



Annual General Meeting

Wednesday, October 21st 2020

7 – 8.30pm

via [Zoom](#), Meeting ID: 895 657 7451, Passcode: 0r5fx5

AGENDA

We aim to provide an hour to discuss the low-traffic neighbourhood proposal, hence covering formal AGM business to follow this.

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for Absence
3. **Chair's Report**, followed by
4. **The DRARA Low-traffic Neighbourhood (LTN) proposal**; Presentation of the [LTN proposal for our community](#) followed by questions and thoughts from residents. This will be presented by the DRARA Traffic team. Dr Scott Urban from Oxford Liveable Streets who is involved in the transformations to reduce through traffic gridlock across Oxford and the UK will also attend.

Recommended viewing: [Please click to see](#) Dr Urban's recent talk hosted by the Oxford Civic Society. He explains low-traffic neighbourhoods with successful examples from elsewhere and discusses these can be central to reclaiming our streets for residents to use.

5. Minutes of the AGM held on 16 October 2019
6. Matters Arising
7. Treasurer's Report
8. Election of Committee
9. AOB
10. Date of the next AGM: 14 October 2021 (tbc)

Committee nominations to Clare Ridley, DRARA secretary, secretary@drara.org.uk or in person on the night

Divinity Road Area Resident's Association Annual General Meeting 2020

Chair's report

The Corona Virus pandemic is cutting deep. A cliché for our times is becoming evident: "Who would have thought..." is often said, with a sense of puzzlement or despair - we can all fill in the blanks. So much of our lives talking and communicating through Zoom, Teams, WhatsApp video – the list goes on, all electronic. Finding our way through the myriad of seemingly sometimes perverse advice, guidance, and regulation. Our social and personal lives so restricted and compromised, and having to cope with the fears, anxieties and anger that we can all experience often without the close personal contact with those we love and hold dear.

One of the things that has come through so strongly is the inestimable value of our local community, our neighbours and all those day to day relationships that make up the web of our daily lives; and this is the one thing that does not make me reach for the 'Who Would Have Thought' response. Last year I reflected on the importance of our neighbourhood and the things that we do together that makes and reinforces all those relationships that give it the sense of community. Covid-19 brought all this home and inevitably it will dominate this report as it has dominated all our lives.

The local community response here, across East Oxford and way beyond, has been incredible. The drive and energy is inspiring and has generated all those immensely practical and caring things that have sustained us all: the Bartlemas Area support Team with 16 street champions that include some students, linking with every resident, the WhatsApp groups and the other initiatives that offer support, practical help and help with quick and effective communication, as well as the weekly emails sharing news of what was happening around us. So, a huge and heartfelt thank you to all those involved.

The weekly support of donations to local stepping stone charity, [The Porch](#), has been especially good. As normal food donations dwindled, a fantastic network of residents (please see their names below) were able to gather and deliver donations enabling the Porch team to offer over 100 packed lunches and hot suppers each day. This support continues and I would like to thank Farooq, Wayne and the team at the co-op for their support to keep this going as well as Cindy for leading on this.

Of course, we have not been able to hold the events that we value so much. Before the lockdown we had an amazing Apple Day and there were the Living Advent Calendars last December and the DRARA quiz in January. The Easter Egg and Teddy Bear hunts were virtual as was our Open Gardens. We've not gathered at a Meal in the Street evening nor enjoyed a Film in the Street. There's been no DRARA in the Park. However we know that many residents really appreciated seeing and sometimes singing together on Thursday evenings! But the Events Team will be thinking about what can be done virtually over the coming months.

One of the things that the Lockdown brought home to us is how much the volume of traffic can dominate our daily experience of living here, and how good it was when lockdown stopped it. We will be talking about this in more detail but, in summary, we held a residents' survey and there was an overwhelming level of support for stopping our area being a rat run. We have a highly active group taking action on the traffic issues. Proposals have been submitted to create a [Low Traffic Neighbourhood](#) here in the DRARA area by creating barriers to vehicle traffic near the top of Divinity Road and the junction of Stone Street with Divinity Road. At the time of writing no decision has been made by Central government and the County Council on this and the

areas in East Oxford, Cowley and Florence Park proposals. Traffic has been a perennial topic at AGMs and I'm sure that this will continue, but hopefully we'll be discussing different aspects and issues in the future.

Planning continues to be a busy area. We are closely monitoring planning applications, many of which are for establishing C4 use for HMOs. We take a very critical and careful look at all of them. Last year we had a very full discussion on HMOs and the impact of them on our community. We remain very frustrated at the structural dislocation between the planning and licencing systems and requirements – as is, I believe, the City Council.

