

HERMITAGE PARISH COUNCIL UPDATE

Despite the somewhat iffy weather the Platinum Jubilee celebrations drew the crowds. Everything from a giant bouncy castle to a coconut shy – 50 coconuts were knocked down, from plant a seed and watch it grow to paint a crown biscuit and then eat it was on offer. A bran tub, a dog agility run, a model steam engine, petanque, tin can alley, splat the rat and a treasure hunt quiz kept people busy with tea and cake, listening to the delightful voices of the Trinity Tones, when thirst and a sit down called. And all for free.

Thank you to everyone who helped make this such a successful event bringing together all of Hermitage clubs and societies; Horticultural Society, Scouts, pre-school, the primary school governors and Holy Trinity Church. And a big thank you to parish councillors for all their help and agreeing to fund it and to village hall trustees who provided tea and cake.

Members of the Community Speed Watch team have been out with the speed gun and, not surprisingly, clocked quite a few speeding along, despite the fact that it was a weekday afternoon. And one car doing 59 miles an hour! What was surprising though was the number of cars on the road – more than 200 in one hour passed by, and that's just those traveling in the direction being counted.

More dates are scheduled when the team will be out and about. The data collected is passed to Thames Valley Police who will take any necessary action.

As well as the speed gun the sign with the (hopefully) smiley face, currently on a post near the Pinewood Crescent roundabout, will be moved around the village collecting anonymous data. This helps with deciding where best to deploy the speed gun.

A number of planning applications were on the agenda for consideration at the June meeting of HPC. Most were fairly uncontentious but a great deal of time and thought was given to the application from TA Fisher, the company developing the land associated with the Old Farm House. This is the second time the council has looked at these plans - which are on the WBC web site if you want to know more – as modifications against objections need to be resubmitted. One

thing HPC is unhappy with is the number of parking spaces planned, believing that parking on the pavement will be the inevitable result.

Vast amounts of ash wood, the result of the culling that had to take place due to ash die back, have been sawn and split into useful sizes. Unfortunately, there is still more ash needing attention. Nettles along Eling Way were bashed down but they insist on regrowing with the rain and sun weather we had recently but another visit from West Berkshire Countryside Society in August will no doubt sort them out.

Wild flowers are abundant at Furze Hill at the moment and the slopes on the recreation ground are a mass of clover since HPC took the decision to not cut them during the summer months. Hermitage residents are fortunate to have so much green space available.

Building on the informative presentation on climate change given by Professor Sir Brian Hoskins at the Annual Parish Assembly and to encourage residents to care for our green spaces, HPC is creating a working group. Provisionally called the Climate Change and Biodiversity Group it will be open to anyone with just a little time to devote to running projects in Hermitage. Anyone wanting to be part of this group or wanting more information should contact the council, details below.

When you read this you have, hopefully, taken part in the Neighbourhood Development Plan open day and given feedback on the work so far. If you live in Hermitage, the NDP could affect you. It's important people engage with it rather than just complain afterwards when the village develops out of all recognition. The process of getting the plan together is hard work and time consuming but will be worth it if villagers speak out about what they do and don't want to see.

HPC can be contacted through hermitagepc@outlook.com. Information about councillors and meetings, amongst other things, can be found on the web site www.hermitage.org.uk and news is posted regularly on the Hermitage Facebook page. The next meeting is Thursday July 21st and then Thursday August 18th.