

## EAST HAGBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DULY CONVENED AND HELD ON THURSDAY 9<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2024

#### 1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN AND VICE CHAIRMAN:

P. Dixon nominated Iain Duff to continue as Chairman. C. Gover seconded this proposal. I. Duff accepted this nomination and was unanimously elected as Chairman of East Hagbourne Parish Council until the Annual Parish Council Meeting (APCM) in May 2025. I. Duff signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was witnessed by the clerk.

I. Duff nominated P. Dixon for Vice Chairman. C. Shaikh seconded this proposal. P. Dixon accepted the nomination and was unanimously elected as Vice Chairman of East Hagbourne Parish Council until the APCM in May 2025. P. Dixon signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was witnessed by the clerk.

#### 2. ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST:

Present were Chairman I. Duff, Vice Chairman P. Dixon, Councillors C. Gover, R. Jaboor, N. Milner, D. Rickeard and C. Shaikh.

I. Duff noted that A-M Simpson confirmed ahead of the meeting that she would only be able to attend the latter part of the meeting due to a prior meeting, and may not be able to attend at all if the commitment overruns.

In attendance was L. Lloyd (Clerk).

I. Duff indicated there is 1 vacancy for a parish councillor.

#### 3. PUBLIC FORUM AND QUESTIONS: None

#### 4. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 18<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2024: The minutes of the meeting on 18<sup>th</sup> April 2024 were approved by Council and signed by I. Duff.

#### 5. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS: I. Duff confirmed receipt of the District Councillors' report, please see attachment 2.

#### 6. PROCEDURAL MATTERS: The council reviewed the Annual Review of Council Operations which was circulated ahead of the meeting. The final copy will be available on the website.

##### a) Review of nominations and terms of reference to committees, working groups and non-Council bodies, including signatories for online banking/cheque payments:

C. Shaikh and C. Gover were confirmed as continuing members of the Employment Committee.

P. Dixon and R. Jaboor were confirmed as continuing members of the Cemetery Committee and it was noted that a councillor from EHPC would be taking the Chairman role for the committee in 2024-25, to be confirmed at the July Cemetery Committee meeting.

The change of signatory with Unity Trust Bank has taken a long time due to lack of a second form of ID for N. Milner. It was agreed that this process must be completed as soon as possible or an alternative councillor should be appointed as the new signatory.

##### b) Review of standing orders and financial regulations: The Standing Orders and Financial Regulations were both updated and approved on 9 March 2023. A review in April 2024 resulted in no proposed changes to either document. L. Lloyd confirmed that the new NALC Model Financial Regulations dated April 2024 were circulated to clerks by OALC in early May and need to be reviewed thoroughly to ensure they fit the council's needs.

##### c) Review of inventory of land and assets including buildings and office equipment: A review of assets was carried out at the end of March 2024. No assets were added to the register during 2023-24. R. Jaboor questioned the village car park extension, and it was noted that this could not be added until the land transfer from Deanfield Homes is complete.

##### d) Review and confirmation of arrangements for insurance cover in respect of all insured risks: Insurance cover was renewed on 1<sup>st</sup> April, continuing with the second year of a three-year agreement. BHIB rebranded as Clear Councils in 2023 and the insurance cover is unaffected by this change.

##### e) Review of the Council's Risk Assessment: The Risk Assessment including financial risks was adopted in 2015 and revised in May 2021. A review in May 2023 resulted in a minor change to the risk assessment, which was approved by council. No changes were made following review in early May 2024.

##### f) Review of the Council's and/or employees' memberships of other bodies: Memberships were reviewed and no additions or changes were proposed.

g) **Other Councillor responsibilities:** None noted

h) **Setting the dates, times and place of ordinary meetings of the full Council for the year ahead:**

2024: June 6, July 18, September 5, October 10, November 14, December 5

2025: January 9, February 13, March 13, April 24 (at Hagbourne Village Hall), May 15

All Parish Council meetings will be held at the Pavilion, Great Mead, East Hagbourne unless otherwise stated.

All meetings will commence at 19:30

It was also agreed that the Annual Parish Meeting will take place on April 3 and will be held at The Pavilion, Great Mead.