Our liaison with Oxford Brookes has had an extra edge to it over the past months. On 16 July we wrote an [open letter to both Universities](#) calling for action to protect the wider community as students from across the country come to live alongside us. We were extremely disappointed and dismayed at the slow response by the universities to the threats to the local community posed by COVID-19. There were some very worrying house parties and high levels of concern from neighbours. These have moderated and the emergent strong line about student breeches by Oxford Brookes has helped to dampen the spike in house parties and late night street flows of students we were experiencing in July and August. Oxford University's surge in infection rates experienced a month later than those of Brookes students and staff while not surprising, are very worrying as Oxford City continues to be on Red alert. The Brookes Community Team has been working very hard, responding quickly to complaints and problems as they arise. And I want to appreciate the way in which the team on ground has responded. Similarly, we would like to thank the work of the Community Police teams as they coordinate with the University to educate and follow up on incidents.

But I would like to end this report on a positive note. Our community is one of the most diverse in Oxford. Student residents are as much a part of our rich fabric of neighbours as the elderly, families and many others. The many acts of kindness towards each other, small gestures of kindness and thoughtfulness have all made coping with the difficulties of the pandemic that much easier. I hope you have found our work as an association a helpful source of friendliness and companionship this past year, and into the next.

There are many people involved in the work of DRARA, and I would like to **thank everyone** for all the commitment and hard work that they have put in.

Nick Welch, Chair DRARA

The DRARA Committee

- Nick Welch, Chair and Traffic lead
- Clare Ridley, Secretary and email communications,
- Alison Williams, Treasurer
- Tamasin Lilwall & Deb Tricker, Events & website
- Tom Knollys, Planning
- Deborah Tricker, Promotion and Events
- Paul Vanags, Membership
- Karen Metcalfe, University Liaison
- Jane Bingham, Newsletter
- Maggie Hartford, Environment
- Rob Waterston, Friends of South Park
- Casey Alves, Student representative

The Covid Support core team

- Doris Ahmed
- Lubna Arshad
- Trish Attwooll
- Venina Bland
- Cindy Carlson
- Sarah Christopher
- Geraldine Coggins
- Imogen Foxell
- Chris Franks
- James Harper
- Tamasin Lilwall
- Myfanwys Lloyd
- Alex Morrison
- Ali Morton
- Mori Reithmayr

The Newsletter Distribution Team

- Glen & Alison Williams
- Anna Eden
- Trish Attwooll
- Ann Edmonds
- Martin Stott
- Amanda Green
- Ivon Asquith
- Catherine Weston
- Pauline Edwards
- Richard Josephy
- Linda Forrest
- Hilary Frisbee
- Dom Parkinson
- Clare Ridley
- Chris Franks
- Jane Bingham
- Rob Waterson

DRARA News clipping

- David Morgan
- Riet Van Bremen

The DRARA Traffic Team (DRATT)

- Iona Foster
- Jemima Hunt
- Tom Knollys
- Tam Lilwall
- Tom Miller
- Robert Rasbach
- Clare Ridley
- Nick Welch

Returning Students Planning team

- Marion Rees
- Clare Ridley
- Hanna Sinclair
- Martin Stott

The Subscriptions Team

- Pauline Edwards
- Ann Edmunds
- Linda Forrest
- Jon Bliss
- Maggie Budden
- Rob Waterson
- Anne Hall
- Geraldine Coggins
- Catriona Davidson

- Our brilliant postie, Nigel and the refuse collector team – our lockdown lifeline
- Our Councillors, Tom Hayes and Jamila Azad
- Our local Community Police Team led by Sgt Neil Bouse
- The amazing Team at the Co-op
- Katherine Miles and the Bullingdon Good Neighbours Scheme

- Clare Ridley
- Hanna Sinclair
- Jo Steele
- Martin Stott
- Ann Tutt
- Rob Weston
- Sarah Widemann

The Events Team

- Tamasin Lilwall
- Deborah Tricker
- Rebecca Phillipson
- Victoria Sinclair and Vanessa Sinclair
- Maggie Hartford & George Wormald
- Paul Vanags and Mitch Oliver
- Andy Roscoe and Sue Brownill
- Clare Ridley
- Martin Stott
- Trisha Andrews from Restore
- Ann Tutt
- Linda Forrest
- Barbara Gorayska
- Christopher Livingston-Campbell
- Myfawny Lloyd
- Richard Dunkerley
- Alison and Glen Williams
- Marion Rees
- Alice, Rosie, Finn and David Lilwall
- Catriona Davidson
- Ron and Lucy Gibbons
- Dominic Parkinson
- Rumi Mohideen and colleagues from Warneford Trust
- Rupert Griffin from Tiddly Pommies

The Environment Action Team

- Anna Eden
- George Wormald
- Maggie Hartford
- Joanna Gilmour
- Maggie Lloyd
- Mena Remedios
- Nick Welch
- Gerdi Hayward
- Richard Hayward

And thanks to all the tree pit adopters.

