

## EAST HAGBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

### MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DULY CONVENED AND HELD ON THURSDAY 11<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER 2025

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

Present were Chairman I. Duff, Vice Chairman P. Dixon, Cllrs C. Gover, R. Jaboor, N. Milner and D. Rickeard. Apologies were received from Cllr C. Shaikh, District Cllrs A-M Simpson and C. Topping, and County Cllr J. Hope-Smith

In attendance was L. Lloyd (Clerk).

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

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

#### 3. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 13<sup>TH</sup> NOVEMBER 2025: The minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2025 were approved by Council and signed by I. Duff.

#### 4. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS: I. Duff confirmed receipt of the County Councillor and District Councillor Reports – please see attachments 2 and 3 for the full reports.

#### 5. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

- a) **Draft Budget 2026/7:** Councillors reviewed the draft budget, which had been circulated in advance of the meeting for consideration. Questions and points of clarification were raised ahead of the meeting to aid understanding. At the meeting it was suggested that the precept should keep pace with inflation. No further comments were made.
- b) **To consider CIL expenditure on Village Noticeboards and Signage:**
  - i) **Village map information board – suggestion for consideration:** C. Gover suggested that the feasibility of a map at the village hall/school end be investigated as this would provide a suitable information point for visitors. A village map and the introduction of information boards are included on the CIL project shortlist, with locations to be confirmed. Councillors agreed that C. Gover would investigate potential options.
  - ii) **Existing noticeboards – condition and potential replacement:** C. Gover proposed that the noticeboards in the village be reviewed. In particular, the clerk noted that the main Parish Council noticeboard outside the Community Shop requires attention or replacement. D. Rickeard also reported that the noticeboard on New Road near The Crescent is in need of repair or replacement. It was agreed that C. Gover and the clerk would review all noticeboards and prepare a proposal for circulation to councillors.
- c) **Annual Parish Meeting 2026 – change of date:** Due to a venue availability issue, it was agreed that the APM would be held on 30<sup>th</sup> April.

#### 6. ITEMS FOR DECISION:

- a) **Pavilion Car Park - To accept the quotation from Glanville Group of £1,625.00+VAT for test pits and strength testing to assess the condition of the existing surface and confirm it is suitable for the proposed upgrade:** D. Rickeard confirmed that two test pits would be required and they would not be intrusive. Councillors accepted the quote, with the expenditure funded from the Community Projects Reserve and Asset Maintenance Reserve.
- b) **To consider and approve the quote for £4,595.00+VAT from SCS Oxon Ltd to install a drainage pipe at the end of FP18 at the junction with FP17:** D. Rickeard reported that correspondence had been received from the neighbouring landowner who expressed concerns that the proposed solution may not be effective, citing evidence that the primary source of flooding is from the opposite side of the path. Councillors agreed that, in light of these comments, further investigation is required. Discussions with the neighbour, SCS Oxon Ltd and OCC Countryside access were agreed as the next steps to ensure the final scheme is viable.

#### 7. ITEMS FOR REPORT:

- a) **Planning Applications:** I. Duff noted there are no outstanding planning responses to consultations at present but the following applications have been received via the alerts system:  
**P25/S3138/HH** 2 Church Close application for swimming pool - 1<sup>st</sup> amendment – provision of additional information on drainage and on noise from the heat pump. As this was just supplying further information to the original application, no update was needed to the parish council response.  
**P25/S3776/DIS** Land adjacent to the village hall – although the parish council is not explicitly invited to comment on a DIS (discharge) application, it was agreed that councillors should review the application to check that the environmental aspects of the original application were addressed including tree planting.

