

The Parish Council of St. Helen Without

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 17th July 2023 at 7.30 p.m.
At Shippon Church Hall

Present: Cllrs. M. Page (in the Chair), C. Parkin, M. Littleboy, D. Churchouse, N. Benchiba-Savenius

In attendance: Cllr. R. Webber, R. Clegg, Anna Clarke (Clerk)

1. Apologies

Cllr R. Bahu

2. Declarations of Personal or Personal and Prejudicial Interests

None

3. Matters raised by members of the public

Noise from Airfield Motor Cross Events

The Parish Council received a number of complaints over the weekend from residents subjected to extreme noise levels from the Motor Cross event at the Airfield. The Chair, (Cllr Page), expressed that the Parish Council takes this matter very seriously and that residents should not have been subjected to this disturbance. Looking back over old records, this has been an issue for the last 10 to 15 years. There have been attempts to ameliorate the situation like getting events moved from one end of the Airfield to the other.

Cllr Page has been in touch with the Base Commander and will be arranging a meeting with him, Vale Planning and possibly Layla Moran, to discuss a way forward. The Base Commander is new and has been away until a week ago, so is just catching up with the situation and would like to talk it through and reach a resolution. This may differ from the resolution that people want. Cllr Page has also asked that the matter be escalated above the Base Commander, as this last event was arranged by the Army Sports Board. It is hoped that a date will be arranged for the meeting with the Base Commander before the end of the w/c 17th July.

Cllr Page has had lengthy discussions today with Planning with regards to the Agreement made between the Vale, the Army, St Helen Without & Marcham PC in July 2000. Planning are looking into whether this agreement is enforceable. There are caveats contained within it around the use of crown land, and the immunities, which are benefitted from it. Planning were somewhat reticent to discuss the matter as there is currently an open Enforcement case in relation to the Airfield.

Cllr Page assured that the PC would like to see a re-adoption of the Agreement between the Vale, Army & PC, permitting no more than 14 days of motor sport events a year.

David O'Hara is the Station Staff Officer, responsible for events. Cllr Richard Webber is the Military Champion for Dalton Barracks and can help where needed in liaising with Dalton Barracks.

There was a general consensus that the events being referred to, do not include Army Training exercises. Cycling events agreed to be no problem.

Car Chase heroes – the cars have been modified following complaints and are now fitted with additional silencers.

Summary of Grievances

Noise Levels

- The intolerable levels of noise for prolonged periods, (sometimes days), on a regular basis.
- Some noise can be heard even with windows closed and it is impossible to sit in the garden, as the noise is simply unbearable.
- The regularity of events and the number of days on which there are motorsport events has become intolerable. 4 day events are being counted as 1 event, even if they take place over a 3 or 4 days.
- They are primarily held in Summertime when people are most likely to be outside wanting to enjoy their gardens.
- The departure from the Agreement of July 2000 that there would not be more than 14 days of motor events.
- There is no attempt to reduce noise by e.g. putting screens up.
- The noise levels appear to be way over the level which is considered legal.
- The level of noise is atrocious, whether it is classed as a military event or not.

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- Many people work from home nowadays and it has a huge impact on their ability to work.
- On Saturday evening, just before 7pm, a resident drove down to the base to speak to the organiser. On walking from their car, the person on the Tanoys was explaining to the crowd that the new motor cross track had only been built that week (JCB's were clearly visible) and that 'with the crowd's support, we hope to have it here next year'
- The racing continued until just before 8pm on one night, and after 6pm on another, totalling 20 hours of blasting engine noise across Saturday and Sunday alone, making it impossible to enjoy being at home or in the garden over the weekend, and then it was back on Monday, the 4th day in succession. It is beyond bearable.

Traffic

- Traffic generated in the village from these events, creating gridlocks.
- Caravans and large motorhomes coming through the village going to Car Chase Heroes.
- Lack of infrastructure around the Airfield to support the extra traffic generated.
- Motorbikes in the surrounding villages, as a result of the motor cross events.
- Traffic through Gozzards Ford – cars using the dead end to turn round.

Fireworks

- Noise from fireworks events, which necessitates some residents having to take their pets away for the duration.
- The number of events has crept up from the previous maximum of 2 fireworks events a year.
- Debris from the fireworks is left on the Airfield days after, which poses a danger to dogs being taken for walks.

