



Iffley Fields Residents Association

Minutes of the meeting held on Monday 14 July 2025 at 8PM at the Falcon Boat Club

Present: Sue Hale (Chair), Susan Bedford, Thelma Martin, Christine Hogg, Barbara Ashcroft, Simon Fisher, Tom Green, Nick Barnett, Thelma Martin, Janet Hall, Rosemary, Virginia Hodgson,

Apologies were received from Margaret Thompson, Cllr Emily Kerr, Jo Burch, Cllr Brad Baines,

1. Minutes of the meeting held on 12 May were accepted as a correct record

2. Matters arising

Meadow Lane Carpark – An update from Emily reported that *“Officers had been working with the applicant to resolve outstanding objections from the Local Highways Authority in relation to the application. It would appear that this is close to being resolved, and as such officers are looking to take this to committee in either August or September.”*

Open Gardens 2025 This had been a great success both as a community event and in raising over £1500 to be divided between IFRA, Donnington Doorstep and Asylum Welcome. There was support for doing it again in 2027, perhaps earlier in the year. Susan was thanked for organising this so successfully.

Picnic tables – Sue reported that we had funds for two tables. The crowdfunder had raised £1500. Many contributions were received in memory of Sam Robertson who had died suddenly and had made such an important contribution to IFRA and the community. She had hoped there might be funds for 3 picnic tables, but as we would have to pay VAT, this might not be possible. Tom suggested that it might be possible to use some funds from the Playground which had not yet been allocated. It was agreed to look at this when a new quote was received from the ODS. It would also be important to an additional rubbish bin.

Tow path – Mark Seal had called a Stakeholder meeting for 17 July, where Anneliese Dodds would attend. Cathy Ferreira had agreed to attend this on IFRA’s behalf. The repairs to the tow path planned by the County Council were welcomed but concerns that the whole tow path would be closed for an unspecified time. It was important that closure of all and part of the path was kept to a minimum and the public informed in advance of the project plan and schedule. Following the meeting, IFRA would consider whether to make representations to the Council about this.

Ferry Path: IFRA had applied to have this registered again as a footpath. However, the Registration Officer had informed us that the City Council, as landowner, was ‘not minded to agree’ as there was not enough public use. It was pointed out that the City Council had closed the access from the river and it had become overgrown so it was hardly surprising.

It was agreed to ask for a site visit with Council officers to explain its importance as a part of accessing the river and the whole regeneration of the field by Donnington Bridge and in particular in bringing

the waste area between the Carpark and the path into public use. Simon, Janet, Thelma, Sue and Rosemary agreed to be involved in this.

Application to become a CIO

The application had been rejected but if IFRA addressed the Charity Commission's concerns, we can reapply. Christine agreed to phone up to discuss what we might need to do to meet their criteria. Tom suggested a contact who might be able to advise us.

3. Play ground

The repairs were now all completed and Tom was thanked for his perseverance in helping this happen. There were plans for landscaping and improving the back area and a group were working on this.

4. Longbridges

Tom reported that the access ladders to the swimming areas were now installed and Adam had organised working parties with Oxford Conservation Volunteers and some volunteers from Falcon to help clear the Himalayan Balsam. They would like to get designated bathing status in the long term but there were difficulties in meeting the criteria for nearby car parking and toilets.

5 Meadow Lane Trees:

Sue thanked the 'tree warriors' who each adopted a new tree to water which had been crucial with the hot weather. It was noted an older silver beech tree was suffering and it was hoped someone would offer to water it.

The benches on the lane needed revarnishing. Sue offered to ask Roger Hampton for a quote to revarnish them.

6 Kidneys

Working parties organised by Margaret Thompson and Ruth Ashcroft had cleared the river path and it was well used which was keeping it open, but there was regular need to keep the nettles and the Himalayan Balsam at bay. There was a need for volunteers to help and it was suggested a regular schedule might help. Margaret and Ruth were thanked for their work in achieving this.

Christine reported that she had asked ODS for quotes on log benches for the Kidneys. Possible locations to be decided. She hoped this might be the next project for IFRA funding once the picnic tables were completed.

7 Planning-

Thelma reported her concerns about changes to 270 Iffley Road that had applied to expand from a 6 room HMO to 16. Both IFRA and Oxford Civic Society had objected, variations had been put in by the developer which did not address these concerns. Both IFRA and OCS had again objected. Thelma agreed to alert Emily and Chris to our concerns about this application.

8 Financial Report

Sam presented proposed changes to the financial arrangements which were agreed. This included an agreement to keep a reserve of unrestricted funds of 2 years admin costs (currently about £450-£500) and 5-10% of project funds. This would ensure continuity and help us avoid any problems were there any inadvertent expenses or overspends. It was agreed to consider in September how much IFRA funding might be available to new or existing projects.

9 Traffic and Residents Associations

Christine reported on an approach from DRARA who wanted to bring together residents associations together to address concerns about traffic in East Oxford. She asked anyone interested in taking this forward to contact her.

10 Drones

Virginia was very concerned about drones flying over her house. It was noted that it was illegal to fly over private property but enforcement was difficult. If anyone else has seen drones over Iffley Fields they were asked to let us know.

11 Heat loss monitors

Sam reported that heat loss and thermal imaging cameras from the Low Carbon Hub would be available in November. Anyone interested should email him sammatthewa@gmail.com.

12 IFRA Interest Groups

Book Club continues to thrive meeting every 6 weeks; the Walking Group meet regularly; the Garden Group have, with the leadership from Susan Bedford, held a very successful IFRA Open Gardens and the entrance to the allotments at the bottom of Fairacres Road looks very attractive; History Group has met recently and have a plan. If anybody else has an interest that that they would like to develop with other IFRA residents Sue would be happy to support the launch of such interest groups

13 Street Connectors

Street Connectors meet as a group twice a year. One of their roles is to represent the residents in their part of the street and report to the IFRA committee; make new residents welcome; give newcomers an info sheet /fact sheet with local information about rubbish collections, local politicians, councillors, 'Fix my Street' etc. to help them settle quickly and feel welcome to their new home. The sheet is updated regularly and is also available on the IFRA website. The Street Connector also helps the new residents join the Street's WhatsApp group. The Street WhatsApp group helps keep residents informed about local events, and initiatives of possible interest. It also allows residents to give items away, swop items, ask for help eg looking out for a missing cat, and share enthusiasms. After the sudden and sad death of Sam Robertson we are looking for two Street Connectors one for the top part of Chester Street and the other for the bottom part of Warwick Street. The next Street Connectors Meeting is on Monday 29th September 8.00 until 9.15pm

The meeting ended at 9.15

Dates of future meetings 2025

2025, September 8th (Zoom), November 10th (Falcon)