

Bix and Assendon Parish Council

Clerk - Mrs. Jane Pryce, 56 Galsworthy Drive, Caversham Park Village, Reading, Berkshire RG4 6PP
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The minutes of Bix and Assendon Parish Council meeting held on 6th March 2017

Present:

Ms. L. Thiesen (LT), Mr. R. Aitken, (RA) Mrs. I. Chantry (IC), Mr. M. Beesley (MB) and Mr. W. Murdoch (WM)

Also present: Mrs. J. Pryce (JOP - Clerk) and 17 members of the public.

Key: BAG – Bix & Assendon Grapevine alert email service to residents.

A parishioner asked to leave but informed the parish council about the discovery of a history of Bix & Assendon. Chris Chantry was asked for contact details for possible inclusion on the website.

016/17 Apologies for absence

None

017/17 Members declarations of personal and prejudicial interests

None

018/17 Confirmation of the minutes of 16th January 2017

The minutes were declared true and accurate and signed by the chairman.

019/17 Report from Cllr. D. Bartholomew (the attached report was emailed prior to the meeting – this will be on the website)

Subjects mentioned in the report above are - Council tax rise of 5% **which will** most go on social care. An additional funding of 2 million which will allow an extra £170,000 for grass cutting. Open access children's services to continue.

SPECIFIC REPORT FOR BIX & ASSENDON

P16/S3853/FUL MAYFLOWER COTTAGE, LOWER ASSENDON

I do not support the applicant's plan to incorporate the verge into their garden and, together with District Councillor and OCC Cabinet member David Nimmo Smith, have lodged an objection.

SILT AND DEBRIS ON ROADS

Cllr Aitken has drawn my attention to silt and debris on local roads, particularly Old Bix Road and Dobsons Lane. This type of problem is one I am well aware of throughout my Division. One of the key issues is that both OCC and SODC say the other council is responsible for the issue. This is totally unsatisfactory and I have been lobbying for many months for it to be resolved. The latest response from Chris McCarthy, OCC E&E Ops Director, is:

"Yes, we concur that a protocol or similar is required and this is on our radar screen.

We currently don't have the officer capacity to do that but, on the back of forthcoming organisational adjustments, which should give some capacity, we intend to pick up this issue in the coming months."

I am not satisfied with this reply and have raised the following question that will be put to the E&E Cabinet Member at Full Council on March 21st:

"In June 2016 I alerted OCC Highways to road safety issues relating to the presence of loose gravel/silt on a road in Rotherfield Peppard. Although not a major issue in itself, the report did highlight a matter of much greater concern. OCC Highways asserted that loose gravel/silt constituted 'debris' and it was the responsibility of South Oxfordshire District Council to clear it. SODC refuted this and maintained it was an OCC Highways' responsibility. After months of inter-council squabbling, OCC fixed the particular problem on an exceptional basis, but the general issue does not appear to have been addressed, despite frequent reminders from me. I now have another parish complaining that some of their country lanes have been turned into dirt tracks with the recent wind and rain and I do not know how to best advise them. What is being done to resolve the question of responsibility in relation to this matter?"

There were several complaints about OCC's 'Fix My Street' software and DB informed the meeting that this was being addressed with an upgrade. There is at present, a limited amount of responses possible. So 'being fixed' should be 'inspected' for example.

The loose sets on the A4130 dual carriage need to be reported via 'Fix my Street'.

LT thanked DB.

020/17 Report from the SODC councillor.

Please see Annual Parish Council minutes.

021/17 Village Spring Clean

The annual village spring clean on Sunday 5th March went well according to RA (Lower Assendon) and LT (Middle Assendon) but MB at Bix filled more bags (8-10). The Assendons found half the litter as last year and more volunteers with new faces. A BAG for thanking the volunteers was requested.

022/17 Bix Village Gates

Report by Cllr. M. Beesley

MB asked JOP if the plastic gates were viewed and approved. JOP confirmed that a Rotherfield Greys councillor had viewed some in-situ and found it was difficult to tell them from wood. MB and JOP had surveyed the areas to put gates and it was thought that a gate on the verge (north side) should be near to the 40mph sign and a sign 'please slow down through our village' on it. The same to be positioned again near the 40mph on the south side. The majority of councillors agreed. Clarification on permission from OCC still to be obtained.

023/17 Fairmile cemetery

RA gave a report on progress so far.

