

The wheelie bins have landed! Apparently recycling rates in Oxford are up 80% in areas which, like us, have now joined the blue bin/green bin/green bag/wheelie bin scheme. It'll take a bit of getting used to what happens on which weeks, and there are reports of problems –particularly for those without front gardens big enough for a wheelie bin. But overall this result appears pretty impressive. It's taken us a while to get this issue out, but there's lots going on at the moment and we've tried to cover as much as we can. For more DRARA info, including updates on events etc, check out the new website, now live at www.drara.org.uk

Please remember that your newsletter contributions are welcome: contact **Sandy Ruxton** (sandy.ruxton@googlemail.com) or **Jo Lyon** (lyon.jo@gmail.com) with any ideas.

DRARA events

Lots coming up this year, and any offers of help – publicity, setting up, packing up – will be most welcome!

Sunday 1 April, 2-5 pm: Freecycle Day A great opportunity to give a new lease of life to items you no longer need or want – simply put quality but unwanted items in your front garden for people to take away. To prevent non-freecycle items being taken, clearly label everything that you are offering: labels are available to download from www.drara.org.uk or from Judith Fitzgerald (728741) or Georgia Bushell (721908).

Saturday 28 April, 2.30 pm: History walk Explore the history of our area via this guided walk, and get to know its green spaces. Check the events section of the website nearer the time for our meeting place.

Wednesday 25 April: 20's Plenty Day DRARA is joining other community groups across Oxford in a national day of action to campaign for the introduction of 20 mph speed limits in residential areas. If you could display a poster or spare half an hour on the day to take part, contact James Styring (07792 375423) or Lynne Trenerly (469991).

Sunday 20 May 2-5 pm: Music in the Street Local musicians will be performing in Bartlemas Road on the last day of Art Weeks, and there will be refreshments available. Contact Miles on miles.doubleday@btinternet.com if you'd like to play!

Sunday 10 June: DRARA Open Gardens (tbc) We are hoping to hold an Open Gardens event – where you invite people in to see what you've done with your garden and maybe get some new ideas for their own. If you could organise tea or any other activity in your garden, that would be even better!

If you're proud of your garden please help us get this event off the ground – get in touch with Rebecca Phillipson at 40 Minster Road (421000).

Saturday 14 July: Meal in the Street Details tbc

Saturday 15 September: Film in the Street Film suggestions welcome! **Judith FitzGerald**



From the new Chair

I was elected Chair of DRARA (in my absence!) at the AGM in September. My predecessor, Mark Norman, stepped down from the Chair after nine years in the role, and from the Committee, on which he has served even longer.

During this time Mark worked tirelessly to promote the interests of local residents. As well as the duties of Chair, Mark was an active member of the Cowley Road Tree Group, Chair of the East Oxford Adventure Playground Association and the Committee's Planning Rep. During his stewardship, DRARA has flourished and added an active social calendar to its traditional campaigning role. DRARA presented Mark with a montage of photographs of local scenes, as thanks for his tremendous contribution to the life of the local community.

Val is hoping to see more of him now, if the Ashmolean doesn't get to him first! He will be a difficult act to follow. **Peter Coggins**

Councillors' update

Shopping Trolleys With the management of the Cowley Road Tesco changing frequently, we keep having to re-visit the issue of abandoned shopping trolleys. The local Council Committee, the East Area Parliament (EAP), met with the new manager in February and asked him to look at a more lasting solution. Apparently, several hundred costly trolleys go missing each year – so he seems keen to do something. We further encouraged him by making clear that the local Councillors would seek to use new enforcement powers if the situation did not improve. These powers mean that we could now fine Tesco for not collecting their trolleys. The number to call to report abandoned trolleys is 0845 6779520 or you can report them to staff in the store.

Rats Several residents reported seeing rats in Manzil Way Park – most likely attracted by the mountains of bread which someone is dumping on a regular basis. We urgently instructed officers to investigate the bread and address the rats, and are pleased to say that there is progress on both fronts. (For information and assistance in tackling rats – not to mention ants, fleas, urban foxes, wasps,

and mice – contact City Council on 252888, email: pest@oxford.gov.uk or see www.oxford.gov.uk/environment/pest-control.cfm)

Divinity Road Co-op

We are aware of problems with loading and bin storage at the new Co-op at the lower end of Divinity Road causing an obstruction. Planning officers are currently investigating.