- Scott Urban, Oxford Liveable Streets and Chris Proctor, Waltham Forest lead highways engineer

Reports from Committee Members - Year 2019-20

Street Champions and the Bartlemas Area Covid Support Team (Tam Lilwall and Clare Ridley)

Back in March, when the potential impact of the Coronavirus situation became clear, some of the DRARA committee started to work out how best to use our strengths to support our neighbourhood. In parallel, the Oxford Hub had started recruiting volunteers across the city, and some of these volunteers in our area started to reach out to their neighbours as Street Champions. It soon became obvious that a more organised entity would be beneficial, and the **Bartlemas Area Covid Support Team** was created as a joint initiative between DRARA and the Oxford Hub volunteers. This covers a slightly larger area than just DRARA - encompassing neighbouring streets down to Union Street, and pulls on the strengths of the existing DRARA infrastructure alongside the Oxford Hub concept of 'Street Champions', and gave us the starting point to coordinate our community response to the situation. A brief overview of our response is as follows:

- Recruitment of Street (or zone) Champions for every street or section of street across the whole of the DRARA/Bartlemas Area (16 zones in all)
- Setting up a WhatsApp group for each zone
- Flier across whole area (and posters) to ensure everyone aware of support available, and who their Street Champion is, particularly those not on-line
- Fliers also distributed to local pharmacies, doctors etc.
- Weekly Street Champion Zoom meetings to share experiences and information, through lockdown.
- Neighbourhood Coordinators to provide a point of contact for the Bartlemas Area
- Establishing a DRARA support phone line **07724 294645** and email address support@drara.org.uk, and rotas for staffing these
- Connecting with other local organisations, e.g. Homeless Oxfordshire, the council, the Porch, food banks, Oxford Mutual Aid etc. to help support those in our neighbourhood, and enable our neighbourhood to help others
- Create a blueprint for support coordination across an area

It has been clear that the extent of existing levels of networks varies across our area – some already being very connected, but many others finding a new level of connection through the WhatsApp groups and Street Champion approach.

Although many students in our area moved home during lockdown, some students (particularly post-grads) didn't, and a number of students have been instrumental in setting up the support structure and providing support in our neighbourhood. We would particularly like to thank Mori and Sarah for the invaluable part they played in our support response.

The support given by street champions and neighbours across our area has been amazing – comprising practical support such as shopping, prescription pick up, transport, but also just keeping in touch and providing and sharing information. The

zone WhatsApp groups have enabled requests for and offers of help, particularly for those self-isolating/shielding, of which we have a really high number in quite a few of the zones in the DRARA area, and become a great way to keep in touch.

There have been a number of other projects instigated by the support response:

- **Food Bank collections** – a number of DRARA neighbours offered to be collection points for Food Bank donations, which were very gratefully received by the Rose Hill Food Bank.
- **Supporting the Porch** – donations from across the DRARA/Bartlemas area were collected at drop off houses across our neighbourhood, and then taken to the Porch on a weekly basis for 4 months, including donations of baked goods and allotment produce. The Porch has been supporting significantly more individuals than usual with meals during the pandemic. DRARA also arranged with the Divinity Road Coop to have a donation box for the Porch, and this has now taken over as the collection point.
- **Interest based WhatsApp groups** – as well as the zone WhatsApp groups, we now have a number of groups created to bring people together over shared interests – Gardening, Flour and Bread, Crafts and most recently Wildlife. These have proven really popular and have enabled sharing of ideas, plants, recipes, flour purchases, requests and offers across our community.
- **TOAD Hand Sanitiser distribution** – In response to the pandemic, TOAD distillery switched their production capacity to make [hand sanitiser spray](#). They made this available on a donation basis to enable anyone to have access to this important safety product. Starting in April, residents were able to email the DRARA secretary and order sanitiser which was picked up and delivered to residents. At peak, pickups were twice weekly with over 54 deliveries made.
- **Face mask distribution** – particularly in the early days of the pandemic when these were hard to come by, a number of residents (particularly Ann and Cindy) set about making facemasks for others in our neighbourhood.
- **Reach out to students** - engaging with students returning to the DRARA area at the start of this term, to make them aware of the support available, encourage them to join their zone's WhatsApp group, explain the steps we are taking to keep our community safe and encourage engagement with this and the support response.

And finally, can we say a huge thank you to everyone who has been and continues to be involved with supporting neighbours in our area – the list is too numerous to mention as so many have been involved with supporting others at this time. But can we give a particular mention to:

- Our Neighbourhood Coordinators (past and present): Sarah, Mori, Clare, Tamasin, Cindy, Martin and Jo
- Our Street Champions (past and present): Martin, Hanna, Cindy, Doris, Jo, Geraldine, Ali, Alec, Alexander, Rob, Ann, Karen, Chris, Venina, Imogen, Sarah C, James, Ajaz, Myfanwy
- Our phone team: Cindy, Hanna, Tamasin, Jo, Alec, Trish and Doris.

We always welcome new people getting involved with the support team – if you would like to get more involved, please get in touch by emailing support@drara.org.uk.