## 7. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

**Progress with specifications and quotes for FP12 (Fieldside to the Causeway) and FP15 (Grange Footpath):** P. Dixon confirmed that he has prepared two new specifications for the footpaths following the comments at the April meeting. C. Shaikh extended her thanks to P. Dixon for managing the technical level required for preparing the specifications. It was agreed that the final specs should be sent to the contractors for comparative quotes and also to the FP12 field owner and OCC for approval. L. Lloyd to continue her efforts to make progress with Arthur McEwan-James. P. Dixon noted that adding signage to the paths to restrict users and protect the new surfaces would be advisable.

## 8. ITEMS FOR DECISION:

a) **To consider grant requests from the following organisations:**

i) **Life Education Wessex and Thames Valley – Up to £100.00:** I. Duff noted the request, and asked for councillors views. D. Rickeard queried why there was a limit of £100.00 noted as this particular venture is a good example which directly benefits Hagbourne residents, it would be a good opportunity to perhaps contribute more than £100.00. P. Dixon noted that the request letter stated that it was not expected that the Parish Council would cover the full shortfall of £310.00. It was noted that an additional amount could be given by including an item on a later agenda if there was a consensus to do so. Councillors resolved to award a grant of £100.00 in accordance with the council's powers under Section 137 (S137) of the Local Government Act 1972.

ii) **Home Start Oxfordshire – Up to £100.00:** Councillors resolved to award a grant of £100.00 in accordance with the council's powers under Section 137 (S137) of the Local Government Act 1972.

b) **To ratify the decision to pay for Shield Maintenance Ltd to carry out rubbish clearance from Butts Piece wooded area at a cost of £399.60:** I. Duff noted that following the April meeting, a tent with a lot of contents and outlying rubbish had been located in Butts Piece wooded area. Due to the volume and type of rubbish, a quote for clearance by Shield Maintenance to include proper disposal of the waste was obtained and the clearance was requested for completion this week. Councillors ratified this decision. R. Jaboor queried whether this was a frequent problem as the costs could mount up. It was confirmed that the last clearance was on a smaller scale back in 2020.

c) **To approve the clerk's attendance at OALC's Talking Tables Training Day on Council Assets on 16<sup>th</sup> May at a cost of £40.00:** Councillors approved the clerk's attendance.

d) **To approve the village car park drain clearance at a cost of £168.00 for works carried out on 25<sup>th</sup> April:** I. Duff confirmed that the recent visit from OPC Drains to clear the car park drain was unable to complete a CCTV survey due to the high water level at the headwall. The investigation did clarify the drain layout from the car park to the main road drain and following a further jetting, the flow has been restored. D. Rickeard confirmed that the information gained is useful and I. Duff confirmed that he recently met with Carl Stallwood of OCC who has drainage information that may further help clarify the outlet situation. I. Duff also confirmed that Carl Stallwood has taken over from Daniel Depp as the new footways contact. Councillors approved the expenditure.

## 9. ITEMS FOR REPORT:

a) **Planning Applications:** I. Duff confirmed that both P24/S1241/LB for Appletree Cottage, Main Road and P24/S1300/LB for 6/7 Church Close will have replacement windows with double glazing that has been approved by the conservation team. A no objection response was agreed for both applications.

b) **East Hagbourne Sport and Recreation Committee:** D. Rickeard confirmed the following: The EHSRC AGM was held on 22<sup>nd</sup> April and included confirmation of the new committee; further research on options for the Pavilion Lease are ongoing, with hopefully something to discuss at the next meeting; the £500 insurance contribution for 2024-25 from EHSRC has been initiated.

c) **Cemetery Committee:** P. Dixon reported that he visited the cemetery when a recent grave was dug to analyse the ground layers in relation to drainage concerns raised following the recent flooding. A layer of impervious rock is the main issue as it requires breaking up with a jackhammer when digging the grave. There is a lateral drain in situ which sits on top of the impervious rock layer. On speaking to the grave digger on site,

it is evident that other local cemeteries have similar drainage issues which are still unresolved. Investigation into possible solutions of the flooding problem will continue.

