

Signed (Berrick Salome Parish Council
Chairman)

THE PARISH OF BERRICK SALOME

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 22nd May 2006 at the Berrick Salome Village Hall at 8.00 p.m.

1. Apologies for absence

None were received.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 6th June 2005 were read by John Radice, and approved and signed by Sarah Hicks.

3. Matters arising

Item 11: Chris Cussens informed the Meeting that the Millstream Day Centre was in need of a new cooker, costing around £2,000.

4. The Annual Report of Parish Council

This was presented by the chairman, Sarah Hicks.

The main focus of Parish Council activities this year has again been on planning issues. 13 planning applications have been presented this year and of these 6 were granted, 4 refused and 3 withdrawn. One of those granted was for the Home Sweet Home to build a first floor extension, which will allow them to offer Bed & Breakfast accommodation.

The most controversial planning application we saw was for Roke Farm. The Parish Council called an extra meeting to discuss one version of the plans, and that was attended by many local residents as well as the architect and applicants. On that occasion we recommended that the plan be refused, they were then withdrawn and replaced with a slightly reduced version. This time, the plans split the Council and by a majority vote we recommended them for approval. The SODC planning committee then refused the application by unanimous vote.

The inclusion of low-cost or social housing in Roke Farm's plans raised again the issue of such housing with the Parish. Accordingly, we undertook a low-cost housing survey with the assistance of Suzanne Willers – the Rural Housing Enabler from Oxfordshire Rural Community Council. We distributed 131 survey forms of which 67 were returned – that's 51%, which is considered a good response. Of those who responded, 28% said they would support an affordable housing scheme for local people, 33% would definitely not and 39% answered "maybe". Based on this result, we were advised not to pursue this option, but we may use the results of the survey in deciding on future planning applications. We do have copies of the full analysis should anyone wish to see it.

We are still keen to obtain a defibrillator for the village. However, for this idea to succeed we need many volunteers to be trained and willing to house the device for a set period of time every month. The length of time in each person's care is dependent on how many trained users we have. Sue is trying to arrange a convenient date for a meeting and training session with Dick Tracey from the Oxfordshire Ambulance Service, so please watch notice boards and email inboxes for updates on this situation. In the mean time, if anyone would like more information or would like to volunteer, please speak to a Parish Councillor or Sue.

We have to thank and congratulate Ian Glyn on his success in getting Church Lane resurfaced to a very high standard! Unfortunately, Ian wasn't quite as successful when he Derek and Colin Hoad met with the Camp Commander at Benson to try to do something about the movement of aircraft directly over the village. It seems apparently that the RAF is at liberty to do as they please.

I have had meetings this year with representatives from the County Council regarding suggestions of a footpath from the area around the Chequers down to the Village Hall and also looking at the parking area at the end of Weller Close. There is some concern about the speed of cars travelling through our villages and it is possible that this can be investigated at the same time. We will follow up both these items in future Parish Council Meetings.

I am very pleased to say that the glass-recycling bin has worked out very well and there are no plans at present to move it.

Finally we are still planning to put a second dog-waste bin in at the footpath to the allotments. This has been on the agenda for some time but there were issues over the running of the existing one in the village hall area that had to be resolved first. That has been sorted out now so hopefully the new bin will arrive shortly. Please do encourage any reluctant dog-owners to use this facility when it arrives. The allotments are used more now than they have been for quite some time and it is our opinion that this facility will help make it a cleaner and more pleasant place for all to use.

5. To receive the observations of the County Councillor and the District Councillors

Tony Crabbe, Conservative County councillor, reported as follows:

County Council Administration

Following the Boundary Commission review, the number of County Council members was increased by four giving a total of Seventy Four. The elections last May returned forty three Conservatives, seventeen Liberal Democrats, nine Labour and five Green party members.

As a result an entirely Conservative administration was formed with a Cabinet of ten members.

Two recent By-elections on 4th May 2006 were both won by the Conservatives. One seat was previously held by them but the other was won from the Lib-Dems. The overall Conservative majority on the County Council is now 14.

County Council Budget

The way that the Government has funded Councils this year has changed. Schools are now funded by a dedicated schools grant which amounts to £267.68m for the coming year. Other budgeted expenditure for the year amounts to £332.87m.

The expenditure of the various Directorates is as follows :-

Children, Young People and Families.	£76.32m
Social and Community Services	£135.57m
Environment and Economy	£57.62m
Community Safety	£21.93m
Resources	£9.61m
Strategic Measures	£28.91m

The Total formula Grant from government was £91.43m leaving £237.97m to be funded by Council Tax. The resulting Band 'D' Tax was £1008.75. The increase was 4.375%; this is the lowest in Oxfordshire for many years. It is intended to reduce the % rise in each of the remaining years of this Council. The low increase was achieved by requiring Directorates to make £5m efficiency savings overall.

Oxfordshire Schools

Oxfordshire schools made good progress at KS2 (11year olds), at KS3 (14 year olds), and also at KS4 (GCSE). Last year saw a 3% rise to 54.3% in the number of Oxfordshire pupils obtaining 5 or more good GCSE passes and has reversed the unsatisfactory trend of recent years. I anticipate another good year at this level.

