

The Mouthpiece

Culham's Newsletter

June 2018



For your diary:

Sun June 3rd: 11:00 – Parish Communion, St Paul's

Sun June 3rd: 12:00 – Friends of St Paul's AGM, St Paul's

Sun June 3rd: 13:00 – Friends of St Paul's BBQ, 6 The Green

Sun June 10th: 16:00 – Messy Church (children's activities & biscuits!), St Paul's

Mon June 11th: 19.30 - Parish Council Meeting, Culham School

Sun June 17th: 16:00 - Parish Communion, St Paul's

Church service times

please note changes to Culham and Clifton Hampden service times



Culham

Sun June 3rd 11:00 Parish Communion
Sun June 10th 16:00 Messy Church (family service, crafts & cake/biscuits)
Sun June 17th 16:00 Parish Communion

Clifton Hampden and Burcot

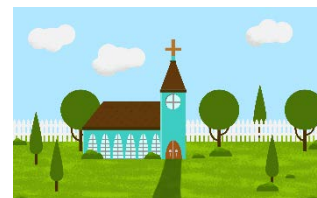
Sun June 3rd 08:00 Holy Communion
Sun June 10th 10:30 Parish Eucharist
Sun June 17th 10:30 Parish Eucharist
Sun June 24th 10:30 Messy Church (family service, children's activities, crafts & cake/biscuits)

Long Wittenham and Little Wittenham:

Sun June 3rd Long W 09:30 Family Service, crafts and breakfast
Sun June 10th Long W 09:30 Parish Communion
Sun June 17th Little W 08:30 BCP Holy Communion
Sun June 24th Long W 09:30 Parish Communion

Talking Point – by Revd David Haylett

There seems to have been quite a bit written and said about the rural church in recent years, and, as a Team we are mostly very much a rural church. I found a report, "Enhancing the Rural Church in the Diocese of Oxford" (January 2017). The Report highlights the needs of rural churches. Rural churches have less infrastructure and very different needs to those in large towns or cities. The Report addresses areas which impinge on the life of the rural church.



"In many rural situations, small things may have huge evangelistic potential even if they are not reflected in an immediate rise in numbers in any one particular church. For example, occasional offices and visitor ministry may have particularly rich possibilities in sharing faith with cold contacts."

Contacts with marriage, baptism and funeral families can provide a foundation on which to build. One example is an annual All Souls service to which recently bereaved are invited.

"A particular characteristic of rural ministry is that the clergy may take three or four services on a Sunday with congregations that never exceed twenty. And that can be dispiriting because that can lead to a feeling of failure."

"It is easier to stand in front of a congregation of two or three or four hundred people and feel successful than to stand in front of ten and feel that the work you are doing is valued."

Yes, I sometimes feel a sense of failure, it takes time and effort to prepare a service and a sermon and then Sunday comes and the congregation struggles to make it into double figures. I take some comfort by the half-recalled comment of a former colleague from my days of paid employment "a small rural church is not a failed large urban church". Our congregations may be small, but expressed as a percentage of the population, the rural church does well.

"We all know that the Church is not all about the building, they are both a significant asset and a spectacular drain on limited resources. Maintenance of a listed building, repair, insurance, heating and lighting and care of the associated churchyard all take time and money." "Many of our rural churches are used for little more than conducting worship. That being the case there may be an argument for closing many of our church buildings. There are powerful arguments for the retention of church buildings but with that there is a recognition that there is a need for these facilities to be put to wider use." "People are not likely to want to be associated with a building which is cold and dark or both and lacking basic facilities."

Our buildings are enormously important. Stadhampton has made a fantastic transformation into being a dual purpose village and worship centre; Culham is contemplating following a similar route; Long Wittenham is hoping to install toilet facilities as a precursor to making the building more a village resource; Little Wittenham's and Clifton Hampden's visitor book often have comments from people grateful that the building was open as a place of quiet and contemplation; Dorchester Abbey nearly always has visitors looking around it. Do we witness to our visitors and secular users, by displays, attractive literature, information on service times? Do we make our buildings welcoming?

For the rural church it has to be recognised that the day of the traditional stipendiary Vicar for each Parish has passed. But we still have a building in every Parish. Is that still a viable option? When we have buildings which are only a couple of miles apart, perhaps the time is coming when hard questions need to be asked. Thirty years ago the Vicar was expected to be Chair of Governors of the local school, that was a much easier task than it is now. The report says, *“being Chair has almost become a full time job”*.

In our churches people seem to be becoming increasingly reluctant to volunteer for Churchwarden, PCC member, Deanery Synod members etc. This is something which affects other village organisations too. Is this a symptom of increasing demands on people's time? Is 'job-sharing' an option? Is there scope for training to be made available? If so, who and where are the trainers? Training courses are provided by the Diocese for many of the roles in Church life, but that does not provide an answer to the basic problem of finding the volunteer in the first place.

On the positive side it is always a great joy to see our churches packed on Christmas Eve for the Carol Service, no urban church would expect to see a third of its population at a single service, but I would find it an even greater joy if just 10% of those people came next Sunday! And again the following Sunday. As the Rural Ministry report says, *“40% of worshippers in the Church of England are attending rural churches, which serve only 17% of the general population.” “What's more, if you rank all the dioceses by the proportion of the population attending church, it's the rural dioceses at the top.”* So we in the Rural Church have a lot to be positive about!

