

EAST HAGBOURNE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING DULY CONVENED AND HELD ON THURSDAY 16TH JULY 2026

1. ATTENDANCE, APOLOGIES AND DECLARATIONS OF PECUNIARY INTEREST:

Present were Chair I. Duff, Vice Chair N. Milner, Cllrs R. Avery, C. Gover, R. Jaboor and D. Rickeard, and County Councillor J. Hope-Smith. A-M Simpson joined the meeting at 8.42pm after item 7.e)

Apologies were received from Cllrs P. Dixon and C. Shaikh, and District Councillors C. Topping and A-M Simpson. In attendance was L. Lloyd (Clerk) and 2 members of the public.

2. PUBLIC FORUM AND QUESTIONS:

MOP1 spoke on 2 issues:

- Concerns regarding inconsiderate parking along Church Close – resident meetings have been held but there are persistent issues with parking along the close which cause issues for delivery vehicles, bin collections and also narrows the road causing concern regarding emergency access. J. Hope-Smith shared relevant OCC contact details with N. Milner to initiate discussion on potential parking solutions in general in the central village which will include Church Close.
- A proposal for the PC to consider involvement in establishing a local mobile mast which would then be rented to phone networks and vastly improve the signal in the parish. MOP1 indicated that this could be of great benefit to parishioners, and generate income for the PC.

3. REPORTS FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS:

I. Duff confirmed receipt of the County Councillor report (Attachment 1) and District Councillors' report (Attachment 2). J. Hope-Smith spoke briefly to highlight items in his report, including today's announcement of the Government's decision to choose the 3 Councils option for Oxfordshire Unitary Councils from 2028. Noting the pothole repair trials, I. Duff again highlighted Main Road to Coscote as an ongoing concern as the potholes which have been repaired will no doubt recur as soon as the rains return. J. Hope-Smith encouraged councillors to register as FixMyStreet super users who can undergo training and subsequently mark-up issues for higher priority attention.

4. CONFIRMATION OF THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 18TH JUNE 2026:

The minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 18th June 2026 were approved by Council and signed by I. Duff.

5. ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION:

a) Bus Shelter Public Art Project:

- To view the completed artwork and provide feedback:** Councillors viewed the final artwork ahead of the meeting and feedback was wholly positive. L. Benton confirmed it will now be photographed and printed onto metal sheeting for installation.
- To consider arrangements for the installation and official opening event:** L. Benton confirmed that the photography will be completed within a week, and Kingdom Signs will then print the metal sheets and complete the installation. Councillors asked for tamper-proof screws for the panels and confirmation of protection against graffiti damage. A small opening event to unveil the artwork once installed was discussed – it was agreed that L. Benton would liaise with the Clerk and C. Gover once dates are established. It was noted that the artworks will be digitised for future printing and consideration of what to do with the original commissioned artworks and potential printing from the digital artworks should be agreed.

6. ITEMS FOR DECISION:

- Cemetery Drainage: To consider the recommendation of the Cemetery Committee to appoint a contractor and approve CIL expenditure for the cemetery drainage works, subject to planning/Lawful Development decision:** I. Duff confirmed that a Cemetery Committee report had been circulated in advance of the meeting, detailing progress and recommendations to council to move forward with the drainage project. The report has also been sent to West Hagbourne Parish Council for consideration and approval. Councillors resolved to accept the recommendations of the Cemetery Committee and appoint SCS Oxon Ltd to undertake the cemetery drainage works at the current quoted price of £14,846.25, noting that the quotation is valid for 28 days. This figure falls within the estimated project costs of £20-£30k which have already been approved in principle for CIL expenditure, with costs to be split 75% to East Hagbourne Parish Council and 25% to West Hagbourne Parish Council in line with the cemetery ownership. It was noted that commencement of the works is subject to the grant of a Lawful Development Certificate (or any other necessary planning consent). The Council authorised the Clerk, in consultation with the Chair of the Cemetery Committee, to agree any reasonable amendments to the specification required by the planning process and any consequential

adjustment to the contract value, provided the total contract value remains within the Council's approved budget for the project. Council authorised the Clerk to place the formal order once the necessary planning consent has been obtained.

b) To consider planning applications received since the last meeting:

P26/S2128/FUL East Hagbourne Pavilion, Great Mead, East Hagbourne - Resurfacing of the existing car park within its current footprint. The Parish Council is the applicant for this application and will not be submitting a response to the consultation. The consultation ends 31st July, with a decision to be posted hopefully on 3rd August. D. Rickeard queried whether a site notice is required for the application. The Clerk will follow up for clarification.

