

Adderbury Parish Council Chairman's Report 2020-2021

Covid 19

As with this Annual Parish meeting all of the monthly Council meetings have been conducted on Zoom during this past year. Councillors and especially the Clerk have adapted quickly to using Zoom and have kept up a good consistent service to the village during the pandemic including still managing to meet with residents and contractors on site but following Covid guidelines for social distancing as well as responding to emails and phone calls.

The Council has been able to help a number of voluntary organisations and groups during this unprecedented time. Most recently a grant from Cherwell District Council was secured by the Parish Council which provided £7,500 for the Christopher Rawlins Primary school and £1000 for the Adderbury library.

Please contact the Parish Clerk or any councillor if anyone needs advice about where to get support.

Community Governance Review

This year a Community Governance Review (CGR) was held by Cherwell District Council (CDC) following a demand by a group of residents who requested a separate Parish Council for the west of Adderbury. I would like to thank all residents who took the time to respond to this Review which showed resounding support for the existing Parish Council. The CGR was an independent review of the governance of the Parish and resulted in CDC recommending that nothing be changed. Whilst there were a large majority of comments in support of retaining only one council, often noting the hard work and dedication of existing councillors on behalf of all the community, there were also a number of critical comments and wherever possible the Parish Council will try to address these.

2021 Election for Parish Council

This was to be held on May 7th (along with District and other elections). However only 9 residents stood for election (for 12 seats) so this means all 9 are elected in an uncontested election. It is good to see that of these 9 who will take office in May 5 are from west Adderbury which continues the very good representation west Adderbury has had on the Parish Council over many years.

The Milton Road Sports and Community Project.

The Parish Council's ambition for this project is to provide a facility which will have a number of different sports, as well as a new community hall and to also improve the facilities in the Lucy Plackett Playing Field. This is set out in the Adderbury Neighbourhood Plan under policy AD18. This project has been the subject of two Parish Polls as well as other consultations.

During this year the Parish Council and the Working for Adderbury Community team (WFAC) has progressed with this project and in May of 2020 preparation of the pitch area was begun. The sports grass for the pitches was sown in early September 2020 in order to establish while other aspects of the project are being completed. The pitches will then be ready for use as soon as the building and car parking etc is completed. The grass for the

pitches is growing well. The contractor has stated that as newly sown grass it should not be walked on by members of the public, and the PC reminds residents that there is no public access to the field during the ongoing construction phase.

Full planning permission for the building was granted in June 2020. It is unfortunate that like many things over the past year it has been disrupted by the Covid pandemic. In December the PC applied for a minor amendment to allow for changes in the position and layout of the building which also provided an opportunity for the project team to respond to some of the comments made during the original application such as moving some car parking. The Parish Council is encouraged by the large number of supportive comments we and the WFAC team have received.

Oxfordshire County Council Highways have included the access from Milton Rd as part of the traffic calming project. Having their support has been a great benefit to the project and to the community.

The Parish Council Chairman and Lathams architects are currently obtaining reports from a number of Consultants which will be used to determine the various planning conditions. Consultants have now been appointed for those dealing with archaeology and for further drainage requirements for the building area. Reports for the Landscape Management and for the Ecological Conditions have now been received by the Parish Council.

The WFAC residents' group have continued to work on fund raising and applications for grant funding. This has been on hold during the pandemic but they have already begun to plan for events later this year as we all hopefully emerge into normal life. A Community Day is planned for the 18th September and the Autumn Ball will be on 20th November.

The WFAC grants sub-group are continuing to research specific grants for different elements of the build. They are also looking at sustainable construction techniques in line with best practice which will include charging points for electric vehicles. The PC's Environment Committee has taken up this initiative and is researching possible charging points at Milton Road and elsewhere in the village.

There are over 30 village sports and Community groups who have expressed a wish to use the new facilities, including the Christopher Rawlins Primary School. This is an exciting project which will have an intergenerational benefit across the whole community of Adderbury. The Parish Council would like to thank all those involved in the WFAC for their hard work and time given in support of the Milton Road project, especially Jackie Head the WFAC Chairman. These facilities will be a valuable asset to this village and will be a benefit to the whole community now and in the future.

If you would like to be involved in helping the Parish Council and WFAC team to achieve this project on behalf of the community please get in touch with the Parish Clerk, Parish Chairman or the Chairman of WFAC.

Adderbury Lakes Local Nature Reserve

The Lakes continues to be a very popular and well used amenity in the village. This year there have been repairs to a leak in the ice house roof, to the wall on the Long Wall

boundary and to the small stone seat between the two Lakes. All funded by the Parish Council.

The Parish Council also commissioned a survey of the trees at the Lakes. This showed no trees need any urgent work and the Lakes committee will be able to use its recommendations to help plan future work at the Lakes.

