

# The Mouthpiece

Culham's Newsletter

**February 2021**



## Dates for your Diary

Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> Feb

Parish Council meeting

Online – please contact for details:

[s.caseyrehaye@culham-pc.gov.uk](mailto:s.caseyrehaye@culham-pc.gov.uk)

# Church News



## Talking point from Rev Paul Wignall

I wonder how much we will miss 2020, good riddance to it sums up most of the conversations I have had about 2020. When a few people were asked to sum up 2020 as briefly as possible these were a few of the printable responses given.

Discombobulating

Overwhelming

Exhausting

Corona coaster

Dark

Looking forward to the vaccine

The last response ends on a note of hope. One of the feelings I have been struggling with of late is hope. I have tried to feel hopeful but in the face of so much that is overwhelming how can we feel hopeful? What does it mean to live hopefully while we are still so deeply affected by the COVID pandemic?

We have entered a new national lockdown, and as a Team Ministry we have reluctantly taken a decision that until at least early February we will not be holding public worship on Sundays in any of our team churches. At one level this is a very sad moment, but we have most definitely not closed, in the same way that schools are not closed but that students and pupils are learning in a wholly different way while there is a real threat in meeting together, our communities will be gathering for worship, thanks largely to the god given gifts of new technologies that enable us to connect in many new ways.

I think that closing our buildings for public worship at this time is an act of love towards neighbour, it is also profoundly hopeful. By making a sacrifice now we are making a statement about being able to meet again to worship in person in the future.

I like these words from Barak Obama.

**“Hope is not blind optimism. It's not ignoring the enormity of the task ahead or the roadblocks that stand in our path. It's not sitting on the side-lines or shirking from a fight. Hope is that thing inside us that insists, despite all evidence to the contrary, that something better awaits us if we have the courage to reach for it, and to work for it, and to fight for it. Hope is the belief that destiny will not be written for us, but by us, by the men and women who are not content to settle for the world as it is, who have the courage to remake the world as it should be.”**

Hope is a very important word, it is not just blind optimism but an act of faith and sometimes uttered through gritted teeth. To hope is to act in the belief that something is the case before we know it to be so. To hope is to make a choice and to believe that God's final word is not gloom and despair but love.

To choose to limit our activities now is to participate hopefully, faced with a new lockdown it is easy to feel that we are back to square one. We are not, there are no doubt difficult times and decisions ahead, but we do have the vaccine, we also know that despite many tragic deaths many people have also recovered from this horrid virus. We express our neighbourly love and concern best at the moment by keeping apart and protecting those who are most at risk. In so doing we are being loving and we are being hopeful, and we are sharing something of God's love for us.

I wish you all a happy and hope filled 2021.

## Parish Council News

The CPC website: <https://www.culham-pc.gov.uk>

### **Culham Parish Council (CPC) notes – Dec 2020**

Held online

The reports from OCC and SODC councillors should appear elsewhere in the Mouthpiece and on the CPC website.

Negotiations with the Diocese regarding the use of Culham School by the CPC are ongoing.

The new planning application for the Waggon and Horses includes a new public house, with a village meeting room on the upper floor, and a 25 bed hotel. A 'permissive' footpath around the site from the A415, south, to Tollgate road is also being considered.

The permissive footpath around the Moors will be closed on Christmas Eve for one day.

A contractor has been appointed to move some of the hydro road waste material close to the Donkey bridge, closer to the hydro plant. This will be used for infill. The remaining material will be moved offsite.

Morrell's have agreed to draw up documentation regarding the sale of The Green to CPC. This will then be reviewed.

A litter-pick along the Burycroft will be undertaken by Biffa. CPC will ask for Thame Lane to be included.

Overhanging branches along the north-east side of the Burycroft have been reported.

The recreation ground lease detail is being pursued with a view to obtain a longer lease before major expenditure on the play equipment is made.

Neighbourhood Plan – A grant of approximately £5000 has been obtained from SODC with more available. A village questionnaire about the NP is being prepared for circulation to all households in January 2021.

