

The Parish Council of St. Helen Without

Annual Newsletter 2010

It is with considerable sadness that we have to report that two members of the Parish Council died last year. David Calvert and Cyril Rudge had both served on St Helen Without Parish Council for over thirty years, the Councillors would like to acknowledge the service and long term dedication that David and Cyril had given to the local community. They will both be greatly missed.

Your Parish Council currently consists of the following members:

Dry Sandford

Mr. Stephen Grigson (Chairman), Loaf Cottage,
221 Cothill Road (01865 390540)
e-mail: thegrigsons@totalise.co.uk

Mr. Geoff Fitzgerald, Old Tara Barn, Church
Lane (01865 390667) e-mail:
geoff.fitzgerald@tech-research.co.uk

Mr. Martin Gilbert, 6 Lansdowne Road
(01865 739544)

Mr. Ken Houlden, 4 Lansdowne Road (01865
730488) e-mail: ken@houlden.demon.co.uk

Mrs Wendy Rossiter, At Last, 205 Cothill Road
(01865 390555) e-mail:
wendyrossiter@btinternet.com

Shippon

Mrs Madeleine Russell-Taylor, (Vice
Chairperson) 26 Rookery Close (01235
523557) e-mail: madbill@talktalk.net

Mrs Diane Livesley, 1 White House Close (01235
530257) e-mail: diane.livesley@tiscali.co.uk

Mrs Caroline Parkin, Applebrook, Faringdon Road
(01235 535969) e-mail: archie232@hotmail.co.uk

Mrs. Vicki Talbot, 58 Barrow Road
(01235 522255) e-mail: talbots4@newbury.net

Mr. Bill Taylor, 26 Rookery Close (01235
523557) e-mail: madbill@talktalk.net

New Co-opted Councillors

Having moved 20 times in the 21 years following the flag, **Vicki Talbot** states it has been great living in Shippon for almost five years. When a vacancy came up on the Parish Council before Christmas, she was encouraged to apply, little did she realize that having been co-opted on, she then attended the longest meeting on record! Vicki and her husband have two children; a son currently serving in the Army and a daughter shortly to finish university in Dublin. She works part-time for an estate agent and also does voluntary work for SSAFA and HM Prisons.

Geoff Fitzgerald was co-opted onto the Parish Council in February 2010, having lived in Dry Sandford for 12 years. Geoff lives with his wife, Cath (Chair of Wootton St Peters PTA); and their three daughters, two of whom attend Wootton St Peters and the eldest attends Our Ladies Abingdon. Geoff has also been the Church Lane Neighbourhood Watch Coordinator for a number of years. Outside of this he is a senior Oxfordshire rugby referee covering junior, university and senior rugby games – in and out of the county; and has been a committee member for several years.

The Parish Council meets, normally on a Monday evening, on nine occasions during the year. The venues alternate between Dry Sandford Primary School and the Community Centre, Dalton Barracks, Shippon. Meetings begin at 7.30 pm and the first item on the agenda is an opportunity for residents to bring their concerns to the Council avoiding the necessity to sit through a long agenda of routine business. A small number of residents attend on a regular basis and members of the Council are grateful for their continued interest.

The Parish Council is available to deal with your concerns and you can contact the **Clerk** if you wish any matter to be discussed at the Council Meetings. Her contact details are:

Mrs. Christine Kerry tel: 01865 321640 e-mail: sthelenwithoutpc@btinternet.com

The *Annual Parish Meeting* and the *Parish Council Annual General Meeting* will both be held on **TUESDAY 11 May 2010 at Community Centre, Dalton Barracks, Shippon**, beginning at **7.00 p.m.** You are invited to attend and raise any matters of current concern to you.

The following is a summary of the main issues dealt with during the past year.

