

## **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 Annual Parish Council meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018 followed by the Parish Council meeting.**

### **Parish Councillors present:**

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

Oxfordshire County Council councillor David Bartholomew  
South Oxfordshire District Councillors David Nimmo-Smith

Also present: Mrs. Jane Pryce (Clerk) and 8 members of the public.

Key: BAG – Bix & Assendon Grapevine alert email service to residents.  
CIL – Community Infrastructure Levy  
OALC – Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils

### **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING**

#### **1/18 Confirmation of the minutes of 6<sup>th</sup> March 2017 Annual Parish meeting.**

The minutes were declared true and accurate and signed by the chairman.

#### **2/18 Chairman's Annual Report**

First let me introduce the Parish Councillors who are present and have served the last three years.

Matt Beesley – Bix

Ina chantry – Middle Assendon

Bill Murdoch – Middle Assendon

And myself as chair also from Middle Assendon

Robert Aitkin – Lower Assendon resigned in December which has given rise to point 22 on the parish council meeting agenda “Casual Vacancy” for the Parish Council Meeting

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the parishioners who have expressed an interest in joining the parish council, and hope they will continue to support us, even if they are not co-opted as we can only have 5 members.

The Parish Council has thanked Robert Aitkin for his excellent work regarding roads.

All superbly supported by Jane Pryce our clerk

Each councillor has an area of responsibility and will report individually

All Parish Council Meetings are open to the public and held in the village hall. Notices of the meeting are posted on BAG (email to residents who have signed up to this service), put on the Bix and Assendon website and notices are posted on the notice boards in the 3 villages.

The remaining meeting dates for 2018 are:

14th May Annual (Electors) parish council meeting,  
2nd July  
3rd September and  
12th November

And on the website and on the 3 noticeboards.

As a team, we have concentrated on a few projects this past year:

**Road Safety:**

The Village gates at Lower and Middle Assendon had fallen into disrepair and the clerk has restored them, except the one on the left-hand side coming into Lower Assendon from the Fairmile; but a car knocked it down and it has now been replaced by OCC with no cost to the Parish Council!

To encourage drivers to respect the 40 miles speed limit coming into Bix from the North the Parish Council has put up a white gate at the side of the road.

We will have a circle with 30 painted on the road on the north entrance to Middle Assendon.

Another project for 2018 is to provide a bus shelter in Bix on the westbound side.

These projects are partly financed by the CIL, which is a levy on new properties.

We have also made an agreement with Henley Town Council, to allow our parishioners a preferential tariff at Fairmile Cemetery.

Fortunately, the defibrillators installed in 2016 have not been used, but we have replaced the pads as is required every 2 years so they are in working order.

We have also set up guidelines for signage on parish land, as at times it became unsightly on the triangle on the Fairmile. We have now people asking to put up signs.

The Parish Council has the responsibility to take over the running of the Village Hall if the Village Hall Management Committee is unable. This looked like a possibility earlier in the year when two trustees wished to retire, and no replacements were identified. The Parish council therefore drew up a contingency plan for how and when the Parish Council would take over. Luckily, we did not have to use the plan as two new trustees have come forward. The Chair of the village Hall Management Committee will provide her report under point 5.

**Public Transport** – The Parish Council continue to support the Comet busses initiative.

**Litter Picking** – Our annual litter picking event will take place Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> March. We urge you to volunteer as it is also an opportunity to meet other residents of the villages.

I am confident I speak on the entire council's behalf when I say that we are looking forward to coming year.

*Lisbeth Thiesen*

*Chair Bix and Assendon Parish Council*

### **3/18 Annual OCC Report from Cllr. D. Bartholomew**

#### **Oxfordshire County Councillor David Bartholomew Annual Report 2018 to Bix & Assendon Parish Council**

##### **Introduction**

As County Councillor, I represent what is known as 'Sonning Common Division'. This Division comprises the nine parishes that curl around Henley, but does not include Henley itself. I am delighted to make this report to you and would like to wish the parish council (and residents!) every success for the coming year. If there is anything I can help with, all my contact details are on the OCC website here:

<http://mycouncil.oxfordshire.gov.uk/mgUserInfo.aspx?UID=7527>

##### **Responsibilities**

In addition to representing the interests of residents in the nine parishes in my Division and my place on Full Council, I am Cabinet Member for Finance & Communication. I am also Chairman of the Conservative County Councillor Group.

##### **Parish Council Meetings**

Most of the parish councils I am responsible for meet every month (Bix & Assendon is unusual in that it only meets every two months) and I attend most meetings. If ever I can't attend, I send a written report. At each of the parish meetings I attend, I give a general report on County matters, then follow this with a report on matters specific to that parish.

