



## Minutes of West Hagbourne Parish Council Meeting held at Hagbourne Village Hall on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> January 2026 at 7:30pm.

Present: Parish Cllrs: D. Tozer (Chair), M. Leishman, R. Wilkes, A. Wimshurst, J. Freeland; District Cllr. C. Topping, Mr. A. Wise (Parish Clerk) and 2 residents

26/1022 Opening of Meeting	DT opened the meeting at 19:30 hrs with a warm welcome to all attendees	
Administrative Matters		
26/1023 To receive Parish Councillor's apologies for absence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>District Cllr. A.M. Simpson and County Cllr. Johnny Hope-Smith</li> </ul>	
26/1024 Declarations of personal and prejudicial interest from Parish Councillors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>None</li> </ul>	
26/1025 To approve the minutes of the meeting of 18 November 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It was proposed by DT, seconded ML, that the minutes be signed as a true record. Carried nem con.</li> </ul>	
26/1026 To agree any outstanding actions from minutes of the meeting of 18 November 2025	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All action items had been completed</li> </ul>	
Open Session		
26/1027 To hear reports on OCC and SODC activities from any OCC or SODC Councillor's present	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><u>SODC Report</u> - attachment 6</li> <li><u>OCC Report</u> – attachment 7</li> </ul>	
26/1028 To hear representations from members of the public	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In response to a question about the Horse &amp; Harrow Pub, AW/DT to write to Hawthorn Leisure formally to seek confirmation that they are the legal owner and, if so, what their intentions for the site are.</li> <li>Chris Lay reported that he was aware of some large potholes in the village near the Horse &amp; Harrow Pub and will spray/report them when we get some dry weather.</li> </ul>	AW/DT CL
Planning Matters		
26/1029 Discussion and decisions on any new planning applications since the previous meeting	Planning applications reviewed - attachment 4 Planning Consultation P25/S3911/HH - Lilley Cottage - It was proposed by AW, seconded DT that the PC instruct the clerk to respond with SUPPORT.	CLERK
26/1030 Discussion and decisions on any other ongoing planning matters	None	
Drainage Matters		
26/1031 948 Any questions on ongoing drainage matters (see report submitted – included here for reference)	Flooding Summary Report for WHPC Meeting on Wednesday 7th January 2026 Activities Since Last Meeting GWP Didcot Drainage Investigations: a letter expressing WHPC's concerns with 'Drainage Approvals, Monitoring and Process' was sent to OCC and SODC, as well as Olly Glover MP, on 19 December 2025. This describes the increased flooding issues	

	<p>the village has faced since GWP was built. Cllr Simpson has acknowledged receipt and will press the relevant council individuals for a response.</p> <p>Flood Group Work:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Drains: Clearance of the Brook Lane drains has not yet been addressed by OCC Highways. Update pictures were sent highlighting issues following the downpours just before Christmas, during which the road was flooded, in part also caused by the blocked ditches at the side of the road. Members of the Flood Group dug these out to alleviate the water overflowing into the road – this issue has also been raised with OCC Highways. Overflowing of the drain on the corner of Brook Lane/Main Street is also continuously being reported to OCC Highways, particularly as we believe this brings road safety concerns due to it's location.</li> <li>- York Farm culvert: we continue to monitor this over winter, as the grill there needs to be regularly cleared.</li> <li>- Moor Lane Ditch: Lewis Purbrick of OCC walked the ditch with Dan Tozer and RW on 10 December 2025. Lewis viewed the watercourse as being in healthy condition, whilst noting the problem areas in the middle, where the 'ponds' develop. Lewis has suggested that we start with a levels survey to see which parts need to be dug out. He will also liase with colleagues on how we might best address the middle section and find the right balance between path and ditch. Due to this renewed interest in help from OCC, we have placed the ditch dig out work with Rowan Napper on hold – thanks to Rowan for again walking along the ditch with us in December and helping us to think about a suitable plan to ensure water flow away from the village.</li> </ul> <p>Purchase of Water Pumps for the Village: a petrol pump, with associated hoses and a trolley, and an electric puddle pump, were purchased in November/December 2025 (total costs to date: £651.34). Thanks again to Steve Carr for his help with this project. The pumps are now being tested by the Flood Group.</p> <p>Fencing around the Culvert at Driftway, York Road: RW has spoken to Jane Drew and this work is still planned. The temporary barrier will remain in place until this is completed. A reminder that a stock of sandbags are held by the Parish Council and available to villagers in need. A very helpful website for assessing home flood resilience is to be found at <a href="http://floodmary.com">floodmary.com</a> and RW is happy to talk to villagers about potentially helpful flood prevention items for homes.</p> <p>Robin Wilkes, 2nd January 2026</p> <p>RW to draft a proposal and cost for a new barrier to replace temporary barrier around the Culvert near York Farm, York Road.</p>	RW
Highways and Transport		
26/1032 Any questions on ongoing highways matters (see report submitted– included here for reference)	<p><b>Roads, Traffic and PROW – report 5/1/2026</b></p> <p>Community Speedwatch Group – during 2025, the group has run 22 roadside sessions resulting in 252 drivers being reported to TVP for speeding offences from a total of 1752 vehicles monitored. After a short break over Christmas and new year, we will be resuming our sessions this month, weather permitting. An enormous thank you again to the members of the group for supporting and promoting road safety through the village.</p> <p>Traffic Management – the new signage and white lines for the single carriageway section of Main Street have been approved and will be installed by contractors in due course. The 3 electronic signs that indicate to drivers that vehicles may be in the middle of the road through the village are often regarded as being superfluous street furniture and the erecting of new signage which will more directly inform drivers of the narrowing of the road ahead will render them redundant. It is proposed, therefore, to have them removed if the parish council approves this action. It is very likely that they were bought by WHPC with Section 106 money from the Bloor homes development on Park Road, in which case it is hoped that an arrangement can be made with OCC for their re-use.</p> <p>Village entrance gates &amp; signage – quotes have now been received for these from</p>	

