

STRATFIELD MORTIMER

Parish Council Newsletter



October 2016



Queens 90th Celebrations



Contents

Queens 90 th Celebration photos	2
Queens 90 th Celebration	4
Air Vice Marshall Barry Newton's Speech	6
Zebra Crossing at St John's School	7
Parish Council Matters	7
The Parish Council and Planning Applications	8
Parish Council Meetings	9
Changes in councillors	10
Update on membership of Parish Council Committees	10
SMPC June 2016 who's who	12
Communications update	14
Neighbourhood Development Plan - Update	15
Mortimer Library	16
Roads and Footpaths	17
Fairground Trees and Amenities	17
Recycling Arrangements	18
West Berkshire Electricity Switch	19
Upcoming Events on the Fairground	20
Remembrance Day Service	20
Useful contacts	21
Parish Council Contact Information	22
Queens 90 th Celebration photos	23

Cover picture: South west view from Drury Lane

Queens 90th Celebrations

Well – we hope you enjoyed yourselves!

An estimated 3,000 villagers and friends had a great time helping us to celebrate Her Majesty the Queen’s 90th birthday by enjoying our free ‘Party in the Park’ on 4th June – the biggest event the Parish Council has staged, with audience numbers just exceeding the Diamond Jubilee celebrations in 2012.

Organised by SMPC with the full and much appreciated support of Mortimer Music Live and with a host of volunteers, the Fairground was transformed into an open air venue for the seven-hour music and dance event, with a full stage, bar and food area. Thankfully the weather stayed fine and picnics were much in evidence.

With entertainment from the Shinfield Shambles Morris dancers, the All Stars Theatre Academy, the 40 piece, award-winning South Berks Concert Band (joined by their fabulous singers David and Valerie Stephenson), State 51, Izziiee Jewell, and finally Nicolette Street & The Revs, there was a fantastic range of local talent in evidence.



(credit Nick Carter)



(credit Aaron Dolding)

There were brief speeches from Air Vice Marshall Barry Newton, who congratulated Her Majesty on this major milestone, and Cllr Neil Kiley, who spoke about the Queen's life and the contribution she has made to the nation. The evening concluded with the Queen's 90th beacon lighting up the night sky and a rousing montage of patriotic music, with the audience joining in. As a splendid finale, Andrew Middleton give a striking Brian May style guitar rendition of the National Anthem.

Our thanks go to Mortimer Music Live, all of the artists, our various sponsors, the Willink School music department and all the volunteers who made this celebration such a success and a day to remember for those who were there.



Air Vice Marshall Barry Newton's Speech

The Parish Council received several comments congratulating Barry Newton on the eloquence and content of his speech made at the Queen's 90th celebrations. In case you didn't hear it, the text is given below.

HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN'S 90TH BIRTHDAY

Many, many years ago when I was a cadet at the Royal Air Force College, my first graduation Parade was taken not by a crusty old Air Marshall but by a VERY beautiful Princess. About 300 of us were on parade that day, and I am sure every single one of us fell deeply in love with her.

Today, 64 years on, that beautiful Princess has reached the age of 90 years, something no other sovereign has ever done in the entire history of our islands. Typically, The Queen has said she doesn't want any fuss made over this birthday, but – heavens above! – she has reigned over us for more than 64 years so it is only fair to underline at least some of her extraordinary achievements.

The Queen has been with us through thick and thin, through triumph and disaster, through grief as well as much joy, never – unlike so many world leaders – seeking the limelight, but providing a focus – a gracious warm-hearted and kind focus – for our national life, especially for celebrations and mourning.

Worldwide, Her Majesty reigns over more than 100 million people, as Head of the Commonwealth she has brought together a host of widely different countries. She is the most experienced and most travelled monarch we have ever had. Here in the United Kingdom her experience and wise counsel has been enjoyed by no fewer than 12 Prime Ministers! Her Majesty is not only the longest serving monarch we have ever had, she is the most respected and far and away the most loved.

Zebra Crossing at St John's School

Prior to the retirement in 2015 of Freda Batten, the long serving school crossing patrol for St John's infant school, no replacement was found, despite advertising by the Parish Council. The WBC funding for the role has since been cut. West Berkshire Council (WBC) carried out traffic level and speed studies in 2015 at the Parish Council's request. These suggested that the site did not meet the requirements for a controlled or zebra crossing. The Parish Council and Mortimer District councillors felt that a zebra crossing would be a solution.

