IRVINE ROAD AREA RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

newsletter

Your voice in the local community

November 2026

http://www.irara.org.uk

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

Welcome to the 2026 edition of the IRARA newsletter. We hope you find it interesting and useful, alerting you to initiatives and events in the Area.

Keeping in touch

Please do keep an eye on the IRARA and Orchard Facebook pages, the noticeboard near the allotments or the local WhatsApp group for up to date information. If you want to join the Whatsapp group or to be added to our email circulation list, please contact us on **info@irara.org.uk**.

Advent Windows – lighting up our Christmas

This was a real highlight from the past year with a full set of festive Windows revealed over successive days. A comment by a resident sums it up "Great to see Advent windows lighting up our streets. I must just say that this has been such a lovely thing to see our streets looking so beautiful and the decoration of the advent windows that are so wonderful has quite overwhelmed me. It has brought happiness and comfort to me to see such sparkle and care. So a huge thank you to everyone who has joined in and made our little corner of the world so bright and full of light, you never know how such a thing can make a huge difference to someone's life, which might sound a bit silly but it's true".

We will ask you to decorate your windows this year, too. More details will follow via the normal routes listed in the Keeping in Touch section. We will also be organising an Advent Windows Night on Sunday 20th Dec where you are invited to gather outside 30 Irvine Road at 6pm for a glass of something festive followed by a stroll around the streets to celebrate people's artistic efforts.



Street Meet popular again

Our third of these events benefited from another fine day which helped ensure a great turnout to enjoy the games, face painting, plant and book sales, refreshments, Punch and Judy, ice-cream and the lovely new bunting created by a group of residents earlier in the year. Looking ahead to next year, we would like to run the Street Meet again with the addition of a Street Sale to the event.

You would be invited to bring a table with any surplus items that others may want to purchase. We are also keen to rotate the Meet (and Sale) around our local streets. A different organising team each year with new ideas and emphasis could add variety to the event.

If this is something that you would like to consider for 2027, why not get together with your friends and neighbours and drop us a line on **info@irara.org.uk**.



Right: The 2026 Street Meet was once again very popular, and the fine weather made it a great afternoon for everyone who turned out.

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This newsletter is delivered to all residents within the Irvine Road Area. If you do not wish to receive it, please contact IRARA at info@irara.org.uk.

Irvine Road Area Residents' Association is a non-political organisation. It acts independently of any political party and is not affiliated to any other body which has as its objectives the advancement of any political interest

In brief

We will keep you abreast of developments regarding a few issues we are in touch with the City Council over, in particular, the overflowing bins on Irvine Road Field and the restoration of the area between the noticeboard and the allotment.

The possible re-organisation of local Government has put a hold on speed checks but we will continue to pursue this as the plans for change become clearer.

One of our residents suggested that home workers (and others) might enjoy coffee breaks in the street, meeting up for a quick chat. If anyone is interested in kicking this off, please drop us a line.

Good to see that residents are taking care to cut back garden growth that overhangs and may obstruct the pavements – great if we can do this to make it easier for all, especially those less mobile, to get around our streets.

2027 events

In addition to those mentioned elsewhere, we plan to run our regular series of events in 2027 including the Wassail on 10th Jan, the quiz, litter picks, Orchard Open Days, Fruit Pressing, and Fungi Forage. Our first Halloween Trail was also a big success with youngsters enjoying the frightening darkness of the Orchard so we will run that again.

Thanks to all of you who participated or helped organise in 2026 and a big thanks to Jack Kennedy for all his help in at the Arclight Bowls club for our indoor events.



The Winter Wassail in the orchard is always popular. In 2027 the event will be be held on January the 10th.

Are you interested in local history?

There seems to be some considerable enthusiasm for sharing and growing our collective knowledge of the Area's history, not least the history of the houses themselves. We know that some of you have found old photographs or interesting information in lease documents that came with your house or have undertaken research on the past owners of their property or are aware of long-term residents with a rich seam of memories of the Area's history.

We think many will be interested to learn more. In the first instance, if you might be interested in participating, please email info@irara.org.uk so that we can gather some initial suggestions and, probably, arrange an initial get-together.

Orchard update

Our work parties continue on the first Sunday of every month (10am to 12pm). Highlights this year include the creation of two "dead hedges" as wildlife habitat, the move to cutting the hedge once a year which has seen good growth despite the lack of water and moving to an annual cut of most of the grassland with the aim of reducing bramble growth.

Despite the fantastic and enthusiastic Wassail in January, the apple crop was so poor we had to cancel the fruit pressing. We are confident that this was not down to the singing but down to the drought and the Orchard ermine moths which covered many trees with their webs.

We hope the trees will bounce back but have made provision in the new Management Plan for replacement trees. Surely, the Wassail on 10th Jan 2027 will produce a better outcome.

IRARA membership – please do sign up

An increasing number of residents are paying their (very cheap) £3 annual subscription by standing order). We would really appreciate it if more people followed suit: we'd really like as many residents to join as possible and electronic payment makes it very much easier for both parties. It should be said that the more members, the stronger our voice when representing the area.

Please note that we changed the membership year to correspond to the calendar year. You can pay anytime so feel free to pay that 2026 membership asap. The familiar membership form is included below. If you would like to setup a standing order to the account below for £3 per annum then please include your address as a reference. Many thanks.

The Royal Bank of Scotland, Irvine Road Area Residents Association,
Account no 10052878, Sort Code 16-16-31

IRARA

Member of Federation of Colchester Residents' Associations

Irvine Road Area Residents' Association Membership application/renewal form 2026/27

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. Associate membership is available to individuals resident outside the area who wish to join us.

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 post it with your subscription through the door at: 17 Irvine Road c/o IRARA Treasurer