

**STRATFIELD MORTIMER**

# **Parish Council Newsletter**



**June 2014**

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## Vacancy on Parish Council

Following the resignation of Cllr Alan Thorpe from the Parish Council (see page 12), the Notice of Vacancy was published on Friday 6<sup>th</sup> June (see facing page). A By-Election to fill the vacancy will be held if within 14 working days of publication (i.e. by Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> June) at least ten electors of the Parish give notice in writing to the Returning Officer at West Berkshire Council claiming such an election. If a By-Election is called would you like to do something positive for your community by standing for election? The statutory role of a Parish Councillor is a voluntary one and is open to Commonwealth/Irish/EC citizens over 18 who are on the electoral roll for the Parish (or who meet specific conditions about occupying land, working or residing in the Parish during the whole of the preceding twelve months).

The Annual Report of the Parish Council (page 4) gives an idea of what the Parish Council does. Any candidate wishing to stand has to submit an individual nomination to West Berkshire Council. The Parish Clerk can provide information and guidance as to the procedures.



**PARISH COUNCIL OF  
STRATFIELD MORTIMER**

**VACANCY FOR A  
COUNCILLOR**

1. There is a vacancy on the above Council caused by the resignation of Mr Alan Thorpe.
2. A by-election to fill the vacancy will be held if within 14 days (not counting a Saturday or Sunday, Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, Good Friday or a Bank Holiday) from the date below ten electors for the parish give notice in writing claiming such an election to the Returning Officer.
3. The address of the Returning Officer is West Berkshire Council, Council Offices, Market Street, Newbury RG14 5LD.
4. If no such notice is given the Parish Council will fill the vacancy by co-option.

Signed: J E Kirk - Clerk

Dated: 6 June 2014

Address: 27 Victoria Road  
Mortimer  
Reading  
RG7 3SH

# **Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council Annual Report for the year to April 2014**

*This report was presented by the Chairman, Cllr Pat Wingfield, at the Annual Parish Meeting on 16<sup>th</sup> April 2014*

As with most years 2013/14 was one of mixed fortunes but the overwhelming sense is that a lot of progress has been made.

Probably the biggest advance has been the build up to and the actual village meeting concerning the creation of a Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) for the parish. The creation of such a plan will undoubtedly help the area in the longer term. In the short term the major issue was dealing with the parking associated with the station at the bottom end of The Street. While present conditions are not ideal they are an improvement on the situation a year ago.

The Parish Council has also started to bring itself up to date with a new web page and the decision to have its own Facebook page.

The major down side this year has been the need to remove the Mortimer link bus service to the station. This decision was effectively forced on the Parish Council due to the withdrawal of funding by West Berkshire.

A lot of time has been spent on matters relating to the Alfred Palmer Memorial Trust, which regulates the playing field near the Turner's Arms. This led to the need for an election of a Trustee at the Annual Parish Meeting.

We have also been successful in obtaining funding to repair and refurbish the Tennis Courts on the Fairground and this work should take place in the early summer of 2014.

We have been very active in trying to influence the actions and policies of West Berkshire on a whole range of subjects from the NDP, to the reduction of planned service cuts for 2014/15, and agreeing that Garth hall should be included on the right to bid register. This means that if

the owners of Garth Hall wish to sell the property they must give the community the chance to put in a bid.

Of course there was a by election for a Parish Councillor in August and I would like to take this opportunity to welcome the successful candidate, Tracy Audsley, to the Parish Council.

Needless to say there is a lot more day to day activity that happens within the Parish from such things as looking after the Fairground, including the provision of a Christmas tree, to the maintenance and organisation of matters associated with the Cemetery. All this alongside the month by month activity of commenting on Planning applications. Looking forward we were able to set a budget with a very minor increase in the precept for 2014/15, due to a removal of a grant, while not reducing any services.

All of the above would not have happened without the dedicated efforts of all those involved in Parish Council matters. To all of those I owe a deep debt of gratitude.

## **APMF Trustee Election**

An election for a trustee of the Alfred Palmer Memorial Field was held at the Annual Parish Meeting. Sarah Smith was elected.

## **Stratfield Mortimer Community Award 2014**

This has not been awarded this year as no eligible nominations were received.