##### **Infrastructure Funding Bid**

The Oxfordshire Growth Board\* has provided unanimous support for an application to the Government's Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) as part of a package of investment to deliver transport infrastructure. The funding bid for up to £500 million was submitted on 28 September by OCC as the county's transport authority. Money is sought to bring forward infrastructure investment to pump-prime three major development schemes:

1. Didcot Garden Town – £171m is bid for transport improvements including a Didcot Science Bridge and A4130 dual carriageway, a new river crossing at Culham and Clifton Hampden Bypass. This would support the delivery of over 22,000 homes in Didcot, Culham, Harwell and Berinsfield. Additionally up to £70m of cycle and other sustainable transport improvements are proposed for inclusion in the bid plan.
2. West Oxfordshire Garden Village – £135.4m is bid for further upgrades to the A40, building on existing schemes and based on the approved A40 Long Term Strategy including development of the Rapid Transit network and additional highway capacity on A40 transport corridor. This would support the delivery of over 10,000 homes in Witney & Carterton, and around Eynsham.
3. North of Oxford – £152m is bid for the development of Rapid Transit lines on upgraded A44 and A4260 corridors, a new Park & Ride, and strategic cycle infrastructure plus. Support is also sought for additional education requirements (as yet un-costed). This would support the delivery of 5,570 homes in Woodstock, Begbroke/Yarnton and the Northern Gateway.

\*The Oxfordshire Growth Board comprises the six councils: Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council, together with the county's Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP).

##### **Growth Deal**

The Oxfordshire Growth Board has also reached an outline Housing and Growth Agreement (Growth Deal) with Government. This will see an additional £215m of

investment over the next five years to build infrastructure, support the delivery of new homes and boost economic productivity across the county. This breaks down as: £30m pa for five years for infrastructure; £60m for affordable homes across the county; and £5m to develop a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan (JSSP). The Board wants the five-year deal to be the first stage in a sustained partnership with Government to secure the ongoing investment needed to deliver properly planned growth and economic development over the coming years. This will support councils to achieve the ambition of 100,000 new homes across the county over the period 2011-2031, as identified through the 2014 countywide Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Local Plans. During the period of development all planning authorities will have their five-year land supply requirement reduced to a three-year land supply with that condition in place for the first three years of the new JSSP. The Growth Deal has gone through the six councils' democratic processes and been agreed.

#### **Social Care Costs & Council Tax**

The rising cost of social care continues to be a problem for most councils and OCC is particularly hard hit. In partial recognition, Government has allowed councils to set an additional 3% Council Tax rise for 2017/18 and 2018/19 in respect of Adult Social Care plus 1% for 2018/19 and 2019/20 in respect of Children's Services offset these costs. The nett result of this is that OCC Council Tax will rise by 5.99% in 2018/19, 2.99% in 2019/20, and then 1.99% in 20/21.

#### **Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) update**

When I first joined OCC, the HWRCs were under threat and it was planned to have just three centres for the whole of Oxfordshire. Our HWRC would have been in Didcot! I campaigned hard against this. In July OCC signed a new Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) contract that secured all seven existing sites in the medium term, with no change to the sites opening hours or days.

#### **1 million tonnes of rubbish transformed into energy at Ardley plant**

OCC and its partner Viridor have marked the one millionth tonne of residual waste received at Ardley during December. The Ardley plant converts waste into electricity, rather than burying it in landfill. It produces enough energy to power 38,000 homes and can export up to 27MW per hour of electricity to the grid.

#### **Ox-Cam Expressway**

The National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) has published its report to Government on the Oxford-Cambridge arc. It advised on the need for long-term investment funding for new transport infrastructure to harness the region's economic potential, to benefit local people and boost UK plc in a post-Brexit landscape. Oxfordshire County Councillors are concerned about the proposals and have passed a motion calling for a Public Inquiry. This has been rejected by the Chairman of the NIC.

#### **Unitary Government**

A proposal for Unitary Government for Oxfordshire was submitted to DCLG in the Spring of 2017 by OCC, SODC and The Vale. Cherwell, WODC and the City of Oxford did not take part. Since the General election, Government appetite for such proposals seems to have faded and there is no update on the situation.

#### **Key Bix & Assendon Issues**

##### **Potholes, general road defects and vegetation cutting in the parish**

I work closely with the parish council on Highways issues. As part of this process, I arranged a site visit with the Area Steward on Monday 11th September to review road maintenance. We were joined by representatives of the parish council and local residents. It was agreed that the Dragon-Patcher would visit the parish to repair

potholes. We also drew the attention of the Area Steward to flooding caused by a blocked drainage ditch at Dobsons Lane. As expected, the Area Steward confirmed that it was the duty of the adjoining property to clear the ditch in accordance with 'Riperian Rights' legislation. Subsequent to the meeting I obtained agreement that OCC would clear the ditch strictly on a 'one-off' basis, and this has now taken place.