#### **Next meeting**

Tuesday 12 January 2021

This will almost certainly be an online meeting.

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

## POST MEETING NOTE

As you may know the SODC has recently, and very reluctantly, adopted the Local Plan (to 2031). Our Save Culham Green Belt (SCGB) committee has been opposing this plan for some time, and despite having presented numerous and very convincing arguments against aspects the plan, they, and others, have been overruled by Central Government.

CPC would like to thank SCGB for its efforts in the past few years in their/our opposition to this plan, especially in respect to the Culham Green Belt areas.

In particular, CPC would like to thank Caroline Baird for her work in the organization of the group, and often being the 'voice' of SCGB.

However, the work of the group continues, currently in assessing a possible Judicial Review of the plan. Many thanks to all

CPC

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## Culham Parish Council (CPC) notes – Jan 2021

Held online

The reports from OCC and SODC councillors should appear elsewhere in the Mouthpiece and on the CPC website.

CPC has voted to become a Corporate Member of the Bioabundance Community Interest Company. The Company is challenging the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 (LP2035) on the grounds of climate change, improper pressure put on councillors to adopt the plan, excessive and incorrectly calculated housing numbers, and inadequate consultation.

CPC will investigate the installation of 'village gates' on the A415 at the Waggon and Horses, on the Burycroft, where it enters the village, and on Sutton Bridges. These are white five bar gate style gates installed at the side of the road to enhance the fact that vehicles are entering a village area. They will hopefully both enhance the village and act as a speed deterrent.

Further trees have been agreed for the village. Areas being considered are the Green, the triangle area adjacent to the school, and with a native hedge to be planted along the line of the new fence across the playing field. Another area under consideration is the triangular grassy area at the junction of the High Street and Tollgate Road. Permission from OCC will probably be needed for planting on this area.

Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) money is available for CPC. The Council will investigate combining requests for funding along with other local Councils. This might allow a greater amount of money to be available for larger projects, which might benefit more than one community.

A footpath running around the back of the Waggon and Horses from Tollgate Road to the European School footbridge is under discussion.

A move to online banking for the CPC is ongoing.

A draft Neighbourhood Plan Document (NP) has been prepared and discussed by the NP committee. A questionnaire will be sent round, by post and with post paid return envelopes, to all residents. It is hoped the plan will be submitted to SODC in late 2021.

CPC is still waiting information from Morrells concerning the potential purchase of the Green.

A speed limit of 20mph has been requested for Thame Lane and the High Street. Confirmation from OCC highways is awaited.

The 2021/22 council budget was agreed. A value of 10% increase was agreed for the CPC precept. This will take a Band D property from £103.62 per annum to £114.39 per annum, equivalent to an increase of £0.89 per month.

Our Clerk, Lucy Dalby, has decided to stand down from Culham Parish Council in March 2021 after 11 years of service. This means we will need a new Clerk! Please see the recruitment advert elsewhere in the Mouthpiece if you are interested in applying for the post.

### Next meeting

Tuesday 09 February 2021

This will almost certainly be an online meeting.

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

# Village News

Village website: [www.culhamvillage.org.uk](http://www.culhamvillage.org.uk)

## *Family Bible - Woodley/West/Lambert*

### A Quest to Find Some Ancestors

From Clare Wadley – email: [CWadley@agamatrix.com](mailto:CWadley@agamatrix.com)



I have had in my possession for many years a rather old and tatty (missing its front cover) bible which has a few pages containing family history (see attached) relating to the above, named families who have links to Mapledurham, **Culham** and Sutton Courtenay. I would love to pass on the bible to a relative of any of those listed and hence I was wondering if you might have any knowledge to assist me in this quest. The bible is rather large, heavy and fragile and so I am hoping to find a relative who lives locally so that I can pass it on to. I have put out an appeal to Sutton Courtenay to no avail and I am unable to find any Mapledurham contacts. Hoping you can help.