Planning Breaches

- Possible Planning breach (Planning Enforcement Case Open). Permitted Development Rights would only allow for 14 days of motorsports, with a maximum limit of 28 days including all other non-military events, given the entire site is classed as a single planning unit. These laws are to protect the residents who are severely impacted by the noise and traffic issues that these events cause. Putting the local residents' wellbeing at harm.

Agreement July 2000

- Use of the loophole for Crown land immunity.
- Mixed Use Events – if MoD classifies something as a military event, then they are permitted to hold more events than non-military use permits. This event was organised by the Army Sports Board, therefore classified as an Army event. Needs to be clarification on what constitutes a military event? How many Military personnel need to attend in order for it to be classified Military?
- Not enough notice is given for the events.

Questions Raised

- Why & how has the MoD allowed this to happen?
- Why has the PC not flagged this issue up before?
- How does the Barracks classify what is Military use and what is Non-military use (given they have a limited number of these by law). For example if a 4 day motor cross event was to be held, with the military holding races for its troops, but there were also other non-military races, with numerous civilian riders (professional motocross riders) with members of the public paying to observe - would you class this as a military event or a non-military event.
- What is the threshold for determining non-military v's military events. In my view it is very clear, as soon as the public are allowed to attend or participate it is no longer military use. This would mean the number of days for events planned for this year is nearly triple digits with at least one very noisy motorsport event per week when averaged for the year.
- How will the Barracks will proceed now the unlawful use and unlawful events have been highlighted?
- What are the Army doing about lowering emissions from these events?
- Was planning sought for the track, were local residents contacted?

The Army have gone down the commercial route and ignoring the community.

Wildlife

- Negative affect on wildlife, particularly with the close proximity to the nature reserve.

Next Steps

- The PC to meet with the Base Commander.
- The PC to continue discussions with Vale Planning.
- Cllr Robert Clegg to provide a link to Environmental Health.
- PC Members to attend an event.

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- For the Army to adhere to the original agreement or another one agreed to replace it.
- The Parish Council to look at Agreements held between other Parish Councils and sporting venues, (Thrupton Race Track, to be used as a model agreement). They include emissions in theirs. To be kept in mind it is a permanent race track, so differing circumstances.
- The Parish Council to explore options of Noise monitoring equipment for use at apposite locations during a motor sport event.
- The Army to consider other ameliorating measures, such as screens.
- The PC will request that the Army sends a list of events for the 3 months ahead, which will be posted on the Parish Council website. This to include what the events are, what they will involve and their duration.

To be considered for inclusion in the Agreement:

- Include something about wildlife.
- Environmental Health will assess the impact of the events.
- Ascertain the number of events (specifically in terms of days) that is agreeable to all parties.
- Look at the seasonality of events (not all / majority to be held in the summer)
- Look at the possibility of extending the agreement to include other types of non-motorsport events, such as the Fireworks. Following a meeting which Cllr Page attended with Layla Moran, it looks unlikely that fireworks events will stop, as a large number of people enjoy them, however, they should be kept to 2 a year.
- The PC to be notified of all events at least 3 months ahead.
- The definition of what is and isn't a Military Event.

4. Attending Councillors and MOD

MoD

Mr David O'Hara

The bus shelter is now on the official programme for repainting.

Following complaints about fireworks debris not being cleared after displays, the organiser has been made aware that they will not be permitted to hold another event, should the field not be left clear.

Cllr Richard Webber

Thames Water Reservoir – as reported in the news recently, TW are having troubles and this may have a knock on, negative affect with the progression of the reservoir.

Oxford Mobility Model – this is supposed to be a means of measuring traffic flow. Cllr Webber has asked that they provide a clear direction of what they are doing and why or alternatively, if it is not progressing, why? Cllr Webber to keep chasing. RW

Barrow Rd / Lashford Lane Traffic Calming Measures

Cllr Webber to follow up if Mark Francis or one of his colleagues would be able to provide a list of all the potential traffic calming measures available or alternatively, to attend one of the PC meetings to talk Cllrs through the options? RW

It may be that the new 20mph speed limit will alleviate some of the problems and take away the need for additional traffic calming measures.

Cllr Robert Clegg

Cllr Clegg to follow up with Environmental Health re the noise issues at the Airfield and provide a link to the Parish Council. RC

Electoral Review

The Local Government Boundary Commission for England has brief councillors on an upcoming review of the district wards across the Vale: demographics have changed since the boundaries were last updated in now some wards have many more electors per councillors than others. The first stage is about deciding how many councillors are needed, and this is expected to be completed in December. The second phase will then begin, concerning the (re)drawing of ward boundaries. Strong desire to keep parishes intact wherever possible: any division would require consultation with the community(ies) affected before coming into effect.