Post script: If you are interested in reading more on this topic “Enhancing and Resourcing the Rural Church” see this link.

www.oxford.anglican.org/mission-ministry/faith-in-action/rural-issues/rural-church/

Team Events

Wed 13th June 7.30pm Filling Station, Marsh Baldon Village Hall – Can Religion Resolve Conflicts with Science? Prof Martin Smith

Events in the Abbey

Mon 4th June 6.30pm Friends of the Abbey AGM

Fri 15th June Music for Autism Concert

Sat 16th June 7.30pm Benson Choral Society Concert – Mozart Masterpieces – Mass in C Minor, Piano Concerto in C Major K467 and Laudate Dominum. Tickets available from tickets.bensonchoral@gmail.com

Mon 18th to Fri 22nd June 6.30 pm Festival of Voices Concerts

Village News

Village website: www.culhamvillage.org.uk

Further Burglaries.....

Following a spate of break-ins in Culham last month it is disheartening to report that 14 Tollgate Road suffered one on the night of Thursday 17th May/early morning Friday 18th May. Their shed was broken into as the residents slept and three bikes were stolen from it. Nothing else was stolen apart from the bikes, the theft was discovered in the morning. The thieves had cut the bolt off the front door of the shed, neatly taken everything out of the shed having cut the locks round the bikes, and made off through the front of the property (onto Tollgate Road).

If anyone saw or heard anything, or has CCTV which may have relevant footage, please let the police know – No. 14's dog heard something and barked at around 2am, so it seems that may have been when the theft occurred.

The message for other villagers is to be vigilant! No. 14 report they had no alarm, CCTV, or deterrent to stop them getting into the shed.

If this happens to you please let the police know as soon as possible. This break-in has been reported but the police have urged that we let as many people as possible know to report to the police if a similar break-in happens again: currently the police aren't even coming out to visit when this happens but will do if more events occur.

Green Recycling Bins - The Railway Inn



Green Recycling bins are situated at the end of The Railway Inn Car Park. This is to raise funds for Children's Air Ambulance. There is also a green bin for media. All items should be bagged.



Friends of St Paul's, Culham

The Friends is a registered charity run by Trustees united in their common aim of preserving the village church. Some trustees are church goers, some are not, but we are united in our desire to maintain and preserve this important structure. We aim to raise sufficient funds to care for the fabric of the church and to assist with reordering it so that it may be adapted to serve as both a place of worship and a community centre for the village and the surrounding community.

At present the Friends' committee has eight members who meet about every two months in each other's houses, to devise ways of fundraising and caring for the church. This is not an onerous task and it can be very rewarding. We need some new members for this committee who would be prepared to give a little time towards this important work, which will enhance the life of the village. If anyone feels that they can help then please contact Ruth Ward at rward15@btopenworld.com or Philip Owen at P.owen462@btinternet.com.

The Annual General Meeting will take place in the church on Sunday June 3rd at approx. 11.40am after the service. All are welcome, the AGM will be followed by a BBQ at 6 The Green from 1pm – Adults £5, children £3.50

Donations and payment can be made via <https://mydonate.bt.com/charities/friendsofstpaulsculham>

Plant Sale (May 20th) Friends of St Paul's and St Paul's Church

In the beautiful sunshine buoyed by BBQ, tea, cakes and prosecco, villagers and many visitors enjoyed buying from the wide range of plants and taking a chance on the tombola among other delights! The children were kept well entertained by the wonderful activities on offer in the Children's Section including non-stop face painting, as well as the many goodies on offer on the various stalls. Over £1,400 was raised directly for the church's running costs and more by the Friends for upkeep of the fabric of the church. The school PTF also got in on the action with Welly Wanging and a Lucky Dip! Well done to Joe Shearer-Rust, Ben Lyons, Ben Churchill Stone and Thea Oxley who excelled in their age groups at Welly Wanging!!

The Art of Culham

The Art of Culham attracted many visitors and much positive comment. The Friday wine and cheese evening and Saturday's child friendly event well attended. It was a vibrant and joyful celebration of all the artistic talent our village boasts. Sale of works of art available were good. Roll on year's event, bigger and even better!!



Both
were
next

Culham Parish Council (CPC) Notes May 2018 – Andrew Steele

This month's meeting was held after the Annual Parish meeting at which reports from various Community Organisations, and the Chairman of the CPC were read out. These will be available in due course on the village website.

The CPC meeting was held to largely undertake administrative procedures.

The main item of note is that Sam Casey-Rerhaye has taken over as Chairman with immediate effect.

Next meeting

Monday 11th June 2018 at 19:30 at the school.

As ever all villagers are welcome to attend - please come along even if you have no specific items to present/discuss.

UPDATE FROM **SAVE CULHAM GREEN BELT CAMPAIGN**

On 15th May the Full Council meeting of South Oxfordshire District Council (SODC) voted 19 to 5 (with two abstentions) to agree the proposal from the new Cabinet to reassess ALL sites. Sue Lawson, the district councillor for this ward, was one of those voting against the motion.

So the Local Plan is coming back to the drawing board! Representatives of Save Culham Green Belt have spoken at the Cabinet and Full Council meetings in March and May and have consistently urged councillors to re-consider and revise the plan so this is good news.