- d) **Employment Committee:** C. Shaikh confirmed that the OALC employment training and the clerk's annual appraisal are both taking place on 13<sup>th</sup> May.
- e) **Butts Piece Allotments:** Part of the fence between SOHA and the allotment has been replaced, but there is another section (about two panels) that needs replacing. The Japanese Knotweed is growing again and the contractor has been informed of this; they have planned to complete the first treatment in June.
- f) **Future Oxfordshire Partnership:** No comments.
- g) **Emergency Plan:** R. Jaboor confirmed that the Emergency Plan will be circulated for approval ahead of the June Parish Council meeting.
- h) **Flood Management:** I. Duff confirmed that Carl Stallwood remains positive about the expression of interest for flood management project funding submitted by EHPC to Lewis Purbrick in late April.
- i) **Community Speedwatch:** R. Jaboor confirmed that 1 person has completed the online training and suitable locations for the speed monitoring were being determined and would need agreement from Thames Valley Police. An initial quote for 3 solar powered VAS speed signs has been obtained and it was agreed that additional quotes should be sought. It was noted that OCC will be involved in the process for installation of poles and approving locations.
- j) **Neighbourhood Plan:** D. Rickeard confirmed that the Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group (NPSG) are working on final minor edits of the plan ahead of it being added to the SODC website.
- k) **Housing Development adjacent to the village hall:** I. Duff confirmed that the sales office will be removed in late summer after the final houses are sold and the children's playground will be installed in that position. The area adjacent to the playing field where there are offices and the workers' car park will be grassed over.
- l) **Matters raised at the Chairman's Surgery and OALC Councillor's meeting:** I. Duff noted the following from his 19<sup>th</sup> April Chairmans Surgery:

Discussion on footpaths including support for 1.2 metre width as opposed to 1.5 metres. Also a request that FP12 renovation be continued from Parsonage Lane to the lane by the church.

Several questions on Deanfield estate. One was seeking assurance that houses would be allocated to local people, which is the case. Questions also on timescale for site completion. Mixed comments on the new access to the embankment from the housing estate but access very much appreciated.

Favourable comment made on information on progress of 20mph zones given in the chairman's page in the Parish Magazine.

Concern was raised about badly painted road markings in S278 works by Deanfield site.

OALC Councillors meeting: I. Duff noted that the recent session spent a lot of time discussing problems including issues between councillors and clerks. It was felt that the Civility and Respect pledge could be an important tool in helping with these issues.

## 10. CORRESPONDENCE:

C. Gover queried whether there had been any feedback on the weed clearance on Main Road which was due to happen this week. A sweeper was seen in the village but it is unclear whether the anticipated clearance has been completed, as there has not been as much weed removal as the previous sweep which used a wire brush system. L. Lloyd confirmed that she will check the status as a thorough gutter sweep may need to be followed by weed treatment ahead of the planned visit from the dragon patcher.

## 11. Finance:

### a) Expenditure and receipts since the last meeting and account balances:

a) Payments since last meeting: NB: Payments pending are shown in yellow and are not included in the account balance shown in c)

Payee	Item	Online Payment/ Cheque No	Amount	VAT	Total	Date
Oxfordshire County Council	INV 3920709995 Granite Sets installed on Main Road	C Shaikh / C Gover	£1,666.67	£333.33	£2,000.00	22/04/2024
ONPA	Membership 2024/25	C Shaikh / C Gover	£50.00	£0.00	£50.00	22/04/2024
Dark White Digital	INV 001502 web hosting April 2024	C Shaikh / C Gover	£30.00	£0.00	£30.00	22/04/2024
Shield Maintenance Ltd	INV 7494 March bin emptying Butts Piece	C Shaikh / C Gover	£13.00	£2.60	£15.60	22/04/2024
OALC	W-3245 Essentials of Employing People (C. Gover)	C Shaikh / C Gover	£30.00	£6.00	£36.00	22/04/2024

OALC	W-3246 Essentials of Employing People (C. Shaikh)	C Shaikh / C Gover	£30.00	£6.00	£36.00	22/04/2024
I. Duff	Expenses - BT roaming charges	C Shaikh / C Gover	£5.48	£0.00	£5.48	22/04/2024
Grundon Waste Management	PSI-1039415 Cemetery waste collection March 2024	DD	£54.73	£10.95	£65.68	23/04/2024
L. Lloyd	April Salary	C Shaikh / C Gover	£784.69	£0.00	£784.69	30/04/2024
Dark White Digital	INV 001530 Web hosting May 2024		£30.00	£0.00	£30.00	
Shield Maintenance Ltd	INV 7587 Dog bin and waste bin emptying April 2024		£125.66	£25.13	£150.79	
EHSRC	INV 240404 Pavilion hire for Parish Council meeting 18/04/2024		£25.00	£0.00	£25.00	
OPC Drains	INV 7349 Drain investigation and clearance 25/04/2024		£168.00	£33.60	£201.60	
L. Lloyd	Expenses - ICO Registration fee		£40.00	£0.00	£40.00	
L. Lloyd	May Salary		£784.69	£0.00	£784.69	
**April Skies Accounting** ADDED AT THE MEETING	INV0239 End of Year Internal Audit 2023/24		£135.00	£0.00	£135.00	

