



HRA NEWSLETTER

Highfield Residents' Association

<https://highfieldresidents.weebly.com/>

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Spring 2020

HRA Events Group New Priorities

Frank McKenna and Patrick Coulter write:

As you know, our events programme has been postponed until the autumn when we hope to gradually begin our regular programme again. We'll keep in touch. For now, HRA energy is focussed on other ways to support our Highfield community during the present crisis. We have set up a support scheme covering all residents in Highfield, which Hilary describes in the next column. So far, there are street WhatsApp groups in Stapleton Road, Latimer Road, Barrington Close and Brookside. For those without access to the internet or WhatsApp we hope that they can be kept up to date with events via neighbours. The aim is to make sure that we can all access food and medicine and other necessary resources for the next few months. Another essential aim is to encourage each other so that we can stay positive. So do let us have your suggestions of activities and events which we can organise within the present very tight limits.

These arrangements are being replicated across Headington – for example there are already over a dozen WhatsApp street groups and a number of Resident Association led schemes. For a Headington-wide picture see Headington News at <http://www.headington.org.uk/news/items/coronavirus.html>.



Every cloud has a silver lining *Hilary Rollin, Covid-19 Support Group Co-ordinator, writes:*

In these dark times, it can be hard to see the positives. However, it has been incredibly heart-warming to see how HRA members have responded to the invitation to join our HRA Covid-19 Support Group. **A big thank you to all our volunteers, and if you would still like to join the team, please contact hrachair@gmail.com**

We hope the number of our residents catching the virus will be minimal. However, please remember that if you are in isolation, or in an at-risk category for health or age reasons, and you need essential food supplies, a prescription, help with bins etc. you can email hra-covid19-support@googlegroups.com giving name, address, phone number and stating what help you need. One of our team of volunteers will then make contact. If you have a neighbour who has no internet access and you cannot give help yourself, please email the above address on their behalf. **The Support Group is here to help all Highfield residents.**

Strictly for use by residents for whom there is no other means of making contact, there is a number that can be phoned, 01865 761545. The person answering your call will relay the request to the team, one of whom will get in touch. **Please note, phoning is the last resort and is likely to result in a slower response.** If you are not a member and would like to join, please email hrachair@gmail.com. Due to the current restrictions the payment of subscriptions is deferred till the autumn.

Easter Egg Hunt

All HRA households* are invited to take part in a 'social distancing' Easter Egg Hunt! How will it work? On Good Friday (10th April) simply put an Easter egg in your front window, or somewhere at the front of your property where children and adults can spot it. It can be a picture of an egg, a painted egg or an actual egg, big, small, sparkly or classically simple - whatever you fancy. Those not in self-isolation, on their one outing of the day for exercise, are invited at some point over the Easter weekend to see how many eggs they can spot. For those in isolation....you can spot how many hunters there are! Obviously we want to adhere to Government's guidance on social distancing so please be mindful whilst you're on your hunt. Let us know how many you spot! Happy spotting! (*Households between Lime Walk and Finch Close/Brookside)

Tree replacements: *James Larminie reports:*

Improving the state of our street trees has been frustrating, though some progress has been made.

When it comes to replacing dead or damaged trees, the County and City councils have done little more than offer vague promises and delays, yet one day a much-loved tree was suddenly cut down by the corner of Latimer and All Saints Roads without explanation or warning. We did eventually find out that it was considered unsafe, and indeed there was evidence of disease in the remaining trunk. However, the speed of action when it comes to removal compared to planting is remarkable.

Taking things into our own hands, a splendid Rowan tree ‘Olympic Flame’ was planted by HRA members at the end of last November, at the lower end of Stapleton Road, which is coming into blossom as we go to print. Amazingly, a little while later, without any announcement or explanation, another tree was planted near the top end of Stapleton

by the County Council. We assume it was left over from the tree planting in connection with works in Headley Way. It has been carefully planted and is well protected, so we are grateful.



Access to Headington: Shared cycle and pedestrian paths along Old Road

John Nealon writes:

One of the aims of Access to Headington (AtoH) is to provide improved segregated cycle and pedestrian pavements throughout Headington and presumably to encourage more use of cycles to get to and from work and generally around Headington.