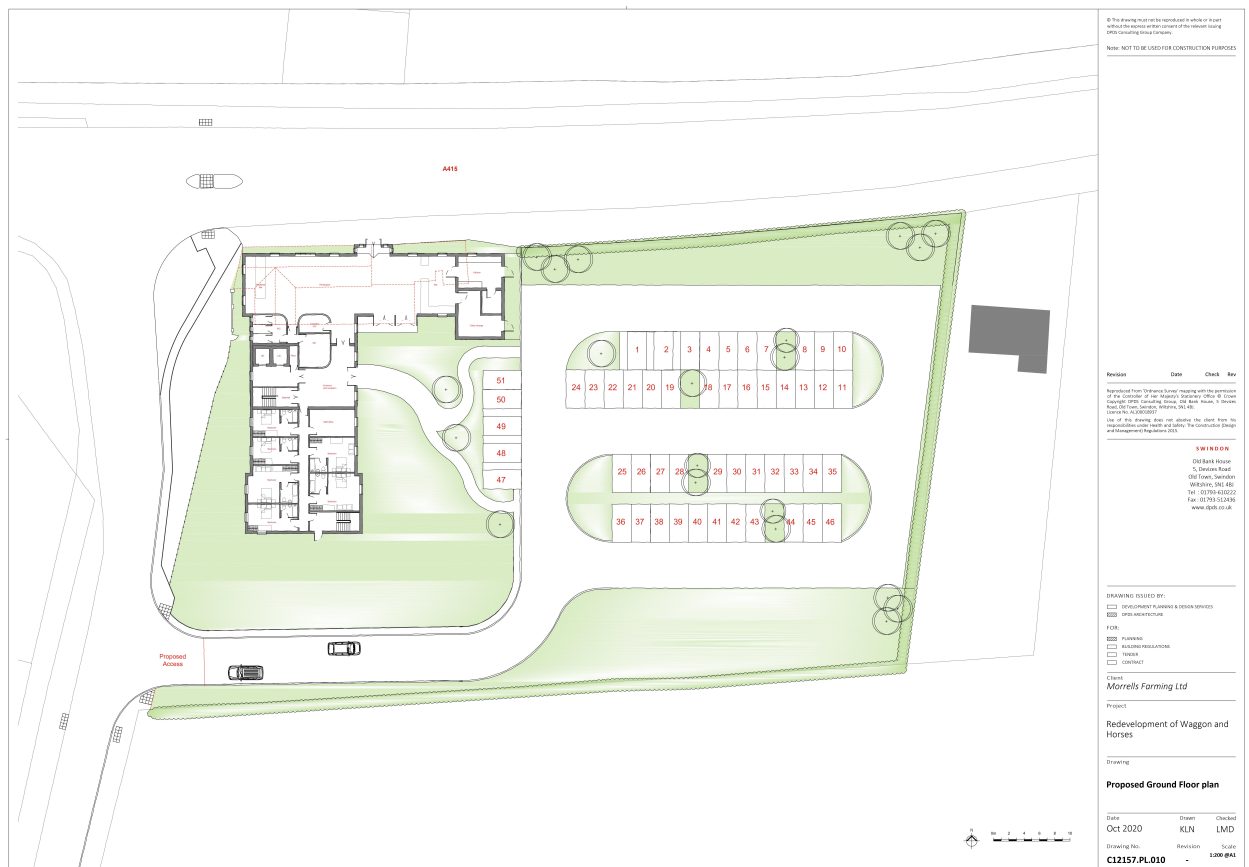
# WAGGON AND HORSES PROPOSALS BY MORRELLS

A new planning application for the Waggon and Horses includes a new public house, with a village meeting room on the upper floor, and a 25 bed hotel.

A 'permissive' footpath around the site from the A415, south, to Tollgate Road is also being considered. (A permissive footpath is not a public right of way. It is a path that a landowner allows the public to use.)

The plan below is of the ground floor and external proposal by Morrells of the Waggon and Horses. There is to be two further floors above with bedrooms and a meeting room.

The proposal has been included at the request of the Parish Council and if you have any comments you are asked to send them to John Taylor at [john@ladbrokehill.com](mailto:john@ladbrokehill.com). John Taylor is a member of the Morrells family and frequently attends Parish Council meetings as their representative.



