

HERMITAGE PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Meeting of Hermitage Parish Council
held on Thursday 19 January 2006 at 7.45pm in the Adelaide Room, Holy Trinity Church**

Present: Mr N Pearson (Chair), Mr K Gover, Mrs P Knightley, Dr J Lawler, Mr Overeynder, Mrs J Pearce, Mrs L Riordan (Clerk), Cllrs Q Webb & G Pask (for part of meeting) and five members of the public.

1. **Apologies** - Mrs K Willis.

2. **Declarations of Interest** – none were recorded

Members are asked to declare any personal interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting

3. **Minutes of a Meeting of Hermitage Parish Council held on Thursday 17 November 2005** were signed as a correct record of the meeting.

4. **Vacancy for a Councillor**

11/Nov05 Co-option

Due to difficulties processing the necessary paperwork after the co-option of Mrs Knightley in November, it was agreed the best way forward was to repeat the co-option. Mrs Knightley was again nominated to become a member of Hermitage Parish Council. This was proposed by Mr Pearson, seconded by Dr Lawler and unanimously agreed by all members.

Mrs Knightley was co-opted and duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

5. **Matters Arising**

04/Oct05 Bus shelter condition/woodworm

The Clerk will write to Mr Lawrence asking him to proceed with the works at his earliest convenience (as per his quotation of 05 December).

05/Oct05 Chapel Lane overhanging bushes

These works have not been undertaken and no response from Englefield Estates has been received.

The Clerk will write to West Berkshire Council Highways and ask them to intervene.

6. **Finance**

Accounts for Payment

01/Jan06 Clerk's salary (Jan)

03/Jan06 F C Lawrence for month of Jan @ £291.67

05/Jan06 Thames Water £5.78

07/Jan06 F C Lawrence – emergency works Pinewood Park @ £55.00

08/Jan06 F C Lawrence – hedgecutting (various) @ £135.00

All agreed the above payments be made.

02/Jan06 D Carter (bus shelter cleaning Jan) @ £30.00

The Clerk has written asking if she can accompany Mrs Carter next time she cleans the shelters and has not had a response. Payment will be withheld until the assessment has been undertaken.

Other

04/Nov05 December payments.

Clerk's salary (Dec)

D Carter (bus shelter cleaning for (Dec) @ £30.00

F C Lawrence for month of Nov @ £291.67

These payments were retrospectively approved.

06/Jan06 FC Lawrence – quotation for bus shelter treatment

The quotation of £200.00 was approved and the Clerk will contact Mr Lawrence accordingly.

Finance 2006/07

09/Jan06 Budget 2006/07.

The estimates prepared by the Clerk had been circulated to all Councillors for scrutiny before the meeting. Amendments were proposed and the attached schedule for 2006/07 approved.

As a matter of good practice and in accordance with Audit Regulations the Clerk will seek quotations for the grass cutting/amenity work contract for 2006/07 by means of a notice on the Parish notice board.

10/Jan06 Precept 2006/07 Application

A precept application for £18,000.00 will be submitted by the Clerk.

Proposed: Dr Lawler Seconded: Mr Overeynder and unanimously agreed.

This was a modest increase of £500 on last year, continuing the trend of the last three years. It was agreed that the Council should make little use of reserves in view of possible expenditure on recreational projects at the cementation site (contributions to tennis courts and village hall). The increase in precept will be absorbed by the higher number of households and therefore it is hoped the increase in cost per household will be minimal. In subsequent years, when the arena site and cementation site houses are occupied a similar or even larger precept should result in a lower cost to the electorate.

7. District Councillors' Report

06/Oct05 Pond Lane and Chapel Lane

Held in abeyance due to the works to install gas mains.

05/Nov05 Grass verge outside Corner Nook

Has been repaired and was looking good until a lorry drove over it!

A written report from Cllr Webb is attached. Cllr Pask added the following:

Hopefully the Council Tax increase for West Berkshire this year will be more or less in line with inflation – a welcome change from previous years which has 10/12% increases.

