

Minutes of the West Hagbourne Annual Parish Meeting held on 16th May 2013 at
Hagbourne Village Hall

Eleven members of the public were present.

1. Cllr M. Butler welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Sue Totterdell and Keith Walton.

3. Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting 2012

The minutes of last years Annual Parish Meeting were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

4. Matters Arising

The traffic warning sign has been erected as agreed at last years meeting.
The SODC Core Strategy has now been agreed with development to the North East.

5. Chairman's Report

The highlight of the year was the event organised by the Village Association to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, in June 2012. This was a great success and the Village Association is to be thanked for its efforts, as are all the villagers who turned up to participate. There was another Dragon competition in April 2013, which resulted in many entries and considerable interest from both within the village and further afield.

This year, potholes and flooding of the roads have been a major problem. There have been occasional repairs of potholes, but they return rapidly. This is a problem throughout the county but the water table has been very high this year and this has made the problem worse in our village. Highways eventually repaired the drainage problems on Main Street, closing it for a week to replace broken drainage pipes. There was a diversion via York Road and nobody will forget the sight of a double decker bus trying to negotiate its way through York Road. The works have dealt with the drainage problems, but there are still problems with water coming up from under the ground. A portion of the road that was replaced has collapsed, to leave another pothole, and the Parish Council is pressing Highways to deal with this and the other potholes.

Traffic remains a major problem. Whilst traffic calming measures will be introduced once work starts on the Bloor Homes development on Park Road, the fact remains that as the population of Didcot increases, traffic through the village will increase. Our traffic warning sign has been installed and is a reminder to people to slow down, as are the "20 is Plenty" signs that some people are using. However the main problem is the volume of traffic and there is no easy solution to that.

The Boundaries Commission came up with proposals for changing the district council wards, and placed West Hagbourne in a South Didcot ward with part of

Didcot and East Hagbourne. This was opposed by the District Council, Didcot Town Council, and of course the Hagbournes. The result was successful and they reversed their decision. The grounds are set out in full below, because they indicate that people appreciate our need to remain as a rural community, and they give us some hope for being able to resist the encroachment of Didcot.

*Boundaries Commission - Excerpt from the Final Recommendations for New
Local Government Electoral Arrangements for South Oxfordshire District
Council*

Didcot

57 During the consultation on our draft recommendations, we received nine submissions concerning our proposed Didcot wards. We also received comments from the Council for this area.

58 The Council proposed an amendment to the boundary between our proposed Didcot West and Didcot South wards in order to improve electoral equality. This would involve placing the area around the Orchard Centre in Didcot South ward. We are content to adopt this modification to our draft recommendations.

59 The Council also argued that East and West Hagbourne ('the Hagbournes') should be included in a ward with parishes to their east, to which they had closer links. The Council noted that the Hagbournes would be better served by a councillor dealing with other rural issues, rather than also representing Didcot.

60 Both East and West Hagbourne parish councils, as well as Didcot Town Council and four local residents, supported the Council's argument concerning the Hagbournes. West Hagbourne Parish Council expressed its fear that as a small rural community it would become swamped by a larger urban area, and its interests would not be represented. East Hagbourne Parish Council echoed this, and suggested that it would be separated from parishes to the east with which it identifies.

61 In our draft recommendations we included the Hagbournes in a Didcot ward for two reasons: to improve electoral equality and to ensure internal ward access. The Council's proposed amendment to the boundary between Didcot West and Didcot South means that without the Hagbournes, these two wards would have 10% fewer and 8% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2018.

62 With regard to the issue of internal access, we note the strength of arguments from parish councils in this area, particularly West Hagbourne Parish Council. It argued that the damage to convenient and effective local government caused by including the relatively rural Hagbournes with the more urban Didcot was greater than that caused by a lack of internal ward

access.

63 In terms of community links, one local resident highlighted links between Church of England organisations in similarly spaced rural villages. The Council noted the different priorities between Didcot and the Hagbournes. They argued that the deprivation and regeneration issues Didcot faced are distinct from the priorities of the rural, historic Hagbournes. West Hagbourne Parish Council argued that local residents regularly looked and travelled to villages in the east, particularly South Moreton.

64 We are persuaded that the Hagbournes share little community identity with Didcot, and instead look to the rural parishes to the east. Although the road access between these areas leaves the district for around a mile, we consider that the evidence provided supports such a warding pattern.

65 In order to better reflect community identity, we have decided to move away from our draft recommendations to adopt the proposals made by the Council and supported locally. Our three-member Didcot North East and Didcot South wards, and two-member Didcot West ward, will have 2% more, 7% fewer and 12% fewer electors per councillor than the district average by 2018.

