

Friends of Iffley Village

website: www.friendsofiffley.org



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Chair: Troth Wells

Newsletter Editor: Juliette Gammon

Spring Newsletter 2023

FOIV's evening with Peggy Seeger was sold out and we all had a fun-filled time with music, laughter and good cheer. Many thanks to Peggy and all who came, and helped. I also enjoyed recent History Society talks, Film Nights and Poetry and Puddings. It's good events are up and running again. See the calendar on p2 for upcoming items including Artweeks and Iffley Open Gardens.

And of course there is the Coronation in May (see below). As part of the nation-wide celebrations, we hope that you will come along to the Community Concert, organised by the Music Society, followed by tea, cakes and a raffle. There will be special services in the Church, and the national peal of bells in the late afternoon. The Glebe Field will be open all day. Hopefully the weather will be fine by then, and you can take a picnic there or simply stroll around.

On a less happy note, there's been a spate of break-ins to houses and garden sheds. These were reported to the police and we hope there will be significant action in all cases. Please be vigilant.

It's now over one year since Russia invaded Ukraine. To mark this, we have an interview on p4 with Inna Soloviova, a Ukrainian living in Iffley. For other items, including planning, please see p3.

If you'd like to join FOIV, please contact the membership secretary by email

membership@friendsofiffley.org or visit the website to download a form. **Troth Wells, Chair**



CORONATION

CELEBRATIONS



SUNDAY 7TH MAY IN THE CHURCH HALL

Free Community Concert 2-4.30pm featuring Oxford Waits, string quartet, guitars, Horns of Plenty & more!

Tea and cake and raffle from 4.30pm

No tickets required although numbers in the Hall may be restricted, on a first-come basis.

The Glebe Field will be open all day for picnicking

Donations welcomed for Refugee Resource or other charities



Friends of Iffley Village

Friends of St Mary's

Iffley Music Society

Iffley History Society

FOR YOUR 2023 DIARY

Date	Time	Place	Society	Event
Tuesday, 8 April	7.30pm	Church Hall	History	Prof John Zarnecki: <i>The Origins & Development of the Solar System</i>
Sundays, 9 April – 10 Sep	2.30-4.30pm	Church	Living Stones	Special welcome to visitors & schools, plus groups by arrangement.
Tues, 11 April	7.30pm	Church Hall	Film	<i>Official Competition</i> (Spain, 2021)
Sun, 16 April	3pm	Church Hall	Music	Charlotte Saluste-Bridoux violin & Ben Tarlton cello: Gliere, Kodaly, Mozart, Ravel
Tues, 18 April	7.30pm	Church Hall	History	Prof John Zarnecki: <i>The Origins & Development of the Solar System</i>
Sat, 29 April	Departure time tbc	Away Day	FOSM*	Geoffrey Tyack leads visit to West Berkshire churches
Sun, 7 May	10am/6.30pm	Church / Church Hall	All societies	Special Coronation Celebrations: Church Service; Community Summer Concert; tea
Tues, 16 May	7.30pm	Church Hall	History	Vivien Greene Memorial Lecture
20-29 May	Various	Levell/Rhys/Farrands/Dorrity	Iffley Art Week	www.artweeks.org/sites/default/files/news/aw_2023guidefinal.pdf
11 June	2-6pm			Iffley Open Gardens
Sat, 17 June	7pm	Church Hall	FOSM*	Summer party for Members

*Friends of St Mary's **Friends of Iffley Village

Improvements in the Village

The Committee of FOIV thought that it would be a good idea for a register to be established in which members could express their views as to improvements and changes that might be made in the village. Without known sources of funding, such a register would of course only be a record of desiderata, but it would come into its own in the event that such funding was to be forthcoming.

Peggy's piano

Peggy Seeger and the FOIV committee donated her "lovely big electric piano" to Rose Hill Junior School. The school are establishing a music room, and the hope is that this wonderful instrument will be a part of programme for musical engagement with the school. It is timely too, as so many schools have had to reduce or cut musical activities in the face of funding crises.

Companionship

Homeshare Oxfordshire is a mutually beneficial living arrangement where an older Householder (or couple) who has a spare room and would like companionship, help or reassurance in the home, is carefully matched with a compatible Sharer, who would benefit from affordable accommodation and is happy to lend a hand. See: www.ageuk.org.uk/oxfordshire/our-services/homeshare-oxfordshire/



They are also being contacted by a number of people from Ukraine interested in Homeshare accommodation, as well as one or two older people asking if there might be people from Ukraine who would be suitable for them. Homeshare are keen to develop this.

Planning Matters

Court Place: The pace of construction is picking up with the brickwork to Court C, which is at the lower part of the site, well advanced. This can be seen best from the Rivermead Nature Park. The number of deliveries has increased and now involves articulated lorries creating additional risks to the public. We remain unconvinced that Felthams are doing everything necessary to reduce these risks. Finally, we have talked with Felthams about a community visit to the project. This could take place after Easter.

Oxford University Wood: This is the area between Court Place and the river. OU state they are: "felling diseased trees, replanting open areas with a mixture of native tree and shrub species and enhancing the state of the paths. Further work includes ditch clearance to minimise local flooding. This is all part of the management plan agreed with the Forestry Commission." It's worth visiting to see the significant change to the woods.