Following a meeting with the Henley Town clerk, Janet Wheeler and accountant Liz Jones, an agenda item was added to next Henley Town Council meeting. This meeting was on 28th February to discuss the Fairmile Cemetery charges (which charge 3 times to non-Henley residents).

It was pointed out that the parish boundary was Bix & Assendon and encompassed the cemetery. Awaiting minutes to be published. The result will be put on BAG.

024/17 Allotment Report

The manure has been delivered. The allotment holders each gave £20 to the Bix church (total £100) and Philip Day (Merrimoles Farm) provided and delivered the manure for free.

There was a report of the padlock not working. JOP has been searching for a replacement and it is always difficult to open. Thanks for Richard Whittington for welding work on it and as Alfie Hay says ‘Thank you for assisting geriatric fumbling codger to gain access to his promised land’.

025/17 Planning

a) Applications received

The following planning application has been received:

Reference Location/Description	Date Registered Target Decision date
<p>P17/S0551/LB Fairmile Chapels, Fairmile Cemetery, Fairmile RG9 6AA Repairs to the external stone and flint work plus repointing. BAPC deadline 7.3.17</p>	<p>10 February 2017 7 April 2017</p>
<p>P17/S0502/HH Hill View, Middle Assendon RG9 6AX Conversion of existing detached garage roof space into domestic office with new stair access from ground floor BAPC deadline 7.3.17 Note: The garage is located in front of the main building line.</p>	<p>9th February 2017 7th April 2017</p>
b) BAPC Recommendations	
<p>P16/S3421/FUL 2nd amendment Halfacre, Bix RG9 6DB The demolition of the existing dwelling and redevelopment to form four (two pairs) of semi-detached dwellings. BAPC recommendation SHOULD BE REFUSED Reasons: The opinion was that of over-development and creating a precedent.</p>	<p>21 October 2016 25 November 2016</p>
<p>..... P16/S3853/FUL Mayflower Cottage, LA RG9 6AH Change of use from public highway to private garden. The proposal is to obtain this area of highway grass verge at the front of the property next to the B480 and convert to a private garden. BAPC recommendation ‘SHOULD BE REFUSED’ This application has raised significant local concern for the change of use from public highway grass verge to part of a garden. This concern was from a safety point of view</p>	<p>5th January 2017 2nd March 2017</p>

and that of creating a precedent – the present position is that, as OCC have denied ownership, that the applicant has been asked to check ownership with the land registry.

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P16/S4220/FUL 21 December 2016
 Merrimoles Farm Bix 22 March 2017
 Proposed redevelopment of dairy unit, revised submission following the withdrawal of P16/S3376/FUL.
 BAPC recommendation ‘NO STRONG VIEWS’

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P16/S4133/FUL 16 December 2016
 Swiss Farm Marlow Road HENLEY RG9 2HY 10 February 2017
 Removal of existing portacabin office and timber outbuilding.
 Provide New Modular Single Storey Reception Building
 BAPC recommendation ‘NO STRONG VIEWS’

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P16/S3555/FUL 25 October 2016
 Leys Stable Cottage, Old Bix Road, Bix RG9 6BY 10 Feb 2017
 Variation of condition 2 and 5 of planning permission P14/S4069/FUL to replace approved plans and for the insertion of a clear glazed first floor window in north or south elevation, Variation of condition 2 of planning permission P14/S1529/FUL Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of a replacement 4 bed dwelling with integral double garage and associated amenity space provision.(As amended by drawings 13 357 03C and 13 357 13 to reduce the width of the garage and revise the roof design of the proposed dwelling).
 BAPC response SHOULD BE REFUSED 18.11.16
 Note: This application has brought strong objections from the immediate neighbours and is with SODC to resolve.

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P16/S2549/FUL 28 September 2016
 Spring Cottage, Lower Assendon Oxon RG9 6AH 18 January 2017
 Demolition of existing house and replacement with new house
 BAPC – NO STRONG VIEWS 25 August 2016

WM - The planning application for this house has reduced in size from last application. Target decision date was 28th Feb 2017 now 8th March 2017

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WM - Other planning matters

P15/S4357 - Orchard House, Bix
 The dispute with Highways over access seems to have been resolved. SODC GRANTED

c) SODC Decisions

P17/S0070/HH 10th January 2017
 Greenmarsh Cottage, Bix RG9 4RY 7th March 2017
 Extension to existing garage
 BAPC recommendation ‘No Strong Views’
 SODC Granted

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P16/S4041/FUL 13 December 2016

