

**DIVINITY ROAD AREA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS
YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2015**

Income

Subscriptions of £1,169 is a new record - thank and congratulations to Anne Hall and her band of collectors

DRARA events yielded £1,012 - £812 from the fete and £200 from Open Gardens

Expenditure

Along with the usual expenditure on printing (£574), insurance (£253) and the website (£120) and events (£637)

DRARA was able to make a £200 donation to Oxfordshire Advocacy from the profits of the fete.

We are also delighted to be able to continue to support the Cowley Road Carnival - DRARA again paid £250 in support

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YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2015**

Income & Expenditure	2015		2014	
	£	£	£	£
Income				
Subscriptions	1,169.00		1,128.00	
Events	1,012.22		1,049.39	
Bartlemas appeal	0.00		0.00	
Other	146.00		0.00	
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
		2,327.22		2,177.39
Expenditure				
Printing	573.70		415.61	
Insurance	253.00		253.00	
Sundries	0.00		0.00	
drara.org.uk	120.00		35.00	
Events	637.07		795.68	
Charitable donations	200.00		336.86	
Other	250.00		250.00	
Planning and appeals	0.00		0.00	
	<hr/>		<hr/>	
		(2,033.77)		(2,086.15)
(Deficit) / surplus for the year		<u>293.45</u>		<u>91.24</u>
Balance sheet				
Cash at bank		1,091.62		798.17
Creditors		0.00		0.00
		<hr/>		<hr/>
		<u>1,091.62</u>		<u>798.17</u>
Represented by:				
Historical surplus brought forward		798.17		706.93
Surplus for the year		293.45		91.24
		<hr/>		<hr/>
		<u>1,091.62</u>		<u>798.17</u>
By Fund				
East Oxford Forum		10.00		10.00
General fund		1,081.62		788.17
		<hr/>		<hr/>
		<u>1,091.62</u>		<u>798.17</u>

A small surplus of £293 means that DRARA enters next year in sound financial health.

Reports from Committee Members

Year 2014-15

Membership Report (Anne Hall)

Collecting seems to have only just finished and it is time to start again for 2015/16! Thank you to everyone who has paid the annual subscription of £5 per household (£2 per household for students and concessions). £1,206 (perhaps we should insert the figure Mark has in his report?) has been collected. A huge thank you to those of you who responded to leaflets the collectors left if you were out after a couple of calls and paid your subscriptions directly to the membership secretary and also to those who paid by standing order. This is much appreciated as it saves time for the collectors. If you change your email address during the year please let collectors or the membership secretary know so we can keep lists up to date.

Our collectors have done a fantastic job and we thank them for generously giving their time and being prepared to turn out in all weathers to collect during the autumn and winter months. The team included Clare Ball, Catherine Barnes, Jon Bliss, Maggie Budden, Ann Edmunds, Pauline Edwards, Jo Gilmour, Shaun Hanks, Mariabelle Headlam, Ros Lacey, Sarah Lacey, Martina Mueller, Rebecca Philipson, Beth Reed, Linda Thomas, Rob Waterston, Catherine Weston and Riet van Bremen. I know some of them wish to 'retire' or 'rest' after several years of collecting and we would be grateful for more volunteers. Please contact me!

Anne Hall, DRARA Membership Secretary
anne16hall@btinternet.com or membership@drara.org.uk

DRARA Events Update – 2014/15

The year got off to a productive start in March with our annual spring **Freecycle** encouraging everyone to have a clear out, then have fun finding treasures out of other peoples' unwanted things – with good participation from the community, especially the children! Our second **Freecycle** day was on Sunday 11th October, which we hope to be especially useful for the new student residents.

Next was the **Easter Egg trail** on Easter Monday. Following spring showers, it was wonderful to see families (in wellies) come to the meadow and hunt for stickers and answer egg-citing quiz questions!

In May, once again our annual **Open Gardens** event took place on the same day as a **garden party** with tea and cakes sold in aid of dementia charities, and **Play In The Street** held at the top of Southfield Road. Thirteen residents shared their gardens for the day, raising over £800 for dementia charities and Cowley Road Carnival, and inspiring all those who visited.

We embarked on our second **DRARA Summer Fete**, with an intention to simplifying a little on last year to ease the load. In reality, June arrived and we managed to turn out a full-on Summer Fete with added bells and whistles – notably Pimms, fish and chips and lots of ice lollies! The events team, with help from many local residents, and borrowing equipment from numerous sources including Mary and John School, the church and even the Witney rotary put on entertainment for all ages - a true community event!

