

DEDDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at Hempton Lounge, Windmill Centre, Deddington at 7:30pm on Wednesday 10 May 2023.

Present: Six parish councillors, Deddington news representative, Parish Clerk and three members of public.

Minutes May 2021 and Matters arising. Cllr M Swadling proposed, Cllr M Robinson seconded the motion and the Council **RESOLVED** (unanimous by those in attendance) that the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting for May 2022 a true record of the meeting.

Report from the 2023 Chair Cllr H Oldfield:

This has been a busy year for the parish council with a number of major projects either completed, en route, or about to begin – including, if all goes well, an approved and established Neighbourhood Plan. There'll be more detail about many of the projects at the Windmill and on our highways from the chairs of individual working groups. But I should like to say how indebted we are to the hard-won expertise and daily grind of councillors and parish clerk, Windmill trustees and committee members in ensuring these projects – new roof, new surface on the all-weather court, new loos – are contractually watertight and effectively carried through.

Planning has been a big issue. We owe great thanks to another doughty crew – the Neighbourhood Plan steering group who, with help and advice from a CDC planning officer and a planning consultant, have brought the Plan to Submission stage, despite a delay enforced by the local elections. Parishioners have played their part too contributing to two consultations, one informal, one formal, now complete.

The Plan has evolved over the year. Initially we were expecting CDC to require a target figure of as many as 150 new homes up to 2040 which might have been located on up to three sites; in light of a preview of the new emerging CDC Local Plan, that figure has now been scaled down to 85 on one site. Parishioners will have the final say on this in a referendum.

Independently of the Neighbourhood Plan, three local large-scale (or largeish-scale) planning applications have been submitted to CDC: one for 135 homes on a site north of Deddington Grange and west of the Banbury Road that has subsequently been withdrawn. An application for 60 homes north of Wimborn Close, and another for nine homes on a site opposite St Johns Way in Hempton are still under consideration and may or may not be subject to a decision by CDC's planning committee at its meeting next week. The agenda should be available in the next day or two.

Widespread concern was expressed in our parish consultations about how overstretched the Health Centre has become thanks to a hugely increased patient load, shortage of staff and space – and Covid. Following discussion with Health Centre staff, this has been taken into account in the decision on site allocation and attendant community benefit in the Submission Neighbourhood Plan.

A serious injury collision at the Hempton pinchpoint in November focused attention on speeding traffic through the village and the need for additional calming measures. This resulted in an on-site meeting between councillors and residents and an OCC highways officer where a number of proposals were discussed. The issue was highlighted in the recent parish council newsletter which provoked further suggestions which will be forwarded to OCC. The final decision on measures to be taken rests with them, but will likely be delayed while the effects of an imminent 20mph speed limit (assuming it is approved) are assessed.

Which brings me to more thanks to all councillors, volunteers and well-wishers who have through rain and shine delivered to every house in the parish the newsletter, the Neighbourhood Plan survey booklet and a leaflet inviting opinion on the possibility of 20mph speed limits (largely favourable as it turned out). Good work on top of all their other parish council duties.

Deddington Environment Network have done sterling work in the parish, notably organising the recent litter pick with help from councillors, particularly in Hempton and Clifton. And they are adorning the community orchard they masterminded in Welford's Piece, Clifton, with a stretch of wildflower meadow. Everything is coming into bloom nicely.

Grateful thanks are due too to Cllr Terry Timms, his son Gary, and subsequently a Community Payback crew who have cleared and made shipshape a neglected corner of the Windmill Park. We salute you.

We have welcomed three new members to the parish council, Cllrs Martin Ince, Jill Norton and Sam Patterson. Unfortunately, we lost one of the great parish council chairmen in David Rogers, who resigned from the chair and the council last summer, but we hope he will return in due course. We fondly remember another much-revered former chair of the council and general Titan of the parish, George Fenemore, who died in late April last year.

