

Welcome

In this edition we take a look at two local businesses, bring you up to date with the City's planning policies, report on some of DRARA's activities, and give details of the Open Gardens day.

We have also been seeking recruits for the committee. At the AGM last October I announced that I would be standing down as chairman and Mark Redhead will not be continuing as treasurer. In addition, Trish Attwooll will be handing over the role of webmaster. These changes highlight the importance of keeping the committee open to new people with new ideas and different ways of doing things. The Association has to get the balance right between continuity and change, and it's probably time for some change. It would be good for the Association and for the work that we do locally to have a broad range of people willing to give some of their time and energy to DRARA. Whether you can only offer occasional help, or would like to become more involved in the local community, we will be pleased to hear from you. It is a great way to make new friends AND do something valuable at the same time! You can contact me through the web site or at

drarachairman@googlemail.com, or Martin Stott, DRARA secretary at martin.stott@talk21.com . Please think about and contact one of us if you are interested.

Elizabeth Mills, OBE

Obituary

Greta Josephy



Greta, who died on November 3rd 2012, had lived in Divinity Road since 1977. She qualified at the Middlesex Hospital in 1964 and worked as a nurse, with breaks to look after three young children, until she retired in 2004. In 1987 she trained at Oxford Brookes to be a community nurse and since then she visited, treated and supported hundreds of patients in and around Oxford. She loved her work and always spoke about her patients with warmth and understanding, even the difficult ones. Her only hard words were about unnecessary bureaucracy or anything she perceived to be unkind.

Greta's interests were wide: music, art, travel, the countryside (in particular, her beloved Cornwall), gardening, but, above all, people. She was a founder member of the Divinity Singers and sang with the Oxford Harmonic Society, for whom she rarely missed a concert. After retiring, she struck a perfect balance between developing her own interests and continuing to sustain others. She helped children learning to read at East Oxford Primary School where she was much loved by those she worked with. Many friends and neighbours are eternally grateful for Greta's help and support, particularly when people were ill or dying or bereaved or just going through a difficult time. She always hit the right note: effective but unobtrusive, a calm and reassuring presence when things were hard. For her extended family Greta was a cornerstone around whom members gathered to celebrate in good times and to be supported in difficult ones.

Greta's diagnosis of a rare lymphoma in 1999 was met with typical optimism and determination to make the most of whatever time was left. As it turned out, her treatment was very effective and for most of the time since then she was fit and active. Not only did she seem to have almost limitless energy and enthusiasm in everyday life; she went, with Richard, on four extended camping trips to Italy. These often included long walks in the hills and Greta also climbed many of the Lake District hills during family holidays there. Only in the last few months was she really poorly and even then her positive approach to life and her concern for others shone through. Throughout her illness Greta was under the care of the Haematology

Department at the Churchill Hospital. The treatment, care, consideration and kindness she received there were outstanding and she felt privileged to live almost next door to such a centre of excellence.

Greta is missed dreadfully by her family and her many friends, but they are sustained by memories of her warmth, kindness and love of life.

Richard Josephy

Features

Strategies for Hope

The Strategies for Hope Trust (SFHT) is a registered charity that began in 1989, with the aim of promoting positive thinking and practical action in the field of HIV/AIDS care, support and prevention, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. In 2011 alone it is estimated that 1.7 million adults and children died of AIDS-related illnesses and over 35 million have died since the epidemic began. Worldwide, 34 million people are living with HIV and AIDS. The Trust is based here in Divinity Road and is managed by Glen and Alison Williams. Nick Welch went to see them to learn about their work.

Glen and Alison run the Strategies for Hope Trust from an office at the top of their house. It is the hub of an organisation that, for over 20 years, has been quietly and effectively working with local communities on the care, support and prevention of HIV/AIDS, mainly in sub-Saharan Africa. Many communities lack simple, user-friendly information and training materials on effective strategies to respond to the challenges. The charity produces and distributes training manuals, books and films to help community groups plan and respond effectively to the needs of people in their communities. All the material that they produce is based on the experiences of community-based organisations.