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	<p>OCC for the two main entrances to the village (see paper copies to be circulated at meeting for discussion and approval). I am still pursuing a response from Upton PC regarding the positioning of the third pair of gates (approaching the H&amp;H) as recommended by Jon Beale OCC Highways, as the 20mph signs within Upton parish. It was proposed by AW, seconded DT that ML go back to John Beale and order the 3 new entrance gates based on his quote and ask Highways to also remove the superfluous 3 flashing signs and if they can be reused elsewhere in the County for the PC to be reimbursed for the original expenditure.</p> <p>Proposed new pavement – Scotland’s Ash – following the decision to pursue the feasibility of a new pavement alongside the residences and businesses at Scotland’s Ash, a villager and member of the Speedwatch Group, has kindly put forward a survey for village use. The survey, intended to establish whether or not there is a need for a pavement, could be carried out via SurveyMonkey online or on paper (see paper example presented at the meeting). ML to verbally survey the residents in Main Street currently without a footpath to gauge opinions before the PC proceeds to opening negotiations with Highways. DT to mention in the Chairman’s comments in the newsletter.</p>	<p>ML</p> <p>ML</p>
<p>26/1033 Moor Lane byway update</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DT to chase Arthur McEwan-James at Highways about when they will be installing the monitoring equipment in Moor Lane as proposed last year</li> </ul>	<p>DT</p>
<p>26/1034 Community Matters (see report submitted– included here for reference)</p>	<p><b>JF Report</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>JF reported that the painting of the noticeboards is ongoing</li> <li>JF has received 3 quotes for the work to repair the Bus Shelter Roof. It was proposed by DT, seconded ML that JF go back to Talbots who quoted £495:00 and ask them when they can start the work on the bus shelter roof.</li> <li>JF/ML to undertake a review of the location of bins in the village, come up with a plan for where they would like them located and then purchase some signs to stick on them. Then JF to speak to Biffa to arrange the re-location of the bins around the village.</li> <li>Storage of PC records and village archive – Clerk formally thanked Sheila, John and Andy for moving the lockable storage cabinet into the village hall small meeting room. Chair now has the key if anyone needs to access the files. Clerk to speak to Sheila about where the original filing cabinet came from with a view to ordering a second cabinet for storage.</li> <li>Village website – Clerk reported that this is now live and publicly thanked John for all his efforts in updating the website whilst the clerk was on holiday in December. When John returns from his holiday in early February, the Clerk will book some time with him for Andy, Robin and the clerk to receive some training in updating pages and uploading pdfs to the new website.</li> <li>AW reported that he has been asked by DT to make a start on the Emergency Plan. It was agreed that the 5 councillors split up the village between then and ask each householder if they have any vulnerable residents and if they have any suitable equipment that could be used in an emergency. AW to then collate the data in the emergency plan. DT to mention this in the newsletter.</li> </ul>	<p>JF</p> <p>JF/ML</p> <p>CLERK</p> <p>CLERK</p> <p>ALL</p>
<p>Financial Matters</p>		
<p>26/1035 Approval of regular payments and Budget 2026/27</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Approval of payments. It was proposed DT, seconded ML, and carried nem con that the following invoices be paid: Parish Clerk’s wages, Expenses, PAYE, village hall hire, website hosting, Hagbourne Cemetery donation and flooding prevention tools.</li> <li>Clerk took the councillors through the draft 2026/27 budget and after some discussion about some changes it was proposed DT, seconded ML, and carried nem con that the Clerk make the proposed changes and save the 2026/27 Budget as final ready for April.</li> </ul>	