There is a further consultation in pace concerning changes to the parish boundaries. West Hagbourne parish currently includes farmland that will be part of the Great Western Park development. We have been asked to submit proposals to SODC. We have met with Didcot Town Council, who will be submitting that the new urban areas should be within the boundaries of the Town Council, meaning that West Hagbourne parish would be reduced in size to exclude the part assigned to Great Western Park. We have been advised that a previous Parish Council indicated that it would like to give up this part, and the view of the current Parish Council is that this attitude should be maintained. We do not wish to be swamped by an urban population. We therefore intend to advise that SODV that this is what we wish to do, although we shall need to check the exact boundaries that will be used.

The Community Led Plan project is under way and we shall await the results of that before decisions can be made on any major projects.

Finally, the Parish Newsletter is now in production again, and the Parish Council would like to thank Marion Judd, Sue Totterdell and Phil Taylor for the efforts they have made.

6. Parish Plan Report

The questionnaire has been distributed but so far the response has been low.

7. Reports

West Hagbourne Village Association Annual Report May2012 - May 2013

This was a special and happy busy year for the Village Association as the main

highlights were the celebrations and lunch organized for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee at York Farm. Many meetings took place and many people were involved in organizing this special occasion. The Village Association applied for and succeeded in winning a lottery grant for £3640 which was used to purchase chairs, tables and trolleys, much appreciated at the Queen's Jubilee Celebrations. On Saturday, 2nd June 2012 the sun shone and approximately 250 villagers and their families enjoyed a free lunch, a delicious pig roast organized by Fred and Maureen Robinson, followed by an afternoon full of entertainment for all ages, that included an audio visual show, tombola, singers, dancers, and children's entertainment. Prizes were awarded for the children's fancy dress competition and the best decorated hat.

During the afternoon the winner of the Madge Trophy for the best village front garden was awarded by Mrs. Madge (the judge) to Mrs. Beechey of 5, Grove Terrace. Also, Mr. Robert Griffiths received a voucher for the winner of the Dragon Competition for his dragon in the phone box. Unfortunately our star attraction, the dragon in the pond, was unable to appear for St. George's day due to lack of water. Several other awards were made to children and to the Nursery for their contributions. In the evening a Quiz and dinner, organized by Phil Taylor, was the perfect ending to a very special day.

On Sunday 3rd June about 50 people gathered in the marquee to participate in our own Songs of Praise, organized by Mr. Peter Mitchell. The members of the Village Association wish to thank everyone who came to the Celebrations and thank all those who helped in so many ways with the scrumptious food, entertainment, the audio visual show, the tombola, the singers, dancers, the children's activities, those who erected the marquees, and the clergy and musicians at Songs of Praise. Also we wish to thank those who made donations including the Parish Council and the Tyrell Trust. A very special thank you to Mr. & Mrs. Richard Allen for hosting our celebrations at York Farm and for their generosity in providing the bouncy castle and the pigs for roasting. It was a truly memorable occasion.

The Annual General Meeting of the Village Association was held at the Horse and Harrow public house on 8th October 2012 when a new committee was elected.

Chairman: Val Walton, Vice Chairman: June Little, Secretary: Hazel Rack

Treasurer: Keith Walton

Other Committee Members: Betty Kendrick, Ted Kendrick, Marion Judd, John Bale, Bridget Pickup, Tony Pickup, Peter Mitchell, Robert Griffiths, Mike Parker, Mary Wiley. Unfortunately, Mary died on 25th November, 2012.

The Village Association thanks everyone who participated in this year's Dragon Competition, April 2013. Twenty three dragons appeared in various locations in the village including the fantastic dragon in the pond which is now full of water! The dragons provided a lot of interest and attracted many visitors to our lovely village. This year's judge was Father Jason from St. Andrew's Church. The winner was Robert Griffiths again for his dragon in the phone box and highly commended were dragons at Orchard House and Drift way.

The Village Association welcome new members and new ideas for the enjoyment of our villagers. Please contact Val Walton---851089 or June Little---850094
It was agreed that the Parish Council would organise a Summer/Autumn Forum in conjunction with the Village Association.

WEST HAGBOURNE VILLAGE HISTORY GROUP ANNUAL REPORT

May 2012 – April 2013

It is with great sadness that we must report the sudden death of our founder, Mary Wiley, on 25th November 2012. Mary was our inspiration and the driving force behind the publishing of the written history of the village: *Windsor Hakeborne: the Story of West Hagbourne*. She is a great loss to the History Group and we miss her greatly.

