

## The Commemorative Stone in Berry Close

The Parish Council decided that the generous bequest of Berry Close to the village should be marked by a permanent structure. The rural nature of the field determined that it should be something in keeping so, after many suggestions and abortive attempts at finding something, it was fortuitous that the Banbury Flood Alleviation Scheme was under construction! Having received an invitation to have a look at what was going on and not to miss an opportunity I soon spotted piles of huge rocks and surely we would be able to find something in there that would be just what we were looking for.

After a chat with Geoff Jones we returned to the site and as we disembarked from the 4x4 in our hi-vis waistcoats and hard hats it was almost the first large rock we saw but we carried on looking, as you do, thinking there will be something better but eventually went back to our first choice! How were we going to get this 2 ½ ton piece of local rock back to Chacombe let alone erect it?



The Environment Agency kindly offered to deliver it. It was washed and loaded and delivered to the field where it lay for several years. It was eventually erected in 2015 by Robert and Richard Tustian but before that, as a condition of the Planning Permission, there needed to be some archaeological excavation of the site and a Community Dig was led by Geoff Jones and Polyolbion Archaeology. More about the archaeology of Berry Close can be found on this website.

The scale of the excavation was very appropriate for the size of the hole needed to accommodate this huge stone!



There was now another delay before the plaque was purchased and finally attached to the stone in 2017 by Charlie Johnson of DC Building Services. Sometimes the wheels of democracy move very slowly.

We are very grateful to all the people and organisations who gave so willingly of their time and resources to make the commemorative stone and it's plaque an appropriate reminder of the generous gift from Tim and Eileen Bennett. Hopefully it will be there for many years to come.

Let the action begin: a pictorial version of how it happened.





