- b) **Recreation Ground and Pavilion:** D. Rickeard reported that a table tennis participant has a suspected broken hip after a fall in the pavilion. This was not due to any hazard present. It is hoped that the injured party makes a speedy recovery.
- c) **Cemetery Committee:** P. Dixon confirmed that the tender information for drainage has been sent out to contractors with a deadline just before Christmas
- d) **Employment Committee:** Nothing to report
- e) **CIL Project Progress:** R. Jaboor confirmed that he is looking into possible shelter options for older children as one possibility to extend the facilities age range. Other suggestions on new facilities are welcome.
- f) **Butts Piece Allotments:** P. Dixon confirmed that the allotments are fully tenanted.
- g) **Flood Management:** Nothing to report. Flood Warden Scheme to be followed up.
- h) **Community Speedwatch and Traffic Monitoring:** I. Duff confirmed that the reports do indicate that speeding is a problem throughout the village, suggesting that introducing VAR would be a good option. It was agreed that OCC guidance on the results would be appreciated to help with VAR locations. D. Rickeard reported that there had been an accident on Blewbury Road due to a car overtaking heading into the village and clipping the kerb before hitting a van parked on the bend. Thankfully no pedestrians were present at the time.
- i) **St Andrews Crescent:** I. Duff confirmed that Deanfield has now signed permission for the Sculpture installation.
- j) **Public Art Project:** I. Duff confirmed that all 3 projects are now making progress; discussions relating the artwork at the Bus Shelter and design for the recreation ground gates are moving forward. The S106 sculpture application is being worked on by Abigail Brown and the clerk. D. Rickeard noted that for security, the preference for a simple lock to be integrated into the design needs to be relayed to Julie Grose. It was agreed that this should be done within the steering group.
- k) **Footpath Management:** C. Gover reported that the 6-monthly report on footpath issues has been received from OCC for review. David Tole (Parish Path Warden Local Coordinator - Didcot and Wallingford Rambler Group Area) has also now dropped off the A3 maps for the Parish Path Wardens.
- l) **Matters raised at the Chairman's Surgery and OALC Councillor's Forum:** I. Duff reported that comments from the Chairman's Surgery were related to blocked drains, speeding, and the fencing by Butts Piece.
- m) **Fencing on unregistered land along Footpath 2 at Butts Piece:** I. Duff confirmed that the fencing and gate were fully removed by OCC on 25<sup>th</sup> November, with a notice left on site for the persons responsible to make contact with OCC by 9<sup>th</sup> January if they wished to reclaim their materials.

## 8. CORRESPONDENCE: I. Duff noted a number of correspondence items:

The clerk confirmed she had received a number of comments relating to the recent slurry seal works in the village completed on 4/5 December:

A report of surface damage outside following heavy rainfall (outside Green Shutters), the stretch of footway adjacent to the hedge at Green Shutters has not been completed, and concern regarding the durability of the works.

Insufficient communication about the works, including the placement of temporary traffic lights to facilitate an alternative footway route on the narrow stretch of Main Road by Lower Cross. C. Stallwood from OCC visited and spoke with residents, and agreed that the communications had not been sufficient on this occasion, including a lack of information on one.network. A positive comment has also been received, confirming the surfacing is a big improvement. A follow up email will be sent to OCC.

Another issue with lack of communication from OCC Highways was that there was no advance notice of the road closure required to repair potholes on Main Road at the Coscote bend.

Village car Park - The disabled bay reconfiguration is complete and cycle racks have been installed: Both improvements have been well received by users.

I. Duff confirmed receipt of correspondence from the Wilts and Berks Canal Trust who were asking for support for canal related issues in connection with Thames Water's South East Strategic Reservoir Option (SESRO) Consultation. I Duff will circulate information on this to councillors. As the Parish Council is not submitting a response to the SESRO consultation, this was communicated to the Canal Trust.

## 9. 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	Auth	Amount	VAT	Total	Date
Castle Water Ltd	INV 10008154371 Allotment Water bill date 4 November 2025	DD	£60.11	£12.03	£72.14	18/11/2025
Nest	Pension Payment October 2025	DD	£66.55	£0.00	£66.55	18/11/2025
Grundon Waste Management Ltd	PSI-1374081 Cemetery Bin Collections October 2025	DD	£65.91	£13.18	£79.09	20/11/2025

