



Annual General Meeting

Monday 14th October, 2024

7:00pm – 9:00 pm, SS Mary and John Church

Doors open at 6:30 for registration and refreshments

AGENDA

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence
2. **Guest speaker – John Hall, speaking on ‘The Warneford Hospital – a potted history’**
3. **Update from Oxford Brookes Community Liaison** Andrea Siret
4. **Updates from our City Councillors**
5. **Updates from Police**
6. **Chair’s Report**, Cindy Carlson
7. Treasurer’s Report
8. Election of Committee
9. **Membership fees** to discuss a possible increase in membership
10. **Open discussion** to agree priorities for the year ahead
11. AOB
12. Date of the next AGM: 22 October 2025

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



DRARA Annual General meeting minutes, held on Monday 30th October 2023,

6.30pm

Asian Cultural Centre

Present: Cindy Carlson (secretary, acting as chair), 9 committee members; 37 DRARA members; Cllr Jemima Hunt (St Clements), Andrea Siret (Head of Community Engagement and Social Responsibility for Brookes); Grace Duffy (Brookes student warden), Cllr Tom Hayes (St Clements), Cllr Anna Railton (Grandpont).

1.Cindy welcomed all to the meeting (54 in attendance)

2.Apologies: Lydia Matthews; Anthony Eccles; Clare Ridley and Ron Gibbons; Geraldine and Peter Coggins; James Schumann; Margaret Coombs; Anne Hall; Trish Attwooll; Isobel Gilman and Chris Cornforth; Nick Welch; Ilaria Parodi and Max; Mena Remedias; The Prangleys; Cathy Gough; Rebecca Phillipson; Leila Lake; Kathy Peto; Danny Emyln-Jones; Mariabelle Headlam; Mary Ashdown, Catriona and James Ferguson. Sergeant Benjamin Clark sent apologies for the police.

3.Talk by Aaron Anstey and Rosamund Ions from Low Carbon East Oxford

Aaron reported on LCEO's activities, notably the monthly Repair Café at East Oxford Market, and the energy advice stalls at the East Oxford Farmers Market and Temple Cowley Shopping Centre. He also provided some useful statistics on home energy consumption.

Rosamund outlined practical low-cost/no cost ways to insulate your home, including adjusting the heating controls on boilers and radiators, draughtproofing doors and windows and chimney blocking. She displayed a number of materials, including radiator foils, which can be obtained from LCEO free of cost.

Some East Oxford homes that have implemented green measures are available to view. See link for further info. <https://oxford.greenopenhomes.net>

There was a lively discussion of energy reduction measures, including the pros and cons of heat pumps.

Maggie Hartford, who volunteers at the Citizens Advice Bureau, outlined some of the measures that can be taken for people in fuel poverty and highlighted the excellent work of Better Housing, Better Health who do home visits.

One resident shared a useful tip - using wheat-filled heat bags to heat the person not the room. Patrick Gray suggested joining a wind turbine owning co-operative as an effective and financially sound way to contribute to the reduction of carbon.

4.Andrea Siret, Head of Community Engagement and Social Responsibility for Brookes, reported on the team's initiatives, covering:

Student community wardens

Andrea outlined the wardens' responsibilities, including home visits to student houses and regular street clean-ups. The team was represented by local student warden, Grace Duffy.

Oxford City Council's Out of Hours Wednesday Night Noise Awareness Service

Andrea encouraged DRARA residents to contact the team directly with any issues on 07483 010709, between the hours of 9pm and 3am.

In the 6 weeks the team has been running this semester, they have received 10 phone calls/text messages, been involved in 13 incidents, and carried out 10 successful interventions.

Communications

The Community Engagement Team has continued to strengthen their communications, including:

- Welcome letter sent to all DRARA residents – permanent and student. The leaflet includes info on the Out of Hours service.
- Visits to student properties
- Talks with Sports Club representatives
- Contact with landlords and letting agents

Andrea emphasized her team's close co-operation with the Council and the Police.

Complaints process

Andrea outlined the stages of the formal complaints process and reported on complaints so far this year. The total so far is 72, which is down significantly on previous years.

She broke down complaints into categories, with by far the largest category being noise, followed by waste management and anti-social behaviour.

Andrea also reported on a Personal safety event held for students.

She concluded by welcoming all communications between residents and Brookes. A full list of contacts was included in the printed reports to DRARA made available at the meeting.

In the general discussion that followed, Andrea and her team were thanked for their work, which in some cases has had positive results, but there were still various concerns:

Rubbish management – this is still a major issue.

It was pointed out that some major problems were caused at the start of the term by landlords and cleaners dumping the contents of properties on the streets.