# District Council News

## SODC LOCAL PLAN – UPDATE FROM SAVE CULHAM GREEN BELT

### NEW COMMUNITY INTEREST COMPANY LAUNCHES A LEGAL CHALLENGE TO THE LOCAL PLAN

I will give you my summary of the situation in bullet points for clarity:

1. As previously advised, in December and under pressure from directions imposed by Secretary of State, Robert Jenrick, the council of SODC adopted the Local Plan 2035, complete with its six strategic sites in Green Belt including 3500 houses in Culham (and 1700 in Berinsfield).
2. Post-adoption there is a strict limit of six weeks in which '*Any person aggrieved by the adoption of the South Oxfordshire Local Plan 2035 may make an application to the High Court under Section 113 of the Planning Compulsory Purchase Act 2004*'.
3. It is important to understand that such a challenge can only be brought on the grounds that there has been a legal or procedural error. It is not possible to attack the decision to adopt the plan on its merits (or lack of merits) or whether it is bad for the residents and businesses of South Oxfordshire. The political background is also irrelevant.
4. The final date to challenge the plan is 21 January.
5. Save Culham Green Belt has sought further advice from the barrister who represented us at the Examination in Public. In a nutshell, his advice, specific to Culham, is: "*Whatever my views of the merits of the plan and its examination, I cannot find a solid argument for bringing a legal challenge to its adoption.*"
6. **BUT** a new and fully registered Community Interest Company (CIC), **Bioabundance**, has been set up by other campaign groups who, like SCGB, opposed the adoption of the Plan (Directors: Dr Sue Roberts, Ian Ashley, Lisa Buchan).
7. Bioabundance has pro-bono legal advice from the lawyers who provided support to the successful legal challenge relating to the third runway at Heathrow (since overturned at Appeal...).

The lawyers believe there is a 'reasonable' case for challenging the Local Plan (LP2035) as a whole on the grounds of:

- Climate change measures
  - Improper pressure put on councillors to adopt the plan
  - Excessive and incorrectly calculated housing numbers
  - Inadequate consultation
8. Bioabundance has sent a 22-page Pre-Action Protocol letter (PAP) to South Oxfordshire District Council. They will apply to the High Court on 20 Jan for Judicial review of LP2035.
  9. A CIC cannot be set up solely to launch a Judicial Review so the existence of Bioabundance will be ongoing whatever happens; it will be proactive in challenging

breaches in environmental law (eg pollution with sewage), and exerting pressure to ensure that, as far as possible, climate change mitigation / offsetting is solid and that things such as heritage and conservation areas are protected.

10. **Bioabundance will need to raise c.£10,000** to take the case forward. They are currently awaiting a 'cost order' limited by the Aarhus Convention. For the High Court stage it is estimated that **a further £30k will need to be raised.**
11. Save Culham Green Belt and Culham Parish Council (now corporate members of Bioabundance) wholeheartedly support this last effort to avoid catastrophe for the district, though there can be no guarantees of success. Many of us will be donating personally and invite you to consider a donation.
12. The Company is also welcoming any new members who would be interested in being involved in their aims in the area of climate, nature and biodiversity. Membership is £10 for individuals (and £25 for corporate/company members). Write to [bioabundance@gmail.com](mailto:bioabundance@gmail.com) to sign up.

Their website is: [www.bioabundance.org.uk](http://www.bioabundance.org.uk)

**I will let you know when the High Court have accepted the case and hope that you may be able to then donate.**

Thank you for reading.

Caroline Baird

[www.saveculhamgreenbelt.org](http://www.saveculhamgreenbelt.org)

## **DISTRICT COUNCILLOR REPORT – January 2021**

**Sam Casey-Rerhaye**

### **Covid 19**

With the new lockdown, please remember the Council support lines ARE STILL OPEN:

The **Community Hub** at the District Council remains a valuable point of contact for residents who need support and so if you're contacted by any members of the public who are worried or need help, point them in the hub's direction on **01235 422600** or email [communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk](mailto:communitysupport@southandvale.gov.uk).