### **Third Reading Bridge**

Berkshire councils and enterprise groups continue to push this proposal with vigour. The Strategic Outline Business Case was published in June and reviewed at an MP summit in September. The objective is to take 55,000 cars a day out of the centre of Reading. The bridge would join the M4 via the A329M to Caversham Park Road. From there traffic would only have two onward routes: via the A4155 through the heavily congested streets of Henley, or via the B481 through Nettlebed on to Watlington and the M40. Both these options are unacceptable to most Oxfordshire residents and I continue to press the case that if the bridge goes ahead, a relief road must be built. I assisted in organising a multi-parish meeting in January to review the situation.

The clerk thanked Cllr. David Bartholomew for his invaluable help with this meeting.

### **4/18 Annual and General SODC Report from SODC Cllrs David Nimmo-Smith**

The full report is attached to these minutes.

The South Oxfordshire District council tax went up by 4.5% this year which is the first time in 9 years. This amounts to £5 per household increase for a band D house.

The Local Plan (for housing) which doesn't effect this parish too much as it is protected by being in AONB. The major house building is more to north of the district running down from Thame to Great Milton round to Wallingford and across to Didcot. The new developments will be likely be signed off next year. As the district hasn't got a 5 year land supply, this is causing problems. There is also the problem of developers getting planning permission and sitting on sites, as there is an uncertainty in selling the new houses, they are being delayed.

Litter being thrown out of cars is a big issue and we will have to spend more money to clear up these areas.

Since losing my seat at OCC last May, I am now on the cabinet on the district council starting off with IT and HR. Now I have been assigned economic development. This is to try and maintain and generate economic development.

Grants of £10,000 had been allocated, which is £5,000 each councilor (Cllr Charles Bailey being the other) would be available to apply for from June.

And larger community grants of £800,000 can be applied for. This would apply to village halls and sporting facilities and similar community projects.

The clerk questioned the timing of the SOC councilor grants as she had notice that the grant scheme was opening 15<sup>th</sup> March to 26<sup>th</sup> April. And would applying for this would be something an SODC grant would like to contribute to? He confirmed that would be acceptable.

### **5/18 Village Hall Annual Report**

### **Report for AGM February 20<sup>th</sup> 2018**

It has been a good year for the hall. The nursery continues to go from strength to strength. Over the year the garden has had a re-design and has also been extended with a climbing frame being built, new vegetable and plant plots have been dug with room still for the chickens, rabbits, etc. With an outstanding result from Ofsted I think we should congratulate Sophie on her hard work and enthusiasm for the school. I would also like to thank Sophie for her efficiency in organising the packaways during the week or week-ends. It's either a partial or full packaway depending on the nature of the booking and as she has the password to the computerised system she knows exactly what need to be done. This helps an enormous amount.

The electrical testing certificate, due every five years, has been carried out; this included a complete new electrics box with up-to-date materials. P J Sparks the contractor, had difficulty in finding the water inlet pipe to complete the bonding process, but once found, they completed all the work required. No other major maintenance problems reared their heads other than the usual PAT Test, Fire Extinguisher check and the emptying of the septic tank.

**Bookings** were buoyant throughout the year, with approximately 110 bookings. Children's parties remain very popular. With advances in on-line banking we are finding more and more that hirers do not want to pay by cheque for their bookings but would prefer to transfer the fees directly into the hall's account. This creates a problem with keeping track of who has paid, and how we manage deposits as well. The committee need to look into this to try and find a system that is more up to date and a solution for both, us and the people hiring the hall.

As mentioned in the past the committee have been in discussion with regard to making a significant contribution from hall funds for the proposed extension and refurbishment of St. James' church. With this project being a wholly community based project the committee agreed to fund a certain area of the build. The final amount of the contribution will be confirmed when further details become available, but a provisional reserve of £10,000 was mooted.

#### **Election of Officers:**

**Chair ~ Jackie Walker**

**Vice Chair ~ Tim Osborn-Jones**

**Treasurer ~ Calvin Frankum**

**Bookings Secretary ~ Stephanie Tomlins**

**Lynn Stallworthy and Marjorie Hay have agreed to continue as members of the committee.**

#### **6/18 Henley Municipals Charities Annual Report 2017-2018**

Henley Municipal Charities (HMC) comprises the following individual charities, The Almshouse Charity, The Relief in Need Charity, The Educational Charity, The Bridge



Charity and the Church Charity. The first three charities offers assistance to people living in the areas of benefit by way of almshouses and grant allocations

The management of the HMC is the responsibility of the trustees, who are 13 in number and include 2 Ex-officio trustees (the Mayor of Henley on Thames and the Rector of St Mary the Virgin Church, Henley on Thames) 3 Nominative trustees one from each of the Parish Councils of Bix and Assendon, and Rotherfield Greys and from the Town Council of Henley on Thames, and 8 Co-opted trustees.