Shield Maintenance Ltd	INV9524 Dog Bin and General Waste Bin collections October 2025	CG / RJ	£215.58	£43.12	£258.70	20/11/2025
Dark White Digital	INV002013 Web Hosting November	CG / RJ	£30.00	£0.00	£30.00	20/11/2025
BGG Garden and Tree Care	INV0981/25 October grass cutting, hedge cutting and FP18 clearance	CG / RJ	£1,845.00	£369.00	£2,214.00	20/11/2025
EHSRC	INV 081-25 Community Room Hire 09/10/2025	CG / RJ	£25.00	£0.00	£25.00	20/11/2025
Julie Grose	1st Installment for Recreation Ground Gates Art Project	CG / RJ	£1,800.00	£0.00	£1,800.00	20/11/2025
Scorpion Signs Ltd	INV4511 Car Park Signage	CG / RJ	£325.00	£65.00	£390.00	20/11/2025
Wilson & Scott	INV 53812 Disabled Bay Markings in Village Car Park	CG / RJ	£931.35	£186.26	£1,117.61	20/11/2025
Citizens Advice Oxfordshire	Parish Council Grant - Power: S142(a)	CG / RJ	£300.00	£0.00	£300.00	20/11/2025
Oxfordshire Mind	Parish Council Grant - Power: S137	CG / RJ	£100.00	£0.00	£100.00	20/11/2025
Laura Lloyd	November Salary + WFH Allowance	CG / RJ	£994.04	£0.00	£994.04	28/11/2025
Unity Trust Bank	Bank Service Charges	Auto Payment	£9.45	£0.00	£9.45	30/11/2025
Scribe Accounting	INV13 Accounting Software Monthly Fee November	DD	£35.00	£7.00	£42.00	01/12/2025
PWLB	Loan Repayment 505533	DD	£2,461.17	£0.00	£2,461.17	08/12/2025
OCC	INV3920861599 Traffic Speed Surveys x 5		£950.00	£190.00	£1,140.00	
Shield Maintenance Ltd	INV9638 Dog Bin and General Waste Bin collections November 2025		£201.49	£40.30	£241.79	
Dark White Digital	INV002041 Web Hosting December		£30.00	£0.00	£30.00	
EHSRC	INV085-25 Community Room Hire 13/11/2025		£25.00	£0.00	£25.00	
The Landscape Group Oxford	INV2148 Playground Gates Installation		£1,066.93	£213.39	£1,280.32	
Nest	Pensions Payment November 2025		£66.55	£0.00	£66.55	
Laura Lloyd	December Salary + WFH Allowance		£994.04	£0.00	£994.04	

**b) Receipts since last meeting:**

From	Item	Amount	Date
Redwood Bank	Interest November 2025	£188.38	30/11/2025
Nationwide	Interest November 2025	£101.83	30/11/2025
NatWest Bank	Interest November 2025	£214.79	30/11/2025
	<b>Total</b>	<b>£505.00</b>	

**c) Accumulated Account Balances (reconciled online 10/12/2025)**

Unity Trust Bank - T1 current account	£9,986.45
Unity Trust Bank - Instant access account	£61,611.03
Redwood Bank - 35 Day Notice Savings Account	£85,000.00
Nationwide - Instant Access Business Savings Account	£82,699.95
Natwest - Liquidity Manager 95 Day Notice Account	£87,711.82
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£327,009.25</u></b>

**d) The Special Project Balances (as of 10/12/2025) are:**

Community Infrastructure Levy Fund	Received 28/04/23 so requires spending by 27/04/28	£15,465.66
	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
	Received 24/10/24 so requires spending by 25/10/29	£115,173.81

	Received 25/04/25 so requires spending by 24/04/30	£8,330.18
	Total CIL money	£249,978.37
Community Projects Reserve Fund		£2,762.91
Planned Development Support Fund		£5,303.15
Cemetery Fund		£10,281.77
Climate and Biodiversity Reserve		£2,500.00
Reactive Works and Emergency Response Reserve		£4,000.00
Asset Maintenance Reserve		£8,490.66
Election Reserve		£1,000.00
S106 Funds		£8,200.00
	Total	<u>£292,516.86</u>
<b>e) General Reserve (as of 10/12/2025)</b>		<u>£34,492.39</u>

- b) Review and approval of pending payments:** Councillors reviewed the pending payments and approved those without prior minuted approval. L. Lloyd noted that she has received a Village Hall meeting room hire invoice for Q1 (Sep-Nov) for £18.25 today and is also anticipating receipt of the electricity invoice once the reading has been completed. Councillors approved the addition of both invoices to the payment run.
- c) To note that FSCS has increased its deposit protection limit from £85,000 to £120,000 from 1<sup>st</sup> December 2025:** Councillors noted the increase.
- d) To approve a transfer of £35,000 from Unity Trust Bank Instant Access Savings account to Redwood Bank 35-day notice account:** Councillors approved the transfer.
- e) To note Unity Trust Bank's confirmation of banking fee increases effective from 1<sup>st</sup> February 2026:** Councillors noted the increases.

