Garsington Parish Council

The Monthly Meeting of the Parish Council was held in the Village Hall on Monday 3rd July 2006 commencing at 7.30 pm.

The Chairman, Councillor Godfrey Eden, presided; present were Councillors Paul Bolam, David Baker, Anne Eastwood, John Hieatt, Gurdip Saini and Cliff Shuker with G Russell in attendance. Also present were County Cllr David Turner, District Cllr Ann Tomline and two residents.

1. Apologies for Absence

All members of the Council were present.

2 Public Participation

a. Monica Waud said that she was grateful that the Council had been able to delay discussion of PO6/W0524 Garsington Manor so that residents would have the chance of commenting on the proposal. She explained that from her point of view she would prefer that the proposed variation of condition 8 of planning permission P01/N0620 to omit the requirement to raise and lower the acoustic screens between rehearsals and performances was not allowed and that the status quo should continue.

b. Basil Townsend said that he thought that the recent traffic calming measures had been totally ineffective and he wished that the County Council would instead spend its money on road repairs which, in his view, should have greater priority. County Cllr David Turner said that when the post-scheme speed checks and traffic analysis is carried out it would be possible to measure the impact of the traffic calming measures. He had been told by other residents that there had been a noticeable benefit.

The Chairman said that traffic surveys on the number of vehicles and their speeds are being made at the moment and that the results will be known soon.

3 Declarations of Interest

Both the Chairman and Vice-Chairman declared personal and prejudicial interests in the matter of PO6/W0524 Garsington Manor. The Chairman was at one time employed by the artist in residence and the Vice-Chairman provides bed & breakfast accommodation for members of the opera company.

4 Minutes of the Meeting held on 5th June 2006

The minutes were approved and signed as a true record after ‘March’ was inserted instead of ‘May’ in Minute 6(a) on page 171.

5 Matters Arising from the Minutes

a. The broken manhole cover in Clinkards Hill has been reported to Mike Dickerson, the area Highways inspector from OCC. The Clerk will follow this up to see what action has been taken.

b. Cllr Shuker has repaired the retaining wall for the play grade safety bark in the play area.

c. Cllr Shuker attended the annual meeting of the Oxfordshire Association of local councils and brought back copies of the Association’s report and accounts and some information about regional assemblies which will be circulated in this month’s folder. It is likely that the OALC will be moving its offices to Crowmarsh in the near future.

d. The Chairman has responded to the draft SE Area Plan emphasising the Parish Council’s total opposition to development south of Grenoble Road.

6 County Councillor’s Report

County Cllr David Turner has asked Peter Ronald to investigate the provision of 30 mph repeater signs and also painted 30 mph roundels on the surface of the roads. This is currently being considered.

Cllr Turner said that he had spoken to Highways about the situation regarding the maintenance of roadside grass. This is the responsibility of different agencies and in some cases – outside Rookery House, for example – the arrangements are quite complex. Cllr Turner asked if the Parish could take over the management of this maintenance itself in return for further payments from the County. This will be considered again for the 2007 season.

Cllr Turner said the review of bus services affecting Garsington would take place early in 2007 with the consultation period commencing this autumn. It was suggested that reference to this should appear in the Newsletter.

Cllr Hieatt said that he was very concerned about road safety on Clinkards Hill and would like there to be double yellow lines. The Chairman said that this idea had been proposed in previous years but turned down by the Highways officers.

7 District Councillor’s Report

Clerk has asked District Council for info on numbers of Garsington residents using the green waste service but the information has not yet been supplied.

The Council was asked by Cllr Ann Tomline to discuss the idea of having roundabouts ‘sponsored’ in order to move the cost of their maintenance away from the Council Tax payer. Although the members of the Council were fairly evenly divided (4-3 in favour) as to whether in principle this is a good idea or not, there was general agreement that even if sponsorship does go ahead the size of the advertisements should be restricted and their content limited to a simple statement or corporate logo. Any message or information, such as a telephone number, which might cause drivers to be distracted from the safe driving of their vehicles, should not be allowed. These comments applied to all roundabouts. Regardless of whether they are in a rural or urban location, road safety at the roundabouts should be the primary concern.

Cllr Mrs Tomline commented that there are a lot of sites in Garsington which should be the subject of action by planning enforcement officers but this is not happening.

8 Finance

Balances and cheques for signature:

The Council’s bank balances were as follows:

Barclays Current Account at 30th June £9,539.66

Barclays Community Account at 9th June £50.27

Bank of Ireland at 14th June £120,561.75 (interest earned £316.26)

Advertising receipts this month total £335

The grass verge maintenance grant for 2006 has been confirmed by County as £329.