We have proposed a new school governor to the board of the primary school, Cllr Maureen Cox. We have a brilliant and hard-working team – now thankfully somewhat expanded – running the Windmill Centre. We are lucky to have an excellent parish magazine, Deddington News, which stoically and graciously covers our parish council meetings. We are still looking for a new minutes secretary/ assistant parish clerk (apply to the parish clerk if interested) but in the meantime we offer heartfelt thanks to our current minutes secretary, Elen Squires, who though she no longer lives in the parish, heroically continues with her duties remotely. What a jewel.

Likewise, we treasure our two stewards, Richard Bannister and Gareth Smith, who keep the parish spick and span. I am particularly grateful to them for walking the hard yards and enabling us to move the parish council wheelie bins from their old site at the focal point of the Market Place by the Town Hall to another venue further afield.

Finally, gratitude and respect to our outstanding parish clerk, Susan Fuller, who keeps the whole show on the road. It is thanks to her and her local government CiLCA qualification (passed with flying colours) that our council now has General Power of Competence, that empowers us to be more masters of our own house.

Report from the Chairs of the Parish Council's Working Groups

a) Planning

Deddington Parish Council received a total of 80 Planning Applications for the 2022/2023 year – these were 54 residential building related, 12 commercial related and 14 tree related applications which involved a total of 26 trees.

Of these, a total of 7 trees were to be felled for a variety of reasons, mostly overcrowding, poor/dangerous/diseased condition, overhanging roads, and undermining buildings.

We requested that a number of the felled trees be replaced as appropriate, either on site or by recommending supporting the Woodlands Trust Scheme that gives away trees as a way of replacing what has been lost, but in a more suitable environment.

The remaining 19 trees were to pollard/reduce/crown/top trees, to maintain them in a good condition.

Two oak trees on the Clifton Road became subject to a new TPO (protection order). Two existing yew trees with TP's on them were subject to crown reduction management.

The 54 building-related applications were mostly for renovations, modifications, single and two-storey extensions, conservatories, etc.

Included in these 54 applications was a resubmission of an undetermined application from the previous year (Wells Yard), and an application to reduce a previously consented application for 7 dwellings (2 x two-storey and 5 bungalows) to 5 bungalows in its place, at the Poplars, Clifton Road.

There were 6 further applications for new residential dwellings throughout the Parish in this year, which would have provided 8 new dwellings if approved. However, one of these was a resubmission of a previously refused/withdrawn application for a 4 bed on Clifton Road adjacent to the Burrington Development (non-related).

The 8 new build applications were as follows.

Property location	Application	Determination	# units
Mount Pleasant, Hempton	2 x 4 bed houses 1 x barn convert house	Undetermined at the time of writing this report	3
Clifton Gate (1st appl)	1 x 4 bed House	Withdrawn	1
Snake Hill Hempton	1 x 2 bed Bungalow	Refused	1
The Daedings	1 x 2 bed bungalow	Approved	1
St James Farm, Clifton	2 x 4 bed houses	Approved	2
Clifton Gate (2nd appl.	1 x 4 bed house	Refused	1

Wells Yard, Hudson Street	1 x 2 bed & 1 x 3 bed cottages	Approved	2
The Poplars, Clifton Road	5 x 2 bed bungalows	Undetermined at the time of writing this report	5

One of the applications was for Mount Pleasant in Hempton, to demolish a derelict house and erect 2 x 4 bed houses and convert a barn to another dwelling – this application is situated on the left (from Deddington) at the pinch point in Hempton. The property has been proved to date back to before 1731 and is mentioned in the 1808 enclosures map. The property was left to the Royal Institute for the Blind many years ago and has ended up in a terrible state of disrepair.

This application was strongly objected to by the villagers and the Parish Council who robustly opposed this application. Subsequently, the application has been amended and resubmitted, now with only partial demolition of a later addition to the house, renovation/preservation of Mount Pleasant itself, one new four bed house and a barn conversion. Something of a success I would suggest.

We received 32 applications for building extensions, renovations, and alterations. One application to demolish an existing house and completely rebuild (not in the conservation area) which is not currently determined at the time of writing.

