

# THE PARISH OF BERRICK SALOME

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 7th May 2009 at the Berrick Salome Village Hall at 8.00 p.m.

## 1. Apologies for absence

Nicol Glyn, David Pelling, Pam Marsh and Ruth Coffey.

## 2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 1st May 2007 and the Extraordinary Parish Meeting held on 29th May 2007 were read by John Radice. Dennis Hall proposed approval, seconded by Brian Bull; and the minutes were signed by Derek Shaw.

## 3. Matters arising from the Minutes

Jean Gladstone raised the matter of sewage tankers using the Rokemarsh lane while the pumping station was out of action – up to 18 a day, causing damage to the lane. Derek Shaw said he would be reporting on his contacts with Thames Water, and asked others to keep him informed of their contacts with TW and any responses received.

## 4. The Annual Report of Parish Council

This was presented by the chairman, Derek Shaw:

Unlike the last year 2008/2009 has been quite a busy year during which The Parish Council had 6 meetings in the Village Hall.

### Planning Activities

As usual, most of our activities centred around planning applications of which there were 9 this year, most of which were non-controversial. Of these, 6 were approved by SODC, 1 refused and 2 are ongoing. The application which generated much discussion was that for a pair of semi-detached “affordable” houses on the site at the side of Parsonage Farm. The Parish Council, having previously opposed many applications for “large” developments, felt that whereas this site was far from ideal it was difficult to oppose a request for 2 “affordable” houses. It did however list 6 major issues with this specific site. SODC refused the application, a decision which was upheld on appeal.

### Parish Notice Boards

Four new notice boards were purchased, with the aid of a generous grant from the Quarry Charity, and are now in place.

### The Village Playground

The Parish Council continues to maintain the playground and have incurred unexpectedly high costs this year, due to new health and safety legislation concerning the topping up the bark floor covering as required by ROSPR. The playground was brought up to specification, again with the financial help of the Quarry Charity.

### The Village Precept.

Despite, due to administrative problems, not receiving any precept for 2008/2009, by using our reserves and generous support from the Quarry Charity we managed to fulfil all our commitments during the year. The precept for 2009/2010 has been raised to recover the money “lost” in 2009. More details will be given by the Treasurer later in the meeting.

### The Floods.

Along with many other villages in Oxfordshire, Berrick and, especially, Roke suffered severe flash flooding in June. A total of 10 houses suffered from flooding, which in percentage terms was one of the most serious in the county. The flooding was mainly caused by drainage ditches not being able to handle the unprecedented volume of water which fell over the period of few hours. In the days after the floods, the villagers pulled together and set up a group, under Chris Kilduff, called COBRA to coordinate self-help activities, to clear the ditches and liaise with SODC, who have subsequently praised Berrick and Roke as a model of how such activities should be organised. A more detailed report will be given later. The value of the work COBRA coordinated was demonstrated in February,

when again Oxfordshire was hit by heavy rain and flooding; this time, no property in the villages was damaged.

#### Relations with RAF Benson.

In November, following the lead set by Benson PC, we invited the RAF to send a representative to a Council meeting to discuss the activities at the RAF Benson Air Base and how they affected the villages. The meeting was attended by Squadron Leader Chris Lindsay, Senior Air Traffic Controller, who took part in an informative Q&A session resulting in a better understanding of both parties' points of view. Following this, Squadron Leader Lindsay organised a visit to the base for villagers, and good lines of communications were established, and aircraft noise was reduced. Unfortunately, in recent months, much of the benefits of these activities have been lost, but we are trying to rebuild them.

#### The Village Web Site

The village Web Site has now been functioning for a year. We hope that villagers have found it useful and informative. Any suggestions for improvement will be appreciated.