Andrea is communicating with landlords about this issue.

Noise – in particular from 'party houses'. Andrea was urged to target these known 'party houses' especially strongly.

Andrea reminded residents that they should use the noise app to report problems to the Oxford council team who are in direct contact with Brookes. A complaint will trigger action in identifying the house and initiating the complaints procedure.

Noise and ASB from transient students walking down Divinity Road en route for the Cowley Road. This is partly managed by Out of Hours Wednesday night service, but not completely. Andrea acknowledged that that this was a hard problem to deal with. However, some of this transient traffic was from sports club groups, and she is making a special effort to contact all the clubs, both official Brookes clubs and more unofficial groups.

There was concern that the complaints procedures were not strong enough, with one resident urging a 'three hits and you're out of Brookes' policy. In response, Andrea explained that as repeated complaints are received, the process of warnings and fines is escalated, with very few going on through to the final stage of the Student Conduct Procedure, which is expulsion from the University. She stated that the advisory stages seem to be effective in preventing further antisocial

behaviour. A review of the figures for last year showed 25 advisory meetings during 2022-23 compared to 37 at the same time the year before.

One poignant plea was made for students NOT to adopt neighbourhood cats, as several have gone missing since the start of term.

5. Councillor Jemima Hunt reported on the East Oxford LTNs

Jemima began by saying how surprised she was to hear of the decision to install an ANPR camera on Divinity Road. This had not been a matter that the whole council voted on.

She acknowledged that it was reasonable to install an ANPR system for the use of emergency services, as had been done in several London boroughs, but she stressed that no London boroughs had added taxis to the list of exemptions, as has already been done in Cowley.

The ANPR cameras are due to be installed in January. There will be a need to monitor the traffic situation very carefully and keep up the pressure on councillors.

Jemima said that we need to keep asking questions, She urged people to write individually to the council, addressing their emails to Councillor Andrew Gant, Cabinet Member for Transport Management, but also copying in Councillor Liz Leffman, Leader of the County Council.

In the general discussion, people expressed strong concern that there would be a major increase in traffic, caused by taxis making the most of the through route.

It was noted that we will need to get organised for monitoring in January.

Patrick Gray stated that the news item in the local papers stating that the Co-op was pulling out of our area, partly in response to LTN issues, was entirely untrue.

6. South Parks report

Rob Waterston, Chair of Friends of the Friends of South Parks, reported on various issues: Fences around trees - the steel fences around trees with dead limbs have been erected for safety purposes while they are being felled/having limbs amputated.

The veteran oak is being left to die and has an extra wide fence to ensure that no one is injured when it falls.

Toad distillery has been sold to Diageo who plan to close down the distillery and open a café complex with public loos. Plans are available to view.

The broken boundary railings will not be replaced because of the enormous cost. The council's long-term plan is to remove all railings and replace them with fences.

The small building close to the playground is being investigated by the Council for asbestos. There is a chance that the building may be made available to turn into a community-run coffee shop.

7. Warneford Hospital development plans

Cindy Carlson reported on a meeting with Warneford Hospital officials. Future plans for the site involve construction of a new, purpose-built hospital beside Warneford meadow, but the meadow will not be touched. There are also plans to build a research centre next to the new hospital, while the old Victorian building will be re-purposed as a graduate teaching centre. Building work is scheduled to start in 2025.

8. Report on the DRARA year

Cindy covered the committee's priorities during 2022/23:

- a) LTNs - DRARA has campaigned hard to keep the streets safe for residents and pedestrians. The good news is that the LTNs will be permanent. The bad news is that ANPR (automatic number plate

recognition) cameras will be installed with an exemption for taxis to replace the bollards on Divinity Road. The Southfield Road bollard will stay in place.

DRARA aims to raise questions with the council and closely monitor traffic flows following the installation of the camera. Four houses in our area have a Telraam (special device to monitor different types of traffic flow), so we can have data on changes in road use before and after the installation of the ANPR cameras

- b) Green measures – DRARA has encouraged a green measures in our neighbourhood, by holding a bi-annual litter-pick and maintaining the street planters and gardens.

The environmental and freecycle Whatsapp groups are going strong.

DRARA is in correspondence with the council to hold landlords to account about waste dumping.

- c) ASB – DRARA continues to work closely with Brookes, especially through the work of Karen Metcalfe, DRARA’s Brookes liaison officer.

DRARA monitors licensing of HMOs and any breach of agreements or attempts to enlarge houses.

- d) Engagement with students - DRARA subs collectors visit every house to explain about DRARA and welcome new residents, many of whom are students. This year there has been a special effort to make the visits earlier in the year, in order to talk to students when they are settling in and to encourage cooperation with neighbours. So far, there have been some positive conversations.