Cllr Pask asked for feedback on the operation of the newly installed Priors Court roundabout. He was advised there have been several minor incidents and that it was generally believed that a major accident will happen in time. The visibility in the Newbury direction on egress from Priors Court Road is particularly poor. Driver compliance with the 'rules of the road' is inconsistent, often due to confusion over priorities. It is believed that when the Arena site homes are occupied the increase in vehicular traffic will exacerbate the situation. Overwhelmingly it was agreed that traffic does not flow naturally. Cllr Pask agreed to contact Highways accordingly.

Concern was expressed to the two Councillors that contractors working in the village were destroying grass verges and not reinstating them. The Clerk was advised to contact Melvyn May of West Berkshire Council and Mr Pearson agreed to provide a list of troublesome locations.

Cllr Pask sought opinion on the traffic generated by Eggleton lorries, in particular travelling from Newbury through Hermitage to the tip near Tidmarsh. It was generally agreed that it was the excessive speed of the lorries that was of utmost concern.

8. Villagers' Open Forum

The Arena site development is floodlit at night to the consternation of nearby residents. The houses are illuminated presumably for publicity rather than security purposes. The light pollution and glow was agreed unacceptable and the **Clerk** will contact the Banner Homes site office accordingly.

9. Planning

9.1 Cementation Site Development

Mr Pearson has been in contact with Mr Sulley at West Berkshire Council re the s106 agreement. Mr Sulley was co-operative and suggested that a list of questions be compiled to which he would ensure a response was provided. A discussion followed and on this basis **Mr Pearson** will prepare a list for the **Clerk** to use as the foundation for a letter.

9.2 Arena Site Development

A minor amendment to the planning application at the site has been submitted to West Berkshire Council. Hermitage Parish Council was asked to consider the proposal to install 20 bollards with lighting within the development. The request is believed to have originated from potential residents who are concerned at the lack of street lamps.

The Parish Council unanimously agreed to strongly object to the amendment. Hermitage PC is very concerned that a rural village is becoming increasingly urbanised. The introduction of bollards would be one more step along the way and this would set a worrying precedent for future developments to introduce lighting schemes. The bollards are more suited to a town centre development than a village in an AONB.

04/Jan06 Stream/footbridge

The area in question has been temporarily fenced by Banner Homes. West Berkshire Council has failed to respond to Parish Council correspondence – the **Clerk** will continue to pursue the matter.

9.3 Other Planning Matters

05/02704/FUL Wellhouse Farm, Eling. Support.

05/02921/FULD Post Office, High St. Support.

05/02867/CERTP Wyldwood, High St. Noted.

10. Correspondence

In circulation

West Berkshire Council

Safer driving

Shaw House restoration newsletter

05/02315/HOUSE (2 Oare View) planning conditions

05/02036/FULMAJ (Cementation site) planning conditions

05/02254/HOUSE (The Beeches, Slanting Hill) planning conditions

05/02496/FUL (Home Park, Slanting Hill) planning conditions

05/02494/HOUSE (Elm Lea) planning conditions

05/02474/FULD (Box Cottage, Eling) planning conditions

Council for Protection of Rural England – Fieldwork magazine

Thames Valley Police – Neighbourhood Policing Consultation

- Local Policing Delivery Plan 06/07: invitation to consultation evening.

North Wessex Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty Review – Annual Report 2004/05

Miller Homes Property Advertisement

Council to Protect Rural England – How to respond to planning applications
Social enterprise Berkshire – Training programme Jan – Mar 2006
Office of Deputy Prime Minister – Standards of Conduct in English Local Government: the future
Consumer Direct – publicity material
Local Council Review

Other

West Berkshire Council

- Tree preservation order, Land at Ambleside, Yattendon Road. Noted.
- Strategic assessment of the second local transport plan – no comment.
- Draft Freight Strategy for West Berkshire – no comment.

Boxford Parish Council – Noise Pollution – M4 between junctions 12 – 14

11. Representatives' Reports

11.1 Village Hall

It is the understanding of the village hall committee that the land on which it is hoped to build the new hall will be transferred from the developer once a planning application has been submitted to West Berkshire Council. A design specification is nearing completion and the next step will be to appoint an architect.