The building related applications also included one for change of use for part of a double garage to a home office which was approved.

We have also dealt with numerous other applications for Discharge of Conditions, CLUP (Certificate of Lawfulness), listed building consents, variations of plans previously approved, non-material amendments and reserved Mmatters applications.

12 applications were made for commercial matters, including 3 applications to install a telecoms monopole on the Banbury Road: the first for an 18m pole, the second two in slightly different locations for 15m poles, all applications have so far been refused.

Of these 12 applications two were to convert commercial to residential accommodation, one of these applications was successful the other was not.

No previously refused applications during the last year are currently in appeal.

As a matter of interest, CDC have only opposed our opinion on 4 applications in the last year. Three of these we supported and CDC refused, and one we supported that was subsequently withdrawn indicating that CDC would have refused it.

There are currently 10 applications included in the above that have yet to be determined on the 15 April 2023, when this report was drafted.

We have dealt with other matters too, correspondence from residents, and other ad-hoc applications; and the occasional site visit if the application is particularly concerning. A very varied year this year!

CDC have the final say on applications and there have been some occasions where they have not agreed with the PC's recommendations, as mentioned above. In general, though, we believe our views are heard by CDC. The PC in most cases approve applications that meet planning criteria and are regarded as sustainable development, always having regard to legitimate concerns and objections of neighbours and other parishioners.

b) Highways and Transport – Cllr M Cox reported:

I wish to thank all members of this hard-working group, the majority of whom are hard-working members on other working groups of the DPC. Their work throughout the year is vital to the smooth running of the parish. We have met each month to look at all issues presented to DPC, and met and communicated with parishioners and OCC. I would also like to thank OCC for their co-operation and advice during these difficult economic and staff-depleted times, especially Dave Catling. Equally my thanks go to our County and District Councillors Arash Fatemian and Bryn Williams and who are always supportive and helpful.

Issues dealt with

Highway outside Unicorn: parking and trestles.

Road marking arrows at traffic lights: reinstated.

Drain at traffic lights: overflowing reported to OCC.

Street light on all day: ongoing since October 2021 – unclear if replaced or burnt out!

Replacement requested for traffic light post leaning since a road traffic accident: many thanks to Arash/OCC for finally, after 9 years, relocating the sign, resulting in improved vision for motorists.

Request for grass cutting as splay is dangerous: site visit to the exit from Earl's Lane into Clifton Rd; agreed to add to grass cutting schedule.

The Grange: suggestion that this area be added to our mowing schedule and OCC be contacted to increase their contribution to cover this cut.

Bollard outside Finishing Touch hairdressers: hit again.

Stone Pits development: issues of damaged kerbs and parking by workers, parking in cemetery layby.

20 mph: '20 is Plenty' signs purchased and installed.

Traffic lights school awareness sign: speeding through red and school signs – a school awareness sign on the Oxford side of the road has been requested similar to that when approaching from Banbury.

Illegal traffic parking and pavement obstruction: regular OCC traffic enforcement has been requested.

Reinstating yellow lines at all bus stops has been requested: OCC has already made site visits.

Deddington Health Centre: meeting and discussion re parking issues and highway updating.

'Fix My Street': many issues are reported directly via this link and we encourage parishioners to use this service.

Relevant road traffic closures: reported monthly in Deddington News – I thank them for their co-operation.

Ongoing

Bank of chargers for EVs: Bull Ring or Market Place suggested with. site meeting with OCC. Waiting to see if DPC has been funded from LEVI fund – we have been prioritised.

EV points in Earls Lane: ruled out due to width of the road when the new pavement is installed. No sign of the construction of the pavement in the near future in spite of asking.

20mph scheme went to parish consultation: application sent to OCC and a further community consultation is currently underway.

Hempton Pinch Point: traffic solutions are being considered by OCC to prevent accidents and injuries at this site.

Posters and A Boards: considering acceptance of template of authority from OCC on street advertising.