P26/S1821/S73 12 New Road, East Hagbourne – Variation of conditions 2 and 3 (for planning application P22/S0969/FUL) Change from a single window to a bifold door with a Juliette balcony on west facing 1st floor bedroom, and surface water drainage scheme. I. Duff noted that the Parish Council did not object to the original application, but did suggest a bungalow would be better for the location. Councillors discussed the impact of the change from window to bifold doors on the neighbouring properties, and agreed that as there is time before the consultation deadline, speaking with the neighbours to clarify whether they have any concerns would help inform the Parish Council's response. I. Duff would call on the neighbours at the weekend.

P26/S2544/LDP East & West Hagbourne Cemetery, Main Road, East Hagbourne – Installation of drainage scheme including soakaway – The Parish Council is the applicant for this application and will not be submitting a response to the consultation.

7. ITEMS FOR REPORT:

- a) Recreation Ground and Pavilion:** D. Rickeard updated councillors on the car park resurfacing project. The planning application is pending decision and the planning officer has confirmed they will work to try and make a recommendation for decision ahead of their leave to enable the decision to be posted on 3rd August. The contractor is now provisionally booked for the two weeks commencing 17th August. The pavilion will be closed to all users during the works period as it will be a working area, but the playground and recreation ground will still be accessible via the alternative gate on Great Mead. The agreement is now with SCS Oxon for approval and will be signed by the Clerk once final details are confirmed.
D. Rickeard also reported on temperatures in the pavilion. The morning sessions are bearable, but the recent heatwaves have meant that users have struggled with the temperatures in the community room. 3 standing fans have been purchased by EHSRC for air circulation and these are proving effective as immediate relief. Looking forward, alternative solutions for mitigating high temperatures within the building need consideration and councillors will be involved in the discussion. N. Milner queried whether aircon would be an option; it was noted that 2 regular users have suggested this as well. The new Local Plan will need a revised design guide that includes mitigation measures for climate change.
- b) Cemetery Committee:** R. Jaboor reported that the Cemetery Committee met on 6th July, with the main discussion focussed on drainage (see item 6.a). In addition it was noted that the cemetery grass is being well maintained at the moment, but the central hedge would benefit from some maintenance.
- c) Employment Committee:** Nothing to report.
- d) Butts Piece Allotments:** The Clerk reported that lining of the culvert under the allotments was completed last week, with a minor outstanding task being completed this evening.
- e) Community Speedwatch and Traffic Monitoring:** R. Jaboor reported that a quote from J. Beale for the post installation has been received today; it will be clarified that the posts match the spec for the Westcotec signage before confirming the order.

A-M Simpson joined the meeting at 8.42pm. It was agreed that D. Rickeard could briefly raise the following queries from earlier in the meeting:

Planning - How are notified neighbours and statutory notices shown on the new planning system
Climate and Design Guide adjustments – A-M Simpson confirmed that once the local plan is approved the design guide can be revised.

- f) Public Art Projects:** I. Duff confirmed that the stonemason Alex Wenham has sent the Public Art Steering Group some initial thoughts on sculpture sizing; this needs consideration ahead of meeting him. It was agreed that key questions would be the scale of pieces and potential subject matter and that a date should be proposed for the steering group meeting. A meeting on site including residents would be held at a later date.
- g) Flood Management:** The Clerk confirmed that the Ecology survey for FP19 channel clearance has been arranged for tomorrow afternoon – R. Avery and C. Shaikh to meet the officer on site. R. Avery noted that EH is on an annual programme and the Main Road jetting was completed in mid-June.
- h) Matters raised at the Chairman's Surgery and OALC Councillor's Forum:** I. Duff confirmed there has been no surgery since the last meeting, and nobody attended the OALC Councillor's Forum so there is no report this month.

8. CORRESPONDENCE:

The following correspondence was noted:

- Concern over Willow Tree cutting on Church Close – Resident spoke to contractors and clarified that correct permission was given for the work
- Kingsholm Close trees/vegetation – Investigating land ownership and maintenance responsibility
- Blewbury Road residents have received notice from SSE ref a power cut next week for tree trimming
- Fallen tree on FP19 – Clerk reported to OCC for urgent clearance on 13/07. Cleared on 14/07 by unknown person(s)
- Soil obstruction on Church Close cobblestone path – Clerk has emailed OCC to check permissions
- Concerns from farmer over field fire risk – Clerk posted Harvest Fire Risk info on FB
- Query on speed bump line markings on The Croft – This is an unadopted road so is the responsibility of the property owners
- Confrontation and police presence on St Andrews Crescent due to parking issues at school drop off today – this will be followed up with residents and school