Newsletter (Jane Bingham)

The newsletter has been rather different this year! Lockdown measures were imposed just as I was finalising our winter issue, so it went on ice while we considered how best to respond to the new situation.

In May, we compiled a different kind of newsletter – [Good News in Strange Times](#). This was distributed online with a photocopied version delivered to households without internet. It provided an illustrated round-up of just some of the many amazing activities that had sprung up in our neighbourhood as a response to lockdown. The newsletter also provided detailed information about the support being offered to people in our locality – especially through the Covid community support scheme.

We are now returning to our traditional printed format for the autumn 2020 issue. This will include vital information on continued community support as we enter a second wave of Covid infections. It will also feature an item on our traffic plans, updates on (virtual) events and interest groups and reports on what some of us have been up to in the past few months.

In this time of social isolation, the DRARA newsletter plays an important role in helping us all to feel connected and supported – and it's also a valuable mouthpiece for our community. So, if you have an item that you would like to be included please don't hesitate to contact me, Jane Bingham, via the email address: secretary@drara.org.uk

Planning (Tom Knollys)

DRARA has continued to maintain a close watch on planning applications and made representations as necessary.

193a and 193b Divinity Road — Planning permission is being sought to turn two newly built houses into HMOs. DRARA has objected and hopes that because the number of HMOs is already at about 20% in that part of the road, which is the limit under the City Councils HMO saturation policy, permission will not be granted, but we await the decisions.

Minster Road — an application to replace a garage and parking area (formerly part of the garden of 102 Divinity Road) with one 2 bed roomed house, including a large basement, was approved. DRARA had objected to various previous plans, but felt the final, revised application for a building more in scale to the current garage was not inappropriate for the site and met many of the previous concerns of DRARA and neighbours.

88 Divinity Road — an application to extend this existing HMO has not yet been decided.

Minster Road — an application to replace a garage and parking area (formerly part of the garden of 102 Divinity Road) with on 2 bed roomed houses, including a large basement, was approved. DRARA had objected to various previous plans, but felt the final, revised application for a building more in scale to the current garage was not

inappropriate for the site and met many of the previous concerns of DRARA and neighbours.

Bartlemas Nursery — After a very long wait for a decision, the council has refused Oriol College's application for student accommodation because the site is not in any of the locations identified on the Local Plan as acceptable for the siting of student accommodation. The planning committee rejected the planning officer's recommendation for approval (the officer had considered that the site was close enough to the Cowley Road district centre boundary as defined by the council, being only 70m away from it).

South Park — TOAD have applied to change the approved plans for the visitor centre at the top of South Park, to remove most of the proposed landscaping in the park, in front of the planned building. If approved this would mean the impact directly on the park would be lessened (the young trees close to the existing boundary the TOAD site should be retained).

175-177 Cowley Road — DRARA submitted comments objecting to a change of use for the current Subway from a shop (Class A1) to a hot food takeaway (Class A5) over concerns that there might later opening hours in the future potentially increasing late-night antisocial behaviour. Permission was given but with a condition limiting the serving of food up to 10.30pm.

HMOs — A meeting with Gail Siddall, HMO Enforcement Team Manager at Oxford City Council last October was useful in discussing issues around HMOs and included a walk about of Divinity Road to highlight houses that might not be registered or might benefit from the team's attention. It is planned to do similar walkabouts of other DRARA streets, which ideally would be led by one or two residents of those streets, who are familiar with what may need drawing to Gail's attention. If you would like to be involved please [email \[planning@drara.org.uk\]\(mailto:email_planning@drara.org.uk\)](mailto:email_planning@drara.org.uk).

Licensing - DRARA needs someone to help to keep an eye on Licensing. Licence applications are made to the council for clubs and bars in and also for temporary events, any of which may affect the DRARA area directly or indirectly (e.g. people returning home through our area late at night).

If you would like to volunteer to take on this role you would be warmly welcomed! The most critical aspect of the role would be to keep an eye out for licence applications and to check if they would have an impact on the DRARA area. A bit of research and investigation on how best to do this and how licensing application work and are dealt with by the council might be needed. But you would be supported by members of the committee in working out how best to ensure we can keep a better watch in this area. Please contact secretary@drara.org.uk

Membership Report (Paul Vanags)

Membership was severely affected by the coronavirus pandemic, with membership collections being suspended in March before collection rounds had been completed. Alternative methods were employed to encourage subscriptions to be made either by dropping off cash/cheque or by taking out a direct debit. These had some success and there was a steady stream of cash and new DD's as a result. However there has been a drop in number of memberships and income as a result of the lack of face-to-face collections £584 raised during the year, down from £953 last year.