Of the two Secondary schools that serve the Benson Division, Icknield Community College achieved their highest ever result with 58.2% obtaining 5 good GCSE passes which was a rise of almost 10% on the previous year. Wallingford School did less well achieving 50.3% pupils with 5 good passes which was a significant fall on the results for the previous year.

Oxfordshire Local Transport Plan

On submission of the new plan to Government we were only awarded £43m in grant funding opposed to the £55m we were anticipating for the next five years. The result is that some of the schemes that were proposed have been dropped. Although some cycleway schemes have been dropped, the Benson to Crowmarsh stage two is fully funded and should proceed later this year once negotiations for the land for widening the existing footpath are completed. The extension will run from St Helens Avenue to the A4074 where the stage one phase ended.

As part of the plan it is intended to undertake major construction work to improve the flow of traffic at the Green Road roundabout where the A40 joins the Oxford Ring road at Headington. Look out for major traffic problems during construction.

The Council has continued to support Local Bus services by significant subsidies despite a considerable rise in operating costs. Facilities have been improved on the Council's Premium Routes, for example the X39 Wallingford to Oxford service.

Oxford Eastern Bypass Central reservation Barrier

Following the very sad accident on this road the Council have just completed the installation of a Barrier along the central reservation to prevent a recurrence.

Oxford Castle Project

The Oxford Castle project which has turned the old Prison and Castle remains into a popular modern hotel and restaurant area, and a soon to be opened Heritage and Visitor Centre, has proved to be very successful. The old buildings have been excellently converted at no cost to the Council. The Commercial side of the project was opened last year and the Heritage centre was officially opened by H.M. the Queen on May 5th.

Oxfordshire Libraries

The opening hours at our libraries have gradually been increased to return to the former level prior to the cuts of about 8 years ago. The Central Library in West Gate, in Oxford City will shortly be opened on Sundays to cope with the increased use of this facility. A new Library for Thame is currently being progressed.

West Gate redevelopment in Oxford City

The Council is actively working with the Oxford City Council to Design a new scheme to revitalise this area of the City.

Sue Cooper, Liberal Democrat councillor for the Benson Ward, reported as follows:

Council Tax

There was no increase in the Didtrict Council portion of Council Tax, which in Berrick Salome accounts for about 9% of the total. This is mainly due to the fact that SODC had a very generous increase of 13% in Government grant this year. Just over half of this increase will probably go on extra duties such as providing for free bus travel to the over 60's through bus passes and for administering the new licensing system. The remainder appears to have been budgetted for a new contact centre for the District.

Planning

The Local Plan for the period up to 2011 was adopted in January this year. I was disappointed that, following the inspector's report, the number of affordable homes required in new developments in smaller settlements (under 300 population) was reduced from our original intention of 50% on sites of 2 or more dwellings to 40% on sites of 5 or more. Most villages do not have many, or even any, new sites for 5 or more houses.

Work is now starting on developing a Local Development Framework and plans which will eventually replace Local Plans.

The planning department have been recruiting staff to work on enforcement cases but it remains to be seen how the backlog will be addressed.

Housing

As ever, the District as a whole suffers from a lack of affordable housing. Again, fewer affordable homes have been completed this year, although the Station Road site in Wallingford has been passed to the Bomford Housing Association with planning permission for about 80 homes. So once the site has been decontaminated work should start on these.

Website

SODC continues to improve its website www.southoxon.gov.uk It is now possible to book and pay for things like bulky waste collection and sports facilities and look at development plans.

Environmental Health

New licensing arrangements have been introduced. There are 3 types of licence available from SODC – premises, person and Temporary Events Notices.

Didcot Town centre

The Orchard Shopping Centre is up and running. Building the 5-screen cinema, fronting the new town square, should start soon but the Arts Centre on the other side of the square has been delayed.

Waste Management & recycling

Currently recycling rate is under our target. As always, if anyone needs a recycling box, or knows of someone else who might use one, contact public amenities at SODC or me. The proposed new system for collecting garden waste from wheelie bins to be emptied fortnightly for £29 per year is now scheduled to start in June this year. Please contact Public Amenities at SODC (phone 823000) if you would like to know more. Or look at the website – if you reserve and pay for a garden waste wheelie bin online, you get a modest discount (£27.50 instead of £29).

6. Statement of the Parish Council's accounts for the year ending 31 March 2005 and observations
Derek Shaw tabled the accounts as follows:

SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENT ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING
31/03/2006

2004/2004 RECEIPTS	2005/2006
£3,000.00 Precept	£3,000.00
£12.27 Interest	£13.55
<u>£3,012.27 TOTAL Receipts</u>	<u>£3,013.55</u>

PAYMENTS

£166.00 General administration	£108.75
£462.10 Insurance	£531.16
£655.20 Clerks fees	£670.00
0 OALC membership	119.85
£1,008.75 Running costs - grass cutting etc.	£1,010.00
£58.75 Play ground	
£345.24 Dog bin installation & emptying	* -£54.53
£170.00 Rental of rooms for Parish meeting	£50.00
<u>£2,866.04 TOTAL PAYMENTS</u>	<u>£2,435.23</u>

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS SUMMARY

Balance brought forward 01/04/03	£3,350.30
Total receipts	£3,013.55
Total payments	-£2,465.23
	<u>£3,928.60</u>

REPRESENTED BY

Current account	£2,455.42
Business Premium account	£1,372.90
Community account	£97.30
Cash	£3.00
	<u>£3,928.62</u>

The precept remained at £3,000.