9. FINANCE:

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

1) Payments since last meeting:

NB: Payments pending are shown in yellow and are not included in the account balances shown in 4-6

Payee	Item	Auth	Amount	VAT	Total	Date
EHSRC	INV135-26 Community Room Hire 14 May	DR / CS	£25.00	£0.00	£25.00	19/06/2026
Shield Maintenance Ltd	INV10320 Dog and General Waste Bin Collections May 2026	DR / CS	£223.17	£44.63	£267.80	19/06/2026
SCS Oxon Ltd	INV SB966 Footpath 30 and Footpath 9 resurfacing works plus additional FP4 slope	DR / CS	£7,477.00	£1,495.40	£8,972.40	19/06/2026
The Parish Noticeboard Company	INV 12651 Community Shop and New Road noticeboards 50% Balance	DR / CS	£1,107.50	£221.50	£1,329.00	19/06/2026
OALC	INV 6408 Roles and Responsibilities (New Councillor training for R. Avery)	DR / CS	£125.00	£25.00	£150.00	19/06/2026
Parish Online	INV 38UD026-0004 Online Mapping Annual Fee	DR / CS	£96.00	£19.20	£115.20	19/06/2026
Castle Water Ltd	INV 10010332633 Allotment Water Charges invoice date 08/06/2026	DD	£25.13	£5.03	£30.16	22/06/2026
The Planning Portal	PP-14987210-V1 Cemetery Drainage LDP application	RJ / CS	£245.50	£0.00	£245.50	23/06/2026
Unity Trust Bank	Bank Service Charge	Auto Charge	£6.77	£0.00	£6.77	30/06/2026
Laura Lloyd	June Salary & WFH Allowance	DR / CS	£978.48	£0.00	£978.48	30/06/2026
Scribe Accounts	INV-19679 Accounting Software Monthly Fee July	DD	£35.00	£7.00	£42.00	01/07/2026
Hagbourne Parochial Charities	Butts Piece Rental 2026-27 July payment		£480.60	£0.00	£480.60	
Shield Maintenance Ltd	INV10452 Dog and General Waste Bin Collections June 2026		£223.17	£44.63	£267.80	
EHSRC	INV144-26 Community Room Hire 18 June		£25.00	£0.00	£25.00	
Dark White Digital	INV002233 Web Hosting July 2026		£30.00	£0.00	£30.00	
Laura Lloyd	Expenses - Printer, Noticeboard accessories and A4 Paper		£161.39	£32.28	£193.67	
Noel Carter	Noticeboard Fitting for the Community Shop and New Road		£463.00	£0.00	£463.00	
HMRC	120PE003402942703 Q1 National Insurance Payment		£249.06	£0.00	£249.06	
Laura Lloyd	July Salary & WFH Allowance		£978.48	£0.00	£978.48	
Laura Lloyd	August Salary & WFH Allowance (TO BE PAID AT THE END OF AUGUST)		£978.48	£0.00	£978.48	

2) Receipts since last meeting:

From	Item	Amount	Date
NatWest Bank	Interest June 2026	£192.50	30/06/2026
Nationwide	Interest June 2026	£99.28	30/06/2026
Redwood Bank	Interest June 2026	£242.83	30/06/2026
Unity Trust Bank	Interest Q1 2026-2027	£82.94	30/06/2026
M&J Didcock	Bailey Interment G194	£186.00	09/07/2026
OCC	S101 Grass Cutting Payment	£838.04	15/07/2026
M&J Didcock	Jones Ashes Interment CM051	£90.00	15/07/2026
Total		£1,731.59	

3) Transfers since the last meeting:

From	To	Amount	Date
Redwood Bank	Unity Trust T1 Account (monthly automatic transfer)	£242.83	30/06/2026

4) Accumulated Account Balances (reconciled online 15/07/2026)

Unity Trust Bank - T1 current account	£8,274.59
Unity Trust Bank - Instant access account	£17,142.17
Redwood Bank - 35 Day Notice Savings Account	£120,000.00
Nationwide - Instant Access Business Savings Account	£83,405.01
Natwest - Liquidity Manager 95 Day Notice Account	£89,085.19
Total	£317,906.96

5) The Special Project Balances (as of 15/07/2026) are:

Community Infrastructure Levy Fund	Received 28/04/23 so requires spending by 27/04/28	£574.78
	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	£235,087.49
Community Projects Reserve Fund		£0.00
Planned Development Support Fund		£5,303.15
Cemetery Fund		£10,044.43
Climate and Biodiversity Reserve		£2,500.00
Reactive Works and Emergency Response Reserve		£4,000.00
Asset Maintenance Reserve		£2,591.64
Election Reserve		£1,000.00
S106 Funds		£10,200.00
Total		£270,726.71

6) General Reserve (as of 15/07/2026)	£47,180.25
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- b) Review and approval of pending payments:** The Council reviewed the pending payments and approved those without minuted/regular payment approval.

