

STOP PRESS: The licensing application for the former Bingo Hall on Cowley Road (see page 3) was turned down by councillors on September 26. According to the Oxford Mail, 'protesters, led by St Mary and St John vicar, the Rev Adam Romanis, painted a doomsday scenario of rowdy drunks and antisocial behaviour'. Owners Solaview have 21 days to appeal and it is unclear whether they will do so. We say how's about giving us the arts centre that we were originally led to believe was planned?

Your newsletter contributions are always welcome: please contact **Sandy Ruxton** (sandy.ruxton@ntlworld.com) or **Jo Lyon** (lyon.jo@gmail.com) with any ideas.

DRARA events

This year, we seem to have spent a lot of time dodging rain! *Playtime in the Court*, back in April, just managed to finish before the rain, lots of children had fun in this great space and enjoyed the many cakes on offer. Thank you to Sinnet Court for the use of their outdoor space.

The first *Room in the Street* had to be rescheduled due to torrential rain in May, but we hit the right sunny day in June, and we had kitchens new and old, playrooms, music room, bedrooms, an oasis of a garden and lots of refreshments on offer too, which all led to a very relaxing and sociable summer's afternoon. Thanks to all residents who took part and in particular to Tess Ward and Rebecca Philipson for getting this event off the ground.

Having lots of offers of help this year for the *Summer Supper* made a huge difference, so a big thank you to all who helped out. Lots of new faces turned out, and the weather didn't stop the swimming pool being well used – the Fire Service came up trumps again!

And we ended on a warm note with a beautiful evening for *Film in the Street* – back in Divinity Road this year with "Some Like It Hot".

Coming up

We're having a planning meeting for next year's events in November – if you would like to be involved, email me (gfitz@farmersweekly.net) and I'll let you know the date when it's arranged. DRARA events don't happen by themselves and take a fair bit of planning – so any new faces and ideas would be more than welcome! We're also hoping to have a post Christmas bash up at Oxford Brookes Sports Hall to work off the Christmas over indulgence. Details TBC... **Judith Fitzgerald**

Parking plea

Autumn is the time it suddenly becomes next to impossible to park on local streets. Students living in shared houses are as entitled as anyone else to use the on-street parking, but it is a condition of Sinnet Court tenancies that students do not have cars in

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www.drara.org.uk



Oxford. This rule is clearly being breached at the moment – only by a small minority, but it still has a big impact. Sinnet are committed to monitoring the situation, and will take action, up to and including eviction, if necessary, so if you see Sinnet Court residents parking in the area, please inform the office (see contacts box), providing a car registration number if possible. **Jo Lyon**

DRARA website

The more observant residents will have noticed that the DRARA website is under construction. The local web design firm, Lumpy Lemon, has been appointed to redesign the website and the DRARA logo.

Meanwhile, we are on the hunt for photographs of the area – old, not so old and current images are sought! Everything from street scenes, individual houses, or even details of buildings, trees or gardens. All will be welcome, and, if used on the website, will be acknowledged appropriately.

If you are able to offer anything – either a photograph or digital image – please send them to me at 11 Divinity Road or email to elizabeth@eminence-grise.co.uk Thank you!

Elizabeth Mills

Warneford Meadow, Warneford Playing Field & Park Hospital

The Oxford Mental Health Trust (OMHT) has put in four planning applications for development and redevelopment of three areas on the Churchill site: the Park Hospital, Warneford Hospital and playing field, and Warneford Meadows. The Trust is selling the Park Hospital and Warneford Meadows, while keeping Warneford Hospital for use by the Trust. The applications that have been put in so far concern access to these sites.

The OMHT have been working with local resident groups, including DRARA, to ensure that the views of local residents are taken into consideration. Two community meetings have been held so far, the latest taking place on the 20th September. Trust staff showed their proposals for how the sites of most interest to DRARA could be developed. For Warneford Meadows they are proposing a green corridor around any housing placed in the area, with 50% of the area remaining greenfield. The Trust would ideally wish to see key worker housing on

Warneford Meadows, and a nursing home on the playing fields.