#### 10. ITEMS FOR REPORT AND INCLUSION ON THE JANUARY AGENDA:

Budget and Precept Decisions for 2026/27  
 Standing Orders / Policies for review.  
 The meeting closed at 7.06pm.

Items for consideration for the January agenda must be received by the clerk no later than Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> January.

**The next meeting will be held at 7.30pm on 15<sup>th</sup> January 2025 at The Pavilion, Great Mead, East Hagbourne.**

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

#### ATTACHMENT 1: ACTION LIST (FOR INFORMATION ONLY: ITEMS WILL NOT BE DISCUSSED AT THE MEETING UNLESS FEATURED ON THE MAIN AGENDA)

Action No	What	Who	Status
2023-03-01	Deanfield Homes Car Park Land Transfer	LL	19/06/2025 Transfer complete. Restriction removal still requires action.
2023-06-02	Parking and Traffic Management on Main Road	NM	13/11/2025 Two surveys to be drafted
2023-06-03	Footway repairs in the parish	ID/PD/RJ	4-5/12/2025 Slurry seal repairs completed along Main Road and Higgs Close. 11/12/2025 Follow up with OCC on damage/missed stretch of slurry seal
2023-10-03	Weed management on Main Road	LL/ID	15/05/2025 Weed treatment now complete at raised footway near Lower Cross. Dead vegetation still present in road channel. <b>01/07/2025 This matter has now been referred to Johnny Hope-Smith for assistance</b>

VARIOUS	Footpath accessibility: 2023-12-02 FP10 MFL to West Hagbourne 2023-12-03 FP12 Church Lane to Fieldside (FP25 towards Church) 2023-12-04 FP13 Parsonage Lane 2024-01-01 FP1 West Hagbourne to Didcot 2024-03-02 FP15 Grange Footpath 2024-03-03 FP8 Bakers Lane to The Croft 2024-04-01 FP30 Village Hall 2025-11-01 FP9 Shoe Lane 2025-11-02 FP4 Wilcher Close	LL/CS/PD/ ID	03/10/2024 FP30 – Initial review of possible surface improvements undertaken by Chloe from the Highways Engagement team 05/12/2024 FP15 surface between Fieldside and the bridge would be better finished in tarmac to withstand flooding. This is under consideration. 17/07/2025 C. Shaikh to obtain quotes for works on FP15 and FP8. Volunteer labour still available if required for FP8 10/10/2025 Surfacing options for FP12 stretch from FP25 towards Church need consideration. Rest of path and tarmac FP13 connecting slope now complete. 13/11/2025 Push for OCC review of FP9 Shoe Lane, speak to SCS Oxon about possible resurfacing works. 13/11/2025 Investigate solution to FP4 access issue due to kerb
2023-12-09	Community Speedwatch	RJ/ID	New coordinator and team members needed to move this forward. 11/09/2025 Follow up two expressions of interest. 09/10/2025 One interested party not currently available
2024-02-04	Flood Management in the Parish	CS/DR/PD	26/02/2025 Leigh Travers and Carl Stallwood completed a walkabout to assess the rest of the watercourses in the parish with input from the flood group 29/04/2025 Leigh Travers visited the parish to meet with P. Dixon (cemetery) and Jane Bell (Flood Group) 28/08/2025 OCC Volunteer Flood Warden scheme – confirm whether we have any Flood Group members interested in signing up
2024-03-06	From APM 2024: Main Road to Coscote road surface	OCC	An OCC matter as no agreement was made with the developer during the planning process. <b>01/07/2025 This matter has now been referred to Johnny Hope-Smith for assistance and the road will be reviewed by an officer</b> 28/11/2025 Two potholes filled at Coscote Corner 03/12/2025 Further request for assistance sent to OCC Highways Engagement and C. Stallwood
2024-04-01	CIL Projects Shortlist	ALL	09/10/2025 Progress being made with Footpaths and Village Sparkle, recreation ground needs consideration as has the potential to use a lot of CIL funds.
2024-10-01	Blewbury Road Drainage	CS/LL	Initial communications being followed up
2025-03-01	Rymans Crescent Wildflower Area	LL	Assist with comms between SOHA and BGG if needed