7. The accounts and report of the Berrick Salome Quarry Charity
In the absence of David Pelling there was no report.

8. Election of Committee of Management of the Berrick Salome Quarry Charity

The current management committee comprising Chris Kilduff, David Pelling, Tim Clayton, Tom Curran, Marion Shaw and Neville Gill was re-elected en bloc on a proposal by Sam Clayton, seconded by Sally Derbyshire.

9. The accounts and report of the Berrick Salome Relief in Need Charity

The Charity was set up to provide grants of money, provision of items or provision of facilities for persons in need living in the Parish of Berrick Salome.

Income is received from rent from a parcel of agricultural land and a fixed interest investment plus interest on accumulated income. Five grants to the total value of £1858. 12 have been made over the past year.

The Trustees of the Charity are

Rev. I. Cohen (ex-officio as The Vicar for the time being of St. Helen's Berrick Salome)

Nominative trustees appointed by the Parish Council of Berrick Salome

Mrs. J. Franklin (Chairman)

Mr. C. Cussens (Treasurer)

Co-optative trustees appointed by special resolution of the Trustees with special knowledge of the Parish

Mrs. S. Clayton plus one vacancy

Mr. C. Cussens (Mokes Corner, Berrick Salome, Oxon OX10 6JR) acts as administrative officer.

He tabled the accounts as follows:

Financial Statement for the year ended 31st August 2005

Receipts and Payments Account

Receipts	y.e. 31.08.05	y.e. 31.08.04
Interest on 195 M&G Charibond shares	14.84	14.84
Rents from Chalgrove charity y.e. 31 December	309.01	309.01
Interest on COIF charities Deposit A/c	744.94	562.97
	<u>£1,068.79</u>	<u>£886.82</u>
Payments	y.e. 31.08.05	y.e. 31.08.04
Grant for educational expenses	100.00	50.00
Grants for special needs recreational & educ opportunities	150.00	300.00
	<u>250.00</u>	<u>350.00</u>
Excess of Receipts over Payments	818.79	536.82
Bank Current & Deposit Accounts at 31 Aug 2004	16,049.48	15,512.66
Bank Current & Deposit Accounts at 31 Aug 2005	<u>£16,868.55</u>	<u>£16,049.48</u>

10. Report of the Berrick and Roke Village Hall Management Committee

Denis Cooper reported to the Meeting:

Over the past year disabled access and the flooding problem had been sorted out. The next tasks were renovation of the WC's and then the Kitchen. He wished to record the Committee's thanks to Peter Snelgrove for the new sign.

Consideration was being given to applying for TEN's (up to 12 per year) – but it will be up to those who rented the Hall. The Committee would give its permission. Hiring the Hall for a private party would not require a TEN, nor if the Quiz night was 'bring a bottle'.

Nicol proposed a vote of thanks to the Committee, seconded by Chris Kilduff.

11. Appointments of Representatives to other organisations

Dot Cussens was re-elected as parish representative to the Millstream Day Centre, Benson.

12. Any Other Business

12.1 *Speeding through the village*

Denis Cooper raised this issue. Vehicles were exceeding the 30 mph limit, particularly past his house, and villagers can be the worst offenders. Should we consider chicane(s) as at Newington?

Rob Marsh pointed out that the road has gradually widened over the years, which encourages cars to go faster. A footpath would narrow the road. John Radice said he opposed the suburban effect of a pavement through the village. Rob suggested at least that the verges were widened again – but this would be expensive. Narrowing the road by demarcating a pedestrian strip each side by white lines was suggested and rejected, as encouraging even faster driving at night.

There was general agreement that the 30 mph limit should be removed between Roke and Berrick: this proposal will be taken up by the Council.

12.2 *Junction markings*

Nicol Glyn asked for pressure to be applied to OCC to paint the lines at the N junction.

12.3 *Stiles*

Sally Derbyshire said that many local stiles were unsafe, and not accessible for dogs, e.g. with a lifting plank. Sam Clayton explained that OCC were responsible, and the Parish Council would pursue the matter.

John Radice suggested the Quarry Charity make a contribution to reinstating kissing gates on the footpath across to the church.

12.4 *The Chequers*

Pam Marsh said she was very concerned that the pub was applying to extend opening hours to midnight every day, with live music up to 11.00 pm. The Notice was dated 8/5/06, with a period for objections until 5/6/06.

Ian Glyn explained the new licencing system, which did allow local people to object if a licence granted causes problems. Most pubs / breweries were making these applications. He confirmed that a pub can request fewer hours. The licence goes with the pub; Rob Marsh said whilst the present managers were responsible people, others in the future may not be.

There being no other business, the Meeting concluded at 9.06 pm.