



IRVINE ROAD AREA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

newsletter

Your voice in the local community

JUNE 2016

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

IF YOU ARE NOT
ALREADY A MEMBER,
JOIN IRARA NOW!

THE IRARA CAMPAIGN TO PRESERVE THE ANCIENT IRVINE ROAD ORCHARD AS A COMMUNITY RESOURCE AND LOCAL WILDLIFE RESERVE

Orchard fight continues



The Irvine Road Orchard: A significant wildlife habitat and part of the local green space.

As reported in a previous newsletter, the ancient orchard at the rear of Irvine Road has been purchased by a local property developer with the intention of building an (as yet) unknown number of houses on an area that is protected as open space and designated as a wildlife site. IRARA sees the future of the Orchard not for development but as a valuable resource – for the community and local schools - and continues to work towards that aim.

As part of the review of Colchester's Local Plan the Orchard's protective designations are vulnerable and IRARA's campaign to maintain the site's status received fantastic local support. The number of responses to Colchester Council's consultation was overwhelming as can be seen on the webpage dedicated to those responses

-<http://www.colchester.gov.uk/article/16038/Consultation-Responses-Irvine-Road>

During June/July, we expect Colchester Borough Council to publish its draft Local Plan. IRARA will want to see the views of local people being respected and for the Orchard to be retained as open space, and not allocated for development. If the status is changed we will want your help and support in campaigning for the Council to change its mind – do keep an eye on the website / facebook page for the latest developments.



www.facebook.com/IrvineRoadAreaResidentsAssociation



IRARA and local councillors apply to have schools access route adopted as permanent public footpath



The path between the schools: a vital daily access route for pupils from 3 schools, as well as the logical choice for the principal pedestrian route from Shrub End to Lexden and the town centre. This photo was taken in 2003, before the gates were installed and proves that until then members of the public had unfettered access to this route.

The main pedestrian access route between Philip Morant School, St Benedict's School and the Colchester High School for Girls is in the news again.

Philip Morant School, who own the Southern section of the land between their campus and playing field, have taken to closing the gates at regular intervals to prevent use of the path that connects the two ends of Norman way to 'express their ownership' of it.

This is effectively an attempt to annex a permissive footpath which has been in regular use since before the schools were built in the 1970s, and, IRARA believes, an essential first step to developing the playing field (on the right of the photo above). Local residents who have used this footpath 'as of right' for over 20 years were invited to submit declarations to that effect, as this would normally be the qualifying requirement for adoption as a permanent public footpath.

Following the submissions we are happy to report that an application has been made to Essex County Council for re-designation as a public footpath. Our thanks go to committee member Michael Coster and Prettygate Cllr. Sue Lissimore for championing the cause.

It's not as simple as that, of course, as PMS have predictably objected on 'pupil safety' grounds. This, apparently, is an allowed objection by Schools and it seems unclear if they are required to substantiate this claim, so we will have to wait and see. It is a fact, however, that in the 50 years since the school was founded in 1965, no incidents involving pupils' safety have been recorded in the area.



Parking problems – again!

A number of residents have contacted IRARA about parking issues and you may have received a note through your door from residents discussing the pros and cons of residents parking permits.

When we balloted residents regarding parking permits about 5 years ago, opinion was divided, but firmly against parking permits and this appears to remain the predominant view. The advice we received from CBC then was that 'polite notices' don't work and nothing less than a fully managed residents' only parking scheme would do the job.

IRARA has regularly surveyed the surrounding streets during working hours, at evenings and weekends, as well as asking residents for their views and the principal points seem to be:

- The main problem is not commuters during the day, but two and three car households at evenings and weekends, & visitors.
- Almost no one wants permits. Some are in favour of 'polite notices' or other measures to discourage parking in front of their houses.
- On average, permits would cost the average household £200 per year for 2 permits plus 1 visitor's permit per week.
- Most permit parking schemes do not apply between 6.00pm and 8.00am, so would not solve the main problems.
- Having off-road parking is of limited use only if access is constantly blocked.
- Existing residents-only schemes do not usually make distinctions for individual streets, so might not benefit us.

There is nothing to prevent householders from erecting signs, but they have no legal standing, so are likely to be ignored by inconsiderate parkers. IRARA has successfully spoken to the Grammar School in the past about parking, but the main problem continues to be householders and their visitors at evenings and weekends (us!). All we can do is urge everyone to be as considerate as possible when parking.



Member of Federation
of Colchester Residents'
Associations

Member of Open
Spaces Society

Irvine Road Area Residents' Association Membership application/renewal form 2016/17

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:

Email address:

Address:

Telephone No:

I wish to receive newsletters via: email hard copy

I/We wish to apply for membership

I/We wish to renew our membership

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: Simon Grinham, IRARA Treasurer, The Old Sweet Shop, Athelstan Road, Colchester CO3 3TR.