



The Fields

Iffley Fields Residents Association

March 2022

Email: iffleyfields@gmail.com, www.ifra.uk

AGM

Monday 13 March, 8pm, Greyfriars Hall, Jackdaw Lane,

This will include an opportunity to ask about IFRA's year and suggest new issues to follow up as well as presentations about local charities where residents are volunteering: Asylum Welcome, Friends of Astons Eyot, Oxford Mutual Aid, Restore and the Samaritans.

Agenda is available on www.ifra.uk

Table tennis on the recreation ground!

Thanks to everyone who contributed to our Crowdfunder to provide us with the new table tennis table. Already it is well used!

Initially we had some concerns about it's position close to the Lane but so far there are no problems and there is a well-placed bench to sit and watch the games! Thanks to Peter Sidgwick for helping achieve this.



Working with Oxford Direct Services (ODS)

IFRA had a meeting with ODS and the Council officers in January to see how we might work together. The City Council makes the policy and decisions (such as the location of table tennis, benches or trees). ODS implements these decisions and is wholly owned by the City Council. They aim for quality and sustainability and so are often not the cheapest option, as IFRA has found. The profits are all reinvested. Their remit includes, parks, street cleaning, recycling, waste, and electric car charging.

At the meeting there was an undertaking to maintain and keep access to the river on the old Ferry Path, which we are very pleased about!

Longbridges

Work continues to make Longbridges a safe and pleasant swimming area and nature reserve. It has been long neglected. New ladders and a bench will be installed once the river levels have sufficiently dropped, ODS have also been clearing vegetation so that they can do remedial work on the embankment.



There are regular work parties, including with Oxford Conservation volunteers and had almost 40 people on site. If you would like to get involved there's a WhatsApp group. Contact: Tom 07732 407491.

Horse Field in Iffley Village

These old meadows in Iffley Village at the top of Meadow Lane are an important part of the river corridor, essential for wildlife. The Council want to build on them. Oxford certainly needs more housing, but there are many reasons why this is not the place. Full details are on the Iffley Village campaign website www.iffleywoods.org.

Meadow Lane

Children's Playground



Residents have raised with IFRA concerns about the state of the playground. A group from IFRA reviewed the playground and produced a report (available on www.ifra.uk). Works in the play area are planned in the 2023/24 financial year. So that is good news, though finances are very tight.

Meadow Lane Car Park

The Meadow Lane car park was closed last year and management handed to the Falcon Club. Though IFRA was not consulted, we asked that it be reinstated as a public carpark and that part of Meadow Lane becomes a CPZ. The City Council is considering its options on this.

We are still concerned about the use of the field by the bridge as a commuter carpark and that the barrier is no longer in use. This has been taken up with the Oxfordshire County Council.

Meadow Lane Recreation ground

In the autumn, Cowley cub scouts planted a few hundred wild daffodils along the back strip. The bulbs were the genuine wild type, so may take a season or two to settle and flower. With funding from the National Lottery, the Council have planted 3 crab apples by the lane at the Jackdaw Lane end, and will be shortly planting an elm and two birch up the other end. The elm is one of the several varieties now available that can resist Dutch Elm disease.



Two more benches for Meadow Lane Recreation Ground

The family of Pam St Clair, who died recently, would like to thank those who contributed towards a new bench. Enough money has been collected for her memorial bench. The plaque will read- *Pamela Anne St Clair, 12th December 1932 – January 9th 2023, 'Not all who wander are lost'*. The other bench will be funded by Dick Wolfe recently City Councillor for this area.

Meadow Lane Guerrilla Gardens

Denise Cullington has done a fabulous job in setting up and maintaining the verges along the Lane by the Recreation Ground with the Guerrilla Garden. Thanks to Susan Bedford there are plans to extend the garden along Meadow Lane and by the allotments. Anyone who would like to donate plants or time to help, would be very welcome. Text Denise on 0777 391 7779.

Social events and interest groups



Last June, after the pause due to the pandemic we once again held an Iffley Fields Open Gardens. It was a resounding success with perfect weather. Refreshments were available to help people as they made their way from garden to garden. Thank you to all who took part! Funds raised went to support the Porch, Restore and IFRA's table tennis fund.

This year interest groups were launched. New members are welcome.

Book Group- To join the Whats App Group, text Sue 07780 697691

Walking Group: to join the Whats App Groups text: Margie 07879 440937

History group: To join email: joanna.innes@history.ox.ac.uk

Gardening Group- To join email susanbedford7@btinternet.com

Bridge Group- Text Gill 07701086950

Writing Group- Text Sue Hale 07780697691 who will put interested people in touch with each other. Also if anyone would be able to run a **film or wild life group**, there is interest, but nobody has stepped forward to run them. Text Sue 07780697691

Do you have bookkeeping, or bursary/accounts experience?

We have a vacancy which will bring you that sense of contribution and closer to your neighbours. It will take up just a few hours per month. After more years than we can remember, Ben Pinches is standing down as treasurer to focus on his Waterways subgroup. The role involves helping us keep track of income, expenditure and subgroup budgets on spreadsheets and producing a simple report for the IFRA meeting every few months. Email Christine iffleyfields@gmail.com and we can arrange a further discussion

Chip in to support IFRA

Thanks so much to everyone who has so contributed to our appeal. We have raised £704 for IFRA funds since 1 December. In addition we have £653 in hand from our Waterways and £2385 for Meadow Lane. The financial year ends 31 March and full accounts will be posted on www.ifra.uk.