All sites capable of performing a 'strategic or regeneration role', FIFTEEN IN TOTAL will be re-assessed. That is:

Those in the current draft:

1. Culham
2. Chalgrove
3. Berinsfield
4. Wheatley

Plus those previously considered but not progressed:

5. Thornhill
6. Wick Farm
7. Lower Elsfield
8. Grenoble Rd
9. land at Great Western Park,
10. Harrington
11. Northfields

AND sites submitted by developers late in the process:

12. Emmer Green, Reading
13. Reading Golf Club
14. Playhatch at Reading
15. Land off Thame Rd, North Weston

The date for submitting the revised draft Local Plan to the Secretary of State would be Jan 2020.

The PROVISIO is that this is subject to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government confirming that submission in January 2020 would not significantly impact on the Oxfordshire Housing and Growth Deal. If that were the case SODC would aim to submit the Plan as it currently stands, with Culham and Chalgrove still in, but with additional reserve site/s in the event that Chalgrove is not deliverable.

Naturally we hope and trust that this will not be the case. July 2018 was mentioned as the date when this would be known by.

It is anticipated that there will be at least another two rounds of public consultation – I know, more emails to write and forms to fill in! But "Save Culham Green Belt" will be on hand to help and we will hold further public meetings when we know what the proposals are with regard to Culham. We cannot say currently what these will be but we are, of course, urging strongly for SODC to reconsider taking land out of Green Belt in Culham to build an unsustainable town in our midst.

Fingers crossed!

www.saveculhamgreenbelt.org



ANNUAL REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS APRIL 2017 – APRIL 2018 **From Cllr Lorraine Lindsay-Gale**

On 4th May I was re-elected as your County Councillor with a majority of 1,054, which represents 55% of the vote. I am really pleased to be able to represent you once again and would like to thank everyone who supported me.

Whether you voted for me or not I will continue to work hard for everyone in my Division which covers Dorchester, Warborough, Shillingford, Newington, Stadhampton, Chiselhampton, Drayton St Leonard, Berinsfield, Burcot, Clifton Hampden, Culham, Nuneham Courtenay, Marsh Baldon, Toot Baldon, Garsington and Sandford-on-Thames.

The Conservative Party has retained control of the Council by joining into an Alliance with two Independent members as we did before, and I have been re-appointed to the Cabinet by the Leader, Cllr Ian Hudspeth. I will continue to drive our Asset Management and Property Portfolio, our Cultural & Community Services, and in addition I have taken over the County Council's Transformation Programme, known as Fit for the Future.

COUNCIL SET A BUDGET FROM A RESILIENT POSITION

OCC set a new budget from a resilient position having made difficult choices in previous years to manage a combination of squeezed budgets and the fact that more people need council services – especially in children’s social care and adult social care. At the same time the council has been involving communities in services for their locality – ranging from support for older people and those with learning disabilities to library volunteers. Although proposed budget changes are not as extensive as in many previous years, like any organisation the council still has rising financial pressures that need to be matched by new savings so that a balanced budget can be proposed.

OCC agreed its budget at a Full Council meeting on 13 February following a five-hour meeting of all 63 county councillors. Council Tax will rise by 5.99%, the maximum amount allowed without a referendum. Key points include:

- Finances are sound compared with other councils, with difficult decisions having already been taken
- The Council Tax rise will deliver extra money for adults and children’s social care
- Proposal to extend £500,000 contribution for homelessness for an extra year in 2019/20 (subject to consultation)
- 10-year programme to improve transport network and release more money for road maintenance
- £15,000 for each of the 63 county councillors to spend on local priorities in their area.

The Councillor’s Priority Fund replaces the Stewardship Fund which was axed during the cuts. County Councillors will have a £15k fund for each of the next 2 years to support parish councils and community groups with small local projects. The criteria include small highways projects which will be welcome news to many communities. In addition, OCC is prioritising children’s social care with £1.9m extra being put in to this service. Overall this means £8.5m is being added to the budget for children’s social care in 2018/19. This follows the central government announcement that it would allow councils to raise council tax by an additional 1% primarily to address financial pressures in children’s social care. The council had proposed a 1.99% Council Tax rise, with an additional 3% precept for adult social care bringing the total proposed rise to 4.99% the same as last year. The additional 1% that has now been allowed takes the total rise for 2018/19 to 5.99%, with a proposed 2.99 % rise in 2019/20. Other calls on funding include the local government national pay settlement where a total of £2.9m extra is required over 2018/19 (£1.4m) and 2019/20 (£1.5m).

GROWTH BOARD ANNOUNCEMENT ON HOUSING AND GROWTH AGREEMENT

The Oxfordshire Growth Board comprises the six councils: Cherwell District Council, Oxford City Council, Oxfordshire County Council, South Oxfordshire District Council, Vale of White Horse District Council and West Oxfordshire District Council, together with the county’s Local Enterprise Partnership (OxLEP). After many months of negotiations, on Budget Day (22nd November) it was announced that the Board had reached an outline Housing and Growth Agreement with Government. This will see an additional £215 million of investment over the next five years to build infrastructure, support the delivery of new homes and boost economic productivity across the county. This breaks down as: £30m pa for five years for infrastructure; £60m for affordable homes across the county; and £5m to develop a Joint Statutory Spatial Plan. The Board wants the five-year deal to be the first stage in a sustained partnership with Government to secure the ongoing investment needed to deliver properly planned growth and economic development over the coming years. This will support councils to achieve the ambition of 100,000 new homes across the county over the period 2011-2031, as identified through the 2014 countywide Strategic Housing Market Assessment and Local Plans. During the period of development all planning authorities will have their five-year land supply requirement reduced to a three-year land supply with that condition in place for the first three years of the new JSSP. The Housing Minister Dominic Raab visited Oxfordshire in March and officially signed the deal.

HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE FUND (HIF)

On 21 March the Government announced 44 bids which have made it through to stage 2 of its Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF) to fund major infrastructure projects. Two of the three HIF bids submitted by OCC last autumn on behalf of Oxfordshire made it through and will now progress to a co-development stage:

Didcot Garden Town – £171m is sought for transport improvements including a Didcot Science Bridge and A4130 dual carriageway, a new river crossing at Culham and Clifton Hampden Bypass. This would support the delivery of over 22,000 homes in Didcot, Culham, Harwell and Berinsfield. Additionally, up to £70m of cycle and other sustainable transport improvements are proposed for inclusion in the bid plan.

West Oxfordshire Garden Village – £135m is sought for further upgrades to the A40, building on existing schemes and based on the approved A40 Long Term Strategy including development of the Rapid Transit network and additional highway capacity on A40 transport corridor. This would support the delivery of over 10,000 homes in Witney & Carterton, and around Eynsham.

Detailed business plans will now be developed for the £300 million of transport infrastructure investment behind these two bids. The Growth Board partners expect to hear in the autumn whether or not the two bids going through have ultimately succeeded.

OXFORD-CAMBRIDGE EXPRESSWAY

In December the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC) published its report to Government on the Oxford-Cambridge development arc. It advised on the need for long-term investment funding for new transport infrastructure to harness the region's economic potential, to benefit local people and boost UK plc in a post-Brexit landscape. For the residents of South Oxfordshire and particularly this Division facing the potential of an expressway cutting a ten-mile swathe through our countryside, there were encouraging signs in that the Commission recommended that a more logical route would be to follow existing rail and road routes (to the West and North of Oxford). But the Commission declined to be specific which is frustrating, and their recommendations are only advisory. It will be up to Highways England to make the final decision by Summer 2018. They were proposing to do this without a period for public consultation which I and many others found totally unacceptable.

On 12th December an overwhelming majority of County Councillors voted to support a motion tabled by Cllr Atkins calling on the Leader Ian Hudspeth to write to Highways England, NIC, the Transport Minister Chris Grayling etc asking on behalf of the County Council for an Independent Inquiry before any decision is taken on the preferred corridor for the Expressway. The timetable for the project only includes an Inquiry afterwards, when the choice between North/West, Central or South of Oxford has been taken. It was encouraging to get such widespread support from right across the county. Sadly since then we have heard back from Highways England who declined to establish a Public Inquiry. They are however, engaging with County Councillors and gave a briefing on 27th March at which they showed their latest thinking on the three possible corridors. A cross party Cabinet Advisory Group has been set up at OCC to monitor and comment on the progress of the project. The County Council's official position is neutral, that of a stakeholder/consultee.

MINERALS & WASTE CORE STRATEGY

In July the County Council's new Minerals and Waste Core Strategy, which outlines the planning strategy and policies for the supply of minerals and the management of waste in Oxfordshire until 2031, received support from the Government's Planning Inspectorate. Following approval by Cabinet on 18th July it went to Full Council in September and was ratified. This was disappointing news for this area, since the new strategy contains key changes that may impact our ability to defend our countryside against large-scale gravel extraction in the future.

Crucially, there is now a presumption that 75% of extraction will take place in the south of the county, 25% in the West. And the Local Aggregate Assessment, which is the total amount of gravel that must be extracted per year has been set at 1.015 million tonnes. This is believed to be far in excess of what is actually required, thus opening the door to the unnecessary development of new extraction sites.

Part 2 of the Plan is now underway, and the call has gone out to the industry for site nominations. This area, particularly Berinsfield, Shillingford, Dorchester, Warborough, Stadhampton, Drayton St Leonard, Culham and Nuneham Courtenay are all listed as potential quarry sites. There has been a big response with many previous nominations being re-confirmed and a few additional sites being put forward. According to officers the potential yield far exceeds what is needed. Consultation on the different options will be undertaken in June/July 2018. The stellar work done by Parishes Against Gravel Extraction has kept this area protected for the last 10 years. But sadly, they are needed again now, as much as they ever were.

QUARRY APPLICATION AT CLIFTON HAMPDEN AND CULHAM REJECTED

After years of diligent and effective campaigning by local residents against the application for a huge quarry at Fullamoor Farm between Clifton Hampden and Culham it was rejected by the County Council's Planning and Regulation Committee on November 27th. The main reason was the unacceptable impact upon traffic and congestion in the area, particularly at peak times. The quarry would have generated 100+ lorry movements per day. A last minute attempt was made by Hills to save their application by agreeing to prohibit lorry movements at peak times. This failed to satisfy the Councillors as did the arguments that the quarry would not impair the construction of the North-South road from Didcot, the new river crossing and the Clifton Hampden bypass all of which now look as if they could be in place by 2025, which is really good news.

OCC STEPS UP POTHOLE WORK

Repeated cycles of ice, thaws and snow have created the worst possible weather conditions for roads over the last few months leading to a rise in reports on Fix My Street from 3,000 pre-Christmas to 7,000 during January. OCC has drafted in more staff to carry out inspections and contractors Skanska are sending out more teams to carry out repairs. An additional Dragon-Patcher is now in action on the road network travelling round on an 'inspect and fix' basis on the rural network. There is also good news in the form of almost £1m in extra funding from the Department for Transport in recognition of damage done to the roads by bad weather. This money will be spent on road patching later this year as that will give longer lasting

benefits and better value for money. Defects that make roads hazardous will be dealt with within 24 hours as usual.