Following representations by the school to WBC we are pleased to report that design stage planning is now in place at WBC for a zebra crossing at that location. Unfortunately, regulations state that crossings need to be illuminated (in addition to the Belisha beacons). The Parish Council is in discussion with WBC to contribute to the design with the aim of making that lighting as minimal as possible. We will keep you informed of progress but if you have any question or comments please let us know via the contact details on page 22.

Parish Council Matters

Since the last newsletter there have been four meetings of the council. In addition to the day to day activities of the Parish Clerk (Mr Haydn Selwyn-Jones) there have been a number of significant matters to mention.

- Approval of terms of reference of all Parish Council Committees
- Approval of the SMPC Business Risk Management Plan
- Finalisation of the part-funded PCSO contract
- Implementation of monthly financial reporting which will be available on the parish council website
- Agreement to start discussions with WBC on possible devolution of activities
- Approval by the external auditor of the annual return (accounts for 2015/16) that the return is in accordance with proper practice and there are no matters for concern

The Parish Council and Planning Applications

The Parish Council has a Committee dealing with all planning matters in the Parish. It is asked by West Berkshire to look at all applications that fall within our Parish. The Committee does not have specific powers. The input of the Parish Council through its Committee is taken by West Berkshire prior to a decision being made by the Officers in the Planning Department in West Berkshire Council. The Planning Committee meets quite frequently and the meetings are open to the public and advertised. Mainly the applications are for small extensions and in the main, they are not controversial. At the other end of the applications, they can be for bigger developments. Late in 2015, the Committee considered the Monkey Puzzle Field application for a large development and the application to build 17 houses at Tower House. The meetings were well attended by the public.

You will know by now that the Monkey Puzzle Field application was recommended for rejection by the Parish Council and was rejected by West Berkshire. The other application has been through further stages including being reviewed at West Berkshire Planning Committee meetings (for the Eastern Area) in June and August. The Parish Council has a right to be heard at those meetings and the Chairman of Planning (Cllr Tony Butcher) attended and spoke on both occasions. The Parish Planning Committee, at its original meeting, had made a decision that they broadly supported the development but had a number of questions and comments. One of those which remained unresolved into the middle of 2016 was how much affordable housing would be included in the development.

The rules for an individual development in connection with affordable housing can be very complicated. An additional issue is that the commercial information provided by the applicant, if they wish to reduce or eliminate affordable housing, and the professional advice received by West Berkshire in response to any such application is all treated as confidential and nobody outside West Berkshire Councillors and Officers can be given that information.

Against the recommendation of the West Berkshire Council Officers, at the June meeting, the West Berkshire Eastern Area Planning Committee postponed consideration of the application to clarify a number of points including affordable housing. At the August meeting, with the recommendation of the Officers still being for approval of the application without any conditions as to affordable housing, on behalf of the Parish, Cllr Butcher made a number of comments about our priorities as expressed in the Neighbourhood Development Plan and disappointment in the village that for reasons which could not be publicly explained, there would be no affordable housing.

The District Councillors, led by Graham Bridgman, on the Eastern Area Committee proposed and then passed a resolution that a condition requiring the “normal” number of affordable units of five should have to be provided by the developer within that development, otherwise the development could not go ahead.

The Planning Committee is always happy to have expressions of interest from the members of the Parish and at least on this occasion, a contribution to a helpful decision was effective.

Parish Council Meetings

Full meetings of the Parish Council are normally held on the second Thursday of each month in the Methodist Church West End Road, Mortimer at 7:30 pm. There is a ten minute slot at the start of each meeting for members of the public to raise concerns and comment on items on the agenda. SMPC would like to encourage members of the public to attend meetings. The remaining meetings for 2016 are:

13 October	10 November	8 December
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Changes in Councillors

In the last newsletter we announced that Angie Philips had stood down from the Council. No request for an election was received in response to the vacancy notice. A call for applications to fill the casual vacancy by co-option was issued and there were three applicants.

At the Full Council meeting on 14th July the candidates gave presentations and Mr Mick Johnson was co-opted to the Council. Mick lives in The Crescent and has lived in Mortimer since birth. Mick's application included the following:

"I have recently retired from a senior management role with Royal Mail and I believe my experience of a manager of people will help me in this role. I have worked as a volunteer with a number of charities (Barnardo's, Sue Ryder, British Heart Foundation) and as a firefighter in Mortimer in the 1980's. I have lived in the Parish since birth and I feel I want to be involved in making a difference. I want to be able to help re-shape the community going forward".