- c) **Bank reconciliations for April, May and June 2026:** The Clerk reported that P. Dixon had completed the Internal Controls for Q1 with no issues raised, and confirmed the Q1 bank reconciliations and bank statements have been signed accordingly.
- d) **Q1 Budget Review:** I. Duff confirmed that the budget report with notes covering variations on anticipated income and expenditure was circulated to councillors in advance of the meeting. Councillors accepted the report and no additional comments were made.
- e) **Review of Council Reserves:** I. Duff noted that the Clerk had circulated a report for consideration ahead of the meeting, with recommendations for movement of funding into earmarked reserves. Councillors reviewed the recommendations and approved movement of general reserves to earmarked reserves as follows: Community Projects Reserve £5,000, Asset Maintenance Reserve £7,000, Election Reserve £1,000 - leaving £34,180.25 in the general reserve.
- f) **Transfer of funds between the Council's bank accounts to ensure sufficient funds are available to meet approved project expenditure and other Council commitments:** Councillors approved the transfer of £50,000 from the Redwood 35-Day notice account to the Unity Trust Instant Access Savings Account. In addition, Councillors authorised the Clerk to set up the transfer of funds between the council's Nationwide, Unity Instant Access and Unity Deposit accounts in excess of the usual £5,000 limit, where necessary, solely for the purpose of maintaining sufficient funds in the Unity deposit account to meet approved expenditure and manage the Council's cash flow. This will allow funds to stay in the interest earning savings accounts as long as possible.

10. ITEMS FOR REPORT AND INCLUSION ON THE SEPTEMBER AGENDA

Items for consideration for the September agenda must be received by the Clerk no later than Wednesday 2nd September 2026.

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on 10th September 2026 at the Pavilion, Great Mead.

Meeting closed at 9.17pm

Signed _____ Date _____

APPENDIX 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. 05/03/2026 Clerk to follow up with OCC Legal team on Land Registry progress
2023-06-02	Parking and Traffic Management on Main Road	NM	14/05/2026 Looking into possible OCC led consultation
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 Parts of Blewbury Road footways and the stretch outside Green Shutters completed in March 2026. Snagging (damage repairs) will be completed on the Main Road slurry seal this Spring.
2023-10-03	Weed management on Main Road	LL/ID	01/07/2025 Referred to Johnny Hope-Smith for assistance

VARIOUS	Footpath accessibility: 2023-12-02 FP10 MFL to West Hagbourne 2023-12-03 FP12 Church Lane to Fieldside (FP25 towards Church last remaining stretch) 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	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 Volunteer labour available if required for FP8 10/10/2025 Surfacing options for FP12 stretch from FP25 towards Church need consideration 15/01/2026 Advice being sought from SCS Oxon Ltd on FP4 access, FP8, FP9, FP12, FP13, FP30 12/02/2026 Agreement to move forward with FP13, FP9 and FP30 subject to permissions and quotes. 29/05/2026 Works on FP30 and FP9 plus installation of ramp for FP4 access at Wilcher Close carried out over the half term break
2023-12-09	Community Speedwatch	RJ/ID	New coordinator and team members needed. 12/02/2026 New volunteer, needs to undertake training
2024-02-04	Flood Management in the Parish	CS/DR/PD	15/01/2026 Ric Avery confirmed as an OCC Flood Warden 15/01/2026 Concern about debris in the drainage channel following recent footpath works – C. Shaikh to follow up with L. Travers at SODC 15/04/2026 ODC visit to review and supply quotes for tree removal and channel clearance FP19 (OCC Flood Project Funding) 18/06/2026 OCC Flood project funding confirmed for channel clearance and tree removal along FP19 16/07/2026 Ecology survey scheduled for 17/07/2026
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. 03/12/2025 Further request for assistance sent to OCC Highways Engagement and C. Stallwood. The road has been reviewed recently but its condition will be reviewed again during the winter in poor conditions. 15/01/2026 A number of potholes have been marked up for repairs, red ones (urgent) have been filled today, white markings should be completed within 28 days. 12/03/2026 Further pothole repairs completed – monitor for longevity
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. Feedback from the 2026 APM to help inform the decision-making process.
2024-10-01	Blewbury Road Drainage	CS/LL	Initial communications being followed up