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

#### ***Sue Cooper reported on behalf of SODC:***

##### **Council Tax**

The District Council portion of Council Tax as SODC rose by 2.9 % this year as again we had a less generous grant from central government towards expenditure. SODC and The Vale of White Horse District Council are trying to make savings by joint working where possible. So far we have shared senior management (including the Chief Executive David Buckle) and some shared contracts such as Finance, with Waste Management about to come on stream.

##### **Planning**

The Core Strategy, which will be the foundation of the future planning strategy for our area, is currently out for consultation. If you are at all interested in planning and are concerned about how our area may develop in future, do please look at the Core Strategy and feed back any comments you may have. It is available on the website.

##### **Housing**

SODC now uses the new system, "HOMECHOICE", for letting affordable (Housing Association) housing. Most of the vacant housing, including some more recently in other parts of the county besides South Oxfordshire, is advertised so that those wanting a house will be able to see what is available and can put in a request for anywhere they fancy. The homes are allocated to the household in greatest need, chosen from those who expressed an interest.

##### **Website**

The District Council website [www.southoxon.gov.uk](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk) is a good place to look for SODC info. Try Benson Library if you don't have access to the internet at home.

##### **Didcot Town Centre**

Cornerstone, the new Arts Centre in Didcot is up and running and seems quite popular. See their website [www.cornerstone-arts.org](http://www.cornerstone-arts.org) if you'd like to know more or see what is on.

##### **Waste Management & Recycling**

Most people around here have now received their 4 bins for the new system which will start for us on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> June with collections from the grey residual waste bin and the small green food waste bin. I hope you have found the leaflet showing which week has which sort of collection and tells you what happens around bank holidays. You should also have stickers to put on the bins (or anywhere else more useful for you!) which say what types of rubbish are allowed in which bins. So happy recycling!

##### **Leisure**

SODC's Leisure centres are now run by Nexus (who also run the Wycombe centres) although SODC's contract is with their parent company Greenwich Leisure. The new gym equipment at the Abbey Sports Centre is very popular, as are the spinning classes (hard work on static bicycles).

This is a brief run through - We keep getting told by central Government that more powers are being

handed down to local government. If this is happening, it isn't obvious to your local councillors as most things at district level are run by officers of the Council or cabinet members!

Derek Shaw informed the Meeting about frustrating correspondence *re* Green Lane rubbish collection. He had now been telephoned with satisfactory proposals.

### ***Tony Crabbe reported on behalf of OCC:***

I have now completed 12 years as a member of the County Council representing the Benson Division. I have been Chairman of the Council for the past year. Holding this office prevents me from being a member of any other committee except the School governors appointments panel and the South Africa School liaison Committee. There are several external bodies on which the Chairman automatically represents the Council which include The Blue Plaques Board, The Oxfordshire Buildings Trust and Age Concern. In the course of the last year I have witnessed some tremendous volunteer work throughout the County. I am sorry I have been unable to attend many of your Parish Council meetings due to other Chairman's engagements.

### **County Council Budget 2009/10**

The County Council agreed it's Budget for 2009/10 and it's medium term financial plan for the next three years at it's meeting in February The Council Tax for the coming year will be £1130.62 for a Band 'D' property. This represents a 3.75% increase over last year for the County element of the Council Tax and is the lowest increase for many years. The Budgeted expenditure for each Directorate is: Children Young People and Families £91.6m; Social and Community Services £160.6m; Environment and Economy £70.2m; Community Safety and Shared Services £40.1 m and Corporate Core £10.8m.

Schools are funded by the Direct School Grant from Central Government and this increased this year by 3.7% per pupil.

### **Oxfordshire Schools' GCSE results 2008**

The DfES issued the national schools' GCSE results at the end of January. Oxfordshire schools overall made a significant improvement in their achievement last year with a 5.4% increase in the number of pupils achieving five or more passes at grade 'C' or better. This is a satisfying result but further improvement is being sought. Our local schools performed well with Wallingford School improving their pass rate by 6% to 69%; Icknield Community College at Watlington achieved a 57% pass rate and Langtree School at Woodcote achieved 69%. I believe our schools have turned the corner and are now performing closer to the expected levels.

