

Report of the Chairman of the Parish Council to the Annual Parish Meeting – 12th March 2015

1). Chairman's Foreword

The main concern of parishioners in the last twelve months has, again, been the redevelopment of West Way. Following an initial application by Doric Properties, the Vale of White Horse District Council required Doric to submit an environmental statement, which included more detail. I thank the members of the Planning Committee who spent many hours reading the complex planning documents and helping to frame our detailed response. On behalf of the Parish I presented our objections at the Vale Planning Committee meeting on 3rd December, at which the Vale councillors on the committee voted unanimously to reject the proposals. We were then told that Doric would be appealing against the decision, but having heard nothing more, I asked the head of the Vale, Mr. Matthew Barber, to meet with representatives of NHPC to update us. He met with us and other stakeholders last month, and at a second meeting earlier this week we were told that an announcement on the way forward will be made shortly. I asked at these meetings for more collaboration, rather than "consultation" with stakeholders at which they are asked to accept or reject proposals that have already been prepared, and I understand that this approach will be a feature of future meetings with the developer. The final proposals will of course have to meet the developer's financial targets but it looks as if it will be a much more democratic process. The Parish Council will continue to press any potential developers for a modern and larger replacement Seacourt Hall, with facilities for use by senior citizens.

NHPC has also commented on the Vale's draft Local Plan 2031, emphasising that Botley should be considered a Local Centre and not a District Centre, and that the vicarage and Field House should not be designated as part of the retail centre. We also made comments on the Vale's latest Design Guide, and are in the process of commenting on the County's Local Transport Plan LTP4 2015-2031. We shall be expressing concern about the poor cycling routes into the city, the lack of a coherent bus system, the excessive on street parking and the need for strategic planning of such developments as the proposed Local Rapid Transit.

From our own part, a questionnaire was circulated to all dwellings and businesses in the Parish asking for responses to accompany a request for the Parish to become a Designated Area for a Neighbourhood Plan. A second questionnaire about leisure activities and facilities was circulated with the Annual Parish Newsletter, and I would like to thank all those who returned their comments, whether on paper or electronically.

I thank councillors for their contribution to the work of the Parish Council, and the Parish Clerk for his valuable advice and his tireless work to deal with administrative matters. The powers of a Parish Council are extremely limited, as are our funds, but we are united in wanting the best for North Hinksey and its residents.

The number of residents in the Parish is increasing daily: many houses are now occupied on the new estate at Harcourt Place (Lime Road), and the first ones are appearing on the North Hinksey side of the Fogwell Road development. I would like to welcome the new parishioners who have already moved in, and look forward to seeing more in the coming year. As always councillors or the Parish Clerk are available to help with any issues.

2). Number of Scheduled Meetings of the Council and other Committees between May 2014 and February 2015

Parish Council – 10 meetings (including Special Meeting 10/12/2014)

Allotments Committee (including N.H. Nature Reserve and the Community Orchard) - 2 meetings and the Allotment Holders AGM

Planning Committee – 14 meetings (During the period the committee considered 60 planning applications, opposing 21 of them.)

Remembrance Day Committee – 3 meetings

Finance & General Purposes (including Grants Allocation, Highways and Web-Site Working Group issues) – 3 meetings

Recreation & Amenities Committee – 2 meetings

During the period two Councillor Surgeries have been held.

3). Councillors' Attendance as a % of Full Parish Council Meetings (10) held between May 2014 and February 2015

Cllr. A. Pritchard (Chair)	10/10 (100%)	Cllr. D. Kay (Vice-Chair)	9/10 (90%)
Cllr. Mrs. P. Allen	7/10 (70%)	Cllr. E. Batts	6/10 (60%)
Cllr. R. Carr	9/10 (90%)	Cllr. Mrs. V. Carr	10/10 (100%)
Cllr. C. Church	3/10 (30%)	Cllr. Mrs. A. Dykes	10/10 (100%)
Cllr. Mrs. K. El-Barhdadi	2/10 (20%)	Cllr. Mrs. J. Hammett	9/10 (90%)
Cllr. A. Hardiman	6/10 (60%)	Cllr. Ms. A. MacKeith	8/10 (80%)
Cllr. S. Sellars	5/10 (50%)	Cllr. Mrs. E. Smith	7/10 (70%)

4). Remembrance Day Service (Sunday 9th November 2014)

I would like to thank the Remembrance Day Committee and the Parish Clerk for the considerable amount of work they put into organising this annual event in the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery, Botley Cemetery.

Please see the report of the Chairman of the Remembrance Day Sub-Committee.

5). Thames Valley Neighbourhood Action Group (NAG)

Councillor Mrs. J. Hammett is the Parish Council representatives on our local NAG where the local communities north of Abingdon meet to discuss issues and work together with the Police and local authorities on issues of concern. This close collaboration continues to provide opportunities to share problems and ideas together and possible solutions to local difficulties. Pc Carl Bryant remains as the local Neighbourhood Officer and is supported by local PCSO's.

6). Grants/Subscriptions

The budget for 2014/15 is £1,940 and currently grants to the value of £1,452 have already been awarded.

Analysis

	<u>Elderly</u>	<u>Disabled/Sick</u>	<u>Youth</u>	<u>Other</u>
	£	£	£	£
Louie Memorial Pavilion - External Paint				152
Louie Memorial Pavilion MC (Fete)				500
South and Vale Carers Centre		200		
Oxford Assn for the Blind		200		
Abingdon & District CAB				200
North Hinksey Conservation Volunteers				200
Totals	0	400	0	1,052

All requests for grant application forms should be made as soon as possible after 1st April 2015, and if possible returned to the Parish Clerk by 19th June 2015. Providing funds are available the Parish Council will consider supporting any local community or club organising an event benefitting the local community.

7). Parish Council Tax for 2015/2016

The Parish Council's Precept (2015/2016) is £75,200 and is a smallest part of your overall annual Council Tax payment. The Parish Council has kept the Parish Precept at the same amount as the current year. The VWHDC has calculated that the parishes 2015/2016 Council Tax at Band D will be £44.65 a year, (£45.35 in the current year). This equates to a monthly charge of £3.72, or 85.9 pence a week.

8). Thank You's

Finally, my sincere thanks to the following people: -

Parish Clerk:	Alan Stone	for his help and hard-work.
Pavilion Caretaker:	Martin Dowie	(Maintains the football pitch, cleans the MUGA,
	Murray Rankin	undertakes the weekly play area safety checks, cleans
	(Relief Caretaker)	outside the Pavilion, the Lime Road bus shelter and litter
		picks).
Grass Cutting:	Trevor Neale	(Churchyard and Village Green + Allotments etc.)
	BGG Garden &	(Playing Fields)
	Tree Care	
Litter Cleaning	Peter Edgington	(Litter Clearance in the Copse area)
Maintenance &	Graham Sillman	(General maintenance work etc, safety checks etc.)
General Works:		

I would also like to thank all the other people who have worked for the Parish Council during the year, but have not been specifically mentioned by name. Finally, thank you to my fellow councillors and the Parish Clerk for their efforts during the year and their willingness to continue to listen to the differing views of the widest possible selection of parishioners.

Andrew Pritchard
Chairman North Hinksey Parish Council
12th March 2015

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