## **Note from the Parish Council Chairman**

I would very much like to thank the Parish Council's employees (Jayne and Frank) for all their work and effort in ensuring a swift and safe end to the occupation of The Fairground by travellers. I also confirm, contrary to rumours, that the travellers did force entry to the grazing area as the gates had been locked immediately after the Fair left earlier that day.

## **Sports Shelter for Tennis Courts**

We have been awarded £4170 from the West Berkshire Council Parish Plan Grant Fund towards a Sports Shelter for the tennis courts, to include two benches and the installation. The parish council has contributed £736 of S106 monies.

## **Parish Council Adopted Budget and Precept Request 2014/15**

The budget for 2014/15 shows a reduction of £5735 from the previous year, partly due to the withdrawal of the Mortimer Link Minibus. The Fairground budget has been increased slightly and two new 'sinking funds' introduced, one for the tennis courts and one for the play equipment. The purpose of these is to put aside funds for the long term maintenance and replacement of these facilities. The sinking fund for the tennis court was required as a condition of the Inspired Facilities Grant to resurface the tennis courts (see page 10).

The daily hire charge for business use of the Fairground has been increased to £100 (from £85) and Cemetery fees increased by 10%.

The precept request by the Parish Council this year is £90,830 compared to £92,370 last year. However, last year £6,639 of this was provided by a government mitigation grant (because of changes in the Council Tax system) so £85,731 was raised through Council Tax. At the time of setting the budget, West Berkshire Council had said they would not be passing on any proportion of the mitigation grant in 2014/15. The Parish Council therefore made a precept request of £90,830 to ensure it had a balanced budget.

The precept is divided by the Council Tax base (the equivalent number of Band D dwellings in the Parish, now 1595.09) to give the Band D household charge. Therefore the annual charge for 2014/15 is £56.94. The corresponding figures for previous years were £53.67 (2013/14), £51.57 (2012/13) and £51.50 (2011/12) per annum.

# Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council Adopted Budget 2014/2015 (also showing 2013/2014)

INCOME	Budget 13/14	Budget 14/15
Cemetery (fees)	£4,000	£4,800
Fairground (fees)	£2,000	£3,255
Bank Interest	£400	£150
Wayleave Rental	£220	£220
Mortimer Link Mini Bus (WBC grant)	£6,000	£0
Mitigation Grant (£6,639)	£6,639	
Precept	£85,731	£90,830
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>£104,990</b>	<b>£99,255</b>

EXPENDITURE	Budget 13/14	Budget 14/15
Cemetery:	£2,450	£2,450
Communications: (Newsletter)	£1,300	£1,500
Fairground: (Grass Cutting, Maintenance, Annual Rental £2,000)	£10,800	£12,547
Sinking Fund/Maint/Repair Play Equipment	£0	£6,000
Sinking Fund Tennis Courts	£0	£2,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>£10,800</b>	<b>£21,047</b>
Roads, Footpaths & Commons: (Management Expenses)	£2,000	£2,000
SMPC Administration: (Audit Fees, Chairman's allowance, Hall Rental, Insurance, Office Admin Expenses, Personnel SMPC Parish Office Rent/Rates/Utilities, subscriptions Training/Courses)	£46,961	£47,893
SMPC grant to Willink Leisure Centre	£9,730	£9,730
SMPC Community Award:	£300	£300
PCSO: Partial Funding	£7,715	£7,793
Community Development Plan (to include Parish Plan Refresh (2) (Balance transferred to earmarked fund)	£8,000	£0
Superfast Broadband (SMPC contribution)	£6,542	£6,542
Mortimer Link (Mini Bus) (service discontinued)	£9,192	£0
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>£104,990</b>	<b>£99,255</b>

## Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council Members

It is a statutory requirement that the Chairman and Committee Members of a council are appointed annually at the May meeting of the Council (the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council). The meeting, on 8<sup>th</sup> May, elected Cllr Mike Dennett as Chairman and Cllr Julian Earl as Vice Chairman for 2014/2105. The committees to which each councillor belong are shown below their names; the chairman and vice-chairman are ex officio on all committees

## Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council 2014/15



**Mike Dennett (Chairman)**



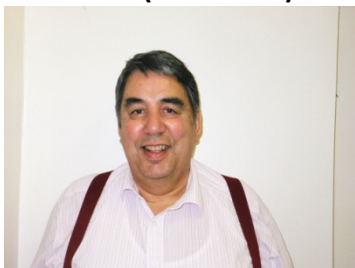
**Jayne Kirk (The Clerk)**



**Julian Earl (Vice Chair)**



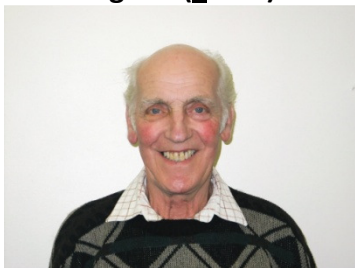
**Tracey Audsley (P Co)**



**Pete Blagden (F FGP)**



**John Bull (F R)**



**Phil Challis (P Ce)**



**Austin Colaço**





**Dudley Ives (P R FGP)**



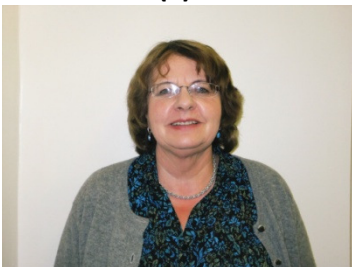
**Neil Kiley (P F FGP)**



**Mollie Lock (F)**



**John Morden (P)**



**Danusia Morsley (Ce Co F FGP)**



**Angie Phillips (P R)**



**Pat Wingfield (Ce F FGP)**



**Frank Stansfield (Custodian)**

Ce = Cemetery, Co = Communications, F = Fairground, Trees and Amenities, P = Planning, R = Roads, Footpaths and Commons, FGP = Finance and General Purposes. Underlining indicates committee chairman

The following represent the Council on outside bodies

The Fairground Trust	Cllrs N Kiley, J.Earl
Clark's Educational Charity	Mr R Peters
Relief in Need Charity	Cllr A Phillips
Burghfield & Mortimer Volunteer Bureau	Cllr P Wingfield
Burghfield & Mortimer Neighbourhood Action Group	Cllrs T Audsley, D Ives
St John's Hall Management Committee	Cllr J Bull
Willink Recreation Joint Advisory Committee	Cllr J Morden
AWE Local Liaison Committee	Cllr M Lock
Wokefield Common Advisory Committee	Cllr D Morsley

## Grant to Refurbish the Tennis Courts

The Parish Council has succeeded with its grant application to Sports England for an Inspired Facilities Award to refurbish the tennis courts. The award is for £45,165 and it is hoped that work will start within two months. The work will be carried out by a Sport England's approved contractor. During the work the courts will have to be closed for between 5 to 7 weeks.

# An Inspired Facility



LOTTERY  
FUNDED



SPORT  
ENGLAND

inspired  
by 2012

The main works will be to consolidate the base in parts of the court and then provide a new tarmac surface over the entire area. The two courts will be marked out and a surface coat applied. Apart from obtaining the grant, it was satisfying that SMPC were complimented on the quality and comprehensive application. Thanks to all who contributed to the application. As a condition of the grant, SMPC has agreed to set up a “sinking fund” which will set aside an amount of money each year to ensure that the new courts are maintained over time (see Budget article on page 6).

# No 75 Bus Service

Following representations from all the Parish Councils on the route, WBC put out to tender a revised 75 bus service. The service will operate on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The tender was won by Newbury and District Bus Company and will be run using a 29 seater 'flat bed' bus. The first day of operation of this service is Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> June.

Beech Hill, Memorial Hall	0935
Beech Hill, Opp The Old Elm Tree PH	0936
Mortimer Station (Request Stop)*	0940
Mortimer Library	0946
Mortimer, Stephens Close	0948
Burghfield, Former Rising Sun PH	0953
Burghfield, Common, Hawksworth Road	0956
Burghfield Common, Clay Hill Rd Shops	0958
Ufton Nervet, Church	1002
A4, Sulhamstead Turn	1007
Beenham, Stoneyfield	1011
Beenham, opp Six Bells	1013
Cold Ash, St. Finians School	1026
Ashmore Green, Telephone Box	1029
West Berkshire Community Hospital	1034
Newbury Post Office	1040

\*Trains to Reading at 0948 and to Basingstoke at 0950

Newbury Post Office	1325
West Berkshire Community Hospital	1331
Ashmore Green, Telephone Box	1336
Cold Ash, St. Finians School	1339
Beenham, opp Six Bells	1352
Beenham, Stoneyfield	1354
A4, Sulhamstead Turn	1358
Ufton Nervet, Church	1403
Burghfield Common, Clay Hill Rd Shops	1407
Burghfield, Common, Hawksworth Road	1409
Burghfield, Former Rising Sun PH	1412
Mortimer, Stephens Close	1417
Mortimer Library	1419
Mortimer Station +	1425
Beech Hill, Opp The Old Elm Tree PH	1429
Beech Hill, Memorial Hall	1430

+ Trains arrive from Basingstoke at 1417 and Reading at 1418.

