



HRA NEWSLETTER

Highfield Residents' Association

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

Spring 2022

Notice of the HRA Annual General Meeting for 2021-22

We are pleased to announce our 49th AGM will be held in person on **Thursday April 28th** from 7.30 - 9.00 p.m. (latest) at All Saints Highfield Church, Lime Walk, Headington, OX3 7AL

Agenda:

1. Approval of Minutes of 48th AGM held by Zoom on Tuesday April 27th 2021
2. Reports:
 - a) Chair's Report
 - b) Financial Report for the period April 1st 2021 to March 31st 2022
 - c) Other brief reports include Planning, Website, Future Events, Trees, Traffic (including Liveable Streets), Book Group, Gardening Group
3. Election of Committee for 2022- 2023
4. Guest speaker: PCSO Ahmed Mohamed
Ahmed will speak about his work as our PCSO.



Future Events by Mike Ratcliffe

Film Night Friday 6 May 7.30 p.m.

Church House, New High Street
Upstairs in the hall with refreshments

Belfast - Oscar-nominated and Bafta-winning British/Irish film (12A) written and directed by Kenneth Branagh starring Caitriona Balfe, Judi Dench, Jamie Dornan, Ciarán Hinds, Colin Morgan, and newcomer Jude Hill. The film, which Branagh has described as his "most personal film", follows a young boy's childhood in Belfast, Northern Ireland, at the beginning of The Troubles in 1969.

Summer Street Party Sunday 5 June from 11 a.m.

On All Saints Road from the junction with Latimer Road

It's the Platinum Jubilee and national celebrations including street parties - so come and celebrate with coffee from 11 a.m., lunch together at 1 p.m. and then entertainments in the street with tea in the Church at 3.30 p.m. The joy of the street party format is people can just come along. You can come for the whole thing (with the opportunity for some light helping) or you can just pass by on your way somewhere else. Mingle all day or mingle as you pass. Apart from the mingling, the other key feature is, on a bank holiday, when the wider roads around our area are mostly empty of their traffic, we won't be letting people cut through. For the children, the novelty of being on the street is marked by play. Things to do in the company of other kids, some well-known from direct neighbours, some from schools and often with kids they've never met before. *More details to follow.*

Trees by James Larminie

This winter has been a good one for tree planting in our area. The HRA has planted three - two in Stapleton Road to replace dead trees: a Midland Hawthorn about half way along, and a Rowan 'Olympic Flame' near the bottom to go with the one we planted at the end a couple of years ago. We bought a third tree for the tree pit at the bottom of Latimer Road, however the City Council said they would take over that one, and they have prepared the ground. The third tree was instead planted in front of Latimer Grange – a very fine Silver Birch 'Snow Queen'. This was planted on the weekend of the 70th anniversary of the accession of the Queen. Although the City Council have yet to plant anything in their prepared tree pit at the end of Latimer Road, they have planted three very fine trees over this winter, on the grassed area near the end of Highfield Avenue on Old Road, behind the bus stop there. So, we are very grateful for that.



HRA Incident Log: Have you ever wondered what this is and what it's for? by Hilary Rollin

It is a record of incidents, and antisocial behaviour, such as drug dealing, late-night noise, fly-tipping, speeding, break-ins. The Log is also used for recording malfunctioning of street services, such as blocked drains and broken street lamps. It enables us to keep track of what might appear to be one-off issues in a particular road, probably reported on Street WhatsApp, but which may be part of a wider problem across Highfield, and need to be addressed. This means we can trace a pattern, which can result in quickly resolving problems across the area.

A recent example of useful feedback of information concerned the pollution of Boundary

Brook. Many thanks to all those who reported their sightings to Thames Water, the Environment Agency and to the HRA Incident Log, resulting in prompt resolution of the problem. For speed we encourage members to report incidents themselves to the relevant authority (Police, Thames Water, Streetscene, Councillors) then send us the relevant details (date, place, police reference number etc.), hracttee@gmail.com

The Lye Valley by Phil Hunter

A five-minute walk from the top of Stapleton Road onto the Slade will take you to the footpath entrance of the north fen of Lye Valley - an 8,000 year-old internationally rare habitat; technically speaking, a tufa-forming, valley-head, alkaline spring fen. It constitutes 1.5 of only 19 hectares of this habitat left in all England and supports over 20 species of plant rare in Oxfordshire of which 14 are on the England Red List. It also hosts ten species of rare and 27 species of nationally scarce invertebrates, notably soldier flies and glow worms, as well as thriving populations of reptiles and amphibians. Among the unusual plants adapted to this environment are the Marsh Helleborine, an orchid which flourishes here, and Grass of Parnassus, a very rare species in this part of the UK.