COUNCIL ENDS CONTRACT WITH CARILLION

In August 2017 Oxfordshire County Council agreed to exit a significant proportion of its contract with Carillion. Negotiations had been ongoing for many months and both parties reached a mutually beneficial settlement covering the construction side of the deal which was originally signed in 2012 and was set to last for 10 years.

On the collapse of the parent company in January 2018 OCC formally terminated its contract with Carillion LGS Limited effective from 1 February 2018. This brought forward the already agreed end of the contract negotiated last June set for the end of June 2018. OCC made a net payment of £10.65m to Carillion to cover construction work already completed.

Carillion also provided the Council with school meals and cleaning; maintenance of council buildings and property services. OCC acted quickly to ensure that these services continued through a mix of bringing the Carillion staff in-house, continuing with suppliers, and working with sub-contractors. We are proud to say that there were no job losses or any breakdowns in provision.

Like every other Carillion customer, OCC is now working out the most cost-effective way to complete construction work left unfinished by Carillion. The Council has taken over direct responsibility for commissioning future construction work and service delivery.

NEW DAYTIME SUPPORT SERVICE

Last year OCC implemented a new, sustainable model of daytime support for vulnerable adults in Oxfordshire. There are over 200 voluntary and community daytime support services provided across Oxfordshire. The vast majority of the 47 services that are currently funded by OCC are set to continue and have applied for and been awarded grant funding to support their move to more self-sustaining models. OCC is continuing to fund the Wellbeing and Employment Support Service and the Dementia Support Service, and is investing an additional £25,000 per year in increasing the capacity of these services to support people with autism and to train other services in dementia support. County Council provided Health and Wellbeing Centres and Learning Disability Daytime Support services were replaced by a new council-provided Community Support Service from 1st October 2017. This service provides flexible, person-centred support to meet a wide range of people's needs, delivered from 8 building bases across the county in Abingdon, Banbury, Bicester, Didcot, Oxford, Wallingford, Wantage. Everyone using former services was offered an individual assessment and/or review and support to explore their options. For people who are assessed as not having eligible needs, there will still be a range of options, for example joining a local group, attending community and voluntary sector provided services or purchasing support from the new Community Support Service.

OXFORDSHIRE'S LIBRARIES ARE THRIVING

I was delighted to welcome Libraries Minister Michael Ellis MP to the official opening of the Oxfordshire County Library on 22nd February. The newly refitted facility at the entrance to the Westgate Centre welcomed more than 100 guests including John Howell MP, the High Sherriff Jane Cranston, Deputy Lord Lieutenant John Harwood, staff, volunteers and community groups who have helped ensure the county's 43 branches have a bright future.

Mr Ellis toured the library and spoke with staff and volunteers about its transformation and wider network of Oxfordshire branches. He said: *"This is a wonderful example of a library that is an integral part of the community. We want to see libraries thrive - not just survive – and this is a classic example of a thriving library. Libraries are still greatly valued by many people."*

Also among the guests was Philip Pullman, author of the famous *His Dark Materials Trilogy* who signed autographs and said, *"I'm very impressed with what I have seen. I knew the old library very well and used to use it regularly, and now it's looking absolutely splendid."* Since reopening just before Christmas the library has signed up 2,000 new members.

HOUSEHOLD WASTE RECYCLING CENTRE UPDATE

After a period of consultation and assessment OCC has signed a new Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC) contract that secures all seven sites in the medium term, with no change to the sites opening hours or days. Banners and leaflets are now on site at all seven HWRCs, informing local residents that there will be a change in non-household waste charges from the 1st October. The existing DIY 1,2,3 for free scheme is being replaced by a small fixed fee per item of £1.50 for non-household waste.

County Councillor's Report by Lorraine Lindsay-Gale May 2018

COUNTY COUNCIL'S FIRST THOUGHTS ON OXBRIDGE EXPRESSWAY

As the highways authority, OCC was asked for its views on the proposed Oxford to Cambridge Expressway. The submission says that until Highways England publishes a preferred route OCC cannot make a formal response on the proposal. Key points from OCC's initial response to Highways England sent in April 2018 are:

OCC welcomes the further development work and engagement taking place on the Expressway project and the opportunity to give views to Highways England. However, at this stage, OCC is not able to indicate a corridor preference, given that the technical and other supporting work required to inform the decision on a preferred corridor is not yet complete.

OCC supports the strategic objectives and purpose of the Expressway project, recognising the opportunity it brings to support and enable growth and development, enhance connectivity and take forward innovation and smart technology. However, following detailed discussion on the project between officers and members, there are some important principles which, in addition to the published assessment criteria, should be integral to the corridor selection and decision-making process. In Oxfordshire, these include:

- 1. Ensuring that the Expressway corridor does not increase pressure on the existing, already overstretched strategic highway network. Specifically, the Expressway must not use the section of the A34 through central Oxfordshire. This section is where the A34 currently operates as both a regional/national strategic route and a local distributor route (forming part of the Oxford Ring Road) and it is essential that the new Expressway infrastructure provides a completely separate strategic route to avoid this conflict of use;*
- 2. Ensuring that the Expressway corridor minimises the impact on the existing highway network, i.e. it should not use existing local road networks or draw significant strategic traffic directly into local road networks / highway infrastructure which would not be able to cope – the ring road around Bicester for example;*
- 3. Ensuring that the Expressway is developed separately alongside locally planned highway enhancements such as Culham river crossing.*

Further information is available from the [Highways England website](#).