Motion on sewage treatment

A motion on sewage treatment was discussed and agreed at the recent Full Council meeting of VWHDC, held on Wednesday 12th July. To sum up the motion and debate around it for SHWPC, the council noted that Thames Water's sewage treatment capacity across the Vale has failed to keep up with the housing growth over recent years, leading to far more sewage being dumped into local rivers and streams than could reasonably be excused due to extreme rainfall. In the debate it was noted that housing developers

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also had a key role to play when ensuring that the properties they sold to new residents were sufficiently served-for on this matter.

Resolutions within the motion included engaging with Thames Water about sewage treatment; considering how to factor this into the emerging, new Joint Local Plan and how to factor it into the consideration of all planning applications; asking local MPs to raise the matter in Parliament.

I feel this may be particularly relevant to SHWPC with the Dalton Barracks housing development on the horizon. Although I don't believe that any of the streams nearby is downstream of a sewage treatment plant (please correct me if I have this wrong), there is a good chance that the question of 'will the sewage generated by this development be treated satisfactorily' will be asked during the planning application.

Motorsport at Dalton Barracks

A resident from Wootton district ward has reached out to the District councillor responsible, Val Shaw, to complain about the noise coming from motorsport events at Dalton Barracks. Since the barracks falls within my ward, and because the noise may also be affecting residents in Shippon, Val has looped me into the conversation. Does the SHWPC have any comments on this matter that they would like to have fed into the conversation?

5. Minutes of the meeting held on 22nd May 2023

6. Matters arising from the Minutes

Trees

The Vale confirmed that the only trees that the Parish Council is currently responsible for, would be on Sandleigh Road Recreation Ground, as it is owned by the PC.

Bins

Cllr Bahu and the Clerk to follow up.

RB/AC

7. Dalton Barracks

- Progress to Date
- Masterplan
- Transport Consultancy

Cllr Page to contact the Vale for an update, through Cllr Clegg.

MP/RC

8. Matters raised by members of the Council

WaDS Newsletter – WaDS are now starting to charge for placing adverts etc. It is distributed in Shippon, however, appears to be more Community Centre focused now and less of a newsletter. The Clerk to contact the Newsletter Editor to notify them that Friends of Shippon is a Community Group affiliated with the PC and therefore, should have the same facility for placing notices without charge. With regards to SHW PC contributing to the costs of the Newsletter, WaDS are due to provide a business case and the PC will look at a potential contribution after that. AC

9. AGAR Amendment

The Auditor noted that Section 2, Box 11a of the AGAR had not been completed. The Clerk amended the document, which was signed by the Clerk and Chair and sent to the Auditor.

10. Finance and Administrative Matters

a) Accounts for payment

Payee	Purpose	Total	VAT
Parish Clerk	Salary June & July	£1,283.40	
Clerk Expenses	Expenses June & July Stamps	£104 £8.80	
MRH Services	Move SID Location/change battery/Service Inspection Playground	£192	
BGG	Grass cutting recreation ground Grass cutting verges	£264 £1008	£44 £168
MRH Services	Repair entrance to rec ground Charge SID battery & relocate Charge SID battery & rotate New sign playground area, fitting and materials	£114.68 £42 £48 £32	
ST Grounds Maintenance	May & June Bin Emptying	£40	

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Mike Page	Zoom Subscription	£91.14	
WaDS Community Centre	WaDS Stock Grant	£300	

b.) Grants

WaDS – WaDS Stock Festival – it was agreed to contribute £300 towards the costs of organising and putting on the WaDStock Festival.

11. Correspondence

Oxfordshire County Council

Oxford United's proposals for the land known as 'the Triangle'

Oxfordshire County Council and Oxford United Football Club are in negotiations on the terms on which council-owned land could be used for the development of a new stadium for the club. The land, known as 'the Triangle', is located east of Frieze Way and south of the Kidlington roundabout.

Please find out more and fill in the online survey to give your views. It should take around 15 minutes to complete. <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/stadium-land-use-negotiations>

OCC June Newsletter

Notice of Confirmation of Modification Order Section 53, Wildlife & Countryside Act 1981.

Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way for Oxfordshire

Marcham Bridleway No. 3 (part) Modification Order 2023, ref 03654

On 26 June 2023 the above Order made under section 53 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 was confirmed.

