

The Parish Council of St. Helen Without Annual Newsletter 2014

Clerk: George Edmonds-Brown, Tel/Fax: 01865 739419 e-mail: g.edmondsbrown@btinternet.com

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Mrs. Brenda Rogers Tel. no: 01865 736784 e-mail: brendarogers@btinternet.com	Currently vacant; if you are interested in being co-opted as a Parish Councillor for Shippon Ward please contact the Clerk
District Councillors	
Ms Val Shaw: e-mail: valshaw@waitrose.com Ms Elizabeth Miles – e-mail: elizabeth.miles@whitehorsedc.gov.uk	Mrs Catherine Webber – e-mail: catherinewebber@hotmail.co.uk
County Councillor: Mr Richard Webber – e-mail: richard.webber@oxfordshire.gov.uk	

Message from the 2013/14 Chair, Geoff Fitzgerald

It's normal for the Parish Council Chair to present a general overview of our activities and contribution to the community over the past 12 months. However, whilst I will cover some of this, I think it is important to stress the level of change occurring within local government and how this might impact us all. The biggest change will undoubtedly come from the Vale of the White Horse District Council's review of the Green Belt and the need to find additional housing in our parish, via the *Local Plan 2011-2031*. This means that our villages are likely to grow in size; and, areas previously protected under the Green Belt will be reviewed and new land allocated for development. This will have both positive and negative impacts on the availability of new and affordable housing, on our green spaces, on the availability of primary school places and an increasing burden on our roads and village services. The primary issue here is that local residents will have little say in where these new developments appear; for example, in our neighbouring parish of Wootton they have just been told of a likely development of 200 new homes in East Wootton, following on from similar announcements in Marcham, Drayton, Steventon, Radley, etc. This brings me onto a key, strategic need for our parish to develop a local *Neighbourhood Plan* which would allow us to have some statutory say in managing future new housing developments in our area and how our communities develop. However, the creation of such a plan will be costly; time consuming; and, the Parish Council would most likely require substantial help from residents to implement this. So, there are major challenges ahead for us to help protect our communities moving forward! If you are concerned about any of the above issues I would urge you to get involved and offer your help to the Parish Council (download more info from the Vale's website: <http://www.whitehorsedc.gov.uk/node/11658>).

In addition, as you may be aware, the Parish Council is also under threat of changing parish boundaries. Whilst this may not seem that important to residents on a day-to-day basis, it will affect which residents we represent and the budget we have to spend on local services, i.e. local road safety projects, maintenance of children's playground equipment and recreation ground maintenance, dog bin services and other, local infrastructure provision (bus shelters, etc.). I would like to thank all those residents that have written in to the District Council objecting to this change – we are likely to hear the outcome very soon.

On to our activities of the last 12 months:

- Speeding and road safety remains an important priority for the Council and so we have installed a 40mph Vehicle Activated Sign (VAS) on Honeybottom Lane; upgraded the corner chevrons on Cholswell Road; and, we are in the process of implementing speed reduction measures in Cholswell Road, Long Tow and Barrow Road in Shippon. Any further ideas for improvement would be welcomed.
- The Parish Council is also looking at developing further recreational activities on the Sandleigh Road Recreation Ground in Dry Sandford, including a provisional plan to install adult exercise equipment. We would welcome comments on this and any further ideas from our residents.
- The development of the two disused farmyards in Shippon is also under discussion, with a view to appropriate development of these sites, as per the Shippon Plan. It is still early days but the Council would

be looking to gain some benefits for the local community if these projects go ahead. Local consultation on these plans would be part of the overall process and we would encourage resident participation.

- The Parish Council continues to monitor and comment on all local planning applications.

Thanks are due to all our Parish Councillors for their work throughout the year, particular thanks go to the Vice-Chair, Madeleine Russell; and, to our hardworking and diligent Clerk, George Edmonds-Brown.

Message from County Councillor Richard Webber and District Councillor Catherine Webber

The consultation on the proposed Local Plan is causing great consternation all across the Vale. Sites for some 20,500 extra houses are being sought by 2031. Fortunately, it does not affect our area too much, but there are proposals to nibble elsewhere at the Green Belt. For many this is the thin end of the wedge. The new Parish Boundary proposals have all but been decided - the powers that be appear to have been listening and Dry Sandford Primary School and Dry Sandford Church will continue to be in the same Parish. Thanks to the efforts of the Parish Council, 30mph speed limit at Long Tow and Cholswell Road has been agreed. OCC has managed to find the money to continue the Highways grants and Community Grant Scheme. Please let us know if you see a useful scheme for the benefit of the community which a few hundred pounds would help make a reality. We can always be contacted on 01235 534001, but we also hope to meet many of you at our surgeries at the Marcham Village Shop. These give us a chance to meet with residents from Marcham, Shippon, Dry Sandford and Gozzards Ford. The Surgery dates for the rest of the year are 9am to 11am on Sat. 12th July, Sat. 30th August, Sat. 11th October and Sat. 13th December.