Land adjoining The Fox Wallingford Road Bix RG9 6DB 7 February 2017
 Demolition of existing outbuilding and erection of detached dwelling with access, parking and amenity space
 BAPC recommendation 'NO STRONG VIEWS'
 SODC GRANTED

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P16/S4010/FUL 7 December 2016
 Mulberry House Old Bix Road Bix RG9 6BY 1 February 2017
 Construct new dwelling
 BAPC response SHOULD BE REFUSED (reasons – open land not infill and inappropriate access to A4130 9.1.17
 SODC REFUSED

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P16/S3650/LB Amendment No. 1 3 November 2016
 Bix Bottom Farm, Road Running North From 29 December 2016
 Bix Bottom Farm to Valley Farm, Bix RG9 6BH
 Extension to listed main farmhouse and alterations. Conversion of garage to playroom/office. Conversion of stable to dwelling. Conversion of house to holiday let. Replacement Pigsty building with pool changing room. 2 new shepherd huts and tool shed.
 BAPC recommendation NO STRONG VIEWS
 SODC GRANTED

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P16/S3649/FUL Amendment No. 1 3 November 2016
 Bix Bottom Farm, Bix RG9 6BH 29 December 2016
 Extension to listed main farmhouse and alterations.
 Conversion of garage to playroom/office.
 Conversion of stable to dwelling.
 Conversion of house to holiday let.
 Replacement Pigsty building with pool changing room. 2 new shepherd huts and tool shed.
 BAPC recommendation NO STONG VIEWS
 SODC GRANTED

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 A member of public asked for the parish council's support for a recently submitted planning application for a new bungalow. The council has not yet received the application and could not comment. WM asked to be contacted to arrange a site visit.

026/17 Correspondence

SODC confirmed the parish council precept (first half £3,550.00) for 2017/18 will be paid the week commencing 3rd April.

NALC (National Association of Local Councils) has increased the S137 payment to £7.57 per parishioner.

The Section 137 payments were explained to the meeting. Community and charity payments can be made by the parish council and are categorised (for audit) as S137. The maximum allowed amount has risen to £7.57 times the adult electors (491) which totals £3,716.87 for next year 2017/18. This total may change as the most recent electors figure is to be updated soon.

027/17 Finance.

a) Cheques for payment

COMET quarterly bus subscription £134 (Q2)

Jane Pryce – Wages £400.79 office rent £41.68 Total cheque £487.78.

OALC annual subscription £133.07 (VAT £22.18)

OALC course 'The Clerks Year' £78 (VAT £13)

Refund expenses for refreshments during village spring clean event 5th March 2017 to LT £33.30

b) Payments received

One early allotment payment of £18.

Bank balance is: £13,064.46

A planning application matter was brought to the parish council for Half Acre in Bix. A meeting was requested with WM to address any reservations there maybe.

028/17 Village Hall Report

Please see the annual VH report in the APM meetings.

029/17 Footpath Report

Maggie Templeton, the Chiltern Society representative, has nothing to report.

The subject of kissing gates for Gingerbread Way is still on-going and Maggie will inform the council when/if the grants are available.

030/17 Any other business

Go-active Gold free Nordic walking training sessions have 12 attendees and runs for 6 weeks from 13th February 2017. The senior circuit course is still to be organised.

The lighting of the beacon for 'The Battle is Over' to mark the end of WW1 is to be held on Bix Common in conjunction with Pishill & Stonor and Maidensgrove parishes on 11th November 2018. The parish council budget (2018/19) will include a contribution of £200 towards fireworks - the councillors agreed. Maidensgrove is providing the beacon. The Bix & Assendon village hall is to be booked for a party during the celebrations.

The Bix telephone kiosk is going to be adopted by a committee. JOP has informed Tom Wyatt of SODC of this and that the one at Middle Assendon can be removed.

WM had received a communication about a piece of land (in Russells Water) willed to Watlington, Swyncombe, Stonor, Pishill and Bix on the understanding a village hall would be built. This village hall has been re-built in year 2000 with funding from a Lottery grant. The committee who runs this village hall have members from Stonor and Pishill and are in need of other members. It was requested a councillor from BAPC volunteer for this. As obtaining committee member for the Bix & Assendon village hall had proved difficult, it was suggested a parishioner could be sought via BAG. The members agreed to discuss this further at a later date.

031/17 Public Comments

None

Next Meeting (Annual Electors parish council meeting) – Monday 8th May 2017 at 7.30pm

The meeting ended at 9.25 pm