The disposal of the existing village hall site is currently being considered. It was noted that the Parish Council is still paying £2,200 pa for a loan taken out to facilitate the purchase of the adjoining cottage.

The village hall committee is about to start applying for grants.

11.2 Play area (*incl. inspections*)

05/Oct04 Play area/BT fencing. The erection of new fencing is believed to be imminent.

The Parish Council expressed thanks to Mrs Knightley for pursuing this matter.

11.3 Footpaths

The paths with stiles are very awkward for dog walkers. In spring, **Mr Gover** will approach West Berkshire Council to suggest replacement with gates.

11.4 Downland Youth Network. Mrs Willis reported that a document has been produced following a pilot scheme offering free travel for eligible 15 - 17 year olds in the Downland area. Bids are now in with various organisations to roll out this particular scheme and fund a webmaster for the website and a Youth/Development worker to work in the Downlands.

11.5 Hermitage Primary School

Discussions with the LEA continue in respect of proposed building works which it is anticipated to start one month before the end of summer term.

12. Burial Ground

Nothing to report.

13. Any Other Business


14. Date of next meeting **** CHANGE OF DATE ****

The next meeting of Hermitage Parish Council will be on

Thursday 23 February 2006 at 7.45pm in the Adelaide Room, Holy Trinity Church

There being no further business the chairman closed the meeting at 10.10pm.

Lynne Riordan
Clerk, Hermitage Parish Council



23/2/06

HERMITAGE PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of a Meeting of Hermitage Parish Council
held on Thursday 23 February at 7.45pm in the Adelaide Room, Holy Trinity Church**

Present: Mr N Pearson (Chair), Mr K Gover, Dr J Lawler, Mrs L Riordan (Clerk), Cllrs Q Webb & G Pask (for part of meeting) and two members of the public.

1. **Apologies** - Mrs P Knightley, Mr Overeynder, Mrs J Pearce, Mrs K Willis.

2. **Declarations of Interest** – none were recorded

Members are asked to declare any personal interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting

3. **Minutes of a Meeting of Hermitage Parish Council held on Thursday 19 January 2006** were signed as a correct record of the meeting.

4. **Matters Arising**

04/Oct05 Bus shelter condition/woodworm

The three bus shelters have been treated for woodworm and an invoice submitted.

05/Oct05 Chapel Lane overhanging bushes

Correspondence addressed to Englefield Estate has been passed to Eling Estate Office. A promise to undertake the works has been received.

5. **Finance**

Accounts for Payment

01/Feb06 Clerk's salary (Feb) + £28.32 expenses

02/Feb06 F C Lawrence for month of Jan @ £291.67

03/Feb06 D Carter (bus shelter cleaning Feb) @ £30.00

04/Feb06 BT plc £38.01

05/Feb06 F C Lawrence Woodworm treatment to 3 No. bus shelters £243.80

All agreed that these payments be made.

Other

06/Feb06 Amenity contract 2006/07.

Only one tender to undertake these works has been received following advertisement. As this was from the existing contractor with whom everyone is satisfied does an excellent job, it was agreed to accept his tender.

6. **District Councillors' Report**

Written report attached.

06/Oct05 Pond Lane and Chapel Lane – to be pursued when contractors have completed works throughout the village.

7. **Villagers' Open Forum**

Priors Court Road roundabout – site lines were again raised as a matter of concern. **Cllr Webb** agreed to clarify the situation with regard to potential land purchases and additionally with regard to rumours of traffic light installation.

The impending 40mph speed limit on Priors Court Road was discussed.

Congestion in Newbury town centre was discussed.

8. Planning

8.1 Cementation Site Development

A meeting was held last Monday 20 February with representatives of Taylor Woodrow, Miller Homes, Green Issues, Hermitage Village Hall Committee and Hermitage Parish Council to discuss the provision of recreational facilities through s106 funding.

