



## Focus on Parishes with Cllr Freddie van Mierlo (Chalgrove and Watlington)

### November 2022

*Welcome to my monthly update. I share a regular update in the first week of every month. In the interests of transparency, I share this update publicly as well as with parish councils.*

#### My recent meetings:

- 3<sup>rd</sup> October: Britwell Salome PC representative
- 4<sup>th</sup> October: Nettlebed Parish Council
- 6<sup>th</sup> October: Chalgrove Parish Council
- 7<sup>th</sup> October: OCC Full Council, Oxford
- 7<sup>th</sup> October: Place scrutiny committee, Oxford
- 10<sup>th</sup> October: Watlington & Cuxham Parishes
- 11<sup>th</sup> October: Watlington & Pyrton Parishes
- 19<sup>th</sup> October: Gypsy & Travellers Service Residents Forum, Headington
- 24<sup>th</sup> October: Shirburn Parish Meeting
- 1<sup>st</sup> November: OCC Full Council, Oxford
- 1<sup>st</sup> November: Nettlebed Parish Council
- 3<sup>rd</sup> November: Chalgrove Parish Council
- 4<sup>th</sup> November: Charlotte Coxe Trust Committee, Oxford

#### Upcoming meetings:

- 8<sup>th</sup> November: Pyrton Parish Council
- 8<sup>th</sup> November: Watlington Parish Council

\*\*\*\*\*

#### OCC news: cost of living special

**Cost of living support for low-income pensioners and families:** OCC are sending a one-off payment of £85 to 11,000 lower income pensionable households to support with energy bills. Eligible residents will receive an Oxfordshire-branded letter from the

Post Office, redeemable for cash at Post Office branches. Schools and colleges will provide children entitled to free school meals with a £15 voucher.

**100K pot to help community organisations with energy bills:** Applications for [grants](#) between £250 and £3000 can be made through the Oxfordshire Community Foundation. Expected to be popular - deadline is 21 November 2022.

**Council votes to request more energy support for off-grid residents:** Many residents in rural areas live without access to mains energy and instead use heating oil, bottled gas, or other forms of fuel. The leader of the council will write to government to request off-grid residents receive the same level of support (£400) as on-grid residents. Conservative councillors abstained on the motion.

\*\*\*\*\*

**OCC supports care business start-ups:** OCC is supporting new 'micro enterprises' to become established [care providers](#), helping local businesses to grow, and develop greater local choice for people looking for additional support. The Community Catalysts' programme takes people through the standards, so that new micro-enterprises have a thorough understanding of what it takes to deliver quality care. Over one hundred people have signed up and have the combined capacity to support one thousand people in the county.

**Renewed call on government to fund Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND):** OCC is appealing to the government to urgently address the national funding issues facing all local authorities providing [SEND services](#) for children and young people. The county council has also submitted to the Department of Education bids for two further special free schools.

**Tree services team successfully bids for funding:** OCC tree services team has been successful in a bid to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA). Funding will be used to provide two new community tree and woodland planting officers who will work to increase tree cover across the county.

**More sustainable streetlights policy:** OCC has approved a new [policy for streetlights](#) to reduce impact on climate change and the environment. The policy considers the impact of light pollution on nature and dark skies in assessing where lighting should be added. When new lighting is necessary, dimming and reduction in operating hours will be used to preserve the night sky.

**Parking standards for new developments:** Developers will need to follow a revised set of [guidelines](#) when they consider parking provisions for new developments. New standards place much more emphasis on cycles, shared car clubs, and public transport than on multiple cars per household. A graduated approach is taken to allow for increased need for parking in rural settings.

**Cheaper Park and Ride tickets up and running:** Passengers can now buy a [combined ticket](#) covering both parking and return bus travel for £4 for a car with only 1 adult and £5 for a car and 2 adults. With both options, up to three children under 16 can travel for free. Drivers are encouraged to purchase a combined ticket through the RingGo parking app, or at one of the onsite ticket machines.

**Oxford traffic filters:** Public consultation closed on 13 October 2022. The next step is for the cabinet to take a decision on 29th November 2022, where the cabinet will consider the outcomes of the public consultation and the closure of Botley Road for a year by Network Rail to accommodate improvements to the railway.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Parish round-up

*Not all parishes are covered – below is a selection of the main updates.*

### Chalgrove

- **Village gates:** OCC has agreed to jointly fund with the parish council white village gates for Mill Lane and Berrick Road
- **Gigaclear:** The need for reseeding of the grass verge used by Gigaclear at Fairfax / Argosy Close has been reported. It is being investigated by Gigaclear and will likely take place in Spring.

### Cuxham

- **Allotments:** In October I met with representatives of Cuxham parish meeting to discuss ideas for an allotment on parish land. OCC have clarified ownership of a fence previously erected by the water board, and will investigate the health of trees lining the highway

### Ewelme:

- **Traffic calming:** A meeting with officers and the parish will take place to discuss traffic calming measures

### Nettlebed

- **Pavements:** Officers are reviewing with OCC contractors action to improve the level of the pavement and reduce its gradient

### Little Milton

- **Traffic calming:** A meeting with an officer was held to discuss traffic management / calming, particularly for Haseley Road junction.

## Swyncombe

- **Additional dragon patching:** Additional patching is being scheduled for 'the lane' from Stonor to Maidensgrove (likely to take place end of November). I have discussed additional longer-term solutions with officers that I hope will be programmed also.

## Watlington

- **Watlington Relief Road:** Consultants AECOM and Galliford Try have been appointed to the scheme. AECOM will undertake preliminary design and planning while Galliford Try will carry out the detail design and construction. Resident may have noticed traffic surveys taking place in Watlington, which are associated with the planning for the road. An updated timetable has been published with the public consultation now due to take place in Spring 2023. Questions can be directed to: [WRRproject@oxfordshire.gov.uk](mailto:WRRproject@oxfordshire.gov.uk)
- **Charlotte Coxe Trust:** A meeting took place on Friday 4<sup>th</sup> November to decide the future governance of the trust that oversees management of the library and number 33 High Street. The committee voted to approve a transfer to Watlington Parish Council, with three Lib Dem & Labour councillors voting for and two Conservative councillors voting against
- **Cuxham Road / Roundabout Street lights:** SSE have fixed a broken cable, restoring power to all but 1 of the streetlights on Cuxham Roundabout. Reports of lights remaining out on Cuxham Road and Willow Close are being investigated
- **Flood management:** OCC is continuing to investigate and improve drainage in Watlington and the brook, informed by Watlington Environment Group. If you see orange cables, they are from CCTV equipment!