

Old Marston Parish Council

Annual Report - 1st April 2017 - 31st March 2018



John Batey



Duncan Hatfield



Nils Bartleet



Michael Cadd



Peter Cox



Tony Greenfield



Patricia Hall



Charlie Haynes



Barry Lewis



Michael O'Keefe



Anjie Tiwari



Peter Williams



Tim Cann
Clerk & RFO



Oxford City Councillor
Mary Clarkson



Oxford County Councillor
Mark Lygo



Oxford City Councillor
Michael Haines

Old Marston Parish Council

Parish Councillors

Mr J. Batey – (Chairman) Resigned as Chairman January 2018
Mr D. Hatfield – (Vice-Chairman) Elected Chairman January 2018
Mr T. Greenfield – Elected Vice-Chairman January 2018
Mr N. Bartleet
Mr M. Cadd
Mr P. Cox
Ms P. Hall
Mr B. Lewis
Mr C. Haynes
Mr M. O’Keefe
Ms A. Tiwari
Mr P. Williams

Oxford City Councillors

Mrs. M. Clarkson
Mr. M. Haines

Oxfordshire County Councillor

Mr. M. Lygo

Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer

Mr T.L. Cann

Internal Auditor

Mr R. James. FMAAT ATT

External Auditor

Moore Stephens

Objectives

- To represent the local community's interests.
- To support local organisations and activities.
- To help provide amenities, such as allotments, burial grounds, recreation grounds etc. and
- To help look after all aspects of the Parish of Old Marston.

Old Marston Parish Council

Introduction

The Council is now into its final year of its four year term. The Council met eleven times between May 2017 and April 2018 and there was an 86% attendance of Councillors, you can see a breakdown of attendances later in this report.

In January John Batey stood down as chairman of the council, due to health reasons, and Duncan Hatfield, the vice-chairman, was elected as the new chairman with Tony Greenfield being elected as vice-chairman until the elections in May.

There were also 16 committee meetings during the year and an 82% attendance of Councillors to these.

Our County Councillor and City Councillors attend meeting when possible but otherwise are always on hand to give advice and assistance to the Council when needed.

The Parish Council reviewed and commented on 29 planning applications during the year, however, although the Parish Council can make recommendations the final decision is made by the Oxford City Council who are the planning authority.

The Parish Council continues to strive to help improve, if not resolve, the parking situation throughout the parish. However, with the County Council experiencing drastic budget cuts from central Government any resolution will be a slow, ongoing process.

The Parish Council maintains good contact with our Community Police as it sees the security and well-being of our Community as especially important. However, like the County Council, they are also experiencing challenging times with budget cuts.

The Parish Council values the excellent work done by all the organisations within the parish. The Parish Council gives financial assistance, wherever possible, to local organisations to enable them to continue their work in providing services and activities to the parishioners.

Old Marston Parish Council

The Parish Council encourages more residents to attend the monthly Council meetings, which are open to the public and the media. The Council meeting allows for public participation and would welcome a greater level of public participation. The Parish Council encourages residents to review the Parish Council noticeboards and website where the minutes of all meetings are published along with other Parish Council information.

The Parish Council strives to be a competent Council, qualified Clerk, General Power of Competence and is working towards Quality Status.

Chairman's Report

As we look forward to the coming administrative year so we shall look back at the events of the past twelve months.

Pavilion

Since the Roy Garner Pavilion was erected last year, a lot of work has been done to get it ready and up to standard, dealing with snagging issues, water and electricity supply, and various other issues as they have arisen. The pavilion is now in regular use by Marston Saints and we are looking at how to develop it for future use. The pavilion was officially opened in November by former Marston Saints and England footballer Martin Keown and former parish clerk Roy Garner, who had faithfully set aside money each year that allowed us to purchase and install the pavilion debt-free.

Elsfield Road Path

After funding has been made available, the clerk has asked the city council works department to extend the path from the cemetery to Marsh Lane which will make it safer for members of public to walk along Elsfield Road. We expect the work to be done late Spring or early Summer.

