



HRA NEWSLETTER

Highfield Residents' Association

<https://highfieldresidents.weebly.com> hracttee@gmail.com

Spring/Summer 2023

HRA Events

About 30 HRA folk gathered on a sunny but cold Saturday morning on 11th March for our annual litter pick. We also cleared litter from the park in Valentia Road and the woods south of Old Road and along Boundary Brook. A huge pile of rubbish was collected, including an old bike and a rubber dinghy!



EVENTS COMING UP

Film Night, 7:30 p.m. Friday 31 March.

Upper Hall of Church House. "**Saving Mr Banks**", the PG-rated (i.e. children age 8 and over), rave-reviewed film starring Emma Thompson and Tom Hanks about the making of the film of Mary Poppins. This is the film that we planned to show in March 2020, but had to cancel.

HRA Annual General Meeting. 7:30 p.m.

Thursday 27 April in All Saints Church, 71 Lime Walk, Headington OX3 7AB

Our speaker at the AGM will be Jim Woods, Treasurer of Shotover Preservation Society, who will speak on "Shotover: past, present and future".

Those who remember the late Jim Cocke, Vicar of All Saints Church for over 60 years, might be interested in **A Prom for Jim** at **7:00 p.m. Saturday 29 April** in All Saints Church. This will be a concert given by past choir members and musician friends. Free entry, but collection for the Children's Society. Tickets from Eventbrite; search "A Prom for Jim." Or just turn up on the day.

Another epic HRA Street Party.

From 11:00 a.m. Sunday 7 May, the coronation weekend. Details of timings to follow, but coffee, music, lunch, tea, crown-making competition, cycle jousting, other games, choral evensong, gathering in The Butcher's Arms, etc.

Meeting our local police officer

In response to some recent incidents of theft and minor vandalism, Stapleton Road residents had a useful on-street meeting with our local community police officer Ahmed and our ward councillors Roz and Chris. We had a useful discussion with many questions. By comparison Highfield is relatively crime-free. CCTV is only used in problem areas. We could organise a Neighbourhood Watch if there is enough interest. The HRA Incident Log does keep police in touch with our area. Police have cleared up recent problems with drug trafficking in our neighbourhood with several prosecutions. The police budget is seriously cut so the local force is much reduced. Regarding speeding, councillors can arrange for 20mph roundels on roadways and perhaps a live warning sign. So there is no magic bullet but we are more aware that behind the scenes police and councillors are active and always available.

Garden Group by Sally Brodhurst

The Garden Group has been going for a few years now. It is active between April and October, depending on spring and autumn weather; and hibernates in the winter months. We meet each month, on a regular basis. Our members are locals who actively enjoy gardening, and have a garden of their own, which gives them pleasure. Our gardens vary hugely. Some are small; some very large indeed. Some are very tidy; some rather more unkempt. We meet in the evenings, and go to a different person's garden each month. We enjoy discussing which plants are successful, which less so, discovering plants we may not have known before, sharing advice about planting, swapping seedlings or cuttings. It is always a pleasure to return to gardens again, often at a different time of year, and see different plants and any changes. All these gardens are secret oases, in our urban landscape, and, hidden away at the back of our houses are a delight to discover. We have sometimes had our gardens open for the HRA Community Street Party in the summer.

If you are interested in joining the Group, do speak to Sally Brodhurst at 18 Stapleton Road
Tel: 01865 766725.



Lime Walk Planters

I am sure you have noticed and admired the planters at the crossing of Lime Walk and All Saints Road. Have you considered why they are so beautiful? The seeds for the plants are chosen, sown and nurtured by two knowledgeable volunteers, Gill Beeston and Phil Hunter. The compost is put in, turned and cared for, also by these two. Then a dedicated group of more volunteers maintains a watering rota all through the summer months. When it is very hot and dry, this can mean watering daily. And regular dead-heading is needed, to keep the plants flowering for a long season. If you are

interested in helping, do get in touch with Sally,
Tel: 01865 766725, or Phil Hunter, HRA
Committee.