## **Parish Council Says Goodbye to Alan Thorpe**

Alan Thorpe has served the parish of Stratfield Mortimer in many ways over his years in the village. He came to Mortimer in 1969 to take up the post of St. Mary's Junior School, a position he retained until his retirement in 1989. Mortimer was fortunate to get him as he was simultaneously offered the post of managing a new teachers' centre in Chester. Luckily for hundreds of children in Mortimer he and his family chose Mortimer over the attractions of Chester. He remembers the school winning the All England 5 a Side Football Championship at Wembley in 1985 as one of the highlights of his time at the school.

Soon after coming to the village he joined the Parish Council, serving there until he became a District Councillor in 1980. He served on the District Council for twenty years; at various times he held the roles of Chairman of Planning, Vice Chairman of Education and Chairman of the Council. In recognition of his services he was made an Honorary Alderman in 2012.

On leaving West Berkshire Council in 2000, he returned to the Parish Council. His considered comments and dry humour will be much missed in Parish Council meetings.

## **Was Mortimer Once Madder?**

The Parish Council recently received an intriguing letter from Hampshire County Council and Museums Service. At some time in the past (certainly before the recollection of any current councillors or the clerk!) the Parish Council loaned them a strait jacket which had been previously used in the parish. The strait jacket is currently in the reserve store at Chilcombe House, Winchester. The Museums Service wished to know if the Parish Council was willing to continue loaning the strait jacket on a 25 year basis in accordance with their new loan agreement. After a lively debate the meeting agreed to this.

## **Neighbourhood Development Plan - First Step**

A very well attended public meeting was held in St. John's Hall on 20<sup>th</sup> March to explain what an Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP) could and could not do for Mortimer and how it fits in with West Berkshires (WBC's) Local Plan. A draft of a Vision which will guide the work on the NDP was presented and those attending agreed this was appropriate. The Vision for the future states:

*Mortimer retains a distinctive rural character and a strong sense of community while providing a wide range of services and a thriving small business economy. Development is in harmony with this vision and ensures that Mortimer's distinctive character is retained.*

Examples of the type of policies that could be included in the NDP were presented to the meeting and a lively exchange of views resulted in many good points that needed consideration being raised. The discussion was greatly helped by the attendance of Bryan Lyttle who is WBC's Planning Transportation Policy Manager.

The NDP Steering Group has been continuing to progress the plan and is now looking to engage with volunteers to help push on with the plan. The final draft plan will go out to formal consultation and the final plan will seek to gain approval in a formal referendum of the electors in the Parish.

## **Neighbourhood Development Plan – Second Step**

The next opportunity for Mortimer residents and businesses to contribute their views to the Neighbourhood Development Plan will be on Sunday July 6<sup>th</sup> when an exhibition will be held on the Fairground from 2 – 4pm. This will be held in the main marquee used by the Fun Day on the Saturday.

The NDP Steering Group invites all residents and businesses to come and see examples of ideas that could be part of the NDP and to contribute their views as to which are the most important to them and which they agree or disagree with. Additional ideas for policies will be

welcomed. A variety of maps and statistics showing different aspects of life in Mortimer will be on display. For instance:

**Total Usual Residents: 2001 = 3475, 2011 = 3807**

<b>Ages</b>	<b>0 - 4</b>	<b>5 - 7</b>	<b>8 - 9</b>	<b>10 - 14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16 - 17</b>	<b>18 - 19</b>	<b>20 - 24</b>
<b>2001</b>	202	142	90	227	42	71	56	141
<b>2011</b>	268	165	98	247	48	74	58	151
<b>Ages</b>	<b>25 - 29</b>	<b>30 - 44</b>	<b>45 - 59</b>	<b>60 - 64</b>	<b>65 - 74</b>	<b>75 - 84</b>	<b>85 - 89</b>	<b>90 ≤</b>
<b>2001</b>	149	816	741	201	308	210	52	27
<b>2011</b>	133	818	760	248	385	255	76	23