### **Oxfordshire Fire Service**

I hope you never need to call on our Fire Service but should it be necessary you can be assured that you will receive an excellent response. The recent inspection once again showed our Fire Fighters to provide an outstanding service and they were rated as amongst the top in the Country.

### **Gravel Extraction**

You may recall that this major issue which could affect the Village has been delayed whilst the Government issued new guidelines for the preparation of our Minerals and Waste Development Framework. Having received the necessary information the County have now approved a new programme for the preparation of the plan but we are unlikely to know the preferred sites for Gravel Extraction until January next year when there will be further consultation.

The preferred new sites will be included in the revised core strategy.

### **Waste Incineration**

This is a very big issue at the moment. The Council needs to reduce the volume of Waste sent to landfill or will face severe financial penalties. All of the specialist waste disposal contractors who submitted proposals to deal with our excess waste proposed Energy from Waste. This means incineration, with the bonus of some electricity being produced.

Two sites have been proposed for a possible incinerator, Ardley near Bicester, and Sutton Courtenay near Abingdon. In order for the two selected companies to make firm proposals they must first obtain planning approval for their selected site. These applications will be considered by the County's Planning Committee in the coming months. The earliest these applications will be considered by the committee will be at the July meeting. There are many issues to be resolved before firm proposals are

considered and it is not possible to form a firm view on this matter before more detail is known. I have already taken the opportunity to visit an existing plant near Basingstoke to see the operation for myself. Only one of the two proposed sites is likely to be adopted. I have prepared a separate note on this which I have given to the Parish Clerk for anyone especially interested.

### County Council Resources Directorate

The Audit Commission have recently completed an inspection of this Directorate. Their findings were that the Council's Finances are very well managed and that we are also well placed to deal with climate change issues. The handling of flooding issues in recent years was praised. The Council was awarded a maximum four stars for this service area. This is an improvement from the previous three stars and puts our Council in the top four performing councils in the country for this council service.

### Local Issues

#### 1. The recycling site in Eyres lane Ewelme

This Site has caused a great deal of concern amongst local people and I have put a lot of effort into resolving this problem. There is no doubt that the site is being over intensively operated and I hope that County Planners will very shortly issue a Planning enforcement notice. I have gradually raised the seniority level at which I have requested action, culminating last week at the CE and Council Leader level. I am advised that the Enforcement report is currently with the Council's solicitor and I now have a meeting arranged with the legal Dept. and the planning team for 14<sup>th</sup> May to discuss the next move.

#### 2. Oakley Wood waste recycling centre

The centre is currently closed for improvements to be carried out to make the operation more efficient and safer. It is anticipated that it will reopen in mid June. In the meantime the County is funding additional disposal facilities through SODC community waste vehicles in Wallingford, Didcot, Henley, Thame, and Wheatley. When complete it should make vehicle turn round much faster and safer.

## 6. Statement of the Parish Council's accounts for the year ending 31 March 2009 and observations

Ian Ross tabled the accounts as follows:

### SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENT ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31/03/2009

2007/2008 RECEIPTS	2008/2009
<b>£3,500.00</b> Precept	<b>£0,000.00</b>
<b>£20.53</b> Interest	<b>£6.95</b>
Grants from Quarry Charity	<b>£2,814.35</b>
<b><u>£3,520.53</u></b> TOTAL Receipts	<b><u>£2,906.30</u></b>
<b>PAYMENTS</b>	
<b>£100.30</b> Items written off (Allotment a/c and £3.00 cash)	
<b>£680.00</b> Seat at Millenium Stone	
Notice Boards	<b>£1,314.35</b>
<b>£120.25</b> General administration	<b>£229.00</b>
<b>£567.79</b> Insurance	<b>£593.30</b>
	<b>£750.0</b>
Clerks fees	<b>0</b>
OALC membership	<b>£125.85</b>
<b>£1,010.00</b> Running costs - grass cutting etc.	<b>£1,085.00</b>
<b>£1,598.01</b> Play ground	<b>£70.50</b>
<b>£175.22</b> Dog bin installation & emptying	<b>£270.50</b>
Rental of rooms for Parish meeting	<b>£500.00</b>
<b><u>£4,251.57</u></b> TOTAL PAYMENTS	<b><u>£4,938.50</u></b>