The day to day running of the HMC is carried out by the clerk who liaises with the chairman, treasurer and committees of trustees who oversee particular areas of activity i.e. grant applications from educational establishments, planning issues, property development. Trustees are responsible, by rota, for carrying out monthly visits to all the almshouse residents to report on the state of the properties and the health of the residents. Trustees meetings are held monthly. Our current clerk Mrs Jean Pickett retires in March 2018 after serving HMC for 32 years. Our new clerk is Mrs Wendy Bowsher.

Rents are received from 8 properties in Henley on Thames and the income is applied to meet the objectives of each of the named charities. The areas of benefit for the HMC are the parishes of Bix, Rotherfield Greys and the Town of Henley on Thames

### **Almshouses**

The HMC is responsible for the administration of 23 almshouses (10 for double occupancy and 13 single) which are situated in Church Avenue, Western Close and Vicarage Road, Henley on Thames. Eight single occupancy properties in Church Avenue have just completed a major programme of extension and renovation. Currently there are 22 residents. There are 6 properties vacant and we are currently interviewing for new residents

As well as regular property maintenance recent activities have involved upgrading and renovation, including turning adjacent small single occupancy properties into larger ones suitable for couples, also in landscaping the grounds in Western Close

### **Grants**

Grants were given to local state primary schools , the Henley Youth Festival , Music in the Meadows, Christmas grants to almshouse residents , the Mayors Christmas party , the Christmas parcels fund , and for the cleaning costs of several properties. The Church Charity gave its annual grant for the update and repairs to the Church Wardens of St Mary the Virgin Church.

Dr Richard Tomlins  
March 2018

### **7/18 Planning Annual Report**

A summary of the 38 planning applications we have received during the year.

The parish council's response to these were:

31 NO STRONG VIEWS (then 1 withdrawn)

4 SHOULD BE REFUSED (Bix Hill House x 2, radio receiving antennae and Hill View)

1 WITHDRAWN

1 INFORMATION ONLY

Of these the SODC:  
GRANTED 24  
REFUSED 1  
AWAITING SODC DECISIONS 5  
WITHDRAWN OR AMENDED 7

I shall go into more detail about outstanding applications later in the meeting.

Cllr William Murdoch

### **8/18 Police Matters Annual Report**

#### **Cllr. Ina Chantry**

This information coming via the Henley Neighbourhood Policing team. Henley Sector comprises of Henley Town and the parishes of Goring, Woodcote, Goring Heath, South Stoke, Whitchurch-on-Thames, Nettlebed, Swyncombe, Pishill with Stonor, Bix & Assendon, Stoke Row, Highmoor, Checkendon, Rotherfield Greys, Sonning Common, Rotherfield Peppard, Kidmore End, Mapledurham, Harpsden, Binfield Heath, Shiplake, Eye & Dunsden.

**Burglary:** We still urge residents to be vigilant and review their home security.

Burglary continues to be a local priority in Henley with PCSOs carrying out high visibility patrols. Most of these burglaries are from outbuildings so it was urged to secure these.

**Speeding:** Due to resident's concerns, PCSOs Claire and Janice carried out speeding awareness on Harpsden Road, Henley. Two "Respect our Community" Speeding Signs are now in place on Harpsden Road.

**Parking:** This continues to be a problem in the Henley town centre, Fixed Penalty Tickets will be issued to offending vehicles. PCSOs will continue to monitor the Disabled Only parking bays.

**Rural crime:** During the weekend of 10/11th February the Henley NHPT took part in Operation Migrate. We were out patrolling the rural area and making contact with farmers and landowners. As a result of team work between Henley Officers, Henley PCSOs, and our colleagues in the Vale of White Horse, four males were arrested and four lurchers seized.

#### **Anti-social behaviour (ASB)**

In Sonning Common, two males were captured on CCTV and identified by Police, damaging community planting outside the village hall. Two Youth Restorative Disposals were issued to the young males and a written letter of apology was sent to the Parish Council.

#### **Safe Places**

Businesses in Henley-on-Thames are being encouraged to sign up to a new scheme to help provide a safe place to go if someone is feeling lost, worried or threatened. 'Safe Places' launches in Henley this March. Under the scheme, a vulnerable person can enter a participating location where trained staff will offer help to keep them safe. Retailers, charities and other venues can register an interest in becoming a Safe Place by emailing South Oxfordshire District Council's Community Safety team at [communitysafety@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:communitysafety@southandvale.gov.uk) or by calling 01235 422593. Participating locations will be invited to a special training session on Monday 26 February or 8 Thursday March at Henley Fire Station, with 45-minute slots available at 10am, 12:30pm and 5:30pm.