Cindy thanked all those active in creating events, such as the Tea Party, Open Gardens and First Mondays.

She also thanked the committee members.

9. The DRARA committee – new members needed and re-election of members

Cindy reported that more committee members are needed. There are currently 2 vacancies. The committee would especially value someone with good website skills.

Jane Bingham also asked for a volunteer to design the DRARA newsletter.

It was proposed that all the existing committee members were re-elected. Proposed by Patrick Gray. Seconded by Tim Bolton. Approved by all present at the meeting.

Alison Williams proposed that Cindy become Chair, as the position is currently vacant. Tom Knollys seconded and the motion which was approved by all.

Committee members for 2023-24 are currently as follows:

Cindy Carlson	Chair
Currently vacant	Secretary
Alison Williams:	Treasurer
Susan Lisk, Linda Forrest	Events
Tom Knollys:	Planning
Deborah Tricker:	Traffic
Margaret Wolf:	Communications and emails
Jane Bingham:	Newsletter
Maggie Hertford:	Environmental Action
Karen Metcalfe:	University Liaison
Lydia Matthews:	Anti-social behaviour and Licensing
Ex officio members:	
Rob Waterston –	Chair of the Friends of South Parks
Nick Welch –	Liaison on Warneford Meadow

There is a vacancy for the post of secretary, which will be covered by Cindy for the time being, but a replacement is urgently needed. The committee is open to offers of job shares and job flexibility.

8. Any Other Business

Two concerns were raised:

Possible vandalism to ANPR cameras - There was concern about the positioning of the cameras –would they be vulnerable to vandalism?

It was reported that the ANPR cameras installed in Cowley had been installed high up – above head height – and had not yet been touched.

Electric car charging points

Currently there is only 1 working public charge point, on the corner of Stone Street, and this is usually occupied by the Co-wheels car.

There is a call on DRARA to put pressure on the council to replace/repair 2 charge points as a matter of urgency.



DRARA AGM 2024

CHAIR'S ANNUAL SUMMARY REPORT

We have had yet another eventful year in DRARA, with many activities across our different action groups, as you can read in their short reports, and beyond.

This last year we collected £1,371.00 in membership subscriptions from 258 (44%) households in the area. These funds are used to support primarily our events, printing our newsletters, our website and other communication related costs.

Starting with our very dynamic events team (see members listed below) – I hope as many of you as possible have been able to make it to the many, varied events that have occurred over the last year – from December's very creative windows to the May Tea Party and June Open Gardens and to the return of Film in the Street as well as a very soggy Apple Day in September. The year isn't over yet and the environment action group will be holding our next street garden/freecycle and litter picking day on the 19th October. First Mondays have continued thanks to Clare and Elizabeth. The people giving talks remain a wonderful demonstration of all the talent that lives in and around our area.

Our Share and Freecycle WhatsApp group now has 217 members, who are an amazing resource for the whole community – from offering pre-loved goods, surplus garden produce and foods to sharing names of people or companies that can fix appliances to sorting out your plumbing. And who add the occasional opinion on the local and global situation, thrown in for good measure. We also have sub-street support WhatsApp groups for close neighbours to join. The other special interest groups, including Energy, Gardening and Wildlife are also very active and very informative. There is also a DRARA Book Club to join if you fancy a good chat about books you and your neighbours have read. If you aren't already a member of a group and would like to be, please let us know so we can send you the appropriate links! (see the bottom of this report for all the different groups).

The dominant issues this year included the introduction of Automatic Licence Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras on Divinity Road, replacing the bollards that were there, further challenges with anti-social behaviour and advocating for repairing the damage done to South Park during the fireworks night last year and for changing how this event is held in future.

On traffic, we now have five Telraams in the area, devices that count types of traffic using our streets (categorised as pedestrians, cars, two-wheelers, and large vehicles). There has been a dramatic uptick in the number of cars using Divinity Road due to taxis taking advantage of their exemption, while more motorbikes are using Southfield Road to avoid the ANPR cameras. The Traffic Action group continues to monitor the situation and to hold meetings with Councillor Gant, the OCC cabinet member for transportation. We're planning to run a community speed watch exercise to get more data on how fast cars and motorbikes are travelling on the streets to see the degree to which they may be causing problems for cyclists, pedestrians and people with mobility challenges.