The plans for Old Road on the AtoH website call for a shared pathway along the whole length of the road, on both sides, from Gypsy Lane up to The Slade. The more easily converted sections where the path and verge could relatively quickly be converted have been finished. These run along the south side from Gypsy Lane to Finch Close and along both sides from Lime Walk/Churchill Drive to Windmill Road/The Slade. The rest has yet to be done. The photographs show before and after outside my house in Old Road by the NOC. OK, the grass has gone, replaced by a path that is comfortably wide enough for both pedestrians and cyclists. In that respect I feel the work has been a success, despite nostalgia prompted by my lingering memories of the path as it was a few months ago and how it was when I moved there in 1993. Then the south-side verge was all grass - to a townie like me it seemed almost rural.



The cyclists seem to like it, which is good, and while, of course, most cyclists are lovely people (I'm an irregular one myself) I wish they would slow down a bit as they hurtle past, a foot or two from my gate, and learn not to ride the wrong way – for goodness sake, there are huge white arrows on the paths!

Work has yet to start on the rest, including the most difficult section, between Lime Walk and Gypsy Lane. The AtoH plan calls for land to be taken from the Old Road Campus to allow a full-width cycle and pedestrian path. The plans include an artist's impression to show a retaining wall running along the garden frontages on the north side and fenced-off pathways on the south side. It will be very interesting to watch this unfold.

COVID-19 What do we need to know and

do? *Dr Premila Webster, Retired Consultant in Public Health gives us the Public Health perspective, current at time of writing, but may change.*

Covid-19 is a new strain of Coronavirus, not previously identified in humans, and experts are learning as they go along. It is therefore important to keep updated through television, the press, radio and internet. Coronaviruses cause illnesses ranging from the common cold to diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV).

How does COVID-19 spread? It is mainly transmitted through contact with respiratory droplets rather than through the air.

Symptoms: A high temperature i.e. your chest or back feel hot to the touch (no need to take your temperature) and a new, continuous cough –i.e. coughing a lot for more than an hour, or 3 or more coughing episodes in 24 hours (if you usually have a cough, it may be worse than usual). These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually. Some people become infected but have no symptoms and don't feel unwell. However, it can be more severe for others, affecting lungs and airways.

What steps should I take? Most people recover without needing special treatment. Older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness. Patients with the most serious health conditions- including those undergoing chemotherapy - should be shielded from social contact for 12 weeks. These patients will receive detailed guidance from the NHS.

Basic protective measures:

- **Wash your hands frequently and thoroughly** with soap and water or an alcohol-based hand gel for at least 20 seconds.
Why? This kills viruses that may be on your hands.
- **Maintain social distancing:** To reduce the chances of spreading infection, all members of the public must abide by current allowable reasons for leaving home.
- Work from home, if you can.
- If going outside, go alone or only with one member of one's own household.
- Use the phone, online services, or apps to contact your GP surgery or other NHS services.

- Stop all unnecessary travel and avoid public transport wherever possible.
- Maintain at least 6 feet distance between yourself and others.
- Wear gloves if you have to go out, and wash them frequently.
- **Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth:**
Why? Hands touch many surfaces and can pick up viruses which they can transfer to your eyes, nose or mouth. From there, the virus can enter your body and make you ill.
- **Follow good respiratory hygiene:** Cover your mouth and nose with your bent elbow or tissue when coughing or sneezing; dispose of the used tissue immediately in a covered bin and wash your hands.
Why? Droplets spread virus. By following good respiratory hygiene, you protect the people around you from viruses such as colds, flu and COVID-19.

Tips to maintain mental health:

Managing your stress and psychosocial wellbeing during this time is as important as managing your physical health.

- Avoid watching, reading or listening to news that makes you anxious or distressed.
- Seek information updates at specific times, only once or twice per day. The constant stream of news reports about an outbreak makes anyone feel worried.
- To help you distinguish facts from rumours, only get information from official or credible websites, i.e. *World Health Organization, Public Health England* and *NHS*.
- Stay in touch with family and friends by phone, skype and facetime.
- Keep to regular routines and schedules as much as possible.
- Stay positive: think what you can do, not what you can't do.