ADDITIONAL NEW POTHOLE FIXING MACHINE

OCC and contractors, Skanska, have taken delivery of another Dragon-Patcher which uses a combination of compressed air, heat, bitumen and chippings to repair potholes. This means that there are now two machines working full-time in the county with another being shared with Peterborough and Cambridgeshire. Because it can repair a number of holes at the same time, and much faster, a Dragon-Patcher can carry out repairs far more cheaply than before. A typical Dragon-Patcher repair costs just under £14 whereas one fixed using conventional methods on a non-rural road costs about £60. On a good day a Dragon can repair 200 potholes; that, combined with the low road repair costs, means that the investment is a sound one. More work is done and more money is saved so that it can be put into resurfacing. The Dragon also carries out preventative work by sealing cracks in the road surface that would otherwise let in water and eventually turn into more potholes. In the past year, OCC's own machine, along with the shared Dragon, has fixed over 21,000 potholes. It is expected that the new one, over the next twelve months, could fill up to 14,000 more.

RESIDENTS WEIGH IN OVER HGVS ON RURAL ROADS

Villagers throughout Oxfordshire are working with the county council's trading standards team to police the scourge of heavy lorries ignoring weight limits on rural roads and bridges. And three out of the four most recent prosecutions in Magistrates' Court have come about after members of the public reported the drivers and their vehicles to the council. OCC enforcement officer Simon Mitchell said: *"While we and the police do actively patrol hotspots, our partnership approach with local residents is proving very successful."* Since February 2016, there have been 100 prosecutions for breaching weight restrictions brought by Oxfordshire Trading Standards resulting in £55792.50 in fines. A further 57 more cases are under active investigation. In total 660 formal warning letters have also been issued to HGV drivers as a result of investigations into the 454 public reports, 157 vehicles seen by patrolling Trading Standards officers and 460 vehicles recorded by the ANPR camera at Newbridge.

CARE WORKER RECRUITMENT CAMPAIGN ATTRACTS DOZENS OF APPLICANTS

A recruitment drive to encourage more people in Oxfordshire to consider a career as a care worker has attracted more applicants in just five months as in the previous two years. The campaign - *'Make a difference every day'* - features a number of real life care workers, already supporting people across the

county, talking about the rewards of the job and why they would recommend the job to others. The Oxfordshire Association of Care Providers (OACP) website received 84 applications for a variety of care work roles between mid-November 2017 and the end of March 2018, compared with 66 applications in the two years between November 2015 and October 2017. A total of 107 new job seekers registered on the site between November 2017 and the end of March 2018, compared with 101 from October 2015 and October 2017. And around 130,000 people have looked at recruitment adverts on Facebook since the campaign launched. Oxfordshire currently has around 14,200 people working in adult social care. But the county's ageing population is growing at twice the average, so there is an urgent need for more caring, friendly and reliable care workers to support older, frail people in their own homes, in nursing and residential homes or in community hospital settings. According the latest workforce survey by OCC and Oxford Health Foundation Trust (OHFT), nine out of 10 care workers say they are proud of the work they do.

COUNCIL PROBES THAMES WATER'S OXFORDSHIRE RESERVOIR PROPOSALS

A series of questions have been raised by OCC about Thames Water's plans to build a huge new reservoir to the south of Abingdon between Steventon and Marcham. The council's cabinet was asked to endorse a response to Thames Water's consultation on the idea – which is part of its wider strategy for the South-East of England in coming decades. The company's Draft Water Resources Management Plan proposes a new reservoir near Abingdon which will not only support the forecast needs of the Thames Water area but also some of the needs of the wider South-East. In response to the consultation the council has asked for more detail on Thames Water's calculations for growth in population and water usage for coming years that underpin the reservoir proposal. The council has also asked how much of the water from the reservoir would be sold to other water companies. A report to councillors also urged Thames Water to speed up their programme of leakage reduction' to 'delay the need for a reservoir as long as possible' as well as pointing out that there is a 'lack of clarity on whether potential sites have been assessed across the South East region'.

District Councillor's Report by Sue Lawson

Local Plan

Many of you will be aware of the recent decisions made within SODC. At a recent Full Council meeting the majority of councillors voted not to move forward with the current Local Plan. Council had a meeting on Thursday 17th May to vote on a new motion and it is possible that more green belt sites will be considered. I am vehemently against building on Green Belt land and have been opposing the Culham site on those grounds. I will continue to oppose large scale strategic sites being built on green belt land. Smaller green belt sites which are community led, i.e. through NDPs, may have merit, however, large sites for thousands of housing in my opinion do not.

More than £1million for community groups in South Oxfordshire

South Oxfordshire District Council is providing more than £1million in grant funding to 16 community groups, charities and support organisations across the district.

The funding will help to ensure that important services such as support for disabled people, carers, and the elderly, can continue to be available locally for South Oxfordshire residents.

The revenue grant funding from South Oxfordshire District Council will help groups to pay for things such as salary costs, rent and rates, marketing and publicity, and transport and utility costs.