ATTACHMENT 1:

TITLE	COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT
AUTHOR	CLLR JOHNNY HOPE-SMITH
PARISHES	ASTON TIRROLD/UPTHORPE, CHOLSEY, EAST HAGBOURNE, LITTLE WITTENHAM, LONG WITTENHAM, MOULSFORD, NORTH MORETON, SOUTH MORETON, WEST HAGBOURNE
DATE	JULY 2026
CONTACT DETAILS	JOHNNY.HOPE-SMITH@OXFORDSHIRE.GOV.UK

Dear Parish Councillors and Residents,

Here are some updates and news I have gathered for you. Please provide any feedback; or 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 Parish Councils to consider advertising or acting upon

Best wishes,
Johnny



Wildfire Prevention – Fire Service Issues Summer Safety Advice

Key Details

Oxfordshire Fire & Rescue Service is urging residents to take extra care during hot, dry weather following a number of major wildfires across the county in recent years.

Fire crews attended four major wildfires in 2025, three in 2024 and seven in 2023, as well as many smaller outdoor fires.

Common causes include discarded cigarettes, litter, disposable barbecues and garden fires.

Even a small spark can quickly ignite dry grass and vegetation, putting people, homes and wildlife at risk.

Residents are advised to use barbecues safely, dispose of coals responsibly, and take extra care when burning garden waste.

What Parishes Can Do

Share wildfire prevention messages through parish newsletters, noticeboards and social media.

Remind residents not to discard cigarettes, litter or glass bottles in the countryside.

Encourage safe use of barbecues and garden bonfires, particularly during periods of hot and dry weather.

Promote the Fire Service's wider safety messaging, including water safety advice during the summer months.

LINK <https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/oxfordshire-fire-crews-launch-wildfire-prevention-advice/>

Rural Speed Limit Review – 60 Further Routes Under Review

Key Details

Oxfordshire County Council is expanding its review of speed limits on rural A and B roads as part of the county's Vision Zero programme to eliminate deaths and serious injuries on the road network.

Around 60 additional routes will be assessed during 2026/27, with reviews based on collision data, road layout and how roads are used by motorists, cyclists, walkers and horse riders.

The review has already resulted in changes on roads including the A4074, A40, A420, A417 and A4260, with further proposals for the A361 due for decision in July.

The council stresses that this is not a blanket reduction in speed limits. Each route will be assessed individually using Department for Transport guidance and local evidence.

Recent provisional government statistics suggest serious and fatal collisions in Oxfordshire have fallen significantly, supporting the county's approach to road safety

What Parishes Can Do

Monitor local consultation opportunities as stakeholder engagement with parish and town councils will begin during the coming months.

Identify any local concerns about speeding, collision hotspots, or roads frequently used by walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

Encourage residents to participate in any statutory consultations later this year when specific proposals are published.

Provide local knowledge and evidence to help ensure any proposed changes reflect the conditions and safety concerns on roads serving your community.

LINKS <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/cwy0d18dz44o>

<https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/speed-limit-review-to-look-at-improving-safety-on-60-rural-roads-this-year/>

Rural Quiet Lanes Programme – First Trial Route Announced

Key Details

The first Quiet Lane trial route has been announced as part of Oxfordshire County Council's programme to make rural roads safer for walkers, cyclists and horse riders.

Quiet Lanes are intended to create roads where vulnerable users have greater priority and where through-traffic is discouraged.

Measures can include signage, lower speed limits and physical interventions such as bollards or gates to reduce traffic using the route as a shortcut.

The programme forms part of Oxfordshire's wider Vision Zero and active travel ambitions, helping improve safety and accessibility on rural roads.

If successful, the trial could help inform similar schemes elsewhere in the county.

What Parishes Can Do

Consider whether local rural roads with significant walking, cycling or equestrian use might be suitable for future Quiet Lane designation.

Review routes where through-traffic causes safety concerns despite relatively low traffic volumes.

Work with neighbouring parishes where routes cross parish boundaries.

Monitor the trial and share feedback with Oxfordshire County Council as the programme develops

LINKS <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/transport-and-travel/local-transport-and-connectivity-plan/active-travel/quiet-lanes-programme>

INFO - Council Secures Injunction to Protect Communities and Highway Safety

Key Details

Oxfordshire County Council has secured a High Court injunction to prevent the continued unauthorised placement of flags on or near the public highway.

The injunction follows a series of incidents across Oxfordshire involving the organisation Raise the Colours, including the installation of flags on highway infrastructure without permission.

