

BENSON PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Hall, Sunnyside, Benson, Wallingford. OX10 6LZ
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Benson Parish Council Recreation and Lands Committee meeting held on Thursday 12th November 2015 at 7:30PM in the Committee Room

MINUTES

Present: Cllr P Baylis (CPB) (Chair) Cllr J Fowler (CJF)
Cllr P Murray Cllr D Olley (CDO)
Cllr P Peers (CPP) Cllr T Stevenson (CTS)

Proper Officer: P Eldridge

Mr D Rushton, Transport Advisory Group (TAG)

Mr D Cook, Benson Transport Representative

There were no members of the public present.

Minutes of the previous meeting held on Thursday 17th September 2015 were approved at the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 24th September 2015.

1. **Apologies.** Cllr S McCann
2. **Declarations of Interest.** – There were no declarations of interest.
3. **Public Session.** There were no members of the public present.
4. **Adventure Playground.** To receive a short brief on the progress of the Adventure Playground Project from Cllr T McTeague. Cllr T McTeague gave a quick update which included:
 - a. A presentation by the 3 contactors who have provided quotes will be held Thursday 19th November at 7PM in the Parish Hall Lounge.
 - b. Reasons for having an adventure playground came out of the public meeting and survey of households.
 - c. Meeting with the local school council had provided the information that Benson playgrounds were not as good as other playgrounds in the area.
 - d. Watlington was mentioned as particularly good by Benson residents and specifications provided to the contractors had asked for a similar layout and format to Watlington.
 - e. Other information provided by the survey showed that a skate park was still wanted in Benson.
 - f. The requirements of the adventure playground were to provide a modern, safe and state of the art one stop playground in Benson.
 - g. Budget provision would need to be £180K - £220K.
5. **Village Centre.**
 - a. To receive a report from the Transport Advisory Group (TAG) and discuss a Benson Village Parking Plan. Mr D Rushton, chair of TAG gave a report to councillors on the 2nd Draft of the village parking plan produced by TAG. Mr Rushton noted that there 20 recommendations in the report which would need to be reviewed by councillors on the Recreation and Lands committee and then passed to a Benson Parish Council Meeting for action. Comments from councillors on the report included:

i. Recommendation 2: Should include additional bicycle racks around the village. Should also include negotiation with West Waddy for more cycle paths in any new developments.

ii. Recommendation 3: Careless parking in the centre of the village would be improved if white lined parking bays were marked.

iii. Recommendation 10: Use additional white lining to restrict parking at St Helens Avenue.

iv. Recommendation 14: Benson Parish Council should open negotiations with OCC with regards to slip road parking.

v. Cllr P Murray noted that good work had been done to produce the report and asked what the process would be to take it forward. Cllr Baylis responded that Recreation and Lands would need to prioritise the list of recommendations cost them and then make recommendations to full council. Clerk was instructed to place an item on subsequent agendas to discuss.

Action: Clerk to place fixed item on future Recreation and Lands agendas to discuss Benson Village Parking Plan.

CLK

b. To discuss the recent Bus Transport Survey provided by the Transport Advisory Group, circulated Wed 28th Oct 2015 at 07:33. Mr D Cook went through the Route 139 bus transport survey and report noting that the results had been submitted along with objections from TAG and many villagers to OCC. Mr Cook continued that neither the survey nor the objections appeared to have influenced OCC as the cabinet had decided to withdraw all bus subsidies and the funds for Dial a Ride as released in an email from OCC dated Wednesday 11th November 2015. Comments from members on the report included:

i. Cllr P Murray agreed to speak with Thames Travel to try and ascertain what would happen to the service.

Action: Cllr Murray to contact Thames Travel re the Route 139 bus service.

CPM

ii. Cllr P Peers noted that it was likely some areas around Oxfordshire would challenge the legality of removing subsidies based on the requirement for OCC and SODC to provide support for vulnerable people. Mr Cook noted he would be attending Parish Transport Representatives Meeting on 25th November 2015 at county hall and would report back any details of the meeting including any legal challenges.

iii. Mr Rushton suggested that BPC contact OCC Cllr Nimmo-Smith to ask how the removal of subsidies would be processed. Members agreed that the clerk should write to Cllr Nimmo-Smith requesting information.