Strategies for Hope has produced 26 books, seven films, a web-based training package and the "Stepping Stones" training package. They have distributed over 1.2 million pieces of material. Their work is mainly through faith-based organisations; these are the largest social asset in Africa, with an infrastructure of schools and churches, and there is also collaboration with Islamic organisations. But although much of the work is through faith-based organisations, over 40% of the users are secular groups.

Glen's involvement started in 1989, when HIV and AIDS were new; there were no treatments and no materials or training to support community-based initiatives to combat stigma and give practical assistance. He was asked by Action Aid to do some research into an HIV Home Care Programme in Zambia. This led him to propose that Action Aid

should produce books and other training materials on home-based care and community-based HIV prevention.

The British and Norwegian governments supported this and funds were made available for three years' work. In 1990 the World Health Organization bought the distribution rights to a video which the Strategies for Hope produced in Uganda on community responses to the AIDS epidemic.

The availability of anti-retroviral drugs since the mid-1990s has transformed the HIV and AIDS scene. Now HIV and AIDS are no longer a stand-alone issue but part of a wider range of health concerns. The approach taken by Strategies for Hope is to work with local communities to see what they can do for themselves to reduce AIDS-related stigma and discrimination, which still contribute enormously to the spread of HIV. The SFH Trust is now an independent, registered charity. One of its greatest challenges is fundraising. Its materials are distributed to community and church groups free of charge. By establishing co-production and local distribution agreements, a high level of free distribution of Strategies for Hope materials is maintained. In a world where aid and support programmes have been shaped and directed by particular ideological views, the practical, community-based approach of Strategies for Hope is particularly important. The charity continues to seek funds; the needs of communities profoundly affected by HIV and AIDS will be evident for decades.

The Strategies for Hope website is at www.stratshope.org

LifeCraft

LifeCraft is run by Georgia Styring and her two business partners in Witney and Marlow. Her company offers short craft courses in Oxfordshire. Georgia lives on Southfield Road, and Nick Welch went to find out more about what she does.

Georgia has always been involved in crafts, and while she was on maternity leave from her job as design manager at Pearson Education she had the opportunity to start LifeCraft with two friends. Now, Georgia's work with LifeCraft sits alongside her other work of running her freelance design business.

LifeCraft runs creative workshops on a wide range of crafts: felt-making, papier-mache modelling, fabric printing, and sewing – the list goes on. The workshops are held approximately once a week in pop-up sessions at places like Oxford, Turl Street Kitchen and in the centre of Witney. The Marlow venue is a café called Choco-Latte. They are

looking to expand to venues in Oxford and the market towns across the county.

Their Oxford workshops attract a broad range of people: women and men of all ages, and sometimes parents or grandparents with their children or grandchildren. They come to learn a new skill, find a new hobby, meet like-minded people, revive an old skill or just have a relaxing time.

LifeCraft will offer a 10% discount to DRARA residents on any upcoming workshop – just quote 'DRARAFRIENDS' when you book. Their web site is www.life-craft.co.uk.

Simon Greenall, OBE

Simon Greenhall, of Divinity Road, has recently been awarded an OBE in recognition of his work in English Language Teaching (ELT). Not many people realise what an important contribution ELT makes to the British economy. It is in fact the eighth largest business in the country! The growing importance of China on the world stage – as well as its enormous population – makes it a particularly significant market for ELT, and Simon has concentrated on publishing texts for this important region.

Simon Greenall= came into English Language teaching after a degree in Modern Languages at Oxford, spending a few years teaching English at the University of Lyon. Returning to the U.K., he joined Heinemann, later taken over by Macmillan, producing English Language textbooks which are sold all over the world.

Since the year 2000 Simon has concentrated on producing text books for China (he has also produced textbooks for the Palestinian Authority), starting with material for use in Middle and Upper schools. The series for which he is responsible as co-editor in chief has sold 600 million copies. Since 2007 he has also produced material for non-specialist university students.

Throughout the world – and particularly in China - English has assumed greater and greater importance; for individuals it helps their career, and on a wider scale it serves to encourage trade. Simon has played a varied role in ELT publishing. He has been President of the International Association of Teachers of English as a Foreign Language, and has lectured in about 50 countries. His work in this very important sector has finally been recognised by the granting of an OBE.