## ATTACHMENT 2:

<b>TITLE</b>	<b>COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT</b>
<b>AUTHOR</b>	<b>CLLR JOHNNY HOPE-SMITH</b>
<b>PARISHES</b>	<b>ASTON TIRROLD/UPTHORPE, CHOLSEY, EAST HAGBOURNE, LITTLE WITTENHAM, LONG WITTENHAM, MOULSFORD, NORTH MORETON, SOUTH MORETON, WEST HAGBOURNE</b>
<b>DATE</b>	<b>DECEMBER 2025</b>
<b>CONTACT DETAILS</b>	<a href="mailto:JOHNNY.HOPE-SMITH@OXFORDSHIRE.GOV.UK">JOHNNY.HOPE-SMITH@OXFORDSHIRE.GOV.UK</a>

Dear Parish Councillors and Residents,

Here are some updates and news I have gathered for you. Please provide any feedback, if its too much or not enough and of course any more information on a specific topic I can help with. I have put in **BOLD** the items which I think may be specifically appropriate for the Parishes to consider advertising or acting upon

Best wishes,

Johnny

## Consultation – Improving Oxfordshire’s Fire and Rescue Service

Oxfordshire County Council is consulting on proposals to improve how the Fire and Rescue Service responds to emergencies and delivers community safety. The aim is to ensure:

- More fire engines available during peak risk times
- Faster response to incidents across Oxfordshire
- Better alignment of resources to areas of greatest need
- Futureproofing the service for growth and sustainability

Why change?

- Currently, fewer firefighters are on duty during the day, when emergencies are most frequent, and more at night, when incidents are less common.
- This imbalance can lead to slower daytime response times and costly overtime.
- Changes projected to deliver £189k–£310k annual efficiencies by reducing overtime and fleet costs and allow reinvestment into prevention work and modern facilities
- Proposals are based on independent modelling and include reshaping prevention and protection work.

More locally, Impact on Rural Villages like ours (e.g., Cholsey, Wittenhams, Moretons, Hagbournes): positives.

- Faster daytime response: The main proposal forecasts 1 min 46 sec quicker arrival for the first fire engine during the day.
- More prevention work: Extra daytime capacity means more home safety visits and community risk reduction activities in rural areas.
- No change to the Didcot day crew and key hub station

More locally, negatives;

- Wallingford Fire Station Changes
  - If moved to Crowmarsh, this is positive for modern facilities, but it means construction disruption and possible longer travel for some staff.
  - On-call firefighters who mainly work during the day may face redundancy risk.
- While daytime response improves, night-time response remains vulnerable due to low on-call availability.
- Staff Morale and Recruitment - Changes to crewing models and relocation may affect morale and retention, especially for on-call firefighters in South Oxfordshire.

Key dates

- Consultation Closes: 20 January 2026
- Decision: Spring 2026 after Cabinet review

### What parishes can do

- **Encourage residents to read the consultation document and take the survey:**
- **Take part here <https://letstalk.oxfordshire.gov.uk/ofrs-consultation>**
- **Offer feedback on local priorities (e.g., rural coverage, prevention work)**

**Your residents will need to book a visit to a household waste recycling centre from January**

Oxfordshire County Council has agreed changes to how the county’s seven HWRCs will operate, following a public consultation with over 5,800 responses

Why the changes?

It is designed to improve recycling rates and traffic flow and ensure fairer costs for Oxfordshire taxpayers.

Key Details

- Booking system starts: 14 January 2026
- Residents to book up to two weeks in advance or 30 minutes before visiting.
- Customers must separate recyclable material from mixed waste before visiting.
- £15 charge for non-Oxfordshire residents per visit.

- Van/trailer permits reduced to 10 per year.

#### What Parishes Can Do

- **Share the booking system start date (14 January 2026) with residents.**  
<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/household-waste/household-waste-recycling-centres/book-recycling-centre-visit>
- **Encourage sorting waste before visiting to comply with new rules.**
- **Inform residents about permit changes and charges for non-Oxfordshire users.**

#### EV Charging for Homes Without Driveways – Gul-e Rollout

Oxfordshire County Council has appointed ODS to deliver up to 500 cross-pavement EV charging cable channels across the county, using the innovative Gul-e system. This is part of the UK's largest programme of its kind and a wider £4.3 million government-backed project to expand EV infrastructure. Around one-third of Oxfordshire households lack off-street parking — this scheme makes EV ownership more practical and affordable. This supports Oxfordshire's net zero goals and complements plans for 1,200 public EV chargers by 2027.