The Community Hub team is currently available from: 8.30am-5pm Monday to Thursday;  
8.30am-4.30pm Friday.

The message to anybody who is unsure if they need help, or if they're unsure if the council can help, is ***if in doubt, get in touch!***

The dedicated **South and Vale Business Support Team** is on hand with advice and guidance for businesses in our communities to help understand what the lockdown might mean to them, and what support is available. There's lots of information already at [www.svbs.co.uk](http://www.svbs.co.uk) and this page will be updated all the time.



**If the local Covid Community Groups find they have significant pressures, they can contact the Hub as soon where they can get advice and support.**

**Do take note that** the new variant is far more transmittable, and that situations that were previously low or medium risk, may well be higher risk, and to maintain a minimum 2 metre distance as recommended by our Health Protection Board.

**Please follow government guidance to STAY AT HOME as much as you possibly can.**

As a result of this new lockdown, the council's ability to maintain business as usual will be severely affected whether it be because staff are being re-deployed to the Hub, the local Track and Trace or administering business grants which are becoming more complicated, and/or having to supervise children at home or because they are ill/looking after someone who is ill or shielding.

### **Brown Bin Collections Suspended**

Brown bin collections for garden waste have been suspended while Biffa need to focus on essential waste collections with staff shortages. The Council already offers more collections than are paid for each year, so this should not affect the cost. Please be patient and maybe postpone garden clearing up for a few more weeks.

### **Local Plan**

In the Full Council meeting on 10<sup>th</sup> December, the Local Plan 2035 was adopted. I abstained in the vote. My reasons for doing this was that I felt my voting against it was useless as the government minister had already indicated that he would have taken further action if the Plan was not adopted, and therefore any vote by the Council was 'window dressing' only, in which I refused to participate. I am extremely sorry we were not able to withdraw this Plan and start a new one as we had hoped when we had been voted in, but the government seems determined to grow South Oxfordshire no matter what the local people want. There have been some emails requesting a u-turn in relation to the changed formula on housing numbers that the government issued in their White Paper on planning. This is not possible as the new formula would not be retrospective and has not come into force yet anyway.

The Plan will now carry 'full weight' in Planning applications. We were able to get some changes put into the Plan – including getting community involvement in the master-planning of strategic sites, the prioritisation of walking and cycling in these plans and a new policy (DES10) on carbon reduction in house building- as far as legislation allows and it relates to all housing applications of whatever number.

Strategic planning never stops, however, and we are engaged in discussions across Oxfordshire and the broader Ox-Cam Arc area to create a longer-term strategic vision for the region, including employment opportunities (particularly in the area of green technology and innovation), digital infrastructure, environmental enhancements/nature recovery networks and community strengthening. We are also investigating the feasibility of a joint Local Plan with the Vale of the White Horse, since we share so many interests and issues (e.g. the development of the Didcot Garden Town) for the next Local Plan.

### **Housing First**

Six new long-term homes have been provided for former rough sleepers in the south of the county following the success of a pilot project called 'Housing First' run by South Oxfordshire District Council and Soha Housing in partnership with Aspire Oxfordshire.

Housing First offers former rough sleepers with complex needs the opportunity to be rapidly rehoused into suitable accommodation where they receive intensive and long-term support provided by Aspire Oxfordshire.

This is different from the traditional “pathway approach” offered to rough sleepers. The pathway approach often begins with emergency accommodation, then moving to supported accommodation before finally receiving an offer of long-term accommodation if they are assessed as suitable. This can be unsettling and difficult to manage for people who often have multiple complex needs.

The pilot project began in South Oxfordshire in 2019 when six households accepted an offer of long-term accommodation and support. All are still in their homes and are celebrating the new year away from rough sleeping.

