

The Mouthpiece

Culham's Newsletter

March 2022



Dates for your Diary

Wed 2 nd March	7.30pm	Parish Council Meeting	St Paul's Church
Sun 6 th March	11am	Family Holy Communion	St Paul's Church
Sun 13 th March	11am	Holy Communion	St Paul's Church
Sun 20 th March	11am	Messy Church	St Paul's Church
Sun 27 th March	11am	All- age Mothering Sunday Service	St Paul's Church

From Rev. Paul Wignall and the Dorchester Abbey Team



Loneliness can take many forms. Maybe we find ourselves without family, or friends seem preoccupied and we don't want to add to their pressure, or we aren't well enough, in mind, body or spirit, to get out and about just now. I suspect too that loneliness has become an underlying state for many of us over the past couple of years, with lockdowns, isolation, loss of the familiar rhythms of life and calendar landmarks. We aren't quite sure how to get back into circulation again, even if we want to; our energy levels have fallen through the floor.

I've been reading a little book recently. Written by Gavin Francis, a GP working in Scotland, it's called *Recovery: The Lost Art of Convalescence*. The book is full of wisdom and it grows out of the conviction that too often both doctors and their patients get into a mindset that, once the medication is finished, the wound healed on the surface, the stitches removed, all is back to normal. But, of course, it isn't. We still have quite a way to go, not just bringing our bodies but also our minds back to full health. And if we don't seem to be bouncing back as quickly as we ought, then we start to worry, or punish ourselves, or feel ourselves to be failing others. But, as Dr Francis makes clear, healing takes time, acceptance of limitations (however temporary or long-lasting) and above all self-compassion. You have been through a hard time, and it's not over when the last pill has been taken or the last appointment signed off.

The last two years have hit individuals very hard, and we will need time to recover. It's hit schools and communities, clubs and pubs, and churches hard too. They will need time to recover: time for convalescence, for taking pressure off, for self-compassion and for mutual care above all. Do you remember the days of convalescent homes? Often run by trade unions or charities, they gave people time and space, a chance to get back to some level of health and fitness, renewing confidence and helping us accept ourselves as we are, and having a realistic understanding of what we can be.

There aren't many convalescent homes around now – not in that sense – so perhaps we have to find them in family and community life, being compassionate with one another, and confident that these times too will pass, eventually, and like spring, new life will come again (even if isn't quite like the old life). So don't be afraid of being tired, detached, uncertain. It's part of the recovery. And don't be afraid of finding joy wherever you can: in your garden, in a flickering candle, in a smile, in music or a good book. Take time and time will take you in its loving arms and gently nurture you into health. It takes time to regroup with friends and family, with community gatherings; but time will do it with you, if you let it.

Team Services

Ash Wednesday 2nd March: Begin your Lenten journey with an act of repentance and a commitment to follow Jesus

9.30am Berinsfield Eucharist with Imposition of Ashes

7.00pm Dorchester Abbey We will mark the start of the Season of Lent with a quiet, contemplative evening service. This will include reflective readings and the symbolic marking with ashes. All are welcome as we journey together into Lent.

Through the week in Lent Devotional Services:

Mondays: Compline 8pm Drayton St Leonard Church A service of music and words for quiet reflection

Thursdays: Stations of the Cross 5pm Berinsfield Church A devotional reflection on Jesus' journey to the Cross

Fri 4th March 3pm Women's World Day of Prayer "I Know the Plans I Have for You" Berinsfield Church followed by afternoon tea Everyone welcome!

Mothering Sunday 27th March

As Mothering Sunday this year falls on the fourth Sunday of the month, we will be having services in the parishes instead of our monthly Team Service.

Team Events

Farewells from Canon Sue Booy

It was a great sadness that it was felt right to postpone some of the Farewell events that people had so kindly arranged for us – we are really hoping that it will be possible to reschedule them in the near future (see below). We are particularly sorry that the message about the Saturday coffee did not get through to everyone. The love and care that has gone into their organisation of events for our departure, the kind and generous messages we have received and the truly memorable leaving service on 16 January have all given us so much joy – with more to come.