Review of Bus Service 4B

“Hold the Front Page” A campaign has been running for some months to prevent the 4B bus service (Oxford-Cumnor-Wootton-Abingdon and return) losing the evenings and Sunday services. A subsidy of approximately £70,000 was due to run out in June and Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) was reviewing whether it was able to subsidise this service. Petitions from both Dry Sandford and Shippon residents were sent to OCC and meetings attended to firstly emphasise the necessity for this only evenings and Sunday service; and secondly to convince OCC to route the bus through Shippon to accommodate the 1500 serving personnel and their families at Dalton Barracks. It was stressed how important this service could be to families of soldiers who are deployed on active duties.

The Parish Councillors are pleased to report a decision was announced on 6 April by OCC to support the existing hourly extensions, evenings and Sundays; and, the service will be diverted via Dalton Barracks and Shippon instead of Wootton Road. They would like to thank everyone but particularly Cpt. Neil Whitewick, Welfare Officer at Dalton Barracks, for all their hard work with this successful campaign.

Now we have confirmation of its continuation, an increase of passengers is essential to maintain the provision of this service at evenings and Sundays in the long term.

Battery Operated Vehicle Activated Signs

The Parish Councillors were interested in a County Council (OCC) scheme for new battery powered signs which are mounted onto special posts which slot and lock into “ground screws”. The electronic sign flashes up the speed limit when drivers are travelling too fast. Parish Council expenditure would be used to fund the supply and installation of the ground screws only and OCC would provide the signs which would be in place for 10/12 days at a time before being moved to different locations throughout the Vale. Two locations, Barrow Road Shippon and Cothill Dry Sandford have been approved by the County Council. We now wait for news that a sufficient number of these devices will be purchased throughout the district for the scheme to go ahead.

Street Lighting in Cholswell Road Shippon

For many years the Parish Councillors have been concerned about the street lighting in the section of Cholswell Road from the junction of Long Tow

to the junction with Faringdon Road. A site meeting was held in June 2009 with representatives from Defence Estates, MoD Housing Solutions, a Welfare Officer of Dalton Barracks, OCC and Parish Councillors. It was agreed that this section is very poorly illuminated with only one light, screened at times by vegetation. The road has considerable motor and pedestrian traffic as it runs through the centre of the village. It is the location for the two most frequently used bus stops; children walk along it accessing all the local schools and it is the route to the one remaining shop. All present at the meeting considered there to be a safety risk.

For OCC to adopt this lighting, half-standard [7 lamps] would be needed and cabling from the Faringdon Road to the Main MoD Gate. The total estimated cost would be £22,450.

As OCC who are responsible for street lighting, have no available funds at present for this scheme, the Parish Council who has limited reserves is trying to obtain funding from many different sources.

Wootton & Dry Sandford Community Centre Refurbishment Project

The Parish Councillors have been watching the refurbishment of the charity based W&DS Community Centre with great interest. The Council was pleased to make a second donation of £5,000 making a total of £10,000 towards this project. It is encouraging to know the work should be finished by mid April and that there is a fundraising initiative in place to furnish and equip the Centre. Much still remains to be done and personal donations would be gratefully received. If you are a UK taxpayer these can be gift aided.

A date for opening has not been publically stated however this is anticipated to be the 1st May 2010 and a formal opening ceremony will be held in September. The community centre is already receiving many enquiries for bookings. Should you wish to make a booking this can be arranged through Diana McNeil by email at diana@msn2802.fslife.co.uk or by telephone 01865 730506.

Parish Rate 2010-2011

The Parish Councillors recognise the difficult financial climate and have been able to reduce their planned expenditure slightly compared to last year. However about 20 of the MoD houses at Dalton Barracks have been taken out of commission for renovation. So fewer MoD houses paying rates next year has resulted in an increase of 1.9% spread across the rest of the Parish.

Planning Application: Cothill School

During last summer a lot of energy went into campaigning against expansion proposals from Cothill School. These would have involved a large new car park extending into the fringes of Cothill woods and a new dormitory block on their existing car park, set hard up against the existing houses. The Parish Council opposed these on amenity grounds and because of unacceptable and unnecessary damage to the Green Belt.

The campaign was ultimately successful in that the Vale Planning Committee turned the proposals down, despite the advice of their officers. After consulting the Parish Council, the School have now submitted new proposals for a smaller car park and the dormitory block set well back from the houses.

