

**MINUTES OF DUCKLINGTON PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON WEDNESDAY 2 SEPTEMBER 2009  
IN THE LILAC ROOM, VILLAGE HALL, DUCKLINGTON AT 7.30 PM**

**124.09 Members Present:** Edmund Strainge (Chairman)  
Peter Almgill  
Adrian Armitage  
Richard Border  
Brian Hicks  
Peter Godwin  
Graham Lenton  
Catherine Maddison

**In Attendance:** Helen Sandhu - Clerk  
Don Seale – Oxfordshire County Councillor to Agenda item 6,  
minuted under 129.09  
Steve Hayward – West Oxfordshire District Councillor to Agenda item  
6, minuted under 129.09  
1 member of the public

**125.09 Members' Apologies:** Glyn Rees

**126.09 Minutes of meetings held on 1 July and 5 August 2009**

The minutes of the above meetings were approved and signed by Edmund Strainge as a true record of the meetings.

**127.09 County/District Council Matters**

Don Seale provided an update on matters relating to the County Council. He reported that he has been contacted by a resident who is concerned about the dilapidated gate at the end of the footpath between Curbridge Road and the A415. Steve Hayward was able to advise the Parish Council that an order for a new gate was placed in May. Don Seale requested a copy of the correspondence on this matter between the Parish Council and Oxfordshire Highways so that he can chase it up.

Councillor Seale asked whether the Parish Council had any response to make to the County Council's review of the speed limits on A and B roads. He was advised that the Parish Council has written to request that the speed limit on the A415 between Cokethorpe School and the Ducklington roundabout be reduced to 50mph.

Edmund Strainge told Councillor Seale of his concerns about the poor visibility at the junction of Aston Road and the A415 – the Parish Council has written to Highways to request that the hedges/trees be cut back to improve the visibility, but Highways has replied that they do not believe there to be a problem. The Clerk said that she would send Councillor Seale copies of the correspondence between the Parish Council and Highways.

Steve Hayward gave a report on matters relating to the District Council. The District Council has been told that it should recover around 80% of the £9million that remains tied up in the failed Icelandic banks, with some due to be paid back on 1 September.

Witney Town Council is having trouble finding land for new allotments; the District Councillors are therefore asking their Parish Councils to make it known that if anyone has land which they are willing to sell for additional allotments they should contact the Town Council.

**127.09 County/District Council Matters (continued)**

The District Council is now sharing its senior finance official with Cotswold District Council as a trial period until the end of the financial year (in addition to the Chief Executive who is already being shared between the two Councils).

**128.09 Parish Councillors – Disclosure of interests on agenda items**

Brian Hicks – as an allotment holder the discussion on the allotment tenancies – Agenda Item 6f (Minute 129.09f)

**129.09 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings**

a) *Parish infrastructure issues*

- *Request for new signage around entrance to Fritillary Mews*
- *Changes to signage on Standlake Road due to extension of 30mph speed limit*
- *HGV signage on Ducklington roundabout*

Edmund Strainge, Brian Hicks and Richard Border met with Tony Currell of Oxfordshire Highways on 10 August to discuss these issues. Mr Currell informed them that Oxfordshire Highways is proposing to introduce parking restrictions around the entrance to Fritillary Mews – a double yellow line between the entrance and the substation to the right as you exit Fritillary Mews and a single yellow line (no parking between 8am and 6pm) between the entrance and Wesley Barrell.

Mr Currell thinks that they road may narrow sufficiently to permit the installation of a “road narrows” sign – he is going to look into this again.

The extension to the 30mph zone will be in place on 21 September.

The Parish Councillors talked to Tony Currell about the Parish Council’s concerns about the cycle path – he agreed to look into this.

Mr Currell proposed the installation of a white line and “studs” on the road around the bend of the Old Rectory to create a “virtual” widening of the footpath.

The signage relating to HGVs is being finalised.

- *Work to footpath verges in Ducklington*  
The footpath across the Moors has been strimmed – no-one was sure whether the footpath between Starnham Road and Curbridge Road had been done.

b) *Cyclepath*

Still nothing new to report – Clerk continues to chase.

c) *Progress on temporary vehicle activated signs*

Installation still awaited.

d) *Potential new bus shelters on A415 near A40 flyover*

A revised draft agreement and suggested designs had been circulated in August’s folder.

Letters informing residents of the Parish Council’s intention to erect a shelter on Witney Road had been sent to the occupiers of 39, 40 and 41 Witney Road.

The resident of 40 Witney Road had sent a letter expressing his family’s concerns about the proposed bus shelter – he was in attendance at the meeting and was invited by Edmund Strainge to talk about his concerns. He stated that his family already experiences problems relating to the bus shelter on the opposite side of Witney Road – young people meet there during the early evening, causing noise and litter which blows across the road into the his property. He said that his family was concerned that if a new shelter is installed nearer to their house they will get more disturbance and more litter.