Once a member of staff has attended the training the location will receive an orange and yellow window sticker and can start supporting the Safe Places network. They will also be added to the Safe Places map - [safeplaces.org.uk/member-schemes/south-oxfordshire/](http://safeplaces.org.uk/member-schemes/south-oxfordshire/) and mobile phone app.

Henley NHPT have been working closely with schools, the town council and residents to combat Cybercrime. PCSOs have been into schools to talk about the dangers of sexting which supported 'Safer Internet' day last week.

Next month PCSO Janice Smith will be delivering anti-bullying talks to groups of parents and grandparents.

In regards to the level and types of crime in our parish, in relation to others, it was similar.

### **9/18 Broadband and Bix Church Improvements Annual Report** **Broadband Report by Cllr Matthew Beesley**

The last twelve months has seen substantial progress as relates to the provision of Super Fast Broadband to the Parish.

As at the end of calendar year 2017, a number of premises in the Bix and Assendon Parish were currently connected to cabinets sited a long distance from the villages and as such have not been able to benefit from the cabinet upgrades that have occurred in Lower Assendon

As part of their work to remedy this within their broader government-mandated targets, we were at Christmas informed by Better Broadband for Oxfordshire - and latterly corroborated by Councillor Bartholomew, that we would soon be benefiting from the installation of 3 secondary fibre cabinets within the parish at closer proximity to the premises they will serve. Being closer cabinets would lead to improved speeds for connected premises, subject to purchasing a fibre package with the individual ISPs.

Specifically we were informed that the premises in the Bix part of the parish will be connected to the new cabinet Henley-on-Thames cabinet 37, while the Lower and Middle Assendon premises will be connected to the new cabinets Henley-on-Thames cabinet 38 and 39.

As of now, cabinet 37 is stood and powered, but still requires some works to connect the cabinet to fibre and as such it is not yet ready to begin what is called the live-to-live migration process. As such OpenReach are now advising that the cabinet is in plan for the Jan-June 2018 delivery schedule. Cabinet 38 is now active and for those residents close by, there should now be the possibility of significantly faster broadband speeds, once their ISP is able to switch them over onto an appropriate broadband package. Cabinet 39 is stood and powered, but still requires some works to connect the cabinet to fibre and as such it is not yet ready to begin the live-to-live migration process. As with cabinet 37, OpenReach are advising that the cabinet is in plan for the Jan-June 2018 delivery schedule.

So a year of progress with the prospect of more to come.

### **Bix Church Annual Report by Cllr. Matthew Beesley**

2017 was a tough year for St James, and the rest of the Benefice, as the church was and indeed still is without a Rector. However, there continued to be a high level of community events organised directly by or for the church:

- The annual Bix Fete which was attended by over 300 people.
- The inaugural Open Gardens event had around 100 people attending
- The annual plant Sale
- Support for the Royal British Legion Remembrance Day service
- Provision of Teas for the annual Christian Aid walk
- Wine tasting event at the Village Hall
- Music evening at the Village Hall
- Donation of produce for the Food Bank

The big focus of the church as relate fund raising, is linked to its plans for an extension for toilet and kitchen facilities. Planning permission has recently been granted by SODC.

<http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/ccm/support/Main.jsp?MODULE=ApplicationDetails&REF=P17/S4381/FUL>

This enables the church to proceed with getting approvals from the church authorities; any significant changes to the fabric of the church has significant governance around it. Once they have agreed what can be done then formal quotes for the work will follow. Most of the grant bodies require approvals & quotations in place before submitting an application, however monies from some of last year's events will go toward this project and donations from both the Parish Council and the Village Hall Committee have been gratefully received in that regard. The Heritage Lottery Fund have sadly already dismissed the request for help. In total, the proposed works will likely cost about £300,000 and that might move higher if heating and lighting in the planned community space is also improved.

### **10/18 Bix & Assendon Grapevine (BAG) and website Annual Report Chris Chantry**

The main communication with the parishioners is through BAG and is very popular **with** 250 email address and vast majority are residents. Henley Standard picks up quite a few of them. Main role is to inform residents of parish council activities. But it also used the village hall events and it assisted with Church improvements questionnaire. Stable numbers for couple of years and it is likely this is now maxed out. The website has been updated for regulation requirements in Transparency with the 2016 and 2017 minutes and accounts accessible.

A member of the public asked how the BAG email obtained any crime or hawkker alerts. It was confirmed that the information came to Ina Chantry (via police alerts) or Jane Pryce (via residents emails).