For 2020-21 we will be introducing a new set of protocols in order to be able to safely continue face-to-face collecting to the extent that we can, although this will be challenging as many collectors, understandably, do not want to collect face-to-face whilst we are still in the pandemic. Other methods such as email and potentially leafleting with a response coupon will be considered. If you feel willing to support subs collection please do contact me to discuss at membership@drara.org.uk

Subscriptions or donations can be paid by cash or cheque (made payable to DRARA) delivered to the Membership Secretary, 32 Minster Road, or by standing order - click [here](#) to download the standing order form.

DRARA Website and Facebook page (Tamasin Lilwall)

After the major revamp in 2019, no major changes have been made to the [DRARA Website](#) this year, or [East Oxford Report It](#) site, but both, along with the [DRARA Facebook page](#), continue to be useful resources for our community. A big thank you to Deb for looking after our Facebook page, and posting such useful information.

It is worth noting that new members of our community can now [join DRARA through the website](#) – so please point any new neighbours in this direction. Feedback is always welcome - please contact Tamasin at website@drara.org.uk.

I also just wanted to say a massive thank you to Clare for her hugely informative DRARA emails – these have been a critical source of local information which has been so essential this year, and often providing some cheer too! I know the effort that goes into these is enormous.

Environment Group (Maggie Hartford)

The DRARA Environment Action Group (EAG) started the year with our usual activities including tree decorating before Christmas, and the Oxford-wide litter collecting day, Oxclean. We were joined by four residents and five students to clear the roads and 'grot spots'. In pairs, we spent another day collecting litter just after the start of the Oxford Brookes University term in September.

During the lockdown we sent out positive environmental news, emailing 300 people, including Drara residents, with 'Green Flashes' – ideas for improving our local environment, encouraging wildlife in our gardens, and enjoying local green spaces and nature. DRARA now has a Wildlife WhatsApp group, so please email environment@drara.org.uk if you want to join.

We also wrote to councillors and groups such as Oxford Civic Society about our environmental concerns, and started a letter-writing campaign asking supermarkets and businesses to act on plastic packaging and other environmental issues.

When lockdown rules allow, we will restart work on repairing and replanting the small gardens we created around trees in Divinity and Southfield Roads to brighten the neighbourhood. We are always looking for residents to 'adopt' one of the gardens near their home, so please contact us if you are interested - environment@drara.org.uk.

Friends of South Park (Rob Waterston, Chair)

Our AGM this year is 'virtual' ie reports being emailed to our Members this week. Not much to share, though there has been a working party + the Oxclean event in March; much less noticeable ASB due perhaps to Covid19; no Round Table sponsored Fireworks this year (so less damage to grass(!)); TOAD are still planning to open cafe & loos and there is new entrance onto Park now. NB if these or the main gates on Cheney Lane are open the temporary loos on site can be used.

Finally - a replacement ping-pong table for the one irreparably damaged some years ago has finally been funded and will be installed as soon as Parks Dept has a slot in their schedule.

Events (Tamasin Lilwall and Deb Tricker)

It is an understatement to say that this year has been unlike any previous year – the Coronavirus situation has meant that DRARA has put more effort than ever into bringing the community together, helping neighbours to connect and particularly trying to reach those who are more isolated. But this year, due to lockdown and restrictions on being able to hold events, much of this effort has gone into creating and supporting our Street Champion network – see later section.

Rewinding to the beginning of our events year, which started blissfully unaware of coronavirus or the enormous impact it would have on our way of life.

Warneford Meadow Apple Day, held in October, is such a glorious celebration of the meadow and orchard - nestled amongst downpours, and with a last minute hour's delay, Apple Day was pretty much dry and by the end we even had blue skies! Even more impressive was the really amazing turnout, from DRARA, the hospital and neighbouring communities. We run Apple Day collaboratively with staff from the Warneford Hospital, in particular Rumi whose enthusiasm for the meadow and encouraging its use by patients and staff is really inspiring. Apple Day means a lot to many - the freedom of the orchard and meadow, getting together with our community and the magic of being involved in producing something as wonderful as the fresh apple juice from scratch (with the essential help of Rupert from Tiddly Pommies), all makes it really special. And we are all reminded of what a special and peaceful place we have on our doorstep.

Our Warneford Hospital/DRARA partnership on this is something that we hoped to expand on through the year – made less straight forward by Coronavirus, however a few weeks ago, a number of DRARA volunteers helped erect a polytunnel for use by the Warneford Hospital patients and staff. We intend to continue this collaboration with some (socially distant) orchard/meadow working parties, with involvement from the hospital and DRARA communities.

Our **Living Advent** is now a much anticipated fixture in our events calendar, and was more colourful than ever – a new window display being unveiled each day of Advent, resulting in a wonderful trail of displays around the DRARA area. Alongside this, we also participated in Homeless Oxfordshire's [12 Days of Giftmas](#) – collecting donations of requested items for distribution to Homeless Oxfordshire's clients. Thank you Clare

for yet again organising Living Advent and Paul, Mitch and Anna for being collection points for the donations.