After the resident made his representations the Parish Council discussed the proposed new bus shelter further. It was decided that the Clerk should continue to seek advice from

**129.09 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)**

Highways about whether they would be likely to grant permission for a bus shelter in the location. Clerk also to attempt to assess the level of usage the bus shelter would be likely to get – requesting passenger numbers from Stagecoach and user levels from the mobile library which stops in the layby.

It was also decided that the Clerk would contact the local Police team to inform them of the anti-social behaviour which sometimes happens at the existing bus shelter, asking them to ensure that they come through the village in the early evenings on occasion. Clerk also to ensure that a note about littering is put in the newsletter.

e) *Tree inspections*

The Report received from Boward Tree Surgery which had been circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes was discussed.

It was decided that Dick Rudd would be asked to take the stakes off the trees and sever the ivy where identified in the report.

It was decided that the Clerk would request three quotations for the complete removal of the horse chestnut tree on Bartholomew Close (tree 703).

It was decided that the removal and replacement of the five horse chestnut trees on the sportsfield would be included in the budget for year 2010/11 and 2011/12.

f) *Allotment tenancies*

Allotments 8B & 16 have been let to Mrs J Walsh of Lovell Close.

The Clerk reported that as decided at the meeting on 5 August the tenant of allotment 1C has been given one month's notice to quit his allotment. The notice period expires on 12 September. The Clerk was asked to contact the next person on the waiting list to offer them the tenancy of allotment 1C.

g) *Ducklington village pond*

Concerns have been raised about the condition of the village pond. Following the meeting on 5 August a letter was sent to Smiths of Bletchington asking them for information on changes to the local water table and whether they would be able to help with renovation works. A copy of their reply was circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes. The information they supplied on the level of the water table seemed to indicate that there had been little change locally.

Graham Lenton spoke on this issue and circulated a report he had written entitled "The Village Pond – problems and possible solutions". He expressed the view that there are three main issues: 1) the silting up of the pond which is substantially due to the high number of ducks; 2) the low water level which could be solved by relining the pond; and 3) the central weeping willow which takes out water, drops leaves into the pond and whose roots have the potential to cause substantial damage to nearby pipework.

It was decided to form a Working Party, led by Graham Lenton, to look into the problems with the pond and advise the Parish Council on the best way forward. The Working Party could seek appropriate professional input. Mr Lenton agreed to contact the people he knows who work in this field. It was agreed that at some point the volunteers from the village who are interested in the pond could be invited to attend a future meeting of the Working Party. The possibility of holding a public meeting at a future date was also discussed.

It was decided that the newsletter would include an item indicating that the Parish Council is looking into the concerns that there are about the pond and that if people have comments they would like to contribute they should contact a member of the Parish Council.

### **129.09 Matters Arising from Previous Meetings (continued)**

*h) Grass strimmer – cutting of churchyard grass*

The current grass strimmer used to cut the both the graveyard and the grass around the Church (for St Bartholomew's Church) is broken and beyond economic repair.

It was decided that Jim Miles should be asked to continue using his own strimmer, charging the additional £10 for its use until he is advised otherwise.

It was decided that the Clerk would contact St Bartholomew's Church to ask if they will pay 50% of the cost of a new strimmer. Brian Hicks agreed to find out the likely cost of a new strimmer and to inform the Clerk before she writes to the Church.

*i) Overgrown hedges/trees blocking visual splay, Aston Road exit to A415*

This problem was reported to Highways in July. Highways has now replied that "I... estimate the visibility when positioned to pull out from the junction to be 100 metres in either direction. I do not consider there to be a safety issue here."

Don Seale agreed to look into this for the Parish Council – Clerk to send copy of the email from Highways to him.

### **130.09 New Business**

*a) Request for access over Bartholomew Close open space by resident of Witney Road*

The paperwork supporting the request had been circulated in the Clerk's Briefing Notes. It was decided that the requested access would not be granted.

*b) Request from a resident for the Parish Council to cut back the tree and hedge boundary on the land between Peel Close and Lovell Close*

It was decided that this would be carried forward to the October meeting, with Councillors to go and look at the area before then.

*c) Injuries to local cat*

The Clerk told the Parish Council that she had dealt with an enquiry by a resident of Ducklington about an injury to her cat. The resident reported that her cat appeared to have been the subject of a strimmer injury on Saturday 22 August and she believed this could have happened around the sportsfield playground. The Clerk's enquiries revealed that neither of the Parish Council's contractors, nor Oxfordshire Highways were strimming around that date. The resident had been informed.

*d) Wasp nest treatment by WODC*

The Clerk informed the Parish Council that West Oxfordshire District Council had been called to treat a wasp nest near the tennis court at the sportsfield playground. Invoiced cost - £61.31 + VAT.