Cameras at traffic lights: now urgent. DPC requested the installation of speeding cameras as a result of multiple complaints of speeding and red light jumping. This is a high accident and injury site within the Parish. This was forwarded on to TVP who are in the process of reviewing all the camera sites and have added this to the list. However, this it is likely to be some time before we hear back. Cllr Fatemian is pursuing,

Earls Lane: we have requested a drop kerb on the left-hand side pavement and a connecting pavement on the left to aid scooter and disabled individuals. We are yet to hear back from OCC.

Purchase of Speedwatch equipment: This will be reconsidered if and when a Speedwatch tsar comes forward to organised speed watch – we recommend that we should have 18 volunteers and we invite TVP organiser of the training, their role in speed watch monitoring and yearly ongoing engagement.

c) Transport – Cllr H Oldfield reported:

Funfair: During the funfair when the Market Place was closed, the S4 bus was observed far from its normal route, e.g. in Castle Street. Inexplicable since the service operates satisfactorily on Farmers' Market Saturdays going straight down the High Street/New Street. The clerk wrote to Stagecoach to request signs to warn people where to wait when bus stop locations change, and that the drivers be informed of these changes.

£2 fares: Only 75% of passengers have returned to travelling by bus as compared with pre-pandemic levels. In an attempt to lure passengers back, a £2 flat fare for any single journey on Stagecoach buses was introduced in January, sponsored by OCC. The scheme has been extended until June 2023.

Proposed reduced youth fare for 16–18 year olds: has been promised for 2023.

Electric buses: From September 2023, a fleet of 159 new battery electric buses is to be introduced in the county. The £82m deal will be paid for by Oxfordshire bus companies, including Stagecoach, with a contribution from OCC.

Comet service: This minibus service run by OCC resumed service post-Covid last July. There are no scheduled services, but buses are available on demand to individuals or groups 10am–2pm on weekdays. Call 01865 323201 to register.

Volunteer Driver Service: The car service, for hospital trips and other journeys, provided by volunteers and organised by Citizens Advice in Banbury continues. The number is 0300 3030 125. The service is always

looking for more drivers to meet high demand. Passengers pay a contribution per mile to help cover the driver's fuel costs.

Community buses: Increased grants are available from OCC, especially for a start-up.

d) Environment and Recreation – Cllr M Robinson reported:

The remit of the E&R working group is to help make our community an attractive place to live, work and visit – and it has been busier than ever. The current cost-of-living crisis has meant we have had to examine our budget line-by-line to achieve the best possible value for money.

The 2023–24 budget allows only for existing services to be maintained at their present level, with funding for any new projects coming from outside sources, e.g., S106 funds from recent housing developments.

Thanks to grants and donations reported last year we are very fortunate in having the leisure and play facilities we have in a parish our size. But they do need ongoing funds for maintenance and ultimate replacement. It is still our intention to accrue for these, though this has not yet been possible.

These have been the main areas of activity:

Litter bin replacement, April 2023: 14 old, scruffy bins have been replaced across the parish thanks to sponsorship from local businesses and organisations. The wheelie bins outside the Town Hall (the subject of much debate over the years) have been rehoused at the Castle Grounds, to be screened by a wicker fence.

Tree management: We have a rolling programme of tree management across the parish, removing dead and diseased trees. It is the PC's policy to mitigate any tree loss by replacement elsewhere in the parish. We had a massive clearance of brambles around Gaveston Green. Roots were poisoned and the PC intends to keep on top of this situation in future. At the Windmill, tree roots have damaged both the tennis courts and cricket net surfaces and the trees have been removed.

Grass cutting: new three-year contracts have been awarded to the existing contractors. Greens across the parish were earmarked for No Mow May/June, and the scheme will be reviewed next year.

Market Place bench: The bench on the smaller green was rotten and has been replaced by one made of recycled materials.

Wimborn Close: More play equipment will be added with a path linking the close with houses in Hempton Gate.

