



JULY 2010

IRVINE ROAD AREA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

newsletter

Your voice in the local community

<http://www.irara.org.uk>

NEWS IN BRIEF

Successful IRARA AGM

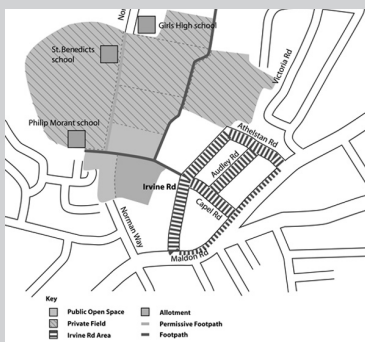
The recent IRARA Annual General Meeting held at the Drury Arms attracted the best attendance yet and produced a full complement of committee members for the first time in quite a few years. It was also very encouraging to see how many members were prepared to get more involved following our pleas for support in the May newsletter. A big thank you to everyone who turned out and made it such a success.

The new committee consists of:

- Dave Kennedy** *Chairman*
- Will Emrich** *Vice Chairman*
- Barbara Addison** *Events organisation*
- Gavin Sandercock** *Minutes*
- Frances Kent**
- Karen Farrar** *Publications & promotions*
- Ron Cooper** *Meetings*
- Daniel Fox** *Treasurer*
- Roque Vieito** *Membership*
- Stuart Fenton** *Membership*
- Adam Bowers**

It was generally agreed at the AGM that the association needed to work harder to recruit members from the whole area, particularly from Roads other than Irvine Road, and to make people aware that anyone living in Capel Road, Audley Road, Athelstan Road and the adjacent parts of Maldon Road is eligible to join IRARA.

It was also suggested that members encourage residents from the lower Maldon Road area to form their own association as many of them share our open space concerns.



The IRARA accounts have now been officially audited and approved and are available to any members wishing to view them. Just contact treasurer Daniel Fox.

GOVERNMENT ANNOUNCES SCRAPPING OF ALL SCHOOL BUILDING PROGRAMMES NOT ALREADY FUNDED

END OF THE ROAD FOR PMS?

"...all local authority schemes that have not reached financial close will not go ahead..."

The recent announcement by the Education Secretary, Michael Gove that all school spending projects not already funded are to be scrapped should mean the end of the deeply unpopular Philip Morant School access road, as most of the spurious justification for this colossal waste of money has evaporated. The promised £130m has proved to be exactly the mirage we always said it would be, but it now remains to be seen whether a new justification will be offered by the school and Essex County Council. PMS have made it plain that they intend to keep pushing for a road, claiming that 'nothing has changed' in the 11 years since

East Basildon Lower Academy	Unaffected
East Basildon Upper Academy	Unaffected
Greenwood College	Academy - for discussion
Rickstones Academy	Unaffected
Sir Charles Lucas	Academy - for discussion
St Peter's High School	Academy - for discussion
The Maltings Academy	Unaffected
Alderman Blaxill	Stopped
Beachumps High School	Stopped
Colchester PRU	Stopped
Edith Borthwick Community Special School	Stopped
Glenwood, Benfleet Community Special School	Stopped
Homestead	Stopped
Mayflower High School	Stopped
Philip Morant	Stopped
Stanway	Stopped
The Appleton School	Stopped
The Billericay School	Stopped
The Bromfords School	Stopped
The Deanes School - Essex	Stopped
The Gilbert	Stopped
The King John School	Stopped
Thomas Lord Audley	Stopped
Thurstable	Stopped
Castle View School	Unaffected
Chelmsford New Model Special School	Unaffected
Cornelius Vermuyden School	Unaffected
De La Salle	Unaffected

planning permission was first granted, but ECC, who had previously hinted that they would be prepared to fund the road separately, without the anticipated grant, have put the schools re-organisation as a whole on hold for at least a year. In any case, Colchester Borough Council have rescinded their decision to release the land for the road as their conditions can no longer be met.

Sanity Returns?

The document issued by the DFES shows quite clearly that the Philip Morant and Thomas Lord Audley rebuilds are stopped for the foreseeable future. Sir Charles Lucas is up for discussion, but it's hard to see this happening without the rest of the Colchester schools re-organisation. We'll have to wait and see.

Philip Morant School continues to ignore local community in refusal to give up agreed land

In their latest snub to the local community, the Board of Governors of Philip Morant School have flatly refused to agree to the enlargement of the Irvine Road Field as compensation for the massive damage their proposed new access road would have caused.

