



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

March 2024

Welcome to my monthly update, shared in the first week of every month.

Upcoming meetings:

- 11th March: Lewknor Parish Council
- 12th March: Watlington Parish Council and meeting with Watlington retailers
- 13th March: Little Milton Parish Council
- 18th March: Great Milton Parish Council

***** OCC NEWS*****

OCC Budget 2024-2025: The [budget](#) agreed by councillors for 2024-2025 includes above inflation rises for adult social care and children's services. Councillors also agreed an additional £5m capital (one-time) investment in roads and pavements and £1.2m revenue (ongoing) investment in potholes, drainage, and verges. All parties proposed budgets or amendments that included a 4.99% rise in council tax.

Call to government on exploitation of overseas care staff: OCC is calling on the government to tackle practices that exploit overseas care workers. The UK, post-Brexit, has become increasingly reliant on care workers from outside of Europe, with fewer protections in the workplace. OCC has created a [portal](#) to help providers understand the complex immigration rules and reduce costs to providers. I asked a question to the cabinet member on this topic in December, which can be found [here](#) (question 27).

OCC leading on Nature Recovery Strategy: OCC is the lead organisation developing Oxfordshire's Nature Recovery Strategy (a new requirement following the Environment Act 2021). A [consultation](#) is taking place until 31 March.

Streetworks start for Oxford traffic filters trial: Work started to [prepare](#) for six traffic filters to be installed and trialled in Oxford, including one planned at Thames

Street. Residents living outside Oxford will qualify for filter passes. Trials will take place after Network Rail finishes its improvements work.

School places: Majority of parents and children were offered [first choice](#) in secondary school (88%). 100% parents/children listing [Icknield](#) as first choice got a place.

*****NEWS IN BRIEF*****

Visions Zero (road deaths and injuries): [Consultation](#) closes 10 March

Planned highway maintenance map: See [map](#) of planned highway maintenance

Benson relief road: Phase 2 (main civils) work has started and is expected to run to October

*****PARISH ROUND-UP *****

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

Chalgrove

- **Marley Lane:** Water rising from a manhole has been reported to OCC and Thames Water.
- **Village maintenance:** Issues highlighted by Parish Council are being worked through by OCC, including damage to bridge and uncollected barriers at Chapel lane.

Cuxham

- **B480 potholes:** Potholes have been raised with officers for action. The area is scheduled for surface inlay work (resurfacing) in summer 2024.

Ewelme

- **CLEUD:** Decision is still pending.
- **Drainage works:** Proposed drainage improvement works have been delayed, but plans remain unchanged.

Lewknor

- **Manor Close:** OCC has followed up twice with developer on drawing package for technical audit. Developer noted that they are working on details and come back to OCC
- **Hill Road steps:** Budget has been identified in new financial year for a handrail, with delivery expected early in financial year

Shirburn

- **Chicane:** Following a trial, it has been agreed to progress plans for a chicane on B4009, which will require a public consultation. If objections are received, the decision will be made by the cabinet member for highways.

Swyncombe:

- **B480 drainage (Cookley Green):** Flooding on B480 at dip in road at Cookley Green has been reported to officers. Initial cleansing work has been carried out, but because road is low lying, it has been referred for a more engineered solution.

Watlington

- **Charlotte Coxe Trust:** Work is ongoing to find way to improve the EPC rating of 33 High Street
- **Red Kite View to Cuxham Road path:** Agreement has been reached between Bloor and OCC and will be signed. Once signed, traffic management for the works needs to be applied for and approved before Bloor can carry out the required work.
- **Relief Road:** The public consultation on the planning application closed on 02/03/24. A decision is expected at a planning committee meeting in May.
- **Community transport grant awarded:** WPC awarded grant of £3500 to fund survey of residents transport needs