DRARA committee members concur that this sort of use would have far lower impact on our area than other proposals, such as student accommodation. You can see outline details of the applications on the Oxford City website at <http://uniformpublicaccess.oxford.gov.uk/publicaccess/>. The easiest way to find the applications is to type in the date the planning application was made - 25/07/2006.

The City Council will be meeting on 23rd November to discuss the OMHT applications and take a decision. DRARA residents are urged to continue making their views known to local councillors so that we can ensure stringent conditions are put on how the land will be used.

OMHT have also asked us to put forward criteria that the Trust should use on deciding who they eventually sell the land to. They would also welcome our views on what the ideal mix of housing on the Warneford Meadow site might be (e.g. single person flats vs family homes), if it can be safeguarded as key worker housing. Please forward your thoughts to Cindy Carlson (carwal9704@yahoo.co.uk) and/or Barbara Crossley (barbara.crossley@ceu.ox.ac.uk), who are attending meetings with OMHT on DRARA's behalf. **Cindy Carlson**

Cycle network review

Since 2005, City and County Council transport planners have been discussing with Cyclox, CTC (the national cyclists' organisation) and Sustrans to agree how best to connect up the various elements of the city's cycle network. A project that aimed to complete an ideal cycle network in one fell swoop would be too expensive. Instead, they have embarked on a rolling programme of small schemes that can be implemented quickly and at low cost, aiming eventually to achieve a coherent 'dual' cycle network of slower, quiet back-street routes and faster main-road routes.

They are **very** keen for input from all sources – including (if you cycle) you. All suggestions will be added to a master cycle network map, and implemented when time, money and approval permit. Many suggestions from last year's consultation have already been funded. Immediate priorities are.

- The Plain roundabout. Discussions with Cyclox (et al) to contribute to the Plain roundabout redesign, October 2006. We have received a lot of complaints about difficulties exiting Cowley Road onto the Plain.
- The whole length of the High Street from Carfax to the Plain roundabout.
- The length of St Giles, from the Woodstock/Banbury Road junction to the 'entrance to' Magdalen Street South/East.

- The 'approach to' Botley Road railway bridge – i.e. Roger Dudman Way and the railway station 'forecourt'.

Please give us your suggestions for any improvements to the existing facilities, and for routes that you wished could be built. Don't just think about the Divinity Road area. Your experience of commutes and regular cross-city journeys will provide valuable data, and the bane of your commute could be resolved sooner than you'd imagined!

Please send all of your suggestions, preferably by email to contact@cyclox.org; or on hard-copy to 44 Southfield Road. **James Styling, Cyclox chair**

Latest from the police...

There are a few new faces around... PC Hannah Davies (hannah.davies@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk) has recently joined the CBO team, and PS Jen Kingsley (jennifer.kingsley@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk) has taken over from PS Simon Beaton. PC David Stares can still be reached at david.stares@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk, though he is due to retire in January 2007.

A new neighbourhood policing initiative is about to be set up in this area. The Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) will be made up of local 'doers' who will identify three primary initiatives, the top concerns for local people and then work through their resolution. The first identification of these concerns took place before the last East Oxford Area Meeting on 20th September. Residents are encouraged to get involved in the NAG and make their priorities known. More details on www.saferoxford.org.uk (see 'East Oxford NAG'). **PC David Stares**

The Community police team is now evolving into a Neighbourhood police team involving the extended police family of Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs). East Oxford has three PCSOs at the moment: Emma Fitzsimmonds, David Atkinson and Tom Mason.

Crime figures in the area are showing a downward trend in burglaries, which is always good news, but one concern that has been highlighted to me has been the gate crashing of parties by unwanted guests, most notably within the younger age group residents. This has resulted in thefts and damage whilst parties have been going on, and has also caused upset and anger among householders. With this in mind I welcome suggestions from residents and their children on how they feel it's best to communicate with the police to gain intelligence on those suspected to be responsible. You can email me on chris.griffin@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk and we can develop a strategy and feed this into the Neighbourhood police team. **PC Chris Griffin**

...and an update from our Councillors

Planning

As Councillors, those of us who may be involved in planning decisions are unable to publicly state our views on any particular application in advance of it being formally considered. This is to avoid accusations of bias and any legal challenge.