General planning: Protracted discussions continue on an application at appeal and requests for retrospective planning permission. Protecting the village is often out of sight, but none the less critical. **Phil Hart**

Horse Fields: The Horse Fields (HF) application deadline has passed, but the Case Officer will still accept emails at MKEMP@oxford.gov.uk, ref **22/03078/FUL**. You can view all the application documents, expert assessments submitted by FOIV, and responses at: <https://public.oxford.gov.uk/online-applications/> using the above ref.

Over 1100 people responded, the overwhelming majority objecting to the proposal. The comments will be analysed (thanks to those who helped) and then sent to the Planning Dept so they are fully apprised, since the response uploading was inconsistent.

While some councillors, including our local representatives, seem confident that the application will be speedily approved, the Case Officer has said it "is not in a position to be determined in its current form." He is "awaiting revisions to a range of documents based on consultee responses which will each need to be reviewed." It is unlikely that the application will go to the Planning Committee before May. Based on the evidence of the FOIV-commissioned experts, and the assessment by the planning consultant hired by the Iffley Crowd Fund, the Local Plan policy for the HF site is undeliverable: it is not possible to build 29+ houses on the HF and 'protect and enhance' the Iffley Conservation Area and deliver a 5% biodiversity net gain (10% soon to be required by law). The assessment of the impact of traffic on Iffley is also felt to be flawed; plus, there is significant risk of increased flooding and river contamination.

In response to a resident reporting that the five-bar gate at the Church Way entrance to the HF had been vandalised, OxPlace erected a solid 6ft fence; the height was later reduced after residents' objections that the heritage view must be restored. **Rachel Falconer**

Donnington Recreation Ground Cycle Track: OCC's proposal (via its subsidiary ODS) to construct a cycle track across from Cavell Road to Meadow Lane is not opposed by FOIV in principle. But the proposed route will result in the pointless loss of some 20 mature trees from the well-loved willow copse by Meadow Lane, and will not solve the problem of damage to the football pitches from bicycles and pedestrians.

The applicant's agent has submitted technical notes attempting to deal with the problems of the scheme, relating to tree and biodiversity loss, flood risk and whether the applicant has done enough to minimise negative effects. ODS appear to accept the scheme will be net harmful but are reluctant to change the route to a less damaging one. Some residents are concerned that ODS are wedded to the current route as it may provide a 'Trojan Horse' for an attempt to take road access to the Iffley Mead development site from Cavell Road or Meadow Lane. The Council awaits further submissions from the applicant before deciding when to take the application to committee. **Dominic Woodfield**

Inna Soloviova makes the most of her Iffley stay

Two days after Russia invaded Ukraine, Inna Soloviova looked out of her window and saw Russian tanks outside her apartment building. “It was very terrible; we didn’t think Russia can do this.” She made a quick decision, packed two small bags and, with her 14-year-old son Artem and their beautiful Burmese cat Joy, fled Kyiv. On 2 March they crossed the border to Hungary. “We thought it would soon be over and we could return in a couple of weeks,” she explains. Four months later they arrived at the Beavers’ house in Iffley, having been put in touch with Bill and Sarah by a mutual contact. She knows she and Artem are fortunate to have separate bedrooms in such a comfortable house, unlike Ukrainian friends who have to share. She finds Iffley – and Oxford – “very calm after Kyiv”. She also can continue to run the computer company she started 13 years ago, via Zoom.

Inna had just returned from visiting her eldest son, Alex (28), a young major now stationed in Kyiv. It was her third visit home and she collected more of the belongings they were forced to abandon: “I saw friends every day and it was wonderful to be welcomed back into the office to see my colleagues



face to face”. In Kyiv, she continues, “I think people have adapted to the situation and try to live as normally as possible. But when I visited friends in Bucha it was very different, though it’s only a 20-minute car drive away. They have really suffered, especially the doctors and ambulance crews who are very mentally traumatised.”

Artem has settled happily into Culham’s Europa School and with online tutoring by his former Ukrainian teachers has become proficient in English and Maths. He’s joined Oxford’s RAF Air Cadets, takes advanced maths lessons on Saturdays at the University’s Mathematics Institute and studies electric guitar. “It’s great for the children to get an English education but the sad part is they won’t want to go back.”

“Sarah and Bill are very kind people, just like parents for me. For example, they invited my Ukrainian friend over for Christmas and I shared my joy with Sarah when Artem got his first very good school report.” With her son eager to complete his education here (“he loves the buildings in Oxford and says ‘this university is my dream’”) she’s hoping to find a flat when her placement ends in July. Eventually she’d like to start a branch of her company here once her English improves: “There are so many problems with the Ukrainian economy and many businesses have closed.” She thinks there are a lot of things people don’t understand about the history of Ukraine and Russia.

“For me it was great to discover more of British culture and British people. It’s really fantastic. You have a lot of compassion, support, openness and kindness. For me all this was a great gift and Grace of God. A lot of thanks to British people for supporting every Ukrainian who has come to the UK now. And, for supporting our country in its struggle for independence in the war with Russia. Thank you, thank you everyone.”

Juliette Gammon

In March 2023 ten Ukrainians were being hosted by generous households in Iffley.

Is your boiler getting old?

Clean Heat Streets is a new government project offering dramatically-subsidised air source heat pumps with a free technical survey and follow-up help for suitable homes in Rose Hill and Iffley’s borders. The initiative is a part of Oxfordshire’s plans to transition away from gas and reach net zero by 2040. To find out more, contact rosehill.iffley.low.carbon@gmail.com