As reported in the previous Annual Report, the Group had decided to gradually wind down its activities in the absence of new members. It was agreed that we would continue to maintain an archive and complete the house project. Two working party meetings have been held in the past year.

Annual General Meeting, 2012

The AGM took place at 7.30pm on 21 May 2012 at Silva Felix, York Road. There were no members of the public present. The audited financial report for the year ending 31 March 2012 was accepted. All office bearers agreed to continue in their roles. Chairperson: Josie Hill; Secretary: Val Walton; Treasurer: Linda Thompson.

History Group Photographs:

- The Group has provided historical photographs for display on the walls of the Horse and Harrow to promote our collection in a public space
- A photographer has produced high resolution electronic files from our negatives in order to reproduce good quality prints in the future
- All our b/w photographs have been mounted into an historic photo album, together with captions and reference numbers.

Ongoing Activities:

- Recording of memorial trees planted in the village. When approached, the Parish Council said that it continues to seek out land where further memorial trees could be planted
- Archiving of village newsletters, St Andrew's Hagbourne Parish Magazine and newspaper cuttings
- Documentation of village events through photographs
- Contributions to village newsletters and village website where appropriate.

Annual report of the East and West Hagbourne Cemetery Committee 2013

The committee met twice during the last year, on 16th July 2012 at the cemetery and on 4th March 2013 at 12A Harwood Road.

Mrs. Napper reported that she will fill in the gaps in the Rosa rugosa hedge in the autumn. Mr Dawson has taken cuttings as a secondary measure. The wild flower meadow has been cut and the surplus hay burnt. Mrs. Napper reported that the trees on the embankment are encroaching on the cemetery. An inspection will be carried out.

The cemetery charges were discussed and it was agreed to leave them as they are for the time being. They will be reviewed at the next meeting.

There has been a complaint regarding the fir trees on the western boundary that they are overshadowing the first row of graves and need to be pruned. These trees are the property of the Parochial Church Council and so Mr. Garlick will put it to the PCC at their next meeting.

There is a problem at the moment in that nobody is sweeping the lay-by by the lych-gate. This is owned by us and is therefore our responsibility. We either need to find a volunteer or persuade SODC to include it when they sweep the road.

North East Didcot Development

As part of the consultation process on the North East Didcot development a presentation was made to Parish Councils on 11th April 2013. I attended as the West Hagbourne Parish Council representative. There were also representatives from East Hagbourne, Harwell, Sutton Courtenay, Appleford, Long Wittenham. A public exhibition of the current proposals was held at the Cornerstone Arts Centre on 19th/20th April and a presentation was made to Didcot Town Council on 24th April. There will be a further public exhibition in the summer. The planning application will be submitted later in 2013. This is earlier than originally intended to contribute to the Council's 5 year housing land supply and ensure delivery of the whole site within the plan period.

The proposal is for 2030 homes, 2 care homes, 2 primary schools, a secondary school, a leisure centre and playing fields. There will be 40% affordable housing. The first phase is housing, the first primary school and a local centre.

Obviously the main concern at the meeting was the additional traffic that will result from the development. The development will 'plug in' to the existing road network. There will be no additional river crossing built. There will be new bus services to serve N.E. Didcot and connect to the town centre, the Harwell site, Milton Park, Abingdon & Oxford. There will be cycle and pedestrian routes to the town centre.

There will be improvements to the existing junctions onto the Northern Perimeter road.

The original heated arguments eventually resolved themselves into a calm and rational discussion about sustainable travel and the meeting ended with some positive suggestions.

Oxfordshire County Council – Report by Cllr Patrick Greene for Moreton Division to 31st March 2013

The County Council provides around 80% of the County's local authority services. These include social care, schools & children's services, waste management, trading standards, roads, transport planning, land use, countryside, the registration service, the fire and rescue service, countryside service, libraries, museums, emergency planning, public health and Youth services.

This will be the last report for the Moreton Division as on May 2nd 2013 as County elections take place for only 63 larger Divisions, a reduction of 11 Divisions making a smaller council for the future.

On the 19th February the Council set an increase in Council tax of 1.99% that equates to 44p per week at band D. The background is that government grants have been cut to such an extent that over the period 2010 to 2017 the Council will have had to make savings of £200 million and to date savings of £127million have been made. The savings so far across all departments of the council have been made by becoming more cost effective and with the small increase in tax the Council has been able to set a sustainable 4 year budget.