The Council welcomes Mick to the Council and also thanks the other applicants for their interest. Mick has since been appointed to three committees: Cemetery; Fairground, Trees and Amenities and Roads, Footpaths and Commons. He will also be a SMPC representative on the Burghfield and Mortimer Neighbourhood Action Group.

Update on Membership of Parish Council Committees

The Chairman, Vice Chairman and Committee members of the Parish Council were appointed at the meeting of the Parish Council on 12th May 2016. At subsequent meetings of the Parish Council the following additions to committee membership have been resolved:

Cllr Dudley Ives to the NDP Implementation Committee

Cllr Mick Johnson to Cemetery; Fairground, Trees and Amenities; Roads, Footpaths and Commons.

The Standing Orders of the Parish Council allow the co-option of non-councillors to committees as non-voting members. The following co-options have also been resolved:

Mr Tennant Barber, Mrs Danusia Morsley and Mrs Sue Carter to the NDP Implementation Committee

Mr David Kilshaw to the Communications Committee.

Members of Committees are shown in the table below and below the photographs of Councillors. The Chairman of each Committee is indicated by *. The Chairman and Vice Chairman are *ex officio* members of each committee.

Committee	Members September 2016
Cemetery	Kiley* , Bull, Challis, Johnson, Lewis, Wingfield
Communications	Richardson* , Carter, Jones, Lewis, co-opted Mr D Kilshaw
Fairground, Trees and Amenities	Blagden* , Bull, Challis, Johnson, Kiley, Lock, Richardson
NDP Implementation	Wingfield* , Carter, Ives, Jones, Kiley, Richardson, co-opted Mr T Barber, Mrs S Carter and Mrs D Morsley
Planning	Butcher* , Challis, Ives, Jones, Kiley
Roads Footpaths and Commons	Ives* , Bull, Butcher, Johnson, Lewis, Lock
Finance and General Purposes	Dennett* , Earl, Blagden, Butcher, Ives, Kiley, Richardson, Wingfield

Stratfield Mortimer Parish Council September 2016



Mike Dennett (Chairman)



Haydn Selywn-Jones (Clerk)



**Julian Earl
(Vice Chairman)**



**Pete Blagden
Fairground***



**John Bull
Cemetery; Fairground; Roads**



**Tony Butcher
Planning*; Roads**



**Nick Carter
Communications;
NDP Implementation**



**Phil Challis
Cemetery, Fairground;
Planning**



**Dudley Ives
NDP Implementation;
Planning Roads***



Mick Johnson
Cemetery; Fairground;
Roads



Lucy Jones
Communications; NDP
Implementation; Planning;



Neil Kiley
Cemetery*; Fairground;
NDP Implementation;
Planning



Chris Lewis
Cemetery;
Communications; Roads



Mollie Lock
Fairground; Roads



Andrew Richardson
Communications*;
Fairground; NDP
Implementation



Pat Wingfield
Cemetery; Fairground;
NDP Implementation*



Frank Stansfield
Custodian

*** denotes Chairman of that committee**

Finance and General Purposes Committee comprises the Chairman, Vice Chairman and the six committee Chairmen

David Kilshaw



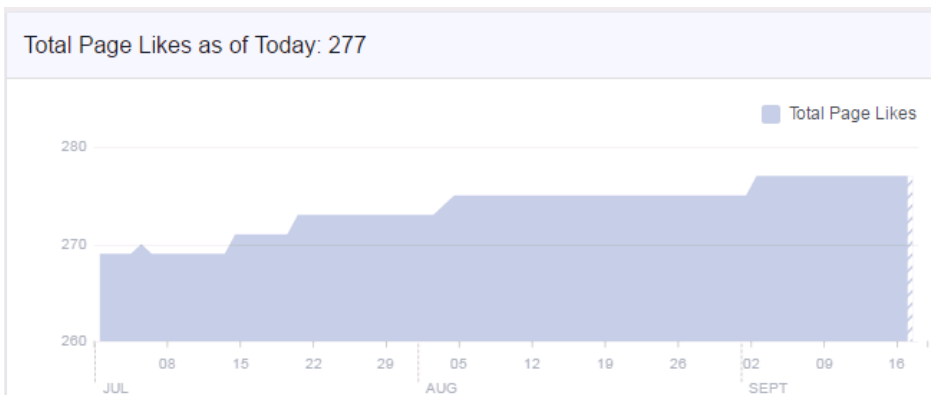
At the parish council meeting in August Mr David Kilshaw was co-opted onto the SMPC communications committee. David is very active in the community, he is the group scout leader for Burghfield Scouts, administrator for the MVP Facebook page, member of the MVP committee, community bus organiser and member of the SOB committee. David has already assisted SMPC with their communications strategy and he is now welcomed as a member of the communications committee.