Grants don't pay overheads and now we need your help to raise about £700 core funding each year for printing and website costs so we can maintain our momentum. We are asking residents who can afford to do so to make an annual contribution towards these overheads.

Set up a standing order form/make payment to Iffley Fields Residents Association – Account No. 24751634, Sort Code 54-21-23, National Westminster Bank Plc, Oxford, Cornmarket Street.

Pay a cheque made out to IFRA and deliver to IFRA c/o 53, Stratford Street. Please donate as little or as much as you like, whether than be £1/year or £10/month.

Your used postage stamps

British or foreign stamps can be used by a charity who sell them on to fund their work. Please tear or cut the stamps off your envelopes, put them in an envelope labelled STAMPS, and drop them through the letterbox of 98 Fairacres Road. They'll be sent on to Reaching The Unreached, a charity supporting disadvantaged children and families in very poor districts of rural South India. See <https://www.rtu.org.uk/>

What should IFRA do next?

This year IFRA celebrates its first quarter century! Through successful grant applications and crowdfunding we have seen improvements in the last three years: new benches, better planting on the recreation ground, and the table tennis, helping make Longbridges swimming area safer and more pleasant.

All these changes came because residents approached and worked with IFRA and councillors to achieve them. So, if you have any ideas, contact us. Here are the next projects that we are hoping to get off the ground – with your help

Defibrillator



Defibrillators can be used by anyone without training and can double the chance of survival from a cardiac arrest, as long as they can be accessed within minutes. Though there is one at the Falcon and in the School, these are locked out of hours, so the only 24/7 public access defibrillator is on the Riverside Centre by Donnington bridge. We need one towards Chester Street and near the Recreation Ground, where most people congregate. We are looking into funding and an exact location.

Basketball net

We would like to see more activities for young people around here and there is a lot of support for a basketball net on the Recreation Ground. We are looking into costs and possible locations with the City Council but it will be expensive.

Can you help us achieve this? Email us on iffleyfields@gmail.com



Volunteers wanted

This AGM will focus on volunteering and how we can help organisations looking for support in these difficult times.

Asylum Welcome, based in Magdalen Road, provides support and advice, food, and help with English language to people seeking refuge. It has recently expanded to cope with increased need, and has 200 volunteers helping with very varied tasks. www.asylum-welcome.org

Friends of Astons Eyot is the local community organisation which manages Aston's Eyot with a new 21 year lease from Christ Church, and is also the friends' group for the Council-owned Kidneys. Volunteers are needed for practical work on site and for admin tasks. <https://friendsofastonseyot.org>

Oxford Mutual Aid provides 330 households with regular food and baby supplies, delivers nearly 100 emergency food parcels a week, and cook over 650 meals a week. volunteers phone up recipients, pack parcels and stock the Hall (279 Cowley Road), and drivers and bikers deliver parcels and collect surplus food. www.oxfordmutualaid.org.

The Porch Day Centre in Magdalen Road provides a stepping stone for those who are homeless or vulnerably housed. It is open every day except Sunday. Volunteers don't have to have special skills, just non-judgemental and interested in people. Training given. <https://theporch.org.uk>

Restore provides innovative therapeutic recovery programmes and coaching support to people with mental ill-health, as well as a digital Recovery group. Volunteers are involved in the recovery groups, the café and in admin and fundraising roles. www.restore.org.uk.

Oxford Samaritans on Magdalen Road is one of 201 branches of the national charity offering 24/7 confidential emotional support to anyone who may be experiencing distress or despair, including those that may lead to suicide. After extensive training volunteers do one four- hour-shift a week including a monthly night shift. www.samaritans.org

IFRA

iffleyfields@gmail.com www.ifra.uk

IFRA welcomes involvement of residents. If you have any issues you want to raise, contact any of the IFRA committee or your street connector. We meet the second Monday of every other month: Agenda and minutes are on www.ifra.uk. The meetings for this year are 12 September and 14 November.

The Committee

Sue Hale (Chair), Ben Pinches (Treasurer), Christine Hogg (Secretary), Thelma Martin (Planning), Barbara Ashcroft, Susan Bedford, Luke Bolton, Denise Cullington, Simon Fisher, Janet Hall, Emily Kerr, Jon Rees, Samantha Robertson, Peter Sidgwick.

Keep in touch

If you want to keep up to date with what is happening in Iffley Fields,

Sign up for email updates –Email us: iffleyfields@gmail.com

Join your street WhatsApp group, ask your street connector.

Join Facebook –On IFRA’s Facebook page, find out what is happening, get recommendations and offers. To join you need a Facebook account and search for IFRA. Administrators will accept anyone into the group if they look as if they are local.

Street Connectors welcome newcomers and bring forward issues to IFRA.

Argyle Street– Simon Fisher- simonfishershous@gmail.com

Sue Hale, No 38, 07780 697691, sue_hale@btinternet.com

Bedford Street, Eyot Place/Meadow Lane: Janet Hall, No. 39, 07587590039, janetmwhall@gmail.com

Chester Street –Luke Bolton, No. 42, 07961 351443, boltonluke@gmail.com

Fairacres Road – Barbara Ashcroft, barbaraashcroft@btinternet.com

Stratford Street - Ben Pinches, No. 53, ben@pinches.biz

Warwick and Parker Street - Darren Clahane 07445 887597, darren.clahane@gmail.com

Information about local services for newcomers can be found on www.ifra.uk and from your Street Connectors