



Benson Parish Council

Benson Parish Hall, Sunnyside, Benson, Wallingford. OX10 6LZ

Tel: 01491 825038 e-mail: clerk@bensonpc.org.uk

Recreation & Lands Committee

Membership:

Councillor Patricia Baylis (Chair), Councillor Robert Castelow-Sturges, Councillor Gavin McLauchlan, Councillor Phil Murray, Councillor Roger Moore and Councillor Tom Stevenson.

MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE BENSON PARISH COUNCIL RECREATION AND LANDS COMMITTEE HELD IN THE PARISH HALL ON THURSDAY 9th JANUARY 2025 AT 7.00PM

Present: Cllr Patricia Baylis (Chair), Cllr Robert Castelow-Sturges, Cllr Gavin McLauchlan, Cllr Phil Murray, Cllr Roger Moore and Cllr Bill Pattison

Nicola Copland - Clerk

Layla Johnston
15th January 2025

1. Apologies and absences.

Cllr Stevenson sent apologies

2. Declarations of interest

Members must ensure that they complete the Declaration of Interest sheet prior to the start of the meeting in respect of items other than Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and must indicate the action to be taken.

3. Public session

No members of the public present.

4. Minutes of the last meeting

It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes of the meetings of the Recreation and Lands Committee held on Thursday 14th November 2024 and sign as a true record of the meeting.

5. Actions from the last meeting.

Skate park – still querying whether the repair is under warranty. Will wait a week and escalate or In Cllr Pattison's view grounds team could repair hole.

Rivermead – Cllr Baylis & Sarah Singleton have drawn up brief. Will go onto contract finder and out to individuals next week. PB has meeting with the EA landscape adviser next week.

Willow tree spiling – Confirm if this is spiling or coppicing (ie cutting back)

History leaflet – b/f Cllr Stevenson

Cuckoo Pen clearance – RFO completing new grant application. Survey had approximately 50 responses and showed a 71 to 29 split in favour of the second option which is the more open accessible option. The survey was conducted using Simple Surveys but we have been unable to access the results as we only had a temporary sign up. The results will be communicated once we have the results.

The Cedars – still waiting for professional advice.



Benson Parish Council

Benson Parish Hall, Sunnyside, Benson, Wallingford. OX10 6LZ

Tel: 01491 825038 e-mail: clerk@bensonpc.org.uk

Recreation & Lands Committee

Membership:

Councillor Patricia Baylis (Chair), Councillor Robert Castelow-Sturges, Councillor Gavin McLauchlan, Councillor Phil Murray, Councillor Roger Moore and Councillor Tom Stevenson.

Allotments – allotments FB group has been set up

Allotment report submitted using Cllr Murrays form

Oak tree pruned. Hazel awaiting coppicing by grounds staff

Water Meter for paddock – b/f Cllr McLauchlan providing information

Chicken coops – b/f Cllr Baylis to write to her to ask her to move to her plot

Small, raised beds – Cllr Baylis spoke to her and the plot holder is working her plot.

Boreholes – b/f Cllr Pattison

Hedging at Mill Lane Allotments – to be planted on the 11th February.

Warwick Spinney Crossing – Cllr Murray reported there had been recent BANG meeting looking at this area - there is support towards renaming the Benson Country Park Ladybrook Common (flagged up complications of naming piece of land a “common”). With regard to a crossing to Warwick Spinney there has been an offer of sleepers to go ahead and make a crossing. Cllr Pattison mentioned piece of correspondence giving permission for crossing. **Action** Clerk/RFO to locate letter about Ladybrook bridge

Broken swings at St Helen's Play area – The broken swings have been removed for safety and the Committee has decided to pursue the replacement of the swings.

RECOMMENDATION to spend no more than £950 plus VAT on the supply and fitting of two swings plus chains and two cradle seats at St Helen's play area.

Fencing around play area – b/f for next meeting

Basketball hoop – hoop is going to be turned around and relocated to another part of the play area. **Action** – Ground staff

Aldridge triangle – no new bench needed and concrete plinth can be left in situ.

Tree canopy lift – **Action** - Cllr Stevenson to mark branches in question

Stones along edge of Aldridge Triangle have been approved.

Purchase of trailer – deferred to 26/27 financial year plus no storage for trailer. Cllr Pattison queried that it was going to be paid for out of the commuted sums not BPC budget? Also Rupert Belcher has offered a shipping container for storage at £100 per month. **Action** Cllr Pattison to liaise with interested parties.

Bike stations – deferred pending decision on mobility hub. Our MP Freddie Van Mierlo confirmed that that the hubs were going ahead.