With the bonus of lovely weather for the second year in a row, Sinnet Court once again proved to be a welcoming and safe space for our community get-together. The aim of the fete was primarily to bring the community together, but we did manage to raise some money too, with £50 supplementing the contribution towards the Cowley Road Carnival, and a further £200 being

donated to Oxford Advocacy (a charity providing free, independent, non-judgmental and confidential advocacy support to disadvantaged adults in Oxfordshire).

Unfortunately **Film in the Street** didn't take place this year – the Events Team just didn't have the time or resources to make it happen within the September time window, and despite requests for others to get involved in the newsletter, no offers of help were forthcoming. However, the good news is that in response to news of its cancellation, a few new faces have come forward offering their help for future film in the streets – so it will be back on next year! (Andy stepping down, and thank you – or have we already done this?)

Following great feedback and requests for more **walking events**, we organized three walks this year: firstly, in July, a **wildlife walk** around Warneford Meadow with local resident and original member of Friends of Warnford Meadow, Andrew Lack. Next, in August, local historian Annie Skinner took us on an **East Oxford stroll** down the Cowley Road from the Plain to the churchyard, sharing her extensive knowledge of local history. And finally, we celebrated the Indian summer with a **Nature Walk** across the public footpaths that stretch across the golf club and into Barracks Lane, picking blackberries along the way! Thanks to Maggie Hartford for leading this.

We now have an organised troop of leaflet distributors and poster displaying houses, which, alongside the DRARA emailing list and DRARA Facebook page, and advance planning of DRARA event dates, has definitely improved communication of upcoming DRARA events. A date is already in the diary to plan our 2015-16 events, hopefully building on the success of our established annual happenings, but maybe with a surprise addition or two!

Environment Report

The DRARA Environment Action Group (EAG or Eager Beavers as we call ourselves) co-ordinates practical activities such as Street Gardening and Ox Clean days, reports fly tipping and acts on rubbish left in the street and front gardens.

We also consider wider environmental issues, and send Green Flashes to 300 email addresses, including DRARA members. Topics have ranged from compost, plastic-free July, energy saving, etc. Suggestions for other topics welcome!

We have constructed frames around tree gardens in Divinity and Southfield Roads, adding compost, flowers and bulbs. We are now focusing on drought-resistant plants such as herbs. Anyone with herb plantlets or time to help will be very welcome.

Over the year the group has leafleted houses with messy gardens, reported fly-tipping, and linked with other groups across the city including OxClean in March, the Cowley Road Tree Group, Drara traffic-calming and Freecycle days. At the Drara fete this year we ran a recycling game, conducted a questionnaire on plastic bags, and sold reusable shopping bags.

We are encouraging beautiful front gardens and are planning an exhibition of photos. Oxford City Council will act on rubbish in front gardens if prompted, so contact us via the website.

We are appealing for residents to 'adopt' their own tree-garden so that watering and weeding can be done more regularly. **Our next community gardening session is on October 31st**. Contact annaeden49@hotmail.com

Traffic Report

The volume and speed of the traffic in our streets is as much a concern as ever. The traffic survey carried out by Oxfordshire County Council in November and December 2014 gave us some hard data

and confirmed what we all know: our roads are very busy. In Divinity Road the camera recorded 21,727 vehicles in one week while the camera in Southfield Road opposite Warneford Road registered 16,102 vehicles. Speeds were also recorded, with probably a diluted picture emerging; even so, 31% of vehicles recorded on the cameras were exceeding the 20 mph speed limit.

We've had a detailed look at these survey results and on 24 February over 40 DRARA members gathered at the Golf Club to discuss them, along with our community police officer Sergeant Neil Applegarth, our County Councillor Jamila Azad, and a journalist from the Oxford Mail. It was clear from the numbers of DRARA members who attended and from the discussion itself how much concern there is about the amount of traffic using these streets, the inconsiderate and sometimes dangerous driving that residents witness every day, and its impact on our community - danger to pedestrians and cyclists, noise, pollution, and damage to residents' vehicles, all of which undermine the residential nature of this area.