Meetings

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. The dates of the meetings to be held in the next 9 months are as follows.

4 August Dry Sandford Primary School	8 December The Community Centre, Dalton Barracks
15 September The Community Centre, Dalton Barracks	19 January 2015 Dry Sandford Primary School
27 October Dry Sandford Primary School	2 March The Community Centre, Dalton Barracks

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. His contact details are above:

Community Orchard

There were a small number of trees that did not survive the very hot dry spell we had last summer, most have been replaced and the few outstanding will be replaced this autumn. There has been a small amount of vandalism but nothing we cannot cope with. We will prevent any fruit forming this year to help strengthen the trees, but it is hoped that we may allow the first small crop next year. Once again if you interested in helping with their maintenance please contact the Parish Clerk.

Allotments

The allotments are now in full swing with many planted up and plot holders looking forward to a plentiful supply of fresh and tasty, chemical-free vegetables this year. If you wish to be put on the waiting list for one please contact the Parish Clerk.

Wootton & Dry Sandford Community Centre

The Community Centre is now a thriving centre of activities in the area. St Helen Without Parish Council continues to support the Centre. Residents of the Parish qualify for local rental rates. Bookings can be made with the Booking Clerk, Debbie Elwood, Tel. No. 07770447186; e-mail; w-and-dscc-booking@hotmail.co.uk

The Community Website

The community website has been re-launched with information about facilities and activities in the parishes of Wootton and St Helen Without. It can be accessed on www.woottondrysandfordshippon.co.uk. Community organisations and groups are welcome to have a page on the website or a link to their website by using the "contact us" button.

WADS Youth Club Report; Adam French, Youth Worker; Tel 01865 327283

Introduction: The Youth Club is a made up of a range of young people from different backgrounds, culturally and economically. The local young people attend Mathew Arnold, Fitzharries, John Mason, Larkmead and some private schools, which is a very unusual dynamic for an area. The club provides a welcoming place for the young people to mix and socialise with other young people they wouldn't normally get a chance too.

The Programme: The young people decide the programme of activities, which includes table tennis, pool, Wii games, discussion tables and outside sports. In addition to these activities we have done sports competitions, cooking, graffiti artwork, card making and had a cinema night to name a few. We have also had a number of trips to the ice rink, bowlplex, theatre and Adrenaline Alley – Corby (an indoor BMX and scooter park). We also ran a small Dragons Den project with sessions in the build-up looking at business. Although this engaged a small crowd I do feel those who participated gained a lot. This year we have also had an Arts Award delivered by Oxfordshire Youth. The young people have done a number of different arts sessions including lyric writing, beat boxing, furniture up-cycling

and model building. The club at the start of the year was averaging 20 young people and throughout the year has steadily declined and is now average 8-10 young people... we would encourage more young people to join us.

Workshops: We try to keep issue-based youth workshops as part of the club; topics covered include bullying (in person & cyber), on-line safety, sexism, pre-judgments (conscious and unconscious), alcohol awareness, smoking, nutrition, empowerment, confidence building, communication skills and laws.

Evaluation: The club has faced a very up and down year. As we approached the end of Summer 13 we were in danger of closing due to lack of volunteers and expended a lot of energy in the recruitment. This worked well and the team is in a good position now, with the recruitment of some very skilled and enthusiastic volunteers. The main issue we have faced this year has been the decrease in numbers due to a number of older youths hanging around outside the club. This has resulted in young people who turn up not engaging with activities and hanging around with the older youths in the shelter. The number over the year in the shelter has increased and the number accessing the club decreased. This issue took up the majority of our last management meeting and we have put an action plan in place including re-advertising and using outside sports to engage. I feel we are in a good position now as a club, with a good management team, local support from our Parish Councils and local Councillors. We have put a good plan in place to support young people away from negative peer pressure and back into positive activities. We would like to take this opportunity to thank both Parish Councils for their contribution to our club on behalf of the young people.

