

REPORT TO PARISH COUNCILS

FROM YOUR COUNTY COUNCILLOR and DISTRICT COUNCILLOR for OTMOOR DIVISION AND WARD Cllr Tim Hallchurch

JUNE 2014

On 22nd May, I handed over the Chairmanship to Cllr Anne Purse who will now be Chairman of Oxfordshire County Council for a year. Anne is the County Councillor for Wheatley Division.

My last events as Chairman included receiving the SABRE award from the South East Reserve Forces and Cadets Association (SERFCA) for the contribution OCC had made to the forces. The presentation was by HRH The Earl of Wessex.



I then escorted HRH The Duke of Gloucester to a Citizenship Ceremony in County Hall and the presentation of BEMs to eight Oxfordshire residents in the Dexter Room at the Registry Office. Other highlights of the last month included the presentation of a cheque from my Charity Dinner to Jayne Many of Earth Trust at Shillingford. I now hope to find more time for local matters. I have now resumed committee work and am now a member of the Health Overview Scrutiny Committee and the Audit Committee of Oxfordshire CC.

My diary can be view on www.otmoor.co.uk

CONNECTING OXFORDSHIRE

The Leader of the Council, Ian Hudspeth, launched Connecting Oxfordshire in April. This outlined the strategic transport schemes that the County Council and our partners, such as Network Rail, will deliver between now and 2020.

Over the coming months he will be travelling around Oxfordshire giving presentations to residents, with particular focus to those local areas. Each meeting takes place at 7.00pm:

Mon 23 June	Banbury	Town Hall
Wed 25 June	Wantage	Civic Centre
Mon 30 June	Bicester	Littlebury Hotel
Mon 7 July	Witney	Henry Box School
Tue 15 July	Didcot	Cornerstone
Wed 16 July	Henley	Town Hall



We are starting the process for the next Local Transport Plan (LTP4) and discussions from these events will also feed into that plan. It is vital that we have a transport system which will enable residents to move around the county efficiently.

For more information on Connecting Oxfordshire, please see:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/news/2014/apr/county-council-leader-outlines-his-vision-transport-connecting-oxfordshire>

ADULT SOCIAL CARE GRANT

Thanks to a successful bid by the County Council, we have been granted £459k to expand and develop social care in Oxfordshire. It will be spent on a range of initiatives designed to enhance social care delivery locally, including the establishment of a behaviour-based recruitment pilot and training on assistive technology that will allow people to be cared for in their own homes for longer rather than being admitted to a care home.

For more information: <https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/news/2014/may/council-gets-%C2%A3450k-grant-develop-local-adult-social-care-workforce>

OFSTED INSPECTIONS

A four-week inspection of Oxfordshire schools took place in May. While the Children's Services Directorate prepares for these regular inspections, Ofsted will only give 24 hours' notice to see schools performing as they would on an everyday basis.

The results will be known at the end of June and give a clear indicator of performance (either inadequate, requires improvement, good or outstanding). Schools will strive to continuously improve themselves and the recommendations from inspectors should help us to advance.

THRIVING FAMILIES INITIATIVE

Latest Government figures show the 'Thriving Families' scheme run by the County Council has turned around the lives of more than 400 families in Oxfordshire – continuing to place the county among the best performing local areas. This is known nationally as the Troubled Families programme and has been set up to turn around 120,000 troubled families nationwide by March 2015.

New figures show the programme, in which a dedicated worker is assigned to each family to give hands-on support, has brought about positive outcomes for 444 of Oxfordshire's most troubled families, by tackling problems such as crime and antisocial behaviour, poor school attendance and unemployment. This means more than half (55 per cent) of the 700 families the council has worked with so far, have turned their lives around. This is well above the national average of 33 per cent.

This success rate makes the county third best across the South East region, with only West Berkshire and Southampton recording a higher percentage, albeit having worked with fewer families than Oxfordshire, 116 and 685 families respectively, compared to our 700 families.

The council has invested £1.6million in the scheme and Oxfordshire is trialling a DCLG Cost Benefit Analysis tool, the only Shire County to do so, which shows that for every pound invested the Thriving Families Team saves the public purse £3.22.

ARMED FORCES DAY

Armed Forces Day is a chance to show your support for the whole of the Armed Forces Community, from serving personnel to Forces' families and cadets. It is also an opportunity to raise public awareness of the contribution by those who serve and have served in Her Majesty's Armed Forces.

Oxfordshire County Council will be celebrating the Armed Forces Day with a Flag Raising Ceremony on Monday 23 June 2014. The flag will be raised at 11am above Oxford Castle.

