

Iffley Fields Residents Association

Minutes of a meeting held on 11 November 2024 in person

Present: Sue Hale (Chair), Samantha Robertson, Benedict Pinches, Susan Bedford, Thelma Martin, Christine Hogg, Ruth Ashcroft, Barbara Ashcroft, Sam Alston, Margaret Thompson, Margaret Thorogood, Virginia Hodgson, Matt Morgon, Simon Fisher, Tom Green, Cllr Emily Kerr.
Apologies were received from Peter Sidgewick, Cllr Damian Haywood

1 Minutes of the meeting on 9 September 2024 were accepted as a correct record.

2 Matters Arising

2a Meadow Lane Carpark

So far there was no date for a decision on the future of the carpark. The delay was with the County Council. It was noted that the Falcon had approached IFRA for a meeting, but we had preferred to wait until there was a decision on the Carpark which had been expected in May. It was agreed that IFRA should now follow this up as we had no timetable for the decision on the Carpark.

2b School traffic update

Matthew Morgan, while supporting the scheme, had 3 concerns about the implementation.

- Timing – The afternoon slot was variably described as 2.30 -3.30 or 3.20. This needs to be extended as cars as school pickup time is 3.20, finishing the school streets at 3.20 or 3.30 will mean cars trying to drive down at 3.30 to do a late pickup.
- Signage: there seemed to be more signs than necessary. Emily explained that there was a legal framework which had to be adhered to, but she would find out if there was flexibility within this.
- Data protection: what happens to camera footage, how is it stored and for how long? It was agreed that this was important data protection issue.

Emily agreed to follow up these points with Damian as they were County Council issues. It was noted that the Meadow Lane Carpark was important for parents to be able to use when they drop off their children.

2c Ferry Path

It was noted that this was now cleared and accessible and appreciation for this was expressed. It was hoped that the land between the carpark and the path could be brought into public use as soon as possible. Emily explained that she had asked for the path to be formally registered as a foot path. The path will need regularly maintained to keep it clear.

2 d Playground event and renovations

Tom reported that play events have been held over the summer with great success. The group was working with Nature Effect in looking at how the area at the back could be used effectively. Funding would be sought for this. It was hoped the school might get involved as their pupils were heavy users of the playground.

The Wobbly bridge had still not been replaced and work started but not finished on the slide, and areas fenced off for 2 months. There had been some major staff changes in ODS that had caused

delays. However, as the Ferry Path showed, ODS was responsive to comments and complaints. Anyone effected was encouraged to write to ODS.

Emily reported that Damian was planning to contribute some funds to the playground improvements and this was greatly appreciated.

2e Defibrillator location

Two locations had been offered and the defibrillator will be installed on a Garden Wall opposite the playground. Thanks were expressed to Martin and Brittany who had offered to host it.

2f The Kidneys

Margaret Thompson and Ruth Ashcroft reported that improvements to the paths had now been completed and were a great improvement and paths could even be used by buggies. This demonstrated the benefit of FoAE and IFRA working together.

Margaet pointed out that there used to be a clear space along the river and that it would be great to open this up. Ruth said that the Friends of Astons Eyot was willing to organise an initial working party to clear the river bank and see if there was support do this. The area along the riverbank would need regular work parties to manage it, if it was to be kept clear. If anyone is interested in helping contact iffleyfields@gmail.com.

2g Picnic Tables on the Recreation Ground

Sue reported that she had got a quote from ODS of about £2000 per table. She had asked for but not yet received a specification and a picture of the table. She hoped for 2, preferably round tables, one by the Skate Board Park and one by the University Sports Ground. Emily reported that Damian had indicated he might have some funding for this.

4 Longbridges

Tom reported steel piling had been installed and two picnic tables. Unfortunately the tables had been installed side by side again, despite repeated requests to install one on the island side or at least further apart from each other. The ladder which had been funded by IFRA was still not installed (one of the installed benches was also funded by IFRA). Tom was liaising with Cllr Anna Railton about this. The river level needed to be lower before the ladders could be installed but Tom was trying to set up a site visit with the City Council Waterways Officer to discuss locations before installation, without success. Emily agreed to follow this up.

5 Orchard on the Recreation Ground

Emily reported that there was a county fund for this and she had discussed it with Chris Bell who was looking into sites that did not interfere with underground pipes. There would only be about 7 small trees and these would not interfere with sports or impede the open aspect of the Recreation Ground.

6 Open Gardens 2025

Susan is willing to organise this for next year, but had only received one offer of a Garden. It was agreed to set a date in June or July and see if there is more interest. A minimum of 8 gardens was needed to participate. There could also be a plant stall and a garden book sale.

7 Planning

Thelma reported that there had been no new applications that affected Iffley Fields.

8 AGM

With the closure of Greyfriars and the Gladiators, IFRA needed to find another venue for the AGM in March. St Albans Hall, the Falcon and the Seventh Day Adventists were possible places.

Other in-person meetings could be held in members houses. Sue was thanked for her warm hospitality that made for a relaxed and comfortable meeting!

It was agreed to look into inviting speakers who had done positive community projects, such as Nature Effect, Oxboxes, Community Land Trust and the City Farm.

9 Financial Report

A financial report had been circulated and Sam Alston reported that we were now in a healthier position, though we needed to maintain and keep the standing orders.

It was agreed to open a savings account with the NatWest that had a 35 days' notice period.

Christine proposed that IFRA consider becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation. This was a new status and a much simpler registration process than traditional charity registration. It would enable IFRA to apply for funding, get gift aid and avoid VAT on work undertaken by ODS.

It would require a revised Constitution to comply with the Charity Commission, maintaining a membership list and submission of accounts. There would be an additional administrative burden but there would be benefits for IFRA in terms of access to funds and governance.

Christine agreed to draft a constitution and present a paper to the next meeting. If we agree to proceed, a resolution and Constitution could be submitted to the AGM in March.

9 AOB

Street Connectors

Sue reported on a useful meeting of the Street Connectors. The poster and information for new residents revised. Susan offered to laminate the poster for the noticeboard.

Parking permits

The City Council were introducing online visitors permits. While this might be difficult for some people, it was well established in other areas, such as London and Bristol, and was unlikely to change. One of the aims was to prevent the trade in parking permits.

2025, 8pm second Monday of the month: January 13th March (AGM), May 12th, July 14th, September 8th, November 10th

The date of the AGM will be notified when we have identified a venue