The court hearing took place on 23 June 2026, and the named defendants have given undertakings not to erect flags on the highway, encourage others to do so, or abuse individuals removing them.

The council states that the action relates to highway safety, obstruction, trespass, harassment and intimidation, rather than the content of any particular flag.

Residents from across Oxfordshire, including Wallingford, reported concerns about safety risks, distress and confrontational behaviour associated with the installations.

The injunction provides the council with additional powers to enforce against future unauthorised activity and supports its legal duty to keep the highway safe.

What Parishes Can Do

Share accurate information with residents that this action concerns highway safety and legal compliance, not restrictions on lawful flag displays on private property.

Remind community groups that any signs, flags or structures placed on highway land require appropriate permission.

Refer questions about enforcement or highway land ownership to Oxfordshire County Council.

Report any highway obstructions or safety concerns through the appropriate council channels.

LINKS <https://news.oxfordshire.gov.uk/council-secures-injunction/>

INFO - Potholes – Oxfordshire Trials 15 Different Repair Methods

DRAFT Minutes July 16th 2026

Key Details

Oxfordshire County Council and its highways contractor, M Group, have trialled 15 different pothole repair and road patching methods on a single stretch of road in Banbury.

The trial follows a winter which saw an unprecedented increase in potholes, with more than 33,000 highway defects repaired since January 2026.

Repair crews were increased from 7 to 25, with the council receiving over 1,300 pothole reports in a single week during the peak period.

The project builds on a similar trial in Steventon in 2023 and aims to identify the most durable, cost-effective and environmentally sustainable repair methods.

The test sections will be monitored over the next two years to compare the performance of different materials, techniques and technologies.

What Parishes Can Do

Encourage residents to continue reporting potholes through FixMyStreet: <https://fixmystreet.oxfordshire.gov.uk>

Reassure residents that Oxfordshire is actively testing new approaches to improve the quality and lifespan of repairs.

Highlight recurring pothole hotspots to me, your County Councillor where defects continue to reappear.

Encourage residents to include photographs where safe to do so, helping highways teams assess and prioritise repairs more effectively.

LINK <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/articles/czdeymydr8o>

INFO - Budget Pressures – Cabinet to Review Financial Risks

Key Details

Oxfordshire County Council has warned that additional savings may be required beyond those already identified for future years.

The council currently needs to find at least £15.5 million of savings in 2027/28, rising to £22 million in 2028/29, following changes to government funding announced earlier this year.

A report to Cabinet on 14 July will set out a range of risks that could increase financial pressures further, including rising inflation, increasing demand for children's social care, uncertainty around adult social care funding, and possible changes to NHS and Better Care Fund arrangements.

The council has stated that reductions in government grant funding, combined with increasing costs and demand for services, mean difficult decisions will be required during future budget rounds.

Options to reduce expenditure and deliver savings are currently being developed, with more detail expected later this year as work begins on the 2027/28 budget.

What Parishes Can Do

Be aware that the council faces significant financial challenges over the next few years and that further savings proposals are likely to emerge during autumn and winter.

INFO - Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) – Government Decision Expected Soon

Key Details

The government is expected to announce its preferred option for Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) in Oxfordshire later this summer.

Three proposals have been submitted for consideration, ranging from a single unitary council for Oxfordshire through to models involving two or three councils.

The change would replace the current two-tier system of county and district councils with a new unitary structure, bringing services together under fewer authorities.

Preparatory work is already underway across Oxfordshire and West Berkshire to ensure councils are ready to implement whichever option is selected.

While a decision on the preferred model is expected shortly, the transition to any new arrangements will take place over several years and existing councils continue to operate as normal.

What Parishes Can Do

Keep parish councillors and residents informed that a government decision is expected soon and that further details will follow once announced.

Continue engaging with Oxfordshire County Council and district councils as usual, as existing responsibilities and services remain unchanged for now.

Consider how future governance arrangements may affect relationships between parish councils and principal authorities.

Monitor future updates, as parish and town councils are expected to play an important role in local representation whichever model is adopted.

ATTACHMENT 2:

Title	District Councillors' Report
Councillors	Cllr Anne-Marie Simpson & Cllr Crispin Topping
Parish	East Hagbourne Parish Council
Date	16 July 2026

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

[South News](#) a monthly resident newsletter packed with the latest news, events, and consultations happening across South Oxfordshire.

Next steps for Local Plans

A local plan is a document councils are required to prepare to provide plans and policies for all types of development, including new housing and employment developments in the area as well as identifying the infrastructure needed to support them.

Councillors in South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse on 18 June 2026 approved an update to the timetable for the Joint Local Plan 2041 (JLP1) and its plans for development in the area. The report that went to the councils and the revised LDS can be reviewed [here](#).