The ceremony will be attended by the Lord Lieutenant, High Sheriff, Chairman of the County Council,, local Mayors, Councillors and representatives from RN reserves and cadets, Bicester Garrison, 7 Rifles, QOOH, RAF Brize Norton and Benson, , the Royal British Legion and Cadets from across the county.

CLA GAME FAIR

The CLA Game Fair is returning to Blenheim Palace on **18th, 19th & 20th July**. This national event is billed as the largest countryside event in the World and expects to attract 150,000 visitors that weekend. This will inevitably add to traffic, particularly on the Friday.

The County Council will put in place a similar traffic management plan to that used in 2011, with all organisations working to reduce the impact on the area.

DISTRICT & EUROPEAN ELECTIONS

On 22nd May, Oxfordshire residents had the opportunity to vote for their Members of the European Parliament. Our county elects as part of the South East of England Constituency that returns 10 MEPs to the 751-strong Parliament. There are now 4 UKIP and 3 Conservatives alongside one each for Labour, Green and Liberal Democrat.

There were also district elections in a third of the seats in Cherwell and West Oxfordshire, and for half the seats in Oxford City. West Oxfordshire and Cherwell remain under Conservative control; Oxford is held by Labour.

RECYCLING INITIATIVE IN BICESTER

Oxfordshire County Council has teamed up with Bicester Green sustainability centre and Viridor to ensure that bikes and furniture are saved from becoming waste.

County Councillor David Nimmo Smith, Oxfordshire County Council's Cabinet member for environment, said: "The success of this partnership is really heartening as it is always better that something is reused than thrown away, even if it is recycled. I hope that we will see more and more bikes and furniture finds its way through Bicester Green and back into more local homes."

More information and for details of opening times to make donations please see:

<https://www.oxfordshire.gov.uk/cms/news/2014/may/recycling-cycles-and-more-bicester>

DEMENTIA FRIENDS CAMPAIGN

Oxfordshire County Council is backing this important Alzheimer's Society Campaign. By becoming a Dementia Friend, you can find out more about how you can help someone in your family or neighbourhood.

More information is available at: <https://www.dementiafriends.org.uk/>

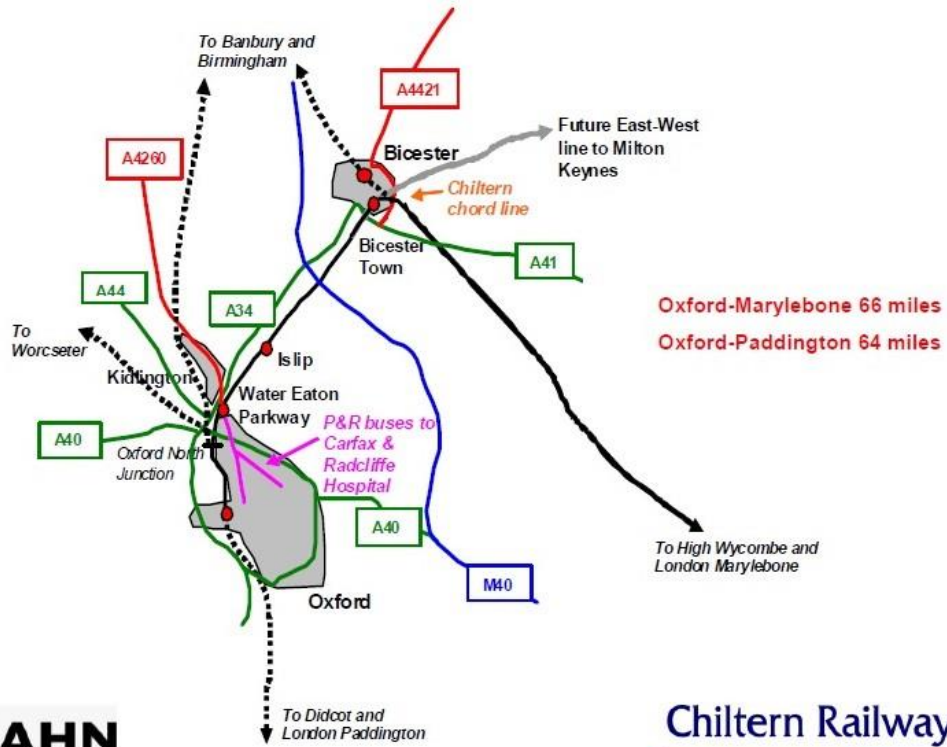
OXFORD _ MARYLEBONE RAIL LINK

Work on the new line from Oxford to Marylebone via Water Eaton and Bicester is well under way. The work has resulted in extra heavy goods vehicle traffic on the country lanes that is causing disruption and road damage.