Planning by Mike Ratcliffe

We have often noted that our patch in Headington is neatly bounded by some of the major employment sites in Oxford. The health and education institutions shape Headington; the shark may get photographed more than they do, but the institutions matter more. We know that brings challenges but these are not insurmountable, especially if they are planned for. The City Council is engaged in preparing the next local plan.

In the 'east quadrant' of the city Marston Road and Old Road have the following specific development sites to consider:

Government Buildings and Harcourt House
Land surrounding St Clement's Church:
Headington Hill Hall and Clive Booth Student Village; Oxford Brookes University Marston Road Campus; Old Road Campus; Warneford Hospital; Churchill Hospital; Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre and Pullens Lane Residential.

We can see the cranes over the Clive Booth Student Village as the low intensity Morrell Hall is replaced by bigger, taller, blocks. Closer to our patch we've seen the masterplan unfolding at the Old Road Campus. What's less clear is the masterplan for the Churchill itself with its low-rise buildings and seemingly *ad hoc* car parks, especially towards the back of the site. What will be complex is how planning links up the employment sites, so vital for the jobs we need, with the places where people live. Employment will grow faster than new places for people to live and the result will be more transport needed. When we participated in the Neighbourhood Plan, there was a hope that we could join these two aspects together. The impact of that not happening is playing out in the County Council's various controversial transport schemes. We will need to keep an eye on these developments. Not least as one manifestation of the problem: rush-hour congestion on the London and Old Roads and people moving between them through residential streets is returning to pre-pandemic levels.

Interview with Spike and Kate Wilson by Diane Sider



1. How long have you lived in Highfield?

We have lived in Stapleton Road for nearly 36 years. It's a wonderful street, with a great sense of community, and it was a delight to play to everyone at a safe distance, from our windows, every day during the pandemic. This had the bonus result of increasing community cohesion and reducing isolation.

2. You are members of a quartet called OXUS. Did you all meet at Oxford University? How frequently do you play together?

Kate (violin) and Spike (cello) met at Oxford University and played in a string quartet there too. Heather (viola) lived in Lime Walk for a while, and Louise (violin) in Old High Street. Heather now lives in St Albans, but we still meet most weeks on a Monday morning to rehearse either there or here, and do as many concerts as we can. Kate and Spike also play in a chamber group called The Holywell Ensemble, with which we have played for forty years; with this group we have toured Greece, Turkey, Slovakia, Belgium, and Holland, played at London's Purcell Room and Wigmore Hall, and made several CDs. Nowadays we tour less, but are invited to play in concerts around the country. We like to give concerts in Oxford as we have a loyal following here, and enjoy the interaction with the audience. We are also busy musicians individually, freelancing in professional orchestras, and leading and coaching local amateur orchestras.

3. How important is it for you to introduce newer composers to your audiences? Do you ever compose your own music?

As OXUS we enjoy dreaming up interesting new programmes and finding links between different pieces of music for string quartet. We have also always been interested in introducing audiences to reasonably tuneful, accessible modern music, as there is a lot of great stuff around. We like to talk to our audiences and give them some background information on the music, as we find that it enhances their concert experience. We were commissioned to compose a piece of music for an Arts Council-funded interdisciplinary project concerned with grief and sorrow, using speech-sample techniques similar to those used by Steve Reich in his seminal work, *Different Trains*. Though none of us is a born composer, it was a really interesting experience, which we enjoyed a lot and were pleased with the result.

4. You also hold workshops for young people - what form do they take?

We have done a number of workshops for secondary school children, introducing them to minimalism and Steve Reich's *Different Trains* in particular, and simpler educational concerts introducing younger children to different types of music. Children are very enthusiastic about classical music if they are introduced to it in an engaging way. We are all involved in music education individually as teachers of our respective instruments.

5. How do you see the future for musical education in our schools?

We really worry about the low priority which music is given nowadays. It seems particularly short-sighted, after everyone's experience during the pandemic, when so many people realised how important music and the arts were in their lives, that it is being portrayed as an elite luxury. If there were just one day a year in which all the music were removed from all films and television programmes, then people would realise what a huge part it plays in their lives. We are lucky in Headington to have good state schools which fight the prevailing Philistinism, and provide opportunities for music learning and performance, but other places are not so lucky. There will not be any professional orchestras or choirs in this country if the current generation of children is not encouraged and helped to excel in and value it.

