



North Hinksey Parish Council

2019 Newsletter



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Annual Parish Meeting

We would like to encourage all parishioners to attend the **Annual Parish Meeting at 7.30pm on Thursday 21st March in Seacourt Hall** (refreshments served from 7pm). Please send any questions in writing (an e-mail will do) to the Parish Clerk by 12 noon on Monday 18th March to receive a reply at the meeting.

This year there will be updates on the proposed Oxford to Cambridge Expressway, plans for a replacement Pavilion, and progress on the Botley Centre redevelopment, but with so many things happening in and around the parish no doubt quite a few other topics will arise during the meeting.

Remember, this is your chance as residents to set the agenda, and to discuss local issues that are of most importance to you personally.

Be there on 21st March to find out more.



Community Hub framework in the snow

2019 Chairman's Report

The Botley Centre redevelopment remains the biggest single issue impacting on the lives of local residents and businesses. In recent months progress has been both speedy and relatively painless, for which I'd like to thank Mace, SDC and everybody else carrying out the works.

Following the demolition of the old shops the frameworks of new structures are rising in several locations, and we look forward to moving in to the new Seacourt Hall alongside Botley Library and Botley Baptist Church around the end of 2019 (see current status in photo below).

The threat of widening the A34 as part of an Oxford to Cambridge Expressway still remains, and we will only find out which routes Highways England are considering in detail at the public consultation this autumn. NHPC will continue to oppose the scheme in general, and specifically any routes that would impact on Botley.

In November we launched the new Parish Council website at **www.northhinksey-pc.gov.uk**. Built in Wordpress, the website uses a more modern design, adapts automatically for viewing on your phone or tablet and we tidied up the pages to make the information more focused. We hope it will provide easier access to the information you need but please do send us any feedback on possible further improvements to the webmaster at **website@northhinksey-pc.gov.uk**.

Our Neighbourhood Plan has now been submitted to the Vale for Independent Examination, the first stage of which is a six week consultation ending on the 27th March. For further details see the Vale website at **www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/northhinksey**.

With local elections taking place in May we are hoping to encourage an influx of new candidates from across the parish (especially some younger residents) to take on the many challenges that will face the new Parish Council in the future, and to build on the good work of this Council.

Finally a word about Alan Stone, our former Parish Clerk, who retired in December. His gritty enthusiasm and experience will be sorely missed, not least by me personally.

**Councillor David Kay,
North Hinksey Parish Council Chairman**

Planning Committee Report

The Planning Committee continues to comment on a wide range of applications, though not those submitted under the (amended) 1995 General Permitted Development Order, where only neighbours can comment. Our objections to an application have to be supported by the Vale of White Horse Ward District Councillor (Cllr. Debby Hallett) if the Vale's Planning Committee is to discuss it.

Some earlier applications for conversions or replacement by blocks of flats, to which we objected on the grounds of poor general amenity space, but which the Vale approved, are now well under way, notably at 47 West Way and 8 Elms Road, and confirm our concerns. On the Seacourt Retail Park the drive-through coffee shop and the new access from the A34 slip road are now open; Homebase has closed, but has not been replaced by a Marks & Spencer Food Store, as once suggested, and it appears that the rest of the planned development is now on hold.

In Botley Centre the interim replacement accommodations for the Seacourt Hall, Baptist Church, Co-op, pharmacy and Tesco are now operating smoothly. Alongside them the new West Way Centre construction is proceeding by leaps and bounds.

At long last Persimmon has agreed to complete the Tilbury Fields estate to the original plans, requiring significant work to upgrade roads and re-work drainage to a satisfactory standard, with corresponding inconvenience to those living there. The planned play area, urgently needed for young families on the estate and others in this part of the parish, is still being used as a builders' yard.

Details of developments near you, and their progress, can be found on the Vale of White Horse's Planning website by inputting the reference number or the address. If you believe that what is being built is not in agreement with the approved plans, you should ring the Vale's Enforcement Team on 01235-422600.

I would like to thank the other five members of the committee and the Parish Clerk for their help with planning applications over the past year.