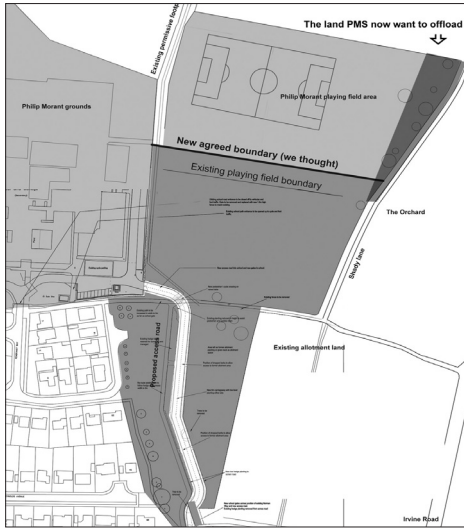
The terms of the Colchester Borough Council Cabinet's provisional approval to release the land necessary for the road included a requirement to replace the land taken up by the road, and to work with local residents to ensure that damage and loss of amenity was kept to a minimum.

After six months of cynical procrastination and

much empty talk about 'working with the community to 'increase open space' the school finally admitted that they had no intention of increasing the public open space in the area and reluctantly agreed to release the bare minimum required.

IRARA had been under the impression that they had agreed to enlarge the Irvine Road Field by just over 8m on the Northern Boundary, but, true to form, they reneged on even that puny commitment and ended up trying to offload the inaccessible, overgrown triangle in the Eastern corner of their field. The reason given was that the





⇒ **Dumping ground:** The school want to offload their unusable triangle of land at the Eastern edge of their playing field, and are even claiming the hedge as part of their property for negotiation.

governors felt that their playing field would be 'even more separated' from the school grounds, a transparently ridiculous excuse and the latest in a long line of attempts to conceal the school's true long-term ambitions, to develop their playing field.

Shady Lane a cycle path?

Supporting our suspicions are the school's increasingly obvious attempts to force local residents to agree to turn Shady Lane into a tarmac cycle path, which would require the removal of all the hedging along the narrowest part and the cutting back of much of the hedgerow along the lane next to the field.

This is obviously part of a long term plan to close off the permissive footpath between the schools and join the PMS playing field to the rest of the school, despite the fact that a very large number of local schoolchildren depend on that path for safe access to school.

Fortunately, much of this has been rendered academic by the recent budget cuts,



but we can expect this pressure to increase in the future, with or without the road.

The good news is that ECC promised to hand over the Irvine Road Field to be kept in trust as permanent public open space, regardless of the outcome of these talks. We shall be pushing to ensure they keep that promise.

It's good to talk

Another issue raised at the IRARA AGM was the possibility of increasing communication and distribution of notices and newsletters via email.

We have polled members in the past in an attempt to find out how many of you are in the habit of communicating electronically, and were amazed when only 9 of those who responded said they were interested in using the internet. That was a few years ago, however, and perhaps it's time to look again at what the web can do for the association.

Newsletters

Newsletters have always been available on the IRARA website to read or download and it has been suggested that we circulate electronic versions to members as well as posting them through letterboxes.

If you want to receive the newsletter via email in future, just use the contact form on the website and let us have your email address. Obviously your details will not be passed on to anyone else.

Email is also an excellent way of disseminating the IRARA point of view and members are very welcome to forward newsletters to friends and colleagues. Current newsletters will also be posted on the new noticeboard by the path to the allotments.

IRARA website

OK, it's a fair cop, we admit that the website hasn't always been as up to date as it could have been, and over the last year in particular it's been hard to keep up with all the twists and turns in the struggle to preserve our public open spaces. We will endeavour to persevere, however, and keep it up to date in future so that news of any developments which occur between newsletters will be available on the site. www.irara.org.uk

The Picnic – a final reminder

Don't forget the IRARA picnic on the Field on Sunday 22nd of August, from 12 o'clock onwards.

As always, it will be a very informal gathering and everyone is welcome, so come along, enjoy yourself and meet the neighbours. You will need to bring something to sit on (or kick/run around, depending on how energetic you feel) and refreshments.

There will be some refreshments available and if you feel like making a contribution, please contact Barbara Addison at No. 56 Irvine Road. **See you there!**



Irvine Road Area Residents' Association

Membership application/renewal form 2010/11

Annual membership of IRARA is £3.00 per household and is open to anyone living in Athelstan Road, Audley Road, Capel Road, Irvine Road and adjacent parts of Maldon Road and Shrub End Road.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone No: _____

I/We wish to apply for membership

I/We wish to renew our membership

Do you think the association should continue to fight for the preservation of our public open space for the benefit of local children? Yes No

Would you be interested in helping with some of the association's activities (for example, leaflet drops, litter clearing etc.) Yes No

Please fill in this form and hand it to your representative or send it to: Daniel Fox, IRARA Treasurer, 33 Irvine Road, Colchester CO3 3TR.

Member of Federation of Colchester Residents' Associations

Member of Open Spaces Society