As a result of increasing the number of dwellings to be constructed to 209, further s106 obligations were placed on the developers and a new contract drawn up. Hermitage Parish Council has not had sight of this agreement, but a copy was promised by Green Issues.

The following were confirmed:

- a sports pitch will be laid to appropriate standards;
- development construction works will commence next week;
- phase one housing completion summer 2006;
- developer keen to co-operate with village hall construction;
- developer would be interested in developing the site of the existing hall;
- land only will be provided for tennis courts;
- developer keen to provide a crossing near the Primary school.

Three potential planning applications are anticipated:

- additional housing on land allocated for employment use;
- new village hall on cementation site;
- development of site of existing village hall.

A follow-up meeting will take place in a month's time.

8.2 Arena Site Development

04/Jan06 Stream/footbridge. It seems that Banner Homes have not been advised if/when off-site watercourse improvements will be undertaken by West Berkshire Council, even though they say they have paid a considerable amount of money for these works. Attempts by the Parish Council to obtain information from West Berkshire Council have not received a response. Cllrs Webb/Cllr Pask agreed to intervene.

8.3 Other Planning Matters

Hermitage Parish Council raised no objections to the following:

- 06/0012/FUL 06/0013/FUL The Grange, Yattendon Road
- 06/0087/HOUSE Ambleside, Yattendon Road
- 06/00184/Westdene, 5 Briants Piece
- 06/00242/FUL Former Cementation site
- 06/00245/HOUSE 4 Willis Close, Cold Ash (adjacent Parish)
- 06/00394/HOUSE The Lilacs, Deacons Lane

Hermitage Parish Council objects to the following:

- 06/00180/FULD Bridge House, Chapel Lane

9. Correspondence

In circulation

West Berkshire Council

- New Style Kennet and Pang Valley Area Forum – 06 February 2006

- District Parish Conference – 28 March 2006
- 05/02574/HOUSE Case officers report
- 05/02704/FUL Case officers report
- 05/02826/FUL Case officers report
- Consultation on Home to School Transport Policy 2007-08
- 40 mph Speed Limit Order 2006

Clerk and Councils Direct

The Clerk

Berkshire Unitary Authorities' Joint Strategic Planning Unit – Joint Minerals and Waste SA Scoping Report Consultation

CPRE Voice

Other

Berkshire Association of Local Councils – Royal Garden Party 18 July 2006

In the absence of Mr Overeynder, it was proposed he be nominated. Should he not wish to attend, Mr Gover will be nominated.

Community Council for Berkshire – Community Action Village Design Workshop
Saturday 11 March. Noted.

West Berkshire Council – Shaping the Planning Strategy for West Berkshire, Friday 10 March
- District/Parish Conference 28 March. Noted.

10. Representatives' Reports

10.1 Village Hall

With regard to the new hall project:

- it is planned to appoint an architect soon;
- fund raising has been initiated;
- a planning application will hopefully be submitted in July;
- the disposal of the existing village hall is being discussed according to Charity Commission requirements;
- consideration is being given to whether the sale of land should be with or without planning consent;
- a meeting has been scheduled in one month's time.

Other news:

- the chairs have been ordered;
- Burns Night was enjoyed by all;
- a cocktail evening is planned for 25 March.

10.2 Play area (*incl. inspections*)

05/Oct04 Play area/BT fencing – nothing to report.

10.3 Footpaths – it is hoped that additional funding will be available for footpath improvements now that the Parish Plan has been implemented. It is hoped that the replacement of stiles with kissing gates may be possible.

10.4 Downland Youth Network – nothing to report.

10.5 Hermitage Primary School - negotiations continue re locating the pre-school on the Primary School site.

11. Burial Ground

Dr Lawler agreed to make regular inspections.

12. Any Other Business

Mr Gover agreed to provide telephone numbers for non 999 police matters.
The new Village Welcome Pack has been produced and is looking good!

Date of next meetings

Date for Annual Parish Assembly – Thursday 20 April 2006.