Parish Rate 2014-2015

The Parish Precept has been increased from £16,000 to £16,900 to take account of the cost of vandalism and increased dog bin charges by the Vale of White Horse District Council. This is the first increase in 4 years.

The Friends of Shippon – contact: Judy Stubbley (01235 559055) or Val Dawson (01235 529596)

Now in its seventh year, Friends of Shippon is a well-established group which meets once a month (usually the second Friday in the month) in Shippon Church Hall at 7.30pm. The annual membership fee is £12.50 and visitors are charged £3.00. The programme covers a wide spectrum of interests, including the occasional ‘away days’ and we have initiated two popular independent groups: the Bridge Club and the Book Club. Forthcoming attractions include:

Friday	July 11 th :	Puddings and Pimms.
Friday	September 19 th :	The Rudolph Hess Cover Up’: a talk by Tony Eaton.
Friday	October 10 th	Col Iain McKend; Army/Shippon Village Liaison Meeting
Friday	November 14 th :	Memoirs of a RAF Officer: Derek James.
Friday	December 12 th :	The Christmas Social.

If you would like to be included on our email list please contact judith.stubbley@btinternet.com. The digital projector, screen and a PA system (funded by the Parish Council) may be borrowed by residents of Shippon on payment of a refundable security/breakage deposit and proof of residence (Tel: 01235 527211/529596 for details).

News from Dalton Barracks; John Higgs, Station Staff Officer, Dalton Barracks

The final few months of 2013 saw 3 Regiment and 4 Regiment returning to barracks from their respective tours in Afghanistan and Canada, whilst 12 Regiment remained busy preparing for disbandment. 3 Regiment drove the distance from Earth to the Moon during a 6-month tour of Afghanistan, returning home after clocking more than 293,000kms. Their role was twofold; to supply troops on the front line with essential supplies such as food, vehicle parts and ammunition; and, to collect equipment as patrol bases were handed over to the Afghans or closed down. Returning to UK in October, they enjoyed a well-earned leave period before a Homecoming Parade in Abingdon, followed by a Medal Parade inspected by HRH The Princess Royal. Operational commitments continued nearer home, when 31 Squadron and 32 Squadron provided vital extra capacity and expertise to the hard pressed local responders during the floods experienced in January and February. The residents of South Hinksey, in particular, were highly complementary and delighted to receive their support during construction of a 600m long flood barrier.

4 Regiment deployed to Canada in August for the longest and largest exercise seen in recent years on the training area. Although the preparation for their deployment and the subsequent exercise was incredibly busy, it was not all work. Twenty-two lucky individuals were lucky enough to take part in adventure training, with the majority of packages taking place in the scenic Rocky Mountains. They returned to a high UK work tempo, compounded by regular deployment of personnel to Kenya and Canada during 2014. 12 Regiment were disbanded as a result of the Army’s restructuring, finally closing their accounts and handing over real estate in April 14. Whilst a number of their personnel were cross-posted to either of the remaining Abingdon units, many others were moved to join Royal Logistic Corps units elsewhere. A late decision reversed the original Army 2020 plan to switch 3 Regiment and 27 Regiment between Abingdon and Aldershot during 2014 and 2015. Many of our families were relieved to hear that both units are to remain in place, providing valued continuity of education and employment for many. The Community Centre continues to deliver a wide range of activities throughout the week; adult education classes, stay and play, jungle tots, coffee mornings, baby massage, cookery classes, youth club, tumble tots, Military Wives Choir, bingo and quiz nights. Finally, after a 2 year wait, we greeted, with open arms, the arrival of Lorraine Griffin, our newly appointed Community Development Worker. Lorraine has a wealth of experience and is always looking out for those keen to join classes, or others who may wish to offer voluntary help; her contact number is 07769910529. Unfortunately, whilst the Community Centre’s World Cup programme, prepared by Capt John Barker, began with a flourish and major support in both group-stage games for England, the future now looks more subdued and less profitable. John Barker is now starting to plan for the Station’s Bonfire and Fireworks event, scheduled for Sunday

