



Risinghurst and Sandhills Parish Council Newsletter April 2022

Chairman's Annual Report to the Community for 2021/22:

It has been another difficult 12 months, punctuated by Covid-19 lock downs and restrictions, and now made worse by the terrible events occurring in Ukraine. For those of us who have been fortunate enough not to have suffered from Covid-19 we must be thankful, but I fear the “old normal” of pre-March 2020 is no longer attainable and the coming year will be a struggle for everyone. So, it is important as a community we stick together and help each other whenever and however we can.

The Parish Council has endeavoured to make progress with the development of the Risinghurst playing field and surrounds which is a major challenge. Considerable work has been completed to improve the drainage of the main sports field with additional ditching. Within the woodland area, the old drain and pond have been reinstated. Overall it is too early to determine how successful this has been but there has been significant improvement to the Olive Jack's field footpath.



This work has resulted in a considerable amount of disruption with the removal of some trees and hedging along the boundaries, particularly at the south end below Shotover. Once the brash has been cleared and removed we intend to plant trees and new hedging, however we are very aware that this will take time to establish. We are also very conscious of the short-term damage to the surrounds this has caused and its effect on local environment, however our overwhelming intention is to improve the biodiversity of the area.

If you would like to help with this improvement, please get in touch with us.

In March 2021 we completed the refurbishment of the Downside Dip Play Area equipment., this is a great improvement and has gone down well with the children using it.



In August, together with Headington Youth Football Club and Oxfordshire FA we obtained a football pitches improvement grant. We have renewed smoke alarms and fire extinguishers in the pavilion and funded food and hygiene training for HYFC.

On an administration front, we have merged the Charities that oversee the Risinghurst Playing Field and Olive Jack's Field to protect them from any future development.

✔ We received a good audit report for 20/21 from the external auditor following changes to the governance and we instigated a Parish Council Facebook page to try and improve our communications to residents in addition to our website.

We welcomed two new councillors, Alex Jenkinson and Jayne Wright, but received resignations from Roz Smith, Liz Taylor, Graham Drummond and Jayne Wright. We **thank them** for their contributions and support to the Parish Council over their varying years of service.

We do have vacancies on the Council, so if you are interested in helping and being involved with what we do, please contact the Parish Clerk at clerk@risinghurstandsandhills-pc.gov.uk.



Last summer we experimented with allowing some of the grass verges to grow to encourage wildflowers and help the insect life. In most areas this proved not very successful; due to the growing conditions the grass grew very long and looked very untidy and few if any wildflowers were present. This year most of the grass verges will be cut as before; we have identified 2-3 areas at the entrance of Sandhills and elsewhere on Risinghurst which will be allowed to grow long with the perimeter being cut. Some wild flowers seeds have been sown – we await to see the results.

In November we managed to run a very successful **Fireworks Night** with silent fireworks (well, most of them were!) which were well appreciated, the event was well supported by residents and a welcome relief from covid lockdowns.



We have recently received notification that the planning application for the Nielsen's site/Thornhill Park will be submitted shortly. There has been no further information of the new development on Bayswater Farm Field just north of Sandhills. We will be watching closely for any plans that are forthcoming to ensure that we try and mitigate, as much as we can, their impact on our community.

Looking ahead, we have much work to be done on the development of the playing field and woodland, the refurbishment of the Olive Jack's children's play area, in the longer term the replacement of the pavilion. We have a small group of volunteers who **help** the Groundsman, but we are always looking for extra helpers. Please complete the enclosed **Questionnaire**, and if you wish to help in any way, or you feel the Parish Council could help you, please contact us.

Cllr David Adams—Chairman of Risinghurst and Sandhills Parish Council

www.risinghurstandsandhills-pc.gov.uk



COMMUNITY EVENTS 2022 — DATES for YOUR DIARY:

- **2.00pm Sunday 5th June Platinum Jubilee School Fete**

For all the family at Sandhills Community School on the field, in partnership with the Parish Council.

- **1.30pm Sunday 12th June Community Platinum Jubilee Fete and Picnic**

Held on the Risinghurst playing field. Helpers are urgently needed, can you help? If so, please contact :

Barbara Naylor 01865 453 910 or email barbara.naylor@ntlworld.com

Opportunities for Volunteering:

There are opportunities to volunteer helping to keep the natural environment beautiful and improve biodiversity:

- **Parish Council:** there is a regular work group most Thursday mornings at the Risinghurst playing fields. Contact the Parish Clerk for details at clerk@risinghurstandsandhills-pc.gov.uk
- **Sandhills Naturehood:** is an active group of local residents working together in our private and public spaces to address wildlife and biodiversity decline and climate change. It is a fun and informative group open to everybody - sharing wildlife sightings ideas , discovering and learning together what we have and how we can help for the benefit of everyone and everything.



For more information follow us via Sandhills Community Hub facebook page, contact us at sandhills.naturehood@outlook.com , or join our WhatsApp group. ***Every little action helps and together we can make the biggest difference!***

- **Wild About Risinghurst (Naturehood) and work parties at the CS Lewis Reserve:** details of activities are shared on the Wild About Risinghurst Facebook page.

Sports:

Headington Youth Football Team (HYFC): if you are interested in a youth football team (ages 7-18 boys and girls teams), find out more by contacting headingtonfc2015@gmail.com

Risinghurst Cricket Club: The club has been using the cricket field for many years and last year had one of their most successful seasons: the 1st XI gaining promotion to division 5b in the Cherwell Cricket league.

Practice evening is every Thursday during the season on Risinghurst Playing Field from 6:30pm, all are Welcome! If you are interested in playing cricket, contact the club secretary at risicc.sec@gmail.com