter this.

Neighbourhood Action Group ("NAG")

On behalf of HRA, Simon and Gill recently attended a Headington NAG meeting. These meetings are where the local police listen to community concerns, and plan their priorities. At present, monitoring speeds in Highfield and enforcing 20 mph is not one of them. **We urge you to take every chance you can to reinforce this priority to the police** (e.g. via the intermittent police "Have your Say" opportunities in the shopping areas or community centres). For further details see www.thamesvalley.police.uk/yourmh-tvp-pol-area-n452.htm.

The police will co-ordinate a **Community Speedwatch** if we get enough volunteers. Let Simon know if you'd be willing to spare about an hour a week for this. www.thamesvalley.police.uk/community-speedwatch.pdf.

Simon Hunt and Frank McKenna

REPORTING INCIDENTS:

HRA maintains a confidential log of low-level incidents. Speeding cars, smashed car mirrors, fly-tipping, blocked drains in our streets, graffiti, used syringes, break-ins... these are just some of the incidents that we think we have to put up with.

Ensuring that such problems get logged in the HRA Incident Book means that HRA can keep a record and identify developing trends. This puts us in a better position to enlist police support. **Phone or email Hilary (761545; HRAadmin@gmail.com.)** with information and, if relevant, a photo so we can document any such problems

If you witness or have been a victim of crime, phone 101 (non-emergency) or 999 or 112 (emergency). There are advantages in using 112. See http://youtu.be/XPZv_8dABfU

Hilary Rollin

BOOK GROUP

The book group continues to meet every other month, reading an eclectic mix of authors from Tolstoy, Trollope, and Thomas Hardy to French, African and North American writers. Books we read last year include *Things Fall Apart*, by Chinua Achebe, *Suite Française* by Irène Némirovsky, *The Way we Live Now* by Anthony Trollope, and *For Whom the Bell Tolls* by Ernest Hemingway. More recently we have read *Anna Karenina*, and for our March meeting are discussing the *Stone Diaries* by Carol Shields. We're certainly not short of ideas for future meetings – the main challenge (but an enjoyable one) is choosing which books to read next.

Susie Pye

ENVIRONMENTAL MATTERS

Thermal Imaging Camera Report:

Thanks to Oxfordshire County Council for the loan of a thermal imaging camera for ten days last December, it was possible to visit the homes of about 40 local residents and identify for them where they might be losing precious heat.

What could one hope to achieve with the visits? As I pointed out beforehand and during the on-site discussion, I am not a professional, and my visit should be seen as serving to identify potential weaknesses to be investigated further.

Given the mixture in Highfield of late-Victorian, Edwardian and modern houses, people were curious to know the interpretation of the images. There were surprises in both directions; older houses that transpired to be less 'leaky' than anticipated; houses whose cavity wall insulation had slipped/ was missing and was less effective than expected. Other features usefully identified were: missing pointing; cracked bricks/ gaps around discharge pipes; leaky cat flaps; doors that were losing heat.

A number of residents were overjoyed by the significantly more favourable readings for parts of roofs recently insulated. Interior cladding was found to be effective, and exterior cladding even more so. However, the most consistent finding and the most readily remedied was loss of heat from radiators on external walls. This included loss of heat above and to the side of radiator foil already installed.

When the pre-Christmas frosty weather ended and rain set in, a few visits had to be cancelled; sincere apologies to those whose 'survey' could not be re-scheduled, and to those who never got beyond the waiting list due to the short duration of the camera loan.

Carbon Conversations Course:

If you previously missed this, now is your opportunity! This is a very supportive, informative and fun course; ask anyone who has taken it in the past! A one-hour taster will be offered on Thursday 18th April, venue tbc. The next available course runs on Thursdays as follows: May 2nd, Introduction: A low-carbon future; May 16th, A low-carbon house; June 6th, Transport and Travel; June 20th, Food and Water; July 4, Consumption and Waste. Date of follow-up meeting to be arranged by the group. Venue: location in Headington tbc according to where participants live. The course is free, but there is a fee for

the course manual. Early booking advisable. Details from Hilary (contact details, p4).

Annual Litterpick:

On Saturday 2nd March a band of 25 HRA volunteers, children included, set off armed with litterpicks, gloves and high visibility jackets to take part in the annual Oxclean initiative.



As our sacks grew heavier, we congratulated ourselves that our streets looked much pleasanter purged of beer cans, take-out cartons, cigarette stubs etc. Among the more interesting 'trophy' were the blade of a hedge cutter, a suitcase, a hessian bag, syringes, and two large pieces of carpeting that had been unceremoniously dumped in the undergrowth. Once we reported these items, City Works were very prompt in collecting them.

