

Headington Committee for Development Action

Annual General Report October 2005 – September 2006



1. Background

Headington Committee for Development Action (HCDA) provides a meeting forum and links between organisations operating in the Headington area. This includes residents' associations, employers, businesses, police, schools, health, local councils, and churches. It is not a forum for individuals, but for representatives of organisations.

HCDA was established as a legal entity in September 2002, and was registered with the Charity Commission in July 2003, when the current constitution was also formally adopted. See 4.g for proposals to change the constitution.

2. Meetings

From October 2005 to September 2006 there were ten meetings of HCDA, and there were meetings of sub-groups to work on the Headington Festival and the OX3 Guide.

Invited speakers who have attended meetings during the year were:

- Peter Mann, Senior Transport Planner from Oxfordshire County Council
- Martin West of the City Council reported on Area Action Planning Workshops

3. Membership

Current membership stands at 22 members, with two co-opted members. There were three resignations due to ill health or relocation, with new members on behalf of the Headington and District Allotment Association, Wood Farm Community Association, and Churches Together in Marston. Replacement members were invited from the Barton Community Association, Co-ordinating Committee of Headington Residents' Associations, and Oxford Brookes University.

Appendix 1 includes the number of meetings attended by representatives in the past year.

4. Key projects

(a) OX3 Guide

A major new venture of HCDA this year has been the production of OX3, a guide to a local resources ranging from toddler groups to U3A opportunities, and from local shops to refuse collection. The Guide covers the whole OX3 area which includes greater Headington and Marston, its near neighbour. The objective is to foster community spirit by letting people know what resources are available locally and how to access them. The core of the material came from Stephanie Jenkins's excellent Headington website. Angela Cristofoli provided key information and wise counsel. A copy was delivered to every household in the OX3 area (13,000) as well as to local businesses, shops and organisations. Copies were also available to new staff at local hospitals and students at Oxford Brookes University.

We greatly appreciate the support provided by local councillors and the funding from Oxford City Council, the Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals Trust, and Oxfordshire County Council, without which the project could not have happened. Additional funding was obtained by providing limited advertising space to local companies. Thanks are also due to Martin Anderson, our designer and editor, for the excellent quality of the booklet.

(b) Stakeholders' Consultations

The executive summary of the HCDA 'Business Plan' states that we are to 'ensure good communication between stakeholders'. Over the past year we have made a deliberate effort to fulfil this brief by inviting various stakeholders to present to the committee their key current issues and developments, to take questions, and to engage in conversation about how the community might be affected or involved. We have heard from the Radcliffe Hospitals Trust (Marion Fiddes and colleagues), Ruskin College (Audrey Mullender), the County Council's planning department about the Controlled Parking scheme (Peter Mann) and the Local Schools Partnership including the government's Extended Schools initiative (Sue Baker and Lesley Williams). We are grateful for these authoritative contributions. As a result we feel we are becoming an increasingly well-informed group.

(c) CPZ

The HCDA committee is taking an active part in discussions with the County Council concerning the implementation and review of local residents parking schemes and how they might be improved in the near future.

(d) Headington Festival

As agreed following the previous year's festival, the Headington Festival in 2006 was a one-day event held in Bury Knowle Park on 4 June 2006. Funding was provided by Oxford City Council and the Midcounties Co-operative Society, and sponsorship by Charles Lawson, estate agent. Once this was in place it was possible to appoint Caroline Duffy as the Festival Co-ordinator to work for limited hours to make all the necessary arrangements with the active involvement of the reduced Festival Committee, which comprised two members of the HCDA committee and three co-opted volunteers. We are indebted to Caroline for her commitment, skills and innovative ideas.

The event was a great success, with entertainment for all ages, a tea tent, scarecrow competition, live music, a fancy-dress parade, and over 30 charity stalls and displays raising funds.

Evaluation was carried out on the day, and subsequently with a questionnaire to stall holders to establish how their funds had been enhanced by their attendance.