**Councillor Andrew Pritchard,
Planning Committee Chairman**

Remembrance Day Service 2018

The 2018 Remembrance Day service at Botley Cemetery took place on a beautiful autumn morning and provided a peaceful setting in which to reflect on the exact moment that the First World War ended, 100 years to the day.

We were delighted to welcome many local residents, a large contingent of HM Forces, local Clergy, representatives of local, national and international government, local Police, uniformed groups of children with their leaders and pupils from Matthew Arnold School. We welcomed new Parish Clerk Colin Ryde, who has assisted on many previous occasions by amplifying and broadcasting the service. Retiring Parish Clerk Alan Stone had, as usual, worked tirelessly to enable this, his last service, to run smoothly.

The W.I. hall was packed at the end of the service with people enjoying the hot drinks and wonderful home-made biscuits. There was also a chance to look at the work of local school children, who responded movingly to our search for poems and pictures relating to our theme of peace and reconciliation.

Matthew Arnold pupil Olivia Metson read her poem, *Peace*, during the service which ends:

Let there be love
For those we've lost
For those who live
As we remember them

Let there be peace
A bond of unity and love
Let them bring us together
As we remember them.

Our guest speaker was Alan Pope, ex Lord Mayor of Oxford and chair of the Oxford-Bonn Twinning Link, now in its 72nd year. Alan's speech and samples of the children's work are on the NHPC website (Remembrance Day Section).

Alan Pope finished his talk with following very fitting words: *Here in this cemetery are graves of British and Commonwealth servicemen as well as their enemies-Germans and Italians. But it is right that we now remember all those who died in the war, regardless of their nationality. All fought for their country. And with this sacrifice in mind, let us be positive and active in continuing to work for a more peaceful world, based on reconciliation and hope for the future.*

**Councillor Voirrey Carr
Remembrance Day Committee Chairman**

Allotments Committee

The long hot summer dried out our clay soil and made gardening difficult last year, although the plots by Seacourt Stream were a shady refuge. Enjoy them while you can (there are still a couple vacant!) as the Flood Alleviation Scheme threatens to replace the tranquil views with heavy machinery for several years to come. On the plus side, our plots may also become less prone to flooding.

We have been advised that allotment tenancies should coincide with the growing season, so this year's rents have been adjusted to cover an extra three months. All will then be in order for next year's invoices to be sent out by the new Parish Council. At present we have several vacant plots, so now is the time to step forward if you want to grow your own vegetables.

The annual meeting for tenants took place on 16th February, and was addressed by Carol Kramer, gardener and nutritionist, on the subject of Good Food from Good Soil. The pump handle on the well is now fixed and the neighbouring tank filled. Thanks are due to Chris Sugden for his help. The plot markers are currently being brought up to scratch.

Inspections will take place at the end of April, the end of July and in October.

The Allotments Committee has historic responsibility for the Community Orchard and the Nature Reserve in North Hinksey Lane. Much work has been done here over the winter. The nature reserve has been tidied and cleared, and the willows round the pond thinned and pollarded, thanks to Oxford Conservation Volunteers. A pile of logs for firewood has been left for people to take away – please help yourselves!



The memorial garden is in a sorry state. Hopefully this will soon be reinstated, but if you know who is responsible for the vandalism that has disfigured it, please tell us. The Parish Council will struggle to find the money to make it good in the short term, though in the longer term we are hoping to give it an overhaul with help from Kevin Minns.

Councillor Ag MacKeith
Allotments Committee Chairman

Recreation & Amenities Committee

Over the past four years the R&A Committee has focused on the NHPC key objective of providing an improved range of leisure and recreational facilities within the parish. We've made visible progress, but the work is only partially done. So even as this council's term comes to an end we keep moving towards longer-term goals for the community.

In January we opened the new adventure play area in the upper Louie Memorial Playing Field. This followed more than three years of reviewing available facilities, consulting local young people, undertaking longer-term planning for the playing fields, and selecting the equipment (zip wire, trampoline, and big swings). It was fantastic to finally deliver this for the community to enjoy!