This new extension of the Housing First project will also be part funded by the Vale of the White Horse District Council, in addition to money from South Oxfordshire District Council, Soha Housing and the government

### **Civil Parking Enforcement**

The Council approved a recommendation at a special meeting on 22<sup>nd</sup> December to move ahead with taking responsibility for managing on-street civil parking enforcement in collaboration with Oxfordshire County Council. We now expect progress on this to move quickly and for powers to be transferred during 2021. This will work alongside our existing off-street parking enforcement powers. We will be consulting communities on parking problem ‘hotspots’ when we are close to implementing this.

### **New CIL Spending Strategy**

We approved a new CIL and Section106 spending strategy last month (money that developers need to give communities/councils when they build new houses or other building) which will take effect from April 2021. Most of the changes affect how SODC and Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) can spend their allocation of CIL funds; the Parish allocation will remain at 25%. This means that OCC will now be able to claim funds to spend on libraries and Special Education Needs provision as well as on education and transport, while SODC will be able to invest in improvements to cycle networks, provision of electric charging points and access to nature. The new, more flexible, rules should release funds more rapidly and enable larger projects to be commissioned across the District rather than being spent piecemeal on small initiatives.

### **District Councillor Grants**

There is less than one month left to apply for a Councillor Grant (5<sup>th</sup> Feb is deadline), although it maybe extended for a short period - application forms and guidelines can be found here:

<https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/community-support/grants/councillor-community-grants/>

As ever, please get in touch with any queries related to the District Council:

[Sam.casey-rerhaye@southoxon.govuk](mailto:Sam.casey-rerhaye@southoxon.govuk)

01235 7994809

# Oxfordshire County Council News

COUNTY COUNCILLORS UPDATE FOR JANUARY 2021

BY CLLR LORRAINE LINDSAY-GALE

## COVID-19 vaccination programme

The first vaccinations using the Oxford AstraZeneca vaccine on Monday signalled another key milestone in our fight against the pandemic. It was wonderful to see the first doses of a vaccine that had been developed in Oxford delivered at the city's Churchill Hospital.

The Oxford vaccine represents a major addition to the UK's vaccination programme, which continues at pace with almost 1.5 million people in the UK having now received at least one dose of the COVID vaccine. In Oxfordshire, 18 GP-led vaccination sites and one hospital hub are now delivering the vaccine to our most vulnerable residents and frontline health and social care workers (a more detailed vaccination update is below). I am delighted to report that, as of Wednesday this week, 22 per cent of care home residents and 23 per cent of care home staff in the county have received the vaccine.

By the 15th January 22 sites across Oxfordshire will be offering vaccinations to the top two [priority groups](#). Good progress has been made in vaccinating approximately one third of residents aged 80 and over so far.

The first vaccinations were delivered to patients (aged 80 and over), care workers and frontline NHS staff on 8 December at the Churchill Hospital. Since then vaccination services have opened in a phased approach, led by GPs, across the following primary care network sites:

- Chipping Norton Health Centre
- Hart Surgery, Henley
- Banbury Cross Health Centre
- Malthouse Surgery, Abingdon
- Bartlemas Surgery, Oxford
- Jericho Health Centre, Oxford
- Barton Neighbourhood Centre
- Windrush Health Centre, Witney
- Leys Health Centre, Oxford
- Wallingford Community Hospital
- Morland House Surgery, Thame
- Clifton Hampden Centre
- The Heritage Centre, Bicester
- Kennington Health Centre
- Didcot Civic Hall

- Islip Medical Practice
- Cherwell School, Oxford
- Wantage Health Centre.

The final three sites will start vaccinations next week in Carterton, Faringdon and the Grimsbury area of Banbury. Plans are also underway for the Oxfordshire Vaccination Centre to be operational by the end of January, which will be the Oxfordshire site for mass vaccinations and provided by Oxford Health.

### **New year present for bus passengers in Oxfordshire**

Bus services across the county are set to be improved thanks to our work with local bus operators and major employers to revise bus services and frequencies to help support the region's recovery from the pandemic.

Among the changes are more frequent services between Milton Park and Didcot, with improved links to the site from Wantage, Grove, Abingdon and Oxford thanks to a new partnership between Milton Park and Thames Travel. Abingdon will once again be linked to Oxford station by service X2; and service X3 will operate through to the John Radcliffe Hospital, while also serving the new Barton Park development and Barton. A higher frequency will be introduced between Abingdon and Oxford city centre on Mondays to Saturdays. To find out more, read the [news story](#) on our website.