The groups receiving funding are:

Age UK Oxfordshire - £93,289

Berinsfield Information and Volunteer Centre - £56,814

Community First Oxfordshire - £74,250

FISH Volunteer Centre - £12,000

Home-Start Southern Oxfordshire - £66,706

My Life My Choice - £16,840

Nomad Youth & Community Project - £80,000

Oxfordshire Association for the Blind - £25,000

Oxfordshire Sexual Abuse & Rape Crisis Centre - £52,500

Riverside Counselling Service - £65,000

South & Vale Carers Centre - £83,508

South Oxfordshire Food and Education Alliance - £94,000

Style Acre - £66,000

The Chiltern Centre for Disabled Children - £100,000

Thomley Activity Centre - £97,500

Council welcomes major £1million investment for Berinsfield regeneration

South Oxfordshire District Council has welcomed the news that Berinsfield is to receive more than £1million in government funding to boost the area's regeneration.

More than 100 housing estates across the country are set to benefit from a significant investment to kick-start their regeneration, the Communities Secretary Sajid Javid has announced today, with South Oxfordshire District Council being awarded £995,000 to boost the Berinsfield regeneration project, while SOHA, which owns many properties in Berinsfield, has also been awarded £98,380.

The news follows significant recent engagement with the local community as part of the Berinsfield Community Investment Scheme which is actively involving residents in determining how their community develops. The main aim is to find a balance between the needs for new homes and creating a sustainable community with supporting infrastructure and facilities for current and future residents.

The grant will help South Oxfordshire District Council pay for technical studies to ensure that Highways and utilities will have capacity for development proposed at Berinsfield. It will also help pay for detailed design work to support an outline planning application for improvements that local people want and provide additional resources to engage with local people to ensure accelerated delivery of new homes and community facilities for the well-being of local people.

Councils recover over £1.6million unpaid council tax

Over £1.6million in council tax arrears was recovered last year thanks to enforcement action taken by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils.

In 2016/17 the councils issued over 5,300 court summonses to people who had failed to pay their council tax. Magistrates then granted liability orders against 3,600 of those individuals – this meant enforcement action, including the use of bailiffs, could be taken to retrieve the money.

Almost all of those in arrears then paid the money they owed, however the councils were forced to take further action against 96 people to ensure they paid their fair share towards the cost of providing public services. The councils also recovered and saved a further £167,000 after 62 people were caught claiming discounts on their council tax they weren't entitled to. This resulted in nine being prosecuted in court and 47 fined.

Science Vale UK surpasses the rest of the Thames Valley

Science Vale UK and Oxford are outperforming other locations in the Thames Valley for new businesses moving into the area according to an independent report.

Throughout last year and the first quarter of this year, Science Vale UK covering Culham, Milton Park and Harwell Campus, proved very popular for the life sciences and space technology sectors within Lambert Smith Hampton's 2017 Thames Valley Office Market Report.

According to the report, take-up remained solid at 258,000 square foot for both Science Vale and Oxford, of which 42,000 was at Milton Park and 14,000 was occupied at Harwell. Both of these sites are set to continue to attract more businesses by speculatively building new office and laboratory space. Immunocore Ltd, a world-leading T-cell receptor company, recently announced further expansion at Milton Park with an extra 53,000 square foot.

Matt Barber, Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council said: "Science Vale UK has the highest concentration of science research facilities and development activity in Western Europe and this report clearly demonstrates that organisations are excited to move here.

Ground-breaking transport awarded government funding

News that ground-breaking transport technology being pioneered in Oxfordshire has won a share of a £51million government prize has been welcomed by two council leaders.

Oxfordshire is home to Science Vale UK and some world leading science and technology companies who are blazing a trail towards more energy efficient and road safety. Organisations based in the Science Vale are working on pioneering projects such as autonomous cars and smart traffic management systems needed to support people travelling around the county.

Remote Applications in Challenging Environments (RACE), which is based at Culham Science Centre in Oxfordshire, is to receive £6.9m from the Department of Transport towards their £10million project to set up a range of different test areas mimicking increasingly realistic city driving environments, where automated vehicles can be tested before being taken onto public roads.

£1.55 million available to boost rural areas in the county

Grants of up to £100,000 are available to community groups, small businesses farmers and foresters for projects that support the rural economy.

The Oxfordshire LEADER fund aims to support a wide range of activities in the countryside such as assisting local small businesses, supporting local heritage and cultural events, attracting tourism and visitors increasing foresters and farmer's productivity and helping to diversify services. Contributions are available for capital costs such as building work, equipment and for projects located in the Oxfordshire LEADER area until September this year.

Other News

Fun, friendly and affordable physical activity sessions for people aged 60+

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Neighbourhood Policing
newsletter

Your **Neighbourhood Policing Team** consists of Inspector Tim Pavey, Sergeant Fraser Weller, PC Simone O'Dell, PCSO Sue Harris, PCSO Marie Davenport, PCSO Sarah Jones, PCSO Clare Beale.

Offenders brought to justice

An arrest has been made in relation to the theft from vehicles around Wallingford. However, the investigation is ongoing at this time and if you have any information please contact us.

Crime prevention advice

For the last few weeks we have seen an increase in theft from vehicles across the Wallingford area. Lots of vehicles have not had any signs of forced entry which means they may have been left open. Please can we remind everyone to lock (and set alarms) along with shutting windows. Also please do not leave anything on display this includes, loose change, clothing, electronic device/wires.

What the neighbourhood team have been doing

The Wallingford neighbourhood team have been delivering a 'Sexting' presentation and internet safety talks to teenagers at the European School in Culham and Wallingford which have been very engaging and beneficial. Officers have also visited The Rainbows group at Benson to talk about safety and our role in the

community. The group had a lovely time and enjoyed finger printing and taking part in the 'egg helmet' experiment to demonstrate the importance of wearing a helmet. On 16th April officers visited St Nicholas Primary School to help with a parking initiative. Officers worked with the children and staff to raise awareness about the meaning/purpose of the double yellow lines and how parking on them could cause an accident. We will be actively patrolling school around the future.

