

Bix and Assendon Parish Council

Clerk - Mrs. Jane Pryce, 56 Galsworthy Drive, Caversham Park Village, Reading, Berkshire RG4 6PP
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The minutes of Bix and Assendon Parish Council meeting held on 8th May 2017

Parish Councillors present:

Ms. Lisbeth Thiesen, Mr. Robert Aitken, Mrs. Ina Chantry, Mr. Matthew Beesley and Mr. William Murdoch

Oxfordshire CC councillor David Bartholomew and South Oxfordshire DC councillor David Nimmo-Smith

Also present: Mrs. Jane Pryce (Clerk) and 4 members of the public.

Key: BAG – Bix & Assendon Grapevine alert email service to residents.

032/17 Election of the Chairman and Vice-Chairman

Lisbeth Thiesen was proposed as chairman by Robert Aitken and seconded by Ina Chantry. Robert Aitken was proposed as vice-chairman by William Murdoch and seconded by Matthew Beesley.

033/17 Apologies for absence

SODC Cllr. Charles Bailey did not attend.

034/17 Members declarations of personal and prejudicial interests

None

035/17 Confirmation of the minutes of 6th March 2017

The minutes were declared true and accurate and signed by the chairman after an addition requested by Cllr. Nimmo-Smith to state that he had attended the annual parish meeting but had left when the full parish council meeting started.

036/17 Report from Cllr. D. Bartholomew

Due to pre-election 'Purdah' rules (now elapsed) and the election process itself, this report is very brief. Normal service will be resumed for my next report!

GENERAL OCC REPORT

ELECTION RESULTS

The County Council election results are as follows:

Conservative	31
Labour	14
Liberal Democrat	13
Other	5

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As 32 seats are required for a majority, no administration has yet been formed and negotiations between parties are taking place.

In my own Division, I was honoured to enjoy an increase in share of the vote from 58% to 71%.

SPECIFIC REPORT FOR BIX & ASSENDON

SILT AND DEBRIS ON ROADS

Cllr Aitken has previously drawn my attention to silt and debris on local roads, particularly Old Bix Road and Dobsons Lane, and I have reported back about the issue of identifying which local authority is responsible for clearing (both OCC and SODC say the other council is responsible). I will continue to lobby to get the matter resolved.

GRASS CUTTING ADJACENT TO JUNCTIONS

The PC has reminded OCC about the importance of cutting verges early in the season where long grass would have an impact on safety. I will monitor this situation closely.

Cllr Aitken reported that potholes that had been closed as fixed on 'Fix my Street' hadn't. Cllr. Bartholomew explained that the system was being upgraded as closed as fixed can also mean inspected (not to warrant repair) and closed. When the new system is in place, Cllr. Bartholomew would let the PC know.

The criteria for a reportable pothole was over 40mm deep and 150mm wide with sharp edges and costs £42.

037/17 Report from the SODC councillor.

Unitary is still going to happen (probably 2019) in spite of the general election. The next agenda item was discussed.

038/17 South Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Plans and their Implications

The Housing Plan was presented to Henley and seems to be computer generated house numbers required with no regard to infrastructure. The presentation that was given about this in Henley was deemed a disgrace. Robert Aitken asked if there was a consultation that could receive feedback from residents and the parish council. David Nimmo-Smith asked if the councillors had received any correspondence on this. The clerk was unsure and a letter about it from him was given to her to scan and forward to the councillors. Jane Pryce would forward any information it receives.

039/17 Fairmile Cemetery

Cuts in Fairmile Cemetery Charges for Bix & Assendon Residents – Report by Robert Aitken (who was thanked by Cllr. Thiesen for the behalf of the parish council).

The running of the Fairmile Cemetery was devolved a number of years ago by South Oxford District Council to Henley Town Council. Since then, their charging for its use has favoured Henley residents as Henley residents pay for the upkeep of the Cemetery through their Council Tax charge. The upkeep costs include grounds maintenance and maintenance of the surrounding walls, fences and hedges as well as repairs to, and the restoration of, the two Grade II listed Chapels located within the Cemetery. As is the

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norm for Local Councils, charges for those who are not resident are considerably higher than the residents' rates. In the case of the Fairmile Cemetery this has been up to three times the charge for Council Tax paying residents. This higher charging has included Bix & Assendon residents who viewed the charging structure as an anomaly given the location of the Cemetery within the Bix and Assendon Parish boundary.

The Parish Council has been in discussion with Henley Town Council representatives for some time to try to make an exception to the rule for the residents of Bix and Assendon. *As a result Henley Town Council has recently agreed that the rate to be charged with respect to Bix & Assendon residents will be the Henley rate plus 25% instead of three times the Henley rate.* The Parish Council believe this represents a fair compromise, reflecting the fact that any deficit after income on running the cemetery and the in-perpetuity responsibility of maintaining the cemetery lies with Henley Council Tax payers.

