



Iffley Fields Residents Association

Agenda for IFRA meeting to be held on Monday 13 January 2025 at 8PM on zoom

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87153156570?pwd=bzFdumB8LwmoWkQYFaPzQKcrEnzThz.1>

Meeting ID: 871 5315 6570

Passcode: 791267

1. **Apologies**
2. **Minutes of the meeting held on 12 November 2024 (attached)**
3. **Matters arising**
 - a. Meadow Lane Carpark update (Emily)
 - b. School traffic update (Emily)
 - c. Meeting with Falcon (Sue)
 - d. Open Gardens 2024 (Susan)
 - e. Ferry path (Christine)
 - f. Kidneys (Margaret/Ruth)
 - g. Meadow Lane recreation ground
 - Proposal for Orchard (Emily)
 - Picnic tables (Sue)
4. **Tow path** Initiative from Mark Seal and Recommendations from Oxford Pedestrians Association *
5. **Proposal to become a CIO (Christine)***
6. **Sub groups updates**
 - a. Waterways
 - b. Planning (Thelma)
 - c. Interest groups (Sue)
7. **AGM 10 March 8pm at the Falcon arrangements**
8. **Financial Report (Sam A)**
9. **AOB/ Reports from Street Connectors**

Dates of future meetings 2024

2025, AGM 10 March 8pm May 12th, July 14th, September 8th, November 10th

*If you would like copies of documents/reports, email iffleyfields@gmail.com

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, Cllr Emily Kerr. Tom Green

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 clarified and also extended as cars often arrived earlier.
- 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.

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 th 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 Mark 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. 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 planking had been installed and two picnic table. Unfortunately the tables had been installed side by side. A bench and ladders which had been funded by IFRA were still not installed. 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 without success. Emily agreed to follow this up.

5 Orchard trees 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 Planning

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

7 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.

8 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.

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.

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.

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

Oxford Pedestrians Association response to Coroner's report on the death of Polly Friedhoff, and recommendations arising from this.

November 16th 2024

Oxford Pedestrians Association has been working for 27 years to promote walking (including people with supported mobility needs and wheelchair users) as a form of urban transport. Our overall aims are for footways, pavements and crossing places that are wide (at least wide enough for two wheelchair users to pass one another in comfort and dignity), level, continuous and unobstructed.

We were sad to hear of the untimely death of Polly Friedhoff and send our condolences to her family.

Looking at this tragic instance in the context of the towpaths in general (Thames Path and canal towpaths), we note that none of them are wide enough to be shared use pathways. Calling too-narrow paths shared use is an easy way out of providing proper infrastructure for both pedestrians and cyclists. We also note however that the spot where this incident occurred is one of the narrowest parts of the Thames Path; at 1.2m this is below standards for either cycle lanes or foot paths and certainly far too narrow for shared use. The Thames Path is a designated footpath, and is the width of a footpath, not a shared use facility. Although there are places where it is wider, a footpath is only as good as its narrowest and most neglected part.

The Coroner's report points out that:

'I understand this part of the path at the lock is popular with pedestrians and cyclists. It is a shared space, albeit strictly speaking it is a footpath and cyclists are not permitted to use it unless they have permission. In reality it is heavily used by cyclists for leisure and commuting and some cyclists travel at significant speed in close proximity to pedestrians. One of the main problems is that the path at the location of Mrs Friedhoff's accident is only about 2 metres wide. A short distance before this the path is only 1.6 metres wide. I understand from that national guidance for such a path is 3.5 metres. Mrs Friedhoff's sons are very familiar with the location and describe it as normal pavement width but with cyclists permitted to cycle on it, thereby creating an obvious accident risk. It is also noteworthy that the surface of the path has been upgraded in recent years which, in all probability, has encouraged its use by cyclists and enabled them to cycle faster.'

OxPA also notes that the reality is cyclists will choose to use the Thames Path east of Folly Bridge as Abingdon Road is congested with motorised traffic, causing danger and polluted air to both walkers and cyclists along this route, which also suffers very narrow pavements. (We also note that residents living along this route would suffer the noise and air pollution caused by traffic, and that buses are regularly held up along arterial routes such as Abingdon Road by high volumes of cars.) However, as the coroner and several OxPA members have stressed, this route is designated as a footpath, not a cycleway. And that when cyclists are forced off direct routes by the dangers posed by motorised traffic, they are often pushed into space that is designated for use by pedestrians who are the most vulnerable of transport modes. This can in turn marginalise and endanger pedestrians.