The next meeting of Hermitage Parish Council will be on

Thursday 23 March 2006 at 7.45pm in the Adelaide Room, Holy Trinity Church

There being no further business the chairman closed the meeting at 9.54pm.

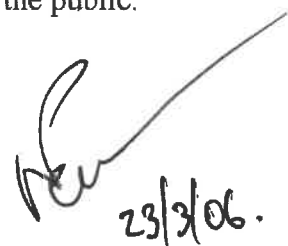
*Lynne Riordan
Clerk, Hermitage Parish Council*



WEST BERKSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT FEBRUARY 2006

1. Work has started to enhance Newbury's main shopping street. The major face lift to Northbrook Street should boost the retail trade and attract even more shoppers and visitors to the town. Improvements will include new-style paving from Bridge street to West Street, new street lighting and street furniture, all of which will aim to capitalise on the historic character of Newbury. The aim is to have Northbrook Street fully refurbished and operational in good time for the summer shopping period.
2. Kennet School in Thatcham has been offered a third specialism in Modern Languages to begin in April 2006 which will attract some £500,000 extra funding from the Government in recognition of outstanding achievement in certain subjects. The school already boast specialist school stratus, having been designated as a Technology College in September 2000. Following expansion and increased examination success, Kennet was the only West Berkshire School to be offered the opportunity of achieving a second specialism. This was granted in March 2005 when the second specialism was awarded for Theatre Arts.
3. West Berkshire is to sign a "Local Area Agreement" in a move to spearhead new joint working between public organisations that could bring real benefits to residents by pooling plans manpower and budgets. West Berkshire has been selected by the government to take part in the second round of the 'Local Area Agreement' initiative which enables districts to use money awarded for achieving certain targets to boost service delivery across the whole public, private and voluntary sector. Locally, more than £5 million of extra government cash is at stake. The Council is currently being used as an example of best practice for work on its 'Economic Bock'. This includes increasing corporate social responsibility and tackling the shortage of basic skills in the district.
4. As part of the improvements engendered by the implementation of e-planning all applications registered (including copies of the actual plans) and decisions taken with effect from 1 December 2005 can now be viewed on the UK Planning web site. This is accessible from the Council's own website either using the A-Z to find Planning-Plans and Documents (click on the link to access) or from the Home page via) On-Line Services then. Planning Applications- Plans and Documents. This is Phase One of the planned programme; all applications are sent for scanning once they have been validated and usually appear on the website within 48 hours. Similarly, all decisions are scanned, also appearing on the website within two days. Phase Two will be the implementation of a direct link from the *Associated Documents* tab in Public Access; this is dependent on the installation of a dedicated sever to hold the scanned images.
5. The first meeting of the Council's new Overview & Scrutiny Commission has set itself an ambitious work programme, covering highway, crime, and disabled access to the Council. The Commission had its first meeting on Tuesday 25th January 2006. The commission will ensure the completion of ongoing scrutiny work on underage drinking, hot versus frozen meal delivery to the elderly. How Highways department responds to requests from Councillors, Parish Councils and members of the public.

Quentin Webb
Joint Bucklebury Ward Member



23/2/06.

HERMITAGE PARISH COUNCIL

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held on Thursday 23 March at 7.45pm in the Adelaide Room, Holy Trinity Church**

Present: Mr N Pearson (Chair), Mr K Gover, Dr J Lawler, Mr Overeynder, Mrs J Pearce, Mrs K Willis, Mrs L Riordan (Clerk), Cllr Q Webb (for part of meeting) and six members of the public.

1. **Apologies** - Mrs P Knightley.

2. **Declarations of Interest** – none were recorded

Members are asked to declare any personal interest and the nature of that interest which they may have in any of the items under consideration at this meeting

3. **Minutes of a Meeting of Hermitage Parish Council held on Thursday 23 February 2006** were signed as a correct record of the meeting.

4. **Matters Arising**

05/Oct05 Chapel Lane overhanging bushes. The Clerk will contact Eling Estates again as the works have not been carried out.