The Parish Council would like to thank the Henley Town Councillors and officials in reaching this compromise for the Parish.

040/17 Inspection Log and Risk Assessment

The inspection log lists all parish assets that the parish council looks after and insures. The assets are checked twice a year and assigned to councillors and the clerk. This was handed out in November and has now been completed and any issues were discussed. The defibrillator pads will need replacing July 2017. The clerk confirmed this will be done.

Jane Pryce and Matthew Beesley completed their sections at the meeting.

The Risk Assessment also lists parish assets and other procedural controls which Lisbeth Thiesen signed as Chairman as well as Inspection Log.

The clerk suggested the purchase of 2 USB sticks (£90) to put all of the parish councils data on as a 'disaster recovery' measure and give one backed up one to a councillor and swap with the latest updated one at each meeting. The cost of the USB sticks was seen as too high Jane Pryce would come back with the disc space required and whether it would be expedient to include the website. Jane would ask Chris Chanty (website administrator) about this.

041/17 Henley Municipal Charities

A parishioner is nominated to be a representative of the parish council for the HMC. This is a two year post and this ends in July 2017. The parish council agreed to nominate Richard Tomlins again as parish representative. He is agreeable to continue if the parish council so wish.

Now a 4 year tenure.

042/17 Allotment Report

Need 12 new poles and more chicken wire - Poles @ £6.50 x 12 = £62.40 (VAT £15.60). Chicken wire 20M (2 rolls) @ £42.50 x 2 = £85 (VAT £21.26). The expenditure on allotments was deemed too high and this was refused. Jane Pryce was asked to find out the rental price of other sites and discuss the improvements cost at a later date.

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The clerk is following up 2 leads for free unwanted poles.
 Plot 4 is now not two halves with the agreement of the previous tenant of plot 4b. The tenant of plot 4a has been looking after plot 4b for the last year as the tenant was unable to continue and now has decided to give it up.

043/17 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) payment

A CIL payment comes due on certain planning applications if deemed that there is a need to mitigate it through a variety of infrastructure requirements. Extra traffic, extra children, etc.

This levy has been charged on two planning applications (which only comes due when the building is complete). SODC receives the major of the levy and a portion is awarded to the parish it lies in.

Planning application P16/S1572/FUL The Old Police House, Bix £594.00
 Planning application P16/S0749/FUL Walnut Cottage, Middle Assendon £1,209.38
 Total £1,803.38

The CIL payment must be spent to address the demands that development places on an area.

The parish council must consider how the payment be spent.

Suggestions:

Bix village gates £2,500

Refreshing the white lining in Middle Assendon £1,050 per day. The clerk was asked to go back to OCC to ascertain if/when the white lining would be done anyway.

The parish clerk must complete a report on how the money was spend and submit it to SODC and the parish website by 31st December 2017.

044/17 Planning

a) Applications received

The following planning applications have been received: None

b) BAPC Recommendations

Reference	Date Registered
Location/Description	Target Decision date
<p>P17/S0847/FUL Campions, Henley Park, Fawley RG9 6HY Replacement dwelling (as supported by revised arboricultural report received 24th April 2017 and updated ecological report received 27th April) BAPC recommendation NO STRONG VIEWS</p>	<p>6 March 2017 10th May 2017</p>
.....	
<p>P17/S0992/FUL Witness Farm, Lower Assendon RG9 6AW Change of use from private and recreational equestrian use to</p>	<p>18th April 2017 13th June 2017</p>

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private, recreational and small business equestrian use (additional information about business operation and details of flooding and parking received 25th April 2017).

BAPC recommendation NO STRONG VIEWS

P16/S3421/FUL 3rd amendment

Halfacre, Bix RG9 6DB

The demolition of the existing dwelling and redevelopment to form four (two pairs) of semi-detached dwellings. (As amended by plans received 2016_12_13 to increase garden sizes for Plot 1&2 and provide landscaping proposal). (As amended further by plans received 2017_01_17 reducing number of dwellings and altering the layout of the development) (Amended further by plans received 2017_04_13 to reduce scheme to two dwellings).

BAPC recommendation 'NO STRONG VIEWS'

c) SODC Decisions

P17/S0801/HH

Orchard Dene, Old Bix Road, Lower Assendon RG9 6AG

Construction of tennis court for domestic use.

BAPC recommendation NO STRONG VIEWS

SODC GRANTED

1 March 2017

3 May 2017

P17/S0551/LB

Fairmile Chapels, Fairmile Cemetery,

Fairmile RG9 6AA

Repairs to the external stone and flint work plus repointing.

BAPC recommendation NO STRONG VIEWS

SODC GRANTED

10 February 2017

7 April 2017

P17/S0502/HH

Hill View, Middle Assendon RG9 6AX

Conversion of existing detached garage roof space into domestic office with new stair access from ground floor

BAPC deadline 7.3.17

Note: The garage is located in front of the main building line.

