

146/11 COUNTY & DISTRICT REPORTS

Mr Roger Bell (District Councillor) – Mr Bell reported that since the last Parish Council meeting he has had written confirmation from the Post Office Ltd that the village Post Office will close. The Post Office Ltd state in the letter that they are determined to ensure that a service is maintained in Horspath. Mr Bell has also had a discussion with Mr Patel. Mr Horsley stated that the Post Office Ltd is aware that there are options for the Post Office to remain in the village, and have been to the village to see the facilities available in the Doctor's Room but to date no reply has been received. Discussions have also taken place with the two pubs in the village. Local businesses have taken action to make sure that their businesses will not suffer. Mrs Julian commented that she is concerned with the security issues of the Post Office operating from the Doctor's Room in the Village Hall even though there will be no money left on site, therefore modifications would be required. Mrs Watson asked if a mobile post office would be an option. Mr Horsley stated that this type of service is an outreach from a local Post Office. Mr Horsley will ask the temporary postmistress how many pensioners rely on the local Post Office to collect their pensions. Mr Turnbull suggested that it may be worth considering running computer classes for people over 60 years so they can learn how to do their banking etc online. Mr Turnbull also asked the Parish Council if they would be interested in taking receipt of old computers. Mrs Julian stated that unless the computers were wireless this would not be an option. Mr Bell will reply to the Post Office Ltd asking them to keep him informed.

Mrs Anne Purse (County Councillor) –

Wheatley Youth Club – Mrs Purse reported that the building has been awarded a grant to make it into a children's centre. The Youth Club has submitted a bid for a Big Society grant. There is a very strong possibility that there will be transport to the youth club available for youths from neighbouring villages to enable them to attend so maybe Horspath Parish Council can consider a financial contribution in the next budget.

147/11 CLERK'S UPDATE

Stagecoach – Written confirmation has been received from Martin Sutton (Stagecoach) that the fence has now been repaired.

Blake Laphorn Solicitors – The recent invoice for £600.00 has now been cancelled.

Arrow Accounting – Letter of Engagement for 2011/12. – Deferred to next meeting.

Horspath Fair – Mr Pettigrove has confirmed that the fair will be on Monday 12th September 2011.

148/11 RISK ASSESSMENTS

Mr James Dobson recently circulated the format for the risk assessments to all Councillors. To move this project forward, Mr Dobson will now circulate it to all relevant organisations in the village to be completed. Mr Harris stated that he has carried out the risk assessments in the Conservation Area and confirmed that he has emailed the format used for this to Mr Dobson who can amend it where necessary. Mr Pete Dobson asked what terms of reference is Mr James Dobson working under, as he thought that each organisation was submitting their risk assessments onto Mr James Dobson but they seem to be reluctant to share the information. Mr Horsley will forward onto Mr Dobson the risk assessment for HVSA and Mrs Julian/Mr Murray will forward on the same for the HVHMC. Mrs Julian explained that the information passed to Mr James Dobson so far was the initial risk assessment and the last review was carried out in a different format. Mr Harris commented that risk assessments have to be in place for insurance purposes.

149/11 POST OFFICE – This item was discussed under Item 146/11 Mr Roger Bell (District Councillor).

150/11 BURIAL GROUND

Mr Turnbull reported that the landowner Mr Dennis Walker is not available to meet with him until after the harvest period to discuss the drainage issues. Mr Walker is not aware of any proposals regarding digging a trench around the 3 sides of the burial ground which will be on his land, however this may

have been discussed with his father. Mrs Woodcock has passed details of the previous quotes received to Mr Turnbull and Mrs Julian has the details of the contractor who came out to site. To be discussed at next meeting.

151/11 END OF YEAR ACCOUNTS 2010/2011 – EXTERNAL AUDIT

Postponed until the October meeting as the External Audit report has not yet been received.

152/11 CORRESPONDENCE.