The Prince of Wales Feathers Public House

In October 2009, Punch Taverns placed the Prince of Wales Pub up for sale. In December the Parish Council received an application for the Change of Use of the building to a private dwelling. This caused considerable consternation within the village as it was considered one of the few remaining public facilities available to residents. A petition signed by over 400 people and numerous letters all asked for a public house to be retained. The Parish Council objected to the Change of Use also wishing to keep the pub as a facility. The Change of Use was then withdrawn. John and Ruth Binning who intend to run it as a public house had made an offer for the premises and we understand that the sale is now complete. The Prince of Wales will remain open – the landlords being Michel Sadones [formally of Michels of Oxford and MaBelle] and Philip Radbourne [formally of the Woodstock Arms and the George in Oxford], who will be pleased to welcome anyone and discuss the future plans. We hope it will have support from all the residents of the village.

Shippon Village Notice Boards

Shippon residents may have noticed the new position of the parish notice board, on the corner of Faringdon and Cholswell Roads. It is hoped this is a more central location. An additional parish village notice board has been erected alongside, this can be used by residents to advertise forthcoming community events; however we request that these are removed when out of date.

24th Abingdon Scout Group HQ Building Lashford Lane, Dry Sandford

The Parish Council was pleased to assist this scout group with a £500 donation towards the modernizing and restructuring of its headquarters, and hope their fundraising continues positively.

The Friends of Shippon

The overriding aim of the Friends of Shippon is to bring together people living in the village and local area and so create a stronger sense of community. After another successful year, their work is appreciated and the contact details for the Committee are:

Madeleine Russell (523557), Chris Gibbins (527211), Carol Gibbins (527211), Edwin Scott (532704), Val Dawson (529596), Eve James (523321), Judy Stubley (559055), Sylvia Bird (521162), June Rowe (527210).

The remaining programme for 2010 is

Wednesday 21st April at 7.30 pm – Alms Houses –

The original Sheltered Housing - Geoff Morris

Wednesday 12th May at 7.30 pm – Whist Drive

Wednesday 16th June – Mallams Antiques Road Show- 6.30 to 8.30 pm.

Friday 16th July at 7.30pm – Presentation of Shippon Plan – Shippon Parish Councillors

Friday 20th August at 7.30pm – Just Desserts – A pudding club evening.

Tuesday 7th September at 7.30pm – Visit to Friends of Abingdon with tour of Buildings, talk and slideshow.

Friday 24th September at 7.30pm – Newspapers in the 21st Century – Derek Holmes, Editor of the Oxford Times

October – Bee Keeping – Rob Nickless [date t.b.c.]

Tuesday 9th November at 7.30pm – The Story of the Flying Doctors – Graham Laurie

Friday 10th December at 7.30pm – Christmas Social and Quiz

Community Emergency Plan – Good Neighbours

In January when the snow fell our Oxfordshire villages looked just like the ones on Christmas cards, beautiful to see and enjoy, however for some there were hardships in keeping warm and getting about. It was good to see those more able calling on their neighbours to check if they were warm and if provisions were needed. This is what being good neighbours or community spirit is all about.

It is this spirit we wish to harness in our community emergency plan. We know that in a case of a major incident, the blue light brigade and local council will step in to preserve life and property. We are not trying to replace them, but to have the ability to quickly react to the problem, rather than trying to find equipment or volunteers after the event.

We wish to have a list of available resources and volunteers so they can be called upon to give immediate assistance. You may have equipment or specific skills that can be used as an individual, or organisation. You may be able to provide support, like calling on doors or even cooking in a reception centre if we have to evacuate some houses.

Thank you to those who have already volunteered their services and if you are able to join them please complete the distributed form and return to the Clerk.