Swan School

We attended an exhibition regarding the proposed school and have raised concerns with the planners and developers. There are concerns about the effects on traffic, parking in residential areas, loss of recreational space for St Nicholas Primary School, increase in pollution and flooding, effects on water and sewage, and a road crossing the cycle track putting many pupils of Cherwell School at risk. Since many of the target group would be coming from Barton, would it not be better to

Old Marston Parish Council

have it built there? Regardless of our concerns it seems the school will be built.

Access to Headington

The Access to Headington Scheme was postponed but is now being undertaken. Concerns have been raised and largely ignored. There are concerns that it may increase traffic congestion in the parish whilst ignoring the state of the roads, especially Cherwell Drive, which is in urgent need of repair. Many of the trees have been cut down as well.

Recreational Grounds and Cemetery

With the installation of the pavilion, the play equipment was removed from Boult's Lane recreational ground. As it no longer met current standards, we are looking to install some new equipment. Several members of the public have asked us about this. We regularly check the equipment in Mortimer Hall recreational ground to ensure it is safe and in good working order. We were disappointed when our equipment was stolen from the shed at the cemetery but now have a local contractor who is now undertaking the maintenance.

OxClean

Our annual litter-pick around Old Marston was delayed this year due to the weather and we also had fewer volunteers as a result. However, a large amount of litter and fly tipping was collected and removed. Thank you to all those who volunteered. Members of public have thanked us for our efforts and for the difference it makes to the environment.

Development Near Elsfield

Earlier in 2017 we were made aware that there could be a possible development on the green belt land near Elsfield and the Barton development. We were then approached by Christ Church College who own the land to confirm that they wished to develop the land. They arranged a meeting with community and the developers Dorchester. 115 persons attended the public meeting voicing their concerns. Many were concerned about the location of the development and wondered if the properties would be bought up by people not from Oxford and thus would not benefit Oxford. The developers did say that if approved then they would consider building the Swan School within the development.

Fireworks

There was an excellent bonfire and fireworks display held at the Red Lion Pub in November which was attended by a large number of local residents. The parish council paid for the fireworks for the benefit of the local community.

Old Marston Parish Council

Fête

There was a family fun day at the Victoria Arms. Although a great event, it seemed more aimed at people outside the parish and little encouragement was given to local people to participate. The parish council gave a grant towards the event. Another fête is being planned for 23rd June 2018 and members of the parish council and St Nicholas Parish Church are involved in the planning and provision of activities.

GDPR

Government legislation is changing the way data and personal information is stored and used. Both the clerk and chairman have had training in how to handle this. We are reviewing all our data to ensure that it complies with the new legislation and is kept secure. A lot of what the council does is already compliant and we will continue to ensure everything is compliant.

Committees

We are looking at the structure and scope of powers and responsibilities of the committees and when they will meet. This will bring more structure to parish council business and make it easier for members of the public to know when to attend.

New Vicar

In May we welcomed our new vicar Skye Denno and her family. The Chairman and Vice-Chairman attended her inauguration.

Underpass

A group of local residents have come together to raise funds and to organise the repainting of the underpass under Marston Ferry Road. The parish council have also given a grant towards the project. The pupils of St Nicholas Primary School are involved in helping to design the new look underpass. We look forward to seeing the finished project.

Traffic and Parking

Traffic is an on-going issue in Marston as is parking in residential areas, especially during school terms. We will continue to monitor and raise our concerns.

Local Elections

As well as the city council elections, there was also an election for the parish council. John Batey decided not to stand again. We would like to thank him for all his commitment to the council and the parish, especially for all his hard work in helping to get the pavilion up and running and wish him all the best for the future. We are sorry to lose Barry but also welcome our new members onto the parish council.

Old Marston Parish Council

Planning

We are a statutory consultee for all planning applications in the parish and we will continue to monitor all local planning in the interests of the local community. We were disappointed that the former Jack Russell will no longer be a community asset.

Boundary Review

Oxford's parish councils were invited to a meeting with the Boundary Commission. They are reviewing the ward and division boundaries in Oxford, which could be changed by 2020 local elections. The chair and vice-chair attended. The commission does not have the power to amend the parish boundaries - that decision lies with the district council; however it was felt that we should review the parish boundaries in consultation with local residents.

Information

The parish council has a website as well as a Facebook and Twitter site. We are looking for new sites for a public noticeboard to increase awareness of local activities and parish council business.