While some Brookes student households continue to create noise and rubbish issues for their neighbours, one of our more pressing challenges has been with the few houses that have been rented out by Homeless Oxfordshire to house formerly homeless individuals to help them integrate back into communities. The

residents of these households have multiple challenges and some continue to have fairly chaotic lifestyles, which is affecting their housemates and near neighbours. This also includes noise and poor regard for waste management, as well as concerns about the safety and welfare of the people living in these households. The near neighbours together with myself have been working with the council, the police and Homeless Oxfordshire to find solutions that would make everyone's lives more tolerable, though to date all efforts, including doing an ASB review, have not yielded sufficient action. We continue to work with the council and HO to resolve these challenges.

Many of you have joined a community advocacy group that has called itself 'Save South Park' after seeing the significant damage made to the park by the organisers of last year's fireworks event. This group has complemented the efforts of Friends of South Park to protect and preserve this amazing, valued green space in our community. Having lobbied for a scaled down activity for the last year it appears this has been partially successful in that there will be no bonfire and no heavy vehicles driving over the parkland from the top to the bottom of the park, according to the proposal submitted to the council.

Two new initiatives were started in the last few months that have some effect on our area. We've put together a proposal to have a defibrillator installed centrally in our neighbourhood. Mike Hobbs has been instrumental in putting the information together for the proposal and identifying sources of funding. We may also need to crowdsource some of the funding for training and maintaining the defibrillator depending on how much funding we can raise from other sources.

The other initiative relates to the changes being proposed at Warneford Hospital, which has the intention of becoming a world-leading research mental health hospital. The history of the hospital will be the subject of the AGM's guest speaker and while the new plans will be covered in more detail on the 4th November's 'First Monday' talk.

This year we have or will be losing some of our wonderful committee members after this AGM as they are standing down to have a much deserved rest from their committee responsibilities. Huge thanks go to Lydia Matthews for her previous and continuing work on ASB problems we've been facing, to Deb Tricker for all her work on Traffic, and her support for other action groups, especially the events group, to Tom Knowles for his efforts to keep us informed about new planning applications and planning breaches, and to Linda Forrest (and Susan Lisk who stood down earlier), for keeping all the events efforts ticking over this last year. Happier news is that Pat Tope has joined as DRARA Secretary, along with Julie Martin and most recently Mike Hobbs. Rob Waterston, who has been a DRARA committee member, committee chair and most recently ex-officio member representing Friends of South Park, is also stepping down from the committee. We still have vacancies on the committee and encourage those who want to play a larger role in supporting the community to join us, you'd be most welcome. Please see one of the committee members or send a message to secretary@drara.org.uk if you would like to talk about joining the committee.

Our stalwart membership subscription collectors are starting their rounds of the neighbourhood to collect subscriptions. Many thanks to those who pay their subscription through standing orders. And a very big thanks to Dave Waller who coordinates membership work and the membership collectors who take the time to go out and talk to their neighbours and collect subscriptions.

As ever, the DRARA committee wants to thank everyone who contributes so much to our area. The subs collectors, who collect our only income, our different action groups, those who contribute to writing and distributing the newsletter, and print and host our posters. There's a long list of those who have been so involved in making our area the special place it is to live, which is provided below.

Committee memberships and supporters

The DRARA Committee

- Cindy Carlson, Chair
- Pat Tope, Secretary
- Alison Williams, Treasurer
- Linda Forrest; Events (stepping down)
- Deb Tricker; Traffic (stepping down)
- Tom Knollys, Planning (stepping down)
- Margaret Wolf, Emails/Communications
- Lydia Matthews; Licencing and ASB
- Maggie Hartford, Environment
- Karen Metcalfe, University Liaison
- Jane Bingham, Newsletter
- Rob Waterston, FOSP ex-officio-(stepping down))
- New member vacancy x 2

The Newsletter Distribution Team

Organised by Anne Hall

- Trish Attwooll
- Jane Bingham
- Chris Livingston-Campbell
- Anna Eden
- Ann Edmunds
- Pauline Edwards
- Linda Forrest
- Christopher Franks
- Cathy Gough
- Richard Josephy
- Susan Lisk
- Maggie Lloyd
- Myfanwy Lloyd
- Dominic Parkinson
- Martin Stott
- Pat Tope
- Rob Waterston
- Nick Welch
- Catherine Weston
- Glen and Alison Williams

Porch donation Team

- Kim de Keijzer
- Florence de Keijzer

The Events Group

DRARA Street Champions

- Trish Attwooll
- Cindy Carlson
- Geraldine Coggins
- Anna Eden
- Chris Franks
- Isobel Gillham
- Myfanwy Lloyd
- Ilaria Parodi
- Clare Ridley
- Mena Remedios
- Martin Stott
- Pippa Thyne

