

THE PARISH OF BERRICK SALOME

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 3rd May 2012 at the Berrick Salome Village Hall at 8.00 p.m.

1. Apologies for absence

Rob and Pam Marsh, Nicol Glyn and David Pelling.

2. Minutes of the last meeting

The minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 19th May 2011 were summarised by John Radice. The minutes were signed by Derek Shaw.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes

There were no matters raised – see agenda items following

4. The Annual Report of Parish Council

This was presented by the chairman, Derek Shaw:

It had been quite a busy year during which the Parish Council held 6 meetings.

Elections

On May 5th there were parish and district election. The following were elected to the Parish Council unopposed:-

Ian Glyn
Anne Kilduff
Ian Ross
Derek Shaw
Douglas Taylor

Planning Applications

As usual planning applications took up a significant part of our time. This year there were a total of 14 application involving 10 properties. 3 applications were withdrawn, 1 was refused and then withdrawn [Roke Farm bungalows 1] and the other 10 were approved by both the Parish Council and SODC.

Village Hall and playing field

It has been a busy year concerning the Village Hall with a new committee taking over the running of the Hall re negotiating agreements etc. with the Wallingford Bridge Club who are the main users of the Hall. This will be reported on in item 11. The village field and the playground have been maintained during the year, the grass at the rear has been renovated and 6 4-year-old oak trees planted to define the edge of the overflow car park. Considerable work will soon be undertaken to renovate the playground equipment and renew the ground covering.

Sewers and flooding

Fortunately there have been no major problems with flooding this year as a result local actions to keep ditches and streams etc. clear. We wish to remind everyone that it is in everybody's interest/responsibility to keep all the drainage channels clear. Again there were failures of one of the pumps in the Rokemarsh holding tanks during in the year which caused Thames Water to tanker out waste from the Berrick holding tank. This resulted in damage (again!) to the verges in front of the Millennium Stone. Thames Water have acknowledged this damage and will be making good and issuing specific new instructions to their new contractors to avoiding it happening again should tinkering be necessary again. Despite 2 site meetings and numerous phone calls and e-mails there still has been no progress. The same "we're getting approval..." has been received repeatedly since October. John Howell MP has been informed and will raise the issue with Thames Water management.

Police report

At the request of the Parish Council the police undertook several speed checks using their SID devices between October 2011 and January this year and no was found to be over the limit. They will be undertaking more checks later this year. Unfortunately crime in the area seems to be on the increase. The 3 tractors stolen from Parsonage Farm were believed to have been loaded onto another vehicle and removed. At this time, the tractors have not been recovered due to insufficient evidence. At the beginning of April, there were a series of thefts from vehicles, where items were stolen from inside a vehicle and an agricultural roll has been stolen. The Police are working to reduce the amount of thefts from vehicles by carrying out a process called the Clear Car Campaign where we will write to the registered owners of vehicles displaying valuable items to inform them of the importance of putting items away and out of sight. Please make sure that your vehicles are left secure and all items removed from the window to help to prevent your car/van being broken into.

Road Maintenance

We have lobbied Highways, with limited success, to work on the "erosion" at the Home Sweet Home corner and the lay by outside the Village Hall. The issue of getting grit for use on the roads, fortunately not need this winter, has still not been solved. Getting the salt/grit locating the bins is not the issue; the problem is defining a reliable strategy of spreading the salt when it is needed. Any suggestions for a solution would be welcomed.

Parishes Against Gravel Extraction (PAGE)

The Parish Council contributed to PAGE again this year. PAGE report positively on the current status concerning gravel extraction in the area (see also item 5)

Relations with RAF Benson

The interactions between RAF Benson and the Parish Council have continued in a positive way with the Commanding Officer still seeming to keep good relations with the local communities.

The Village Website

(www.berrickandroke.org.uk) Please look at the site and contact the webmaster@berrickandroke.org.uk if you have any suggestions for improvement or wish to put any material on the site.

The Golden Jubilee Weekend

After much discussion it was decided that, since Benson is organising significant activities that weekend as are our local Pubs, I'm sure they will be only too please to provide details, and the imminent Church Fate the Parish Council would not organise any events.

Benson Library

Cllr. Crabbe felt that there had been a good outcome for the Benson Library issue compared with the situation a year ago, when it was facing closure. OCC would now provide all necessary materials, plus 50% of the staffing, leaving the other 50% to be made up by volunteers. This, he said, would ensure that a viable system would be in place for when the economic situation improved at some stage in the future.