**b) Receipts since last meeting:**

From	Item	Amount	Date
Plot 19	Allotment Rent	£28.65	19/04/2024
Plot 11	Allotment Rent	£26.35	19/04/2024
HMRC	VAT Refund for 2023/24	£2,443.83	23/04/2024
Central England Coop	Lamerton Interment C078	£88.00	23/04/2024
MJ Didcock	Hill EROB and interment G189	£308.00	25/04/2024
MJ Didcock	Jones interment F168	£88.00	25/04/2024
SODC	CIL Money Payment (P22/S2574/FUL Instalment 1)	£4,165.09	26/04/2024
Plot 3	Allotment Rent	£29.00	29/04/2024
Plots 1 and 16	Allotment Rent	£54.60	30/04/2024
Plot 4A	Allotment Rent	£14.85	30/04/2024
Plots 12 and 13	Allotment Rent	£54.40	30/04/2024
Plot 24	Allotment Rent	£29.75	30/04/2024
Redwood Bank	35 day notice account interest April	£223.74	30/04/2024
Nationwide	Instant Access Savings account interest - April	£144.82	30/04/2024
Plot 15	Allotment Rent	£21.75	07/05/2024
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£7,720.83</b>	

**c) Accumulated Account Balances (reconciled online 08/05/2024)**

Unity Trust Bank - T1 current account	£22,471.01
Unity Trust Bank - Instant access account	£57,098.56
Redwood Bank - 35 Day Notice Savings Account	£85,000.00
Nationwide - Instant Access Business Savings Account	£80,236.44
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£244,806.01</u></b>

**d) The Special Project Balances (as of 08/05/2024) are:**

Community Infrastructure Levy Fund	Received 24/04/19 so requires spending by 23/04/24	£121.40
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	Received 30/04/21 so requires spending by 29/04/26	£1,517.73
	Received 27/10/21 so requires spending by 26/10/26	£3,307.90
	Received 27/04/22 so requires spending by 26/04/27	£3,035.45
	Received 28/10/22 so requires spending by 27/10/27	£2,127.82
	Received 28/04/23 so requires spending by 27/04/28	£55,413.82
	Received 27/10/23 so requires spending by 26/10/28	£106,843.63
	Received 26/04/24 so requires spending by 25/04/29	£4,165.09
	Total CIL money	£176,532.84
Community Projects Reserve Fund		£4,712.91
Planned Development Support Fund		£5,303.15
Cemetery		£15,978.98
	Total	<u>£202,527.88</u>

e) **General Reserve (as of 08/05/2024)** £42,278.13

- b) **Approval of payments:** L. Lloyd noted that the invoice from April Skies Accounting for £135.00 needed to be added to the pending payments list – this was agreed. The Council reviewed the pending payments list and approved those without prior minuted approval.
- c) **Review of Direct Debits and regular payments:** The DDs and regular payments were reviewed and approved. In addition, the variable direct debits were re-approved and signed as a record by D. Rickeard and C. Shaikh.
- d) **Progress with Unity Trust Bank change of signatory:** Ongoing
- e) **Internal Audit – response to recommendations:** I. Duff confirmed that the end of year internal audit report had been received from April Skies Accounting with no concerns raised.  
The following recommendations were made:  
The Council may wish to consider using an accounting system such as Scribe, Edge or Rialtas – L. Lloyd is looking at options and will report to council.  
The risk assessment should be noted as a separate minute, this has been picked up by external audit at other councils – this has already been actioned (see item 5.e)
- f) **Formal Acceptance of Internal Audit:** The council formally accepted the Internal Audit for 2023/24.
- g) **Formal Acceptance of Annual Accounts:**
- i) **Annual Governance Statement for 2023/24:** The Annual Governance Statement for 2023/24 was formally accepted by the council and signed by I. Duff and L. Lloyd.
- ii) **Accounting Statements for 2023/24:** The Accounting Statements for 2023/24 were formally accepted by the council and signed by I. Duff. The document was signed by L. Lloyd ahead of circulation to councillors before the meeting.
- iii) **Confirmation of the period for exercise of public rights:** L. Lloyd advised that the Notice of Public Rights would be posted on the noticeboard and in the Financial Information folder on easthagbourne.net on 3<sup>rd</sup> June, with the period of 30 working days being 4<sup>th</sup> June – 15<sup>th</sup> July inclusive. The Annual Governance Statement and Accounting Statements will also be posted for viewing on the noticeboard and the website. The documents will also be sent to the External Auditor for review.