5. **Finance**

Accounts for Payment

01/Mar06 Clerk's salary (Mar)

02/Mar06 F C Lawrence for month of Feb @ £291.67

04/Mar06 F C Lawrence - pruning of trees in cemetery £120.00
- notice board improvements £35.00

06/Mar06 Thames Water Utilities - £10.75

All agreed the above payments be made.

03/Mar06 D Carter (bus shelter cleaning Mar) @ £30.00

There has been no response to the Clerk's request to assess cleaning procedures and also to be notified in advance of cleaning dates. The Parish Council confirmed that they did not wish payments to be made until the requests have been complied with (although timesheets have now been received).

6. **District Councillors' Report**

05/Mar06 Priors Court Road roundabout. Cllr Webb had nothing to report.

04/Jan06 Stream/footbridge (Arena Site). Cllr Webb had nothing to report - see planning below.

07/Mar 06 A plan of Highway works will be provided by Cllr Webb, particularly the effect on Hermitage.

Written report attached.

7. **Villagers' Open Forum**

Comments re planning applications to be discussed later in the meeting were noted.

8. Planning

8.1 Cementation Site Development

It is believed that although site clearance/preparation is underway, building works cannot commence until all pre-application conditions have been met. S106 obligations will apply once building works begin.

Questions remain over the layout of the recreational area.

Extreme disappointment was expressed that West Berkshire Council had allowed the provision of changing facilities to be removed from the developer obligations under the s106 agreement. Hermitage Parish Council has been neither consulted nor notified of this matter by West Berks planning officers.

Other s106 questions asked of West Berkshire Council remain unanswered.

Cllr Webb agreed to investigate the matters above.

It was noted that work on site starts as early as 6.00am. **Mrs Willis** will notify the planning/enforcement officer.

8.2 Arena Site Development

04/Jan06 Stream/footbridge. Andrew Reynolds of West Berkshire Council has confirmed that a contribution had been received from the developer of the Arena Seating site, of £10,000. This money will be solely spent on improving the existing land drainage system downstream of the development. A number of improvement works are being looked at and costed.

8.3 Other Planning Matters

06/00527/FUL Land adjacent to Medan and 4 Oare View. No objection but concerned that the overall height/ridge height is excessive.

06/00575/OUTD Land adjacent to Tall Trees, Newbury Road. A site visit and planning meeting was convened for Thursday 30 March.

06/00374/ADV White Horse, Newbury Road. No objection.

9. Correspondence

In circulation

West Berkshire Council – West Berkshire Local Development Framework: West Berkshire Planning Strategy Preferred Options. Pre-Submission Public Participation (Regulation 26) of the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) Regulations 2004

- Joint Minerals and Waste Local Development Framework Core Strategy Issues and Options Regulation 25 Consultation
- The Historic Environment in your Parish
- Case Officer's Reports

05/02921/FULD Post Office, High St

06/00087/HOUSE Ambleside, Yattendon Road

06/00012/FUL & 06/00013/FUL The Grange Yattendon Road

Campaign to Protect Rural England - Fieldwork

Society of Local Council Clerks 'The Clerk'

Community Council for Berkshire – 'Community' Winter 2006

Other

Community Council for Berkshire – Calor Village of the Year. Hermitage will not enter.
North Wessex Downs AONB Forum 2006 ‘Our Villages: Vibrant, Valuable and Vulnerable’
Monday 15 May 9.30am to 4.00pm, Pewsey, Wiltshire. Noted.

West Berkshire Council

– Kennet & Pang Valley Area Forum – Tuesday 18 April, Padworth Village Hall. Noted.

10. Representatives’ Reports

10.1 Village Hall

The process of appointing an architect to design a new hall and prepare a planning submission is underway.

The total estimated cost of constructing a new hall is ca £1million. £750k is covered leaving £250k to fundraise. It is hoped this will be raised mostly through grants on the back of the existing funds in place.

John Lawler and Charles Gilchrist will make a presentation of proposals at the Annual Parish Assembly.