The Subscriptions Team

Organised by David Waller

- Brigitte Blakey
- Maggie Budden
- Geraldine Coggins
- Catriona Davidson
- Ann Edmunds
- Pauline Edwards
- Linda Forrest
- Anne Hall
- Leila Lake
- Susan Lisk
- Julie Martin
- Rob Waterson
- Jocelyn Weryho-Neuman
- Paul Wolf

The Environment Action Team

Organised by Anna Eden

- Anna Eden
- Dave Dalton
- George Wormald
- Julie Martin
- Maggie Hartford
- Maggie Lloyd

Organised by Linda Forrest

- Trish Attwooll
- Clare Ridley and Elizabeth Mills
- Deborah Tricker
- Rebecca Phillipson
- George Wormald
- Maggie Hertford
- Andy Roscoe and Sue Brownhill
- Sietske Boeles
- Rosamund Yuval
- Julie Martin
- Louise Lobo
- Catriona Davidson
- Anna Eden
- Margeret and Paul Wolf
- Mitch Oliver
- Rupert Griffin from Tiddly Pommies

- Nick Welch
- Pat Tope
- Trish Attwooll

Traffic Action Group

Organised by Deborah Tricker

- Cindy Carlson
- Geraldine Coggins
- James Doyle
- Mike Hobbs
- Clare Ridley
- Leila Lake

DRARA TREASURER'S REPORT – Alison Williams

YEAR ENDED 30 SEPTEMBER 2024

1. INCOME:

Subscriptions: £1,453

During the year, income from membership subscriptions increased by 8.8% over the previous year (which was £1,335). This has been a tremendous achievement, and very significant in maintaining a healthy bank balance. Income from subs paid by Standing Order this year has increased by 12% (£593 to £665), This saves time and administration, both for collectors and members. Subscriptions are DRARA's main source of general funds, and are needed primarily to cover the costs of newsletters, website expenses and event insurance.

DRARA events: £2,987

Please see the box below for income raised, expenses, donations made, and beneficiaries. In all but Film in the Street, our events were charitable, with 90% going to various charities, as outlined in the last column. Film in the Street ran its own budget this year, incorporating the purchase of a new projector and screen. The event finished with a deficit of £124, and it is hoped that this can be raised by a whip-round from DRARA members, so general funds will not be needed.

DRARA events 2023-2024		Inc	Exp	Donations	Balance	Donation recipients
06/02/2024	Quiz Night	610.00	-	550.00	60.00	Children Seen and Heard £275. Oxford Mutual Aid £275.
11/05/2024	Street Tea Party	586.00	-	527.40	58.60	Oxford Breast Buddies £527.40.
09/06/2024	Open Gardens	1,292.05	-	1,162.74	129.31	Kate's Garden £627.52; OMAid £295.38; Children Heard & Seen £119.92; Joliba Trust £119.92.
14/09/2024	Film in the Street	414.58	538.60	-	-124.02	Expenses - included new projector £191.99; new screen £109.09.
14/09/2022	Apple Day	84.50	-	76.05	8.45	OXFAM Gaza appeal.
		2,987.13	538.60	2,316.19	247.91	

In addition, but not in the accounts, the DRARA Christmas Fair in December raised £812 for charity. The organisers of each stall gave their cash takings direct to their chosen charities:

03/12/2023	Christmas Fair	812.00		812.00	0.00	OXFAM £110; Crisis £150; Oxford Mutual Aid £422; Barnardos £70; Oxfordshire Mind £60.
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Newsletter sponsorship: £350

Local estate agents, Scott Fraser, agreed to sponsor our summer newsletter, covering the cost of design and printing. They had done this a few years ago. It is hoped we will be able to continue this arrangement, and we are very grateful for their contribution.

Other income: £20.03

Net contributions from participants for refreshments at the AGM.

Total income for the year: £4,810

2. EXPENDITURE:

Expenditure for the year was as follows.

General funds:

Newsletters	562	(Autumn 2023, Summer 2024)
Insurance	303	(for events)
Website and Zoom costs	467	(hosting/domains EORI £12; Zoom Pro £144; Google Workspace £311.)
Events	539	Film in the Street
Charitable donations	2,316	(see details in box above)
Other	<u>190</u>	(AGM costs, Ox Civ Soc m/ship)
Subtotal:	<u>4,377</u>	
Friends of Warneford Meadow:	0	

Total expenditure for the year: £4,377

3. BALANCE:

We ended the year with a balance of £1,457: £1,171 in the General fund, and £286 in the Warneford Meadow fund.

There was a surplus for the year of £433 (compared to the 2022/23 deficit of £-1,208).

In conclusion, we are pleased that, with a surplus for the year of £433 and an overall balance of £1,457, our financial situation has shown significant improvement since last year.