Also agreed by both councils was to start work on the next local plan, referred to as Joint Local Plan 2045 (JLP2), in line with government requirements, before the independent examination on the last one is finished.

JLP1

Our forthcoming first Joint Local Plan 2041 delivers on our vision and priorities as well as providing help to our neighbouring districts. It is robust, innovative, forward-thinking and based on strong community engagement, and it is good to see that it is progressing again through the examination process, examined by government-appointed inspectors.

The plan was submitted to the Secretary of State for independent examination in December 2024. The first stage of inspector-led hearing sessions took place in June 2025, with the second stage of hearing sessions programmed taking place last week 5-7 July 2026, followed by further hearings in the autumn.

The examination of the Joint Local Plan 2041 encountered a temporary setback in September 2025, following a letter from the inspectors outlining their initial findings from the first hearing sessions held in June 2025. Encouragingly, progress is now firmly back on track, supported by recent national changes to the local plan examination process.

For more information on the first Joint Local Plan (JLP1) visit www.southandvale.gov.uk/joint-local-plan-2041-examination

For recording of last week's second stage hearings:

The recorded sessions for 5-7 July are available to watch online via the [Councils' YouTube Channel](#) in the [Live Streaming](#) section.

- The Inspectors have issued agendas for the July hearing sessions ([ID21](#), [ID22](#), [ID23](#), [ID24](#)), as well as an updated draft Hearings Programme ([ID18](#)).

Our [Joint Local Plan examination webpage](#) contains further details.

JLP2

New government regulations mean that at the same time as working towards adopting the first Joint Local Plan between the two district councils, they are required to start preparing their next plan or plans for the area, which would run to 2045. This is known as 'twin-tracking'.

The timetable for the new local plan, needs to be in line with the government's requirements for preparing, examining and adopting plans in 30 months, which the councils must start by 31 October 2026. With Local Government Reorganisation, a new unitary authority would look to adopt the second local plan/plans, but the existing councils must start the process.

Now that the decision has been made by the councils on how best to proceed, the new Joint Local Plan (JLP2) will go out for the first stage of public consultation in September 2026 asking what the plan should cover.

There is no doubt that the councils will have their work cut out for them in developing a second plan – but on the strength of their previous work on the first Joint Local Plan, they will rise to the occasion and bring the same dedication and determination to see it through, handing over the baton to the new authority when the times comes.

For more information on the new Joint Local Plan (JLP2) visit [Joint Local Plan 2045 \(JLP2\) - South Oxfordshire District Council](#)

Joint statement from South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils on local devolution

The leaders of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils have reaffirmed their commitment to working constructively and collaboratively with all partners and the government on discussions around a new strategic authority that would cover the Thames Valley.

Leaders from the region met in Reading on 17 June to discuss a letter from the government proposing a Foundation Strategic Authority for an area covered by Oxfordshire, Berkshire and Swindon.

A Foundation Strategic Authority (FSA) is a regional government body that oversees things like strategic transport infrastructure, economic development and regeneration. An FSA is overseen by representatives of all the constituent councils rather than by a mayor.

To establish an FSA the government requires all councils in the area to be in consensus, however some councils in Oxfordshire and Berkshire felt they could not lend their support.

Community Hub roadshows

Our Community Hub team continues to visit local community organisations across South Oxfordshire and the Vale to support residents with the cost of living.

Upcoming roadshows include:

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- **Wednesday 15 July**, 2 to 4pm at Vale Community Impact Pop-Up Café (Petypher House), Kingston Bagpuize OX13 5FR
-
- **Tuesday 11 August**, 11am to 1pm at Didcot Baptist Church, 43 Wantage Road, Didcot, OX11 0BS

No booking is needed. We'll continue to add new dates and locations over the coming months.

Please help us spread the word with residents in your wards. For more information, visit the Community Hub webpage [South/Vale](#)

Didcot comes together to celebrate culture and community

On **Saturday 11 July** we celebrated culture and community at the first ever Didcot Festival of Cultures.

This free, family-friendly event took place from 10am to 3pm at Cornerstone Arts Centre, featuring live music, dance, food, workshops and activities inspired by cultures from across Britain and around the world.

The event was made possible by working in partnership with Didcot Town Council, Healthy Didcot, Cornerstone Arts Centre and Didcot Interfaith Group.

Visitors on the day enjoyed free workshops, including Turkish marbling art and African drumming, as well as performances from the Military Wives Choir. For the full programme visit [Cornerstone's website](#).