2nd November, starting at 6.30pm. The Airfield continues to host a variety of activity, most notably the recent Air and Country Show and CAR-nival; both events continue to raise valuable monies for worthy causes. The Airshow has now raised in excess of £60,000 for charity, including over £40,000 to the Air Ambulance Trust since supporting them from 2007. The CAR-nival, in its 18th year, has raised in excess of £215,000 for the Army Benevolent Fund and is also a generous supporter of the Dream Makers Trust (Friends of Stowford). Residents should be aware that a mandatory pass system is now in place for dog-walkers who wish to access the Airfield perimeter. Enquiries should be addressed through WO1 Allen, the Station's Health and Safety Warrant Officer on 01235 543605 or AbingdonStn-USEA@mod.uk. Colonel Iain McKend, Station Commander since September 2013, is encouraged by the strong relationship that exists across the wider local community and is fully supportive of the initiatives involving co-operation with County, District and Parish Councils. Station HQ continues to promote local access to the Armed Forces Community Covenant Fund and this last year supported successful bids by Larkmead School, Oxford United Football Club, Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum and Oxfordshire MIND. The school received a generous grant towards the cost of a multi-use, all-weather sports pitch which should benefit the wider community. The aim of the scheme is to deliver financial support to projects at the local level, which strengthen the ties or the mutual understanding between members of the Armed Forces Community and the wider community in which they live. Further local guidance is available through John Higgs, Station Staff Officer on 01235 543534.

Message from Andrew McCormack PCSO Thames Valley Police

Concerns have been raised about dangerous and illegal parking outside local Primary Schools when parent drop off and pick up their children and so members of the inner and outer Abingdon Neighbourhood Teams have started patrols at each of the Schools during opening and closing time to monitor the situation. Just as a reminder please, when you are dropping off or collecting your children from school ensure you park considerately and we would like to remind you that causing an obstruction and parking within 10 meters of a junction is an offence which you can receive a £30 fixed penalty notice for. Parking on pavements is another issue that is regularly raised with neighbourhood teams and although this is sometimes a lesser of two evils in modern built estates if drivers wish to ensure not obstructing the road please be considerate. Thought must be given to pedestrians, those with children, push chairs, wheel chairs and vehicles that are causing unnecessary obstruction and are liable again for a £30 fixed penalty notice. I would also like to take this opportunity to inform residents who do not already know that I am trained in carrying out home crime reduction surveys. If you would like to take the opportunity to have some advice on security and crime reduction at your home please contact me via e-mail at andrew.mccormack@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk. Also, please feel free to contact me if you have any concerns about the area you live via the same e-mail address or on 07890317282.

HOW YOU CAN HELP OUR COMMUNITY

The Parish Council makes every effort to ensure that the infrastructure of the village is kept in good order. Residents and landowners can, however, be a tremendous help by:

- **Ensuring that their hedges are cut back to avoid impeding highways and footpaths**
- **Helping to keep the villages tidy, for example by maintaining stone walls and other features.**
- **Ditches are kept clear to prevent flooding**
- **Cars are parked appropriately – parking on the pavement can make it difficult for mobility scooters**
- **Speed limits are observed within the Parish**
- **Potholes, littering, defective street lights and crimes are reported using the contact numbers below.**
- **Residents' co-operation would be appreciated in keeping the Sandleigh Road recreation ground free of litter. Please take your litter home**
- **Reporting incidents of dog fouling to the Environmental Warden**

USEFUL CONTACT NUMBERS

Thames Valley Police: Serious crimes 999; non-emergency crimes 101. The Parish Thames Valley Police contacts are PC Keith Morton and PCSO Andrew McCormack (C9461). They can be contacted on 101

Vale of the White Horse District Council: Litter and domestic waste: Waste contractor Biffa Tel. 0300 610610

The VWHDC Waste Management Team Tel. 01235 520202; E-mail – waste.team@southandvale.gov.uk

Environmental Wardens: (to report offenders anonymously) Tel. 01235540555; Dog bins are emptied weekly - contact the Vale on Tel. 01235 520202. Biffa Tel. 0300 610610

Planning Department, Vale of White Horse District Council; Tel: 01235 520202 - planning@whitehorsedc.gov.uk;

Planning Enforcement: Tel - 0149 823277; E-mail planning.enforcement@southandvale.gov.uk

Oxfordshire County Council: Street Lighting: Tel. 0800 317802 or by e-mail giving the lamppost number to streetlighting@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Oxfordshire Highways: potholes and other problems relating to highways and footpaths can be reported on the website www.oxfordshire.gov.uk or by telephone on Tel. 0845 3101111.

Dalton Barracks : Guardroom and Detention Centre on Tel. 01235 543365

Royal Air Force Benson: flying activities - www.raf.mod.uk/rafbenson Flying complaints can also be registered on the website or on Tel. 01491 837766 ext. 5218.