5. To receive a report by PAGE on gravel extraction

The following report was presented:

After 2 years of work we are at the final stages of the fight against gravel extraction in our area and whilst the OCC Strategy document being presented to the Secretary of State includes many of our recommendations and excludes our area, it is necessary for us to complete the task. The danger is that objections from West Oxfordshire and CAGE (Cholsey Against Gravel Extraction) will convince the Inspector appointed by the SofS to ask OCC to redraft the document. You may have seen the CAGE activity who are fighting a rearguard action and raising funds to pay legal fees to fight the proposal contained in the document that Cholsey is one of the sites.

We understand that objections can only be made at this stage about the process adopted by the OCC in arriving at their conclusions, not the content, although constructive amendments can be requested. PAGE therefore needs to be invited to the Examination in Public by the Inspector. The

consultancy advising us has been appointed to carry out the work below to ensure that this happens.

1. PAGE have now completed the representations to Pre-Submission Core Strategy which will be presented before the 16th July deadline these include:-
 - Review of the provisions of the SCS and supporting docs
 - Preparation of report on SCS implications and suggested actions
 - Preparation of draft representations to the SCS
 - Submission of Formal Representations
2. The next stage is the Submission of Core Strategy to the Inspector appointed by the Secretary of State (by OCC) / prior to Examination and we will be required to:-
 - Check Submissions by others
 - Check OCC's responses to representations
3. The final stage is attendance at the EIP (Enquiry in Public) and this will require:-
 - Preparation of evidence and submissions for the EIP
 - Review of evidence submitted by other parties (e.g. CAGE) and other background as necessary
 - Attendance at the EIP (2 days) (Autumn 2012)

We are asking Parishes for contributions toward £5,600 for 1st and 2nd phases and would greatly appreciate the continued financial support of the Berrick and Roke Parish Council helping us towards reaching this sum.

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

6.1 *Rachel Wallis reported on behalf of SODC:*

Miss Wallis introduced herself. She had been elected in May 2011, since when one her principal appointments has been on the Community Investment Fund.

She is also on Planning Committee, meeting monthly.

The new Planning Policy Statement introduced by Westminster on 27/3/12 sees the biggest change in 25 years, with 1,000 pages of guidance allegedly replaced by 49.

Her Conservative colleague Felix Bloomfield is chair of the Council.

In answer to a question from Doug Taylor about funding from the District Council for flood protection, Miss Wallis said she would enquire.

6.2 *Tony Crabbe reported on behalf of OCC:*

Leader of the Council

Keith Mitchell who has been leader of the Council for the past Ten years indicated that he intended to stand down from the leadership of the Conservative Group at the end of this political year. This meant that the Conservative Group on the County Council would elect a new leader who will then become leader of the Council because of the majority we hold. The new Council leader will be elected at the AGM of the Council in May. Keith has indicated that he will not be standing for re-election to the Council in 2013 and wishes to give the new leader the opportunity to 'settle in' during the next year. Councillor Ian Hudspeth, the member for Woodstock, was recently elected as the new Conservative Group leader and will be elected Leader of the Council at the Annual meeting shortly.

Boundary Commission Review of County Council Divisional Boundaries.

The Boundary Commission requested that the Council make proposals for realigning Divisional Boundaries to roughly equalize the number of electors in each Division as significant inequalities have arisen due to development in certain areas. The County Council proposed that the number of Councillors should be reduced to 63 from 72 and made some proposals. The Commission

accepted the reduction in the number of Councillors but did not accept the proposals for the new boundaries and made alternative proposals, which they intend to put to parliament shortly, so that the new boundaries will be in place for the 2013 County Elections. Their proposals dramatically affect the Benson Division which will be renamed Benson and Cholsey and will include the parishes of Benson, Crowmarsh, Nuffield, Ipsden, Cholsey (excl. Winterbrook) and Moulsoford. This means that Berrick Salome, Brightwell Baldwin and Ewelme will no longer be part of this Division and will be part of Watlington Division.

Council Budget for 2012/13

The Council's Budget has now been approved and will result in a standstill in the County level of Council Tax. The Council qualified for a Government Grant by keeping the increase in Budget to a low level. This has been achieved by some significant cuts to staffing including one Director post. There were no nasty surprises in the budget and some small goodies which were possible by some late unexpected income. £300K will be provided to improve school leadership; £700K will be used to support Every Child a Reader Programme and £1.6M to support troubled families, part of which may be recovered from Govt. Most importantly the County has entered into an agreement with BT to provide a large injection of funds to provide Superfast Broadband to the local area, Central Govt. has also provided funds for this rural pilot which will involve the upgrading of the Wallingford Exchange. The extent of the area included is not yet clear.