Action: Clerk to write to Cllr Nimmo-Smith.

iv. Mr Rushton noted that Mr and Mrs Cooper had assisted with the Bus Transport Survey covering all of the requirements at the RAF Base. It was agreed that the clerk should draft a letter of thanks for the work.

Action: Clerk to draft letter to Mr and Mrs Cooper.

CLK

v. Cllr J Fowler noted that there could be other options to ensure continuance of the service such as the use of smaller vehicles and reduction in running times when the service was least used.

vi. Cllr D Olley asked if there was any indication if Thames Travel would maintain the service as a commercial service. Mr Cook responded this would depend on viability and negotiation with OCC.

Cllr Baylis terminated the discussion by thanking Mr Cook for both the work carried out and the report and noted that recreation and lands committee would be very interested in any future meetings he attended.

- c. To discuss any requirements for additional OCC Traffic Surveys to check the speed of vehicles along Oxford Road. Members discussed the request for additional traffic surveys on Oxford Road by Cllr M Winton. Cllr P Baylis noted that information from TAG indicated that previous surveys including some commissioned as part of the previous Benson Neighbourhood Plan, were still valid and that traffic information from all of the previous surveys provided consistent results. At this point Mr D Rushton provided copies of the previous surveys and explained how to interpret the results which he had consolidated into a separate report. Mr Rushton noted that the most suitable road in Benson for a speed survey was the High Street as this was the most likely road to require a 20MPH speed limit. A speed survey would be required to substantiate the requirement for a 20MPH limit. Members agreed that based on the information provided an additional speed survey on Oxford Road was not required. Cllr P Peers asked what funding should be allocated in the 2016 to 2017 budget for surveys and Mr Rushton suggested that around £130 would finance a single survey but added that if BPC were considering resurrecting a Neighbourhood Plan a budget of £500 to £600 would be suitable to cover the necessary traffic surveys.
- d. Any maintenance or other issues. Cllr P Baylis informed members that:
- i. A Christmas tree had been donated by Mr P Keable for 'Bob's Corner' and would be installed during the last week of November.
 - ii. The Benson Xmas Street Fayre had been cancelled by the organisers.

Cllr P Peers left the meeting.

6. Rivermead:

- a. To receive an update on the refurbishment of the paddling pool. Cllr P Baylis reported that during a recent meeting with the clerk the contractor for the refurbishment of the paddling pool had provided a sample of the tiles to be used on the pool, and agreed to complete the work within 6 weeks of the date of the meeting. Contractor had also confirmed that the tiles had been delivered to his office. Cllr Baylis continued that she would be confirming the new completion date with the contractor by letter. Members discussed whether the contractor should be asked to deliver the tiles to clerk. Clerk responded it might be difficult to find storage for such a large delivery and agreed to contact the scouts to see if they could temporarily be stored in the canoe hut located at Rivermead.

Action: Cllr Baylis to write letter to contractor.

Action: Clerk to contact scouts about the storage of tiles.

CPB
CLK

- b. To note that the repair of brick surround around the base of the Summer House has been completed. Cllr P Baylis noted that the work to replace the brick surround of the Rivermead Shelter had been completed and that the work was of a high standard. In response to a request from Cllr D Olley Cllr Baylis agreed to write a letter to the contractor Mr E Crockett to thank him for the timeliness and quality of the work.

Action: Cllr Baylis to write a letter to Mr E Crockett.

CPB

- c. To receive an update on the installation of new Thames path gates at each end of Benson Marina. Cllr P Baylis reported that she was still trying to contact the marina owner and currently had no update on when the work would be

complete. Members agreed that when contact was made Benson Parish Council would provide assistance to the installation by allocating the council external contractor to help with the installation of the gates.

Action: Cllr Baylis to continue to try and contact the marina owner and offer support to help with the installation.

CPB

d. To discuss the recent use of the landing stage for overnight mooring of Salter's Steamers boats. Cllr D Olley noted that the Benson Parish Councils policy was not to allow overnight mooring by any boats at along the Thames River Bank at Rivermead. Clerk noted that he had not seen a policy document containing this condition. Cllr Olley suggested that the chairman ask Cllr P Peers as the councillor most likely to remember which document the condition was in.