#### Key Details

- Gul-e units allow safe, trip-free charging from home electricity to vehicles parked at the kerbside.
- Applications are still open via the council's website; each site will be assessed for safety and suitability.
- Successful applicants will benefit from significantly reduced installation costs thanks to a £700,000 government grant.
- Residents must install a compliant home EV charger once the Gul-e channel is fitted.
- ODS will maintain and inspect installations twice yearly.

#### What Parishes Can Do

- **Promote the application opportunity to residents without driveways. apply here**  
<https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/firm-chosen-to-install-electric-vehicle-charging-cable-channels-for-homes-without-driveways/>
- **Encourage residents to check eligibility and safety criteria before applying.**

#### INFO - Nearly 70,000 Gullies Cleaned Since April

Oxfordshire County Council is on track to clean every highway drainage gully in the county by March 2026, as part of a £2.6 million programme to improve drainage and reduce flooding risk.

#### Key Details

- Target: Clean 145,000 gullies and manholes in 12 months.
- Progress: 67,000 gullies cleaned by end of October; 17,000 in October alone.
- Investment: £1.5m additional funding approved in the 2025–26 budget.
- Delivery: Crews doubled from 6 to 12, working day and evening shifts for efficiency.

#### Benefits:

- Reduces surface water and flood risk.
- Protects roads by preventing potholes caused by standing water and freezing.
- Technology: Tankers use asset management software to log cleans and schedule revisits.

#### What Parishes Can Do

- **Report blocked drains via Fix My Street:** <https://fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk>  
<https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/nearly-70000-drainage-gullies-cleaned-since-april/>

#### INFO - New Management Plan for North Wessex Downs National Landscape

I was this year appointed by Oxfordshire County Council to represent the authority on the North Wessex Downs National Landscape (NWDNL) partnership and am pleased to say that the NWDNL has launched a new five-year Management Plan, setting ambitious targets for nature recovery and stronger protections for this nationally important area.

#### Key Details

- Covers 668 sq miles across Berkshire, Hampshire, Oxfordshire, and Wiltshire.
- First plan since the law changed in 2023 to require authorities to “seek to further” the purpose of conserving and enhancing natural beauty.
- Nature targets:
  - Increase wildlife-rich habitat, tree canopy, and woodland by 3,400 hectares by 2030.
  - Contributes to national goal of protecting 30% of land and sea for nature by 2030.

#### What Parishes Can Do

- **Share the plan link:** <https://www.northwessexdowns.org.uk/our-work/management-plan/>
- **Encourage local involvement in nature recovery projects and volunteer opportunities.**
- **Consider parish-level actions that align with the plan’s priorities (tree planting, habitat creation, supporting biodiversity).**
- **Highlight the strengthened legal duty for councils and parishes to further the conservation and enhancement of the landscape**

#### INFO - SEND Service update

A recent monitoring inspection by Ofsted and the Care Quality Commission (CQC) has confirmed that Oxfordshire’s local area partnership has taken effective action to improve services for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) following the 2023 inspection.

#### Key Improvements

- All five priority areas addressed, including governance, communication, and family involvement.
- Better EHCP timeliness and quality, with faster decisions and improved waiting times.
- Enhanced partnership working between education, health, and social care.
- More opportunities for families and young people to contribute, including SEND Youth Forum and SEND Together events.
- Successful pilots in areas like speech and language screening.

#### INFO - Oxfordshire’s Gritters Get New Names (Full List at the End!)

Oxfordshire County Council has named its fleet of 30 gritting lorries after famous local figures, landmarks, and cultural icons following a public competition that attracted nearly 1,500 suggestions.

#### Key Details

- Names include Sir Winston Churchill, Agatha Christie, Alfred the Great, Inspector Morse, Radiospread, Prof Stephen Hawking, and Sir Roger Banister.
- Local landmarks feature too including local Grittenham Clumps.
- Pupils from schools near gritter depots helped choose names and will meet their gritters later this winter.
- The fleet treats 42% of Oxfordshire’s road network, covering 27 routes and over 1,960km each time temperatures drop below freezing.

Salt barns in Woodcote, Deddington, and Drayton store 10,000 tonnes of salt for winter operations.