The work on the roundabouts on the A40 section of the ring road, due to continue until September 2016, is causing hold-ups which mean that more drivers than ever are using our streets as a cut-through. This is a reminder that there is a bigger picture to our traffic issues. The County Council's Local Transport Plan (LTP4) was out for consultation in spring of this year, and a detailed response on behalf of DRARA was submitted. On 21 July the documents, with amendments incorporated following the consultation, were approved and recommended for adoption by Full Council at a meeting to take place on 8 September 2015. The full range of documents and amendments can be viewed at <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/local-transport-plan-ltp4>

The vision presented in LTP4 is just that, a vision, and as always the devil is in the detail and in the processes that will be involved in implementation, and in any case the plan covers a period up to 2031. So the work we can do locally is what may make the most impact now.

Community SpeedWatch

After a lull while we waited for the new, state of the art SpeedWatch equipment to be delivered to our community police, we're now in a position to restart our action to remind drivers in our streets of the speed limit and to catch the speeding ones.

I have been trained to use the new equipment, and at the same time, have discussed our SpeedWatch strategy with the police. As ever, the police are very helpful and encouraging, and can assist us both with the setting up, if we need it, of a SpeedWatch, and with the follow-up when we have the list of registration numbers of speeding vehicles. Drivers who have exceeded the 20 mph limit are written to by the police. If the car is logged in 2 further SpeedWatches, their details are sent to Roads Policing, who may take further action. So while the main aim of SpeedWatches is 'education' there are potential sanctions as well.

The first SpeedWatch with the new equipment took place at the end of September. The intention is to make the SpeedWatches as frequent as possible. Our main aim is to remind drivers of the speed limit and that their driving is being monitored. We therefore are planning frequent, short sessions, rather than long ones, across a range of times. If we can manage it, we'd like to include sessions in the middle of the day and in evenings, when drivers have more opportunity to drive inappropriately than when the roads are congested. Shorter sessions are also less onerous for our SpeedWatch volunteers without whom, nothing is possible!

'Home Zone'

Alongside the SpeedWatch operations, we plan to make our streets more visibly residential and 'homey' – to become a 'Home Zone'. This is a concept launched in the Netherlands in the 1970s, and work through the physical alteration of streets and roads in an area. These alterations force motorists to drive with greater care and at lower speeds ... benches, flower beds, play areas, lamp

posts, fences and trees used to alter the streets and roads. Becoming a Home Zone offers other community benefits as they also enhance the beauty of an area. Beechcroft Road in N Oxford have done this successfully. See <http://www.homezones.org/concept.html> for more information.

Within the physical and legal constraints presented by the way our streets work and are managed, we think there is more that we can do to create the sense of a 'Home Zone'. Working with DRARA's environment committee, a working group could be set up to agree and implement some inexpensive – and legal – changes to our streets that could contribute to the effort to get drivers to slow down and to drive courteously in roads where people live.

So a three-pronged approach to the traffic in our streets is needed: to continue to lobby the councils; SpeedWatches; and making the streets more 'homey'. We have a group of SpeedWatch volunteers, and a group of you who have expressed your willingness to help with working on the other aspects. If you haven't already signed up to either of these groups, and think you could spare some time for one of them, please get in touch with us at traffic@drara.org.uk.

Newsletter

We are continuing to produce the newsletter four times a year, and plan to continue with the format of 4 sides in colour. The response to the content has been positive.

To help defray the printing costs we have sought sponsorship. JCP estate agents sponsored 3 issues and now Scottfraser estate agents are supporting all the printing costs. It would be good to be able to support the newsletter entirely from DRARA's own resources but the other demands on the budget make this impossible if we are to maintain the newsletter in its present format. We have agreed with Scottfraser that they will sponsor a total of four issues, after which we will review the arrangement with them.

It is always good to have suggestions for articles, either one-off or as a regular feature, and of course having more contributors would be great.

Nick Welch

Good Neighbourliness in DRARA & East Oxford

Last year at the DRARA AGM, you asked us to help residents to connect more with each other. In response to this, we produced a leaflet in late spring entitled "Getting to know you". This leaflet was designed to be one way to help members of our immediate community to get to know each other more, and in doing so, enjoy doing things together.

The 4 sided colour document was posted to all homes in our community and shared information of interest and use to residents such as clubs and activities to get involved with, and sources of help such as access to library and audio books. We also suggested groups of immediate neighbours get to know each other more, and even consider adopting the nearest Tree Garden to their homes! Response was positive and we were grateful to benefit from a £100 donation from our local City Councillor, Bev Clack towards the art and print costs.

Further to this aim, DRARA also was involved in the small group that has developed into the East Oxford Good Neighbour Scheme. Still in its infancy, it has piloted two projects; Gardening Angels and the East Oxford Carpentry for Men initiative. The Gardening Angels project links a qualified and approved gardener, to residents finding it hard to maintain their gardens. A work visit is initially planned and then delivered by (vetted) volunteers. Donations of vital gardening equipment were

made by several DRARA residents. The men's carpentry project successfully brought together gentlemen who enjoyed good companionship while building much needed boards and displays for the Cowley Road Carnival.