Drop in café with Sue Booy

If you have not yet had an opportunity to say goodbye to Sue, there will be a drop in café at the Abbey on **Saturday 5th March, 10.00am - 11.30am**, so you can have a cuppa with her and say your farewells.

Living in Love & Faith (LLF) Lent Course

This course from the Church of England is a chance to explore important issues of identity, sexuality, relationships and marriage. It is an opportunity to discuss and shape the direction of the Church of England on these issues as at the end of the course you will be shown how to complete a questionnaire and submit your thoughts to the Bishops of the Church of England. We are offering sessions in the afternoon and the evening on Wednesdays during Lent so people can join in at a time to suit them. The afternoon session begins with tea and cake and the evening session begins with a Fish Supper.

See posters or contact your local clergy for more details

Wednesdays 9th-30th March 2pm Berinsfield Church and 7pm Berinsfield Church

Lent Coffee and Lunches across the Team

Tuesdays Lent LOAF Lunch 12.30pm Berinsfield Church Local, Organic, Animal friendly and Fair trade food for the body and soul! Come for lunch and a sharing of recipes and ideas to make your shopping and eating environmentally friendly.

Wednesdays Lent Lunch 12pm in the Bridge Group – contact clergy for details

2nd March Vicarage Long Wittenham

9th March Vicarage Long Wittenham

16th March Long Wittenham Church

23rd March Pool Room, Little Wittenham

30th March Long Wittenham Church

6th April Vicarage Long Wittenham

Thursdays Lent Coffee and Cake 11am Vicarage Warborough Contact Rev Caroline for more detail

Events in the Abbey

Sat 19th March 7.30pm Chilcott Requiem and Haydn Nelson Mass Our first concert under our new musical director, David Wordsworth will feature Bob Chilcott's gentle and beautiful Requiem coupled with one of Haydn's most successful and stirring choral compositions, the Nelson Mass. For more details see

<https://www.bensonchoralsociety.org.uk/>.

Sat 26th March 7pm Classic Mozart Mozart's last work, written as he drew his final breaths, is his most loving and human. Ave Verum, unlike the dramatic Requiem on which Mozart was working at the same time, is simple and humble; Mozart called it sotto voce (subdued). Tickets £5 to £25 from <https://www.osj.org.uk/>

Village News

Village website: www.culhamvillage.org.uk

Culham Parish Council (CPC) notes – February 2022

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

Recreation Ground and Play Equipment Report

CPC is waiting for a report from the committee concerning the status of the grant applications.

“20’s plenty” campaign

Oxfordshire is fairly positive about the change to lower speed limits, according to an online forum attended by CPC. The speed limit can be ‘enforced’ using a phone app which a trained operative uses to photograph the speeding vehicle. This information is sent to the police who then send a letter to the vehicle’s owner reminding them of the offence. Further action can be taken for repeated offences.

CPC is awaiting an information pack from the organising group before proceeding. This will include stickers for waste bins, etc.

Pedestrian crossing at the Waggon & Horses

CPC will put in a bid to OCC to apply for money for a pedestrian-controlled crossing on the A415 under CIL funding.

Noticeboards

Repairs will be instigated rather than replacement of the noticeboards.

HIF road update from the Parish group

Consultants have produced several reports for submission in objection to the scheme. Feedback has been returned to the Five Parishes coordinator.

Traffic calming gates

CPC has just to pay their contribution before installation is agreed.

Neighbourhood plan

Formal procedures are being considered and going through the system before a village referendum in August(ish) 2022. SODC should approve the plan by end of March 2022.

Spoil heap next to path on the Moors

A plan was presented by Morrell’s to sift and remove the heap, keeping the material useful for repairs to the road on the approach to the hydro. A conversion of the central part of the road way to a ‘green lane’ was discussed.

Orchard site – to discuss site options

Three locations were discussed. The area by the pumping station on Tollgate Road was chosen. Plans will progress with a view to plant the trees next season.

Next meeting

Wednesday 2nd March 2022 at 19:30 – to be held in the Church

PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE OF DAY.

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

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

District Councillor's Report February 2022- Sam Casey-Rerhaye

2022/23 South Oxfordshire District Council Budget

The 2022/23 budget will go to Council for debate on 17th February.