The following cheques were approved for signature:

ColourPlus (June Newsletter) £764.82

G Russell - Salary £315.90

Admin £76.95

Barclays Bank is offering the Parish Council a Business Barclaycard and the Council will consider whether this is worth having or not.

The Clerk reported that he has received an appeal from Sobell House Hospice Charity. This is in addition to the appeal from Berinsfield for a contribution to the campaign against car crime which was circulated after the last Council meeting.

The Council has already made a commitment to St Mary’s Church restoration of another £5,000 this year and the Clerk was asked to calculate if there would be anything left in the S137 payments budget after this amount had been paid.

The Council approved the 2006 Annual Return and Statement of Assurance which was signed by the Chairman. The accounts and returns will now be submitted to the Internal Auditor prior to being advertised as available for inspection by local electors and submission for final audit.

9 Planning

a. Applications

(Cllrs Bolam and Eden left the room while the following matter was discussed)

PO6/W0524 Garsington Manor.

Variation of condition 8 of planning permission P01/N0620 to omit requirement to raise and lower acoustic screens between rehearsals and performances

The Council considered that the applicant had provided no reasons that would justify an alteration from the original decision to impose this condition and therefore wishes the status to be maintained.

P06/W0545 106 Wheatley Road

Conversion of remainder of rear annexe to provide additional living accommodation

The Council recommended that this application be refused since it would result in overdevelopment of a site which occupies a prominent position on the edge of the village in the area of the green belt.

b. The Council noted the following decisions.

PO6/W0425/LB & PO6/W0426 Seven Bells Cottage, 93 South End Garsington
Demolition of existing conservatory, construction of double glazed entrance link single storey bedroom extension to existing dwelling

Planning permission and Listed Building consent granted 12th June

P06/W0528 (Agricultural Notification) Lower Farm, Watlington Road

Erection of steel frame portal building

Planning consent not required. Decision dated 27th June

P03/W0624 Retrospective Listed Building consent 18, The Green

Creation of secure storage area in existing building by installation of internal stud partition wall and new ceiling above. Alterations to gable end including removal of 2 light sash window and installation of new 3 light casement window. Listed Building consent granted 9th June.

P06/W0031, Field off Oxford Road Change of use of land from unused agricultural to public amenity use (open green space)

Planning consent granted 30th June 2006.

Cllr Mrs Tomline said that she had made a complaint to the Head of Planning about the length of time that has been taken for this application to be determined.

10 Correspondence to Chairman and Clerk

a. The Council noted the ‘No time to waste’ road shows at Thame and Wallingford and the Oxford Inspires special events forum at Crowmarsh, Monday 17th July but no-one was able to attend these meetings.

b. Minerals and Waste issue; the consultation paper and response form have been received and will be reviewed by the Chairman. The consultation period ends on 11th August.

c. Cllr Shuker will attend the County Council meeting with Town & Parish Councils on Thursday 27th July at Guildhall, Abingdon. The Clerk will also attend if possible.

e. The Chairman said that he would try to attend the City of Oxford CPRE AGM on Friday 30th July at Lady Margaret Hall commencing at 6.00 pm

d. The Chairman has been approached by a relative of someone buried in Garsington burial ground who said that she would like to place a memorial bench there. This was approved.

11 Land off Oxford Road

The change of use approval had been received and the Clerk has arranged an informal meeting with Veronica Taylor, SODC assistant grants officer, for Thursday, 6th July. The next grant application cut off date is the end of July and the application will be filed by this deadline. The project will be presented as meeting as many of the District Council’s strategic objectives as possible.

Cllrs Shuker and Baker had visited a project at Woodstock where Nicholsons Nurseries had been involved and had been impressed with the work done, which had been partly supported by a grant from TOE (Trust for Oxfordshire's Environment).

It was agreed that Nicholsons should be told that they are the Council’s preferred contractor in order to expedite matters when the grant is approved.

12 Village Maintenance

Cllr Baker supplied the Clerk with information about where the City Council obtained its supply of play grade safety bark. A delivery will be ordered urgently.

The Chairman had received a letter complaining about poor grass maintenance by Rookery House. This matter had been covered earlier in the meeting with County Cllr David Turner.

Countryside access grants: the completion of the expression of interest form, due for return by the end of July, is being dealt with by the Garsington Society.

13 Police/Parish Council liaison

Cllr John Hieatt had written to Sergeant Jubb at Henley Police Station and will attend the first Neighbourhood Action Group public meeting at Regal Centre, Wallingford, on Wednesday, 12th July.