News from Dalton Barracks

In November 2009, those members of 3 and 4 Logistic Support Regiments, who had returned from Iraq and Afghanistan, paraded through Abingdon. They received a warm welcome from the townsfolk. After medals had been presented in the Market Place by the Mayor of Abingdon, The Chair of the Vale of White Horse and the Director of the Royal Logistic Corps, they continued on to a Service of Thanksgiving in St Helen's Church.

There is a major renovation taking place in many of the quarters around the Barracks. In effect, the worst properties are having roofs removed and the internal walls knocked down and re-aligned. (Demolition and rebuild would seem simpler). There are also various upgrades to wiring, kitchens and bathrooms taking place in another hundred or so houses. There is also a major refit of soldiers' accommodation within the Barracks, which has transformed over 300 bedspaces (military speak for rooms in barrack blocks). There are still another 300 plus to be tackled and we will continue to seek funding for them despite the present economic plight.

The present Station Commander Colonel D A Kelly OBE moves on to Grantham and is succeeded by Colonel M E Newman (Ed). Colonel Newman was previously in Abingdon as a Squadron commander about eight years ago, so should know the area well.

The new arrival of a year ago, 12 Logistic Support Regiment, began its deployment to Afghanistan on 7th March. Most of the Regiment will have moved within three weeks of that date but another element of 70 plus goes out in April/May, so we

will have a staggered return six months later with all back by mid November 2010.

Lt. Col. H. McCormack

Dalton Barracks Youth Club

The Youth Club has now been running for 10 months and is thriving with up to thirty children and young people attending sessions on Tuesday 6–8pm and Friday 4.30–6.00pm. We have a good team of volunteers who help to support our activities but we are always on the look out for more.

The children and young people have been active in planning and delivering a varied and exciting programme. They have taken part in a five day summer camp in Winchester, four days of sailing, overnight camp on the airfield, outdoor cooking, building dens in Bracknell Forest, art and craft week, drama workshops, bowling and ice skating to name just a few. We have managed to do all these activities due to the support from the Parish Council and its donation of £750.

We have more exciting plans for this year including hosting a summer camp at Boars Hill for 60 children and young people, more sailing, growing our own vegetables, painting murals in the youth centre, making a pizza oven out of clay and many more exciting opportunities. Three of the play parks are to be revamped over the coming months which will enable children to play outdoors safely over the summer. We welcome both military and civilian children and young people over 8 years old at the club. For further information please contact me on 07768 465559 or pop in a see me at the youth club. *Emma Link*

Community Development Worker

Useful Contact Numbers

Parish Transport Representative (PTR)

Mrs June Rowe has volunteered her services as the PTR, whose role will be to keep in touch with views and needs of bus users and the performance of local bus services and advise the Council accordingly. Any queries or comments should be addressed to her at **15 Elm Tree Walk, Shippon, OX13 6LX**, or telephone **01235 527210**.

Thames Valley Police

The Parish have a new police officer who will be covering Dry Sandford and Shippon (as well as many other places). Her name is **P.C. Katrin Gardener No. 1478**. She can be contacted on **0845 8 505 505**.

The Police Community Support Officer for the Parish is **Laura Schmid No. C9932**. She can be contacted on **0845 8 505 505**.

Vale of the White Horse District Council

Anyone seeing a dog owner acting irresponsibly and not cleaning up after their pet can report them to the **Environmental Wardens** anonymously on **01235 544066**.

At present the **dog excrement bins** in this area are emptied every Monday, excluding bank holidays. To report any faults contact the **Vale** on **01235 520202**.

Oxfordshire County Council – Street Lights

If residents notice street lights that are not working they can report this to OCC on 0800 317 802 giving the number of the lamp which is displayed on the post.

Dalton Barracks

If residents are concerned about activities on the airfield, the first point of contact is the **Guardroom** on **01235 543668**. If there is no reply on this number, the **Detention Centre** on **01235 543565** can be contacted.

Royal Air Force Benson

For information on flying activities conducted by RAF Benson, visit the following website: **www.raf.mod.uk/RAFBenson**, then click on "flying info" where the current programmes are listed. The procedures for flying complaints are also found here, or direct dial telephone number **01491 837766 ext. 5218**.