OxPA is also very aware that pedestrians are more vulnerable than cyclists, and that whilst many cyclists are courteous when sharing these too-narrow paths, there are those who speed along and ring a bell believing that pedestrians should speedily get out of their way. And that as we have seen in this tragic instance, when there is not space (and though the cyclist said he had rung his bell), a

death can be the result of a collision even at slow cycle speeds. This naturally leaves many pedestrians feeling nervous and unsafe on the narrow paths.

Pedestrians do not move along at a uniform pace in straight lines like other road users, but walk in groups, hold an arm or a hand, stop to chat or look at things, meet one another, move at varying speeds, and may also move in any direction, reactively or impulsively. This is normal, healthy and expected behaviour for pedestrians.

OxPA therefore recommends that:

- 1. The Thames Path is affirmed as a footpath, with absolute priority to pedestrians and wheelchair users.**
- 2. E-bikes and e-scooters be not permitted to exceed speeds of 3mph along the footways alongside canals and rivers.**
- 3. Signs which are visible and large enough be placed at regular intervals along these paths saying 'Pedestrian Priority'.**
- 4. In the same way as cycle signs have been placed on roads where there is motorist and cycle sharing to indicated cycle priority, signs indicating a walking and a wheelchair using person are placed along the Thames Path and the canal towpaths**
- 5. Plans be made to widen the Thames Path and canal towpaths wherever this can be carried out, so that shared use is possible without risk to pedestrians**

We believe that recommendations 3 and 4 could be carried out at minimal cost and need to be put in place as soon as possible.

Recommendation 5 would take planning and liaison with the various bodies overseeing the footpaths, but should also be taken forward as soon as is feasibly possible.

Where no widening is possible OxPA recommends passing places are created so that users of the towpaths can safely allow one another to pass. If the Pedestrian Priority signs and walking wheeling pictures are in place it would then be expected that cyclists would give pedestrians priority and right of way to pass at pinch points where they meet.

Sushila Dhall

Chair, Oxford Pedestrians Association

IFRA as a Charitable Incorporated Organisation

Resolutions for AGM:

1. That Iffley Fields Residents Association apply to the Charity Commission to become a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)
2. That Iffley Fields Residents Association adopt the new Constitution below that complies with becoming a CIO.

Rationale

CIO is a new status available to small organisations like IFRA that is relatively easy. There are two main **benefits**:

1. IFRA would be eligible to raise funds for projects from organisations that will not give to non-incorporated organisations, receive gift aid on donations and possibly VAT relief on any construction work (eg benches, tables tennis table that we fund through ODS)
2. IFRA would have a more robust governance arrangement and improved accountability to supporters and funders.

The disadvantage will be an increased administrative burden on the officers, see below.

IFRA New Constitution

We have to follow the template supplied by the Charity Commission. It provides options and we have chosen the options that are close to our current Constitution.

Membership

- Membership eligibility is residency in IF
- IFRA can raise subscriptions, but membership does not have to be tied to subscriptions (or donations)
- Only in-person voting at AGM, not proxy or postal votes
- No organisation or associate memberships

Trustees

- Maximum of 15 (can have unlimited). In future this will need to include Chair, Vice Chairs, Secretary and Treasurer.
- The committee elects the Chairs and officers
- Third of trustees are re-elected each year, but no limit to how long they can be a trustee.
- The first trustees would be the Officers elected at the AGM and the first AGM after setting up the CIO we elect new trustees.

Code of conduct

- We can add the existing code as an appendix

Administrative implications

We shouldn't underestimate this.

- **Membership list** – this can be just a spreadsheet with names and addresses that only needs to be updated when someone moves away, dies or resigns. All Trustees and street connectors and new trustees would need to register obviously.
- **Gift aid for donations under £30**, (which could include Open Gardens and Jumble trail), you can aggregate them without an individual form as long as IFRA is registered with HMRC. You can claim for 4 years after the end of the tax year in which the donation is made . So, there will be no rush and we can just do once a year. For larger donations, we can use Just Giving.
- **Submission of annual accounts:** once the system is set up, this should be straightforward and we should be doing annual accounts anyway as accountability to our funders and supporters. The 2026 AGM may need to be in May as presently our financial year ends in 31 March which is after our AGM!
- **Annual report:** this can be just reformatted as our newsletter.
- **Register of trustees:** we have to keep a register of trustees

Christine