Tips to keep physically active:

- Take short active breaks during the day.
- Follow an online exercise class.
- Walk, even in small spaces; walking around or walking on the spot can help you remain active.
- When on the phone, stand or walk around your home, instead of sitting down.
- If you go out for a walk or exercise, observe social distancing from other people.
- Stand up: aim to interrupt sitting and reclining time every 30 minutes.

OxClean Litterpick:

29th February had a murky start to the day, but that didn't deter 20 keen individuals, equipped with high-viz jackets, gloves, litterpickers and empty sacks, from setting off to our allotted roads. In fact, some roads had already been purged of litter by Brookes students (thank you!), so we adjusted our routes accordingly. An hour or so later, we heaved our bulging sacks back to the agreed refreshments station. It was hard to tell which was more rewarding: the sight of the sacks we had filled, or the appearance of the streets! This year there were no sharps, but what on earth was the heavy, cylindrical metal object doing amid the vegetation? Where were the bikes whose stout lockable chains we found in the undergrowth? Who could have rounded up a whole collection of empty cans and dumped them unceremoniously beside the footpath? If you liked the look of our litter-free streets, once the current restrictions have been lifted, do feel free to carry out your own mini-litterpick.

HR

Revd JE Cocke farewell

Nicholas Rollin writes:

England's longest serving vicar, James Cocke, of All Saints' Highfield, officially retires on 31st March after 63 years. To mark the occasion a farewell service was held in church on 26th January. A choir made up of current and former students led the singing; Jim gave the sermon and an appreciation was given by the Dean of Christ Church. The service, which followed the Book of Common Prayer, was a very personal one and stressed the continuity of human endeavour. Jim was supportive of HRA activities, many of which have taken place on All Saints' premises. It is not yet known when a successor will be appointed

Useful addresses

Member of Parliament (Lab), Anneliese Dodds MP, Unit A, Bishops Mews, Transport Way, Oxford OX4 6HD.

T: 595790. E: anneliese4oxford@gmail.com

County Councillor: Headington & Quarry

Roz Smith (Lib Dem), 12 Weyland Road, Headington Quarry, Oxford OX3 8PD. T: 750371. M: 07584 257156.

E: roz.smith@oxfordshire.gov.uk

County Councillor: Churchill & Lye Valley

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

E: liz.brighouse@oxfordshire.gov.uk

City Councillors: Headington Ward

Stef Garden (Lib Dem), Town Hall, St Aldate's, Oxford OX1 1BX. M: 07443 331700. E: cllrsgarden@oxford.gov.uk

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

E: cllraltaf-khan@oxford.gov.uk

City Councillors: Churchill Ward

Mark Lygo (Lab), 20 Valentia Road, Headington, Oxford OX3 7PL. M: 07826 527047. E: cllrmllygo@oxford.gov.uk

Susan Brown (Lab), 34 Canal Street, Oxford OX2 6BQ. M: 07775 792447. E: cllrsbrown@oxford.gov.uk

Thames Valley Police website: www.thamesvalley.police.uk. For emergencies T: 999

Headington Neighbourhood Police Officers: PC Luke Smith and PCSO Ahmed Mohamed. T: 101.

E: Headington@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

Thames Valley Alert website: www.thamesvalleyalert.co.uk

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

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

Antisocial Behaviour Team: website: www.oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decC/Anti_Social_Behaviour_and_CANAcT_occw.htm

Community Response Team: E: saferox@oxford.gov.uk; T: 249811; **Streetscene:** T: 252971

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

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

Headington website: www.headington.org.uk; **Highfield History** section: www.headington.org.uk/history/streets/highfield/

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

HRA Committee:

Chair (rotating between committee members):

hrachair@gmail.com

Admin:

hractee@gmail.com

HRA website:

<https://highfieldresidents.weebly.com/>

HRA Covid-19 support group:

hra-covid19-support@googlegroups.com