Highway maintenance open day - Saturday 15th July

To have a look around at the site equipment and some live demos – including using sand to have a go at lining (road marking), along with chatting to both Milestone and County Council staff.

Community Tree Care Volunteers

The Tree Service recently undertook planting efforts across the county, with at least one tree planted in every parish. As we enter the summer months, we are reaching out to each community to recruit any volunteers interested in caring for the new trees, particularly with regular watering. The Tree Service is able to provide watering cans and advice on young tree care to any volunteers. The scheme is very informal with no commitment requirements. For anyone interested in volunteering, contact tree.planting@oxfordshire.gov.uk

The Community Tree and Woodland Opportunity team will also be looking at possibilities for future planting projects over the next few years, with a strong focus on community involvement and benefit, so please do reach out to us should you become aware of any relevant opportunities and share our information with any members of your parish with an interest in tree planting.

Matthew Barber Police & Crime Bulletin

OALC

June Update

Vale Communications

Abingdon and Wantage get high-definition CCTV upgrade

Twenty-six new high-definition CCTV cameras have been installed in the Vale, with 20 rolled out across Abingdon and six in Wantage town centre.

Vale News

Planning Surgeries for town and parish councils

Want the lowdown on the latest planning issues affecting your town or parish? Our planning team holds monthly surgeries where you can discuss general planning queries. You can book 15-minute online meetings.

Climate Action Fund webinar is available on youtube

Last week the Climate and Biodiversity team hosted a webinar on our Climate Action Fund which is currently open for applications for funding for projects that help to tackle climate change and increase people's awareness and knowledge of the climate emergency. [Climate Action Fund 2023/2024 - Vale of White Horse District Council \(whitehorsedc.gov.uk\)](#)

Summer season set to start at Abbey Meadow

Abbey Meadow outdoor pool in Abingdon will open ahead of the school summer holidays on Saturday 22 July until the start of September.

Latest images unveiled for new council HQ

A new building that will kickstart the revitalisation of Didcot Gateway is now one step closer, with updated images of the proposed council headquarters released today and a formal planning application expected soon. Both South Oxfordshire and neighbouring Vale of White Horse District Council plan to call the

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office home, as it will provide a flexible, sustainable workspace central to the two districts and help them become carbon neutral councils.

Have your say on the South and Vale Air Quality Action Plan

We are inviting you to have your say on the [Draft Air Quality Action Plan 2023-27](#) for South Oxfordshire and the Vale of White Horse, which outlines the actions we will take to improve air quality in the districts.

This survey will ask you a few questions to find out your views on both area wide and targeted actions. We are carrying out a six-weeks consultation which runs from Thursday 15 June to **11.59pm on Thursday 27 July 2023.**

How to comment The quickest and easiest way to comment is to use our online comment form which is available here: <https://survey.southandvale.gov.uk/s/AirQualityActionPlan/?m=73149804o1spw>

Other

Ava Recreation Playgrounds

JACS UK Street Furniture

Kompan UK

Volunteer Link Up – Good Neighbourhood Scheme - If a new scheme would like to set up, we offer a start up grant of £500, free DBS checks on volunteers and insurance.

Tel: 07545 923327 email: oxfordshiregns@vlu.org.uk

Oxfordshire Treescap Project - We wanted to let you know about an exciting change for the [Oxfordshire Treescap Project](#): from July 2023 the Oxfordshire Treescap Project will be run from within [Community Action Groups Oxfordshire](#), rather than the charity [GrowGreenCarbon](#).

We think that this is a positive step for the project – one of our important learnings over the last two years has been how important it is for community-driven nature recovery to have support for the groups and individuals doing the work, which is where CAG Oxfordshire's expertise lies. [These five slides](#) give more details on our vision for this. We are working to make the transition as smooth as possible, but please bear with us if we are slow to respond to emails during this time. From the end of June, please use naturerecovery@cagoxfordshire.org.uk to contact us; we will advise you if and when contact details change.

12. Cllrs reports and items for future agendas

None

13. AOB

Cllr Bahu to explore the possibility of having an EV scheme in the Village, where residents can hire an electric vehicle of e.g. an hour to see if it would be suitable for their needs.

14. Date of next meeting

It was confirmed that the next meeting will be held at 7.30p.m. on Monday 11th September 2023 at Shippon Church Hall.

There being no further business the Chair closed the meeting at 9.08 p.m

Minutes & Agendas can be found on our website at: <https://sthelenwithout-pc.co.uk>