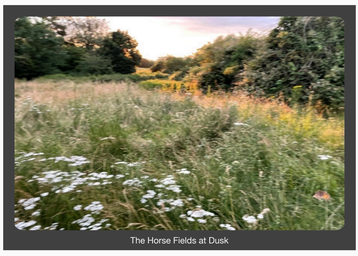
FOFI August Newsletter



The Horse Fields at Dusk

View this email in your browser

The Meadows in midsummer are tall and golden and a great place for wildlife! Our campaign is set for this to continue, and to become even more biodiverse with regular mowing, which encourages wildflowers to set seed. But OCHL undertook unnecessarily invasive soil sampling in the meadows in July. We are still waiting for OCHL to allow hay making, as is best practice at this time of year. Although they are allocated, the fields **do not** have planning permission, and Oxford City Council have a duty of care to look after the environment in our City.

Please would you help by writing to OCHL (wmckay@oxford.gov.uk) and our Councillor Ed Turner (cllreturner@oxford.gov.uk) asking that Oxford City Council to mow and manage these meadows according to best practice?

Planning how to best protect the Fields

FOFI is working with Friends of Iffley Village in preparation for the consultation phase by OCHL (due in the autumn) and a planning application (towards the end of the year). Our common aim, to keep the fields green and the preserve the quiet lanes, will require expert input in the key areas of Conservation, Landscape, Ecology, Highways, Hydrology and Planning. If you feel able to help with our fundraising efforts or to contribute towards the costs of engaging these experts, please contact treasurer@friendsofiffley.org.
We will report on further details of OCHL's plans, as they become available, in our September newsletter.

A Vision for the Fields

We are proposing a vision for the Horse Fields and Memorial Field, working in collaboration with local artists and ecologists. Iffley Community Fields is a proposal to benefit both people and nature.



Iffley Community Fields aims to:

– Promote links in the wider community
– Provide educational opportunities
– Improve mental health and wellbeing
– Care for our natural environment for future generations
– Help maintain the rural character of the Iffley Conservation Area

Please share your views by completing the survey here

Promoting the Campaign

The summer months have been busy promoting the value of Iffley's Meadows.
Leafleting on Broad Street: We have been leafleting on the Council's own fake meadow in Broad Street where shoppers have enjoyed a little bit of wilderness. But the contrast with the real meadows here in Iffley is striking!



The importance of the wild meadows in Oxford, both for our wellbeing and for resilience to climate change and ecological collapse is increasing as the IPCC report makes clear. We have but little time to act on **Code Red for Humanity**.

Speaking at the Oxford City Full Council Meeting: On 26th July, FOFI came together with representatives of other green field campaigns from Blackbird Leys and Marston, to ask all the Councillors in Oxford to think again about concreting over Oxford's key green spaces when there are so many other better places to build new, genuinely affordable housing. You can listen to the presentations here.

The petition to Oxford City Council has now reached over 57,000 signatures! This has prompted a response from Oxford City Council's housing arm, OCHL. You can see their response and our reply on the petition website.

Please sign the petition here if you have not already done so, and share widely! Our goal is to reach 100,000 signatures!

The press has picked up this story and Iffley's fields featured on the front page of the Oxford Times last week. This article and the ongoing coverage in the press shows that the agenda is a much wider one of growth at the expense of nature.

What's in the pipeline for the Growth Agenda...

Massive economic growth is the goal for Oxfordshire, at 5x the national average. It is being driven locally by the Oxfordshire Growth Board, but ultimately coming from central government. It is the greatest threat to green spaces, not only in Oxford and Oxfordshire but extending to the destruction of large swathes of countryside on the Oxford Cambridge Arc, for which over 1 million new homes are planned. Given the emergencies of climate and nature, the huge contribution construction and transport make to carbon emissions and the importance of our natural world for climate resilience, it is time to think again!

Have your say in the 3 consultations about development in Oxfordshire
Oxford 2040 Local Plan (closes 24th August so PLEASE DO THIS FIRST)
Oxfordshire 2050 Plan (closes 8 October)
Oxford Cambridge Arc (closes 12 October)
Please click here for links and information

BUT what about the current Local Plan?

The current 2036 Local Plan remains in place for the next 2 years. Despite the global urgency of acting on climate change and responding to COVID, development plans in Oxford continue unabated. Around 330 acres of allocated green spaces in Oxford are under threat, unaffected by any of the green ambitions of the future 2040 plan. We cannot afford to lose these vital green areas in the City. The Only One Oxford campaign, set up by a coalition of local groups fighting against development of their green spaces, is calling for URGENT review of the 2036 Local Plan to prevent further destruction.

Please sign the Only One Oxford petition here and share with others in the City!

Finally, just to let you know of a future event to protect Oxford's green spaces:

Saturday 28th August, 12 noon,
Broad Meadow
Oxford 4 Nature March
please register here



Evelyn, on behalf of the FOFI action group
friendsofthefieldsiffley@gmail.com

Copyright © 2021 Friends of the Fields Iffley, All rights reserved.

Want to change how you receive these emails?
You can update your preferences or unsubscribe from this list.

Grow your business with mailchimp