Old Marston Parish Council

Administration Report (including finances)

The budget is an important document for the Council, it not only shows what is expected to be spent but gives an indication as to how much money is needed for the council to operate through the year. The Responsible Financial Officer pulls the budget together, reviewing past expenditures on various items, including items the council have agreed they want to achieve as well as looking at best practice, value for money and obviously their statutory duties.

However, it is the council who are responsible for agreeing the budget and ensuring that it is reviewed on a regular basis throughout the year. The council should also, if possible, look to have a certain amount of reserves.

Reserves are also important as it helps even out the cash flows as well as cushion the impact of unexpected events or emergencies.

Income Explained

Precept: This is the figure which is collected from every household through the Council tax.

Grant: The Oxford City Council gives the Parish Council a grant to assist in the maintenance of public areas owned by the Parish Council which are open to everyone, regardless of whether they are parishioners or not. This includes the two recreation grounds, allotments and cemetery.

Central Government Grant: When the boundary changes were done back in the 1990's some local councils gained while others lost out so to soften the blow central government gave those who lost out a grant. This grant has been decreasing by approximately 30% each year and will stop in 2020.

CiL Money: For every new build within the parish the developers pay a Community Infrastructure Levy, of which a percentage goes to the Parish Council.

Cemetery Income: Self-explanatory really, this is the fee collected for burials, headstones, etc.

VAT Returns: The Parish Council can reclaim the VAT paid on non-business activities such as maintaining the recreation grounds.

Old Marston Parish Council

Wayleaves: Is the consent in writing that allows utility companies to carry out work on privately-owned land. It is a written legal agreement between the company and the land/property owner that grants access to install, maintain or repair network equipment.

Rent: A charge for use of Parish Council land.

Others: Various activities throughout the year for example this year the cemetery store was broken into and all the equipment was stolen. There was therefore an insurance claim made which resulted in the council getting £4,734.

Income 2017/18

	£
Precept	53,998.85
Grant	10,000.00
Central Government Grant	758.28
CIL Money	2,029.66
Cemetery Income	2,770.00
VAT Returns	28,392.36
Wayleaves	43.28
Rents	510.05
Others	7,146.20
TOTAL INCOME	£105,648.68

Old Marston Parish Council

Expenditure v Budget 2017/18

	Budget	Actual
Allotments	500.00	00.00
Cemetery	2,000.00	414.99
Recreation Grounds	6,700.00	2,336.15
Pavilion Maintenance	100.00	2,177.04
Grants (s.137)	7,000.00	6,617.15
Administration (Salary, stationery etc.)	19,850.00	18,576.85
Insurance	3,500.00	4,735.75
Contractors		
Recreation Grounds	3,250.00	3,666.80
Cemetery	2,400.00	2,035.80
Pest Control	2,500.00	2,270.40
Trees	1,000.00	6,984.00
Verti-draining	3,000.00	3,022.44
Audit Fees (External & Internal)	1,000.00	1,059.00
Memberships (OALC, SLCC, ICCM, etc.)	1,200.00	946.62
New Projects (Elsfield Road Footpath)	5,000.00	00.00
Chairman's Expenses	1,000.00	318.62
Miscellaneous		5,482.67
TOTAL	£63,000.00	£60,644.28
Capital Expenditure - Roy Garner Pavilion		£145,533.89

Old Marston Parish Council

Overview

Allotments: The Parish Council have a legal obligation to provide allotments. The allotment site in Mill Lane is owned by Old Marston Parish Council and is run on a day-to-day basis by the Old Marston Mill Lane Allotments Association (OMMLAA).

Cemetery: This covers the 'L' shaped land at the back of the cemetery which the Council owns. It has been maintained on a voluntary basis with the Council paying for the maintenance costs, until the store was broken into and all the machinery stolen. Since then, the contractor, BGG, kindly agreed to keep up the maintenance while doing the cemetery until the council had decided whether to replace any machinery.

Recreation Grounds: These are the Mortimer Hall Recreation Ground, Boults Lane Recreation Ground and the field in Mill Lane, (on the right of the entrance to the Victoria Arms drive) which although not owned by the Council it is maintained by the Council for local children to play.

Pavilion Alarm: In the past this was the annual servicing of the old pavilion alarm system. However, as this is now the Roy Garner Pavilion alarm.