Action: Cllr P Baylis to ask Cllr P Peers if there is a policy document for Rivermead.

CPB

e. Any maintenance or other issues. No maintenance or other issues were raised.

7. Allotments.

a. Allotment allocation update and report. Cllr P Baylis reported that there are currently 6 vacant allotments available on the mill lane side and 6 vacant on the St. Helens side. Cllr Baylis continued that 2 allotments have been re allocated in the last month and the annual letter and invoices were sent out at the beginning of October.

b. Any maintenance or other issues. No maintenance or other issues were raised.

8. Play Areas:

a. To discuss the Wickstead quote for the refurbishment of the Sunnyside play area. Cllr P Baylis reported that she had reviewed the work carried out by Cllr J Fowler to prioritise essential refurbishment of the Sunnyside play area. Cllr Baylis distributed copies of the list of essential work and continued that the cost for the work came to £2845 +VAT. Members discussed the list and agreed that a recommendation should be made to full council:

Recommendation to Full Council that £2900 +VAT is allocated to carry out essential maintenance and refurbishment on selected items of equipment in the Sunnyside play area.

b. Any maintenance or other issues. No maintenance or other issues were raised.

9. Bertie West Field (BWF).

a. To discuss which village organisations need copies of the conditions for the use of BWF. Members discussed and decided that initially the conditions should be provided to: Scouts, Guides, Youth Club and Benson Primary School.

Action: Clerk to distribute conditions.

b. Members noted that the scout's use the tractor tyre located in BWF and agreed it could be retained.

c. To receive an update on the removal of the water tank. Cllr D Olley confirmed that the removal of the water tank was being dealt with.

d. Any maintenance or other issues. Clerk noted that a new fence bordering part of one side of the field had been erected.

10. **Sunnyside.**

- a. To discuss the infilling of the gaps on the perimeter of Sunnyside with trees. Deferred to next meeting.
- b. Any maintenance or other issues. Clerk noted that as instructed at the last meeting he had replaced the warning sign at the entrance to BWF.

11. **Millstream Public Conveniences and Store.**

- a. To receive an update on the installation of an automatic lock on the Millstream toilet. Cllr P Baylis reported that the lock is due to be installed around 10AM Friday 20th November 2015.
- b. To discuss options for the installation of a salt bin. Cllr P Baylis reported that the installation of a salt storage facility was urgent as the current location would need to be vacated by December 2015. Cllr Baylis continued that there were several options including installing some sort of bin at the Millstream toilet as originally proposed on the plans. Hire a lock up (which would be very useful in any case if we have to store equipment for Oxfordshire Together work, garage at College Farm would be good for this task. Reallocated some of the current storage space back to BPC use (pavilion Garage, canoe hut etc.). After discussion members agreed that the best way forward would be to level the area of ground originally allocated as a salt store at the Millstream toilets and install a suitable bin. Due to the restricted timeframe members also agreed to make a recommendation to full council to fund the work:

Recommendation to Full Council that Benson Parish Council allocates up to £2000 +VAT to provide a salt storage facility on the ground adjacent to the Millstream toilets.

- c. To discuss the options for the installation of a rose garden at the Millstream toilets. Cllr P Baylis noted that there would be no room for a rose garden once the salt storage facility had been constructed. Cllr D Olley responded that it may still be possible, in the future, to plant roses adjacent to the Coop wall.
- d. Any maintenance or other issues. No maintenance or other issues were raised.

12. **Benson War Memorial.**

- a. To discuss the use of the External Contractor to support the setting up and manning of the road closure for the Benson Remembrance Parade. Due to time constraints this item was deferred to the next meeting.
- b. To receive a report on the action from the last meeting to get additional quotes to refurbish the lettering on the memorial. Cllr D Olley produced copies of a recent report, attached at annex B, provided by Cllr P Murray. After a brief discussion it was agreed that the clerk should contact the SODC conservation officer and invite then to visit the Benson War Memorial to meet with a councillor in order to provide additional advice on options for the repair/replacement of the worn lettering.

Action: Clerk to contact SODC conservation officer.

