

Report on Avebury Parish Council's negotiations with the National Trust towards extended opening hours of the Coach House public toilets:

Avebury Parish Council's discussions with the National Trust continue in the hope of finding a way to extend the opening hours of the toilets in the High Street to meet the reasonable expectations of visitors to Avebury, which is an open access component of the World Heritage Site.

We began by considering a partnership proposal enabling Avebury Parish Council and others to cover part of the National Trust's costs and management of the extended hours. Now the National Trust appears to prefer a commercial relationship under which the parish council would run the facility as a whole. Avebury Parish Council has consulted a service provider and it is clear that the parish council would on its own be unable to meet the cost of running the toilets. Furthermore, there is the question of principle: is it correct for ratepayers to fund in its entirety the cost of running a facility owned by a charity that has a significant local income stream largely derived from visitors living outside the parish? In parallel Avebury Parish Council has been opening lines to other stakeholders including Wiltshire Council and the World Heritage Site, who have expressed interest in the outcome of discussions with the National Trust.

In the circumstances Avebury Parish Council would be grateful for an extension to the £1,000 grant allocated by Marlborough Area Board. We believe that there is prospect of discussions with the Trust reaching a workable outcome, in particular if we can return to the partnership proposal with which we began.

*Avebury Parish Council  
May 2017*