

Minutes of meeting of New Marston (South) Residents' Association committee held at 5.30 pm on Wednesday 27th November 2025 on Teams

Present: Adam Wright (Chair), Tessa Hennessy (Secretary), Liz Adams, Nigel Berry, Mike Charles, Helen Burlingham, Isobel McConnan, Jill O'Reilly

AW welcomed everyone to the meeting and said that Charles Parrack had sent his apologies.

AW announced the sad news of the recent death of Roy Darke, which he said would be a huge loss to the committee and the local community. TH said that Jane Darke is planning a memorial service in early January, details of which will be shared with the committee.

Minutes of last meeting: these were agreed.

Matters arising: AW reported on the ongoing night-time lighting issues with the new student blocks on the Clive Booth site. Oxford Brookes University is looking into cheaper options for dealing with this issue. NB said he would look into this.

Report from chair/finances: There is still £115 in the bank account and finances aren't a critical issue. Moving forward AW said that it would be good to get some more people to join the committee and asked the members of the committee to encourage others to do so.

Planning/other issues:

- **Plans for Exeter/Hertford college playing fields:** the planning application was rejected at the November planning meeting with 2 votes in favour and 4 against. IM, a resident of Purcell Road, spoke against the application and reported that the main reason for rejection was flooding with the Environment Agency not being satisfied that this had been properly addressed by the colleges. Noise and light were also cited as reasons for rejection, along with traffic and parking. IM expressed concern at the poor quality of understanding and decision-making by councillors. She was surprised that CP attended on behalf of NMSRA and spoke in the "in favour" part of the meeting. AW said he was not aware of this and will raise the issue with CP. He said that NMSRA had submitted detailed comments expressing concerns about the proposals. He will make it clear at the AGM that the Association did not express a view either way, but raised local concerns about the proposals.

IM said that the college bursar's view was that reducing the scale would mean the scheme wasn't viable financially. AW said he would be surprised if they abandoned their plans. HB said she had been against the plans from the beginning, not least due to traffic/parking issues. She is happy with the college playing fields being used for young people's football at weekend but padel courts on top would worsen parking issues. It was noted that the parking issue was dealt with as an aside and on the basis that the NM parking zone would be extended to weekends as well. IM said that if the colleges re-applied, it would be prudent to commission an independent acoustic survey: the college view was that there would be less not more noise, which she found bizarre.

AW said he was grateful to IM and JOR for attending the planning meeting and reporting back.

- **Ferry Lane planters:** TH explained that she recently attended a meeting with local councillors, a city council representative and Nigel Fisher from OU estates to discuss the siting of the planters (these are to deter parking by contractors working in the centre of Oxford). The main issues are maintaining the planters and accepting liability for them, There's also an issue about whose land they are installed on - Ferry Lane is unadopted and ownership is unclear. LA said she had recently met with the city countryside officer to discuss rights of way. The officer's view is that the planters would be a traffic hazard. TH said that there was a possibility of OU accepting responsibility for the planters and for these to be installed on their land, off the highway. Enquiries/discussions are ongoing.
- **AGM:** AW explained that our AGM was postponed from 1st October due to the unavailability of St Michael and All Angels Church (which is currently closed due to subsidence). HB's suggestion to use New Marston Pastoral Centre which is behind the church has been taken up and the centre has now been booked for the evening of 22nd January 2026. No speaker had come to mind and there were no suggestions at the meeting. TH will confirm the date of the meeting with the pastoral centre and organise comms to local residents.
- AW said that our next committee meeting would probably be in April 2026 or sooner if a planning matter crops up.

AOB: MC asked about the opening of the foot bridge across the river into Mesop from the footpath which leads off the cycle track. LA said that this was being chased up with the university by the rights of way officer at the city council.

The meeting closed at 6.13 pm.