Benson Parish Council

Benson Parish Hall, Sunnyside, Benson, Wallingford. OX10 6LZ

Tel: 01491 825038 e-mail: clerk@bensonpc.org.uk

Recreation & Lands Committee

Membership:

Councillor Patricia Baylis (Chair), Councillor Robert Castelow-Sturges, Councillor Gavin McLauchlan, Councillor Phil Murray, Councillor Roger Moore and Councillor Tom Stevenson.

Sunnyside

Blue paint issue – resolved

Hedges cut along Watlington/Hale Road

Planting at Faye Elizabeth Park – awaiting planting plan

War Memorial – planning permission granted but it is subject to the Highways regulations but have been unable to find out what they are. Cllr Pattison suggested solution would be to approach an OCC approved contractor to carry out the work as they will know the regulations.

Millbrook Mead Walkway extension – Clerk and Cllr Baylis meeting Maydencroft on 10th Jan to assess and get quotes.

Trees at tennis Courts – report sent

6. Green Spaces Working Group.

- a. Report from Chairman – No report

7. Skate Park

- a. Update – already discussed.

b. Any issues – As the first part of the relief road is complete BPC can take forward the idea to fence around the skate park to keep dogs out. Check details of s106 agreement before doing at council's cost.

8. Rivermead.

- a. Refurbishment project – already discussed

b. Any issues – Tree report has advised an Alder tree needs felling and 2 willows need to be pollarded. Boundary hedge between Rivermead and the Waterfront needs cutting back. Action – Azalea to do it before end February. Would make sense to cut through the gap in the hedge (1m wide). Action - Cllr Pattison will meet Clerk down at Rivermead to map out. Cllr Moore agreed to help.

9. Allotments -

- a. Report from Allotments Manager – read and discussed earlier.

b. To receive an update on the Allotment Association – FB page and a WhatsApp group set up.

Action – Layla to post on FB/BB etc. The group is called Benson Allotments.

- c. Discuss the installation of a water meter at St Helen's allotments – already discussed

d. Update on possible bore holes – already discussed

- e. Any other issues - none

10. Sunnyside

- a. Any issues – no issues

11. Play Areas

- a. Discuss the recent quote for the repairs to the swings at St Helen's Park - discussed

b. Update on the hedging at St Helen's play area - discussed

d. Any other issues. One of the canopy covers on the seesaw at Faye Elizabeth Park has been broken. The repair quote is £2000 so the cover has been removed as it is not a safety item.

12. Waste and bins.



Benson Parish Council

Benson Parish Hall, Sunnyside, Benson, Wallingford. OX10 6LZ

Tel: 01491 825038 e-mail: clerk@bensonpc.org.uk

Recreation & Lands Committee

Membership:

Councillor Patricia Baylis (Chair), Councillor Robert Castelow-Sturges, Councillor Gavin McLauchlan, Councillor Phil Murray, Councillor Roger Moore and Councillor Tom Stevenson.

- a. Update – dog bin on the corner of Chapel Lane needs replacing as it has some sharp edges. Dog bin needs to have a lid – could the SODC bin be replaced. Cala do plan to put dog bins on Benson Country Park but there are also requests for dog waste bag dispensers. Comment there is a tendency for these to be nicked. Action – Clerk to find out costs.

13. General items.

- a. Update on the War Memorial- already discussed
b. Discuss the fence around the Millbrook Mead walkway - already discussed

14. Cuckoo Pen

- a. Discuss results of the recent survey – discussed earlier
b. Update – Re the community orchard Cllr McLauchlin still chasing up with OCC whether could get trees and store.

15. Warwick Spinney

- a. Discuss a possible crossing – discussed.

16. Nature Park

- a. To discuss future planning.
- Things to consider – no formal access from Littleworth Road to the small area next to the community hall.
 - Lack of drainage – flooded everywhere including the hoggin path – slippery and need wellies to walk there. Cllr Murray pointed out this is in flood zone 3 and there is nothing we can do about it.
 - What maintenance needed for hoggin path
 - No formal access to relief road - replace hedging?
 - Temporary fencing by Triggs Mead – will it be removed?
 - Issues with the interpretation boards – BANG have already discussed them and talked to Cala about replacing them. Incorrect information on boards eg where is the badger set? Would need to be recommended to Rec & Lands
 - Bins not near roads – how will they be emptied?
 - Benches – what is their composition with respect to maintenance?
 - No entrance for vehicles to access for mowing etc. Birdsmouth fencing – need access panel
 - No dog bins/rubbish bins or bench on smaller area

SODC planning have said until the entire relief road is completed there will be no handover of the green spaces. This needs clarification as the OCC team think the transfer process will be in spring. Cala have confirmed that the birdsmouth fencing needs to be extended.

17. Items for Councillors to note or for the next agenda.

Footpaths to be added to next agenda.

18. Any other business - none

Date of next meeting.

Thursday 13th March 2025