BAPC recommendation 'SHOULD BE REFUSED'

SODC GRANTED

9 February 2017

7 April 2017

P16/S3555/FUL

Leys Stable Cottage, Old Bix Road, Bix RG9 6BY

Variation of condition 2 and 5 of planning permission

P14/S4069/FUL to replace approved plans and for the insertion of a clear glazed first floor window in north or south elevation, Variation of condition 2 of planning permission P14/S1529/FUL Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a replacement 4 bed dwelling with integral double garage and associated amenity space provision.(As amended by drawings 13 357 03C and 13 357 13 to reduce the width of the garage and revise the roof design of the proposed dwelling).

BAPC response SHOULD BE REFUSED 18.11.16

25 October 2016

10 Feb 2017

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Note: This application has brought strong objections from the immediate neighbours and is with SODC to resolve.

SODC REFUSED

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P16/S2549/FUL

28 September 2016

Spring Cottage, Lower Assendon Oxon RG9 6AH

18 January 2017

Demolition of existing house and replacement with new house

BAPC – NO STRONG VIEWS 25 August 2016

SODC GRANTED

.....
P16/S4133/FUL

16 December 2016

Swiss Farm Marlow Road HENLEY RG9 2HY

10 February 2017

Removal of existing portacabin office and timber outbuilding.

Provide New Modular Single Storey Reception Building

BAPC recommendation ‘NO STRONG VIEWS’

SODC GRANTED

.....
P16/S4220/FUL

21 December 2016

Merrimoles Farm Bix

22 March 2017

Proposed redevelopment of dairy unit, revised submission following the withdrawal of P16/S3376/FUL.

BAPC recommendation ‘NO STRONG VIEWS’

SODC GRANTED

.....
P16/S3853/FUL

5 January 2017

Mayflower Cottage, LA RG9 6AH

2 March 2017

Change of use from public highway to private garden.

The proposal is to obtain this area of highway grass verge at the front of the property next to the B480 and convert to a private garden.

BAPC recommendation ‘SHOULD BE REFUSED’

SODC GRANTED

This application has raised significant local concern for the change of use from public highway grass verge to part of a garden. This concern was from a safety point of view and that of creating a precedent – the present position is that, as OCC have denied ownership, that the applicant has been asked to check ownership with the land registry. There has been a notice of this in the Henley Standard and the clerk was asked to find out the length of time this notice has/will be running for.

Cllr. Murdoch asked if the parish council have any objections to the ‘interpretation board’ for the Old Bix church ruins being sited closer to the road verge. The councillors agreed.

045/17 Correspondence

The Chiltern Conservation Board which the parish council subscribes to each year has requested a donation for a heritage project ‘Beacons of the Past - Hillforts of the Chilterns Landscape’. The project is to study the Iron Age heritage of hillforts and the tribes that used them using LiDAR technology (aerial survey) which can reveal structures hidden by dense woodland. A donation was decided against.

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After a site meeting for positioning of village gates on Thursday 4th May between Jane Pryce and Mark Francis (OCC highways) the following was recommended: One gate on A4130 Eastbound in front of speed limit and place on it 'Bix' village name and dispose of old 'Bix' sign. On the A4130 Westbound Mark thought there was not much to gain by installing a gate and expensive due to required traffic management. A gate supplier – Glasdon was suggested. It was decided to have both gates installed. Jane Pryce to inform OCC of this.

The clerk has received an agreement for the sale of the Bix phone kiosk from British Telecom. The 'phone box committee' did not attend to assure the parish council that they would restore the kiosk as an asset for the community. A vote to not adopt was taken.

Five Waste and Recycling Leaflets have been received and was handed out one to each councillor.

046/17 Finance.

a) Cheques for payment

CFO (Community First Oxfordshire) annual subscription £55

Open Spaces £100

S137 payment limit is £3,716.87 (2017/18).

Current total spend is (see above) £155

Remaining S137 limit is £3,561.87.

Insurance premium for parish council £297.23 (3 year deal) due 1st June 2017.

Clerks wages: £444.68 (wages £403 office rent £41.68) for April and May 2017.

b) Payments received

Precept first payment £3,550

Allotment payments £90

VAT reclaim £286.85

CIL payment £1,803.38

Bank balance: £17,971.64

c) Audit

The government requires that all town and parish councils are audited once a year. This is a three stage process. First stage is for the parish council to agree that the Annual Governance Statements are being followed and Accounting Statements are correct. The Statements were read out and agreed by councillors. Section 1 and 2 were signed by Lisbeth Thiesen and Jane Pryce (as Responsible Financial Officer) and dated and minute referenced. The documents (including bank statements, minute book, cheque books, etc) can now be submitted for the internal audit (second stage). The internal audit is a detailed check of all processes and codes are being followed and a summary is presented for the government audit (third stage).