### **11/18 Footpath Annual Report**

The South Chilterns Path Maintenance Volunteers Review of 2017 are attached to the minutes

The Chiltern Society continue to change stiles to gates. Manpower provided for this provided free of charge.

### **Added agenda item – 12/18 Roads**

I will provide a short update on the roads:

The major problem as all over the country is potholes, and we have our fair share.

The fix my street website has been updated and should now run smoothly. In our parish there are more than 30 incidents listed as open and more than 110 incidents as closed.

Fix my street will send all the reports directly to OCC and they will respond. It may be will be looked at, but still they will be made aware.

Fix my street [www.fixmystreet.com](http://www.fixmystreet.com)

Can also be used for reporting fly tipping, abandoned vehicles or other issues causing problems on the roads.

During the year Cllr Aitkin and County Councillor David Bartholomew have made several site visits together with the Area Steward to emphasize the problem with pot holes on our lanes. This has helped getting roads repaired, however pot holes keep reappearing.

David Bartholomew will provide more information on this topic in his report.

The grass cutting frequency by OCC has been reduced in previous years but is now back to twice a year where overgrowing vegetation is a danger to traffic, such as the crossing of A4130 at Bix. The Parish Council have budgeted for additional cutting in areas not maintained frequently by the OCC and are obtaining quotes for this.

*Lisbeth Thiesen*

*5 March 2018*

Concerns about the damaged large sign on the dual carriage. And some dumping. It was requested these should be reported. Jane Pryce will escalate this as was on 'Fix my Street'.

**The full Parish Council meeting followed the Annual Parish Council meeting.**

## PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

**The minutes of Bix & Assendon Parish Council meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2018.**

### **019/18 Apologies for absence**

None

### **020/18 Members declarations of personal and prejudicial interests**

None

### **021/18 Confirmation of the minutes of 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018**

The minutes of 8<sup>th</sup> January 2018 were corrected for an item in minute ref. 006/18.

“It was confirmed that Robert Aitkin would still represent the community on the Townlands Committee and that the Parish Council would welcome updates at his convenience.”

The minutes were then declared true and accurate and signed by the chairman.

### **022/18 Casual Vacancy**

A casual vacancy came about due to the resignation of Robert Aitken. The period of 14 days had passed and co-option came into force. The candidate, Robert Walmsley of Lower Assendon was put forward to be co-opted. Cllr William Murdoch proposed and was seconded by Cllr Matthew Beesley. The Returning Officer witnessed the signing of declaration of acceptance of office and was signed by Robert Walmsley and Jane Pryce. The Code of Conduct and Standing Orders documents will be forwarded. The ‘Members’ Interests’ form was also issued and was filled in by Cllr Robert Walmsley and then passed to the clerk for registering with SODC.

Robert Walmsley was welcomed to the parish council.

### **023/18 OCC Report from Cllr. D. Bartholomew**

#### **GENERAL OCC REPORT**

The full report can be found attached to the minutes.

#### **Budget 2018/19**

OCC agreed its budget at a Full Council meeting on 13<sup>th</sup> February following a five-hour meeting of all 63 county councillors. Council Tax will rise by 5.9%.

#### **Roads**

Almost £1 million in extra funding has been allocated from the Department of Transport for the damage done to roads by the bad weather.

#### **SPECIFIC REPORT FOR BIX & ASSENDON**

#### **PUBLIC INQUIRY FOR PROPOSED STOPPING UP AT MAYFLOWER COTTAGE**

The PC will be aware that it has been announced a Public Inquiry will take place on Wednesday 30 May. I will attend and speak if am available.

There was great concern about this from the public. Adverse consequences must be produced. Such as loss of a public amenity or safety for walking on a busy road.

#### **THIRD READING BRIDGE**

This project has been stalled. But I will keep you updated with any developments.

### **024/18 SODC Report from SODC Cllrs David Nimmo-Smith**

As above – a combined annual and general report was given during the annual part of the meeting.

### **025/18 Clerk's Report**

Acrylic glass pane had been found out of its frame at the bus shelter at Bix by Matthew Beesley. This has been re-instated.

The clerk requested she purchase 2 USB sticks with greater capacity as off-site backup sticks (at only 64mb) now only contained the accounts and some minutes. The new sticks would cost £15.98 for 2 and had 3.76 GB capacity. This was agreed.

A flyer for COMET Buses had been written and was handed to councillors. It was decided that to print and distribute would be too difficult and instead it was decided to put an article in 'The Link' magazine. The clerk will put an article together and email to the editor. A BAG was also asked to be issued, with a request included, to print and distribute to those without a computer. And the posters on noticeboards refreshed.