School crossing on Iffley Road

Those who have kids at SS Mary & John School will be pleased to know that the campaign for a new crossing on Iffley Road seems to finally be making some headway. At the moment there is no safe, direct route between the two SS Mary & John sites, and residents and Councillors have long argued that the County should have put in a new crossing on Iffley Road when the school was made a split-site.

The EAP invited the County Councillor with responsibility for crossings, Cllr David Robertson, to a meeting in February to again put the case for a new crossing. We offered him some cash from our meagre local area funds to pay towards the crossing, and this seems to have had some impact.

New recycling scheme

The controversial new 'wheelie bin' recycling scheme is currently being rolled out across the City, and the East Area will soon be entirely covered. In the recent City budget setting we succeeded in getting an extra £100,000 of funding to ease the introduction of the scheme but – though recognising that there are some serious teething problems – we support it as the best means of raising Oxford's dismal recycling rate.

Collections alternate: one week the green wheelie bin and green box are emptied and the next week the blue box and garden waste sack are emptied. A calendar has gone to each household to provide a reminder of what gets collected when and, if you have a mobile, you can text your collection day (e.g. Wednesday) to 07786 200424 and you will be sent a text reminder. You can also register for email reminders. If you want a small wheelie bin, or sack, instead of a big wheelie bin then phone 252900. If you are a champion recycler and want a blue wheelie bin, instead of a box, then call the same number. Do contact us if problems persist.

Forthcoming East Area Parliament meetings

Wed 18 Apr 2007 at 18:30

Larkrise Primary School, Boundary Brook Road

Wed 16 May 2007 at 18:30 Venue to be confirmed Meeting agendas and papers are available a week prior to the meeting from:

<http://www.oxford.gov.uk/council/meeting-diary.cfm>

Cowley Road Carnival 2007

The popular procession is back this year – Sunday 1st July. See you all there! **Craig Simmons**

Oxford Brookes licensing application

Oxford Brookes Student Union has submitted a variation to its Club Premises Certificate (Ref.

07/00158/CLUB). It wants to extend the hours for supplying alcohol on Wednesday nights until 3 am on the following day, and on Friday and Saturday nights until 4 am on the following day. The Union has also submitted a variation to its premises licence (Reference: 07/00156/PREM) to include existing and additional types of regulated entertainment: Mondays till 2.30 am on the following day; Sundays, Tuesdays and Thursdays till 12.30 am; Wednesdays till 3.30 am and Fridays and Saturdays till 4.30 am; and to extend the number of events from 24 to 36 a year. **DRARA and many residents on their own account**, have objected to these proposals. A public hearing will take place on 3 April in the Town Hall at 9.30 am. All welcome.

Barbara Crossley

Hill Top Road Residents' Association

We have revived this association with a new constitution and committee. This has been triggered by the need to respond to proposals to develop Warneford Meadow, which we oppose, and the association continues to allow Hill Top Road residents to address other issues of particular importance to them.

The majority of residents of Hill Top Road have joined and the new constitution emphasises that the association will represent the majority views of the residents and act in the interests of all members, consulting members and residents regularly. The HTRRA is not in competition with DRARA – many Hill Top Road residents are members of both organisations, and actively support DRARA's campaigns and appreciate the social events. See our website at www.hilltoproad.org.uk, or contact secretary@hilltoproad.org.uk **Laura Elliott**

Old Bingo Hall licensing application

An appeal by Solarview Ltd. against the refusal of the City Council Licensing Committee to grant a licence for recorded music, dancing, and selling alcohol was heard by magistrates on 16 March. Magistrates accepted the appeal, subject to certain conditions. The venue will now be able to open after midnight on Thurs (til 2am the following day), Fri (til 3am), and Sat (til 4am). A comprehensive travel plan is also required, but with capacity of up to 1750, no parking and no taxi rank, residents can expect some disruption.