If you would like to be involved in this special activity in our community, please contact Clare at secretary@drar.org

University Liaison

DRARA works with both universities to improve relations between long term residents and students. The majority of students in this area are from Brookes University, and DRARA is in regular communication with Brookes about measures which can be taken to improve relations. These include:

Student Community Wardens: Brookes now has sixteen student community wardens who aim to improve communication between students and long term residents and help to resolve issues. There are six working in the Cowley North area which includes the DRARA area; they each work about five hours a week.

House Champions: Brookes aims to ensure that every student HMO (House in Multiple Occupation) has a House Champion who is the point of communication for any issues which arise in the house. Last year Brookes had 213 House Champions, of whom 61 were in the DRARA Area.

Communication with Residents: DRARA has two meetings a year with student leaders from both universities. Brookes organises three meetings each year with all the residents associations so that common issues can be discussed together. From mid-September Brookes writes to all residents with leaflets about the facilities at Brookes which are open to the public, Brookes' role in the community, and a year planner.

Complaints: Brookes maintains a record, covering 52 roads, of all complaints about student behaviour- their number, type and location. The Brookes community liaison team, led by Andrea Siret, responds to complaints and lets residents know what action is being taken. Last year the total number of complaints received by Brookes fell slightly, from 149 to 137. Over 80% of the complaints were about noise. Unfortunately the number of complaints in the DRARA area rose significantly from 32 to 52, with half of them occurring in Divinity and Bartlemas roads.

Education: Brookes is trying to do more to educate its students about how to behave when they move out of purpose built accommodation into private rented accommodation in their second year, and has been running a "From Hall to Home" campaign. The number of complaints is always highest at the start of the academic year.

Residents and Students: can contribute greatly to improving relations by getting to know each other.

**DRARA Annual General meeting minutes, held on Thursday 15th October 2015, 7.30pm, SS Mary and John Church,
Cowley Road**

Present: Martin Stott (chair), six committee members, 28 Members, 7 guests; Andrew Smith MP, Councillors Bev Clack and Jamila Azad), Jess Moorhouse, Andrea Siret and Oscar Travis and a representative from East Avenue Residents Association.

1. Martin **welcomed** all to the meeting and thanked the church for making us welcome for the AGM
2. **Apologies:** From Councillor Tom Hayes, Sgt Neil Applegarth, David Whittingham, Mohamed Alyas and 8 apologies from members

3. Chair's Report

This was Martin's last as chair, and so, in place of a written report, he shared his reflections on his time working on and then leading the committee over the past 5 years. He spoke of how our **events** both long established (Film in the Street), and the newer ones such (Summer Fete) have demonstrated how coming together as a community really works, with the neighbourhood walks giving the opportunity to see our area in a different way. Our **newsletter**; produced to such a high standard of design and content, and delivered to over 600 household is something we can all be proud of. Our **campaigning work** on planning, HMO's and most recently on traffic has made things happen and strengthened our links and influence with local police and government agencies. Working closely with the team at **Brookes University**, we have made great in roads to building awareness and involvement of the students living within our community. And finally, he highlighted our efforts to build inclusivity and multicultural harmony in our area; notably, our support for the Cowley Road Carnival and our joint leadership efforts with the Central Mosque.

Martin shared his feelings that there is a lot to be proud of. He introduced Nick Welch as his proposed successor and thanked Clare for her personal support in the past 2 years as secretary. Finally, he thanked the fabulous committee, who have worked to ensure key aspects that support our community are there on behalf of the whole community; the website, membership, financial governance, the environment group to name but a few.

4. DRARA and the Cowley Road Carnival – Celebrating Community – Guest Speaker Paul Wolf, Trustee of Cowley Road Works and DRARA resident.