DRARA Traffic Action Group 2024 Report - Deb Tricker

This has been another eventful year for the DRARA Traffic Group.

At last year's AGM we had only just heard the news that Oxfordshire County Council had voted (on 17th October) to make the East Oxford Low Traffic Neighbourhoods permanent, but with some modifications. The main change was the replacement of physical barriers with enforcement by Automatic Number Plate Recognition on Divinity Road, Magdalen Road and James Street facilitating the movement of emergency services, P.O. deliveries, refuse collection vehicles and taxis through the filters. After enjoying the safe environment for children and adults created by the recent instalment of less fragile bollards, we feared a return to the days of taxis speeding through our neighbourhood day and night. DRARA raised these concerns with Andrew Gant, the Traffic Lead on Oxfordshire County Council, and we have continued to monitor traffic flow through our area all year. We have also assisted the Council with our regular communication to residents on the (much delayed) implementation of the traffic filters.

The cameras were installed in April and shortly afterwards we asked for them to be raised to protect them from vandalism and for their angle to be adjusted to catch motorbikes sneaking through on the pavement. This was done but has had the knock-on effect of an increase in motorbike and moped traffic through Southfield, which we are also monitoring. We have run and reported manual traffic counts (a baseline count on 21st April just before the bollards were removed, with follow-ups on 23rd May and 8th July 2024). We have also installed Telraam counters in strategically located windows, which give us constant (slightly less accurate) data on all users. OCC have also monitored traffic via surveys on both Divinity and Southfield and of course receive data on breaches and number of drivers fined. We need to make Freedom of Information requests to access this data; by mid-June ((less than two months in) 544 penalty charge notices had been issued.

Councillor Gant has been responsive to our concerns throughout the process but seems to be committed to the taxi exemption. Drivers of taxis and private car vehicles have agreed to a code of conduct which covers speed, safety and courtesy among other things and Councillor Gant is collecting our reports on breaches of this code to raise with the companies, whose lobbying brought them the exemption and who know that bad behaviour could jeopardise its continuation. We are implementing speed watches and will continue to report breaches of every kind to taxi licensing and to Oxfordshire County Council; we also have regular meetings with Councillor Gant and OCC's enforcement officer to discuss problems and concerns. While our surveys and traffic counts show that the LTN continues to foster active travel, particularly among schoolchildren and commuters, there is no room for complacency; the LTN needs to be protected and monitored, and we need to keep up the pressure on OCC to deal with lawbreaking to ensure that pedestrians and cyclists do not feel it is unsafe to use. Please do report any breaches yourself, and feel free to join the LTN and traffic count groups – ask a DRARA committee member if you would like to find out more.

DRARA Events 2024 Report – Linda Forrest

The DRARA events team has had a really good year. The weather has been kind to us and the turn outs, as ever good too. As a result we have raised approximately £3,465 for local charities.

The purpose of our events is to bring together the neighbourhood face to face. It enables us to meet new residents and welcome them and to touch base with those of us who have been around a while.

So, here is how we raised the funds and the charities we supported.

Light up December

Organizers – Anna Eden and Deb Tricker

This is like an advent calendar except a window is decorated for a specific day of December 1-24, then announced on the day so people can view. It's great fun. Do volunteer your window for this year.

Xmas Fayre

Organized by Rebecca Phillipson for the second year now. Its a really good event in the winter and just before Xmas. Look out for this years event. Rebeca and the stall holders raised the following:- **Oxfam £110, Crisis £150, Oxford Mutual Aid (OMA) £422, Barnard's £70 and Oxon Mind £60.**

Quiz

Our annual quiz is organized by George Wormold and his team and held at Cheney school. A really good night! George raised **£495 for Children Heard and Seen and OMA.**

Tea Party

Organized by Roz Yuval and her family Maddy and Yonadev. Cakes and buns galore were made by lots of neighbours. The sun shone, it was well attended and **£540 was raised for Breast Buddies.**

Open gardens

Organized by Rebecca. This has become a well known and very good neighbourhood event with others attending from outside DRARA (very welcome). This year showcased 4 gardens designed by one of our lovely neighbours, Kate Jury, who sadly died very unexpectedly last year. **£627-52 was raised through ticket sales for 'Kates Place' in Florence Park.** We also had a plant stall organized by our environmental group who raised **£256 for The Joliba Trust and Children Heard and Seen.** The tea stall, organized by Isobel and Vicky raised **£328 for OMA.**

Film in the Street

This event was resurrected after a pause last year due to a lack of projector and the need for a screen! Well done Trish Attwooll and Mary Ashdown for organizing the night. A projector and screen were purchased and made a big difference and of course an excellent feel good film was chosen '**Sunshine on Leith**'. A local band Horns of Plenty played and a good night was had by all. This event raised **£415** and went towards the cost of the projector and screen. It also contributed to other costs, rental of the film, insurance for all events, closure of the road etc. We still need about £150 to fully cover the costs of projector and screen we purchased for DRARA events.