There is another application pending for the Bingo Hall for reduced hours (noon-midnight 3 days and noon-2am the other four days), but it is up to the applicant if he still wish to proceed with this. This application is 07/00157/PREM (see Council website at <http://tinyurl.com/2939vz>). To make a representation, visit the web pages above and hit the "Submit Comments" button. Further details, contact Tony Brett on 07971 589623

Warneford Hospital Playing Field, Park Hospital and Warneford Meadow

DRARA has joined with Friends Of Warneford Meadow and other Residents' Associations in a joint campaign to oppose the planning applications made by The Oxford Mental Healthcare Trust in respect of these sites. The main grounds of objection are: the additional traffic that these developments would bring to local streets (particularly with the massive new developments at the Churchill Hospital site); the increased pressure on parking space in Hill Top Road, and at the top of Divinity Road and Southfield Road; the change in the character of the local area that would result from large-scale development of these sites; and the loss of the amenity of Warneford Meadow that would result from losing half of it to development.

The Local Plan provides that planning permission will be granted for various uses at these three sites. At the time that it was drawn up, the need of the Mental Healthcare Trust to build a new hospital, and the need of Brookes University for additional academic floorspace and student accommodation, were the drivers behind the allocation of Warneford Hospital and Warneford Meadow as development sites.

However, circumstances have changed since then. The Mental Healthcare Trust has applied for a use other than the one provided for in the Local Plan for the Hospital Playing Field site. Brookes University has not expressed an interest in these sites for additional academic floorspace, and several brownfield sites have been granted permission for student accommodation since the Local Plan was drawn up, which means that there can no longer be justification for the loss of a greenfield site to **these forms of** development.

These arguments were put forward by local groups, including DRARA, at the meeting of the Council's North-East Area Committee in January. The Committee recommended that development should take place at the Park Hospital and Warneford Playing Field sites, but that none should take place at Warneford Meadow. These recommendations will now go to the Council's Planning Committee, probably on **April 25**, which will decide on these applications.

DRARA's letters of objection to the Planning Office are available on the website. **Peter Coggins**

Friends of Warneford Meadow (FOWM)

Through public meetings, local press campaigns and a travelling exhibition the Friends Of Warneford Meadow campaign group has in recent months captured the imagination of people in East Oxford and Headington. A major success came when all the neighbouring residents associations agreed to campaign against any development on the Meadow. The joint front presented at the North East Area

Committee (NEAC) meeting in January was undoubtedly a major factor in the councillors decision. Another factor was the 250 letters of objections which were written to Oxford City planners and we also hope to present a petition to the Lord Mayor before the plans are discussed.

Parallel to this planning process is the Town Green proposal submitted by local resident Paul Deluce in December. This application has now been accepted by the County Council and now starts an anticipated 4-6 month process before this is resolved. FOWM doubt if this will halt the planning process but unless the proposal is rejected it is likely to affect the market price of the Meadow.

Keep up to date with FOWM news on the website, www.friendsofwarnefordmeadow.org.uk If anyone is able to help with the campaign please contact Sietske Boeles, 108 Southfield Rd, OX4 1PA. Tel:728153, E-mail: boeles.rowland@ntlworld.com

Latest from the police

I have now been in post for almost a year, however we (again!) have two new faces on the Neighbourhood team. PC Tom Glover (thomas.glover@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk) is a new and very enthusiastic Officer who joins us along with a new team Sergeant Karen Fletcher (karen.fletcher@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk)

Local residents who attended the recent East Oxford Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG) meeting identified three main areas of concern: antisocial behaviour, especially at night; parking; and drugs.

The East Oxford team has been working hard to target anti social behaviour by running 'Operation Bratwurst' on Friday and Saturday nights. So far this operation has led to 36 people being dealt with either by arrest or fixed penalty ticket.

The next Neighbourhood Action Group open meeting will be organised in due course. Residents are encouraged to attend. More details on www.saferoxford.org.uk (see 'East Oxford NAG').

PC Hannah Davies

(hannah.davies@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk).

News from Ss Mary & John Church

Five different Lent courses are running in the Parish: a film/book discussion group, a "creative breakfast", Iona/Taize-style worship, hearing the Gospel story afresh, and a course on Richard Niebuhr's "Christ and Culture". It's not too late to join. For details see the Parish Magazine, or phone 242396.