Paul presented a very engaging and lively overview of the Cowley Road Carnival and its work to build a stronger Community. He talked of its origins back in 2001 in the SSMJ church hall as a part of the East Oxford Action regeneration project. At that time they had the foresight to create a charity to ensure continuity, and the tremendous achievements and vibrant life and activities along the Cowley Road give testimony to the successful regeneration of the area, that the Carnival has helped to enable. Overseen by a robust board of Trustees, Cowley Road Works is a lean "virtual organisation". Its mission remains to ***engage and celebrate diverse communities through cultural and educational events culminating in an annual Carnival in Oxford.***

Pauls' key messages were:

- Cowley Road Carnival is a vibrant, diverse and free celebration of our community, attracting 45,000 people
- Carnival is much more than a single day of festivities; it's the glue which brings the community together with enduring social, learning and economic benefits.
- Carnival contributes significantly to the local economy
- Carnival seeks to be a sustainable, fossil fuel free event produced by a socially responsible charity, committed to supporting and using ethical and environmentally friendly goods, services and procedures and to reducing the negative environmental impacts of our activities.

Paul gave out postcards to every audience member and posed three questions for people to write their response onto. The questions were; what does Carnival mean to you? Is there anything you think you can offer to support CRC? And finally, how best can we contact you? Paul reiterated his thanks to everyone that supported the work of the charity and hopes that people will be interested in becoming more involved in whatever way they felt they could contribute.

5. Open discussion on what is important for DRARA in the year ahead

Much of the discussion centred on DRARA events

- A desire to hold Meal in the Street again this year – but be sensitive to need to be inclusive and avoid cliques - lay out tables for putting out sharing food?
- Continued request to hold events that take back the streets; closing the streets, visible residential area to traffic and a way to bring our all residents in our community – a meal, party, play or sports day were all ideas aired.
- We want Film in the street back again next year!
- Try to include students
- Perhaps expand Open Gardens event to show off other talents of residents i.e. music, art
- Room in the street again was requested as an idea to pursue. Bring together music; make a kitchen or sitting room....
- Hold specific meetings for discussion and to hear talks on different topics e.g. dementia, recycling, bullfinch

It was made clear that these activities can only be done if people actually get involved and take on some responsibility to deliver parts. There is an events team, but it can only do so much. There needs to be a “balance of doing and viewing”.

Traffic is another important topic. There is a desire to ramp up SpeedWatches, improve signage and explore speedbumps and reactive speed signals. Again, the extent for developments on this is dependent on building a team of people prepared to play an active part. This shouldn't be onerous if enough people step forward.

Refreshment Break

6. **Minutes of the AGM** held on October 16th 2014 were agreed in principle with hard copy to be posted on noticeboard in Co-operative and onto the website <http://drara.org.uk/>
7. **Matters arising:** None
8. **Treasurer's report** was received and agreed. Subscriptions of £1,169 is a new record - thank and congratulations to Anne Hall and her band of collectors. DRARA events yielded £1,012 - £812 from the fete and £200 from Open Gardens. Along with the usual expenditure on printing (£574), insurance (£253) and the website (£120) and events (£637). DRARA was able to make a £200 donation to Oxfordshire Advocacy from the profits of the fete. We are also delighted to be able to continue to support the Cowley Road Carnival - DRARA again paid £250 in support. A small surplus of £293 means that DRARA enters next year in sound financial health.
9. **Election of Committee:** Martin Stott and Ivon Asquith stood down from the Committee and were thanked for their great service to the community. Nominations for the election of Tamsin Lilwall, Karen Metcalfe and Leila Lake were supported. The remaining committee members were re-elected.

The committee for 2015-16 are; Nick Welch (Chair), Clare Ridley (Secretary), Mark Redhead (Treasurer), Anne Hall, Tamasin Lilwall, Deborah Tricker, Mary Chesshyre, Leila Lake, Maggie Hartford and Claire Ball. Final roles on Committee will be reviewed in first committee meeting on November 9th.

On behalf of the Committee, Martin thanked the many people who have supported DRARA activities this year. These include the Events team, the Subs collection team, the Environment and the Dementia Friendly teams and Margaret and Martin Coombs for the news clipping work they compile. This was available for all to review and will be available to any resident at Clare's house; 47 Divinity Road.

10. AOB:

- A reminder of the Friends of South Park AGM on Wednesday 21st October, 7.30pm The Primary Centre, Cross Street.
- Paul Wolf shared information on the recently established East Oxford Good Neighbour Scheme. Its committee meets every other month. He shared how the Gardening Angels project that DRARA residents had donated garden tools to, has done well and is now looking for both volunteers to help garden as well as prospective clients who may be finding it too demanding to keep on top of their garden and who would appreciate some support.
- A concern over the increased number of skips that are not covered over was made. This has led to people using the skips as rubbish bins, which in turn have made the streets full of litter.
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11. Date of next Annual General Meeting: 20 October 2016 (tbc)

The meeting closed at 9.35pm