Communications update



The Parish Council Facebook site has witnessed a 9% increase in total number of likes since the last newsletter, 277 likes compared to 255 last time. SMPC hope to increase this going forward and in that regard aim to post more news and promote awareness. The page is:

facebook.com/stratfieldmortimerparishcouncil



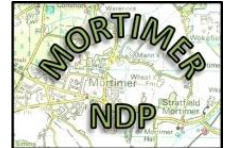
It was reported last time that it is planned to give the SMPC website a makeover in the coming months. So far this has not taken place due to other priorities. Please give us your views on how the website can be

improved. At the front of the Newsletter is a scan image which takes you to the website and you can access a soft copy of the Newsletter by clicking on 'SMPC Newsletters' and downloading 'October 2016'.

Neighbourhood Development Plan update

Summary

Since the last report to the Parish Council the main event has been the public hearing of the NDP held in Newbury on the 24th and 25th of August.



Discussion

The hearing: The first full day and the morning of the second day were held in WBC's offices. The afternoon of the second day was spent on an extensive site visit to Mortimer.

The hearing took the form of a round table discussion with representatives from the Parish Council, WBC, land owners, agents, developers, statutory consultees and members of the public all being present. The inspector firmly led proceedings and examined particular issues in turn. Generally, on the first day, issues raised as part of the consultation process were dealt with. On the second day the inspector went through the NDP document and examined particular aspects on which he wanted clarification.

The site visit to Mortimer took the form of a visit, on foot, to each of the sites that had been touched upon in the consultations and the hearing. The inspector was accompanied by some of the people who had been at the hearing. The inspector asked questions as he went around but did not allow presentations from those accompanying him.

Next steps: The inspector will now write a report and recommendations. He did not give a timescale for this but did indicate

it should be weeks rather than months. The findings will be submitted to WBC and they and the Parish Council will have to consider them and decide on a course of action. For other NDPs this has normally been to incorporate suggested changes to wording into a revised NDP. If that is the case, then WBC will have to take the revised document to their members to get approval to bring it into force should it pass a referendum.

WBC would then organise the referendum and if a majority of those voting accept the NDP it will immediately become part of the planning framework for the parish. It is expected that all this should take place before the end of this year. SMPC will keep you informed as to the progress of the NDP and encourage you to vote in the referendum, assuming this takes place. The referendum will be organised by WBC in the same manner as any national or local election in the Parish which normally has the polling stations in the Community Centre and all on the electoral register will be able to vote.

Mortimer Library

Around February 2016 West Berkshire Council (“WBC”) announced that in order to save £730k a year it would close all libraries except one. The opposition raised concerns as to whether this closure was lawful and cited Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964 s7; this states that it is the ‘duty of every library authority to provide a comprehensive and efficient library service for all persons desiring to make use thereof’. WBC stated that owing to the vague nature of the Act it was taking legal advice. WBC has subsequently declined to make this advice public as it could prejudice any future legal challenge. The relevant section of the Act was partially tested in a public enquiry in the Wirral in 2009. One of the reasons that the enquiry recommended keeping a library open was that the library authority had failed to carry out an ‘assessment of local needs’. Such an assessment was then commissioned by WBC.

As reported in the last newsletter, the Parish Council set up a Mortimer Library Working Group. The group devised a small questionnaire which was available at the Fun Day in July and in Budgens as well as on line. Results and views were given to Wendy Crosson-Smith, the representative from Red Quadrant who are carrying out the assessment, when she visited Mortimer Library in mid July. For the present, Mortimer Library remains open and the SMPC are awaiting the outcome of the needs assessment, which is expected in mid October. It is likely that WBC will then carry out a consultation on the resulting proposals.

Roads and Footpaths

Parish Councillors have been using a speed indicator devices (SID) at various sites around Mortimer during September. Results will be available later.



Fairground Trees and Amenities

The main planned activities coming up are:

- Planned annual cut of cricket outfield and newt corridor
- Fencing around fairground to be replaced

Recycling Arrangements

A News Release from West Berkshire Council regarding the September launch for new waste permit scheme is reproduced below:

A new permit scheme for accessing West Berkshire household waste recycling centres will begin on Monday 26 September, 2016.