- a. 2JEvents – Invitation. – (Circulated via email).
- b. John Howell MP – Village Tour. – (Circulated via email).
- c. South and Vale Councils – Communications August 2011. – (Circulated via email).
- d. Rural Services Network – News Digest. – (Circulated via email).
- e. John Howell MP – MPs Surgeries September – December 2011.#
- f. OALC – Training Event. – (Circulated via email). – (Mr Ewart to attend).
- g. Neighbourhood Watch – Public Disorder. – (Circulated via email).
- h. OCC – Preparing for Winter – Salt Bins & Big Bags. – **Mrs Purse stated that Mr Paul Wilson (OCC) is willing to come out and discuss the new plans with the Parish Council if required. It is a policy decision about the Big Society and Parishes having more control. Last winter there wasn't a shortage of salt, the problem was the inability to keep the roads clear. If this situation happened again, with this new plan villages would already have the salt and a local person who has the necessary machinery could use the salt to get the roads gritted. Mr Dobson asked if OCC are no longer providing this service then the allocated budget should be paid to the Parish Council. Mrs Purse stated that OCC intend to provide the same service as in previous years but if there is a situation where vehicles are limited then only so many roads can be gritted. The plan for the salt is complimentary on top of the existing service for Parishes to use it where necessary. OCC have said that they will look at the option of paying local farmers etc to grit the roads in villages. Mr Harris stated that there would be local companies who may be interested in this option and maybe they would take delivery of the 1 tonne of salt. Councillors requested that clarification is needed from OCC that they will ensure that the main roads will still be gritted particularly from the Ring Road and along Cuddesdon Road and Gidley Way. Mrs Purse recommended that a Councillor attends the meeting on 4th October 2011 to obtain more details. Councillors agreed that the Clerk write to OCC stating that the Parish Council does not accept the new plans as a solution to the road safety problems in winter weather and that we expect the salt bins to be re-filled during the winter months as and when necessary and that the main roads to be gritted as this is the responsibility of OCC Highways Dept. Unless the roads are kept clear of snow and ice, Horspath residents cannot use public bus services to access vital services such as Doctor's Surgeries, Pharmacies and Hospital clinics which could have serious consequences. It is unacceptable that we have been informed of the new plan less than 8 weeks before the winter could start which is not allowing any reasonable notice for the Parish Council to put a plan in place. Any accidents that may occur due to the lack of salt available or roads that are not gritted will be the sole responsibility of OCC.**
- i. Glasdon – Products for Local Councils.*
- j. Oxfordshire Carers' Forum – Donation Request. – **No donation made on this occasion.**
- k. Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group – Donation Request. – **No donation made on this occasion.**
- l. Russell Harrison – Masons Funfair. – **Passed to Mrs Watson to keep on file for any future village fetes etc.**
- m. Wheatley Parish Council – Newsletter August/September 2011.*
- n. OPFA – Newsletter Summer 2011.*
- o. The Local Government Boundary Commission – Electoral Review of Oxfordshire. – **Noted.**
- p. ORCC – Invitation to Community Networking Event 3.10.11.*

- q. Clerks & Councils Direct – September 2011 Newsletter.*
- r. OCC – Review of Octabus Dial-a-Ride Service.*
- s. Oxfordshire Association for the Blind – Donation Request. – **Councillors agreed a donation of £50.00.**
- t. OPFA – Renewal of Annual Membership £35.00.*
- u. Neighbourhood Watch – TVP Community Policing Update. – (Circulated via email).
- v. Thames Valley Police – Police report for September 2011 for Horspath. - (Circulated via email).
- w. SODC – Town & Parish Council Forum 2011. - (Circulated via email).
- x. Open Spaces Society – Defra Consultation. - (Circulated via email).
- y. OCC – Emergency Response & Winter Preparedness. - (Circulated via email).
- z. SODC – Minutes of the Standards Committee Meeting held on 13.7.11. - (Circulated via email).
- aa. OCC – Consultation on Draft Oxfordshire Minerals & Waste Plans. – (Circulated at meeting).