Names of soldiers fallen in WW1 have been registered with the Imperial War Museum and War Memorial Trust. Thanks to Kevin Duthie for providing the photographs which the Imperial War Museum also expressed. The clerk has been co-ordinating with Brigadier Andrew Merton about the WW1 centenary. Gary Hall of Bix Manor has offered to host the preliminary part of evening by offering the car park, hall, food (which the parish council is giving £200 towards) and refreshments (at buy your own bar). Arrangements for safe passage across the road has yet to be arranged for the later stages of the bugler and lighting the beacon. But this has still to agreed and there is a possibility of moving everything (eg. beacon) to Bix Manor with necessary permissions in place. Nettlebed may be doing their own centenary and a couple of other parishes may go to there rather than Bix.

Annual CIL and grant reports, that are required to ensure the money is spend as had been directed, were completed.

### **The second CIL report was presented:**

**A CIL report** for the Bix village gate

CIL Payment received: £594.00

CIL expenditure: £594.00 towards cost of village gate (total for gates was £1,019.07)

The **white lining** for Middle Assendon still not done but not paid for either

CIL Payment received: £1,209.38

CIL expenditure: None

This CIL payment will be carried forward to be spent by 2021.

This report will published on [www.bixandassendon.org.uk](http://www.bixandassendon.org.uk).

The second grant report has been done as the village gate has appeared in Bix. The path clearance at Bix towards Nettlebed (stopping at the woods) has stalled. The parish council has received £500 towards this and can only be spent on this. There has been emails about a machine that removes the soil rather than a 'brush cutter' which

throws it around. The Clerk has seen a similar path in Nuffield and has been cleared very well. She is awaiting details.

The external audit exemption documentation has now been published and it is clearer how to proceed. The parish council cannot apply for exemption till after 31<sup>st</sup> March and then before the EOY accounts approved by council. This will be in the May 14<sup>th</sup> meeting. But it is unclear how to fit in the internal audit part before deadline of 2<sup>nd</sup> July 2018. There is a £40 + VAT fine for late submission. Unless the clerk starts the internal audit process before EOY accounts approved and do both internal audit part 2 and section 1 and 2 and certificate of exemption at the same time. This was process was approved.

Jane Pryce noted she has not minuted the passing of the external audit 2016/17 nor provided the report for the website. She apologises for this and now noted and report passed to Chris for website today.

Using Gmail email addresses has been advised by OALC but so far testing of this has not gone well and Jane Pryce did create one for testing, it repeatedly asked for a password and the email address was deleted. This may be due to account set up and more testing to be done.

HMRC is again asking for payment of PAYE/NI for previous clerk. The payroll company was found to be stealing the money. A payment had been made and HMRC agreed this was 'case closed' but no mention of it in the recent correspondence. The clerk sought clarification of this but is still waiting. The liability is now £425.20 – this was paid as fines were being incurred daily. The parish council resolved to seek compensation for this.

Jane Pryce had been in contact again with Henley Town Council about grass cutting. Details were finalised and a re-imburement can be sought from SODC. Still awaiting quote for this. The area of grass round the Bix 'interchange' needs to be done separately, if needed.

### **026/18 Village Spring Clean**

The clerk asked if equipment (12 sets) for Lower Assendon be left with Robert Walmley the day before 18<sup>th</sup> March. This was not possible but Aafke Oldridge has offered. Equipment (12 sets) would be left with Matt Beesley for Bix, the day before and the clerk would deliver the remaining 12 sets of equipment for Middle Assendon on Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> March before 11am. Lisbeth Thiesen was unable to attend.

### **027/18 Allotment Report**

The clerk was concerned, again, about plot 6. She has offered to the tenant to subdivide but this would be considered later after the season is over.

The site overall is looking very good.

A question was asked about the tenant and whether more time to get the plot in order would help but the clerk informed that the plot had been tenanted for a year. It was resolved if the plot can vacant it would be subdivided.



**028/18 Planning**

a) Applications received

<b>Reference</b>	<b>Date Registered</b>
<b>Location/Description</b>	<b>Target Decision date</b>
<a href="#">P18/S0533/HH</a> Orchard Dene, Old Bix Road, Lower Assendon RG9 6AG Construction of swimming pool. <b>BAPC</b> deadline for response 19 <sup>th</sup> March 2018	21 February 2018 18 April 2018
.....	.....
<a href="#">P18/S0480/HH</a> The Fables, Wallingford Road, Bix RG9 6DB Erection of detached timber garage building <b>BAPC</b> deadline for response 7 March 2018	9 February 2018 6 April 2018
.....	.....
<a href="#">P17/S4024/FUL</a> Campions, Henley Park, Fawley RG9 6HY "Variation of condition 2 of planning application P17/S0847/FUL to vary approved plans with revised basement layout to incorporate a garage" <b>BAPC</b> deadline for response 9 March 2018	15 February 2018 12 April 2018