It is proposed that a Headington Festival for 2007 should be organised by the subgroup of HCDA; to include at least one HCDA member as well as persons co-opted to the group. It was agreed that the Headington Festival should continue in the future but only if a paid co-ordinator can be funded. It is agreed to seek further sponsorship from local companies together with funds from charitable bodies and the City Council.

(e) Subway noticeboards

HCDA has accepted responsibility for the two double-sided central Headington Community Noticeboards supplied by Oxford City Council. We are grateful to Janet Isaac who offered to act as keyholder and to undertake the overseeing of the boards. The east side of each board is changed weekly and shows community events, courses and local activities. The west side of each board is used for more permanent notices such as ongoing activities and requests for support from organisations such as charity shops and hospital Leagues of Friends. The boards are well used and appreciated by local residents.

(f) Tree Sculpture in Bury Knowle Park

Following the completion of the tree sculpture and the launch on 25 May 2005, further appeals for funding have been made to local businesses and organizations to complete the project with the carving of two benches around the tree. Three local businesses responded positively: Knowles and Son (Oxford), Symm & Company Ltd, and WHM Consulting. Although there is still a small financial shortfall, it was agreed to complete the project and use HCDA reserves while still seeking additional funding. This is continuing and a permanent plaque will not be commissioned for the time being. In its place laminated notices have been erected in the park to notify the public of all the sponsorship that has been obtained to date. The tree sculpture and benches have been well received, and the area has become a focal meeting point, in addition to being used as the story-telling area for which it was designed.

(g) Constitution

This year HCDA has reviewed its constitution to address some issues that have arisen. It was felt that the name of the organisation was a difficulty when working with the media and that a working title would be more beneficial in promoting the work of HCDA. The working title proposed was 'Headington Action'. There were also discussions on whether having an Associate membership with no voting rights would be advantageous, as many organisations, whilst supporting the aims of HCDA, found it difficult to attend regular meetings. A draft paper was developed and the membership consulted, with a final version being agreed at the September 2006 meeting. This will now be forwarded to the Charity Commission for approval, and then a special meeting for HCDA members will be organised to agree the new constitution.

(h) London Road Study

Following the response of HCDA and others to the consultation undertaken by Oxfordshire County Council to proposals to address the traffic issues along the London Road in Headington, the County Executive recognised that the consultation had not been adequate. The suggestion to closing part of London Road had been abandoned following overwhelming public disquiet. Additional proposals to relieve traffic pressure are going for further consultation once the major rebuilding of the Green Road roundabout is completed in November 2006. HCDA is continuing to follow this consultation and it is proposed to respond when further proposals have been announced.

5. Other Activities**(a) Christmas Funday**

Over the previous six years, under the umbrella of the Headington Business Association, Jill Cummings has organised the Christmas Festive Street Lighting Event. From its inception, it has been a community event with financial donations coming from local businesses, tins in shops, local residence associations, the North-East Area Committee of Oxford City Council, and HCDA.

In future, as a result of new regulations concerning the installation of festive lights, including public liability, Jill is unable to take on full responsibility for the lights due to the demise of Headington Business Association, which is due in part to retirement of some members. Jill has now arranged for the lights to be insured and erected by Council contractors covered through the offices of the Area Committee.

Fund-raising will continue for payment towards the storage and maintenance of existing lights and the purchase/hire of additional ones, with all purchased lights re-

main the property of Headington. This will ensure that community involvement is maintained and the partnership between Headington and the local council continued.

A number of businesses wished to sponsor the Christmas Tree this year, but Andrews Estate Agents were the first option, as they were only too willing to sponsor in 2005. The tree will be supplied by Mr Andrew Ingram of Green Field Farm, which is situated on Christmas Common.

The Sunday Funday Event will continue this year on 3 December 2006. As the regulatory requirements in relation to the lights now restrict a single person to organise this event, Neil Holdstock of Absolute Event Solutions (based in Windmill Road, Headington) has been approached to help organise the event along the lines of last year. Jill Cummings has offered to assist him in the best way possible. Although being taken over by an events business this is still seen very much as a local community event and organizations are urged to help in any manner possible.