Benson Library

I believe that we have achieved a good outcome for Benson Library which had been proposed for closure a year ago. An improved proposal kept the Library open but required 66% voluntary staffing. The final Proposal was for just 50% volunteer staff. I believe that it is important that we keep the Library open so that when the Economic climate improves we may be able to return to the former level of operation. No Libraries will close under the revised proposals.

Sand and Gravel Extraction

The possibility of Gravel extraction North of Benson and to the West of Berrick Salome appears to have receded. The current proposals are for extensions to existing workings with a proposed new Working at Cholsey. The Council's Scrutiny Committee has endorsed the proposals but with a recommendation to Cabinet that they should satisfy themselves on the deliverability and the possible impact of the Cholsey site on the adjoining ANOB's.

The Cabinet approved the proposals at their meeting on 13th March and by the Full Council for submission to Govt. I do not anticipate any changes in view of the extensive amount of work, and consultation, that has gone into the current proposals. The Full Council approved the proposals for the 'Minerals and Waste Development Framework' at their meeting on 3rd April. The Framework will now be subject to an Examination in Public by a Govt. Inspector.

Oxfordshire Secondary Schools Performance

GCSE and Equiv.

	% A*-C	% A*-C (Incl. E&M)
Oxon	74	57.4
National	80.5	58.2
Wallingford	68	61
Icknield	65	52
Langtree	73	64
St Birinus	62	61

Locality Funding

At the last year's Budget it was agreed to allocate a small sum of money for each Councillor to fund projects within their Division.

This year my fund has been spent on lowering the pavement to give disabled access at several locations within Benson. The kerb has now also been lowered at the south side of the Riverside Bus Stop for disabled access. Some funds have also been used to cut back overgrown vegetation at Crowmarsh Hill. If Berrick Salome Parish have any small scheme they would wish me to consider I will be pleased to receive details for consideration for the coming year. I would then need to get costings and assess the benefit in terms of value and number of residents who would benefit.

7. Statement of the Parish Council's accounts for the year ending 31 March 2011 and observations
Ian Ross tabled the accounts as follows:

SUMMARY OF RECEIPTS AND PAYMENT ACCOUNT FOR THE YEAR ENDING 31/03/2010

2010/2011 RECEIPTS	2011/2012
£4,000.00 Precept	£6,000.00
£0.20 Interest	£0.20
£0.00 Grants from Quarry Charity	£0.00
<u>£4,000.20</u> TOTAL Receipts	<u>£6,000.20</u>

PAYMENTS	
£1,000.00 Donation to PAGE	£0.00
£0.00 Football nets and posts	£0.00
£64.73 Website	£93.52
£191.00 General administration	£195.00
£555.80 Insurance	£547.66
£0.00 Clerks fees	£100.00
£263.37 OALC membership	£0.00
£1,166.11 Running costs - grass cutting etc.	£1,505.50
£74.03 Playground inspection	£75.60
£137.00 Dog bin installation & emptying	£141.54
External repairs / improvements	£1641.45
£0.00 Rental of rooms for Parish meeting	£0.00
<u>£3,452.04</u> TOTAL PAYMENTS	<u>£4,300.27</u>

RECEIPTS AND PAYMENTS SUMMARY

Balance brought forward 01/04/011	£4,712.87
Total receipts	£6,000.20
Total payments	<u>£4,300.27</u>
Creditors	<u>£246.60</u>
	<u>£6,659.40</u>

REPRESENTED BY

Barclays A/C 401667715	£6,245.14
Barclays A/C 40166731	<u>£414.26</u>
	<u>£6,659.40</u>

Ian Ross in answer to a question from John King confirmed that the new oak trees were paid for by the Parish to mark the Queen's Jubilee.

8. To receive the report of the Berrick Salome Quarry Charity

David Pelling reported as follows:

There have been no direct requests for funding from the Charity since the last Parish Meeting.

Our bank balance this time last year was £7,566.26.

During the year we have received £2000.00 in rent from Wilkinson's our tenant in the wood yard on the B4409.

We have made £4.24 in interest on our bank balance!

Having made no payments over the last year our current balance (at the end of April 2012) stands at £9,570.50

Whilst we will be happy to consider requests for financial help towards projects (that would benefit the four hamlets making up our parish) we do not feel that in these times of severe economical restraint it is a bad thing to gently build our reserve for a rainy day in the future. However we understand that the Parish Council may be approaching us for a contribution towards maintenance work to the playground area by the Village Hall.