Carols in the Street, another firm favourite, proved its popularity with a magnificent turnout. No rain this year, and such a joy singing and meeting up with neighbours, with the added bonus of mulled wine, hot chocolate and mince pies. Thank you to Victoria and Vanessa for your organisation and musical accompaniment.

DRARA Charity Quiz Night is such a welcome event in the depths of January. A last minute issue with venues meant a move to Cheney School hall, which proved to be a great venue, and enabled even more quiz teams to take part than usual. It raised a fantastic £734, split between Asylum Welcome and The Porch. Thank you to George, Pete and James for writing and hosting the quiz, and for all the organisation.

During lockdown, we organised The **DRARA Easter Egg Hunt**, some very creative window Easter displays enabling socially distanced Easter egg hunting, with the added bonus of an on-line gallery to enable those shielding/self-isolating to see the displays too.

Sadly, by May/June, it was clear that events such as Open Gardens were still not going to be possible, so we took a technological leap and Tam and Rebecca created our **first ever DRARA Virtual Open Gardens!** The support from our Open Gardeners for this was fantastic, and the result was an amazing tour of 19 stunning gardens, with the added bonus of extra details such as the history of the garden, inspirations and plant names. The real bonus though is that this can still be viewed - <https://padlet.com/drara/OpenGardens>. Thank you so much to all involved in this project.

Unfortunately, due to restrictions, it has not been possible (and would not have been responsible) to organise any in-person events for the remainder of the year.

However, as it is clear that this situation is likely to continue for a number of months yet, we are putting together a series of community projects and virtual events to bring us all together during these tricky times – Window displays, more on-line galleries, virtual quizzes and more all in the planning. And of course, when it is possible, we really look forward to resuming our wonderful array of in-person events.

If you would like to get involved in organising events or activities, we would love to hear from you – please email events@drara.org.uk.

Traffic (DRATT)

A huge amount of work has been happening this year to get to grips with the massive 74% rise in traffic volumes we have been enduring - an average working day of 5,817 vehicles using Divinity Road compared to 5 years prior!

A resident survey took place in June that showed that 92% of residents wanted our roads to become "Access Only". This has culminated in a proposal for our area to become a low-traffic neighbourhood, which has been approved by County Council and is awaiting central government final decision. This decision is long overdue as this report goes to release. Please click to read the updates provided over the summer; [June Traffic](#) and September's [LTN proposal update](#).

In addition, safety crossing the top of the very Morrell Avenue was finally addressed with the creation of a zebra crossing – funded by County Councillor Jamila Azad. We

are also now part of the Air Quality Research project that is aiming to reduce air pollution in our city and community. This is thanks to our City Councillor Tom Hayes.

University Liaison (Karen Metcalfe)

DRARA works with both universities to improve relations between residents and students. The majority of students in this area are from Brookes University, and DRARA is in regular communication with Brookes University about measures which can be taken to improve relationships.

Throughout the year I have attended Residents' Associations Meetings at Brookes University on behalf of DRARA alongside regular updates with the Community Engagement Team and the Student Community Wardens.

In recent months, throughout lockdown and at the start of the new term, Brookes have worked hard to keep us informed. They have put robust measures in place to keep students, staff and residents safe, and have updated parts of their Behaviour policy in response to Covid. Key guidance includes:

- Be mindful of the needs of those you live alongside in the community and be respectful towards them at all times (of course this works both ways!)
- Volunteer and take opportunities to support those in our community whenever you can (many students have already joined the local WhatsApp support groups).

Brookes University take concerns seriously. The Community Engagement Team follows a complaints procedure to deal with anti-social behaviour and excessive noise disturbance so **please report it**.

Oxford Brookes Community Engagement and Social Responsibility

(Andrea Siret, Head of Community Engagement and Social Responsibility, Oxford Brookes)

Oxford Brookes Community Engagement & Social Responsibility Team works to establish and strengthen positive relationships with residents/resident groups. This report provides a summary of the University's approach to Covid as well as the initiatives that the Community Engagement team has been involved with so far this year. Although we have adapted some of our activities in line with government guidance, there are some events and campaigns that we have not been able to continue this year.

University approach to Covid

The University takes its role in protecting against further spread of Covid-19 extremely seriously and the safety of staff, students and the wider community is paramount in all our plans.

- **Teaching & Learning:** We are following national guidance and taking a blended approach to teaching and learning. Only teaching in smaller groups is taking place on campus. Teaching is in carefully managed teaching spaces and is subject to the required safety measures including social distancing and face coverings, which are mandatory indoors for everyone except for those with necessary exemptions.
- **Open areas:** Access to our campuses is now restricted to Oxford Brookes students and staff. Essential visitors are permitted by invitation only. A limited number of services, such as the new Co-op on our Headington Campus, Brookes Sport centre and Studental do remain open for the local community to use.