- c. To receive a report on the action from the last meeting to get additional information on the listed building planning permission process. Covered in the preceding minute. Report is at Annex B.
- d. Any maintenance or other issues. No maintenance or other issues were

raised.

13. Benson Brook.

a. To discuss the removal of a small timber weir that has been built down by the footbridge near the cuckoo pen nursery. It was agreed that Cllr T Stevenson should process the necessary form to enable the removal of the weir.

Action: Cllr Stevenson to process the forms for the removal of the weir in the Benson Brook adjacent to the Cuckoo Pen.

Cllr J Fowler apologised saying that as it was getting late he needed to leave the meeting.

Cllr P Baylis closed the meeting deferring all other agenda items to the next meeting.

b. To discuss the recent communication between Cllr R Workman and the Environmental Agency on culverts along Benson Brook circulated Tue 3rd Nov 2015 at 13:18.

c. Any maintenance or other issues.

14. General.

a. To note the minutes and supporting documentation of the Agrivert Liaison meeting held Tuesday 20th October 2015, circulated Tue 3rd Nov 2015 at 08:34.

b. To review information received from the 'Oxfordshire Together' launch meeting.

c. To discuss and identify the way ahead to purchase or lease the 'Salt Store' land for use as a car park.

d. To note that Grundon have provided a large sack of daffodils for use around the village.

e. To discuss the placement and costing of additional litter bins around the village.

f. To review and identify precept funding.

g. To note that the 'Litter Pick' around the village on Saturday 17th October 2015 was successfully completed.

h. To discuss setting up a liaison meeting with the manager of Benson McDonald's to review options for reducing litter from the outlet.

15. Any Other Items to Note or for the Next Agenda.

16. Date of Next Meeting. 11th February 2016.



P Eldridge
Parish Clerk
18th November 2015

Annex A
Actions for Receptions and Land Meeting as at
12th November 2015

Serial No	Action	
1.	Clerk to report cracked manhole cover at scout hut to Thames Water. R & L Minutes dated 20 th February 2014 (8.b.i.). <i>In progress</i>	CLK
2.	Clerk to purchase root puller. Minutes dated 12 th February 2015 (8.b.i.). <i>In progress.</i>	CLK
3.	Clerk to obtain quotes for the removal of Elder trees along the Sunnyside perimeter fence adjacent to Hale Road. Minutes dated 9 th April 2015 (9.a.). <i>In progress.</i>	CLK
4.	Halls manager to write to allotment holders. Minutes dated 6th August 2015 (6.a.). <i>Letter sent. Item closed.</i>	HMR
5.	Clerk to arrange the watering of plants. Minutes dated 6th August 2015 (9.b.ii.). <i>In progress.</i>	CLK
6.	Cllr Stevenson to inspect boardwalk damage at Millbrook Mead. Minutes dated 6th August 2015 (12.c.). <i>In progress.</i>	CTS
7.	Halls Manager to circulate allotment Terms and Conditions for hirers to members of the Recreation and Lands Committee. Minutes dated 17 th September 2015 (6.a.ii.). <i>In progress.</i>	HMR
8.	Cllr Stevenson to check the Paddock for removal of Ragwort. Minutes dated 17th September 2015 (6.b.). <i>In progress.</i>	CTS
9.	Parish staff to produce a list of conditions for beehives on Benson Parish council allotments for review and inform allotment holders of the request for a beehive. Minutes dated 17th September 2015 (6.d.). <i>In progress.</i>	CLK
10.	Clerk to review and report on the best option to replace worn and damaged panels on play equipment in the Sunnyside play area. Minutes dated 17th September 2015 (7.c.i.). <i>Superseded by new plan. Item closed.</i>	CLK
11.	Clerk to arrange for the removal of the wood burning bin in the Sunnyside play area. Minutes dated 17th September 2015 (7.c.ii.). <i>Bin removed. Item closed.</i>	CLK
12.	Cllr Olley to arrange for the removal of the water tank on BWF. Minutes dated	CDO