b) BAPC Recommendations

<a href="#">P17/S3158/HH</a> Leys Cottage, Old Bix Road, Bix RG9 6BY External alterations to ground floor garaging within existing linked extension to facilitate the creation of a home office and construction of a new triple bay car port upon concrete hardstanding on land to the south. The forestry officer is concerned that the work will damage surrounding trees. <b>BAPC recommendation 'NO STRONG VIEWS'</b> <b>SODC</b> target decision date 27.11.2017	
.....	
<a href="#">P17/S3318/FUL</a> - amendment No. 2 Bix Hill House, Old Bix Road, Bix RG9 6BY Demolition of existing house and erection of new house and garage <b>BAPC recommendation 'SHOULD BE REFUSED'</b> - An inappropriate design for the location and this is not a replacement as the new house is in a completely different site. <b>SODC</b> target decision date 9.1.2018	

c) SODC Decisions

<a href="#">P17/S4381/FUL</a> St James Church, Henley Construction of single storey extension to Grade II listed church for the provision of kitchen and toilet facilities. <b>BAPC response 'NO STRONG VIEWS'</b> <b>SODC - GRANTED</b>	
.....	
<a href="#">P17/S4154/FUL</a> Bromsden Farmhouse, Bix RG9 4RG	

Installation of photovoltaic modules

**BAPC recommendation 'NO STRONG VIEWS'**

**SODC granted**

.....  
[P17/S4070/FUL & LB](#)

Bix Manor, Barn Road, Known as Broad Plat Lane,  
Bix RG9 4RS

Change of use from function and events to residential. Formation of a new access for existing dwelling

**BAPC response 'NO STRONG VIEWS'**

**SODC granted**

.....  
[P17/S4189/FUL](#)

Henley Four Oaks Caravan Club Site,  
Marlow Road, HENLEY RG9 2HY

Relaxation of a seasonal occupancy condition from 8.5 months to 12 months of the year.

**BAPC recommendation 'NO STRONG VIEWS'**

**SODC granted**

.....  
[P17/S4430/HH](#)

Foxwell Cottage, Bix RG9 6DB  
Single storey side extensions

**BAPC recommendation 'NO STRONG VIEWS'**

**SODC granted**

A question was asked about the large antennas (in the testing stage of the application) would just appear or would notice be given. William Murdoch confirmed they would just appear but might not be switched on straight away.

Landscaping being carried out at Round Hill House was questioned as being carried out on agricultural land. And had a change of use been applied for? It was confirmed that it had not and this would be looked into.

### **029/18 Correspondence**

Application to OCC for change of byways to BOAT (Byway Open to All Traffic). This is several applications spread across South Oxfordshire. As many neighbouring parishes were involved, it was decided (and advised) that a joint parish response would hold more weight. Six parishes have joined and signatures acquired and submitted.

Maggie Templeman (Bix & Assendon parish Chiltern Society representative) has forwarded the Chiltern Society objection to this for 10 areas. This confirms that due to Parish path representatives in all the parishes, they can provide witness statements to the effect that these byways did not have motorised traffic between 2001 and 2006.

### **030/18 Bus Shelter**

The three quotes were discussed.

BusShelter: £6,577.39 + VAT £1,315.48 Total £7,892.86

Externiture Ltd £5,960 + VAT £1,192.00 Total £7,152.00

BCShelters £2,499.00 + VAT - hard standing not quoted £1,390 - £1,995

Exteriture Ltd was decided on. The SODC grant window will open 15<sup>th</sup> March. The clerk would apply for a SODC grant.

**027/18 Finance**

a) Cheques for payment

Clerk's wages and office rent for February and March £444.68

Expenses incurred on behalf of the parish council £425.20 for PAYE/NI not paid by payroll company in 2013/14

Total = £869.88

OALC annual subscription £135.06 (VAT £22.51)

b) Payments received

None

Bank balance £14,752.00

The mandate change forms to remove Robert Aitken as a signatory for cheques had been signed and posted.

**032/18 Village Hall Report**

Please see above under the annual parish meeting.

A question of 'safe guarding' for activities held in village halls. A policy for this will be checked.

**033/18 Any other business**

A USB stick was handed to Lisbeth Thiesen to have an off-site backup of minutes and accounts. This will be swapped at every meeting with an up-to-date second USB stick.

**034/18 Public Comments**

None

Next Meeting – Monday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2018 at 7.30pm. This meeting is the Annual Electors Parish Council Meeting.

The meeting ended at 9.31 pm