**Parish Council accounts (cont)**  
**RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS SUMMARY**

Balance brought forward 01/04/08	<b>£3,164.47</b>
Total receipts	<b>£2,906.30</b>
Total payments	<b>£4,938.50</b>
	<b><u>£1,132.27</u></b>

**REPRESENTED BY**

Community account (creditor)	<b>-£750.00</b>
Community account (current)	<b>£1,468.62</b>
Business Premium account	<b>£413.65</b>
	<b><u>£1,132.27</u></b>

The precept remained at £3,500.

**7. To receive the accounts and report of the Berrick Salome Quarry Charity**

Last year was very quiet with no requests for financial assistance from the Charity. This year has been similar save for a donation of £1,314.35 in October 2008 made to the Parish towards the costs of the new village notice boards and £1,500 in August 2008 towards the cost of bark at the village recreation ground.

Income continues at £500 per quarter from Wilkinson's Wood Yard (rent) and we have received £100 in hire charges on the communities portable public address system.

Our funds/reserves currently stand at £5559.49 which includes £82.78 of interest earned since the last accounts.

We are expecting a request from the Village Hall Committee to fund or part fund new cooking equipment as part of the hall's refurbishment programme. We may possibly also receive a request from St. Helen's Church for a contribution towards a proposed new carved stone nameplate.

The trustees of the Quarry Charity are presently: David Pelling, Tim Clayton, Marian Shaw, Neville Gill and Abbie Clayton (who is the treasurer) and the Chairman of the Parish Council all of whom have indicated their willingness to continue in office and therefore seek confirmation from parishioners for them to continue managing the affairs of the Charity for a further year.

**April 2008 Balance £6191.06**

April 2008-March 2009 Payments and Receipts

**Receipts £2100**

£2000 (Rent)

£100 (Hire of sound equipment)

**Interest £82.78**

**Payments £2814.35**

£1500 (Parish Council)

£1314.35 (Parish Council Notice Boards)

**April 2009 Balance £5559.49**

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

The current management committee comprising David Pelling, Tim Clayton, Abby Clayton, Marian Shaw and Neville Gill was re-elected en bloc, proposed by Derek Shaw and seconded by Ian Ross.

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

Chris Cussens reported to the Meeting:

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. Nine grants to the total value of £1325.63 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

Mrs S. Pelling

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

### Financial Statement for the year ended 31st August 2008

#### Receipts and Payments Account

<b>Receipts</b>	<b>y.e. 31.08.08</b>	<b>y.e. 31.08.07</b>
Interest on 195 M&G Charibond shares	<b>14.84</b>	<b>14.84</b>
Rents from Chalgrove charity y.e. 31 December	<b>309.01</b>	<b>309.01</b>
Interest on COIF charities Deposit A/c	<b>869.11</b>	<b>779.08</b>
	<b>£1,192.96</b>	<b>£1,102.93</b>
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<b>Payments</b>	<b>y.e. 31.08.08</b>	<b>y.e. 31.08.07</b>
Grant for educational expenses	<b>£425.63</b>	<b>£140.59</b>
Grants for special needs recreational & educ opportunities	<b>£150.00</b>	<b>300.00</b>
Grants towards flooding relief	<b>£750</b>	
Grant for disability equipment		<b>£1,200.00</b>
Grant towards heating installation		<b>£500.00</b>
	<b>£1,325.63</b>	<b>£2,140.59</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Excess of Receipts over Payments	<b>£617.33</b>	<b>-£1,037.66</b>
Provision for cheques not resented	<b>£750.00</b>	
Excess of Receipts over Payments	<b>-£132.67</b>	
Bank Current & Deposit Accounts at 31 Aug 2005	<b>£15,035.79</b>	<b>£16,073.45</b>
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Bank Current & Deposit Accounts at 31 Aug 2006	<b>£15,653.12</b>	<b>£15,035.79</b>

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

Simon Dorling reported to the Meeting:

Drainage work, including guttering and carpark repairs, had been done.