HRA Incident Log by Hilary Rollin

"Please help us to help you." A request from PCSO Ahmed Mohamed

To this end HRA keeps the Incident Log. To enable us to keep the Log of incidents in Highfield updated, please send details of location, date/ time etc., and if relevant, photos to hracttee@gmail.com. NB It is helpful if you include information about who you have already reported the matter to; and if the incident has been reported to the Police, please include the Police Reference Number. The Log helps us build up a picture, which can enable us to convey to the relevant authority that a particular event/ problem is not an isolated incident, but part of a trend. By incident we mean anti-social behaviour, speeding, traffic offences, potholes, theft, burglary, damage to property etc.; in short, situations or malfunctioning that detract from the amenity of Highfield.

Useful addresses (as of March 2023)

Member of Parliament (Lab),

Anneliese Dodds MP, Unit A, Bishops Mews, Transport Way, Oxford OX4 6H

T: 01865 595790 E: annaliesedoddsoxeast@gmail.com

County Councillor: Headington & Quarry

Roz Smith (Lib Dem), 12 Weyland Road, Headington Quarry, Oxford OX3 8PD

T: 01865 750371 M: 07584 257156 E: roz.smith@oxfordshire.gov.uk

County Councillor: Churchill & Lye Valley

Liz Brighouse, OBE (Lab), c/o County Hall, New Road, Oxford, OX1 1ND

T: 01865 766995 M: 07710 451769 E: liz.brighouse@oxfordshire.gov.uk

City Councillors: Headington Ward

Chris Smowton (Lib Dem), Town Hall, St Aldate's, Oxford OX1 1BX

M: 07766 888883 E: cllrcsmowton@oxford.gov.uk

Mohammed Altaf-Khan (Lib Dem), 83 Hugh Allen Crescent, Oxford OX3 0HL

T: 01865 798777 M: 07931 345554 E: cllrmaltaf-khan@oxford.gov.uk

City Councillors: Churchill Ward

Mark Lygo (Lab), 20 Valentia Road, Headington, Oxford OX3 7PL

M: 07826 527047 E: cllrmylygo@oxford.gov.uk

Susan Brown (Lab), 34 Canal Street, Oxford OX2 6BQ

M: 07775 792447 E: cllrsbrown@oxford.gov.uk

Thames Valley Police: www.thamesvalley.police.uk Emergency T: 999 Non-emergency T: 101

Oxford Northeast Neighbourhood Police Team:

Sgt Marc Robinson, PC Jon Kelly, PC Lauren Edkins, PC Jordan Welch

PCSO Ahmed Mohamed, PCSO David Atkinson T: 101

E: BGNeighbourhoodTeam@thamesvalley.police.uk

Oxford Brookes Head of Community Engagement & Social Responsibility:

Andrea Siret T: 01865 647370 <https://service.brookes.ac.uk/cms/communitycomplaints>

Oxford City Council: T: 01865 249811 www.oxford.gov.uk

Antisocial Behaviour Team:

To report anti-social behaviour www.oxford.gov.uk/site_search/results/?=report and CANActoccw.htm

Community Response Team: T: 01865 249811 E: saferoxford@oxford.gov.uk

Streetscene: T: 01865 247811 E: streetscene@oxford.co.uk

Oxfordshire County Council: T: 01865 792422 www.oxfordshire.gov.uk

Free reporting service for lost, found and stolen pets in Oxford: www.oxford.animalfinders.co.uk

Headington News: www.headington.org.uk

Highfield History section: www.headington.org.uk/history/streets/highfield/

Headington Action: <https://headingtonaction.org>

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

HRA Committee:

Chair (rotating between committee members):

hrachair@gmail.com

HRA Admin:

hracttee@gmail.com

HRA Planning:

hra.oxford.planning@gmail.com

HRA Webmaster:

hra.website@gmail.com

HRA Website:

www.highfieldresidents.weebly.com