Although the work will take up to two years I understand that earth moving phase will only last a few weeks before actual construction will progress using the railway to bring in new track and infrastructure. I have asked for an estimate of how long it will take before we can see the back of the HGVs on the lanes and I am waiting for a reply. I am afraid that we will have to accept a certain amount of pain to get the project finishes quickly. I will keep you informed when I get a reply.

I am also pressing for the roads to be repaired once work is completed.

A new route to Oxford




Chiltern Railways

Cherwell District Council – Otmoor Ward

Local Plan

The Local Plan has been taking up the time and efforts of the Cherwell officers and members of the Executive over the last few months. It has been held up for various reasons and latterly by a move of Oxford City Council who want a delay so housing for the city can be built on Cherwell DC land. The City have said: **“The Plan was submitted in advance of the publication of a new Oxfordshire Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA).** Working through SPIP, the Oxfordshire Districts and County Council jointly commissioned consultants to prepare a new SHMA to supersede the previous SHMA published in 2007. Work on the new SHMA has been taking place over the last few months and a summary of key findings was published on Friday 7th March 2014. The final SHMA report was due to be published later in March. However this has now been delayed”

The Districts believe there is a big difference between theory of the SHMA numbers and what is realistically deliverable, and this difference will be assessed by the Inspector at the Cherwell Examination this month.

- *A Pre Hearing Meeting on the Local Plan took place on Tuesday 25th March 2014 A Briefing Note was prepared by the Inspector to help people understand the process. The  [Inspector's Briefing Note](#) (129kb) is now available.*
- *Hearing Sessions are provisionally due to commence on Tuesday 3rd June 2014 within the Council Chamber of Cherwell District Council Offices, Bodicote House, Bodicote. Banbury, Oxon, OX15 4BN*
- *The proposed new Cherwell Local Plan (2006 - 2031) was submitted to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government for formal Examination on 31st January 2014.*
- *A new [Local Plan Examination](#) webpage has been created which contains information on the Examination with a Core document **library**.*

Nominate causes for community compost giveaway

Organisations which help or benefit the community are being invited to apply for free bags of compost and wildflower seeds from Cherwell District Council.

Residents are being encouraged to put forward suggestions for local groups, schools and charities to receive either 20 or 40 bags of compost and the seeds to help grow gardens within the community.

Starting with the sentence "I would like to nominate (add name of organisation) to receive the compost because..." residents must sum up the reasons for their nomination in just 50 words.

Splash out on unlimited swimming

People looking to increase their physical activity are being invited to enjoy one month of unlimited swimming for just £5.

Between June and August, adults are being offered the chance to swim at Spiceball Leisure Centre in Banbury, Bicester Leisure Centre and Kidlington and Gosford Leisure Centre for just £5 for the month. The scheme has been introduced to encourage people who do less than three hours' physical activity each week to adopt a healthier lifestyle and improve their fitness levels as part of Cherwell District Council's Go Active, Get Healthy and its Active Women initiatives.

Cllr George Reynolds, Cherwell's deputy leader, said: "This is a fantastic chance for people who have been thinking about getting back into physical activity to turn those thoughts into action. For just £5 they will be

able to enjoy unlimited swimming at our three Parkwood Leisure Centres. Swimming is one of the best yet least strenuous ways to get fit and active so I would encourage as many people as possible to take advantage of this great offer.”

The vouchers will be available to over 18s only on a first-come-first-served basis and are only redeemable during public swimming sessions. The initiative will run from 1 June until 31 August inclusive and will not include Woodgreen Open Air Pool.

The cost of the vouchers is being offset by Go Active, Get Healthy and Active Women which is funded by Sport England and delivered by Cherwell.

To sign up visit <http://www.getoxfordshireactive.org/cherwell-swimming>

For more information contact Christina.higgs@cherwell-dc.gov.uk or call 01295 221803.

Forum to focus on disability

Sport development and transport will top the agenda Cherwell District Council's next disability forum on 2 June.

The event takes place between 11am and 2pm at the council's Bodicote House headquarters.

Cherwell organises disability forums to ensure that people with disabilities have their voices heard when it comes to influencing and improving the council's services. The forums raise the profile and awareness of disability issues in Cherwell, identify gaps in service provision and promote opportunities and empowerment for disabled people.

Awards celebrate achievements in Cherwell

The great and the good from across north Oxfordshire came together to be celebrated at the third annual Cherwell Business Awards.