Damage to the village hall in November was reported. A private party was booked and a deposit cheque lodged which bounced. £350 approx of damage took place. The matter was reported to the Commanding Officer at Dennison Barracks who will not accept any responsibility as the booking was made by the wife of the soldier, not the soldier himself.

108 new chairs have been purchased – and the old chairs are for sale.

10.2 Play area (*incl. inspections- no issues reported*).

05/Oct04 Play area/BT fencing. Fencing now in place and no further action required.

The Annual RoSPA inspection will take place in April.

10.3 Footpaths

The stile at the top of Chapel Lane (leading round to cementation site) was reported as being too high. This will be added to the list of requests for replacement with kissing gates.

10.4 Downland Youth Network

Have now set up 4 youth clubs, having helped them to establish they are now self-supporting. Youth consultation is underway.

£20,000 received from Vodafone to support the website.

Now seeking to appoint a Rural Youth Worker.

10.5 Hermitage Primary School

The re-location of the pre-school to the Primary School site will not be going ahead.

£1.1million has been allocated for the new classrooms (to provide 7 in total) including developer funding. Works will start in November 2006 to finish late summer 2007.

11. Burial Ground

It was agreed to remove the rubbish bins from the burial ground. A notice will be purchased and displayed asking people to take their rubbish home.

Plans to make provision for ashes plots, unconsecrated ground and children’s plots were discussed and will be considered by **Dr Lawler**.

12. Any Other Business

Advance notification of the resignation of Mr Overeynder was sadly received (effective May 2006).

Two cars parked outside the Fox Inn on the Yattendon Road for several weeks were noted. Discussion re lorries using Hermitage as a route to Tidmarsh was again discussed.

Date of next meetings

Date for Annual Parish Assembly – Thursday 20 April 2006.

The next meeting will be the Annual Meeting of Hermitage Parish Council on:

Thursday 18 May 2006 at 7.45pm in the Adelaide Room, Holy Trinity Church

There being no further business the chairman closed the meeting at 9.39pm.

*Lynne Riordan
Clerk, Hermitage Parish Council*

WEST BERKSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILLORS REPORT MARCH 2006

1. 'Excellent' inspection report for mental health services. Users of mental health services in West Berkshire benefit from effective service delivery, that is serving most people well, and that has excellent capacity for improvement. That's the main conclusion of the *Commission for social care inspection*, which carried out a review of the Council service in November. It represents almost the highest accolade that could be given. The climate of mature partnership and service choice and quality has led directly to three stars being awarded to West Berkshire social services. Managers are skilled and committed. The Council uses partnership, careful targeting of services, and joint commissioning to good effect.
2. West Berkshire Council is seeking the views of local residents and over 500 organisations on 'Preferred Options' for a new Planning Strategy which will be the lead document in the core strategy and will outline the long term plans for the whole of West Berkshire. The strategy will explain the planning vision for the area and will be the basis for all subsequent documents produced as part of the Local Development Framework. Full details are available on the Councils website www.westberks.gov.uk
3. Drivers across West Berkshire will soon benefit from an investment in new road surfaces of £2.5 million. This represents a three-fold increase on the previous budget for resurfacing, and provide a huge boost to the highways credentials of the district by bringing a significant number of smaller roads up to the quality standards demanded by road users
4. To understand how best to plan and deliver services for the people of West Berkshire, we need to understand the area and communities we are working with, as well as external influences, which play a part in shaping our District. The 2006 West Berkshire District Profile has now been published on the website. It brings together current data and information from a variety of national, regional and local data sources and council and partner strategies and reports. It builds up a picture of the district in a single document, describing key characteristics that make West Berkshire what it is, as well as issues and influences on the social, economic and environmental fabric of the area profile provides an evidence base for developing our understanding of West Berkshire and informing how we provide and can improve services and functions in the future. It sits alongside the Corporate and Community Planning processes.
5. West Berkshire Council has approved an increase in travel token values as follows
Band A from £20 to £30
Band B from £40 to £45
Band C from £60 to £65
6. .

Quentin Webb
Joint Bucklebury Ward Member