Roy Garner Pavilion: This is to replace the old pavilion which was not fit for purpose. It is now in situ and being used by Marston Saints FC, it is also where the Council have their committee meetings.

Grant (s.137): This covers the Firework display at the Red Lion and the Parish Fete at the Victoria Arms as well as grants the Council gives to local organisations to assist them in carrying out the work they do. This year the recipients were: - Aspire Oxford (to provide a bus service to residents of Bradlands), OXSRAD, Old Marston Mill Lane Allotment Association (OMMLAA), Old Marston Over 50's, Friends of St Nicholas School (FOSNS), 43rd Scout Group, St Nicholas School Garden Club, Marston Times, St Nicholas Society of Bell Ringers, Oxfordshire Association for the Blind, St Nicholas Church Junior Choir, Marston Village Hall (Mortimer Hall) and the Mortimer Hall Pre-school.

Administration: This covers everything which involves the running of the Council, employing the Clerk; his pay, tax, National Insurance and Pension plus any stationery, ink, paper, postage, etc. It also covers the running of the website, hardware or software and training.

Old Marston Parish Council

Insurance: By law the Parish Council has to have certain insurance cover in place and it would be very short sighted of the Council if it did not protect itself and its property from theft or damage.

Contractors: The Council has several contractors who ensure pests such as moles do not infest the recreation grounds or cemetery, as well as keeping mowed the Mortimer Hall Recreation Ground, Boults Lane Recreation Ground, Victoria Arms field and Cemetery. They also litter pick both of the recreation grounds.

Audit Fees: By law the Council has to have an internal auditor as well as an external auditor, so as to ensure public money is correctly spent and appropriate records are kept. Although called an 'Internal Auditor' they are not connected to the Council in any way.

Membership: The Council are members of various organisations so as to assist them in the running of the Council by providing the latest information, training courses etc. These include the OALC (Oxfordshire Association of Local Councils), ICCM (Institute of Cemetery & Crematorium Management), Oxfordshire Green Belt. The Clerk is a member of the SLCC (Society of Local Council Clerks).

General Maintenance: This is a contingency and used for emergencies such as tree damage etc.

Chairman's Expenses: The Chairman to the Parish Council is the public figure of the Council; he attends functions where they represent the Council. Out of pocket expenses are available, such as travel costs to and from functions, any stationery they may use while carry out the role as chairman.

2017/18 Overspends Explained

Pavilion Maintenance: £828.88 – Originally this was just for the servicing of the alarm system on the old pavilion. However, with the old pavilion now out of use this has switched to the Roy Garner Pavilion. There has been a number of teething problems with the fire alarm system which hopefully have now been resolved.

Insurance: £1,235.75 – this is due to the fact that this year the new pavilion, the Roy Garner Pavilion, was added to the policy. However, in a way this is misleading as we have had £594.53 refund from the insurance company as the cover of the new building was only for part of the year.

Old Marston Parish Council

Recreation Ground: £164.20 – This was due to the fact that an invoice for last year, (August 2016) for £522.60 was mislaid and so was paid in this year's accounts.

Verti-Draining: £22.44 – The Council paid a great deal of money having a drainage system installed under the Boults Lane Recreation Ground so as to ensure it does not flood. Work is done each year so as to ensure the drainage system works effectively. There was a slight increase in the price of fertilisers resulting in the slight overspend. It should be noted that the Parish Council agree to keep the field to the standard of a recreation ground. If Marston Saints FC want any additional ground work done so as to keep the pitch area to the standard of a football pitch then they are responsible for any additional cost.

Audit Fees: £59.00 – As you may remember from last year's annual report there were a few queries from the external auditor. This resulted in them making additional charges.

Miscellaneous: These are items which were not been budgeted for.

This year it has been:-

6 x Chairs	£72.00
Defibrillator	£1,812.00
Hall Rent	£242.00
Burial Plot Refund	£2,770.00
Refund to OMCT	£568.67
Sundry Expenses	£18.00
TOTAL	£5,482.67

Overall, there was an under spend of £2,355.72 which, considering there were £5,482.67 of unbudgeted items, is relatively good achievement.