Local residents owe a particular debt of gratitude to Jill and Frank Cummings for establishing and maintaining this event over the past five years which has done so much to assist Headington in remaining a vibrant community.

(b) Oxford Car-free Day

This is now well established in Oxford, and HCDA supports events that take place locally. The leaflet written by member Stephanie Jenkins gives clear directions for a pleasant and safe walk into the city highlighting all the significant historical features en route.

(c) Warneford Meadow

HCDA is being kept up-to-date with proposed developments for this meadow, which belongs to the Warneford Hospital in Headington. Such developments would have a significant impact on an already congested area should they come to pass.

(d) John Radcliffe Hospital Residents' Forum

HCDA continues to be represented on this forum, which aims to promote debate on issues that affect the local area following major developments on the hospital site.

(e) Headington Library

HCDA continues to play an active part to persuade the County Council to install a disabled access to the current building, and continues to support the proposal for a more suitable building to house the local library.

(f) HCDA website

The website at www.hcda.org.uk continues to provide up-to-date information on the work undertaken by the HCDA and is expertly managed by Stephanie Jenkins, a co-opted member of the committee.

(g) Bury Knowle Park

HCDA continues to be involved in promoting the improvement of facilities in the park and is soon to hold a further consultation with local groups to discuss additional facilities for young people.

6. The way forward

The objective of HCDA is to improve the quality of life for the users and residents of Headington. This is principally to be achieved by encouraging cooperative working to ensure good communication between stakeholders, and by preparing events and services for local people.

Over the past year the membership has increased again and the range of projects continues to show that HCDA is a forward-thinking organisation and is benefiting the people of Headington. In particular the OX3 Guide has met with universal approval for its comprehensive overview of the local area, and is of benefit to established residents as well as to those new to the area, including students and hospital staff. Invitations to local stakeholders have been well received, and it is extremely helpful for local groups to be kept abreast of developments.

Appendix 1**HCDA Members – October 2006**

First Name	Surname	Organisation	Meetings attended Oct 05–Sept 06
Heather	Armitage	Headington & District Allotment Association	1 Joined Sept 2006
Anne	Ashley	Oxford Brookes University	0 Resigned July 2006
Susan	Baker	Headington Schools Partnership	2
David	Bartrip	Wood Farm Community Assoc.	0 Resigned Jan. 2006
James	Bloice-Smith	Headington Churches	
Tim	Chapman	Oxford City Primary Care Trust	0
Bob	Clarke	Headington Business Association	2 Resigned Feb. 2006
Angela	Cristofoli	Oxford City Council – Officer	8
Jill	Cummings	Headington Christmas Events Organiser – co-opted	9
Paul	Cunningham	Barton Community Association	2 Resigned Feb 2006
Marion	Fiddes	Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals NHS Trust	8
Joanna	Foster	Nuffield Orthopaedic Centre	0
Frank	Holliday	Wood Farm Action Group	3 Joined March 2006
Mary	Hope	New Headington Residents' Association	9
Janet	Isaac	University of Third Age (U3A)	8
Stephanie	Jenkins	Website – co-opted	10
Tony	Joyce	Oxford Civic Society	8
Kathrin	Luddecke	The Midcounties Cooperative	Resigned April 2006
Audrey	Mullender	Ruskin College	7
David	Rundle	Oxford City Council – Councillor	2
Liz	Simpson-Wells	Manor Hospital	0
Mike	Stranks	Public Relations/Media Co-opted	3 Resigned March 2006
Diana	Townsend	Churches Together in Marston	5 Joined Jan 2006
Arthur	Treherne	Co-ordinating Committee of Headington Residents' Associations	3 Resigned Jan 2006
Marie	Vickers	Co-ordinator of Friends of Quarry	8
Steve	Walker	Headington Community Assoc.	0
Stella	Welford	Friends of Old Headington	9
Jean	White	Central North Headington Residents' Association	2
Charles	Young	Highfield Residents' Association	6 Joined Jan 2006