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Then the Chair led his fellow councillors through a discussion on how much Precept to ask for. It was decided to go for a small increase (in line with inflation) on 2025/26 and if necessary, fund any shortfall from CIL Reserves. It was proposed DT, seconded ML, and carried nem con that the clerk fill out the paperwork requesting a precept of £9900.00</li> </ul>	CLERK
26/1036 The current financial situation for 2025/26	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Current Financial situation for 2024/25 – attachment 2 &amp; 3</li> <li>Clerk reported that he issued invoices for 3 current newsletter advertisers</li> <li>Clerk to book the same internal auditor as has been used for the past 2 years</li> <li>Clerk to submit an annual VAT return later this month</li> </ul>	CLERK CLERK
26/1037 Risk Assessment Register	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>DT signed off appropriate parts on the current Risk Assessment Checklist – attachment 5</li> </ul>	
26/1038 Agreement of items to include in Chairman's report for next monthly Parish Newsletter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chair will send a report to Editor Sue Totterdell before the end of the month in time for the next edition of the Village Newsletter.</li> </ul>	DT
26/1039 Agreement of items to include in the agenda for the next WHPC meeting Wed 7 Jan 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clerk to draft agenda and circulate amongst councillors 10 days before next meeting</li> <li>Next meeting to be held on 11 March 2026</li> </ul>	CLERK CLERK
26/1040 Close of meeting	DT declared the meeting closed at 9:35pm	

Signed:

Date:

Attachments:

1. Agenda
2. Financial Statements
3. Expenditure against Budget 2024/2025
4. Planning Applications
5. Risk Assessment
6. SODC Report

<b>Title</b>	District Councillors' Report
<b>Councillors</b>	Cllr Anne-Marie Simpson & Cllr Crispin Topping
<b>Parish</b>	West Hagbourne Parish Council
<b>Date</b>	7 January 2025

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

## Planning Policy

### Joint Local Plan (JLP) Examination

On 3 December 2025, we confirmed to the Inspectors that we want to resume the local plan hearings and are awaiting their response. The Government intends to remove the Duty to Cooperate early in the new year. For plans like the JLP already at examination, this means the legal "pass/fail" test will go, but we'll still need to show effective cooperation as part of the soundness test. This can be addressed during examination if needed.

See the latest information here [Joint Local Plan 2041 Examination - South Oxfordshire District Council and Vale of White Horse District Council](#)

## **Oxford Growth Commission Interim report**

[Neale Coleman's Interim Report](#) was published on 15 December. It identifies barriers to growth and sets out 47 recommendations to improve infrastructure and speed up development. The Commission will continue its work through 2026, with a final report expected later, within a year.

## **Planning Reforms**

Government has released a raft of [new guidance](#), including details on the forthcoming 30-month process for preparing new-style local plans.

## **National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)**

A [draft revised NPPF](#) was published on 16 December 2025 for consultation until 10 March 2026. It aims to create a more rules-based system and accelerate delivery of 1.5 million homes this Parliament.

## **What this means for South and Vale**

Although Government policy and the local plan system are changing, there is no direct effect on the Joint Local Plan. The JLP qualifies as a transitional plan, so it is being examined against the 2023 NPPF. For the JLP, we do not need to immediately meet new national policies, adopt the new housing numbers, or switch to the new plan-making system. Those changes will apply to a subsequent local plan. Where these changes impact on development management decision making, officers will set out the relevant weight to be applied in their reports.

**Our Planning team sent letters to the Town and Parish councils in December with a clarification and summary of the government's current proposals to reform the planning system. You can read the letters in full via these links [Vale](#) / [South](#).**

## **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](#)

## **Coming soon: Community Infrastructure Levy Grant**

The second round of funding for the Community Infrastructure Levy Grant Fund will open to Town and Parish councils and not-for-profit community groups in South Oxfordshire early this year.

A total of £750,000 is being offered to support projects that improve or create new community amenities such as community centres, sports and cultural facilities, play areas, and open spaces.

Grants between £75,000 and £250,000 will be available for organisations to apply for to support projects in the district which are needed due to development in the area.