NHPC is now seeking planning permission for a multi-use building to replace the Louie Memorial Pavilion. R&A Committee members have supported the development of these plans since early 2018 by working with community stakeholders including Pavilion Trustees, Scouts representatives, and Youth Club leaders. There is still much work to be done to make the new building a reality, but we couldn't have made it this far without so much community effort. Hundreds of parishioners took part in public consultation events as the plans emerged, and you will be able to give your views as the Vale District Council considers the plans – check the NHPC website for details.

Preparation for the planning application included an ecological survey of the playing fields in November. The R&A Committee is taking forward recommendations for further surveys on bat activity and the health of the fen in the spring, for which we welcome support from organisations such as BBOWT. The North Hinksey Conservation Volunteers have worked tirelessly to keep the woodlands bordering the playing fields enjoyable for all, and we thank them for their dedicated efforts.

In the course of its work the R&A Committee has built strong relationships within the community. The trial agreement with Matthew Arnold School for use of the Louie Memorial football pitch and MUGA for PE lessons has been a great success, and we are recommending that the agreement be extended. We are also very grateful to the Pavilion Trustees and Caretakers, who have looked after the building and playing fields with great care.

So lots behind us, but more exciting things on the horizon. All are welcome to attend the next R&A meeting on 4th April.

Councillor Caroline Potter,
R & A Committee Chairman

Parish Councillors to May 2019

Cllr. Lorna Berrett

Tel. Oxford 722732 or 07967 111014
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Cllr. Judith Bolder

2, Stanley Close Tel. 07838 239939
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Cllr. Andrew Pritchard

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Cllr. Adam Rankin

Tel. 07989 574862
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Parish Clerk

Mr. Colin Ryde

Parish Clerk office, Seacourt Hall, 2nd floor,
1 Westminster Way (above Co-op), 9:30am to
3pm Monday to Thursday
Tel. & Fax Oxford 861992
E-mail: clerk@northhinksey-pc.gov.uk

District Councillors

Cllr. Debby Hallett

Tel. Oxford 435794

Cllr. Emily Smith

Tel. 07986 877933

County Councillor

Cllr. Judy Roberts

Tel. Oxford 319279

Seacourt Hall Bookings

Eric Batts

Tel. 07452 960100

E-mail seacourt.hall@gmail.com

www.seacourthall.org.uk

Parish Council Responsibilities:

- Allotments, community orchard, and nature reserve
- Consideration/comments to the District Council on Planning matters
- Playing Fields, including the football pitch, MUGA, Trim Trail and children's play area
- Copse & concrete path from Cedar & Hurst Rise Roads
- Maintenance/upkeep of parish owned land / buildings including Louie Memorial Pavilion
- Parish owned bus shelters, notice boards and seats
- Maintenance of the Parish Council website

Parish Council Committees:

- Planning
- Finance and General Purposes
- Allotments includes the North Hinksey Nature Reserve and the Community Orchard
- Recreation and Amenities
- Remembrance Day
- Communications

Committee membership, meeting dates and other events information can be found on the Parish Council website and Facebook page:

www.northhinksey-pc.gov.uk

www.facebook.com/northhinkseypc

Attendance at Council Meetings:

The following are the number and percentage of full Parish Council meetings attended by Parish Councillors over the year to January 2019:

Cllr. L. Berrett	10 out of 11	91%
Cllr. J. Bolder	9 out of 11	82%
Cllr. V. Carr	10 out of 11	91%
Cllr. C. Church	7 out of 11	64%
Cllr. A. Dykes	11 out of 11	100%
Cllr. A. Hardiman	5 out of 11	45%
Cllr. D. Kay	11 out of 11	100%
Cllr. L. Kunzemann	8 out of 11	73%
Cllr. A. MacKeith	9 out of 11	82%
Cllr. R. Mayne	8 out of 11	73%
Cllr. C. Potter	10 out of 11	91%
Cllr. A. Pritchard	10 out of 11	91%
Cllr. A. Rankin	10 out of 11	91%

Other useful Telephone Numbers:

Vale District Council Milton Park 01235 422422
Oxford City Council Town Hall 01865 249811
Oxon County Council County Hall 01865 792422
Oxon County Council Highways (potholes & local highways problems—not A34) 0345 3101111
Thames Water Emergency Line 0800 714 614
Thames Valley Police Non-Emergency Calls 101