## **West Berkshire Local Plan Housing Site Allocations Development Plan Document (DPD)**

A West Berkshire Housing Site Allocations DPD is now being prepared. This will allocate sites for housing to meet the remainder of the 10,500 housing requirement in West Berkshire by 2026. The DPD will also include sites for Gypsies and Travellers and a limited number of housing policies, including those to guide development in the countryside. (A plan of the sites in Mortimer from which the preferred allocation will be drawn will be on display at the July the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting. Consultation on a 'preferred options' version of the DPD is scheduled to begin on 25 July 2014 for a 7 week period, and will include details of short listed sites for housing. It should be emphasised that the DPD simply allocates sites, it does not go into the detail of what number or type of housing should be built on those sites nor does it specify when the housing should be built. This can all be covered by the NDP which makes it such an important document.

The DPD is due to be adopted in December 2015, and will be followed by the preparation of a new Local Plan which will look longer term and which will cover the full range of policies and allocate additional sites for development. The Local Development Scheme (LDS) which is the timetable for the Local Plan will is available at

<http://info.westberks.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=28845>

## **NDP Stall at the Fun Day**

The NDP Steering Committee look forward to meeting as many residents and local businesses as possible at their stall at Mortimer Fun Day on the Fairground on July 5<sup>th</sup> 10:30 – 5:30

## **PCSO Report**

PCSO Joe Hare and I have been PCSOs in the

Burghfield and Mortimer area for a few months and are settling in well; please come and say hello if you see us out and about!



We have seen a slight increase in theft from vehicles and burglary non dwellings in recent months. If you store valuables in an outbuilding please do all that you can to secure them. If you store multiple bikes, chaining them together makes them harder to transport. Property marking will make your property easier to identify and therefore less appealing to thieves. Please keep no valuables whatsoever in your vehicle – and think about removing wires and cables which might indicate you have a sat-nav / mobile phone within the vehicle.

Mortimer Police Station is kept open every other Friday by a team of volunteers. As local officers we work out of this station most days so if you see a police vehicle outside we are more than likely in unless we are on foot in the village. We are still looking for volunteers at Mortimer Police Station: contact Thames Valley Police on the 101 number. We are very proud to have this station open and in this time of cuts we would promote you to use your local station. For those mad about history we have a board in the counter area with the history of local policing in Mortimer so please pop down and have a look.

Our next 'Have Your Say' meeting will be held on Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> June at 11 am outside Budgens . If you have any problems or issues please contact Thames Valley Police on the non-Emergency number of 101. Always call 999 in an emergency.

**Olivia Davis, Police Community Support Officer, TVP,  
Burghfield & Mortimer**

## Fairground Diary

3 <sup>rd</sup> – 6 <sup>th</sup> June	Circus
22 <sup>nd</sup> June	Mortimer Riding Club
5 <sup>th</sup> July	Mortimer Fun Day (including NDP stall)
5 <sup>th</sup> July	Mortimer Music Live event
6 <sup>th</sup> July	Neighbourhood Development Plan Exhibition
7 <sup>th</sup> September	Mortimer Riding Club
28 <sup>th</sup> September	Mortimer Fun Run

## PARISH COUNCIL CONTACT INFORMATION

Mrs. Jayne Kirk, Parish Clerk  
Parish Council Office  
The Library  
27 Victoria Road  
Mortimer  
RG7 3SH

Tel: 0118 933 1955 – Fax: 0709 2310443

Email: [the.clerk@stratfield-mortimer.gov.uk](mailto:the.clerk@stratfield-mortimer.gov.uk)

Website: [www.stratfield-mortimer.gov.uk](http://www.stratfield-mortimer.gov.uk)

Minutes and Agendas of Council meetings, as well as other Council information can be viewed on the above website or on the Parish Council notice boards which are located outside the Post Office and the Library.

The Parish Council Office is open:  
Tuesdays & Thursdays,  
10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

**Please note that the Parish Office is open as stated above, even if the library is closed. Entrance is via the side gate.**