Apple Day

Back again this year as there were an abundance of apples, unlike last year. Sietske Boeles organized was the organizer and brought in Rupert Griffin and his apple press which was a hit with the kids. Despite the rain in-between the sun it was a great success. £76 was raised for the Oxfam Gaza appeal.

In between all of these events and running approximately four times a year is freecycle and litter pick days. Freecycle is the face to face version of the DRARA Share and Freecycle WhatsApp group and street clean is exactly that. It is organized by the environment team.

DRARA has other costs over the year, largely for events, so the DRARA committee decided to take 10% from all events towards the costs.

That's it for this year. I would like to thank all of those behind the scenes who have played a big part, you know who you are and events couldn't manage without you. Please keep it up as we have lost a few members of the team.

If those reading this would like to join the team please contact secretary@drara.org.uk

DRARA Planning 2024 Report – Tom Knollys

The principal planning event of the past year has been the emerging plans for the development of the Warneford Hospital site. I and other members of DRARA have been to several meetings about the Trust's plans during the course of the year as the Trust sought to keep us informed of the process, and all members of the public were invited to a presentation of the outline plans for the site (a masterplan for development over the next 70 years or so) in September. DRARA will comment on the details plans when they put forward in a planning application.

DRARA commented on the following applications:

- 151 Cowley Road (conversion of former Honest Stationery to a gaming centre — application approved)
- 137 Divinity Road (replacement of garage fronting Stone Street with two storey building to create 2 x 1 bedroom flats — no decision yet)
- 187 Divinity Road (retrospective application for an HMO — permission refused)

Additionally, DRARA has been involved with issues regarding 2 Divinity Road, which includes the owners seeking certification that its use as an HMO is lawful (the council has previously rejected an application owing to insufficient evidence, but another application has recently been submitted — it is reassuring to note in both this case and 187 Divinity Road, the council has so far been upholding the policies to limit HMOs).

There have been ongoing and increasing problems with several houses in HMO use managed by organisations housing those who are formerly homeless or who otherwise needing support. DRARA has assisted neighbours affected by various challenges with these households, including management, or anti-social behaviour from the occupants, and helped with seeking resolution of issues from the institutions and council.

University Liaison 2024 Report -Karen Metcalfe

DRARA works with both universities to improve relations between residents and students. Most students in this area are from Oxford Brookes University, and DRARA is in regular communication with the Community Engagement team about measures which can be taken to improve relationships.

Throughout the year I have attended Residents' Associations and Councillors meetings at Brookes University on behalf of DRARA. This forum provides an opportunity for local representatives to be updated on the University's activities and priorities, to discuss how they relate to the wider community and to raise specific questions, concerns and ideas. We are provided with updates on estates, community engagement and University staff are available to answer any questions we have.

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.

DRARA Environmental Action Group 2024 Report – Maggie Hartford

This year, the group has held regular tidy-up and planting sessions of the planters and tree gardens, cleaned and repainted the post-box on the corner of Hill Top and Divinity Roads, repaired the Southfield Road noticeboard, sent out regular Green Flash emails and articles for the newsletter, and arranged collection points to recycle blister packs of pharmaceuticals. We are now investigating other items that cannot be easily recycled from home, eg toothbrushes and toothpaste tubes.

We also ran the plant stall for the Christmas fair and Open Gardens day in June, and organised a successful litter-pick for the city-wide OxClean in March and a Freecycle day.

Our WhatsApp groups have continued to grow in popularity: the Energy Group has 69 members, the Wildlife group has 55 members and the Gardening group has 77 members!

DRARA Newsletter Report 2024 – Jane Bingham

In December 2023, the DRARA committee decided to reduce the number of newsletters produced in 2024 from three to two as DRARA funds were looking low for the start of the year. So, this year, one issue came out in May and the second is due to be distributed at the end of October, following the AGM. We have now decided to continue with two issues per year for 2025.

Also, thanks to the outreach of Linda Forrest, Oliver Boyle of Scottfraser Estate Agents (whose office is on the Cowley Road in the DRARA area) has kindly sponsored printing and design costs for the two 2024 issues. We are hoping that this generous sponsorship will continue in 2025.

The newsletter is delivered to every household in in the DRARA area by a wonderful team of volunteers led by Anne Hall.