However, we can (and do) keep residents informed about what is happening and try and make sure we are ourselves well informed about the key issues. We therefore welcome being copied in on any letters you may send to the planning department.

We undertake site visits where these help put the plans and sketches that we see into context. For example, several of us recently visited Warneford Meadow Answers to frequently asked questions about the proposed development (the NHS is the applicant) can be found on the internet at tinyurl.com/e6st4

Full details of the applications can be found on the Council's planning website. If you haven't already commented, it's not too late. The local East Area Parliament will be making its own views known to the central planning committee (known as SDCC) at its meeting on 18th October (6:30pm Larkrise Primary School, Boundary Brook Road). Planning officers will present the application and there will be an opportunity for residents to comment before Councillors formulate our response.

New East Oxford Farmers' Market

The new Farmer's and Community Market happens every Saturday from noon to 3 pm at the Asian Cultural Centre on Manzil Way. The market was provided with seed funding (excuse the pun) from the East Area Parliament, and in the few weeks it has been up and running it's grown from strength to strength. The market is keen to attract more members to its governing committee. If you are interested, then contact Brian at eastoxfordmarket@gmail.com

Twenty's Plenty

Just to let you know that we are still lobbying the County to extend the 20mph speed limit on Cowley Road to include the residential side streets (the DRARA area included). They are reluctant to take this forward until the Cowley Road scheme has been fully evaluated. Our view is that the current situation is ridiculous – to have speeds on the side streets higher than the main road is absurd. We will keep you posted.

Bingo Hall – Licensing

The former Bingo Hall on the corner of Cowley and Magdalen Roads is under new ownership and is being used for the occasional event. There has also been an application for a formal licence to allow the premises to be used for: films (Monday to Sunday 2pm – 7pm), live music (6pm to 2am Monday to Saturday and 6pm to midnight Sunday), recorded music (11pm to 4am Monday to Saturday and until midnight Sunday with occasional weekday opening to 6am) and dancing (roughly same times as recorded

music), as well as a late night alcohol and food licence (roughly same times as recorded music).

The new Licensing Act does not permit local Councillors to comment independently on licensing applications (though Mary-Jane sits on the Committee that will be determining this application). Only 'affected persons' – those living or working within a certain distance of the premises – can submit comments. We know that many of you have made your views known. One of us (Craig) lives and works in Magdalen Road so (as an 'affected person') has been able to put in a personal objection to the late night opening. He has also been in contact with the police – who are also opposing this element of the application.

Artwork at top of Divinity Road

We have been approached by residents about funding some artwork on the roundabout at the top of Divinity Road (possibly by the local artist Ted Dewan). We are generally well-disposed to this and are awaiting information on costings. If you think that this is a good (or bad) idea then let us know.

Council in the balance

The Liberal Democrats became the largest political Group (just) on the City Council this May after a poor performance by Labour. The Greens also did well (thank you for your support) returning all our Councillors and gaining a further seat in in Iffley Fields. We now hold all the seats on the East Area Parliament. But a recent defection from the Lib Dems to Labour and a further loss from the Lib Dems as one of their Councillors decided to go independent has changed things. Labour are now (by one Councillor) the largest group. As before the 8-strong Green Group holds the balance of power.

Craig Simmons, Mary-Jane Sareva, Nuala Young

Traffic and parking surveys

For DRARA to make a meaningful case for reducing speeds and/or restricting access to our roads, we need data about current usage patterns to back this case up with the council.

Similarly, when discussions start regarding residents' parking permits, DRARA needs to have some idea as to what percentage of parked cars belong to students – and whether we can make a case for permits to be restricted to owner-occupiers.

We did one survey in July while it was quiet, and we're doing the next one in October, when the area is a lot busier, so that we can compare our 'high' and 'low' seasons.

The traffic surveys involve:

- noting down registration numbers of cars entering and leaving the area at the five entry/exit points
- noting down registration numbers of parked cars at intervals during the day.

