

## AGM 2023 – Chair’s Report (Troth Wells)

Welcome and plan for evening, with TVP presentation at 8.15-9pm.

*‘Ladies and gentlemen, esteemed members of FOIV. I am pleased to welcome you all to our AGM. It has been an eventful year, filled with accomplishments and progress as we strive to enhance our village community. In this report, I will highlight the key activities and achievements of FOIV over the past year’.*

That intro was in fact generated by ChatGPT! But it neatly takes me into my **own** words as FOIV makes significant moves with technology towards online ticketing, contactless payments and online membership renewal.

We have already made big strides in communication with members and residents through frequent e-newsletters to augment the printed Newsletter; and more use of WhatsApp groups in the area. Publicity via Next Door and Daily Information continues as well as the notice board posters. Many thanks to Chris Steele for managing the website and e-newsletter mailings, and to Juliette Gammon for editing the print newsletter.

In today’s world, the complications of running a society like FOIV are clear: volunteers with limited amounts of time grappling with the requirements for data protection and the move towards a cashless society; as well as the need for speedy electronic communication. And much greater volume of comments and enquiries as a result!

Over the last year we have built up the membership numbers to some 430, with the GDPR consent requirement making this less straightforward than in the past. The e-newsletter goes to about 300 members, so please sign up to receive it if you don’t already.

We had a membership payment pause for 2023, meaning that members only paid 1p – although many of us continued to pay the standard rate and some even increased their standing order amounts. We also received many donations for which we thank those individuals. For 2024-25, the membership subscription will be £5 payable in January.

**Meetings** - We would like to record thanks to the Mercure Hawkwell House who have hosted many of our committee meetings over the year. Staff have been very helpful with technical support so that we can run hybrid meetings as required.

**On Planning and Highways**, as most of you know, Iffley is currently in the throes of three major developments or proposals.

- The Court Place rebuilding is continuing apace. Phil Hart and Bill Beaver have worked extensively with Felthams Construction and OUD to ensure that the village and surrounding community in Rose Hill have not suffered too much disruption. This has required regular meetings and engagement, and we are extremely grateful for their diligence.

- The Iffley Mead plans for 90 or so houses came forward as a consultation and FOIV responded, with major concerns over access to the site as well as the impacts on other parts of the village of the no-car plans. In September, there was a meeting about a possible Controlled Parking Zone (CPZ) with County Councillor Brad Baines explaining some of the potential impacts.

- The Horse Fields lie in the Iffley Conservation Area (ICA). FOIV's constitutional purpose is to conserve the ICA and therefore we oppose this proposed development on green fields. The original proposal was sent back to the Council's housing arm, OxPlace, as it required deep revisions. We have not yet received the revised application. When this arrives, the independent Crowd Funder will seek donations so that the consultants - who produced such professional and thorough reports on the flawed first application - can scrutinise and advise again. For those who are not aware, the first application triggered over 1,000 responses – an enormous number – with 98% of these objecting, including statutory consultees such as the Environment Agency and BBOWT, BugLife, PlantLife plus many individuals.

Alongside these large development schemes, we continue to respond to other planning and general issues including leaks, noise, vegetation, and sadly burglaries. FOIV worked to ensure that the second defibrillator is operational again at the reopened Prince of Wales pub (which FOIV had earlier registered to secure as a community asset).

**Events** After the Jubilee in 2022, there was a further major royal occasion this year with the Coronation in May. FOIV again worked with Friends of St Mary's, Iffley Music Society, Iffley History Society to produce events including the Community Concert, Afternoon Tea, and an evening lecture. The Glebe Field was open all day; thanks to OPT. Donations went to Refugee Resource, an Oxford charity.

Peggy Seeger, committee member, has been very generous of her time, teaming up with singer Julia Hollander for a fun event in September entitled 'Why We Sing' – and we did!

We are delighted to announce that the poet **Jackie Kay** will be coming for FOIV's Winter Event on Sat 16 December.

**The Cost of Living, climate crisis and conflicts** all impact on many lives in our area. Wars in Ukraine and Israel-Palestine carry on, along with other conflicts and disasters. Please continue to support local groups such as Donnington Doorstep, Asylum Welcome and the Rose Hill and Donnington Advice centre among others.

**Andrew and Sarah McKearney of St Mary's** retired in May. They did so much in and for the village, and we thank them for their enormous contribution.

**Over the year** sadly several Iffley friends have died, including former FOIV treasurer Kate Griffin; all are sorely missed.

## Committee

As you know, the committee are all volunteers who give much time to FOIV. The workload seems to grow exponentially, with increased engagement and communication on many fronts.

I would like to thank the committee for their staunch support, help and hard work over the year.

To end - back to words produced by ChatGPT: *'I would like to thank each and everyone one of you for your continued support, dedication and enthusiasm. FOIV is only as strong as its members...'*

I couldn't have put it better myself!

Now we will go through the agenda items, taking any questions on the reports which have been circulated.

At 8.15 we welcome Thomas Taylor, Police Community Support Officer for our area to speak on 'Neighbourhood Policing'.

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