For centuries this was common land used for grazing animals but over the last century, the valley has changed: now there is a major threat to its continued existence because of hydrological issues. The fen is wetted by natural springs, but the catchment area for these springs, once open country, is now built up. Water run-off from the surrounding area, instead of percolating gently into the ground, is now captured in large drains and fed into the brook. When there is heavy rain, the brook becomes a torrent, and the bed and the walls are being eroded. As the brook sinks lower between its banks, water drains off the fen, leading to a gradual drying effect. Over recent years the Friends of Lye Valley have started an extensive scheme of reparative conservation work involving regular cutting of the fen and extensive, ad hoc works to mitigate and manage the flow of water through the site, all of which should maintain the peat-rich environment and enhance the biodiversity of the habitat. For lots more on Lye Valley see their website: <http://www.friendsoflyealley.org.uk>

Interview With Leon Catalo, Priest-in-Charge, All Saints Highfield, by Diane Sider

DS: *When did you decide to become ordained and what led to that decision?*

LC: I can't say there was ever any writing in the sky for me. It was more of a slow but growing conviction as I met many people who have questions but no-one to talk to about them. It's a privilege to be paid to help people who want to learn more about the Bible and the Christian faith.

DS: *How much freedom do you have within the Church to set your own agenda?*

LC: There's always a risk that clergy can become "loose cannons"! My job is not to share my own pet theories about economics, politics or philosophy. I'm only an amateur in those things. What I'm qualified to talk about is the Bible and Christian theology. Quite apart from anything else, theology is fascinating! For centuries it was seen as the "queen of the sciences".

DS: *How do you see your role in the local community?*

LC: I'd love All Saints to play its part in making our little corner of OX3 a great place to live – for everyone, whatever they believe. We host many different musical, cultural, spiritual and social groups in the church itself and in our church hall on New High Street. I am still quite new to the area so for now I'm trying to listen and learn. If you have thoughts or suggestions please do get in touch via the website.

DS: *How do you encourage more people to attend All Saints?*

LC: There are all sorts of things going on. During the week we have toddler groups, board games, Bible study, ceilidhs and morning prayer, among other things. On Sundays we aim for our services to be both joyful and traditional. We have all ages from under 1 to over 90. We sing good old classic hymns, follow the traditional and beautiful Anglican liturgy and listen to (hopefully!) thought-provoking sermons. Afterwards we all have coffee together while the kids charge around the church playing hide and seek!

DS: *"The fall in religious observance in Europe is counter-balanced by fervent concern for the environment, which is, of course, the oldest religion of all." Theodore Zeldin, The Hidden Pleasures of Life. How far would you agree?*



Leon Catalo, his wife Charlotte & daughter Elanor

LC: I'd certainly agree that we can't help but worship something. It's simply how we're wired as human beings. David Foster Wallace (who was not himself a Christian) once said, "In the day-to day trenches of adult life, there ... is no such thing as not worshipping. Everybody worships. The only choice we get is what to worship." He goes on to talk about the dangers of worshipping things such as money, beauty, career, the environment etc. For a Christian, those are all very *good* things, but they become corrupted (and corrupting) when we try to make them *ultimate* things, rather than God.

DS: *How do you make Christianity relevant to young people today?*

LC: The question I find harder to answer is "how did we ever manage to make it seem *irrelevant*"! If nothing else, in a world of uncertainty and anxiety Christ offers hope and peace. I think the biggest turn-offs for young people (as for anyone else) are half-heartedness and hypocrisy. Quite right too. What is more off-putting than holier-than-thou folk going through the motions? The reason I was fascinated by Christianity as a teenager, was because I met people who clearly believed it - and also clearly acted like they did too.

DS: *How do you put your beliefs into practice day by day?*

LC: Not as well as I should do! Like any relationship, a relationship with God is sustained by two things: listening and talking. Christians listen to God by reading the Bible and talk to him in prayer.

Lime Walk South needs an HRA Street Rep.

What is involved? Deliver the HRA Newsletter to members twice a year, collect subs from members when delivering the Spring Newsletter, update any changes and check on email addresses. The Membership Secretary equips all Street Reps with a list of members in their street (in this case Lime Walk, south of the junction with All Saints' Rd.) Being a Street Rep is not very demanding, but is essential for the smooth-running of the organisation, and is actually good fun, and a way of getting to know neighbours and bring in new members. If you are interested contact hrachair@gmail.com

-Useful addresses (as of March 2022)

Member of Parliament (Lab), Anneliese Dodds MP, Unit A, Bishops Mews, Transport Way, Oxford OX4 6H
T: 595790; E: <mailto:annaliesedoddsoxeast@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

Chris Smowton (Lib Dem), Town Hall, St Aldate's, Oxford OX1 1BX.
M: 07766 888883; E: cllrsmowton@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: cllrmygo@oxford.gov.uk

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

Thames Valley Police: <http://www.thamesvalley.police.uk> For emergencies T: 999

Headington Neighbourhood Police Officers:

Sgt David Vermeulen, PC Mollie Dugmore

PCSO Ahmed Mohamed, PCSO David Atkinson. T: 101;

E: OxfordNortheastNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

E: ahmed.mohamed@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk

Oxford Brookes Community Relations Officer: Andrea Siret

T: 484451; E: community@brookes.ac.uk

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

Antisocial Behaviour Team: website:

http://www.oxford.gov.uk/PageRender/decC/Anti_Social_Behaviour_and_CANAcT_occw.html

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

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

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

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

Headington: 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:

hractee@gmail.com

HRA Planning:

hra.oxford.planning@gmail.com

HRA Webmaster:

hra.website@gmail.com

HRA Website:

www.highfieldresidents.weebly.com/

HRA Covid-19 support group

hra-covid-19-support@googlegroups.com