** original held by the Clerk, copy available on request.*

displayed on Village Hall & village noticeboards.

153/11 PAYMENTS.

Chq	To Whom Paid	Details	Vat	Total £
2096	OALC	Training Event – Mr Peter Ewart	8.00	48.00
2097	Buildbase	Materials for Conservation Area	1.22	7.30
2098	OPFA	Renewal of Annual Subscription		35.00
2099	PWLB	Loan repayment for Village Hall		1095.00
2100		CHEQUE CANCELLED		
2101	Ox'shire Assoc for the Blind	Donation		50.00
		TOTAL	9.22	1235.30

Chq	To Whom Paid	Details (Stone Pit Charity)	Vat	Total £
100001	Mr James Offen	Consultancy service for Stagecoach Lease		250.00
		TOTAL		250.00

154/11 RECEIPTS.

Date	From Who Received	Details	Total £
		TOTAL	

155/11 ANY OTHER BUSINESS.

- a. Mr Horsley reported that the new dog bin at the entrance of Shotover Country Park by the entrance of 43 Blenheim Road has not been emptied. Clerk to inform SODC.
- b. Mr Harris gave the following report on the Conservation Area. - Our bat tunnel is now of prime importance for the conservation of at least four species of bats in Oxfordshire, and it is now in its tenth year of operation. The preliminary Health and Safety inspection of the bat tunnel before the visit by the Oxfordshire Bat Group on 7th August showed that while the structure of the tunnel itself was still very sound, there were some broken sections of the duck-boarding which needed to be removed from use to avoid accidents. The bat tunnel visit was enjoyed by 22 people, and the damaged sections of duck-boarding were temporarily covered over by some new planks. However, a further examination of this duck-boarding by our volunteer carpenters on 20th August revealed that more extensive sections of the woodwork are insecure and these need to be replaced as a matter of urgency by thicker boards, and the cost of these boards will be approximately £350. It is proposed that this carpentry work is undertaken by our local volunteers before the end of October, so that it is safe for other volunteers who monitor the

bats throughout the winter to use the duck-boarding to enter the tunnel when it is flooded, as it intentionally is flooded to a depth of about two feet deep throughout the winter, to maintain a high humidity to protect the hibernating bats. Councillors agreed that Mr Harris go ahead with this project. Mr Harris also reported that he has applied to the Carter Trust for a grant of £900.00. On 27th August a group of 9 volunteers, using three Stihl petrol-driven hedge trimmers, and a selection of wheel barrows and rakes, cut the tall vegetation on the clay wildflower meadow beside the main path in the Wildlife Conservation Area, and put the cuttings on the main compost heap, which is now an important habitat for a variety of small animals. This meadow can now be mown closer for the winter, now that the tall vegetation has been removed, and it is hoped that this will be done before November. The next seasonal maintenance tasks for our volunteers will be to cut back all the vegetation growing over the circular path, and to resurface any areas where the gravel has been worn away by the high daily volume of pedestrian traffic.

- c. Mr Harris reported that approximately 110 of the free trees planted in the Bowley Field have now died and need to be replaced with English Oaks or Beeches. Mr Harris suggests that we order the trees as whips at a cost of approx £1 each and then ask a team of volunteers to plant them in November. Councillors agreed for Mr Harris to obtain a quote. To be discussed at next meeting.
- d. Mr James Dobson passed thanks to Mr Harris and Mr Brooks for a marvelous open day visiting the bat tunnel. Mr Harris commented that Mr Brooks came along and laid the new planking.

156/11 DATE OF NEXT MEETINGS.

Parish Council Planning Meeting – Tuesday 20th September 2011 (To be confirmed)

Horspath Parish Council Meeting – Tuesday 4th October 2011.

157/11 STAGECOACH & HORSPATH STONE PIT CHARITY

Mr Harris has passed a copy of the Health & Safety and Insurance documents to Mr Horsley.