A donation had been received from the Wallingford Bridge Club. The Club provides 80% of the Hall's income.

Derek Shaw said that WBC were to pay for extending the car park.

Ruth Coffey tabled the accounts as follows:

### Financial Statement for the year ended 31st March 2009

#### Receipts and Payments Account

<b>Receipts</b>	<b>y.e. 31.03.09</b>	<b>y.e. 31.03.08</b>
Hire of Village Hall	<b>680.75</b>	<b>637.5</b>
Quarry Charity donation	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Grant donations	<b>1,500.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Bridge Club rents	<b>7,200.00</b>	<b>6,900.00</b>
	<b>9,380.75</b>	<b>7,537.50</b>
<b>Payments</b>	<b>y.e. 31.03.08</b>	
Refurbishment	<b>766.88</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Cleaning	<b>1,407.00</b>	<b>1,224.00</b>
Maintenance	<b>7,113.51</b>	<b>1,260.17</b>
Oil / heating	<b>909.30</b>	<b>73.50</b>
Disposable items	<b>76.63</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Furniture / fittings	<b>0.00</b>	<b>0.00</b>
Insurance	<b>623.54</b>	<b>607.46</b>
Electric	<b>1,458.28</b>	<b>800.44</b>
	<b>12,355.14</b>	<b>3,965.57</b>
Excess of Receipts over Payments	<b>-2,974.39</b>	<b>3,571.93</b>
Capital: Lloyds Bank	<b>10,695.90</b>	<b>7,123.97</b>
	<b>7,721.51</b>	<b>10,695.90</b>

## 11. Appointments of Representatives to other organisations

Dot Cussens was re-elected as parish representative to the Millstream Day Centre, Benson; proposed by Derek Shaw and seconded by Marion Shaw.

## 12. Any Other Business

### 12.1 COBRA – Flood control

Chris Kilduff reported to the Meeting.

COBRA is a committee of volunteers formed since the floods – and *ad hoc* group not appointed or elected but open to all interested in the problem. All four villages are represented on the committee; the acronym stands for Committee of Berrick, Roke and Rokemarsh Aquaticians.

COBRA's purpose is to understand what caused the floods; what can be done; and by whom.

Investigations have established that the riparian owners, not OCC Highways, are responsible for the management of the streams and ditches. However, if they fail to do so then SODC have the right to step in and charge the riparian owners.

A lot of ditch clearing has been done: but this must be continued and maintained. A few stretches (eg at the back of the allotments and behind Cuddithorne) remained to be cleared.

There has been close liaison with SODC, and a grant of £25,000 received. Engineer Dave Baldwin of Monson visited in April and identified pinch points and obstructions. Discussions are ongoing to resolve how these are to be dealt with and by whom.

#### 12.2 *Millenium Book*

Derek Shaw enquired whether there was support for updating this, as an 'M + 10' Book. There appeared not to be, and it was agreed to review the matter as 3000 approached.

#### 12.3 *Air activity at Benson*

Derek Shaw said that Benson's Director of Communications had expressed a desire to come to this APM; but DS had advised that it was probably not the appropriate forum.

There was a need to set up a regular annual meeting to communicate better, not least because personnel on the Base seem to change so often. The current incumbent seemed unaware that Berrick Salome had a Parish Council.

A meeting had been set up for 13th May 2009.

There being no other business, the Meeting concluded at 9.35 pm.