

Notes from Beenham Parish Council meeting on 7th October

Public Forum

-The road sign approaching the school, having fallen down, was discussed. It had been reported to WBC last month when it was leaning over which WBC confirmed had been rectified. WBC have been notified that it has now completely fallen over.

-It was reported that the Village Tea Party had raised £200 for MacMillan Cancer Care in September.

Affordable Housing Survey

-The initial results from the survey were presented by Maria Kelly of Connected Communities Berkshire. There were 257 responses to the survey out of 550 sent to residents, which was an exceptionally high percentage (47%). Of these, 68% of respondents were supportive of the suggestion to build between 4~10 affordable homes for those with connections to Beenham. It seems clear that there is a need and demand for such a development in Beenham. The full results of the survey will be presented to parishioners at the public meeting due to be held in the Victory Hall at 2.00pm on Saturday 26th October. Please come along to hear those results and the discussion on the suggested next steps and possible candidate sites should it be decided to proceed with the proposal.

Councillor reports

-Discussion was held regarding the possible introduction of a bye-law over the issue of parking on pavements and footpaths in the village as reported last month. It was decided to firstly contact the Police Community Support Officer to look into the problem of pedestrian safety after no change in parking patterns had been observed since last month's meeting when the PC decided to monitor the situation.

-A report was given on the recent meeting held regarding the future of Beenham Social Club and a possible merger with the Victory Hall. Beenham Club has been in existence since 1920 and has provided social facilities and events for the Community since then. To take the Club forward, it is first necessary to elect a new Committee as the current Members stand down annually at the AGM, this year scheduled for Wednesday 6th November at 8.00pm. The Committee consists entirely of volunteers to run the club, which involves managing the finances..ordering supplies..manning the bar..arranging events..cleaning..maintenance etc..and needs a minimum of 5 and a maximum of 11 volunteers. A flyer has already been delivered to all parishioners to explain the activities of the Club and its management needs. At the same time both the Victory Hall and the new Club Committee hope to investigate a potential merger with the Hall, or establishment of the Club as a charitable organisation from its current not for profit status. This may open up opportunities for the Club to apply for community support funding from various local charitable organisations. There is no intention or desire to close the Club permanently as it is an extremely important Community asset, so please come to the AGM to see if you can offer some voluntary help to keep it active for all Beenham residents in the future.

Planning Matters

- Application 24/01822/FUL. Norbeck, Bath Road, Padworth. Proposed erection of 4 terraced houses following demolition of existing buildings. No objection but a comment that this appears to be possible overdevelopment.

-Applications 24/01819/LBC and 24/01818/HOUSE. Malthouse Farm, Cods Hill. Proposed extension and alteration to existing farmhouse. No objection

-Approved 24/01216/HOUSE. Ararat, Beenham Hill. New Garage. Approval noted.

Parish Councillors

-WBC are introducing a new on-demand bus service to replace the 41/44 service from Monday 21 October 2024 (though this could be subject to change), and the operating area will include Beenham. Details of how it is proposed to operate are below.

Passengers would be expected to book their journey which can be done via the passenger app (which will be available on the apple and play stores), telephone (01635 519650) or by email – communityconnect@westberks.gov.uk. Information will be made available at the following link [West Berkshire Community Connect: On-demand Transport - West Berkshire Council](#). We will also provide information at bus stops, on the bus and around the area.

In addition, there will also be some timetabled services to compliment the on-demand bus service, they will be known as the Community Connect B & C. Passengers will not need to book to use these services.

Community Connect B will run between Thatcham and Calcot Sainsburys on Monday, Wednesday and Friday, with one inbound and one outbound journey. Community Connect C will operate an early morning and late afternoon journey from Aldermaston Wharf between Thatcham Broadway Monday to Friday. They will also start from Monday 21 October 2024 (though this may be subject to change).

The Parish Council has asked for more information regarding (a) what times the service will be available (b) how much notice would need to be given and (c) will the late afternoon Connect C extend if required to Beenham for passengers on the bus or boarding at Aldermaston Wharf.

-Concerns were raised about the acoustic fence on Awberry Farms driveway, which was a requirement of WBC as a condition of approving the wedding venue. Some have reported that the narrow public footpath to the right of the fence is intimidating, particularly for women, due to poor light levels for the length of the fence. PC to contact WBC.

-Aldermaston defibrillator. Still waiting for WBC Streetcare to visit potential sites.

-Mallard Way, Aldermaston Wharf parking issues. The PCSO is being contacted for advice.

-Ragwort infestation. Following last month's meeting where it was agreed to approach neighbouring PC's to discuss joint action, no replies have been received to date.

-There was a discussion about a suggested speed limit of 20mph in the village. WBC do not think that Beenham reaches the criteria for such a blanket limit. It was suggested that they be asked if a 20mph zone in the vicinity of the School could be acceptable.

-WBC are planning to introduce a 3 week cycle of black bin collections. Although the PC understands and agrees with the aim of reduced waste and increased recycling, it notes that any reduced costs should make more money available for other local Community matters.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on Monday November 4th at 7.00pm in the Community Room.

Full details of the Councillors (including email addresses) are on the website at beenham-pc.gov.uk/councillors/.

Your Parish Councillors are:

Graham Bowsher (Chairman) Tel. 07557967575

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District Councillor; Dominic Boeck Dominic.Boeck@westberks.gov.uk

All correspondence to the council should be addressed to the Parish Clerk.

Parish Clerk: Lauren West Tel: 07919 916125 Email: clerk@beenham-pc.gov.uk

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Parish Council website: www.beenham-pc.gov.uk

Beenham Community Website: <https://www.beenhamonline.org/>