Old Marston Parish Council

Roy Garner Pavilion Expenditure

	Actual
Oxford City Council (Building Control)	709.00
Storage	1,560.00
Security Lights & Play Fence Removal	760.00
Relocation & assemble	134,742.00
Structural Engineer	990.00
Project Manager	250.00
Shutter Repairs	402.00
Bat & Bird Boxes	123.91
Intruder Alarm Installation	1,836.00
Replace Wooden Fence	1,250.00
Professional Clean internally	1,176.00
Install Fire Alarm System	600.00
Install Fire Extinguishers	417.00
Pavilion Signs	712.44
General Replacements & Repairs	604.94
TOTAL	£145,533.89

The Roy Garner Pavilion is up and running!
There are still things to do:-

- Demolish of the old building, however, this cannot happen until the electric meter has been moved. SSE are quoting £15,950 plus VAT to move the meter into the new building which the Council felt a little excessive, so it is being looked at leaving it where it is and boxing it in its own housing.
- An asbestos survey is needed but the building needs to be empty which includes the electric meter.
- Resurfacing of the area but again this can't happen until the building has been demolished.

However, as this project was classified as a 'non business' activity the council was able to reclaim the VAT, so the actual spend for this year was £139,286.70.

Which, considering the council was originally being quoted in excess of £850,000, this must be seen as a very prudent move by the council.

Old Marston Parish Council

End of Year Audit

The end of year audit has been completed by the external auditor. Moore Stephens have certified that they have completed their review of Sections 1 and 2 of the signed off the accounts advising that 'Our review of Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return, in our opinion the information in Sections 1 and 2 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return is in accordance with Proper Practices and no other matters have come to our attention giving cause for concern that relevant legislation and regulatory requirements have not been met.

Old Marston Parish Council

2017-18 Councillors

John Batey – Chairman of the Council (Resigned December 2017)

Committees: Pavilion, Planning, Staffing & Standards (Vice-chairman), Parish Forum representative. Contact: 47 Horseman Close, Old Marston.

Duncan Hatfield – Vice-Chairman of the Council (Elected Chairman January - April 2018)

Committees: Standards & Staffing, Webmaster, Old Marston Charities Trust.

Contact: 40 Coniston Avenue, Headington, Oxford OX3 0AN Mobile 07706998224 Email duncan@oldmarston-pc.gov.uk

Tony Greenfield – Mortimer Hall, NAG & Parish Forum

Representative. (Elected Vice-Chairman January – April 2018)

Committees: Recreation Grounds & Cemetery (Chairman), Pavilion.

Contact: 9 Raymund Road, Old Marston, Oxford OX3 0SW

Telephone 01865 794 744

Mobile 07876205200

Email anthony.j.greenfield@gmail.com

Nils Bartleet – Public Transport.

Committees: Finance, Internal Reconciliation Review.

Contact: 37 Salford Road, Old Marston, Oxford OX3 0RY

Telephone 01865 722 773

Michael Cadd – OXSRAD Representative.

Committees: Pavilion (Chairman), Planning (Chairman), Finance, Recreation Grounds & Cemetery.

Contact: 5 Oxford Road, Old Marston, Oxford OX3 0PQ

Telephone 01865 972 197

Peter Cox – Committees: Recreation Grounds & Cemetery, Standards & Staffing. Contact: 17 Oxford Road, Old Marston, Oxford OX3 0PQ

Telephone 01865 256 053

Pat Hall – Committees: Planning, Finance (Chairman), Recreation Grounds & Cemetery, Staffing & Standards.

Contact: 87 Cherwell Drive, Old Marston OX3 0ND

Telephone 01865 241 696 Mobile 07827495867

Email patihall@aol.com

Old Marston Parish Council

Council Meetings 2017/18

	Total	Meetings	
Councillor	Meetings	Attended	Percentage
Nils Bartleet	11	10	91%
John Batey	11	8	73%
Michael Cadd	11	11	100%
Peter Cox	11	10	91%
Tony Greenfield	11	11	100%
Patricia Hall	11	10	91%
Duncan Hatfield	11	11	100%
Charlie Haynes	11	1	9%
Barrie Lewis	11	11	100%
Michael O'Keefe	11	11	100%
Angie Tiwari	11	11	100%
Peter Williams	11	9	82%
Overall Attendance			86%