- 17th September 2015 (8.a.).
In progress.
13. Clerk to replace BWF warning sign and arrange for the useable recreation areas to be cleared. Minutes dated 17th September 2015 (8.b.). **CLK**
Sign Replaced. Item closed.
14. Cllrs Olley and Stevenson to review Rose garden plans. Minutes dated 17th September 2015 (10.b.). **CDO
CTS**
Superseded by new plan. Item closed.
15. Cllr Olley to get updated quote for re-lettering names and wording on War Memorial. Minutes dated 17th September 2015 (11.a.). **CDO**
In progress.
16. Cllr Murray to get more information on the planning process for listed War Memorials. Minutes dated 17th September 2015 (11.a.). **CPM**
Information obtained. Item closed.
17. Clerk to write to TAG asking that they process the requirement for a Benson Parish Council parking plan. Minutes dated 17th September 2015 (12.d.). **CLK**
Letter sent. Item closed.
18. Cllr Olley to contact a local woodworking contractor to give an assessment on the repair/replacement of the Church Road bench seats. Minutes dated 17th September 2015 (12.e.). **CDO**
In progress.
19. Clerk to place fixed item on future Recreation and Lands agendas to discuss Benson Village Parking Plan. Minutes dated 12th November 2015 (5.a.v.). **CLK**
In progress.
20. Cllr Murray to contact Thames Travel re the Route 139 bus service. Minutes dated 12th November 2015 (5.b.i.). **CPM**
In progress.
21. Clerk to write to Cllr Nimmo-Smith. Minutes dated 12th November 2015 (5.b.iii.). **CLK**
In progress.
22. Clerk to draft letter to Mr and Mrs Cooper. Minutes dated 12th November 2015 (5.b.iv.). **CLK**
In progress.
23. Cllr Baylis to write letter to contractor. Minutes dated 12th November 2015 (6.a.). **CPB**
In progress.
24. Clerk to contact scouts about the storage of tiles. Minutes dated 12th November 2015 (6.a.). **CLK**
In progress.

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| 25. | Cllr Baylis to write a letter to Mr E Crockett. Minutes dated 12th November 2015 (6.b.).
<i>In progress.</i> | CPB |
| 26. | Cllr Baylis to continue to try and contact the marina owner and offer support to help with the installation. Minutes dated 12th November 2015 (6.c.).
<i>In progress.</i> | CPB |
| 27. | Cllr P Baylis to ask Cllr P Peers if there is a policy document for Rivermead. Minutes dated 12th November 2015 (6.d.).
<i>In progress.</i> | CPB |
| 28. | Clerk to distribute conditions. Minutes dated 12th November 2015 (9.a.).
<i>In progress.</i> | CLK |
| 29. | Clerk to contact SODC conservation officer. Minutes dated 12th November 2015 (12.b.).
<i>In progress.</i> | CLK |
| 30. | Cllr Stevenson to process the forms for the removal of the weir in the Benson Brook adjacent to the Cuckoo Pen. Minutes dated 12th November 2015 (13.a.).
<i>In progress.</i> | CTS |

Annex B

Report on the Condition of the Benson War Memorial

1. Monument is made of granite and condition is not too bad
2. Listed Building status confers a duty to retain the existing architectural and historical nature/value of a building or monument, so we should look to repair wherever possible - rather than replace or modify
3. The approach recommended by the Abingdon company is a modification, not a repair, that would significantly alter the appearance of the monument (introduce new stone, hide existing lettering, damage original surface with fixings etc). It would definitely require Listed Building Consent; and is unlikely to be approved if less drastic and practicable repair options are available
4. Recommended approach is to:
 - Review lettering and identify those that are badly worn or damaged and therefore need to be recut - mark up photos of those to be recut for use in getting quotes, advising SODC etc.
 - Get a good monumental mason to recut these letters, using existing style, size etc
 - Chase out the current stain (probably a bitumen paint?) from all the other lettering
 - Reapply stain - SODC may be able to advise or there may be guidelines on what to use on Historic England website - failing these, I can ask Cathy to check out latest advice
5. This repair approach does not strictly require Listed Building Consent, though councils are within their rights to ask for a Certificate of Lawfulness (ie to waive LB Consent). Best approach might be to email/write to SODC, prior to commencing work, advising that we are proceeding to repair the monument, outlining rationale and attaching marked up photos
6. The team didn't think the repair work should be expensive, provided we can secure a good monumental mason