## 12. Items for report and inclusion on the June agenda:

Emergency Plan

Items for consideration for the June agenda must be received by the clerk no later than Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> May. The meeting closed at 9.07pm. The next meeting will be held on 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024 at the Pavilion, Great Mead, East Hagbourne.

Signed.....Dated.....

## ATTACHMENT 1: ACTION LIST

Action No	What	Who	Status
2023-03-01	Deanfield Homes Car Park Land Transfer	LL	Transfer documentation signed at meeting on 26 <sup>th</sup> March. Awaiting confirmation of transfer from solicitors.
2023-06-02	Parking and Traffic Management on Main Road	NM	On hold
2023-06-03	Footway repairs in the parish	ID/PD/RJ	Prioritise potential repairs for OCC to review
2023-10-01	Disabled Parking spaces in the village car park	LL	Research options and costs
2023-10-03	Weed management on Main Road	LL/ID	SODC channel clearance along Main Road w/c 6 <sup>th</sup> May. Awaiting feedback from SODC and a quote for weed treatment from BGG.
2023-12-01	Footpath 4 surface improvements	LL	TOE Grant confirmed in mid-March, OCC have instructed the contractor to hopefully carry out the work in June (weather dependent).
VARIOUS	<p>Footpath accessibility:</p> <p>2023-12-02 FP10 MFL to West Hagbourne</p> <p>2023-12-03 FP12 Church Lane to Fieldside</p> <p>2023-12-04 FP13 Parsonage Lane</p> <p>2024-01-01 FP1 West Hagbourne to Didcot</p> <p>2024-03-01 FP12 Fieldside to the Causeway</p> <p>2024-03-02 FP15 Grange Footpath</p> <p>2024-03-03 FP8 Bakers Lane to The Croft</p> <p>2024-04-01 FP30 Village Hall</p>	LL/CS/PD/ID	<p>Chasing OCC for a meeting between OCC/EHPC and WHPC to assess FP10 and FP1 and for approval for potential works to FP12, FP15 and FP8</p> <p>Volunteer labour is available for FP8 aggregate laying subject to OCC approval</p> <p>Agreement in principle to spend CIL money on FP12, FP15 and FP8 improvements</p> <p>Revised quotes for potential works for FP12 and FP15 – a final spec has been agreed and contractors will be asked to submit comparative quotes for review.</p> <p>Field owner reviewing options for FP12 between the Causeway and the Church</p> <p>Chase quote for FP13 from OCC Highways, investigate obtaining comparison quote</p> <p>FP30 – initial review of possible surface improvements needed</p>
2023-12-09	Community Speedwatch	RJ	<p>Harwell Speedwatch session attendance to be arranged</p> <p>Online training details sent to volunteers to complete – 1 person has completed online training so far</p> <p>Reviewing speedwatch locations</p>
2024-01-02	Emergency Plan / Flooding documentation Review	RJ/LL	Emergency Plan to be circulated to councillors for review ahead of approval at the June meeting.
2024-01-04	Car Park Drainage	LL	OPC Drains unable to complete CCTV survey but have jetted again and restored flow into the main drain. OPC drainage information passed to OCC.
2024-02-01	Pavilion Lease Renewal	DR/LL	Further investigation required – DR and LL to meet and discuss.
2024-02-03	Cycle Parking at the village car park	LL	Liaise with VH Committee ref signage / alternative solutions
2024-02-04	Flood Management in the Parish	CS/DR/PD	Meetings with OCC, SODC and EA complete. Expression of interest for funding from OCC's Flood Risk Management funding for 2024/25 submitted and acknowledged. L. Travers obtaining quote for works.