The scheme is being introduced to ensure West Berkshire residents do not have to pay for waste brought to the district from elsewhere through their council tax. Until recently, Hampshire County Council paid £200,000 a year to allow its residents to use West Berkshire facilities but stopped this funding earlier this year. Hampshire residents currently account for around 40% of waste taken to Padworth and 20% of waste taken to Newbury and the cost of disposing of this waste now falls to West Berkshire council taxpayers and puts an additional strain on the waste service. In March, West Berkshire Council also decided to cease funding towards the re3 waste partnership – funding which allowed residents to use the Smallmead recycling centre in Reading.

From 26 September West Berkshire residents will need to display a vehicle permit in order to access the household waste recycling centres in Newbury and Padworth. A permit will be posted to every household across the district in the coming weeks and must be clearly displayed in order to enter the recycling centres.

Each household will receive a single permit that can be used in domestic vehicles. Residents who only own a commercial-type vehicle will be able to apply online for a permit.

Neither site is registered to dispose of commercial waste so businesses, which are already prohibited from the centres, will not be issued with permits.

More information is available at www.westberks.gov.uk/hwrcpermit.

West Berkshire Electricity Switch

This was announced back in July 16 and could enable households to save money. The closing date for the scheme is 10th October and below is a summary, more information is available from the West Berkshire Council website.

Outline of the Scheme (from WBC website)

It's very simple. Would you like to save money on your energy bills and keep the switching process quick and easy?

Then all you need to do is:

- Register for **free** to express your interest at:
www.westberks.gov.uk/communityswitch
- You can register any time from 12 July up to and including 10 October 2016.
- Energy suppliers are then invited to take part in the auction to bid against each other to offer the best deal. This takes place on 11 October.
- The winning supplier will be the one making the lowest offer. We are not affiliated to any supplier. You will receive an email from 21 October onwards with an offer, based on the usage information you have submitted. You are under no obligation unless you decide to switch.
- If you decide to accept the offer you need to let us know before 29 November 2016.
- We then take care of the entire switch for you, meaning the whole thing is as smooth and hassle-free for you as possible. You will need the following details to complete your registration:
 - Your name, address and contact details.
 - The name of your current energy supplier(s) and current tariff plan(s).

- Your current consumption in kWh or spend. See your energy bill or your annual energy statement. You are then ready to register for the collective switching scheme:
- Enter your personal details, your energy usage details and your current tariff plan.
- You will receive an overview of your registration by email.
- Confirm your registration by clicking the link in the email.

Upcoming events on the Fairground

Village cricket match for the Alan Thorpe Trophy Sunday 2nd October

Carol singing around Christmas Tree – Saturday 17th December 5pm

Remembrance Day Service

This will take place at the War Memorial on Sunday 13th November starting as usual at about 10:45.



The Service
last year

Useful Contacts

Fairground Emergency

0743 6807543

To report any emergencies and dangerous situations on the Fairground.

For non-emergencies please contact the Parish Council Office

0118 9331955

Police Non-Emergency

101

To report crime and other concerns that do not require an emergency response.

NHS non-Emergency

111

If you need medical help fast but it's not a 999 emergency.

West Berks Council (WBC)

01635 42400

WBC Out of Hours Emergency Contact

01635 42161

To report major incidents out of hours.

West Berkshire Council Streetcare Team

01635 519080

streetcare@westberks.gov.uk

To report problems with streets, roads, highways, pavements, etc.

West Berkshire District Councillors for the Mortimer Ward

Cllr Mollie Lock

0118 9332858

Cllr Graham Bridgman

0118 9331707

Mortimer Village Partnership

www.mortimervillage.org.uk

For village news and information on events, including a directory of local clubs and businesses.

PARISH COUNCIL CONTACT INFORMATION

The Clerk
Parish Council Office
The Library
27 Victoria Road
Mortimer
RG7 3SH

Tel: 0118 933 1955

Email: the.clerk@stratfield-mortimer.gov.uk

Website: www.stratfield-mortimer.gov.uk

Facebook: facebook.com/stratfieldmortimerparishcouncil

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 old Post Office and the Library.

The Parish Council Office is normally open:
Mondays, Tuesdays & Thursdays,
09:30. to 17:00



South Berkshire Concert Band (credit: Sue Totham)





State 51 perform on stage. (credit: John Harris)



Nicolette Street & The Revs perform on stage. (credit: Claire Thomas)