

**H**appy Christmas and all good wishes for whichever holidays and events you are celebrating this season as well as for 2010.

Welcome to our winter newsletter. In this edition we've provided updates of some issues of ongoing concern in the community: work being done on our local environment, Warneford Meadows and fund raising for the Bartlemas Conservation area appeal and the latest on what is happening with Brookes University. We have also included some of our usual items on Events and various community activities. There is so much happening, and as always, helping hands are always welcome to get involved – whether it's with planning the next bit of work around reducing our carbon footprint to helping to set up or take down street furniture when we have a neighbourhood event in the street.

There is no new news on the CPZ front as the planned consultation has been delayed. Watch this space for updates! For further information and updates you can always go to the DRARA website, [www.drara.org.uk](http://www.drara.org.uk)

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## From the Chairman

This year's AGM saw several changes on the DRARA committee and very warm thanks are due to those who have stood down after impressive years of service – in particular, Peter Coggins, Barbara Crossley, and Susan Lisk. I am honoured to have been chosen as your new Chairman, but very daunted by the task ahead. There is such a lot happening in East Oxford at the moment, and DRARA is active on several different fronts.

Having been DRARA representative on the local Thames Valley Police Neighbourhood Action Group for the last two years, I am aware that the challenges we face are shared by others living in the area. We are hoping to set up an East Oxford Residents' Associations consultative group in order to pool ideas on different issues, and present a solid front to Universities, Hospitals and Local Authorities alike. We will circulate details of consultations as they are arranged and rely on you all to share your views with your committee.

Over the years, DRARA has always enjoyed the active support of a great many local residents, and I hope to get to know many more of my neighbours during the coming months. Meanwhile if you have any ideas for future events, or are concerned about any issue, please do not hesitate to contact your committee.

With all good wishes to you all, and to your families, for a peaceful Christmas and happy 2010.

**Elizabeth Mills O.B.E., DRARA Chairman**



**Winter 2009**

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### Environment Action Group – Update

The Environment Action Group, initiated by Amanda Root in spring 2009, has been meeting regularly and developing its activities.

The group's aim is **to support practical ways of reducing energy use and promote environmentally friendly lifestyles**. We currently have about 16 – 20 members, and are very keen to have more involved!

Topics discussed at previous Environment Action Group meetings include:

- calculating our carbon footprint;
- measuring energy (gas & electricity) usage through the i-measure website;
- practical tips for improving home insulation, reducing energy usage, reducing waste through increased recycling and composting, and local food production;
- linking up with other local environmental/'low carbon' initiatives;

The Group produces a monthly 'Green Flash' bulletin, which is now circulated to all DRARA members on the email membership list. Please let us know if you have any feedback on the Green Flashes, or suggestions for future topics.

We have also been busy linking up with other initiatives locally to find out what other 'Low Carbon', or 'Climate Action' Groups are doing.

The ClimateXchange initiative, which is supported by the Environmental Change Institute, organised an excellent 'Big Climate Event' at the Town Hall on 7<sup>th</sup> November. Further details and presentations from the conference can be found at: [www.cagoxfordshire.org.uk/big-climate-event](http://www.cagoxfordshire.org.uk/big-climate-event)

The Environment Action Group organised an open meeting – held in Restore's Straw Bale House in Manzil Way – on a wet and windy evening in early November. Around 20 people turned out to hear from Ruth Mayne of Low Carbon West Oxford about the fantastic things

that they are doing to tackle climate change in West Oxford, since they got started after the flooding which affected the Botley Road area so badly in 2007. Further details about Low Carbon West Oxford can be found on: [www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk](http://www.lowcarbonwestoxford.org.uk).

We are also keeping in touch with a new initiative, launched by the Green Party at a meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> November, to develop a 'Low Carbon East Oxford' group, as we feel strongly that our 'Environment Action Group' has a potentially important role to play, developing community-based action with and on behalf of DRARA members and residents.

The **next open meeting organised by the Environment Action Group will be held at the Straw Bale House on THURSDAY 14<sup>th</sup> JANUARY (7.30 – 9.00 pm)**. We're hoping to have a speaker from Low Carbon Headington – to be confirmed – so do come and join us then!