On Friday, 16 May, 250 guests representing businesses and charitable organisations gathered at Dovecote Farm in Adderbury to recognise the outstanding efforts of companies and individuals from across the district and share best practice.

Awards were handed out across nine different categories including charity and community, customer care and innovation before a tenth award was presented for the overall Business of the Year.

Adrian Colwell, Cherwell District Council's head of strategic planning and the economy, said: "For the past few years the news headlines have been dominated by the economic problems associated with the recession. However, at the same time there are numerous businesses which continue to thrive and generate success stories which tend to be overlooked amongst all of the doom and gloom.

"The Cherwell Business Awards give these companies the chance to shine and have their hard work recognised and we would like to congratulate the winners and finalists for their fantastic achievements."

The awards were organised by Cherwell District Council, Ellacotts LLP, Begbroke Science Park, Banbury and District Chamber of Commerce, Bicester Vision, Spratt Endicott Solicitors, NatWest and Bicester and District Chamber of Commerce.

Cherwell sponsored the charity and community category and the council's chairman, Cllr Lawrie Stratford, presented the award to Ace Training and Consultancy Limited, which also picked up the award for the overall Cherwell Business of the Year.

Other winners from across the evening were:

- New Business: iphone-experts (Bloxham Mill)
- Charity & Community: ACE Training & Consultancy Ltd (Kidlington)
- Small Business: Oxford Fine Dining (Weston on the Green)
- Customer Care Award: Castle Vehicle Leasing Ltd (Bicester)

- Established Business: Nicholsons (North Aston)
- Staff Training & Development Award: Hawkins Group of Companies (Banbury)
- Export: Zeta Specialist Lighting Ltd (Bicester)
- Innovation & Creativity: Oxford Photovoltaics Ltd (Kidlington)
- Business Person of the Year: Mike Hawkins (Banbury)

The awards were hosted by Stuart Miller, co-founder and chief executive of the Oxfordshire logistics company, Bybox.

Barking mad if you're not registered

A record number of free identity tags have been issued to dogs across Cherwell in the same year the scheme was acknowledged with the RSPCA's Innovator Award.

During 2013/ 2014, Cherwell District Council issued 865 identity tags to owners, up from 562 the previous year.

The tags contain a unique identification number which, when cross-referenced with Cherwell's database, provide contact details and addresses for their dog's owner.

Mark Harmon, Cherwell's environmental enforcement manager, said: "It is a legal requirement for dogs to wear an identity tag in public and failure to do so can result in a £25 fine.

"While some people choose to create their own identity tag, the benefit of our scheme is that by using a unique identification number to cross-reference contact information, we are able to access a lot more information than can be squeezed onto a small tag. What's more, the tags are completely free!"

Owners can apply for a tag online by submitting a description and optional photograph of their dog along with various contact details including phone numbers, email addresses and home addresses to help trace them should their pet be picked up.

This information is then cross-referenced against a unique identification number which is printed on the dog's tag along with a phone number for the council's dog warden.

In November last year the dog registration scheme was recognised by the RSPCA who presented the Cherwell with one of only four national Innovator Awards after the council topped the English District and Borough category for innovation.

Bright future ahead for depot

A new lighting system which will save approximately £1,000 a year while reducing annual carbon dioxide emissions by almost five tonnes has been installed at Cherwell District Council's depot.

A total of 22 energy efficient LED light bulbs have been installed in the car park of the Thorpe Lane depot to help increase security and visibility at the site after the previous lighting system began to fail.

In addition to being cheaper and more energy efficient than its predecessor, the new lighting system also offers a longer lifespan which will generate further savings through reduced repair and maintenance costs.

Cllr Nigel Morris, lead member for clean and green, said: "The previous lighting system down at the depot had begun to fail which was causing serious concerns because some areas were in total darkness with both staff and large vehicles manoeuvring through it. This new system will not only bring light back to the depot

but it will also tick the important boxes of saving us money and reducing carbon emissions, creating a financially viable and environmentally friendly solution to the problem."

Previously the depot's lighting system generated almost eight tonnes of carbon dioxide from its electricity use, but this is expected to reduce to just over three tonnes with the new system, which consists of 75 watt bulbs.

Last year the depot's total electricity consumption generated annual carbon dioxide emissions of 42 tonnes but this is now expected to reduce to 38 tonnes with the installation of the new lighting system.

The Thorpe Lane depot is the base for the council's environmental services team including energy, waste and recycling and the council's MOT bay.

Council Tax

Yet again Cherwell District Council has held the Council Tax rates for the sixth year. This has been possible due mainly to efficiencies of working jointly with South Northants and Stratford upon Avon Councils.