Holy Week & Easter There will be the usual procession on Palm Sunday (1 April) from St Alban's (10am) to Ss Mary & John's. On Good Friday (6 April), East Oxford Churches Together will be doing the Stations of the Cross walk up Cowley Rd, commencing outside the Methodist Church (Jeune St) at 10.30am. Other main services will be on Maundy Thursday (7.30pm, followed by Watch till

midnight), Good Friday (12noon - 3pm), Holy Saturday night (Easter Vigil at 8pm), and Easter Day (usual Sunday times of 8am, 10.30am & 6.15pm).

Building Works We now have a woodworm-free church, with new heating and lighting, and a new sound system! On 16 April the builders are going to start constructing a new porch to the north door (where the new path is) and the refurbishment of the vestries (including toilets), and this work will continue until the summer. So from 16 April all weekday services will be taking place either at St Alban's or Bartlemas. The plan is that Sunday services will continue as normal at SS Mary & John's, but this may not be possible – so please check notices carefully during this period, especially if you are an occasional attender.

Baptism, Confirmation, Reaffirmation is being held on Pentecost Sunday, 27 May. Please get in touch a.s.a.p. with any enquiries. **Adam Romanis**

Churchyard Spring has arrived in the churchyard with snowdrops, primroses, violets and daffodils flourishing despite the very waterlogged ground. This year we hope to keep a monthly record to guide us in our efforts to increase the biodiversity. Anyone interested in joining our team of birdwatchers and plant recorders would be very welcome.

In May we will be launching the churchyard website, which will aim to encourage exploration not only of the wildlife but also of the links with the social history of east Oxford. It will include downloadable leaflets suggesting what you can look for in the different seasons, guides to the memorials, fact sheets on aspects of life in east Oxford, and Teachers' Guides on how to introduce children and young people to this heritage. Contact Ruth Conway on 723085 for details.

Southfield Superstars: your cricket team!

2007 marks the 21st Anniversary of the start of the Southfield Superstars. Beginning as an offshoot of the Divinity Rd baby sitting circle, several of the then "babies" are now regular players. The rest of us are mainly ageing superstars long past our cricketing best. Most players still live in the area or thereabouts. Some former residents return from their rural idylls to play, and we allow a few friends from alien territories like Iffley Rd and South Oxford to join in too.

If you are a keen cricketer (of any age or level of ability) who has somehow managed to escape our talent scouting net then please get in touch with Pete Edwards (727160). We play our home games at Oriel College Field on Tuesdays from the second half of June. Away games are played earlier in the season when Oriel is unavailable. All games are 20 overs a side evening matches starting at 6 pm.

Appeal from Asylum Welcome

Asylum Welcome, the local organisation supporting asylum seekers and refugees in Oxfordshire, is

increasingly having to give basic support, including food, to asylum seekers who are destitute.

There is a general appeal for food, specifically tea and coffee, tinned fruit, tinned vegetables, pasta, rice, couscous, tinned fish, tinned meat, UHT milk, tinned soups, lentils and fruit cake. Halal food is especially useful, but no fresh food please as we don't have the storage facilities. If you have working tin openers that you don't need, they would also be appreciated! Please note that clothes and furniture are not wanted at the moment.

If you would like to give something, you can drop it off at Asylum Welcome, 276a Cowley Road, between 10am and 3pm Mon, Tues, Weds and Fri, or contact Anna Eden, 49 Southfield Road, 249442.

Dogs body?

If any dog owners in the area fancy meeting up to discuss common issues – be it local walks, sitting arrangements, vet advice, dog wardens, pavement detritus, or even a DRARA dog show – contact Sandy Ruxton, 36 Southfield Road, 432647

Host families sought

Well-established language school in the centre of Oxford requires new host families for English language students. Single or twin rooms. Good rates. Contact Catriona Davidson at 36 Minster Road (01865 242128) or apply on line www.eckersley.co.uk/accommodation

Useful contacts:

City Councillors, St Clements Ward: Nuala Young (Green), tel 749459 or cllrnyoung@oxford.gov.uk

Mary Jane Sareva (Green), tel 07776 075250 or cllrmjsareva@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: Rebecca Harty, tel 484451 or community@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

DRARA: For more information, contact Peter Coggins on 723254 or email petercoggins@aol.com