047/17 Village Hall Report

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Governance issues had come to light after Jane had done the audit for the village hall. The processes that were required were almost all done anyway so now is fully compliant. Lisbeth Thiesen thanked the clerk for her help. The next village hall meeting is 9th May.

048/17 Footpath Report

FOOTPATH REPORT MAY 2017

Oxfordshire Way, Middle Assendon

The Chiltern Society has secured funding to replace the first two stiles on this path (from the Middle Assendon end) with wooden kissing gates. Funds have been provided by the Long Distance Walkers Association and the Oxford Fieldpaths Society, and the project has been approved by the landowner. Volunteers from the South Chilterns Path Maintenance Group will install the gates, free of charge. No date has been fixed for this yet, but hopefully it will not be too far off.

Oxfordshire Way, Shirburn

For information, and for anyone walking all or parts of the Oxfordshire Way, the Chiltern Society has been awarded a grant to replace twelve stiles with kissing gates on a section of the OW in Shirburn, on land around Model Farm. The gates will begin to be installed by Chiltern Society volunteers from September this year.

Chiltern Society Walk

The next Chiltern Society Walk around this area is on Sunday 4th June, starting at 10 a.m. from the Red Lion in Britwell Salome. It is a five-mile circular walk, mainly across farmland. One stile. For further information, please contact Maggie Templeman (01491 637942). All welcome.

The clerk was asked BAG both the above and below walks.

Brakspear Walks

As you may have seen in the Henley Standard last week, Brakspear together with Trust for Oxfordshire Environment (and with the help of the Chiltern Society) is promoting circular walks from some of its pubs. The first walks – launched at the Station House in Henley – include three walks from the Rainbow in Middle Assendon. You can pick up the walks leaflets - which include a map and detailed instructions - from the pub.

Ina Chantry was asked to check that the leaflets were available.

Maggie Templeman

Area Secretary Chiltern Society

maggie@swimmingwithlabradors.com

01491 637942/07831 878679

049/17 Village Fete and Church amenities project

This year's Bix & Assendon Village Fete will take place on Saturday 10th June 1-4pm on Bix Common.

Once again, the fete will feature the hugely popular "Fun Dog Show", which this will be run by Woofits Walkies. Starting at 2pm it will include all the usual crazy categories such as Waggiest Tail and Prettiest Bitch.

Beginning at 1pm with a BBQ lunch, this year the soundtrack to the Fete will be provided by The Goring & Streatley Concert band. Delicious teas and cakes will be served from 2pm.

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As well as the usual entertainment for children with Pony Walks, Wellie Wanging, Crockery Smashing and Egg Throwing stalls, this year the fete will feature a Kids Corner: Kids Stalls, Run by Kids, for Kids. Very simply, any children with an Apprentice style money spinning idea can pay £10 for a pitch and keep all the profits from the stall! There are a limited number of spots available on a first-come-first-serve basis, so email bixvillagefete@yahoo.co.uk now to reserve your child's pitch.

Raffle tickets will be available in advance and on the day and this year feature a very special prize - the promise of a flight in a light aircraft over Bix & The Assendons for one lucky winner, kindly donated (and piloted) by Assendon dweller Kevin Duthie.

Finally, after the immense success of last year, this year the fete will again conclude with an inter-village tug-of war. After the titanic battle of 2016, who will reign supreme in 2017? Team members are needed, so please contact bixvillagefete@yahoo.co.uk to express an interest in competing for your village.

The fete is run entirely by volunteers with profits contributing to the running costs of the Church. Help on the day is desperately needed to set up, run and tidy away our regular stalls. Please contact bixvillagefete@yahoo.co.uk if you can help in any way. Cllr. Matthew Beesley.
An entry charge of £2

The Church amenities project for a kitchen and a toilet is also hoping to raise funds from the fete ticket sales

050/17 Any other business

The clerk was asked to look into having more emptying for the Middle Assendon bin at end of Rainbow Way (near noticeboard). This is now being scheduled by SODC. and requested Lower Assendon rubbish bin too. Jane Pryce asked the councillors resident in Middle Assendon to monitor this.

The parish council noticeboards at Bix, Lower and Middle Assendon have a lot of non-parish adverts in them. The clerk asked if the PC would like a paddock – this was decided against.

During the village gate site meeting, Jane Pryce, spotted a milestone on the other (south) side. This should be listed as a parish council asset to be inspected but belonging to OCC highways. Value £0 but checked as part of the inspection log and inspected /photographed/read.

051/17 Public Comments

The lack of teaspoons and kitchen taps are very stiff at the village hall. This information would be passed to the village hall meeting tomorrow.

Next Meeting – Monday 3rd July 2017 at 7.30pm

The meeting ended at 9.24pm