I am pleased to report that, thanks to bringing the Finance function back in-house from Capita, we have much better processes for budget-setting, scrutiny and approval. This has helped us to identify savings in our base budget while not compromising on the services we offer to residents. As a result of this, our update Medium Term Financial Plan which takes us through to 2026/27 shows a much healthier reserves balance of £21m, whereas previously it was projected to be only £11.4m and falling. Better accounting systems, our decision to create our new Local Plan jointly with the Vale, and savings in rent paid to Milton Park after the Council moves into the new office we are building in Didcot have all contributed to this. It undoubtedly helps that at least three of the members of the Cabinet of the Council are qualified Accountants and are therefore able to provide a professional approach to the Council's finances.

Our current projections indicate that we have been successful in closing the gap between revenue and expenditure since being elected in 2019 (one of our Corporate Plan priorities) and that Council reserves are in a much stronger position than the predictions we inherited. As a result, we have been able to put aside £500k for this year to further accelerate actions in our Climate Action Plan, nature recovery and community well-being projects – some of which are 'invest to save' for the future.

Unfortunately, we still only have a one-year financial settlement from the Government, which does pose challenges with long term planning for revenue spending. We are proposing raising Council Tax by the maximum allowed, which is £5 per annum for a Band D home. It was the decision in the past to freeze Council tax, while losing control of the finances by outsourcing so much to Capita, that gave rise to the previous alarming forecast. However, despite the improving position, the Council's finances are not yet sufficiently robust to prevent an increase in Council Tax. There is no point in making a political gesture by freezing council tax if the Council ends up, like Northamptonshire or Slough, completely bankrupt.

Infrastructure Funding Statements

SODC has published its Infrastructure Funding Statements for 2020/21 to provide an annual summary of developer contributions. Through Community Infrastructure Levy and Section 106, we have secured just over £20.5m from local developments, which will go towards local infrastructure to support the building growth in our district. We publish it on the website: <https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/community-support/infrastructure-to-support-communities/>

As part of the budget-setting process for 2022/23, a prioritised list of projects which will use the SODC portion of these funds has been created; this new approach will ensure that 3rd party funds are used wherever possible for major projects, thus reducing the demand on the Council's reserves. The majority of these projects relate to the District's leisure centres, the Riverside pool, campsite and other facilities in Wallingford, tree planting projects and to the purchase of housing for properly affordable rent

Covid Support continues with the Community Hub

The Household Support Fund has vouchers available (until the end of March) for fuel, food and other necessities if people are struggling. You do not need to be claiming benefit to be eligible. People who are struggling to pay for food, energy, water bills and other related expenses can contact Citizens Advice on 0808 278 7907 / hsf@osavcab.org.uk to apply for support. They will refer all successful applicants to receive vouchers from the council's Community Hub. <ore details here: <http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/coronavirus-community-support/household-support-fund/>

Community hub team support

On top of managing the household support fund above, our Community Hub team remains very busy supporting for residents who are self-isolating. In January the Hub made 502 phone calls to people who've asked for help whilst self-isolating, contacted 105 residents who've received the £500 test and trace payment to offer them support, delivered 11 food parcels and handled 436 enquiries from residents, mostly on financial help.

Climate Action Plan for the District Council

We have approved our 4-year Climate Action Plan this month. Each and every action is costed, budgeted and in each department's work plan. This means we are not making lofty statements but have worked through a series of 74 actions, big and small, over the next 4 years. It is also a working document that will be updated if and when legislation changes and if the performance monitoring of the Plan requires change. We will produce quarterly monitoring reports on the Plan which will go to the Climate & Ecological Crises Advisory Committee (CEEAC) for comment and feedback and be part of the wider Corporate Plan we created in 2020. A lot of work on climate action and nature recovery is already ongoing in the Council, and this outlines our next steps. It covers 7 areas of actions: Our Ways of Working, Our Service Delivery, Our People, Our Land, Our Buildings, Our Communities, Our Partners. I am very pleased with the Plan, and as Chair of the CEEAC, will be part of the monitoring of its implementation. I also think it will help give momentum to other people and organisations around the District in changing how we live and work to reduce carbon and other greenhouse gas emissions substantially – this cannot be achieved without commitment to change from all of us. The Plan will soon be put up on our Climate pages:

[Action on climate and nature - South Oxfordshire District Council \(southoxon.gov.uk\)](https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/action-on-climate-and-nature)

Design Guide Consultation

We have published a draft document known as a Design Guide that provides guidance on how new developments can be designed and constructed to the highest levels of quality and sustainability – and we want to hear what people think. I am really pleased with it, it is as sustainable as we could make it within the law and is incredibly detailed, whilst being easy to understand. It's a joint South and Vale guide, and it sets out a series of steps and design principles that will be considered when deciding on all future planning applications – whether it's a resident looking to build an extension or a developer building a large housing site.

To help make the draft Joint Design Guide easier to understand, we've created [an interactive website](https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/JDG/Guide.html):

<https://data.southoxon.gov.uk/JDG/Guide.html> - please have a look and then head to:

<https://www.southoxon.gov.uk/south-oxfordshire-district-council/planning-and-development/urban-design/joint-design-guide-consultation/> to give your comments.

We've just extended the deadline for comments by two weeks, as one or two people had some technical difficulties accessing the interactive website when it was launched – the new deadline for comments is 11.59pm on Tuesday 15 March.

Joint Oxfordshire Councils Letter to Minister on the '5 Year Housing Land Supply' Rule.

The six council leaders in Oxfordshire have written to Michael Gove MP highlighting our severe concerns with the national 5 Year Housing Land Supply rules. You can read the letter at:

<https://www.southandvale.gov.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/Oxfordshire-Leaders-5-year-land-supply-letter-.pdf>

Sessions to help hair and beauty staff support victims of domestic abuse

The South and Vale Community Safety Partnership and Oxfordshire charity Reducing the Risk of Domestic Abuse are running a series of free online training sessions for people in the hair and beauty industry to help them understand domestic abuse. The events entitled 'Transformations - changing our response to domestic abuse' will highlight what staff should do if they suspect that a client or colleague is at risk or suffering from domestic abuse.

The sessions are available for anyone working in South or Vale in hair and beauty, including, nail bars, tattooists and ear-piercing establishments.

Domestic abuse affects 1 in 3 women and 1 in 6 men in their lifetime, so it's very important that people know how they can support and signpost those affected.

If you know anyone working in the hair and beauty industry in our districts, please encourage them to sign up – more information is available on our Eventbrite page: southandvale.gov.uk/youcanhelp

My contact details are:

Sam.casey-rerhaye@southoxon.gov.uk

01235 635566

County Councillor's Report February 2022– Robin Bennett

Oxfordshire County Council Budget 2022-2023

OCC has just agreed the first budget of the Oxfordshire Fair Deal Alliance, a new administration for Oxfordshire which has been forged around a shared commitment to nine priorities. The three political parties of the Alliance (Lib Dems, Labour and Greens) are working together because we want to see a greener, fairer, healthier Oxfordshire. We want to build on our strengths while confronting the challenges we face: addressing climate change, tackling inequality, strengthening the resilience of individuals and communities, fostering more social cohesion and common purpose.

Our initial budget proposal in December had more than double the number of responses received last year. We have sought to reflect these in the budget, and have added:

1. £500,000 to support the review into home-to-school transport, with a particular focus on supporting more active travel and more sustainable transport opportunities.
2. We are offering tenants of the Council in community assets a one-year rent holiday to take account of financial pressures on many community and voluntary organisations.
3. We will undertake a strategic rail feasibility study advance the proposals for new rail links to Cowley, Grove/ Wantage, North Cotswolds and West Oxfordshire.
4. We are investing to accelerate our work on active travel in the county: planning for new walking and cycling schemes and including them in any future proposals.
5. Further investment to (a) support projects that will generate future savings for the Council budget; (b) make early interventions to improve the lives of children and young people; (c) accelerate our climate response.

The Alliance called on national government to respond to the challenges facing local government in a meaningful way through the autumn spending review. Unfortunately, they did not. Instead, in adult social care for example, they directed that local authorities should use council tax to meet rising costs.