Committee Meetings

	Number of	Total		
Councillor	Committees	Meetings	Attended	Percentage
Nils Bartleet	1	4	1	25%
John Batey	3	8	7	88%
Michael Cadd	4	15	15	100%
Peter Cox	2	6	6	100%
Tony Greenfield	2	12	9	75%
Patricia Hall	4	11	11	100%
Duncan Hatfield	1	1	0	0%
Charlie Haynes	0	0	0	N/A
Barrie Lewis	3	15	12	80%
Michael O'Keefe	1	6	3	50%
Angie Tiwari	2	5	3	60%
Peter Williams	1	1	1	100%

Old Marston Parish Council

Looking forward to next year

2018/19 Budget

Allotments	1,000.00
Cemetery	200.00
Recreation Grounds	5,000.00
Pavilion	100.00
Roy Garner Pavilion	5,000.00
Grants s.137	4,000.00
Grants s.137	3,000.00
Administration Clerk	18,750.00
Stationery	800.00
Soft/Hardware	800.00
Webmaster	500.00
Legal Advice	250.00
Council Training	1,500.00
Insurance	3,500.00
Contracts	
Pest Control	2,500.00
Recreation Grounds	3,750.00
Cemetery	3,500.00
Tree Maintenance	500.00
Verti-draining	4,750.00
Audit Fees External & Internal	1,125.00
Memberships	1,225.00
Maintenance Work	4,000.00
New Projects (Elsfield Road Footpath)	5,000.00
Chairman's Expenses	1,000.00
TOTAL	70,950.00

Old Marston Parish Council

Old Marston Parish Councils Action Plan for 2018/19

Roy Garner Pavilion:

The new pavilion is now complete and Marston Saints Football Club have occupancy. However, there is still work to be done to complete the project. The intention this year is to:

- Resolve the electric meter situation whether to move it to the new building or retain in some form on old site
- Demolish the old building so as to increase the parking facilities,
- Resurface the parking area and bay
- Install Cycle Rack(s)

Elsfield Road Footpath:

Background: The footpath going down Elsfield Road stops at the cemetery gates which has always made it difficult for walkers especially with pushchairs etc. The intention this year is to:

- Extend the footpath from the Cemetery gate all along joining up with the footpath on the ring road in Marsh Lane,
- A quotation has been received and Council resolved to use CIL money, there has also been £5,000 set aside in the last two years' budget so there should be the funds available.

Play Equipment in Boults Lane:

Background: The old play equipment had to be removed as it was located where the new pavilion is to be located. As it was very old it did not meet current safety standards and so once removed could not be re-used. The Council intend to:

- Seek the views of parishioners, including local children, for what play equipment they would like to see,
- Endeavour to obtain grants covering at least the majority of the cost.

The Council to be a quality awarded council:

- To introduce the necessary policies and procedures to meet the criteria and achieve Foundation and/or Quality Award
- To ensure these standards are the norm

Ongoing activities:

Background: Old Marston Parish Council is fortunate to own a number of facilities such as Mortimer Hall Recreation Ground, Boults Lane Recreation Ground and Mill Lane Allotments, although the allotments are managed on a

Old Marston Parish Council

day-to-day basis by the allotment association on behalf of the Council. However, with this fortitude is also the burden of upkeep and maintenance. The intension this year is to:

- Ensure the recreation grounds and cemetery are maintained to a high standard, grass cut and edges strimmed regularly - this is achieved by employing a contractor,
- An annual safety check is performed on all play equipment and any faults actioned - this is achieved by having a contract to ensure done,
- As well as annual safety checks a weekly check is done so as to ensure ongoing safety of the Councils equipment - the chairman of the appropriate committee checks weekly and gives a report at meetings,
- All trees on Council land are checked at least on a biannual basis and any work needed is actioned - the Clerk gets a tree survey done.

As a consultee by statute, the Parish Council will continue to view planning applications in the Parish and comment accordingly with the best interest of the Community as a whole.

It will also monitor neighbouring developments to ensure the infrastructure, integrity and quality of life within the Community of the Parish of Old Marston is not compromised.

To act as guardians of the Conservation area.

To seek where possible the opinions of Parishioners concerning issues relating to the Parish.

Old Marston Parish Council