The newsletter aims:

- to inform everyone in the neighbourhood about DRARA activities and other local events
- to report on local issues, such as our LTN

- to report on community concerns, such as anti-social behaviour
- to provide local interest stories, such as our ‘meet the neighbour’ profiles.

The wider aims of the newsletter are:

- to foster pride in our neighbourhood
- to connect different elements of our community and make us more aware of each other.

Contributions needed!

We welcome all suggestions for articles as well as volunteers to write for the newsletter. We would especially welcome participation from younger members of our community.

Designer needed!

We have now lost our long-term designer, Georgia Styring, so we are looking for someone to take over the design of the newsletter for a small fee. We have found a useful stopgap, but it would be great to have the design input of someone with connections to our area.

It’s not a big job – we have a design template, and all copy and photos are supplied ready to be used. If you – or anyone you know – would like to take on this job, your help would be greatly appreciated.

Friends of South Park 2024 Report – Rob Waterston

Since the 2023 DRARA AGM much has been happening in and around South Park. Many, if not all, will have been appalled at the physical and environmental damage inflicted during and after last years Firework and Bonfire event. Members of FoSP and other Park users witnessed the damage being done and it has taken really until now, 10 months on, for the rectification works to be completed; FoSP has held regular meetings with the Council, Round Table and Oxford Preservation Trust to try and ensure there is no repeat of previous years’ damage. To the dismay of some – though not all - an application for a permit to put on a firework display this year has been submitted by the Round Table, significantly with no bonfire. In the last year, too, FoSP, in conjunction with OPT has at long last secured funding for signage in the Park, though the actual signs are unlikely to be in place by the time of DRARA AGM.

Some of you will have noticed that the distillery aka TOAD at the top of the Park has recently closed and the site is – we understand – going out to tender. It is the hope of FoSP that the long-promised café and loos will materialise in the plans of whoever takes over.

FoSP participated in Oxclean again this year and organised a working party to clear undergrowth along a section of fencing along Cheney Lane. Both these activities are, in the view of the Committee, a core part of FoSP and I do encourage those Members of DRARA who are not yet Members of FoSP to join and to attend our AGM on 31st October at 7.30pm at The Family Centre, Cross St.

DRARA 2024 Membership Fees

Current DRARA membership fees are £5.00. This amount hasn't changed in over a decade. A special discounted rate of £2.00 is available for those households where there is no one in full time employment and for student households.

Membership fees help partially to cover DRARA's insurance for holding events, as well as the purchase of material and equipment needed for events, the costs of the DRARA website, producing the newsletter and the occasional community activity, such as purchasing plants for street planters. DRARA can only partially cover these costs through membership fees so we also ask for donations to cover the full costs of our events (e.g. venue rents, equipment hire and refreshments).

Inflation, especially in the last three years, has meant that the costs of everything has increased. At the same time, some of our events materials, such as the marquee, the first aid kit and the screen for film in the street have needed to be replaced, while we've had to purchase a new projector for Film in the Street as the one we were using left when a generous resident moved out of the area! In fact, the reason we are asking for donations for events equipment at the AGM is because The Film in the Street finished with £124 more on expenses than income - ie a deficit particular to this one event in September. If we manage to raise this £124 then this event will have paid for itself (including projector and screen), and therefore will not reduce DRARA's general coffers.

We've had to reduce the number of newsletters from three to two a year because of the cost, and were fortunate this year to receive sponsorship from Scott Fraser to cover the cost of printing, which comes to £700 for the year. It's not guaranteed that we'll receive the same sponsorship next year.

The DRARA Committee has come up with a set of options for how we might be able to better cover the costs of our activities going forward. None of these would affect the current membership collection, but could instead be applied next year. For the moment we're wanting to gauge the views of our membership.

Options	Advantages	Disadvantages
1. Status quo – we maintain the current £5.00 and rely on donations from residents to cover the costs of DRARA activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimum changes needed to the current membership collection materials; • No changes needed to standing orders we receive 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May end up in the situation we had last year where the DRARA accounts almost had a negative balance; • Means the costs are not evenly distributed across the membership but instead reliant on the generosity of a sub-set of members.
2. Raise the membership fee to £8.00 or £10.00 a year	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More likely to cover the full annual costs of DRARA activities, except for exceptional expenses • Spreads the costs of DRARA activities across a wider group of residents. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Membership collections could be trickier as it's easier for people to find a £5 note on the doorstep and less likely to have change; • Would require effort to change the standing orders.
3. Raise the membership fee to £10.00 a year except for those paying by standing order, who would only need to pay £7.00 a year	Same as for Option 2, except that it could incentivise more people to pay by standing order.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Same as Option 2, with added complexity of maintaining a two tier system of payment.