Free and low cost family fun all summer long

Families can look forward to an action-packed summer with six weeks of free and low-cost activities taking place across South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse.

Starting on Wednesday 22 July, the holiday programme has been organised by South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils' Active Communities team. It has something for everyone, from skateboarding and cricket to family fun days, outdoor adventures and wellbeing activities.

Kicking off the programme of events are Mini Fun Days taking place at venues across both districts, alongside Family Fun Days at Better Leisure Centres in Thame, Henley, Faringdon, Didcot and Abingdon. Expect days filled with sports, games and fun activities for all ages to enjoy.

Those looking to get outdoors can take part in the Xplorer family navigation challenges in Wantage, Didcot, Kingston Bagpuize and Benson. There will also be Picnic & Play in the Park events, Explorer Walks, and activity sessions in local parks and open spaces across the districts, offering plenty of opportunities to explore local green spaces, stay active and spend quality time together.

For young skateboarding and scooter enthusiasts keen to develop new skills, Summer of Skate returns throughout the holidays with free sessions in Didcot, Thame, Abingdon, Botley and more. Featuring expert coaching by ATBShop, fun games, competitions and prizes, the sessions are suitable for all abilities and no need to book—just show up and have fun.

Children aged 5 to 11 can get involved in All Stars and Dynamos Cricket at Didcot Cricket Club. Running over six weeks, the sessions provide a fun introduction to the sport while helping children build confidence, stay active and make new friends.

Over at Cornerstone Arts Centre in Didcot, families can enjoy a range of family-friendly activities and entertainment throughout the summer holidays. With more events to be announced, keep an eye on [Cornerstone's website](#). At The Beacon in Wantage, families can also enjoy a variety of activities and entertainment. Visit [The Beacon's website](#) for the latest programme as more events are announced.

There's even more to enjoy at Better Leisure Centres across South Oxfordshire and the Vale, with a range of activities taking place throughout the summer holidays. Families can also cool off at the outdoor pools in Abingdon and Wallingford, which will be open throughout the summer for people of all ages to enjoy.

For the full programme, including dates, venues and booking information, visit southandvale.gov.uk/holidayactivities.

Performing Arts Grant

Local arts organisations can apply for a share of £60,000 from South Oxfordshire District Council's Performing Arts Grant when applications open on Monday 20 July.

The funding supports arts and community projects that give residents across the district the chance to take part in the performing arts, bringing communities together, improving wellbeing and helping grow South Oxfordshire's arts scene.

Voluntary and community organisations can apply for grants of between £500 and £5,000. Funding can be used for projects such as festivals, concerts, dance lessons, accessible music sessions and equipment purchases.

Applicants must show how their projects meet the following community values and priorities, fostering a vibrant, inclusive, and sustainable performing arts scene in South Oxfordshire:

- Increase the range of arts opportunities available to local communities.
- Support inclusive practice and celebrate diversity
- Develop local artistic talent
- Promote innovation and excellence
- Develop new audiences and participants in performing arts initiatives

Organisations eligible to apply are:

- Non-for-profit groups, arts, or community groups
- Town and parish councils
- Schools (for non-core curriculum activities)

The deadline for applications is **midday Friday 30 September 2026**.

More information about the grant scheme can be found on the council's website southoxon.gov.uk/grants and organisations can contact the Community Arts team performingartsgrants@southandvale.gov.uk for support.

Councils are encouraged by the results of their tenants' satisfaction survey

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils have carried out a satisfaction survey among their tenants for the first time since they re-registered as social housing providers and the results are encouraging.

The councils, which now manage 92 properties across both districts scored 100 per cent satisfaction on questions on their housing repair service and whether their homes are well-maintained. They also scored highly on keeping communal areas clean and providing homes that are safe. The lowest score was on the question of how the councils handled complaints and still 75 per cent of respondents were satisfied.

The Government requires all registered providers of social housing – including local authorities – to collect and report annually on their performance using a core set of defined standards called the Tenant Satisfaction Measures. The TSMs provide tenants with greater clarity about their landlord's performance.

For South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils this is the first measurement of their performance since re-registering in 2023 as a Local Authority Registered Providers (LARP) marking the return to their role as a social landlord.

The councils currently manage properties in Abingdon, Harwell and Wantage in the Vale and Didcot and Wallingford in South Oxfordshire. These range from single rooms to flats and houses with a variety of households ranging from single people to family groups.

The survey takes place during April and May, and the councils then publish the results. The 2026 survey results (of the 86 households under the councils' management at that time – the councils have since taken on six more properties) are available on our websites ([South Oxfordshire/Vale](#))