2024-03-04	Main Road 20mph limit	OCC	Proposal currently with OCC ahead of public consultation.
2024-03-05	From APM: Step reinstatement on Main Road/Bakers Lane footpath	OCC/LL	OCC's Carl Stallwood to investigate and progress the matter with SGN (NB: this is an OCC Highways matter)
2024-03-06	From APM: Main Road to Coscote road surface	OCC	An OCC matter as no agreement was made with the developer during the planning process and the S278 agreement to maintain and repair the main agreed access route to the site. The Parish Council has full support from our County Councillor, Jane Murphy, to lobby for repairs and reinstatement
2024-04-01	CIL Projects Shortlist	ALL	Councillors reviewing and updating project proposals following discussion at the APM

## ATTACHMENT 2:

<b>Title</b>	District Councillors' Report
<b>Councillors</b>	Cllr Anne-Marie Simpson & Cllr Ben Manning
<b>Parish</b>	East Hagbourne Parish Council
<b>Date</b>	9 May 2024

[Booking link](#) for planning surgeries for town and parish councils  
**Corporate Plan Performance Report – [Third Quarter](#)**  
**Climate Action Plan Performance Report – [Third Quarter](#)**

### Help set 'The Way Ahead' for South Oxfordshire

We are encouraging everyone within the district to join in the conversation 'The Way Ahead'.

We have opened a discussion around how we can best create a fairer, more inclusive South Oxfordshire where all residents can thrive both now and in the future. The feedback we receive will contribute to the development of a new draft council plan for 2024-2028.

To find out more and take part or share, visit: [www.southoxon.gov.uk/TheWayAhead](http://www.southoxon.gov.uk/TheWayAhead)

The conversation runs until **Tuesday 14 May**.

Information is also available at a number of other locations, including at local libraries across the district, at Cornerstone Arts Centre in Didcot and at the council offices in Abbey House, Abingdon. There is also a [virtual exhibition available here](#).

### Cash boost for improvements across Didcot Garden Town

More than half a million pounds is being invested into Didcot to help deliver important community improvements as part of the ongoing delivery of plans for Didcot Garden Town.

The funding, approved by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils, will be used to improve green spaces, encourage greater biodiversity and improve wayfinding signage across the town.

Improved wayfinding will allow people to easily find where they want to go, highlight local spaces and encourage people to walk or cycle. It will help promote notable destinations and connectivity within the expanding communities of Didcot, looking at how we can improve the experience of residents and visitors.

The proposals, set out in the Wayfinding Strategy, are designed to resonate with the town's history, natural setting, and relationship with the area recognised nationally as Science Vale.

A number of projects proposed in the Green Infrastructure Strategy, have been approved to improve access to green spaces across different areas of the town too.

In the northeast, money will be spent on improving green spaces through food growing and public art as well as increasing biodiversity.

Working with landowners, we will look to make improvements to the National Cycle Route 544 in the southeast of the town, which will result in clearer sight lines, better lighting and better access, making it safer to use.

In the southwest, work will be carried out to enhance and develop the southern perimeter route between Mowbray Nature Reserve and the proposed Alma Park/Neighbourhood Park/ Boundary Park/Robin Way Park. This work will include play and exercise features.

The funding and proposed strategies were approved at the most recent [South Oxfordshire District Council cabinet meeting](#) and [Vale of White Horse District Council cabinet meeting](#).

### New 'Let us Bee' areas

Following on from the success of our Let It Bee trial last year our parks team is continuing with our land management where we allow the grass grow on sections of land we own or manage. This year we have added new sites to our meadow areas following recommendations from residents, council members and town and parish councils. For more information please see our grass cutting pages our websites ([South/Vale](#)).

### Update on Local Nature Recovery Strategy

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Oxfordshire County Council has organised a free webinar on 8 May to present a summary of responses from local people on the Local Nature Recovery Strategy. This follows workshops and a survey in February and March. At the webinar you will hear the plans to create biodiversity priorities and to then map the areas for action across the county. Anyone can join so please spread the word.

Sign up here: [Oxfordshire's Local Nature Recovery Strategy - Progress Summary Tickets, Wed 8 May 2024 at 18:00 | Eventbrite](#) To find out more about the local nature recovery strategy, visit the [county council's website](#).

### **May half-term activities**

Young children and their families can enjoy free and low-cost entertainment and activities during the May half-term holiday.

From 28 to 31 May, children can take part in the Xplorer navigation challenge in Benson and Abingdon. At Cornerstone Arts Centre in Didcot there's the chance to make your own robot sidekick from recycled material or join Mr Bubbles for The Bubble Show, a unique blend of magic, storytelling and science; while at The Beacon in Wantage, the much-loved tale 'The Little Red Hen' will thrill youngsters with brilliant puppetry, live music and unforgettable comedy.

The events are expected to be very popular so book now to avoid disappointment! To find out more and to book a place, visit [southandvale.gov.uk/holidayactivities](https://southandvale.gov.uk/holidayactivities).