We have followed the Government's five-step approach to ensure a Covid-secure campus including extensive risk assessments, enhanced cleaning regimes and social distancing measures.

The University has also appointed a number of Campus Monitors to help students and staff navigate around our campuses. They help to ensure that campus users are abiding by the measures put in place to keep the campuses Covid-secure.

We are operating our own test and trace system on campus in key areas, and also the NHS's own 'test and trace' in our public spaces, such as our cafes.

We have also reduced the number of people on campus and all non-academic staff who are able to work remotely, will continue to do so until January, and we are encouraging all academic staff to work from home whenever they can.

- **Behaviour:** The majority of our students are following the rules and are taking the safety of our wider community, as well as their own and that of their fellow students, very seriously. Many of our students are working hard to make a positive contribution to the community, for example through volunteering to support those in need locally. Many others are on placements with local NHS and education partners as they train to become the next generation of teachers and frontline NHS staff.

We continue to communicate extensively with our students to help ensure that they understand the irresponsibility's during the pandemic.

The University expects its students to be socially responsible and has made these expectations clear by introducing additional principles around [Keeping each other safe](#). This also focuses on their behaviour while in the wider community. We have emphasised our clear expectations on abiding by government guidance, including wearing face coverings where necessary (in shops, on buses etc.).

These principles have been linked to our Student Conduct Procedures, to which all students agree to abide by, as part of their enrolment. Where these regulations are not being met we are taking action and we have reacted swiftly to deal with students who have not been following government guidance. Any student found in breach of these regulations could face disciplinary action being taken against them.

- **Enforcement:** Enforcement is a team effort. As a university, we do not have enforcement powers off-campus and have to rely on the support of the police and other partners, particularly in private residential areas and public spaces.

We have been working closely with a range of partners, including the city and county councils, the University of Oxford and local NHS Trusts, to coordinate our efforts, for the benefit of the wider community.

In collaboration with Thames Valley Police and other partners, we have been able to put in place swift additional measures to disperse the groups meeting outside one of our halls. We are also working with local partners to counteract where this is happening more widely in the community, such as in parks and community spaces. It is important that we respond quickly and firmly to any issues which may suddenly arise. We are taking firm action to address poor behaviour quickly and we have escalated cases to Student Conduct Proceedings. Since Arrivals Weekend on 12 September, the University has issued over 300 fixed penalties for breaches within halls of residence and in the private rented sector and we have also sped up student conduct hearings for repeat offenders. The money from the fixed penalties is split between our Hardship Fund which supports students with costs of studying and the Oxford Hub to support their Oxford Together initiative.

- **Covid Cases:** It is important for the University to be open with the community about the number of cases we are seeing and updated figures are published on our [Coronavirus webpage](#) on a weekly basis, aligning with Oxfordshire County Council's reporting periods.

Where we do see cases, we are moving quickly to manage and contain them in partnership with Public Health England.

We are supporting a number of students who are currently self-isolating in university halls or in private-rented student accommodation. We have a comprehensive structure in place to support students who are self-isolating. Students who are self-isolating are allocated a case worker who regularly checks in on the household to check on the welfare of the students, arrange any support as needed and help with the delivery of essential supplies such as food and medication.

We are also working with Oxford Hub to support their Oxford Together initiative which is available to everyone, including students and we will be encouraging students to volunteer and take part in the programme. Oxford Brookes has made a donation to support the implementation of deliveries for those in the community who need to isolate due to Covid-19.

- **Student Support:** Our Wellbeing department and the wellbeing support offered by Brookes Union have been operating remotely throughout the pandemic and these services will continue to be available to students and are promoted widely to them. Services and resources will be available online, with some running on an appointment basis as usual. We have a team of experienced counsellors in our Wellbeing service who can offer support to students. We also encourage students to look out for each other and ask for further help when needed.

The Community Engagement and Social Responsibility Team Activities

- **The Team:** The team consists of four full-time members of staff led by Andrea Siret, Head of Community Engagement & Social Responsibility. The team works to ensure that concerns raised to the University are properly dealt with as well as pro-actively engaging with residents and students to implement new initiatives that enable students and residents to live harmoniously in the community.
- **Student Community Wardens:** The University employs a team of Student Community Wardens who visit student properties in East Oxford, including DRARA to provide information on being good neighbours. This year, although the team will need to operate slightly differently as they follow government guidance; they will continue to help students settle into their private rented accommodation.
- **Agency links:** The strong working relationships with the council and police are more important now than ever. We work in partnership to tackle issues that arise within the community and share information to ensure that processes are consistent and cohesive. This year we have been working together around Covid messaging and addressing student behaviour for non-compliance.
- **House Champion Scheme:** This is a joint initiative which includes the council, police and both universities. All student properties within the DRARA area are visited by our Student Community Wardens and provided with a pack of information and guidance supplied by each partner to help them settle into their neighbourhood. We also take this opportunity to encourage students to get to know people that live near them and to be good neighbours.
- **Resident Association Meetings:** The University meets regularly with Resident Associations to discuss topics of mutual interest. This year, we are meeting more frequently and held one at the beginning of September and another in October to update residents on the University's response to Coronavirus and the measures we are putting in place to keep our students, staff and the wider community safe. The meeting is chaired by Brendan Casey, Chief Operating Officer and Registrar, and provides an opportunity for residents to raise any concerns with senior staff. We are keen to keep open the dialogue with our neighbours and we have extended these meetings to local Councillors. The next meeting will take place in November.
- **DRARA Link:** The University has a link person, Karen Metcalfe, and we have regular contact to discuss student and university issues and how we can work together to address resident concerns.
- **Complaints process:** There is a formal complaints process that is followed by the Community Engagement team to ensure that all concerns raised to the University are logged and action is taken. We have introduced a [new online form](#) this year (it