### **131.09 School Report**

Graham Lenton reported that Julia Hamper will be taking her post as Head Teacher back up following her sabbatical. As requested at a previous Parish Council meeting he will find out the percentage of pupils at the school who actually live in Ducklington.

### 132.09 Playgrounds/Sportsfield

a) *Inspection Report for August*

Rust on slide frames – It was decided that Adrian Armitage would now meet with Graham Dick Rudd to agree which areas of the frames need to be sanded down and treated with rust-inhibiting paint.

Zipwire brake – Dick Rudd has indicated that only certain parts are needed to repair the brake. However, the supplier has stated that unless they originally supplied the brake, their parts may not fit. It was therefore decided to replace the whole trolley (brake) at a cost of £130 + VAT. Dick Rudd to be asked to fit it.

Gaps in safer surfacing – Dick Rudd will restart work when the children return to school  
Deterioration in year-old cradle swing seats. It was agreed that the Clerk should seek a refund from Wicksteed for these seats which do not appear to be fit for purpose.

b) *Request for help with monthly routine inspections*

Dick Rudd has indicated that he would like to reduce the number of routine inspections he carries out. The idea of Parish Councillors undertaking some of the monthly routine inspections was discussed. It was decided that the Clerk would find out whether OPFA could run a training session for Councillors. Dick Rudd to be asked to continue with his monthly inspections in the meantime.

c) *Faults with flat swing seats*

Edmund Strainge confirmed that he has received a package from Wicksteed – he will check whether it contains the six flat swing seats promised.

### 133.09 PLANNING

#### **PLANNING APPLICATIONS GRANTED:**

09/0753 8 Aston Road, Ducklington  
Erection of single storey front extension

#### **NEW PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**

09/0988 1 Barley Park Cottage, Ducklington  
Erection of two storey rear extension  
*No comments*

09/1010 67 Witney Road, Ducklington  
Remove existing barn and single storey extension. Alterations and extensions to enlarge existing accommodation  
*No comments*

#### **FURTHER INFORMATION ON PREVIOUS PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**

MW 0063/09 County Council application  
Smith and Sons (Bletchington) Limited  
Planning application for processing plant for recycled aggregates  
*Placed in the folder for circulation amongst Councillors*

**134.09 FINANCE**

- a) Account Balances and Debts due to Council – as circulated with the meeting papers
- |  |                   |
|--|-------------------|
| Balance on Current Account at 31 August 2009   | £ 2,719.68        |
| Balance on Deposit with WODC at 31 August 2009 | £27,300.00        |
| Total Cash Holding                             | <u>£30,019.68</u> |

- b) AUGUST INVOICES  
PRESENTED FOR APPROVAL AND PAYMENT AT 2 SEPTEMBER 2009 MEETING

		Statute
Clerk's salary - H Sandhu – gross of £344.72 less tax of £34.20	310.52	LGA 1972, s112
HM Revenue & Customs (PAYE on Clerk's salary)	34.20	LGA 1972, s112
Clerk's expenses – telephone calls 28/4 to 27/7: £5.59 & printing – 440 pages £17.60	23.19	LGA 1972, s111
B Lockett – litter picking for July	60.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Margaret Johnson – stationery & copying	25.24	LGA 1972, s111
ISS Waterers – 3 cuts of verges in June/July (10 to date), 5 cuts of playing field in July (20 to date)	599.61	HA 1980, s116/ LG(MP)A 1976, s19
West Oxfordshire District Council – treatment to wasp nest	70.51	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Mrs F Bryant – rental of extension to sportsfield, Oct to Dec	93.75	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
Dick Rudd – August inspection, removal of tree next to zipwire, repairs to rocking horse, picnic bench bolts and Chalcroft slide runout. Rotovating bark under zipwire, replacing slats on picnic table and wood-treating whole table, strimming car park edges, servicing zip-wire mechanism	320.00	LG(MP)A 1976, s19
J Miles – 1 grass cut in graveyard (6 this season to date) including additional £10 for use of own strimmer	80.00	LGA 1972 s214
Thames Water – water supply to pavilion and allotments	345.87	
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>£1,962.89</b>	

The payments were approved. The cheques were signed by Brian Hicks and Graham Lenton.

**135.09 Parish Councillors' reports from meetings attended since last meeting**

None.

**136.09 Other matters for discussion – for information only**

- a) The need for a dog bin on one of the new streetlights near Fritillary Mews was discussed – to be included on the agenda of the October meeting.
- b) Peter Almgill reported that there are two doors in the Windrush near the bridge on the lane to the Fritillary Field. Edmund Strainge agreed to inform the Environment Agency.

**137.09 Date of next meeting – 7 October 2009 – Lilac Room, Village Hall, 7.30pm**  
Monthly meeting of Parish Council

Signed .....dated.....