I now quote a paragraph from last year's report: "*After a flurry of phone calls from the legal department at SODC early last year, expressing the wish to divest themselves of any interest in the Quarry Charity, [The Charity Commission in its wisdom originally invested control of the Charity in a board of trustees, representing the inhabitants of Berrick Salome, together with the Chief Executive of the South Oxfordshire District Council]. I asked as chairman that they advise us on the exact legal procedure as to how this would happen and pointed out that we would be unwilling to saddle anything but the most modest of costs to effect such a change. I have heard nothing since! Your Trustees feel that as it is of no particular advantage to us that we would let sleeping dogs lie*". Unsurprisingly neither I nor any other trustee of the charity has heard anything further from the SODC; so the position remains unchanged.

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.

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

The current management committee was re-elected en bloc, proposed by Derek Shaw and seconded by John Radice.

10. 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: Chalgrove Charities, who manage the agricultural land for us, started a process of renegotiating the rent; from this, we hope to receive an improved income annually.

Ten grants to the total value of £1,677.36 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 and Administrative Officer)

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

Mrs. S. Clayton

Mrs S. Pelling

Financial Statement for the year ended 31st August 2011

Receipts and Payments Account

Receipts	y.e. 31.08.11	y.e. 31.08.10
Interest on 195 M&G Charibond shares	14.84	
Rents from Chalgrove charity y.e. 31 December	309.01	
Interest on COIF charities Deposit A/c	89.26	
	413.11	
	413.11	
Payments	y.e. 31.08.11	
Grant for educational expenses	346.65	
Grants for special needs, recreational & educational opportunities		
Grants towards flooding relief		
	£346.65	
Grants towards flooding relief paid 07/08, presented 08/09		
Excess of Receipts over Payments	66.46	
Bank Current & Deposit Accounts at 31 Aug	14,826.94	
	£14,893.40	
	£14,893.40	

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

Robert James reported to the Meeting:

As your 'new' Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC) has just celebrated its first year, we thought this would be an opportune moment to provide a brief update on your Village Hall. First of all, however, the VHMC would like to express its' grateful thanks to all previous committee members for their hard work and, in particular, Pam Marsh for her excellent handover to the new Chair. A list detailing current Committee members has been posted on www.berrickandroke.org.uk.

A major feature of the past year has been the signing of a new agreement with the Wallingford Bridge Club (WBC) for 15 years from October 2012. He wished to thank Alison Blakey for her work on this. The agreement will greatly assist with securing the future viability of the Hall and has already led to a number of improvements. The VHMC would therefore like to thank all those involved in the discussions and, in particular, Ian Glyn and Alison Blakey.

Various improvements have been made to the Village Hall and, for those who have not yet had a chance to see them, they are briefly listed below:

- re-decorated internally
- new flooring
- new curtains
- secondary double glazing
- external windows repaired and painted

These improvements have been made possible through the kind efforts of the WBC. The VHMC would therefore like to thank the WBC and, in particular, the donation from the Woo family (WBC members). In addition, WBC had paid directly for a new external light near the overflow carpark, and the repair of potholes.

Funds were being built up for the planned replacement of the roof and guttering.

The Village Hall is available for hire (£10 per hour) and, over the years, has been well-used for parties, quizzes, evening classes, travelling theatre, Parish Council meetings and, of course, the annual cricket tea and Christmas Fair. It was also the home of a nursery school for a year or two.

Anyone interested in booking the Hall should contact Dymphna Thomas on 01865 891237

The accounts were tabled as follows:

Financial Statement for the year ended 31st March 2009

Receipts and Payments Account		
Receipts	y.e. 31.03.12	y.e. 31.03.11
Hire of Village Hall	1,280.00	650.00
Deposits received	200.00	
Bridge Club rents	8,475.00	8,100.00
	<u>£9,955.00</u>	<u>£8,750.00</u>
Payments		
Admin		
Refurbishment		
Cleaning	1,575.00	1,605.00
Maintenance	1,106.37	3,663.91
Oil / heating	688.45	676.73
Disposable items	176.01	270.36
Insurance	756.60	769.80
Electric	791.06	538.13
	<u>£5,293.49</u>	<u>£7,523.93</u>
Excess of Receipts over Payments	4661.51	1,226.07
Capital b/f: Lloyds Bank	£3,666.45	2,440.38
	<u>£8,721.44</u>	<u>£3,666.45</u>
Capital c/f: Lloyds Bank		

12. Appointments of Representatives to other organisations

Ian Ross explained the activities at the Millstream Day Centre, Benson: e.g. meals, the 200 Club, hire of the Hall.

Improvements to the external sitting area landscaping had been carried out.

Ann Ross was re-elected parish representative to the Millstream Day Centre, Benson; proposed by Marion Shaw and seconded by Anne Kilduff.

There being no other business, the Meeting concluded at 9.02 pm.