Many of the back office savings have been reinvested in front line services. Management and staffing costs have been greatly reduced by employing less staff while integrating staff from partner organisations – good deals from the private sector contractors and working with voluntary sector partners has played its part –reorganising service delivery for increased efficiency. Savings have been made across all departments.

Some examples of other successes achieved over the last year:

- Supported schools and parents to deliver a significant improvement in primary school results
- Completed the process of delivering Early Intervention Hubs to support children and families
- Targeted extra resources from NHS, by working with the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group, which have contributed to an increase in the level of adult social care services
- Worked closely with the Oxfordshire Clinical Commissioning Group and other partners to prepare for the return of Public Health to local government in April 2013
- Responded to widespread flooding across the county minimising risks to life and damage to property
- Supported the new Police and Crime Commissioner for the Thames Valley setting out the county's key priorities to tackle crime, help victims and reduce anti-social behaviour
- Quickly replaced back up bus services after private firms delivering services found themselves in financial difficulties

On a more local level the Area Stewardship fund has been well received and members have worked in partnership with parishes to implement a variety of projects and some details for the Moreton Division are set out below:-

Being part of the Didcot locality area there was over the 18 month period to 31/3/13 a total of £50k to allocate to projects in this Division. It was gratifying that the parishes overall added contributions amounting to £16350, thus increasing the total spend budget to £66,350!

Projects so far achieved during the 18 months brought 6 Vehicle Actuated signs (30mph/Slow down), many new and refreshed road markings, 40mph/30mph white road roundels on the Hadden Hill stretch of the A4130 to help improve road safety, a new 110 metre length of pavement in East Hagbourne joining Blewbury road pavement with Great Mead in New road providing an improvement to pedestrian safety. Road planer patching, also handrail painting in North Moreton. Refreshed yellow road lining outside the school in East Hagbourne

A contribution of £10k from the fund to a £62k project has been agreed to make Church Road bridge in Cholsey one way for vehicular traffic with traffic lights and a designated pathway for pedestrians to walk safely – Important for pupils and parents walking from the Church car park over the bridge to Cholsey school and back. Still to be implemented are 2 more vehicle actuated 30mph signs, pathway clearing in Cholsey, vertical white painting stripes on Hithercroft rail bridge South Moreton to improve bridge visibility, restore verge at Wittenham Clumps car park.

For the new financial year 2013/14 it is expected the fund will continue but be focused on maintenance activity that members will have an input on what maintenance should be implemented.

Flooding and cold weather has contributed to there being many more pot holes in the roads over the winter months, stretching council resources. With improved weather conditions the pot hole situation should improve. It is most important that when pot holes occur they are reported immediately to highways by emailing highwayenquiries@oxfordshire.gov.uk or phoning 0845 310 1111.

Network Rail will be raising road bridges to accommodate under bridge electrification lines and one of the first to be worked on is the Fulscot bridge in South Moreton. This work is due to start in November 2013 and be completed in early 2014. Such works will mean road closures and diversions and road adjustments near the bridge.

During this last year each councillor was allocated a £10,000 Community Budget (Big Society) to support projects that in the main matter most to their local communities. For this Division six projects were identified and agreed that spent the total budget. These were:-Developing facilities and access at Wittenham Clumps (Earth Trust), South Moreton Community Arts Festival, Cholsey Community Library (computers for the young), Christmas Chamber Concert (Raising funds for two charities), Garden Development (Hagbourne Primary School), and Oxfordshire Blue Plaques. The good news is that the allocation of £10,000 to each councillor in the new financial year is expected to continue.

The Oxfordshire Minerals & Waste Core Strategy was agreed by the County Council in April 2012 then following a period of public consultation was submitted to the Government in October 2012. Since then the inspector has raised matters of concern and the process of the Examination in Public has been postponed till late May 2013 and at that time the inspector will announce new arrangements for the subsequent stages as appropriate.

Your councillor thanks the Parish Councillors for their co-operation throughout the past year.

8. Parish Boundary Review

It was reported that the Parish Council will respond to the Parish Boundary review suggesting the edge of settlement of Great Western Park become the new Parish Boundary.

9. Footpaths

The footpath between East and West Hagbourne is in a very poor state. The Clerk will report the matter to the Countryside Field officer.

10. Open Forum

Mr Totterdell reported that the tap of the water butt by the bus stop is being left open thus wasting the water.

The field in which several memorial trees have been planted has now been sold and the trees fenced off. The Parish Council agreed to discuss the matter.

Mr Totterdell reported that the area under the notice board has now been replanted and he is hoping to replant the area on the other side of the bus shelter.

There being no further business the meeting was declared closed at 9pm.

Signed.....Dated.....