You can find out more in [our latest press release](#), please help us to spread the word to organisations that could benefit in your ward.



## Thames Water funding for community flood prevention projects

Thames Water is offering local organisations funds to install small scale SuDS (Sustainable Drainage Systems) schemes e.g. planting, paving removal, water butts etc like the rain gardens we have installed at Portway car park in Wantage. The funding will prioritise areas that are known flooding hotspots - [see this map](#).

Applications are open until **31 March**. There is a webinar on applying in January. Interested parties should get in touch with [swmp.applications@thameswater.co.uk](mailto:swmp.applications@thameswater.co.uk). Please help us to spread the word.

## Share your views on NHS 'commissioning intentions'

You may want to take part in the following organisation's consultation.

The Buckinghamshire, Oxfordshire and Berkshire West Integrated Care Board has developed 'commissioning intentions' for the new Thames Valley ICB to support its strategic priorities around improving care and investing in the right services. To find out more and have your say on these plans, visit the BOB ICB engagement platform at '**Your Voice BOB**' view the ['Developing the NHS Thames Valley'](#) section which includes details on the '**Thames Valley Commissioning Intentions 2026 - 2030**' (you might need to register on the site if it's your first visit).

You can leave your comments in the discussion forum on the webpage – closing date **11 January 2026**.

## Arts Centres in Southern Oxfordshire launch new websites

Cornerstone Arts Centre in Didcot and The Beacon Arts, Entertainment and Community Centre in Wantage have launched new websites to make it easier for visitors to explore what's on offer.

As part of their ongoing Action Plans to ensure long-term sustainability, these updates are key steps in enhancing the venues' services and ensuring they continue to serve the local community for many years to come.

The new sites feature a clean, modern look that highlights the venues' events, activities, and services. They've been made easier to navigate, with simple access to information on events, exhibitions, classes, and venue hire.

Both websites work well on mobile phones, tablets, and desktops, and are linked to the Spektrix ticketing system, so visitors can easily browse and book events.

The new sites also focus on accessibility, making sure they are easy to use for everyone. They include better search engine optimisation and tools to help the venues understand their audience and improve their online services.

While both websites share a similar layout for a smooth experience, each has its own design to reflect the unique feel of Cornerstone and The Beacon.

For more information, including details of the new spring season's shows and classes, please visit

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their new websites:

- [Cornerstone Arts Centre](#)
- [The Beacon](#)

## **Councils secure a high-quality and sustainable future for leisure facilities in uncertain time**

Local residents can look forward to high-quality, sustainable leisure services for at least the next three years after their councils struck a deal for a contract extension.

South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils have secured the future of the districts' leisure services by extending their leisure contract for a further three years, unlocking savings, and securing fresh investment in facilities until 31 August 2029.

With the government planning to reorganise councils in Oxfordshire in the coming years, a short-term contract extension - rather than a new long-term deal - provides the greatest flexibility for the new unitary council that will be replacing the two districts in the next few years, whichever form it takes.

The councils current long term leisure services contract was nearing its end in August 2026. Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL), who operate under the brand 'Better', has successfully delivered leisure services on behalf of South Oxfordshire and Vale of White Horse District Councils, since the award of a joint leisure operating contract in 2014 (and separately for both councils for several years before that). This covers leisure facilities - with seven in South Oxfordshire and four in Vale of White Horse, (including outdoor pools in both areas).

Changes within the new three-year extension contract offer significant financial benefits for both councils, generating cost savings without any compromise on service. There is further significant investment earmarked for facilities across both districts.

Both councils have invested significantly in sports and leisure facilities over the last few years, with further investment planned over the coming year. Investments will focus on quality, accessibility and sustainability.

Multi-million-pound major energy-saving decarbonisation projects across several sites, coming to fruition in 2025/2026 – such as installation of insulation, new windows, solar panels, air source heat pumps and external wall insulation - aims to reduce the councils' overall carbon emissions by more than 25 per cent.

The councils have also recently adopted Playing Pitch and Leisure Facility Strategies, which provide a road map for the future aspirations of leisure and sports provision.

## **2026 Council Calendars**

Our Diversity and Social Campaign calendars for 2026 are now live on our websites [South](#) / [Vale](#).

The dates in these calendars have been approved by Cabinet and Leaders and are important for us as they reflect our council priorities and the key messages we want to communicate with residents and businesses, including those championing diversity and inclusion. Please help us to share these messages throughout the



year.

## Reservoir FAQ

We've created a useful FAQ for Thames Water's proposed South East Strategic Reservoir Option (SESRO) as we know this is an important topic for both council members and our residents.