#### What Parishes Can Do

- **Share the gritter tracker link so residents can follow gritting activity:** <https://dataroute.exactrak.co.uk/whereismygritter/org/milestoneoxfordshire/>
- **Remind drivers to take care when following gritters (speed limited to 30mph) and never assume roads are ice-free.**
- **Promote winter readiness tips for safe driving in cold conditions.**

#### REMINDER: Councillor Priority Fund – Supporting Local Projects

The Councillor Priority Fund has reopened, offering each Oxfordshire County Councillor £10,000 to support community projects within their division. This funding is designed to help deliver local priorities and strengthen community initiatives.

Parish councils, community groups, and local organisations are encouraged to apply for funding to support projects that benefit residents. Examples might include:

- Improvements to community facilities

- Local environmental initiatives
- Activities that promote wellbeing or inclusion
- Smaller-scale projects are especially encouraged, as the fund is modest and intended to support a wide range of communities across Oxfordshire

Key details:

- Applications must be submitted by 30 November **2026**
- Grants are typically paid within 28 days of approval
- Applicants must register for an account to apply and track progress
- Monitoring and reporting are required for successful projects

To ensure your project meets the funding criteria, please read the guidance document before applying.

**What parishes can do:**

- **Identify local projects that could benefit from modest funding**
- **Collaborate with community groups to develop proposals**
- **Submit applications early to allow time for review and payment**

Keep records and be prepared to report on outcomes

For more information or to apply, visit the Councillor Priority Fund page.

<https://service.oxfordshire.gov.uk/councillorpriorityfund>

### **Appendix One – The Full Gritter Names.. Any favourites?**

- Bossy
- Monster Rich
- Snow-bi Wan Kenobi
- Robin the Great
- Duck, Duck, Grit
- Draytonator!
- Did You Just In-Salt Me?
- Great Gritain
- Hansel and Gritel
- Gritasaurus
- Ready, Spready, Go
- Elvis Spreadley
- Inspector Norse
- Agatha Gritstie
- Snowy Beauchamp
- Gritty Gritty Bang Bang
- Sir Winston Chur-chill
- Shotover Chill
- Snowdo Baggins
- Radiospread
- Professor Stephen Thawking
- Claudia Sprinkleman
- Blenheim Pal-ice
- Sir Roger Ban-ice-ster
- Grittenham Clumps
- Grittmeister 5000
- Alfred the Grit
- Spready Mercury
- John Thaw
- Blizzard of Ozz

## ATTACHMENT 3:

<b>Title</b>	District Councillors' Report
<b>Councillors</b>	Cllr Anne-Marie Simpson & Cllr Crispin Topping
<b>Parish</b>	East Hagbourne Parish Council
<b>Date</b>	11 December 2025

[Booking link](#) for planning surgeries for town and parish councils

### **A call for Oxfordshire and Berkshire to be in the next wave of Strategic Authorities**

The Cabinets at South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils have supported the submission of an Expression of Interest (EOI) to government for a Mayoral Strategic Authority (MSA) in the Thames Valley region.

#### **Councillor David Rouane, Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council, said:**

“Oxfordshire and Berkshire together make sense for a strategic authority. These areas share deep connections and complementary strengths that can underpin a successful partnership. Our priority is to ensure that any future arrangements reflect these natural ties and deliver real benefits for our communities.”

#### **Councillor Bethia Thomas, Leader of Vale of White Horse District Council, said:**

“This is about starting a conversation with government on how devolution can work best for our region. No decisions have been made on the final geography of a future Strategic Authority but we want to see one that builds on the strong links between Oxfordshire and Berkshire, giving clarity and confidence to our residents and businesses while unlocking opportunities for sustainable growth.”

The expression of interest will be signed by a number of councils in the area already involved in local discussions about a future Strategic Authority for the Thames Valley although there is not yet agreement on which areas would be included in the final geography.

**Cllr Rouane added**, “Swindon has expressed an interest in joining with this MSA but our view is that this would not be appropriate for several reasons: it is not part of the Thames Valley police or health infrastructure, its economy is not integrated with ours, and its commuting patterns look west rather than east.”

**Cllr Thomas added**, “The Thames Valley is a well-established and coherent region – it has a long history of working collaboratively across the full range of sectors. Swindon has never been part of that so it would not make sense to include it now.”