For further information about joining or getting involved please contact:

**Claire Ball:** [Claire.ball20@ntlworld.com](mailto:Claire.ball20@ntlworld.com),  
**Trish Attwooll** [trishattwooll@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:trishattwooll@yahoo.co.uk)  
or **Anna Eden** [annaeden49@hotmail.com](mailto:annaeden49@hotmail.com)

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## Warneford Meadow – The Saga Continues

Since December 2006 Friends of Warneford Meadow (FoWM), have been advocating to have Oxfordshire County Council to register Warneford Meadow as a Town Green, which would protect it from development and safeguard the right of local residents to use it for recreation. As many of you know, the Inspector firmly recommended that the Meadow should be registered as a Town Green in October 2008, and in April 2009 the County Council voted to accept his recommendation.

However, in June, the Oxfordshire Mental Health Trust announced that they were seeking a judicial review by the High Court of the County's decision. A judge granted leave for a full review, while making clear that he had doubts about some of the Trust's case. The Trust, the County and Paul Deluce have now submitted their legal arguments, and a hearing is likely fairly early in the new year.

Meanwhile FoWM have raised over £55,000 from generous local residents to finance legal advice and representation at the Inquiry, and, although Paul expects some help from Legal Aid, we need to raise £10,000 more to meet the costs of the High Court case. If you'd like to donate, contact David Sutton ([david@sutton-ld.co.uk](mailto:david@sutton-ld.co.uk)). Donations over £50 benefit from Gift Aid. And if you don't know the Meadow, take a walk: just turn left at the far end of Hill Top Road.

For further information, please contact: **Andrew Carter**, 426955 [www.friendsofwarnefordmeadow.org.uk](http://www.friendsofwarnefordmeadow.org.uk)

## Update on Car Club: Oxcars celebrates its 1st birthday!

Oxford's first car club -- Oxcars -- is the most successful of the 11 car clubs run by Commonwheels, the parent organization, and has just celebrated its first birthday, with a healthy membership of 209, who have made more than 1400 bookings and driven more than 53,000 miles! Because of its success, Commonwheels is planning to add another 6 cars to the East Oxford area within the next 6 months. If interested in donating a car, or in joining the scheme, please respond to: [info@commonwheels.org.uk](mailto:info@commonwheels.org.uk).

**Susan Lisk**

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## Oxford Brookes Update

**Police Community Support Officers:** Brookes are going to fund the costs of two new PCSOs to patrol the DRARA, Headington and Gipsy Lane areas. The working hours of the officers are still under discussion. It is expected that they will start work by April 2010.

**Community Relations:** Andrea Siret, community relationship manager for Brookes, has been visiting HMOs in parts of Divinity and Southfield roads with a Council officer, to discuss waste disposal and recycling with students. The Brookes student union is planning a campaign in the second semester about citizenship "to encourage our members to have a greater understanding of their role within their local community." David Whittingham, general manager of the student union, works with Andrea Siret and would welcome any suggestions from residents' associations. He attends Neighbourhood Action Groups in Headington and East Oxford. ([dwhittingham@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:dwhittingham@brookes.ac.uk); [asiret@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:asiret@brookes.ac.uk)).

Anne Gwinnett, Director of Corporate Affairs at Brookes, and Andrea Siret recently had a meeting with Elizabeth Mills and myself to discuss community relations. A meeting between Brookes and representatives from several residents' associations took place on 18 November; the next meeting will probably take place in February, rather than in six months time.

**Cars:** Since May the DVLA has refused to supply Brookes with identification of the owners of cars, which it makes it difficult to discover which students are using cars against the rules. Brookes has written to Andrew Smith MP about this issue, and hopes the resident associations will do so too.

**Buses:** there are now eleven new Brookes buses, run by the Oxford Bus Company, all manufactured in the UK and producing 80% fewer emissions than previous buses.

**Location of Students:** our impression that there is a massive concentration of students in the DRARA area

has been confirmed by Brookes. They have done an analysis by postcode of the location of their full time students who are not living in university accommodation. They estimate that there are 3,431 such students and the heaviest concentration is in DRARA.