In some areas, we have found that the sums provided for capital projects by the previous administration were inadequate, for example we have had to budget £27m extra for Kennington Bridge. The largest example is the Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF1) scheme linking Didcot and Culham; When the previous administration committed to deliver this, it accepted the full financial liability for any additional costs. We now face disruptions to the supply chain, very significant inflation and labour shortages in the construction sector, which will hugely increase the expense of such projects. We have asked officers to take a more sober and realistic assessment of the costs and risks associated with major programmes.

The OCC budget also included £8m over 3 years to allow communities across the county to bring in 20mph limits in built up areas; it's great to see such a positive response already.

Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council end formal partnership

Oxfordshire County Council and Cherwell District Council have both agreed to bring their formal partnership arrangements to an end. The arrangement between the two councils, which has taken the form of joint services under a single chief executive, has been in place since September 2018. Recruitment will take place for the post of permanent chief executive for the County Council.

Councillor Priority Fund

I've committed a substantial amount (£2500) from my councillor priority fund towards the parish council's plan for 3 gates to be placed at entrance points the village to encourage reduced speeds.

Public engagement on proposal to move Oxford United FC to Stratfield Brake (Kidlington)

Oxford United Football Club has proposed to develop a new 18,000 capacity football stadium with linked leisure and commercial facilities at Stratfield Brake in Kidlington (on land owned by the County Council). In addition to the stadium, the club's proposal includes facilities such as a hotel, retail, conferencing and training and community grounds.

After February's public consultation, OCC Cabinet will consider whether to proceed with negotiations at its meeting on 15th March.

Other News



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**At our February meeting we had fun
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Application deadline is **31 March 2022** in the first instance, but we are happy to receive expressions of interest on an ongoing basis.

For further info, please contact our Branch Secretary Dorian Grier.

E: dorian.cpre@gmail.com

T: 01491 612079

See our website for more information: www.cpreoxon.org.uk

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NEW DATES!

We're back!

Owing to Covid-19 we had to postpone our great new pantomime. Our new dates are as follows:

Thursday **28th** and Friday **29th April** at 7.30pm.

Saturday **30th April** matinee at 1.30pm and evening at 6pm.

Abingdon Drama Club (ADC) brings pantomime back to the beautiful Unicorn Theatre, with this classic tale of a young lad going to London to seek his fortune.



Soldiers of
Oxfordshire
Museum

Saboteurs, Assassins and Subversives! An Everyday Tale of the SOE

Video Link: <https://www.sofa.org.uk/whats-on/sas-soe/>

Saboteurs, Assassins and Subversives! An Everyday Tale of the SOE is the title of the next in Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum's series of popular online talks.

Available from 7pm, Tuesday 1st March 2022, the talk sees Ingram Murray and Antonia Keaney lift the veil of secrecy over the wartime activities of Special Operations Executive (SOE).

One of the many secret organizations created after Dunkirk at the beginning of the Second World War, the SOE had the task of stirring up clandestine warfare in Occupied Europe and creating mayhem behind enemy lines.

Both at the time, and afterwards, the SOE had a controversial record, so Ingram and Antonia will tackle the questions of whether it was effective and whether its methods were acceptable in a civilised society.

It had only a short life but it was the model followed by the USA in creating the CIA, and many of its more ruthless practices have been copied by terrorist organisations today.

Retired Lt Colonel Ingram Murray served with Parachute Squadron of the Royal Engineers commander of 131 Independent Parachute Engineer Squadron, and as watchkeeper with Intelligence Cell, 1st British Corps in GB, 1976-1980. More recently he has contributed to many exhibitions at the Soldiers of Oxfordshire Museum as a researcher and historian, including *Spy Oxfordshire: Lifting the Veil of Secrecy*, and written numerous articles for *Bugle & Sabre: The Military History of Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire*. He will also be known to listeners of the *We Have Ways Of Making You Talk* history podcast, having appeared alongside his son, comedian Al Murray.



Antonia Keaney is Blenheim Palace's Social History researcher and an experienced speaker. She has addressed a variety of audiences, featuring on both local and national TV and radio. Antonia has also co-curated a number of exhibitions at the Palace.

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 April 2022 issue of the Mouthpiece by March 15th to:

generalmouthpiece@gmail.com

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WHO IS WHO IN CULHAM?

CULHAM PARISH COUNCIL			
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