You can access the FAQ document [via this link](#) (please note this document will download to your computer when clicked).

## Laptop donation to Aspire and SOFEA

The councils donated the older laptops which still work but are no longer usable for South and Vale to SOFEA and Aspire for their 'getting people online' programme and supporting local people. They hope to get many out in time for Christmas. This included:

- 276 devices in total
- 154 laptops
- 89 Surface pros
- 33 desktops

You can also donate your unwanted laptops to help - [Put your old laptops to good use!](#)

## River charity appeals for volunteers

Thames21 is looking for volunteers to monitor river pollution between Wallingford and Caversham. They need people to commit to 30 minutes a month for a year as a Thames Water Watcher. Training will be provided on **17 January 2026, 11am - 1pm, Goring Village Hall**. Booking is essential for the training session. Details on the [Thames21 website](#) or email [claire.robertson@thames21.org.uk](mailto:claire.robertson@thames21.org.uk) This event is run by **Thames21** for the **South Chilterns Catchment Partnership**, funded by **Mend the Gap**.

## New Leader at South Oxfordshire District Council

Cllr Maggie Filipova-Rivers is the new Leader of South Oxfordshire District Council. She was chosen by councillors during a vote at the [Council meeting Thursday 11 December 2025](#).

Her election as Leader comes after Cllr David Rouane chose to stand down having led the council for four years - and having served as the Cabinet Member for Housing and Environment for two and a half years before that. He will remain in his role as councillor.

Cllr Filipova-Rivers, who is ward member for Goring, has served since 2019, as Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Housing and Communities at South Oxfordshire District Council, and since May 2025, as a county councillor in Oxfordshire. Her work spans affordable housing, homelessness prevention, public health, and community resilience, including playing a key role in the Covid response. She also served as Vice Chair of the Oxfordshire Health Improvement Board.

Maggie is a public policy and economic development professional with extensive experience in green growth, refugee integration, and multi-sector partnership work. She holds an MSc in the Political Economy of Development and a BA in Financial and Business Economics. Her professional experience includes work with

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the World Bank's Finance, Competitiveness and Innovation Global Practice, where she contributed to major investment programmes decarbonisation and economic inclusion. Alongside this, she advises more than 180 councils across the UK on refugee integration strategy through City of Sanctuary UK, helping local authorities strengthen access to a broad range of services and develop more inclusive communities.

Cllr Filipova-Rivers' was elected unopposed and by a unanimous decision.

Cllr Filipova-Rivers' new role as Leader means there are some changes in the Council's cabinet. They are as follows:

- [Councillor Maggie Filipova-Rivers](#) – Leader, plus Legal and Democratic Services.
- [Councillor Tony Worgan](#) – Deputy Leader, Cabinet Member for plus Housing and Planning Development Management.
- [Councillor Pieter-Paul Barker](#) – Cabinet Member for Finance and Property Assets.
- [Councillor Mike Giles](#): Cabinet Member for Corporate Services, Policy and Climate Action.
- [Councillor Georgina Heritage](#) – Cabinet Member for Communities (Including Community Hub).
- [Cllr Sue Cooper](#) – Cabinet Member for Environment.
- [Councillor Leigh Rawlins](#) – Cabinet Member for Economic Development.
- [Councillor Anne-Marie Simpson](#) – Cabinet Member for Planning Policy, including Garden Communities.

At the same meeting, and at Vale of White Horse Council meeting on Wednesday 10 December, Adrianna Partridge was confirmed as the councils' new, shared Chief Executive. Adrianna will formally take up the post on 1 January 2026.

## 7. OCC Report



<b>Title</b>	County Councillor's Report
<b>Author</b>	Cllr Johnny Hope-Smith
<b>Parishes</b>	Aston Tirrold/Upthorpe, Cholsey, East Hagbourne, Little Wittenham, Long Wittenham, Moulsoford, North Moreton, South Moreton, West Hagbourne
<b>Date</b>	December 2025 / January 2026
<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

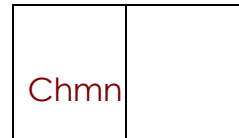
- Share the booking system start date (14 January 2026) with residents.  
<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/household-waste/household-waste-recycling-centres/book-recycling-centre-visit>
- Encourage sorting waste before visiting to comply with new rules.
- Inform residents about permit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

# West Hagbourne Parish Council

Chmn	
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- Claudia Sprinkleman
- Blenheim Palace
- Sir Roger Banister
- Grittenham Clumps
- Gritmeister 5000
- Alfred the Grit
- Spready Mercury
- John Thaw
- Blizzard of Ozz