**Studentification:** a public meeting was held on 23 September on the impact of studentification on local communities. The problems of noise, litter, parking, squalid houses, anti-social behaviour, lack of neighbours etc. are shared by many university towns throughout the country. The lead speaker was Professor Danny Dorling from Sheffield University. The meeting had to be moved from Cheney School because the school was afraid of offending Brookes. It was agreed that the local RAs would work on submissions to the N.E.Area Committee and the East Area Parliament on action plans which will address the issues associated with the high concentration of HMOs. This meeting was reinforced by DRARA's guest speaker at its October AGM, Dr. Richard Tyler.

**Street Cleaning:** Brookes have purchased a machine for cleaning the streets near the Headington campus. (Unfortunately it cannot be operated by students for insurance reasons.)

**Landlord Accreditation Scheme:** the City Council is just completing a consultation on this scheme. Brookes strongly supports it and thinks it should be mandatory (not voluntary as at present), and should include agents as well as landlords.

**Brookes Planning:** Oxford Brookes University has indicated that they are unlikely to appeal against the City Council's decision to refuse planning permission for their new student building at Gypsy Lane. OBU is considering their options in consultation with local residents.

For further information, please contact: **Ivon Asquith** ([ivon.asquith@btinternet.com](mailto:ivon.asquith@btinternet.com)).

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## **Bartlemas Conservation Area – Oriel Submit New Plans**

Oriel College are submitting new development plans for the Bartlemas Conservation Area. The original application was rejected by Oxford East Area Parliament and went before the planning inspectorate – who rejected Oriel's appeal. Permission was given to demolish the old nursery building.

Oriel have now come back with new plans which reduce the number of students living in the proposed accommodation from 35 to 31 and which also include a lowering in height of the southern pavilion at the eastern end (but not the western end facing Southfield Road). They have also reduced the height of the northern pavilion. The design of the main building block though remains largely unchanged and so the key issues remain

unchanged: bulk and height of the proposed development, lighting and noise pollution and problems with screening especially in winter.

Oriel's architects, Marcus Beale, submitted the new proposals at the end of November. Residents affected by the development will receive letters from Oxford City Council in due course, allowing three weeks to voice objections. DRARA met with Marcus Beale prior to their submission of the plans with the aim of securing further changes. Some minor changes were made as a result but substantive concerns over the height and bulk have not been resolved. DRARA will continue to oppose the current development proposal in order to achieve the best possible outcome for residents and the wider community.

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## **Fundraising Concert for Bartlemas Appeal**

Saturday 30 January: 8pm - DRARA is hosting a fundraising concert in Bartlemas Chapel to raise funds towards the appeal costs incurred through opposing Oriel College's plans to develop on the former nursery site.

Edward Higginbottom of New College has agreed to conduct the concert - following on from his wonderful revival of the St Bartholomew Ascension Day morning celebrations early this year which it is hoped will become an annual event.

The short concert will be a small scale Vivaldi's Gloria with 6/7 singers, string quartet, oboe and trumpet, preceded by a short instrumental piece.

The instrumentalists are mostly DRARA members and the singers, mostly London based but with Oxford connections.

Tickets are limited to 60: £25 to include wine and finger food in Bartlemas Farmhouse barn opposite the Chapel after the concert. For further information contact **Sarah Franks**, Bartlemas Farmhouse on Tel: 723056, Email: [csdtc@hotmail.com](mailto:csdtc@hotmail.com)

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## **DRARA Events**

The DRARA events season for 2009 ended positively with a popular showing of Ghostbusters as the Film in the Street. Horns of Plenty, the talented local street brass band, took a spin around the streets first to announce the occasion in colourful style and to test the nerves of the traffic stewards. The new addition of hot dogs and cakes was a well received innovation, and had the added benefit of supporting local Cheney students who continue to fund-raise to travel to Leon in Nicaragua to see for themselves what challenges the children there face in their daily efforts to become educated. Many thanks to Andy Roscoe for coordinating this event.

2010 has plenty of activity already scheduled, with one or two more dates yet to be pinned down. The overall emphasis next year is to get more people to take small roles in organising each event in order that everyone does a bit less and has more fun in the process, so do think about giving the events team a hand if you possibly can..