Cllr Thomas has also [written to Cllr Liz Leffman](#), the Leader of Oxfordshire County Council, confirming the Vale’s support for the expression of interest, and her views on the best geography for a Thames Valley MSA.

A Mayoral Strategic Authority is a new type of regional body that brings together several council areas and is led by a directly elected mayor. Its purpose is to take on powers and funding from central government so that big decisions about things like transport, housing, skills and economic development can be made locally rather than in Westminster. The government wants every part of England to be covered by a Strategic Authority because it believes this will help drive economic growth and improve public services. These authorities can plan across a wider area than individual councils, making it easier to coordinate investment in roads, rail, housing and jobs. They also give regions a stronger voice when negotiating with government and attracting private investment.

Local councils would still provide day-to-day services like social care, waste collection and leisure facilities. In Oxfordshire, the government is also intending to reorganise those local councils into new unitary councils. Three proposals for how these unitary councils would work in the area have been submitted to the government last week.

For more information on the joint Expression of Interest, visit [reading.gov.uk/devolution](https://reading.gov.uk/devolution)

### **Help share our news!**

We publish a monthly resident newsletter called South News, which is packed with the latest news, events, and consultations happening across South Oxfordshire.

Residents can register on our website: [South](#)

### **Council services over Christmas**

We’ve put together a guide to all our council services over the Christmas and New Year period when the council offices are closed to the public. Find out more on the council websites: [South](#) / [Vale](#)

### **Christmas waste and recycling**

Residents can find all they need to know about waste collections over the Christmas and New Year period – including the changes to the collection dates, which bin you should put your Christmas rubbish in, what to do with your tree

once the festivities are over and much more, via our [South Oxfordshire Christmas waste page](#) / [Vale Christmas waste page](#).

### **Free food caddy liners**

During December, Oxfordshire Recycles is giving away free rolls of food caddy liners to help people recycle even more.

Residents are encouraged to plan their meals, store and freeze leftovers and recycle all inedible food waste to stop feeding climate change.

The free rolls are available from any Oxfordshire library, while stocks last: [oxfordshirerecycles.org.uk/foodwaste](http://oxfordshirerecycles.org.uk/foodwaste).

### **First stop for festive fun**

We're supporting small, independent businesses this Christmas by advertising their festive events and activities on [SouthernOxfordshire.com](http://SouthernOxfordshire.com), the official tourism and events hub for South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse, managed by our Economic Development Team.

The site is funded through the Government's UK Shared Prosperity Fund and offers a comprehensive, up-to-date calendar of everything happening locally and is frequently updated. Please spread the word to any local business, who can list their events for free, and make sure your residents make it their first stop for planning festive activities.

### **Council Plans and Annual Delivery Plans**

- [South Council Plan](#) (download) and [South webpage](#)
- [South Council Plan flip book](#)
- [South Annual Delivery Plan](#)

### **Latest CCTV reports**

The Q1-2 CCTV performance report is now available to download from the council's website: [CCTV - South Oxfordshire District Council](#)

And you may have also seen the recent media coverage relating to the Thames Valley CCTV Partnership – read more about that in our joint statement [South/Vale](#).

### **Disabled Facilities Grant**

Disabled or vulnerable residents can apply now for our Disabled Facilities Grant to make their homes safer and easier to live in. The grant provides up to £50,000 for essential adaptations such as ramps, stairlifts, level-access showers, heating or insulation improvements, and more.

You can read more in our latest press release: [South / Vale](#).

Please help us spread the word by sharing our social media posts about the grant.

### **Your guide to Cornerstone's new seasons**

Cornerstone Arts Centre kicks off the new year with their new Spring/Summer season, packed with theatre, comedy, live music and family favourites.

Highlights include [Reginald D Hunter](#) on **Saturday 7 February**, delivering his trademark wit, and [Rapunzel](#) on **Saturday 21 February**, a bold, music-filled retelling where Rapunzel takes charge of her own escape.

[Meet Fred](#) comes to Didcot for the first time on **Tuesday 24 March** as part of its exciting 10th anniversary UK tour. This darkly hilarious, critically acclaimed show follows Fred, a two-foot-tall puppet navigating work, love, and society. Contains strong language and puppet nudity.

This is just a snippet into the seasons so check full listings when tickets go on sale this Friday (**5 December**) at 10am.

Discover the full programme on the brand-new [Cornerstone website](#).