OIRA Committee Meeting
Sunday 6th September 2026 at 3 pm
18 East Street

Minutes

Present: Alison Burdett, Eleanor Dickey (secretary), Maria Holt (treasurer), Philippa Lanchbery, Sarah Parker (chair), Karen Schoenemann, Kate Stewart, Cllr Susanna Pressel

Not present: Cllr Lois Muddiman

1. Minutes of previous meeting: these had already been approved by e-mail. Regarding the matters mentioned in them, everything has now been successfully done except the anniversary celebration, which is scheduled for next weekend. In the interests of being able to keep islanders informed of our activities we agreed to continue the practice of approving committee minutes by e-mail.

2. Minutes of the AGM: these were accepted and **Eleanor** will now send them to Jane for posting on the web site. The committee apologised to Kate for not acting sooner on these.

3. Environment update: the committee noted concerns about the problems posed by the new business school in the Power Station, as well as gratitude to Veronica Strang for taking the lead in dealing with these. OIRA has been well represented at the Osney Mead consultations.

4. Councillors' slot: Thames Water is not adhering to previously announced timetables for work on the bridge. The letter about the Botley Road resurfacing was unclear and will hopefully be rewritten to convey more real information. A complaint has been raised about the new building at 1 North Street not matching the planning permission. Much frustration has been expressed about the visitors' permit system not working properly, but the council remains obdurate. Frustration was also expressed about the new rules for the tip, and about the long-standing rule that people may not bring things to the tip on foot.

5. Subscriptions: it was agreed to change the collection system from issuing every household with an envelope for cash to soliciting bank transfers with the option of giving cash in one's own envelope. We will now do the 2026 subscription collection: **Maria** will give Eleanor the bank information, **Eleanor** will design a flyer to put in the November newsletter, **Alison** will get it inserted into the newsletter, and cash will be received at 18 East Street, 8 Bridge Street, and 22 West Street. **Eleanor** will also send out an e-mail reminder about a week after the newsletter appears.

6. Events in 2026:

- Anniversary event on 12th September: Sarah is managing this and has it under control. **Eleanor** will e-mail the islanders to tell them about what's happening. Sarah will give tours at 10:00 and 1:00, leaving from Hollybush; exhibition at WODC 11:30-3:00. **Maria** will run this 11:30-12:30, **Eleanor** from 12:30.
- Cruise: Local historian Mark Davies has offered to run a short historical river cruise, but low water levels are making this hard to schedule. Maybe in the spring? **Sarah** will continue to liaise with him on this.

- The anniversary tea towel may be produced for Christmas. We will try to get an advert for this into the November newsletter, due date Oct 22nd. **Sarah** will organise getting a finalised design by that time.
- Christmas: **Jane Buekett** will check with Matt Dyson that he is willing to run the carols again and with Debbie Hall that she is willing to run the advent calendar again.

7. Dates for events in 2027:
- Open Gardens and Tea on the Towpath: **Eleanor** will ask Susan Hutchinson if she is willing to run Open Gardens.
- AGM: the date for this should be set after the date for Open Gardens, so that they don't come too close together, but the usual late-April time is good.

8. Date of next meeting: Nov. 8th at 3 pm was confirmed; Maria cannot make this date, but without her we will still be quorate. **Anyone else who develops a conflict** is requested to notify us immediately, as we may then need to reschedule. Kate kindly agreed to host again.

9. Any other business:
- The Boat club (which stores our gazebos and Tea on the Towpath materials) needs a new home, but after discussion we did not see how we can help. We will have to find a different solution for the items that belong to us.
- The Global Leadership Centre licensing application includes an outdoor space that will cause severe disruption for East Street residents, and unfortunately most of us will be away on the date of the meeting (22nd September). Anyone who can attend is encouraged to come and speak.
- We should do more with the Osney archive. Historian Liz Woolley could do something good with them, but we'd need to pay her. **Alison** will contact her and ask what she'd charge.
- The committee noted the report in the *Clarion* that our councillor Susanna Pressel has been repeatedly threatened with violence as a result of doing her duty regarding the unauthorised flag-raising in Oxford. Although noting that we ourselves do not always agree with Susanna on every point, we greatly appreciate what she does for us, and above all we find it shocking that anyone would threaten her. So we unanimously voted to minute our strong condemnation of any attempts to intimidate our hard-working elected officials.