**February:** Thursday 11<sup>th</sup>: Events meeting to finalise plans for the year. 126 Divinity Road, 8pm

**March:** Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> pm: To coincide with the City's OXClean initiative, DRARA Freecycle Day – recycle useful things on your front doorstep and catch up with neighbours as you wander around to find treasure! See the website for timings

**End April** (date tbc) : Open Gardens Day Part 1 – a spring time visit to local gardens as the weather begins to warm up. Small admission charge

**May: 14, 15, 16** SS Mary and John Church plays host to musicians from Grenoble, France in a week of twinning events across Oxford – see the DRARA website for details. Small admission charge

**June: Saturday 19<sup>th</sup>** Meal in the Street's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary! Celebrate a decade of this most popular DRARA institution, this year in the middle section of Southfield Road. Help to choose this year's film choice for September on this night too – and bring the family to play in the pool and on the street too. Small donation requested to cover costs

**July: Date tbc** Open Gardens Day Part 2 – a late summer visit to local gardens which are blooming in this season. Small admission charge.

**September: Saturday 18<sup>th</sup>** Freecycle afternoon to coincide with a new intake of University students who may find your bits and pieces useful. And Film in the Street 5.30-11pm – small donation requested to cover costs.

**To be confirmed** A local history walk around the neighbourhood to discover secret and not so secret details of the area – Small admission charge. Also, Sinnet Court play afternoons for local families to have space to cycle, scoot and chat – see the website for the above.

For further information contact Henrietta Gill [henrietta.gill@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:henrietta.gill@yahoo.co.uk) or look under the DRARA website for Events updates

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## CHRISTMAS AT ST MARY & ST JOHN'S

(plus a couple of things in Bartlemas Chapel - new this year is the 9pm "First Eucharist of Christmas" - dress warmly for this very atmospheric celebration, in this Chapel that was actually once used as a cattle shed!)

### December

**Mon. 14th** 7.30pm Divinity Singers & Community Choir Carol Concert

**Tue. 15th** 8pm Carol Concert in Bartlemas Chapel

### Thur. 24th

- 6pm Crib Eucharist for all ages

- 9pm Simple Nativity Eucharist in Bartlemas Chapel

- 11.30pm "Midnight" Mass

**Fri. 25th** 8am Said Eucharist

10.30am Eucharist

### Sun. 27th

8am/10.30am/6.30pm Parish Patronal Festival (St John)

### January

**Sun. 3** 8am/10.30am/6.30pm The Epiphany

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## Useful contacts:

**City Councillors, St Clements Ward:** Nuala Young (Green), tel 749459 or [cilmnyoung@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:cilmnyoung@oxford.gov.uk)  
Mary Jane Sareva (Green), tel 07776 075250 or [cilmjsareva@oxford.gov.uk](mailto:cilmjsareva@oxford.gov.uk)

**County Councillor:** Larry Sanders (Green), [larry.sanders@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:larry.sanders@oxfordshire.gov.uk) and Sajjad Malik (Labour), [sajjad.malik@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:sajjad.malik@oxfordshire.gov.uk)

**Oxford City Council Environmental Officer:** Alex Solaja, tel 252821.

**Brookes Community Liaison:** Andrea Siret, tel 484451 or [community@brookes.ac.uk](mailto:community@brookes.ac.uk)

**Cowley Road Police Station** (non-emergency): All local officers can be contacted at 08458 505 505 or [eastoxfordneighbourhood@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk](mailto:eastoxfordneighbourhood@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk).

**Sinnet Court:** Amanda Green, Manager: 202377, or [amanda.green@A2dominion.co.uk](mailto:amanda.green@A2dominion.co.uk). Office staffed from 9am to 5pm Monday-Friday. Out of hours incidents requiring immediate action call 07786 962 015

**DRARA Contact** Cindy Carlson on 242949 or [carwal9704@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:carwal9704@yahoo.co.uk)

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### [www.drara.org.uk](http://www.drara.org.uk)

DRARA has a great website! Take a look and you will find lots of useful information there! If you are new to the area, see the *Welcome* and *Local History* sections, and you can get more involved by becoming a member. The website has a *Local Businesses* section for advertising, and soon we will also have a *Recommended* section where local residents can place their recommendations of local carpenters, builders, craftspeople, etc.

Let us know if you wish to add anything yourself, or if you have any comments, via the 'Get in Touch' button.