The July survey was carried out in the last week of the Cheney term and after the academic term at Oxford Brookes was finished. We expect that the amount of traffic using the Divinity Rd area for rat-running to be significantly higher in October.

Similarly, the parking survey was carried out when most students had left. We expect the numbers of cars parked in October to be far higher.

The registration numbers from the July surveys are being input into a software programme specifically developed for us by DRARA member, Bernard Suftrin. We will let everyone know the results when we have them.

In July, we had too few people doing too many things, so the more volunteers we have for October, the easier it will be. The survey will be on Thursday 19 October. If you can spare a few hours for either the morning or evening rush hour traffic surveys, or if you could help collect parking data at a few intervals during the day, then your assistance would be greatly appreciated. We'll need around a dozen people.

If you think you can help, please contact me on lynne@setpoint.co.uk or 07785 112202. A big thank you to the team of volunteers who completed the first traffic and parking surveys! **Lynne Trener**

CSV Make a Difference Day

Make a difference to SS Mary & John Churchyard on Saturday 21 October from 10 am to 4.30 pm as the Churchyard Group take part in this year's CSV Make a Difference Day. We will be trimming and mulching conservation hedges, clearing litter, and planting native climbing plants and spring bulbs. Volunteers are much needed (3,700 bulbs to plant!) – and then we can all enjoy the flowers in the spring! Please contact me on 723085 for more details. **Ruth Conway**

Church news

At present we are working on woodworm treatment, refurbishment of the organ, refurbishment of the vestries, completion of electrical works (heating & lighting), and a new entrance porch to the north door. When the woodworm treatment is done we are likely to have to close the church for two or three weeks. All services in the parish will continue at the usual times, but re-located to St Alban's (Charles St) and possibly Bartlemas. During this time there will be a single main service on Sunday mornings at 10am at St Alban's. When dates are known they will be clearly advertised outside the church and in our usual publicity. Diary dates (unless disrupted by woodworm treatment!):

Sunday 22 October

Preacher Canon Gideon Byamugisha, on Ministry to HIV/AIDS sufferers in Uganda

Thursday 2 November

Sung Requiem Eucharist for All Souls, 7.30pm

Sunday 5 November

Dedication Festival Eucharist, 10.30am

Sunday 12 November

Remembrance Sunday Eucharist, 10.30am

Sunday 3 December

Advent Sunday Eucharist, 10.30am

At the end of September, Wednesday Morning Liturgy transfers from Bartlemas Chapel to St Alban's Upper Room Chapel for the winter, but the monthly Evensong still takes place in 5.15pm on the last Sunday of every month (29 October, 26 November). A great opportunity to pray and reflect in the very special atmosphere of Bartlemas.

Burial of ashes in the churchyard

Just a reminder that, while there is no space available for new graves in the churchyard, we very much encourage the burial of cremated remains. These are buried in the Garden of Thanksgiving and Remembrance (the section nearest Helen House). Ashes are not buried in containers, and it is not possible to have plaques or stones. But names are recorded in a new "Book of Remembrance" which is on display in the church. Burial can take place in the context of a memorial service or prayers, or without ceremony. Please contact me for further details.

Adam Romanis

Useful contacts:

City Councillors, St Clements Ward:

Nuala Young (Green), tel 749459 or cilrnyoung@oxford.gov.uk

Mary Jane Sareva (Green), tel 07776 075250 or cilrmjsareva@oxford.gov.uk

County Councillor: Craig Simmons (Green), tel 202257 or craig@greenoxford.com

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

Brookes Community Liaison: Anne Ashley, tel 484451 or amashley@brookes.ac.uk

Cowley Road Police Station (non-emergency): All local officers can be contacted at 08458 505 505. Leave a message and they will return your call.

Sinnet Court:

Amanda Green, Manager: 202377, or amanda.green@dominionhg.co.uk. Office staffed from 8am-6pm Monday-Friday. Out of hours incidents requiring immediate action call 07796 962015: this will reach a student warden (24 hours).

DRARA: For more information, contact Mark Norman on 240146 or email mark.norman@ashmus.ox.ac.uk