NB An unofficial litterpick can be undertaken by anyone at any time, and who knows, the sight of people gathering up litter might just encourage others not to drop their litter!

Hilary Rollin

Unsolicited marketing phone calls:
Don't forget you can register with the Telephone Preference Service (TPS), a free service to prevent such calls, but you'll need to re-register annually. [www:http://www.tpsonline.org.uk](http://www.tpsonline.org.uk) or 0207 291 3320. If you still receive unsolicited live marketing calls, contact the TPS. If you still receive recorded messages, contact the Information Commissioner's Office: www.ico.gov.uk / 0303 123 1113 (local rate); 01625 545 745 (if you have free calls). If you receive spam text messages, forward them to 7726 (the numbers on your mobile keypad that correspond to the letters SPAM). HR

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. T:595790. E: andrewsmith.mp@virgin.net

County Councillors: Headington & Marston

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

E:roy.darke@oxfordshire.gov.uk

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

E:altaf.khan@oxfordshire.gov.uk

County Councillors: Barton and Churchill

Liz Brighouse, OBE (Lab), Willow Bank, Old Road, Headington, Oxford OX3 8TA. T/F:766995. M:07710 451769.

E:liz.brighouse@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Roz Smith (Lib Dem), 12 Weyland Road, Headington, Oxford OX3 8PD. T:741872. M:07584 257156.

E:roz.smith@oxfordshire.gov.uk

City Councillors: Headington Ward

David Rundle (Lib Dem), 39 Catherine St, Oxford OX4 3AH. M:07980 894147. E:david.rundle@oxfordlibdems.org.uk

Ruth Wilkinson (Lib Dem), 21 Thames View Road, Oxford OX4 4TQ. M:07789 368300. E:cllrwilkinson@oxford.gov.uk

City Councillors: Churchill Ward

Joe McManners (Lab), 1 Woodbine Cottage, Headington Hill, Oxford OX3 0BT. M:07979 638670.

E:cllrjcmcmanners@oxford.gov.uk

Mark Lygo (Lab), 20 Valentia Road, Headington, Oxford OX3 7PL. M:07918 635395. E:cllrmllygo@oxford.gov.uk

Headington Neighbourhood Police Officer, PC Kelly Love. T:101. E:Headington@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

Thames Valley Police, website:www.thamesvalley.police.uk. For emergencies T:112 (or 999)

Oxford Brookes Customer Relations Officer, Andrea Siret. T:484451; E:community@brookes.ac.uk

Dorset House Manager, Emily Wright. T:0844 3715641. E:E.Wright@crm-limited.co.uk

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

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

Headington Website:www.headington.org.uk

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

Commonwheels Car Club: www.co-wheels.org.uk

HRA Committee

Patrick Coulter (Events/Traffic)	20 Stapleton Road	T: 766341	patco@supanet.com
Gill Beeston (Treasurer)	14 Stapleton Road		gillianbeeston@waitrose.com
Frank McKenna (Traffic)	92 Lime Walk	T: 769708	frank.mckenna@btinternet.com
Simon Hunt (M'ship/Traffic)	28 Latimer Road	M: 07989 869995	svhoxford@gmail.com
Susie Pye (Events/Books)	18 Bickerton Road	T: 762261	susiepye@phonecoop.coop
Hilary Rollin (Environment)	63 Old Road	T: 761545	hrollin@btinternet.com
Mike Ratcliffe (Secretary)	37 Bickerton Road	T: 763074	mratcliffe@brookes.ac.uk
Philip Hunter (co-opted)	9 Stapleton Road		
Sarah Wordsworth (co-opted)	68 Lime Walk		
Tony Joyce (Hon Member)	68 Blenheim Drive	T: 556050	tandk@appleinter.net
Admin:			HRAadmin@gmail.com
Chair:			HRAchair@gmail.com

HRA Street Representatives

Barrington Close	Margaret Belfrage	11 Barrington Close	
Bickerton Road	Pat Whitehouse	8 Bickerton Road	T: 761718
Brookside	Laura Ess	13 Brookside	T: 762559
Finch Close	Harry Edwards	17 Finch Close	T: 767936
Highfield Avenue	Monyca Douglas	34 Highfield Ave	T: 761441
Latimer Road	Zohra Ashraf	55 Latimer Road	
Lime Walk (North)	vacant		
Lime Walk (South)	Julia Boone	89 Lime Walk	T: 761982
Old Road (part)	Hilary Rollin	63 Old Road	T: 761545
Old Road (part)	Auriol Hamer	67 Old Road	T: 761092
Stapleton Road	Diana Chandler	46 Stapleton Rd	T: 764809