can also be accessed by visiting the University's home page and searching '[Resident information](#)'). If you have any queries please do not hesitate to contact us via email on community@brookes.ac.uk or use the online form as mentioned above.

TREASURER'S REPORT - YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2020 (Alison Williams)

As to be expected, activities during the year were considerably restricted by Covid19. Lockdown, on March 23rd, came midway through DRARA's financial year, meaning most events, which usually take place in the warmer months, had to be cancelled.

1. INCOME:

Subscriptions: Income from subs was understandably greatly reduced, with door-to-door collecting put on hold. Most of the £584 which we received (down from £953 last year) came from residents' Standing Orders.

DRARA events:

Apple Day was held at the beginning of our year on 13/10/2019, and raised £90.05.

Quiz Night was held on 30/01/2020. It made a profit of £734.27 (takings of £1036.12, less £301.85 costs) which was donated equally to The Porch and Asylum Welcome.

Grants - we received £125 from Councillor Craig Simmons, Oxford City Council, towards the *East Oxford Report It* leaflet.

2. EXPENDITURE:

We have divided expenditure into two sub-accounts - General Funds, and Oxford City Council's £1,400 grant (made to DRARA in June 2018). The latter was granted as a contribution to the improvement of our streets.

General Funds:

Photocopying	20.00	
Newsletter printing	162.80	
Website costs	158.38	
Event exps	21.85	
Donations from Quiz Night	734.27	
Other	<u>59.72</u>	(Replacement notice board, and Ox Civic Soc m/ship)
	<u>1,157.02</u>	

Oxford City Council £1,400 grant:

Tree planting	150.00
Report It leaflet	157.20
Consultant, street plng/LTN	<u>240.00</u>
	<u>547.20</u>

Total expenditure: £1,704.22

3. SURPLUS and BALANCE:

We ended the year with an overall balance of £2,704.69. This is £149 down on last year's balance, but with both income and expenditure greatly reduced, this is not an issue. Income was only about 54% of the amount received in 2018/19, and expenditure approximately 46%. It is a relief that we ended the year with much the same balance in funds as we started with.

DIVINITY ROAD AREA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION (DRARA)
FINANCIAL STATEMENTS: YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2020

	2020		2019	
Income & Expenditure	£	£	£	£
Income				
Subscriptions	584.00		953.00	
Events	846.17		1,894.05	
Grant from Oxford City Council	125.00		-	
Other income	0.00		26.68	
		<u>1,555.17</u>		<u>2,873.73</u>
Expenditure				
GENERAL FUNDS:				
Printing/photocopying/design	20.00		300.26	
Newsletter	162.80		834.00	
Insurance	0.00		262.00	
Sundries	0.00		30.84	
Website/drara.org.uk	158.38		177.60	
Events	21.85		311.85	
Charitable donations	734.27		1,694.90	
Other	59.72		50.00	
SUBTOTAL:		<u>1,157.02</u>		<u>3,661.45</u>
OCC GRANT (£1400)				
Env Action Group/tree planting	150.00			
Report It leaflet	157.20			
Street design/LTN consultant	240.00			
SUBTOTAL:		<u>547.20</u>		
		(1,704.22)		(3,661.45)
Surplus for the year		<u>(149.05)</u>		<u>(787.72)</u>
Balance sheet				
Cash at bank		2,650.41		2,925.73
Petty Cash		54.28		54.28
Inc: Deposits to bank after year-end		0.00		244.05
Exp: Invoices paid after year-end		-		(370.32)
		-		
		<u>2,704.69</u>		<u>2,853.74</u>
Represented by:				
Historical surplus brought forward		2,853.74		3,641.46
Surplus for the year		(149.05)		(787.72)
		<u>2,704.69</u>		<u>2,853.74</u>
By Fund:				
East Oxford Forum		10.00		10.00
General fund		1,841.89		1,443.74
Earmarked grant from Oxford City Council		852.80		1,400.00
		<u>2,704.69</u>		<u>2,853.74</u>

