

Minutes of AGM of New Marston (South) Residents' Association at 7.30 pm on Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> January 2026 at New Marston Pastoral Centre, Jack Straw's Lane

Present: 32 local residents plus Cllrs Kate Robinson and Mary Clarkson

Adam Wright (Chair) welcomed everyone to the meeting.

The minutes of the last AGM were approved.

Report by the chair (including finance report):

AW explained the reasons for the delay in holding the 2024 AGM. He then updated members on the affairs of NMSRA over the past 15 months:

- Planning application by Exeter and Hertford colleges for new sports hub: the committee spent many hours going through the documents and prepared a measured response, recognising the benefits (renovation of dilapidated buildings, improved sports facilities, a café and new lit pedestrian path running alongside the existing cycle path), while also identifying several concerns about the application (intense usage of the site, nuisance caused by increased road traffic, light and noise pollution, damage to green nature of site/adjoining SSSI). Sport England and the Environment Agency objected to the application, which was rejected in November. It remains to be seen whether the colleges, which feel aggrieved by the rejection given the perceived net benefit to local residents, will re-apply. If they do, NMSRA will spread the word.
- Parking on Ferry Lane: Oxford University (which now directly manages Park Farm) has installed a lockable bollard to prevent unlawful access down the lane to the farm; initial attempts to stop parking, through placing large logs on the "parking area" led to people working on construction sites in town parking on Ferry Lane, causing a nuisance to cyclists and pedestrians. Our local councillors (Mary Clarkson and Kate Robinson) supported a plan to place planters alongside the lane to deter parking. This plan has stalled due to bureaucratic concerns about maintenance and liability and we await the outcome.
- State of field behind Ferry Road: NMSRA enlisted the help of OU estates to liaise between the college landlord and residents to allay concerns about the field.
- Light pollution from new student accommodation on Clive Booth village site: this was raised by NMSRA at a liaison meeting with Oxford Brookes University (OBU). OBU have said they don't presently have the funds to resolve this.
- NMSRA has heard a rumour that OBU might be selling the Millham Ford site (this does not include the land in front) and will continue to monitor the situation.
- Use of illegal e-bikes on cycle track: this has been raised by NMSRA, though no action appears to have been taken.

- Roy Darke: AW reported the sad news that Roy Darke died in November 2025. He was instrumental in getting New Marston Meadows and Millham Ford School on to the Oxford Heritage Asset Register. Roy was a good man, committed to furthering local issues as former chair of NMSRA, a county and city councillor. He will be greatly missed.
- Finances: funds currently amount to £85.42. With running costs around £100 per year (costs of AGM and website included), AW said the Association would be grateful for cash donations. He also appealed for a treasurer.
- Finally, AW thanked his fellow committee members for their hard work over the year, especially the secretary, Tessa Hennessy.

Comments from the floor on chair's report:

Does the designation of Millham Ford School on the Oxford Heritage Asset Register protect it from development? This will be a factor considered in relation to any planning application but does not give legal protection. The land in front is owned by the city council, not OBU.

Flooding at bottom of Ferry Road: with recent heavy rain, this is a recurring issue for those living close by and people passing through. The question asked was whether we need to escalate this issue beyond Thames Water e.g. to Ofwat. Cllr Robinson asked whether anyone affected had been offered/received compensation from TW. It was suggested that organising letters of complaint from local residents would be a good idea, with support from local councillors. Bill Holman, a past chair of NMSRA and long term local resident, said that flooding on Ferry Road had been a problem since he moved to the area in 1975. He said that many phone calls to TW have been made over the years, yet none appear to have been logged, so they don't consider the issue to be a problem. Bill said that a water test had revealed some radioactive material (wastewater comes from the JR hospital). A school governor reported that there had been increased flooding at St Michael's Primary School since the new accommodation blocks at Clive Booth was built; OBU say it's not their fault.

Cycle track maintenance: the ditch which runs alongside the cycle track needs clearing out. Cllr Clarkson said she would speak to the council about this.

It was noted that work undertaken by OU on the Park Farm estate to extend and clear out ditches has improved the flooding situation. OU is planning another engagement event with local residents in the early summer; more information to follow.

Elections of committee: The following were elected - Adam Wright (Chair), Tessa Hennessy (Secretary); Liz Adams, Mike Charles, Nigel Berry, Helen Burlingham and Chris Lewis. There were no nominations for treasurer.

AOB: there was none.

The meeting closed at 8.10 pm