He, his wife Jill (who is an ELT editor) and their two sons, will be going to Windsor Castle in April to receive the award.

Dementia Friendly Neighbourhood

A small group of DRARA residents who have friends or relatives with memory loss have been

working together to see if there's anything useful that can be done within our neighbourhood to

help share the lows and occasional highs of the situation they and others find themselves in. This is a way to forge partnerships/connections with people in similar situations and for others perhaps to offer a brief break for the carers. This might be, for instance, staying and chatting with someone whilst their partner gets out for half an hour, having small and inclusive tea/coffee gatherings, or offering to loan useful equipment.

We are also linking up with other local and national initiatives to support people with dementia or memory loss. One such is Neighbourhood Return (NR) which is a pilot project working in Oxfordshire to encourage individuals to volunteer to go to look for someone with memory loss if they should go missing. They

are seeking to recruit people from this area who would then be contacted if needed. They aim to significantly reduce the time taken to find people and have strong links with the police. In registering for this, you may never be called out and will only be called within the time limits you set when you register. People with dementia/memory loss can also be registered so that if they are lost, NR will already have details which will simplify the search. For more information: www.ourturn.org.uk.

We are planning a small-scale event in May probably involving tea and music in a garden at which we hope to start raising more awareness. There'll be more information about this – look out for flyers or on the DRARA website.

If you would like to be involved with this group please contact:

Jo Gilmour: 01865 248576 email: joannagilmour@btinternet.com or Anna Eden: 01865 249442 email: annaeden49@hotmail.com

Age Concern and Brookes University partnership

Age Concern have started a shop at Brookes University, opening 11 – 2.30 in the term time. You can find it next to the Chaplaincy in the Helena Kennedy building. And there's also the Age Concern shop on Cowley Road for your unwanted, usable possessions.

Planning

Sites and Housing Plan adopted.

In our October 2012 edition Richard English set out the key points for our area in the City Council's Planning Consultation document. Sietske Boeles summarises the decisions reached by the City Council in February this year.

The City Council's Sites and Housing Plan was adopted in February. This planning document sets out where more than 2000 homes on 45 sites should be built over the next 13-year planning period and includes policies on where student housing and shared homes can be located.

After years of campaigning we are pleased to see that this plan contains strong policies which promote more balanced communities. It includes a cap on the number of houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) which are restricted to a maximum of 20% of houses in any 100 meter stretch of residential road. The plan also states that purpose-built student accommodation must be located away from residential areas in order to minimise disturbance. It requires that student accommodation should be mainly located in the city centre or adjacent to main thoroughfares, so as to relieve pressure on residential streets.

DRARA, together with the Bartlemas Action Fund, lobbied hard to maximise the protection for the Bartlemas Conservation Area. We believe that the (previous) bowling green is now safe at least for the 13-year period. However the proposed development on the Lincoln Playing Field for 100 homes could pose a threat to the rural setting of the Conservation Area and we will continue to monitor the impact of any proposed developments.

Cricket

Southfield Superstars Cricket Club has another full set of fixtures this year and will seek to recapture the unprecedented good form of last year. We particularly welcome new players from the DRARA area and anyone interested should contact James Rowland at 108 Southfield (728153 or james.rowland@ntlworld.com). The full fixture list is:

May 1st	Wednesday	Cheney	Cheney
May 7th	Tuesday	Heinemann	OUP Jordan Hill
May 16th	Thursday	Oxfam	Horspath Rd Rec.
May 23rd	Thursday	Blackwells	Horspath Rd Rec.
May 29th	Wednesday	OUP	OUP Jordan Hill
June	SUGGESTIONS WELCOME IN THIS WEEK		
June 13th	Thursday	North Moreton	North Moreton
June 16th	Sunday	SE Tigers XI	Combe
June 19th	Wednesday	Bartlemas	Lincoln College
June 25th	Tuesday	Heinemann	Oriel College
July 2nd	Tuesday	Blackwells	Oriel College
July 9th	Tuesday	Oxfam	Oriel College
July 16th	Tuesday	RT Harris	Oriel College
July 23rd	Tuesday	Bartlemas	Oriel College
July 30th	Tuesday	RT Harris	Oriel College

DRARA news and information

Liaison with Oxford Brookes

Ivon Asquith represented DRARA at the meeting between Brookes University and the Residents Associations held on 21 February. This is his summary of the discussions.