Unfortunately in March 2020 it was necessary to close the Lakes under the government restrictions due to Covid-19. The Lakes Management group however worked hard to develop a one-way system and signage to enable opening as fully as possible in recent months while still following the guidance for social distancing. Special thanks are due to Rick Atkinson and Nigel Claxton for their efforts at the Lakes throughout the year but the Council wishes to thank all members of the Lakes Management Committee for their hard work in managing the Lakes Local Nature Reserve and also the large number of volunteers who help at the monthly work parties held between September and April. Their contribution to the Lakes is invaluable and shows how popular the Lakes are within this community.

Forest School Project

This has been held up by the restrictions on the school during the pandemic and the PC still has young trees obtained from the Woodland Trust to plant out which have been placed in a nursery bed ready for planting out in the autumn. Hopefully it will then be possible to involve the children and other members of the community, as previously planned. Before the pandemic Christopher Rawlins School had used the area for many activities and lessons.

Biodiversity Project

This has been taken up by residents and a number of areas around the village have been left unmown during the summer months to encourage grass and wild flowers to grow. These include Lake Walk Green, and St Mary's Rd entrance as well as two amenity areas on the Aynho Road. The PC thanks all residents who have been involved in this project.

When the grass was mown in September at St Mary's Rd residents removed the risings and have planted seeds from wildflowers. Bollards have been agreed with OCC for St Mary's Rd to discourage vehicles from parking on the area of grass. The residents have also begun to develop log piles in this area.

Amenity areas on the Aynho Rd, Longwall Close and Sydenham Close, are being managed for meadow plants through agreement with Cherwell District Council (CDC) which has responsibility for these two areas. In the Long Wall Close/Henry Gepp amenity area, some areas have been left as meadow grass with a mown area for play and a pathway. The meadow area produced a good show of wild flowers during last summer.

In the Sydenham Close amenity area CDC has cleared self-sown sycamores and coppiced some hazel as the first part of this project. Residents in Sydenham Close have shown keen interest in volunteering to help manage the area and have formed a community group for work parties. A few weeks ago in March it was disappointing to see much of this good work destroyed by contractors employed by Persimmon on work to check road drainage outlets. The PC Chairman has met with Persimmon and CDC officers to discuss repairs to the area including replanting. We are hopeful that this will provide an opportunity to recreate the

meadow area and return the site to what was originally planned and that the residents' volunteer group will want to continue with their excellent efforts once it is restored.

Traffic calming

This is an important issue in a number of areas across the village. In the past the Parish Council has achieved a number of traffic calming measures, like the VAS signs and gateways and road markings at village entrances. During last year the Parish Council's Environment Committee has worked hard on this matter, liaising with the Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) officers, Thames Valley Police (TVP) and members of the community. This has resulted in a scheme to include traffic chicanes on the Milton Road and Berry Hill road and a trial closure of the west side of the Oak Tree junction. The building work for this project will begin in June.

Alongside these developments the PC's Environment Committee and a dedicated group of village members have started to implement other projects which include the Community Speedwatch with several speed watch teams established in different parts of the village. With a generous grant from OCC, the PC have purchased a TVP-recommended stand-alone speed camera. The scheme has been held up due to Covid restrictions but previously teams logged in excess of 100 significant offenders whose details are passed to TVP who have generated and sent approximately 100 letters. TVP welcome the traffic data as they can additionally follow up with any vehicles that are drawn to their attention for other reasons (like insurance or tax) and visit and/or prosecute accordingly. The work in Adderbury has been commended as an example of a Community working with the authorities successfully.

The traffic calming initiative has also been responsible for new signage, reminding drivers of the village speed limits and the presence of speed detection, together with some planned refreshed and enhanced road markings to reinforce the limits. The PC wishes to thank the OCC and all those Parish Councillors and community members on the Environment Committee who are working hard to achieve this scheme and also to especially thank Jonathan White who has provided his expertise and advice to the Parish Council in this matter.

Dog Fouling

This continues to be an issue and new bins have been installed in Twyford following a request from a resident.

Also the PC is working with residents on a 'Poo Means Paint' initiative where any dog faeces not picked up is spray painted by volunteers to draw attention to it. The hope is that dog owners will take note and be encouraged to actually pick up after their dogs. This has been trialled elsewhere with positive results.

Grants.

The Council has supported a large number of village organisations with grants during this year.

Planning

The Council has considered a number of planning applications throughout the year. Two of the largest are Hallam Land Management Ltd, Land North East of Oxford Road West of Oxford Canal and East of Bankside, Banbury to which the PC objected and Hollins Strategic

Land LLP for up to 40 dwellings off Berry Hill Road which is due to be considered at Appeal in the next few months and the PC has again objected.

The Parish Council also objected to two planning applications on land east of The Leys. Currently this has been withdrawn.

The PC has also objected to an application on Henge Close for one extra property at 'plot 37' and the Clerk has supported the residents in their discussions with CDC. This application will be heard at the CDC planning committee on 15th April.

Finally, as Chairman I wish to thank the Clerk and all councillors, including our District and OCC members, for their time and efforts over this past year in working to support the Adderbury community.

Diane Bratt, Chairman APC.