Deddington Environment Network: We have instigated regular liaison with DEN to keep us informed about whatever they are investigating or planning to save duplication or misunderstanding. We are grateful to DEN for taking over the twice-yearly litter picks.

Dogs: As reported last year dogs, or rather their owners, continue to be a problem. Most are responsible, a few are not and continue to make life difficult for the stewards and football officials who have to clean up after them. We provide dog bins: if the nearest one is full, please find another or take it home. We pay CDC around £2,500 a year for this service: dog lovers think it is essential and complain if bins are full; non-dog lovers complain about the cost. Please, everyone, do your bit by calling out the perpetrators or providing evidence to CDC's dog warden. And it is particularly upsetting when the only reply is verbal abuse.

Windmill Centre: The Parish Council and Management Committee are working in partnership on a rolling programme of improvements:

1. With financial help from OCC and Locality, two new Equality Act compliant toilets were completed on the west side of the Centre, one internal and one external for users and visitors to the sports pitches and play areas. It was a very long drawn-out process, with some snagging issues nearly a year on.
2. A new carpet for the all-weather court will be added in June, with the old one end-of-life and concern over mud seepage on to the court after heavy autumn rain.
3. Planning permission was granted in May for a new overclad roof for the building before winter 2023–24. This will solve the ongoing problems of leaks and condensation.
4. The internal toilet refurbishment, which finished in May 2022, has proved very popular – on time and under budget – an excellent job.

5. After much local research, we have plans for an outside exercise area on the old play area near the tennis courts. The area surrounding the old play area has been cleared of scrub.
6. Two rowan trees were planted on the Adventure Playground in memory of those who died of Covid, and key workers whose helped us survive two very difficult years.
7. Solutions are still being sought for the problems of slide mound erosion and loose water fountain – we're cautiously optimistic that we're nearly there.
8. A list has been drawn up of suggested future S106 expenditure as funds become available from the Hempton Gate and Clifton Gate housing developments.
9. We are extremely grateful to the excellent team on the Windmill Management Committee who look after the Centre and its facilities so well. Thank you.

And lastly, our thanks as always go to our overworked Clerk, Susan Fuller, the two parish stewards, Richard and Gareth, who keep the place in good nick, and to Cllr Terry Timms for all his willing, hands-on help around the parish.

e) Finance and General Purposes – Cllr C Snashall reported:

Though F&GP's main concern is with the financial accounts and budget control, the working group considers every development in the parish and assesses its financial implications. As these are covered in other working groups' reports they will not be covered here.

The General Income and Expenditure on the revenue account shows a small excess of income over expenditure of £4,300.

The Balance Sheet shows a capital fund of £401,726. This is money which came to the parish many years ago, and is ring fenced for spending on capital items. It cannot be used for routine expenditure, but the interest on the money invested can be used to provide services in the parish.

Total funds held by the Council are £541,425, much of which is allocated to known future projects such as the upcoming roof repairs for the Windmill and replacement of the carpet on the all-weather court.

Interest on bonds at £3,776 was lower than the previous year due to extremely low rates being paid recently, and indeed there is difficulty in finding sufficient places to put our money and still remain within the Financial Services Compensation Scheme limit of £85,000 for any one bond.

The annual financial report will be published on the Parish Council website once it has been audited.

I would like to thank the Clerk for all her work on keeping the finances in order and ensuring that we act within the law applying to local councils at all times.

Report on the Neighbourhood Plan – Cllr H Oldfield reported:

See Chair's report.

Open discussion where individuals can raise issues of interest or concern

A resident asked the council about what would be left for the children in terms of sustainability. In terms of EV charging, it was suggested that the council should support the idea that future developments should have PV panels. Suggestion that the climate change emergency should overrule building controls. Concern was raised over land used for solar farms and the need for south-facing roofs for maximum PV efficiency.

Another resident asked about the progress of the Neighbourhood Plan. This is to be submitted to CDC shortly for further consultation.

It was also noted that new developments bring positives to the community in terms of the skills that new residents bring, and their involvement in the community by volunteering.

Meeting closed at 8:10pm