AOB

Wallingford officers are working with residents in Dorchester-on Thames who are signed up to the Community Speed Watch initiative and will be carrying out some local speed enforcement soon.

Contact non-emergency number 101, emergency 999.

Email WallingfordNHPT@thamesvalley.pnn.police.uk. Please note this email address cannot be used to contact Thames Valley Police to report crimes or for any urgent matters.

Stag beetle summer: how you can help this endangered beetle this June & July



Between June and July, wildlife charity People's Trust for Endangered Species (PTES) is asking for families, individuals or groups of friends in the UK to record sightings of stag beetles on six summer evenings, as part of an ongoing European study into these impressive, yet endangered beetles.

Taking part in the *European Stag Beetle Monitoring Network* couldn't be easier; all volunteers need to do is walk 500m, six times between June and July on warm, summer evenings, counting and recording any stag beetles they see. So whether you're on your evening dog walk, a post-work jog, popping to the shop or walking to your local pub, you can help!

European Stag Beetle Monitoring Network. The group are keen to hear from more people in the UK, so to take part please visit: www.stagbeetlemonitoring.org.

Stag beetles are Britain's largest land beetle with males reaching up to 7.5 cm in size. They are also one of the most spectacular looking insects, with a males' huge mandibles (antler-like jaws) making them easy to spot! Despite their appearance, stag beetles are harmless if left alone, and from mid-to-late-May are more likely to be seen as warmer evenings draw them above ground to find a mate and reproduce.

PTES wants members of the public to record any sightings directly to them via the Great Stag Hunt – an annual stag beetle survey PTES has been running for nearly 20 years. Last year, over 6,107 records (of both larvae and adult beetles) were submitted to PTES via the Great Stag Hunt website: 925 larvae and 5,182 adult beetles. To record a sighting, please visit: www.ptes.org/gsh, and if you can, take a photo too to help conservationists at PTES verify your sighting.

On top of these two surveys, anyone with a garden can help by making their green spaces a stag beetle haven. Create a log pile or leave plenty of dead wood for stag beetles as habitat and food supply; reduce dangers (magpies are a predator); if you see a dead-looking beetle in water, please take it out, they often revive!

Visit www.ptes.org/stagbeetles to find out more, including how to build a log pile or pyramid, ID guides so you know a stag when you see one, and to record your sightings. Visit www.stagbeetlemonitoring.org to take part in the *European Stag Beetle Monitoring Network* survey.

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She has performed mainly on the folk scene, playing all kinds of venues from small clubs to large festivals. She has made six albums including 'Pockets On Fire' which was released on the Fairport Convention label 'Woodworm' with Fairport playing on eight of the tracks. In 2016, the long-awaited 'The Art of Making Faces' was released. Anna is now working on her 7th album.

Anna is also part of the trio IOTA along with Marion Fleetwood and Sally Barker, seen earlier this year at the Unicorn.
www.annaryder.co.uk

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Music At The Unicorn (MATU) is a not-for-profit community organisation who stage concerts to bring the best music to Abingdon. An important part of the work is supporting up-and-coming musicians from the local area, giving them the opportunity to perform in front of wonderfully supportive and knowledgeable audiences. A dedicated team of volunteers run all the events.

All profits go into improving the facilities and into bringing an even greater variety of talented bands, singers and instrumentalists to Abingdon.

The Mouthpiece

Please note that any opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the contributors and not necessarily those of the editors. We accept contributions and advertisements in good faith and cannot be responsible for errors therein.

Contributions to the July/August issue of the Mouthpiece by **June 15th**, please, to:

generalmouthpiece@gmail.com

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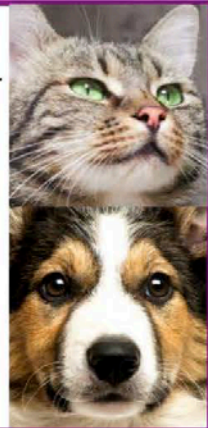
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Andrew Steele		27 High Street, Culham	01235 534910
John Thomas		40 High Street, Culham	01235 521678
Gordon Gibbs		32 High Street, Culham	01235 523679
Adrian Morris			
CLERK TO PARISH COUNCIL			
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Lorraine Lindsay-Gale	lorraine.lindsay-gale@oxfordshire.gov.uk	Nut Tree Cottage, The Green South, Warborough OX10 7DR	01865 858976
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Ordained Local Minister	Revd. David Haylett	familyhaylett@yahoo.com	01865 407382
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Churchwarden:	Roy Epps	14 The Glebe, Culham	01235 537525
Hon. Secretary:	Charles Reichardt	Fair Green, Henley Rd, Culham	01235 520534
FRIENDS OF ST PAUL'S CHURCH			
Chairman:	Philip Owen	6 The Green, Culham	01235 555223
CULHAM PAROCHIAL SCHOOL (Thames Bridge C of E Federation)			
Head Teacher:	Mrs Lisa Horton	The School, High Street, Culham	01235 521766
Chair of Governors:	Debbie Croft	c/o Clifton Hampden School	01865 407700
LADIES OF CULHAM (LOC)			
Mary Rickford	mary@therickfords.com	The Clock House, Culham	01235 528052
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