

Headington Action (HCDA)

Annual Report 2006-2007



Introduction

The past twelve months have been an interesting and active period for Headington Action: we have had our new constitution approved by the Charity Commission which, amongst other things, means we have a new working name; we have continued some established projects and started a couple of new ones; and we have enabled one another to better understand our local area and community.

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.

Meetings

From October 2006 to September 2007 there were ten meetings of HCDA and there were meetings of sub groups to work on the Headington Festival and the OX3 Guide.

Constitution

During the year the Charity Commission have approved our revised constitution. The background to this application was given in the last annual report. The two top implications are that we have a new official working title, *Headington Action*, and we have new rules which will separate supporters of Headington Action into full members and associate members based on attendance.

Membership

At the time of the AGM we have twenty three organisations in membership.

One of the purposes of rewriting our constitution was to make a distinction between full member organisations, that is voting members, of Headington Action and those who want to be informed and to attend less frequently—associate members organisations, who will not be eligible to vote. Attendance at meetings is the criterion for the membership status, namely, an organisation attending less than half the meetings in a year (less than 5), will automatically become associate members. Those bodies eligible for two representatives must achieve a total attendance of seven in the year. With the revised constitution approved these new rules apply as from the 2007 AGM. Can we, therefore, remind member organisations that their representative must attend for the required number of meetings to keep full member status.

Projects

A. Tree Sculpture in Bury Knowle Park

The Storybook Tree project is nearing completion with the successful appeal for funding to commission two further carved benches to be installed round the tree. A local resident has made a donation for these to be provided in memory of a family member. It is hoped the benches will be installed early in 2008. Following completion a permanent plaque will be commissioned giving details of the whole project including the name of sculptor and all the sponsors.

The tree sculpture and benches have been well received, and the area continues to be a focal meeting point, in addition to being used as the story-telling area for which it was designed.

In 2007 The Storybook Tree was given an environmental award by The Oxford Preservation Trust.

B. Headington Festival 3 June 2007

Headington Festival 2007 followed the now established pattern of a one-day event in Bury Knowle Park on the first Sunday in June. Funding was provided by Oxford City Council; Oxford Brookes University and sponsorship

by Chancellors, estate agent. The Oxford Playhouse, The Creation Theatre Company and Rectory Farm provided active support. Once this was in place it was possible to re-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 Festival Committee, which comprised one member of the HCDA committee and five co-opted volunteers. Again we are indebted to Caroline for her commitment, skills and innovative ideas.

The event was a great success with an estimated attendance of over 3,000 people. There was entertainment for all ages, including The Jubilee Brass Band, a Fancy-dress Parade, Wellie Wanging and Orinoco Recycling Competitions, Magic Show, Puppet and Dancing displays and a tea tent arranged by the League of Friends of the Churchill Hospital. Over 30 charity stalls and displays were present raising funds and interest.

Feedback from members of the public was extremely positive. A questionnaire was sent to stall holders to establish how their funds had been enhanced by their attendance.

It is proposed that a Headington Festival in 2008 should be organised by the sub-group 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.

C. Headington Farmers' Market

During 2006-2007, it was decided to investigate the feasibility of establishing a farmers' market in Headington. A site was identified, and preliminary work was done on seeking a road closure and on identifying potential stallholders. Initially it was hoped to start the market in early summer, but in order to give sufficient time to prepare for the launch of the market, it was later decided to postpone the first market until after the summer holidays.

D. OX3 Guide

During the year we took the decision to reprint the OX3 guide, the first edition of which came out in 2006. Whilst our attempt to gather systematic data on the usage of the previous edition have proved disappointing, we have plenty of anecdotal evidence that the guide is appreciated and we know that whenever the guides are put out on shop counters they are taken very quickly. The sub-committee has met and early preparations are underway.

Ongoing discussions

Through the course of this year there have been significant ongoing discussions

A. Community Led Planning

In view of many changes underway in Headington some members felt we should seek to establish a broad view of how we would want the area to develop. In response to this we invited past Headington Action member Kat Luddecke, Local Area Co-ordinator, Oxfordshire County Council, to address us. Further discussion has clarified for us that this project is too big for us to take on at this point in time, but that we can make a start in a restricted way by researching the issues effecting the development of the Headington Shops.

To carry this forward a sub committee has formed and met several times. We are seeking help from the local higher educational establishments. A joint project with Ruskin College is now a likely outcome.

B. Headington Shops

We have discussed on several occasions the issues effecting the health, or otherwise, of the Headington Local Shopping Centre. Prompted by the retirement of Jill Cummings from Time and Elegance we have noted the demise of the Headington Business Association (HBA). Further, arising out of work by Stephanie Jenkins we have looked at the subject of the classification of local shops by the Oxford City Council. We hope to take this work forward by seeking to encourage the HBA to start again. We will also take the matter on as detailed in the heading above.

C. Car Free Day/Streets for People

We see this as an excellent way to foster community and will seek to promote this venture in the coming year.

Stakeholder Consultations

A. Sue Holden: Projects in Barton

B. Kat Luddecke, Local Area Co-ordinator, Oxfordshire County Council: Community Led Planning

C. PC John Shaw, the Neighbourhood Specialist Officer (NSO) for Marston: Local policing and police concerns.