### **Oxfordshire wins £3 million grant to help prevent sewers flooding**

Householders and businesses could see the risk of flooding reduced, after the county was awarded £3 million to prevent excess surface water from entering the sewer system.

As the lead local flood authority, we led a successful bid with Cherwell and Vale of White Horse District Councils for the funding from Thames Water. The two districts will each receive £1.5m towards projects to tackle the problem over the next five years. The funding will enable the councils to explore schemes to tackle the safe disposal of rainwater, which can overwhelm the sewer system and lead to flooding in homes, businesses and the environment. As well as reducing flood risk, this approach also provides wider benefits, such as improving the local environment, reducing air pollution and helping biodiversity.

### **Schools Now Closed**

Since writing my previous report, just a few days ago, everything has changed for our schools. They are now closed until at least the February half term – perhaps returning on February 22<sup>nd</sup>. There has been an overwhelming flood of parents claiming that they are key workers, and therefore their children should be allowed to continue attending school. The objective is to minimise the number of children attending school in order to help prevent the spread of the virus. So numbers will continue to be restricted according to the guidelines.

### **Changes to services**

Now Oxfordshire is once again subject to a national lockdown, some of our services are affected, although many will continue to deliver an online service:

- **Household waste recycling centres** remain open. However, they are very busy and so we are advising residents that the sites may close temporarily to relieve traffic congestion and to maintain social distancing.

- **The Oxfordshire Museum and Oxfordshire History Centre** are closed.
- The county's libraries are closed for browsing, but **14 library branches** are providing a limited number of services, including IT access, which must be pre-booked, online services, home library visits and click and collect.
- In line with national guidance, the county council's **registration service** will only be conducting wedding or civil partnership ceremonies in exceptional circumstances, such as the illness of a couple or member of the family due to attend the ceremony.

### Helping businesses

This week the Chancellor announced one-off top up grants for retail, hospitality and leisure businesses worth up to £9,000 per property to help businesses through to the spring. A £594 million discretionary fund was also made available, at a national level, to support other impacted businesses and this comes in addition to £1.1 billion further discretionary grant funding for local authorities, local restriction support grants worth up to £3,000 a month and the extension of the furlough scheme. To read more about the Chancellor's announcement visit [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

The government's [business support](#) webpages also set out the COVID-19 support available to businesses such as loan schemes designed to support UK businesses that are losing revenue and seeing their cashflow disrupted as a result of the pandemic.

In Oxfordshire, the four Districts and the City council are responsible for distributing grant funding. As throughout, they have been doing a fantastic job and update their support for business webpages on a regular basis.

### Christmas effort to protect and support residents

Areas of the county were once again affected by flooding over the holiday period. I am sure you would like to join me in recognising and thanking our colleagues in highways, social care, emergency planning and response plus our wonderful fire and rescue service who worked incredibly hard to ensure all those affected had accommodation, properties were protected where possible and roads were closed where necessary. Two care facilities were flooded and social care ensured all clients were moved to alternative care facilities, with our fire service moving essential equipment. The emergency planning team supported this response, liaising closely with the communications team, who shared information and messages as widely as possible to residents and businesses. This highlights how our services really pull together at times of crisis.

## Green Recycling Bins - The Railway Inn



The Green Recycling bins situated at the end of The Railway Inn Car Park **are no longer available** as they are full to overflowing and collections are not taking place.

## 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.

Please send contributions for the March issue of the Mouthpiece by February 15<sup>th</sup> to:  
[generalmouthpiece@gmail.com](mailto:generalmouthpiece@gmail.com)

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## LOCAL SERVICES DIRECTORY

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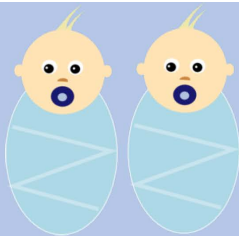
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