Student numbers

This year Brookes has about 800 fewer students than last year- about 500 undergraduates and 300 postgraduates. As a result there are about 250 rooms vacant in their halls of residence, out of a total of about 5,000 rooms.

However, while student numbers had fallen, the number of HMOs had not. Brookes will report on the number of students living in private rented accommodation. They also confirmed that they are not interested in developing small sites for student occupation, such as the one at 190 Iffley Road with 27 rooms. Brookes only want large sites run by companies with a good track record.

Brookes Student Community Wardens

There are now twelve SCWs working in four teams: DRARA, Gipsy Lane Estate, Cowley Road North (streets between Cowley Road and Morrell Avenue) and Cowley Road South (streets between Cowley Road and Iffley Road). The SCWs helped in the picking litter during Oxclean weekend at the beginning of March.

Complaints

So far there have been fewer complaints than last year: 111 compared to 150. The number of complaints about noise has dropped to 79 from 109. Only one complaint was referred for disciplinary action compared

to five the previous year. We will get more details when the breakdown of complaints by street is produced at the end of the academic year.

Community Liaison

Brookes is going to issue an e-community liaison newsletter once or twice a semester. If you would like to receive a copy please let Andrea Siret know. (asiret@brookes.ac.uk).

Environmental Action Group

The Environmental Action Group is a very active Group. Maggie Lloyd and Claire Ball summarise the group's activities.

The group has been very busy in recent weeks. As usual, we took part in the annual OxClean litter campaign on 2nd March and with the help of extra volunteers cleared huge quantities of rubbish and recyclables from Ss Mary and John churchyard and from Warneford Meadow. Many thanks to everyone who turned out to help.

We've just circulated another Green Flash, one of a series which have been produced monthly for the last three years, with the aim of helping and encouraging local residents to make the best use of the environment and covering topics from energy-saving, slow-food cooking and creative Christmas presents to how to get the best from your bike. They are emailed to a majority of households in the Divinity Road area and recently we've also been forwarding them, by request, to a number of local low-carbon groups and interested parties all round Oxford. If you're not on our list and would like to be, please contact us.

This latest Green Flash is on the subject of front gardens and how to enjoy and care for them. In February we went on our annual look-out for abandoned mattresses, overflowing bins and builders' rubble and, as usual, we leafleted the offending households with suggestions of how they might deal with their own rubbish and with problem landlords who use front gardens as a dumping ground. Thanks to joint efforts with the city council and the Brookes student wardens, we were pleased to find a great improvement on last year.

Following the success of our planting scheme last autumn, when we installed frames round the tree pits in Southfield Road and filled them with plants and bulbs grown in compost made from food waste recycling, we're now busy sawing, painting and assembling old pallets ready to install and plant up another seven frames in Hilltop and Divinity Roads.

If you'd like to join us for the next 'Gardening in the Street' session on Saturday 27th April, do get in touch with Maggie (E: maggie.lloyd@btopenworld.com) or Claire (E: Claire.ball20@ntlworld.com).

Open Gardens - 19th May

Rebecca Phillipson is coordinating the DRARA Open Gardens day, which will be on 19th May. There will be a number of local gardens open for people to wander around, get ideas from, and meet their neighbours. If you would like to open you garden, or help in any other way, please contact Rebecca at rjphillipson@aol.com

Dogs and potholes – how to get something done

There has been a big upsurge in dog fouling in the area since Christmas. The link below is to the City Council's "Report It" website. Dog fouling is second in the 'what is the problem' drop down menu.

https://ecitizen.oxford.gov.uk/citizenportal/form.aspx?form=Report_Street_Cleaning

The council is apparently good and quick at responding to these complaints.

Councils are required by law to fix potholes within 28 days. Oxfordshire County Council says it aims to repair most serious potholes within 24 hours. Members of the public can report potholes by calling 0845 310 11 11 or by visiting <http://oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/content/potholes>